

The Messenger

Orchard Covenant Church
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THE PASTOR'S PAGE

Easter Sunday: Celebrate Resurrection!

9:30 am Easter Breakfast for the Church Family and Guests
11:00 am Worship Celebration with Choir selections from the Messiah!

"A Practice of Pervasive Prayer"

⁵"And when you come before God, don't turn that into a theatrical production...Find a quiet, secluded place ... Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace. Matt 6:5-6, The Message

One of our goals from the Navigate conference, is to **"establish a practice of pervasive prayer"** in our congregation. The word "Pervasive" means to exist in, or spread through, every part of something. When I make soup, I add salt, which flavors everything in the soup. When I bake bread, the aroma permeates the house. You can't miss it, can't get away from it – and you don't want to.

Prayer is to be that way. Our communication with God is to permeate everything with a sweet aroma. Our church, our congregation, our life and mission, are to be soaked in prayer.

In Matthew 6 Jesus taught the people to pray simply and genuinely "Pray in private," he said – where only God sees – "don't try to impress others." Jesus then taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer. We pray it every week together. Scot McKnight suggests we pray it several times a day in private.

Praying in private conversation with God is a foundation stone of a Christian life. But so is praying together as a church. Jesus promised: "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

I don't really know if we have a "practice of pervasive prayer" at Orchard Covenant. What happens in our private prayers? What might God do among us if we "soak" in prayer together?

Right now we pray together briefly Sundays at 9:15am, and Wednesdays at 10am in my office. Our Council and Vitality Team are praying, small groups are praying. Which time can you come to pray? Or what day / time is best for a new prayer group? Please let me know. I'm sure that through pervasive prayer, God will bless us all, in every aspect of our lives and our mission.

See you in church, Pastor Nancy Ebner

Easter Week Schedule

April 17

Palm Sunday Worship 11am

April 19

Tuesday

Bible study at Ebners' 6:30pm

April 20

Wednesday 12pm

Community Lunch, devotion and prayer

April 21

Maundy Thursday

Soup and Bread Supper 6pm

**Worship with Holy Communion
7pm**

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 1- Art Lawler
April 1- Garth Marshall
April 10 - John Hayden
April 13 - Sharon Campsie
April 13 – Jenevive Nishimwe
April 15 - Ruby Anderson
April 22 - Mary Lou Deshais
April 23 - Ellen Ebner
April 25 – Erik Olson
April 28 - Ron Benoit
April 29 - Nathan Bromage

ANNIVERSARIES

April 5 - Don and Gabrielle Olson

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 16 – Men’s Breakfast
April 16 - Church Spring Cleaning
April 17 – Palm Sunday
April 21 - Maundy Thursday
SOUP AND BREAD SUPPER 6:00 P.M.
April 22 - Good Friday
April 24 - Easter Sunday
EASTER BREAKFAST 9:30 A.M.

The Men’s Connection

Date: Saturday, April 16

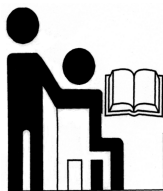
Time: 8:00 a.m.

at the

Orchard Covenant Church

Breakfast will be served.

The time has been changed to allow for Spring Cleaning.



ACTS CELEBRATION – SAVE THE DATE

ACTS is marking its 25th anniversary this year with a celebration at the Community Music School in Springfield on **Tuesday, April 5, from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

The featured speaker for the evening is Dr. Alan Ingram, Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools. Special music will be provided by Intercession, a gospel jazz vocal quintet from the local area. YOU are invited. To make a reservation at \$25/ person, please see Linda or John Howell.

Community Lunch and Health Day

April 6

The liver is one of the “weirdest and coolest” organs in the body according to a short video that will be shown on April 6 at Community Lunch. It is also like a sophisticated jet engine in that it performs more than 500 different functions. We won’t discuss all 500 but will focus on the main ones and answer questions about hepatitis A, B and C. What can we do to take care of this vital organ so that it doesn’t fail us?

Enjoy the fellowship and the healthy lunch. Bring your friends. Come early for blood pressure checks.

SQUANTO BAKE SALE

Dale Jennings



Some of you saw our "Bake Sale Preview" on Sunday to raise money for Camp Squanto scholarships. We had a small amount of baked items, but as one child pointed out "We sold everything in one minute!!"

There are a half a dozen or more youngsters who are looking forward to their first camp experience. These children each have a "Savings Account" managed by Dina Hokanson. Each week they bring whatever money they've been able to earn or save and put it in their account. Most of these children will need a little help to pay the full amount of the cost of their week at camp.

I thank God for the dear children He has brought to this church family and feel an obligation to participate in their growth in His Kingdom.

Last Sunday the kids made \$33.75 to get the fundraiser started. Thank you to all who participated in buying the "goodies". Also, we would appreciate your donating baked goods for the table as often as possible. Each week the kids will be at the table selling the baked goods. Come and get to know these delightful youngsters.

LILIES FOR EASTER

Traditionally, our Sanctuary is filled with beautiful Lily plants for Easter. If you would like to order Lily plants, please fill out the form that will be in the bulletin, and put in the offering plate along with your payment, no later than April 17. The plants are \$8.00 each, and you will be able to take them home with you after Easter.



Palm Sunday, April 17--Worship service, 11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 21--Let's gather together to remember the last night of Jesus' earthly life. Soup and bread supper, 6 p.m. Communion Service, 7:00 p.m.

PRAY WITH ONE EYE OPEN

Dina Hokanson



Last week, the 3rd/4th grade class interviewed Charlene Abrahamson about her prayer habits. She mentioned praying while driving to which one boy said, "I hope you keep your eyes open!" Mrs. A assured us that she keeps **both** eyes on the road. When the children pray in Sunday School, I have to keep at least **one** eye open at all times. If you have worked with children you know all about this. Who knows what could go on under the nose of a teacher with both her eyes closed. Our children are learning to pray out loud in their classes and sometimes it is hard. Last week's lesson for us, from Matthew 6, talked about how Jesus tells us not to babble on or try to sound smarter than we really are when we pray out loud. Babbling on and on when we pray in our classes usually isn't the issue; it is actually things like nervousness and shyness. If you get nervous before praying with others, you know what our students are going through. Praise God our children have a Sunday School where they can come and learn, practice and gain confidence to be tomorrow's leaders.

A RITE OF SPRING

Spring is here and we will have our usual spring clean up day on **Saturday, April 16th at a NEW time: 9:30 AM.** We will have projects inside and out, so please come and help take care of God's house!



The leaking heater/blower units in community hall have been replaced. They are much more efficient than the old ones. We had hoped that they might be a lot quieter than the old but it turns out there has not been much improvement in that department.

Both the sanctuary and community hall will be inspected by the City of Springfield sometime in April, so please pray that all goes well and that there will be no large and expensive discrepancies.

The floor in community hall is in desperate need of refinishing and contractors will be supplying estimates to do so this month.

Navigate Waypoint 104

Dick Warner



We are not alone in this journey! On Saturday, March 9th, our Vitality Team hosted the Vitality Teams of our sister churches from Cromwell and Haddam Neck, CT. In all, about 22 people attended the retreat which was led by Assistant Superintendent Jason Condon. It was a day of worship, song, Bible Study, sharing and planning. One of the great benefits of the day was the further development and strengthening of our relationships with each other. Since the retreat, you may have noticed the visit on March 20th by our friends from Cromwell and future events including all three churches are in the works.

As has been said many times, "a cord of three strands is not easily broken." This was witnessed as our day together progressed and as we got to know each other more. We have agreed to pray for each other and your Vitality Team encourages you to pray for them as well. Pastor Nancy has written and spoken about a practice of "pervasive prayer", a practice where we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide us in all we say and do. The Vitality Team encourages you to do this as this is core to our journey in Christ together.

Your Vitality Team is making good progress on the development of what will be our "Covenant for Holy Manners" and will be presenting it to the Church Council for its suggestions and endorsement in the near future. Please pray that this instrument be spirit led and spirit filled. And remember Philippians 2:3-4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should not look only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Your Vitality Team is cheering you on!

HALLELUJAH

The choir will be singing selections from the Easter Messiah on Easter Sunday. Please come to hear this beloved well known music. We are excited to be sharing with you these special songs as we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord.

On Easter Sunday the choir will once again be serving **Easter Breakfast**. It will be served in the community hall at beginning at **9:30 a.m.** Come join us as we fellowship together before the worship service. Donations will be accepted, and will be used toward the purchase of new choir music. We look forward to seeing you there.