



Oakham
Congregational
Church

March/April 2020

The Guiding Light

Sunday Service 10:00 a.m.

Office hours: Mon. & Thurs., 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (please call to verify)
508-882-5537 * OakhamCC@verizon.net www.OakhamChurch.org
Rev. Timothy Hanley, Pastor



Message from Rev. Tim

March 1 is the first Sunday of Lent. Growing up in Chicago, the first Sunday in Lent meant a big meal at the home of Aunt Alice and Uncle Gene. Their three children would be there: Sister Eilene, a Catholic nun and school administrator in Wisconsin, Bobby, their son, soon out of high school and off to the Army and Korea, and their youngest, Carol Ann, a beautiful blond 9th grader generating great fear among the family regarding dating and who would be showing up for our approval. Mom was close to Carol Ann. She was our babysitter and already "boy crazy". As the years passed, she would bring boyfriends by our house in the hopes Mom and Dad would give approval. For quite a number of years no one passed—some weren't complete losers, but no one had a chance.

These are some of the great memories I have from growing up in an interesting and loving family. I learned girls and boys need relationship lessons and to mostly "calm down"! Among us these were some very tough times. I learned how quickly life can turn around and shake us all until we thought we would surely break. We gathered at funerals that were not supposed to be happening. My cousin Bobby had his six year old son die of cancer. My father died at age 61. My Aunt Alice, by far one of my favorite people in the world, died suddenly when I was in school in Maine, and had no way to get home for the funeral. When I did get home, I visited my Uncle Gene. The emptiness of their apartment sat like heavy black clouds—like holding areas of sadness. Uncle Gene just stared at the TV and we made small talk. I went back to New England to start my life in the ministry. I would never see Uncle Gene again. He died a couple years later, and I was too busy to go home.

Now, just my sister Sally and I are left to remember and to tell the stories. There should be three of us, but my younger sister, Mary Alice, died several years ago. The seasons

come and go, and looking back seems so sad.

But in truth, those were great times and people. Those dinners were fierce with reality. Every personality bold, jumping right into conversations just like we knew what we were talking about. A table full of food like I have not seen since. Cooks spent days in the kitchens, working like a rented donkey to provide a meal which would leave even Christ Jesus reeling and reaching for the TUMS. Laughter, affection, affirmation, the sense that we were all there for each other, no matter what. So it was. The time of our lives. I am so much richer for those people. And there is nothing which can take their love from me.

Lent is a time to remember the sadness, because there is much in this world to be sad about. We cause a lot of sadness too, although we seldom give voice to that truth. The opportunities we miss to give something positive to the world around us is numerous, and yet can be wiped away with two words: I'm busy. Talk about us being "sinners" is only church talk and usually not a whole lot of that on Sunday mornings. But I find it also true that humans know, we understand when we fall short...even though we don't want to fall short. And somehow the idea of death gets in the mix. There is never enough time because time comes to an end – and that end is not predictable.

I share these good words with you from Julie Porter, the managing editor of Sojourner's Magazine:

"Lent is a way to experiment with shaking off a little of our sin and lean into a story that is about overturning the power of death in small and large ways. We may—we will—find that we can't do it alone. We need help. We need community. We need a God who is reaching toward us and isn't afraid of meeting us at a point of our worst sin, a God who knows death intimately, and pulls us toward life."

"...and pulls us toward life." That's Easter—personally and in community. That's sitting around that dinner table, year after year, laugh-

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ing and crying, grieving and celebrating, knowing from our bellies to our bellies to our brains that LIFE IS GOOD.

Happy Spring!

My best to you all,

Rev. Tim





From the Historian...

I don't think there is a job description for the Church Historian. If we ever get one, I would make a few suggestions.

First, that the Historian researches the history of the church and makes this information available to the members. This history would include important events, people and property of the church.

Second, that the Historian encourage the recording and preservation of the present activities and records of the church.

Jennifer McMenemy is helping me with research this year. We have several projects that we are considering. The first is a time line of the history of the church. We hope to have a number of special stories about the church to bring to the attention of the members.

We plan to continue to share stories about the church during church services.

Hopefully that as enough information is researched and recorded, a book can be developed to tell the history of the church.

We welcome anyone who would like to join in this important and fun work.

Herbert Holmes
Church Historian



Easter Schedule

April 5 Palm Sunday

April 9 Maundy Thursday
Service 7:00 p.m.

April 12 Easter Sunrise
Service 6:30 a.m.
Breakfast to follow in church hall.

April 12 Easter Service
10:00 a.m.

All are welcome!

Why is it called Good Friday?

If you had spoken to Jesus' family on that Friday, I suspect they would have agreed with you. Then all hope seemed lost; Satan and his servants seemed to have won, evil and death seemed to have triumphed.

But if you had spoken to them only a few days later, you would have heard something entirely different! Then they knew all was not lost; Satan and his servants had not won; evil and death had not triumphed. In fact, the opposite was the case. The forces of evil had been defeated, death had been destroyed, and from that point onward human life would never be the same.

What made the difference? The difference was twofold: Jesus' tomb was empty, and He had appeared to them. In other words, Jesus had broken the bonds of death, and now He was alive! And suddenly they realized that what had seemed at first to be defeat was in fact a victory—a victory over Satan and sin and death.

The Bible says, "You, with the help of wicked men, put him to death...But God raised him from the dead" (Acts 2:23-24).

Why is it called "Good Friday"? Because of His death, Jesus became the fine and complete sacrifice for our sins. We cannot erase our guilt, nor can we overcome our sins by our good deeds. But Christ did what we could never do for ourselves, by dying for us on that first Good Friday. May this day truly become "Good Friday" for you, as you confess your sins and put your faith and trust in Christ.

(from Billy Graham Evangelist Assoc. website)




Church Membership

The Oakham Congregational Church is a community of faith comprised of many members and friends. One need not be an official member of the church to participate in many of its activities or to worship. However, one does need to be a member to vote on matters concerning the church. If you are not an official member of the Oakham Congregational Church and you would like to be one, please contact Rev. Tim or one of the Deacons.



2020


MARCH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 OCC Annual Meeting 11:00 a.m.	9	10	11 Knit, OCC 10:00 a.m. Dismas Dinner 6:00 p.m.	12	13	14
15	16	17  St. Patrick's Day	18 UFO Group 9:30 a.m.	19 Spring Begins Knit, Library 6:30 p.m.	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

2020

APRIL



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Breakfast 8-9:30 a.m. Egg Hunt 9:30 a.m.
5  Palm Sunday	6	7	8 Knit, OCC 10:00 a.m. Dismas Dinner 6:00 p.m.	9 Maundy Thurs. Service 7:00p.m.	10	11
12  Easter	13	14	15 UFO Group 9:30 a.m.	16 Knit, Library 6:30 p.m.	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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4 Coldbrook Road—Unit 12
Oakham, MA 01068

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Food Pantry

We donate to the Barre Food Pantry and the Rutland Food Pantry. All contributions of food are graciously welcomed and can be dropped off here at the church. Monetary contributions can be made directly to the Barre Food Pantry by mailing them to: Barre Congregational Church, P.O.Box 936, Barre, MA 01005 or the Rutland Congregational Church, P.O. Box 484, Rutland, MA 01543

We are also continually in need of replenishing the stock of our local food pantry here at the church. These items are available to local folks who are in need. Please consider canned meats and non-perishable boxed milk along with your other donations. Checks to support this ministry can be made payable to the Oakham Congregational Church with a note in the memo stating: Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Dismas Family Farm Dinners

On the second Wednesday of every month at 6:00 p.m., the church prepares a dinner for the Dismas Family Farm on Lincoln Road. If you would like to help with a meal, please contact the church at 508-882-5537.

Opportunity Fund Applications

The Opportunity Fund is accepting applications. The purpose of the Opportunity Fund is to provide financial assistance to individuals in the town of Oakham or within the Oakham Congregational Church Community to support an endeavor that provides spiritual, personal and/or vocational advancement for the applicant. The Outreach Committee acts as the Opportunity Fund Committee. Proceeds from the Annual Bob Tyck Memorial Golf Tournament support the Opportunity Fund. For applications call Linda at 508-882-5222.

UFO Group

The UFO group meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. They have started construction of the quilt to be raffled at the 2018 Holly and Harvest Fair. Also, any UFO (**Un-Finished prOjects**) can be continued. New ideas and classes will be scheduled. Come join the group and bring your ideas.

BREAKFAST & EASTER EGG HUNT

**Saturday, April 4
(Rain/snow date is
Sat., April 11)**

**Breakfast 8:00-9:30 a.m.
Easter Egg Hunt 9:30**

A pancake breakfast will be held on Sat., April 4 right before the annual Easter egg hunt. The Easter Bunny may make an appearance at the breakfast giving the kids a chance for handshakes, hugs and pictures.

Candy donations for the egg hunt can be left in the side entryway to the church. The Easter Bunny usually fills over 2,400 eggs so donations are gratefully accepted. This event is open to all!

