

APRIL 2025 HILLTOP HERALD

Rev. Andrew Harris
 Pastor

Mark Omobono
 Moderator

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My siblings in Christ,

During the season of Lent we pack up our alleluias and set them aside to be taken out again on Easter morning. For these 40 days, we consciously and willingly forgo the feeling of exultant joy that lifts our spirits and fills our hearts during the other 325 days of the year (God willing). It's like going on a long hike. We will not keep the comforts of a cozy bed, a roof, a car, or electronic gadgets.

We'll make our way by foot, sleeping in tents, eating canned beans over campfires. But along the way we will also encounter beauties, challenges, and interactions unexpected and unplanned for. We will deal with whatever the weather gives us and find beauty in the rain, in a chance encounter with a passing stranger, and in those humble canned beans satiating a hunger we could not have previously imagined.

The reasons for these Lenten practices are as diverse as the Church body itself, but one of the feelings that comes to light for me each year is this: we are putting ourselves in the shoes of Jesus's first disciples on their way to Jerusalem. They do not know what will happen. Some are hoping Jesus will lead his considerable crowd of followers into a violent confrontation with Rome. Some hope for healing. Some hope for forgiveness. Some are not sure what to expect but are drawn to this mysterious, miraculous Galilean. But none of them, least of all Jesus's closest disciples, really expect him to be crucified and, ultimately, resurrected, despite Jesus's numerous forewarnings.

During the season of Lent, we put away our alleluias because we're called to experience the unfathomable shock and surprise of Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection. We're called to go through our Lenten journey and Holy Week spoiler-free, without presuming to know the ending, so that we too can have all our expectations upended; so that we can take our own ideas of what salvation is and what salvation ought to be and watch them disperse like shadows before the light of resurrection.

One thing we learn every Lenten season is that salvation is not what we want it to be. Whether we desire salvation from our problems, from our worries, or from our political situation – whatever it is we're longing for, Jesus gives us something different; a complete reversal of what we expect. The Good News is that the salvation we receive, the salvation that was, and is, and will be, the salvation that we celebrate every Easter, goes above and beyond even our wildest expectations. The salvation we receive colors every aspect of our lives. It transforms grief to gratitude, poverty into plenty, death into life.

As we prepare our hearts to embrace the mysteries of Holy Week and Easter morning once again, may we let go of our own expectations and allow ourselves to be transformed by the journey itself. May we quiet our spirits and open our ears to hear God's still, small word for us. May we witness Christ crucified and be amazed by whatever unexpected miracle happens next.

Peace,

Rev. Andrew Harris



HOLY WEEK



PALM SUNDAY

April 13 10:30am

Palms for this service leading up to Easter Sunday. Come early, pickup your palms at the door and welcome each other.

Procession at Noon

Join us at St. Mark's Church as we process up to UCC. Leading the way will be a mini-pony! Refreshments will be provided outside on the green!



MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 17 6:30pm

Join us in Sewall Hall for soup, bread and worship. This is a solemn service not recommended for young Children.



GOOD FRIDAY

April 18 TBD

Join the Presbyterians at their church for Good Friday stations of the cross.



EASTER SUNRISE

April 20 6:30am

Join us outside top of the hill at Simonds Park. Coffee and donuts to follow.



EASTER EGG HUNT

April 20 9:45am

Join us for our Easter Egg Hunt on the church grounds provided by Christian Education.



EASTER FESTIVAL

WORSHIP

April 20 10:30am

Music - Cross decorating begins @ 10:15am

Worship Service begins @10:30am.

Join us from 10:15-10:30am as we decorate our beautiful floral cross and listen to music from Brian Gionet and guest musicians. At 10:30am our service will begin.

It was a long meeting, with much of the time spent discussing Lent, Holy Week and Easter events and plans.

On Ash Wednesday, 'ashes to go' were popular in the morning both at the church and True North. The evening service, held here jointly with the Presbyterian church, was attended by 22, with about 75% from our church.

The first session of the monthlong Lenten workshop, 'Aging with Grace,' was attended by 12. Its leaders are Debbie Claar and Andrew.

Deb Raymond and the CE committee have organized a noontime Palm Sunday procession from St. Mark's to our church again this year. The Deacons will provide refreshments.

On Maundy Thursday, worship will be in Sewall Hall at 6:30, again with the Presbyterians, and will include a simple meal of soup and bread. Readers are needed for the service.

The Presbyterian church will offer the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, with the time to be determined.

All are welcome to join the Deacons on Saturday, April 19th at 9:30am to decorate the sanctuary for Easter.

On Easter, the Sunrise service is scheduled for 6:30 am at Simonds Park. There will be an Easter egg hunt provided by CE at 9:45 and the decoration of the large cross in the sanctuary will begin at 10:15 before the 10:30 service, which will feature guest musicians.

Music is one of the Deacons' responsibilities under the constitution, and there was extensive discussion about the process of selecting a new Director of Music Ministries. Possible search committee members were identified and will be approached. Survey responses are coming in both on paper and online. The goal is to have someone in place by the end of the summer. Debbie Claar, Aline Beck and the Special Music Committee will oversee music in the meantime.

Eight people are taking the new members class. Those who decide to join will be welcomed on May 4.

Work continued on the Memorial Fund Policy, which should be finalized shortly.

EASTER PLANTS for the SANCTUARY



Remember how beautiful the church looked at Easter? If you would like to donate a plant or two for our service this year on April 20th, the form is at coffee hour and in the newsletter. Plants are \$10 each and you can keep your plant, donate, or have the Deacons deliver one to someone who could use a little cheering up. Make payment to *UCC* and please add *Easter Flower* on the memo line. Return form with payment to the church office. Deadline for ordering is April 13th. (Form included)



MISSIONS UPDATE!

RED WAGON

Please remember April will contain school spring vacation week. The need for snacks is greater than usual. We realize our church collection happens after the vacation week on April 27th, but you can always drop items off to the pantry directly at 21 Murray Ave, Burlington (close to the Used Book Store).

Cereal-Oatmeal-Canned Beans
Individually wrapped Kids Snack Foods
Baby Wipes
Jelly
Cooking Oil

CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE

We are looking forward to warm days so we can meet out of doors. On cooler days we will meet indoors in the conference room. Good news is that while Joanne's may have closed, we still have a location in Burlington where we can donate the blankets for Project Linus. The new drop off place is the Electric Quilters. Some of us are making strips to be sewn into blankets, others are making scarves or children's sweaters.



MISSIONS TREASURER'S REPORT

In March \$1000 was paid to the SNEUCC. This is the first of 4 payments, which will total \$4500 by the end of 2025. \$900 will go directly to the Metropolitan Boston Association. \$200 will be donated to support the Palm Sunday Procession, led by Deb Raymond. The check will be made out directly to Sandy Covee, who provides Clyde, the horse, for the Procession. Missions is in the process of reviewing the non-profits we donated to in 2024. We are looking to support fewer and making a greater impact.



MISSIONS NEWS

Missions would like to thank all who gave generously to our special collection for One Great Hour of Sharing.



EASTER SPECIAL OFFERING

The special offering taken on Easter, April 20th, will be divided, with 50% going to our Church to support its work. The other 50% will be given to support the UCC's relief efforts in the areas of Los Angeles which were affected by the devastating fires last December and January. There will be envelopes marked Easter in the pews, on the pew beside the Bulletins and outside Bobbie's office. If you donate using a check, please mark the memo line with Easter. You may also mail checks to the office, 6 Lexington Street, Burlington. If you want to give digitally the church web page tells you how to use Vanco.



BIBLE STUDY

Join Pastor Andrew on Wednesday afternoons here in the conference room (and on Zoom livestream) from 2-3pm. All are welcome!

The link for Zoom is:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84363847241>

PUB THEOLOGY



Due to Holy Week and other Thursday evening commitments, Pub Theology will be cancelled in April.

If you would like to meet with Pastor Andrew you can contact him at:
andrew@uccburlington.org or 978-219-2715.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

Transition and Future Plans

Dear Congregation,

On Sunday, April 27th, there will be a special coffee hour in recognition of the contributions Brian has made in the past two years. Please join us in wishing him and Alli the very best in their future endeavors.

As we navigate the transition following the departure of our Director of Music Ministries, Brian, we want to assure you that we are in the capable hands of Aline Beck and Debbie Claar. They will lead us with grace and dedication, supported by the Music Committee.

During this period, we will be inviting some of talented members of our congregation to fill in through the summer and on Sundays when the choir is not performing. Aline and Debbie will be leading the music for these services with the support from the Music Committee, ensuring that our worship's music remains vibrant and soulful.

A search committee is now being formed to find a new Director of Music Ministry. Thanks to the invaluable feedback from the recent survey and interviews with band members and choir members, we have gathered wonderful insights that will guide us in this search.

We appreciate your support and patience during this transition and look forward to continuing our musical journey together. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to talk to me, Deana Tredeau, chair of the Music Committee. If you would like to share your special talent please let me, Debbie or Aline know.

Warm regards,
Music Committee
Deana Tredeau, Chair



FROM THE GREEN TEAM

Please join the Green Team on Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10-12 as we cut the invasive vines that are destroying the trees in the forested area between the church and parsonage. We will be enjoying pizza after our cutting so please see the signup sheet at coffee hour.

We really appreciate any help you can give us as we bring new life to this area. If you are joining us please be sure to wear sturdy boots or sneakers, long pants, long sleeves and gloves. Bug spray is a must! If you have loppers or clippers please bring them, but if you don't have any we will have some extra for you to use.

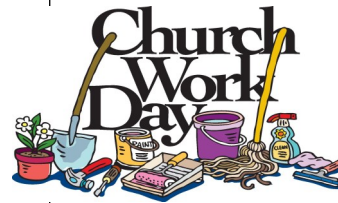
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY

May 3rd

There will be sign-up sheets at coffee hour

List of proposed projects will be announced at a later date



SAVE THE DATE-MAY 10TH!

Mother's Day Plant, Craft, and Bake Sale on Saturday, MAY 10th at UCC!

We are hoping you will lend your talents to the cause to make this another successful fundraiser. Last year we sold many spring and Mother's Day themed crafts, as well as lots of perennials and vegetable and flower seedlings.

If you would like help digging up/splitting perennials in your yard, please contact Julie Lewis at jalewis@gmail.com. **We have pots here at church if you need any! If you are sharing your perennials, they should be potted and delivered to the church on Friday, May 9th or Saturday morning before 9 am.**

We will also be looking for people to make and package baked goods to sell that day. Look for sign-up sheets at coffee hour, or feel free to email Julie if you plan to contribute anything, or if you have questions. Thank you!

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN ED

Look what's coming up in Sunday School

- 4/6 Start Sunday School at 10:30 downstairs . Then come up and join worship for Communion.
- 4/13 All Church Worship. The Sunday School will be in church for the full service and participate in passing out the friendship pads and collect the offering.
- 4/20 Easter-there will be a Sunday School class after the Children's time.
- 4/27 Seasons of the Spirit curriculum

Nursery School

Care is provided by 2 people for newborns – 4 years old.

Confirmation

The confirmation class will meet: 3/30 at UCC Church, 4/13 at Hancock Church, 5/4 at Hancock Church
5/18 Confirmation will be part of the Church Service. Please plan to attend church to support the Confirmands.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE EVENTS

Yard Cleaning at UCC Saturday April 12, 10:30 AM

Andrew is encouraging this to be an Intergenerational event, with adults, youth, and kids getting out to lend a hand. Pizza at noon!

Palm Sunday Procession April 13, 2025 begins at noon

Procession begins at St. Mark's parking lot promptly at noon.

We will walk up Bedford Street .7 miles to the United Church of Christ (UCC) lead by Clyde a mini Horse!

Bring your palms with you, to reenact procession into Jerusalem!

If you are not inclined to walk, please be at the top of the hill at the UCC to cheer on the procession!

Deacons will provide refreshments outside for your enjoyment!

Easter April 20, 2025 9:45am Easter Egg Hunt

Hear the story and then off to find the eggs!

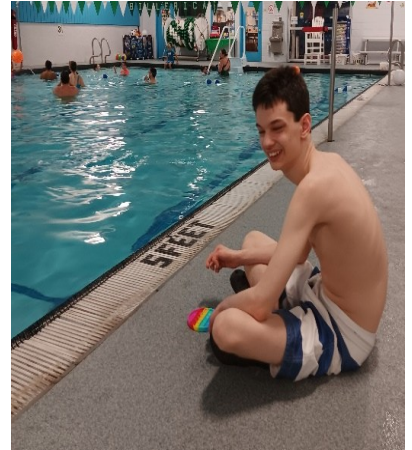
Please bring your own containers to collect the eggs. (Bags, baskets, buckets)

You are welcome to bring your family and friends.

Here is the great group from the 2024 Easter Egg Hunt



OUR POOL PARTY ON MARCH 16



March 16 Coffee Hour and Bake Sale were fun and a huge success!

Thank so much to all that donated to the bake sale and coffee hour:

Carol Downing, Donna Ferro, Kathy Hill, Hilary Hrutkay, Barbara Leonard, Deb Raymond.

Expert bakers and sales persons were: James Omobono, Holy and Nemaniah Rosenberg

Thank you to all that purchased bakery items for your generosity! The bake sale made \$217.

WORSHIP PARTICIPATION

April 6 Communion-Lent

Communion Prep: Tonia Egan-Sally Willard
Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist: Brian Gionet
Lay Leader; Chris Stahlinski
Head Usher: Dave McNeil
Usher:
Greeter:
Flowers: Jake Vitali
Collector: Marge Zamanian
Nursery: Kate Smith
Sunday School: Deb Raymond
Donna Ferro
Coffee Host: Andie Joseph
Bakers; Sally Willard
Marcia Rich

April 13 Palm Sunday-Love Offering

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist: Brian Gionet
Lay Leader: Lucy Damiani
Head Usher:
Usher: Sally Willard
Greeter: Chris Stahlinski
Flowers: Palms
Collector: Deb Raymond
Nursery: Kate Smith
Sunday School: Deb Raymond
Donna Ferro
Coffee Host:
Bakers:

April 17 Maundy Thursday Service at 6pm

Soup and Worship in Sewall Hall
Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist: Brian Gionet
Readers: Various Volunteers

April 18 Good Friday-Stations of the Cross

At the Presbyterian Church Time to be Determined

April 20 Easter Worship

Easter Sunrise at Simonds Park 6:30am

Easter Egg Hunt at UCC 9:45am

Decorate the LARGE Cross 10:15am

Easter Worship Service at 10:30am

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist: Brian Gionet
Lay Leader: Marcia Rich
Head Usher:
Ushers (4): Chris Stahlinski

Greeter:
Flowers: Easter Plants
Collector: Dick Butler
Nursery: Kate Smith
Sunday School: Deb Raymond-Donna Ferro
No Coffee Hour Today!

April 27 Worship-Red Wagon

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist: Brian Gionet
Lay Leader: Sally Willard
Head Usher:
Usher: Dave Leonard
Greeter:
Flowers: Easter Plants
Collector: Joan Zink
Nursery: Kate Smith
Sunday School: Deb Raymond
Donna Ferro
Coffee Host: Deana Tredeau
Baker: Deana Tredeau

(Special Coffee Hour to celebrate Brian on his last day with us!)

ZOOM LINK FOR WORSHIP:

Click <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/756975189> to watch.

If you cannot connect to Zoom, you can always call from your phone and listen to the audio.

The phone number is 929-205-6099 and the meeting ID is 756 975 189 when prompted.

The Link to signup as a volunteer for Sunday morning worship is:

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/567269842043/false?popup=true#/invitation>

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Karen Ciardi's mom Dottie	Barbara Naddaff's friend Mary
Andrew's friend Lorenzo	Tonia Egan's Mom and Dad
Claire Simas	Shirley Fong's Mom Mary
Omobono family friend's new baby	Kay Shute
David Leonard	Julies Lewis' cousin Alicia
Ally's cousin Lea	Chris Stahlinski's sister
Deana Tredeau's brother-in-law Jim Sutton	Brian Gionet's Dad
Bill Hitchcock's girlfriend Denise	Roberta Low
Ryan Roitman-Waters and husband	Shirley Garside's daughter Lynn
Bill Livezey	Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce
Donna DeSimone's Brother-in-law Rick	Marilyn Langley's brother Bill
Anna Karwan's mom Irene and gratitude for her sister as caretaker	Kelly Sievert
Laura Nowell's brother Nick, cousin Nigel, friend Mary	Jan Blandino's grandson Toby, daughter Brenda, son-in-law Rick
Elaine Glancy	Ginger Mungillo and daughter Cindy, son Jim
Skip Glancy and sister Dorothy	Barbara Garland
Karen Butler's brother-in-law Lenny	Victims of the Wildfires and Hurricanes
Ted Brierley	Mother Earth / Our Country!

CONDOLENCES:

Our deepest sympathy to Joan Zink and her entire family on the passing of Joan's dear daughter Jen DeSario. We can't express enough how sad we all are. Our sympathy to husband Steve and their two daughters Ava and Emma. Keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Our heartfelt sympathy to Rev. Andrew Harris and family on the passing of his Grandmother Jan Cooper. Keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Condolences to Karen Ciardi and family on the passing of her dad, Bill Richard. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Sadly, Joe Stoddard, our previous Director of Music Ministries, lost his mom. She passed on March 24th. Keep Joe and Paul in your prayers.

1 Alan Beck
7 Brody Bonnell
9 Kristen Costa
10 Josephine Samarjian
11 Barbara Naddaff
12 Barbara Leonard
13 Tina Brierley
13 Pam Walker



13 Brad Bond
15 Donald Walker
19 Janet Hooper
21 Shirley Fong
25 Allison Reynolds (Phillips)
28 Kristen Harder
30 Mark Forbush
30 Kay Shute

April 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1	2 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	3 1p C4C 6:30p Scouts	4	5 4pm setup 5-10pm Riyaz Rental
6 10:30a LENT Communion	7 6:30p AA 7p Trustees	8 7p HR Mtg	9 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	10 1p C4C 6:30p Scouts 7p Deacons	11	12 10am Vine cutting and pizza day!
13 10:30a Palm Sunday Service  Noon Processional from St. Mark's Church to UCC	14 6:30p AA	15 7p PC Meeting	16 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	17  1p C4C 1p Foil Plants NO Scouts 6p Soup and Worship Sewall Hall	18  GOOD FRIDAY @ Presbyterian Church	19 9:30p Come Help Decorate the Sanctuary
20  6:30a Sunrise Service 9:45p Easter Egg Hunt-Sewall Hall 10:15p Decorate Cross 10:30am Worship 3:30p-8pm RENTAL	21 PATRIOTS DAY HOLIDAY Office Closed 6:30p AA	22	23 2p Bible Study 7p Choir	24 1p C4C 6:30p Scouts	25 MAY HILLTOP ARTICLE DEADLINE	26
27 10:30a Worship Red Wagon Celebrate Brian!	28 6:30p AA	29	30 2p Bible Study 7p Choir			

UCC Congregational
6 Lexington Street
Burlington, MA 01803
Address Service Requested

TO:



APRIL 2025 HILLTOP HERALD NEWSLETTER

EASTER PLANT ORDER FORM

Given by: _____

In Memory /Celebration / Honor of: _____

No. of plants: **(\$10.00 each)** _____

I wish to keep my plant: _____

I wish to donate my plant: _____

I will deliver a plant: _____

I would like a plant delivered
to a UCC member/friend _____

(Name of Person)



**Please return your payment to the church office by April 13th.
Payment made out to UCC and Easter Plant on the memo line.**

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Given by: _____

In Memory /Celebration / Honor of: _____

No. of plants: **(\$10.00 each)** _____

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