

Church Staff

Rev. Rebecca Clancy, Pastor
Rev. Catherine Erwin, Minister of Christian Education
Karen Howard, Music Director
Patricia Alcorn, Organist
Lynnly Buchanan, Church Secretary
Phil Potoczek, In-Care Seminarian
Kyle Tade, In-Care Seminarian
Jillian Lindeen, In-Care Seminarian

Church Officers

Dave Buchanan, Moderator
Dayle Malone, Vice-Moderator
David Fauntleroy, Treasurer
Dan Brand, Financial Secretary
Open, Historian
Gail Schlesinger, Clerk

Board Chairs

Barb Malone, Worship
Sharon Jones & Kim Valentine, Deacons Board
Daniele Gibney & Lynnly Buchanan, Christian Education Board
Becca Clancy & Carolyn Fabian, Missions Bd.
Lynnly Buchanan, Properties Board
Mike Rosier, Stewardship Bd.

The First Congregational Church of Geneva
United Church of Christ
321 Hamilton St
Geneva, IL 60134
(630) 232-7143
geneva-ucc@sbcglobal.net

visit our web site at:
geneva-ucc.org

A Reminiscence

By Anne Bronte

Yes, thou art gone! And never more
Thy sunny smile shall gladden me;
But I may pass the old church door,
And pace the floor that covers thee.

May stand upon the cold, damp stone,
And think that, frozen, lies below
The lightest heart that I have known,
The kindest I shall ever know.

Yet, though I cannot see thee more,
'Tis still a comfort to have seen;
And though thy transient life is o'er,
'Tis sweet to think that thou hast been;

To think a soul so near devine,
Within a form so angel fair,
United to a heart like thine,
Has gladdened once our humble sphere.





Sunday Schedule

10:00 am Morning Worship
11:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship

Board Meetings & Events

Sun, May 1	10:00 am	Neibhur Center Youth Group visit Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Missions Board Meeting
Sat, May 7	8:00 am	Fox Valley CMA Annual Meeting, West Chester
Sun, May 8	10:00 am	Mother's Day!
	11:30 am	Deacon's Board Meeting
Sun, May 15	10:00 am	CHOIR SUNDAY !!
	11:30 am	Deacons Shepherd Meeting
Sat, May 21	8:30 am	Men's Breakfast
Sun, May 22	11:15 am	Community Garden Blessing
	11:30 am	Council Meeting
Fri, May 27	6:30 pm	Justice Series Movie #3
Fri, Jun 3	8:00 am	IL Conference UCC Annual Meeting, Oak Brook (2 days)
Sun, Jun 5	10:00 am	Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Missions Board Meeting

Birthdays !

5/5	Claire B	5/18	Joseph B
5/6	Marion B	5/21	Anna M
5/9	Livy M	5/27	Debbie B
5/10	Ruth M	5/29	Henry B
5/12	Denise F		

Anniversaries !

Sharon and Clyde	46	Years
Lea and Mike	35	Years
Sue and Dan	29	Years
Jackie and Earl	54	Years
Debbie and Craig	28	Years

The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective

James 5:16

Please keep the following individuals in your prayers this week:

- Karen Howard's friends and family (illnesses);
- Pat Alcorn's friend, Ericka (illness);
- Pat Alcorn's friend, Buzz (illness);
- Pat Alcorn's father-in-law, Ken (illness);
- Pat Alcorn (Surgery);
- Dave's friend, Laura (illness);
- Catherine Erwin's friend, Lynn (illness);
- Mark Fenne's mother, Jewel (illness);
- Barb Sharp's niece, Amy (surgery, illness);
- Barb Sharp's brother, Steve (illness);
- Lynnly's uncle, Ken (illness);
- Nancy Hannah's friend's son, Dave (struggles);

Additionally, please remember our ill and home-bound members: Emma Gene Buchanan, Betty Deitrich, Nell Graham, Elsie Hogancamp, Leona Johnson, Barb Kryzenecki, Lucille Landberg, and Esther Wessels. Finally, please pray for those serving in the military

For the Record...



Pulpit Associate volunteers for the coming months:

June Open

If you are interested in serving as Pulpit Associate or Usher talk with Barb Malone, Worship Board Chairperson.

Food For Thought...

"A boy doesn't have to go to war to be a hero; he can say he doesn't like pie when he sees there isn't enough to go around."

Edward W. Howe

From The Pastor

Easteride Greetings!

Reading the resurrections accounts of the gospel of John this season, something struck me.

Mary Magdalene's response to the evidence before her eyes was inexplicable. When she entered Jesus' empty tomb on Easter morning, she arrived at an unshakeable conclusion: *Someone had stolen the body!* Thus when she rushed to tell Peter and the beloved disciple she declared, as if it were fact, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and I do not know where they have laid him."

This seeming authoritative report led Peter and the beloved disciple to believe: believe that is, along with Mary that the body had indeed been stolen. Therefore, they did what any practical man would do. They went home. Who took the body? Where was it? These matters would have to be dealt with – but after the sun rose, and the day got started. Where was the urgency after all? It was, for all its sentimental value, in the last analysis, a corpse. Yes, they would deal with these matters, but at an hour when such matters were properly dealt with, and after they gotten a bit more sleep.

But Mary Magdalene declined to do the practical thing. She lingered as the morning light dawned, mourning this now compound loss. Jesus was dead, and now even his body had been stolen. She was left with nothing. Yet Mary was not quite all tears. Her mind wandered from her grief. Her curiosity got the better of her, and after a time she stooped amid her tears and looked down into the tomb.

It is here that Mary Magdalene's response to the evidence before her eyes becomes increasingly inexplicable. Peering into the tomb saw two angels! Without so much as an inkling that something must be afoot -- something astonishing, something marvelous, something miraculous -- she in tears told the angels, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him."

She repeated her unshakeable conclusion – now for the third time – when turning around she encountered *Jesus himself*. He asked her,

"Woman, why are you weeping? Whom to you seek?" Thinking Jesus an early rising gardener she informed him of the stolen body. Only when he spoke her name were her eyes opened and her weeping quieted by her recognition of him. Her unshakeable conclusion about the stolen body finally gave way to the realization that God had resurrected her beloved Jesus.

What the gospel wants us to see, it struck me, is that Mary Magdalene was rather like us – a common, everyday person. She lived in a world that had taught her what to expect in life, and so she expected it – good people, sometimes the best of people, get done in by life, by evil and unjust forces; wrongs don't get put to right; hopes get dashed, and the dead are gone. They will never live again.

But the gospel cautions us that the expectations that the world had taught Mary Magdalene and that the world still teaches us today can stand in the way of *our real assimilation* of the resurrection. Like Mary Magdalene, all the expectations the world has taught us firmly in place, we say to him that is now resurrected and before us, "They have taken my Lord's body, and I do not know where they have laid him." But the gospel beckons us to realize that something has broken in upon the expectations the world has taught us, something that must now shatter them; and that something is the resurrection.

The word of the resurrection is that we need not struggle and cope and fear though this life as though this life is all there is. The word of the resurrection is that evil and injustice may have passing sway but never the final say. The word of the resurrection is that the doctrine of death's ultimacy is a lie. The word of the resurrection is that you and me, indeed all time and history, and all creation have been bequeathed God's own eternity.

If we can only, amidst the expectations that the world has taught since the dawn of history, hear and believe the word of the resurrection, then we will be set free from those expectations to live for the joyous truth that sets us free – Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the truth of Eastertide.

With you in His service,, *Becca*



No Title Required

It has come to this: I'm sitting under a tree
beside a river
on a sunny morning.
It's an insignificant event
and won't go down in history.
It's not battles and pacts,
where motives are scrutinized,
or noteworthy tyrannicides.

And yet I'm sitting by this river, that's a fact.
And since I'm here
I must have come from somewhere,
and before that
I must have turned up in many other places,
exactly like the conquerors of nations
before setting sail.

Even a passing moment has its fertile past,
its Friday before Saturday,
its May before June.
Its horizons are no less real
than those that a marshal's field glasses might scan.

This tree is a poplar that's been rooted here for years.
The river is the Raba; it didn't spring up yesterday.
The path leading through the bushes
wasn't beaten last week.
The wind had to blow the clouds here
before it could blow them away.

And though nothing much is going on nearby,
the world is no poorer in details for that.
It's just as grounded, just as definite
as when migrating races held it captive.

Conspiracies aren't the only things shrouded in silence.
Retinues of reasons don't trail coronations alone.
Anniversaries of revolutions may roll around,
but so do oval pebbles encircling the bay.

The tapestry of circumstance is intricate and dense.
Ants stitching in the grass.
The grass sewn into the ground.
The pattern of a wave being needled by a twig.

So it happens that I am and look.
Above me a white butterfly is fluttering through the air
on wings that are its alone,
and a shadow skims through my hands
that is none other than itself, no one else's but its own.

When I see such things, I'm no longer sure
that what's important
is more important than what's not.

~ Wislawa Szymborska ~

(Poems New and Collected 1957-1997,
trans. S. Baranczak and C. Cavanagh)

I found it to be a blessing that Easter came late this year. As a congregation we have packed an incredible amount of wonderful ministry and growth into these last nine months, and the seeds for so much more have been planted. God's gift of the whole of creation is coming to life, seemingly overnight, all around us. The grass so long buried under snow is green, and lawn mowers will probably anchor the neighborhood soundtrack this weekend, if the rain will hold off a bit. The time for planting is just around the corner, and then, well, we wait. Tomatoes, herbs, beans, squash, cucumbers ... we can't wait till they come bursting forth, yet we must. Like most good things in life, there is a period when things must be left to simmer like a good spaghetti sauce on the back burner. It is not time wasted, not neglected, but time to allow things to blossom into fullness.

Our poet reminds us that not all things that are important can, or even need, to happen quickly. Some of current societal woes are due in part, to those in the know not slowing down to look at long-term implications of policies and actions. Many times injustice occurs because persons or powers without our best interests as a society in mind are allowed to push through quiet changes. While I clearly acknowledge that some things must be attended to with due timeliness, we, as a society seem to have perfected the “one speed fits all, and that speed is fast” mantra.

High blood pressure and hypertension run rampant in our society. Speed can, intentionally or accidentally, hide flaws in plans and ideas, and cause our bodies great stress. Stress management classes and practices like our new meditation class and special open sanctuary prayer times are showing up at many churches, as we try to help ourselves stay centered, in our bodies, minds and souls.

May is a month of new beginnings and near endings. As the trees around us signal spring and impending summer, they also signal the mad dash to the end of the school year. That last push for grades, and for some the time to say goodbye to what has been, and to look forward in anticipation, and perhaps a bit of dread, to the new that is to come. God’s very creation is calling us to look forward, but just as the seed does not become the flower overnight, so we too as human beings need to take time to rest and reflect. Even a race must have a quiet, still time from which to begin, so Get ready ... , Get set ... ,

Shalom,
Catherine

JULIETs Meeting

Juliets will meet Friday, May 20, 1 to 3 p.m., at Sharon Jones home. Join us for an afternoon of conversation and snacks. Everyone is welcome. Please call Nancy Hannah or Ruth Marsh if you need a ride.

The 2011 Justice Series



Our Justice Movie Series marches on, the last Friday of the month, continuing through Friday, July 1st (we shift from the last Friday in June due to Swedish Days). The series features movies with a social justice theme. All movies start at 7:30pm, with cartoons, snacks and fellowship time beforehand

starting at 6:30pm. Admission is one canned good item for the Open Door Clinic Food Pantry per person. Free nursery care is available. Here's a little more information about this year's remaining movies:

Friday, May 27th 7:30pm **One Peace at a Time**

Activist Turk Pipkin continues his global journey of knowledge in action with a goal to create a virtual roadmap to a better future by focusing on specific solutions in these troubled times. Pipkin journeys around the planet in search of a better world.

Friday, July 1st 7:30pm **As We Forgive**

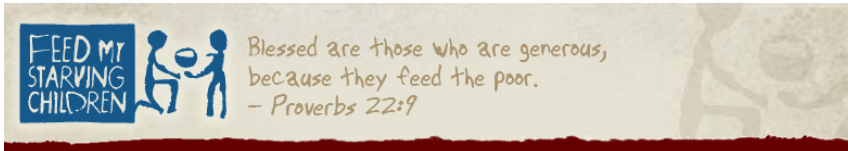
Could you forgive a person who murdered your family? This is the question faced by the subjects of As We Forgive, a documentary about Rosaria and Chantale, two Rowandan women coming face-to-face with the men who slaughtered their families during the 1994 Rowandan genocide. Struggling to live again as neighbors, these survivors and killers discover the power and the pain of radical reconciliation.

This is a great series, not to be missed. Bring your friends and add some meat to your normal coffee hour conversations.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

The men's group, Society of the Sons of God (SoSoGo), will have their next breakfast meeting on Saturday, May 21st, at 8:30am in Fellowship Hall. All men and boys are welcome. The group meets on the third Saturday of each month for breakfast and light chores.



Feed My Starving Children Opportunity

The Missions Board has made arrangements for members of our congregation to participate in the food packaging efforts of Feed My Starving Children, an organization that is attempting to end hunger throughout the world. FMSC supplies nutritional food packages to distribution organizations around the world. All of their packaging is done by volunteers, and helps make their efforts cost effective. We have signed up for the 9:30am to 11:30am time slot on Monday, June 27th. While this is not necessarily the time that will work for everyone, it was the first available time slot (they fill up very quickly). We are requesting additional dates (Saturdays and evenings) later in the year. See Carolyn Fabian or any of the missions board members, or contact the church office, if you would like to go or if you need directions to the FMSC facility in Aurora.

Choir Sunday

May 15, 2011

Be there or be square



Choir Sunday is the final performance of your First Congregational Church Choir, marking the end of a long season of practice and praise (the melodic sort). The choir works hard all year, especially from December through May, and the last song of our Choir Sunday service makes us both exhale with relief and weep (some of us openly) for the temporary suspension of this most important part of our faith life. For those of you who are moved by music, or who find music an important and effective way to pray, won't you join us on Sunday, May 15th, to help us celebrate the best of the years songs, as well as to listen with child like anticipation for the new surprises yet to unfold that day. You won't be disappointed, and neither will your friends and relatives if you can manage to bring them...

"Where words fail, music speaks."

Hans Christian Anderson

Open Door Clinic Muddy Buddy Race Fund Raiser – We have put together five teams to participate in the 2011 Columbia Muddy Buddy - Chicago race on July 31st, in Gilberts, Illinois in an effort to raise funds for the Open Door Clinics in Elgin and Aurora. The race has a bike/run/obstacle course format for teams of two. Fund raising for this event will start in the next few weeks, so watch your e-mail boxes for letters from our team members. You will be able to donate online or directly through one of our team members. Many updates to follow in the coming months...



One is nearer God's heart in a garden than
anywhere else on earth.

Dorothy Frances Gurney

Our community garden project is set for another year of outstanding growth. Last year we had bumper crops of veggies, thanks in part to the hallowed ground on which the veggies are growing I'm sure, but also to the weather and organic goat manure liberally spread throughout the beds. On Sunday, May 22nd we will again fill our boxes, and patiently wait for another bumper crop. This year we will be donating a larger portion of our produce



to the Food Pantry at Open Door Clinic, to Lazarus House, who prepare homemade gourmet meals for the homeless. There are still one or two beds available if you are interested in farming (on a very small scale). Call Lynnly if you are, otherwise sit back and watch the magic this summer!

From the Deacons Board

Back in March you received a survey from the Deacons Board asking for your opinion about the activities the church is involved in, and the direction you would like to see future activities go, as well as your general comments about the church. The Deacons Board is very much interested in your views; they are very much interested in helping make our church the best it can be; they are very much interested in growing our church in both faith and numbers. Won't you please take a minute to complete your survey and share your thoughts with them? They are interested in criticism as well as compliments and suggestions. If you've misplaced it, drop the church office an e-mail and we will forward a new one to you!



Community Renewal Society's Day of Faith in Action Springfield, Tuesday May 10, 2011

FIGHT for the rights of
children of the
incarcerated

STAND UP for
services for the most
vulnerable

DEMAND that Capitol
Hill be accountable
to local communities



Last Year at the Lincoln Statue

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people..." (Isaiah 10:1-2)

Bring Justice to Capitol Hill!

CIVIC ACTION

NETWORK

For more information contact Kristin Holm:
312-673-3844
kholm@communityrenewalsociety.org

Join Us: For a rally, prayer vigil,
& face-to-face visits
with legislators

When: Tuesday May 10th
Free Buses depart at 6am

Where: Transportation provided
from Chicago and the
Suburbs

Call 312.673.3844 to reserve a seat!