

## OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

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

New England  
Congregational Church  
UCC

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*A Caring Church for  
Thinking People*

**Senior Minister: Brandon Perrine**  
**Office Administrator: Shelley Lund**  
**Director of Education Ministries: Desiree Guzman**  
**6th-7th Grade Jr. Youth Group: Kathy Kokkinos**  
**8th-12th Grade Youth Group: Lesley Myers**  
**Chancel Choir Director: Paul Laprade**  
**Organist: Marsha Foxgrover**  
**Assistant Organist: Marilyn Parolini**  
**Handbell Director: Cathy Canfield-Jepson**  
**Director of Community Life: Kimberly Adams**  
**Wedding Coordinator: Nancy Richmond**  
**Nursery Director: Jenni Moses**  
**Nursery Attendant: Charlotte Adams**  
**Custodian: John Hett**  
**Building Maintenance: Todd Jones**

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**Moderator: Josh Ream**  
**Moderator-elect: Heather Azem**  
**Treasurer: Andy Sprau**  
**Clerk: Ida Dunham**

**“God  
Is Still  
Speaking”**

New England  
Congregational Church  
UCC  
Aurora, Illinois



**TIDINGS**

Volume 94, Number 4

April 1, 2023



### MUSINGS

Dear Friends,

Easter really is just around the corner! Growing up a bit further south, I always counted on Easter to be the day that shorts and sandals came out of their winter hiding. After sunrise service, we drove the hour and a half to my grandparents and joined them for the Easter service—wearing the new clothes purchased especially for the occasion. After church, though, it was off with the suit and on with the shorts and sandals before exploding out of the house for our annual Easter Egg Hunt! Good memories.

While I doubt it will be shorts weather for us this year, Easter does mark that springtime transition of nature better than anything else I can think of. As we celebrate the defeat of death and the earth's annual rotation out of winter, we gather with family and friends to attend services, host feasts, eat candy, and hunt for those illusive Easter Eggs. It's wonderful, whether we're wearing shorts or not!

Beyond the religious significance of the day, there's something truly sacred about breaking out of our own winter tombs, even as the earth shrugs off the vestiges of its seasonal slumber. Birds return, flowers begin to blossom, and the first glimmers of green creep into our lawns. It's as if we're all celebrating together!

I do hope you'll consider celebrating with us here at New England Church. Our services at 8:30 and 10 a.m. will feature a lovely indoor garden, special music, uplifting hymns, and the unmistakable joy of a community gathered in celebration of life's ultimate triumph.

I'm reminded of the words of John Crum's old Easter hymn:

Now the green blade rises from the buried grain,  
wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;  
love lives again, that with the dead has been;  
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

Winter and Lent are almost over, thanks be to God!

Blessings to all,

Brandon Perrine  
Senior Minister

## Planned Giving & Estate Planning Seminar



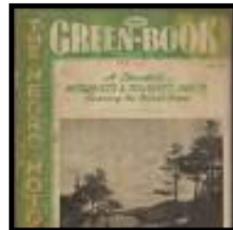
Join us for a Planned Giving and Estate Planning Educational Seminar on Sunday, April 30 from 11:15-12:15 pm in Friendship Hall. Ron Hem of Alschuler, Simantz, & Hem, LLC; Julie Christman of the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley; and John McKee will be the presenters at the seminar.

They will provide information on Wills, Estates, and Powers of Attorney, as well as how to leave a lasting legacy to NECC through either Endowment Gifts or Direct Gifts. In addition, information will be provided on the Church's Memorial Garden.

Although not mandatory, if you plan to attend, please sign up on the Sign-up Station at our website or by calling the office. Please note that this is educational only; there will be no solicitations.

## Intergenerational Field Trip

Please join us Sunday, April 16 for an intergenerational field trip to experience The Negro Motorist Green Book Exhibit at the Holocaust Museum in Skokie. The Green Book guided Black Americans to thousands of welcoming businesses for over thirty years. Visitors will explore film, photographs, interactives, and oral histories from travelers and business owners; and compare "Green Book" sites then and now. The exhibition includes artifacts, images, and firsthand accounts that illustrate not just the apprehension felt by Black travelers, but also the resilience, innovation, and elegance of people choosing to live a full American existence. The cost is as follows: Adults \$12, Seniors \$10, Veterans half price, Youth ages 12-22 \$10, and Kids 5-11 \$5. Lunch will be provided at church after the 10:00 am service by the Students of the Beloved Community Committee, then we will carpool/caravan to the museum together for a docent guided group tour at 1:30 pm. Sign-up in the marketplace or using this link: <https://bit.ly/NECCouting>.



## FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES



April 14 at 7:00 pm: Wit (2001)  
Emma Thompson stars as a professor diagnosed with ovarian cancer. The film is an up-close look at death, yet contains both wit and humor. Presenter: Elaine Ross



**Guy's Night Out**  
Thursday, April 27  
At Fireside Grille,  
49 Sugar Lane,  
Sugar Grove.  
6:00pm -Social time  
& 6:30 - Dinner  
Ordered.

We will have separate checks and they have the following specials:  
Enjoy ALL of the craft beers at a special price of \$5 and delicious classic margaritas for \$7.  
Sign up on-line at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040F4AABAD2BA75-necc32>  
or in church at the Marketplace table on April 9, 16 or 23.  
Bring a friend, neighbor, or a co-worker - the more the merrier.

Four NECC youth participated in the Fox Valley Park District's production of JOSEPH & THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT in February at the Prisco Center. Over forty people from the church attended one of the shows and supported the kids!



Josie Guzman was cast as "Zebulon," one of the brothers.

Alan Hertz played the role of Potiphar.



Cypriano Hertz performs his solo in Joseph.



Cypriano Hertz checks his mic after his solo in Joseph.

Savion Hertz playing one of the Ishmalites leading Joseph away.



Micah Guzman was part of the stage crew team.



APRIL, 2023

**YOU MAKE EASTER SWEETER AT  
NEW ENGLAND CHURCH:**

On Saturday April 8th from 10:00-Noon, we invite students in 4th-12th grade to help us decorate and stuff special treats for all our members and guests who attend the 10:00 service on Easter morning. Then all our kids and youth will be invited to help us make Easter morning extra sweet by serving and handing out these special surprise treats. We hope you can join us for this egg-cellent new tradition!



**YOUTH CALENDAR**

- April 2nd** Palm Sunday - Intergenerational Worship. Joy Ringers.
- April 8th** Saturday Easter Service Project 4th-12th grade. 10am-Noon Friendship Hall.
- April 9th** Easter - Intergenerational Worship. Youth serving treats after the 10:00 service.
- April 16th** Youth Group
- April 23rd** Youth Group. Final Evening Confirmation Gathering 5-7PM.
- April 30th** Youth Group. Confirmation Faith Projects Due.
- May 7th** Confirmation Sunday

**PARENT CAFÉ:**

Did you know that every Sunday while kids and youth are in Bell Choir practice from 9-9:45, a group of parents and grandparents meet in the Church School hallway for coffee and conversation? If you have to bring your student(s) early to bells anyway, this informal gathering is a great way to pass the time and get to know other parents and grandparents. I hope you can join us!

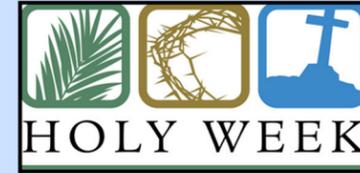


**CONFIRMATION REMINDERS:**



All 7th & 8th grade students who wish to be confirmed, should plan to attend our final Confirmation Evening Gathering on Sunday April 23rd from 5-7PM. Faith Projects are due to Desiree by Sunday April 30th and the Rite of Confirmation will be held May 7th at our 10:00 service with a reception to follow. Students should plan to stay after the service for the reception and Faith Project display time. If you have any questions, please contact Desiree Guzman - [desiree@newenglandchurch.org](mailto:desiree@newenglandchurch.org)

**Happy Easter!**



**April 6**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY TENEBRAE—SERVICE OF SHADOWS**

Join us on April 6 at 7:00pm for a service of Communion and Tenebrae. This special service will feature a variety of special music, readings, and the extinguishing of candles. While meditative, it is also interactive and appropriate for people of all ages. We hope you'll join us.

**April 7**

**GOOD FRIDAY**

Self-directed Communion and Meditation  
11:00 am-1:00 pm in Johnson Chapel

**April 9**

**EASTER MORNING SERVICES**

We will have two Easter Morning service offerings on April 9. Our Chapel service at 8:30 am will have special music, piano-led hymns, and an abbreviated version of the second service. Our Sanctuary service at 10:00am will feature the Chancel Choir, New England Carillon, pipe organ, brass and Children's Time. We hope you'll participate in one of these joy-filled Easter services this year.

**Books of Note**

The Books of Note book discussion group is open to all. New members welcome at any time. Attend via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month from 7:00- 8:00 pm. Read one book or all. It's up to you! Books are suggested by participants and voted on twice a year. Contact Sue Reimer to obtain a book and the Zoom link.

**April 18: The Island of Missing Trees "by Elif Shafak**

Two Greek teenagers meet at a taverna on the island they both call home. In the taverna, hidden beneath garlands of garlic, chili peppers and creeping honeysuckle, they grow in their forbidden love for each other. A fig tree stretches through a cavity in the roof, and this tree bears witness to their hushed, happy meetings and eventually, to their silent, surreptitious departures. The tree is there when war breaks out, when the capital is reduced to ashes and rubble, and when the teenagers vanish. Decades later, Kostas returns. He is a botanist looking for native species, but really, he's searching for lost love.

Years later a Ficus carica grows in the back garden of a house in London where Ada Kazantzakis lives. This tree is her only connection to an island she has never visited--- her only connection to her family's troubled history and her complex identity as she seeks to untangle years of secrets to find her place in the world.

A moving, beautifully written, and delicately constructed story of love, division, transcendence, history, and eco-consciousness, *The Island of Missing Trees* is Elif Shafak's best work yet. 368 pages. published 2021.



## From the Students of the Beloved Community Committee



Our congregation's enthusiasm for learning more showed up at the discussion with the showing of the Ted Talk, "How to Deconstruct Racism One Headline at a Time." More new ideas and old dilemmas were shared. Baratunde Thurston made us laugh and gave statistics both. If you missed it, here is the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZgkjEdMbSw>.

We will follow up the hope that is Easter with a Sunday outing on April 16 to a new exhibit about the *Green Book*. Ever wonder what it was like to be Black and travel in the decades before integration laws? You couldn't enter hotels, gas station bathrooms and more. Instead of your family sleeping in the car, you would consult the book written by Victor Green, a travel guide to Black-friendly businesses all over the US, complete with towns to avoid after sundown.

The Illinois Holocaust Museum is hosting the Smithsonian exhibit, "The Negro Motorist Green Book" with interactives, first hand accounts, film and more. It's a family friendly outing complete with lunch at New England before we head out in caravan. Sign up in the marketplace or using this link: <https://bit.ly/NECCouting>. It is another chance to share in Black Joy.

For the fall, we are collaborating with Women's Circle of Friends to bring to New England the intimate talk, "Pre-Civil War Quilts: Secret Codes to Freedom on the Underground Railroad," by Connie Martin. Save the date: October 14 at 9:30 am.

So much history we didn't get in school. What are you ready for next? Let us know.

## HYMN FESTIVAL

On Sunday, April 23, at 4:00 pm the Fox Valley American Guild of Organists chapter will have their 2023 Hymn Festival, "Great Hymns of the Church" which will be held at the New England Congregational Church.

Participants in the program who are members of FVAGO and are organists at churches in the area are: Kevin Wong, First Presbyterian Church of Glen Ellyn; Mark Edwards, Baker Memorial Methodist Church of St. Charles; Bonnie Johansen-Werner, Organist Emerita, First United Methodist Church of Lockport; Betsy Waldon, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Downers Grove; Daniel Segner, First United Methodist Church in LaGrange; Lance Peeler, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Geneva, and Kevin Lange, Gary Methodist Church in Wheaton. Giving wonderfully researched and presented narration for each hymn will be Dr. Jane Holstein, former keyboard editor at Hope Publishing Co. and Organist of First Presbyterian Church in River Forest.

Complementing the outstanding musicianship of these organists will be the equally outstanding Paul Semanic Brass Quintet, assisting on several hymns, along with Rev. Craig Felde, timpanist. Paul Laprade will conduct the brass/organ segments of the program. Co-chairs for this Hymn Festival are Dr. Steven Wenthe and Marsha Foxgrover. Admission is free with the doors opening at 3:30 pm. You are cordially invited to a reception in the narthex following the Hymn Festival. We are certain you will enjoy this event, singing traditional "Great Hymns of the Church" in a beautiful sanctuary. This is a rare experience you will not want to miss, that of singing beautiful, inspiring, traditional hymns in a beautiful setting.



MARDI GRAS SUNDAY AND THE CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL



WACKY BOWLING TRIP TO FUNWAY



# Tiny Tidings

APRIL, 2023



## CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

- APRIL 2ND Palm Sunday - Intergenerational Worship. Joy Ringers with guest ringers.
- APRIL 8TH Saturday Easter Service Project 4th-12th grade. 10am-Noon Friendship Hall.
- APRIL 9TH Easter - Intergenerational Worship. Kids & Youth serving treats after the 10:00 service.
- APRIL 16TH Lesson: New Life
- APRIL 23RD Lesson: Earth Day
- APRIL 30TH Lesson: Stillness

### ALL 1ST-5TH GRADERS INVITED TO JOIN THE JOY RINGERS ON PALM SUNDAY:

Any 1st-5th grade student who comes to Church School on March 19th and/or March 26th will get the chance to try out Bell Choir during class. Those same students are invited to join the Joy Ringers when they play in church on Palm Sunday. This is a great chance for younger students or students who haven't been part of our Youth Bell Choir this year to give it a try!

### PARENT CAFÉ:

Did you know that every Sunday while kids and youth are in Bell Choir practice from 9-9:45, a group of parents and grandparents meet in the Church School hallway for coffee and conversation? If you have to bring your student(s) early to bells anyway, this informal gathering is a great way to pass the time and get to know other parents and grandparents. I hope you can join us!



### KIDS & YOUTH EASTER SERVICE PROJECT :

On Saturday April 8th from 10:00-Noon, we invite students in 4th-12th grade to help us decorate and stuff special treats for all our members and guests who attend the 10:00 service on Easter morning. Then all our kids and youth will be invited to help us make Easter morning extra sweet by serving and handing out these special surprise treats. This project will give kids and youth the chance to contribute to the life of the church and be more visible and present at our Easter Service. As we work to engage new families and to strengthen our connections with current members, sometimes it will require us to try new things. I hope your kids will consider joining us for this new Easter Service Project adventure. Who knows? Maybe we'll be starting a new beloved tradition.

## 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.



## AURORA PRIDE PARADE



### Calling All Organizers!

We need your help to organize our New England Group that will march in this year's Aurora Pride Parade, this June.

We need people who can help us determine what our marching unit will wear, hand out to the crowd, music that we will play, and other fun things that we would like to do to show our NECC Pride and our love to our LGBTQ families,

friends, and neighbors! We will be meeting in April and May to be ready for the big day. Please email Kimberly at [kimberly@newenglandchurch.org](mailto:kimberly@newenglandchurch.org) if you are able to join this fun Pride Committee!

## 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.



Help support the Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry!

Volunteers are needed to re-stock the shelves.

NECC Volunteer Days are:

The 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 3:00-4:00 pm.

No Sign-up required

- Please arrive on-time at 1110 Jericho Rd. Aurora.



Remember that there is overflow parking to the west of our church parking lot, behind the law offices of Don Dickinson. A sign on the front lawn on Galena Blvd directs you to the lot.