

Congregational Clarion

AMERY CONGREGATIONAL UCC

PASTOR'S POINT

by Barry Schaefer

Hello April



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April 21 is
Easter Sunday

Matthew 28:5-7 ESV

But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (6) He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. (7) Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you."

This month's Pastor's point is but a "minor rant", an attempt to help us all keep, not only Christ in Christ-mas, but to keep Christ Jesus, risen Lord, as central focus of Easter.

The 'Christmas' industry is huge world-wide, but did you know that Christmas only has meaning because of Easter. Easter informs the world that Jesus is Lord, Messiah, and is the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Easter shows the world that Jesus really is who he said he was!

At this time of year we Christians really need to be careful of conflating, or "mixing" secular traditions of a mythical "Easter bunny", with the truly miraculous Easter resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Let us remember that Jesus was, from the beginning of creation, co-creator with God and the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that Jesus left that spot in the cosmos, to be come en-robed in human flesh, to take on the life that we know. Jesus came to live with us, to take upon him our sin, to suffer at the hands of evil persons,

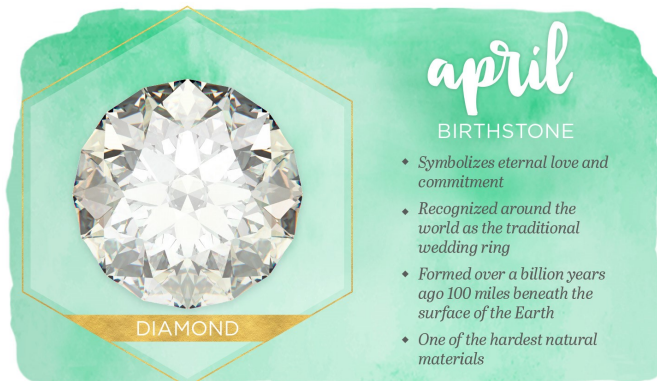
and to be crucified dead upon a cross of torture. The verse quoted from Matthew 28 shows the results of that crucifixion and death, that Jesus was raised to life from the tomb of death. This is big news!

Here is what I think we should emphasize at this time of year, as we prepare to celebrate Easter.

We need to teach our families about these events, 1)Palm Sunday, 2)The Last Supper, 3)Garden of Gethsemane, 4)Good Friday and the 5) and the Resurrection of Easter. In this chain of events, you will see the structure of Holy Week, which is this year April 14—21 (Easter Sunday). Rather than plan family events around the misleading secular events of Easter Bunnies and an obsessive focus on candy, why not focus upon palms, unleavened bread, roasted lamb, a family Good Friday worship service, and an Easter Celebration, where the celebration is not about the Easter Bunny arriving mysteriously overnight, but about a loving God, raising a Son from the grave of death and destruction. This is real miracle if you like the miraculous! Lets teach our kids and families what this Easter season I all about, breaking death's power, life, forgiveness, and proclamation of news so good that even the "stones shall shout out" Jesus lives.



04/02 Scott Smith	04/19 Irene Stindle
04/02 Elsa Rose O'Rourke	04/19 Jill Jackson
04/04 Owen Harris	04/19 Bailey Johnson
04/06 Kelsey Monteith	04/21 Dan Satterlund
04/09 Chris Lindee	04/21 Nancy Hoppe
04/11 Chase Anderson	04/23 Corey Warner
04/12 Marian Peterson	04/24 Jeanne Murphy
04/13 Christine Kopp	04/25 Marion Christensen
04/13 Roy J. Giudice	04/25 Mary Piasecki
04/15 Pat Waterman	04/28 Martin Sigsworth
04/17 John Mayer	04/29 Margie Peterson
04/18 Vicki Betzold	



MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



Golden Age Manor

220 Scholl Street
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-7107
Kathy Picotte
Ruth Ream

Willow Ridge

400 Deronda Street
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-8171
Pat Canham

Riverbend

475 Golfview Lane
715.268.9949
Beth Sorensen
Nyla Roettger

Water's Edge

410 Harriman Ave.
Amery, WI 54001
Betty Jansen

Evergreen Village

611 Harriman Avenue
(715) 268-6640
Marian Peterson
Gussie Fennern

Baldwin Care Center

650 Birch St.
Baldwin, WI 54002
Mary Monson Apt. 27

Memory Care

215 Birch St. W
Amery, WI 54001
Dorothy Mueller
Jeanne Murphy
Evelyn Monteith
Halverson
Ginny Nelson
Sylvia Utter



Wednesdays

April 10 - 3:30 pm H&H, 6:00 pm Soup Supper, 6:30 pm Lenten Service and Rehearsal for Sonrise Easter Service.

April 17 - :30 pm H&H, 6:00 pm Soup Supper, 6:30 pm Lenten Service and Final Rehearsal for Sonrise Easter Service.

April 24 - FUEL Event. H&H after school. Head to Camp Wapo at 5:30 for Dinner and the Presentation of Walk to Emmaus. Please bring \$5 for dinner, if you are able.



from your YOUTH MINISTER

April 11th - Congo Service Night:

Youth in grades 7-12 are asked to help with various service projects after school. Parent pick-up time is 9:45pm. See Charlotte to sign up!



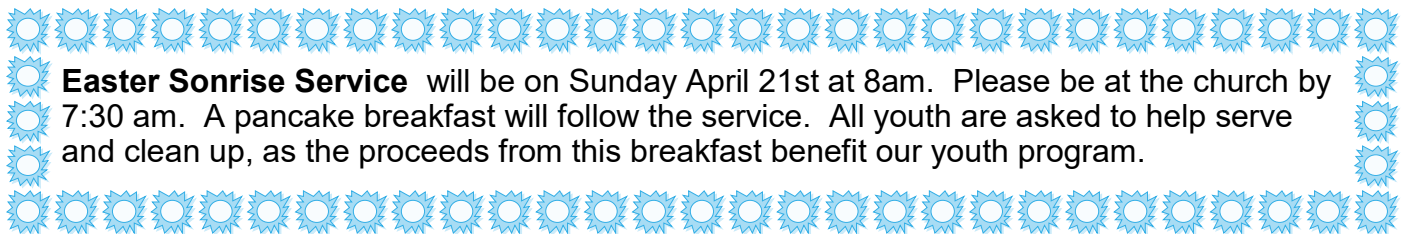
Ruby's Pantry Service Day

Youth Group Ruby's Pantry Service Day is Saturday April 13th. Please be at Congo Church no later than 8am to help serve. Lunch will be provided following clean-up and parent pick-up time is 1pm.



Sunday, April 14th - Silent Messengers - Celebrating a Savior.

Please meet at Congo Church at 4:15 pm. We will go to Faith Community Church in New Richmond for a dinner at 5:00 pm. The play will start at 6:00 pm. This is a free will offering. All proceeds benefit Grace Place and Serenity Home Shelters.



Easter Sonrise Service will be on Sunday April 21st at 8am. Please be at the church by 7:30 am. A pancake breakfast will follow the service. All youth are asked to help serve and clean up, as the proceeds from this breakfast benefit our youth program.

Thursday, April 25th

Feed My Starving Children mobile packing event at the Polk County Fairgrounds in St. Croix Falls. Please ride the bus to Congo after School. We will enjoy supper together then pack food from 6pm - 8 pm. We should be back to Congo around 8:30 pm. Spots are filling up fast - Be sure your son/daughter lets me know ASAP if they would like to participate.

If you can lay down at **NIGHT**
knowing in your **HEART**
that you made someone's day
just a little bit **BETTER**,
YOU HAD A GOOD DAY.



Save Your
Items for Our
Garage Sale

Youth Fundraiser Rummage Sale

As you start your spring cleaning, please remember to set aside your unwanted items for our upcoming rummage sale on Saturday, May 25th from 8 am to 3 pm. Donations will be accepted the week of May 19-24. Thank you!



The Easter Bunny at the candy store, giving a shout out to his Peeps.

Summer Stretch Registration is NOW OPEN through Sunday May 5th.



Summer Stretch is a fun, faith-filled summer ministry for youth who are currently in grades 4-12. We will gather together on Wednesdays July 17, 24 and 31 from 7:30am-4:30pm for a fun day of challenging and rewarding experiences. We will spend the morning doing service projects, have lunch together and spend the afternoon at a fun activity. Our final event is a full day at Valley Fair on Wednesday August 7th. Summer Stretch is a great way to meet people, have fun and do something for others. Cost is \$90 to participate; several fundraiser opportunities are available if financial assistance is needed. Registration forms can be found outside Charlotte's office door. Please see her for more details!

Youth Director Contact Information:

Charlotte Gillen
715.268.7390; ext. 12
715.338.6929 (cell)
Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com



PLAYERS/GREETERS/COFFEE HOSTS 2019 SCHEDULE

January, Trustees
February, Diaconate
March, Mission Team
April, Missions & Social
Concerns
May, Primetimers
June, Congregational Giving

July, Christian Education
August, To be Determined
September, Women of Faith
October, Youth
November, Mission Team
December, To Be Determined



FAMILY TABLE

Please join us at the Congo
Family Table on Wednesday,
April 17 at 11:30 am

Call Rae, the Church Lady,
715-268-7390, by Sunday,
April 14 to make your
reservations.

ALL ARE WELCOME
Free Will Donation

DINNER THEATER

Come and join
us "For the
Love of Lefse"
as the people
of Burbot Lake,
WI get ready
for their annual
Syttende Mai
celebration.
Controversy
erupts over
new and old
ideas about



staging this event, and what it means to be Norse. If you
are Norwegian, or know a Norwegian, you will not want to
miss this musical comedy.

“If we had no winter,
the spring would not
be so pleasant.”

— ANNE BRADSTREET



"For the Love of Lefse" will be played Friday through
Sunday, April 26-28, and May 3-5. Fridays and Saturday
hors d'oeuvres will be served starting at 6 PM. Sundays
the hors d'oeuvres will be served starting at
12:30 PM.

The Players include Lou and Kathy Williamson, Kathy
Christenson, Gail Peterson, Alek and Abby Betzold,
and Chad Leonard.

Ticket pricing: \$20 per ticket

Tickets will be sold by Mission Team Members

**You may also purchase tickets by stopping in or calling the
church office at 715.268.7390 Monday through Friday,
10am to 2pm**

WHAT IS HOLY WEEK?



Holy Week marks the final week of the season of Lent and it recounts the final days of Christ's life, as well as his death, burial, and resurrection. In the early developments of this tradition, Good Friday and Holy Saturday were the first to be designated as holy days. Some early accounts also included Easter Sunday morning. It was not until the 4th century that Thursday became a holy day, and Wednesday was later added in remembrance of Judas' plot to betray Jesus. The remaining days were added

by the middle of the 4th century.

Holy Week was first mentioned by Irenaeus near the end of the 2nd century, though Eusebius believed it dated back to Apostolic times. In the East, "Holy Week was distinguished from the rest of Lent by the extreme strictness of the fast." In fact, some Christians kept an absolute fast during the entire week.

Today, Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday and concludes with the celebration of Jesus Christ's Resurrection.

Holy Week Schedule

Journey through
Holy Week with us.



April 14 10:00 am - Palm Sunday Service

April 18 6:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Lamb dinner

April 19 7:00 pm - Good Friday Community Service

HAPPY EASTER

April 21 8:00 am - Sunrise Service

9:00 am - Easter Breakfast

10:00 am - Worship Service

Maundy Thursday--Properly called "Thursday of the Lord's Supper," this day commemorates the institution of the Eucharist at Jesus' Last Supper. The term "Maundy"



Maundy Thursday Service

**APRIL 18TH
6:00 PM**

reportedly comes from the Latin *mandatum*, referring to the "command" Jesus gave his followers at the Last Supper to love one another (John 13:34). The name may also derive from the Latin *mundo* meaning

Why is Good Friday referred to as "good"? What the Jewish

authorities and Romans did to Jesus was definitely not good (see Matthew chapters 26-27). However, the results of Christ's death

are very good! Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." First Peter 3:18 tells us, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit."



SILENT SERVANTS

By Rae Wooldridge

Nancy Sigsworth is my good friend, my role model and, coincidentally, the Silent Servant pick for the April Clarion.

Two years ago, Nancy went to Mexico for HSCT (Hematopoietic Stem Cell Therapy), to treat her MS. This involved extracting white blood cells from her bone marrow.

These cells were then treated with chemotherapy to make them, in essence, forget they have MS. The cells were then put back into her system. A very grueling procedure.

However, April 8th will be Nancy's two year old "Stemmy birthday." and she is now doing well.

After her treatment, Nancy returned to the church with a huge smile and no hair! Pastor, not one to let an opportunity pass to pick on his buddy, made a comment about Nancy's bald head. "Well, at least mine will grow back" was her quick retort. Nancy, as long as I have known her, is the queen of quick comebacks, sly humor and a ready laugh.

Nancy and I have been friends for almost 20 years. I met Nancy when I started working at Amtec. Nancy was tasked with my office training. Her first question to me was not about Photoshop, Illustrator, spreadsheets or any other computer skills. Rather, she greeted me with, "Hi, I'm Nancy - have you read any of the Left Behind books?" I answered that I had read every one to date, including the children's series. It was that moment we became instant forever friends.

Nancy introduced me to the Congo Church when she requested my help while she taught crafts to our Congo "Critters"- the name of our former youth program. Next, Nancy had me attending WOW on Wednesday nights. Then, when I found out that Nancy acted in Lenten skits, I, of course, had to attend soup suppers and stay to watch Nancy perform. Before long I was actually acting in skits with her - it was great fun as we play so well off each other. Because of Nancy, Barry and the friendly congregation, I started feeling a part of the Congo Family. That, I am fairly certain, was Nancy's intent all along. Nancy knew my spiritual need for this church even before I did. My husband and I became regular attenders and then members. [Good job,

Nancy! Your love for your Congo home and family was, and is, contagious. I am sure Dick and I are not the only ones you brought into the Congo church family through your obvious and enthusiastic love for your Congo home and family.]

What makes Nancy a silent servant? Most of you know that Nancy comes faithfully every Sunday to run the computer for Pastor's services. Neither MS nor a broken leg kept Nancy from this labor of love. However, did you also know that Nancy was once a Sunday School teacher as well as a substitute middle school youth group leader at the Congo? And, that Nancy was the person who ran with the idea of a little community ice cream social, expanding on the plan with unbridled enthusiasm until it became our original block party? If that is not enough, Nancy has delighted audiences with her dinner theater performances, has been on 3

mission trips, was on the board of Christian Ed, co-wrote a Lenten drama, started and led a Bible study, and, to top it off, is a fundraising guru. Oh, did I mention Ruby's Panty? Pastor, really counts on Nancy's knowledge and leadership skills for our monthly food distribution. Nancy is the person who coordinates our distribution site with the Ruby's Pantry administrators and staff - which, as Pastor and I know, takes

great diplomacy and patience.

I guess you could call me a Nancy Sigsworth fan for many reasons. I admire the way Nancy faithfully volunteers her time and skills to our Congo church. And, over the years, she has proven to be a loyal friend. She is the type of friend who you may always count on in good times and bad. - a person who always keeps a promise and would never betray a confidence. Nancy is one who will greet you at church with a hug and a smile, whether she knows you or not. I feel blessed to have Nancy as a friend and as a sister in Christ. I will always be grateful to Nancy for bringing me into the Congo Church family. Thank you Nancy for all you do for me, the church, and anyone in need of compassion, a huge smile and prayer. Thank you for who you are as a child of God and the face of Christ.

Friends are an indispensable part of a meaningful life. They are the ones who share our burdens and multiply our blessings. A true friend sticks by us in our joys and sorrows. In good times and bad, we need friends who will pray for us, listen to us, and lend a comforting hand and an understanding ear when needed.

Beverly LaHaye

5 POWERFUL WAYS PALM SUNDAY REMINDS US THAT JESUS IS THE KING OF KINGS

1. THE PALM BRANCH AS VICTORY

God's Word tells us the people cut palm branches and waved them in the air, laid them out on the ground before Jesus as He rode into the city. The palm branch represented goodness and victory and was symbolic of the final victory He would soon fulfill over death.

"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" 1 Cor. 15:55

2. THE DONKEY AS PEACE

Jesus chose to ride in on a donkey, which directly fulfilled Old Testament prophecy of Zech. 9:9. In Biblical times, it was common for kings or important people to arrive by a procession riding on a donkey. The donkey symbolized peace, so those who chose to ride them showed that they came with peaceful intentions. Jesus even then reminded us that He is the Prince of Peace.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you;

righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Zech. 9:9

3. CHRIST THE KING AND SAVIOR

When the people shouted "Hosanna!" they were hailing Christ as King. That word actually means "save now," and though in their own minds they waited for an earthly king, God had a different way in mind of bringing true salvation to all who would trust in Him.

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!" Ps. 118:26

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Rom. 10:9

4. THE SACRIFICE FOR SALVATION

The Bible says that Jesus wept for Jerusalem. In the midst of the praise of the moment, He knew in His heart that it wouldn't be long that these same people would turn their backs on Him, betray Him, and

crucify Him. His heart broke with the reality of how much they needed a Savior.

"As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it, and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes.'" Luke 19:41-42

5. CHRIST THE CONQUERING KING

Palm Sunday reminds us that the reign of Christ is far greater than any the mind of man could ever conceive or plan. Man looked for someone to fight their battles in the present day world. Yet God had the ultimate plan of sending His Son to fight the final battle over death. This is the greatness of why we celebrate this week. Because of Christ's ultimate sacrifice, we can be set free of death.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,'" John 11:25

Reprinted from crosswalk.com

Palm Sunday

a moment to stop the routine of everyday life ... to worship, pray, share in communion and celebration together.



A Time for Renewal

By Julie Smith

The anticipation of Spring brings with it a hope for renewal. Waiting for the snow to melt, the grass underneath to green and the trees to bud. Sometimes I reflect on this time of year as a more perfect time to make resolutions to renew and grow as individuals, as opposed to the traditional time on the calendar of January 1. As a Christian, this time for renewal lends itself to the Easter season when we reflect on the resurrection of Christ and the miracles surrounding this joyful time in this season of rebirth.



I am encouraged at this time of year to look forward with hope at the upcoming beauty of spring. So many of my contemporaries don't understand why I still choose to live in a place with what some consider "harsh" winters. I love the beauty of snowfalls and the crunch of snow beneath my feet. Nothing beats a hot cup of tea, a cozy fire and a cat on your lap. I love the crispness of Fall and the colors that it brings. Besides if you have a long winter, it helps you appreciate the coming of Spring that much more. And appreciate it I do; by this time of year I can hardly wait for the daffodils. So I view the coming of spring as a chance for new beginnings. I have created several new "resolutions" for myself including the traditional resolutions of exercising more and eating right. I also have a tendency to look back at past mistakes and hope that I can learn from them. Looking at my past frequently brings to mind a poem that was sent to me during a very difficult time of my life, a divorce, and it inspired me and lifted me up. It still inspires me to this day:



Comes the Dawn

by Veronica A. Shoffstall

After awhile you learn the subtle difference between holding a hand and chaining a soul. And you learn that love doesn't mean leaning and company doesn't always mean security. And you begin to learn that kisses aren't contracts and presents aren't promises. And you begin to accept your defeats with your head up and your eyes ahead, with the grace of a woman, not the grief of a child. And you learn to build all your roads on today because tomorrow's ground is too uncertain for plans, and futures have a way of falling down in mid-flight. After awhile you learn that even sunshine burns if you get too much—so you plant your own garden and decorate your own soul instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers. And you learn that you really can endure, that you really are strong, and you really do have worth. And you learn and you learn. With every goodbye you learn.





Council Meeting: March 12, 2019

ATTENDANCE: Sheldon Betzold: Moderator, Virginia Ormsby: Treasurer, Sandy Morris: Clerk, Charlotte Gillen: Youth Director, Chad Leonard: Trustees, Juli Swanson: Christian Education, Sherry Monson: Deacons, Abby Betzold: Congregational Giving, Julie Smith: Recording Secretary

Sheldon opened the meeting with prayer at 6:05 pm.

The Council had many items to discuss this month and to get "caught up". The January meeting was not held due to lack of a quorum, the February meeting was cancelled because of severe weather.

Sheldon reviewed the minutes from the December meeting and they were discussed and approved.

TREASURER: Virginia presented the Treasurer's Report. She reported that the 2018 yearend report ended with only a \$300 gap below expenses. The month of February is showing a deficit and discussion was held that attendance (and church offerings) have been down because of severe weather. Chad made a motion and Abby seconded to wait and review the February budget. It needs to be reviewed by the Trustees, and then Council will vote on it next month. The Treasurer's report for January was voted on and approved.

CLERK: Sandy reported that after extensive work to contact the non-active members of the church roles, 43 of the non-active members have been removed from the role. We recently gained two new members. Our current church enrollment of members is at 168.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Not present.

YOUTH: Char presented her reports for both January and February. She highlighted that the Youth has been active with assisting with Ruby's Pantry. They enjoy serving in this way. She likes to do a service project with the youth every month, an addition to recreational activities.

TRUSTEE: Chad presented the Trustees report. He said that our new Baby Grand Piano was procured through a generous memorial donation. The church's policy for rental of our building was discussed and the Trustees worked to clarify and update the outlines regarding use of the church. Chad also wanted to extend a very huge THANK-YOU to our snow removal team for all their work clearing our sidewalks and parking lot. It has been a challenging winter. Special thanks to: Bill Faughn, Mark Kopp and Howie Monteith

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Juli presented the report from her committee. She said the youth is busy preparing for the Son Rise service to be held April 21 at 8 am. She also said that our church will be hosting the summer VBS this year scheduled for June 23-27.

DIACONATE: Sherry said that she felt some of the banners in the sanctuary need to be replaced and /or updated. Discussion on ways to proceed with that were held.

BOARD OF CONGREGATIONAL GIVING: Abby presented her committee's report. She discussed automated giving and also that her committee is trying to coordinate "Stewardship Minutes" for the 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month.

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS: Not present.

PASTOR REPORT: Pastor Barry was out of town, but presented a copy of his report to the Council.

CALENDAR REVIEW: The April calendar was reviewed and discussed. A few revisions and corrections were made on the calendar and then approved.

NEW BUSINESS: Duane Morris was not present, but submitted to the Council a suggested outline for handling financial transactions in the church. He wanted to provide clarification on certain items and have it voted on by Council to make sure that all appropriate personnel are able to assist the church in this manner. Several motions were discussed and approved and are as follows:

- 1) Sandy motioned that the Chair of the Trustees, the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer should have the authority to conduct financial transactions on church accounts. Juli Swanson 2nd the motion. It was voted on and passed.
- 2) Chad made a motion that the following individuals be authorized to access the Petty Cash accounts: Administrative Assistant, Pastor, Youth Director, and Duane Morris. Juli 2nd the motion, vote was taken and it passed.
- 3) Chad made a motion regarding allowing Duane Morris to remain assisting with "operational checking" with accounts for the church. Juli 2nd the motion, vote was taken and it passed.
- 4) Chad motioned that two individuals in our church be authorized for the processing of funds, picking up and depositing of funds. These 2 individuals are: Duane Morris and Gene Priednow. Juli 2nd the motion, vote was taken and it passed.

The Next Council Meeting is scheduled for April 9 at 6 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Julie E. Smith, Recording Secretary

