



TIDINGS



Reverend Gale Grayson

March/April 2019

A Message From Pastor Gale

Signs of Life

But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles...(Isaiah 40:31)

Each year I look forward to being greeted by snowdrops and crocus, tiny heralds of the Easter season yet to come. At this writing it is too soon to find these first harbingers of spring which announce the thaw and the promise of life refreshed and renewed. Still, there are signs of life all around us and not just marginal life, or the just-getting-by survivors.

Life is amazingly resilient and we have amazing stories about those who, against all odds, have risen up and rebounded to embrace a better future. We have fondly dubbed such hardy souls “comeback kids.” Recently I had the high privilege to observe a “comeback kid” in action. It was not a politician, or the baseball player in the movie. It was, rather, something revered by the prophet Isaiah long before it became our national emblem – the eagle.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--|--------------|
| A Message From Pastor Gale..... | 1 & 3 |
| Save the Date, Celebrations..... | 2 |
| Choir..... | 3 |
| Loving Spoonful, Butter Braid..... | 4 |
| Coffee House, Music, Easter Plant Form..... | 5 |
| Stewardship , Quilters..... | 6 |
| Cemetery, Historian Reports..... | 7 |
| Fuel Bank Annual Report..... | 8 |
| Knitting Ministry, Prayer Chain..... | 9 |
| Sanctuary, Fuel Bank, Clothing Bank. | |
| Monday Morning Guys..... | 10 |
| Calendars (hard copy only)..... | 11 & 12 |
| From the Editor, online Mailing List, email..... | inside page |
| Contact us, Lectionary..... | outside page |

One recent morning, against clear blue sky, out above our backyard meadow I spotted one of these majestic birds soaring and then landing for some moments at the top of a huge oak. There was just enough time to grab the binoculars and get a good look at the classic “bald” head and the sturdy legs with huge claws. Then again, on the way to preach one Sunday in January, another sighting at one of the farms along Rt 82.

We are fortunate to have areas around the Connecticut and Housatonic Rivers, such as the Bald Eagle Observation Area at the Shepaug Dam, where we are able to get good views of juveniles and fully matured birds.

The Bald Eagle is notable not only for its majestic presence, but also, for its comeback story. Before the 1970s, the use of DDT combined with other environmental challenges put this national treasure on the endangered species list. Since that time conserva-



Lenten and Holy Week Schedule

March 6th Ash Wednesday Service at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall.

April 14th Palm Sunday Worship Service at 10am in the Sanctuary

April 18th Maundy Thursday Service of Tennebrae at 7pm

*April 19th Good Friday Cross-walk at 8:30, St Bridgett's
11:30am Last Words of Christ in sanctuary*

April 21st Easter Sunrise Service at 6:45am at Gillette's Castle

Easter Breakfast at First Church of Christ, following the service.

Easter Worship Service at 10am in the Sanctuary

Other Dates to Remember

March 1st, Unplugged East Had-dam Ice Cream Social

March 16th UCC Super Saturday

Pot Luck Dinner at the end of March? TBD watch for details



MARCH



3 -Val Seaver

4 -Kathy Boyce, Nathaniel Kinsman

10 -Don Messmer, Judy Dawson, Olivia Lisowicz

13- Michael Lacey

17-Joe Dawson



APRIL

17-Mark Freeman

18- Ruth Gerth

22-Zach Hughes

(cont'd from page 1)

-tion efforts and other favorable ecological changes have permitted the eagle population to recover. Not many years ago (1991) there was but one pair of nesting eagles in Connecticut. By 2013 there were 31 nests and by 2016 there were 51 nests, which represents close to a “full house” here in the state based upon forested area and eagle territory size.

This Lenten season we might consider some interesting parallels between the eagles’ story and our Christian journey.

The eagle’s nesting was disrupted by deforestation. Does it seem as if the sanctuaries of mainstream Protestant churches have become “deforested?” Is it possible for our community to “nest” in such lean groves? In your personal journey, have there been times when you have found it difficult to find a “nesting” place?

Because the eagles need about nine square miles of territory, a companion problem to deforestation is overcrowding. We, like the eagles, need room to grow. Does our spiritually sometimes seem cramped? What do you find helpful or hurtful in the current variety of secular spiritualities? Likewise, what is helpful or hurtful in our tradition?

The eagles were devastated by DDT and pesticides which weakened the shells of their future generation. How have consumerism, gluttony, greed, substance abuse, pride and other “poisons” tainted our community and our individual lives? How might we avoid exposure, mitigate damage, and rehabilitate ourselves?

The good news is that it is possible to be a comeback kid. We helped to recreate a habitat that was hospitable to the eagle and this treasured emblem of freedom is now, once again, soaring above Connecticut skies.

Let’s reflect individually and together on how to create the right “habitat” for our spirituality. Let us reach out together in faith and with enthusiasm. As Isaiah said, *“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not be faint.”*

Grace and peace,

Pastor Gale



ATTENTION CHOIR MEMBERS!!

Palm Sunday & Easter are coming soon, so we will be rehearsing to prepare for those services. Watch your email for the schedule

Loving Spoonful Snack Bar



The Loving Spoonful Snack Bar is open for its 6th year, Tuesdays starting 1/8/2019 from 12 noon – 5:00 pm. This time overlaps the hours for the EH Food Bank and EH Clothing Bank. **Volunteers are needed** for the morning shift 11:00-2:00 and the afternoon shift, 2:00-5:00. Soup chefs, bakers, donations of beverages and monetary donations to purchase grinders are needed each week.

Sign-up sheets are available in the Fellowship Hall or you can contact Patti Lombardo, wjpalombi@yahoo.com or evenings at 860-873-9835.

Thank you for your help and support. Together we will be a blessing to our neighbors and friends, offering warm soup, a light snack and fellowship.

Butter Braid



It is that time of year! We are selling Butter Braids and Cookie Dough until March 17, 2019.



The delivery date is March 30, 2019 at 9:30 am. Just in time for Easter! It takes a lot of help from everyone in order to make this a successful Fun-Raiser.

So please see me in coffee hour and get a free sample and take an order sheet. Tell your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, teachers, and they will sell themselves. The more we sell the higher our profits.

All profits go to help the Church with their rising electric and heat bill. As always, I will have local gift certificates for high sales.

Many thanks in advance for all of your help,
Kathy Boyce

Coffee House

We had a fabulous 'Coffee House' evening on Feb. 15th! Eight separate performers participated: Sterling Brandt on Piano, Ian & Caleb McClean on Clarinet, guitar & Flute, Emily Murphy on Piano, Mya Darrow on Piano, Lynn Rossi piano accompaniment to Margaret Charney on flute, Anthony Nero on guitar, Castle Quartet consisting of Maryann McCary on piano, Sue Mero on violin, Margaret Charney on flute and Evelyn Morgen on cello, then the evening ended with Ruth & Frank Vitale playing banjos. Our audience enjoyed the variety of music and also the delicious snacks with beverages from 2 Wrasslin Cats! Our donations totaled \$452.00 and will be added to the 'Raise the Roof Fund'. We plan to have a summer Coffee House, so watch for info in July or August. Anyone who plays an instrument, sings, acts or reads poetry is welcome to participate. It's fun to have new and different entertainment.

Musicians Wanted!



Lynn Rossi usually provides music for two Sundays per month, so that leaves two, and sometimes three other weeks for someone to play. If you play an instrument and would like to be a part of worship, speak to Margaret Charney and sign up on the schedule that's posted in the Fellowship Hall. Not only piano, but other instruments are appropriate too--guitar, flute, clarinet, violin, or trumpet and combinations of any of those!!

Easter Memorial Flower Order Form

6 in pots _____ Tulips - \$9 _____ Daffodils - \$9 _____ Lilies - \$13

Name

Address

Tel #.....

In Memory /Celebration/Honor of, (circle One)

.....

.....

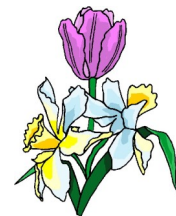
.....

_____ I will pick up my flowers after service

_____ Please deliver my flowers to a shut-in (left over plants will be planted in the church gardens)

Make checks payable to First Church of Christ Easter Memorial Flowers on memo line.

Last day to order April 7, 2019





STEWARDSHIP 2019: Planting the Seeds for Our Future

Have you checked out the oak tree display on the parish hall bulletin board lately? With each passing week we post more and more brightly colored acorns. Each one signifies a pledge made and counted toward the goal we all share of keeping our church family moving forward into the next year of doing the Lord's work. We deeply appreciate both your generosity and the faith you have shown in the people who do the hard work of making a plan and a budget for the next year. They couldn't do it without your pledge commitments. The funding raised through your pledges is the lifeblood of our church life. It's why we have a heated and lighted place to gather, a pastor to lead us, the paper to print out bulletins, music to enhance our worship experience, and the wherewithal for outreach to better our community. There's no more important fundraising we do together than pledging support in this way. We are pleased to report that we are more than half way to our pledge goal, and now that the days are getting longer and spring seems like an actual possibility, we are facing the future bravely with your help. On behalf of your fellow church members and all who came before us stretching back two centuries, thank you.

As of February 28, 2019, 25 people have pledged \$41,796. This is 59.7% of our goal of \$70,000.

We will be winding up our Stewardship Campaign on Sunday March 31, 2019.

Tuesday Quilters

We continue to meet on Tuesday mornings to make items for the next Fair season and Quilt show boutique. During the winter we multitask by setting up for Loving Spoonful, so come with your project supplies and have some warm soup too!

We sew from 9:30am and between setting up and guests until about noon.

Contact Margaret Charney at 860-537-3323





First Church Cemetery Association News

With the recent sudden death of Lonnie Duffy, our cemetery grounds keeper, we are in need of a new company to mow, trim and clean up the cemetery, which is a big job.

Anyone knowing of some company that could take over this job as grounds keeper for the cemetery, please let me know as the first mowing takes place in late May and we will need to negotiate a contract with someone before the first of May. You can reach me at 860-873-9375. If I'm not available, please leave me a message.

Venture Smith is in the news again with Channel 30 NBC doing a news segment on Venture for Black History Month and the schools are back teaching Venture. Our own 7th grade (Mr. Riccio, teacher) at Nathan Hale-Ray Middle School is creating a web page for Venture and I've been approached to help students at Suffield Academy with a Venture Smith research project.

Karl P. Stofko, First Church Cemetery Superintendent and chairman of the Venture Smith Day Celebration Committee

Church Historian's News

The Meeting House Weathervane

The meeting house's weather vane received damage during in bad wind storm recently and needed to be taken down for repair. It was found that at the time of the damage the weathervane had also been struck by lightning. This weather vane, the second since the meeting house was built in 1794, was installed in 1904 when the spire of the steeple was raised to its present height. Several years ago the weather vane had to be repaired when a piece that had broken off needed to be soldered into place. The weather vane will probably remain down until the steeple restoration has been completed.

Church Historian's Annual Report

The church history for 2018 has been published and a limited number of copies are available for those who are interested. If interested, please see the historian after church on a Sunday.

Karl P. Stofko, Church Historian,
First Church of Christ, Congregational
and First Ecclesiastical Society in East Haddam, CT.

EAST HADDAM EMERGENCY FUEL BANK
REPORT FOR 2018

| | Income | Disbursements | Balance |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Balance as of January 1, 2018 | | | \$11,561.01 |
| Liberty Bank Interest | \$ 12.27 | | |
| Susan's LLC | 70.00 | | |
| Nathan Hale Pharmacy | 142.50 | | |
| Nathan Hale - Ray Middle School | 185.00 | | |
| Hadlyme Congregational Church | 318.00 | | |
| Franklin Academy | 350.00 | | |
| East Haddam Garden Club | 380.00 | | |
| St. Stephen's Ladies Aide Society | 436.58 | | |
| VFW Post No. 3336 | 500.00 | | |
| 2 Wrasslin' Cats | 607.50 | | |
| Moodus United Methodist Church | 637.85 | | |
| 23 donations in memory of Joanne Rocznik | 1,435.00 | | |
| East Haddam Community Lions | 2,000.00 | | |
| First Church of Christ, Congregational | 3,079.74 | | |
| 37 local families & individuals | 3,944.00 | | |
| TOTAL | \$ 14,098.44 | | |
| Disbursements of \$300 for fuel for 38 needy | | | " |
| East Haddam families | | \$ 11,400.00 | |
| Balance as of December 31, 2018 | | | \$ 14,259.45 |

The East Haddam Emergency Fuel Bank was established in 1977 by the East Haddam Public Health Nursing Board and the East Haddam Council of Churches, neither of which exist today. At that time, the Council of Churches consisted of 2 lay members and the clergy from First Church of Christ, Congregational, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, St. Bridget of Kildare R.C. Church, Hadlyme Congregational Church, Moodus United Methodist Church and Congregation Rodfe Zedek. First Church volunteered to act as the sponsoring charity for this fund with Dr. Karl Stofko as treasurer and manager and has continued in that capacity ever since.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl P. Stofko DDS, treasurer



News from the Knitting ministry.

Dear knitters, The knitting ministry is a booming success! That creates a little problem!

We are in need of prayer shawls! So if you knit, want to learn how or know someone who likes to knit, we meet the **third Wednesday of each month at 7 PM** in the room directly behind the sanctuary. We would love to see you there! Come for good conversation ,prayer, knitting and fellowship!

If you are unable to attend meetings but are willing to knit, please contact Myra Brandt for more information and yarn at myrabrandt3@gmail.com.



The Prayer Chain is one of the Ministries of First Church. If you would like to pray with this group, there is a sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Beginning this month, names will be removed every 2 months or so. If you want someone to stay on the Prayer Chain, you need to notify Barbara monthly.

For more information

please contact Barbara Bernard at barbarabernard@sbcglobal.net or call 860-705-8842.

God is still listening to our prayers for:

Karan, Justine as Emitt has passed away December 29th, Lisa, Scott.



Prayer

*How to do nothing
and still think you're helping*

From The Sanctuary Committee

Easter is on it's way!



The forms for the Easter plants are on page 4. Orders must be in by April 7, 2019.

The plants come from Ballek's and are always beautiful! Let them die back and then plant in your garden in the fall for beautiful spring flowers!

The East Haddam Fuel Bank

See page 8 for the 2018 Annual Report of the East Haddam Emergency Fuel Bank.

The next Fifth Sunday for Fuel is March 31st. Look for the pink envelopes.

For more information about the East Haddam Fuel bank, contact Karl Stofko.



The East Haddam Clothing Bank

The East Haddam Clothing Bank is located on the lower level of the church. You may enter through the back entrance.

The hours for January-March are 2:30pm -5:30pm every Tuesday of the month.

You may drop off your clean, gently used clothing during these hours. As there isn't any storage space available, they ask that you bring seasonal clothing only.

Note: The East Haddam Clothing Bank is run by the town. We just give it a home. Any questions or concerns about the clothing bank should be directed to the town office.



The Monday Morning Guys

The Monday Morning Guys are a group of gentlemen who love this church and lovingly maintain it. Their numbers are getting smaller and they need some new blood!

Are you retired?

Do you work 2nd or 3rd shift?

Do you have a couple of hours on Monday mornings?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of these questions, call one of the gentlemen named below;

Larry Fraser, Don Messmer, Roy Butler, Joe Dawson





If you would like to see what is happening you can go to our website to view the calendar and it is posted just outside the Fellowship Hall.

You can contact me at
schleppsister35@gmail.com.

The deadline for the May/June 2019 Tidings is April 15, 2019.

This is a good advertising tool for any events coming up!

Blessings,

Kathy Sewell

Our email has changed!

Please note that the general church email address has changed

to

contact@firstchurcheh.org

Join Our Online Mailing List

If you would like to receive The Tidings on line, please email me at contact@firstchurcheh.org, Attention Kathy for Tidings in the subject line. I will add or subtract you from the Tidings email list.

Our mailing list is never shared or sold. We may, however, occasionally pass along an offer from affiliated organizations that we think you may be interested in.

Read the Tidings on our Website!

Tidings is available to read on our website and our events calendar is, also, posted. firstchurcheh.org.



First Church of Christ, Congregational
 499 Town St
 PO Box 445
 East Haddam, CT 06423

TIDINGS
 MARCH/APRIL
 2019



| Lectionary Series | | Contact us |
|---|--|---|
| MARCH | APRIL | Minister Rev. Gale Grayson 860-837-4606 revgalegrayson@gmail.com |
| 3-2 Cor 3:17-4:2 Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a) | 7- Isa 43:16-21 Phil 3:4b-14 John 12-1-8 | Church Office Phone Number 860-873-9084 (Leave message) |
| 10- Rom 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13 | 14- Palm Sunday Ps 118:1-2, 19-24 Luke 19:28-40 | Chair of Deacons Lydia Sherman lydgeosherm@aol.com |
| 17- Phil 3:17-4:1 Luke 13:31-35 | 21- Easter John 20:1-18 | Tidings Editor Kathy Sewell schleppsister35@gmail.com |
| 24- Isa 55:1-9 Ps 63:1-8 | 28- Ps 150 John 20:19-21 | Church Email address (Best way to contact us) contact@firstchurcheh.org |
| 31- 2Cor 5:16-21 Josh 5:9-12 | | Church Website firstchurcheh.org Like us on facebook facebook.com/fccceh |