

God is still speaking, at ...



THE UNITED CHURCH of Rockville Centre



March 18, 2010

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Dear Friends,

Although we celebrate Easter with lilies, eggs and bunnies and associate it with the coming of Spring after a long, cold, dark winter, Easter is not about any of those things. Easter is not about the triumph of one season over another, still less is it about a promise of eternal life compensating us for earthly misery, struggle and suffering. Christian faith is so watered down by such shallow, short-term views that it is no wonder so many people turn elsewhere for something real.

Easter is about the power of life within death, not after death; the power of life in every season, not just spring and summer. An Easter faith is a comfort in every moment of life and a source of strength in every adversity. When I look out over the congregation, I see the evidence: so many of you have been through struggles and suffering, and have met the challenge with a reliance on God to see you through to the other side. That is the power of Easter!

Easter does not deny suffering and death. Jesus suffered. Jesus died. We see him as Savior precisely because we know that he knows what we are going through. There is no flaw, no failure, no pain, no shame or guilt that Jesus himself has not known and suffered, all the way to the Cross. We proclaim the Cross as the way of salvation because it is there that God meets us in every time of trouble. At the Cross, where our utmost pain and powerlessness meets the pain and powerlessness of the crucified one, we know we are not alone. There we are met by the One who created us, who suffers with us, and because he also has suffered, we are no longer separate individuals, isolated, abandoned and unconnected. At the moment of our greatest suffering, we discover Christ our brother, meeting us with an infinite compassion, drawing us into an infinite love that death cannot destroy.

We are surrounded daily by this infinite love. We live in it irrespective of our circumstances, age, virtue or lack of virtue. Awakening to that reality that is truer than all the competing claims for our allegiance, attention and loyalty is the task of Christian discipleship.

We cannot do it alone. That is why we gather in church as a community of sinners, forgiven, and grateful for the fullness of this very moment, in which all time finds its completion and resurrection. We are in this together, learning and growing together. Our task is to enlarge our community of fellowship to include those whom society has forgotten, people who, like Christ, are despised, rejected, considered of no account.

The strength and power of our church does not lie in numbers so much as it lies in this intention: to open our arms and extend our hands to those who have nothing, who have suffered the pains of hatred, prejudice, poverty and hunger. By thus extending ourselves we ally ourselves with the outsiders as Christ did. Barriers of hate and prejudice and selfishness are overcome. We realize our oneness in Christ, that nothing in heaven or earth can destroy. That is the true resurrection.

May we open our hearts to the power of the resurrection within and around us!
Pastor Bob

Holy Week Schedule

Thursday, April 1, 7:30 pm – **Maundy Thursday Service**

We will celebrate the Last Supper as we have traditionally done in Rickert Hall

Friday, April 2, 7:30 pm – **Good Friday Tenebrae Service**

We will have an informal service of prayers and Bible readings in the Chior Chancel of the Sanctuary

Sunday, April 4, 7:30 pm – **Rejoice! EASTER SUNDAY Service**

Join us as we celebrate the joy of Easter in worship with special music

Why not invite your families and friends to join us this Holy Week and experience Rockville Centre UCC at its finest?

The Sunday Night Club



Our next regularly scheduled meeting is a supper meeting on May 16 that 6pm. The supper chair is Janet Zimmerman. Our program will be a double quartet from the Twin County Chorus of Sweet Adeline's International. This group is part of a 50+ member chorus which has been singing on Long Island since 1963. The Sweet Adeline's International is an organization of women of all ages dedicated to preserving the American art form of four part harmony sung a cappella. The organization is world wide with choruses all over the US as well as in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, England, Sweden and Canada. Put this date on your calendar and join us.

Join us to attend South Side High School musical "Carousel" on Friday, April 23 @ 7:30pm. Tickets are \$10 per person. RSVP to Jean Goodwin @ 223.3646.

All church members, families and friends, whether single or married are invited to all our events.

Pat Barnes & Stan Weiner

United Church Nursery School News

Our Toddler programs have expanded and continue to grow. We now offer Twogether We Go, one and two day separation programs. The children have transitioned beautifully thanks to Miss Christina, a dedicated and talented toddler teacher.



We are currently registering for our summer program which begins on July 5th.

Limited space is available in our 3 year-old afternoon program for the September 2010 school year. Call Providence Alfieri for more information 516.766.5635

Upcoming Schedule

March

- 21 Easter Lily/Hydrangea orders due.
- 28 Palm Sunday service 10:30am
Rehearsal for UpperRoom readers @ 12:30pm

April

- 1 Maundy Thursday Upper Room meal at 7:30pm in Rickert Hall. Please sign up to attend in the Narthex.
- 2 Good Friday service @ 7:30pm
- 4 Easter Sunday service 10:30am
- 5 Board of Trustees Meeting 7:30pm
- 6 Board of Deacons Meeting @ 5pm
Church Council Meeting @ 7:30pm

Souper Group

The "Souper Group" will be meeting during the month of April on Friday, 4/9 and Friday, 4/23. They will be cooking up batches of their delicious Lentil and Bean soup.

Please remember that all help is welcome whether it be a donation of time, money or ingredients. And don't forget that the soup they make is delivered to the INN in Freeport which helps to feed the less fortunate in our community.

If you have any questions feel free to contact the church office at 766.2975.

United Church of Rockville Centre
430 Morris Avenue
Rockville Centre, NY 11570



Board of Missions News

Your previous giving to OGHS made it possible for the United Church of Christ to immediately provide clean water, food and medicines to our partners in Haiti and Chile following the recent earthquakes. A portion of the offering is always set aside for immediate disaster response.

Your gifts are also building schools and providing education for children from poor families in Laos.

Your giving equips a network of community health facilitators in Chile and missionary doctors in India, East Timor and Haiti for ministries of healing.

Your giving enables women in Egypt, Zimbabwe, Bosnia, and Ecuador to receive micro-credit loans, start small businesses and provide for their families.

Each day, around the world, One Great Hour of Sharing gifts are at work changing lives. See how by watching the new OGHS video.

Please give generously to the 2010 OGHS Offering on Sunday, April 4th.

Grace and Peace,

Your New Board of Missions

Megan Asuncion

Leigh Latimer

Tiffany Williams

Beth Borzone

TOWELS FOR THE INN



Throughout the months of March and April your Board of Mission will be collecting NOT just towels, but all kinds of **NEW** personal care items for the guests of the Interfaith Nutrition Network. We invite you to join us in making life a little more pleasant for the people the serves. Items will be collected each Sunday in throughout March and April. Some suggested items are;



Towels - bath size
Wash Cloths
Disposable Diapers
Razors

Toothbrushes
Shaving Crème
Soap - bar or liquid
Underwear—All Sizes

Toothpaste
Shampoo
Socks—All Sizes

Spring Fair

We are in need of items for Granny's Attic for our Spring Mothers' Day Plant and Gift Fair. Please search your closets, drawers, basement and attic for small items (no clothing, furniture or appliances please) in good condition. Especially sought after in these sales are: jewelry (old costume in particular), decorator items, candy dishes, antique glass items. Please have all items clean. Any Items may be placed in the box marked "Spring Fair" located on the stage.

