**News and Inspiration for March 2019**

“Opening Your Eyes” from M. Wiederkehr’s Abide: Keeping Vigil with the Word of God

 Prayerfully read Luke 24:13-32. “But their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.” (v.16) and “With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him” (v 32)

 Praying with this familiar passage from the Gospel of Luke, I became aware of 2 very different experiences that can occur in my life. One is a moment of blindness—I do not recognize a movement of grace that is unfolding before me. The other experience is a moment of recognition—a veil lifts and I am in awe of the miracle before me. These 2 moments may often be the same experience.

 As I recall the disciples’ walk to Emmaus when Jesus joined them along the way, I am jolted by these words: “*but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.”* They were intimate friends of Jesus. They had shared much with him before his death. How could they not recognize him?

 As I questioned the disciples’ unseeing eyes and hearts, I was given a glimpse of my own obtuse spirit and began to realize just how much I share their blindness. In this world so full of Christ, so full of blessings, so full of things for which to be grateful, how often I focus on the evil that surrounds me rather than the good.! How often I allow the moment of sacramentality to pass me by! How often I moan and groan about something that has been taken away from, failing to notice that I am utterly surrounded by gifts given….Sometimes it is the power of an experience that could be a healing force in my life if I would look at it with new eyes and allow it to be a moment of grace…my body is there but my mind is distracted. Thus I miss the time of grace.

 The disciples who walked along with Jesus did not have closed hearts. Perhaps they were so full of sorrow that it was their grief preventing them from knowing him. Their hearts were obviously touched by this stranger who walked with them. Gradually, a new openness made its way in their hearts. They invited him to eat with them. When he broke the bread and handed it to them. “*their eyes were opened and they recognized him”*  v 31.

 I am grateful that this recognition took place around a table while sharing a meal. Amazing things can happen when we meet around a table. Miracles take place when we begin to feed each other. Barriers fall away. Eyes open. We see Jesus and one another in a new way and with a deeper insight. Moments of recognition can heal. It happened to the disciples. It happens to me. It has probably happened to you.

**Upcoming Events**

* **Earth Day, Earth Year 2019 What does the Lord require of you?** What can you do for Planet Earth? Maybe pick up trash in Mason?
	+ - * 1. What about an energy audit for your home? <https://www.energy.gov/articles/home-energy-audits-making-homes-more-energy-efficient-and-comfortable>
				2. Mason has an Energy Commission RSA 38 D-5 authorization, since July 2018, and they have been active, on your behalf, to reduce energy costs to our town! Check out the 2018 report, and support our local efforts to save tax money, and reduce pollution. <http://masonnh.us/wp-content/uploads/EnergyComm_YearEndRpt-2018.pdf>
				3. Reduce your plastic use. Only 9% of plastic is recycled, so first reduce your use, second recycle what you can—usually on those plastics with a 1 or 2 in the little triangle on the bottom of the plastic item.
				4. Refuse all Styrofoam containers. It never degrades, but becomes tiny balls that birds, insects, and sea animals mistakenly take for food, and often die due to clogging of their intestine. Ask your favorite restaurant to use paper, or better yet bring your own container when you go out.
				5. Straws and grocery bags—Refuse straws, just drink from the cup like a normal adult/child, and bring your own bags to the grocery store, as well as other shopping.
* **April 7 5:30 to 8 pm The Conversation** This community meeting is about end-of-life issues, from your Healthcare Directive (that document you share with your physician) to low cost funerals, and discussions about your life, like what do you want to be remembered for, what wisdom have you learned and want to share, and how to write a loving and/or humorous obituary for self or loved ones!  **This month we will watch the documentary “Holding Our Own,”** and there will be a series of study questions to stimulate conversation as a follow up to our Threshold speakers, Deana and Sandy’s discussion from Feb.

Check out: <http://www.legacy.com/news/advice-and-support/article/how-to-write-your-own-obituary>

**We start with a simple shared meal of soup/bread/salad/dessert**, and move into our discussion.

* **Lenten Study for Adults at 10 am Thursdays** with Pastor Veronica. Reading topic: “Give it Up!” by Dottie Escobedo-Frank. Join in at the Mason Church, Pastor’s Office.
* **April 11th Thursday 5:30 to 7 pm Community Supper** Join us for another delicious meal with companions from Mason and surrounding area. As always, you are welcome to bring an item for the Greenville Food Pantry. Deposit it in the box as you come in. Don’t let food sensitivities keep you home – Each community supper has a gluten-free, dairy-free, and nut-free entrée for our special guests.
* **April 13th Nashua Soup Kitchen** Meet in the church parking lot at 3:30 for carpooling to Nashua. We are usually back by 6:30 or 7pm. Share your love and energy in this outreach mission of our community. Contact Kathy Chapman if you plan to go or need information 603-878-4993 or email chapman.kathy@gmail.com We welcome members of the community in this service mission.
* **April 18th Mason/Brookline Maundy Service At 5:45 pm Soup/bread/salads At 7 pm** Join us at the Mason Church for our Mason/Brookline Maundy Thursday service. This is a moving worship service leading up to our joyous celebration of Easter. Reverend Catherine Merrill and Reverend Veronica Don will be officiating.
* **April 19th Women’s group will be meeting this month.** We will continue our reading of Active Hope by Joanna Macy, and develop some actions we can take that align with the book!April 20th 6:30 pm. Living Room Coffee House The next feature at the ”Living Room Coffee House” is **Band members are Tara Greenblatt, Ramsay Thomas, Lucio S. Eastman, Shana R. Hall, & Grace Aldrich. Together they weave a musical tapestry of luscious harmonies, decadent strings, groovy hand drumming, & poignant lyrics. Visit:**<http://taragreenblatt.com/>
* **April 21 Easter Sunrise We will have Easter sunrise service at Gretchen and Wally’s house 421 Meeting House Hill Rd, at 5:45 am** Afterwards we will gather at Jennie Greenwood’s 773 Greenville Rd, (2 minutes away) for coffee and delicious breakfast items.
* **April 21 Easter Church Service at 10 am. Come, celebrate this joyous occasion in the life of the Christian Church.** Followed by a brunch of egg strata, fruits, Easter bread, and beverages. All are welcome!
* **May 4th Community Wide Yard Sale, hosted by Mason Church.** 9 am to 1 pm Call to reserve a table, Michelle at 878-1680. You may bring your own table, or use a blanket on the ground. Bring your beloved treasures, set your prices, and be sure to take home any treasures that do not sell! No charge for space, but you are welcome to make a monetary donation to Mason Church. Light refreshments provided by Mason Church. Rain or shine, though space may be limited in the case of heavy rain. Bring a tent, or space will be available in carriage sheds and Fellowship Hall, on a 1st come, 1st serve basis.



* **Curt Dunn** He has moved and is in Southern NH Medical Center or call him on his phone at 603 222-3004. Although he has trouble reading, he still loves cards, but of course, enjoys calls and visits even more. He is over the pneumonia, and lost strength while recovering, so don’t bring any germs with you!
* **Gwen Whitbeck** has had surgery recently and is at Lahey Clinic. Check with Doug if you want to visit or call her. Doug is at dwhitbeck@hotmail.com The Whitbecks have given so much to NH and the community is service---many thanks! Now let us help you.
* **Laila Washburn March 3—Laila is 100 years old!** Laila lives at Summer Hill Assisted Living in Peterborough. She loves company and cards. At 100, every day is treasured. Laila Washburn, Summer Hill, 183 Old Dublin Rd, Peterborough, NH 03458. Call ahead if you have questions. 603-924-6238
* **Nancy Richards turns 95 years young this month.** If you want to send a card, 270 Campbell Mill Rd, Mason, NH 03048. Or give her a call at 603 878-2190.
* **Karin Eisenhaure** is driving, and getting stronger every day, but recovery is always slower than we want or expect! She, like the rest of us, enjoys seeing friends, and sharing a meal. So give her a call 878-2675
* **Deborah Prince Smith and Don Smith** Deborah and Don are working through his recent diagnosis of bone cancer. Your prayers and encouragement would be appreciated.

Address: 41 Sauna Row Rd, West Townsend, MA 01474 Phone 978-597-2204

* **Gretchen and Wally Brown** Always in need of a little cheer, and just contact with the outside world, so stop by with a smile, a meal, or just to pick up syrup and say hello!

Cards to: 421 Meetinghouse Hill Rd, Mason, NH 03048 phone: 878-1481

* **Jean Randle’s daughter, Paula,** is better, and received a prayer shawl to wrap her with the love of our community.
* **Gloria Foster**  Although it has been 3 months since Gloria’s daughter, Emily, died, it is helpful to keep Gloria in your thoughts. You can offer encouragement and sympathy to Gloria Foster, 65 Boynton Hill Road, New Ipswich, NH 03071

Join in the missions of Mason Church: Nashua Soup Kitchen, Greenville Food Pantry, Community Supper, Prayer Shawl knitting and distribution, and United Church of Christ One Great Hour of Sharing, Blanket Sunday, and more. All are welcome to join in these missions!

***"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.  You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." anonymous***