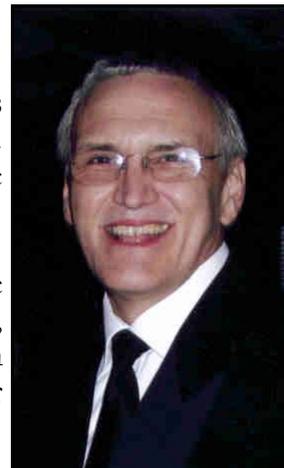


## MUSINGS

The first Sunday in May has been Confirmation Sunday at NECC for many years. This year we have 9 youth who will confirm their baptism and their ongoing faith journey. I'm excited about the new direction our confirmation program is taking, and in advance of May 6, I want to share with you some of the changes that have taken place this year.

It has been my privilege to spend time these past months with Desiree Guzman, the Confirmation Coordinator, and Audra Darché, our Director of Education Ministries, rethinking the purpose and program of Confirmation. Our conversation has been guided by a desire to reshape the confirmation process so it engages our youth in their exploration of what it means to be a person of faith.



One of the first changes we are implementing this year is to ask our confirmands to express their faith journey in some sort of tangible way that is uniquely their own. This replaces the previous 'faith statements,' allowing for personal creativity in expressing themselves. This is much more in keeping with the way New England Church functions rather than requiring doctrinal statements of belief. It has been well-received by this year's group; some are using visual arts, some music, some words, and some multi-media. These will be on display in Friendship Hall at the Coffee Fellowship reception following the service. I think you will be delighted by what you see.

The second significant concept we wanted to reframe is for our youth to envision Confirmation as the *beginning* of a new adventure in one's faith journey rather than the *end* of going to church. This year's group is engaged in a joint activity with members of the high school group, and at the Fall Festival in September, these new 9<sup>th</sup> graders will receive their adult name badges as they continue their faith journey as high schoolers. A social event is planned to welcome them into the senior high fellowship this autumn.

Each year I lead a tour of the Art Institute of Chicago, exploring some of the major works of art—religious and secular—to understand the importance of self-expression. We talked about various concepts the artist was trying to communicate without using words. Then Desiree asked each of the youth to take a "selfie" with one of the pictures that was especially meaningful to them. This activity served as example of what they might do to express their faith in some tangible way on this Confirmation Sunday. Please join them in Friendship Hall for some cake and a chance to see their individual projects.

We hope you'll join us for worship at 10:00 am on May 6 for this special day in the life of our church. While the confirmation ceremony will be a brief part of the service, the entire service will be designed to encourage them—and all of us—in our evolving faith.

We hope the newly-designed Confirmation program will be one that will encourage them to stay connected to the church for of the important role it plays in life.

Gary



## 'CONVERSATIONS WITH GARY'

Join Gary 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, May 7  
 Tuesday, May 15  
 Wednesday, May 23  
 Thursday, May 31



## AN INTERFAITH JOURNEY



Israel-An Interfaith Trip with Temple B'nai Israel and New England Church-February 20-March 2, 2019. Join Rabbi Ed Friedman, Rev. Gary McCann, and the communities of our two congregations as we explore the country of Israel, visiting religious and historical sites and engaging in conversation with military experts, peace activists, and citizens of this 70 year old country. We will visit museums, biblical sites, experience home hospitality, and feel the vibrancy of the old and new as it is mixed together in the modern country of Israel. If you are interested or need more information, please contact [gary@newenglandchurch.org](mailto:gary@newenglandchurch.org).

## DONATIONS TO MUTUAL GROUND

Mutual Ground is one of the largest and oldest domestic violence/sexual assault agencies in the state of Illinois. In a given year, Mutual Ground provides services to about 1,500 survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. NECC has supported Mutual Ground for many years by inviting members to make a once a year donation to the organization. We will be collecting donations for Mutual Ground on every Sunday in May with the last collection date being Sunday, May 27. Beginning May 6, please stop by the Marketplace for a full list of items currently in need. Some quick suggestions include bath and hand towels, shower curtains and liners, small garbage cans for bedrooms, new flip flops in all sizes, and paper towels. *And they will know we are Christians by our love.*



# OUR HISTORY PRESERVED

The 2013 historic video of our church has been viewed over 1,000 times on the internet! It can be accessed on our website under: Who We Are – History Video & Ministers (1858-2015).

The video and the biographies of all of our ministers were written by church member Sharon Stredde, who based her work on Gary McCann’s book, Through These Doors. The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley and the Dunham Fund provided financial support for the video.

Whether you are new to the church or a longtime member, please take time to access these three important resources that capture the essence of our amazing 160 years of service.

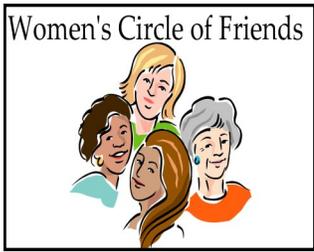
In addition, please share the link with others who may benefit from learning more about our church and its role within the Aurora community.




Daniel Fauth  
1447 NE Hillside  
Terrace, Apt. 102  
North Kansas City,  
MO 64116

Lee Marr  
1200 Sugar Tree Ct.  
Chatham, IL. 62629

# WOMEN’S CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



“April Showers (snow) bring May flowers”; after our cold start to spring, all women of our church are invited to Josie Starke’s house for breakfast on Saturday, May 12 at 9:30 am. We will enjoy her spring gardens and share some gardening tips. Please bring a dish to share. This will be our last Women’s Circle of Friends meeting until September, so mark the date on

your calendar! Please sign up on your home computer on the NECC website, or in the church office.

# CHILDREN’S MUSICAL

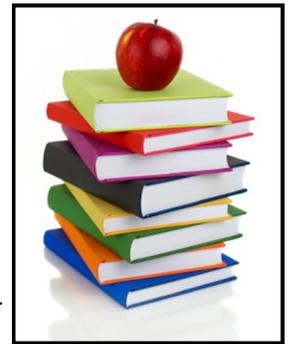


This year, after a hiatus last year as I transitioned into the role of Children’s Choir Director, we will be resuming the tradition of a children’s musical! But this time, we are involving all of our Church School children! I have been working with different groups of children most Sundays since the beginning of the school year and all our hard-work will culminate on May 20 during our regular 10:00am service as we share with you a musical called *In The Image*, by Mark Burrows. In this show, we sing about the creation story and work through how we are all creative human beings and what we can do to celebrate God’s creation. Don’t miss this meaningful and humorous story! Come support the children of NECC!

*AnDréa James*

# BOOK COLLECTION

At the end of each school year, the staff of Greenman School provide at least one book for each of their students to take home to read over the summer. NECC would like to help our neighbor in this important project. We are asking for donations of new or gently used books for grades K-5 to be delivered to the church by Sunday, May 13. Please place the books in marked boxes in the church office. If you have any questions please contact Nancy Garbe at 630-892-4724. *And they will know we are Christians by our love.*



The current worship schedule will remain in place during the summer months.

The church office hours will be from 9:00 am-1:00 pm beginning Tuesday, May 29 through Friday, August 31.



# MENTAL HEALTH MONTH



What better way to observe May as Mental Health month than to take advantage of a significant conference right in our area. On May 4, Downers Grove, The UCC Mental Health Network will hold an informational workshop. You will enjoy hearing Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund speak on the power of personal story to counter stigma – another example being Mariah Carey with her recent disclosure of her battle with bi-polar disease. Bob Dell will attend and he would be glad to answer questions and have company.

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## FILM SERIES

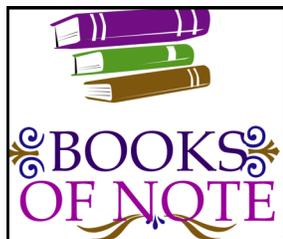
### May 11: A Man Called Ove (2015)

Ove, an ill-tempered, isolated retiree who spends his days enforcing block association rules and visiting his wife's grave, has finally given up on life just as an unlikely friendship develops with his boisterous new neighbors. Presenter: John Ruby.




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## BOOKS OF NOTE



Books of Note is reading *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by the best-selling author Barbara Brown Taylor. This book was featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in April 2014 and is described as, "another thoughtful book in which Taylor encourages us to turn out the lights and embrace the spiritual darkness, for it is in the dark, she maintains, that one can truly see." Please join us on

Tuesday, May 15 at 7:00pm in the parlor. If you have any suggestions for summer reading, we would invite you to join us for this last meeting before we take our summer hiatus. New participants are always welcome to join us, whether you've read the book or not. We hope to see you there for lively conversation and fellowship.

Volunteer to work at the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry - NECC sends volunteers to work in the warehouse and/or to restock shelves every 2nd and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:00-4:00 pm. The location is 110 Jericho Road, Aurora. Thank you!



May, 2018  
Vol. 5

# Tiny Tidings

## CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

- MAY 6 Zacchaeus
  - MAY 13 Mother's Day Project
  - MAY 19 Musical Rehearsal at Church
  - MAY 20 Children's Musical & Church Family Picnic @ Darché Home
  - MAY 27 End of Year Movie in Theatre
- CHURCH SCHOOL "SUMMER ADVENTURE" WILL BEGIN ON JUNE 3RD

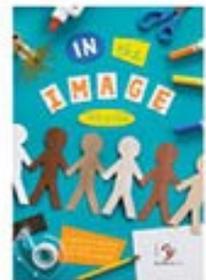
## APRIL 15TH - DAY OF GIVING FOR ALL

### A Busy Day

This year, on April 15th, the Pre K and K children participated in a special "Read In" day with the 5th & 6th graders. During this time, the older children came into the PreK and K classroom and sat on the floor and read several common Biblical stories to the children. The entire class time was focused on building relationships and making connections with our younger children in the church. In addition, while the younger children were engaged in stories, our 1st-4th graders packaged toiletry items for Hesus House. Although each class was engaged in a different activity, all benefited from giving their time and energy to others.

## CHILDREN'S MUSICAL

On Sunday, May 20th, several church school children will be participating in our upcoming Children's Musical: "In the Image" lead by our wonderful music director AnDrea James. The children have been practicing for months on this production and are excited to share their talents with you. In addition, keep any eye out during the musical because many of our church school children created an artistic masterpiece during our recent Earth Day lesson and it will be displayed during the play. The musical will take place during the 10:00 AM service and will be a visual and auditory delight for all. Make sure to mark your calendars for this entertaining event!!



## 4TH ANNUAL CHURCH SCHOOL PICNIC



On Sunday, May 20th, a special Church School family picnic will also take place 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-6th grade child are welcome to this event. Please keep an eye out for a sign-up genius to finalize your RSVP.

## THANK YOU TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our wonderful high school volunteers (Samantha Pittman, Daniel Moses, Olivia Swindle, Kylie Moses, Lauren Hasty, and Brianna Duran) who have made the church school year a success! Your dedication and time are recognized and our program would not exist without your help!



## SUMMER VOLUNTEER TEACHERS NEEDED

The church school is in need of volunteers to help teach our Summer Adventure lessons beginning June 3rd. The theme this year is Art in Our Lives and will focus on the various forms of art such as painting, drawing, quilting, and more. Many of the lessons have already been secured by artists in our congregation; however, we still need people willing to lead a fun art project with the kids on various days. Please remember, if you are available, all lessons, along with the art craft and supplies will be provided each week to make it easy for all who teach. A sign-up sheet is located in the church school hallway to view open dates.

**Volunteers Needed**

The 5th & 6th graders led Bible Games for the younger children.



Nancy Hopp wrote the name of each Bible recipient inside their new Bibles.

Thank You



for your Kindness



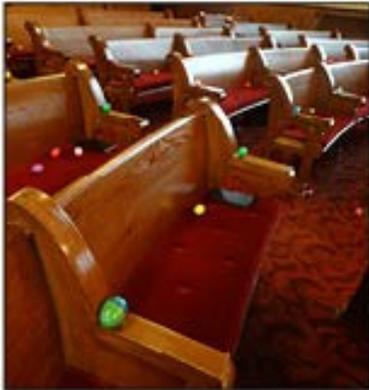
## EASTER EGG HUNT



There was a real bunny to feed and pet when the children arrived.

There were Easter pictures to color and food to eat while they waited to go on the Easter Egg Hunt.





The weather was too cold to go outside so the HS youth hid the eggs in the sanctuary.



First, the youngest ones hunted for eggs. More eggs were hidden and then it was time for the older children to hunt.



Eggs were counted to make sure everyone got the same amount of them.



Finally, it was time to use the tickets, found in the eggs, to buy prizes.



EVERYONE THERE HAD A **Funtime**

# YOUTH THINGS

MAY, 2018

90TH EDITION

## 5TH & 6TH GRADE

On April 15th, the 5th and 6th graders hosted a read-in with the Pre/Kindergarten students. They read aloud their favorite stories from the church school library to the young students. The 5th and 6th graders really enjoyed leading the preschoolers and kindergartners.



## UP AND COMING FOR 5TH & 6TH

In order to maintain the safety standards set by the church, the 5th and 6th graders will be conducting their emergency procedure drills on May 6th. This will ensure that the 5th and 6th graders are well prepared in the event of an emergency. A reminder will be sent out as we get closer to this date.



## CLASS UPDATES

Summer is almost upon us now and we only have about a month left of Youth Group Meetings. Please note that our last meeting will take place this year on May 27th. If you haven't joined in the Sunday fun as of yet, we'd still love to have you attend a class or two. Please come and join us Sundays from 11:05-11:50 and see what it's all about.



POOL PARTY  
for the 5th and 6th graders  
this summer!!!!

## LEARNING THROUGH ART

Confirmation students explored the galleries of the Art Institute of Chicago in April, learning about a variety of religious images in art, and how different artists from different places and times in history have interpreted familiar Bible stories. They were also asked to look for one piece of artwork that was meaningful to them personally. Special thanks to Pastor Gary for sharing his knowledge, and to Satrin Eller and Scott Voris for driving and chaperoning. As a surprise bonus, New England Church was able to purchase a premium membership to the Art Institute because the cost was actually cheaper than purchasing individual tickets. This means that there will be opportunities for future NECC groups to enjoy the museum too!



## HIGH SCHOOL

Thank you SO MUCH to all the High School students and their families that came out to help with the Easter Egg Hunt. Everything ran very smoothly and a fun time was had by all. With so many hands helping out this year, it made for light work.

THANK YOU  
VERY MUCH



NECC Confirmation Teacher, Desiree Guzman, wants to extend a big thank you to all the parents, students, and mentors who have been part our program this year. It has been a year of transition and learning for the program, and we have really appreciated your support. **DON'T FORGET**, Confirmation Sunday is MAY 6th! As we look forward to next year, we are very happy to hear your thoughts, feedback, and suggestions.

**“God  
Is Still  
Speaking”**



**New England Congregational  
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Fax: 630.897.8744  
Email: [office@newenglandchurch.org](mailto:office@newenglandchurch.org)  
*A Caring Church for Thinking People*

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

## Joys & Concerns

### Hospitalized:

Matt Pendell, Helen Rangel, John Ditzler, Jim Carson,  
John Williams.

### Deaths:

We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of  
Barbara Carlin, Rich Soltis and Susan Kachavos.



## OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

**Senior Minister:** Gary L. McCann  
**Assistant Minister:** Joe Dunham  
**Office Administrator:** Shelley Lund  
**Preschool Director:** Jacquie May  
**Director of Education Ministries:** Audra Darché  
**5th & 6th Grade Education:** Kathy Kokkinos  
**7th & 8th Grade Education:** Desiree Guzman  
**9th–12th Grade Education:** Lesley Myers  
**Chancel Choir Director:** Jon Warfel  
**Children’s Choir Director:** AnDréa James  
**Organists/Pianists:** Marilyn Parolini, Arlene Thurow  
**Handbell Director:** Cathy Canfield-Jepson  
**Director of Community Life:** Ann Eifler  
**Wedding Coordinator:** Nancy Richmond  
**Nursery Care:** Jenni Moses, Susan Kleinwachter  
**Custodian:** John Hett  
**Building Maintenance:** Todd Jones  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Moderator:** Scott Voris  
**Moderator-elect:** Brian Kleemann  
**Treasurer:** Andy Sprau  
**Clerk:** Judy Lopez