

LISTEN to the ChurchMouse

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*“Original Landlord Still offering Sanctuary”***

VOLUME 51 MARCH, 2020

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Pastor's Column

Lent is based on the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness. Matthew tells us that Jesus fasted for those forty days. So, we think about what we might give up for Lent. Maybe it's a habit we'd like to step away from; maybe it's a fast from the overwhelming words of the media or social media; maybe it's a fast from frivolous entertainment, shows, or games; maybe it's a fast from purchasing. Hundreds of years ago, Christians gave up eating meat on Fridays, and gave that money to the poor. So, part of our giving something up is to make space for something else. Maybe we spend more time writing, or visiting, or reading – something to feed our own souls, something to connect us with those who are feeling disconnected.

Whatever we make of this season, Jesus reminds us that when we change our routines, we can feel a little lost, like we are in the wilderness. The wilderness is the place the Israelite slaves experienced God in the parting of the Red Sea. The wilderness is the place where Moses brought them commandments from the mountain. So, we are reminded that while the wilderness may feel a little lonely, we are never alone in the wilderness. The wilderness is the place that God meets us, God saves us, God tells us what God dreams for us. Even in our darkest hour, angels are nearby to wait on us, just as they did for Jesus.

The invitation of Lent is to let God touch the things in our lives that are in need of healing. And while we do this, we remember that underneath the dryness of the desert there is water waiting to rise to the surface. There is living water in each of us, waiting to refresh and renew us. This is what we remembered on Ash Wednesday – the dust of our flesh, and

the living water God has for each of us. Even though we die, God promises us new life.

We ask ourselves: what are the burdens I carry that I cannot forgive? Lent is the opportunity to sit with God, to let God speak to us about those burdens, to let God carry those burdens with us, as we journey from the desert to the cross.

Our Lenten journey is a reminder that God forgives, and God's love never leaves us. "Return to me," says the Lord, "and I will return to you" (Zechariah 1:3).

Lenten Blessings,
+Holly

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This Month in Mission, March 2020

This month's mission collection will support the CROP Walk which will be held in Albany on Sunday, May 3, to raise funds to end hunger in the U.S. and around the world.

Twenty five percent of the funds raised will go to hunger-fighting programs in our local community. The remainder will go to grassroots development efforts around the world to help provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs.

In January we collected \$215.71 which was sent to the New Scotland Community Food Pantry.

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Change in Winter Policy

We generally do not cancel activities at church, unless the roads or our parking lot are impassable, or if authorities are recommending that folks stay off the roads. We know that conditions can vary from house to house, road to road, and neighborhood to neighborhood, so we encourage everyone to be cautious, and *never* venture out if you feel unsafe.

At the last Session meeting, it was decided to change the procedure for notification. If we need to cancel church on a Sunday morning, we will post it in two ways. The cancellation will be on the outgoing phone message, so you can call the church office at 518-439-6454, and listen to the message there. It will also be posted on the church's website <https://www.newscotlandpc.com/>

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To Shake or Not to Shake?

During cold and flu season, we sometimes get concerned about shaking hands when passing the peace during worship. If this is a worry, please feel free to pat people on the shoulder, give them a fist bump, touch elbows, or just keep your hands in your pockets and offer a smile and a nod. We want everyone to feel welcome, and also recognize the concern to stay healthy. There are bottles of hand sanitizer throughout the church building, so use them freely!

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Lenten Devotionals

Lent is a special season of 40 days to prepare for Easter. We have Lenten devotionals called "For the Beauty of the

Earth," free for the taking. They are on the table in the narthex. The devotional has a scripture reading and reflection for each day of Lent. Please take one home with you!

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Lenten Book Study

Once again we will have a special study for the Sundays of Lent. Our theme is reflecting on creation care. The Rev. Larry Deyss will be leading us discussing the book, Climate Church, Climate World. Copies of the book are available now for a freewill offering on the table in the church lobby. The schedule of what we are reading each week is inserted in the book. We will meet for five Sundays, March 1 – March 29, after coffee hour. All are welcome!

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Many Thanks

We are blessed with so many people who give of their time and talents to keep our property functioning, and make our community a lovely and welcoming place! Many thanks to John Griffin, Laurie Colehamer, Homer Warner, Bob Fuglein, Matthew Fuglein, Kevin Lamica, and John & Jane Norris, who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in taking care of so many issues with the manse in the last few months, including cleaning up from a burst pipe, and cleaning out items left by previous tenants. Special thanks to John for dealing with all the insurance claims and contractors. Thanks to Dan Coons, for putting up new smoke detectors in the church and manse. Thanks to Ed Wiest, who upgraded the church WiFi. Thanks to Brenda Dwyer, who installs such lovely displays in the History Cabinet, and does the flowers for worship. Thanks to Sandy

Warner for the Lenten wreaths by the church doors, for preparing and sending our prayer letters, and for organizing the cards for our card ministry. Thanks to Carol Wickham who takes our donated pop tops for the Shriners Hospital. Thanks to Bonnie O'Shea and Duncan Morrison for erecting the Lenten cross in the sanctuary. Thanks to Bonnie Griffin who organizes and sets up the Easter flower display. Thanks to the Rev. Larry Deys, who is always willing to step in when Pastor Holly is under the weather. I hope we haven't left anyone out; just know that to everyone who helps out at church: We appreciate all of you!!

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Card Ministry

Free cards are available in the boxes on the narthex table – some are for specific occasions and some are blank. You are welcome to take a card any time to let someone know you are thinking of them. If you have cards to donate, please see Sandy Warner.

Session Notes (Unofficial)

The Session met twice in February.

- We approved the Annual Statistical Report to be sent to the national office.
- We approved the baptism of Sam Youmans' great-granddaughter, Sophie Samantha Youmans for Sunday, April 5.
- We approved a Child Protection Policy, as is required by the denomination. All officers and those who work with children will be given a copy of the policy.
- We are thankful to John, who renegotiated our electricity rates to a lower cost; gas rates are up for review in March.

- We have a contract with Star Roofing to replace the roof on the manse this Spring; the cost is covered by insurance.
- The Rev. Larry Deys will be leading a book study in March and April.
- Christine Cameron was the delegate to the 1/26 meeting of Albany Presbytery. She reported that four churches in the presbytery have new leadership; the Rensselaer Church will be closing this Spring, and the Bay Road church is leaving the denomination. Our presbytery voted to support an overture to this year's General Assembly about policies for family leave.
- Holly, John, Kevin, and Mardell have been attending a Presbyterian Foundation program for small churches. The Foundation provides access to on-line giving, which we are exploring. It was suggested at the last meeting to be sure our street numbers are prominently displayed on the church building and manse to make it easier for people to find us if they only have an address. The Foundation has other programs we might consider. The last meeting is in March.
- We are participating in planning meetings for events related to "Screen-Free Week," in Voorheesville, May 4-10.
- We decided to participate in the Board of Pensions program "Healthy Pastors Healthy Congregations," which has an educational piece on the cost of having a full-time pastor, as well as a financial assessment and grant application piece for the pastor.
- Ed Wiest installed a new router to upgrade our WiFi at church. Passwords will be posted in the building.

Friday Fish Fry

New Salem Fire Department hosts "Fish Fry Fridays" on four Fridays this year, March 13 through April 3, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Dinner includes haddock or clams, macaroni and cheese or hot dog; potato, coleslaw; coffee, tea, or lemonade. Chowder and dessert also available. For take-out, call 518-765-2244. Fire house is at 694 New Salem Rd.

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Men's Communion Breakfast

Save the Date! The 70th annual Palm Sunday Men's Communion Breakfast will be held on Sunday, April 5. There will be a communion service at 7:00 a.m., followed by breakfast in the dining room. After the meal, Timothy Wiles will give a presentation on his years at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

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Upcoming Joint Worship for Holy Week

Monday, April 6, 12:15 p.m. Midday Joint Communion Service at New Scotland.

- Tuesday, April 7, 12:15 p.m. Midday Joint Communion Service at Delmar.
- Wednesday, April 8, 12:15 p.m. Midday Joint Communion Service at New Scotland.
- Maundy Thursday, April 9, 7:00 p.m. at Delmar.
- Good Friday, April 10, 7:00 p.m. at New Scotland.
- Holy Saturday, April 11, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. sanctuary open at Delmar.
- Easter morning, April 12, we will gather in our parking lot at 5:45 a.m. for procession. Meet at Thacher Park

Overlook at 6:00 a.m. for joint Easter Sunrise Service. Following the service, around 6:45 a.m., we will share Easter breakfast at New Scotland.

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Litany for the Lord's Day

2nd Sunday in Lent – March 8

Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Ps. 32

Rom. 5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11

3rd Sunday in Lent – March 15

Exod. 17:1-7; Ps. 95

Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

4th Sunday of Lent – March 22

1 Sam. 16:1-13; Ps. 23

Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

5th Sunday in Lent – March 29

Ezek. 37:1-14; Ps. 130

Rom. 8:6-1; John 11:1-45

Palm/Passion Sunday – April 5

{Holy Week begins}

Psalms: Matt. 21:1-11; Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29

Passion: Isa. 50:4-9a; Ps. 31:9-16

Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 26:14-27:66 or

Matt. 27:11-54

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**Jesus is a friend who
knows all your faults
and still loves you anyway.**

*But God commendeth his love toward us,
in that,
While we were yet sinners, Christ died for
us.*

Romans 5:8

March Birthdays

We wish a very Happy Birthday to these people celebrating in the month of March:

- 1st.....Anthony Scaccia
- 4th.....Carol Fuglein
Matthew Fuglein
- 5th.....Deann Dela Penta
Jackie Short-Dougan
- 6th.....Ruth Von Haugg
- 8th.....Patricia Whitbeck
- 9th.....Brianne Dwyer Roberts
- 10th...Timothy Thornton
- 11th...Patricia Lemieux
- 12th...Catherine Nicholson Russell
- 12th...Meredith Coons
- 14th...Sandra Warner
- 15th...Frances McCormick
- 17th...Robert Rudd
Daniel Joyce
- 18th...Leland Wright
Stephen Kohler
- 19th...Jordyn Claire Miller
- 20th...Kristine Norris
- 23rd...Emily Kohler
Erin Kohler

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March Anniversaries

We wish a very Happy Anniversary to these couples celebrating in the month of March:

March 5, 2006
Carol & Frank McGowan

March 25, 1961
Arlene & Jake Herzog

March 26
Patti & Tom DeLorenzo

March 26, 1984
Lynn & Van Kohler

Paddling through Lent – and Life

Lent is a time for restoring balance to our lives. The Eskimos practice balance as they venture into freezing Arctic waters in little boats. If you've ever paddled a kayak, you know how easy they are to tip. Thankfully, kayaks are just as easy to turn back upright.

This isn't a bad image for Lent – or for life as a whole. Whatever spiritual discipline we adopt, if we succumb to temptation, it's no biggie. One of the lessons is that, as long as we're traveling light, it takes only a quick twist of the paddle to right us. That paddle twist might take the form of a quick but heartfelt prayer, 'Jesus, set me straight again!' Or it might mean some extra time set aside for quiet meditation with God. Don't get worried if your spiritual discipline fails now and then. Just let Jesus help you get upright once more, and keep paddling!

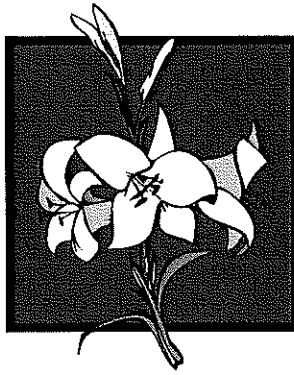
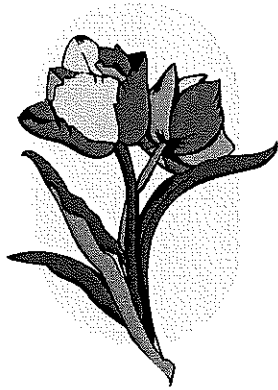
...adapted from Carol Wilton, in
Homiletics

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God's Wonders

People travel to wonder
at the height of the mountains,
At huge waves of the seas,
At the long course of the rivers,
At the vast compass of the ocean,
At the circular motion of the stars, and yet
they pass by themselves
Without wondering.

.....St. Augustine



EASTER PLANTS

If you would like the church to purchase a plant for you to place in the sanctuary for the Easter Sunday Worship Service, please fill out this form and return to **Bonnie Griffin** by Sunday, **March 15**.

YOUR NAME _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

NUMBER OF PLANTS _____

Please check the kind(s) of plant desired.

Lily Mum Tulip Azalea Hyacinth

Plants come in assorted colors this year.

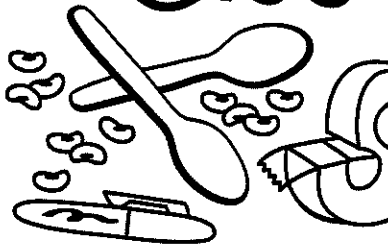
Please check one of the following.

_____ I will pick up plants(s) after service.

_____ I will not pick up plant(s). You may take it to the churches homebound.

The cost per plant is **\$10.50** delivered to the church. Please make your check payable to **Bonnie Griffin**, 288 New Salem South Rd., Voorheesville, NY 12186.

Joyful noise



Use your voice and this hand-crafted percussion instrument to make joyful noises to the Lord.

What you need:

- Dry beans (about one Tbsp)
- Plastic Easter egg
- 2 plastic spoons
- Masking tape
- Markers and stickers

What you do:

1. Place the beans inside the egg and snap it closed.
2. Set the egg in a spoon and cover it with the second spoon so the spoons are holding the egg.
3. Tape the spoons to the egg. Also wrap tape around the spoons from top to bottom to make a shaker handle.
4. Decorate your shaker and use it as you sing praises to God.
5. Experiment with sounds by filling other eggs with coins, rice, and so on.



MAKE MUSIC TO THE LORD

People of the Bible used many different instruments to worship God through music.

Directions: Using the clues, unscramble the names of instruments found in Psalm 150. Then write the circled letters in order in the spaces below to complete verse 6.



A type of horn _____ MURTEPT

Played by King David _____ PRHA

Plucked to make sound _____ _____ IGSNSTR

Similar to a tambourine _____ _____ MRBELIT

A type of harp _____ _____ ELRY

Blown through to make sound _____ _____ EPPI

A percussion instrument _____ _____ YBLACMS

Le_ everyt_ing tha_ has _r_ath
_raise the _ORD. Psalm 150:6, NIV