



scc Highlights

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here

SOMERS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST WORSHIPING AND SERVING SINCE 1727
599 Main St. PO Box 295 Somers, CT 06071 (860) 763- 4021

April 2025
Volume 297 / #4

Letter from the Pastor

"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn. April is a promise that May is bound to keep, and we know it." – Hal Borland (1900-1978)

Recently, I was chatting with a group of pastors and one of them shared a recent conversation that had had with a church member. The member had asked to chat about their concerns that the church wasn't offering "something" that fit her needs. They had recently retired, the kids were out of the house, and they were wondering what was next. One of the phrases that kept coming up was that *she just didn't feel like she fit in at the church.*

So as the two of them drank coffee the pastor asked her, "What do you need? What are you looking for?" It was a question the member struggled to answerbut I know she's not alone.

As a pastor, I often hear this question being asked over and over again -- except that it usually sounds more like this: "someone" should be doing "something." For each person that worries about that "someone," the "something" is slightly different. But something must be done!

For me, this is the sticking point. I'm guessing many of us remember the days when everyone wasn't quite so busy and there always seemed like there was "someone" to help. Now it seems that people are busy and everyone has something else they need to do.. There isn't as much time to lend a hand to help with Coffee Hour, serve on a committee, or help with a mission project. We know this.

But, that doesn't stop us from lamenting that "someone" should really do "something."

Recently I read an article by the theologian Brian McLaren entitled *Joining the Resurrection. Something about these words spoke to me as we journey through the Season of Lent and into Holy Week-a time that ends with the miracle of the empty tomb. I've been discerning the ways that resurrection isn't just something that happens to Jesus but happens to each and every "someone."*

McLaren says it best here: *It is good and right to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning, but even better and greater to choose to affiliate with it . . . to identify with it, to join it, to enter it and let it enter and fill us, to give ourselves to it and receive all it offers us, so we can wholeheartedly participate in it and with it, so that resurrection keeps spreading until everything is healed and everything is new and all is well and all manner of things are well.*

This happens when each and every "someone" realizes that there are no hands and no feet but our own. **We can't outsource it. We don't have all of the money, power, and prestige in the world...but we are the ones we've been waiting for.** We are the someones that will do "something." It might not look like it once did because our ministry will change as much as we have changed.



When we are able to recognize this change, and connect with it enough to believe that all is well and all manner of things are well, we will be able to do “something” about it. We will realize we are the someones and maybe even be clearer about what it is that we need most.

For, surely, this knowledge is what will allow us to participate in the resurrection wholeheartedly -- when we know what it is that we need most and then try to do something about it.

My door is open if you would like to chat more about this.

God bless.

Pastor Scott

April Worship Schedule

April 6th

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Psalm 102:12-17 & Mark 13:1-8, 24-37

When Will These Things Happen?

Communion & Deacon's Fund Sunday

April 13th

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:25-29 & Mark 11:1-11, 14:3-9

May I Anoint Your Feet?

April 17th

Maundy Thursday

Worship at Congregational Church of Somersville at 7:00 pm

April 18th

Good Friday Service of Tenebrae at 7:00 pm

April 20th

Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service at Soapstone Mountain @6:00 am

9:30 Service with Communion

April 28th

First Sunday of Easter

Guest Preacher

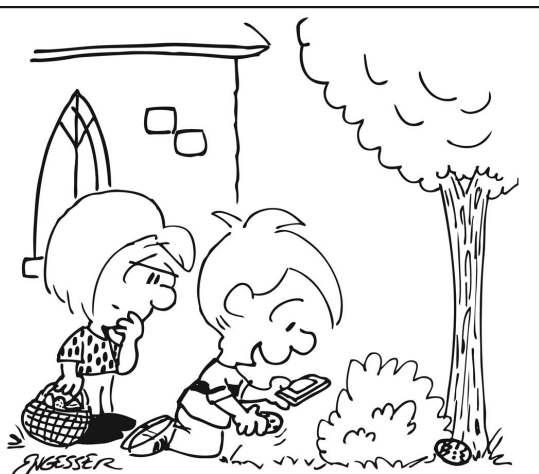


April 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 10am



"This year I'm prepared with my egg-hunting app."



Apr 1	Missions Meeting (Offsite)	7:00 pm
Apr 2	Fellowship Committee—Zoom	7:00 pm
Apr 3	Choir Rehearsal	7:00 pm
Apr 6	Music and Arts Meeting	10:45 am
Apr 7	Christian Education Meeting—Zoom	7:00 pm
Apr 8	Caring Committee Meeting	3:30 pm
Apr 9	Community Supper	5:30 pm
Apr 9	Deacon's Meeting	6:30 pm
Apr 10	Choir Rehearsal	7:00 pm
Apr 10/11	Friendship Kitchen	
Apr 13	Facilities Meeting	8:30 am
Apr 14	CMC Meeting	7:00 pm
Apr 15	Council Meeting	6:00 pm
Apr 17	Maundy Thursday (Somersville)	7:00 pm
Apr 18	Good Friday Service of Tenebrae	7:00 pm
Apr 20	Easter Sunday	
Apr 24	Choir Rehearsal	7:00 pm
Apr 26/27	Tag Sale	Sat 8am-3pm Sun 11am-3pm
Apr 27	Somers Community Clean up	11 am





Our Church History

The Great Awakening and a Turbulent Time in Somers

Between 1730 and 1745 there was a time of great religious revival in New England, known as The Great Awakening. Our first pastor, Rev. Samuel Allis, presided over two revivals in Somers in 1736-1737 and 1741-1742. Our church records show that many families were baptized during that time. 1.

A leader of The Great Awakening was the great evangelist, Jonathan Edwards. Born in East Windsor in 1703, the son and grandson of pastors, he became the Pastor in Northampton and later the president of Princeton. One of his most famous sermons was preached in our parent church in Enfield, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”.

There began to be much dissension between the “Old Lights” or Memorialists, the more traditional, conservative Congregationalists and the more evangelical Separates or “New Lights”.

Rev. Freegrace Leavit, our second pastor from 1748 until his death in 1761, seemed to lean toward the “Old Lights”. After his death, Somers could not settle on a pastor and eight different men preached in as many years but none was ordained until Rev. Samuel Ely arrived in 1767.

Controversy surrounded Mr. Ely. In April 1769 he was to be ordained but no clergy could be found who would ordain him so a group of his supporters, “New Lights” or Separates, decided to secede from the church and ordain him themselves.

This group continued to meet in the original meeting house while the “Old Lights” met in the home of Dr. Samuel Reynolds. 3.

In 1771, the Memorialists appealed to the CT General Assembly and received the resolve of the Assembly that the Memorialists were “to be the only Ecclesiastical Society in the Town of Somers and ought to have the entire use and possession of the meeting house and also the lands given for the benefit of the ministries.” They reproved “the said Ely” and his followers.

The 1771 document is from the “General Assembly of the Gov. and Company of the Colony of Connecticut, holden at New Haven on the Second Thursday of October Anno Dom. 1771”. We have this original document, the oldest piece of paper in our archives.

After this, becoming disillusioned with Mr. Ely, some of the Separates returned to the old church. However, those still loyal to Mr. Ely remained with him and built a separate meeting house on Turnpike Road just north of Florida Road. 4

In 1773 the town voted to seek advice from a council of ministers. The council recommended that the Separates reconcile with the established congregation and suspend Mr. Ely’s ministerial duties. After this, the church members voted to “Forget and forgive all past offences towards each other.” (Somers town records.) 5.

The town finally reunited under the ministerial authority of Rev. Charles Backus in 1774. 6.

While in Somers, Mr. Ely married a Somers girl, Beulah Billings and had three daughters. 7. It seems that Mrs. Ely stayed in Somers while Samuel did itinerate preaching and protested against the Massachusetts government's treatment of small farmers and businessmen.

In 1782 he emerged as a leader in a series of protests that included mobbing the Northampton Court of Common Pleas. He was arrested but was eventually released and moved to Vermont and Maine where he continued his protests. 8.

Our church has a copy of an interesting thesis written by Shelby M. Balik for her Master of Arts (History) degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2000, "Persecuted in the Bowels of a Free Republic, Samuel Ely's Theology of Justice". Some of her research was done at our church with the help of Marge Griswold (church historian) and Lori Lenthe (administrative assistant).

Balik p. 25

Balik p. 25

Balik p. 32

Mar. 1977 sermon by Rev. Randy Hammond

Balik p. 43

Balik p. 44

Balik p. 44

Shaysrebellion.stcc.edu

Ailene Henry church historian

Easter Cards for Caring

Bring your creative talents to Coffee Hour after church on Palm Sunday, April 13th. The Fellowship Committee along with the Caring Committee is holding an Easter/Spring card making session. The cards will be distributed along with the Easter lilies to the people on our Care List. All materials will be provided. Past recipients have really appreciated our efforts. So make a card and make someone's day brighter.



Memorial Easter Lilies

It is time to order lilies to beautify our worship space for Easter. You are invited to specify individuals or events that you would like remembered. Please indicate the number of lilies you wish to purchase and note if you are giving them in Honor or Memory of a specific person. Also indicate if you will be taking the lily after Easter worship for yourself, delivering it to one of our shut-ins, or leaving it for our Caring Committee to deliver. The cost of donating lilies is **\$7.00** per plant.

DEADLINE for Ordering Lilies is April 7, 2025.

Please make checks payable to "Somers Congregational UCC"

Name of lily Donor as it should appear in bulletin (please print): _____

Given: ____ In Memory of _____

____ In Honor of _____

Given: ____ In Memory of _____

____ In Honor of _____

Total Number of lilies _____ X \$7.00 = Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Following worship on Easter:

____ Please deliver to shut-in or individual on caring list

____ I will help deliver other plants. Yes ☐ No ☐

____ I will take the Easter lily with me after Easter Service.

Your Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____



MISSIONS' CORNER

As the winter months are now a thing of the past, we are excited for the warmer weather and are looking forward to what the spring months hold in store for our committee. Below is our Mission news for March.

Allocated donations for March:

Honor Flight: Honor Flight is a nonprofit organization that was co-founded by Jeff Miller and Earl Morse in 2005. Its mission is to honor and thank American veterans who have served, especially in World War III, Korea and Vietnam, by providing them a free trip to Washington, D.C. to commemorate their service. This trip includes visits to various memorials and monuments, as well as a celebratory send-off and a welcome back home. To date, this has been made possible for more than 200,000 American veterans of all branches of service who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. We thank our veterans and are happy to continue giving to this amazing organization.

Thank You Notes: None to report

Fundraising News:

The Chocolate Bake Sale was, again, a huge success this year. As you know, Missions receives 10% of our church fundraisers, and this year Kathy Fuller chose Somers Human Services, as her mission charity to receive that donation via Missions. Somers Human Services works with families, including seniors and youth to provide support assistance to those who may find themselves in various social situations and need help navigating through the many complex systems to receive assistance. Congratulations and thank you to Kathy and her entire team for all their hard work on another successful bake sale!

Mission Outreach News:

- The Soap for Hope schoolwide project organized by the students and faculty at Mabel B. Avery for collection of soap and washcloths for the people of Haiti was a huge success. Students made close to 2500 packets for this vaccination incentive program. Our church was contacted to help them, and Missions had very little time to put this together, less than 2 weeks, and AS ALWAYS, our congregation came through with so many donations. Thank you, thank you, thank you!
- Our Spring/Summer Mission outreach this year, which will be Power-in-A-Shower, an organization that provides access to mobile showers for individuals in need. Our goal will be to collect underwear, tee shirts, disposable towels, and very lightly used men's and women's shirts and trousers. The Town of Enfield Department of Social Services is working to raise money to have Power-in-A-Shower come to Enfield in 2025. We know you can help us to make our next mission's and community outreach project a huge success. More information, coming soon. If you wish to learn more, you can visit..... powerinashower.com

Misc:

The Missions committee talked about and came up with the idea of designating a week of being kind and along with Council have designated April 6th-12th as “**Be Kind Week.**” Please see our list of ideas that you may consider doing in our separate Highlights article this month and how we will share some of these acts of kindness with our church community in the weeks to come.

We hope you will consider “paying it forward” in your own way, anyway you like, to a friend, neighbor, someone in need, a family member or a stranger. Sometimes showing a little kindness towards someone can surely brighten their day and sometimes without you even knowing it.

Thought to Ponder: “Kind hearts are the gardens. Kind thoughts are the roots. Kind words are the blossoms. Kind deeds are the fruits”. ~~**Kirpal Singh**

As always, please reach out if you have an organization that you would like us to consider donating to. If you have any questions about anything we do on Missions, please feel free to ask. From all of us on your Missions Committee, be well and above all else, **always be kind.** We look forward to continuing the good work that we do on behalf of all of our congregation and our community.

Laura Jill, Ellen, Bev

Your Missions Committee

SCC KINDNESS WEEK!

APRIL 6 - 12

John 13:34-35: *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one another."

Join the Missions Committee and Church Council in showing Kindness in our community by following these words of Jesus. During the week of April 6, we are asking that you do one (if not more!) act of kindness for a friend, a neighbor, a stranger or a family member. This can be as simple as complimenting a stranger or contacting an old friend to check in. Simple things like these will brighten someone's day and show others we live our faith by our acts.

On Sunday, March 30, we will ask you to write down your suggestions to share with the congregation and on Sunday April 6, you will be invited to take one of these ideas home and use it as inspiration to reach out to others. And on April 13, we would love you to share what you did to make someone's day brighter by leaving another note for all to read at Coffee Hour.

Here are some suggestions to get you started. Share them with your family, your neighbors, your friends. Post it on social media!

Encourage others to join us spreading kindness throughout Somers and beyond!

SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS TO BRIGHTEN SOMEONE'S DAY

Buy coffee for the person behind you

LEAVE A POSITIVE NOTE FOR SOMEONE TO FIND

Offer to help a friend with a task

Donate clothes you no longer wear

Bake something and bring it to work

Smile at someone who looks down

Pay for someone's meal anonymously

Hold the door open for a stranger

Offer a ride

Deliver snacks or small gifts to a neighbor's home

Compliment someone's hard work

Give someone a shout-out on social media

Give away books you've already read

Cook a meal for a friend or family



TAG SALE

Mark your calendars! As one of the largest fundraisers for the church, your donations as well as your time is appreciated!!

SATURDAY 4/26 8-3

SUNDAY 4/27 11-3

It's time to clean out your closets, cabinets, basements, attics, and jewelry boxes! We are looking for all types of items in good or excellent condition. If donating linens please indicate the size if possible. Test electrical items and mark "tested" on masking tape prior to donating. **Reminder, we DO NOT accept the following items:**

*Couches, large exercise equipment, outdated computers/ printers/TV's, encyclopedias, clothing, cribs, car/booster seats, and items weighing more than 50 lbs. (with the exception of furniture in **excellent** condition or items pre-approved by committee members).*



The tag sale has jobs for everyone, beginning with table set-up on April 16th which takes about 1 hour. Please sign up on the poster by the kitchen next week. If you are helping to sort items, there is no need to sign up and daily jobs will be listed on the easel upstairs in the hallway.



We are looking for the following items:

- ♦ Costco fruit and veggie boxes (we need about 50 more)
- ♦ Clear linen bags
- ♦ Shoe boxes and small amazon boxes for glass sets

Sue Moak will be helping to distribute leftover items to various organizations. Help will be needed packing up Sunday & Monday afternoon for distribution. Please sign up!

TAG SALE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

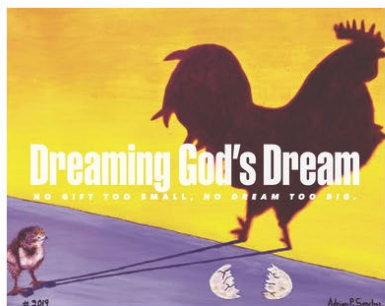
- ⇒ Wed. 4/16 Table Set up 4 PM to 5 PM
- ⇒ Thurs. 4/17 9 AM to 7 PM - Drop off and sort
- ⇒ Fri. 4/18 9 AM to 5 PM - Drop off and sort
- ⇒ Sat. 4/19 9 AM to 7 PM - Drop off and sort
- ⇒ Sun. 4/20 Easter **NO DROP OFF**
- ⇒ Mon. 4/21 9 AM to 7 PM - Drop off and sort
- ⇒ Tues. 4/22 9 AM to 8 PM - Sort, tag, price, hang signs and more!
- ⇒ Wed. 4/23 9 AM to 8 PM - Sort, tag, price, hang signs and more!
- ⇒ Thurs. 4/24 9 AM to 8 PM - Price, set up cashier areas
- ⇒ Fri. 4/25 Final check and shopping for workers (5 PM - 6:30 PM)
- ⇒ Sat. 4/26 TAG SALE 8-3
- ⇒ Sun. 4/27 TAG SALE 11-3 Pack up 206, Pack for organizations
- ⇒ Mon. 4/28 Pack up for organizations, dump runs, Goodwill run

Thank you!

Sharon Renzoni, Dorian Jones, Nicole Caron, and Sue Moak

Interested in joining our coordinating team?

- ♦ See Sharon or Dorian at coffee hour; or
- ♦ contact Dorian at 860-214-8323; or
- ♦ email: dorianajones56@gmail.com



Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG.



Imagine Together was our campaign theme for 2024. We had members share information and testimonials and all of us learned how our talents and generosity make everything possible for our church.

This coming year we will Dream God's Dream - No Gift too Small, No Dream too Big. We dream big things for Somers Congregational Church. The Gospel moves us to imagine addressing poverty, directly helping the marginalized, reconciling conflicts, and provide a loving Christian community building the kingdom of God. Our gifts may seem small next to the big dreams of our congregation. But like the feeding the 5000, (Mark 8:1-10) God's amazing work begins with our small gifts.

What might God do with what you have to offer?

Your time, talents and financial pledge make our dreams possible. The Stewardship Committee is asking you to prayerfully consider pledging if you have not already done so for 2025. *Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7.*

As always, if you have any questions about giving or about how your offerings become ministry, please feel free to contact the Stewardship Committee.

Blessings

You're Stewardship Team

Jeff Roig (Chair) & Tyler Cass

SOMERS **MEALS on Wheels**

for Homebound Seniors



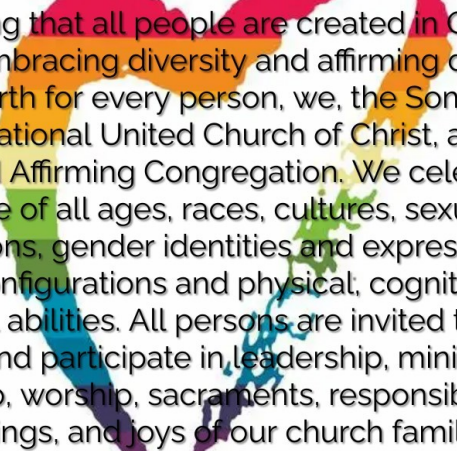
Call us at **860-265-7551 x1**
to see if you qualify and to sign up

Must be 60 years or older, a resident of Somers,
homebound, and unable to shop or prepare meals.

Call us TODAY!

*Meals are provided by Community Renewal Team and are
delivered by community volunteers.*

Somers Congregational United Church of Christ Open and Affirming Covenant



"Believing that all people are created in God's image, embracing diversity and affirming dignity and worth for every person, we, the Somers Congregational United Church of Christ, are an Open and Affirming Congregation. We celebrate people of all ages, races, cultures, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, family configurations and physical, cognitive or emotional abilities. All persons are invited to fully share and participate in leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our church family."



Somers Congregational Church
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Our Church Administrative Assistant edits and publishes the
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Please be aware of deadlines and send your articles to
Highlights@thesomerschurch.org