

The Meeting House Times

The Congregational Church of Salisbury, United Church of Christ
March 2013



Pamela Wyeth, Editor



Services: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
 Worship & Communion, 1st Sunday of the month at 10:00 a.m

30 Main Street, P.O. Box 392, Salisbury, Connecticut 06068 ~ 860.435.2442 ~ www.salisburycongregational.org

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

I am sure that many of you have stopped by to see the progress in the parish hall. I estimate that we are about 50% through the project, and everything is in full swing. We hope to meet our completion date of the third week of March – just in time for Easter – fingers & toes crossed!

Most of the plumbing rough is in and the rough carpentry has been completed. The walls of the hall have been insulated and the various committees are in the final phases of determining the various finishes and schedules. Since everyone is in complete agreement, there have been lots of meetings! As we are dealing with a 50-year old structure that hasn't been modified or *opened up* since original construction, there have been lots of new discoveries. We have experienced many change orders as we have

attempted to bring our parish hall into the 21st Century.

Some of the modifications that have challenged us are structural. We had to add a microlam beam to support the second floor in the kitchen as well as further strengthen and support the area where the stairs comes down from the second floor in the opposite corner of the hall. Certain code issues for the kitchen have also caused us to scratch our heads..... but progress is our most important product!

This is an exciting time for our church. I personally want to thank all who have pledged so generously, allowing the project to go forward. If there are those who still wish to give – no amount is too small – please consider the importance of this project for the future of our church.

Ward Belcher



... and there goes the wallpaper. For a gallery of photos of the project's progress, visit the church website. There's a link on the home page.

www.salisburycongregational.org

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Growing in Faith Together



ALL THINGS MADE NEW

"Holy is the time and holy is this place."

These are the first words of a poem by Ann Weems called "The Holy in the Ordinary." For me, this short phrase sums up the month of March. It is to be our holiest month this year, with the entirety

of Holy Week and Easter falling within its bounds. We will spend all of March in Lent, culminating with the Palm Sunday Hosannas, the Maundy Thursday tears, and the joy of Easter morning on the very last day of the month. It is to be a month of reflection and preparation, a time of soul tending.

I invite you to actively engage your spirit in cultivating a deeper faith this month. Sow some seeds of contemplation and prayer with the hope of harvesting a closer relationship with God by Spring's first blossom. It is a time of anticipation, as the light slowly brightens and the days become just a bit longer.

Though we will journey with Jesus to Jerusalem this entire month – we can anticipate the glory of the resurrection at the end. We know the ending to the story, so we need not despair as we revisit the familiar scripture. We have lived through many Easters, so we can be certain that we are, indeed, a resurrection people. We know that Christ is ever present in our lives and that as a result we can see and feel the holy in the ordinary.

This month will also mark the winding down of our construction project. I am not willing to predict a finish date for the project, but I feel confident that we will soon be gathering in our holy space. Out of the ordinary – from the dust and the debris – we will create a place that welcomes the stranger, celebrates our community and glorifies God. Together we have journeyed down a difficult path, but we have worked together to steward our beloved treasure of a building into a new era. I like to imagine people gathering for worship and fellowship 40 or 50 or 100 years from now and giving thanks for our careful leadership on this project.

Take some time this month to appreciate the holiness in the ordinary things and moments of your life. Breathe deeply as the warm air finds its way back to our gardens. Listen for the returning birds. Remember that this is the month that ends with the resurrection! All things will be made new in Jesus Christ.

Easter blessings,

Pastor Diane

Email: pastor.diane@salisburycongregational.org

DISCUSSION GROUP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

We are now offering a discussion group for students in grades 7-12 during Sunday School time (10:15 - 11:10). Participants will attend the first part of worship, leaving after the Children's Message. Reverend Duane Estes will facilitate the discussions covering topics of interest identified by the group. Please let the teens in your family know about this new program. Attendance is open ended. Come whenever you want! See Pastor Diane for more information.



Giv2 (Give Squared) is a group of UCC youth & adults giving back to our communities in response to the gifts of God. Together, we explore our faith through service and fellowship.

On **Sunday, March 17th, 1:00 - 5:00** we will be joining efforts with the other youth groups in the Litchfield North Association as part of the **Giv2** program. We will be helping out **the Susan B. Anthony Project**.

The Susan B. Anthony Project is a battered women's shelter located in Torrington. In addition to the shelter they run, they provide counseling and support services for their clients, as well as an educational program for schools and organizations around the Northwest Corner. Our "job" will be to help prepare materials for their teen violence prevention project. We'll fold paper "Cootie Catchers" that are used in the high school educational programs that the Susan B. Anthony project runs. They need hundreds of them folded!!

In addition to folding the cootie catchers, the Susan B. Anthony Project will send one or two of their staff to provide education to our youth and adults about safe dating, appropriate relationships and incest. We will meet with the other students around 1:30, get to know each other, share lunch and complete the assigned tasks.

We will be back in Salisbury by 5:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Pastor Diane as soon as possible so that we can reserve spaces to participate.

A TISKET A TASKET, WHERE ARE THE LITTLE WHITE BASKETS?

For nearly a year ten small white wicker baskets have been missing. They are used on the window sills in the Meeting House at various times of year, but especially Easter and Christmas. We had twenty, one for each window, but ten of them seem to have disappeared from the closet under the front stairs. We're hoping that someone borrowed them for a function and simply forgot to return them. Their ten remaining companions are lonely and look forward to a reunion soon. A ride is available (call 869 824-5896) or leave them at the church, Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Thank you, the Flower Committee

What is....?

What is Lent and How is it Observed?

On the Christian calendar, Lent is the 40-day period from Ash Wednesday to Easter. When it was first observed in the fourth century, its focus was on self-examination and self-denial in preparation for Easter, and Christians used fasting (abstaining from eating food) in the early years as a visible demonstration of this process.

Over the centuries, the strict fasting rules have been relaxed. Today, only Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all Fridays during Lent are considered fasting days in the Catholic Church.

Orthodox Christians are far more rigorous in their observance of fasting during Lent, believing that regular fasting is a crucially important discipline for one's spiritual growth. Meat, dairy products, and eggs (which historically were considered more luxury foods than ordinary breads) aren't allowed, with some additional restrictions on certain days. They can only eat fish (which was historically considered less of a luxury than red meat) on the feasts of the Annunciation and Palm Sunday.

In addition to refraining from eating, Lent is often a time when Christians give up something pleasurable (furthering the focus on self-denial), be it chocolate, meat or coffee. More recently the focus has changed to *doing* something for Lent – a service project, volunteering time, reaching out to a person in need.

Some Protestant denominations such as Anglican and Episcopalian observe Lent, but many Protestant (including the United Church of Christ) attach less significance to the Lenten season than to the individual holy days leading up to Easter.

What is Palm Sunday?

Christians observe Palm Sunday on the Sunday before Easter, celebrating Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The reason they call it Palm Sunday stems from the fact that when Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, a large crowd of people in the city spread out palm branches on the ground before him as a sign of his kingship.

Throughout Jesus' three-year ministry, he downplayed his role as Messiah and sometimes even told people whom he

healed not to say anything about the miracle to others. Palm Sunday is the one exception in which his followers loudly proclaimed his glory to all.

Today, Christians often celebrate Palm Sunday in a joyous, triumphant manner during worship services, emphasizing the glory of Jesus Christ. Our church celebrates with a parade from the White Hart Green, waving palms and singing "All Glory, Laud and Honor," followed by a worship service that includes the reading of the Passion Story.

What is Maundy Thursday?

Within the midst of the Easter season, Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter. The Tennebrae Service draws a connection between the Passover sacrifice, a Jewish tradition, and Jesus Christ's sacrificial role on the cross.

The night before Jesus was crucified, he had a Passover supper with his disciples. (Passover is a Jewish holy day that celebrates God's deliverance of the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt.) After supper, Jesus knew that this would be his final opportunity to instruct his disciples before the crucifixion, so he talked at length about his purposes, what his followers should do in response, and the promise of the Holy Spirit to come. He then washed his disciples' feet in an incredible demonstration of humility and servanthood. Finally, he gave bread and wine to his disciples and asked them to partake of it in remembrance of him. The act of partaking bread and wine is called Communion (or the Last Supper) today.

The word Maundy (pronounced mawn-dee) comes from the Latin word *mandatum*, which means "command." The command that this holy day refers to is the one that Jesus gave to his disciples during the Last Supper:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, just like I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13:34–35

Our church recognizes Maundy Thursday with a solemn service of Tenebrae – diminishing light – as we share the story of Jesus' last supper, arrest and crucifixion.

What is Good Friday?

Good Friday — the Friday before Easter — marks the day on which Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross for the sins of the world. The term Good Friday might be a bit confusing if you associate good with happy. Good Friday isn't a happy day, but its name is a reminder that humans can only be considered good because of what happened on that day.

Some believe that its name was originally God's Friday, which, over the years, became its present name. In Germany, Christians call it Quiet Friday (from noon on Friday until Easter morning, church bells remain silent). Christians in other parts of Europe call it Great Friday or Holy Friday.

Good Friday is a day of mourning and sorrow over the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and a reminder that the sins of all people made it necessary for him to die in the first place. It's also a day of gratitude for the supreme sacrifice that he made.

What and When is Easter?

Easter is the single most important holy day of the Christian Church. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the central event in Christianity. To Christians, the resurrection backs up Jesus' claim that he had the authority to die for the sins of the world and the power to come back to life again. It also gives hope to Christians that they too will experience a resurrected life in heaven.

The exact day of the year that Easter falls on is based on the lunar calendar and tied to the start of the solar spring. It falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after March 21st (the vernal equinox). It can't come before March 22nd or after April 25th.

No one knows for certain where the term Easter came from, but one theory is that it's derived from the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre, who was connected with fertility and spring. If so, Christians named their high holy day Easter aiming to replace the pagan celebration of spring with their own holiday — like they did with Christmas. Easter is also often known as Pasch, which comes from the Hebrew word *Pesach*, meaning "Passover."

Adapted from "Christianity For Dummies" by Richard Wagner



Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday: March 24th, 9:50 a.m.

We will join our neighbors from St. John's Episcopal Church in the annual Palm Sunday procession. We convene on the lawn at the White Hart Inn and share a time of prayer about 9:50 a.m. Then we march down Main Street, singing All Glory, Laud and Honor. We gather for our regular worship service in the Meeting House. We will read the passion story and prepare ourselves for Holy Week.

Tenebrae Service

Thursday, March 28th, 7:00 p.m.

We gather for this solemn service of remembrance of Christ's last hours with his disciples. The diminishing light, powerful music and words of scripture dramatize this important story of our Christian heritage.



Easter Sunday Sunrise Service

March 31st at 6:30 a.m.
at the Town Grove



We will gather with our neighbors from the Methodist Church to welcome the dawn of Easter Sunday. We will celebrate the empty tomb found at dawn that first Easter. Join us for a memorable morning on the shores of Lake Wononscopomuc and a joyous breakfast afterward.

Easter Sunday Worship in the Meeting House March 31st at 10:00 a.m.

A joy filled service of worship with music by both the Bell Choir and the Adult Choir. Our church family will gather and extend an extravagant welcome to visitors on this holiest day of the year. (The Parish Hall renovation is supposed to be completed by this day!)



BOOK DISCUSSION

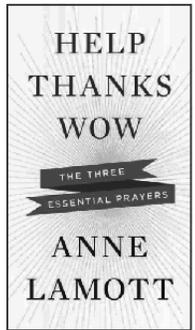
THURSDAY, MARCH 21ST, 10:00 - 11:30

In her book *Help, Thanks, Wow* New York Times bestselling author Anne Lamott writes about the three simple prayers essential to coming through tough times, difficult days and the hardships of daily life.

Readers of all ages have followed and cherished Anne Lamott's funny and perceptive writing about her own faith through decades of trial and error. And in her new book, *Help, Thanks, Wow*, she has coalesced everything she knows about prayer to these fundamentals.

It is these three prayers – asking for assistance from a higher power, appreciating what we have that is good, and feeling awe at the world around us – that can get us through the day and can show us the way forward. In *Help, Thanks, Wow*, Lamott recounts how she came to these insights, explains what they mean to her and how they have helped, and explores how others have embraced these same ideas.

Insightful and honest as only Anne Lamott can be, *Help, Thanks, Wow* is the everyday faith book that new Lamott readers will love and longtime Lamott fans will treasure. *from Amazon.com*



SILVER LAKE OPENS REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER 2013 CONFERENCES

To learn more, visit silverlakeect.org
To register, visit
silverlakeect.org/register



A LISTENING

*Going through Lent
is a listening.
When we listen
to the word,
we hear
where we are so
blatantly
unliving.
If we listen to the word,
and hallow it
into our lives,
we hear
how we can so
abundantly
live again.*

~ Ann Weams

COMMITTEE FAIR ~ MARCH 3RD

Are you ready to get involved in church activities but just not sure what you want to do? Now is the time to find out. On Sunday March 3rd during coffee hour members of the various committees will be available to talk about their activities and answer questions. See you at the Committee Fair on March 3rd.

Kathy Mera

Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust

As we observe Lent, let us be mindful of our imminent mortality. Let us repent for being reckless, negligent and sometimes ungrateful for this precious gift of life. And from this day forward, let us never take another day for granted.

UCC Daily Devotional

GIVE IT UP! LENT2013

1 MARCH Think of someone you need to thank and write them an old-fashioned thank-you note. Even if it's just to say "thank you for being you."

2 MARCH Give up the television for just one night! Read a great book instead.

3 MARCH Give up making excuses for not going to church. It's Sunday; just go! (Sundays are actually "in" Lent but not "of" Lent. Sundays aren't counted in the 40 days because Sunday is always a "little Easter." Try shouting for joy somewhere, sometime today because it's a "little Easter.")

4 MARCH Say the words of Isaiah 43:1-7 as a prayer. Try putting your name in where it says "Jacob" and "Israel." Do that once, then again, then three times and more if you need to.

5 MARCH Show other people that you value their time. Today, plan to arrive 15 minutes early for everything. Give up being late.

6 MARCH See if you can recycle more than you throw away this week.

7 MARCH Stop stressing about money. It won't help. Plan, don't panic.

8 MARCH Give in. Lent is not just a time to give up. Real repentance may mean giving in, to someone else, admitting they were right. Or that you were also right, but in this case, they just needed it more.

9 MARCH Say goodbye to someone you need to say goodbye to. Whatever the circumstances, good or bad, remember

that "goodbye" comes from "God be with you."

10 MARCH Daylight Savings Time starts today. Spring forward! (And set your clocks ahead an hour, too.)

11 MARCH Give up complicating things. Instead of making mountains out of molehills, be on the lookout for ways to simplify.

12 MARCH The perfect day to give up procrastination. Whatever you've been putting off, do it now.

13 MARCH Give up the Internet. Just for the day. Or even the afternoon. Look past the screen. Look up, look around, look out the window, look for signs of spring.

14 MARCH Say thank you to the person who taught you how to say "I'm sorry."

15 MARCH Go to bed an hour early tonight. Give up being over-tired and possibly cranky. Your family and co-workers will thank you.

16 MARCH Give up at least one of your prejudices. Don't have any? Think again.

17 MARCH Invite someone to church. Tell them what Lent means to you, and why this might be a meaningful time for them to sit next to you in worship.

18 MARCH Give up credit cards. Or at least try not to use them this week.

19 MARCH Lent commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent wandering in the wilderness. Go for a solitary wander through your neighborhood, with no destination in mind. Notice everything. Notice yourself.

20 MARCH Today is the Spring Equinox, when we hang perfectly balanced between light and dark, day and night. The word Lent comes from the lengthening of the daylight hours.

Pray that your life will tip toward the light.

21 MARCH Give up frowning. You might be scaring little children and dogs.

22 MARCH Give up forcing happiness. Let it come to you.

23 MARCH Only God is perfect. You don't have to be. Forgive yourself for mistakes. There are plenty of things worth doing that don't have to be done "right." Give up thinking there's only one right way.

24 MARCH Palm Sunday: Fold your palm fronds into a cross. You can learn how to do it on YouTube ("Making a Palm Cross").

25 MARCH Give up anxiety. It's no fun. What is fun is peace. Anxiety takes over the place where peace wants to play in our hearts. What about losing it?

26 MARCH Challenge those who are pessimistic. Speak to them with an absurd optimism.

27 MARCH Jesus died on the cross. Think about it. Why did it happen? Ask yourself what you truly believe. Now ask God.

28 MARCH Write down ten things you are thankful for. And then write down ten things more.

29 MARCH Give up trying to change other people. Leave that to God. Consider instead changing yourself and how you respond.

30 MARCH Give up stress. Ask stress what it has done for you lately. Bend towards the cross. There is a lot on the other side of it.

MARCH 31 Easter: Give up giving up. Have hope instead. HAPPY EASTER!

FROM THE DEACONS

QUADRAGESIMA AND LENT

In Latin, the term *Quadragesima*, is translated as the fortieth day before Easter. In the Middle Ages the English word lent was adopted which simply meant spring. Lent is the Christian season of preparation before Easter. In Western Christianity, Ash Wednesday marks the first day, or the start of the season of Lent, which begins 40 days prior to Easter.

Traditionally these forty days are marked by fasting, both from foods and festivities, and by other acts of penance. The three traditional practices to be taken up with renewed vigor during Lent include prayer (justice towards God), fasting (justice towards self) and alms-giving (justice towards neighbor). Today Christians will often give up a vice or add a behavior that will bring them closer to God, such as quiet reflection, prayer, and daily scripture reading. Many will also give time or money to charitable organizations.

Lent is traditionally described as lasting for forty days in commemoration of the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the desert before the beginning of his ministry. It's also where he endured temptation by the Satan, according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

I pray that you may further understand Quadragesima, and that this time is one of spiritual blessing and enrichment, self-examination and personal generosity towards your neighbor.

May God Bless you always. Tony Good

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
					World Day of ¹ Prayer	2	
10:00 - Worship & Communion. No church school; crib/toddler care available. OWL's Kitchen collection. 11:30 - Bd. of Trustees <i>Third Sunday in Lent</i>	4	5 4:00 - 5:00 - Comfort & Conversation - in the Parish House upstairs meeting room	6 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	7	8	9 9:00 - 3:30 - Leadership Matters Conference in Glastonbury	
10:00 - Worship & church school; crib/toddler care available. <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins Girl Scout Sunday Fourth Sunday in Lent</i>	11	12 4:00 - 5:00 - Comfort & Conversation - in the Parish House upstairs meeting room	13 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	14	15	16	
10:00 - Worship & church school; crib/toddler care available. 11:30 - Church Council <i>St. Patrick's Day Fifth Sunday in Lent</i>	17	18	19 4:00 - 5:00 - Comfort & Conversation - in the Parish House upstairs meeting room	20 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal <i>Vernal Equinox First Day of Spring</i>	21 10:00 - 11:30 Book discussion*	22	23
24 9:50 - Gather for Palm Sunday Procession; 10:15 - Worship & Church School; crib/toddler care available <i>Palm Sunday Holy Week Begins</i>	25 12:00 - Women's Brown Bag Lunch in the upstairs meeting room	26 5:30 - Bd. of Deacons	27 7:30 - Choir Rehearsal	28 7:00 - Tennebrae Service - Meeting House <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	29 7:00pm - Good Friday Liturgy at Trinity Lime Rock <i>Good Friday</i>	30	
31 6:30 - Sunrise Service - Town Grove* 9:45 - Bell Choir prelude & Worship <i>No Church School; Crib/toddler care for children under 4 Easter Sunday</i>			 Time to Spring Ahead March 10th			* Article in this MHT	

DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH



BLESSINGS ON YOUR MARCH BIRTHDAY

5th Robert Weber
4th Desean Taber
5th Marion Labat-Comesse
6th Olivia May
10th Dave Heck
13th Carrie Babigian
14th Debra Palmer
17th Leanne LaFosse
18th Hawk Blumert
21st Rebecca Offensend
23rd Karin Noyes
31st Lauren Hanlon
31st Sarah Zarbock
31st Maggie Smith

From UCC.org Free Download: Spring Cleaning e-Calendar

Because you cleaned us out of 10,000 Spring Cleaning Lent Devotionals, we thought we'd offer up a bonus item...for FREE!

The Spring Cleaning Lent e-Calendar is now available and can be used with or without the devotional.

May this Lenten season be one of reflection and revelation.

To download the free e-calendar, visit the church website for a link on the home page:

www.salisburycongregational.org

*A poem by Karen Ziel, CMCE
Minister of Faith Formation
CT Conference UCC*

Gracious God,
My repentance calls for humility,
create in me a humble heart.
My failure to give love and receive love requires an open heart,
create in me an open heart.
My need to speak to injustice requires courage,
create in me a courageous spirit.
My faith calls for greater intention and nurture,
create in me a longing too deep to be denied and a willingness to take every opportunity
to grow closer to you in this Lenten season. Amen

HOSANNA BANNER

Offer Jesus our King praises by making this banner for Palm Sunday.

What you need:

- 6 sheets of green construction paper (8" x 11")
- Pencil
- Scissors
- 7 sheets of pastel-colored paper
- Rubber cement or glue
- 7 sheets of white cardstock (8" x 8")
- Hole punch
- Thin ribbon

What you do:

1. Fold the stack of green paper in half. Draw a palm branch on one of the folded sides and cut out all 12 branches.
2. On the pastel-colored paper, draw and cut out block letters to spell the word *Hosanna* – one letter per sheet. Then glue each letter onto a sheet of white paper.
3. Punch one hole in the top of each palm branch and two holes in each letter square (top left and top right corners).
4. Thread the ribbon through a palm branch, letter, palm branch, letter, etc. Tie a knot after each hole to keep the pieces from sliding.



PRAYING WITH JESUS

The second winter unit in Sunday School is *Praying with Jesus*, which not only focuses on the Lord's Prayer but also on the idea that prayer can happen in many different ways in many different kinds of places. Jesus' words, recorded in both Matthew and Luke, were a response to a request from his disciples: "Lord, teach us to pray." Jesus' reply has become a central, virtually unchanged piece of our Christian worship. *Praying with Jesus* will give the children a deeper knowledge of the Lord's Prayer and will guide them in establishing their own prayer lives.

Station leaders for the unit are fantastic adult members of the Clulow, Crain, LaPier, and Smith families. *Barbara Collins*



LEADERSHIP MATTERS

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Connecticut association of United Church Educators (CAUCE) are offering a leadership development event on Saturday, March 9th, from 9:00-3:30 p.m. at the Congregational Church of South Glastonbury, UCC.

A day filled with over 20 workshops, this will be an opportunity for leaders and staff members from local churches across the Connecticut Conference to discover ways to be more effective in their individual ministries, to share best practices, to listen to and learn from one another, and to discover new resources and approaches to their common work.

Log on to: www.ctconfucc.org, then select Upcoming Events: Leadership Matters, to register online. Be in contact with Pastor Diane to become part of a carpool to South Glastonbury. It promises to be a great day! (storm date: March 23rd).

WELCOME OUR NEW SEXTON

Barrie Richardson is our new sexton. He was with us in July on our service trip to Mexico and proved himself to be a hard worker and a young man of good character. We're very pleased to have him on our church staff.



Coming Downstairs

Teddy came thundering down the stairs, much to his father's annoyance.

"Teddy," he called, "how many more times have I got to tell you to come down the stairs quietly? Now, go back up and come down like a civilized human being."

There was a silence, and Teddy reappeared in the front room.

"That's better," said his father. "Now will you always come down stairs like that?"

"Suits me," said Teddy. "I slid down the bannister."



"An Easter bonnet? I thought you were Lady Gaga."