



The Scroll



Volume 46, Issue 4 • April 2018

NO HOLD ON ME

Message from Pastor Linda

We've all heard the familiar phrase, "_____ has a hold on me." We know what it means – one is helplessly wrapped up in a person, a situation, or a thing. Often it's love or affection, but not always. There are lots of things in our world today that compete to take "hold" of us: pressures at work, debt, that unforgiving bathroom scale, toxic messages playing relentlessly in our minds, deep-seated insecurities within, and so much more. If we are not careful, we could be completely bound up by them, caught in an invisible web that we can't seem to break free, try as we might.

So, imagine how I drew in my breath when I saw the words of Jesus leap from the pages of my Bible recently: "**He has no hold on me.**" Six powerful words. They are the words of Jesus to His disciples when He was about to walk into the most ominous hours of His earthly life. The 'he', Jesus was referring to, was the power of evil and hate, the "prince of this world" (John 14:30a). He would not control Jesus; he would not sway Jesus or hold him against His will. What words of certainty and conviction on Jesus' part!

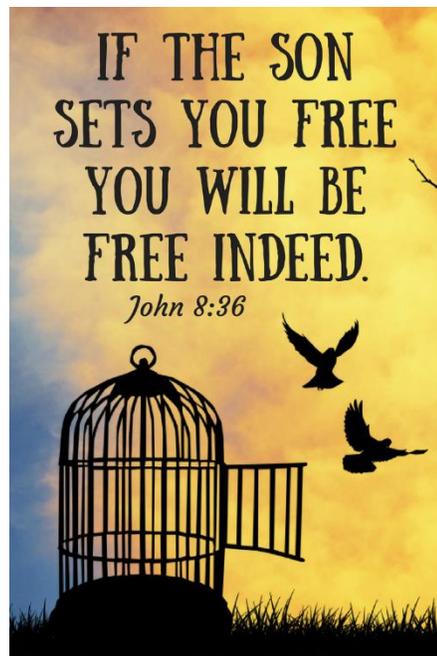
Even as the powers of the world, bent on destroying him, were closing in on Him, Christ was able to confidently reassure His disciples, "I've got this."

"Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God." (John 13:3) Nothing, he tells them, NOTHING – neither powers nor

principalities, neither the world rulers of this present darkness, nor spiritual hosts of wickedness, would stand against him. Nothing would deter him from his mission to save those whom He loves. Nothing would pull His eyes and attention away from the Cross. Nothing would hold him back, or hold him down.

We know on this Easter day, that Jesus' words were true that memorable night with his followers. Nothing stopped him from fulfilling His Father's will. Not fear or dread. No weapon, or onslaught of hate. No vicious lies. The world threw everything it had against him: unimaginable pain, vindictive hate, undeserved shame and injustice, and terrible

loneliness all to no avail. Even the grave could not hold Christ!



As I ponder the truth and the awesome power of Christ, I think about those areas in our lives that sometimes take hold of us. Try as we might, we become frustrated or worse yet, resigned to its hold on us. How quickly we forget who we are, and to whom we belong! As we struggle with whatever seeks to grab hold of us, we might seriously question, "God, will I ever be free of *this*?"

The answer is unequivocally: Yes! On this Easter day, we are reminded anew that the things of this world no longer have a hold on us. As much as the world

may seek to convince us otherwise, and though there are sure to be moments we doubt, let us be reminded "*we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*" (Romans 8:37) Through Jesus' work on the Cross and His Resurrection, the disease of this world, sin and even death no longer hold us. Christ has set us free! Happy Easter!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL, By Amy Julia Becker, Chair of Spiritual Formation

This year in Sunday school, the elementary school kids have been looking at the same story from different angles, and they have continued their monthly "Acts of Love" when they do a service project of some sort. In January, we started with the Creation story in Genesis. The children painted and put on a play as different ways to learn about God's creative action in making the world.

More recently, in the weeks leading up to Easter, they learned about the Last Supper. They looked at artwork about the Lord's Supper, attended a communion service, sang songs, and even made unleavened bread as a reminder of the Jewish celebration of Passover. Looking back over the past few months, Marilee Becker says, "*I liked when we sang and learned a song. It was about Egypt.*" Addyson Cannavaro says, "*I liked making brownies for Loaves and Fishes.*"

OL' MAN WEATHER GUMS UP LENTEN LUNCHESES, By Diane Swanson

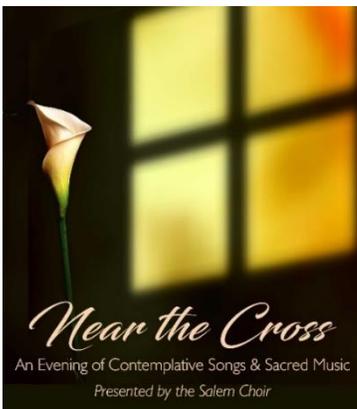
Happy Spring! This year Lenten lunches went great, except Ol' Man Winter stuck his two cents in a couple of times and the luncheon had to be cancelled! The other four weeks, we had awesome home-made soups, and yummy sandwiches, and delicious cakes for dessert. Thank you to all the soup makers and bakers.



We had good turnouts. Our biggest group was 48 in attendance. (I think that's a record!) I would like to give a big thank you to my set-up "girls", and fabulous clean-up crew. And a special thank you to Holly Camp for coming in early to help me make sandwiches after Robin McHan was called out-of-town. And lastly, to Robin, a big thank you for organizing this year's Lenten Lunches; it was a lot of planning. Looking forward to next year.

God bless, Diane

SONGS OF LENT



This year Salem's Choir presented a special evening of songs for the season of Lent. All of the community was invited to come and listen to the worshipful and sacred music, telling the Passion story in song. Nearly 50 people were in attendance, and many commented on the beauty and peace they experienced through the lyrics and melodies.

Patty Parker's comments summed up the evening for many: "*I loved everything about the concert. The leading up to Holy Week with a time of reflection and contemplation. There wasn't any applause just the powerful stories told thru the sound of gifted voices. I thought it was very emotional in many ways. I brought a friend who doesn't attend any church and she was very moved. I would love to do this every year.*"

Our heartfelt thanks to Susan Anthony-Klein, Music Director, and all the Choir members for their gift of time in preparing and gift of song.

HOLY WEEK - REMEMBERING

Samuel Johnson once wrote, "*People need to be reminded more often than they need to be instructed.*" Over and over again, in our Holy Scriptures, God tells His people: **Remember**. By this, He means more than simple recall. God provides us both a narrative in His word and tangible ceremonies so that we can be reminded over and over again of the great truths of our faith, and the work of Christ. During Holy Week, many of our services are in commemoration of events long ago. We are invited to enter into these sacred places of remembrance. As

Dr. Jeff Arthurs writes, “Stirring memory does many things for the listeners.” It evokes gratitude, repentance, and humility. Remembering the stories of God’s people before us encourages our faith, provides warnings, strengthens us, and binds us together as a faith community. So, as each generation before us here at Salem, we held Holy Week services, remembering and commemorating the final days leading up to Jesus’ death and resurrection. Below is a recap of each service.

Evening Prayer – Some of us gather not just during Holy Week, but each 4th Wednesday of the month to pray for the concerns and needs people in our congregation bring forward. We pray fervently for our church family, for our community and for the world beyond. Sometimes this time includes singing, other times reading Scripture, and nearly always we close saying the Lord’s Prayer together. It is a meaningful experience to pray with one another.



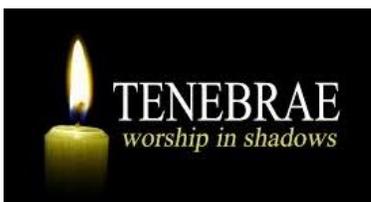
Maundy Thursday – By Carol Walzer

As a first time participant in a Maundy Thursday Service I would like to share my experience with you. I arrived at the Fellowship Hall a little early to find Pastor Linda and Michel making final preparations for the Service, and Susan was already there at the piano arranging the music sheets for the hymns. I was happy to assist in setting the tables with dishes of nuts, olives, grapes and plates of parmesan cheese and oil to go with plenty of delicious new bread.

Jugs of water and grape juice were ready to be poured into the glasses, and plates placed ready for each person to use for the food as they pleased. The room was dimly lit and the tables were covered in bright red cloths. As people arrived and took their seats we formed a circle of about eighteen. Among us was a grandfather visiting from out of town, and a Lutheran Archbishop.

Pastor Linda began the service with prayer followed by four Bible readings throughout the service. After each reading we sang a hymn. As this Service was in commemoration of Jesus Christ at the Last Supper, Communion was offered for all. We were reminded of the humble gesture of Jesus when he washed the feet of his Disciples, and Pastor Linda symbolized this, not by everyone taking off their shoes, but instead by washing the hands of each one of us. After our hands had been washed as a Blessing was recited, the person in line ahead dried the wet hands of the one behind - a very personal touch between two people. The Service was appreciated by everyone and it prepared us for the next Holy Days to come.

Afterwards, conversation was shared by some while others cleared the tables and joined in on a group washing up of all the dishes, glasses and silverware. It was convivial and did not take long before everything had been cleared, washed and put away. Then the last of us were saying goodnight and thanking Pastor Linda and Michel for their unselfish commitment to these special events, which are so meaningful, and a constant reminder of what God has done for us by sacrificing his only son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins.



Service of Tenebrae – Good Friday

Tenebrae, also known as the Service of Shadows, is the most somber of Christian service as the Passion Narrative is shared. This year we had seven readers to lead us through the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Christ. After each reading was concluded, a candle was put out until only the Christ candle remained. We sang songs from our Blue Hymnal which has such rich liturgy and beautifully haunting

hymns, including O Sacred Head Now Wounded and Were You There? As the last song is sung, the Christ candle is carried out (only to return on Easter morning), followed by a long period of silence and reflection. The service was very moving for those who came.

EASTER – RESURRECTION SUNDAY!

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.” ~ 1 Pet. 1:3-4



What a wonderful morning celebrating the Resurrection of Christ! Once again we were reminded of the hope we have in Christ. Colorful flowers brightened the Altar, the pews were full, the Choir offered beautiful songs, the good news was preached, and the children enjoyed the Easter Egg Hunt. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this a special day for all who worshiped here this day.

BAKE & BOUQUET SALE

This year Salem continued its festive Easter tradition of the Bake & Bouquet Sale the Saturday before Easter. Volunteers gathered the night before the sale, and created beautiful floral arrangements in bright colored vases, cups and other assorted containers. Plate after plate of decorative baked goodies were donated by many in the

church. It all made for a wonderful and diverse offerings for the many who streamed through the church on Saturday. The numbers are still being tallied, but over \$550 was raised.



MONTHLY SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE & SUPPER CONTINUES

Our next **Sunday Evening Service and Supper is planned for April 22, 5:00 pm.** Glenn Hafele, our song leader, will be here at 4:00 pm to teach guitar to interested students; he will have extra guitars on hand.

LOVE MERCY, DO JUSTICE

From our inception the Covenant has been concerned with helping hurting people (love mercy), and addressing the causes of that hurt (do justice). The mission of Love Mercy Do Justice (LMDJ) is to "Join God in making things right in our broken world."



This year's **Easter Offering** is for Project Hope (Covenant Kids Congo). Our church sponsors fourteen children living in the neediest province of the neediest nation in the world. These funds help to provide the children and their communities access to clean water, food, medical care, education and safe hygiene measures.

CHURCH PROPERTY

Upstairs Bathroom – In March, the upstairs bathroom received some much-needed TLC. The cracked sink and leaky faucets were replaced by local plumber, Ethan Labella. At the same time, one of our stealth volunteers applied a fresh coat of paint to the walls and replaced the hanging pictures, and corner chair with updated art work, and a classy little table. This bathroom improvement may seem rather insignificant, but it is small changes like these that leave a lasting impression on new visitors. It shows we care about details, and more importantly, about people.



Front Entry Door shatters – Just as the bathroom improvements were completed, that same week one of our entry doors shattered unexpectedly. It sounded like a huge chandelier coming down and hitting a concrete floor! No one knows for sure how it happened, but the best guess is a small pebble was picked up by the gusty winds that day, and hit the tempered glass just right. Gratefully, no one was near the door, and gratefully too, we were blessed to have kind neighbors come and put up temporary plywood. The glass was replaced last Monday.



Pave the Way  To date, \$52,108.28 has been received in cash donations and \$18,378 pledged.

If you would like to make a donation toward our Pave the Way Capital Campaign, you may go online to and click giving. <http://www.covchurchgiving.com/p-2125-pave-the-way-capital-campaign.aspx>

UPCOMING EVENT

Sunday, April 8, Guest Speaker, Marcy Heath Robitaille

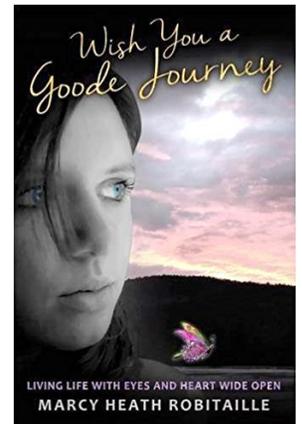


On Sunday, April 8, we will be blessed to have Marcy Heath Robitaille as a Guest speaker during our Worship service at 10:30 am.

After losing her 17-year-old daughter Makenzie Mia Goode in a tragic accident, Marcy felt compelled to share their story. She is the author of “Wish You a Goode Journey” and also writes a blog called A [Godwink.com](http://agodwink.com/) (<http://agodwink.com/>)

Although initially consumed in grief with her daughter's unexpected departure, Marcy has since found joy and healing as the additional chapter of her daughter's life unfolds. Makenzie saved six lives through her organ donation.

Today, Marcy is a volunteer for New England Donor Services and also speaks at churches, hospitals, and other civic venues, sharing hope and words of healing. She also leads a group for grieving parents called Hearts of Hope. She is married, lives in Warwick, MA and attends Monadnock Covenant Church.



We hope you will come and listen to her testimony of hope!

Thank you!

To the friends of Salem,

Thank you for the beautiful Valentine Card. You made Valentine's Day very special!!!

With Love and Prayers to all of you, Janet Showalter

Dear Salem,

Thank you so much for thinking of me each Wednesday – the delicious soups, sandwiches and cakes have been such a treat, and it means so much to still feel part of the Salem family even though it's hard for me to get to church these days.

Wishing you a blessed Easter season,
With Love, Dorine Boesel

Dear Salem Church family,

I want to thank you also very much for your prayers, cards, calls, visits, and the very delicious soups. I am very blessed to have such a church family to support me as you have. God bless you all!

Love you, Diane Locke

APRIL EVENTS

April 1 – EASTER!

- Community Easter Sunrise Service, Sunrise, Stone Church, New Preston
- Easter Worship Service, Communion & Children's Easter Egg Hunt

April 4 – Council Meeting, 7:00 pm

April 6 – Loaves and Fishes, 3:30 pm

April 7 – Lion's Club Trivia Night – Go Team Salem!

April 8 – Special Guest, author Marcy Robitaille

April 22 – Sunday Evening Service & Supper, 5:00 pm

April 28 - 4th Wednesday Evening Prayer, 7:00 pm

April 29/30 – East Coast Conference Ministerium Annual Meeting – All day

April 31 – East Coast Conference Annual Meeting, Berlin, CT – all day



Sandy Nelson	6
David Golembeski	9
Elliot Bogue	10
Katie DeWitte	13
Teddy Alex	14
Steve Haas	14
Janice Anthony	15
Hillary Kelly	15
Mary Ann Lundberg	16
Emily Anderson	17
Sara Taylor	19
Holly Haas	22
Kat Stevens	23
Spencer Tillman	23
Deb Blank	26
Greg Alex	28
Dawn Belanger	29
Gavin Dowling	29

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor – Reverend Linda Williams

Music Director – Susan Anthony-Klein

Administrative Assistant – Caitlin Cannavaro

Nursery Care Provider – Stephanie Shaw

CHURCH COUNCIL

Chair– Jeremy Chase

Vice-Chair– Spencer Guptill

Treasurer/CFO– Caitlin Cannavaro

Secretary – Julie Fredlund

Spiritual Formation – Amy Julia Becker

Fellowship – Robin McHan

Diaconate – Charlotte Johnson

Ex-Officio – Pastor Linda Williams

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Ron Ames

Mike Andrews

Bob Dickinson

Mark Showalter

Michel Williams

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Jeremy Chase

Spencer Guptill

Peter Becker

Amy Hoeniger

Holly Camp