



Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC
142 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054
www.millisucc.org (508) 376-5034

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Church of Christ Vision Statement:
Worship God, serve our neighbors, share God's love.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter Services

Church of Christ,
Congregational
142 Exchange St.
Millis, MA

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Sunday, April 14 – 10:00am
Palm/Passion Sunday Service

Thursday, April 18 – 7:00pm
Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 19 – 7:00pm
Good Friday Service & Reflection

Silent Vigil – 7:30pm Friday, April 19
to 6:00am Sunday, April 21

Sunday, April 21

6:00am Easter Sunrise Service
followed by a hot breakfast

10:00am Easter Festival Service



Volunteer Greeters Needed

In keeping with our whole church commitment to be welcoming, we need two greeters each week. The importance of this initial connection to our church community is simple, rewarding and valuable. Don't pass up this opportunity. Sign up in Fellowship Hall.

~ Your Welcoming Committee

You are invited to attend a Springtime Luncheon!

Hosted by the Visitors' Group

**May 16, 2019 from 12-2pm
Fellowship Hall**



*Enjoy an afternoon of
fun, friends, fellowship,
and a delicious feast of
sandwiches, salads,
deli and desserts!*

All Are Welcome!

We hope you can join us! If you have any questions, please call the church office at (508) 376-5034.

LENT

Lenten Activities continue in April

Taizé Services

**Monday evenings at 7:30pm
April 1, 8 and 15**

Lenten Study Book Discussion

40-Day Journey with Julian of Norwich

**Wednesday mornings, 10-11am
April 3 and 10**

Bibles & Brews

at Mickey Cassidy's, 116 Main St., Medway

**Thursday evenings at 6:30pm
April 4 and 11**

Visitors' Group News

The next Visitors' Group meeting is **Thursday, April 18th at 10:00am** in the Church Parlor.

We will be planning our annual May Luncheon, which will be held on Thursday, May 16, from 12:00pm to 2:00pm in Fellowship Hall.

Save the date -- we hope that you can make it! We are looking forward to seeing you and sharing the afternoon with you. RSVP to the church office at 508-376-5034. If you don't get a chance to call us, that's okay -- you are still welcome to join us at the luncheon!

It Starts Before Christmas

by Myrna Rybczyk

I have always loved Lent; the contemplative, introspective, austere time before Easter. At that point in the church year, I have settled into the quiet darkness, where truth and belief seem shadowy and indistinct.

There are extra services in Lent and special music must be prepared. I love the solitude of the empty church and filling it with the many voices of the organ. I practice as often as I am able and as I leave the church, I check the mailbox for bills and announcements. And there you have it! A solid half dozen packets of catalogs for Christmas! Their glossy pages make them heavy and the covers emblazon CHRISTMAS! The Season of Joy! Praise the Lord! Let Us Raise our Voices in Celebration.

I really don't want to see this; I've just been working on *Christ Lag in Todesbanden: Christ Lay in Bonds of Death*.

We are approaching Holy Week with its beautiful service of darkness; Maundy Thursday, my favorite service of the year. It marks the start of the Christian three-day celebration of Easter. Many churches observe this by the ritual washing of feet, followed by the sacrament of Communion. White cloth covers a table where eight people sit with candles placed between them. At the end of the table, the large Christ candle burns brightly, for now.

The high church windows are shuttered and the fading evening light stills the hearts and minds of the participants. I will be at the organ and will have chosen one of several hymns that are appropriate for the service, perhaps it will be *Christ Lag*, or maybe, *If Thou Will but Trust in God to Guide Thee*. I would like to start with *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*, but that will come later.

I love being able to make these choices because I know how deeply touched people are by the solemnity and beauty of these century's old tunes.

The choir will have sung an anthem that reflects and encompasses this sacred moment and then, moving carefully, will go to the choir stalls. Readers in the service will take a seat at the table.

Carefully, I turn the large wheel that lowers the chandelier lights, hoping it will not make a ratcheting sound. I don't wish to disturb the quietness.

The readings of scripture begin. Each reader extinguishes a candle when they are done, and the choir responds with song. One by one the candles are put out and the darkness grows. We are enveloped in the telling of Christ's last hours, his suffering, the denial, the loneliness in the garden. We are nearing the end...

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*What language can I borrow to thank Thee dearest Friend,
For this thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end.
Oh, make me Thine forever, and should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love for Thee.*

These words have always touched me deeply and I am glad I am playing because singing them would be nearly impossible.

Now, in the faintest of light, the Christ candle is extinguished and we sit in profound silence which is filled when a beautiful voice pierces our hearts and asks; *Were You There?*

*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*

This.

This moment when we are brought together as a community recalling Christ's death...

The song ends and we sit silently for a few more moments until the Christ candle is lit reminding us that He lives on, with, and through us.

The chandeliers now light the stripping of all artifacts in the church.

Every moment of this service has deep roots in the past, and the observance prepares us for the solemnity of Good Friday. The church remains open and many come to keep watch for an hour of meditation, remembrance, and reflection on Christ's life and our own.

And then, it is Easter! Lilies and tulips fill the church, and the choir and congregation sing *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today* as trumpets play variations on the tune.

The church year moves on through Eastertide, although for most people, Easter is over. Pentecost and Ordinary Time, the time of work in the church, follow.

Now I will be ready to look at and listen to the numerous CD's with new Christmas music. I will start listening to sacred collections that include choral works, solos, and cantatas. I will hope that I don't have to hear *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* dozens of times. Perhaps there will be something new and special and I can begin to think about building a choir season around the birth of Christ.

But just now, I am not ready. I need this Lenten moment to reflect, to grieve, and to wonder at the mystery.



Furnishing hope with every stride.

**SAVE THE DATE:
MAY 11, 2019**

on the Medfield State Hospital Grounds

Join the Millis UCC Team to walk, run, jump 5K (3 miles) to support New Life Furniture Bank. New Life is having its 2nd annual Trail Run on May 11th so please join the Mission members for some spring fun and great mission!! For more info, see one of the Mission members, call the church office at (508) 376-5034, or visit the New Life 5K website page at: <https://www.newlifefb.org/5ktrailrun>.

Support New Life Furniture Bank of MA which helps restore hope, dignity, and stability by recycling donated furniture and household goods to people in need.

The area's most avid runners, walkers and everyone in between are invited to participate in this 2nd annual event to support New Life!



PIANO NOTES



The piano in the sanctuary is a wonderful instrument, but we ask that you please **do not** play it unless you have express permission from Music Director, Myrna Rybczyk.

Also, there is a humidifier attached to the piano that needs to be plugged in to keep it in tiptop shape and in tune. Though it might appear to be something that only needs to be plugged in when in use, we ask that it be left plugged in at all times.

If you have any questions, please direct them to Myrna Rybczyk through the church office, at (508) 376-5034.



April!

Pathfinders' Youth Group:

We may gather for a day during vacation week. Watch for an email with details.

We have a regular Youth Group meeting Sunday, April 28th, 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

Please look for information regarding Hiking Camp, elsewhere in the Spire!

Sunday School:

Grades 4-6 will meet on April 14th and April 28th.

Everyone of all ages, is invited to Holy Week services, especially on Good Friday and Easter Sunday's Sunrise service!

Thank you everyone who came to our very magical dinner!

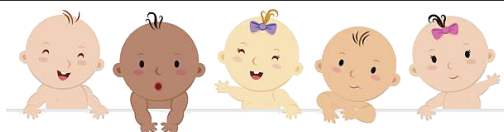
The costumes and obviously love for the Mouse and his friends were wonderful to behold!

Over \$800 was raised.

We are incredibly grateful for your support!



PIPS



**Next Dates:
April 11 & 25**

Parents of Infants and Preschoolers Social Group

The PIPS group was formed to provide a shared and supportive space for parents to visit, exchange ideas, and connect. **The group meets in the church parlor from 9:30-10:30am on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month.** Visit millisucc.org for details.

2019 Youth Hiking Camp

July 14 ~ 19

Sponsored by The Congregational Church
of East Sumner, Maine, U.C.C

The aim of Hiking Camp is to promote Christian fellowship and growth in a setting where the wonder and beauty of God's creation forms the setting for our life together. Our program embodies concepts articulated over a century ago by Luther Halsey Gulick, who advocated education that integrates growth in the spirit, cultivation of the mind and healthful development of the body.

Campers and counselors undertake a variety of challenges in which we all learn from each other, as we build a sense of mutual dependence sharing in preparing meals, maintaining our campsite and helping one another on the trails. 2019 marks our 32nd season.

Activities during the week depend somewhat on weather, but are focused on challenging hikes on well-maintained trails in New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest, swimming and a one-day canoe trip on the Saco River. We establish a base camp at Barnes Field, part of the Dolly Copp Campground, operated by the National Forest Service, located at the base of Mt. Madison, near Mt. Washington and the Carter Range.

Who is Eligible?

Hiking Camp is open to youth who have completed grades 5 - 12. Previous hiking experience is not necessary. The only requirements are an interest in the outdoors, a willingness to be a cooperating member of the Camp Community and good general health. Prospective campers should understand that weather permitting, hiking and one day of canoeing form the focus of the program.

What is the Cost?

The cost of camp is \$275. This covers meals, campsite, transportation and all planned activities. We ask a \$50 preregistration fee to reserve a place at camp. Arrangements can be made to extend payments, and thanks to generous donors over the years, camperships can be arranged. NO ONE will be denied a place in camp for financial reasons.



For more information contact:

Skip or Flo MacMullen
172 Sutherland Pond Rd.
Sabattus, Maine 04280
(207) 375-8161

Jan or Steve Howie
42 Union Street
Millis, Mass 02054
(508) 376-5363

Andy Trasher
P.O. Box 1401
Marblehead, MA 01945
(781) 631-3541



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Phone:
508-376-5034
E-Mail:
millisucc@msn.com



We're on the Web!

Visit us at:
www.millisucc.org

It's Time to Order Your Easter Flowers!

The **deadline** for ordering Easter flowers
is **Tuesday, April 16.**



The cost is:
Lilies = \$12 each
Tulips = \$12 each



Forms are in the church office or online at:
www.millisucc.org under Newsroom/Events.
Please include payment with your order.
Make checks payable to: **Church of Christ,**
and put "Flowers" in the memo line.

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