

living into a resurrected life

RISE UP

vulnerable humble reconciled grace-filled

TRICON
LENT 2021

**“You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.”¹**

Maya Angelou

These chilling, prophetic words were penned by the great modern-day prophet Maya Angelou. Triumph over tyranny and defiant survival through oppressive struggle is the consistent “rise up” thread woven into all of Dr. Angelou’s work. Although the tapestry of her writings is an intimate expression of a personal experience, her work transcends self-reference.

From the heart of Dr. Angelou’s unfiltered truth-telling, a timeless resonance echoes deep within us. Readers all around the world, across all cultures, races, ages and religions continue to connect with her stories and poetry at a soul level. Her writings tell a universal story. A story of vulnerability as the door to authenticity, humility as the strong foundation of courage, reconciliation as the fuel to power resiliency, and grace upon grace as the healing balm that restores hope and ignites gratitude. The resonating universal truth is that the only way we rise up is to keep

on walking, one step at a time, through the valleys of adversity, loss, and suffering. To rise up requires first a paradoxical surrender to a sense of utter powerlessness in the face of defeat. To rise up one must first fall down. For many, falling into the abyss is where God is most palpable and it is here where we discover that our undoing is actually a reliable preamble to living into a resurrected life. It is from ashes that God, faithfully and lovingly breathes new life.

¹ Maya Angelou, "Still I Rise" from *And Still I Rise: A Book of Poems*. Copyright © 1978 by Maya Angelou.

Resurrection is not only our hope to come on the far side of the grave. Through grace, we are all invited to rise up in *this* life, again and again.

Daring to follow Jesus and fearlessly walk the path of our undoing is the journey of Lent. We began on Ash Wednesday, confronting our powerlessness over death. "You are dust and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:19) "But still," as Dr Angelou defiantly writes, "like dust, I'll rise."

This year, it feels like our Lenten journey following Jesus through the bleak wilderness started not weeks ago but rather a full year ago when we first went into pandemic lock down. Yet through the unknowing disorientation, we have endured and adapted together. We have learned how our church is more than a building. We have given love out to one another and received love as well. Gratitude for even the simplest things became a touchstone. We have remembered how interconnected all life is and how precious and vital our relationships are.

Now, we see a glimpse of the horizon ahead, a faint glow that beckons us to rise up and

begin to live the promise of the resurrected life now.

Through the season of Lent, we walk in anticipation of the sure and certain joy that is coming. In the great mystery we call Easter, God shows us how love is more powerful than even death. Along the way, let us also anticipate our own resurrections in this life. In this Good Friday world, we know that Easter is coming, so we endure and hold fast to God's reliable promise of liberation from every bondage and rescue from every danger. Through God's great love and mercy, all sadness, sorrow and regret is redeemed and resurrected into new life!

This is our universal story, the common thread woven through every life. And so, like dust, let us RISE UP & live into a resurrected life.

In faith and hope,

Bob

Rev. Robert Brown – Senior Minister



Weeping
may tarry for the night, but
joy
comes with the morning.

(Psalm 30:5)



Sabbatical Proposal from Rev. Bob Brown

Due to the outbreak of COVID last spring, we thought it best if I postponed my sabbatical for a year. The following is how I plan to use the gift of this time between May 1 and mid-August 2021.

Scripture teaches us that care for creation is very much a spiritual and religious issue. Care for creation is not just one social issue among many, it is a spiritual practice that honors God and is foundational to what it means to be a human being in this world. God has created all of life and values all of it. All life is interconnected and interdependent. This means that our love of creation and our care for it is a matter of faith; a matter of worship.

To engage climate change seriously means both social and political changes but, more than that, it also quickly becomes the central issue is our relationship with God and God's justice for all people; all life. We are clearly compelled by God to care for creation and take specific actions to reverse the effects of climate change.

The sabbatical will be about creating a living case study for sustainable, simple, comfortable and eco-responsible living within the microcosm of a small island in coastal Maine and to engage environmental theology in practical, hands-on study and experience.

My wife Natalie and I own a 2acre lot of wooded forest on Chebeague Island in Casco Bay, Maine. The island is 2 miles wide by 5 miles long and accessible only by ferry with roughly 350 residents living there year-round, but thousands more during the summer months.

We have a small shed that functions as a primitive shelter. Last year we settled on a design and have already begun to build a two-bedroom cottage. Our goal is to build an environmentally friendly, sustainable house. We have been researching the latest sustainable options for power, water, septic, roofing, siding, insulation and heating. While we intended to do as much of the actual construction work as is safe and reasonable, we decided to hire a local contractor to pour the foundation and frame the structure. In May, Natalie and I will side the exterior, install the finished plumbing, electricity, insulation and much, much more.

Through this project, we will learn about the latest affordable, climate sensitive choices available for residential construction. We will evaluate how our individual choices impact the project and the environment. We also intend to begin working with town government to explore possibilities that might be considered on a community level for island-wide renewable power, water and septic, along with forest and coastline stewardship.

Upon returning, I will offer a presentation to the church about what was learned through the experience and engage the church in meaningful dialogue about the practical choices and options available for living a more environmentally sensitive lifestyle.



March

Preaching Schedule:

March 7th	10 AM	Rev. Bob Brown, Senior Minister
March 14th	10 AM	Rev. Bob Brown, Senior Minister
March 21st	10 AM	Rev. Bob Brown, Senior Minister
March 28th	10 AM	Rev. Gail Miller, Minister of Congregational Life



The church building remains closed.

Our worship services and committee work continue through ZOOM. We are all encouraged by the vaccine news and look forward to a time in 2021 when we can safely gather together again.

Until then....

Office staff are working at the church building and can be reached most days, M-F, between 9-4. Call the church office at 978-369-4837. If you leave a voice mail, we will get back to you.

Be well and wear your masks! *Thank you!*

online worship services

The ZOOM links are emailed every week on the Friday eblast, and again on Sunday morning. You can also link through the website: www.triconchurch.org

Church office: 978.369.4837; info@triconchurch.org

Rev. Bob Brown, Sr. Minister: 978.204.7739; revbobbrown@triconchurch.org

Rev. Gail Miller, Min. of Cong. Life: 978.831.3482; revmiller@triconchurch.org

Victoria Wagner, Music Director: vwagner@triconchurch.org

Carrie O'Brien, Children's Ministry Director: cobrien@triconchurch.org

Judy Walpole, Church Administrator: 978.884.7976; jwalpole@triconchurch.org

Amy Bruning, Church Admin. Asst.: 978.394.1916; abruning@triconchurch.org

Christine Kelley, Youth Leader: ckelley@triconchurch.org

Marcia Macres, Communications Director: mjmacres@triconchurch.org

Jamie Aromaa, Sexton: jaromaa@comcast.net



SPECIAL

Easter

OFFERING



Let's Get Together to *Fight Homelessness*



This year's Easter offering will be designated to the Friends of Boston Homeless (FBH). For over 30 years, FBH has worked to provide innovative programs to help homeless individuals move beyond shelter into permanent housing. Their services include emergency assistance, transitional housing, life skills and career training and help with housing start-up costs such as security deposits and furnishings. Watch for a letter later in the month with more information on how our donations will help in this fight against homelessness.

In addition to our monetary support, we will be sponsoring a **SOCK DROP** for FBH starting March 1st through Easter Sunday, April 4th. Each year the Friends of Boston Homeless give out 8,000 pairs of socks. Clean, warm socks are both a necessity and a luxury for the homeless!

NEW pairs of socks for both men and women may be left in the food bin near the Walden Street door.



A THANK YOU from the Concord Prisons

Following the distribution of the Holiday Gift Bags at NECC and MCI-Concord, Concord Prison Outreach received many letters thanking the community for being able to continue the project, especially in the midst of the pandemic.

Here are the words of one of the incarcerated men:

"I am writing this to let you know how much we as prison inmates appreciate what your program does for us, not just for the much-needed supplies that we look forward to, but also the fact that all of you do this out of the kindness of your heart for people that could easily be forgotten. So, THANK YOU from all of us at NECC Farm Dorm." Scott

CommUNITY

It's been almost exactly a year since we shut the church doors and went into quarantine/isolation mode. But, we did not shut down the church! It has been a challenging year in many ways but it has also been a year with many positives. As we look back over the year, and take this page to report on the Annual Meeting held last month, it is wonderful to list so many good things in our church life.

- Attendance at Zoom services and views on YouTube exceeded our usual in-person worship attendance.
- Friends, former parishioners, members of extended families and new worshipers were able to worship with us through technology.
- Parishioners showed their support fulfilling pledges and making gifts that meant we ended 2020 with over \$20,000 more than budgeted for pledges and gifts.
- On February 8th, our Annual Meeting on Zoom had 60 screens tuned in, representing over 80 attendees -- a showing much larger than usual for a regular annual meeting.
- Our Christmas offering raised over \$13,600 for the Greater Boston Food Bank and we collected two truckloads of food for Open Table -- two great success stories in the fight to alleviate food insecurity.
- We ended 2020 with a large surplus. Annual Meeting voted to set aside \$30,000 in a technology fund to look into continuing on-line and broadcast options for worship, even as we look towards transitioning back to in-person worship.
- The congregation voted to put the majority of the 2020 surplus onto our Mission Endowment Fund where a judicious use of the income can be used to benefit those in need for many years to come.
- We have a balanced budget for 2021, using a small amount of reserve funds but primarily driven by a successful Stewardship Campaign that even slightly exceeded the goal -- a first!
- The Nominating Committee reported that they filled the slate of officers and committees with relative ease as many stepped forward willingly and eagerly to assume leadership positions for our church.

We are a faith community and in unity, we are strong; we are open; we are vibrant!



MUSIC

Our own **Matt DiBattista** has just returned from West Palm Beach, where he performed in both *The Magic Flute* and *Pagliacci* in the company's first-ever outdoor opera festival at the South Florida Fairgrounds. He said it felt great to be onstage again.

During the 2020 hiatus, he was involved as both singer and music director for Enigma Chamber Opera's very unusual production of Mozart's *The Impresario*, created when artists were never in the same room together. While hibernating at home, you can spend a pleasant hour watching this delightful and amusing performance you on YouTube. It's free!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4kJfNupClw&feature=youtu.be>

Enigma Chamber Opera

the impresario

(or 'Live from the METa')

W.A. Mozart

Book by
Simon Robson

Libretto by
Kirsten Z Cairns

YouTube video player interface showing a performance scene with two women and a man.

**Monday evening Bible Study
is suspended through LENT**

The **Book of John**. Contact
Otto Judicke for info.
ojudicke@comcast.net

Look for link and dates after Easter.



Men's Anchor Group

For meeting dates and times, please email Greg
Howes: greg@howesinsurance.com



WOMEN OF SPIRIT

Wed.@ 7:00AM; 3/3, 3/17, 3/31
cheryl.shea@verizon.net

Thursday PM group meeting WEDs in March

Wed.@ 7:30PM; 3/3, 3/17, 3/31
lbenema@gmail.com

If interested in joining a group, please contact the leader(s) for
zoom links.

UPPER ROOM publications available outside on
milk box by Walden St. door. Please feel free to
stop by for a copy should you be interested in
the daily devotionals.



**WANT THE
NEWSLETTER
ELECTRONICALLY
ONLY??**

Contact the church office via phone or email and we
will update you to **electronic communication ONLY**
of the monthly newsletter. Thank you!



Our sympathy and prayers are with Kathy
Jorgenson and her family in the death of her
father, George Schultz, on February 6th at age
100.

We are saddened to learn that Laura Hunt's
brother, Patrick Gushue, died on February 15th
at the age of 57, in Florida. We offer prayers of
comfort to Laura and her family.

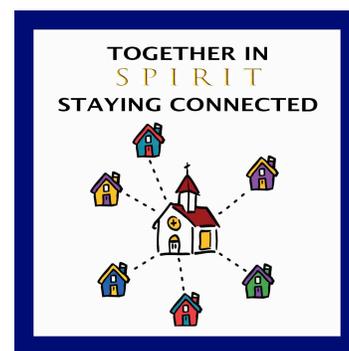
Our sympathy and prayers are with Barbara
Fivek and her family in the death of her
husband, Rich, on February 18th

It is a joy to announce a new grandbaby!

Benjamin Saul Berk was born on January 5th, to
Chris and Mattie Berk. Overjoyed grandparents
are Dennis and Liz Berk.

**Celebrate St. Patrick's
Day with a few
LAUGHS**

Join Judy and others
on Zoom on
**Wednesday, March
17th at 2PM** for dose
of "laughter is the best
medicine" ... no one
tells a joke like Judy
Walpole!



Meeting ID: 859 1967 3612

Palms and Butterflies



March 28th is Palm Sunday.

Even on Zoom, we can celebrate Palm Sunday *together*, as usual, waving our palm branches.

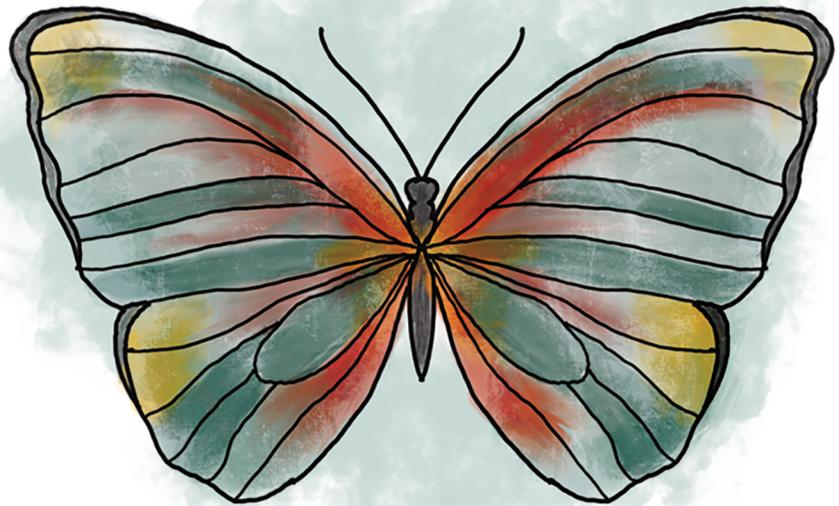
Palms can be picked up at the church by the Walden Street door a few days before the Sunday service.

Watch your email or call the church office to find out when they are available.

The **butterfly**, a Christian symbol of resurrection, signifies life and hope.

The week before Palm Sunday, you are invited to pick up a small feather butterfly to display on your clothing, your computer screen or your furnishings as we worship together on Easter Sunday, April 4th.

They will be available by the Walden Street door starting March 22nd.



Wednesday night Discussion Group

March 10th and 24th @8:00 P.M.
Zoom link will be sent out via GroupMe



Sunday night Youth Group

March 14th and 28th
Activity and Time TBD



Congratulations to last month's Bingo and Trivia winners! We hope you enjoyed the surprise gift cards in the mail from Tri-Con.



Mission Trip 2021 Update

Due to COVID there are no plans for a mission trip to take place this year during April vacation. We are in the information-gathering stage for *what* and *when* we could potentially do something. If we are able to take a trip this year, the trip would take place in June, specifically somewhere between the dates of June 19th and 27th. Additionally, we know that our destination would be less than 200 miles from Concord.

In the event that we are unable to provide a Mission Trip, we would then hope to provide a Youth Group *retreat* which would fall during the time period listed above. There are still many questions and unknowns at this time but more information will be shared as it becomes available. Stay Tuned!



March 2021

While our children’s education year may look different this school year, one thing hasn’t changed - our mission to continue to find safe, meaningful and fun ways to minister to you and your family.

See below for our March 2021 Children’s Ministry line-up. There is something for kids of all ages. Please note that there may be update, or programming additions, so please check Carrie’s weekly family emails.

3rd Sunday of Lent, March 7th

Lenten Candle Zoom with Carrie – 9:45am

Faith at Home Focus – The Lost is Found

4th Sunday of Lent, March 14th

Lenten Candle Zoom with Carrie – 9:45am

Faith at Home Focus – The Rich Man and Lazarus

5th Sunday of Lent, March 21st

Lenten Candle Zoom with Carrie – 9:45am

Faith at Home Focus – Zacchaeus

6th Sunday of Lent, March 28th

Faith at Home Focus – Holy Week

Each week Children’s Ministry Director, Carrie O’Brien, emails families Faith at Home practices, details about upcoming Voyager and SEEKER events, news and other programming opportunities.

If you are not receiving Carrie’s emails, or would like to begin receiving her emails, please shoot her an email at cobrien@triconchurch.org.

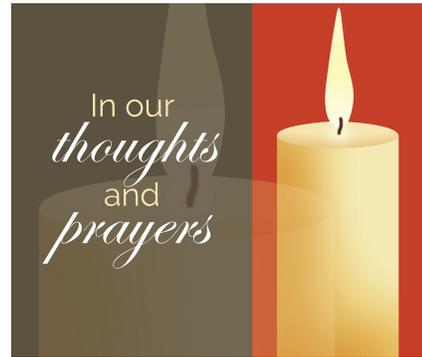


Check out these fabulous Valentine cards our SEEKERS and Voyagers made in February for our Caring Connection!!



everyone is welcome

During ONLINE worship, every week we invite those feeling new, or have new contact information, to follow this link to a simple google-form. We would be happy to hear how you would like to receive communications about our TriCon events and happenings.
tinyurl.com/TriCon-Info



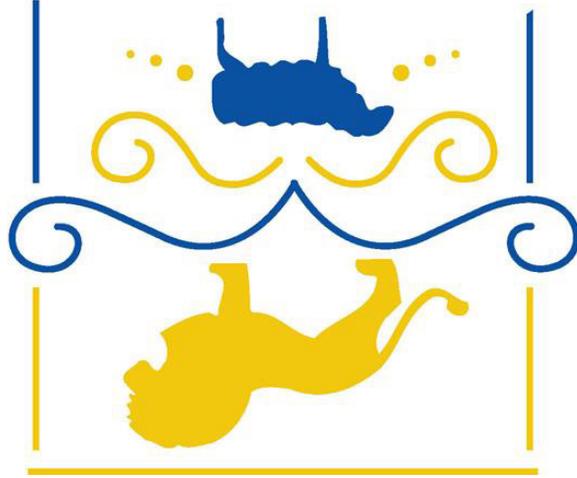
If you have someone on your mind, a prayer you'd like us to keep in our hearts, you are welcome to email prayers@triconchurch.org, any time.

**We're launching
an ONLINE
Photo Directory!**

**Look for info in
the Friday
emails.**

NEWSLETTER

March



Return Service Requested

TO:

phone: 978-369-4837
fax: 978-287-0406
email: info@triconchurch.org
website: www.triconchurch.org

54 Walden Street
Concord, MA 01742



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