

The Covenant Contact

May 2023

Appreciating God's Goodness



April showers bring May flowers. . . . Boy, am I sick of April showers, but an abundance of May flowers will be worth it. Last year I could not get my pool filled; this year it's already overflowing. I have to keep dumping off the excess water every time it rains. But isn't that the way life is sometimes?

I've been spending a lot of time recently in the book of Exodus, which is, of course, about

Moses and the Exodus of the Israelites. Together, they escaped the Egyptians' hold on them.

The Israelites were also having their troubles with water. One minute they have all the food and water they need, and then a few chapters later, when things get tight, they start grumbling against Moses and Aaron, "Give us water to drink! If only we had died by the LORD'S hand in Egypt! Why did you bring us out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" (Exodus 17:3)

Wow! I mean, really, that's a little bit overkill, isn't it? "If only we had died by the LORD'S hand in Egypt," that's better than being hungry or thirsty? Keep in mind that, "Woe is us!" is the Israelites' go-to line whenever food or water are not to be found. "Woe is us! Why did you drag us out of Egypt? If only we had died by the LORD's hand!"

Peter says, in his second letter, something like, "A washed

pig always returns to the mud." (I'm paraphrasing here.) Are the Israelites really saying that they would be better off back in Egypt where they were slaves? Moses rescued them; he didn't drag them out. Moses rescued them from Pharaoh and Egypt, so they are now free people! But. . . they still act like slaves, waiting for someone to provide water for them, provide food for them. "What?. . . wait, Lord! You'll provide for us, BUT you want us to follow your rules? We didn't really have to follow any rules like that when we were slaves in Egypt!"

I don't believe that they were slaves in the terms that most of us would think. Most of us think of slaves like the African slaves, unwillingly brought to this country, chained, beaten, and held against their will. I believe these people (the Israelites) more closely resemble what this country refers to as illegal aliens. They were in a country which was not theirs, Egypt. They were forced to live under the laws and culture of that country. They were the poorest of the poor, "cheap labor," who were, in a sense, accepting of their place in life. No wonder Pharaoh didn't want to let them go! They were just pigs in the mud, following whatever rules were handed down before them. Woe is us!

It takes Moses and God a long time to get them to see that there is something better on the other side, that it just takes time, but that they will eventually reach the Promised Land. Well, some of them will.

I've got to think of this abundance of spring rain as just a rough spot that we need to get through as we wind down our long Exodus journey from winter into the Promised Land of summer, where we soon will be grumbling like the Israelites. "God, it's too hot! Why did you take us out of the coolness of spring to the over-present heat of summer? Bring us to the chill of fall!"

Keep the faith. Come on, May flowers; summer's a-comin'!

In Christ, Pastor Gary

Women Ministries



Women Ministries events are for all women of the church and their friends.

- **Graduates' Picnic:** June 5 at 6:00 p.m. at Ann Ryan's (40 Quanopaug Trail, Woodbury) Bring a dish to share. Sign-up sheet in the Potter's House.
- **Spring Outing:** June 10, Hill-Stead Museum in Avon, lunch following. Sign up in the Potter's House.
- **Clean and Organize the Church Library:** Cathy Fredlund (203 841-7239 or cbfredl@optonline.net) is heading this up.

Continuing activities:

- **WM Kitchen Detail:** First Tuesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. Monthly cleanup and organizing in the church Kitchen.
- **Women's PM Study,** Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Potter's House
- **WM Book Club:** Our next book to read is *The Golden Doves* by Martha Hall Kelly. We will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 31, at Morton's Pond.

Men's Study

- Men's Breakfast and Study, Friday mornings, 8:30 a.m., in the Fellowship Room.
- Wild at Heart: Discovering a Man's Soul, by John Eldridge

39ers

- Monday mornings when Thomaston Schools are in session, 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Room.
- We are in the Gospel of John.

Christian Education

- We will celebrate Children's Sunday on May 21. We will have something special for after worship, so stay tuned!
- Sunday School will continue through Sunday, June 18.
- Campership applications are available. Contact Mary Butkevich (860 514-4343 or marybutkevich@gmail.com). The application deadline is June 1.

Rotary Grants Follow-Up

At the March quarterly business meeting, it was announced that Rotary would soon award its grants to projects that benefit our community. Each organization could apply for up to three grants for up to \$750. Several application forms were given out at that meeting.

Grant awards have been announced and our grant request for the Banquet of Blessing food pantry was awarded \$506 to buy new shelving for the room! New shelves are being ordered. They will be similar to the ones in the Kitchen pantry.



Summary of Board Meeting of April 23

Teen Challenge Adult will be here on May 28.

The Board meeting of May 14 has been canceled.

General Fund offerings for the first 16 weeks of the year, through April 16, are \$41,902.25. Budget expectation is \$46,769.23, meaning that we are \$4,866.98 below budget. The General Fund balance is \$15,094 and the Restricted Funds balance is \$38,842. All bills are up to date. Several small Restricted Fund amounts will be consolidated to related accounts.

The Confirmation dinner is on May 11 and Confirmation is May 14. The Diaconate has begun to review their job descriptions and the church's mission and vision. Preliminary work has started on adding to the church's technological support for worship by installing screens in the sanctuary. The Technology Committee is reviewing quotes and generating ideas for this.

The sign outside the North wing door indicating where to find the pastor's study is being replaced and carpets will be cleaned.

Children's Sunday is May 21. The last day of Sunday school will be June 18. The CE Board also plans to honor youth workers during June. Changes were made to the Safe Church Policy to clarify expectations for behavior. Creating a separate Safe Church Committee was recommended. Parenting classes are planned for the fall.

Women Ministries plans a May orchid class. The annual graduates' picnic is June 5 at Ann Ryan's home. The spring outing is June 10 to the Hill-Stead museum in Farmington, followed by lunch.

The Search Committee continues to review candidates and conduct interviews.

(continued)

(Summary of Board Meeting of April 23, continued)

The proposed amendment to the Call bylaw, as revised by the Search Committee, will be presented to the congregation at the June quarterly meeting.

Women Ministries and the Missions and Evangelism Board are taking charge of how unsold pewter ornaments left from the Women's Club 2005 fund-raiser will be used. The board also is considering what to do with/how to use a new sewing machine that has been given it to the church

John Bedosky, Church Chair

Giving Made Easy

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Covenant Church of Thomaston

Giving Page QR Code



Keeping Up

- Our Sexton now is Debbie Martinelli ((860 921-4879 or debdoodles9918@gmail.com)

Crafty Fridays

Crafty Fridays: Potter's House, 6:00-8:00 p.m. If you have a craft to do, bring it. If you don't have a craft but would like to visit and chat, that's okay! Contact Ruth Johnson (860 605-8040) for more information.

Youth Groups

Pathfinders is for students in Grades 1-3. The group generally meets on the third and fourth Sundays of the month, 4-6 p.m. Leaders are Linda Lawrence (lindae0824@gmail.com or 860 283-8726) and Brenda Tousignant (203 232-1525 or soxj269@aol.com).

5/7 4:00 Regular meeting



Trailblazers is for students in Grades 4-6. Trailblazers leaders are Jessica and John Bedosky. If you have questions, need to register your student or want to help out, contact Jessica (203 910-0945 or jbed546@aol.com). Sessions are 4-6 p.m. in the Potter's House.

5/7 12:45 Final meeting for the season



D/C (Discipleship/Confirmation) is for students in grades 7-8, a two-year journey of exploring who God is and what God means in our life. All junior high students are welcome to attend. The leaders are Sarah Morton and Pastor Gary. We meet 9-10 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

5/7 9:00 Regular meeting
5/11 6:30 Confirmation Dinner
5/14 9:00 Regular meeting
5/14 10:00 Confirmation



CHYG (Covenant High Youth Group) is for all students in grades 9-12. Leaders are Jessica Bedosky, Beth Campbell, Susan Sundell and Gina Whaley.

5/7 4:00 Regular CHYG
5/21 4:00 Regular CHYG



Kids Snack Packs

- We still distribute to at least 3 families weekly from the Information Desk in the Potter's House. The families receiving the bags are so appreciative of your generosity.
- **Need:** Chef Boyardee, Spaghettios, breakfast items (cereal cups/boxes, Nutrigrain, Belvita, Poptarts)
- **Drop off** at the Potter's House desk.
- **Or cash** to Christy Barrett and she will shop for you.

Banquet of Blessing

- **Need:** canned carrots, fruit cups, peanut butter, canned whole-kernel corn, toilet paper, tissues. • **No perishable foods.**
- **Check expire dates.** We can't give away out of date food.
- **No canned green beans or mixed vegetables right now.**

Prayer Chain

Contact Prayer Coordinator Mary Butkevich (860 514-4343 or marybutkevich@gmail.com) for prayer concerns and rejoicings.

Meal Coordinator

Providing a meal to someone during a difficult time is one way to show how much we care. If you know someone who might benefit, contact Sandy Dunn (860 483-2015 or daytondunn@mac.com).

May 2023 (Rev 5/4/2023)

Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24, 25

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9:30 39ers Study (Fellowship) 6:30 Search Committee (Library)	2 9:00 WM Kitchen Detail	3 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)	4	5 8:30 Men's Breakfast (lite) & Study (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's)	6
7* 11:30 Diaconate (Library) 12:45 Trailblazers, Pathfinders. 4:00 CHYG	8 9:30 39ers Study (Fellowship)	9 6:3 Search Committee (Library)	10 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)	11 6:30 Confirmation Dinner (Fellowship)	12 8:30 Men's Breakfast (lite) & Study (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's)	13 11:00 Private Funeral (Sanctuary, Fellowship)
14* MOTHER'S DAY CONFIRMATION	15 9:30 39ers Study (Fellowship) 7:00 Tres Dias Secretariat (Fellowship)	16 6:30 Search Committee (Library)	17 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)	18	19 8:30 Men's Breakfast (lite) & Study (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's) 7:00 Tres Dias Secuela (Fellowship)	20
21* (No D/C) CHILDREN'S SUNDAY 4:00 CHYG	22 9:30 39ers Study (Fellowship)	23 6:30 Search Committee (Library)	24 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)	25	26 8:30 Men's Breakfast (lite) & Study (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's)	27
28* (No D/C)	29 MEMORIAL DAY	30 6:30 Search Committee (Library)	31 6:30 WM Book Club (Morton's Pond) 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 6:30 Prayer (Sanctuary)	*Sundays: 9:00 am Sunday School and D/C (Confirmation); 10:00 am worship; 11:15 Fellowship Sunday worship services are recorded and posted on the church website (covchurchthomaston.org). Worship bulletins, including announcements, also are posted on the church website.		

Volunteers: . . . through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13b

Coffee Fellowship sponsored by: Diaconate**

****Only beverages are needed and are provided by the church. If you provide a snack, at least one that is gluten-free, please.**

NURSERY				ALTAR FLOWERS		LAY READERS:	
5/7	Patricia Vigeant Megan Campbell	6/4	Lori Vigeant	5/7	Communion - none	5/7	Liz Montambault
				5/14	Ruth Johnson	5/14	Dave McClay
5/14	Gina Whaley Lauren Whaley	6/11	Margrit Saghafi Britta Saghafi	5/21		5/21	Jessica Bedosky
				5/28	Christy Barrett	5/28	Gina Whaley
5/21	Sue Sundell Erik Sundell	6/18	Patricia Vigeant Megan Campbell	6/4	Communion - none	6/4	Ann Ryan
				6/11	Liz Montambault, in memory of Don	6/11	Liz Montambault
5/28	Christy Barrett Savannah Acevedo	6/25	Gina Whaley Lauren Whaley	6/18	Deb Melvin	6/18	Jessica Bedosky
				6/25	Liz Montambault, in memory of Donna	6/25	Gina Whaley

Sunday School Staff

K &-Pre-K Patricia Vigeant, Grace Duke	3-4 Ruth Hopkins Drew Conlon		
1-2 Lori Vigeant	5-6 Margrit Saghafi		

Youth Staff

CHYG (Grades 9-12) Beth Campbell, Gina Whaley, Sue Sundell	D/C (Grades 7-8) Sarah Morton, Pastor Gary Freimuth	Trailblazers (Grades 4-6) Jessica Bedosky, John Bedosky	Pathfinders (Grades 1-3) Brenda Tousignant, Linda Lawrence
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Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays	11	12	13	14	15	18	20	22	25	25	25	26	26	28	28	29	30	31	Anniversaries
1 Tom Duffany	Brianna Boston	Ryan Hurlbert	Elin Saghafi	Terry Breen	Amy Bond	Alex Dunn	Lauren Radke	Beth Campbell	Willow Bothroyd	Ethan Jackson	Liz Montambault	Drew Conlon	Ruth Johnson	Cathy Fredlund	Cheryl Morton	Jamie Saghafi	Katie Grabherr	Michele Dayton	Anniversaries
2 Nick Samela																			14 Michele & Bill Dayton
4 Stan Hurlbert																			17 Jen & Nick Samela
5 Linda Chandon																			28 Jessica & John Bedosky
7 Gunnar Barrett																			29 Kim & Tom Duffany
7 Alexa Sanson																			

Connections:

> Interim Pastor and Congregational Care Pastor: Gary Freimuth (study) 860 283-9146, (c) 860 307-1547, (h) 860 283-4540, or ggfremuth@optonline.net > Church Chair: John Bedosky: jbedosky@outlook.com or 203 770-5304	> Treasurer: Lori Vigeant: lori_a_vigeant@sbcglobal.net or 860 484-4941 > Office "Churchmouse" Ruth Johnson: cmouse@covchurchthomaston.org or 860 605-8040 (Office: 860 283-5071 > Meal Coordinator: Sandra Dunn; 860 483-2015 or daytondunn@mac.com > Prayer Coordinator: Mary Butkevich; 860 514-4343 or marybutkevich@gmail.com
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