

The Messenger

Orchard Covenant Church
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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Semi-Annual Meeting!

In the Bible we read that “two is better than one” (Ecclesiastes 4:9), and some years we manage to hold TWO church business and ministry meetings, which is better than one!

This June 16 after church, at about 11am, since June 16 is the first of our Summer Sunday schedule, (we will hold our 2019 Semi-Annual Meeting, to provide information and discuss several items important to our congregation:

- Voting on a new member
- Discussing / Voting to approve expenditure to replace the Blue Room furnace
- A report from the Search Committee
- Financial Report
- Other Business that arises.

If you are a member of OCC, please do your best to be present; come to worship at 10 and stay after in the Sanctuary. Other church family is welcome too! We will hold our Munch n Mingle fellowship hour after the meeting.

“The Necessity of Pain”

*“If we numb the dark, we numb the light.
If we take the edge off pain, we take the edge off joy.”*

I've been thinking a lot about pain. Our whole society tries to avoid pain, or shut down pain, by taking “pain-killer” drugs, but it turns out that “pain killer” overdoses are killing people every day. This is a painful truth. Can we talk about how to live with and heal our pain, instead of trying to hide it?

Pain is an indicator that something needs attention, and when we don't feel pain, we avoid working at being healthy – in body, mind, and Spirit. We also don't like emotional pain, or painful conversations and confrontations with others.

For me, one of the most painful issues of our day is our country's inability, or refusal, to stop or even slow, the weekly, at times daily, mass shootings in schools and other places around our country. We get so used to news of violence, that we just shrug it off and move on, rather than feeling the pain, grieving more tragic and unnecessary death, and insisting our government change its laws. Do we feel the pain of the families of loved ones who die from guns? Or of millions of children who are now traumatized even by “active shooter drills?”

Do we feel the pain of our brothers and sisters of color, who have to teach their children how to act if a policeman approaches them? Do we feel the pain of the people of Flint, as so many children's lives are stunted by poisoned water? What might God's response be?

Our faith requires vulnerability and courage, to shine God's light on the dark and painful. Healing light comes through conversation, confession, forgiveness, medicine, counseling – and action for change. I think of Jesus' words in a situation where his disciples could not heal: **“This kind can only come out by prayer.” Mark 9:29**

See you in church! Pastor Nancy Ebner

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

June 1 - Amouré Joseph
June 3 - Phil Foster
June 4 - Isabelle Benoit
June 4 - Gordon Johnson
June 7 - Krystyna Pringle
June 10 - June Preissler
June 13 - Jackie Hudson
June 14 - Jennifer Allen
June 19 - Natftari Ntirinyibagira
June 21 - Elena Texiera
June 24 - Laura Ebner Rhol
June 25 - Sara Wapner
June 28 - Jay Foster
June 29 - Jose Nunez

ANNIVERSARIES

June 1 - Joseph and Sarah Gleason
June 21 - Warren and Jackie Hudson

[If your date is wrong or your name has been omitted, please contact the editor.]

DATES TO REMEMBER

June 3 Council Prayer and Meeting
June 9 Pentecost and Children's Sunday;
All-Church Choir; Camp Squanto Bake
Sale; **LAST 11:00 AM SERVICE.**
June 15 Men's Breakfast
June 16 **FIRST 10:00 AM SERVICE;**
Semi-Annual Business Meeting,
Father's Day

The Men's Connection

Saturday, June 15
Time: 8:30 to 9:30 am
at the Orchard Covenant Church
Breakfast will be served.



SPECIAL MUSIC

If you are interested in doing special music this summer, please see June Foster. **Starting June 23**, we will need special music every Sunday!

THANKS

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your donations to the ministry of the NE Seafarers Mission. It is only possible by the faithful giving of partners like yourself, who by your generosity and kindness, that we can extend the love of Christ to the often weary and lonely men and women that work on the sea.

The Rev. Stephen R, Cushing, Executive Director

ALL CHURCH CHOIR

There will be an all-church choir practice after church on Sunday, June 2, and before church on June 9. We will be singing "Watoto Waje" (Let the Children Come) on **June 9**. Contact June Foster for more information.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

June 9 is Children's Sunday and will include hotdogs for everyone and an ice cream treat for the kiddos. Please sign up on June 2 to bring a salad or dessert—cold foods only for this picnic. There will also be a bake sale and samosa sale that same day to raise funds for Camp Squanto. We have lots of kids wanting to go to camp; not so much money. Consider a sponsorship: \$250 covers one week of camp. All donations are welcomed!



Our youth leading worship at Easter

ACTS at OCC

Linda Howell

Have you seen the beautiful poster drawings on the wall in the Community Hall? They were done by our ACTS students that meet on Tuesday afternoons, and each one depicts a phrase from the 23rd Psalm. All year we have been learning the Psalm along with motions to help us remember each line. Ask our own children here at OCC, Christina, Salima and Francois to point out their drawings. As we all hold hands and pray at the end of Club Time and then lift our hands at the end of the prayer saying, "Praise God", we are so thankful to Him for giving us such a good year. We've had 10 very faithful children and 10 tutors as well. There is room for YOU to be a tutor and get in on being a significant person in the life of a child. Please consider joining us!



Our OCC children at ACTS

A FEW NOTES AND QUOTES

Pastor Nancy

1. In Confirmation Class, as we discussed the nature of Jesus as fully God and fully human - "I wonder if he had hiccups?"

2. From the Just Faith seminar Linda, Toni and I attended:

We are to BE the Compassionate Christ, that is, faithful people transformed by the Spirit and leading lives of extraordinary compassion. How?

Build relationships with people you've avoided

- b. Get to root causes of problem
- c. Don't divorce our Christianity from the environment
- d. Proclaim Jesus and live the truth of the Reign of God (when God's intentions of love, forgiveness, unity, grace, peace - rule the world)

How do we recognize the Reign of God? Transformed people, transformed world.

When inviting people to a journey of discipleship with Christ: "Are you open to the possibility of a transformed life?"

3. Reverend Philip and Reverend Stephanie Voland, Covenant Missionaries

On April 28 Philip Voland, Covenant missionary, spoke about his and his wife's call to ministry in Kiel, Germany. He asked if we would be able to support their mission, and at our May Council meeting, the Council voted to designate \$100 per month of the money we send every month to the Covenant Headquarters in Chicago, to the Volands! God is good! Philip and Stephanie will both be ordained at the Covenant Annual Meeting in Omaha in June.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Linda Howell, Chairperson

The joy of the Lord continues to be our strength as we put the final touches on our church profile, placing us in a position to accept profiles of potential pastoral candidates in June. Please be praying for the committee as we get to this next stage. And pray for the candidate that is being prepared by the Lord to accept a call. May we all be of one heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

PICNIC AT THE PINES

On **Sunday, July 14**, right after church, we will head up to Pilgrim Pines in New Hampshire for our annual PICNIC! Let's have everybody come! We will be meeting in the tent on the field like we did last year. There will be NO grilling. Bring your own food and a dish or dessert to share. Put it on your calendar now!

If you are being led by God to be baptized and would like to be baptized in the lake, please let Pastor Nancy know.



For more information, to offer others a ride, or to indicate that you would like a ride, call the church office at 543-4204. And pray for sun!



OUR 2019 GRADUATES

Lambert Bilanga from Putnam High School.

Giles R. Hayden (John and Emily's grandson) from Lake Braddock High School in Burke, VA. He will be attending the University of Georgia next year on an Air Force ROTC Scholarship.

Kristianna Henriques (Mary Ann's granddaughter) from Minnechaug Regional High School

Amouré Joseph from Central High School.

Gail Joseph from Mt. Holyoke College, Master of Arts in Education.

Madala Osano (Pam and Job's daughter) from the University of Southern New Hampshire, Bachelor of Science in Nursing,

Claire Widman (John and Linda Howell's granddaughter) from San Jose State College, Bachelor of Science in Biology.

Congratulations to one and all for your academic achievements. We pray that Our Lord will use your gifts in the building of His kingdom.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pray for the Search Committee as they begin the process to discover who God has prepared to be our new pastor.

Pray especially that the church's financial needs can be met with generosity and abundance.

Pray for the Church Council as they, with God's help and guidance, give leadership to our church in 2019.

Pray for all of those who have suffered at the hands of hateful people, violating the sanctity of holy places. Lord have mercy!

Pray for all of those who have suffered because of the recent violent weather.

A PRAYER FOR SUMMER

The warmth of the sun's embrace,
the gentle breeze swept in by incoming tide,
the rhythm of seasons,
of new birth,
death and recreation.
All these speak so clearly of your love,
your power
and your beauty.
All are expressions of your creativity,
and more importantly of yourself.
As an artist might share his personality
within each brushstroke,
so within the myriad colours of a butterfly's wing
you share the exuberance of your love.

