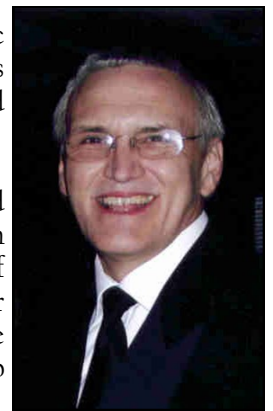




MUSINGS

There is a statue that one encounters when traveling between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland that represents the hope for a peaceful and friendly, if not united, Ireland. The statue is of two men, one from each country, standing opposite each other, but with arms outstretched and hands almost touching in anticipation of a friendly handshake.

“We are a nation divided,” writes Susan Beaumont, church consultant and spiritual director, “and those divisions are creeping into congregational life...Polarization is the division that occurs when a complex community falsely divides itself into sharply contrasting groups. Opposing sets of opinions or beliefs are used to foster a we/they mentality that forces people to declare their “side.” [But] we don’t have to accept polarity as the new status quo. There are specific things we can do to encourage the re-emergence of a healthy middle ground.” She goes on to list ten ways to divert polarization to find middle ground.



While we don’t have significant polarization at New England Church, I thought that these ideas would be helpful in our personal relationships with friends and colleagues with whom we have differing ideological perspectives.

Stay spiritually grounded. It is critical to remain non-anxious and connected to our faith. Fear, driven by the reactivity of others, cannot be our guiding force.

Maintain a sense of humor. Humor disappears as people polarize, so we must remember to laugh at ourselves.

Regulate responses. Be clear about your own feelings and don’t let personal emotions cloud perceptions or opinions. Use “I” statements to express your feelings and to let others know how their behaviors impact you.

Focus your energy on health, not dysfunction. Negative people often command the attention, but stay with the health of a relationship or a conversation.

Clarify needs not positions. When people take a positional stance, help deescalate their position by focusing on what the underlying needs might be that prompt their intense reactions.

Challenge behaviors and ideas, not motives or worth. It is easy to make assumptions about the motives behind positions, and to project our biases on them as representatives of clusters of other beliefs. “If you believe this, then you must also stand for that.”

Paraphrase the idea of others before responding. When you hear an idea or accusation that alarms you, pause before responding. Paraphrase first what you hear before expressing your own opinion.

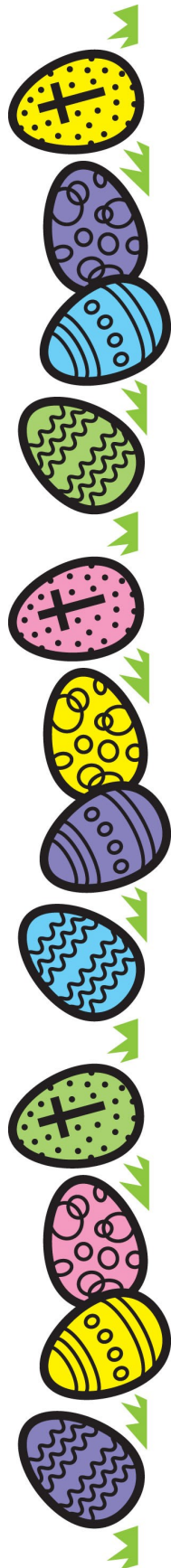
Do not speak on behalf of others. In a polarized community, people like to speak on behalf of the group they perceive as theirs. When people speak on behalf of another, simply remind them to speak their own truth.

Start with what is possible. A return to healthy dialogue sometimes seems impossible but urge people to commit to one small step that you could take together. Success with one step will begin to restore trust.

Pray for one another. It is impossible for a community that is praying and caring for one another to stand in long-term opposition to one another. A genuine stance of prayer invites empathy, compassion, and reconciliation.

Peace and reconciliation to all of you as we live into the hope of Easter joy.

Gary



Women's Fellowship

Mark your calendars now so you will be sure to join women from NECC at breakfast on Saturday, April 8 at Riverview Restaurant at 9:30 am.

We will order our own breakfast from the menu and enjoy talking & sharing with other women from our church. Please invite a friend or two and sign up in the church office. If you

need a ride, indicate that on the sign up and we will make sure you get a ride!

Women's Circle of Friends



FILM SERIES



Film Series April 14: The Hundred-Foot Journey (2014)
 Displaced from their native India, the Kadam family settles in the quaint village of Saint-Antonin-Noble-Val in the south of France. They decide it's the ideal place to open an Indian restaurant until the chilly proprietress (Helen Mirren) of Le Saule Pleureur gets wind of it.

Presenter: Nancy Garbe

OPEN MOSQUE DAY

The Islamic Center of Naperville is hosting an Open Mosque Day on Sunday, April 23 at their facility, 2844 W. Ogden Avenue, Naperville, from 11:00 am until 4:00 pm.

The event will offer helpful information, friendly people, delicious food, and an outpouring of warmth, grace and love. Everyone is invited.



Breaking Free



For 40 years Breaking Free's passionate and proven approach has been strengthening the lives of 15,000 people annually. Their compassionate staff uses nationally recognized prevention and educational programs to build the life skills people need to thrive and make positive decisions for themselves and their

families. Examples of their impact in the past year:

- DREAM After-School Program in West Chicago reached 255 youth
- Nurturing Parenting Curriculum reached 751 adults and children
- Counseling Services helped 881 clients with substance abuse disorders and mental health concerns
- Community Comprehensive Prevention Programs working with schools and community coalitions reached over 13,981 people!

If you would like to learn more about Breaking Free, checkout their website at www.breakingfreeinc.org and come to church on April 30 to meet Executive Director, Teddi Krochman who will offer a "Moment for Mission" and be available in the church marketplace after each service.

The Scouts and adult leaders of Boy Scout Troop 3 wish to thank the congregation for their support of our pancake breakfast on Scout Sunday and throughout the year. Our affiliation with New England Church will continue to benefit the lives of the boys and the communities in which we serve.

'CONVERSATIONS WITH GARY & MIKE'



Join us at Ballydoyle Irish Pub in downtown Aurora for conversations on the subjects you wish to discuss.

Everyone buys their own food and drink.

LUNCHTIME at 11:30 am:

Monday, April 3, Tuesday, April 11, Wednesday, April 19,

Thursday, April 27

Holy Week Calendar

MAUNDY THURSDAY-April 13

Worship service at 7:00 pm

GOOD FRIDAY-April 14

Self-directed Communion and Meditation

11:00 am -1:00 pm in Johnson Chapel

EASTER SUNDAY-April 16

Two Identical Services at 8:30 & 10:00 am



Confirmation Sunday

Please join us on May 7 at the 10:00 am service for the Rite of Confirmation as our 8th grade youth are confirmed into full membership at New England Church. A special coffee fellowship will follow in Friendship Hall.

THE MEMORIAL WALK IN THE GARDEN OF THE SAINTS




Engraved pavers in the Garden of the Saints serve as a lasting tribute to family members and friends. This summer we will be placing the order for engraved pavers to be installed in the walk. If you are interested in memorializing a family member or friend with an engraved paver, your order will need to be received in the office no later than

Wednesday, May 31. Order forms are available in brochure rack outside the church office.

BACK BAY MISSION TRIP

Interested in volunteering in Biloxi at Back Bay Mission? We have extra spots for any adults interested in coming to Back Bay Mission this summer from June 11 to 17. If you are interested, please contact Mike Day for details at mike@newenglandchurch.org or 630.897.8721 x. 2140. Also check out: www.thebackbaymission.org

CHANGE of ADDRESS

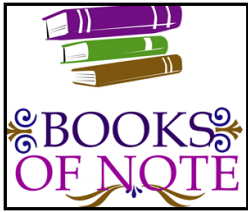
Mildred West
421 N. Lake St. #3200
Aurora, IL. 60506

CHURCH BUILDING TOUR



Join Gary McCann on Sunday, April 30 at 11:15 am in the Sanctuary to start a tour of our church building. The tour will take about one hour and you will discover things you never knew about our building and the history of our church.

BOOKS OF NOTE



Come join the Books of Note discussion on April 18 at 7:00 pm in the parlor. We'll be talking about "Little Mercies" by Heather Gudenkauf. This novel relates the story of a social worker who finds that her accidental mistake as a mother is a nightmare on the other side of the law. As she copes with the consequences of her mistake, she is assigned a ten-year-old who needs help. Can this relationship help each of them? This is a powerful and emotionally charged tale about motherhood and justice, a searing portrait of the tenuous grasp we have on the things we love the most, and of the ties that unexpectedly bring us together.

Burial Plots Available

New England was given two burial plots and a bronze headstone in the River Hills Memorial Park in Batavia. River Hills has told us that the value of each burial site is \$1,050 and the bronze headstone's value is \$2,300, for a combined value of \$4,400. We continue to offer these items to members and friends of New England and we will accept any reasonable offer for the plots and headstone. If you have an interest or know someone who might, please contact the church office.



FIVE CROWNS



Have you wondered about the Five Crowns group that meets every Sunday in the parlor at 5pm? We are a group of people who love playing the card game, Five Crowns, and we would love to share our enthusiasm and fun with you. The game is easy to learn and simple enough that we can snack and talk while playing! Over the years, the players have ranged in age from 10 to 84, so it is a game that appeals to a wide range of ages! Please see Judy McCann, Barb Vavrinek, or any Five Crown player if you have questions or are interested in joining us.



April, 2017
Vol. 4

Tiny Tidings

CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

APRIL 5TH	Story of Easter
APRIL 9TH	Palm Sunday
APRIL 16TH	Easter (All Children Stay in Church)
APRIL 23RD	Stewards of the Earth
APRIL 30TH	Prayer



EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILL

On March 5th, all of the church school children (pre-school- 4th grade) practiced running through our emergency drills to ensure they all understood the protocol in the event of an actual emergency here at church. The children reviewed where to go if there was a tornado and where to go in the event of a fire. In addition, the children participated in a special question and answer session lead by our own Lieutenant Jeff Wiencek.

THANK YOU

Jeff for making this sometimes scary event informative and fun for our church school children.

THANK YOU TO OUR 5TH & 6TH GRADERS



goes out to Jean Carson and the 5th and 6th graders who helped teach the 3rd and 4th graders about the Bible on March 19th. The 5th and 6th grade youth lead the children in various activities and games that provoked interest while encouraging the use of their new Bibles. Not only was the lesson fun, but it was great to see our youth as leaders in our church.

CHURCH SCHOOL PICNIC

Make sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming Church School family picnic. The picnic will take place on Sunday, May 21st at 3:30 PM at the home of Rick and Audra Darche. This will be a great opportunity for our Church School families to hang out and enjoy a fun afternoon of food & fellowship. All families with a preschool-4th grade child are welcome to this event. Keep an eye out for more details and hope you can make it! Please RSVP to Audra Darche if you are able to attend.



CAMP



Are you looking for a camp for your 6th-9th grader that incorporates their love of sports, while cultivating their inner faith? Well, Sports Camp may just be the camp you are looking for. If your child has completed 6th -9th grade, they are eligible to attend Sports Camp. Sports Camp is an overnight camp that runs from June 18-24th this year and is located in Pilgrim Park, IL. In addition, Suzy Daly, parent and member of our congregation, is going to be one of the acting directors during this week at camp. Several youth (Chloe Daly, Shelby Darche, & Chloe Darche) have already signed up for this amazing week and we would love to have more youth from our church attend. Please see the flier in the Church School hallway or log into the below website for more information about this and many other United Church of Christ camps.
www.uccsportscamp.org

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DRILL



BIBLE RECIPIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES



YOUTH TIDINGS

APRIL, 2017

79TH EDITION

5TH & 6TH GRADE CLASS

- APRIL 2ND Fill Easter Eggs with candy for the Egg Hunt April 15
- APRIL 9TH Puppet Show Improv: Little Theater
- APRIL 15TH Children's Egg Hunt
- APRIL 16TH EASTER SUNDAY
- APRIL 23RD Conservation/Earth Day Project:
Build Bat Houses
- APRIL 30TH Helping Hands Casseroles for Hessed House & Cookout, Chestnut House

CONFIRMATION

- APRIL 2ND Easter Story
- APRIL 9TH Ushering & Fellowship
(Easter Party and filling Easter Eggs)
- APRIL 13TH Maundy Thursday, 7 p.m. in chapel
- APRIL 15TH Children's Egg Hunt
- APRIL 16TH EASTER SUNDAY
- APRIL 23RD Class
- APRIL 30TH Moving by the Spirit

SENIOR HIGH FELLOWSHIP

- APRIL 2ND Fellowship: Adopt-a-Highway Road Clean-up
- APRIL 13TH Maundy Thursday, 7 p.m. in chapel
- APRIL 15TH Children's Egg Hunt
- APRIL 16TH EASTER SUNDAY
- APRIL 23RD Youth Ushering

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

If someone is gracious enough to give me a second change, I won't need a third.
Pete Rose

APRIL 30TH

The Executive Director from Breaking Free will be at church. Breaking Free is a local agency that helps people of all ages with abuse and dependency issues. Their motto is, "We build strong family foundations and rebuild those impacted by substance abuse, child abuse and other life challenges."



BREAKING
Free

www.breakingfreeinc.org

YOUTH WORK ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Please wear close toed, sturdy shoes and long pants. If you have work gloves please bring those as well. Our road clean-up is on Orchard Road south of Rt. 88 on the west side. We'll leave from Chestnut House and return to Chestnut House by 1:00.



YOUTH HELPERS NEEDED



The annual children's EASTER EGG HUNT is coming. April 15th here at church. The event starts at 11:00 a.m. We can use youth helpers starting at 10:00 a.m.



THANK
YOU
BOY
SCOUTS



FOR YUM MY
PANCAKES &
GREAT MUSIC

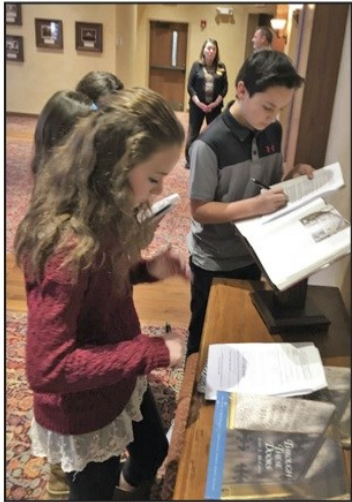
FAITH PAPER WRITING

8TH GRADERS
SATURDAY, APRIL 22ND
AT CHESTNUT HOUSE

CONFIRMATION - SUNDAY, MAY 7TH

Check out the Illinois Conference UCC summer camp schedule at www.il-outdoorministries.org

ASK ABOUT SPORTS CAMP!



5th & 6th graders used the Tiffany Rose Stained Glass Window as a starting point, then proceeded from the plaques outside the Chestnut Street church door, to the dirt floor in the boiler room under the sanctuary, on to the Scout room, up the secret staircase passages, through the chapel to Friendship Hall and the Source Theater to work collaboratively to find answers to historical questions about NECC. They found the church sacraments and the names of world religions embroidered on pew cushions in the chapel. Through *These Doors* by Gary McCann served as a reference guide for finding many of the answers including the name of Phillips Bros. & Co. store where the founders of NECC met before they had a church building for worship. Students said examining murals and exploring the church was an easy and fun way to learn about the NECC.



FREE AT LAST,
FREE AT LAST!
THANK GOD ALMIGHTY,
I'M FREE AT LAST!

Five 5th & 6th grade "runaway slaves" with Harriet Tubman (Suzy Daly) as their guide/conductor moved from "station to station" throughout Chestnut House on their journey north along the Underground Railroad to freedom. Bounty Hunter (Jean Carson) checked travelers she encountered quizzing them on names, birthdates & birth cities/states



listed on their "free-born papers." Wearing disguises, they re-enacted history by escaping through tunnel passageways, hiding in safe houses, crossing rivers in boats, eating cornbread, collard greens, ham, black eyed peas & peach cobbler, and continued north Through These Doors seeking sanctuary in the narthex at New England Congregational Church. This learning experience was part of the 5/6th grade church school study of New England Congregational Church and the role it played in providing safe haven for runaway slaves traveling to Canada in the 1800's.

Joys & Concerns

Visit us on the
web
at
[www.newengland
church.org](http://www.newenglandchurch.org)

Births:

Pam Olsen has a new grandson, Thomas Tate Celnar, born March 6.

Rich & Terri Rosemann became grandparents to Olivia Jean, born on March 14.

Baptisms:

Savannah Adele Sharkey, daughter of Christopher & Stephanie Sharkey.

Hospitalized:

Terry Jones, Rich Soltis, Barb Mitcheltree, Laurel Svendsen

Deaths:

We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Don Brownson.



OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

New England Congregational Church UCC

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church.org](mailto:office@newenglandchurch.org)

*A Caring Church for
Thinking People*

Senior Minister: Gary L. McCann
Assistant Minister: Joe Dunham
Minister of Education & Mission: Mike Daly
Office Administrator: Shelley Lund
Preschool Director: Jacquie May
Director of Children's Ministry: Audra Darché
Chancel Choir Director: Jon Warfel
Children's Choir Director: AnDréa James
Children's Choir Accompanist: Beth Ann Miller
Organists/Pianists: Marilyn Parolini, Arlene Thurow
Handbell Director: Cathy Canfield-Jepson
Wedding Coordinator: Nancy Richmond
Nursery Care: Jenni Moses, Susan Kleinwachter
Custodian: John Hett
Building Maintenance: Todd Jones

Moderator: Cheryl Vonhoff
Moderator-elect: Scott Voris
Treasurer: Andy Sprau
Clerk: Judy Lopez

**“God
Is Still
Speaking”**