

March 2019

*“You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off”;
fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you
with my righteous right hand.”*

Isaiah 41:9-10

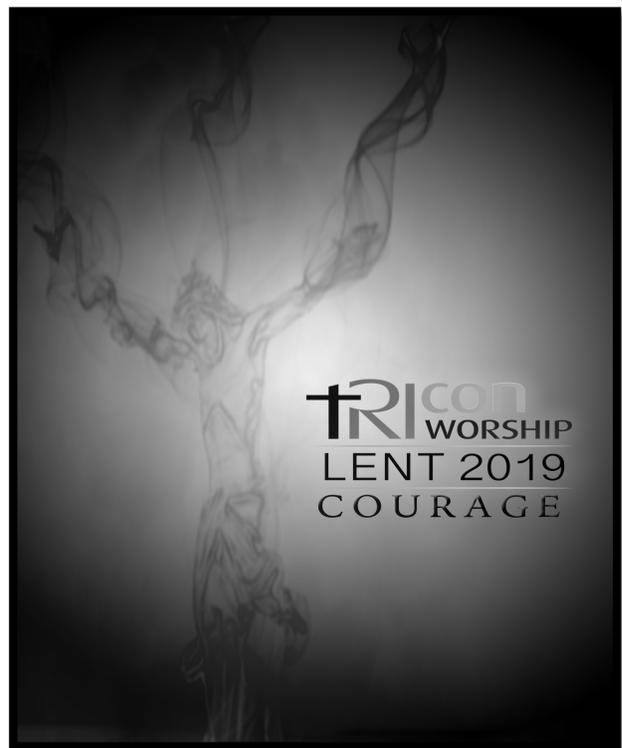
Remember that time you were forced to take your first step into a frightening and uncertain journey? Maybe it was the day you moved out of the house as the ink dried on the divorce papers, or perhaps it was your first day of chemo, or your last day at the office. Very few of us willingly choose the shadowy path that descends into darkness. In most cases life itself unceremoniously pitches us headlong into the abyss. Yet, the season of Lent asks us to intentionally choose to dive in of our own free will!

For 40 days each year, Christians are asked to seriously ponder their own powerlessness and realize the stark certainty of death. Lent is a time to fully accept the hard truth that all life is fleeting and much of what happens to us is undeniably beyond our control. Lent asks us to deliberately descend into the darkest corners of our soul, hoping, yearning, praying for God to meet us there.

From where do we access the courage to test the frailty of our faith and squarely confront the reality of our weakness. To what extent are we culpable for the suffering and brokenness that permeates our world?

These will be the guiding questions as we enter the winding, potentially arduous path of Lent. Lent is the time we follow in the steps of Jesus, who walked knowingly into the violent and unjust fate that would await him in Jerusalem.

We begin on March 6th, gathering together on Ash Wednesday. This is where we are marked with the stark, dirty, sacred mark of God. The sign of the cross is painted on our forehead and we hear the whispered words that will set us on our way, ***“From ashes you have come, and to ashes you will return.”***



Many of us will engage in weekly small groups to examine and discuss how we might find the courage to clearly see the truth, to live peacefully even in the truth of an uncertain world, and then boldly change course when lost. We will calculate the cost of taking action in the name of our God, in whom we have the courage to trust.

For those who wish for nourishment along the way we will offer **quiet, reflective, centering prayer each Wednesday evening during Lent from 6:30 until 7:00pm.** In the candle lit stillness of our sanctuary we will listen to the deep yearning of our hearts. Through scripture, poetry, pipe organ, and sustained periods of silence we will contemplate the mystery, mercy and presence of God.

If we can find the courage to dismantle the flimsy facade that struggles to successfully manage our human brokenness on our own power, we will find an amazing gift. Fully exposed and completely vulnerable we will be astonished to discover the deep mystery of a God who is only good and utterly reliable.

This is where our courage is rooted. Facing our fear, we come to understand that no matter what may come, *all* things are redeemable, *all* suffering will one day come to an end and even death itself is never the end of the story. Following in the Way of Jesus, we find the courage to willingly slide into the abyss of self-doubt, grief, guilt and uncertainty. Lent is the way through to resurrection and into the promise of new life.

Let's go together.

"Fear not, for I am with you." says our God. "I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you."

In faith and hope!

Bob



BE STILL
contemplative prayer for presence
QUIET ♦ REFLECTIVE ♦ CENTERING

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
6:30 to 7:00
Beginning March 13

TRICON
Nurturing Discovery

TRICON EMERGE 2019

REFLECTIONS FROM THE INTERIM

Whenever we learn that a change is coming, it is normal to feel all sorts of feelings at different stages.



Hearing that a friend is going into hospice care, for instance, or that a loved one has suddenly died, you may feel surprise, sadness, and relief one at a time or all at once. If your spouse announces that he wants a divorce, you may feel shock, confusion, and anger. Only later does the hurt reveal itself, or later still, the all-important learnings.

Even though you are thrilled for your child's graduation or promotion, you can also feel grief upon her leaving the 'nest,' or be both happy and fearful that he is entering the world with new independence. Changing jobs or the departure of a colleague may provoke stress as well as excitement. Indeed it can be quite satisfying to make a change and overwhelming at the same time.

When it comes to the transition of a minister, feelings are also multiple and mixed, even contradictory at different points along the journey. While knowing that an interim pastor is temporary, and looking forward to working with the new settled pastor, one can feel both disorientation and delight contemplating the future.

Given the special and powerful relationship between ministers and congregants, it is quite common for both parties to deny the reality of the departure before making peace with it, and rather than face their feelings about the change, to attempt to cope by ignoring these feelings or distancing themselves from the clergy and each other. A few might even pick a fight with the other rather than allow themselves to feel the loss. Thankfully, most of us muddle through, weeping freely and laughing heartily, making space in ourselves for all of it.

I know this because as many times as I have said good-bye to loved ones and to congregations, I still feel the entire range of emotions. I usually anticipate my grief quite a while before I hear members express theirs directly to me. I am also tempted at times to bury my appreciation of people under my frustrations with them, or to avoid overt demonstrations of appreciation. I have also learned, however, that such coping mechanisms sabotage what I *really* want: to experience the fullness of life in a nurturing community of faith - the Body of Christ in the world!

So will you make a pact with me? In the next months, by God's grace, let's be as authentic, open, and available to each other - even to all that is unfinished in us. In so doing, we are more likely to share in the miracle of the Spirit building us up in love. (Ephesians 4:16)

In daring trust,

Jean

MARCH WORSHIP

March 3 Communion	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Robert Brown preaching
March 10	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Dr. Jean Vandergrift preaching
March 17	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Robert Brown preaching
March 24	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Dr. Jean Vandergrift preaching
March 31	Service at 10:00 a.m.	Rev. Robert Brown preaching





COURAGE

FIND YOUR GROUP
TriConchurch.org



TRICON
EDUCATION

SMALL GROUPS

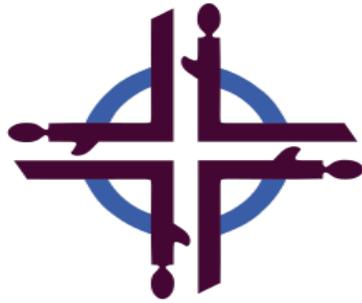
LENT 2019

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Friday, March 1, 2019

11:00 a.m.

TriCon Church

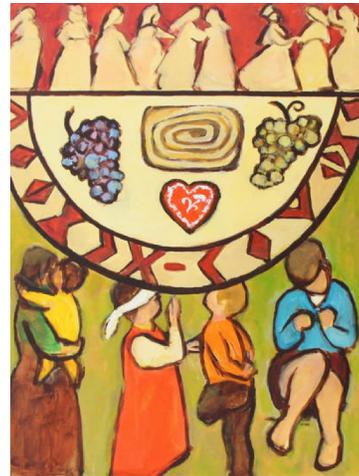


AN INTERFAITH SERVICE

Written by the women of Slovenia

followed by a light luncheon and fellowship

World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a worldwide ecumenical movement of women of many faith traditions who come together each year, on the first Friday in March, to observe a common day of prayer. Women from a different country each year write the World Day of Prayer worship service. For 2019, that country is SLOVENIA. The 2019 World Day of Prayer service will begin at the first sunrise on March 1, 2019, in the Pacific region and, following the Earth's rotation, will spread around the world.



This is an excellent opportunity to contribute to a beautiful worldwide service right here in Concord. In 2018, 100,571 services were held worldwide, in 108 countries, in 88 languages, with 1,457,479 participants.



YOUTH GROUP MISSION TRIP

Youth Group will meet
Sundays, March 3rd, 17th, and 31st at 7PM
NO YG on March 24th

March

Special **SNOW TUBING** outing March 10th, 3-5 PM
at Nashoba Valley Ski Park. More info to follow in
an email... keep an eye out for it!

Discussion Group will meet
Wednesdays, March 13th, 20th & 27th.
NO DG on Ash Wednesday, March 6th, but all are encouraged to
attend the service at 8 PM.

Mission Trip 2019 - Puerto Rico

Mission Trip MEETING

Sunday, March 3rd: 12:00 - 1:30 PM

This is a **required** pre-trip meeting.
Contact Nick Bruning before the 3rd with
any questions, concerns or conflicts.



MT Fundraiser is underway!!

We have FIFTEEN FABULOUS PRIZES. Raffle tickets are \$25 each or FIVE for \$100!
The MT team will be selling Raffle Tickets in the Parish Hall through the month of March
and early April. You can stop into the church office during the week at any time to
purchase tickets, too. TWO Prizes (Celtics tickets, and tickets to A Bronx Tale) will be
drawn on March 10th! The others will be drawn at the MT dinner on April 27th. Need
not be present to win.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

Christine Kelley,
Youth Leader
ckelley@triconchurch.org
978.337.6171 call or text

Bob Brown,
Sr. Minister
revbobbrown@triconchurch.org
978.204.7739 call or text

Nick Bruning
Mission Trip
nbruning@triconchurch.org
978.618.1629 call or text

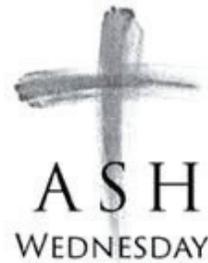


CONFIRMATION

Wednesday, March 6th	Ash Wednesday Service, 8PM	Confirmands & Mentors
Sunday, March 17th	UCC & TriCon - Class, 5 - 7 PM	Confirmands only
Sunday, March 31st	Forgiveness - Class, 5 - 7 PM	Confirmands & Mentors

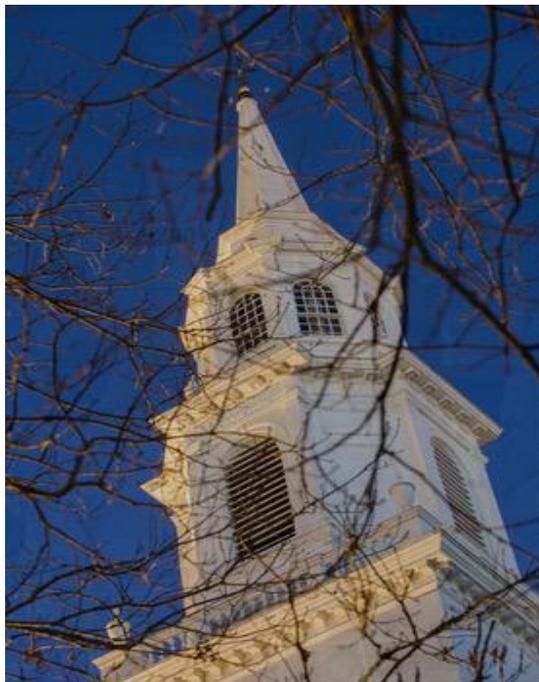
All *Confirmands and Mentors* are encouraged to attend the **Ash Wednesday** service at 8 PM on March 6th. There is an All-Church supper before the service beginning at 6:30 PM. You are welcome to attend that together; please sign up online or in the Parish Hall.

If you cannot make a class that includes Mentors, please be sure to let your mentor know ahead of time.



Thank you to the parents who provide the meals each class so the group can enjoy a time of fellowship and discussion together around the table. Any questions on the meals, contact Jennifer Clarke at jbp.clarke@gmail.com.

Suzanne Giles, 978.505.9176
 David Hart, 978.618.1855
 and Rev. Bob Brown, 978.204.7739



5th Sunday
forum
MARCH 31, 2019
 following worship

A time for us to gather together to talk in an informal, open forum setting about anything related to our church or denomination.

THIS MONTH: *Our church governance*
 How the church is run

THE TriCon OPERATING SYSTEM

Our Inclusive Church Governance

The Annual Meeting on February 10th marked the official beginning of a new church business year. We thought it good to review our church governance.

Church Governance: It is the congregation, either at the Annual Meeting or at a special Congregational Meeting, that makes major decisions for the church, sets the budget, elects officers and members of committees, approves by-law changes and votes on calling clergy. A special Congregational Meeting may be called by a 2/3 vote of the Church Council or by ten members submitting a request in writing to the Clerk of the church.

Church Council: The Church Council is the governing body of the church between congregational meetings, and its actions are subject to review only by the congregation. The Church Council advises the Minister on the general direction of the church's activities and joins with him or her in the formulation of a well-rounded program. The Council has five regularly scheduled meetings, adding special meetings as needed.

Membership on the Church Council includes the Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, immediate past Moderator, three elected members-at-large, chairpersons of the elected committees or their designee, the Minister, and any additional clergy and staff as deemed necessary by the Church Council.

Prudential Sub-Committee:

In May, 2018, the Church Council voted to establish a sub-committee for ongoing deliberations and management between Church Council meetings.

The definition of Prudential is "involving or showing care and forethought." This subcommittee is for consultation and deliberation with the Moderator to ensure thoughtful and prayerful management. All decision-making authority continues to be with the full Council or the congregation, as appropriate. Minutes of Prudential Sub-Committee meetings and discussions are distributed to the Council. Members of this subcommittee are the Moderator; chairs of Finance, Personnel, Diaconate, and Pastor-Parish Committees; the Assistant Moderator; the Church Business Manager; and the Senior Minister and any additional clergy.

If you have any questions, about the church governance, please contact Russell Sanna, Moderator. Copies of the church By-Laws are available on our website under "parishioner resources."

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



WELCOME TO TRICON!

Whether you are just visiting, looking to find a church home or still feeling your way after several visits, we encourage you to pick up brochures and other information in the parish hall or the church entry, and to come for refreshments in the parish hall following the service.

You are welcome to participate in any of our church programs and activities and to sign up your children for Children's Ministry or youth programs. Call the church office with any questions.

ATTENTION MEN OF THE CHURCH Join the Anchor Group

The Anchor Group meets on the **first and third** Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 a.m. in the church parlor. The Anchor Group is a group for men of all ages who discuss and share issues of religion and spirituality in light of contemporary culture. Any questions, email Greg Howes at howes2012@gmail.com.

The deadline for the
April Newsletter
is March 15.

CAREGIVERS GROUP

The TriCon Caregivers Group is an opportunity for parishioners and friends in caregiving roles to come together to share accomplishments and failures, joys and sorrows, laughter and hope, as well as information about caring for others and ourselves.

If the role of caregiver is part of your life, please consider joining the TriCon Caregivers Group. **We will meet on Wednesdays, March 6 and 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the church parlor.** Call the church office (978 369-4837) for more information.



**Set your clocks ahead one hour
at 2:00 a.m.**



FIRST DAY OF SPRING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20



**Wednesday,
March 27
at Noon
in the
Church Parlor**

Knitwits

All knitters at any skill level are welcome to join us. Come and get help, give help, share projects, get new ideas or just enjoy the conversation. If you are new to knitting, we are happy to welcome you and teach you some basic stitches. If you need a project, we can make suggestions. As a group, we make prayer shawls for the Caring Connection, plus donations of hats, mittens, and scarves for City Mission Society.

LIFE CHANGES

Sincere sympathy to Jane Turner Michael and her family. Jane's mother, Lorraine Newell Turner, died on January 24 in VA. A service will be held in ME in the summer.

Heartfelt condolences to Kevin, Pat, Laura and Kathy Bentley. Kevin's mother, Colleen Bentley, died on January 29.

Our sympathy and prayers are with Leslie and Paul Mahoney and their family. Leslie's father, Richard Ludwig, died on February 7 in Newtown Square, PA.

Membership Opportunities!



We will welcome **new members** on **Sunday, March 17th**, and would love to include **you**, should you be ready to join TriCon church.

We will host an **"Exploring Membership"** event, a pre-joining meeting with Bob and others from the committee, on **Wed. Feb. 27th at 7PM**. Anyone interested in joining TriCon, either in March or at a later date, is welcome!

If you want to join in March and cannot make the "Exploring Membership" meeting on Feb. 27th, and haven't been to one before, please call or email Amy Bruning at the church office; we can find another date that works for you before the 17th.

On **Sunday, March 10th**, in the Parish Hall after worship service, the Membership Committee will be available to those who are new worshipers, or still feeling new. Stop by, say hello, ask any questions you might have about TriCon. Come find us ... we're really friendly!

TriCon strives to be an open and welcoming community of faith.

Jill Robitaille, Co-Chair of Membership: jb.robitaille190@gmail.com

Sarah Hart, Co-Chair of Membership: sarahphart@earthlink.net

Amy Bruning, Membership Coordinator: abruning@triconchurch.org ~ church office: 978-369-4837



Caught in Family Homelessness: *Parents tell their stories*

*The Advocacy Network to End Family
Homelessness*

14th annual forum

Sunday, March 24, 2019 2:00-4:00 PM

Trinitarian Congregational Church

200,000 families in our state spend more than 50% of household income on housing. A divorce, a lost job, or a health crisis can set these families on a course toward homelessness with devastating effects on the health and social and academic development of children. Come and find out how you can advocate for effective programs that keep families in their homes and children on track.

SPEAKERS:

- “Testimony of a Homeless Mom...a Cold Overnight in Our Car in March”
Lynnette Martin, Advocate/Mother who previously experienced homelessness
- “How Homelessness Impacted My Family” **Christine Chase**, Public Voice Speaker with City Mission
- “Two Years Growing Up Living in a Car Near Here” **Magi Lindeman**, Social Worker from Formerly Homeless Family
- “How We Can Help” **Rev. June Cooper**, Director, City Mission
- “How Citizens Can Make a Difference” **Kelly Turley**, Associate Director, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
- Legislators Weigh In: **State Rep. Tami Gouveia**, **State Sen. Jamie Eldridge**

SPONSORS:

The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, City Mission, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. For more information go to www.endfamilyhomelessness.net Free and open to all. Reception to follow.



It is March and by now, most of us have given up on our New Year's resolutions to get healthier – we have not gotten to the gym; we're still snacking between meals and we're binge-watching Netflix rather than getting those 8 hours of sleep! Tussie Williams had a good alternative for us in a recent Call to Stewardship:

"I was thinking the other day of all the ways in which coming to church -- coming to TriCon -- improves your health. That is, the ways in which coming to church makes you healthier. There are lots of ways, and they're all gifts from God, but I am going to mention just three ways.

The first way is by reducing stress. If you reduce stress, the Wall Street Journal says it lowers your blood pressure and you sleep better. That's good. How do you reduce stress by coming to church? Well, you get rid of things that worry you. You ask God to help you get rid of worries and to help you solve problems. You pray and ask for God's help...and then those problems don't seem so difficult. Getting rid of stress is good, your blood pressure goes down, you sleep better and you feel free-er and happier.

The second way coming to church improves your health is by breathing. Breathing is very fashionable these days. Of course, you breathe all the time, but just little, short, shallow breaths. Now, for adults, who are not in the choir, where else and when do you take really deep breaths and belt out "A Mighty Fortress is Our God"? Singing is very good for taking in oxygen and deep breathing. You know, I've noticed over my four score years that singers and musicians live longer than other people and I think it comes not just from the pleasure they get from music but also from those heavy dosages of oxygen.

*And the third way coming to TriCon improves your health is by **socializing**. That means talking to your friends, or even people that you don't know. So, when you grab a cup of coffee, or a munchkin, after the service in the parish hall, you can talk to old friends, make new ones, welcome newcomers, and speak to someone you don't know very well -- and you'll feel good, happier, better about everything. When you socialize, you're not being lonely. Again, the Wall Street Journal says loneliness is a worse problem in this country than opioid addiction. Imagine that! Everyone can attend a TriCon Lenten or Advent Group, or join a church committee, or come to coffee hour and **socialize**.*

So, remember how much coming to TriCon improves your health and well-being: by reducing stress, by engaging your diaphragm with song, by building friendships, and by being grateful and giving thanks to God for all our blessings."



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

*Our Children's Ministry Program in March**



Sunday, March 3rd

10:00am Mission Projects Sunday

Sunday, March 10th

10:00am Worshipping Together

Sunday, March 17th

10:00am Exploring Faith Groups
11:15am SEEKER/Parent NYC Meeting

Sunday, March 24th

10:00am Exploring Faith Groups
TBD Voyagers and Bowling

Sunday, March 31st

9:00am 8th Grade Breakfast
10:00am 8th Grade Bibles
Exploring Faith Groups

Session Two Children's Ministry January - June

We have a great offering of
Children's Ministry programming
in Session Two.

More Exploring Faith Groups,
Creative Churches,
Mission Projects Sundays and
Worshipping Together services!

Please consider joining in on the fun!

**Programming may be subject to change.
Check emails from Carrie O'Brien or Friday's
TriCon emails for up-to-date programming information.*

If you are a new family and would like information about our Children's Ministry program, please contact our Children's Ministry Director, Carrie O'Brien, at cobrien@triconchurch.org. You may also visit our website at www.triconchurch.org and click the Christian Education tab.

Children's Ministry Morning Routine

Before the 10:00AM service, nursery age children, up to age three, are dropped off in the nursery on the first floor of the Children's Ministry wing. Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade join worship with their families for the first part of the service before leaving for programming. On Sundays when there is no Children's Ministry programming, there is child care in the nursery for children up to age 5. There are activity clipboards for older children in the Narthex.

Open Table Donations MARCH 2019 Cereal - all kinds!



Helping Our Neighbors Locally and Globally

Serving Over 300 Guests Weekly



LOOKING FOR LEGOS



Wondering what to do with that box of unused Legos? Our Children's Ministry Director has the answer!

Always looking for new and creative ways to explore the Bible with children, Carrie O'Brien is introducing a new program in March, **Building Faith...Brick by Brick** and is looking for lots of used, clean Lego donations.

Please call Carrie at the church office at 978 369-4837. Donations can be dropped off at the church or Carrie will pick up.

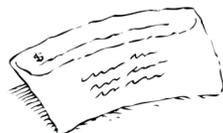
ITEMS OF INTEREST

FLOWER COMMITTEE

Each year at Christmas and Easter, volunteers decorate the church with special floral displays. We would like to create a **Flower Committee** that would continue that tradition and also be available, on occasion, to do flowers for a special service or event. If you enjoy flower arranging and would like be involved, please call the church office or speak to Rebecca Purcell.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Light blue offering envelopes for 2019 are now available in the Parish Hall. Feel free to take as many as you need. Please mark your giving code on your envelopes, if possible.



OPEN TABLE MAYNARD

Open Table Maynard is changing and TriCon's service date is now the **THIRD MONDAY** of each month, beginning **March 18**, and **May 20**. We encourage new participants to this program. Volunteers will dish up plates in the kitchen, serve meals in the dining room, clear and rinse plates at the "slop station" or help with dishes in the kitchen. The meal is served at 6, so volunteers are asked to arrive by 5:40 and we are usually finished between 7 and 7:20, depending on the meal. Great restaurants nearby in Maynard offer us the opportunity for dinner and fellowship after we serve the meal, too.

Polly Vanasse 617 584-1705 or pyoungkeller@gmail.com for questions

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to donate flowers for a Sunday service in 2019, you may sign up on the flower chart in the parish hall or on our website.

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