



Congregational Church of Burlington

Established 1774

February 2018

Pastor's Message

Each year the arrival of the season of Lent seems to take me by surprise. Often, I haven't even taken all my Christmas decorations down before the season of Epiphany comes. Even after its six weeks, I still seem to be surprised that Lent has arrived. There really is no excuse since there are signs all around me. The word Lent means spring, and the lengthening of days, and with each passing day there is more sunlight as the spring season draws closer.

One way the Church tries to help its members and friends get ready for Lent is to invite them to come to Ash Wednesday services. It is in this service that they are encouraged to engage in the disciplines of Lent, like prayer, fasting, study, giving, and service, that helps to prepare them for the celebration of Easter.

Study is a big part of our Lenten discipline here at the Congregational Church of Burlington. It is something we encourage our members to do in a more intentional way with their fellow members by participating in what are called Lenten studies. Often these studies are on some book, or books from the Bible, in part because our people seem to have a thirst for Bible study, and in part because the Bible is the foundation of our Judeo-Christian faith, and contains the story of Jesus' passion which leads into the accounts of his resurrection that are read on Easter Sunday. Our Bible studies are usually well attended and are full of informative information, and lively and heartfelt discussion that helps us deepen our faith. Last year we examined the Gospel of John, and this year we will examine Mark which biblical scholars believe to have been the first and oldest of the Gospels. Seeing the course advertised on Sunday someone asked me how it would be taught. I basically told them "by reading the Gospel of Mark together and discussing it, with background information provided." No previous knowledge of the book is necessary, only a desire to learn, and a willingness to share. Each year I am amazed by the depth of insights and faith shared by participants.

On the Wednesday nights of Lent after Ash Wednesday, continuing to Holy Week, we will be studying the Gospel of Mark together. Plan to join us beginning on February 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., as we study together on our journey towards Easter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendell M. Taylor".

Wendell M. Taylor, Pastor