

Large Print

Step by Step: A Slow Walk Through Holy Week

THE LAST STEP

Rev. Dr. Mary Luti
guest preacher

Holy Saturday (Step 7-7)
4/13 @ 10am, on-site & online via Zoom
Connect at www.NeedhamUCC.org



The Congregational Church of Needham, *United Church of Christ*

1154 Great Plain Ave, Needham MA 02492 / Tel 781.444.2510 / www.NeedhamUCC.org / IG @NeedhamUCC

Rev. John Gage, *senior minister*

Valerie Becker, *director of music*

Robin Bevilacqua, *church administrator*

Cindy Sullivan, *financial administrator*

Tom Mollerus, *moderator*

Alan Clayton-Matthews & Avery Casper-Filbin, *deacon chairs*

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

revjohn@needhamucc.org

musicdirector@needhamucc.org

office@needhamucc.org

finance@needhamucc.org

moderator@needhamucc.org

deaconchair@needhamucc.org

prc@needhamucc.org



Welcome! *No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are invited and welcome here at The Congregational Church of Needham, United Church of Christ.*

Please take a moment to let us know you're here, whether you are an official church member, a frequent guest, or a first-timer. **Scan this QR code with the camera on your phone and follow the link to sign-in.** *There's a paper sign-in sheet in the foyer, if you prefer.*

Children of all ages are always welcome in worship! Quiet books and pew pals (soft toys) are available in the foyer outside the sanctuary doors. All bathrooms have **changing tables**. **Pre-K children** who are potty trained are welcome to join our elementary Sunday school activities. **Sunday School is usually offered on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month,** unless otherwise announced.

There is Sunday school this Sunday! Children may follow their teachers downstairs to the classroom after the "Time Especially for Children." **Our next Sunday School dates are 4/27, 5/11, and 5/18.**

April 13, 2025: "Holy Saturday"

Here at the centre everything is still/ Before the stir and movement of our grief/ Which bears its pain with rhythm, ritual,/ Beautiful useless gestures of relief./ So they anoint the skin that cannot feel/ Soothing his ruined flesh with tender care,/ Kissing the wounds they know they cannot heal,/ With incense scenting only empty air./ He blesses every love that weeps and grieves/ And makes our grief the pangs of a new birth./ The love that's poured in silence at old graves/ Renewing flowers, tending the bare earth,/ Is never lost. In him all love is found/ And sown with him, a seed in rich ground.

—"XIV. Jesus is laid in the tomb" by Malcolm Guite (b.1957)

READING FROM SCRIPTURE *from the Letters of the Early Church*
1 Peter 3:17-22; 4:6

SERMON *Holy Saturday* Rev. Dr. Mary Luti

ANTHEM *De Profundis*, by C.W. Gluck Chancel Choir

*De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine,
Domine, exaudi vocem mean,
fiant aures tuae intendentes
in vocem deprecationis meae,
et ipse redimet Israel
ex omnibus iniquitatibus,
ex omnibus iniquitatibus ejus.*

O, I cry to Thee, Lord,
Lord, from out of the depths I
have cried unto Thee.
Lord, give ear to my supplication,
Be attentive, Lord, unto my trials,
take heed unto my prayers and
supplication.
Let Israel ask the Lord above us
to save us all our iniquities,
to save us from all our iniquities,
O Lord.

SHARING OUR PRAYERS (“O God, hear our prayer”)

*****SINGING THE LORD’S PRAYER** (*see below*)

**Our God in heaven, holy is your name.
Your reign come, your will done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread
and help us forgive as we have been forgiven.
In the time of trial, lead us into light,
for yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for-ever.**

PARTNERING IN THE GOOD NEWS

HYMN *From the Falter of Breath (The Last Journey)* (see below)

WE ARE BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

POSTLUDE

CHURCH ACTIVITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS: April 13, 2025

We *always* need Sunday School volunteers. Info?

childrenandyouth@needhamucc.org Sign up?

<https://shorturl.at/UaLJk>



“Step by Step: A Slow Walk Through Holy Week”

Continues

Sundays, March 2-April 20

Most years, it seems, Holy Week goes by in a blur. It's Palm Sunday one moment, Jesus is entering Jerusalem to the acclaim of the crowds, and the next it's Easter, with Jesus already killed, buried, and raised before we know it. We barely get time to acknowledge the *what* of his death much less the *why*, which is every bit as important, if not more so. To engage these questions more deeply, we'll spend the season of Lent walking slowly through the events of Holy Week. We'll take an entire Sunday worship service to explore each of the days of Holy Week in turn from Palm Sunday to Easter. This Lent, join us on this slow, intentional journey to the cross and the heart of our faith.



Easter Flower Delivery

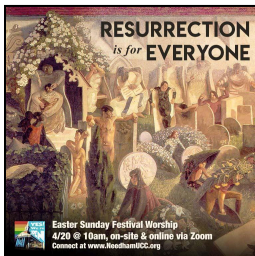
THIS SUNDAY, *after worship*

Help us share the tender good news of Easter with members of our congregation who may be going through a hard time just now or simply can't make it to worship as often as they might like. We need volunteers to help deliver 25 beautiful spring flowers and a smile around town (and just a little further) after worship today.



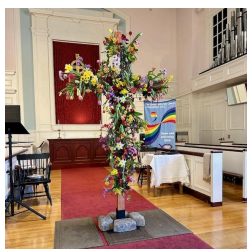
***Actual* Maundy Thursday**
Thursday, 4/17 @ 7pm EDT LIVE!
On-Site & Online via Zoom at
<http://zoom.us/j/907548568>

We remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples, when he welcomed them all to the table, even his betrayers, as an act of radical hospitality on the eve of his execution by the state. Even in the midst of our own season of shadows, inside and out, that invitation still stands. Come share Jesus' table, his "new commandment" that we should love one another, and his trials, as he shares ours. Worship will include both Holy Communion and a Service of *Tenebrae* or Shadows.



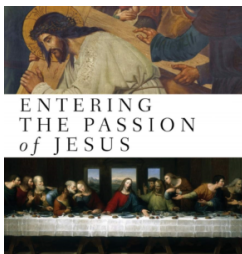
“Resurrection is for Everyone”
Easter Sunday, 4/20 @ 10am EDT LIVE!
On-Site & Online via Zoom at
<http://zoom.us/j/907548568>

At last we arrive at Easter. But oddly enough, Matthew's version of the story of the resurrection begins on Good Friday, with what sounds at first like a ghost story about tombs being opened and the walking dead. But it's a reminder that Easter doesn't belong just to the church, and resurrection doesn't belong only to Jesus. Resurrection is for everyone, for all the dry bones, for all the walking dead, for all the helpless and hopeless, even for us. (Matthew 27:51-54)



We need your help to **Bloom the Cross for Easter**

A bare wooden cross stands at the center of our worship during this season of Lent. It will get even colder and harder during Holy Week as we accompany Jesus through the last hours of his life to his crucifixion on Good Friday and his burial in the tomb. But we believe death does not have the last word, and even the cross can be redeemed. As a sign of our hope in the resurrection, please bring flowers—LOTS OF FLOWERS—either from your lawn or the store, to decorate the cross and make it bloom on **Easter Sunday, 4/20 @ 10am.**



Next for 4/16: Chapter 6

Lenten Reading Group: *Entering the Passion of Jesus*
Wednesdays, 3/5-4/9 @ Noon-1pm online via Zoom at
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85113249091>

As we take our slow walk through Holy Week this Lent, we'll follow along with Biblical scholar and engaging guide Prof. Amy-Jill "A.J." Levine, Rabbi Stanley M. Kessler Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at UCC-related Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, in her book *Entering the Passion of Jesus*.

Earth Sunday: Look to the Bees

with special guest preacher,

The Rev. Dr. Chris Davies

4/27 @ 10am, on-site & online via Zoom

This Earth Sunday, we celebrate not God's gift of the earth *to us*, but God's gift *to us* of our interconnected relationship with the earth, God's wider, deeper, higher, and altogether "very good" creation of which we are a part. Our guest preacher will be The Rev.

Dr. Chris Davies, one of the executive ministers of our Southern New England Conference of our United Church of Christ denominational family... and an avid beekeeper! She will share with us spiritual lessons for our current moment she's gleaned from caring for bees and the way bees care for each other. Our own Environmental Ministries team is helping to plan and lead this worship service, ***and they will be giving away 20 white dogwood saplings after worship!***



NEW! Baby Basics ONGOING Food Collection

Each Sunday in worship, we will be collecting specific core proteins for the groceries we give to the families accessing diapers through Baby Basics every other month. **The protein of the month for April is:**

large jars of natural (no sugar added) peanut butter.



Spring Fundraiser for Music: “Give Thanks and Sing!”

Each Sunday we come together as church to listen for a Word from God, share our concerns, care for one another, and encourage one another on our faith journey. We communicate that point in many ways – through scripture, sermons, prayers and the way that goes most directly to the heart: through music. In order to keep our music program flourishing, we need your help in replenishing the Supplemental Music Fund. Please consider a gift to the Supplemental Music Fund to underwrite our music program. Give generously by sending a check made out to “The Congregational Church of Needham” with “Music Fund” in the memo line or **give online via our website at www.NeedhamUCC.org/PayPal**, where you can click on the PayPal logo and select “Music Fund” from the drop-down menu.

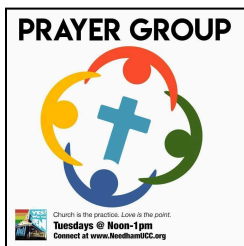


Annual Women's Retreat

“Profound Resilience: Shining and Sharing Your Light”

Friday, 5/9 @ 3pm - Saturday, 5/10 @ 3pm, *Craigville Retreat Center, Cape Cod*

Events include morning beach walk/yoga, music, discussions, a craft, communion service and overall camaraderie. Space is limited to 23 people and the cost /per person is \$155 in a dorm-like setting. To join us, please mail or drop off a check made out to the Congregational Church of Needham, with “Women’s Retreat” in the memo section, as well as a note listing your email address, phone number, and any food allergies or dietary restrictions. If you have any questions contact, **Stephanie Oddleifson at soddleifson@gmail.com**, **Carol Oberle at coberle1@verizon.net**, **Carol Brown at walshbrown1@gmail.com**, **Janet Jankowiak at janetjankowiak@comcast.net** or **Cici Hunt at cicihunt@gmail.com**.



Weekly Prayer Group

Tuesdays @ 12 Noon via Zoom at

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84372854861>

In church we often talk about prayer as if everybody knows what prayer is. But prayer can look and feel very different for different people in different situations. Above all, prayer is a practice, and practices take practice. Join us as we practice praying together.



Mindful Meditation

Sundays @ 7pm via Zoom ONLY

at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/79920727588>

What is mindful meditation? *Focusing on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgment. Practicing mindfulness involves breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.* Join longtime practitioner Sue Findlay and others Sunday evenings online.



Save the Date!

Family Promise Metrowest WALK TO END HOMELESSNESS

Sunday, May 4

Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

From the Falter of Breath (The Last Journey)

From the falter of breath, through the silence of death,
to the wonder that's breaking beyond,
God has woven away, unapparent by day,
for all those of whom heaven is fond.

From frustrations and pain, through hope hard to sustain,
to the wholeness here promised, there known,
Christ has gone where we fear and has vowed to be near
on the journey we make on our own.

from the dimming of light, through the darkness of night,
to the glory of goodness above,
God the Spirit is sent to ensure heaven's intent
is embraced and completed in love.

From today till we die, through all questioning why,
to the place from which time and tide flow,
angels tread on our dreams, and magnificent themes
of heaven's promise are echoed below.