

## ***From the pastor's desk ... Lent 2018***

**On February 14, we will begin our season of Lent with an evening service on Ash Wednesday @ 7 pm.**

Traditionally, the 40 days of Lent begins with confession on Ash Wednesday. And this year, as we prepare to journey through Lent and a closer relationship with God, we step back and consider the ways in which we have put distance between ourselves and God. Separation is one way to understand sin; reunion is one way to understand forgiveness.

On February 14, we will explore different ways that we sin or separate ourselves from God and each other. And, in turn, how God's love and forgiveness can bring us back into reunion or relationship with God and each other. Our service will conclude with the receiving of ashes.

## ***Preaching & Worship Theme for Lent: God's Love & Forgiveness***

*Through preaching, music, and worship leadership, we will explore the theme of "God's Love & Forgiveness."*

*Each of the 5 Sundays of Lent, we will design our worship to explore ways that we feel separated from God and each other. Each Sunday, we will look at a question that you might be struggling with in life and use the Bible as a "spiritual resource" for dealing with each question.*

**Feb 18:** Feeling separated from God – The Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15: 11 – 24

**Have you ever felt that God would not forgive you for something you have done?**

**Feb 25:** Feeling separated from others – The Parable of the Prodigal Son's brother

Luke 15: 25 – 32

**Have you ever felt the need to be forgiven by someone else – or to offer forgiveness to another person?**

**March 4:** communion; Feeling a brokenness in our lives – Jesus’ healing words of institution at communion

1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 24

**Have you ever felt your life was so “broken” that you are beyond God’s healing power?**

**March 11:** Dealing with addiction in our lives – a Psalm about putting our trust and faith in God “as a shelter in the day of trouble”

Psalm 27: 4 – 6

**Have you ever struggled with addiction?**

**March 18:** God’s Grace – The story of the lost sheep - Our loving God never gives up on us

Luke 15: 1 – 7

**What is God’s grace?**

### *Looking ahead to Holy Week ...*

March 25: Palm Sunday

March 29: Maundy Thursday @ 7 pm - communion & hand washing

March 30: Good Friday

April 1: Easter @ 6 am (sunrise service) and 10 am

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*From the Associate Pastor of Music & Healing Ministry*

**You are invited to connect with each other and our community!**

### **Healing Ministry**

- **PrayerConnect** – Do you need spiritual support or a reflective moment? Perhaps just some daily words of encouragement? You can receive this daily reflection...And it can come to you privately in your email-of-choice each day, Monday through Friday. Why not sign up and see what can come? You can catch the three weekly editions on Facebook at this address: <https://www.facebook.com/woodridgePrayerconnect>

## Music Ministry

- **Choir & Chimes** .... *Thursday rehearsals ...Chimes 6:30 pm...Choir 7:30 pm. We hope you will join one of these groups.*
- **'Prime Time' Chimes group** – rehearsals Sundays, right after worship in our sanctuary!
- **Do you play an instrument?** We are looking to build up the “band”. How about you?

**Please continue to pray for all our ministries, that they will grow and expand into many places, guided by the Spirit. Amen!**

With you on the journey,

Rev. Bob

Email: [nolan062400@gmail.com](mailto:nolan062400@gmail.com)

Phone: (401) 339-6134

## Christian Education & Youth News

### *Upcoming Events! Mark Your Calendar*

**Feb. 4 - Sun. *Sliding with Faith***, at Peace Dale Church, Fee \$12, grades 6 thru 12. Kids from other churches in UCC Conference invited, too!

**Feb. 11 - Sun. *First Communion Class begins*** for grades 1 and 2. Details below.

**Feb. 11 - Sun. *Confirmation "retreat" with adult mentors.*** Details below.

**March 18 - Sun. *Confirmation "retreat" with adult mentors.*** Details below.

**April 8 - Sun. *First Communion Celebration***



## ***Class Begins in February for First Communion Celebration***

On Sunday Feb. 11 we'll begin our 2018 Communion Class for students in grades 1 and 2. Children are required to attend all classes.

*The Communion Celebration will take place on Sunday, April 8.*

## ***Bible Study Class for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Graders***

The 5th and 6th graders have been combined and will be participating in a Bible Study along with their regular curriculum through the remainder of this school year. Students who attend throughout the rest of the Sunday school year will receive a special bible at the end of the year!

## ***Sky Zone was a BLAST!***

On Sunday, Jan. 21 our Junior Youth Group joined kids from churches throughout RI and enjoyed an afternoon of faith and fun. Following pizza at Woodridge, we travelled to Seekonk, where we learned about the power of words, played games, and had yummy treats. Then we jumped, flipped, played dodge ball, and did lots more challenging games at Sky Zone. Big thanks to Kristin Putney of Seekonk, who organized the event, and to supportive parents/grandparents of our Woodridge Junior Youth Group.

## ***What's Happening in our Confirmation Program?***

Seven youth, including four from our sister church, Edgewood UCC in Cranston, have been meeting through the fall and are beginning work on their "statements of faith." On Feb. 11, they will go on "retreat" with their adult mentors and begin to write their statements of faith as a way to form their understanding of the Christian faith. They will go on "retreat" again on March 18 as they prepare to be confirmed in May and June.



**Save the date . . .**

# ***Irish & Italian Dinner***

***Saturday, March 10, 2018***

***2 Seatings: 4:30 - 6:00 & 6:30 - 8:00***

***Tickets: Adults \$12 Children (ages 3-12) \$5***

***Reservations will be required:***

***See Deb Scipione or Courtney Lombardi or contact the church office:  
942-0662***

***or email [woodridgechurch@verizon.net](mailto:woodridgechurch@verizon.net)***

***Look for tickets and sign-up sheets starting February 4<sup>th</sup>.***



***Also from Membership & Fellowship . . .***

***Sunday February 11<sup>th</sup>, following the worship service, our***

***All Church Birthday Party!***

***Come and join us for cakes, games and fellowship!***



## ***Service Committee News, updates & special giving opportunities***

We once again will be having a collection during Lent that will benefit the [Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center](#) which serves individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. The Center is in Cranston, RI and provides services such as Law Enforcement Advocacy, Court Advocacy, Counseling and Support Services, Residential Services, Prevention and Education, and Professional Training. The collection will be February 26 through April 17. Donated items can include:

Disinfecting Wipes, Disposable Mops, Sponges, Toilet Paper, Table Napkins, Trash Bags, Laundry Detergent, and Murphy's Oil Soap

Thanks for helping a local agency in our community serve those who are in need.

### ***Food Ministries***

Non-perishable food items are collected in the Narthex. The donated goods are split between Interfaith Food Pantry and CCAP.

Volunteers help at the Interfaith Food Pantry the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday morning each month – If you have any questions or would like to join them, contact Bob Cole.

- **Mitten Tree** – 19 pairs of mittens & gloves, 17 hats and 15 scarves were contributed to children in foster care.

- **Our annual diaper collection** - for children in foster care - resulted in the donation of 2,269 individual diapers.

***Thank you!!***



***Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of the church through pledges and offerings. Keeping your support up-to-date even when circumstances keep you away from church on Sunday is very much appreciated.***

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*Deadline for our next (March) issue – February 21; to be mailed/emailed the end of February.*

*Visit our website for the year-to-date financial report, latest board meeting minutes, birthdays & anniversaries and the prayer list:*

[www.woodridgechurchri.org](http://www.woodridgechurchri.org)

*For the latest news, to be added to their email list, and most anything else about the Rhode Island Conference of the United Church of Christ, visit their website:*

[www.ricucc.org](http://www.ricucc.org)

## Woodridge Congregational Church

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*A Caring and Welcoming Community*

 Find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/woodridgecongregational](https://www.facebook.com/woodridgecongregational)

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