



Christ Congregational Church, UCC *An Open and Affirming Congregation* *Creating Beloved Community*

Volume 41 No 5

Be The Church

May 2021

WORSHIP AND PROGRAMS:

Worship: Remotely and On-Site
(with restrictions)

Sundays, 9:55AM
(Music starts at 9:50am)

Regular: Remotely

Bible Study: Wednesdays,
10AM

Prayer Group: Tuesdays, 7PM

Hymn Sings: Wednesdays,
6:45PM

Fiber Fellowship:
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 5PM



Board Meetings: ZOOM

Christian Ed: May 5, 6:30PM

Council: May 20, 7PM

Deacons: May 6, 7PM

Finance/Property: May 13, 7PM

Media/Tech: May 18, 7PM

Missions: May 4, 6:30PM

Music: May 9, 11:30AM

OCC: TBD

Vitality: May 13, 6PM

PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Beloved Community,

Today is May 1st, and tomorrow we will hold our first in person worship in our sanctuary since before the COVID-19 pandemic began. I can remember back to my first time visiting the sanctuary, in June of 2020, and preaching for the search team. I was filled with visions of worshipping with all of you in a beautiful space that simply invites the movement of God's Spirit.

Fast forward to this moment and it's clear to see that the very first stages of our regathering won't resemble what we're used to, or perhaps even what we've been dreaming of these past months during the pandemic – but they are steps nonetheless. I'm reminded of Mark 4:30-32 where Jesus says, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." This pandemic has stripped much of what we know down to the most basic elements, and so although we will start with 35 people in our sanctuary tomorrow we are planting a seed of faith for what God will bring forth in this new spring of our lives. Much will feel familiar, but much will also feel different.

Thank you for your patience and grace over these past few months as we've made our plans to regather in person, and thank you for your patience and grace as we begin the process of regathering for worship in our sanctuary. We will still need patience in the months ahead – but knowing what can come from a mustard seed we can all take a moment to appreciate the joy that comes from even a little bit of hope.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Jeff



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School
@
Home!

Sunday School

Our current Sunday School @ Home series on Scripture and Science is continuing through the month of May. Our Sunday Schoolers have been hearing bible stories, performing experiments and learning about their faith. Keep an eye out for videos to accompany each lesson.



Youth Group

This month, the Youth Group will be co-hosting a Carwash Fundraiser with CE and Vitality on May 2nd from 1-3. Then later in the month they'll meet again on Sunday, May 16th from 3:30-5:00 to help record an experiment for a Sunday School at Home video. With lots of mentos and diet coke, it's sure to be an explosively fun time!



Confirmation Class

Confirmation

This will be the last month our confirmation class meets this year. On May 23rd, the confirmands will help lead the worship service and we'll celebrate the rite of confirmation for this year's class.

May 2nd – Tradition: Priesthood of All Believers

May Classes: May 16th – Where Do You Stand? The Power To Choose (5:00-6:30pm)

May 23rd – Pentecost Sunday: Confirmation Service



Give Our Confirmands A Hand!

We'll be celebrating the rite of confirmation during worship on Pentecost Sunday (May 23rd) and we need your help! We're asking members of the congregation to trace their hands on a piece of paper (notebook or construction, whatever you have) and send it to the office. If you'd like you can also decorate it or write messages inside of the hand to our confirmation class. We'll collect these and use them for a "laying on of hands" during confirmation. It's a way for our congregation to 'show up' for the class and offer support during this important moment in their lives.



Class of
2021

Graduation

Are you (or your child or grandchild) graduating this spring? Let us know so we can celebrate them in June! We are assembling a list of graduates (*high school & higher education*). Please contact the church office: 508-586-3022.

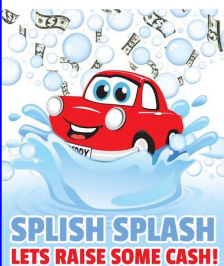


College Scholarships

Scholarship applications have gone out and are due back on June 1st. If you would like an application please reach out to the church office or to Pastor Ann-Marie. Scholarships will be awarded during the month of June.

Camperships

Silver Lake and other church camps are planning to offer sessions of camp this summer! To learn more, check out their website: silverlakeect.org. Please contact Pastor Ann-Marie.



Carwash Fundraiser for the Campership and Scholarship Funds

The Board of Christian Education, the Vitality Committee and the CCC Youth Group are coming together to raise funds in support of church camperships and scholarships. Drive over to the church parking lot on Sunday, May 2nd between 1-3 and get your car washed by our amazing team of volunteers, while you stay comfortably inside. Our recommended donation is \$10-20 for each car, but you are welcome to donate what you can. It's a great way to support our youth and wash the last of winter off your car!



Notes from Murray

As I look around and see the green leaves start to take over the grey and brown colors of winter, my heart grows lighter. As Jesus was resurrected, we see life renew all around us. It is getting warmer and our ability to be outside is greater. I have been listening to music (below) lately that has provided me with solace and inspiration.

In addition to the rejuvenation of the flora, with every passing day, it seems more and more likely that singing and making a joyful noise is on a trajectory to be back to (almost) normal in the coming months. It is heartening and exciting to see this. I know the choir and bells are eager to begin playing and singing together. We all have missed this part of life profoundly! But, it is coming! Stay strong and keep going toward the light.

This is Ralph Vaughan Williams, [Easter from his Five Mystical Songs](#). It is so joyful! Soloist is Don Wilkinson.

[I have enjoyed this song and the words to this song.](#)

Take a walk and enjoy the fresh air. Think peaceful thoughts. Sing a song you enjoy or hum along to a tune you hear at home on the radio. Make music in your lives. Spring has sprung and life is new!

Sincerely,
Murray

MEDIA TECH TEAM

Media Tech is doing a lot of work getting ready for in-person services in May. We have been practicing in the sanctuary, streaming the Sunday services to iron out all the kinks before we start in-person services. As we move forward to returning to full capacity, part of our new normal will include continuing to stream our services to give people an opportunity to watch when they can't be present.

Streaming may seem simple enough, just click the button and watch on youtube right?

But there is a bit of effort that does go into it.

For instance, a typical in-person service will include the following:

- A video camera to capture video, and a camera operator
- Pre-recorded songs to be streamed at specific times during the service. These are recorded by our musicians and enhanced for streaming
- Pre-recorded songs played through the sanctuary's sound system
- A central computer with software that connects to audio and video capture devices, and pushes it out to youtube to stream.



Currently, we have 3 positions to fill at each service who do one of the following:

1. Operate the video camera
2. Run the streaming service and play the videos/music at the right time
3. Operate the songs for all the people in the sanctuary

As we move forward we will be training people in the various aspects of streaming the service with the goal of creating a rotating schedule at each service.

It may seem overwhelming and nerve-wracking, but it's not as hard as it seems. We are there to help and train others so that we can all have a satisfying experience.

If you think you might want to help out with it, let us know at mediatech@brocktonucc.org.

ORGAN COMPLETION COMMITTEE

CHRIST CHURCH PIPE ORGAN SERIES PRESENTS:



Midday Music on May 19th

Streaming online starting at 12 noon

“Songs of Spring and Love”

Featuring Harpist, Alison Read

To receive the link by email, send message to organ@brocktonucc.org

Save the date

MIDDAY MUSIC JUNE 16th

**with Matthew Dion
2021 Graduate of
Oberlin Conservatory**



**We hope we will be able to offer this
as an in-person program
in compliance with the church
COVID guidelines.**

**And maybe we can have our
traditional June
Strawberry Shortcake
celebration following the music!**



LOOKING AHEAD FOR THE ORGAN COMPLETION COMMITTEE

The work of this committee has come to a close, as the funds have been raised, the Choir Division installed and the work signed off and payment completed.

We are pleased to transfer to the Board of Music more than \$6,000 that was raised in excess of our goal of \$166,000. These funds will be used for future maintenance on the organ.

We look forward to a Dedication Concert in Fall 2021, which is being planned by the Board of Music, with help from former OCC members.

Please plan to attend that concert and help celebrate the completion of our church's Austin Organ Opus #2759.

THANK YOU!!

A Note from the Moderator...

Denouncing injustice and proclaiming a vision of an alternative society--God's Kin-dom--was what the prophets like Jeremiah, Amos, and Micah were all about. At Christ Congregational Church we also are called to prophetic ministry. Our commitment to our strategic pathways of racial justice and community engagement are part of our response to that call. In June of last year our Council crafted and circulated a public statement in the wake of the killing of George Floyd and other people of color. That statement was very consciously meant to denounce and proclaim. While statements alone do not usher in the Kin-dom, they can serve to clarify for ourselves and others who we are, what our values are, and to what we are committed. We need to revisit and sometimes revise what we denounce and proclaim. That is why we periodically read our full Statement of Welcome that expresses our Open and Affirming commitment. In the same spirit, please read again our statement from last June, included below, and consider how you might support our work with partners to dismantle racism in the Brockton Area. Please look for forthcoming information about that work and about opportunities to get involved.

A Statement from the Council, June 10, 2020

Our congregation has become increasingly troubled by the racial injustices within our society.

The recent killings of George Floyd in Minneapolis; Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky; Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, Georgia; and many other murders resulting from police brutality against our black and brown brothers and sisters challenges our congregation to awaken from our slumber.

We are a multi-racial, predominantly white church community located in a racially diverse city. These events have called us to act with the knowledge that we have fallen short in the past. William Dickerson of the Brockton Interfaith Community, challenges us: If we are not willing to step up and seek justice, then we are part of the problem.

We publicly commit ourselves to move past complacency and to do the work to become a community that embraces and lives out racial and social justice. It's not enough to be "not racist!" We seek to be anti-racist in our thoughts and actions and to become trusted, active allies of our partners. Led by faith and the example of Jesus, we will strive to leave our comfort zones and to show up in challenging spaces to support those partners. We will work together to dismantle the deeply embedded institutional racism in our city and in our nation.

We confess to not fully understanding what all that may mean and what our role may be. As we push ourselves to show up, we know we also have reflective work to do as a congregation. We are dedicated to educating ourselves, to seeking help in understanding the issues of the black and brown communities, and to moving forward with open eyes, open ears, open minds and open hearts toward the work of eradicating racial injustice.

We pray for courage and guidance as we act as a people of faith called to seek justice for all of humanity.

Barry Shelley, Moderator

Greetings from the **Ministries Support Task Force**. We have been tasked with developing innovative projects in the hope of providing sustainable income streams for our church. There are multiple projects under discussion including:

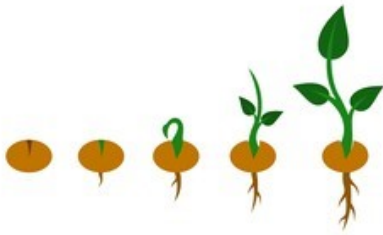
- Yard Sale/ Vendor tables
- Food and Meals: Pie sale, Dessert sale / Family Dinner Takeout / Lunches to go, Picnics
- Business Co-op that allows local businesses and artists to sell their creations
- Church worship video production company
- Online silent Auction



In order for these endeavors to be successful, we will need volunteers and leaders.

Please consider joining us as we work toward continued success and vitality of our church. This is one more exciting aspect of our reopening process; we look forward to seeing you soon! Please reach out to any of the members noted here if you are able to volunteer or have ideas to add to our list.

Members: Deb Bowman, Deana Colby, Donna Costa, Sheppo Fisher, Sue Koza, Lisa Sparling



Stewardship

SNIPPETS

(Not Snippy! Just Zippy!)

According to Luke, and the parable of the mustard seed and the yeast, big and small gifts are cherished and used by God. The mustard seed: so tiny, yet full of promise, as well as the yeast in its rawest form, has the potential and possibility of providing so much fulfilment for all!

We are given so many awesome gifts from God, and perhaps we feel small, or our gifts feel small, but we feel the power of God within us, and through our gifts. We share our bounty so that God can use it to grow us in our relationship with Christ and the community, like the mustard seed grows into a tree, and the yeast expands into bread to sustain us. *Luke 13:18-21*

- *Stewardship is a year-round endeavor utilizing the time, talent and treasure of all!
- *Although our annual pledge drive focuses on the fall and winter, it is never a bad time to submit your pledge, if you have not been able to do so.
- *Just like the mustard seed, your time, talent and treasure have the ability to have a huge effect on our beloved community, no matter how large or small.
- *Pledging is a community action, and it takes everyone to do their part. Please prayerfully consider planting the seeds so our mustard tree can flower and bloom, and provide sustainability for the future.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the beautiful seeds, and God's people that will plant them. They will provide us with blessings today, and into our future. Amen!

I want to thank the Deacons and Christ Congregational Church for the beautiful tulips. Purple is my favorite color. I feel honored to have received them.

Peace and Blessings to All,

Alice Farnsworth



To my Church Family,

I thank everyone that listed the names of those that have passed on that were members and friends of the Church under the Easter Memorials.

You brought back so many nice memories of former members that we all miss. I forgot to add Charlie and Lucy Brown to the list as good friends of all of us. My how the years pass by so quickly!

George Manoogian
The Mister Nice Guy

Dear Deacons - Christ Church,

Thank you for the lovely plant. I know just where I'll plant them the end of the week. Thanks for your thoughtfulness.

Fondly,
Glenna Paananen



Just a note to say

Thank you to all the Christ Church members for their toiless effort in keeping our church alive and kicking during the Covid crisis.

I know that it took a lot of meetings and planning to accomplish this endeavor.

From the bottom of my heart I give you much Love & Kisses.

God Bless You All,
Ruth Copeland

To the Board of Deacons CCC-UCC

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the cards you have sent me and for the Easter plant and Communion kit that was delivered to me. This is an especially difficult time for all of us, and I appreciate the time and thought you have spent to make an uplifting difference in my life.

Sincerely,
Betsy McMahon





Wishing all the best on your Birthdays

James Ferguson, Connor Nocivelli, Sharon Silvernail, Nancy Simonis, Sandra Alden, Sue Koza, Harriet Dunklee, Nancy Wentzell, Richard Calvin, Nora Deyoe, Darlene Gilson, Mickey Carey, Daniel Harrigan, Janet Hodnett, Nathan Herget, Beth Eaton, Linda Sampson, Mary Baker, Keith Allen, Gregory Davis, Bob Cutting, Kathy North, Andrew Eckstrom, Gini Hathaway, Levi Swisher-Rosa, Alice Farnsworth, Sharon Quesnel, Helen Nocivelli-Camara, Salomè Kaptimer, Beatrice McIntire-Smith, Michelle Young-Ferguson
(listed in order of day of month from 1 to 30)

Wednesday Morning Virtual Bible Study

10:00 AM VIA ZOOM

Join us for Wednesday morning Bible Study group. Regulars and newcomers alike are welcome to drop in and check out this adult faith formation opportunity. The group discusses the lectionary scripture readings each week. Hope to see you there!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84061103224>
Meeting ID: 840 6110 3224
+1 929 205 6099 Password: bible or (423861 if calling by phone)



*"Be Still
And
Know that I am God"*
Psalm 46:10



Weekly Silent Prayer Group on Zoom

Tuesdays from 7 PM to 8 PM

I would like to invite you to join me every Tuesday to learn about and experience silent prayer time. Please email me at deb@act-cpa.com or text me at (508)410-3476 to get the zoom link emailed to you.

Peace, Deb Bowman

ZOOM Fiber Fellowship & Crafts



Meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday

From 5:00 - 7:00 PM

Come Knit, Crochet, Needlepoint, crafts, etc.

Or just come for the fellowship!!
(call or email office for zoom link)



FOOD PANTRY

If your own cupboard is bare, please remember you are ALWAYS welcome to help yourself to the food pantry.

We also thank you for all your generous contributions. Please make sure you check the expiration dates before donating.

We would like to replenish our pantry. Please bring an item of two when we gather for indoor service.



Dear Friends,

Thank you all so much for the kind words, prayers, and messages as I prepared for my Ecclesiastical Council. I have been blessed to have such a loving and supportive community on my ordination journey. Thank you!

With much love,

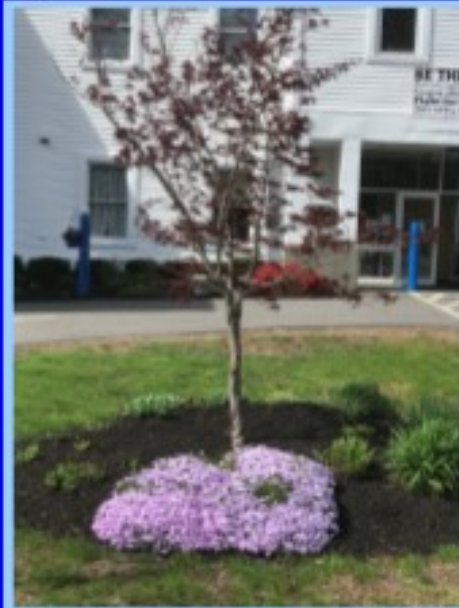
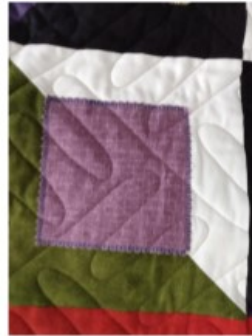
Ann-Marie





COMMON THREADS QUILT GUILD

A couple quilts from Janet Eckstrom that are quilted and completed. Look at the amazing detail.



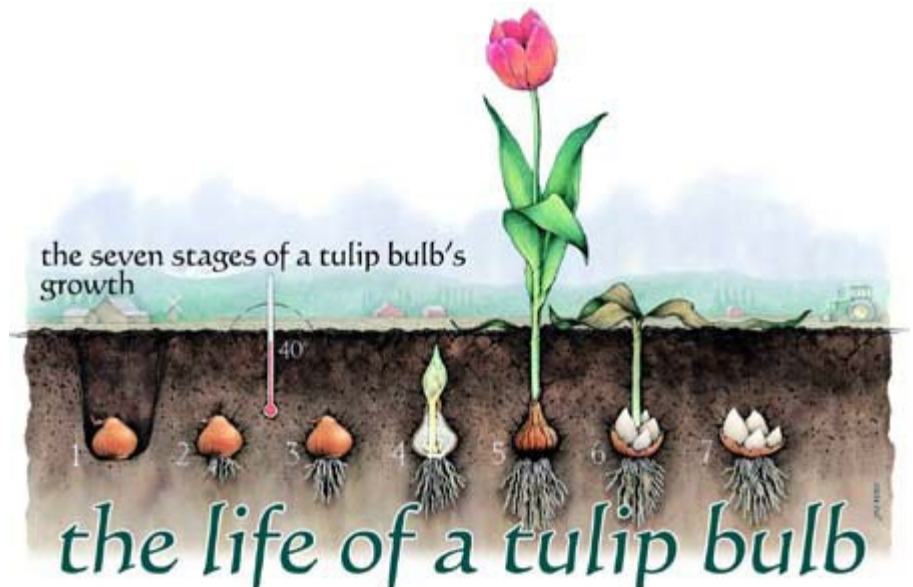
The church gardens are starting to bloom with columbine and tulips near the kitchen door. Some plants have been divided and moved and new ones added.

Grateful thanks to Darlene Gilson, Janet Eckstrom and Thomas Fisher for getting the mulch spread.



We're also introducing a new plant program - Bring Back Your Bulbs!

Now that your Easter plants might be finished blooming, you might be tempted to throw them away. **Don't!** Janet Eckstrom and Sylvia Berry want you to bring back your Easter plants so we can plant the bulbs in the fall. This will add to the tulips that Darlene planted last fall, giving us an ever increasing number of Easter flowers in our own yard for us to enjoy! Leave plants at the church any time from now until August.





MISSIONS

Missions has been busy with the planned calendar of events and agencies and initiatives to support. On Wednesday, May 5th, we will once again host **Depot Day** for area churches to drop off clean-up, hygiene and school kits to Church World Services.

What we are waiting for now is YOUR response to our [survey](#). This will guide us with a project for the balance of the year doing something different. We sure would like your input as to what YOU think is an important project for our Committee to work on and promote.

Due to the virus issues we have been a bit low key this year because we are taking into account many people's situation with this pandemic and do not want to burden families.

Your Mission Scribe,
George Manoogian

Here is a letter from the child we sponsor through the UCC's Global Ministries Child Sponsorship Program. He is from the Philippines.



Damaguete Kalsaman Center for Development
Piñero Subdivision, Sto. Niño Road, Mangnao, 6200 Dumaguete City, Philippines
PO Box 270, Tel. No. (035) 420-6560, email address:

March 4, 2021

Dear sponsors at Christ Congregational Church UCC,

A blessed day everybody! Hi, how are you? I hope you are in good health and are safe together with your family. First of all, thank you for accepting me as your new sponsored child. My name is France Neil A. Pacatang, 7 years old, Born on August 31, 2013 and I am a grade 3 student. I have an older sister named Danielle and an older Brother named Jude, Both are also studying. My mother's name is Belinda, she is a very hardworking person. She is a laundry woman and does house hold work. My father's name is Neil and he is a laborer that carries rice sacks in a store. They are both so happy because of your financial support. I love to dance & video editing. My favorite color is blue, and I don't like tight clothes, vegetables and dirty things. I am also an honor student. My dream is to become a doctor someday. About school, I am having modular classes because we are not allowed to go outside because of COVID-19. We are praying that this pandemic will soon end. Once again, thank you for supporting me and making my dreams come true.



Well Pastor Jeff,
It's official!

Sue and Karl Koza installed the new sign and reattached Murray's sign and prettied it up.



If you or someone you know are caring for an elderly or disabled person in your home, you may be eligible for help. We provide monthly tax-free money to families and caregivers who provide care to disabled and elderly living in their home. Call us today at 781-897-5711 to find out more!



CONTACT US

CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
1350 Pleasant Street
Brockton, MA 02301-2840

Tel: 508-586-3022
Fax: 508-583-7156
Web: brocktonucc.org
Email: office@brocktonucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday thru Thursday:
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship Time: 9:55 a.m.



Can homeless children count on you?

Can you spare 2 hours a week to **PLAY** with homeless children in Brockton, Fall River, New Bedford, or Norwell?

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER ORIENTATIONS:

Wednesday, April 14th

6:00-8:00 PM

Tuesday, May 18th

6:00-8:00 PM

All online via Zoom

Give. Volunteer. Connect

horizonschildren.org/playspace

508.510.3250



Christ Congregational Church, UCC
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Brockton, MA 02301-2840