

The Meetinghouse News

The First Congregational Church of Madison

April 2011

I had an arrangement with the director of a local nursery school to come and give children's sermons to the three and four-year-olds when the holidays arrived. At Christmas, I would bring out the Nativity set, and that was pretty straightforward. The concept of Baby Jesus being God was a little abstract, but that we pay special attention to this birth made sense, mostly. Angels, shepherds, animals – it's all good. But Easter was a challenge. I actually had a parent tell me that if I intended to mention anything about death, they would keep their child home that day. And I wasn't going to be talking about Easter bunnies.



In the meantime, about once a month or so, I was visiting Doris, a very frail lady, tethered to large canister of oxygen in the corner of her living room. She lived alone in a small neighborhood of houses near one of the lakes in town. Although she had one of those portable oxygen units with a shoulder strap, I don't think I ever saw her outside of her house. In spite of this limitation, she found ways to enjoy life very much. She helped her granddaughter with her homework and stayed in contact with her neighbors. Her oxygen tube was long enough to reach the mailbox by the street and that was her daily adventure when the weather allowed.

Doris had a hobby few people knew about or ever would have expected. She raised cecropia moths. Those are the enormous moths you sometimes see in the summer – brownish with big "eyes" on their wings and large, feathery antennae. Very beautiful, a miracle of creation, really. Doris knew what the cecropia caterpillars ate, their perfect environment, and every detail of their life-cycle. It might seem a little creepy to some people, but this was mostly hidden. The cocoons were in a fridge in the garage for much of the year, and when it came time for them to hatch, they went into an aquarium in a side room so that she could watch the transformation. She released the new moths each spring.



Cecropia Moth

For a couple of years, Doris supplied me with my Easter children's sermons. She could actually time the hatching of the moths with Holy Week. I would leave a cocoon in the nursery school in a large jar. By Easter weekend, a moth had emerged and we would talk about it. The kids were fascinated. I would describe to them how believing in Jesus also brings new life, a special life that only God can give – that's what Easter is really all about. Jesus died, but God brought him back to life, something like the caterpillar in the cocoon. When we pray to God, God can make us into a new kind of person. Okay, still a little abstract!

But in the years since Doris has gone, I've found myself paying more attention to butterflies and moths, these temporary visitors to our flower beds, snapping a photo every now and then. Exquisite and fragile, God is able to make them reappear every spring, after a winter of "death." Especially in challenging places, especially when things seem lost, there is a promise of hope, new life, and renewal. Nothing is impossible with God.

See you soon, **Christopher Nichols, Sr. Pastor**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

Easter Sunday

April 24, 2011

Hallelujah!!

*Share this Easter season with us
as we celebrate God's amazing love!!*



Mark your calendars for these important dates.

Sunrise Service

at West Wharf Beach, 6:00 a.m.

(Deacons will host a Continental Breakfast in Hubley Hall of the Church House following Sunrise Service)

Traditional Service

in the Meetinghouse, 10:00 a.m.

(Children's Easter Egg Hunt on the Front lawn 11:00 a.m. between Services)

Contemporary Service

in the Chapel of the Church House, 11:45 a.m.



Lenten Breakfast

WOMEN'S LEAGUE PRAYER BREAKFAST

All women are invited to a Lenten Communion Breakfast at **9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 20 in Hubley Hall of the Church House.** Join us for a time of fellowship and communion led by Rev. Kathryn King, Acting Pastor for the Northford Congregational Church. A light breakfast of hot cross buns, coffee and juice will be served.

MAUNDY THURSDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE

Thursday, April 21st come experience this beautiful service of scripture readings that tell the story of Jesus' trial, crucifixion, and burial, accompanied by the gradual extinguishing of candles. We will gather in the **Meetinghouse at 7:30 p.m.**



EASTER FLOWER ORDER & DEDICATION

Each year we decorate the Meetinghouse
for Easter Sunday Worship with flowers.

If you wish to purchase one, please complete the form below
and return it, along with \$10.00,
to the church office by **April 10, 2011.**

NAME

I would like the Dedication in the bulletin to read:

(Example: Given in memory of John Doe by Mary and Joe Doe)

Please check mark one of the following:

- I wish to pick up my plant after the 10:00 a.m. service, Easter Sunday.
- I wish to have a Deacon deliver my plant to someone homebound.

Please make your check of \$10.00 payable to
The First Congregational Church marking it "Easter Flower".

DEADLINE IS SUNDAY, April 10, 2011



LCM Caring, Coffee and Confidentiality

Caring, coffee and confidentiality are the tenets of the Lay Caring Ministry's recently established Cancer Support Group. The group is open to anyone touched by cancer – patient, caregiver, someone looking for answers. It is a place to talk, to listen, and to share, be it fears, lessons learned, or experiences. Whatever is said there is kept there. You are welcome to join us for one meeting, or for many. The date of our next meeting is posted in the Events Calendar on our church's website, on the LCM bulletin board, and in the Sunday bulletin. For further information, please call the church office at 203-245-2739, x-20.

The group has encouraged the LCM to purchase two books which should be on our shelf soon. The first one is *Cancer Etiquette: What to Say, What to Do When Someone You Know or Love Has Cancer* by Rosanne Kallick. The author offers

excellent advice with anecdotal examples of what to say and not to say (or do) when you have a loved one diagnosed with cancer. It is an excellent gift for anyone in the health care field.

The other is *Just Get Me Through This: The Practical Guide to Breast Cancer* by Deborah A. Cohen. This book is highly recommended to anyone who has breast cancer, has a family or friend with the disease, or simply wants to better understand the breast cancer experience.

The Lay Caring Ministry is trying to fill our area of the Parlor Library with current books written to help readers cope with life's stressful, transitional, and sometimes tragic moments.

We welcome book recommendations and reviews.

Carol Robbins
LCM Chair



COME AND CELEBRATE THE EASTER SEASON WITH US BY PRAISING AND WORSHIPPING GOD IN A NEW AND

**DIFFERENT WAY!
CONTEMPORARY
WORSHIP SERVICE**

"sharing and praising God together"



Please join us for this amazing worship experience. The service is held at 11:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each Sunday in the Chapel which is in the building next to the church.

The service includes song lyrics and inspirational photos and videos displayed on a screen, along with live music with keyboard, guitars, and singers. The scripture-based sermons, given by the Church's Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Chris Nichols, are the same as at the traditional 10:00 a.m. service.

Check it out on our Church web site and  Find us on Facebook to hear some of the contemporary worship songs.

"The Contemporary Service is an incredible experience. The songs, the visuals, the spirit . . . all are truly amazing."
(recent comment on Facebook)



Here's where to get the latest scoop on what's happening musically in the church!
For even more information, call Nathan at: (203) 245-2739, ext. 12.



“BUY-A-KEY” FUNDRAISER UPDATE!

WE DID IT!!! Thank you to everyone who contributed toward funding the recovering of the historic 1930 Moller organ's ivory keytops! All keys have now been “sponsored”! Begun only about a month ago, we have now raised over \$3,200—this helps defray the costs *tremendously*.

The list below was generated March 17th—if your name is not on this list and you contributed after this date, thank you! Donations will still be gratefully accepted as every one helps to bring our costs down. The keys are slated to be recovered in bone through the month of June.

Our sponsors are:

Caryl Anderson
Nathan Bayreuther
Teddy Bidney
Kathleen Bidney-Singewald
Robert & Joanne Blake (4)
The Brown Family
Pinky Chidsey
Jamie Diglio
Margaret Diglio
Matthew Diglio
Vincent Diglio
Douglas Ewers
Connor Favre
Tyler Favre
Anne Woodruff Frank
Maureen Frisbie
Frank & Yvonne Furth (4)
Barb Genter (10)
Robert & Taylor Girard
Shirley Green
Robert Green
Dave Grimm & Ruth Raleigh
(4)
Marion Greim (2)
Dave & Candice Guerette
Robert & Pauline Hale

Barbara Hirst
The Holdridge Family
Rita & Lyle Holmberg
Adam & Alison Hubley
Anne Hull
Gunnar Johnson
Eileen Johnson
Marilyn Johnson (3)
Harold Landis (2)
Esther Landis (2)
Hank & Pam Lunn
Linda K. Macy
Nancy Mallory
Ted Mallory
Claudia Marks
Rob Mead
Jeremiah Mead
Helena Meader
Kris Miller
Ed Miller
Jim & Marianne Mitchell (3)
Sylvia Morrison (2)
Cynthia Nethercut
Richard & Cynthia O'Sullivan
Meghan & Thomas O'Sullivan
The Pardo Family



Carol Peragine
Karin Peterson (5)
Jamie Pinilla-O'Dea
The Pitts Family
Colin Reeve
Marie Reeve
Timothy J. Ressler
Carol Robbins
Ann Sachs
David Satterwhite
Lee Satterwhite
Ray & Robin Shaw
Dean Singewald
Nora Beth Smith
Mark Sorensen
Bennett Arvid Sprague
Jeff & Ellen Swiggett
Denise Tucker
Will Tuthill & Melanie Clark
Susan Wenderoth
Jennifer Wenderoth
Lindsay West
Erica West
Brian West

MUSIC AT THE MEETINGHOUSE: FIVE FRIDAYS LENTEN CONCERT SERIES!

It's that time of year again—the Five Friday Lenten Concert Series is back! For the last five Fridays of Lent, from 12:15-12:45 pm, the public is invited to bring their lunch into the sanctuary and enjoy a half-hour concert of reflective and meditative music performed on the historic 1930 Moller organ by local organists.

This year, the performers are:

March 25th: Brett Terry, Yale University graduate student

April 1st: Andy Kotylo, organist at Trinity Church in New Haven

April 8th: Brett Judson, Yale University graduate student

April 15th: Gary Snowbeck, organist at North Branford Congregational Church

April 22nd: Nathan Bayreuther, organist at Madison Congregational Church

You are invited to come, and bring a friend or co-worker with you! The concerts are free as the Music Department's Lenten gift to the community.



EASTER HANDBELL ROTATION SIGN-UP!

The next four-week handbell rotation sign-up sheet for Easter has been posted in Angela Hubley Hall! The rehearsal dates are:

- Tuesday, March 29th, 7:30-8:30 pm
- Tuesday, April 5th, 7:30-8:30 pm
- Tuesday April 12th, 7:30-8:30 pm
- Tuesday, April 19th, 7:30-8:30 pm
- **Play in church: Easter Sunday, April 24th, 10:00 am**



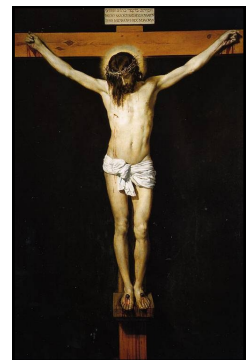
UPCOMING LENT & EASTER MUSIC

Jean-Baptiste Faure's *The Palms* ("Les Rameaux") will be sung by the Adult Choir (with David Keiser singing the baritone solo) on Palm Sunday. A popular choral work, Faure's music expresses the jubilation of the crowd who has come to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, desperate to "regain freedom from degradation".

On Maundy Thursday, the Adult Choir will be presenting music evoking images of beauty and are also reflective, haunting and inspirational. *Eyes of Heaven*, by Ruth Elaine Schram, takes us on a journey from when Christ was born to when He was transfigured and finally to the cross. *Ah, Holy Jesus*, arranged by Craig Courtney and based on the tune *Herzliebster Jesu* from 1640, places us squarely at the bottom of the cross as we watch His death and realize His sacrifice. Joseph Martin's *He Loved Them to the End* is a heart-breaking piece that leaves us with hope for the Resurrection to come.

Guest musicians will join us as music will fill the sanctuary on Easter Sunday! The choral anthem, *Raise Your Joys and Triumphs High* by Mary McDonald, is a powerful work accompanied by both the organ and piano.

It will be a spectacular celebration of Christ's Resurrection!



If you are interested in singing with the Adult Choir for Maundy Thursday and Easter, please let Nathan know no later than Wednesday, March 30th.

The Choir hopes you will join them!

OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE ADULT MINISTRY COMMISSION

Explorations - Meeting God in the most Unexpected Places –You are invited to join us for a weekly time of fellowship, prayer and spiritual growth meant to stretch your faith led by Rev. Nichols. Traveling together, using our Bibles, current authors and our own life experiences, we will find God in the news and our daily lives. We will meet on the **first and second Tuesdays of the month. A light supper will be available at 6:00 p.m. in Hubley Hall. The group will meet 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the Parlor.**



**Pastor's
Study
Group**

Women's Connection – April 6th, 7:00 p.m. at the home of Beth Abbott, 121 Overbrook Road, Madison - All women are warmly invited for a great evening of fellowship and spiritual encouragement from God's Word! Women's Connection meets on the first Wednesday of each month. Hope you can come and bring a friend! If you have any questions, contact Beth Abbott at 203-421-4105 or bethabbott@snet.net.



*Get
Connected*

Men's Breakfast Group - Men, YOU yes YOU are invited to **JOIN US in the Parlor on Tuesday mornings 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.** If you need to leave early it's OK. Just turn up as you are able, feel free to bring a friend. This is a great opportunity to meet with fellow men of all ages in open discussion of God's word. Need more information, wish to be added to our list, contact the office. We look forward to seeing you.

**Men's
Group
News**



Women's Bible Study! To prepare our hearts and minds in this season of Lent and Easter; All women are warmly invited to attend a 6 week study of the book of **Hebrews!** We will meet **Fridays, 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., March 11th - April 15th**, at Sheri Pasqualoni's, 6 John's Path. Come for all sessions or as many as you can – You are welcome at any time. For more information, please call Kathy Nichols 203-318-0044.



CD Ministry - Adult Ministry has purchased copies of the New Testament on CD which are available in the Library. The Library, located in the Parlor, is an honor system based process for you to take books as you wish and then return for the next person to enjoy.



It's Spring and Wally's mind turns to outdoor work!! As you prepare your beds and begin your planting, if you have any extra plants or flowers that you would like to donate, Wally will make good use of them around the church property

WOMEN'S LEAGUE LUNCHEON
THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2011

in Hubley Hall of the Church House.

April's monthly gathering will begin at 12 noon with a brief reflection, then luncheon, followed by our speaker.

Nancy Ford, a member of the Westbrook Congregational Church, will be talking to us about the Stephen Ministry.

The Stephen Ministry is a program led by trained lay-people which offers support to a parishioner who is undergoing a difficult time in his/her life.

All women of the church and their friends are invited to attend. If you are not on the calling list, please call the Church Office (203-245-2739 x 20) to make your reservation.



WORSHIP ON WEDNESDAY

Wed. April 27th at 7:30 p.m.
 in the Chapel of the Church House.

**"DEAN'S LIFE JOURNEY IN FAITH
 MEETS JESUS' SOCIAL JUSTICE AGENDA"**

The message will be given by fellow church member **Dean Singewald**, who has served as a deacon, on the Worship and Membership Commissions, and currently the Outreach Commission. Dean will speak about his life devoid of religion, to becoming a Catholic, and now a Congregationalist. He'll relate how his faith led him to his Underground Church and to standing up for the oppressed and less fortunate as he followed Jesus' Social Justice Agenda.

Please note that this WOW service will take place on the **fourth** Wednesday in April to avoid Holy Week programming. The service will also include special music, prayers, and readings. If you would like to share a poem, prayer, or reading or play a musical instrument, please contact alisonhubley@gmail.com.

If you need a ride or childcare, please contact the church office by Friday, April 22nd.



HAVE YOU HEARD? There is a lot going on at FCC Madison and we want to share all the good news with you! We now have 2 new ways for you to stay up to date and informed about all that is going on here! **Email notices and Facebook!!**

JOIN OUR EMAIL DATABASE - Receive the Meetinghouse News and other important announcements and information via email. Here's how: Go to our website, www.fccmadison.org and click the blue and yellow 'Join Email List' link on the right side of our homepage. This will bring you to a sign up page. You will receive an email from a company called Constant Contact with final instructions to complete your registration. Go ahead and get signed up and soon you'll receive regular updates to keep you informed!



ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK? Well, First Congregational Church of Madison, CT has a Facebook group page!! Friend us and keep up with all the good stuff going on in our church. You'll get invitations and reminders about events, read comments and view photos. You can even see Rev. Nichols' latest sermon posted there! Go to our website, www.fccmadison.org and click on the Facebook logo link on the right side of the main page to friend First Congregational Church of Madison, CT.



UPCOMING FELLOWSHIP EVENTS – *Come and join in the fun and fellowship!*



Come out on the 9th of April for a night of Bunco in Hubley Hall. The Game will start at 6:30pm. (An easy to learn dice game). Just bring an appetizer to share.

If you would like to bring the kids a movie will be played in the Parlor (Movie to be announced).

Coffee Hour —Please join us for Coffee Hour at 11:00 a.m. in Hubley Hall of the Church House next door. Whether you come after attending the 10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service or before the 11:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship service, you are warmly invited for refreshments and fellowship.



STRAWBERRY JAZZ FESTIVAL ON THE GREEN

June 4th 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.



Activities and events planned include:

Nathan Bayreuther Jazz Trio, food including Strawberry Shortcake and pies, plant sale, games, petting zoo, artist and craft vendors, fire department safety demo, Rotary Amber Alert registration, local authors signing books, *...and much, much more!!!!*

We have invited town civic groups and other non-profits to join us by setting up booths to showcase what they do. Many are participating and we are not charging them for these spaces. We are selling vendor spaces to artisans and crafts people who want to sell their goods. The vendor space is 20'X20' and costs \$40. If you or anyone you know would like a vendor space that day, leave a message with Doug Payette at 203-245-2739 ext. 100.

**This festival is being spearheaded by the Fellowship Commission
but everyone's help is needed to make it successful!!!**

Let us know you can help out by signing up on the volunteer sign up sheet located on the fellowship bulletin board in Hubley Hall. Duties for the day include: setup, cook and distribute food, assist with various games and activities, cleanup, etc.

*There is a planning meeting scheduled for Sunday, April 10th at 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor.
All are welcome to attend. And find out how you can join the fun!!!*





Fun evenings of group games, discussions – and food! - are designed to help you grow closer to God and your friends. Any high school student is welcome – church membership is not required. To stay in the loop for GROUP events,

make sure you are on our e-mail list; simply send a message to Rev. C. Nichols (jcn@snet.net).

GROUP! Meetings. Throughout the year, GROUP meets most **Sunday nights at 5:17p.m.**, at locations announced during the prior week via e-mail and Facebook.

Leadership Team. Every **Thursday at 5:17p.m.**, a group of students gathers in the Church House for fellowship, food, a devotional moment, and planning for GROUP events. Any interested students are welcome!

Confirmation is a meaningful, year-long adventure for high school students leading toward active membership in the First Congregational church of Madison. To participate, simply participate in GROUP activities. Contact Rev. Nichols for more information

July 9—16, 2011 Appalachia Service Project—We have had such a great response to this trip that we are now only taking names for a waiting list!!!

If you have already signed up be sure to get your deposits and payments in ASAP to secure your spot!!



Is this you?

Youth GROUP Yellow Pages!

Check out the list of services our GROUP has to offer!

ALL money raised is going towards each youth's mission trip allowing them to do God's Work.

If you have a job that needs to get done, check out these yellow pages first!

Kate Adams (203) 815-9173

- *Babysitting – up to 5 kids available weekends
- *Shoveling snow
- *Pet Sitting
- *House Cleaning
- *Yard work

Michael Abbondandoio (203) 245-9253

- *Yard Work
- *Shovel Snow
- *Board Games
- *Sports with Kids
- *Tutoring – Social Studies Kindergarten – 6th Grade

Sean Antenucci Weaver (203) 245-9180

- *Yard Work
- *Shovel Snow
- *Odd jobs—you name it!

Chase Briggs (203) 245-0678

- *Lawn Mowing
- *Car Washing
- *Babysitting (Red Cross certified)
- *Dog Walking
- *House/ Yard Maintenance assistance

Bridget Bunda (917) 747-2952

- *Closet Organizing
- *Babysitting
- *Leaf/Snow Removal
- *Dog walking

Valerie Cavanaugh (203) 779-5117

- *Baby sitting (Red Cross certified)
- *Mother's Helper
- *Tutoring – Spanish, Math History, up to 6th Grade

Julia Keene (203) 245-4284

- *Babysitting
- *Pet Sitting
- *House Sitting
- *Tutoring - Math, Spanish, 5th –8th grade

Caroline Lepczyk (203) 245-1386

- *Babysitting – up to 5 kids, available weekends and some weekdays
- *Pet Sitting while you are on vacation
- *Tutoring – K-8th grade math

Meghan O'Sullivan (203) 318-1898

- *Babysitting
- *DELICIOUS Homemade Cheesecake
- *Piano Lessons
- *Pet Sitting/ Dog Walking
- *Need Someone to Edit a Paper? (up to 10th Grade)
- Grocery Shopping

Thomas O'Sullivan (203) 318-1898

- *Babysitting
- *Dog/ Cat Sitting
- *Raking Leaves
- *Bake a Cheesecake
- *Make Lasagna

John Ovia (203) 444 7086

- *Yard Work
- *Shovel Snow
- *Odd jobs—you name it!

How it works...Contact any one of the youth listed above, then **NAME YOUR PRICE!** They will explain all the details

Your donations are greatly accepted for the services our youth will provide

Thank you so much for all your support!

2011 Christian Community Action Anti-Hunger Challenge Help Feed Hungry Families This March & April

Food item or cash donations to the Christian Community Action Food Pantry in New Haven during March and April earns CCA a financial match from the Alan Shawn Feinstein Foundation of Rhode Island for each donation. The more donated, the bigger the match. The CCA Food Pantry is the second largest food pantry in the region, serving more than 600 families and individuals a month (50 percent of whom are children).

Items most needed:

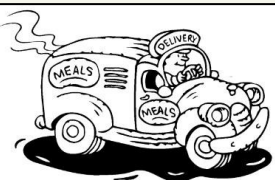
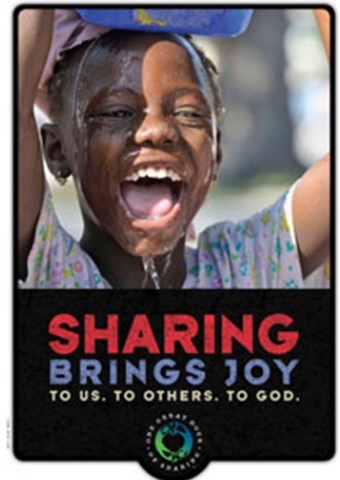
Bags of rice and beans (red or black)
Stuffing / corn bread mix / pasta
Canned fish, fruits, meats and vegetables
Pasta sauce / gravy
Low-sugar cereals / low-sodium soups
Dessert items – Jell-O, pudding mixes, etc.



Third Sunday Mission Moment Special Collection Sunday, April 17th (Palm Sunday)

Beneficiary: One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing is an offering that makes the love of Christ real for individuals and communities around the world who suffer the effects of disaster, conflict, or severe economic hardship, and for those who serve them through gifts of money and time. Today, projects are underway in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada. In the 1990s, receipts have exceeded \$20 million annually. While specific allocations differ in each denomination, all use their One Great Hour of Sharing funds to make possible disaster relief, refugee assistance, development aid and more.



HELP WANTED! Can you drive for meals on wheels once a month on a Tuesday or Wed. from 10:30- 12:00?? If so, please call Vicki Littell at 203 640 9132 or email VLittell@PageTaft.com



The First Congregational Church Of Madison

26 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443
Overlooking the Green
An Open and Affirming Church

Non-profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Madison, CT
Permit #7

Change
Service
Requested

April 2011 Issue

Sunday Worship Services

Traditional Service

10:00 a.m.

In the Meetinghouse

Contemporary Service

11:45 a.m.

In the Chapel

Worship on Wednesday

3rd Wednesday each month

7:30 p.m.

In the Chapel

Sunday School

10:15-11:15 a.m.

Communion Served First
Sunday Each Month

Madison Access TV

Sunday 12:00 noon

Monday 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. &

9:00 p.m.

Note early deadline date!!!

Our Pastors:

The Rev. Christopher Nichols
Senior Pastor

The Rev. Boyd M. Johnson
Minister of Pastoral Care And Visitation

Phone: 203-245-2739

Fax: 203-245-3341

E-mail: mainoffice@fccmadison.org

Website: fccmadison.org

Deadline for the
May issue is
March 31!!

Email to:
Laurie Satterwhite
mainoffice@fccmadison.org

**DEADLINE FOR
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**