



Pastor's Letter

March 2019 First Congregational Church of Canterbury

“Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors” is the mission statement of our Church. How many of us actually knew that was the mission statement? It is a simple enough phrase to say. Is it equally as simple a thing to do, I wonder? This past week I have been reminded of this statement.

OPEN HEARTS Hearts are most closely associated with love. Children learn to draw hearts on cards at a very young age. In our Churches we seem to lose the innocence of a crayon drawn heart meaning love. Love becomes complex and layered. It becomes our actions towards others. It becomes the love that Jesus showed in his actions.

OPEN MINDS In news the story of our brothers and sisters in the United Methodist Church gathered at their annual conference. As they gathered, we here in the UCC as well as other denominations prayed. We prayed for God to show them guidance and the world to show them love no matter what the outcome of their historic vote. A vote that had the power to move them a step closer to inclusion. No matter the decision, it was not our vote to make. Prayer was our only “vote” in the matter. The prayer was simple...let them come with OPEN MINDS!

OPEN DOORS All around us we hear of churches closing their doors. Just last week a UCC Church in the city of Stamford closed its doors. Many Churches around us are eating away at their endowments in order to keep their doors open. This Church too has seen its doors close in many ways over the years. We hold one service on Sunday morning when looking back we held two services on Sunday morning. The Pastors unlock the doors to the office only a few days each week, when not so long ago, it was open twice as much with a full time Pastor. I remind us of our doors, not to long for what was but to celebrate what is. Our doors are still open on Sunday morning. The Pastors office door is open three days a week. Technology opens a door to communication with the Pastor seven days a week.

Our doors are not closed. Our minds are not closed. Our hearts are not closed. As long as our hearts, minds and doors stay open to new possibilities our Church home remains open.

Pastor Cheryl



A six-week Bible study has begun. We are working from the book, HE CHOSE THE NAILS written by Max Lucado. Each week we explore stories of what God did to win your heart. Sessions are held each week on Thursday night 5:30-6:30. The readings will be available the Sunday of each week.



Sunday
School

3/3 Transfiguration

3/10 Forgiving

3/17 Parable: Laborers in Vineyard

3/24 Wedding Banquet

3/31 Parable of The Bridesmaids



"The youth group is currently fundraising for [Rise Against Hunger](#). Rise Against Hunger's meal packaging program is a volunteer-based initiative that coordinates the assembly-line packaging of highly nutritious dehydrated meals comprised of rice, soy, vegetables, and 23 essential vitamins and minerals. On **Sunday September 8** the youth group will be leading a meal packaging event at the Pomfret

Community School in Pomfret Center. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Nichole (mdanis74@sbcglobal.net) or Sarah (segtex@yahoo.com)."
Currently the Youth have raised \$205 toward their goal. They are seeking out other youth groups and Churches to join in this wonderful mission project. Online donations can be made starting in late March.

NEXT FUNDRAISER is a Spring Breakfast

MUSIC APPRECIATION SUNDAY

March 3rd



Our Music Director, Pianist, Organist, Choir Director, Flutist,
Guitarist, Drummer, Bell ringer, Microphone fixer,
All things music maker: **Nicole Loser**

Choir members:

Sharon Swan, Becky Paquette, Donna Green, Pamela Kerouack-Warner, Heather DeLuca, Ashlyn Childs, Dan Ginnetti, Bob Guttay, Michael Arndt, Mike Boulay & David Paquette





Lenten
Soup Suppers

Soup & Bread 7:00-7:30 Program

Wednesday nights throughout Lent

Ash Wednesday 3/6 @ Newent CC

Soup supper @ 6:30 and Worship service @ 7 pm.

March 13th @ FCC Canterbury

"A New Way Labyrinth" -part 1

March 20th @ Newent CC

"A New Way Labyrinth" -part 2

March 27th @ FCC Canterbury

"A New Way Labyrinth" -part 3

April 3rd @ Newent CC

"Painting the Psalms"

April 10th @ FCC Canterbury

"Thailand- mission trip stories"

April 17th @ Newent CC

"topic undecided"

Maundy Thursday Worship service @ FCC Canterbury



5:30 Soup Supper 6:00 Worship Service

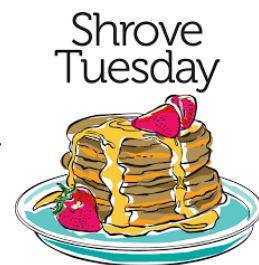
@ Newent Congregational Church



On Sunday March 3rd. Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer will be joining us in worship. He is the executive director of Silver Lake Conference Center & Camp.

The Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer joined Silver Lake in 2016, coming from several years of ministry as Associate Pastor of the First Congregational Church UCC of Essex, Vermont. He has prior camp experience in Vermont and Idaho, and has served on the Board of the UCC's Outdoor Ministry Association. A graduate of DePauw University and Eden Theological Seminary, he and his wife, Abby, have a young son, Keadyn.

Pancake Supper March 5th @ 6:30 pm Come enjoy pancakes, kings cake, beads and music. MARDI GRAS Canterbury style.



COMMUNITY MEAL: Our turn to serve the Community Meal is on Monday March 25th, 2019. We will be serving entree, salad, bread and dessert.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HELPER: Please consider signing up to be a helper. Lesson plans can be provided ahead of time.

Canterbury Cares Distribution: Monday March 18th 10 am -12 pm Volunteers are needed from 9-10 am to help set up the food pantry in Hart Hall.

Events and activities in March

Soup Suppers 3/13, 3/20, 3/27, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17

Ash Wednesday Service 6 pm 3/6 @ Newent Congregational Church

Music Appreciation 3/3



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Deacons March 7th 7 pm

Trustees March 14th 7 pm

Council March 21st 7 pm

HART HALL- Jr. Girl Scout Troop will be meeting on Tuesday evening February 5th & 26th



Time to
Spring Ahead

March 10, 2019

Sunday Morning Worship Service 10 am

Pastor Cheryl's email ccaronna07@comcast.net Pastor's cell phone 860-916-4157

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**OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS
OPEN DOORS**