



The Link - March 2008

Which Procession Are We In?

During Advent, we looked forward with excitement to the birth of baby Jesus and the procession of shepherds, angels, and wise men to Bethlehem. Now, at the end of Jesus' short-lived ministry, we look forward with excitement to his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. We know that crowds spread cloaks and palm leaves as he made his way on the colt, in royal style.

However, did you know that, at the same time Jesus was making his entry into Jerusalem, there was another triumphal procession across town? Because so many Jews returned to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, the Roman government always made a flamboyant and intimidating show of military/police force to ensure crowd control. Theologians Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan describe a splendid parade of imperial cavalry and foot soldiers who escorted Governor Pontius Pilate into Jerusalem to oversee the peace of Passover. These two theologians wisely ask, "What does *then* have to do with *now*?"

The two historic Passover processions symbolize a conflict that still has a powerful hold on us today. Pilate was the living representation of the great Roman Emperor Augustus, who was referred to as "Son of God," "Lord" and "Savior who brought peace on earth." The Emperor's divine rule was an absolute rule of the power of Roman culture. He rewarded the strong and wealthy and taxed the poor and enslaved or executed all who opposed his word.

Cont. in Page 03

From the worship committee:

Easter will be upon us soon! There will be many services you may be part of Holy week. Hope you will be able to attend all of them.

Our next Worship Committee meeting will be held March 9th with a short meeting on March 30th if needed for our fun dinner. We are looking for someone to be in charge of the Altar flowers. You do not need to be on the Worship committee to do this. It entails ordering flowers for Sun. & picking them up for people that want to put them on the Altar in memory or honor of someone. The Altar is also decorated for Easter & Christmas. People may order or bring their own flowers to these services. The church usually orders from a special florist but one of your own choosing is acceptable. Joan Parris has been doing this & will be able answer any questions you might have or you may call me. It is a nice little job if you are interested & will be meaningful to our service. Another thought is that summer promotes a nice time for garden arrangements!!

It's getting closer, END OF WINTER CELEBRATION!! Hope you all are coming! April 5th @ 5:30 p.m. Sign up & help by bringing your favorite course, & get your traveling shoes on!! The sign up sheet will be in the vestry, or call Ann 508-485-5786 or Pastor Linda. It should be fun! We will be doing a Yankee swap the same night @ the Dessert Course! Find something in your home you don't want or pick up something new that will be a surprise. Wrap it up & bring it with you. We will be meeting @ the church @ 5:30 & directions will be given out for you to travel by. We may also travel together. Meet & gab with your fellow church people!!!

A thought for your day from the Upper Room," god comes to us in one another"

Worship Chair: Ann Edelman

Which Procession Are We In?

continued from page 01

Meanwhile, Jesus of Nazareth was the living representation of the Living Israelite God, Yahweh. Jesus, like Augustus, was also referred to as “Son of God,” “Lord” and “Savior who brought peace on earth.” Yahweh’s divine rule was an absolute rule of the power of the One who created all heavens and earth. This God compassionately protected the weak, held the strong and rich strictly accountable for stewardship or their talents and generosity, and brought eternal salvation to all who were poor, enslaved or oppressed for any reason.

The spirit of Emperor Augustus is alive and well in the popular culture of our world today. Our culture gleefully watches processions of military and technological might, parades of buses and airplanes carrying political candidates who spend millions of dollars on glossy ads that seek to make us worship them every bit as much as having likenesses on coins made Romans worship the Emperor. Nightly, we watch and celebrate processions of Hollywood stars and professional athletes whose lives are constantly entangled in webs of dishonesty and moral scandal.

As Holy Week comes near, we must ask ourselves: Which procession will I attend on Palm Sunday and throughout Holy Week? Will I be one of the faithful few on the side of Jesus, or will I be like most people I know, deferring to the parade of popular belief that individuals can find God on their own in the midst of a culture of worldly temptation?

My prayer is that you will join the only procession that the world has ever known to stand the test of time, not for our present lives, but for all of eternity. With over half of our nation’s population claiming to be Christian and not having a clue about what Christian living means, it’s time for Christians of substance, like you and me, to take a stand. Remember that everyone but the most devout ran away from the cross when Jesus was doing his most powerful saving work through the crucifixion. Running away from reality through worldly temptations is how most people try to save themselves in times of trial. Likewise, they won’t be there for you in your time of trial.

Come, stand by Jesus—for He is the only one powerful enough who surely stands by you, walks with you, upholds you in good times and in hard times. Which procession will you join this Holy Week?

In Christian hope, Pastor Linda

From the mail bag

From Bishop Peter Weaver: Recently, I had the opportunity to review the Mission Share contributions from our churches in New England for 2007. I rejoice and am deeply grateful for the hard work and faithfulness of you and your congregation in paying 100% of your mission share apportionment for the year. Your generosity and support of our connectional life together is cause for great thanksgiving because of the lives that are being touched by the love of Christ all around the world through your contributions. You were part of the reason our Conference was able to contribute 92.74% of its fair share for our denominations’ great work through World Service and 100% of its fair share in support of Black Colleges and Africa University. This is one of our best responses in many years. Thank you!

From Jean Dorchester: Dear “WHOs”: Such a wonderful surprise! I had a great time looking and trying all the gifts in my basket. Just like a kid with a Christmas stocking! I know how hard you all work for our church and all its activities. I feel we should be giving you each a basket of love and appreciation!

From the Women of North Grafton United Methodist Church: We, the North Grafton ladies, want to thank you for a most delightful Fellowship Tea. What beautifully prepared food and a wonderful assortment of tea, teapots and china! We all had a wonderful time, and we thank you for including us. Your sisters in Christ, NGUMC women.

From Marlborough Community Services, Inc.: Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your recent donation. Your contribution assists us in meeting the ongoing needs of those whom we serve through our Food Pantry and Direct Services Programs. Fatinha Kerr, Executive Director

Faithlift Auction in the works

Save the date! The Auction Committee announces the return of our most popular fundraiser of the year, **The 2nd Annual Faithlift Dinner and Auction featuring Talents, Treats, and Trivia, on Saturday, March 29, 5:30 – 8:30 PM.** This year's auction will be held at the Moose Family Center, 67 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough.

Last year's Faithlift auction raised over \$5,000 toward lift installation. We are ever so grateful for auction donations which included collectible Hummel figurines, fabulous jewelry, and more from our own congregation as well as a wide range of items from our community. Donated items, enthusiastic bidding, and the talents of our volunteers all contributed to our success. This year, we have many more projects to fund, including installation of a handicapped-accessible restroom. You are invited to come and get in on the fun and also to help with the planning and execution of this event.

Please carefully consider helping in any of the following ways:

Donations:

- _____ I can donate an item for auction. _____
(name of item)
- _____ I will solicit donations from the community.
- _____ I will donate a *treat* for auction. _____
(Home made item or baked goods)
- _____ I will donate a *talent* for auction. (Use your imagination here. Can you give a music lesson? Prepare a meal? Iron shirts?) Separate forms available for these donations.

Time and talent:

- _____ I will distribute advertising in the community.
- _____ I will help with set-up (5:00-5:30).
- _____ I will help with clean-up (8:30-9:00).
- _____ I will help to cook and serve the meal.
- _____ I will help run the trivia contest during the auction.
- _____ I will be an auction "runner" (displays items for bid and delivers to winners).
- _____ I will be a cashier.
- _____ I can be an auctioneer.
- _____ I will be event photographer.

Church Calendar for March 2008

2	Sunday	11:00 AM 12:30-2:00 PM	Worship, 4 th Sunday in Lent, Holy Communion Noon Coffee Fellowship hour in Vestry Confirmation Class, Nursery
3	Monday	10:00 AM 6:00 PM 7:30 PM	Adult Bible Study on Proverbs, home of Bess Cowan Chocolate for Lent Study, Pastor's Study Joint Celebration honoring John and Charles Wesley with Anglican Orthodox Church
5	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Trustees, Meeting Room
6	Thursday	7:00 PM	Evening Worship with Communion, New Horizons
9	Sunday	11:00 AM Noon 12:30-2:00 PM	Worship, 5 th Sunday in Lent, Jan Racca, Guest Preacher Coffee Hour Fellowship, Vestry Confirmation Class, Meeting Room or Nursery
10	Monday	10:00 AM 6:00 PM	Adult Bible Study on Proverbs, home of Bess Cowan Chocolate for Lent Study, Pastor's Study
13	Thursday	7:00 PM	Evening Worship, New Horizons
14	Friday	7:00 PM	Joint Worship Way of the Cross, Sanctuary with Anglican Orthodox congregation
15	Saturday	6:00 PM	Church Lenten Supper at North Grafton UMC
16	Sunday	11:00 AM Noon 12:30-2:00 PM	Palm Sunday, worship with Palm Procession Coffee Hour Fellowship, Vestry Confirmation Class, Meeting Room or Nursery

Holy Week Begins

17	Monday	7:00 AM 10:00 AM 6:00 PM	Morning Prayer, North Grafton UMC Adult Bible Study on Proverbs, home of Bess Cowan Final session Chocolate for Lent, Pastor's Study
18	Tuesday	7:00 AM	Morning Prayer, North Grafton UMC
19	Wednesday	7:00 AM 7:15 PM	Morning Prayer, North Grafton UMC W.H.O. (Women Helping Others) in Meeting Room
20	Thursday	7:00 AM 7:00 PM	Morning Prayer, North Grafton UMC Maundy Thursday Joint Service at New Horizons with Holy Communion

Continued in Page 7

Photos from February 2008

Church Calendar for March 2008 (continued)

21 Friday	7:00 PM	Good Friday and Tennebrae Service
22 Saturday	8:00 PM	Easter Vigil, Pastor Linda preaching, joint service with Holy Trinity Anglican congregation
23 Sunday	6:00 AM 11:00 AM	Easter Sunrise Service, Parsonage in North Grafton Traditional Easter Service with Holy Communion Confirmation Sunday and Baptism of Reilly Edelman
24 Monday	10:00 AM	Adult Bible Study, home of Bess Cowan
25 Tuesday	6:00-9:00 PM	Local Treasurer Training by Conference Treasurer First UMC, Westborough
27 Thursday	7:00 PM	Evening Worship at New Horizons
29 Saturday	5:00-8:00 PM	Second annual Auction with preview, dinner and bidding
30 Sunday	11:00 AM	Morning Worship, Mathew Alexander, Guest preacher
31 Monday	10:00 AM 7:00 PM	Adult Bible Study, home of Bess Cowan Administrative Board, Vestry

On February 10, W.H.O. (Women Helping Others) hosted their first Fellowship Tea in the afternoon. More than 40 ladies of all ages gathered, invited from all over our local area and the North Grafton congregation. Thanks to the artful high tea treats by the W.H.O. ladies, everyone enjoyed a delightful selection of teas and delectable treats to go with an afternoon of laughter and relaxed fellowship.

Faithlift Auction in the works continued from page 5

There will be many surprises up for auction and a trivia contest during the auction. Correct trivia answers earn "Auction Bucks" redeemable as cash toward auction items. Put on your thinking caps and bring your sense of humor!

Please return this form to any member of the Auction Committee: Alyson Cox, Joyce Swett, Michele Rogers, Cindy Beals.

The date for **Easter 2008** (March 23) is the earliest it can possibly be. In the 250 years between 1875-2124, Easter occurs that early only one other year - 1913. Because of the early date for Easter this year, Lent also comes early with Ash Wednesday on February 6 and there is an exceedingly short period for planning and preparing Holy Week and Easter services.
Pastor Linda Stetter.

Link Editor: Arul J. Gerald (ajjoe@rediffmail.com)





First United Methodist Church of Marlborough
52 Church Street
Marlborough, MA 01752
(508)485-1980
Email: marlborofumc@verizon.net
Website: www.marlboroumc.com

Address Correction Requested

Pastor Linda Stetter

