



The Congregationalist

Volume 18 Issue 7

March 2018

The Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Westfield, NJ

Senior Minister's Message Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea

Hi...

Just as we began the season of Lent with a highly unusual occurrence - Ash Wednesday falling on the same day as Valentine's Day - we end it with another.

This year, Easter Sunday is on April 1 - yup, April Fools Day. And while that might seem to be an opening for endless punch lines, there is, from the earliest days of our spiritual tradition, a strong association between Easter and foolishness.

The prominent early Christian leader Paul anchors his first letter to the Christian community he founded in the ancient Greek city of Corinth in the idea that our tradition is grounded in foolishness - "folly", "unwiseness".

"For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18)

"For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength." (1:25)

Several other times in that letter, Paul refers to the message of the cross being "foolishness" or "God's foolishness". He is not saying however, that it actually *is* foolish - folly or unwiseness. He is saying that it is only seen that way from the perspective of what we would call "conventional wisdom", or as it is commonly referred to in sermons, "the ways of the world". The "wisdom" of the ways of the world says that force equals strength, money equals power, and fame equals success.

By that standard then, the message of the cross - the wisdom of the Christian tradition - that true strength lies in compassion and vulnerability; that true power lies in caring for the weak and providing justice to the oppressed; that true success lies in service and giving - *is* foolish.

But it's not to God. And it must not be to us. For throughout history, the world's wisdom has served humanity and creation far less than God's foolishness has.

So let us be foolish this Easter, and always. Let us be a community of "wise fools" for God's sake. For each other's sake. And for the world's sake.

Easter Blessings,

Mark



WORSHIP NOTES

Sunday, March 4 - Third Sunday in Lent

Our Lenten Message series, "Crossroads" continues. In addition, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion, as well as the Sacrament of Baptism for Lena Pasko, daughter of Tom and Tana Pasko. The Paskos will also be joining FCC as full members on this day.

Saturday, March 10 - "First Saturday"

Due to the annual Spaghetti Supper and Talent Show being held on the first Saturday of March, our monthly "First Saturday" worship celebration will take place on **the second Saturday, March 10, at 5:30 pm** in the Sanctuary. "First Saturday", which features more time for individual and group reflection that our regular Sunday morning worship, is intended for those who find it difficult to be with us regularly on Sunday, or who desire a quieter, more contemplative worship experience on occasion.

Sunday, March 11

Our Lenten Message Series, "Crossroads" continues. Also, please remember that Daylight Savings Time begins this weekend, so please remember to set your clocks **one hour ahead** Saturday night, March 10

Sunday, March 18 - Festival Chorus Sunday

We welcome one of the traditional highlights of Lent at FCC - the annual Lenten Music Festival. This year, the Festival Chorus, under the direction of Dr. Barbara Thomson, will bless us with a performance of Haydn's, *Lord Nelson's Mass*. Don't miss this powerful and inspiring time of worship.

(continued on page 2)



Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 11

Make sure you turn your clocks **ahead** one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 10.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2. Associate Minister's Message/Lenten Theme
3. Adult Studies/Leadership Retreat/Easter Flowers/WaySharers
4. Confirmation/Youth Fellowship/Spaghetti Dinner
5. Board of Outreach/Readers and Riders
6. Opera/Music Service/Compass SchoolHouse
7. Church School
8. Super Bowl Sunday photos
9. Super Bowl Sunday photos
10. Marc Hardy Nomination Criteria

Associate Minister's Message
Rev. Joy Mounts,



Close or Far Away

Recently I got some lenses for my iPhone Camera. Yes, you read that correctly. I didn't even know this product was out there until browsing through Amazon one day. I love to take close up pictures of nature and was disappointed that my iPhone camera did not have as good a zoom as I wanted. Low and behold, there they were. Lots of them! So I picked a Marco lens and hit "buy now."

I have not been disappointed with it so far, although I have to get pretty close to the flowers and plants I am photographing. Still, I love how close I can get! And I love learning about the ways I can use the lens and the other lenses that came with it.

When I get so close it reminds me of all that I don't see on a regular basis – either under my nose or far away and slightly out of focus. How much do we really notice of the world around us? How much do we really take time to see? Hurrying from place to place, we often barely have time to see what is right in front of us, never mind anything else.

Which leads me to this – How often do we look around to see God with us? To see God in our moments and days? In the kindnesses shown to us or the unexpected moments of grace? Probably not too often, if at all. As a result, we are missing so much. Missing moments which could lift us up and give us encouragement and hope. Because close up or far away – God is with us.

Lent is the perfect time to reflect and see. That is part of what it is designed for. So why not take the opportunity given us? We don't have to do anything – the time is already set aside – all we have to do is make the time. I know, easier said than done. But why not take on the challenge? Your heart and soul will thank you.

Happy reflecting. Wishing you a sacred Lent.

Peace,

Joy

Easter Flowers

The Board of Deacons will be decorating the church with Easter flowers and lilies for Easter Sunday on April 1. Please consider honoring family members or wishing friends a Happy Easter by contributing \$30 to the Flower Fund. A sign-up sheet is in Patton. Please make checks payable to "First Congregational Church" with the words "Easter Flowers" on the memo line and place them in the Sunday morning offering plate, or drop them off at the Church Office.



(continued from page 1)



Sunday, March 25 - Palm Sunday

Holy Week begins with our annual commemoration of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem for the Passover festival. All children are invited to participate in processing through the Sanctuary with palm branches during the opening of our Worship time this day. We will also be blessed to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism on this day for William Nash Bollinger, son of members Lauren (Rabadeau) and Jeff Bollinger, and grandson of long-time members Jerry and Lynn Rabadeau.

Thursday, March 29 - Maundy Thursday 7:30pm
in the Sanctuary

Our Holy Week remembrances continue with a recounting of the Last Supper and the following hours of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion through a moving candlelight vigil of Scripture, hymns, anthems and Dramatic Reflection.

Friday, March 30 - Good Friday 7:30pm
in Patton Auditorium

Join us as we move through the time between Jesus' death and Resurrection in Scripture, hymn, prayer and Dramatic Reflection.

Sunday, April 1 - Easter 9 and 11am
in the Sanctuary

We renew our faith and trust in the power of God's life-giving and affirming ways over the ways of death with two Worship celebrations of Scripture, Message, and soul-stirring, spirit-filled choir and instrumental music.



LENTEN THEME and MESSAGE SERIES

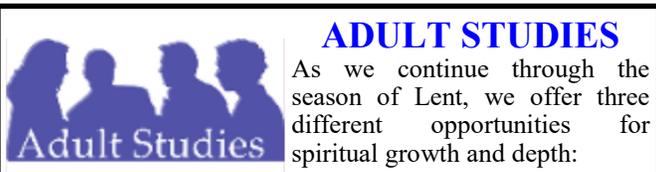
Join us each Sunday throughout Lent (excluding Music Festival Sunday on 3/18) as we explore this year's Lenten Theme, "Crossroads".

Each week we examine a story from the Gospels of individuals or groups whose life was changed by their encounter with Jesus, the choice or choices that encounter left them with going forward, and how those choices reflect the ones we are given in our time and place.

Festival Chorus!



On Sunday, March 18, our Lenten Festival Chorus will be performing Joseph Haydn's, *Lord Nelson Mass*. The performance of this famous work will be enhanced by vocal soloists, trumpets, timpani, and Dr. Barbara Thomson on the organ. Be sure to be there!



ADULT STUDIES

As we continue through the season of Lent, we offer three different opportunities for spiritual growth and depth:

“Four Accounts of Jesus’ Resurrection”

**Tuesdays, March 6, and 20
7:30-8:30pm in Chapel Lounge**

Jesus’ burial and resurrection are found in all four of the Gospels as well as the letters of Paul. All of them affirm His resurrection, but differ in various ways. What do Christians believe about the differences, and what do we mean when we affirm that Jesus rose from the dead? We will examine the diversity of the accounts and discuss what it means for our own Lenten journey and Easter celebrations.

“Last Days of Jesus”

**Mondays: March 12 and 19
7:30-9:00pm
Patton Auditorium**

Over the course of these two Monday evenings, we will view and discuss the 2017 PBS film “Last Days of Jesus”. Based on new interpretations of historical events in Rome from that time, the film explores how dramatic political events there could have played a crucial role in shaping Jesus’ destiny.

“Prayer and Meditation”

**Tuesday, March 13
7:30pm-8:30pm in the Sanctuary**

Members, friends and guests are welcome to a time of sharing in prayer and meditative practices. These sessions also include time for participants to offer their own prayer intentions.

**Women's' Fellowship
Readers and Riders**

**Tea, Cookies, Fun and Games:
White Elephant Bingo**

Bring a surprise prize; something free that you don’t need/want in your house; it will be a Bingo prize, and we can trade prizes.

Thursday March 1 at 1pm in Patton. Park on the street in front of the church. Bring quarters for the meters. (6 quarters for 2 hours)

Call Laura (908) 232-6516 if you’d like a ride.

Calling Interested Adults To Sign Up For The Spring 2018 FCC Adult Retreat!

Another exciting Adult Retreat is in the works, and we are encouraging anyone who is interested to sign up now and reserve your spot. We identified a new facility this year to accommodate a larger group, and we are excited to be back in Ocean Grove in what looks to be a beautiful retreat facility, located only a few blocks from the beach.

Dates	Friday, April 27 (evening) - Saturday, April 28 (late afternoon) 2018
Location	Grove Hall Christian Conference & Retreat Center , Ocean Grove, NJ https://www.oceangrove.org/grove-hall
Who	Open to FCC adults of all ages, friends, and family members
Cost	Cost is \$150 per person \$50 deposit is requested to reserve your spot by March 15 . Rooms can accommodate 1 or 2 people, depending on your need/interest.
Retreat Theme	<i>Christian Soup – What do we Gather from our Spiritual Garden?</i>

Feedback on previous years’ retreats has been very positive, and those who attend typically feel very enlightened, relaxed, and refreshed afterwards. This is a great opportunity to step away from your daily routine and spend some quality time with others from our FCC community. The schedule will be flexible, and you can participate in as much or little of the structured program as you wish. The activities are being designed around the theme of “Christian Soup – What do we Gather From our Spiritual Garden?”

Come join us for good music, activities, reflections, food, and worship. Sign up by contacting Ruth Indelicato at ruth566@live.com or Lyn Kelman at lynkelman@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you there!

The FCC Adult Retreat Planning Team



WaySharers

WaySharers will meet on Friday, March 2 for Yoga. On Friday, March 16, we will meet for Bingo.

For information about WaySharers, call Cynthia Mathis (908) 233-0180.

Readers and Riders: Top Picks in Books for 2017

In February, the Readers and Riders met to discuss their top recommendations in books for the past year. There was an overwhelming number of history, historical fiction and memoirs, as well as some spiritual writings, and a sprinkling of fiction and detective books.

History :

- 1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created* by Charles Mann
- For Liberty and Glory: Washington, Lafayette, and Their Revolutions* by James Gaines
- Code Girls: The Untold Story of the American Women Code Breakers of World War II* by Lisa Mundy
- Daring Young Men: The Heroism and Triumph of The Berlin Airlift June 1948-May 1949* by Richard Reeves

Historical Fiction:

- The Red Tent: A Novel* by Anita Diamant. Ground-breaking Biblical fiction.
- Oil and Marble: A Novel of Leonardo and Michelangelo* by Stephanie Storey
- Benjamin Franklin's Bastard* by Sally Cabot about William Franklin, the Royal Governor of NJ, whose "Proprietary House" the Readers and Riders recently visited.
- Empire* by Gore Vidal about the emergence of the US as a global power in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- Redemption* by Leon Uris about the Irish struggle for freedom as the world is on the verge of WWI.
- A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles about Count Rostov, who is put under house arrest for the remainder of his life in Bolshevik-controlled Russia.
- Rules of Civility: a Novel* by Amor Towles occurring in 1930s New York.
- Girl Waits with Gun* by Amy Stuart, based on the Kopp sisters who lived in New Jersey in the early 20th century.

Biography and Memoir:

- Leonardo Da Vinci* by Walter Isaacson
- Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism* by Temple Grandin, a gifted animal scientist who designed many of the livestock-handling facilities in the United States.
- Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J.D. Vance about the Appalachian values of his upbringing.
- A Thousand Hills to Heaven: Love, Hope and a Restaurant in Rwanda* by Josh Ruxin

(continued on right)

(continued from left)

Religious and Inspirational:

- The Gospel of Judas* by Rodolphe Kasser
- Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* by Kathleen Norris
- The Cloister Walk* by Kathleen Norris
- Dakota: a Spiritual Geography* by Kathleen Norris

Fiction and Detective:

- Mrs. Osmond* by John Banville; written as a sequel to Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady*
- A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith. Classic about young girl's coming-of-age.
- And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini
- The Alphabet Mysteries* by Sue Grafton. Adventures of a tough-talking, endearing female detective.

News from the Board of Christian Invitation

New brochure and pew card

At Christian Invitation, we (and Paul Federico) are very busy giving a complete makeover to the brochure and pew card. One could say we are the Chip and Joanna Gaines of brochures and pew card renovations. Demo is complete. Now we are in the process of redesigning, framing and choosing the finishing touches. Can't wait for the big reveal!

Signage

In addition, to help visitors and guests navigate this large building, directional signage has been placed in key locations.

The Next "Name Tag Sunday" is March 25, Palm Sunday



The Board of Christian Invitation is all about welcoming new and not so new folks to FCC. One reason BCI is hosting "Name Tag Sunday" is because as we grow, it becomes more difficult to learn everyone's name.

Here's how it works: after the Worship service on March 25, make your way into Patton for refreshments and conversation. There you will find a table with blank name tags and different colored markers. Create your masterpiece, peel it off and slap it on! It's easy and fun!

We also want to spread the word that day that FCC is a great place to be. One way we can do this is by taking a moment to "Check-In" to our FCC Facebook page. Ask the nearest millennial if you need help.

In this spirit of making connections, we invite you to wear a Name Tag and Check-In on Facebook on March 25.

Board of Christian Invitation



March Confirmation Schedule

- 2 7:30pm - Temple Emanu-El visit
- 4 11:30am - Class in Dr. Boyea’s Office
- 10 (Saturday) 6:00am - YSOP Day – Mentors invited – Mandatory for Confirmands
- 11 No Class
- 15 (Thursday) 7:00pm - Bridges Sandwich Making
- 16 (Friday) - 5:30pm Bridges Run – NYC
- 18 Confirmands to meet with mentors during this week
- 25 11:30am Class in Dr. Boyea’s office



&



It’s coming! An evening of good food, great entertainment and wonderful fellowship. The Annual FCC Spaghetti Dinner and Talent Show fundraiser for the Summer Mission Trip is on Saturday, March 3. The dinner is at 6pm and the Talent Show starts at 7:30pm. The entire event will be held in the newly renovated Patton Auditorium. The cost is \$14 for adults, \$10 for children ages 6 to 12, \$5 for children ages 4 to 5. Children age 3 and under are free. All proceeds go to help support the Mission Trip to work with UCC Missions at the Johns River Valley Camp in North Carolina this July.

In order to help keep the costs of the dinner down, we are seeking donations of #8 spaghetti, marinara spaghetti sauce and beverages. Please leave all donations at the Church Office between 9am and 3pm or with Rev. Mounts. Thanks!

If you haven’t already - Please RSVP to the Church Office at (908) 233-2494 or uccfcc@verizon.net. If you want to perform or to help with the dinner, please see Rev. Mounts or Joe Regan. Hope to see you at this joyful annual event.



Trivia Night - Friday May 4 - Save the Date!

On Friday, May 4 we will be having our second annual Trivia Night Mission Trip Fundraiser. If you attended last year, then you know what a fun evening of food, trivia and fellowship it was. Not to mention all of the wonderful silent auction items that were bid on and won! We are working on all of the details for this event and there will be more info in the April *Congregationalist*. But for now – please save the date. If you have an item or service to donate, please see Rev. Mounts or Nancy Elkin.

Youth Fellowship Update

The Youth Fellowship had a busy February. It started off with them helping at the Elizabeth Coalition Super Bowl Party on Sunday, February 4 (See pictures on page 8). It was a fun afternoon and the YF once again ran the Bingo game. Thanks to Michael Bonnell for being the head Bingo Caller all these years! On February 18 we had a wonderful Olympic-themed Games night led by YF Leaders Margot Motyczka and Elizabeth Rehwinkel. Special thanks to Heidi Hylan for her wonderful snack display, which captured the theme perfectly! YF ended the month with a group of twenty-five YF and adult chaperones participating in Nightwatch at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

In March, YF will be on the go – helping with the Spaghetti Supper and Talent Show, participating in a YSOP service day with the Confirmation Class and going on a Brides Run! As well, we will have a regular meeting on March 25 – our annual paper airplane making and race event led by YF Leaders Kelton Estabrook and William Rehwinkel. If you have any questions about YF please see Rev. Mounts.

March

- 3 (Saturday) 6pm Spaghetti Supper and Talent Show
- 4 No YF
- 10 (Saturday) YSOP Service Day - NYC
- 11 No YF
- 15 (Thursday) 7:00pm Bridges Sandwich Making
- 16 (Friday) 5:30pm Bridges Run – NYC
- 18 5pm Junior High YF off-site dinner
- 25 5pm YF Meeting in Patton

Youth Fellowship fun and games



Trip to the Frick!



“Jacob and His Sons”

On Saturday, April 21, we are planning a trip to the Frick Art Museum in NYC to see the exhibit “Jacob and His Sons”.

From the Frick website -

In collaboration with the Meadows Museum, Dallas, Texas, and The Auckland Project, County Durham, England, The Frick Collection has organized an exhibition of Jacob and His Twelve Sons, an ambitious series of thirteen paintings that depict over life-size figures from the Old Testament. On loan from Auckland Castle, the works by the Spanish Golden Age master Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664) have never before traveled to the United States. The series was likely intended for export to the New World. In seventeenth-century Spain, it was commonly believed that indigenous peoples of the Americas were descended from the so-called “lost tribes of Israel.” The paintings, however, did not come to light until the 1720s in England when they appeared at auction and were purchased by a Jewish merchant. In 1756 they were acquired by Richard Trevor, Bishop of Durham, a supporter of Jewish rights. Trevor hung them in the dining room at Auckland Castle, where they have remained for over 250 years. A two-year restoration of Auckland Castle presents this extraordinary study and exhibition opportunity.

This trip will coincide with the Confirmation Class’ trip to NYC to see the three Fifth Ave churches we tour each year. Details and cost are being put together. If you are interested in going, please let Rev. Mounts know by Friday, March 16. Please let her know if you have any questions about the trip.

THE OPERA IS BACK!!



This year's annual outing to the Metropolitan Opera will be on Monday, April 30, with attendance at one of my all-time favorite operas, Puccini's *Tosca*. The all-star cast is headed by the fabulous Anna Netrebko, one of the most famous sopranos of our time. Combine her voice and star quality with Puccini's gorgeous melodies, and you have a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

We will meet at a restaurant in New York for dinner at 5:30pm, then walk over to Lincoln Center for the 7:30pm performance. The running time of the opera, including intermissions, is just under 3 hours, so we will be out by 10:30pm.

As always, I suggest you buy your own tickets on the Met's website, Metopera.org, so you can pick tickets that suit your budget. I have checked and see that it is selling out quickly, so if you want to go, make a commitment now and buy the tickets ASAP before they're all gone.

Let me know if you are planning to attend – Bctbct@aol.com. I can't wait to see this one!

Barbara Thomson



COMPASS CORNER

Compass is in the midst of registering students for the 2018-19 school year and there are plenty of spots still available!

We held our biggest fundraiser of the year in February, which had a more casual theme than our previous three years. The Compass Jeans and Jersey Night, held at the Summit Elks Lodge on February 8, was well attended by Compass parents and staff alike with food, drinks, games, music, dancing, and mingling! We are grateful to have raised adequate funds to enable us to absorb most of the cost for replacing the fence around the perimeter of the playground and purchase safety mats for our indoor play area.

Planning has begun for the annual Compass STEM Fair, held on Friday, March 23. FCC FAMILIES ARE WELCOME! (Please contact the Compass main office at (908) 232-2084 and let the office staff know you would like to attend!) The only requirements are to come to this event with hungry bellies and thirsty minds, and then socialize over pizza and engage in age appropriate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) stations at the event. Oobleck, Engineering, and Our Amazing Bodies are a few examples of what is in store at this year's fair. There is even a dedicated area for children under 1. It's never too early to spark that curiosity in the littlest learners!

Mark your calendars for the annual Compass Carnival on Saturday, May 19 at 10am!

Sue DeWeever
Director



**March
Communion Offering**

This month our Communion Offering will benefit the Bridges Outreach, Inc.

Founded in 1988, Bridges reaches out to the homeless in New York City, Newark, Irvington, and Summit, New Jersey every week. Over 2,000 volunteers each year help deliver 100,000 meals, seasonal clothing, and necessities without question and with genuine respect. It is Bridges' goal that people who are homeless know that they are cared for and valued as individuals, while those who serve gain a better understanding of the realities of homelessness.

FCC began its participation with Bridges in the fall of 1995 by going on Friday night “Runs”. The FCC Youth Fellowship continues to participate in Friday or Saturday “Runs” several times a year to serve the homeless in Newark or NYC. Additionally, on a monthly basis, FCC prepares and provides bagged lunches and collects clothing, toiletries, and other essentials for Bridges to distribute.

Your financial support is essential to sustain the monthly efforts of our FCC volunteers and Youth Fellowship to provide these lunches and items for distribution to those in need.

For more information you may visit the Bridges Outreach at www.bridgesoutreach.org.

Church School News

Bible Study for Church School Teachers

The next Bible Study class for the Church School teachers will be offered on Thursday, March 22, at 7pm in the Chapel Lounge. We will look at the scripture lessons for April. Please come prepared with questions about the weeks you are teaching.

The FCC Art Gallery – New Exhibit!

The Church School’s artwork will once again grace our FCC Art Gallery during Lent. These beautiful murals, showcasing the *Symbols of Easter*, were created last year. They are on display along with photographs of the Church School students working on their Lenten Artwork. Pictures of this year’s Church School classes will also be on display.

Heifer International

Our Church School’s Lenten mission project, Heifer International, will begin on March 4, with a fun and educational presentation by Karen Fountain during Church School on her experiences volunteering at the Heifer Project in Honduras. Thank you, Karen, for sharing your passion and experience with Heifer with our children.

The two Heifer International programs that the children will participate in are “Read To Feed” and “Fill-the-Ark”. Heifer International is a non-profit organization that helps the hungry around the world. For 70 years, Heifer International has provided millions of struggling families with the tools needed to become self-reliant for food and income. Through gifts of livestock and training, a family can obtain food products and other income-producing benefits to feed, clothe and educate their children.

Each gift multiplies because every family that receives a Heifer animal promises to "pass on the gift" by giving one or more of their animal's offspring to another family in need.

Please consider giving as much as you can since each dollar raised for Heifer International will once again be matched dollar for dollar by Wally and Linda Parker.

Heifer International Read To Feed Program

This program helps to pass on an important message to children: that it is possible to end two of the world's most awful tragedies - hunger and poverty - while making the world a better place for all.

Read To Feed encourages children to connect books and learning with taking action to create a more just world. Participants obtain sponsorship from parents, friends and relatives based on the number of books (or units of time) they read. The goal is to promote reading and help Heifer International assist millions of people around the world feed their families and reach self-reliance through the gifts of livestock and training. Ultimately, we hope that their programs, which offer global educational opportunities, will foster a love for reading, a passion to help others and a desire to help create a better world. On March 4, children 3 years old through Middle High will receive Read To Feed material. The Read To Feed pledges should be returned to your child's Church School teacher or to Alida on Palm Sunday, March 25.

(continued on right)

(continued from left)

Fill-the-Ark Program

On March 4, The Fill-the-Ark Program, a four week “voyage” into real life solutions to world hunger, will be launched. Children, 3-years-old through Grade 5, will receive daily calendars and ark banks. As your family fills the arks with coins, you will learn how your gifts can share God’s love and make a real difference in the world. If your child did not receive an ark bank, please see Alida Woods. The ark banks should be returned to your child's Church School teacher or to Alida on Palm Sunday, March 25.

Heifer International Cake Auction



A Cake Auction is planned for Sunday, March 25 during Coffee Hour to support our Church School’s Heifer Project for Heifer International. It is being sponsored by the Middle and Senior High Students, as well as the Board of Christian Education. The theme this year is “Animals of the Bible”. If that doesn’t work for you, please use your imagination for any other cake. Cake donations from Church School children or any members of the congregation are needed and greatly appreciated.

On March 25, please drop off your cakes in Patton Auditorium at least 10 minutes before the church service begins (please label your cake with its ingredients). Then, let’s all come join the auction during Coffee Hour.

Auction tickets may be purchased for \$5 a sheet. Please help us make this a huge success. Any questions, please call Ellen Hollis at (908) 400-4385.

A Time To Share

The children really enjoy a snack during Church School. It is a time of prayer and sharing - not just eating! However, we need to stock up on our juice and snack supply, so we are asking for a donation of a half-gallon bottle of apple juice and a box of gold fish or graham crackers. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

March 18 - Lenten Festival Chorus Performance

The Middle High class is invited to attend this special performance by the Festival Chorus. Church School will be provided for children three-years-old to Grade 5. Crib Room will be provided for infants and two-year-olds.





Mission Trip Update
 Our first big fundraiser is kicking off the month of March! The Spaghetti Dinner and Talent Show will be on Saturday, March 3 in Patton Auditorium. See the details for the event on page 5. We have also begun work on our May fundraiser - Trivia Night - and the 16 Prospect one which will be held in late June or early July.

Last year we did a Tag the Bag fundraiser run by Denise Schifando in which folks donated toward the total Mission Trip costs by putting money inside a pink backpack that Denise carried on the trip. All of the donors' names were displayed on the outside of the backpack. This year we decided to do individual Tag the Bag fundraisers with the monies collected going toward individual trip costs. So if you see a Mission Tripper with a backpack you will know what is going on!

We are also busy working on all the many Mission Trip details for our work with the Johns River Valley Camp in NC. Further updates will be in next month's Congregationalist.

Keep Someone Warm this Winter: Collecting Coats and Duffel Bags!



The cold weather is here and there are many families in Union County who need coats to stay warm this winter. As you go through your closets, please remember the families at the Elizabeth Coalition. Gently used coats and jackets of all sizes are needed (baby sized through adult).

The Coalition also needs Large Duffel Bags and Large Sports Bags for the homeless in their winter shelter, Operation Warm Heart. This shelter serves the chronic homeless, who are usually living on the streets or in abandoned buildings. Each client is given a bag with personal items when they begin the program. The Coalition needs large sized bags that can hold a blanket, toiletries, towels and a change of clothes. Bags with a zipper closure and shoulder strap are preferred, sports or duffel bags are ideal. All donations can be dropped off at the church - look for the big blue bins outside of Patton Auditorium.

Members of the Board of Deacons, Board of Outreach, Confirmation Class and Youth Fellowship hosted a Super Bowl Party at the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless on February 5.





First Congregational Church
125 Elmer Street
Westfield, NJ 07090

Address service requested



The Congregationalist

is published monthly by

First Congregational Church
125 Elmer Street
Westfield, NJ 07090



Handicap Accessible



(908) 233-2494

FAX (908) 233-1416

Email: uccfcc@verizon.net

Website: www.fccofwestfield.org

Leslie Ann Kopf, Editor

Email: uccfcc.leslie@gmail.com

Worship & Church School
Sundays, 10am

Staff

Rev. Dr. Mark Boyea, Sr. Minister
uccfcc.mark@verizon.net

Rev. Joy Mounts, Assoc. Minister
uccfcc.joy@verizon.net

Dr. Barbara Thomson
Director of Music and Organist

Alida Woods,
Church School Superintendent

Jim Palme, Church Administrator
uccfcc.jim@verizon.net

Tom Lawler, Church Custodian/Sexton



Next Deadline: **March 20**

Marc Wesley Hardy Human Rights Award

The Board of Outreach Ministries is currently seeking nominations for the *Marc Wesley Hardy Human Rights Award* for 2018. Candidates must be young people between the ages of 16-22, living in Westfield or the greater Union County area, who have distinguished themselves in the area of human rights. It will be offered to a person who has shown:

Openness and friendliness to persons of all races, creeds and nationalities; involvement and leadership in organizations and activities committed to improving human relations; unusual personal dignity; the willingness to risk for what he or she believes is right; unqualified acceptance of others; respect for diversity; personal integrity; caring and willingness to listen; and the ability to lead by example.

The award consists of both a Certificate as well as a monetary award. Nominations must be received no later than **March 23**.

The award is named in honor of Marc Hardy, a member of our church, who was killed in a car accident in 1990 shortly before his graduation from Westfield High School. He was a National Merit Scholar, a gifted singer and actor, and was very much interested in human rights.

Please click on the following First Congregational website link for information about eligibility, requirements and award criteria: www.fccofwestfield.org/outreach

Nominations must be received no later than **March 23, 2018**. Mail/email nominations to:

First Congregational Church of Westfield
125 Elmer Street
Westfield, NJ 07090
uccfcc@verizon.net

Please direct any questions to the Church Office at (908) 233-2494, or any Board of Outreach Ministries member.

It would be wonderful to consider one or more nominations for a member of FCC!