



# THE OPEN DOOR

## The Briarcliff Congregational Church

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“BEHOLD, I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU AN OPEN DOOR, WHICH NO ONE IS ABLE TO SHUT.” REVELATION 3:8

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Dear Good People of Briarcliff Church,

Earlier this year, I invoked my retiring pastor's privilege and included a copy of a "thank you" sermon I'd preached earlier that month in an edition of *The Open Door*. I wanted a wider hearing for that sermon than that in any particular Sunday congregation; because in the sermon I tried to express my profound appreciation for and to this parish. In the end, it will be thirteen years of blessed and precious ministry, I've shared here, with you in Christ. That's something for which to be thankful! I hope you were able to read that message of gratitude last fall and to sense from it just how full of thanks my heart is for these grace-filled and many seasons of serving God and BCC.

Among other things in that sermon last fall, I self-identified as someone who "wears her heart on her sleeve." I find that heart is on my sleeve a bit again this month, as well; as the anticipatory losses of retirement are informed by both the themes of Lent and Easter and the truths they proclaim.

While I am and continue to be full of gratitude for my pastorate with BCC, I am also full of sorrow as I anticipate saying, "Good-bye." Being a sentimental sop, I'm living this year mindful of what is a series of "lasts:" My last Christmas Eve, my last Transformation Sunday, my last Easter, and so forth and so on. Believe me, I look forward to retirement, I really, really do! And, to be honest, I rejoice in some of the lasts, for sure. But, believe me, also: I live with a sense of looming loss. Time is fast approaching when I'll no longer be either *a* or *your* pastor.

### SAVE THESE DATES

#### April

- 2 Peanut Butter Sunday
- 6 Women's Society 9:30am
- 9 Palm Sunday
- 13 Maundy Thursday 7:30pm
- 16 Easter 9:30am & 11:00am
- 16 No Church School
- 23 Moving Sunday
- 29 Rummage Sale

Contact Us At:

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It's not much of a stretch to apply the themes of late Lent and Easter (dying and rising) to these circumstances. Inevitably, I will have to "die" to my pastor's identity. As threatening as this idea is, I know by faith that in God's time I'll be "raised" to a new purposefulness, even after the covenants of my formal ministry are dissolved. And, you, too, dear congregation: In so far as any of you might be experiencing loss in my retirement, be assured you, too, will be raised to new life as you celebrate the promise of my successor's ministry with you in this place.

*Continued*

The rhythms of death and resurrection inform our whole lives. How else could we bear the many losses we suffer every day – even those so natural as pastors coming and going? But, natural or not, losses are painful, often wrenching; and through our lives, they pile up. This is why it's so important for us to remember the Good News of Easter and our Christian conviction that our whole lives, living in or dead to this sphere and its vicissitudes, are lived together and eternally in Christ. Circumstances of location, tenure, specifics – they matter not, for they're but the glass through which we see darkly. Christ lives and we, in Christ, do too, together and with all the saints, no matter what else! So, whether I am your pastor or someone else is, whether I live next door or at some other address, whether I teach the Bible in the Stimson Room or in Fishkill Prison (where I'll be teaching some in the fall!) – it is Christ's life that is shared. And THAT LIFE cannot be broken or subdued.

There is yet time for goodbyes. There is yet time for stories. There is yet time ...

And in the meantime, there's much to accomplish; so, by God's grace, I remain,

Your pastor,




### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Oriel Redd has recently relocated: She's moved from Atria/Briarcliff to Rhode Island, where her daughter and son-in-law live. Our loss is their gain, for sure! Oriel's new address: 57 Grandville Court, #204; Wakefield, RI; 02879



### HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Our observation of Holy Week and Easter '17 will reflect our pattern of the last several years. **Palm**

**Sunday**, 9 April, will be observed with palms, the traditional hymns for the day, and reflections on the Gospel account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (according to John this year). The choir will sing "Domine Fili unigenite" from Vivaldi's "Gloria."

On **Maundy Thursday**, the Pastor and Board of Deacons will be offering worship, beginning at 7:30, which will include a celebration of the Last Supper, a *Pedilavium* (foot-washing) and a *Tenebrae* (gathering shadows). This service concludes in silence and in the dark, and for many, is the "favorite service of the year."

**Easter Sunday** will find us gathering **twice** to celebrate Jesus' resurrection: At 9:30 and again at 11:00. The first service, intended to include our children, will be shorter and will feature a rite of "flowering the cross." The Cherub Choir will sing. Later, at 11AM, a more traditional celebration of Easter will be offered. The 11:00 liturgy will be enhanced by a string quartet and choral music from Vivaldi's "Gloria." The *Overture* from Handel's *Messiah* will be offered as the Prelude for both services; and, Fimi will conclude both with Widor's "Toccata" as Postlude. 'Twill be sublime.



## WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

At the March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Women's Society, Cornelia Schimert from the Visiting Nurse Association of the Hudson Valley (the umbrella organization of Hospice Care in Westchester and Putnam, located in Tarrytown, NY) spoke about hospice and palliative care. At this most difficult of times, thankfully the benefits are usually covered by Medicare and health insurance. One of the take-aways from her talk was that frequently people wait too long to call.

**Our next meeting will be Thursday, April 6 at 9:30 in the Eastman Room. The topic will be rummage.** Watch for sign up sheets in Beebe Hall after church—and possibly on-line.

Please remember to sign up for lilies and daffodils to decorate the sanctuary at Easter.

**Louisa Myers** has moved to Cape Cod to be near **Tom and Shannan Myers**, her son and daughter-in-law. Louisa has been an active and much loved member of the Woman's Society for countless years, famous for her wisdom, good humor, and carrot cake. We are going to miss her but are glad she has found a new home. Her new address is 579 Buck Island Road, Apt 272, West Yarmouth, MA. Telephone 508-771-1243. She would love to receive cards and notes.

### **SPRING OUTING –SATURDAY, MAY 20**

We'll be going via car pool to Madava Farms, home of Crown Maple products, in Dover Plains, NY. We'll have a tour and enjoy a maple-infused lunch in beautiful surroundings.

### **Women's Society June Luncheon, June 8**

The luncheon this year will be at Joan Austin's home in Briarcliff. Watch for details after Rummage. We hope everybody will mark their calendars and plan to come.



Our annual **Rummage Sale** is just around the corner, Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. Here are the Rummage Sale dates with notes...

### **Team Rummage, The Reality Series, Season XII**

Sun	Apr 23	<u>Moving Sunday</u>	11 – 3
		No donations before this date!	
Mon	Apr 24	Sorting	9 – 4
Tue	Apr 25	Sorting	9 – 9
		Pizza Supper	7 p.m.
		(free will offering)	
Wed	Apr 26	Sorting	9 – 4
Thu	Apr 27	Sorting	9 – 4
		Workers Luncheon, noon	
		last day to bring rummage	
Fri	Apr 28	Sorting	9 – 4
		Bring baked goods by 3 p.m.	
Sat	Apr 29	<u>RUMMAGE SALE</u>	9 – 4
		CLEANUP	3:30 – 6

### **Things to remember:**

~ Look for the Rummage Sale sign-up sheets in Beebe Hall at coffee hour and sign up to work during Rummage Sale week and on Rummage Sale Day.

~ Please save brown grocery bags, plastic bags, shopping bags, and newspapers and bring them to Beebe Hall during Rummage Sale week. (We need these to wrap and pack Rummage Sale merchandise.)

~ Please plan to bake for our Bake Sale room. We need home-baked goods. Baked goods may be dropped off all day Friday (April 28<sup>th</sup>) in the Parish

House kitchen or Saturday morning in the Bake Sale Room.

~ There are some things we are not able to accept because we cannot sell them.

Please do not bring:

*computers, printers, monitors,*

*outmoded electronics*

*baby cribs, strollers*

*florist vases, cookie tins*

*picture frames larger than 11" x 17"*

*old textbooks*

*out of date encyclopedias or manuals*

*Reader's Digest condensed books*

*magazines, including National Geographic*

*books with writing or underlining in them*

*books which are in poor condition*

Our sale will be better in every way if you will examine items you are considering for donation and bring us only those which are in good condition and saleable.

Thank you for your help. We look forward to another successful Rummage Sale. Please plan to bring your rummage and come and work with us as often as you can during Rummage Sale week. There's a job for everyone. See you there!

## WHAT TO DO

### WITH YOUR RUMMAGE?

Spring is in the air, and that means rummage can't be too far off. The BCC Rummage Sale is on April 29<sup>th</sup> this year. We ask that you hold on to all your treasures until Moving Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

We thought it might be helpful to explain WHY this is our policy AND offer an exception. We begin to carry and sort mountains of rummage from the church basement on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The more items we have brought into the basement before Moving Sunday, the more we all have to carry across the street after church.

HOWEVER, if someone is moving, you know someone who is moving or you have something that you think would be simply wonderful for rummage and absolutely can't store it till the sale, then PLEASE, *call us*, and we will work it out. Many of us have stored other folks' goods at our houses to this end. The goal is to have a lot of high quality items and make lots of money for the church.

For any PRE Moving Sunday items contact Helen Buerger #488-5522, [coopbuerger@aol.com](mailto:coopbuerger@aol.com)

## MUSIC NEWS

The Heim concert in March featuring the scholarship recipients was well attended. These talented young musicians were very excited and appreciative to have been given this opportunity to perform. Thank you to those who came out to support this event, and those who have contributed to the scholarship fund. A special thanks to the music committee for the planning, publicity, reception, and ushering this concert.

The Junior Choir is preparing to sing on 3/26, along with Charlotte Luttkus singing a solo. I have been working with the cherubs weekly in preparation for Easter Sunday. A few weeks ago, I had about 15 singers and they were so enthusiastic, singing with such abandonment. The energy was unbelievable! This shows the vibrancy of our church, it's very exciting.

The adult choir will sing two pieces from Vivaldi's "Gloria" on Easter Sunday with a string quartet, of which two are our scholarship recipients, Kristina á Váli (cellist) and Gustavo Briceño (violin). Our choir continues to work hard in praising God through their singing despite illnesses which affected many this winter. We are blessed to have such a dedicated choir.

Peace,  
Fimi

## NEWS FROM THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

On Sunday, March 5, BCC was honored to have Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams as a guest preacher during worship. Rev. Williams, an Associate Conference Minister of the New York Conference of the UCC, is guiding us through our pastoral search process, and we are blessed and grateful to have her help.

Now that our job posting is listed on the UCC's website, (as of March 1<sup>st</sup>), we have begun to receive a number of candidate profiles. Each member of our committee is thoughtfully and prayerfully considering each candidate to determine who will receive a copy of our Church Profile and subsequently who will be invited for an initial interview via Skype. We also will request from candidates who receive a copy of our Church Profile a cover letter containing a brief description of why they would like to be considered for the position and of anything they read in our Church Profile that aroused their interest. In addition, if available, we will review candidates' websites, video/audio recordings of past sermons, blogs and other online material. Following our initial Skype interviews, we will discuss and decide which candidates we would like to move further along in the interview process and the appropriate way to do so (whether it be a second Skype interview with additional members of our committee, a trip to see them preach in their own church, or setting up a neutral pulpit closer to home).

As always, if you have any questions about our search process, or if you would like to read a copy of our Church Profile, feel free to contact any one of us or talk to us before or after Sunday worship.

Yours in faith,

Mel Corbett (co-chair), Sheri Gausepohl  
(co-chair), Judy Beck, Ted Buerger, Barbara  
Gasparik, Kevin Junkins, Brian Lewis, Nancy  
Panagacos, Debra Stewart, Robyn Wild



**The 2017 Easter offering**  
will be used for needed work on  
the manse to prepare it for the  
arrival of our new minister  
later this year.

Please give generously!  
Easter envelopes can be found in  
*The Open Door*, and in the back  
of the church.



### EARTH DAY, '17

What a great  
coincidence it is: This  
year Earth Day falls on

the same weekend as our Rummage Moving  
Sunday! Think of Rummage as an offering for  
Mother Earth, an opportunity to re-cycle, re-  
purpose and repent of SO MUCH STUFF! Off  
load, trim down and share the excess. The "good  
cause" isn't just the Women's Society coffers –  
it's also Mother Earth!

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CELEBRATES

### PALM SUNDAY WITH A SEDER

The Sunday School will hold a Seder on Palm Sunday in BeeBe Hall after Bonnie's Children's Moment.

The Jewish people celebrate their freedom from slavery and bondage at the hands of the Egyptians thousands of years by holding the Seder, a ritual Jewish feast to mark the beginning of Passover.

In Exodus 12 Moses said, "Let my people go" and Pharaoh said "No" and God sends ten plagues to Egypt to make Pharaoh listen. The Jews suffered the first nine plagues but not the 10th. The Sunday School will read the story of Passover from Exodus at the Seder table in BeeBe Hall. Then the children will read from Isaiah and Luke to learn how Jesus celebrated the Passover and the story the story of the Last Supper.

The teachers of the Sunday School wish you and your families a Happy Easter.

## CONFIRMATION CLASS MAKES

### HEADWAY

Pastor Bonnie has been meeting with four of our young people (Hallie Foss, Emma Konrad, Caroline Adams and Matt Stewart), preparing for the Rite of Confirmation, which is scheduled for 4 June. Class content is organized this year around what is known as "the religious quadrilateral," an understanding of our faith as being revealed in and built on four foundations: Scripture, Tradition, Community and Experience. John Wesley first formulated this methodology for faith reflection, but it's been adapted and fine tuned by others, as well. With it in mind, we're reviewing the story of salvation history, as put forward in our Scriptures; we'll be looking at the Ancient Creeds

and tracing them to contemporary Statements of Faith; we'll be talking with members of the BCC community about the role of faith in their adult lives; and we'll be developing our own credos, drawing on our own life/faith experiences. It's a demanding curriculum and a lot to ask of our confirmands-to-be! So, please keep the Confirmation Group (and Pastor Bonnie!) in your prayers.

## EMERGENCY SHELTER UPDATE

BCC hosted the Ossining Emergency Shelter for a second week, March 12-18, which included some special provision for shelter during Storm Stella! Our guests were stranded here on the 14<sup>th</sup>, sheltering in place while the storm raged. And what a blessing it was for them to be warm, safe, fed, dry and undisturbed! Some were able to sleep most of the day, catching up on rest that's constantly interrupted by the predictable and many dislocations of being homeless.

Thank you, Judy Beck, for organizing our volunteers; thank you, volunteers, for pitching in and helping out; and thank you, BCC cooks, for feeding our guests so handsomely and well. Thank you, too, Yasna, for helping keep disruptions to a minimum.

Last year the Shelter offered three weeks of hospitality, all at Trinity Episcopal Church in Ossining. At that time, four Ossining/Briarcliff faith communities were involved. This year, we will have offered fourteen weeks of shelter in nine different sites by the time we close. Nine faith communities, including two in Croton, will have participated. That's quite a developmental leap! Who knows what winter '18 will produce...

## MODERATOR'S REPORT

My report this month consists of information on the two important Celebration Events for Pastor Bonnie that follow.

I hope to see all of you at both events.

Yours in Faith,  
Beverly Aisenbrey



## SPRING CLEAN UP

The annual spring beautification/ workday is Saturday morning, April 8, 9 - 12 noon. Please join us! Come one hour or three hours, all ages welcome and needed!

Whatever time you can give is appreciated! Refreshments and fellowship in abundance! BCC Buildings and Grounds Committee



## CELEBRATION DINNER MAY 6

Dinner and Entertainment to Celebrate Pastor Bonnie's Tenure with us.

May 6

Beebe Hall

6 pm to 9 pm

Bring your family – child care available

Please RSVP to Jodi

in the office (914) 941-4368

by April 26

Let her know if you will need child care and children's ages

## FAREWELL RECEPTION

JUNE 18

Farewell Reception on

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Rosborough's Final Day  
at BCC Beebe Hall

Immediately Following Sunday

Worship Service

Outside Guests may Attend



The Easter Bunny will be at BCC On Holy Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm with Easter treats!

Bring your children and grandchildren to our Egg Hunt. The Easter bunny will be there with lots of photo opportunities before the actual

Easter Egg Hunt begins.

Just look for the balloons and the Easter Bunny and come join the fun.

In the event of rain come anyway and follow the signs to BeeBe Hall and our rainy day facility.

# April 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Peanut Butter Sunday  Confirmation Class	3	4	5  Deacons Meeting 7:30pm	6  Women's Society Rummage Prep 9:30am	7	8  Church Spring Clean-up 9am-12pm
9  Palm Sunday  Confirmation Class	10	11	12	13  Maundy Thursday 7:30pm Service	14  Good Friday	15  Easter Bunny Visits: 2pm
16  Easter 9:30am & 11:00 am Services  No Church School	17	18	19	20	21	22  Earth Day
23 Moving Sunday Confirmation Class Rummage Prep	24	25	26  --Rummage Prep--	27	28	29  Rummage Sale 9am-4pm
30  Confirmation Class  Choir Appreciation						