



NEWSLETTER, APRIL 2008

The First Congregational Church of Georgetown United Church of Christ

Come Share the Bounty of God's Love...

Grow With Us!

7 Andover Street, Box 200 • Georgetown, MA 01833 • (978)-352-8443 • www.georgetowncongregational.org

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter to you I realize that it will be my last. Next month you will receive your newsletter goodbyes from Pastor Eric, and this month I share my own. Saying goodbye is never easy, and it certainly is not easy to say goodbye to a congregation who has been so much a part of our lives for the past five years. You have seen us through many life transitions; a move to a different part of the country, the purchase of our first home, the birth of our first child. And together as a community we have gone through some amazing congregational transitions; the establishment of our vision statement, the launching of the co-pastorate, the beginning of new hospitality and stewardship initiatives. It was an honor and a privilege to serve amongst you for this short time. And so in this context it becomes increasingly important that we say goodbye to one another in ways that allow for open communication and Christian love.

This grace-filled mode of leave taking was one of the unanticipated discoveries for us when we became parents. Already in Zeph's short nineteen months we have had to say goodbye to so many of his life stages. At four months, when he sat up we said goodbye to the tiny infant stage. At seven months as he rolled over and crawled we said goodbye to the comfort and safety of a stationary baby. And more recently, as he giggled and ran away from us at full speed, we had to recognize his independence and his growth as an individual person. I know these goodbyes will only increase as Zeph grows older. It is not one of the tasks that you think of when you are expecting your first child, when you imagine yourself being a parent, and yet perhaps it is one of the most crucial.

And so, as parents, as friends, as children, as partners, as pastors and congregations, throughout life we must learn to say goodbye well. We must learn to say goodbye in ways that might help each other to grow. We must to hold onto memories that bring us joy, and let go of bitterness that hardens the heart. We must learn to say "I'm sorry" and to offer our forgiveness in return. We must release our need for control and free one another to listen for the voice of God. What I have found both through my short time of parenting, and through my experiences of saying goodbye in other contexts, is how we leave one another affects us, our hearts and our future, far more than we might think. When we say goodbye with love, with peace, with honest, and yet gentle kindness we leave better able to face the future. We leave with the knowledge that we allowed God's grace to shine as a guide before us. So together let us say goodbye well. Let us share laughter and memories. Let us give each other the freedom to go into our respective futures with hope and promise, with goodwill and good cheer.

And as we enter the season of Easter, let us be mindful that we are journeying into a new future. This is an important time in the life of First Church. It can be viewed as a crisis or an opportunity. I believe that, with prayerful, loving and honest communication, with goodbyes filled with tender kindness, and graceful regret, it truly is the latter. The journey to Jerusalem was difficult; along the way, Jesus experienced conflict, suffering and loss. But we know that ultimately, through the resurrection, God's light and love shone brightly in the Risen Christ. I hope and pray that God's holy light and love will shine brightly in you, the members and friends of The First Congregational Church of Georgetown, United Church of Christ.

With blessings and love,

Pastor Sara

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Church School Class Schedule with Lesson Topics

Lesson titles and descriptions are taken from our church school curriculum, *Seasons of the Spirit*.

Sunday, April 6

STUDENTS BEGIN IN CLASS

Focus Scripture: Luke 24:13-35

Risen Indeed

“Christ is Risen!” With this traditional profession of Easter faith, we open ourselves to new life in Christ. We share this truth with the disciples in Jerusalem who preached the good news. In our rituals and in our living each day, we declare, “Christ is risen indeed.”

Sunday, April 13

YOUTH SUNDAY

NO CHURCH SCHOOL

Sunday, April 20

STUDENTS BEGIN IN THE SANCTUARY

Focus Scripture: John 14:1-14

A Place with God

In word and deed and character, Jesus shows us God. In that revealing, Jesus assures us we have a safe place with God. That promise remains secure in times of joyous presence and of troubled absence. Such hope takes shape in the psalmist’s trust of God as rock and fortress, and in Stephen’s dying graciousness.

Sunday, April 27

STUDENTS BEGIN IN THE SANCTUARY

Focus Scripture: John 14:15-21

Spirited Love

God has listened to our searching for holy presence. Spirit’s gift comes as response to that listening. The language of relationship with God is Spirit-ed love. Love keeps this relationship in word and deed. Love casts out fear. Love does not abandon. Love is eager to do good. Love provides place. Through love we find, and are found, by God.

To learn more about our church school and sign your children up for classes, please speak with Pastor Eric.

NEXT TEACHERS’ MEETING: Sunday, April 13, 9:30 a.m.

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES!

The Christian Education Committee is recruiting individuals to team teach our church school classes from September to December, 2008. If you have been a member or friend of First church for at least one year, would like to learn more about the Bible and our faith in a fun environment, and can dedicate a few hours a month to support our children and youth, team teaching may be a good fit for you!

Please contact Pastor Eric to discuss this opportunity to learn and grow with our students.

Thoughts and Letters

Dear Women's Guild,

Thank you so much for the beautiful quilt for Zeph. It was such a thoughtful gesture. We will treasure it for many, many years to come. And, a special thanks to Millie who designed and made its wonderful moon pattern. With love and blessings,

Sara, Eric and Zeph

Dear Church family & friends,

Thank you so much for your cards, visits, thoughts and prayers. They have really helped me during these past few months. I especially want to thank Kristen Arsenault for visiting me to deliver my birthday rose - it was beautiful and lasted a long time at my bedside. I'm still hoping to be better soon so that I can see you all in church!

Helen Snow

Dear Church Family,

Many thanks for notes and messages of "best wishes and get well" that I received when I was hospitalized and in rehab. I also appreciated the bouquet of flowers that was sent by the church Flowerladies; and visits by Sara and Eric.

And, to be sure, a great big Thank You to George Comiskey for carrying on with the Usher Coordinator Duties.

Sincerely,

Donn Chatterton

Prayers

Please keep in our prayers:

Florence Hamelin who is recovering from a recent hospitalization.

Karla Szkutak, who is hospitalized at Mass General Hospital. Her neighbor, **Maria O'Brien**, is coordinating offers of assistance. If you'd like to help, please call her at (978) 352-8849.

Helen Snow who is continuing physical rehabilitation in her home.



Happy Birthday Wishes



Michelle Brock
Isabelle Gammon
JoEllen Fielding
Joe Sheehan
Zachary Brock
Elizabeth Kalfin
Eric Marean

April

April 2nd
April 5th
April 11th
April 12th
April 25th
April 28th
April 29th

Groups and Committees

Moderator's Corner

By Tom Stewart, Moderator

I am pleased to report the Diaconate continues to work together in an impressive manner keeping on track while respecting the time line outlined by United Church of Christ (UCC) Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Carol Atwood-Lyon during our March 5, 2008 meeting. The Diaconate has worked diligently to create a profile for our church that will be used in the interviewing of prospective Interim Pastors. By the time this newsletter is printed, the profile should be completed and sent to the UCC representative the Reverend Mr. Dale Hempen. Reverend Hempen is the Associate Conference Minister (ACM) of the Southeast Region and coordinates Interim Pastor's profiles with churches in need. The Diaconate will soon begin the interviewing process for an Interim Pastor. Diaconate Chair Jeff Fitzpatrick and the rest of the Diaconate members will continue to keep us informed as the interviewing process develops. Please feel free to offer your thanks and appreciation to the Diaconate for their dedication and hard work when you speak with each individual.

I must mention that my learning curve as Moderator has been accelerated by recent events in our church. As I have met with and listened to individuals and groups, I am impressed with the work and commitment people have for our church. It seems we all have lessons to learn from one another as we share in the fellowship of God's work. It has been a privilege to have this opportunity to listen and share so much with many members of our church.

I was deeply touched when I visited the Women's Guild last month. The Guild sews and donates the most beautiful quilts directly to babies which are born with AIDS. The commitment and teamwork the Guild demonstrates is exemplary with lessons for us all. I thank the ladies of the Guild for the experience and lessons I learned while visiting their

meeting. I hope to be a guest again soon and learn from one the interesting speakers at the Guild. Thank you and hats off to the Guild for all they do and what they represent.

Lastly, Sunday May 18, 2008 will be the last service of our Co-Pastorate, Sara and Eric Marean, while Friday May 23, 2008 is their last scheduled day in the office. The process of saying goodbye to clergy is challenging. Ideally, it is best for each of us, the Co-Pastorate and the future of our church to create an ending experience that is positive, respectful and Christian in nature. During this time, I suggest we draw upon the words that Jesus taught us and give thanks for the ministry of our Co-Pastorate Sara and Eric Marean. There is much we have learned from one another since 2003. It is my hope that, in the future, we will look back with pride upon how we all said goodbye.

Again, I am interested in hearing the thoughts, feelings and opinions of all who are involved in our church. Please feel free to contact me if you have issues or concerns you would like to discuss. I look forward to serving as your Moderator.

Stewardship Committee

A Message from Stewardship Team:

We all love our church and want to do what we can to support it and its missions. Unfortunately, today's economy makes it difficult to be as generous as we'd like to be with our charitable contributions. The stewardship team has been tasked to come up with new ideas to make it easier to give. If you haven't already heard, [the US Congress and President Bush](#) have announced a tax rebate to be given out to eligible families in May. If you find it is possible, the team suggests tithing your rebate as an offering to the church in our time of need. Please keep the church in your hearts this May.

Blessings,

Richard Aberman, George Comiskey, Tim Clift, Tom Stewart and Pastor Sara Marean

Missions



April 22nd

The Federal Government first established Earth Day in 1970 to focus on cleaning the air, promoting land conservation and improving water quality. While we have made some good progress, we can still do much more. Everyone can do something to make a difference. We can save energy; use less water; reduce, reuse and recycle. **What can YOU do?** What are your ideas? Be creative! Check out the

Earthdaynetwork at <http://ww2.earthday.net/~earthday/>. You can also sign up to receive an EDN Newsletter on how to help our environment.

Earth Day...it's not just one day, it's **EVERYDAY**. Preservation, conservation, education, dedication...***ACTION!***

Lawrence Fire Victims Rebuild Their lives

As you are aware, Lawrence had a disastrous fire at the end of January. 45 families—200 people—were left homeless. Fire swept through 14 buildings, most of them multifamily houses, on Parker, Market and Springfield Streets. People are rebuilding their lives and restoring hope from the ashes. Habitat for Humanity is working to help families rebuild homes. If you would like to assist in this effort, please make your check payable to our Church and note on the check that your donation is for "Habitat-Lawrence Fire Victims." Donations will be accepted through the month of April and one check will be sent to Habitat in the name of our Church. Checks can be given to me, the pastors and/or the Church Office or placed in the Sunday offering. Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity.

Diane Townsend (978-994-9261)
Missions Coordinator

Social Committee

Coffee Hour is a great way to relax and catch up with friends. Please keep in mind that the Women's Guild Room is undergoing a renovation. The women have been working very hard to make that room into a meeting area. Refreshments are not allowed in this room. Please do not allow your children to run unattended in there or elsewhere in the church during Coffee Hour. A reminder that children are not to use the elevator unless accompanied by an adult.

Hosts Needed

Thank you for everyone who has contributed their time and energy to being Coffee Hour Hosts. We still have a few more Sundays to go before the summer arrives. If you haven't already had a chance to sign up to be a Coffee Hour Host, please consider becoming one. If you have already done one, think about doing it once again.

UCC Delegate

Nancy Aberman

Interested in Communication?

The Essex Association Annual Meeting will take place at the Byfield Parish Church on Saturday, May 3, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The theme of the meeting is Communication. Following the business meeting and a worship service, Keynote Speaker, The Rev. Dr. Jim Antal (MACUCC Conference Minister & President) will give a talk on "God Is Speaking, But Are We?" Workshops on various topics relating to communication will follow.

Our Church's UCC Delegate, Nancy Aberman, will be attending this meeting and urges anyone who is interested in any of the workshop topics to join her. Topics include stewardship; using technology to enhance the Church's message; growing membership through marketing; hospitality; and leadership. Anyone is welcome to attend. Registration materials are available at the MACUCC website, from the Church office, or from Nancy Aberman.

The Women's Guild

Please see the attached flyer on page 15 for the April event being sponsored by the Guild.

Youth Group

Senior High Youth Group

3/30/08- 6:00-7:00 PM. We will meet at the church to prepare for Youth Sunday.

4/6/08- 6:00-7:00 PM Meet at the church for our final rehearsal for Youth Sunday. Please bring an unwrapped present valued around \$10.00 for someone of your own age. Remember that this is for the Birthday program we will be participating in on April 26th. The item should be something you would like that could be carried around.

4/13/08-Youth Sunday! We will meet at the church at 9:45AM. We will be greeters, ushers, participating in the worship service and will be hosting coffee hour. Please bring your favorite coffee hour snack to share.

4/26/08- Mission Day in Boston. We are planning to meet at the church at 9AM to head into Boston for our day. I will let everyone know what you will need to bring. Plan on being in town for most of the day and bring some money so we can get something to eat together. More details to follow.

Looking forward to seeing you soon! Susan Stead 352-8907

Middle School Youth Group

March 30th, and April 6th 5:30-6:30

Regular meeting here at the church.

Planning for Youth Sunday

Sunday, April 13th

Youth Sunday Come be a part of worship.

Announcements

Bread Exchange Sunday

On Sunday, April 6th we invite you to participate in our "Bread Exchange Sunday". Bring a loaf of bread, homemade or store bought, to church with you on April 6th. After the communion service you can exchange the loaf you brought for someone else's loaf!

Youth Sunday

Join us on Sunday, April 13th for Youth Sunday! On April 13th our service will be led by the Junior and Senior High Youth Groups who will focus our attention on issues of homelessness in our country. After the service there will be a free-will offering to benefit the Sr. High mission project in Boston on April 26th. Come learn about this important issue!



Book Club

The Book Club is opened to anyone who would like to gather together with Church Family and friends. The group meets monthly at member's houses to discuss the selected books. The following is a list of the books that will be discussed in case you would like to get a head start on future readings. No need to call ahead to book yourself a seat. Just show up and have a cup of tea and good discussion. The meetings start at 7:00pm

April 10: *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert at JoEllen Fielding's home, 20 Ordway St, Georgetown

May 8: *A Patchwork Planet* by Anne Tyler at Donna DeSisto's home, 15 School St, Georgetown

June 12: *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson at Nancy Aberman's home, 199 West Main St, Georgetown



Church Yard Sale



We have some super White Elephant items left from the Fair last fall, so we're going to have a yard sale. We are thinking about either 5/24 or 6/7. It will probably run from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm. Before choosing the date, we would like to know who's available. Is anyone interested in helping out?

We will need volunteers to help us haul the items outside, a few people to hang around and collect money, then help packing up the leftovers. We are also hoping to sell some food items to bring in more money. Any ideas?

Please call us, we'd love to hear from you!

Peggy & Dave Smith 978-352-8741



Light the Church Fund



Contributions for lighting the church edifice can be made on a monthly or weekly basis, either in memory of loved ones, or in honor of someone special. Contributor and names of loved ones will be listed each week in the bulletins and also in the Monthly Newsletter. For one month's listing, the suggested donation is \$100. You may send contributions to the church (P.O. Box 200) and to the attention of our Collector.

Lighting of the Church

The church was lit for the month of March in memory of Jim St. Pierre's birthday from his wife Carol and children, Jared & Corwin.



Lost and Found



There is a collection of coats, hats and other items that have been left behind by people who have visited our church. If you are looking for something, please check out the coat hangers at the Clark Street doors. We will be taking these things to Goodwill or Planet Earth by the end of April.



Special Notes



Save the Date

Adult Music Camp 2008

Massachusetts Conference UCC

July 24-27th

\$340 per person for 3 nights lodging, 10 meals and linens

Join other musically minded Christian adults (minimum age 18) for the opportunity to spend a long weekend making beautiful music together. Participants will worship, rehearse, relax and enjoy fellowship. On Sunday afternoon you will share your talents in a concert. All participants are expected to sing in the choir. It all takes place at the Craigville Conference Center, Craigville MA.

Go to www.maucc.org/leadership/Summercamps.htm for more information.

MOMS, Ministry of Mothers Sharing:

Information Session

Saturday, Mar 29, 9:00-11:00 am

St. James Episcopal Church

119 Washington St., Groveland, MA 08134

(978) 373-1270

"It means so much to be able to talk to other mothers who understand."

Would you like to bring the companionship of other women into your BUSY life as a mother? As you face the difficult challenges of raising a family, would you enjoy the opportunity to develop your self-esteem and enhance your relationship skills in the company of other mothers? Find time to develop a greater awareness of your own spirituality as a mother and to appreciate the ministry of your motherhood.

We plan to offer MOMS as an 8-week journey that leads a group of women through an experience of peer ministry, self-discovery, mutual support and prayer. The group will meet on six (6) Saturdays in the months of April and May. The cost for participation will range from \$35-80, depending on the group's childcare needs. Scholarships may be available and fundraising may be an option.

This group is open to ALL mothers from our churches and communities: new mothers, mothers of older children and adults, grandmothers, foster mothers, Godmothers, and "mothering-types". Join us for coffee and snacks, watch a video and examine sample materials. A presentation can be made in your parish and the video is also available to borrow for home viewing. Find out if this may be a group for you!

For more information contact Helen Pickard, Director of Friend's Ministry, St. James Church, Groveland, (978) 681-9915 or mapickard1@verizon.net.

**BOARDS, COMMITTEES, OFFICERS AND STAFF
2008**

MODERATOR

Tom Stewart

CLERK

Emily Knapp

TREASURER

Peggy Smith

COLLECTOR

JoEllen Fielding

ASST. COLLECTOR

Vivian Rasmussen

AUDITORS:

Dwight Southwick & Jeff Moore

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Pam Sheehan

DIACONATE

Kristen Arsenault

Gladys Kneeland

Brett Davis

Chuck Davis

*Jeff Fitzpatrick

Tracy Southwick

Barry Games

Cheryl Gould

TBA

Betty Bruce

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Donn Chatterton & George Comiskey

MISSIONS

Diane Townsend

SOCIAL

Kristen Davis & Janice Murphy

UCC DELEGATE

Nancy Aberman

FLOWERS

Michelle Brock & Jaime Krenn

*Denotes Chairperson

STAFF

Co Pastor/Co-Directors of Christian Education

Rev. Sara E. Marean

Rev. Eric M. Marean

Acting Office Manager

Michelle Brock

Director of Music

Robert Knapp

Organist

Emily Knapp

Junior Choir Director

Marion Harding

Sexton

Rachel Edwards

Pastor's e-mail: eric@georgetowncongregational.org , sara@georgetowncongregational.org

Office Open: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10:00-2:00

Office email: churchoffice@georgetowncongregational.org Phone: (978) 352-6853

Guild Insert Here

April 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>30 Blessing of the Animals</p> <p>5:30-6:30 MS Youth Grp 6:00-7:00 SeniorYouthGrp</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1 9-12 Senior Center 1-3 Country Gardner 's Senior Tea Moonlight 6-9p 6:30 Finance 7:00 Girl Scout Leaders</p>	<p>2 9-12 Senior Center 7-9p Band/Choir 7-9p Boy Scouts</p>	<p>3 3-6p Joyce Dance</p> <p>6-9pm TOPS I</p>	<p>4 9-11:30am TOPS II</p> <p>12-2Women's Club</p> <p>7-9p AA</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6 Bread Exchange Sunday 11:45 Junior Choir Practice 11:45 Diaconate 5:30-6:30 MS Youth Grp 6:00-7:00 SeniorYouthGrp Moonlight 1-8pm</p>	<p>7 9-12 Senior Center</p> <p>6-9p Moonlight</p>	<p>8 9-12Senior Center</p> <p>6-9pMoonlight 7:00p Cabinet</p>	<p>9 9-12 Senior Center 7-9p Band/Choir 7-9p Boy Scouts</p> <p>6-9p Moonlight</p>	<p>10 3-6p Joyce Dance</p> <p>6-9pm TOPS I 6p Moonlight Show 7:00 Book Club</p>	<p>11 9-11:30am TOPS II 7-9p AA 6p</p> <p>6pmMoonlight Show</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6p Moonlight Show</p>
<p>13 Youth Sunday 9:30 Teachers Meeting 11:45 Music Committee</p>	<p>14 9-12Senior Center</p>	<p>15 9-12Senior Center</p>	<p>16 9-12Senior Center 7-9p Band/Choir 7-9p Boy Scouts</p>	<p>17 3-6p Joyce Dance</p> <p>6-9pm TOPS I</p>	<p>18 9-11:30am TOPS II 7-9p AA</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 9:00 Board of Christian Ed 11:45 Junior Choir Practice</p>	<p>21 9-12Senior Center</p>	<p>22 9-12Senior Center</p>	<p>23 9-12Senior Center 7-9p Band/Choir 7-9p Boy Scouts</p>	<p>24 3-6p Joyce Dance</p> <p>6-9pm TOPS I</p>	<p>25 9-11:30am TOPS II 2:00-4:00pm Women's Guild Tea 7-9p AA</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 11:45 Fair Meeting 11:45 Junior Choir Practice</p>	<p>28 9-12Senior Center 6-9p Country Gardeners</p>	<p>29 9-12Senior Center</p>	<p>30 9-12Senior Center 7-9p Band/Choir 7-9p Boy Scouts</p>			

Fair Insert Here