

# *The Congregator*

First Congregational Church of River Edge, New Jersey

a congregation of the United Church of Christ

April 2021

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*From the grave's depths, Lord Jesus Christ, you emerged, breaking the hold of sin, death and hell, that those who trust in you might share in your righteousness, life and beloved community with God the Father and all God's children. We bow in awe before your majesty, giving thanks for your grace extended so bountifully to us. By the power of your Spirit who lives within us, may we share the astonishing news of your resurrection with others, that they also may know your saving grace. Amen.*

**SPECIAL DATES:**

**PALM SUNDAY**, *March 28*

**BIBLE STUDY**, *March 30*

**VESPERS PRAYER & COMMUNION**, *March 30*

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**, *April 1*

**EASTER DAY**, *April 4*



*Alleluia!*

## FIRST THINGS

### **A Happy Easter to You**

A premature greeting? After all, there is a lot for us to slog through in the week to come, before we come to Easter next Sunday. Even more, this pandemic world still has us wondering just when (and if) new life *will* spring forth. Too soon, you may wonder?

But I hope my greeting is perfectly timed. We *are* at Easter's door. "But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb." (*John 20:11*) The news of resurrection came to people who were weeping, to people who were at the end of their rope, to people who had no hope for pulling any meaning from this great tragedy. That same resurrection news still does come to us as well; as the book title shouts, *It's Friday, But Sunday's Comin!* (A book by Tony Campolo, worth the read.)

Easter came in the early morning mist while it was still too dark to see clearly, through weeping and weariness, through fear and confusion, through the disorientation of grief, through arms reaching out to feel the way in the darkness. The resurrection did not change this Good Friday world of ours. Death, and our many little deaths, continue to stalk us. We grieve. We have places where we are near the end of our rope. We weep. We cannot stop it.

But then Jesus left us with a light, a hope, a Spirit of seeing in a way the world cannot see. Resurrection may not change the world; but it does change us—and how the world looks to our eyes.

Easter is comin'! Be not afraid; Christ is risen. Hold on to God's vision of a world made whole—and of our lives made whole. Easter is a season as much as it is a day; you have fifty days to admire and become familiar with the gift we open again on Easter morning. Let these fifty days offer you time to let it sink in and ripen in your life.

Even beyond the fifty days, Easter lives at the heart of our Christian faith year-round: *every* Sunday is a "little Easter," reminder-after-reminder-after-reminder that God has turned the movement from life to death inside out.

So, Happy Easter! May you keep opening this gift which Gerard Manly Hopkins so amazingly described:

*Break the box and shed the nard;  
Stop not now to count the cost;  
Hither bring pearl, opal, sard;  
Reck not what the poor have lost;  
Upon Christ throw all away:  
Know ye, this is Easter Day.*

*Build His church and deck His shrine,  
Empty though it be on earth;  
Ye have kept your choicest wine—  
Let it flow for heavenly mirth;  
Pluck the harp and breathe the horn:  
Know ye not 'tis Easter morn?*

*Gather gladness from the skies;  
Take a lesson from the ground;  
Flowers do ope their heavenward eyes  
And a Spring-time joy have found;  
Earth throws Winter's robes away,  
Decks herself for Easter Day.*

*Beauty now for ashes wear,  
Perfumes for the garb of woe,  
Chaplets for dishevelled hair,  
Dances for sad footsteps slow;  
Open wide your hearts that they  
Let in joy this Easter Day.*

*Seek God's house in happy throng;  
Crowded let His table be;  
Mingle praises, prayer, and song,  
Singing to the Trinity.  
Henceforth let your souls always  
Make each morn an Easter Day.*

Godspeed,  
Pastor Dennis

## Holy Week Worship

*Put these opportunities for prayer, worship and study on your calendar, as we walk through Holy Week into Easter's New Life:*

✠ **PALM SUNDAY, March 28:** Weather-permitting, we gather on the entry sidewalks to begin the Palm Sunday parade! Our children will join us (promptly, at 10 am!) in a celebratory procession into the Sanctuary, and the Choir's singing of *All Glory, Laud and Honor!* (Those with mobility concerns are welcome to await us in their sanctuary seats).

✠ **Tuesday, March 30, 4:00 – 5:00 pm:** *Bible Study - From Widows to Warriors.* Join us **IN-PERSON in Pilgrim Hall, or by Zoom.**

✠ **Tuesday, March 30, 5:15-5:45pm:** **VESPERS PRAYER & COMMUNION** -- A simple and quiet *Zoom* service of scripture, Lord's Supper and guided prayer. Join in; make space for God! **Simply go to the regular Zoom link for Sunday worship:**  
**[https://zoom.us/j/892501398.](https://zoom.us/j/892501398)**

✠ **MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 1,**  
*Available after 6:00 pm.* Our classic service of remembrance of Jesus' last mandate to his disciples, his Last Supper, and our participation in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We then experience the Tenebrae, the darkening shadows of Holy Week denial and betrayal, through the stories of scripture. **This year the service will be VIRTUAL ONLY. Please go to [fccriveredge.org](http://fccriveredge.org), and click on the link.** Joy, the Choir, and gifted musicians Karen and David Demsey join us for this prerecorded service.

*(There will be no Labyrinth on Good Friday this year, out of lingering concerns for safety and physical distancing.)*

✠ **EASTER DAY, April 4, 10:00:** Worship Celebration of the Resurrection (in person, and by Zoom), with choirs, scripture and sermon, the greatest of Easter music, joy and hope! Christ is risen! Indeed!

Now, more than ever, we need *YOUR* new life in Christ. Please, in this Easter season of greatest hope:

- **Be a good steward.** Your financial tithe and pledge is especially critical in this crisis time. Please do use the *enclosed Easter envelope* for a "new life" gift to our ministries. And, if you haven't joined in our *One Great Hour of Sharing* for water needs in Texas and globally, your gifts are still needed!
- **Care for one another.** Check up on each other. Call others in the church. Pray for one another...by name.
- **Use your gifts and talents.** Teams, Bible studies, Prayer groups are meeting, and dreaming new dreams. What effort can you join in?!? Please, please do!

Be of Good Courage,  
Pastor Dennis

## LEGACY OF FAITH

A meaningful way to remember/honor loved ones and friends is to contribute to the Memorial Fund, Building Renovation Fund, Music & Arts Fund, Care Ministry or the General Fund of the First Congregational Church of River Edge.

## MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

The Care Ministry Team has been an active and vital ministry since its inception in 2018.

The Team stays connected with our members and friends in their care via calls, cards and outdoor open-air visits when the weather permits.

Along with spiritual care and companionship, Care Ministry has provided hot meals for those who have needed short-term assistance as well as plants and or floral arrangements.

A new Care Ministry account has been established and seeded with donations from Care Ministry Team members.

It is hoped that this account will grow with future donations from our congregation so that Care Ministry can best take care of our members and friends with hot meals, shop rite gift cards or a plant to brighten their day.

If any member or friend would like to join this wonderful ministry, please contact me directly.

Thank you,  
Russell Van Wetering



## "At Risk" Residents Wanted



River Edge is committed to helping "at risk" residents during serious emergencies, for example, during a massive power outage. However, rendering assistance requires knowing who needs help.

"At risk" residents include (but are not limited to) the homebound elderly, living alone or with health care aides. Residents of any age with serious health issues, such as a child or adult on a respirator, or those who might need special medications, etc.

If you have a family member, friend, or neighbor who you believe would be "at risk" in a serious emergency, PLEASE ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONTACT River Edge Health Nurse Arlene Faustini, at (201) 599-6289 for inclusion on her CONFIDENTIAL list.



The borough of River Edge is also exploring vaccine options for our identified "at risk" residents. They will be the individuals with computer and transportation issues; they will also include the truly homebound.

If any of you have not yet registered and need help to register, please contact Russell Van Wetering at 201-261-1795 or email [aprilsky@optonline.net](mailto:aprilsky@optonline.net).

## CAN YOU HELP?



Greeters are needed for upcoming weeks and months. Please contact Russell Van Wetering at 201-261-1795 or email [aprilsky@optonline.net](mailto:aprilsky@optonline.net).

## MUSIC

For many of us, music helps to make Holy Week and Easter such a special time in our church. We are grateful to the Chancel Choir, Pilgrim Ringers, and Soloists (Bert, Joy, Nadia, Kathleen, Vic and Anabelle) who have gone the extra mile to make our services so meaningful. A special thank you to Karen and David Demsey who will provide instrumental music for our Maundy Thursday Service. If you miss it, the event will be available for you on our church website after April 1.

The Singers and Ringers will continue to bless our worship in the coming weeks, with rehearsals scheduled for Thursday evenings, as usual.



*Now let the heavens be joyful,  
Let earth its song begin;  
The round world keep high triumph  
And all that is therein.  
Let all things seen and unseen  
Their notes of gladness blend,  
For Christ the Lord has risen,  
Our joy that has no end.*

...John of Damascus, 8th Century

## WORSHIP TEAM

### April Showers bring May Flowers!

This year April 1<sup>st</sup> brings **Maundy Thursday** and April 4<sup>th</sup> brings **EASTER!**

Maundy Thursday will be shared virtually on April 1<sup>st</sup> after 6:00 pm. The paraments are now purple to symbolize the time of Lent. The cloth will be changed to white for Sunday's service to symbolize the glory of Easter.

We will share Communion on Easter Sunday – April 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. As Christians we celebrate the resurrection of Christ! Please sign up timely to attend in person or you can worship by Zoom.

Thank you to those who ordered the flowers that bring their beauty to the altar. After the Easter service, please remember to bring home the flowers which you ordered.

Happy Easter!!!

## MISSION TEAM

### February 26<sup>th</sup> Neighbors in Need Dinner – THANK YOU!

We were asked to provide meals for 150 people – and we actually fed over 170!

*It was a "Code Blue" night, a night when the temperature is below freezing, when the homeless are sought out and provided with emergency transportation to a warm shelter and a warm meal. The latter was us!*

We were asked to provide fruit with the meal, since many of those who struggle with homelessness and food insecurity get little fresh fruit – particularly worrisome for the children in this situation – and you donated fruit! Enough for over 3 days!

THANK YOU to everyone, who gave their time and their effort and their ability to help with the cooking. And thank you to all who generously donated food (fruit) and funds. You served generously to all.





- 1 Beth Shuler
- 2 Bob Sutherland  
Dennis Agerup  
Stephen Shuler
- 3 Missy Warnet
- 4 Ernest Myhren  
Alexa Agerup
- 5 Kathleen L. Motoike
- 7 Chayse Faith Van Wetering
- 8 Karnig Thomasian  
Jack Silane  
Larissa Heinzinger
- 10 Evan Drummond  
Carol Kuehne  
Emma Heinzinger
- 11 Barbara Parks
- 12 Kerry Hogan
- 15 Christine Egner
- 18 Grace Behrens
- 20 Ryan Griffin  
Frank Meeks
- 22 Rev. Dennis TeBeest  
Thomas Behrens  
Christine Banks
- 24 Stefanie Moynihan
- 30 Dustan Hogan

**Easter Word Search**



- |               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| <b>EASTER</b> | <b>HUNT</b>      |
| <b>EGG</b>    | <b>BASKET</b>    |
| <b>BUNNY</b>  | <b>BONNET</b>    |
| <b>CHICK</b>  | <b>CHOCOLATE</b> |



- 14 Bobby & Jamie Keehn
- 18 Nell & Bill Lent
- 20 Erica (Schmitt) & Gus Sedeyn
- 24 Stefanie & David Moynihan

**HELPING HANDS**

If you have been coming to church in the past weeks, you may have noticed some sprucing up in the narthex of the sanctuary. Thanks to some helping hands, the narthex has received a fresh coat of paint. It is bright and welcoming and the new look will help us all feel a bit of Spring time seeping in.



My thanks goes out to Pastor Dennis, Heidi Buatti and Stuart Heinzinger, who helped this improvement become a reality. As always, many hands make light work.

My thanks goes out to all of you!

Betty Hogan



*The sympathy of the congregation is expressed to Chuck and Maryanne Keehn and Jeff and Laurie Keehn, and their families, at the death of their father, Charlie Keehn, Monday, March 22, 2021.*

# EDUCATION

## Annual



I am very excited to move forward with this annual tradition on Palm Sunday 3/28. Our church school children will gather on the church lawn after worship for some Easter fun! Special thanks to the Pre-Confirmation class for assisting with the “egg stuffing.”

## Church School Happenings

We are very grateful to be able to teach all of our children in-person with all 11 attending each week. Our curriculum is currently focusing on Holy Week, Jesus’s last days on earth beginning with The Last Supper. The children have been learning the importance of prayer, forgiveness and sacrifice. Thanks to the parents for allowing us to share the bible with your children.



## Church School Sunday

The Education Team is looking forward to celebrating our children in person this year! A Church School Sunday service is being planned for early June, date TBD. This church school year has been a challenge for all, so acknowledging everyone’s commitment to faith formation is important to me. Please plan on attending in person or on Zoom to witness the joy children bring to our congregation.



## Confirmation Celebration Planned

It was a joy to be present when the 2020 Confirmation class reaffirmed their faith and became members of the congregation on 2/7/21. The upcoming warmer weather will bring more opportunities for outdoor fellowship. Since we could not do the traditional Confirmation breakfast on Confirmation Sunday, the Education Team would like to celebrate these wonderful youth after worship on Sunday May 23. All are welcome and details to follow.

## Childcare & Children’s Message Volunteers

Currently, there will be no need for childcare or children’s message volunteers. The Education team is looking forward to the time when these two priceless ministries can safely return.

~Nicole

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF RIVER EDGE**

**Prayer Concerns –April 2021**

**Prayers for Those with Health Needs**

Joan Hammerle, Barbara Christiansen, Jean Babington, , Dona Berg, Bob Wieboldt, Judi-Lee Schmitt, Joe Corona, Alec Cameron, Jr., Adamarie Kendall, Arlene Rudd, Chet Price, Victor Babington Sr., Kathy Caughlan, Richard Smith, Chris Egner, Diane Pra, Doris Price, June Seilheimer, Joan Sullivan, Judy Macht, Rev. Muriel (Mimi) Hachfeld, Edwina Arena, Barbara Carr, Peter Armstrong, Nelly Navarro.

**Those Homebound, in Assisted Living Residences or Nursing Homes**

Hilma Albrecht, Barbara Schmidli, Phyllis Malley, William Spencer, Mildred Alderdice, Joan Sullivan.

**Serving in the Military**

Michael Shuler, Michael Riabov and Bob Bailey

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**  
Monday, Office is closed.  
Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 – 4:00 pm.

**CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION**

*109 Continental Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661*

*Phone (201) 261-1712*

*Website – [www.fccriveredge.org](http://www.fccriveredge.org)*

*Church Office e-mail – [office@fccriveredge.org](mailto:office@fccriveredge.org)*

*Please like and follow us on the First Congregational Church of River Edge*

**CHURCH STAFF**

The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Pastor	<a href="mailto:dtebest@fccriveredge.org">dtebest@fccriveredge.org</a> 201-390-5548
Gloria Norton, S.M.M., Minister of Music	<a href="mailto:glorinor@aol.com">glorinor@aol.com</a>
Nicole Babington Minister for Faith Formation	<a href="mailto:nbabington@fccriveredge.org">nbabington@fccriveredge.org</a> 201-956-3435
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Did you know?

Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all your eggs in one basket.





Knock knock. *Who's there?* Hatch. *Hatch who?* God bless you!

What should you do after eating so many Easter treats? *Eggs-ercise!*

Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke? *It might crack up!*



# APRIL 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00 Virtual Maundy Thursday Worship	2 Good Friday	3 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
4  10:00 Easter Sunday Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest 10:00 Church School 10:00 Pre-Confirmation Class	5 <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 3:00 Worship Team 7:00 Education Team 7:30 Step by Step NA	6	7	8 7:00 Virtual Bingo 7:00 Chancel Choir	9	10 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
11 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest 10:00 Church School 10:00 Pre-Confirmation Class	12 <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	13 10:00 Funds Advisory 7:30 Shawl Ministry	14	15 1:00 Shawl Ministry 7:00 Pilgrim Ringers	16 Congregator Deadline	17 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
18 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest 10:00 Church School 10:00 Pre-Confirmation Class	19 <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	20 7:00 Leadership Council	21 	22  7:00 Virtual Bingo 7:00 Chancel Choir	23	24 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
25 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest 10:00 Church School 10:00 Pre-Confirmation Class	26 <u>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	27 7:00 Mission Team	28	29 7:00 Pilgrim Ringers	30	

## APRIL 2021 COMMITMENT REMINDERS

### Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

COMMUNION TEAM/USHERS – Wayne Placek, Jane Silane, Janet Arena  
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard  
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering - **Volunteers needed**  
LAY READER – Joy Jacobs  
ALTAR GUILD – Cindy Fordham, Pat Canzani

### Sunday, April 11, 2021

USHERS - ☩ Betty Hogan, Frank Meeks, Inge Reist  
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard  
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering - **Volunteers needed**  
LAY READER – Jayne Wieboldt  
ALTAR GUILD – Cindy Fordham, Pat Canzani

### Sunday, April 18, 2021

USHERS - ☩ Bill Hamilton, Don Huggett, Diane Lento  
COUNTERS - Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard  
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering - **Volunteers needed**  
LAY READER – Kathleen Motoike  
ALTAR GUILD – Cindy Fordham, Pat Canzani

### Sunday, April 25, 2021

USHERS – ☩ Janet Arena, Marvin Orendain, Janet Masiello  
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard  
GREETERS – Russell Van Wetering - **Volunteers needed**  
LAY READER – Jane Silane  
ALTAR GUILD – Cindy Fordham, Pat Canzani

☩ **Team Leader**



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