



THE BELL TREE
AN MCCC PUBLICATION

A Newsletter for the Month of
APRIL 2022

The Mount Carmel Congregational Church
(A United Church of Christ)
3285 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06518

From the Pastor's Desk...

Dear Members and Friends,

This month brings in the Great Festival of Easter – the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. However, I believe that Easter is not just a day, but a way of life! To make Easter a way of life, we must always be on the lookout for new life, like what God had created with Jesus. Jesus was not merely resuscitated (like CPR); rather, he was Resurrected, becoming a new creation! The risen Christ lives within us and among us now. Because of this belief, Christians are often referred to as the Easter People. The Easter People continue to have hope when hope seems vain; they continue to love in the face of hate; and they take courage in the face of fear. All of this is because the Risen Christ is within us and among us always!

We recreated and pivoted many times this year as we dealt with the pandemic. Can you believe that last Easter, we worshipped outside the Church in the Grove? We had our annual meeting on Zoom, and we celebrated Pentecost and Confirmation outside as well. We created a new Bell Choir and started Wednesday Evening Taizé service for the seasons of Advent and Lent. I am proud of you all my Easter People and wish you a Blessed Easter!

I continue to be deeply grieved over the war in Ukraine. Their prayer is that they can preserve their humanity in the midst of the hell they are enduring, and that we all continue to pray for peace in this crucifying situation. [**Editor's Note:** *If you feel so inclined, the UCC is still collecting donations for their Ukraine Relief Fund; you can donate by mail by sending a check made payable to the United Church of Christ, (P.O. Box 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194; be sure to write "Ukraine Relief Fund" in the memo), or online by visiting <https://mccucc.tiny.us/ukraine>.*]

I wish each of you a happy Easter, and a happy Earth Day, April 23rd! Call me if you would like a visit or a call (203) 641-1638.

Blessings and Peace,
Rev. Olivia Robinson

MARCH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Please join every Sunday at 10am in the Church for service! We will also be holding a Taizé services on Wednesday, April 6th at 7pm in the Church.

<p>April 3rd, 2022 <i>Fifth Sunday in Lent</i> Scriptures: Isaiah 43: 16-21 John 12: 1-8 Sermon: Guest Preacher Zak Carroll <i>Yale Divinity School</i> <i>Raymond Fund Fellow</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lenten Taizé Service</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday April 6th, 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please join us for our final Taizé service of the Lenten season!</i></p>										
<p>April 10th, 2022 Palm/Passion Sunday Potluck After Service <i>Sixth Sunday in Lent</i> Scripture: The Passion According to Mark</p>	<p>April 14th, 2022 Maundy Thursday Evening Service, 7pm Holy Communion and Tenebrae Scripture: Tenebrae</p>										
<p>April 17th, 2022 Easter Sunday Holy Communion Scriptures: Acts 10: 34-43 John 20: 1-18 Sermon: “Roll Back the Stone!”</p>	<p>April 24th, 2022 <i>Second Sunday of Easter</i> Scripture: The Third Letter of John Guest: Reverend Michael Ciba, our Area Conference Minister of the SNECUCC will be preaching.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Bring in your ARKs for dedication!</i></p>										
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>APRIL BIRTHDAYS</u></p> <p><i>Happy Birthday Wishes Go to the Following:</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Nancy Poland</td> <td>April 2nd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rhonda Pruzinsky</td> <td>April 2nd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Olivia Robinson</td> <td>April 3rd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carmen McKee</td> <td>April 21st</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Copeland</td> <td>April 29th</td> </tr> </table> <p>If you would like to add your name to our birthday list, please contact our office.</p>	Nancy Poland	April 2 nd	Rhonda Pruzinsky	April 2 nd	Olivia Robinson	April 3 rd	Carmen McKee	April 21 st	Peter Copeland	April 29 th	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Protocols for In-Person Worship</u></p> <p>Masks have been made optional for the month of April. You can find our updated protocols on in-person worship by visiting our website at https://mccucc.tiny.us/covid. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.</p>
Nancy Poland	April 2 nd										
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Olivia Robinson	April 3 rd										
Carmen McKee	April 21 st										
Peter Copeland	April 29 th										

Earth Day

On Saturday April 23rd, the Town Hamden will celebrate Earth Day indoors and outdoors at the Hamden Middle School from 10am-3pm. We have been asked to participate in some capacity, so stay tuned for more information in the next few weeks regarding our involvement!

FINANCIAL REPORT: FEBRUARY 2022

Following is the financial report for February 2022. **REMINDER: Do not file your taxes until after you have received a notice that you donation has been processed.** If you have any questions, Ellen can be reached at treasurer@mccucc.com.

Income:	Pledges and Offerings:	\$15,367.00
	Other Income:	\$1,705.00
	Total Income:	\$17,072.00
Expenses:	Total Expenses:	\$ 8,609.00
Net Gain:		\$ 8,463.00

Annual Meeting

The 257th Annual Meeting of the Mount Carmel Congregational Church will be held on Sunday, May 1st, following our regularly scheduled worship service. If you are the head of a committee, we ask that you send a typed copy of your report to Aren, preferably by email, by **Tuesday, April 12th** to be included in the 2021 Annual Report. Please also include a list of your current members and officers for record-keeping purposes, as well as a list of any positions that need to be filled so that we can include them in the nominations for the year.

Sincerely,
Beverly Jurkiewicz
Church Clerk

CE/Faith Formation News - Kids

Our last unit, Unit 6, begins after the middle of the month on Easter Sunday. It ends in June on Pentecost Sunday. It is the season of Easter which begins with the festival of the resurrection and continues for 50 days ending with the festival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. During this time, we are reminded that the disciples did not believe what the women had told them. They remained confused and wondering when Jesus kept appearing to them in various places. It is a time of celebration. We bring the Alleluias back into our singing along with flowers and symbols of new life. Included this month are some Easter symbols and an updated version of the Jelly Bean Prayer. The colors of the season are white for Easter and red for Pentecost.

"Ark," Acts of Random Kindness

You may continue bringing in your ark banks at any time. Pick up a new one from the narthex or empty it Sunday morning and recycle it. On Sunday, April 24th, we will all bring our banks forward to the altar to present them.

-Debbie Wooley

Search Committee - Update

To date the Search Committee has received profiles from four candidates. Two candidates did agree to an initial interview. The committee has scheduled a second interview in person with a candidate that we have shared interest. Please feel free to contact any member of the committee with any questions.

Sincerely,
Your Search Committee

Potluck Lunch, Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 10th, there will be a Potluck Lunch to celebrate Palm Sunday. If you plan on attending, please let the office know what you would like to contribute!

Sincerely,
The Deacons

GENERAL ANNOUCEMENTS

Ushers. We need your help! We are currently looking for Ushers – no experience necessary! Please see Dave or Bev Jurkiewicz, or Debbie Wooley, for more information!

Joys and Concerns. If you wish to have a joy or concern announced during worship, please forward to them to Aren at office@mccucc.com or call the church office at (203) 248-7408.

Pastoral Visits. If you are planning on having a procedure done at one of the local hospitals, please let Reverend Olivia know so that she can plan a pastoral visit. Hospitals no longer call local churches with information about their patients. The church depends on others letting us know, and we thank you in advance for your assistance.

Bible Study. There will be no Bible Study during the Lenten Season. Instead, we will be hosting Taizé services every Wednesday night at 7pm. Please feel free to join us!

Committee Openings. These committees need volunteer members to meet their minimum requirements as specified by the bylaws: Deacons-3 more; Trustees-1 more; Music Committee-3 more. If you would like to try out a committee (attend a meeting with no obligations), please contact the committee chair(s): Leon Fiftal-Music; Bev Jurkiewicz-Deacons; Val Duffy and Diane Scott-Trustees.

Church and Hall Cleaning. We are looking for more volunteers to help with cleaning the church and parish hall. For more information, please contact Noelle Ioime by phone at (203) 605-7171 or by email at noelle_i@hotmail.com.

Coffee Hour. Coffee Hour volunteers are needed for the months of April and May. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact the office or use the signup sheet located in the Church Hall.

Altar Flowers. Altar flowers are needed for the months of April and May. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday, please contact Karen Amato or use the signup sheet located in the Church Hall.

Parish Hall Rentals. If you or anyone you know would be interested in renting out our parish hall to host a meeting, service, or a small private event, please feel free to visit our website for scheduling, rates, and conditions.

Happy Easter



Jelly Bean Prayer

RED is the robin; we see her in spring.
She feeds her babies, sheltered under her wing.
BLACK is the soil where seeds sprout and grow
Look closely and see so much life down below.
GREEN are the leaves on the flowers and trees.
They shelter the animals, insects, and bees.
WHITE is the color of the clouds way up high.
What interesting shapes do you see in the sky?
PINK, YELLOW, and **ORANGE** make a beautiful sunrise.
It reminds us of hope. It's a daily surprise.
All of these colors are the colors of spring.
They show us God's love and the new life God can bring.



WHERE:

MOUNT CARMEL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
3284 WHITNEY AVENUE, HAMDEN CT 06518

WHEN:

SATURDAY, MAY 14TH
9AM-2PM

WHAT:

TAG/CRAFT TABLES!
SNACK BAR!
NO BAKE (MONETARY DONATIONS ONLY) BAKE SALE!
& MORE!

BOOK NOW:

TABLES ARE \$20 EACH AND CAN BE BOOKED NOW BY CALLING
(203) 239-7135

MASKS FOR THE EVENT ARE OPTIONAL AT THIS TIME.



The Altar Guild

Orders for Memorial Easter Plants, 2022

Place Orders At:

Sunday Coffee Hour, April 3rd.

or call Karen Amato at (203) 272-0174 by Wednesday, April 6th.

Choice of: Tulips, Daffodils, or Hyacinths
Easter Lilies:

Cost: \$8.00 each
Cost: \$10.00 each

Plants will be displayed on Easter Sunday and can be taken after worship Service.

Please fill out the form below and return to the office or Karen Amato.

EASTER PLANTS ORDER FORM

Ordered By _____ Phone _____

In Memory of: _____

Or, (other dedication) _____

Tulips _____
Daffodils _____
Hyacinths _____
Easter Lilies _____

Flowers total cost \$ _____

Check one:
Will take after service _____
Will leave at church _____

Symbols Of The Easter Season

We hope teachers will work with the children to transform classroom areas into "Easter People places" with the colours and symbols of the Easter Season. Use yellow and white crepe paper streamers, flowers, pictures from the Resurrection stories, and Easter symbols to help children recognize through their senses that this is the most important time of the Christian year. Perhaps all through the fifty days of Easter the children's own symbols of new life and resurrection could be added.

Butterfly

The butterfly symbolizes resurrection, new life, the glorified (changed, resurrected) body.



Chick, Egg, Lamb, Flowers

Each of these symbolizes new life. An egg looks lifeless but miraculously out of it comes new life. An egg can also represent the stone that was rolled away from the tomb.



Lily

The lily is a sign of life coming from death as a bloom comes from a dry, seemingly lifeless bulb. The lily looks like a trumpet sounding the good news of the resurrection.



Sunrise

The women came to the tomb at sunrise on the first day of the week, to anoint Jesus' body, and found that the tomb was empty, and that Jesus had risen. Sunrise can also symbolize resurrection as a new dawn in our own lives.



Empty Tomb and Empty Cross

Symbols of the resurrection: A crucifix represents Good Friday and the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus,

while an empty cross represents forgiveness, resurrection and new life.

Cross of Glory

The cross with rays symbolizes the glory of the risen Christ.



Alpha and Omega

The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, symbolizing eternity and the joyous message that Christ has risen and reigns forever. Based on Revelation 1:8 "I am the first and the last . . . who is, and was, and is to come."



Chi Rho

Chi and Rho are the first 2 letters of the Greek word meaning "the Christ."



Dove

The coming of the Holy Spirit is described as a dove descending at Jesus' baptism and is also pictured that way as a Pentecost symbol.



Paschal Candle

This is usually a large white candle, often inscribed in red wax with a Greek cross, with the 4 numerals of the calendar year in its corners. An Alpha and an Omega are above and below, or to each side of this cross. The Paschal candle symbolizes the light of Christ shining eternally.

Note: Don't be too concerned if the symbols of Easter and Pentecost become intermingled. According to the gospel of John the empowerment of the community happened simultaneously with the resurrection of Jesus. (See section below called "Luke/Acts and the gospel of John.") The 2 festivals which bookmark the season simply provide wonderful opportunities for special focus in a season of nonstop celebration.

Traditionally it stands at a central place in the church and is lighted throughout the 50 days of the Easter season and then at funerals and baptisms throughout the year.



Wind

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at the Pentecost festival is described as a noise from the sky like a strong wind blowing.



Tongues of Fire

In Acts, the coming of the Holy Spirit is described as tongues of fire spreading out and touching each one in the room. Fire is a symbol used in Hebrew scriptures to represent God.



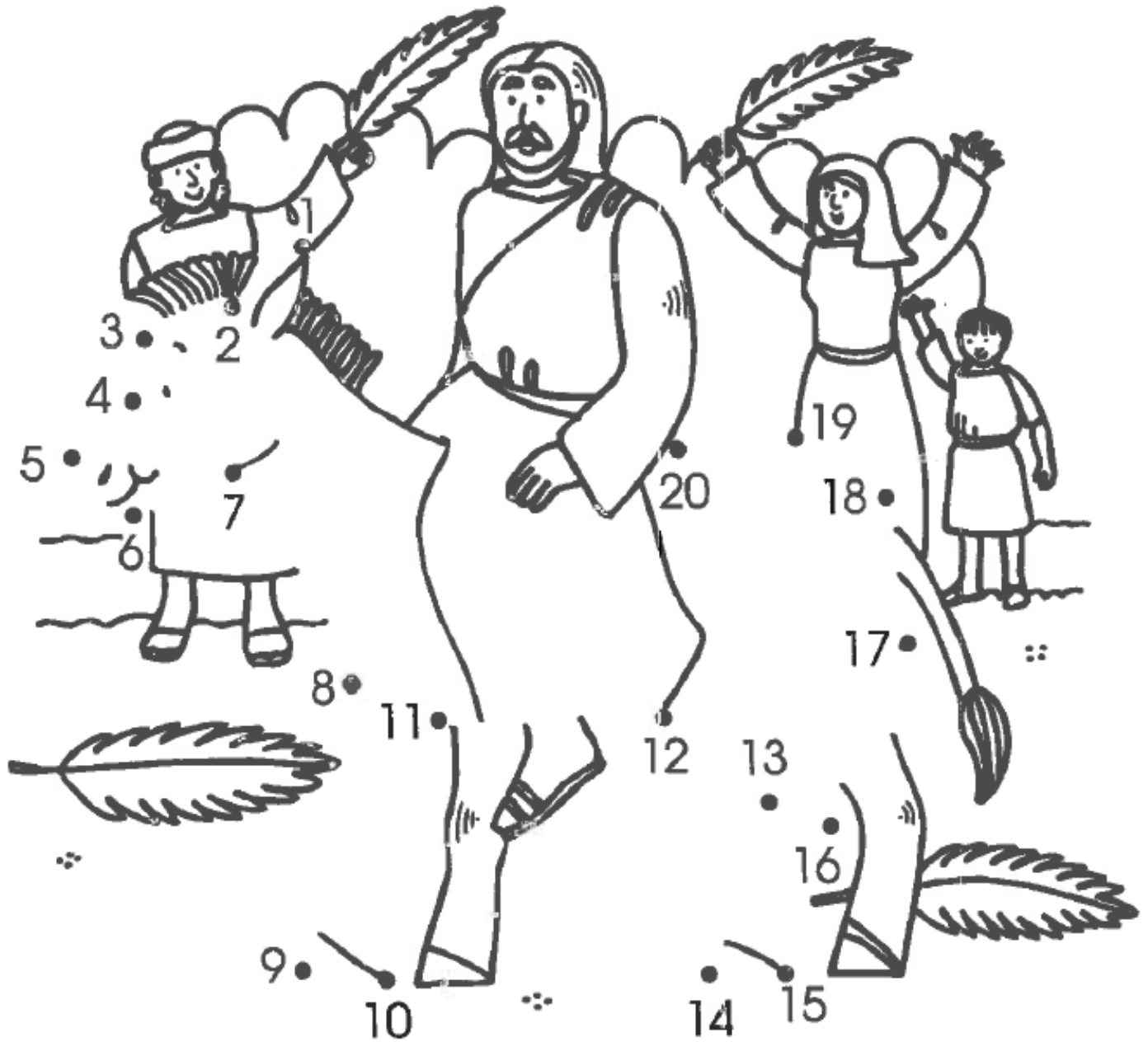
Ship

Symbol for the church, which was given birth at Pentecost. The large assembly part of a church building is sometimes called the "nave" which means ship. The church is seen as the means by which we journey together in faith on the sea of life.



The wind of the Spirit fills the sails of our ship. ■

A Crowd of People Welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem



"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Hosanna in the highest!"

Matthew 21:9



Jesus' Sad Walk to a Garden

After Jesus celebrated the Passover with His apostles, He shared the Last Supper with them. Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. It was a sad walk for Jesus. He is God, and He knew what would happen in the garden that night. To learn more about this story, write the missing letter from each set of letters on the line.

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. QRTUVWX _____ | 3. ABDEFGH _____ | 4. ABCEFGH _____ |
| EFGHJKL _____ | WXYZBCD _____ | YZABCDF _____ |
| LMOPQRS _____ | LMNOQRS _____ | PQRTUVW _____ |
| PQRTUVW _____ | PQRSUVW _____ | ABCDFGH _____ |
| 2. XYZACDE _____ | STVWXYZ _____ | NOPQRSTU _____ |
| BCDFGHI _____ | NOPQRSTU _____ | SUVWXYZ _____ |
| QRSUVWX _____ | BCDFGHI _____ | |
| NOPQRSTU _____ | | |
| XYZBCDE _____ | | |
| TUVWXZA _____ | | |

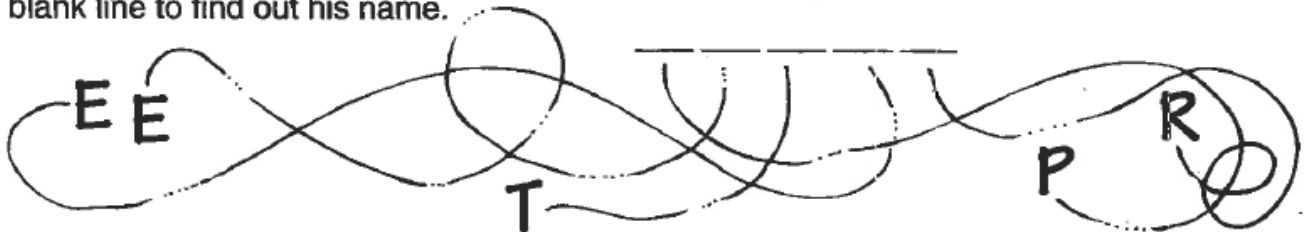


Use the words you wrote above in the sentences below.

Jesus was sad because He knew that . . .

1. He would soon bear our _____ in His body on the cross.
2. One of His apostles, Judas, would _____ Him to His enemies.
3. These enemies would come and _____ Him.
4. All of His other apostles would _____ Him.

Later that night, another apostle denied three times that he knew Jesus. Trace each letter to a blank line to find out his name.



Are you ashamed to tell your schoolmates and friends about Jesus? Isn't that the same as denying Him? Speak up for Jesus! Share His love!

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203-248-7408

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ce@mccucc.com
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