



Oakham
Congregational
Church

March/April 2019

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

Evangelical social activist, Ron Sider, has a moving account of change among a group of inner-city women.

"One Sunday while I was writing this book, an interracial group of young women from Teen Challenge visited my inner-city church. One beautiful young woman shared a wrenching story of incest, physical abuse, and the terrifying bondage of drugs. Regina felt worthless. She was deathly afraid of God because she had thought God would treat her the same way that all men had. She was nothing. After a wretched life and eight abortions, she wanted to die. Again and again she tried to commit suicide.

Then she met Jesus. In Teen Challenge's marvelous Spirit-filled drug and rehabilitation program, God began to put her life back together. She now feels pure and clean, 'more innocent than when she was born.'

After she shared her story, she and the others sang a powerful song about the new dignity and transformation that conversion brings: 'It's not because of what I've done, it's because of who I am. I've been adopted by the king.'

At least once a year Teen Challenge brings a group to our church to share their testimonies. This morning, as usual, the pain of their wrenching histories and the joy of their transformed lives made me weep.

What an awesome gift conversation is. It would be silly, to be sure, to suppose that Regina's struggles are over. But her relationship with God has brought a new sense of dignity, worth, and hope. Her relationships are also beginning to change."

What would it be like to sit across the table from Regina and share a long conversation? You had heard some of the terrible details of her life. Now, it was your chance to engage her one-on-one. Have you ever talked with anyone like her? What sort of picture formed

in your mind as her story of abuse unfolded? How do you react to words like incest, abortion, drugs?

I worked for 18 years with adolescent girls who were only part-way down the path which was Regina's. They too had suffered awful abuse—they felt worthless—they were angry—many people had given up on them as lost.

I remember as a new student arrived, I had a sense of fear and wonder. Fear that I would not be up to the task (completely selfish thinking), and wonder as to what I would discover in this one life brought into my presence.

There were hundreds of girls over those eighteen years and whatever good I have done in ministry, whatever compassion I have turned into action, whatever inspiration and insights I have mustered in counseling relationships, the greater share of credit goes to all those young people who let me into their lives.

Studying their faces and looking into their eyes was so important to me, I wanted to really see them and hear them. I believe all relationships depend on this and on our ability to be open and listening, giving up the need to have answers. As I get older (some say just old) I notice as people relate to each other how often they (we) need to provide answers—especially when they have not been solicited. These brokenhearted kids did not come so much for answers as they did for relationships. Relationships have elements of hope we can find in no other place. If I have you to talk with, share a sandwich with, hear a story told, I have the possibility of expanding my thinking—seeing new prospects for myself and my joys or sorrows.

When my relationship with the young student on Regina's path developed some trust, our conversations became a mutual blessing. When we cried together, I felt the arms of God holding her. I have been a lucky, lucky man. Many small miracles have happened around me. I got out of my own way and out of my own head long enough to see.

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Easter Schedule

- March 6 - Ash Wednesday
Service 7:00 p.m.
- April 14 - Palm Sunday
- April 18 - Maundy Thursday
Service 7:00 p.m.
- April 21 - Easter Sunrise
Service 6:30 a.m.
Breakfast to follow in church hall.
- April 21 - Easter Service
10:00 a.m.

**All are welcome!
Come join us celebrate
that "He lives!"**



The Guiding Light

(Cont'd. from page 1)

The first miracle was the birth of Regina and every child. And then there are supposed to be people there to love the child and join a relationship that nurtures and protects. But something happened and life took a bad, degrading turn. Those who had the responsibility to love, didn't know how. Broken and battered themselves, barely surviving any way they could I would guess, they dropped Regina in a world of pain-alone.

Somehow God brought her into relationships with people who had learned from Jesus what it means to be a human being-a precious miracle in God's eyes-every one of us-and hope poured into Regina's life.

New month, we will celebrate Easter. Perhaps Regina's story is like a Resurrection-a story of love and hard work and deep transformation to new life-all

This leads me to you. How are your relationships going? Are you feeling the joy and the hope? Are you still learning from your faith how to be a human being in the image of Christ? Are there one or two relationships needing resurrection through love and forgiveness?

The time is now. There is no better time. I wish you many important conversations during this Lenten and Easter season with people and with God. May you see and hear. May your heart be moved. May the still small voice of God be after you constantly.

Happy Easter,
Rev. Tim



What is Maundy Thursday?

Folks often ask, "What is the Maundy Thursday service all about?" Perhaps the best way to find out is simply to attend the service on April 18! Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter when Christians memorialize the last supper Jesus ate with His disciples. The word "Maundy" is derived from the Latin word, "mandatum" which is the first word of the phrase found in John 13:34 where Jesus commands the disciples to love one another. Those words are part of Jesus' explanation of why He was washing the disciples' feet. Foot washing can also be a part of the Maundy Thursday service but may not be done every year.

Sharing the Lord's Supper, or Communion, is a part of the Maundy Thursday service. Anyone who chooses to partake in the elements of Christ's body is welcome to join in this part of the service. The mood of this evening is usually somber which sets the tone for contemplation of Jesus' dying upon the cross, which is remembered the next day.

Readings and hymns are also part of the service and many who attend find this time together to be one of the most spiritually moving times of worship within the entire year.

So, please feel free to join us in this service of diminishing light as we let our senses help us journey to the cross of Christ in preparation for the joy of Easter.



Adult Bible Study

Adult Bible Study is held every Monday evening from 7:00-8:00 p.m.. Join us for study and group discussion on the Bible's many perspectives on faith, war, suffering, love, memory, community, and other enduring themes. All are welcome!

Parenting Class

"Raising Emotionally and Socially Healthy Kids" parenting classes will be held on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m. for 6 sessions starting Wednesday, April 24.

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 be one, please contact Rev. Tim or one of the Deacons.



2019

MARCH

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

2019

APRIL



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

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Oakham Congregational Church
4 Coldbrook Road—Unit 12
Oakham, MA 01068

Local Postal Customer

OAKHAM, MA 01068

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.



CROCKPOT SUPPER

Saturday, March 23

5:00 p.m.

A crockpot supper featuring all types of delicious foods made in a crockpot, such as stews, soups, chowders, etc. It will also include salad, bread, a beverage and ice cream sundaes for dessert. As with all our food events, there is no charge. A free will offering jar will be available.

BREAKFAST & EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 13

(Rain/snow date is

Sat., April 20)

Breakfast 8:00-9:30 a.m.

Easter Egg Hunt 10 a.m.

A pancake breakfast will be held on Sat., April 13 right before the annual Easter egg hunt. The Easter Bunny will 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 2,200 eggs so donations are gratefully accepted. **This event is open to all!**