



The Branchline

"I am the vine, you are the branches."

April 2025

From the Pastor's Desk....



"The nation doesn't simply need what we have. It needs what we are."

Edith Stein

Welcome to April

So, here we are, still slogging our way through the Lenten wilderness. The cold and gray weather is still somewhat lurking about, dimming our spirits, and making the wintry parts of ourselves restless and yearning for something new. And when those shadowy and doubtful feelings do take us over; we start demanding answers to our big questions; "Where are you, God?" "I want to know that you are here." "Show yourself!"

Yeah, it doesn't work that way! Our journey through the wilderness can certainly motivate us to look for answers: something beyond ourselves, beyond our struggles, beyond our human limitations. Our Journeys can move us to seek out sunny days and uplifting moments. It can move us to want something solid and trustworthy, inspiring and eternal; like Jesus, like God.

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From the Pastor's Desk (continued)

OK, that's good, although there are times when we definitely feel that God is not acting fast enough on our behalf.

We are demanding in that way! We want to see. We want to be shown. We want proof that God is working in our lives. But God does not appear on demand. God moves in God's own time, in ways that are far beyond our comprehension.

But let us trust that as we move closer to Easter and the promise of the resurrection, we will find our affirmation that God is working in our lives. We will find our proof in God's love and in the sacrifice of his son Jesus. Let us also be reminded that God is with us all the time, in the wilderness and in the resurrection.

Experiencing God is a journey. It takes faith and patience and a true belief that God is with us and God's love for us is profound. We may stumble, we will sin as we journey forward, but we are still called to trust, and move forward in faith.

There is no doubt that the power of that first Easter changed the world profoundly and still continues to do so. Thus we are called to be bearers of that Good News, witnesses to the wonderful message of Easter. For we are Easter people. God made us so.

Easter Blessings

Rev Janet



Wilbraham United Church

Holy Week Schedule

APRIL 13 - PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP 10 A.M.

APRIL 17 - MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP 7 P.M.

APRIL 18 - GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP 12 NOON

APRIL 20 - EASTER WORSHIP 10 A.M.

All are welcome! All are invited!

500 Main St
Wilbraham, MA
(413)596-2511
www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org



The May Branchline Deadline is April 25. Please

submit items of note to

admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org





Hello! from the Music Room

March is about ready to slip away on us. As the month began, it felt as though it was going to last longer. There were many highlights – wish I had some pics to include. March 9th’s “Glory, Glory”, presented by combined Chancel Choir and Praise Band, was incredible! It was great fun to sing and play after the time spent getting it ready to go for that day. Thanks to everyone for taking part and those who signaled appreciation.

April will be busy with full schedules and high points of its own. All groups are now working toward Holy Week. April 6th is the last Sunday in Lent and Palm Sunday on the 13th begins the observance of Holy Week. Our choirs have some highlights and guests for that week. On Palm Sunday Stacy Gilmour will join the Chancel Choir with a flute accompaniment. Easter Sunday will bring several instrumentalists: Richard Cuoco, French Horn (prelude,) and trumpet (Bell Choir anthem, Chancel Choir anthem and postlude); Derek Beston, trumpet; and John Colkos, snare drums also with the Chancel Choir. The Junior Choir is preparing an anthem with maracas and some new sounds. We’re looking forward to having all the choirs and guests with us for these Festival Sundays!

A couple of Heads Up for May. These have been listed in the weekly email – but I want to include them here as well.

May 4: The Fanfare Brass Ensemble will present a mixed genre Music Concert..... Classical titles, show tunes, marches, folk music, rock and more. The concert will be held in the Sanctuary and starts at 3 PM.

May 31: The Merrimack Valley Ringers are returning to WUC with an afternoon of awesome workshops for bell techniques, followed by a potluck dinner. The MVR will change up from teaching to performing – their concert will begin at 7 PM in the Sanctuary.

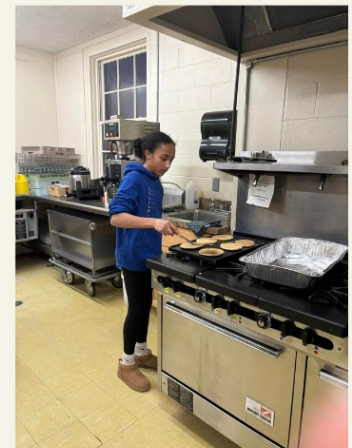
We are blessed with busy calendars, activities and options. May we enjoy the days ahead.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Blessings and Cheers, Bobbie



Family Service Project and Pancake Night



We put together over
100 hygiene kits for
Church World Service
and enjoyed some
Fellowship and
Pancakes!



WANTED!



Candy to fill Easter eggs for the egg hunt

As we have heard over the last couple of weeks, Wilbraham United Church is facing challenging budgetary issues. The Church Council is making concerted efforts to spend wisely and to save where possible. As with any house, building, workspace, etc., there will always be expenditures. Most costs are budgeted and some, unfortunately, are not.

This building, in which we worship on a daily, weekly, monthly basis will be here long after we have passed from our physical forms and into the Kingdom of God. I suggest that we embrace every moment that we have here and focus on things more important than line items on a ledger.

Since I joined this church family 30 years ago, we have always struggled to balance the budget, yet we are still here. Our numbers may be lower than in the past, but our Spirit is stronger than I can recollect. We have been fortunate to receive monetary gifts in the past that

have given us the opportunity to make structural repairs, maintain staffing and benefits, and to ensure gifting to individuals and foundations that rely on our Christian generosity.

We have stressed the importance of Stewardship and pledging, and we shall see how our church members respond to that message. In the meantime, we will continue to proceed in a fiscally responsible manner, but more importantly, we should continue to go forward with faith. So often, when we rely on faith, good things happen. We have seen it time and time again within these church walls, and I believe if we look at our own lives, it has happened there, as well.

I personally would rather be a part of a community that works hard together to maintain a house of worship and faith than be part of a sterile, shiny and modern facility with little to no struggles. In my humble opinion, the CHURCH that Jesus started and offered to us as a gift, requires us to struggle and sacrifice with our Christianity to reap the benefits of God's gifts. These gifts are invaluable, attainable, and worth the effort of each of us to accept.

For hundreds of years after Jesus died for us, Christians have been condemned, exiled and martyred for their faith in him and his teachings. The sacrifices we make today may be burdensome and challenging to us, but they pale in comparison to the early Christian followers. Still, His Church is still here, not just by monetary gifts and offerings, but by faith.

These thoughts stem from listening to, and being a part of conversations regarding the "B" word... budget. This church hasn't come this far by being frustrated and hamstrung with budget woes; it has become what it is by Faith. When we pray for our church and those within it, it is our faith that continues to carry us over and through turbulent times. Having faith and praying for Thanksgiving will ease our burdens, not just here but out in the world.

John Colkos
Fellowship Chair



Repair the Roof

Be a Shingle Sponsor!

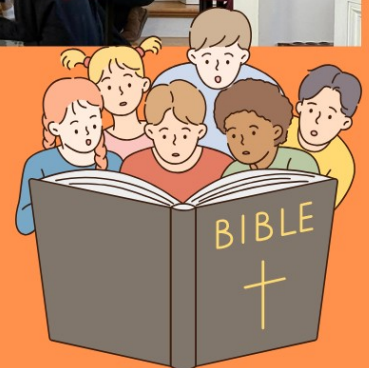
Sponsorship is \$50 and will include your name on our Repair the Roof Dedication List proudly displayed in our church!

Donations are tax-deductible!

Wilbraham United Church
500 Main St
Wilbraham, MA 01095
(413)596-2511
www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org



Luke 4 - Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tested by the devil.



**Message for Children featuring our own
“Sneaky Devil”
March 9**



We are very fortunate to have many creative people in our congregation. In 2019, these Lenten banners which are currently hanging in the Sanctuary were designed and quilted by our Piece Makers group including Nancy Peck, Evie Auchter, Candy Dearborn, Joyce Emerle, Patty Keiser, Gail Lima, Claire McCollough, and Suzanne Zeckhausen.

Prior to the start of Lent, members of the United Players assisted our Phys Ops and Hospitality teams by rigging new ropes and pulleys so that the banners could be hung this year.

These banners remind us of the symbols of the Lenten Season and Holy Week.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
		2pm - Bible Study (ZR)	11am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Boy Scouts (TS, 6:30pm - Phys Ops 7pm - WUP (FH)	6:30pm - AL-Anon (YR) 7pm - Bell Choir (Sanc) 8pm - Chancel Choir	7:30pm - WUP	7:30pm - WUP
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10am - Worship 11am - Fellowship 11:15am - Junior Choir 2:30pm - WUP 5pm - AL-Anon -YR	9:30am - WUP (FH) 10am - Piece Makers	8:30am - Men's Breakfast 2pm - Bible Study (ZR)	11:30am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Boy Scouts (TS, 7pm - Praise Band (Sanc)	6:30pm - AL-Anon (YR) 7pm - Bell Choir (Sanc) 8pm - Chancel Choir		11am - Emerle
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10am - Worship 11am - Fellowship 11:15am - Junior Choir 1pm - WUP (FH) 5pm - AL-Anon -YR	10am - Piece Makers 7pm - WUP (FH)	11:30am - Woman's	11am - Staff Meeting 5:15pm - Discipleship 6pm - Boy Scouts (TS, 7pm - Praise Band (Sanc)	MAUNDY THURSDAY 9:20am - Loaves and 7pm - Maundy Thursday	GOOD FRIDAY 12pm - Good Friday	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
EASTER 10am - Worship 11am - Fellowship		8:30am - Men's Breakfast 2pm - Bible Study (ZR)	11am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Boy Scouts (TS, 7pm - Praise Band (Sanc)	6:30pm - AL-Anon (YR) 7pm - Bell Choir (Sanc) 8pm - Chancel Choir		1pm - WUP Auditions
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
10am - Worship 11am - Fellowship 11:15am - Junior Choir 2pm - WUP Auditions 5pm - AL-Anon -YR 5pm - Confirmation Class	10am - Piece Makers 6:30pm - Trustees (ZR) 7pm - Church Council	2pm - Bible Study (ZR) 5:30pm - Discipleship 6:30pm - WUP Auditions	11am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Boy Scouts (TS, 7pm - Praise Band (Sanc)			