



February 10th Edition

Sean's Reflection

"Glitter Ashes"

Isaiah 61 :1 "The Spirit of Exalted YHWH is upon me, for YHWH has anointed me: God has sent me to bring good news to those who are poor; to heal broken hearts; to proclaim release to those held captive and liberation to those in prison; announce a year of favor from YHWH, and the day of God's vindication; to comfort all who mourn, 3 to provide for those who grieve in Zion—to give them a wreath of flowers instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of tears, a cloak of praise instead of despair. They will be known as trees of integrity, planted by YHWH to display God's glory. 4 They will restore the ancient ruins, and rebuild sites long devastated; they will repair the ruined cities, neglected for generations.

-Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible (p. 874)

As we began to think and plan for Lent, I kept getting visually stuck on the black forehead smudges that some choose to have imposed on them during the Ash Wednesday service as an ancient sign of personal and communal penitence, sorrow, and mourning. I usually appreciate this centering ritual that reminds me of the fragility of life and the gift of each moment. In the past, I would repeat the words, "for dust thou art and dust you shall return," as I made the sign of the cross on worshipers. In more recent years, I ask a simple question, "What do you seek?" And after listening, "May you find what you are searching for."

This year my reaction to Ash Wednesday came in a series of questions. Haven't we had enough ashes? Haven't we had enough mourning? After this year, don't we know just how fragile everything is, how tenuous, how uncertain? I need something more than ashes. I need something more than penitence and sorrow ... I want glitter. We need biodegradable glitter, sparkles in the ashes to remind us that there is always a glint of the Divine and the spark of the Spirit in the darkest moments.

After suggesting the idea to Jed and staff to have an option for glitter ashes, I did a little research on the internet and was excited to find this idea was not original. In 2017 Parity, a national LGBTQ faith-based nonprofit, promoted Glitter Ash Wednesday "as an opportunity for queer and queer-positive Christians to "come out" as both faith-affirming and

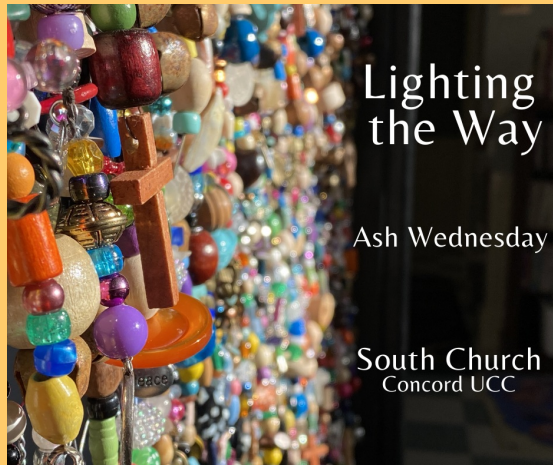
LGBTQ affirming. In 2017 over 200 churches and faith groups in 3 countries, 29 states, and 12 denominations participated in it." If anyone can teach us how to be resilient, hopeful, courageous, and faithful in the difficulties of life, it is the queer community.

In the above passage from Isaiah, the prophet speaks to the exiles longing to be home. It is proclaimed that those who mourn will be comforted, those who have tears will receive the oil of gladness, those in despair will receive a cloak of praise, those with ashes will be given a wreath of flowers. Jesus uses these same words to give hope to those who have been left out and overlooked, the marginalized and disenfranchised, and those considered spiritual-less-than exiles. Maybe Jesus would say to us today that these ashes you have will be turned to glitter, and "you will be known as trees of integrity planted by YHWH."

Receiving glitter and ashes, what will you seek? From glitter thou art and glitter you shall return. May we find what we are searching for. From this exile may it be said of us that "they will restore the ancient ruins, and rebuild sites long devastated; they will repair the ruined cities, neglected for generations."

*In the peace of Christ,
Sean*

Church Events and Activities



Lighting the Way through the Ashes

**Ash Wednesday,
February 17**

Morning Prayer:
7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. [online](#)

Sidewalk Ashes: Visit us in front of the church for self-imposition of ashes, a LED candle and blessing for your Lenten

journey between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. We will maintain safe physical distancing practices and a warm and gentle presence.

Ash Wednesday Service: Join us at 7 p.m. [online](#) for our Ash Wednesday service by following the Zoom link on our web page. During the service, there will be a moment where you will be invited to mark a cross on your forehead using what you have at home to symbolize ashes. It could be dirt from a house plant, a small mixture of cinnamon and cloves, or a bit of olive oil, and remember "A little dab will do ya." You also have the opportunity to receive ashes in front of the church during our Sidewalk Ashes.

Lighting the Way

Lighting the Way

LENT 2021

SOUTH CHURCH CONCORD



Prayer Journey: This Lent we will open the Sanctuary on Thursdays from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. starting on **Thursday, February 18 through Thursday, April 1**. Individuals will be given 20 minutes to be in the Sanctuary to pray; embrace the Lenten season, and enjoy the warmth of being in the space. There will be one person at a time in the Sanctuary for a 20 minute period. **If you are interested in being in the Sanctuary this Lenten season, you**

will need to register. Sign up [here](#).

Labyrinth Walk: The Labyrinth will be available this Lent three weeks prior to Easter from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. throughout the week. There will be one person at a time in the Fellowship Hall and you will be given 20 minutes to walk the labyrinth and pray. **If you are interested this walking the Labyrinth this Lenten season, you will need to register. Click on the week you would like to participate in.**

[Labyrinth Walk Week 1](#)

[Labyrinth Walk Week 2](#)

[Labyrinth Walk Week 3](#)

Outdoor Labyrinth Walk: The Church of the Woods in Canterbury's labyrinth will be available on **Saturday, March 27** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Small groups will be given 20 minutes to walk the labyrinth, pray and embrace the natural world around us. **If you are interested this walking the outdoor labyrinth, you will need to register. Sign up [here](#).**



Outdoor Fun

You have the opportunity to get out into nature and see fellow South Churchers at Beaver Meadow Golf Course on **Sunday, February 21 at 2 p.m.** Bring your snowshoes, cross country skis or crampons to this wonderful event. We will have a special celebrity guest at the event, our own Sean Dunker-Bendigo. For more

information, contact [Lorens Joregensen](#).

Continuing Conversations

Join Sean Dunker-Bendigo every **Wednesday** from 8 a.m to 9 a.m. for conversation and connection. Grab a coffee, tea or beverage and join the conversation. Drop-in; stay awhile; or pop



in just to say hello and run. A free-flowing format with laughter, seriousness, creativity, dreaming, and everything in between. Join the [Zoom](#) meeting.



By The Poet's Light

Every Third
Thursday
7:00 PM

By the Poet's Light

Starting **Thursday, February 18** from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. and continuing the third Thursday of every month, join Sean Dunker-Bendigo for *By The Poet's Light*. Each month we will read and discuss powerful poems related to change, vision, and new beginnings. Join the [Zoom](#) meeting.

Racial Justice



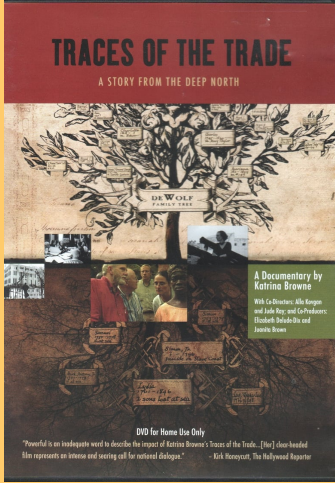
White Nationalism, Contemporary Racism & the Christian Church

Join Rev. Dr. Velda Love, a Racial Justice Minister of the UCC on **Saturday, February 20** from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. *What is white nationalism? What is the relationship between white nationalism and contemporary racism? What is the role of the Christian Church? How do we address racialized trauma?* Join us for an enlightening discussion with Dr. Love. The event is free! Please [register](#) by February 14

Traces of the Trade

Screening and Discussion

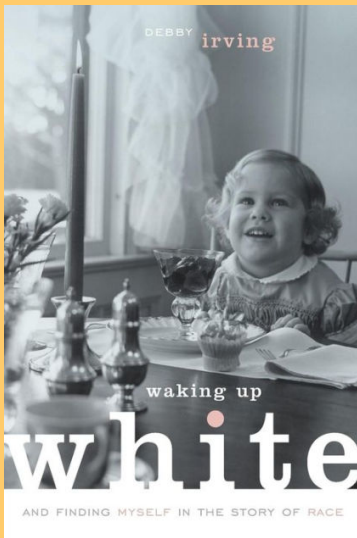
Join host Sean Dunker-Bendigo, Lynne Morgan, Jen Evans and facilitators Constance and Dain Perry on **Monday,**



February 22 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. for a screening and discussion of the documentary *Traces of the Trade: A Voyage of Realization and Reconciliation*. The film traces a journey by Katrina Browne, the filmmaker and nine of her cousins into the slave trade which enriched their white New England family. Dain Perry (one of the nine cousins) and his wife, Constance, will be facilitate our conversation on race, reconciliation and healing following the film.

Dain and Constance Perry are experienced facilitators, having conducted over 500 screenings, and facilitated conversations in over 200 cities and towns across the country, and overseas in Ghana and Australia. One family

member asked whether Perry, who is a descendant of enslaved people, knew about Dain's family history before she married him. The answer was "yes." One reviewer of the Perry's work commented, *"By creating an atmosphere of safety and openness, the Perry's cut through the fears (of judgment, of giving offense, of being misunderstood) that often inhibit discussions of race."* Register [here](#).



Waking up White

A Book Discussion

Join Linda Kenison for a bi-weekly study of Debbie Irving's groundbreaking book: *Waking up White*. *"For twenty-five years, Debbie Irving sensed inexplicable racial tensions in her personal and professional relationships. As a colleague and neighbor, she worried about offending people she dearly wanted to befriend. As an arts administrator, she didn't understand why her diversity efforts lacked traction. As a teacher, she found her best efforts to reach out to students and families of color left her wondering what she was missing. Then, in 2009, one "aha!" moment launched an adventure of discovery and insight that drastically*

shifted her worldview and upended her life plan." The book discussion begins on **Wednesday, March 3** at 5:30 p.m. Register [here](#).

Ministries

Neighbors
in Need

Mission of the Month

During the month of February, the Faith in Action Ministry will be collecting donations for Neighbors in Need. NIN is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. NIN makes available annual grants

to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service, to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. Thank you for your continued support. Donate [here](#).



Planned Giving

Most of us find great comfort and joy in South Church, whether it be Jed's message or prayer; music that sings to our hearts; supportive friendships; or just the quiet sanctuary on a late afternoon when we ring the church bell. South Church is a deep well of holy spirit, filling us daily with hope, love and faith.

A planned gift will give life to our church, long after we live on this earth, assuring that the church will be here for our

children and their children, and many others. This gift is an opportunity to be part of something far greater than ourselves, and to perpetuate the values we hold most dear. It is a spiritual gift of inheritance, worth far more than money, dedicated to sustaining our efforts to create a world of joy, kindness and peace.

There is a good chance you have received a phone call from one of us on the Planned Giving Committee: Tina Annis, Debbie Carley, Peter Imse or Oge Young. Debbie recently stepped down and Nancy Brown has joined us. We want to thank Debbie for her devoted work which included wonderful profiles of Legacy Society members. We have no doubt that Nancy will fill her shoes nobly.

Our committee is small, but our task is great. We have grown the Legacy Society from 10 to over 60 members in recent years, resulting in the growth of the South Church Fund (our endowment around \$600,000 now). Each year we spend 5% of the endowment (\$30,000) to subsidize our annual budget. Presently, this amounts to about 10% of our total costs. The money taken from the endowment is replaced by its investments.

There is a plaque in Fellowship Hall showing the names of our Legacy Society members, those who have committed to leave South Church a Planned Gift. Please consider joining this group. No gift is too small. A portion of your earthly possessions can become a "currency of love," which will help make South Church what you want it to be for years to come. Blessings, Oge

Church Community

Study & Pray



Bible Study ~ On Tuesday, February 16
from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. the Tuesday Night Bible Study will start reading the Book of Proverbs. All are welcome to join, whether to take part in reading or to simply listen to God's word. Please contact [JoAnne](#) if you are interested in joining the bible study and she will send you the Zoom link.

Gathering for Prayer ~

Morning Prayer 7:30 a.m. to 8 a.m.
Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Click [here](#) to join.

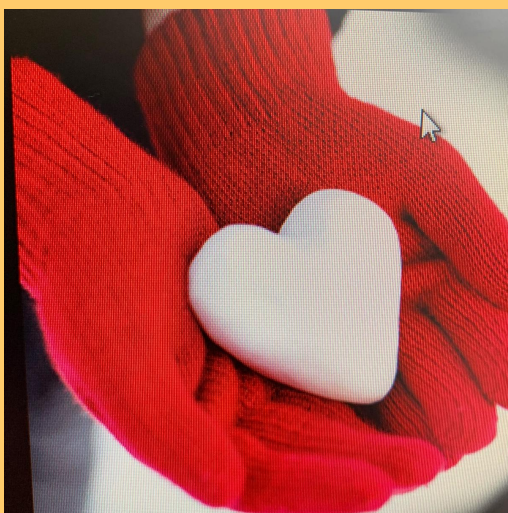
Evening Prayer 7:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Mondays and Tuesdays.

Click [here](#) to join.



Service of Loss & Lament

The Merrimack Association of the NH Conference invites you to a Service of Loss and Lament on **Sunday, March 7** at 2 p.m. This has been a tough year and we have all suffered losses - small and large. Our faith tradition offers us a place to hold our losses, cry out to God, and receive assurance of God's response. We will rely on scripture, poetry, music, action, and silence. Join us and please invite anyone who might benefit from this. Join [Zoom Meeting](#).



Prayers

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers...

Those who have lost their lives to Covid and the loved ones they have left behind.

All those who are on the front lines of health care.

Edna Elle that she will heal after stem cell transplant.

If you would like the congregation to pray for someone and be added to our prayer list, please contact [Lou-Ann Poirier](#). She will also make Jed aware of your prayers.



February Birthdays

We want to wish our members who have February Birthdays

"A Very Happy Birthday!!"

If we missed your birthday that means it wasn't in the directory; so please send it to [Peg Wenzel](#).

February 1:

Bruce Bairstow, Joyce Crane,
Dave Masinick and Carol Ward

February 4:

Joan Fossum

February 5:

Mary Hayes and Kelly McPherson

February 8:

Jason Teaster

February 9:

Oliver Dolcino

February 12:

Steve Arndt and Oge Young

February 14:

Beverly Estabrooke, Katelyn Fennelly
and Bradley Hosmer

February 15:

Linda Gray, Steve Murray,
Pauline Simonton and Mike Wenzel

February 16:

Abraham WinnettKnoy

February 17:

Bob Murphy and
Katie Lyon-Pingree

February 18:

Bill Murdoch

February 19:

Nick Babladelis, Gray Fitzgerald,
Elias Hatem and Kathy Hildebrand

February 21:

Juliette Jones

February 22:

Evelyn Hatem

February 23:

Evelyn Eddy and Alma Goodnow

February 24:

Deb Conley and Sophia Waldron

February 26:

Rolf Gesen

February 28:

Jim Hatem

OCWM South Church Thank You

Please click [here](#) to see Gordon Rankin's OCWM thank you message to South Church.

The Office Hours for entering the building are

Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Thursdays 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

However, if you need to enter the building, please call the office to let them

know you will be arriving and please wear a mask and use hand sanitize.

The office will be closed on Monday, February 15 for President's Day.

South Congregational Church | 27 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

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