



The Witness

Spring 2014 Edition



WINTHROP CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

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Pastor's Reflections

Dear friends,

This season of Lent starts in March with our Ash Wednesday Service on March 5 at 7:00pm. Lent, which means springtime, is traditionally a six week period of repentance and introspection in preparation for the death and resurrection of Jesus. As buds appear (I hope!) and start to open and the days lengthen, this spiritual season calls us to greater openness to the word of God and God's presence in our lives. Henri Nouwen, a contemporary author, described Lent as "a season during which winter and spring struggle with each other for dominance. . . Lent is a time of returning to God. It is a time of refocusing, or re-entering the place of truth, of reclaiming our true identity." (Eternal Seasons)



It is our tradition here at Winthrop Congregational Church to observe Lent with worship and study; both help deepen our spiritual life and reclaim our identity as children of God.

I have always been fascinated with the artist Rembrandt who lived in Holland in the 1600's. Rembrandt was born in Leiden in 1606 and was raised as a Protestant. His family was not orthodox Calvinist but rather Remonstrant who followed most of Calvin's teachings except predestination. (We can talk more about it at the study.) Rembrandt never joined either the Calvinist or Remonstrant Church, but was a person of faith who believed a person's spiritual life was deepened by direct engagement with the Biblical texts. Many of his paintings picture those texts.

Rembrandt pictured Jesus as a teacher and healer of human suffering and believed in God's grace and forgiveness. Rembrandt expressed this faith in his artwork. Our Lenten Study this year will focus on Rembrandt and some of his biblical paintings. We will study his self portrait as St. Paul. In Rembrandt's painting Paul stares out at us, the viewers, with a quizzical expression; Rembrandt paints Paul as a great but flawed man, saved by God's grace. His painting reveals the power of Christians for others who struggle with their own human limitations and questions.



Rembrandt helps us see the inner self of Paul as Paul, his inner self, and our inner selves. His paintings help us open ourselves to God's grace. Learn more about this painting and others later during the study.

I invite you to come to our Lenten studies and learn about Paul and Rembrandt and their faith struggles that connect to our own. The St. Paul and Rembrandt Study will be after church on March 16, 23, and 30. We will have a light lunch of soup before the study. God bless you all! Alice

SPRING EVENTS

- † Sunday, March 2nd - Congregational Meeting in Sanctuary after Worship – Review status of Sanctuary Project - hear recommendations and take action
- † Wednesday, March 5th – Ash Wednesday – 7 pm – Lent Begins
- † Fish Chowder – Friday, March 14, 2014
- † Sunday, March 16th - After Worship and Fellowship - Lenten Study: “St Paul and Rembrandt” and Light Lunch
- † Tuesday, March 18th – Church Council Meeting – 6:30 pm
- † Thursday, March 20th – Visitation Training – 3:30 pm Chapel
- † Sunday, March 23rd - After Worship and Fellowship - Lenten Study: “St Paul and Rembrandt” and Light Lunch
- † Sunday, March 30th – One Great Hour of Sharing
- † Sunday, March 30th - After Worship and Fellowship - Lenten Study: “St Paul and Rembrandt” and Light Lunch
- † Fish Chowder – Friday, April 11, 2014
- † Thursday, April 10th – Visitation Training – 3:30 pm Chapel
- † Sunday, April 13th – Palm Sunday
- † Tuesday, April 15th – Church Council Meeting – 6:30 pm
- † Thursday, April 17th – Maundy Thursday Service at the Winthrop United Methodist Church 7 pm
- † Friday, April 18th – Good Friday at the Winthrop United Methodist Church 7 pm
- † Sunday, April 20th – Easter Sunday
- † Sunday, April 27th – Commissioning KV Association Honduras Mission Team
- † April 28th – May 7th – Kennebec Valley Association Honduras Mission Trip (back in Maine on May 8th)
- † Fish Chowder – Friday, May 9, 2014
- † Saturday, May 10 – Women’s Guild providing lunch for Maine School of Ministry Meeting
- † Thursday, May 15th – Visitation Training – 3:30 pm Chapel
- † Sunday, June 8th – Rev. Alice’s last Sunday in the pulpit



Visitation Training



Are you interested in visiting folks who are home bound, in the hospital or a retirement or nursing home, new people in our church community, young and old people who are part of our church family and others? Do you wonder what to say, how to respond to the person or persons you’re visiting, how long you should stay?

Rev. Alice will hold three visitor training sessions for anyone who might want to be a visitor. When our half time new pastor arrives, lay people will need to do some of visitation. This training is to equip and support you in this important ministry of the church. All the sessions will be held in the chapel on Thursdays at 3:00pm on March 20, April 10, and May 15. If you can’t come to all the sessions please talk to Rev. Alice and she’ll fill you in with what you missed. If you have questions please ask Rev. Alice.

From the Board of Church and Community Concerns

A special offering for One Great Hour of Sharing will be collected on March 30th. Rev. Alice will be assisting the Board in planning a service to raise our Congregation's awareness about how important these gifts are to individuals and communities who receive them. Our donations will be used in the US and abroad to help many people in need due to famine, poverty or natural disaster.

Blanket Sunday collections will be held on Mother's Day, May 11th.

Your continued support of these programs is sincerely appreciated and we want to thank each and every one of you. Your generosity inspires us to continue our mission not just to the local area, but worldwide.

CE Matters

We would like to thank **Sharon Coulton** for her service and dedication to the Christian Education program over the past several years. We will miss you Sharon! **Martha Payne** joined our Board in January and we'd like to welcome her. That still leaves one opening on the Board. Please let one of us know if you are interested in serving in this capacity or if you'd be willing to help with the children's lessons.

TJ Mauro and **Linda Rollins** continue to serve in the nursery on alternating Sundays and they have enjoyed having newcomer **Megan Patterson** in the nursery. It has been a joy to have Megan's 6 year old sister **Madeline** (Maddy) in Sunday school, and we hope to have **Gabby and Alice Lazure** join them as well.

Board of Christian Education

Susan Mauro

Cyndi Hall

Margaret Imber

Martha Payne



Fish Chowder

The Fish Chowder Committee met after the February Fish Chowder and decided to hold Fish Chowder luncheons in **April and May**, in addition to the months of January, February, March, September, October, and November. So we will have eight chowder luncheons each year.



Alan Ellingwood also agreed to make the decision about storm cancellations and whether the chowder would be postponed to the following day (Saturday) or the following Friday. Shirley Foster, Jean Doughty, & Dayle Ashby offered to help with the necessary phone calls.

Fish Chowder Committee (comprised of all who work on the Fish Chowders)

From the Treasurer

The Church's books for the year 2013 ended up with total income of **\$79,275** and total expenses of **\$82,850** for a deficit of **\$3,575**.

Wi-Fi available at WCC- contact the church office for details



Search Committee

The Search Committee met with Rev Susie Craig, Associate Conference Minister in February when she brought us our first two Ministerial Profiles. We review each Ministerial Profile to determine if the candidate appears to be a likely match for our Church. If we are interested in a candidate, we'll send our Church Profile to the candidate and if they are still interested in us after reading our Profile, we will conduct a phone interview and/or an in person interview with the candidate. We hope to interview several pastoral candidates over the next few months.

Highlights of the Annual Meeting

Members in attendance at the annual Meeting on January 26th approved the annual reports of the Offices, Boards and Committees of the Church. A balanced budget for 2015 was presented and passed.

Hannaford Gift Cards Sales

The Hannaford Gift Card sales continue to go well. Thank you to all who continue to support this project to support our church budget. The card sales project began in May of 2011 and earned \$1,325 that year. Earnings for 2012 reached \$2,350 and in 2013, \$2,700 for a total of \$6,375.

Cards are available every Sunday. For cards, contact or see Carol Ellingwood.



Women's Guild

Officers for 2014 are Carol Whittier as President, Lee Gilman as Vice-President, Marie Hatfield as Treasurer, and Cyndi Hall as Secretary. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for February 27th at Cyndi Hall's, March 27th at Shirley Foster's, April 24th at Ann Mitchell's home. We will have our annual "Ladies Night Out" in May - details not yet available.

The Women's Guild coordinates Altar Flowers for worship. We collect loose change in the vase at the back of the sanctuary to help offset this expense. We also encourage families to bring altar flowers in memory or in honor of loved ones. We only ask that you let the "Flower Gal" for the month know what week you'll bring flowers.

In March, the Guild will begin collecting items for the "Gifts from the Heart" program. Our school kits and health kits will be sent to the Church World Service warehouse. CWS will send kits to all parts of the world, wherever tragedy and natural disasters strike.

The Guild funds the church's child sponsorship through the Children International program. We have posted correspondence from our sponsored child on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Be sure to check out the letters from 15 year old Arnold José Manzanares Avila from San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Arnold last wrote he is "so excited for the connection we have...I say goodbye to you with a strong hug at the distance."

Sanctuary, Narthex, and Foyer Visioning Committee

The Visioning Committee will present final cost estimates for painting the Sanctuary at a Congregational Meeting on March 2nd. If approved work would likely be completed either in the late spring/early summer or in October.

Honduras Mission Trip

The Kennebec Valley Association mission trip to Roatán, Honduras will be from April 28 to May 7, 2014. We will work with our Honduran partners at Vida Nueva to help them add to the church building that the Winthrop Congregational UCC Church Mission Team helped move to a new location in June of 2012.

We will also have a medical mission with clinics and bringing medical supplies to an area hospital. We will also help at two schools in the Coxen Hole area. At the back of the sanctuary there is a suitcase and a list of supplies needed if you wish to donate.

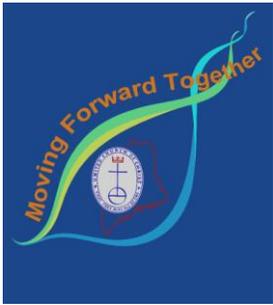
We had a successful Caribbean Cabaret on February 22nd at the Waterville Congregational Church that brought in close to \$1,000 for the Mission trip. We had a great turnout from our Church. Thank you to all who attended!



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

March Birthdays		March Anniversaries	
3	Peter deWolfe	3/5/88	Peter & Lisa deWolfe
10	Kris Hatfield		
15	Mike Burns		
28	Carol Ellingwood		
29	Ruth Emerson		
April Birthdays		April Anniversaries	
1	Eric Conrad	4/28/79	Alice & David Anderman
7	Matthew Dennis		
8	Corinna Coulton		
9	Julia LaCrone		
13	Peter Hatfield		
15	Nick Burns		
	Carol Whittier		
	Jeff Brown		
17	Sharon Coulton		
19	Mike Mayette		
May Birthdays		May Anniversaries	
3	Alice Darlington	5/17/80	Jeff & Wendy Dennis
4	Jean Doughty		
5	Connie Mayette		
7	Barbara Pray		
9	Becky Gillespie		
	Shirley Rollins		
10	Linda Rollins		
20	Emma Conrad		
21	Kelly Dooling		
22	Jeff Dennis		
31	William Maxim		

New Dimensions **All Conference Conversations**



On behalf of the Conference Coordinating Council the New Dimensions Conference Transition Team has been looking into ways to engage the broadest spectrum of the people across the Conference in a conversation regarding the most faithful and effective Conference Staffing and Governance Leadership models as we endeavor to move forward together.

We have engaged the services of the Rev. Dr. Richard L. Hamm, former General Minister and President of the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ and current partner of The Columbia Partnership to help us through this discernment process.

A first step in the process will be these "All-Conference Conversations. The Regional Meetings planned will be identical in agenda and scope, but spread out across the state to provide access to the greatest number of people

[Click Here for More Information](#) (or
<http://origin.library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1109342362154-460/NDT+Flier.pdf>)

**Nearest one to us: March 15, 2014 – Augusta – South Parish Church 10 am – 3 pm
Lunch Provided.**

[Click Here to Register Online](#) (or
http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8v3hu7462beebce&llr=kr_gk4ejab)

(From Church World Service Newsletter – WCC donated some school kits to Pilgrim Lodge)

Assembling with a purpose

This past summer, Pilgrim Lodge UCC Camp, West Gardiner, Maine, assembled CWS Kits as part of its activities program. Tuesday nights were designated as mission-focused, and the campers participated in educational activities using CWS materials and then assembled various types of CWS Kits. Churches and families from across the state of Maine donated materials for the kits. In total, they assembled 238 CWS School Kits, 38 Baby Kits, 65 Hygiene Kits and 18 CWS Emergency Cleanup Buckets. In November, volunteers transported the kits to the storage facility in New Windsor, Md. Thank you, Pilgrim Lodge, for your ministry!



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Visit us at

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