

THE NEW COVENANT



News of the Family from The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

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Holy Week Services

March 28, Palm Sunday, Sunday Worship 10:30

“The World Has Gone After Him”

John 12:1-2, 12-19

Rev. Dr. DeHoff

April 1, Maundy Thursday, Evening Service 7:00

John 13:1-17

“The Messiah’s Final Prayer”

John 17

Rev. Dr. DeHoff

April 4, Easter Sunday, Sunday Worship 10:30

John 20:1-18

“Weeping At the Empty Tomb”

Rev. Dr. DeHoff

NAC Ecumenical Lenten Prayer Services

Each week during Lent on Wednesdays at noon, the NAC clergy will gather for a series of ecumenical prayer services hosted at various Northbridge churches. These services will be live-streamed with limited in-person attendance.

March 3 at the VCC with Rev. Kim Manion (BVUMC) preaching. (5 Church Street Whitinsville MA)

March 10 at Blackstone Valley UMC with Rev. Joel Vande Werken (Fairlawn) preaching (Blackstone Valley United Methodist, 61 Linwood Ave Whitinsville MA 01588)

March 17 at Pleasant Street CRC with Rev. Dr. Susan DeHoff (UPC) preaching (Pleasant Street Christian Reformed, 25 Cross Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588)

March 24 at United Presbyterian Church with Rev. Matthew Burns (PSCRC) preaching (United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville, 51 Cottage Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588)

The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

51 Cottage St. (church) - 7 Spring St. (office), Whitinsville, MA 01588

Phone: 508.234.8220

Website: www.whitinpres.org

www.facebook.com/whitinpres

Office E-mail: whitinpres@gmail.com

Rev. Dr. Susan DeHoff E-mail: sldehoff@verizon.net

Office Hours: 12:30PM - 4:30 PM Monday & Wednesday

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM Tuesday & Friday

*The church office is CLOSED on Thursdays.

In case of emergencies, please call 774-246-6313

March
2021

~ March ~

MINISTRIES	March 7	March 14	March 21	March 28	April 4
Worship Leader	K. Bilodeau	R. Thomas	M. Thomas	L. Walsh	S. Santoro
Song Leader	K. Bilodeau	M. Sabourin	K. Bilodeau	M. Sabourin	K. Bilodeau
Ushers	K. Miedema	J. Baker	L.. Joyce	L. Walsh	J. Baker
Sound Board	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	G. Giemza	M. Thomas	G. Giemza
Power Point	N. Redden	J. Tobin	R. Thomas	N. Redden	L. Joyce

March Birthday Corner

		Jim Remillard	3/19
		Susan Phoebe	3/20
Susan Mateer	3/1	Ashley Giemza	3/21
Stephen Connelly	3/2	Nina Ribbe	3/21
Ava Whitney	3/3	Jim D. Baker	3/26
Zack Morin	3/8	Katrina Ireland-Bilodeau	3/29
Harriet Platt	3/10	Christopher Lee	3/30
Judy Garabedian	3/16	Laurie Sabourin	3/31
Gay McCrea	3/18		

Let your church family celebrate your special days with you. If the church office doesn't have you/ your family's birthday/anniversary information Please call the office at 508-234-8220 or email the office at office@whitinpres.net so we can include your birthday/anniversary dates in the monthly newsletter.

****Sunday Morning Worship Schedule****

- 8:45 AM - Jr. Church—Zoom

- 9:30 AM - Adult Sunday School—Zoom

9:40 AM - Children's S.S. & UPCoW Chorus

12:00 PM first and third Sundays: Youth Bible Study

Morning Worship Service 10:30AM - 11:30AM

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" Matthew 18:20



The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church defines Lent as “The fast of forty days before Easter.” It says the following about the history of Lent.

“In the first three centuries, the period of fasting before Easter did not normally exceed two or three days. The first mention of a period of forty days, probably of Lent, dates from [C.E.] 325, though until a much later date the period was differently reckoned in different Churches.

During the early centuries the observance of the fast was rigid: only one meal a day was allowed and flesh-meat and fish were forbidden. In the West the fast was gradually relaxed. In the Roman Catholic Church by the Apostolic Constitution Paemitemini (1966) the obligation to fast was restricted to the first day of Lent and Good Friday.

In the Western Church the penitential character of Lent is reflected in various features of the liturgy, and there is a proper Mass for each day. The period is also observed as a time of penance by abstention from festivities, by almsgiving, and by devoting more time than usual to religious exercises.”

As I read this history, I remembered that growing up in a Presbyterian church in the South, I was never exposed to Lent. I knew my Catholic friends gave up something for Lent, but I had no idea what that was all about. I don't recall when I first heard it mentioned in a Presbyterian church, but probably not until the late 1980s at the earliest. Then the focus was always on the activity of giving up something that was enjoyed. How far that is from the explanation given above!

Lent is supposed to be about self-reflection (to be distinguished from self-absorption), with honesty about one's own sins. That has always seemed hard for a lot of Presbyterians. We seem not to want to admit that we do anything wrong. I recall once hearing an elder complain about the Prayer of Confession in Sunday morning worship, saying he never sinned and would prefer that the prayer be omitted from the service. But the Bible tells us in several places that all people, including ourselves, commit sin.

So just exactly what is the sin we commit? Aside for our mistakes in judgment, our words and deeds that offend others, and the charitable deeds we fail to do, there is the matter of what the Fathers and Mothers (or Abbas and Ammas) of the early church called the passions. And they did not mean illicit love affairs.

In her book *To Love As God Loves*, Roberta Bondi says that in the early church “humility was one of the chief monastic attitudes of heart which enabled a person to love” (p. 57). Humility was a virtue very much desired, but not always easy to exude. Human passions got in the way. According to Dr. Bondi, the passions were the “conglomerate of obsessive emotions, attitudes, [and] desires” (ibid). The passions, an inherent part of what it is to be human, “blind us in our dealings with ourselves, each other, and the world, and so pervert perfectly good and useful impulses, which takes away our freedom to love” (ibid).

To observe Lent with a truly Christian spirit, we need to disregard all the “noble” activities of Lent and focus on deep soul searching, asking the Holy Spirit to shine light into the dark our corners where obsessive emotions, attitudes, and desires stay hidden from us. They are not hidden from God. They are also not hidden from people around us who see through our actions and words to perceive motives and emotions that we do not allow ourselves to see.

Supremacy, entitlement, racism, and injustice are topics of conversation in many parts of our environment this year. God knows we need to give up all those beliefs and behaviors. Giving up chocolate, sugar, smoking, or even one meal a day for 40 days is not going to accomplish that; it will not contribute to God's work of changing us into what God created us to be, which is certainly not people who agree with or approve of supremacy, entitlement, racism, and injustice.

Rather than getting caught up in the “What Are You Giving Up for Lent” game this year, might I suggest adding something? Add into each day, two or three days a week, or even just one day a week, the discipline of spending 30 minutes to an hour with God in prayer and contemplation about how the passions play out in your life. Read Roberta Bondi's book, Henri Nouwen's *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, or if you get really serious about Lent, read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*. Do not be afraid to be honest with God and yourself; God already knows everything in all your dark corners. That's why Jesus came to earth as the Messiah.

Rev. Dr. DeHoff



PFC Zachary Morin of Charlie Company 58th Battalion, earned Top 10 award at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri during graduation on Thursday February 11th. He flies back to Presbyterian College in SC tonight.



Traditional Sunday Services at United Presbyterian Church of Whitins-



Mallorie Mercer passed her driving test on February 2

Dave Miedma, Cameraman



Willow Sabourin home from the hospital, free of COVID-19.

Deacon's Corner

Here we are in March already, and starting to look forward to the nicer weather that spring brings. After the crazy weather from Mother Nature and the seemingly never-ending Pandemic that has affected our normal life, a nice change for the earth is well in order. At this stage in the earth's cycle for the seasons, everybody is probably anxious to feel the warming and calming transition of spring that takes the chill out of the air and the time for planting gardens and fields.

Transitions like this can also be seen in our faith. With God as our gardener, He is constantly presenting challenges and events in our life, but also takes care of us when we face difficulties or changes that we may or may not always expect or see right away. The theologian C.S. Lewis gives several examples of this, but his most memorable and famous work of all is found in the everlasting tales in his Chronicles of Narnia series. This ageless tale shares many prime examples from the very beginning, when a simple girl opened a wardrobe door, stepped into it, and discovered a gateway that led into a winter wonderland of a whole new world.

This C.S. Lewis work leans towards an analogy in the Book of Romans (chapter 5) where the Apostle Paul shows us how faith can be a "doorway" that leads to our real standing before God that Paul calls grace. As leaders of the church (deacons, elders, pastors, etc.) we are called to face the duties that we perform. Our faith in God then creates a chain of experiences which go on to show God's grace transforming those who have trusted in Christ. This transformation of faith makes it possible for us to receive the peace of God through the sacrifice of His son. Therefore, Jesus is the "door" that has given each and every one of us a part of his family. With the support we receive from Christ, he holds us up as we go through a transitioning cycle which involves our challenges and/or suffering to perseverance, and from that we can transform our character. Our transformed character, in turn, gives us reason to hope, because it offers concrete evidence of Christ at work in us.

As leaders, we are a part of God's ministry as He literally validates this hope to us by pouring out His love through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We then not only know God, but we also experience His love! This chain of grace is then

Missions Corner

The March missions focus is on the Wycliffe Bible Translators USA. Wycliffe was founded on the USA in 1942 by William Cameron Townsend and named after John Wycliffe, who some scholars believe was responsible for the first complete translation of the Bible into common English. The Wycliffe Bible Translators are an interdenominational and nonprofit organization.

There are organizations in 60 countries around the world. Wycliffe Bible Translators have translated the Bible into more than 700 languages. They teach reading and writing, develop alphabets to save dead and dying languages as well as translate the Bible.

Our church has supported translators Linda and Larry Jones for many years. Please keep them and their mission needs in your prayers. If you are led to make a specific donation to the Wycliffe Bible Translators just make a note on your mission giving. A copy of our Outreach and Mission budget is on the bulletin board next to the Welcome center. Take a minute to check it out.

Suzanne Santoro

Chairperson, Outreach & Mission

Deacon's Easter Offering

Deacon's Easter Offering With Spring being just around the corner, the Deacons are getting excited to treat our shut-ins, college students, and military personnel. Last year, we treated these individuals to a special "Easter Basket", filled with a variety of items, such as Easter candy, note cards, stamps, pen and pencils, lip balm, and hand lotion, etc. A few special people (shut-ins and elderly folks) were even treated to a small Easter plant/flower with a few sweet treats and fun items. In order to continue this tradition, we are asking members to contribute and support this blessing of love to our special members of the church. We will have a special Deacon's Fund offering on Sunday, March 14 to help assist in the cost of these special treats. If you have any questions, please feel free to call on any one of the deacons. Thank you for your support!

Deacons: Tanya Morin (Chair), Deb Baker, Jean Finnegan, Brandy Giemza, Laura Joyce, Christopher Lee, Gay McCrea, Kim Mercer, Ronda Thomas

Mallorie Mercer has a prayer of thanks that she passed her driver’s test!

Please keep **Henry Baker’s wife, Gaytha**, and their family in your prayers for peace and comfort, as Henry died last Sunday.

Laurie and Mike Sabourin ask for healing prayers for her 7 year old great niece who has had covid and is experiencing the inflammations disorder that affects children following covid. Willow was born with a heart defect, which was surgically corrected when she was 2 days old, but covid seems to have had an impact on her heart. She is home from the hospital, but drs are still uncertain what is causing her post- covid related symptoms.

Carol Pilibosian asks prayers for her Mom, Anne McLeod. Anne has some swelling in her legs and she is being treated for pneumonia. She needs to eat and drink more.

Laurie and Mike Sabourin have a prayer of thanks and praise that their great-niece, Willow, has recovered from covid and the inflammation disorder that can accompany it in children. She has returned home from the hospital.

Gaye Shannon has a prayer of thanks that her family in Austin, TX have weathered the snow storms well. Even with rolling power outages they were able to keep warm, and they have managed to get needed water.

Please keep the wife (Mary Ann) and family of my dear friend **Stacy Angle** in your prayers, as Stacy went to be with the Lord on Friday.

Jimmy Tobin has a prayer of thanks that the blood thinners dissolved the clots in his Dad’s lungs.

Sarah Wiegers asks prayers that her daughter Noelle’s Covid test will come back negative, signifying that Noelle has just a common cold.

Ronda Thomas asks prayers for her cousins who live a part of Texas hard hit by the winter storm. They now have power and water, but grocery store shelves are still not well stocked with food.

We keep all the **people of TX** in our prayers as they continue to experience hardship caused by the recent winter storm.

Remember The Homebound and Those in Hospitals, Rehab Centers and Nursing Homes:

Gloria Rauth - Whitney Place, 85 Beaumont Dr., Rm 11, Northbridge, MA 01534

Ruth Hoekstra - Linwood Apartments No. 105, 670 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Jim Remillard – 20 Fair Street, Uxbridge, MA 01569

Nancy Freiswyk – Beaumont Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center, Beaumont Dr., Room 222, Northbridge, MA 01534

Anne MacLeod - Cottonmill Apartments #202, 17 Douglas Rd, Whitinsville, MA 01588

Easter Flowers for Our Church

Would you like to help enhance the beauty of Easter service? Bring some flowers or a plant to the church on Saturday, April 3, from 11:00 AM to noon, and place them on a table inside the Spring Street door. Place a marker with your name in the arrangement so that you can retrieve it easily after the service.

Please complete the form to the left or call or email the church office with the information. All forms must be into the church office by March 29th to be printed in the bulletin for Easter Sunday.

Easter flowers will be donated by:

(complete as appropriate)

They will be in memory of:

They will be in honor of:

(Cut out and drop in offering plate, Drop off at church office, email it to office@whitinpres.org, or mail to Church Office, 7 Spring Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588)

DEADLINE: March 29

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:00 PM Session Prayer Meeting	2 7:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting	3 12:00 PM Ecumenical Prayer Service 5:00 Peace of Bread	4	5	6 8:30 AM Lenten Devotional Series
7 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 10:30 Worship Service 12:15-1:15 PM Inquiry Class 1:30 Youth Bible Study(Zoom) 3-4:5 Grief Seminar	8 7:00 PM Session Meeting 7:30 PM Trustee Meeting	9	10 12:00 PM Ecumenical Prayer Service 5:00 Peace of Bread 7:00 CG&N Meeting	11	12	13 8:30 AM Lenten Devotional Series
14 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service 12:15-1:15 PM Inquiry Class 3:00 Grief Seminar	15 7:00 PM Presbytery Meeting	16 7:00 PM Called Session Meeting for planning	17 12:00 PM Ecumenical Prayer Service 5:00 Peace of Bread	18	19 6:30 PM Women's Book Club	20 8:30 AM Lenten Devotional Series
21 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 10:30 Worship Service 12:30 Zoom-called congregational meeting 1:30 Youth Bible Study(Zoom)	22 6:30 PM Deacons Meeting	23	24 12:00 PM Ecumenical Prayer Service 5:00 Peace of Bread	25 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service	26	27 8:30 AM Lenten Devotional Series
28 8:45 Jr. Church (Zoom) 9:30 Adult Sunday School (Zoom) 9:40 Children's SS/UPCOW Chorus 10:30 Worship Service 12:15-1:15 PM Inquiry Class 1:30 Youth Bible Study(Zoom) 3-4:5 Grief Seminar						



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Thank You

A big thank-you from the entire church family to Jimmy Tobin, Debbie Baker, Gay McCrea, Judy Salsberg, and Mallorie Mercer for keeping the office running from February 1 through March 5.



Jimmy Tobin



Mallorie Mercer



Debbie Baker & Gay McCrea