



The Reverend Craig L. Cowing, Pastor
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The Church Mouse

March 2016 Newsletter

RHCC e-mail address – office@rhccucc.org

Website: www.rhccucc.org

Office Hours – 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Friday

Sunday Worship Services – 10:00 a.m.

Childcare Available/Handicap Accessible

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 20 – Palm Sunday

10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

March 24 – Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Service of Tenebrae in the Sanctuary

March 26 – Holy Saturday

10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Family Activities and Worship in Chapin Hall

March 27 – Easter Sunday!

6:40 a.m. Sunrise Service at Rose Hill Cemetery

Breakfast will follow at the Church in Chapin Hall

10:00 a.m. Easter Worship Service in the Sanctuary

All are Welcome!



Memory is an integral part of who we are. As memory is passed on from one generation to the next, stories become integrated into a family's fabric. Sometimes stories are left untold intentionally, or altered to cover up an uncomfortable occurrence in the past. Such is the case with the stories about my great great great grandfather who died in Iowa in 1836. He went out there to find a place to resettle his family. He had suffered a huge financial loss while building up his business in Meriden. The family story was that a large amount of money was stolen by an employee. I grew up with that story. My father and I did some research a number of years ago and found the real reason he lost all his money. He was speculating in real estate, a time-honored way of either getting rich quick or losing your shirt. His fate was the latter. He over-extended himself and got caught in the pinch. He wasn't the only one, though. Many people lost money in real estate around that time in the first financial crisis to hit our country. This story was painful and embarrassing enough to cause his brother to invent a different story, placing the blame on a former employee.

I think about this occasionally because it reminds me of the power of stories. Stories shape who we are, and we in turn reshape them as they churn in our minds. We all have our own individual stories that inform us, and we share collective stories. As Christians, we all share the stories about Jesus as told in the New Testament, although we may understand those stories in a very different way.

We all have stories that remind us of painful or difficult experiences in the past. Such stories pop up at inconvenient times. We'd be happy to have them just go away and be forgotten. Stories such as this are awkward, uncomfortable, even painful to remember.

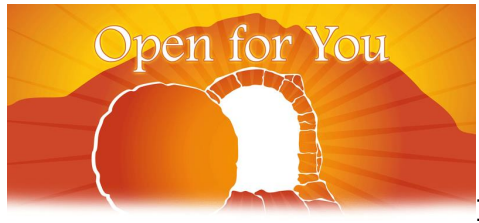
God knows our stories, good and bad. And, God transforms our painful stories through the resurrection of Jesus. The story of Jesus' resurrection shapes our faith. It is a reminder of how God took the pain of the crucifixion and transformed it into a victory over death. This is much larger than just Jesus' own experience. It is our story too. We can look to the power of the resurrection to transform our own pain into a victory over defeat and trial. We are promised that power which is available to us as we ask for God's help.

However the disciples experienced Jesus' resurrection, it transformed them into a group of people with a mission. My prayer is that we will allow this story to transform our lives as well.

In Christ,
Craig



Lent and Holy Week at Rocky Hill Congregational UCC



Lent is a time for introspection and learning at our church. We will host a set of programs to stimulate thought and prayer.

Icons of the Week – Stop by the Chapel every week and view a different icon painted by Reverend Craig Cowing, copying original historic paintings. Sit, view, and enjoy a few minutes of quiet contemplation..

March 6 – Fourth Sunday of Lent 10:00 Worship in the Sanctuary with Communion
March 13 – Fifth Sunday of Lent 10:00 Worship in the Sanctuary
(Budget & Elections Meeting following worship)

HOLY WEEK

March 20 – Palm Sunday

10:00 Worship in the Sanctuary

2nd Hour Presentation: "Good Friday & Easter in Art. East and West" with Reverend Craig Cowing Lunch will be provided by the Board for Faith Formation and Trustees

March 24 – Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m. Service of Tenebrae in the Sanctuary

Tenebrae is distinctive for its gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of readings and psalms is recited.

March 26 – Holy Saturday

3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Family Activities and Worship in Chapin Hall

March 27 Easter Sunday!

Sunrise Service at Rose Hill Cemetery

– Arrive just before sunrise (6:40am sunrise)

- Follow the car path to the right and up to the back corner (close to Gilbert and West St end)

- Breakfast will follow at the Church in Chapin Hall

– All are Welcome!

10:00 Easter Service in the Sanctuary



S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School News

If you've taken the elevator here at church recently, you may have noticed a heart sticker near one of the buttons. There is also a heart sticker near the picture of the church on the bulletin board in the main hallway. These stickers were placed by the Pre-K to 1st grade class as they toured the building, looking for evidence of love here at church. Thanks to teachers Candy Smith and Kari Mccaw, they found plenty of love. Most of the stickers were picked up and placed on the children's shoes, a reminder for them to "walk in love." But the other stickers remain, a reminder to us that at least for the children, **RHCC is a place where love abounds.**

On **Shrove Tuesday**, pancakes and sausages and bacon abounded, as the Inreach Committee prepared yet another fabulous feast. About 50 folks gathered to have a Mardi Gras type celebration, complete with a parade and pancake games (with pancake socks given as prizes!). Filled with good fun and good food, we cleaned up from the party, putting away the Alleluia's and thinking about one thing we would want to let go of during Lent. Pastor Craig took our written thoughts, burned them (outside), and used the ashes during the Ash Wednesday service which followed. It was quite meaningful to enter the more reflective time of Lent with those with whom we had just celebrated.

During this season of Lent, my children's sermons will be asking the kids to consider what it means to be on **God's team**. I consistently hear how older kids' sports teams ask them to spend hours and hours every week for the sake of their team. We don't ask the same here at church, but maybe it is time to ask ourselves if even one or two hours per week can be given for the sake of God's team.

Here is our upcoming schedule:

Topics for February 28 to March 6:

Pre-K to 1st grade: The Lost Sheep and Lost Coin

Grades 2-5: Burning Bush and Other Images of God

The children will:

- enlarge their understanding of God through exposure to new images of God;
- explore a variety of images of God in the Bible -- fire, rock, eagle, and light;
- explore the idea that the image of God can be revealed through them and their actions.

Grades 6-8: Justice, Sharing Communion

S.P.I.R.I.T. Church School News

Topics for March 13 to March 20:

Pre-K to 1st grade: Holy Week and Easter

Grades 2-5: Jesus in Jerusalem

The children will:

- hear the events of Holy Week according to the timeline used in the Gospel of Mark;
- learn how the events of Holy Week teach us more about Jesus and what it means to follow God;
- recognize how Jesus' life teaches us about God's love for us;
- connect the stories from the Gospels with the traditional Holy Week celebrations in the church today.



Grades 6-8: Suffering (Jesus' Betrayal, Arrest, and Trial), Death (Jesus' Death)

If you are able and willing to help teach, lead an activity, or be a second adult in a classroom, please sign up in Chapin Hall or contact Georgette Huie or Kathy Morgan.

Middle School Youth Group

On February 7, we met to celebrate the Chinese New Year. We made dumplings (potstickers), learned of some of the New Year traditions, and learned how to make working elevators from one sheet of paper! On February 21, we tackled the indoor ropes course at Soarin' in Manchester. Our middle schoolers are quite brave and skilled and undeterred in their willingness to try something new, even if it's scary at first, and to complete the task.

High School Youth Group

On January 31, we went to Center Church in Hartford to cook and serve the community dinner. Five of us, including Bob Inderbitzen, worked diligently for 3.5 hours. The time passed quickly and it was satisfying to know our labor resulted in feeding 59 people a healthy, warm, and delicious meal. We received 14 requests for seconds. A number of the guests were homeless, and we were touched by the large family with small children who had made the trek to the church in order to be fed. Thanks to the Missions Board who provided the funds for the meal. Because Center Church is able to work with FoodShare to obtain ingredients for a low price, we were able to use our funds to purchase fresh vegetables for a hearty green salad, something which is not usually available to this clientele. We look forward to doing more dinners in the future.

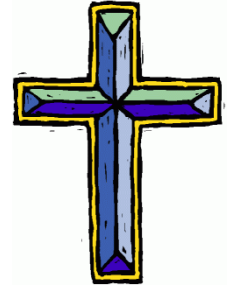
On February 14, we participated in the Interfaith Youth Hangout at the Islamic Association of Greater Hartford, located at the Berlin Mosque. Everything was planned by the Muslim youth, who hope this will be the beginning of forging peace and understanding among them and their Christian and Jewish cohorts. While the youth had their own activities, the adults were given the opportunity to learn more about Islam, and to observe one of the five daily prayers. It was a unique and awesome opportunity, and has opened doors for future interactions.

Holy Saturday March 26, 10am – 11:30am

Designed for families with children, but open to all! We will transform the broken crayons from Lent into beautiful objects, have an Easter egg hunt, and a brief time of worship

Lend Us Your Cross

Throughout the Lenten Season, we will be placing crosses in the hallway display case. Please bring in a cross that is meaningful to you, and we will place it in the case. Be sure and attach your name so we can return it to you after Easter. Crosses can be given to Michael Bower or to Theresa in the church office.



Mission News

Missions is here, near and far. In February, Michael Joseph, missionary to Colombia with Global Ministries came to speak with us. Michael spoke about his work **acompanamiento** with the people of Colombia. Michael explained that his work as a missionary is not to 'lord over' or convert the masses. Rather his work is to accompany or partner with the people of Colombia. Just as Michael's work is to partner with the people of Colombia; we want to partner with the people in our local community as well.

One way that we can do this is through the **Foodshare Walk Against Hunger**. The walk provides support for many pantries and programs in the Greater Hartford Region, including over 42,000 children. The Walk is set for Sunday, May 1st at Liam McGee Park in Hartford. Why I am letting you know this early about the Foodshare walk? Because I want you to make a commitment and put in your calendar to come walk this year. This is the event where we can show the community who we are and what we stand for. If you are unable to donate financially or uncomfortable fundraising; that is ok. Just by you coming out to walk; you show the community and the world that we stand against hunger. So get those walking shoes ready...more information to come.



Save the date for the Walk Against Hunger, Sunday May 1st at 2:00 p.m.

RHCC FOOD PANTRY BASKET

Each week we collect and donate various food and paper goods for the Rocky Hill Human Services Food Pantry. The following non-perishable food items are requested:

Spaghetti sauce and pasta, crackers rice juice, coffee, tea, soups, cereals tuna & canned chicken, applesauce peanut butter & jelly. Jars can be plastic or glass.

Additionally all paper goods (towels, toilet paper, etc.) and detergents are in short supply and always needed. Toothpaste, shampoo and conditioners are needed. The pantry also accepts hotel size containers. All donations are welcome.



Bible Study



Men's Bible Study First and Third Saturday

Come join your Christian brothers as we pursue and try to understand God's words. All are welcome.

For more details, please contact Jim Stevens: 860-632-5810.

CTUCC Events

Super Saturday March. 12, 2016 8:00 am

The Reverend Traci Blackmon - Community Leader, Civil Rights Activist and Pastor of Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Missouri - is the Keynote Speaker for this day of worship, workshops, and networking for lay and clergy leaders from across Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

Join us for a great day of learning and leadership.

Location: Killingly High School, 226 Putnam Pike, Killingly

\$54.00 Per Person or \$44.00 Per Person in Groups of 5 or more from a church.

Contact: Karen E. Ziel, Minister Faith Formation & Leadership

United Church Center, 125 Sherman St., Hartford CT 06105. 860.761.7104.

karenz@ctuucc.org



RHCC UCC DIAPER DRIVE SUCCESS



We're changing lives: here, near and far! Diapers collected by our church during the Epiphany Pageant and throughout the last month were delivered by Board for Missions Chair, Kari McCaw to The Diaper Bank in North Haven. Kari also met the staff and toured the office/warehouse for this organization that centralizes the fundraising and distribution of free diapers to poor families through existing service providers, including local food pantries, soup kitchens, daycare centers, social service agencies and shelters.

Through its extensive network, they provide over 145,000 free diapers monthly to poor and low-income families in Greater New Haven, Bridgeport, and Hartford and Middlesex County.

EASTER OFFERING LETTER

Please be on the lookout for our Easter Offering letter mailed to all members on March 2nd.

Easter is a time of miraculous joy and fulfilled promises. What love and dedication the Lord has shown us by first dying for us and then rising again. To be alive several hundred years after this blessed event and to have the opportunity to reflect and rejoice all over again is one of the greatest pleasures of being a Christian. Some of us shout in jubilation. Others are filled with love and allow it to burst forth in a glorious fountain of light.

The church's wider mission is to change lives. We are here to share our faith with the world through action and humanitarian work.

Please give generously to the Easter Offering this year. Let us shout in jubilation, dance in glee, cry in ecstasy but most importantly let our light spill out of in a brilliant show of love as we rejoice for resurrection Sunday.

In Mission and Faith,
Kari McCaw, Chair – Board for Missions



MUSIC TOGETHER[®]

BRINGING HARMONY HOME.[®]

These classes meet at our church every Thursday:

Music Together classes build on your child's natural enthusiasm for music and movement. We'll help you provide your child with the basic musical skills needed to enjoy future school and social musical activities, and to study an instrument should he or she choose to do so. We give your family the tools to play musically with your children! Contact Susan Freese at: 860-997-2306. Classes are held on Thursday at 9:30am and 10:30am, for a 10-week semester at Rocky Hill Congregational Church. Spring semester begins April 7. www.littlehandsinharmony.com

SHARING YOUR TIME AND TALENT

It is the time in our year to think about how each of us feels called to participate in the life of our church. There are many opportunities for giving your time and talent. There are brochures available if you have questions about the various positions and the opportunities associated with each. If we can't answer your questions about the particular group we will put you in touch with someone who can.



If during your reflections there is an aspect of a board or committee's responsibility that interests you, please, make that known. For example: two members helped the deacons deliver Christmas poinsettias to home bound members, another volunteer is cooking for the Comfort Dinner.

With warm regards;

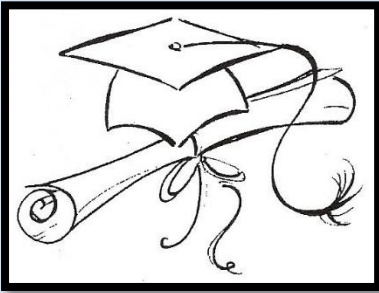
Bill Hoffman Candy Smith Rich Pawlich-Pagliccio Steph Heneghan



We encourage all members of Boards, Committees and the Church to share their news, events and photos for our facebook page, by sending these to office@rhccucc.org. The facebook administrators will post it in a timely manner. Don't forget to follow us on facebook for updates about Worship and Events!

<https://www.facebook.com/rhccucc>

Rocky Hill Congregational Church Scholarship Information for the 2016-2017 Academic Year



Each year, our church awards college scholarships which are funded by investment returns from the Scholarship Endowment Funds. Applicants should be members of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, active members of one of its youth organizations, or active participants in the life of the church. Awards are based upon church and community involvement, demonstrated scholastic achievement, financial need, and the completion and submission of a scholarship application form. Scholarships may be awarded for up to four years of undergraduate studies. Recommendations on scholarship recipients are made by the Scholarship Committee, whose members are appointed by the Board of Trustees. This recommendation is then subject to the final approval of the Trustees.

Graduating high school seniors and returning college undergraduates who are seeking a church scholarship for the 2016-17 academic year are invited to complete and **return an application prior to April 15, 2016**. Scholarship awards will be announced in June. Scholarships to graduating seniors will be presented in the applicant's school awards assembly program. Otherwise, recipients will be notified by letter. Scholarship checks will be paid to the awardee and notification of change of plans or non-attendance should be made to the committee prior to issuance of checks in mid-July and mid-December.

Application forms are available in the office, or send an email to: scholarships@rhccucc.org for the link to the pdf. or refer to members of the Scholarship Committee: Hilaire Leavitt or Randy Pulling.

Applications are DUE prior to April 15th, 2016.



Submission deadline for the April issue of The Church Mouse will be Tues. March 15 and the mailing date will be Tues. March 29.

We want to hear from you! Send your articles and photos to: office@rhccucc.org.

REMEMBER OR HONOR LOVED ONES WITH EASTER FLOWERS



The flowers will adorn the sanctuary for worship on
Easter Sunday, March 27th.



- The three choices this year will be:
 Easter Lily in 6 1/2 inch pots with 6+ buds (\$11.00)
 Hyacinth 6 inch with 3 bulbs (\$8.50)
 Tulip 6 inch full pots with limited color options (\$8.50)

The Deadline for orders is March 21.

Please fill out the information below and give to Kathy Mosure or the Church Office.



Given by: _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Dedication ("in loving memory of...", "in honor of...", etc.):



Number ordered

Dollar Amount

Lily @ \$11.95 each	_____	x 11.95 =	_____
Hyacinth @ \$7.95 each	_____	x 7.95 =	_____
Tulip @ \$7.95 each	_____	x 7.95 =	_____
Daffodil @\$7.95 each	_____	x 7.95 =	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please select:

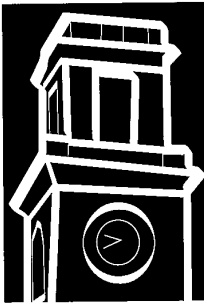
- I will pick up my plant after worship on Sunday, April 5.
- The flowers may remain in church to decorate the sanctuary

**Make checks payable to RHCC and give them directly to
Kathy Mosure or mail to the Church Office**

805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill CT 06067, Attn: Flower Committee

You may call Kathy with questions at 860 632-9763.





March

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
		1 7:00pm Board and Committee Mtgs 7:00pm Hearing Voices	2 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
6 Communion Sunday 10:00am Worship 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	7 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	8 7:00pm Council Mtg 7:00pm Hearing Voices	9 9:00am Breakfast Club at Bob's Café 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
13 Daylight Savings Time begins 10:00am Worship 11am Boards & Elections Meeting 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	14 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 11:00am Retired Clergy 7:00pm Hearing Voices	16 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
20 Palm Sunday 10:00am Worship and 2 nd Hour "Good Friday & Easter in Art" 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	21 Easter Flower Order Deadline 7:00pm Little Scholars 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	22 6:00pm Cedar Hollow 7:00pm Hearing Voices	23 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir
27 Easter Sunday 6:40 am Sunrise Worship Rose Hi 7:15 am Breakfast in Chapin Hall 10:00am Easter Worship Service 4:00pm Siragu Tamil	28 7:00pm Women's AA 7:30pm Bell Choir	29 Newsletter Mailing 7:00pm Hearing Voices	30 6:00pm Pilates w/Caroline 7:30pm Adult Choir



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning Worship

Communion 1st Sunday

10:00 a.m. with childcare

2016



CHILD
care
Provided

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3	4 World Day of Prayer St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Rocky Hill 7pm	5 8:30am Men's Christian Fellowship
10 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	11 	12 Daylight Savings Time Begins Change clocks forward 1 hour.
17 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	18	19 8:30am Men's Christian Fellowship 1:00pm Tennesen Chapin Hall
24 Maundy Thursday 7pm Service of Tenebrae 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA	25 Good Friday 	26 Holy Saturday 10-11:30am Family Activities, egg hunt and Worship
31 9:30am Little Hands in Harmony 7:30pm Men's AA		



March 9th at 9:00am Breakfast Club at Bob's Coffee Shop, 33 New Britain Ave, Rocky Hill. Members of RHCC meet once a month, on the second Wednesday. Join us for coffee and fellowship.





March Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Bill Hoffman | 17 | Kathryn Morgan |
| | Todd McGowan | 18 | Haydee Salazar |
| 2 | Rebecca Milles | 20 | Susan VanNess |
| | Pat Gordon | | Elaine Somes |
| | Grace Donahue | | Charlotte Reed-Swale |
| 4 | John Van Doran | 21 | Ryan Bengston |
| 6 | Percy Hall | 22 | Gladys Carpenter |
| | Bay Tran | | Meghan Young |
| 7 | Margaret Vassilopoulos | 23 | Marilyn Van Doran |
| 8 | Kevin Sudell | 24 | Bea Donahue |
| 9 | Colleen Schultz | | Sarah Mosure |
| 11 | Chase Corvo | 26 | Todd Pender |
| 12 | Tim Dostie | 27 | Richard Sweezy, Jr |
| | Todd Doten | 28 | Gail Fu |
| | Suzanne Speers | | Nicole Graham |
| | Ryan Walker | 29 | Kim Burghoff |
| 13 | Dick Somes | 30 | Jayson Veley |
| | Jackie Little | 31 | Mark Walworth |
| 14 | David Bell | | Pat Hughes-Walworth |
| 15 | Alexander Ware | | |



Paul and Gail Tine
 were married on
March 4, 1972

HISTORIAN NOTES – MARCH 2016



As we discuss how the church can be more visible in the community, it is important for us to remember that this idea is not a new idea for Rocky Hill Congregational Church. On Friday, March 6th the **World Day of Prayer** was held in Chapin Hall. Miss Annamma Thomas, a member of the Syrian Christian Church, a native of India was the speaker. She had attended the Amsterdam Conference* the year prior and was a student at Hartford Theological Seminary. It was stated that Miss Thomas was an interesting and inspiring speaker. God is still speaking, as He was 67 years ago from voices across the globe.

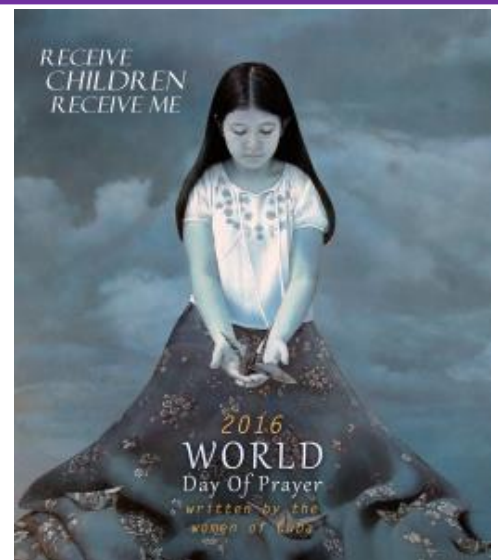
*For those of you wondering, the Amsterdam Conference was the 1st conference of the World Council of Churches held August 22 to September 4, 1948. The theme of the assembly was 'Man's Disorder and God's Design'. One hundred and forty-seven churches from different confessions and many countries came together to commit themselves to the ecumenical movement.

Kari McCaw - historian

World Day of Prayer Friday, March 4!

The Annual World Day of Prayer Service will be held at Church of St. Andrew the Apostle on Orchard Street in Rocky Hill on Friday, March 4th at 7pm.

The theme this year is "Receive Children Receive Me" written by the women of Cuba. Join in symbolic solidarity with women around the world!



ROCKY HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
805 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill CT 06067
Telephone # 860 529-4167

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Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we.
The United Church of Christ:
No matter who you are,
Or where you are on life's journey...
You're welcome here.



CALL TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND ELECTIONS MEETING

Sunday, March 13, 2016

The annual Budget and Elections Meeting of the Rocky Hill Congregational Church, United Church of Christ is called for Sunday, March 13, 2016 immediately following worship in the sanctuary for the transaction of the following items of business:

1. to vote on the proposed budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year;
2. to approve all special offerings for Missions and Diaconate;
3. to vote on the distribution of any undesignated bequests for the 2016-2017 fiscal year;
4. to elect church officers and board and committee members for terms beginning May 1, 2016;
5. to hear Council sub-committee report of introduction/overview for proposed modifications to church governance structure and function;
6. to approve the recommendation of the Fair Committee for expenditure of the proceeds from the 2015 events;
7. to approve the dissolution of the Pastoral Search committee as recommended by the Council;

Marsha Hoffman, Church Clerk