



THE BRIDGE

February 2024

United Church of Christ in Cornwall, Congregational

MARK'S "GOOD NEWS" of TRANSFORMING GRACE

During these days leading through Epiphany to Lent, our Sunday lectionary readings follow Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of Mark ("Gospel" means "Good News"!)

On his first day of teaching in the Synagogue in Capernaum, those listening to Jesus were said to be "astonished". Those who followed him were even more astonished as their lives with this teacher unfolded. There were "unclean spirits", healings, and times of being run out of town. There was the arrest and killing of John the Baptist, stories told by Jesus that were hard to understand, and cleansing of lepers.

Mark's Gospel will challenge us to consider how it is that *we* follow the man of Nazareth. What does it mean to be his disciples today? If our faith is boring or no longer central to our lives, why not take the opportunity to re-examine what it all means?

When Jesus preached in Capernaum, Mark says, "immediately there was in their synagogue someone with an unclean spirit who cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' But Jesus rebuked the spirit, saying, 'Be silent, and come out!' And the unclean spirit, convulsing the person and crying with a loud voice, came out." (Mark 1:23-26)

Though we don't often call it, "casting out demons," we know of God's transforming grace and the difference it can make in our lives and in the world. Here at the UCC we participate in "casting out demons" in the name of God's love.

We do this when we welcome everyone to our church, when we teach God's love to our children, when we work for justice, when we work on behalf of the poor and hungry, when we give time and talent and money to refugee resettlement or work on Pine Ridge Reservation.

Practicing discipleship is one way to bring *our* discipleship to life. Join us as we worship and share together, listening for what God is calling us to do in 2024.

See you in ministry! *Micki*

Beat midwinter blues!

Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 13 5:30 – 7:00



Come join us for fellowship and pancakes, sausage, Mardi Gras beads, and mask making at the UCC Parish House on Tuesday, February 13 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Free will donations will be accepted for expenses. For more information or to volunteer to flip jacks, please contact the Church office (860-672-6840 or office@uccincornwall.org). *Please sign up ahead IF you can for a head count!*

Red Cross Blood Drive

Thursday, March 7 *Morning hours TBD*

in the UCC Parish House

Donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh at least 110 lbs. There is no upper age limit if you are in good health. If you have given in the past or if this will be your first time please come, and invite your friends and neighbors. To sign up please call the Red Cross directly at 1-800-GIVE LIFE. Walk-ins are welcome. Allow at least one hour in all.

GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!

- “Souper Sunday” raised over 100 cans of hearty soups for the Cornwall Food Pantry (housed in our Day Room)!
- An Art Show, titled “The Art of the Stitch and Needle” was planned and executed by the House Committee, with Cornwall artists from church and community. The show is amazing and the opening was a very successful opportunity to welcome in the community to celebrate the beauty and creativity of these works!
- A grant from the Cornwall Foundation for \$3,000 was received to purchase 2 new stoves to replace the one that was no longer able to be repaired. We are grateful for their support since our “stove” feeds a lot of the population of Cornwall over a year’s time!
- The Chore Service that has helped so many in our area has united with the Litchfield Hills Chore Service, maximizing resources to provide more and better services for 13 towns!



LENTEN STUDY

2024 Lenten Study Guide: “Bend” \$5 per booklet

This booklet is written by the Still Speaking Writers Group. It offers daily readings, reflections and prayers for the Lenten season.

The theme of the writings is inspired by the way that Jesus modeled flexibility when he experienced change and challenge that strengthened his ministry.

All interested may order the booklet through the church office by emailing or calling Tracy (office@uccincornwall.org 860-672-6840). Please let her know by Feb. 5, and she will place a group order. If you prefer, you can fill out the form at the bottom of this page.

Micki will lead 4 or 5 sessions in the evening on zoom for those who are interested in discussing the writings, on a time and day agreeable to all.

Silver Lake Summer Opportunities!

Silver Lake Summer Conference brochures are now available online. Many sessions tend to fill up quickly, so, check out what’s being offered then jump online to book your session once **registration opens up on January 18! Family camp sessions are offered as well – a great way for kids to try it first.** You can also see a brochure and register online at <https://www.silverlakeect.org/summercamp> The camp holds an Open House in May so you can go and see it and ask questions.

Kids have a wonderful week full of singing, crafts, games, swimming, active worship, ropes course and much more. The food is great too! Scholarships are available!!!

WINTER ART SHOW IN THE PARISH HOUSE CONTINUES

“The Art of the Stitch and Needle,” is a Group Show of Fiber Arts. Artisans exhibiting their crafts are: Beth Dinneen, Eileen Gargan, Susan Hellman, Jennifer Markow, Dana Saccardi, and Susan Saccardi. A variety of crafts are represented in the show, and experiencing the creativity and expertise of these six Cornwall artisans will delight and brighten your winter!

The show may be viewed Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. - noon, Sundays 10 a.m. - noon, and by appointment with one of the artists. The exhibit will close on February 29th. For more information, call the church office (860 672-6840) or email Marie Murphy (mysticmarie@optonline.net).

THE MINISTER’S DISCRETIONARY FUND

...is funded by generous donations from church members and friends of the church. Occasionally a grant is received. Always, we receive money for local needs (especially hunger) from the CROP Walk money raised for Church World Service in the NW Corner.

We are currently in need of donations to help folks this winter with various needs. Please give generously as you are able. Make checks payable to Minister’s Discretionary Fund or use a card with the DONATE button on our website and indicate that your gift is for the Minister’s Discretionary Fund.

Thank you in advance for your gifts!