

Important Dates at FCC

Sundays:

Every 10am Worship & Sunday SchoolHouse
3/20 8:30am Governance Meeting (third Sunday)
3/27 Easter Services - Sunrise at 5:30am; 10am
3/27 8:30am Stephen Ministry (fourth Sunday)
Every 7pm Sunday Night Youth

Mondays:

2/29 4pm Care Committee (last Monday)
3/7 6:30pm Trustees (first Monday)
3/21 7pm Deacons (third Monday)
3/28 4pm Care Committee (last Monday)

Tuesdays:

3/8 & 3/22 1pm NeedleworX

Wednesdays:

3/2 Westfield Soup Kitchen
Every 6:30pm Marquis
Every 7pm Bell Choir

Thursdays:

3/10 12pm Women's Fellowship
3/17 7pm Maundy Thursday Service
Every 8:45am Yoga
Every 7pm Chancel Choir

Fridays:

3/4 7:30pm Sound Healing

Saturdays:

3/12 6-8pm Souper Saturday
3/19 6-8pm Dessert Auction for SNY

Sundays
Worship at 10am
Sunday SchoolHouse 10am

Email articles for the next First Edition to
sue@firstchurchgranby.org by March 23rd


First Congregational
Church of Granby
219 North Granby Rd.
Granby, CT 06035

The First Edition

March 2016

This Lent we are exploring “gifts of the dark wood.”

Negative experiences and emotions do indeed offer possibilities for growth. But no, everything *doesn't* happen for a reason.

I'm listening to someone relate a story. His friend was in a horrible car accident and now is physically disabled and in so much pain she can no longer work. But this is a good news story, he reassures me; she was a total mess before the accident and since the tragedy her life has completely turned around. And then he concludes decisively, “Everything happens for a reason.”

NOOO! I want to scream. You've heard such platitudes cloaked as comfort... “God doesn't give you more than you can handle. It could have been worse. God needed another angel.” Maybe you've even repeated such phrases when you were trying to comfort someone when the unthinkable happens.

Please don't do it. It's far better to say nothing than to say something so hurtful. When a person is devastated by loss—whatever the cause—the LAST thing they need is your advice. Just be there.

There's another reason not to say it; such platitudes are categorically wrong. Everything does *not* happen for a reason, anymore than God “gives” us stuff to handle. Take cancer, for instance. You don't get cancer because God is trying to send a message. Sure, there are biological reasons, but from the universe's perspective there's no reason our cells change from healthy to stealthy. Nor is loss meted out by a demanding God to punish us or to teach us a lesson. If you need a reason, it's this: we're mortal and that means that hard things are going to happen and eventually we'll die.

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What does seem to matter is how, over time, we internalize such crises. Maybe that's what happened to the man's friend. Going on after such a catastrophe required her to stretch every emotional and spiritual muscle, not to mention her physical ones. During March we continue to explore "gifts of the dark wood." The experiences and feelings we would rather avoid can be assets on the journey of faith when they invite us to probe, question, wrestle, and discover. You don't have to be a spiritual master to experience profound awakening; all you really need to be is human.

Let's journey together!

Pastor Ginny

HOLY WEEK HAPPENINGS

The church enters a week that runs from Palm Sunday to Easter that we call "Holy Week," remembering the last week of Jesus' life.



- **Palm Sunday** –All the choirs add to a musical celebration as we remember Jesus' "triumphant entry" into Jerusalem. We celebrate the "gift of being misfits"! Pancake breakfast before worship and lunch to follow.
- **Maundy Thursday** – We gather at 6 pm in Cook Hall for worship that includes supper, communion, and the story of Jesus' final hours, told from the perspective of those who were with him.
- **Easter Sunday** – Sunrise service at 6:30 am at High Meadow. Worship in the sanctuary at 10 am. Bring your favorite flowering bulbs to decorate the sanctuary!
- **Easter Dinner** – A traditional Easter dinner will be served here following worship. On the menu: baked ham and scalloped potatoes. Do you have a favorite side dish? Bring it or send us the recipe. How about dessert? Sign up outside the kitchen.

EASTER FLOWERS – Yes!

We invite everyone to bring a pot of their favorite spring flowers on Easter Sunday, and during the opening music we will decorate the sanctuary. Think spring!



CONNECT

SOUPER SATURDAY

Saturday, March 12 at 6 – 8 pm

Hosted by Laura & Jerry Kimble, 11 Juniper Drive

Join us for some warm fellowship. Hosts provide soup and guests bring appetizers, sides or desserts to share. BYOB.

Bring friends! Want to share a ride, call Linda 860-920-2500.

PASTA DINNER & DESSERT AUCTION

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 6pm



Help make this year's Dessert Auction and Pasta dinner a huge success. Come to dinner with friends and support the Youth. Free pasta dinner! It is our biggest fundraiser for our youth's summer Mission trip. This year we are spitting the desserts into 2 categories to help please

all! We need simple desserts for the silent auction and fancier desserts for the live auction. We need your support and participation! Sign up online to help: www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0549a8af229-dessert

EXPLORE

Adult Learning Opportunities CONTINUE...

Mar 21 – Discussion of *How to Raise an Adult*

7 pm at First Church with AnneMarie Cox

WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY

We are reading *Reluctant Pilgrim* by Enuma Okoro.

March 14 & 28 at 10:30 am at FCC

March 14 - 7pm at Mary C.; March 28 - 7pm at Linda S.

SUNDAY SCHOOLHOUSE - Sundays at 10am

First Sunday - Meet downstairs; join adults for communion.

2nd & 3rd Sundays - Stay downstairs. Ninth graders begin the timeline project.

Fourth Sunday - Family Service - It's EASTER!!

FAITH ED No meetings the first 2 weeks in March.

SUNDAY NIGHT YOUTH meet 7-8:30

Continuing our discussion on PERSPECTIVE

SERVE

FIRST SUNDAY = GRANBY FOOD BANK

God offers us a place at the table....

We can offer food for the hungry....

Donations most needed:

Soup, Spaghetti Sauce, Pasta

Paper products, Detergent

NeedleworX - Tuesdays, March 8 & 22, 1pm

We make baby items, prayer shawls, and other items. We welcome contributions from those who cannot meet with us.

The gift of a prayer shawl to someone experiencing loss, joy or difficulty can be made from the beautiful collection in the Memorial Meeting Room. Kindly note your gift in our book.

Questions? Contact Margery Gardow 860-658-6464 or Kay Janssen 860-653-7496

SUPER SATURDAY - March 12, 2016

Worship, Workshops, Networking

An all day learning event for lay and clergy leaders from across CT/MA/RI Conferences of the UCC.

Keynote Speaker: The Rev. Traci Blackmon, Community Leader and Civil Rights Activist

Place: Killingly High School

for more information: ctucc.org/supersaturday