



As we approach Easter Sunday, The Rev. Heeckt's meditations have been about the life of Jesus. He has asked each of us to take this time to reflect upon our own beliefs and relationship with God. When we celebrate Easter, it is time to be reminded how Jesus has affected our own lives.

These are the scheduled services for March -

**March 16th** - Palm Sunday - Everyone (if you are able) will meet at Shield's Hall, palms will be distributed, and the congregation will process to the Church. For those unable to walk over to the Church, they will be greeted by a Deacon and palms received as they enter the church. This will also be the Sunday that we accept new members into our congregation

**March 20th** - Maundy Thursday - A communion service with scriptures hearing the last seven words of Jesus will be observed (7:30PM).

**March 21st** - Good Friday - The church will be opened for self devotion and reflection. (Rev. Heeckt will be participating in the Ecumenical Service in Ridgefield).

**March 22nd** - Holy Saturday - The Saturday evening service will be similar to the ancient Christian tradition of the Easter Vigil (5PM).

**March 23rd** - EASTER SUNDAY - There will be two (9AM and 11 AM) services celebrating the arisen Christ. These services will be full of music, celebration and communion. There will be a Fellowship Hour between the two services.

As we celebrate this Easter season, let us all prepare for the Holy Week services by inviting our friends and neighbors to join with us in God's name.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Straiton, chair of Deacons



It's that time of year again! The Nominating Committee will be meeting over the next two months to formulate our slate of officers for May 2008/2009. The slate will be presented to the congregation at our May Annual Meeting. If anyone has an interest and would like to be considered for a particular position, please let a member of the committee know. You can also place a note in the Nominating mailbox located in the office of Shield's Hall. The committee members are, Bill Lucas, Chris Miller, Sally Miller, Sharon Straiton, Liz Rowe, Joy Manger, Carole Bishop, Elizabeth Sganga and The Reverend Heeckt as advisor. As always, the committee strives for a terrific fit amongst the committee members, a group of Christian volunteers who work together to support and care for our church community.

Elizabeth Sganga  
Nominating Committee Chairman

March 2008

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday                        | Saturday  |
|---|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 24  | 25<br>5p Pastoral Relations                                      | 26   | 27<br>7:30p Choir Practice                           | 28<br>7:15p AA Meets   | 29                            | 1<br>5p Church Service<br>6:30p Adult Discussion Group  |
| 2   | 3<br>10a One Great Hour of Sharing Offering taken                | 4<br>7p Deacons Meet<br>6:30p Mission and Social Justice Committee | 5<br>7:30p Choir Practice                            | 6<br>7:15p AA Meets  | 7                             | 8<br>5p Church Service<br>6:30p Adult Discussion Group  |
| 9   | 10<br>Daylight Savings Time Begins [USA]                         | 11<br>7p Trustee Meeting   | 12<br>7:30p Choir Practice                           | 13<br>7:15p AA Meets   | 14                            | 15<br>5p Church Service<br>6:30p Adult Discussion Group |
| 16<br>Palm Sunday [Christian]                           | 17<br>7p Council Meeting<br>St. Patrick's Day [USA]              | 18   | 19<br>7:30p Choir Practice<br>St. Joseph [Christian] | 20<br>7:30p Maundy Thursday Service<br>Maundy Thursday [Christian] | 21<br>Good Friday [Christian] | 22<br>5p Church Service<br>6:30p Adult Discussion Group |
| 23<br>9 and 11 am Easter Services<br>Easter [Christian] | 24<br>5p Pastoral Relations Meeting<br>Easter Monday [Christian] | 25   | 26<br>7:30p Choir Practice                           | 27<br>7:15p AA Meets   | 28                            | 29<br>5p Church Service                                 |
| 30  | 31<br>April Fool's Day [USA]                                     | 1<br>April Fool's Day [USA]  | 2<br>7:30p Choir Practice                            | 3<br>7:15p AA Meets  | 4                             | 5<br>5p Church Service                                  |



In an effort to cut costs for the church, the newsletter will now be e-mailed to everyone. You will receive notification that the newsletter is ready to be downloaded via the church website.

If you still wish to receive a print copy, please contact me. You can see me after church or email me.

Thank you!!

Carole L. Bishop, carolelbishop@sbcglobal.net  
Cornerstone Editor

**CELEBRATE EASTER WITH FLOWERS**

Lilies and hyacinths are symbols of the new life in Easter's promise each spring. Ridgebury Congregational Church is unique in its tradition of celebrating Easter with flowers dedicated by individuals to honor new life, past lives, events and good wishes for others. If you wish to join in this tradition by ordering flowers to be placed in the chancel for Easter Sunday, please fill out the information below and return it in the offering collection (with a check payable to Ridgebury Congregational Church), or put it in the "Flowers" mailbox located in Shields Hall.

Please order Easter flowers **before** Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>.

I wish to contribute flowers for Easter Sunday Services at Ridgebury Congregational Church. Please print in the Sunday program that the flowers honor

Name/Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Number and type of flower:**

Hyacinths \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00  
 Lily \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00

**Please send me a gift acknowledgment card at the address below:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_



When we share our resources through One Great Hour of Sharing, we make a difference in the lives of others. We reach around the world, giving shape to the heart of Christ.

And when we understand how the blessing of sharing changes lives, our own lives are never again the same.

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have."  
Hebrews 13:16a

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received on Sunday, March 2nd.

Ridgefield Historical Society

presents

**Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment:  
the Churches of Colonial Ridgefield**

How and when were Ridgefield's oldest churches established? What did the people who worshipped in them believe? What was their place in Ridgefield's life?

These questions and others will be considered in a discussion series led by the Rev. John Heeckt, Minister of the Ridgebury Congregational Church. Mr. Heeckt has studied the history of American religion at Yale and Harvard Universities.

- **Date:** Tuesday, March 4 and March 11
- **Time:** 7:00 p.m.
- **Cost:** No charge
- **Place:** Ridgefield Community Center  
316 Main Street

**SEATING LIMITED. To reserve a place: Call 438-5821**

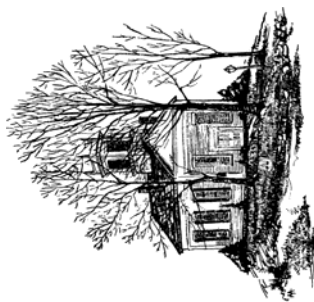
Ridgefield Historical Society  
4 Sunset Lane



In January, we approved our 2008 operating budget. This vote of confidence in our future gives us the "green light" to begin some of the important activities that keep our little congregation thriving. One of those activities is refreshing our leadership. The Nominating Committee is in place and its function is crucial to the vitality of our "little white church on the corner". Its responsibility is to develop the yearly slate of officers, boards and committee membership. Another activity is the long range planning of our facilities. The Trustees have already begun investigating the refurbishing of the Meetinghouse. The Rev. Heeckt developed a list of potential restoration-oriented architects and the Trustees are gathering information on them. A third activity that's key to the health of our congregation is our ability to reach out to the larger community. The Rev. Heeckt is soon to be a famous church historian! Sponsored by the Ridgefield Historical Society, John is giving two talks on religion in Ridgefield. In addition, we are participating in Ridgefield's 300th Anniversary celebration. For May, John and the Deacons are preparing a special Memorial Weekend service. For July, Ryan Clark, Elizabeth Sganga and the 300th Anniversary volunteers are preparing a fun booth for the July 4th weekend country fair.

Our future looks bright as our many hands unite to support our mission. Thanks, you are making it happen!

Respectfully submitted,  
Alice Kenny Lucas  
Moderator



Ridgebury Congregational Church, UCC  
605 Ridgebury Road  
Ridgefield, CT 06877



**MARCH**

- 4 Paget Grose, Cameron Scott
- 12 RoseMary Frederick
- 13 Chris Miller, Marsha Albats
- 21 Robert Mirrielees
- 23 Pat Welton
- 24 Vincent Sganga
- 26 Maggie Pell
- 29 Kristen Heyel
- 30 Kelsey Heyel, Sean Galloway
- 31 Lynne Keeler

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THE CORNERSTONE

Ridgebury Congregational Church  
605 Ridgebury Road  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

MARCH NEWSLETTER

From the Pastor

Ave Ridgeburians!

Even as we as a church are continuing to make our way through Lent, we are beginning to look ahead to traveling along with Jesus and his disciples up the road to Jerusalem. Elsewhere in this issue of *The Cornerstone*, Sharon Straiton will discuss the special events and services that we will share in during Holy Week and Easter. My article will take a look at some of those events and services and talk briefly about what makes them so special.

The observations of Holy Week are intended to help us remember and think about the most important events in the last few days of Jesus' life. These are the days during which his earthly ministry was coming to an end and his church was first coming into existence.

On Palm and Passion Sunday, we remember two seemingly contradictory but intimately related events. The first is his triumphant entry into Jerusalem when the crowds acclaimed Jesus as the promised King. But if Jesus' triumphant entry reminds us that he is that long-promised king, the second event we remember on this Sunday is Jesus' Passion. His rejection by his people's leaders and his betrayal and denial by his closest followers, reminds us that Jesus' kingdom is not a political kingdom, but a spiritual one. One that commands our allegiance not by human power but rather by Divine love. The lesson is that Jesus is our King, but his claim is based ultimately on his sacrifice for our sake.

Before we get to that moment of sacrifice, we pause for a moment on Maundy Thursday to reflect on that love. The English word "maundy" is derived from the Latin word *mondatum*, which means "commandment". On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus' two final commandments to his disciples. They are to love one another as he has loved them and they are to remember him and what he has done for us when we gather around the symbols of his body and blood at the Lord's Supper.

It is on Good Friday that we remember that great moment of sacrifice. The moment when Jesus, for our sake, accepted the shame, humiliation, and pain of death on the cross. Good Friday is not good for what it meant to Jesus, but for what it means to us! We remember that Jesus, who died without sin, died for us. We remember that he took the punishment for our failures. We are also reminded of that great summary of the Gospel that we discussed a few weeks ago in John 3:16. It stated that "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

That brings us to Easter, the Church's greatest celebration. We remember the events of the Passion and the Crucifixion were not, to borrow a phrase of Churchill's, the beginning of the end, but rather the end of the beginning. We remember that despite the plotting of the Jewish leadership, the power of the Roman Empire and all the forces of evil that would have kept Jesus in the tomb, that God's plan for the redemption of all Creation could not be held in check, but rather bursts into glorious new life even as Jesus is raised to new life three days after His death. On this greatest of all days we celebrate that, thanks to Jesus' atoning death and triumphant resurrection, we can claim all the good things that God has promised us. Our lives can be transformed by the power of His love: our futures can be secured in the strength of his promises. As Charles Wesley wrote, "Made like Him, like Him we rise; Ours the Cross, the grave, the skies!"

Cheers,  
John