



# Christ Congregational Church, UCC

An Open and Affirming Congregation

*Creating Beloved Community*

Volume 46 No. 4

Be The Church

April 2026

## WORSHIP AND PROGRAMS:

Worship: Remotely and On-Site

Sundays, 10:00AM

### Regular Events:

Adult Choir:

Wednesdays, 6:45PM

Adult Hand Bells:

Wednesdays, 6PM

Prayer Shawl Ministry:

Wednesdays, 10AM

Quilt Guild:

3rd Tuesday, 1PM



### Board Meetings: ZOOM

Christian Ed: Apr. 26, 11:30AM

Council: Apr. 16, 7PM

Deacons: Apr. 9, 7PM

Finance/Property: Apr. 9, 7PM

Missions: Apr. 12, 9AM

Music: Apr. 23, 6:30PM

Vitality: TBD

## PASTOR'S PAGE

"You are all God's children through faith in Christ Jesus... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

~Galatian 3:26 & 28~

When Paul wrote to the Galatians there were some differences in the air that seemed impossible. First, the Jesus movement (as they weren't calling themselves "Christians" yet) had started in its first generation or so with primarily Jewish followers; followers who all shared similar or identical rituals and customs and beliefs. Even if they were coming from different places geographically, they shared a faith structure from which their adherence to Jesus' teachings sprang forth. By the time Paul was doing his mission work and writing his letters many Jesus following communities had come to include large numbers of Gentiles, or non-Jewish people. These folks didn't share much of anything with the Jews of the movement, except for geography. In fact, in some places throughout the ancient Jewish world a deep mistrust of Gentiles was a central part of keeping the Jewish communities alive and thriving. The Gentiles in the movement might have heard Jesus' teachings and understood things differently, or they may have even tried to bring in some of their own religious frameworks and practices to the movement which would have seemed foreign to the Jewish members of the movement.

One such issue was circumcision – an essential part of Jewish law and identity. But Gentile communities didn't practice this, which raised an intense theological question; could they be true followers of Jesus if they weren't circumcised? This one was probably one of the most pressing, but it went along with several other parts of Jewish law that had guided religious life for generations for a significant portion of the movement. The underlying question wasn't only about circumcision. The question, among the original Jewish followers of Jesus, was whether or not the Gentiles could truly be part of Jesus' movement if they weren't going to follow the Law that had guided the Jews for centuries before.

**Continue...**



THE COURIER



...Continued

This is why Paul's argument in Galatians 3 is so important to the early church.

Paul's argument is that what matters most is that God has brought the people together, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey. Paul is telling them that worrying over whether someone is a Jew or a Greek culturally, religiously, or otherwise is irrelevant to the gospel because the distinction doesn't change the nature of God's grace. No one is a slave under the gospel, and no one is free of its responsibility once they're received it. Men and women are all witnesses to the gospel.

We're all one. Everyone BELONGS.

Belonging is the second portion of our DBIE work here at Christ Congregational Church. The letters, as a reminder, stand for: Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, and Equity. Diversity is when we have many people from all sorts of experiences gathering in one community, just like the Galatian church. Look around on a Sunday, or throughout the week in our building and you can see diversity growing in our midst. It's a beautiful thing – but Paul wasn't speaking to a one off situation with the Galatians. Diversity for diversity's sake can cause problems and friction. Belonging is when we intentionally make sure that we are creating the conditions for these diverse people to feel not only welcome; but wholly part of the body of our community. To truly strive for everyone to feel like they belong. Like they're home. From there, and only there, can the work of inclusion start – where we intentionally set the conditions to ensure that all who belong are included in the work of our community however they feel called. Then, once we've done those things, we can cultivate equity; where all members of the body are equal with none standing more superior or influential than another. It's work that will take us 8-10 years, but it's work that every church needs to engage in – especially now.

The start of that work took place last October, but I'm personally challenging each of you to consider engaging with this work directly as we do it. The next step of it takes place on April 25th when we have our next work shop with Dr. Jessica Pepple about micro aggressions and how to spot them, call them out, and confront them within ourselves. If you don't know what a micro aggression is, you definitely should sign up! You can find more information on it further along in this Courier, or you can ask me or any other member of the DBIE steering team. They are: Doug Anderson, Betsey Clifford, Matt Howard, Henok Kaptimer, Dani Kardisco, Anita Keenan, and Betsey Serjak.

I'll see you there, and we can all walk this road together.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Jeff

## Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, Equity Training

Unpacking Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions  
with Dr. Jessica Pepple

**When:** Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup> 9am-1pm

**Who:** ALL ARE WELCOME!

**Why:** Learn more about how you can be apart of creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable community by creating belonging.

Childcare for ages 0-12 is available  
Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided

Registration is preferred



DBIE Training Graphic:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfcr-yX5xG\\_A7ibAgHK5q1-8rMhDHikKPNiHchfknSnR3liA/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfcr-yX5xG_A7ibAgHK5q1-8rMhDHikKPNiHchfknSnR3liA/viewform?usp=header)

# FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Greetings Church!

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

In this season after Easter, we don't leave the story behind—we step into it. Through our sacred stories the resurrection keeps unfolding in new ways: through community, doubt, courage, and love in action. We can take these lessons and move them outside of the church walls and into our communities to share the transformational love of Christ.

## Children (K–6th Grade)

Each week, our Sunday School students will explore how resurrection shows up in real life—through questions, second chances, belonging, and love in action.

### Big Questions We're Asking:

- *What questions do you have?* (Thomas)
- *When do we get another chance?* (Peter)
- *Who helps you feel safe and loved?* (Good Shepherd)
- *What does love look like in action?* (Jesus' commandment)

Through stories, movement, and hands-on activities, kids are learning that *love is alive—and they are part of it.*

## Youth Ministry (grades 7-12)

We have been spending this year getting to know one another, forging new friends, having lots of fun, and connecting the reality of our lives with scripture stories and how Jesus calls us to live.

## Confirmation

Confirmation Check In

Sunday, April 12th @ 11:30am

## Youth Group

This month, we will meet on Friday 4/17 from 6:30-8pm for macaroni and cheese and an evening themed: Overcoming Obstacles.

## Adult Faith Formation

It can become easy to forget the true power of resurrection and new life as we move through life. It can sometimes feel like we're going through the motions. Connecting with others through faith formation opportunities often reinvigorates us and points us to the new ways that Jesus is working in our lives. Please consider joining us for any or all of these opportunities.

### • **Bible 101: Reading the Bible with Curiosity, Context, and Courage**

- ◇ Join us for a six-week adult series exploring the Bible as a library of diverse voices and stories. We'll look at scripture in its historical context, follow themes of justice and liberation, and consider how it speaks to today's challenges. Whether you're new to Bible study or ready to rethink long-held assumptions, this series offers a thoughtful, welcoming space for questions, conversation, and growth. All are welcome.
- ◇ Sunday mornings 9:00-9:45am beginning April 19th-May 24th
- ◇ Sign up using the link in the Nearly Weekly or email me ([ce@brocktonucc.org](mailto:ce@brocktonucc.org))

- **Diversity, Belonging, Equity, and Inclusion Training**

- ◇ Saturday, April 25th 9am-1pm
- ◇ Childcare is available for children ages 0-12.
- ◇ Whether you attended Dr. Pepple's training in October or not, you are encouraged to attend. It will be a great next step if you did, but still extremely worthwhile to come as you can get caught up! Leadership and committee chairs are HIGHLY encouraged to attend. Again, this work is so very important and a way to live out Jesus' radical welcome, acceptance, and inclusion.
- ◇ Sign up using the link in the Nearly Weekly or email me (ce@brocktonucc.org)

I am so grateful for such a vibrant congregation. These opportunities to learn, stretch, and grow together creates deeper connection and belonging for all. I thank God for our ministry together and pray for all to join us in this amazing work that Jesus calls us into.

In resurrection power,  
Dani

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone and the new is here”

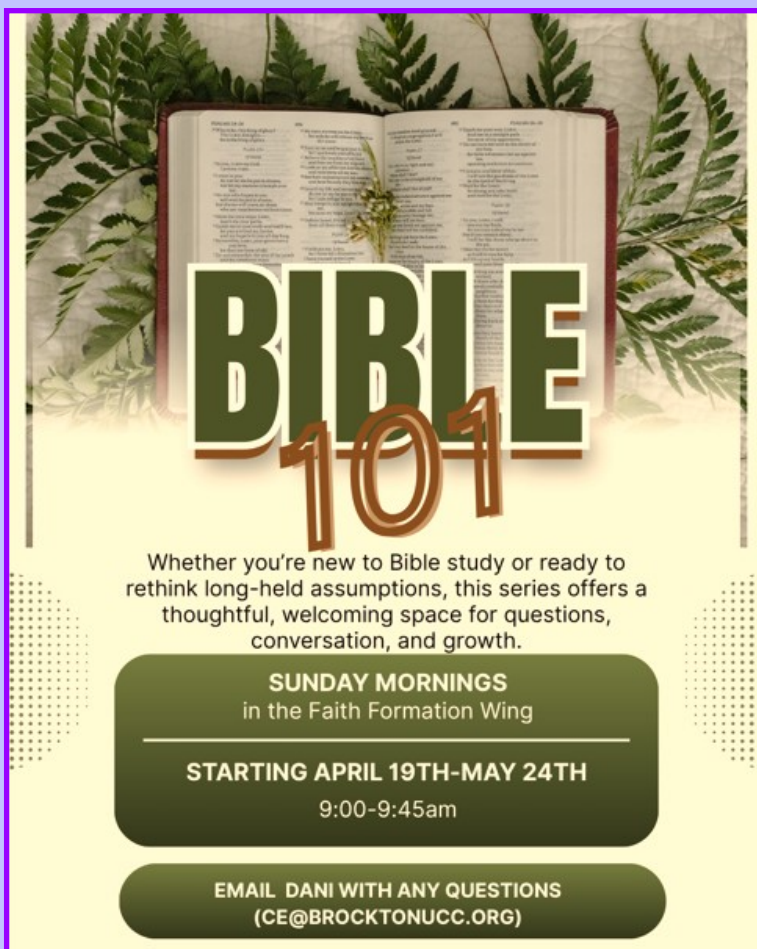
- 2 Corinthians 5:17



**FAITH FORMATION**  
APRIL 5- Easter Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary  
Easter Egg Hunt immediately following worship.  
APRIL 12TH, 19TH, 26TH- Regular Sunday School  
Begin upstairs in worship and move downstairs for Sunday School after the Time for All Ages  
CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC  
BROCKTON, MA



Friday 4/17  
**Youth Group**  
6:30-8:00pm



**BIBLE 101**  
Whether you're new to Bible study or ready to rethink long-held assumptions, this series offers a thoughtful, welcoming space for questions, conversation, and growth.  
**SUNDAY MORNINGS**  
in the Faith Formation Wing  
**STARTING APRIL 19TH-MAY 24TH**  
9:00-9:45am  
EMAIL DANI WITH ANY QUESTIONS  
(CE@BROCKTONUCC.ORG)

Bible 101 Graphic: [https://docs.google.com/forms/de/1FAIpQLSfzclE\\_lfgTscsf2YeWU8m1IzkFqO2hKFYMLbFDwqUT\\_vkWPO/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/de/1FAIpQLSfzclE_lfgTscsf2YeWU8m1IzkFqO2hKFYMLbFDwqUT_vkWPO/viewform?usp=header)



## Sunday School

Turning rocks of pain into rocks of joy!



## Sunday School

Showing kidness and taking care of our neighbors!



## Communion Class

Huge thank you to Jeff and Pat Illsley for teaching and leading.



## March Youth Group

A Light in the Darkness Glow Party



**Intergenerational Worship**  
Celebrating Palm Sunday and Communion



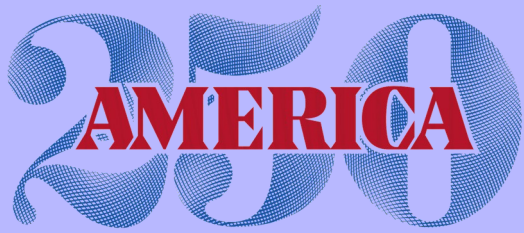
**School of Prophetic Action**  
Spring Cohort 2026

# FROM THE BOARD OF MUSIC

## ARTS & MUSIC AT CHRIST CHURCH

### MIDDAY MUSIC CELEBRATES AMERICA

Come and enjoy Peter Krasinski, guest organist, as he presents a program in celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of the US on **Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>** from 12:15 to 1 pm. Thanks to support from the Easton and Brockton Cultural Councils and other donors, the program is free.



Material donations will be collected to support the community food pantry here at Christ Congregational Church. Suggested items include:

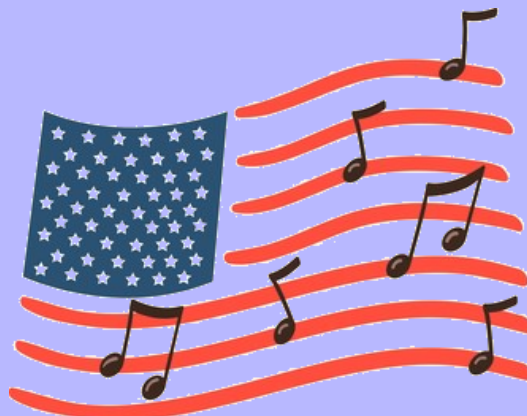


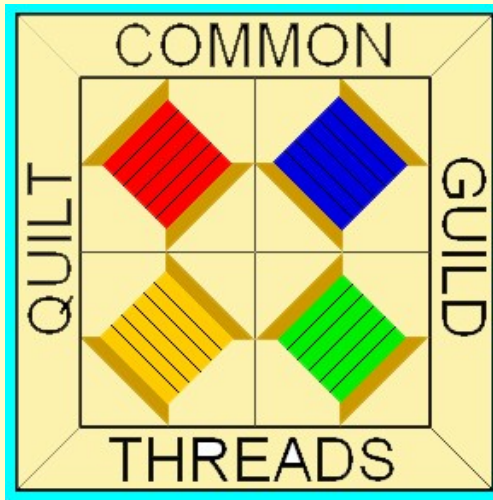
- ◇ Instant Oatmeal
- ◇ Low sugar cereal
- ◇ Shelf stable milk or dairy substitute (soy, oat, almond)
- ◇ Breakfast Bars
- ◇ Tea, coffee, sweetener

So plan now to invite a friend and come to enjoy!

Arts & Music at Christ Church will offer one last Midday Music program on June 17<sup>th</sup>, featuring Pastor Jeff Johnson and Music Director Steve Young, of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Brockton, on piano and organ. Save the Date!

For further information, please email the Arts & Music Planning Group at [arts-music@brocktonucc.org](mailto:arts-music@brocktonucc.org) or speak to any member of the group: *Alice Farnsworth, Betsey Serjak, Candy Savage or Donna Costa.*





Next Meeting:

April 21, 2026 from 1-3pm

Come and join us in fun and fellowship and see what we are all about. All are Welcome!



### Wishing all the best on your Birthdays

Jeffrey Illsley Jr, Calei Nocivelli, Chris Satcher, Thomas Fisher, Fred Hayes, Adriano Swisher-Rosa, Anna Thomas, Pheonyx Mitchell, Katrina Clinton, Tamra Carillo, Debbie Bowman, Sheppo Fisher, Dani Kardisco

*(listed in order of day of month from 1 to 30)*



The Brockton Symphony  
Chamber Players invite you to

## MUSIC FOR FOOD

A Chamber Concert

**Sunday, April 12  
2PM**

Christ Congregational Church  
1350 Pleasant Street, Brockton

**Suggested donation \$25**  
Pay what you wish -  
All are welcome.

Proceeds benefit  
**The Charity Guild's  
Food Programs**  
thecharityguild.org

Scan to help feed families.  
  
Donate today

brocktonsymphony.org  
Sunday, April 12, 2026



## Seeking Attic Treasures Donations

Due to the generosity of our church family and friends, we have sold many "finer fleas" items on Facebook Marketplace. We are always looking for vintage or antiques items, collectibles, new in box items, small pieces of furniture, unique or higher quality items in new or very good pre-owned condition. Please contact Marcia Olson ([baglole.olson@verizon.net](mailto:baglole.olson@verizon.net)) or the church office to make arrangements to drop off your donations



### Find our online sales on Facebook Marketplace

- Enter Marcia's seller profile URL into your browser: <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/profile/1094073446/>
- Scroll down to see "**Marcia's listings**".
- With few exceptions, all items are marked with a "**All proceeds benefit Christ Congregational Church, 1350 Pleasant St., Brockton, MA**" disclaimer in the description.
- You can also go to the Marketplace tab on the Facebook app: [https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/?ref=app\\_tab](https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/?ref=app_tab)
- Enter "**Christ Congregational Church**" AND **Brockton** in the Search Marketplace box.



# BOARD OF MISSIONS

## What's Happening This Month



# CWS

Church World Service Church World Service Kits and Depot

Hebrews 13:16: "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Providing essential sanitary and hygiene products to women in poverty both in the US and around the world shares comfort, confidence, care, and dignity. Please join the Board of Missions in our efforts.

- Christ Congregational Church will again serve as a depot site for the Church World Service truck on Wednesday, May 6th from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Organizations from around the area will drop off their completed kits such as Hygiene kits, school kits, Emergency clean up buckets, and Welcome backpacks and we will help load them into the truck for delivery and disbursement. If you have a free set of hands to load the truck, please see Jan Howard or Betsey Serjak.

- This year the Missions Board purchased 2 cases of women's hygiene products, enough to assemble 20 kits. We will be assembling them after [worship] on Sunday, April 26th.

<https://cwskits.org/assemble-kits/period-packs/>

- Please join us in assembling the kits and if you are able, donate toward the shipping costs to individuals.

Thank you for your partnership!



### MainSpring Casserole Ministry

"Cooking is love made visible".

Last month we delivered 21(including 2 vegan) casseroles to **Father Bill's & MainSpring**. Thank you!

Our next opportunity to serve up a delicious hot dinner to the shelter guests at Father Bill's & MainSpring is in April. We are looking for at least **16 Easy Cheesy Chicken and Veggie casseroles**. We will be handing out foil baking pans and recipes after worship on 3/29 and 4/5. Please drop off your well wrapped and labeled casserole in the freezer in the church kitchen by **Sunday, April 12**. If you can make a casserole, want me to email you the newly revised recipe, or can make a donation to defray the cost, please contact Marcia Olson at ([baglole.olson@verizon.net](mailto:baglole.olson@verizon.net)).

## CCC Food Pantry

The mission team recently purchased new shelving to expand the capacity of our food pantry to better serve our neighbors. Many thanks to **Karl Koza** for installing them. Most of all, thanks to our church family for faithfully filling those shelves week after week.



Shelf-stable, non-perishable donations to our church food pantry are always appreciated as we seek to help those in our community facing food insecurity. Donations can be dropped off at the church Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM and Sunday 9:00 AM – 12:00 NN. Please be sure to check the expiration date!

### Items that are always needed:

- Canned tuna, salmon, chicken and Spam
- Whole grain, low sugar cereals
- Quaker instant oatmeal (Individual packets)
- Breakfast bars (granola, protein and cereal bars)
- Shelf stable milk
- Mac n' cheese, rice, instant potatoes, pasta
- Hearty canned soups, beans, chili
- Peanut butter, almond butter, jelly
- Low sodium vegetables
- Canned fruit in light syrup

### Pantry Extras:

- Condiments
- Cooking oils
- Spices & seasonings
- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate
- Individually wrapped rolls of toilet paper, paper towels, dish soap
- Menstrual products

### Tip for Donating

- **Opt for Pull-Tabs when available:** Canned goods with pull-tab lids are easier for seniors and those experiencing homelessness.



Please bring your bottle/can returns to church in fellowship hall. The money goes to the Christian Education Committee. Please turn in the TABS on the cans, it goes to children with Cancer. See Maurine Upton for further information.



## CONTACT US

### CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

1350 Pleasant Street  
Brockton, MA 02301-2840

Tel: 508-586-3022

Web: [brocktonucc.org](http://brocktonucc.org)

Email: [office@brocktonucc.org](mailto:office@brocktonucc.org)

Office Hours:

**Monday thru Thursday:**

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship Time: 10:00 a.m.



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