



MARCH NEWSLETTER

THE CORNERSTONE

Ridgebury Congregational Church
605 Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Ave, Ridgeburians!

In 1802, the great English poet Williams Wordsworth (the man who may have had the best last name for a writer ever) wrote:

*The world is too much with us, late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bears her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.*

When Wordsworth writes that “The world is too much with us” and that “getting and spending, we lay waste our powers,” his essential point is that we spend too much time attending to the busy-ness of everyday life to pay attention to the things that are really important. For Wordsworth, good early Romantic that he was, the things that are really important are to be found in nature—the Sea, the winds, the sleeping flowers, the pleasant lea (which is an old English word for pasture or meadow, by the way). But we modern folks see none of these things, or if we do see them we fail to admire or appreciate them, because we are so busy doing other things that we have become detached from the things that are really vital, or as Wordsworth puts it, “For this, for everything, we are out of tune;” so nature and its wonders “moves us not.” For Wordsworth this state of affairs is so awful that he thinks it would be better for him—and probably for all of us—if we could find a way to turn our backs on the modern world altogether, to become like “a Pagan suckled in a creed outworn” (by which he means a person raised in an archaic religion.), so that we might become reacquainted with the most important things in life, and, learning to appreciate nature for what it is, “have glimpses that would make me less forlorn.”

So what does Wordsworth’s poem mean for us today? Plenty, I think. I mean, just stop and think for a minute: If Wordsworth felt the world was “too much with us” way back in 1802, when by contemporary standards life was simpler than it is now, just what would he think about life today? In a world with the internet, 24-hour mass media, 300 channels of cable and satellite television, and all the rest, how much more is all the busy-ness of life “too much with us;” how much more time do we dedicate to “getting and spending;” how much further are we “out of tune” with the things that matter most?

Probably enough that poor old Wordsworth would be driven to despair.

But all of this is precisely what makes the season of Lent so important for us. The opportunity Lent offers us is the chance to pull back at least a little bit from all of the busy-ness of our daily lives, and to reconnect with God and with the spiritual things that matter most. For Wordsworth those things that matter most were to be found in nature, because for Wordsworth the natural world was the surest path to God, but whether you find them in nature or not, the weeks of Lent give all of us the chance to pull back from the clutter and confusion of the world around us and to seek God and consider our relationship with Him, to help ensure that we continue to focus on the things that matter most, be sure we never “give our hearts away,” and to keep our spiritual sight focused on those things that “would make us less forlorn.”

Cheers --- John



Spring is on the horizon! That's what I tell myself as I watch the snow falling at this moment and I look over my seed catalogs. That thought leads to the fact that we will be electing a new set of officers and committee members in May ~ time flies, doesn't it?! The nominating committee, headed by Marty Ollinger, will begin meeting some time in March. If you are interested in serving on a committee for 2010/2011, please fill out one of the inserts in the Sunday bulletin and place it in the Nominating Committee's mailbox in the office at Shields Hall.

Council sent out a survey to members last November concerning the restoration and preservation plans for the Meeting House. 68 surveys were sent out. We received 18 responses from members.

The results were as follows:

- 14 members said they don't want any changes to the Meeting House other than the restoration plans.
- 2 members said they'd like a bathroom but only if we can afford it.
- 1 member said he/she would listen to ideas.
- 1 member mentioned an enclosed pew for families if it was possible.
- 1 friend said they would not like any major changes.

This information will be valuable for Trustees as they now seek funding for the restoration/preservation work approved by the Congregation at the January Budget meeting.

Spring is indeed ahead of us, along with our 250th activities, plans for the Meeting House and, as always, members and friends planning and working together. We make it all happen because we care, not only for our physical plant, but for each other's spiritual well being as well. Thank you all for your support.

God bless,
Elizabeth Sganga



It's March—the days are lengthening, the weather is warming and we may even be seeing some ground peeking out from under the snow cover. As we approach the midway point in Lent, we look forward to Spring and Easter, the time of renewal, rebirth and the Resurrection.

As we look forward to Eastertide, the Board of Deacons invite you to attend the following services:

March 28—Palm Sunday— Everyone (if you are able) will meet at Shield's Hall. Palms will be distributed and the congregation will proceed to the Church. For those unable to walk over to the Church, they will be greeted by a Deacon in the narthex and given palms there.

April 1st - Maundy Thursday—A communion service with scriptures hearing the last seven words of Jesus will be observed (7pm).

April 2nd—Good Friday—The church will be open for prayer and reflection during the afternoon.

April 4th—EASTER SUNDAY—There will be two (9AM and 11AM) services celebrating the resurrection. There will be a Fellowship Hour between the two services.

I'm asking God for one thing, only one thing: to live with him in his house my whole life long."

Psalm 27:4

In God's Love,
Carole Bishop

Mission Committee News

Feed My Sheep

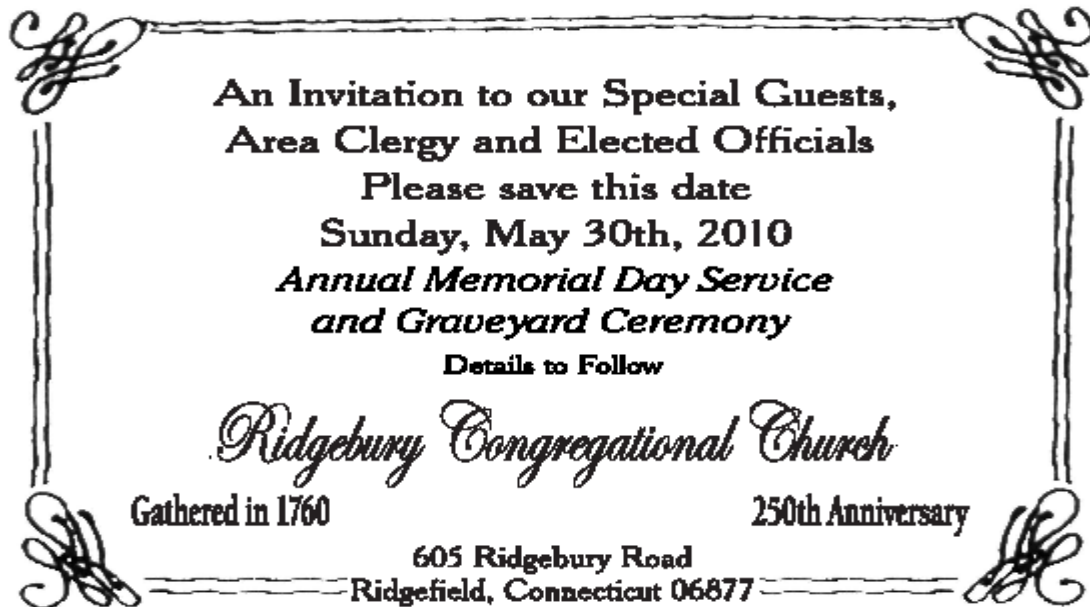
Thank you, thank you one and all for the marvelous response to the Haiti disaster appeal and the CWS hygiene kit project. You have been most generous. The latest figures show more than \$1600 collected!

Our March focus will be on the annual *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering, a special Lenten offering of the United Church of Christ's *Our Churches' Wider Mission*. Through this offering, God's message of love and hope is carried to people in more than eighty countries, including our own. This year the theme is based on John 21: 15-17 ("Do you love me?.....Feed my sheep").

The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, agricultural development, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

The OGHS offering is based on the premise that every human being is created in the image of God and that all are kin in the human family; that the earth and its resources come from God and are provided to serve the needs and support the spiritual growth of all; that we are charged to recognize the most vulnerable as our special concern, in keeping with the practice of Christ who also charges us through his words to Peter to feed and tend his sheep.

The OGHS offering will be received this year in our church on March 28. You will be hearing more about this offering during the worship services in the upcoming weeks and hope that you will decide to give as much as you can. Thank you.



An Invitation to our Special Guests,
Area Clergy and Elected Officials
Please save this date
Sunday, May 30th, 2010
*Annual Memorial Day Service
and Graveyard Ceremony*
Details to Follow

Ridgebury Congregational Church
Gathered in 1760 250th Anniversary
605 Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877

The invitation is enclosed in a decorative rectangular border with ornate scrollwork at each corner. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold serif and cursive fonts.

CELEBRATE EASTER WITH FLOWERS

Lilies, tulips and hyacinths are symbols of the new life in Easter's promise. Ridgebury Congregational Church traditionally celebrates Easter with flowers dedicated by individuals to honor new life, past lives, special 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 place this form and your payment in the envelope marked with a flower. Then place your envelope in the offering basket.

Please order Easter flowers **before** Sunday, March 14th.

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: _____

Please indicate the number of pots you would like to order:

Hyacinths _____ @ \$10.00

Lilies _____ @ \$10.00

Tulips _____ @ \$10.00

Please print your total payment here:

Total payment \$ _____ (cash) _____ (check*)

If you pay by check, please write "Flowers" on the memo line.

If you would like to mail in your order, please mail to the church and write "flowers" on the envelope.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____



The SECOND ANNUAL WHITE ELEPHANT SALE will be held on Saturday, May 1st on the Church grounds.

The cost is \$30.00 per space and you keep the profits!!

The committee is looking for a volunteer to man the church and food sales table during this sale.

Please share the information to see if a friend would like to buy a space.

If you have any questions, please call the church at 203-748-2806 or send an e-mail
wes@ridgeburychurch.org.

MARCH Birthdays



- 4 Paget Grose
- 6 Diane Earle
- 6 Thomas Barry
- 12 RoseMary Frederick
- 13 Chris Miller
- 21 Robert Mirrielees
- 23 Pat Welton
- 24 Vincent Sganga
- 29 Kristen Heyel
- 29 Katherine Barry
- 30 Kelsey Heyel

March 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	1	2 1:30p Adult Bible Study	3	4 7:15p AA Meets	5	6 5p Lenten Church Service 6p Adult Discussion Group
7 Family Sunday	8 7p Trustees	9 1:30p Adult Bible Study	10	11 7:15p AA Meets	12	13 5p Lenten Church Service 6p Adult Discussion Group
14 11:30a Missions Meeting Daylight Savings Time Begins [USA]	15 7p Council Meeting	16 1:30p Adult Bible Study	17 St. Patrick's Day [USA]	18 7:15p AA Meets	19 St. Joseph [Christian]	20 5p Lenten Church Service 6p Adult Discussion Group
21	22 7p Council Meeting	23 1:30p Adult Bible Study	24	25 7:15p AA Meets	26	27 5p Lenten Church Service 6p Adult Discussion Group
28 Palm Sunday [Christian]	29 7p Deacons Meeting	30 1:30p Adult Bible Study	31	1 7p Maundy Thursday service 7:15p AA Meets April Fool's Day [USA] Maundy Thursday [Christian]	2 Church open for prayer and reflection during the afternoon Good Friday [Christian]	3 6p Adult Discussion Group