



The newsletter of The First Congregational Church  
Canton Center, Connecticut

## *The* **CHURCHMOUSE**

**March 2009**

### **FROM THE INTERIM MINISTER**

Dear Friends,

I write this even before I leave for my pilgrimage to Israel. But I know it will be/was a great adventure. Even though I have been there before, each time I see what Jesus saw and walk where Jesus walked, I experience the scriptures anew and renewed. My colleague Jay Terbush and I will be leading 28 people for their first experience of the land of the Bible (my 14 year old grandson included). We will renew our baptismal vows in the Jordan River; eat St. Peter's fish after sailing on the Sea of Galilee; sing Christmas carols in the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem; celebrate communion near the Garden Tomb; and visit many other amazing places. I will return renewed and inspired.

On Ash Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, we will hold our Annual meeting. We will spend about 15 minutes before the meeting in worship, recognizing the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a time that was set aside by the early church to be a time of reflection—of spending 40 days in the wilderness with Jesus—to get ready for Holy Week and Christ's death and resurrection.

During March, we will be observing Lent during the Sunday worship time each week. We will also have a Lenten Bible Study group on Tuesday mornings where we will explore the life and ministry of Jesus through the video Bible study series, Faith Lessons. And, an Intergenerational Program on Monday evening, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, to eat pizza and magical treats, as well as discuss faith issues through the medium of magic and mystery in literature. Using the works of J.K. Rowling, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and Madeleine L'Engle, we will look at the ways these authors have used their characters to explore the values of truth, love, friendship, integrity, and faith while helping good overcome evil.

In some Christian traditions it is their practice to make a sacrifice, or 'give up' something for Lent. I would invite you to consider 'taking on' something for Lent. I have found that few people gain much spiritually from giving up things like sugar or smoking if it isn't tied to some devotional practice as well. But people do benefit greatly from 'taking on' something like:

- reading the scriptures or other devotional materials- we have daily reading guides, These Days and other reading materials on the table outside the kitchen- so do local libraries
- praying daily for someone
- working at a soup kitchen, homeless shelter
- shoveling the sidewalk for a neighbor who can't
- visiting people in a nursing home
- writing letters to relatives far away
- take the money you saved from giving up candy or something and give it to a food bank or other charity.



If you notice, all of my suggestions are verbs, action words. Our faith increases when we put our faith into action.

I hope you will find ways to exercise your spiritual muscles during this season of Lent. That way your faith will be strong and healthy and your relationship with God will grow.

Godspeed on your Lenten journeys, *Sue*

## CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS

March 1	Sunday	8:30 AM	<b>Teachers' Meeting</b> with communion.
	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (begin in Parish Hall)
	Sunday	11:00 AM	<b>SYF Easter Candy Orders</b> taken at coffee hour.
	Sunday	11:15 AM	<b>Cherub Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>Junior Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:45 AM	<b>Confirmation Class</b>
March 2	Monday	5:30 PM	<b>Lenten Workshop</b> & Pizza Supper, Parish Hall
	Monday		<b>Honor Court</b> in Hartford is hosted by our church
	Monday	7:00 PM	<b>Senior Choir</b>
March 3	Tuesday	10:30 AM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
	Tuesday	7:00 PM	<b>Diaconate</b>
March 5	Thursday	7:00 PM	<b>Bell Choir</b>
March 8	Sunday		<b>Daylight Savings begins</b>
	Sunday	8:30 AM	<b>Christian Education Committee</b>
	Sunday	9:00 AM	<b>Missions Committee</b>
	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School ( <i>begin in church</i> )
	Sunday	11:15 AM	<b>Cherub Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>Junior Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>JYF Game Day</b>
	Sunday	11:45 AM	<b>Confirmation Class</b>
March 9	Monday	10:00 AM	<b>Prayer Shawl Ministry</b>
	Monday	6:30 PM	<b>Board of Trustees</b>
	Monday	6:40 PM	<b>Music Committee</b>
	Monday	7:00 PM	<b>Senior Choir</b>
March 10	Tuesday	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
March 11	Wednesday	12:00 noon	<b>Prime Timers</b> in Parish Hall
	Wednesday	7:00 PM	<b>Church Council</b>
March 12	Thursday	7:00 PM	<b>Bell Choir</b>
March 13	Friday-Sunday		<b>Confirmation Class Retreat</b>
March 15	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (begin in class)
	Sunday	11:15 AM	<b>Cherub Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>Junior Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>New Member Forum</b> in Corner Room
	Sunday		<b>Deadline</b> for April issue of <i>The Churchmouse</i>
March 16	Monday	7:00 PM	<b>Senior Choir</b>
March 17	Tuesday	10:30 AM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
	Tuesday	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
March 19	Thursday	7:00 PM	<b>Bell Choir</b>
March 20-22	Friday-Sunday		<b>All-Church Retreat</b>
March 22	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School ( <i>begin in church</i> )
			OGHS offering received.
	Sunday	11:15 AM	<b>Cherub Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>Junior Choir</b>
March 23	Monday	7:00 PM	<b>Senior Choir</b>
March 24	Tuesday	10:30 AM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
	Tuesday	7:00 PM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>
March 26	Thursday	7:00 PM	<b>Bell Choir</b>
March 29	Sunday	10:00 AM	Worship and Church School (begin in class)
	Sunday	11:15 AM	<b>Cherub Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:30 AM	<b>Junior Choir</b>
	Sunday	11:45 AM	<b>Confirmation Class</b>
March 30	Monday	7:00 PM	<b>Senior Choir</b>
March 31	Tuesday	10:30 AM	<b>Lenten Bible Study</b>

March 2009						
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**PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP, 10:00 AM, April 5**

**EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP, 9:00 AM and 10:30 AM, APRIL 12**