Central Square Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

April 2018

# **Steeple Sounds**

# From The Desk of Rev. Beth



It's only once in a blue moon that April Fool's Day falls on Easter...and I mean that quite literally! Easter moves around every year because the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ occurred around the time of the Passover Festival, which is celebrated on the first full moon following the vernal equinox. This year, that moon happens to be blue (the second full moon in March).

Truly, it is quite appropriate that April Fool's Day falls on Easter every 11 to 60 years or so, especially since April Fool's

Day might be the church's fault. Back in 1563, the ecumenical Council of Trent gathered as a response to the Protestant Reformation and, among their many items of business, established the Gregorian calendar to correct the errors of the Julian calendar. The calendar was slow to be adopted by the world. However, in 1582, France officially adopted the Gregorian calendar. In the confusion of a changed calendar, some people failed to recognize that the New Year had moved to January 1 and instead they continued to celebrate around April 1. These individuals ended up becoming the recipients of many jokes... and the first April fools.

That may have been one of the longest running unintentional pranks of the Church, but it most certainly wasn't the first. Long before the Gregorian calendar was established, the first prank of the Christian church may have originated in Christ himself, when the risen Christ showed up on the road to Emmaus and ran into the disciples. Thinking and talking about Jesus' crucifixion, they asked him if he had heard the news around town. Jesus never did tell them who he was... not on the long walk, not when he called them fools, and not while they were eating dinner together. The disciples only realized it right before Jesus disappeared. Look up the story yourself in Luke 24:13-31!!!

## A special note of thanks:

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the wonderful surprise Baby Shower you threw for me, Eric, & Jae! We are so thankful for your presence in our lives and we can't wait for our little one to join the CSCC family! I am going to miss weekly worship with all of you while I am out on Parental Leave, but I'm looking forward to time to get to know this little one that has been taking up residence in my belly. You are in very good hands with Pastor Erin and our strong Deacons while I'll be away, and we'll be sure to pop in to worship a few times before I return to full-time ministry on July 15. Easter blessings to you all in this season of new life!

# From Our Auxiliary Pastor

Greetings, church! My name is Pastor Erin, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve your congregation as Auxiliary Pastor while Rev. Beth is on parental leave! I am a Licensed Minister in the United Church of Christ and serve at Christ Congregational Church in Brockton as their Minister of Visitation and Co-Confirmation Leader. In addition to church ministry, I am passionate about chaplaincy and advocacy work. I grew up in the UCC in Vermont, where my mom served as our church's Christian Education Director and started our church's food pantry along with another member of the church. Her faith and service has greatly influenced my faith journey. My background is in religious studies, theology and education, and it was in the classroom, while teaching English as a Second Language to adult immigrants, that I received my call to ministry.

Currently, I live in Taunton with my partner Mike and our 'L'il Kitty'. Mike and I enjoy spending time outdoors together, especially exploring new places and fishing!

I look forward to meeting you all on April 15<sup>th</sup>! I am incredibly grateful to have this opportunity to get to know you and worship with you as we grow in faith and service together!

In Christ's peace, Pastor Erin

## From the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is looking ahead to 2021 when we will all celebrate our 200th Anniversary! In order to prepare our building for this event, we would like to complete all the necessary renovations to both the exterior and the interior of the church.

Through some simple investigation, we learned that Central Square Church would be eligible to apply for a Community Preservation Grant. The paperwork to be completed in this application is quite extensive and certainly would require the help of a few people. Trustees would like to form a small committee of four people to work together to complete the paperwork. It was told to me that 2018 is a perfect time to begin the request for funding with the Anniversary still a few years away.

I have volunteered to be on this committee along with Dave Sheibley. We would like two others to join us.

It was suggested that we hire a professional consultant to assist us in completing the application, and the name of a historic preservationist has also been referred to us.

I feel very excited about this new project. Community Preservation Funding (CPF) was granted to the First Parish Unitarian Church on School Street in Bridgewater when it applied prior to its 300th Anniversary. The First Parish Church is the oldest church in Bridgewater.

Central Square Church is a historic wooden structure on an old New England Common, a symbol of a life time past. Historians want to preserve this picture. I feel we have a good chance to be granted public funds for this necessary project.

Please contact the church office if you are interested in being on this committee.

Barbara Morey, co chair with Tom Struzik

## From the Board of Deacons

Jesus Is Risen! Alleluia! Now what? From "Poking Jesus" Rev. Jeff Mansfield, preaching April 15, 2012 Based on John 20: 19-29

One of my favorite gospels is a gospel that you won't find in your Bibles although some of you may have heard of it or read it. It's called the Gospel According to Thomas. At the beginning of the book, the author identifies himself as Thomas the Twin, the very disciple we just heard about in John's gospel.

That's right, Doubting Thomas – as we memorialize him in the West – went on to write his very own account of the teachings of Jesus. Well, OK, scholars and religious folks both argue about whether Thomas really authored the gospel, but at the very least we can say that if it wasn't Thomas himself, then the Skeptical Disciple inspired someone – more likely a whole community of someones – to write a gospel motivated by his unique perspective. Not bad for a doubter.

I think Thomas gets a pretty bum rap. Thomas is remembered by us as the bad disciple, the one who didn't quite measure up, the needy one, the one it would be best we didn't emulate. I don't think that this has anything to do with what Thomas said or with what he did. I think it has to do with our own feelings, as people of faith, of guilt and shame about the doubts that ALL OF US carry. I wonder if Thomas might have something to teach us about living with doubt and really LIVING with it. For many of us, doubt can feel like a spiritual dead end and a social stigma – a reason we don't belong. But for Thomas, his doubt was the road to resurrection, to intimacy, and to his very own gospel account of who Jesus was.

Did you know that in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, Thomas is not remembered as Doubting Thomas, but as Saint Thomas the Believer? Many of us have read or heard that Jesus said in Luke's Gospel, "Seek and ye shall find!" Thomas the Believer, no doubt about it, was a seeker in his moment of resurrection skepticism. Maybe Thomas found a little bit later than his friends, but he sought deeper and longer and had the integrity not to cave into peer pressure but to discover the truth for himself. In the opening lines of the Gospel of Thomas, the author – Thomas himself, perhaps, or a community inspired by him – record Jesus as saying, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find." Oooh, That's a little different from Seek and ye shall find, right? Same idea, but there's a little bit of Thomas in there, I think, a little moxie. Thomas' seeking was not satisfied by the stories his friends told, so he went further.

The health of our doubt has to do with our perspective towards it – how we feel about its presence in our life and how we then express it. When Thomas got the news about the

appearances that Jesus had made, something just didn't click for him. It's a whale of a tale after all. Jesus, Thomas has been told, has risen bodily from the grave. But when Mary first saw him, she didn't even recognize him – she thought Jesus was the gardener. And she didn't touch him in John's account. Jesus told her not to. Well, that's not very bodily, is it? Later, Jesus seems to materialize into a room with locked doors – something Spirits are well known for, but usually not bodies. The disciples saw the wounds of the cross and had the Holy Spirit breathed onto them, but they still didn't touch Jesus.

Thomas' doubt is a bold statement of need. He has no self-consciousness about being public and clear. What I need, said Thomas, who had just lost a friend he loved deeply, is to touch him. If that wasn't a ghost you saw, if it wasn't just his Holy Spirit, then I want to touch him. This is not doubt and despair, is it? It seems to me like a pretty good plan – a map of the journey ahead and a way forward. Thomas is not going to be poking at Jesus dispassionately with a stick to make sure he is solid, to see if he'll be stirred to life. Thomas is seeking way more than "proof." Thomas seeks and he doesn't stop seeking until he finds his own intimate connection with the risen body of Jesus.

How we deal with doubt affects the health of our entire lives. Doubt is not just something that assails us in church. Oh no. If only it could be that easy. If only all we had to doubt were the mysteries of faith, but we have our whole lives to find doubt in, don't we? Love, relationships, vocation, self-worth, talent, happiness – We know how to doubt it all....

And can you believe it all begins with doubt. Doubt, healthy doubt, pushing us to seek out blessings and embraces from new communities. The Gospel according to Thomas says, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel and rule over all." No doubt, as we all continue to find our way together, we will be disturbed by one another and we will marvel together. But the blessing of Thomas' doubt has the power to draw us together – seekers who will not stop, journeying together.

AMEN.



Please join the Women's Guild and Fellowship on **Wednesday April 4th** in the Fellowship Hall at **6:30 PM**. Following the business meeting, we will be serving refreshments and then our program for the evening will begin at approximately 7:15 PM. Deb Sorgman will be presenting her program on self-defense. This meeting is open to all women and friends of the church.

Plans will be revealed for our annual banquet in May, too! Reservations and payments will be accepted at this time.



The WG & F Spring Rummage Sale is just around the corner, and plans are underway! The date is Saturday April 28, and the time is 9:00-1:00.

We are asking for donations of gently used items. Goods may be dropped off at the church during church office hours Monday April 23 through Friday April 27th. The church will also be open on Thursday April 26th from 5:00 to 7:00PM for drop offs.

A reminder that we can no longer take encyclopedias, dictionaries, or text books. Hard covered novels are fine. We also accept paperback books, children's book, and puzzles.

This is one of our biggest fundraiser of the year and we ask that you consider donating time for our organizational efforts on any of the days our team is working.

We look forward to seeing you, and don't forget to visit the Lunch Bunch in the Fireplace Room on Saturday. Soup will be on!

Thanks in advance for all your help, Gail Wright Lynn Pietras

# From the Board of Stewardship

Greetings from Your Stewardship team! We want to thank those that have returned your 2018 Pledge Forms. If you have not completed and returned your Pledge form yet, PLEASE do so ASAP. We have received only 42 responses to date and the Board of Trustees will meet next we to begin constructing a budget for next year. Without a complete and clear understanding of our financial commitment from the membership the Trustees and the Church leadership team cannot formulate an accurate plan for fiscal year 2018.

If you have questions about completing the form or have questions regarding pledging in general please contact a member of the Stewardship team and we will gladly assist you. If for some reason you plan not to pledge or support the church this year please note that on the form and send it along. THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL. ONLY THE TREASURE AND THE TREASURES ASSISTANT REVIEW THE PLEDGE INFORMATION. Our contact information is listed below.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this request.

Also, for those who were interested in reading Rich Sullivan's presentation on the History of CSCC, you can now access it under the "About Us" tab of our website!

We'd also like to congratulate the winners of our pledge drawing: Mike & Mauree Bundock, Don & Anne Cederholm, and Bob & Carol Daiker-Howe!

Rich Sullivan Sully1950@comcast.net 339 933 5436

Brad Barnsley barns4@aol.com 508 697 3023

Jim Basler James.basler@sbdinc.com

From the Minister of Music

The adult and children's choirs had a lovely and introspective Lenten season, culminating with a beautiful Palm Sunday service, in which we expressed the emotions of triumph and despair in the same service, to prepare ourselves for Holy Week. We will have a Maundy Thursday service this Thursday evening, in which we will perform music having to do with mortality and the crucifixion, before looking forward to our joyful Easter service, in which all children are invited to sing the song "Spark My World." Another event to anticipate in April is our second Score Club, which will take place after the service on April 29th. We will be discussing Steven Sametz's "A Child's Requiem," and all are invited to participate!

# News from Outreach

Having grown up and lived in Bridgewater for 62 years, I've seen a lot of change, as I'm sure other CSCC members can say also. A little bit of reminiscing – it wasn't too long ago, less than 50 years, that there was almost 20 dairy farms in town, and many more in the surrounding towns. The population of Bridgewater was only about 10,000 people (not counting the college & prison). Now, there are no dairies, and the population is somewhere around 27,000. Farming was a way of life. Growing up on the farm, we worked seven days a week to put food on the table. We had our own chickens for eggs and meat. There was always plenty of milk and hamburger from an old dairy cow that we had dressed out. We had a large freezer to store food from the farm – meat and vegetables. In the basement of the house there was a whole section just for home canning – pickled beets, stewed tomatoes, green tomato mincemeat, dill pickles, and bread & butter pickles that were put up for the winter. Also in the basement, there was a crock full of sour pickles. These were the last cukes (usually small) picked just before a killing frost, and preserved in a mix of vinegar, mustard powder, sugar and salt. Looking back, life wasn't always easy, but it was simpler and less stressful. I recently heard that the few dairy farmers that are left are receiving a suicide prevention phone number from the milk marketing cooperation. Nowadays farming isn't a way of life, it's a business.

Relating this to Outreach: In this day and age with so many people in the world, life has become increasingly more complicated. Sometimes there's not enough opportunity to go around and people get caught up in day to day stresses and deadlines, and some need help. With all these people, there are more and more who become homeless, face drug or alcohol addiction problems, or just have a hard time making ends meet, no matter how hard they try.

At CSCC, these issues have always been front and center. We have the Food Pantry, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Al-Anon who utilize our building to house their meetings. Teen Challenge, Brockton homeless, Mainspring House, and of course the Mission Trip are all part of Outreach, plus many more! No matter what the challenge, CSCC will take it on!

God is still speaking,

David Hanson Outreach Committee

# News from Christian Education

I try to instill as many lessons into my boys' daily lives as possible, guessing that about seventy percent goes in one ear and straight out the other. But sometimes they surprise me...

This weekend, Aiden and I tackled the endless job of cleaning his room and in the midst of it, decided to wrap up all of his change. This was more than a few coins. In fact, he had repurposed one of my old mason jars into his change jar, collecting change from mom and dad whenever we emptied our pockets at night. And, right in time for Toys R Us to begin liquidating their stores.

So as we wrapped, I posed a question to Aiden..."What if we donate 10% of whatever we wrap to either the food pantry or to buy supplies for the homeless?" Now I love both my boys, but I was a little doubtful my idea would go over well considering the alternative was shopping at the toy store. They have been talking about the toy store liquidation since it aired on the news last week.

We had wrapped \$110.00 of change, planning \$11 would go to help others. And when he figured it would be \$11.00, he looked at me and said' "Momma, how about we double it and go with \$22.00?" My heart melted.

So sometime this week, Aiden and I will be headed to Market Basket so he can purchase \$22 of canned veggies for our food pantry. It's one of those mom moments that I won't forget. Maybe a few more of those daily lessons have actually been heard!

And it reminds me that even the youngest members of our congregation can contribute. So, I plan to use this experience as a teaching moment with our Sunday School family. Who knows? Maybe we all could save a little change!

In faith,

Krissy Cannizzo



#### **Mission Youth News**

The Mission Dinner and Auction held at CSCC on March 24th was a wonderful success! Thank you to the families, neighbors and friends in the church community for your support of our major trip fundraiser. The Fellowship Hall was creatively transformed into the Hershey's Bar and Grille for an evening of delicious food, super service, great auction prizes and enjoyable company.

Thank you to the many volunteers who gave their time, talent and treasures to make the evening such an awesome experience. It's amazing how the crew makes such a big event look so easy each year. Wow! The Mission Youth and their leaders are really looking forward to their trip on June 24- 29 for a week of service to people in need in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania community!

Marlene Beaudrault Jacobs Board of Christian Education/Mission Trip Coordinator

### Thank you to our April Acolytes!

- April 1: Jae Stotts & Matt Berard
- April 8: Jae Stotts
- April 15: Daniel Turner
- April 22: TBD
- April 29: Franco Ciaramitaro & Jae Stotts

## Thank you to our April Worship Leaders/Deacons!

- April 1: Anne Malmquist
- April 8: TBD
- April 15: TBD
- April 22: TBD
- April 29: TBD

## Thank you to our April Sunday Service Greeters!

- April 1: Marci & Logan
- April 8: Bev Mitchell
- April 15: Mike Bundock
- April 22: TBD
- April 29: TBD

If you're available to fill in on a "TBD" Sunday, please email <u>diane@sheibley.net</u>. **Every Sunday in May is also available!** 

## Important Upcoming Dates:

April 18: Next Cabinet meeting at 7 PM in the Meeting Room. All are welcome!

## Save the Date!

Our next Golf Tournament is scheduled for Friday, July 27<sup>th</sup>! More details to follow.

#### Daily Lectionary Scripture References April 2018 (Year B)

Sun., Apr. 1, Easter Resurrection of the Lord Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

Mon., Apr. 2 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Genesis 1:1-19 1 Corinthians 15:35-49

Tues., Apr. 3 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Genesis 1:20—2:4a 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Wed., Apr. 4 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Song of Solomon 3:1-11 Mark 16:1-8

Thurs., Apr. 5 Psalm 133 Daniel 1:1-21 Acts 2:42-47

Fri., Apr. 6 Psalm 133 Daniel 2:1-23 Acts 4:23-31

Sat., Apr. 7 Psalm 133 Daniel 2:24-49 John 12:44-50

Sun., Apr. 8 Second Sunday of Easter Acts 4:32-35 Psalm 133 1 John 1:1-2:2 John 20:19-31

Mon., Apr. 9 Psalm 135 Daniel 3:1-30 1 John 2:3-11

Tues., Apr. 10 Psalm 135 Daniel 6:1-28 1 John 2:12-17 Wed., Apr. 11 Psalm 135 Isaiah 26:1-15 Mark 12:18-27

Thurs., Apr. 12 Psalm 4 Daniel 9:1-19 1 John 2:18-25

Fri., Apr. 13 Psalm 4 Daniel 10:2-19 1 John 2:26-28

Sat., Apr. 14 Psalm 4 Acts 3:1-10 Luke 22:24-30

Sun., Apr. 15 Third Sunday of Easter Acts 3:12-19 Psalm 4 1 John 3:1-7 Luke 24:36b-48

Mon., Apr. 16 Psalm 150 Jeremiah 30:1-11a 1 John 3:10-16

**Tues., Apr. 17** Psalm 150 Hosea 5:15—6:6 2 John 1-6

Wed., Apr. 18 Psalm 150 Proverbs 9:1-6 Mark 16:9-18

Thurs., Apr. 19 Psalm 23 Genesis 30:25-43 Acts 3:17-26

Fri., Apr. 20 Psalm 23 Genesis 46:28-47:6 Acts 4:1-4 Sat., Apr. 21 Psalm 23 Genesis 48:8-19 Mark 6:30-34

Sun., Apr. 22 Fourth Sunday in Easter Acts 4:5-12 Psalm 23 1 John 3:16-24 John 10:11-18

Mon., Apr. 23 Psalm 95 1 Samuel 16:1-13 1 Peter 5:1-5

Tues., Apr. 24 Psalm 95 1 Chronicles 11:1-9 Revelation 7:13-17

Wed., Apr. 25 Psalm 95 Micah 7:8-20 Mark 14:26-31

Thurs., Apr. 26 Psalm 22:25-31 Amos 8:1-7 Acts 8:1b-8

Fri., Apr. 27 Psalm 22:25-31 Amos 8:11-13 Acts 8:9-25

Sat., Apr. 28 Psalm 22:25-31 Amos 9:7-15 Mark 4:30-32

Sun., Apr. 29 Fifth Sunday of Easter Acts 8:26-40 Psalm 22:25-31 1 John 4:7-21 John 15:1-8

Mon., Apr. 30 Psalm 80 Isaiah 5:1-7 Galatians 5:16-26



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Sun Apr 1 Easter Sunday 6 dam Breakfast Crew - 8 aam Choir Reh - ST 8 aam Breakfast - FH 3 more	Mon 2 • 6pm Food Pantry - LL • 7pm NA-FH	Tue 3 • 7:30pm Stewardship -	Wed 4 • 6pm Girl Scouts - LL • 6:30pm WG&F - FH • 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	Thu 5 • 10am Food Pantry - LI • 7pm Growth - FR • 7pm Al-Anon - FH	Fri 6	Sat 7 • 9am Guiding Eyes - FF • 10am Beth Cook - KT
8 8 am Choir Reh - ST 9 am Confirmation Cla 9:30am Jr Choir Reh - 10am Worship 2 more	9 • 6:15pm Girl Scouts - N • 7pm NA-FH	10 • 6pm Girl Scouts - FH • 7pm Deacons - FR • 7:30pm Outreach - MR	<ul> <li>11</li> <li>4:30pm Girl Scouts - L</li> <li>6pm Girl Scouts - LL</li> <li>7pm CE - FR</li> <li>7:30pm BSU Choir - S1</li> </ul>	12 • 10am Food Pantry - LI • 7pm Al-Anon - FH	13	14 • 10am Beth Cook - KT
<ul> <li>15</li> <li>6am Breakfast Crew -</li> <li>8am Choir Reh - ST</li> <li>9am Breakfast - FH</li> <li>9:30am Jr Choir Reh -</li> <li>2 more</li> </ul>	16 • 7pm NA-FH	17 Cake Classes - FH Tax Day	18 • 7pm Cabinet-MR • 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	-	20 • 6pm CE Movie Night -	21 • 10am Beth Cook - KT • 4pm Masiello Party - F
22 8am Choir Reh - ST 9:30am Jr Choir Reh - 10am Worship 7:30pm AA-FH	23 • 9am Rummage Sale D • 6:15pm Girl Scouts - N • 7pm NA-FH	24 • 9am Rummage Sale D • 6pm Girl Scouts - FH	25 • 9am Rummage Sale D • 4:30pm Girl Scouts - L • 6pm Girl Scouts - LL • 7pm Trustees-FR • 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	26 Rummage Sale Prep - F 9 am Rummage Sale D 10 am Food Pantry - LI 7 pm Al-Anon - ST	27 Rummage Sale Prep - F 9 am Rummage Sale D 5 5pm Rummage Sale D	28 • 9am Rummage Sale - • 11:30am Soups On Lu
29 • 8am Choir Reh - ST • 10am Worship • 12pm Score Club - ST • 7:30pm AA-FH	30 • 7pm NA-FH	May 1 • 7:30pm Stewardship -	2 • 6pm Girl Scouts - LL • 7:30pm BSU Choir - S1	3 • 10am Food Pantry - Ll • 7pm Growth - FR • 7pm Al-Anon - FH	4	5 Cinco de Mayo • 10am Beth Cook - KT • 11am Tor + Up



#### Central Square CC now takes PayPal!

CSCC is now able to accept **online donations**! (Both general donations and donations for the Bridgewater Food Pantry). At the top of our website homepage (<u>www.csccucc.org</u>), there are two buttons, one for each category of donation. Feel free to let your friends, neighbors, and social media networks know that they have the ability to support our work and the work of the food pantry.

Church Administration Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Stotts – csccpastor@hotmail.com Auxiliary Pastor: Erin Reardon – esr1250@hotmail.com Congregational Administrator: Ellen Atherton – office@csccucc.com Director of Youth Ministry: Larissa DeMarco csccyouthminister@gmail.com Sexton: Rich Sullivan Minister of Music: Julia Scott Carey Superintendent of Sunday School: Krissy Cannizzo maximus202@comcast.net Treasurer: Larry Brown treasurer@csccucc.com Office telephone: (508) 697-6016 Website: www.csccucc.org

Central Square Congregational Church United Church of Christ 71 Central Square Bridgewater, MA 02324

