



The Signpost

APRIL 2017

VOLUME 44, NO. 4



The Bolton Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

228 Bolton Center Road, Bolton, CT 06043 ~ (860) 649-7077 ~ www.boltoncongregational.org

The vision of the Bolton Congregational Church UCC is to be true to the model and example set by the early Church of the Apostles, in our own time.

The Rev. Nicolette L. Siragusa, Pastor; MaryLou Prescher, Organist and Choir Director; Jessica Romeo, Christian Education Director; Melanie Brazdzionis, Church Office Manager/Signpost Editor; Bob Bagley, Ace Maintenance Services; Lisa Catanese, Webmaster; The Rev. Charles H. Ericson, Pastor Emeritus

Covenant with Rev. Chris Davies

On April 2nd during the 10am service, we will affirm a 4-way covenant with the Rev. Chris Davies as she lives out her call as Coordinator of Congregational Assessment, Support, and Advancement – one of the ministry teams of the national setting of the United Church of Christ. The partners in this covenant are Rev. Davies, Bolton Congregational Church UCC, the Tolland Association, and the National Setting. These covenants are documents of mutual support and accountability, recognizing that the church is one body with many members, each with its own form and function.

As a church, we have promised to hold Chris in prayer, include information about her ministry in the newsletter and annual report, recognize her as a Minister in Mission, and support the wider church through financial gifts to “Strengthen the Church” and “Our Church’s Wider Mission.” In turn, Chris promises to be an active part of the church whenever possible (recognizing she lives in Cleveland), to hold us in prayer, to preach at least annually, and to be in regular contact.

May God continue to bless Rev. Davies’ ministry, and our mutual ministry of support and care.

Communion Class for All Ages

**Sunday, April 2
11:30-1:30pm**

Want to learn more about Holy Communion? Usually open only to 3rd graders, this year’s class is open to ALL AGES, young and old. Come and learn something new, or remember something that you have forgotten. Rediscover the meaning behind this ritual in a hands-on class. Pizza will be served, graciously provided by the Board of Christian Education! Maundy Thursday (April 13th, 7pm) will include a special recognition of class participants. Please contact Pastor Nicolette if you are interested in attending: pastornicolette@gmail.com or (517)927-8739.



Country Music Night

Friday, April 28th

7:00pm – 9:30pm

Free Will Donation

Welcoming New Members – June 4th

To join or not to join? Is that the question you are asking? What does it mean to be a member of Bolton Congregational UCC? What does it take to become one? Why would someone want to join? Pastor Nicolette and the Deacons will host a luncheon on Sunday, April 30th, 11:30am – 1:00pm in Chandler Hall to talk about what membership means, and answer your questions. It will also be a time of fellowship when we can get to know one another. We will welcome new members on June 4th – Pentecost Sunday. If you are interested in joining the church, or simply want to learn more about membership, please RSVP by calling the church office (860-649-7077). If you are interested but unavailable at that time, Pastor Nicolette will work with you to make alternate arrangements. Children are welcome and entertainment will be provided (please let the office know the ages of your children)!

From the Pastor...

The early church honored with great reverence the week before Easter. The gospels include many details about what happened this week, and a few of those events we choose to honor as a part of our worship services today.

On April 9th, we will honor Palm Sunday. This is the day of Jesus' triumphant march into Jerusalem. It was a day when the city would have been busting at the seams with Jewish visitors from all over, gathering in advance of Passover. Our sanctuary will be filled with the scent of cut palm branches as we shout words of praise.

On April 13th, we will honor Maundy Thursday. "Maundy" shares a root with the word "commandment" and reflects Jesus' final commandment to his disciples to 'love one another.' On that evening, we will share Communion, and wash one another's hands, and hear the story of Jesus' last night with his disciples, ending with his prayer in the garden.

Please note that on Maundy Thursday, we will not gather for a Seder. We honor Jesus' Jewish heritage, and acknowledge that he was in Jerusalem because of Passover. However, the modern day Seder was instituted after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (in about 70 AD, long after Jesus' final night with his disciples). We know little about the meal that Jesus shared with his disciples, other than the bread and cup which he invites us to share in remembrance of him. If there is interest in learning more about how modern Jewish people honor Passover, we can look into a field trip or a special guest for next year.

On April 14th, we will honor Good Friday through a Tenebrae service. "Tenebrae" is Latin for "shadows" or "darkness," and on that evening, we will extinguish candles and dim lights as we hear the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, execution, and burial.

There will be a marked shift from the joy of Palm Sunday, to the warmth of the last supper, to the dankness of the tomb. All of this is to prepare us for Easter morning. How can we know the joy of the empty tomb if we were not there when Jesus' body was tenderly laid to rest?

Easter morning will begin at 6:00am outside (weather permitting) with a service of water and light. We begin Lent in repentance and ashes, and end the journey with the promises of forgiveness and new life. Begin your Easter morning with this simple yet uplifting service when we rejoice in the promises of God as we watch the rising sun. Then two joyful services at our regular times, filled with the good news of the resurrection.

~ *Pastor Nicolette*

Celebration of Installation

June 4th at 3:00pm

When a congregation calls a new pastor, that pastor is generally "installed" several months later by the local association. We will celebrate the "installation" of Pastor Nicolette as our new minister on Sunday, June 4th at 3pm. Installation services are generally held in the afternoon to allow other local clergy and church members to attend and take part in the celebration. This joyous occasion coincides with Pentecost (the birth of the church), and the color of the day is red. After the service, we will celebrate with light refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Getting to Know the New Pastor...

An open invitation: Would you like to get together over tea, or coffee, or ice cream, or a hike (when it's warmer), or lunch, or dinner, or another activity of your choosing? The best days for me to get together are Monday-Wednesday. Call, text, or email and we'll find some time to get together.



Worship Schedule for April

Sunday, April 2 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Communion Sunday

Message: "Guest of Sinners" ~ Pastor Nicolette

Sunday, April 9 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Palm Sunday

Message: "The King" ~ Pastor Nicolette

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday – April 13 ~ 7:00pm

Good Friday – April 14 ~ 7:00pm

Easter Sunday – April 16 ~ 6:00am, 8:45am & 10:00am

Message: "Alive" ~ Pastor Nicolette

Sunday, April 23 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Easter

Sunday, April 30 – 8:45 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Easter



Storyteller Nights

Story ~ Song ~ Scripture ~ Sacrament

Thank you for your help in making our Lenten Storyteller Nights such a meaningful part of the season. We heard stories from one another, connected with scripture, listened to music, shared communion, laughed, cried, and deepened our relationship with God and with one another. Our final Lenten evening will be April 6th with the theme "March."

Building on the success of these evenings, we will carry them through the summer. Please note the change over the summer from Thursday to Wednesday (to accommodate folks who take long weekends). As weather permits, we'll gather outside around a campfire instead of inside Chandler Hall, for stories, songs, s'mores, scripture, and sacrament. Mark your calendars now – themes will be announced in the May newsletter. Have an idea for a theme? Contact Pastor Nicolette.

- May 4th (Thurs) – Star Wars (May the Fourth be with you)
- May 18th (Thurs)
- June 7 (Wed)
- June 21 (Wed)
- July 5 (Wed)
- July 19 (Wed)
- Aug 2 (Wed)
- Aug 16 (Wed)

Caregiver Collective

Are you caring for a loved one – a spouse, a parent, a sick relative – and want to share some of the joys and struggles of doing so? Pastor Nicolette is collecting the names of people who are interested in a time for caregivers to gather and support one another. The interested individuals will then be contacted to find a mutually agreeable date, time, and location. Please call the office or email if you are interested in connecting with other caregivers.

Crafters'/Store News

HAPPY EASTER from the volunteers at the Church Store.

Our hours are: Sunday 9:30am - 12:30pm
Tuesday 10:00am - 3:00pm

Please join us and check out our new merchandise, buy cards, gifts, donate, or just have a cup of coffee and good conversation. We look forward to seeing you.

We are looking forward to the return of two of our volunteers, Dot Lessard and Kay Richards, who have been enjoying sunny Florida for the winter.

Lynn Ralston

For the Crafters/Store volunteers

Church School News...

Our Lenten Mission Project is still going on. We have been collecting items to go in backpacks for foster children. When a child is taken from a dangerous home environment, they sometimes leave that house with just the clothes on their back. *From the Heart* makes sure that those children will be each given their own bag of personal items. Below is a list of items that we could use. Multiples of each item is fine too, since we will be making multiple backpacks.

All items should be new and un-opened.

Underwear (boys or girls)
Markers
Crayons
Coloring books

On Saturday, March 25th we had a successful paint night with Brush-it-Off. We made \$240 that we will give to *From the Heart* for pillows to go with the bag.

Believe it or not we are talking about the end of the school year. Church School Sunday will be on Sunday, May 21st, during the 10:00am service. There will be only one service that day so the children can practice before the service. Our confirmation class will be confirmed on June 4th at the 10:00am service.

Jessica Romeo

Director of Christian Education

Prayer Shawl Ministry

We are a dedicated group of knitters meeting on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. year round in the lower level of the meetinghouse. Our next meeting is on April 24th. We have provided hundreds of hand-knitted shawls and mantles for friends and family members of our church.

There is never a charge and anyone can make a request as a gift of caring, comfort, or for the joy of a celebration. We have some made ahead with a variety of colors and patterns, ready to fill any requests.

Your generous gifts have made it possible for us to be self-supporting all this time.

Visitors are always welcome at our meetings and we enjoy teaching new knitters. It is a social evening. You can come anytime—come to learn, or share your patterns, or just to visit.

Dot Lessard



Movie Night: "Out of Order" Sunday, April 2, 3:00-4:30pm

What does it mean to love an institution that does not embrace you fully? How can one follow a calling - when the reality of gender and sexual orientation threaten to exclude you? *Out of Order* is a film that draws timely attention to the joyful experiences and complex struggles of queer young people who persist in faith and follow God's call. Doors open at 2:30pm, movie begins at **3pm, on Sunday, April 2nd at Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford.** The evening will include a showing of the film, and Q&A afterwards with Alex McNiell, Executive Director of the More Light Presbyterians, and one of the individuals profiled in the film. We hope you will join us (and don't worry - you'll still be home before the opening tip)!

Storyteller's Workshop - May 7th 11:30am-12:30pm

What makes a good story? How do you capture your audience's imagination? Learn the basics of good storytelling, and come prepared to practice a short (3 minute or less) story. It could be a favorite story to tell at dinner parties, a favorite Bible passage, or simply what you did on Saturday afternoon. A great storytelling evening begins with great storytellers - you!



I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the entire congregation. It has been a rough six months with my father's diagnosis of cancer, the death of my mom's best friend, the death of my grandmother, and finally the death of my father. It has been the hardest time in my life and the support of this congregation has meant the world to me and my family. From the cards and notes, emails and texts, to all the help and support at the services for my dad, I can not find the proper words to say thank you to each and every person who has shown love and concern for us. Our family has been coming to this church for 18 years and I am always touched by the thoughtfulness of this congregation. You all have become like a second family to us, and I just want to say thank you so much for all that you do.

There is a lot for me to do going forward to help my mother. I will be going back and forth between Connecticut and Florida and I will not be able to be at church as much as I would like to be. Therefore, Pastor Nicolette and I sat down and decided that it would be best for me to take a leave of absence from my position for the months of May, June and July. That will allow me to devote my time to my family. I will get things organized for the rest of the Church School year and I will be back in time to plan for the fall. I thank you all for your support at this time.

Jessica Romeo

FROM THE HEART

It's officially *spring*....ahhhhh! It's about this time (after the final winter donations are delivered) that *From the Heart* looks back with sincere appreciation at all the ways you provided warmth & comfort to others in need!

Thank you for all of your support in helping us fill 30 Easter pails! We are still collecting small toys and personal items to fill additional pails so it is not too late! And...the after Easter sales are always a great way to help us plan ahead for next year.

Once again, we had another fun-filled evening at our St. Patrick's Day bingo at Woodlake nursing home! There is nothing like having one of the seniors suddenly answer a flip phone in the middle of a bingo game only to tell the person on the other end to "hold on a minute...I'm playing bingo" ...and then watch her put the phone in her lap! Whoever was on the other end of the phone waited a while. We are always in need of prizes, especially: shower gel, hand/body lotion, tissue boxes, small stuffed animals, and monetary support for other prizes.

"Pillow Care" is now in full swing! So far we have donated over 30 pillows to children in foster care. Brand new, standard size pillows are paired with handmade pillowcases. FTH accepts all sizes as long as they are brand new with the plastic wrap on.

We are also happy to report that Kevin, our adopted soldier, has returned home! His mom was veeery happy to see him again and she sends her thanks for all of your support. We are always proud to support our troops so please contact us if you have a soldier to whom you would like us to send care packages!

We continue to collect and donate gift cards, paper, personal care & non-perishable items for our adopted families! We are currently seeking donations of spring/summer clothes for a boy, size 16-18 shirts/pants. If you have any, or would like to help with a gift card to Wal-Mart or Kohls, we will be collecting items all spring!

Thank you for all you do all year long!

Laura Ann

SIGN UP FOR OUR REMINDER EMAILS!



For those of you who chose to have a hard copy of the Signpost mailed or left in the narthex for you, we also want to make you aware that we now send reminders of upcoming church events via email that you are missing! To sign up for these emails, please visit the church website at:

<http://boltoncongregational.org/index.html>



APRIL 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Every Sunday: † 8:45 a.m. & 10 a.m. Worship Services (Unless otherwise noted)</p> <p>† Church School at 10:00am service (Unless otherwise noted)</p> <p>† Church Store Open: 9:30am-12:30pm</p>						1
<p>2 Communion Sunday Board of Missions 11:15am Board of Christian Education 11:30am Communion Class 11:30 - 1:30pm Girl Scouts: 2-4pm <i>Fifth Sunday in Lent</i></p>	3	<p>4 Crafters/Time to Socialize 10:00am Church Store Open: 10am-3pm Board of Stewardship 6:30pm</p>	<p>5 Choir ~ 6:30pm Refuge Recovery Group 7:00pm</p>	<p>6 Lenten Storytelling 7:00pm in Chandler Hall</p>	<p>7 Office Closed Al-Anon - 7:30pm</p>	8
<p>9  PALM SUNDAY *No Church School</p>	10 Office Closed	<p>11 Crafters/Time to Socialize 10:00am Church Store Open: 10am-3pm</p>	<p>12 Choir ~ 6:30pm Refuge Recovery Group 7:00pm Church Council 7:00pm</p>	<p>13 Maundy Thursday Worship Service 7:00pm</p>	<p>14 [Office Closed] Good Friday Worship Service 7:00pm Al-Anon - 7:30pm</p>	15
<p>16 Easter Sunday  Worship Services at: 6:00, 8:45 & 10:00am *No Church School</p>	<p>17 Office Closed *Pastor Nicolette on vacation 3/17-3/20</p>	<p>18 Crafters/Time to Socialize 10:00am Church Store Open: 10am-3pm</p>	<p>19 Choir ~ 6:30pm Refuge Recovery Group 7:00pm</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 Girls' Empowerment Group 7-9pm Al-Anon - 7:30pm</p>	22
<p>23 Pastoral Relations Board 11:30am <i>Second Sunday of Easter</i></p>	<p>24 Office Closed Prayer Shawl Gathering 7:00pm</p>	<p>25 Crafters/Time to Socialize 10:00am Church Store Open: 10am-3pm</p>	<p>26 Choir ~ 6:30pm Refuge Recovery Group 7:00pm Board of Deacons 7:00pm</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Coffeehouse 7:00-9:30pm Al-Anon - 7:30pm</p>	29
<p>30 Board of Christian Ed. 11:30am Confirmation Class 11:30am New Members Gathering 11:30 - 1:00pm <i>Third Sunday of Easter</i></p>						

Bolton Congregational Church UCC ~ 228 Bolton Center Road, Bolton, CT 06043