



The newsletter of The First Congregational Church
Canton Center, Connecticut

The CHURCHMOUSE

April 2007

FROM THE PASTOR

A Hymn of Promise

“In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise; butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.”

And the last two lines of the hymn by Natalie Sleeth that we have taken to singing on Easter Sunday read...

“In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.”

In his book, *This Is Christianity*, Maxie Dunnam tells us that Natalie Sleeth wrote the hymn for her husband, the late Ronald Sleeth, who was professor of preaching at the Iliff School of Theology. From date of diagnosis of a malignancy to death were just twenty-one days, and Natalie wrote that hymn for him before he died.

Natalie later reflected upon the hymn’s conception: “I was pondering the ideas of life and death, spring and winter, Good Friday and Easter, and the whole reawakening of the world that happens every spring...I worked on the words very carefully, choosing just the right ‘pairings’ to get across the idea of something inherent in something else though unseen.” (from *Chalice Hymnal/Worship Leader’s Companion*)



That “something inherent in something else though unseen” sounds to me to be God’s resurrection power that raised Jesus from death to new life and is our great hope. Mr. Dunnam goes on to write: “The driving power behind the Christian faith is the resurrection of Jesus.... Yet the gospel is more than the proclamation of an event; it is an invitation to an encounter—an encounter with Christ....The early followers of Christ preached the Resurrection as a fact, and they lived it as an experience. They had received a Kingdom that could not be shaken, a life that could not be snuffed out by death.”

May God’s resurrection power be also at work in us making each day a new beginning. And so may we experience it in our gathering together in His name on Easter Sunday when we sing our hymns of promise and new life.

A blessed Easter to all! *Larry W. Smith*

CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS

- April 1 Palm Sunday, 9:00 A.M. **Missionary & Stewardship** Committee.
 Palm Sunday, 9:55 A.M. Church School children assemble in the Parish Hall for the **Palm Processional**.
Palm Sunday, 10:00 A.M. Worship.
 Palm Sunday, 11:00 A.M. **Palm Sunday Potluck**
 Palm Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **Cherub Choir.**
- April 2 Monday, **Honor Court** will be hosted by our church in Hartford.
 Monday, Junior (6:30) and Senior (7:30) **Choirs.**
 Monday, 7:00 P.M. **Christian Education Committee.**
- April 3 Tuesday, 7:30 P.M. **Diaconate.**
- April 4 Wednesday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir.**
- April 5 **Maundy Thursday**, 7:30 P.M. Worship.
- April 6 Good Friday.
- April 8 Easter Sunday, 6:00 A.M. **Community Sunrise Service** in the upper parking lot of Kohl's Dept. Store, the Shoppes at Farmington Valley.
EASTER SUNDAY Worship, 9:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. Church School classes will *not* meet. Nursery care is available.
- April 9 Monday, 10:00 A.M. **Prayer Shawl Ministry.**
 Monday, 6:30 P.M. **Board of Trustees.**
 Monday, Junior (6:30) and Senior (7:30) **Choirs.**
 Monday, 7:10 P.M. **Music Committee.**
- April 10 Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. **Adult Study.**
- April 11 Wednesday, Noon, **Prime Timers** meet at the church.
 Wednesday, 7:00 – 8:15 P.M. **Confirmation Class.**
 Wednesday, 7:30 P.M. **Church Council.**
- April 12 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir.**
- April 15 Sunday, 10:00 A.M. Worship and Church School (begin in class).
 Sunday, 11:15 A.M. **New Member Forum.**
- April 16 Monday, 7:30 P.M. **Senior Choir**; Junior Choir will *not* meet.
- April 17 Tuesday, 10:00 A.M. Adult Study.
 Tuesday, 2:00 P.M. F.V. Assoc. Committee on the Ministry.
- April 19 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir.**
- April 22 Sunday, 10:00 A.M. Worship and Church School (*begin in church*).
 Sunday, 6:15 P.M. meet to car pool to **Godspell** in Torrington.
- April 23 Monday, Junior (6:30) and Senior (7:30) **Choirs.**
- April 25 Wednesday, 7:00 – 8:00 P.M. **Confirmation Class.**
- April 26 Thursday, 7:00 P.M. **Bell Choir.**
- April 29 Sunday, 10:00 A.M. Worship and Church School (begin in class).
 Sunday, 11:30 A.M. **JYF Biking or Hiking.**
 Sunday, 5:30 P.M. **SYF meeting** in The Island.
- April 30 Monday, Junior (6:30) and Senior (7:30) **Choirs.**

April 2007						
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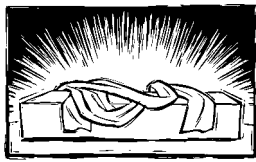
Worship Schedule for Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY



PALM SUNDAY worship is at **10:00 A.M. Sunday, April 1.** Children will assemble in the Parish Hall for the Palm Processional at 9:55 A.M.

MAUNDY THURSDAY worship service is at **7:30 P.M. , April 5.** At this beautiful and moving service we remember that last night Jesus shared with his disciples and partake of the sacrament of our Lord's Supper. Following communion we observe the service of Tenebrae, the gradual extinguishing of the light, recalling the events of Jesus' betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion, and looking ahead in hope to the dawning of Easter Day.



EASTER

EASTER SUNDAY worship at Canton Center Church will consist of 2 services, one **at 9:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M., April 8.** Celebrate the glorious day of resurrection as we lift our voices in songs of victory and rejoicing. There will also be a **Community Sunrise Service** that morning at **6:00 A.M.** at the upper parking lot of Kohl's Dept. Store, the Shoppes at Farmington Valley.