



The Courier

Newsletter March/April 2025

Worship

March 2nd
Transfiguration
Sunday

March 5th
Ash Wednesday

March 9th
First Sunday in Lent

March 16th
Second Sunday in
Lent

March 23rd
Third Sunday in Lent

March 30th
Fourth Sunday in
Lent



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Dear Friends,

Lent begins this week and we enter into this season of reflection and prayer. The season of Lent mirrors the forty days and nights that Jesus spent in the wilderness praying and fasting before embarking on his ministry. The gospels don't give us a clear glimpse into the internal life of Jesus, but we can guess that this was a moment of transformation. Jesus goes from seemingly doing very little to suddenly being a famous prophet, teacher, and healer. What kicks off this ministry is his baptism and then this time of being driven by the Spirit to fast alone. We can imagine that this was a transformative moment of self reflection for Jesus.

We are encouraged to do the same. To put down the things that we normally carry through life and even the things that sustain us, and to pick up an attitude of reflecting on what God might have for us. There are many ways of doing this, from new prayer practices, to devotionals, but something that I find helpful for these moments is trying to take on a new

continued

Worship

April 6th
Fifth Sunday in Lent

April 13th
Palm Sunday

April 17th Maundy
Thursday

April 18th
Good Friday

April 20th
Easter Sunday

April 27th
Second Sunday of
Easter



perspective. I was inspired one year by a minister who “took on atheism” during Lent. The goal was to read arguments from atheists to understand people that had a different view and to see what their needs were. Consequently, this pastor learned more about why they were a person of faith in the first place.

Each Sunday during Lent we’ll take on new perspectives through personal stories. Each sermon time will be a little different from what we’re used to as we include a reflection on someone’s personal experiences - like a Moth episode or This American Life. They’ll include people from other cultures and faiths with different challenges and dreams. Along the way I pray that we’ll find places where we resonate with people that are different from us in a variety of ways. May we build our empathy and our ability to see all people as those who are made in God’s image.

And an additional reminder that this time of Lent is also when we reflect on stewardship and how we support the mission of the church. We’ll take some moments to reflect on this mission as well and the difference that we make together in the community. Look for more information on this soon from our Stewardship team.

During this time may we all find connection and new perspective together!
Blessings and peace,

Pastor Chris

From the Desk of the Moderator

I don't know about you, but when we're in the depths of New England winter (another storm??) I need something to look forward to — something festive and warm and communal. Something like Beer + Bites.

This year's gathering takes place on Saturday, April 5. It's our biggest fundraiser of the year, so it's critical that we spread the word to our friends, neighbors, and other networks now so we can fill Memorial Hall on the big day.

We've secured several first-rate brewers, including Harpoon, Jack's Abby, Castle Island, and Lord Hobo, as well as great food vendors like T'hapas 529, 110 Grille, and Kettle Cuisine. But there's still work to be done and we need all the help we can get.

We also need a few volunteers who can get TIPS alcohol training certification. It's a 2-3 hour commitment and costs \$38. The certification is good for two years. Find out more at:

<https://www.tipsalcohol.com/massachusetts-tips-training.html>



For those of you who would like to volunteer at the event, we will post a sign-up genius in a few weeks.

Questions? Feel free to reach out to Anne Moore at anne.carlson.moore@verizon.net.

Think Spring!

John Swanson



APRIL 5, 2025
Memorial Hall - Melrose
www.melrosebeerandbites.com



Service and Outreach

Birthday Wishes Collection in April

Mark your calendars. MHCC will again be building Birthday-in-a-Box kits for Birthday Wishes in April. We are seeking donations of specific birthday party supplies and/or gifts to build each box. Each Birthday Box will be given to a child living in a homeless shelter to help them celebrate their birthday. Keep your eye on the enews for the link to sign-up to donate. Thank you!

One Great Hour of Sharing

On Sunday, March 30th, we will join with many other denominations to collect donations for One Great Hour of Sharing. With these funds our denomination works with domestic and international partners to support disaster, refugee, and development initiatives. You can donate by check or via our church website “Donate” button (select One Great Hour on the drop-down).

A Servant’s Heart Food Pantry

The Food Pantry continues to see an increased need for groceries and everyday supplies. Please consider picking up a few items for the pantry for March.



- Kleenex
- Pudding snack pack
- Granola bars
- Cookies
- Rice Pilaf
- Coffee—instant coffee or regular ground coffee

Donations can be brought to church on any Sunday or dropped off at Faith Evangelical Church (200 Franklin St. Melrose). You can enter the driveway on the Albion St. side of the church and locate a wooden shed to place your items. Thank you for your continued support!



MHCC Sunday School returned (finally!) on Sunday, February 23rd. We have been learning a bit more about Jesus' life as a child – Jesus as a baby being introduced to God's faithful servants – Anna and Simeon – and the story of Jesus lost in the temple. Jesus is around 12 years old in this story. It closes with the message from Jesus that he was in his Father's house (the temple) and there he was safe/protected. As someone who grew up in MHCC (decades ago) – some of my most cherished memories were getting to know some of MHCC's own "Anna and Simeon" faithful servants. We still have a few of these persons in the church – and a spring time goal of mine as interim coordinator of MHCC's Sunday School program is to further these connections. My life is richer for the connections made – and I would like the same for MHCC's present youth. The church space should be a safe space – a happy space – a space where ALL are welcome. A space that bridges the gap between generations. More to follow on that.

March brings us to the start of LENT – Ash Wednesday is March 5th. Younger kids will be going through our Communion program. Older kids will have specific lessons on John the Baptist and will host a coffee hour in March as we work towards our lofty Heifer goal at the end of this program year (**goal**: donate a pair of mating cows). Look for the return of **PURPLE PATROL**. You and your child are encouraged to wear your purple to church for a fun reward during Coffee Hour! More info on that here.

Sunday School News Continued

UPCOMING CALENDAR

Sunday February 23 rd	Sunday School Returns!
Sunday, March 2 nd	Communion Sunday – All Welcome In Worship
Wednesday, March 5 th	Ash Wednesday (40 Day Lent Begins)
Sunday, March 9 th	Communion Class 1 Older Kids – John the Baptist – Lesson 1
Sunday, March 16 th	Lenten Craft – All Ages
Sunday, March 23 rd	Communion Class 2 Older Kids – John the Baptist – Lesson 2
Sunday, March 30 th	Communion Class 3 Older kids host Coffee Hour
Sunday, April 6 th	Communion Sunday – All Welcome In Worship
Sunday, April 13 th	Palm Sunday – Sunday School Upstairs/Outside
Friday, April 18 th	Good Friday – Labyrinth Open for Reflection
Sunday, April 20 th	Easter Sunday – All Welcome In Worship Easter Egg Hunt After Worship (Outside)
Sunday, April 27 th	Outdoor Planting (Weather Permitting)

**Calling any/all green thumb adults who might care to join us – many hands make for light work!*

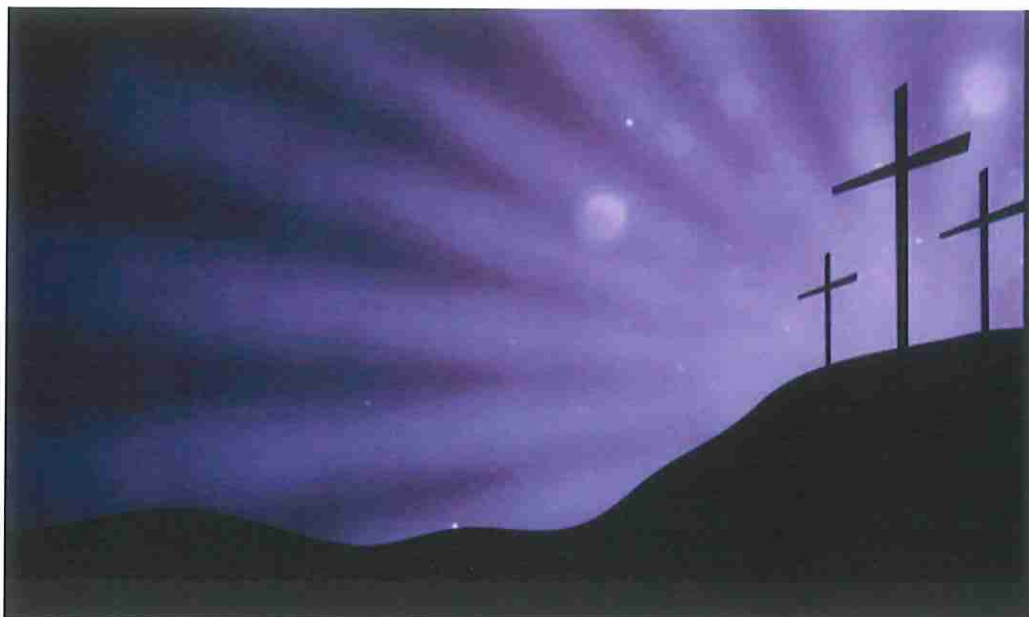
An enthusiastic Sunday School student left Fellowship Hall last week and joyfully exclaimed “I LOVE SUNDAY SCHOOL!” Get to know the kids – you never know what that connection will mean to them.

Best,

Val Bowden, Interim Sunday School Coordinator
774-219-1949 (text preferred)

"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me" (Matthew 18:2)

Sunday School Continued



Wear your PURPLE to church throughout Lent and let the MHCC “Purple Patrol” gift you a small reward! Any purple will do – clothing or accessories (purses, jewelry, etc.). The reward will be a small token.

Purple is the color of royalty. It reminds us of Jesus’ resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated on Easter Sunday. Jesus is our King, our royal King.

Research tells us that the color purple represents the balance of red simulation and blue calm. In stained glass the color purple or violet are seen as the uniting of the “wisdom” of blue and the “love” of red and symbolizes justice. Purple affects us mentally and physically with emotions that are uplifting and calming and often gives a sense of spirituality.

Purple is the color of Lent. Lent reminds us that spring is coming and as many colors erupt as the weather warms, so do the purples.

Purple crocuses.
 Purple hyacinths.
 Purple lilacs.
 Purple irises.

Look for purple hues everywhere this spring. See you in church!

Valerie J. Bowden
 Deacon of Christian Education





MHCC Easter Egg Hunt

When: Sunday, April 20th After Worship

Where: Church Lawn – Weather Permitting

Children to gather first in Fellowship Hall to get their Egg Hunt Bag.

Children will be lined up by age – so the youngest will be able to safely navigate the stairs.

In order to try to manage the level of chaos this egg hunt typically brings – please let Val Bowden know if she should expect you on Easter Sunday – especially if you have extra visitors in tow. All are welcome – but we do like to make sure we have enough for it to be fun for all.

Please return all empty eggs to church – either immediately after the Egg hunt or the following Sunday in the clearly marked box. We all know the price of eggs is a bit crazy these days – let's do our part to reduce/reuse/recycle here.

Thank you.

HOLY WEEK



Palm Sunday (April 13th)

8:00 AM breakfast (location TBA) followed by procession through Main St. with other Melrose churches.

Maundy Thursday (April 17th)

7:00 PM Worship at MHCC

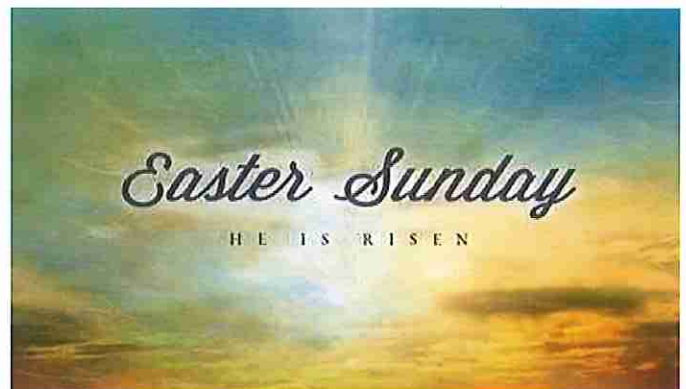


Good Friday (April 18th)

Our Labyrinth will be open from noon to 3:00 PM on Good Friday, the day we remember Jesus' Passion and walk stations of the cross.

Easter Sunday (April 20th)

Easter morning Sunrise Service 6:00 AM at Mount Hood Golf Course.
10:00 AM Celebration of the Resurrection in our sanctuary. Easter Egg Hunt following worship.





Please join us in praying for God's comfort and guidance in their lives and this world, as well as for all those whom you know need God's love and caring.

Please call or email the church office to add a name to our prayer list.

Nancy Chappel
Christyne Cheney Daley
Mary Edwards
Laurie Lowman
Lois Mackey
Jack McLeod
Marcia McCarthy
Carol Trout
Andy Wescott
Ana Wescott
The Andrews Family

Our Sunshine List: *Please send cards, visit and hold in your prayers.*

Barbara Kenworthy, The Fitch Home, 75 Lake Ave., Melrose, MA 02176

Charlotte Swan, Greenwood Nursing & Rehab Center, 90 Greenwood St., Wakefield, MA 01880

Michael Harrison, Steele House, One Nason Ave., Apt. 514
Melrose, MA 02176

Judy McSween, 57 Nowell Rd., Melrose, MA 02176

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23 10am - Worship	24 7:30pm - Outreach Team 7:30pm - Outreach Team	25 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	26 Ash Wednesday	27 6:30pm - Pack 615 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	28 5pm - Pack 615 pinewood	1 7am - Pack 615
2 10am - Holy Communion 10am - Worship	3 7pm - EC meeting	4 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	5	6 6:15pm - Polymnia -	7	8
9 10am - Worship	10 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	11 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	12	13	14	15 10am - Polymnia - FH &
16 10am - Worship	17 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	18 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	19 12pm - TM, pasta dinner - 12:30pm - Lunch Bunch	20	21	22 12pm - Beethoven
23 10am - Worship	24 7:30pm - Outreach Team 7:30pm - Outreach Team	25 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	26	27	28	29 12pm - Beethoven
30 10am - Worship	31	1 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	2	3 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	4 5:30pm - Sunday School	5 Beer + Bites Memorial

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
10am - Worship 30		12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia - 1		7pm - Choir - Sanctuary 2	5:30pm - Sunday School 3	Beer + Bites Memorial 4
10am - Holy Communion 10am - Worship 6	7pm - EC meeting 7	12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia - 8		7pm - Choir - Sanctuary 9		
10am - Worship 1:30pm - MHCC & 13		12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia - 15	11am - Bread of Life 16	5:30pm - Maundy 17	11am - Good Friday FH 18	
Easter Sunday 10am - Worship 20		12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia - 22				1pm - Beethoven Society 26
10am - Worship 27	7:30pm - Outreach Team 7:30pm - Outreach Team 28	12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia - 29		7pm - Choir - Sanctuary 30		