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March 2022

From the Pastor's Desk

Greetings of Grace and Peace!

We have been busy at church! New and good things are happening already and more are in the works. I hope that as soon as you feel comfortable with the decrease of COVID infections, you will make your way back to join us in worship, in Bible study, choir, bells, small groups ministries, or some other place where you can re-connect. I, along with many others, have missed seeing **YOU!** We pray we will see you soon.

March 2nd will mark the first day of Lent. We will offer two short services to recognize the beginning of the season and receive ashes. Whatever last year was like, Lent calls us to let go of it and to journey inward, listening to God, seeking direction to a new Easter, a new way of life and resurrection for this year. "Letting go" of something in your daily life and putting the time, energy, or money towards something which will draw you closer to God is at the heart of Lent. What will you take up? Some examples are as follows:

Letting go of sleeping in or lounging on Monday and taking up sharing in Spirit Chat. (10 – 11 AM)

Letting go of eating out and taking up donating the money to a food shelter?

Letting go of a television show or social time and instead taking up reading the Bible or another spiritual book. (Speak to me if you need a suggestion)

Letting go of diving into your meal and taking up giving a prayer of thanksgiving before you eat.

Letting go of noncommitment and taking up being more faithful in word and deeds.

Letting go of idle time and take up serving at a shelter or the church?

Letting go of sleeping in on Sunday mornings and take up attending worship.

Letting go of making excuses and taking up speaking the truth, even to yourself.

If you have any questions about Lent or another subject, I would be happy to speak with you. Not a lecture, just a conversation. Call the office or send me an e-mail. We can meet in the church office, your home, or coffee shop.

During Sunday worship in Lent, we will have a sermon series, “*For God’s Sake*.” Many times, we use that phrase in a derogatory sense. I will be preaching on positive ways to become a more inclusive, loving, integrated, and serving community: *For God’s Sake* and ours. There is so much violence in the world that we need to be light and to hold onto the goodness in which we were created. Jesus gives us some difficult challenges in life, but they are challenges that bring healing and connection to others in the long run.

We are having a study (Wednesdays at 10:30 AM-noon) on the ***Witness at the Cross***. It is a wonderful study by Professor Amy-Jill Levine. On Jesus’ last days he was surrounded by crowds. Many folks were ugly and mean, some were in hiding, others quiet: few were kind and supportive. It is easy to critique the witnesses in our Biblical stories and condemn many of the behaviors. But I think the witnesses also call us to reflect on our dedication and place regarding Jesus. If the arrest and execution of Jesus took place today, where would we find ourselves standing? What would our behavior be? Would we be present or hiding?

Beginning in Lent, ***For God’s Sake***, the world’s and our own, let us deepen our faith and live it out **BOLDLY** in the world.

In Christ’s Light and Love, *Pastor Pat*

From the Deacons' Bench

We all have the gift of prayer and I pass this on to you. I must admit it is not original but it does give words to my thoughts of prayers of thanks.



Heavenly Father we thank you for food and remember the hungry. We thank you for health and remember the sick. We thank you for friends and remember the friendless. We thank you for freedom and remember the enslaved.

May these remembrances stir us to service, that your gifts to us may be passed on and used for others, to use your gifts to us make our world a better place.

Hayden Tibbetts, Deacon

Music Update

As we enter Lent, we enter another season, a season of self - reflection that hopefully leads to self-improvement. These residual days of Winter cause us to anticipate the warmer days of Spring and with it, Easter. It is this anticipation of Holy Week and Easter that has me asking you to consider ramping up your self-improvement by participating in some aspect of the music at Hampden Federated Community Church. Choir singers are happier, weigh less, and look younger than non-singers. Choir members have more friends. It keeps your mind sharp. It glorifies God. If you've ever thought about singing in the choir, this might be a good time to "give it a try" by singing for Palm Sunday and Easter. Who knows, you might enjoy it enough to want to stick around for more. All are welcome!

Another music making opportunity is unfolding before us. There seems to be a lot of interest in DRUMMING. We are tentatively looking at a Sunday after Church gathering time. STAY TUNED for further details.

Bell Choir

Tuesday evenings at 6:00

Choral Choir

Thursday evenings at 7:00



March Birthdays

Birthday Greetings to the following members of our church who celebrate birthdays in March.



| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Bonnie Watson | 03/02 |
| Robert Green | 03/02 |
| Elizabeth Taylor | 03/02 |
| Joseph Tessier | 03/06 |
| Kellie Hummel | 03/11 |
| Beverly Brant | 03/11 |
| Geoffrey Sterling | 03/15 |
| Dennis Chaffee Jr | 03/15 |
| Virginia Richter | 03/17 |
| Jesse Lee | 03/17 |
| Mary Drozdowski | 03/20 |
| Pamela Rogers | 03/20 |
| Anne Collins Jr | 03/22 |
| Elizabeth Warner Godin | 03/23 |
| Emily Warner | 03/23 |
| Lauren Hummel | 03/23 |
| Ronald Richter | 03/24 |
| Sandra Richter | 03/24 |
| Jarrold Smith | 03/26 |
| Erik McKeone | 03/27 |
| Jolette Germain | 03/28 |
| Glenn Olesuk | 03/28 |
| Patricia Ritz | 03/30 |
| Dale Varney | 03/31 |
| Barbara Panek | 03/31 |

Wedding Anniversaries

| | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Carol & George Quinlivan | 03/18 |
| James & Laurie Bliss | 03/21 |



Prayer Corner



Evie Meacham
Phil Stoddard
Dennis
John (Jack) Bennett
Watson Family
Janet Brehaut
Josh G & Family
Mary Lou Black
Joyce Libby
Pat Safford
Tony Rogers
Rollyn Hatch
Yvette
Christopher
Bob Green
Fran Brown
Elsie Bradway

Doreen
Jaoat
Ed
Adam
Jan
Melinda
Ann
Anna
Kelvin
Doug
Barbara
Winnie
Jack Hess
Ed
Sherry & Family
Elaine Selfridge
Bonnie Watson

For those battling cancer
For those that grieve the loss of loved ones
For those working on the COVID vaccines
For those who do not have access to COVID vaccines
For first responders & health care workers
For those impacted by weather disasters
For the people Afghanistan
For the people of Haiti
For the changing climate
For our country
For all world leaders
For those traveling
For shut-ins and those who are isolated
For the homeless
For Asian & Black people & all who are persecuted for simply being
how God created them
For transitions within our church

Names will remain on our Prayer List for one month. If someone needs ongoing prayer, please contact the office to relist their name.

Sympathy to...

*Phyllis Hultstrom and family in the death of
Kenneth Hulstrom, who passed away on
February 2nd.*



Coffee Hour Resumes

The Board of Directors agreed to have a coffee hour following each Sunday service. We will need coffee servers and those who will provide “goodies.” The food does not need to be elaborate or home-made. Store bought cookies, fruit, cracker, cheese, vegetables, or bread are just a few ideas. Sign-up sheet is in the kitchen on the refrigerator. It is not the type of food that matters, but that we can once again gather together and share the stories of our lives.

Memorial Gifts Committee

The Memorial Gifts Committee will meet March 17th at 1 PM in Libby Hall. If your committee has a need, please let a Committee Member or Pastor Pat know beforehand. Gifts purchased by the committee are normally tangible items. Members are Shirley Facey, Joan Harris, Joyce Libby, Janet Modlish, and Pastor Pat. Donations to the Memorial Gifts Fund are always accepted. They can be given to the church in memory of a loved one at the time of death or at any other time.

UCC Virtual Super Saturday- March 19th

Registration Deadline: March 13, 2022

Guest Speaker

Rev. Sarah Drummond

"Planning for a Better Babylon"

For more info please visit <https://www.sneucc.org/>

Wonderful Wednesday Worship

Looking ahead: our next light lunch and worship will be held on March 16th at 12: 30 PM. We have missed seeing and being with you! Mark your calendars so you will be ready. No appointments or conflicts will be scheduled, unless they are an emergency. If you need a ride, call the church office. We will make sure you are here to join us.

Federated Community Church Annual Meeting

will be held on March 27th, following worship. We will have a working meeting where we share in a light lunch of soup and bread along with our usual coffee, tea, and snacks. While we changed the number of folks required to validate it being a legal meeting, we still need **YOU** to attend.

This is a time to ask clarifying questions about what has happened in the past year and to hear about plans the upcoming year. We will approve a budget for the year. As members, we are to hold one another accountable in being good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us. We vote on committees that will carry out the work of the church: with you or on your behalf. We are working on a new church mission statement:

The mission of FCC of Hampden is to create a safe space to know and experience God, learn the stories and ways of Jesus, and share them in the world.

With the Board's approval, the mission statement will be voted on during the meeting. Please attend. You are needed.

Faith Formation Renovation Team

is planning their next community wide outreach program. We will celebrate National Pet month in May. We are looking for input and volunteers for the day. Everyone is invited to gather at 11:30 AM in the fellowship hall for a brainstorming and planning meeting. It will be a short meeting. Your voice and input are important.

Children / Youth Faith Formation News

Leading up to and through the month of March we will be preparing and supporting families through the journey of Lent.

What can we let go of in order to make room for the new? What do we want to invite in? How can we serve others? What gifts do we receive when we serve others?

As always, we incorporate art and music into every service together. The congregation also enjoys sharing the beginning of each service with our young people as we honor each other in community spirit.

If you would like to volunteer with the Children's Program for a fun change of pace on Sunday, please contact Laura Lillibridge by email at beariverfarm@gmail.com.

Missions

For well over two decades bringing a food donation for local shelters was as much a part of Sunday worship as tucking our monetary offerings into a pocket or purse before leaving the house. The adults placed their donations in a designated cabinet, and the children brought theirs into their classrooms for collection, along with their offering envelopes.



As we live into "Connecting in the Spirit" we would like to restore this simple but effective mission outreach practice for the Children's Ministry.

The Children will be collecting food as an ongoing mission for the Community Survival Center of Indian Orchard. Some great protein items that are always needed from their wish list are the following:

- peanut butter
- canned tuna
- hearty soups,
- canned beef stew
- corned beef hash
- canned chicken

Other great items to round out a healthy diet are:

- pasta and sauce
- cereal (hot or cold)
- canned fruits
- canned vegetables
- boxed potatoes

Monetary donations are wonderful as well. Just put in envelope and mark for Survival Center and give to the children when they are collecting the food!

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 *"Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."*

Missions will be making Hope Totes for homeless men, women and children. These bags will be brought to the Springfield Rescue Mission and to be handed out when the homeless families reach out to them, or the Rescue Mission will be delivering lunches in their van! This will run for the month of March and is put together by us, Mission members, and delivered to the Springfield Rescue Mission by the return date of April 10th!



Here is the list of items that they put in EACH Bag;

Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
Alcohol free Mouthwash
Shampoo/Conditioner
Soap/body wash
Hand/Body Lotion
Men or Women Deodorant
Lip Balm
Disposable razors
Shaving Cream

Feminine Hygiene Products
Comb/Brush
Tissues
Rain ponchos
Men or Women T shirts
Men or Women Socks
Men or Women Underwear

When considering a shopping trip, keep in mind Dollar Tree has many of these items for \$1

As Always Thank You Very Much for your continued Generosity and Support of our Missions here at the Federated Community Church of Hampden!

Many Blessings to you and your Family, Joyce Brooks

Spring Ahead



Please note that Daylight Savings begins on Sunday, March 13th. Please remember to set your clocks ahead one hour!



Easter Flowers

The Flower Committee will be ordering plants for Easter. The deadline for ordering plants is April 10th, 2022. Orders may be sent to:

Federated Community Church, PO Box 246, Hampden, MA 01036 or to Elaine DeGray at [18 Brookside Drive, Hampden, MA 01036](#).

Please enclose with your order form, your check made out to "Federated Community Church".

I would like to order:

| Quantity | Cost |
|--------------|---------------------|
| ___ Lily | @ \$10.00 = \$_____ |
| ___ Hyacinth | @ \$7.50 = \$_____ |
| ___ Tulip | @ \$ 7.50 = \$_____ |
| ___ Daffodil | @ \$7.50 = \$_____ |

CHECK TOTAL = \$ _____

I wish to give my plant in memory/honor of (circle one)

YOUR
NAME _____
PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____

Plants may be picked up after the 10:00 am Easter Service on April 17, 2022. Plants that are not picked up after the service will be left in the sanctuary for the following weeks services.

March 2022

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|--|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | 1 6:00 PM AA | 2 12:30 PM & 5:30 PM Ash Wednesday Services | 3 5:00 PM Renovation Team 7:00 PM Choir | 4 7:30 PM AA | 5 |
| 6 10:00 AM Worship *CYFF | 7 9:30 AM Spirit Chat 6:15 PM CE Ministry Team | 8 6:00 PM Bell Choir 6:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Finance | 9 | 10 5:30 PM Renovation Team 7:00 PM Choir | 11 7:30 PM AA | 12 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast |
| 13 10:00 AM Worship * CYFF | 14 9:30 AM Spirit Chat 6:15 PM CE Ministry Team | 15 6:00 PM Bell Choir 6:00 PM AA 7:00 PM BOD | 16 10:30 AM Bible Study 12:30 PM Wednesday Worship | 17 1:00 PM Memorial Gifts 5:30 PM Renovation Team | 18 7:30 PM AA | 19 |
| 20 10:00 AM Worship * CYFF | 21 9:30 AM Spirit Chat 6:15 PM CE Ministry Team | 22 6:00 PM Bell Choir 6:00 PM AA | 23 10:30 AM Bible Study | 24 5:30 PM Renovation Team 7:00 PM Choir | 25 7:30 PM AA | 26 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast |
| 27 10:00 AM Worship Annual Meeting following Worship * CY Faith Form | 28 9:30 AM Spirit Chat 6:15 PM CE Ministry Team | 29 6:00 PM Bell Choir 6:00 PM AA | 30 10:30 AM Bible Study | 31 5:30 PM Renovation Team 7:00 PM Choir | | |

* Children/Youth Faith Formation (CYFF) begins in the classroom