



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

Volume 43 No. 5

Be The Church

May 2023

WORSHIP AND PROGRAMS:

Worship: Remotely and On-Site

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

Regular: Remotely

Adult Choir:

Wednesdays, 6:45PM

Adult Hand Bells:

Wednesdays, 6PM

Afternoon Hand Bell Group

Wednesdays, 3:15pm

Bible Study: Zoom

Wednesdays, 10AM

Fiber Fellowship: Zoom

2nd Tuesday, 6PM

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Wednesdays, 10AM

Quilt Guild:

3rd Tuesday, 1PM



Board Meetings: ZOOM

Christian Ed: May 10, 6:30PM

Council: May 18, 7PM

Deacons: May 4, 7PM

Finance/Property: May 11, 7PM

Media/Tech: May 16, 7PM

Missions: May 10, 7PM

Music: May 25, 7:00PM

Vitality: May 7, 11:15AM

PASTOR'S PAGE

Dear Friends,

For my Courier article this month I want to highlight an aspect of our church life together that doesn't always get a lot of fanfare – which is leadership development. The simple truth is that any church (but especially a church of our size) can't function very well at all without volunteer leadership – and the members of our church council are not the only volunteers leading our congregation. For our upcoming May meeting we will be called to vote on a slate of nominated volunteers to serve on our various boards and committees – a list that has 54 names on it; each one uniquely qualified and gifted to serve where they are being called.

If it sounds like it would be difficult to even find that many people to simply say yes to volunteering as leaders, it is. If it sounds even harder to find that many people to say yes to volunteering as leaders, and even harder to work out where they might best fit (not simply having them sign on some "dotted line"), it is; which is why I want to extend a special thankyou to not only those who have been nominated – but especially to the small group of dedicated folks who sought them out.

Our Leadership Development Committee (LDC) consists of Barry Shelley as chair, along with Lisa Sparling, Deana Colby, and Matt Howard; and while none of them would seek our recognition for their work they have worked tirelessly to not only find the folks required to lead our congregation faithfully, but they have also taken incredibly special care to refine our process – so that we aren't simply chasing people with a clip board until we fill every seat. The LDC crafted the surveys that have gone out to all of you the past two years, and they have not only received them but they've organized the responses so that they could use your feedback to make sure people are being called to where their gifts might be. I can tell you as someone who has been around churches most of my life (as a pastor's kid, then a seminary student, and now an ordained pastor for the past six years) many churches are still running around with a clipboard, just hoping something will stick. So, thank you especially to Barry, Lisa, Deana, and Matt for all that you've done to make our process with the LDC a process focused on gifts and calling rather than desperate filling of committees.

Thank you also to every one of the 54 people who have said "yes" to leadership in our congregation – whether you feel like the position you've been nominated to is important or not, I can assure you that it is; because God will work with you in that position to advance God's kin-dom if you're open to it. And if you aren't one of the 54 people who are nominated know that God will work with you as well in the midst of our Beloved Community if you allow it. Regardless, please consider sincerely saying thank you to those who step up and step into the work of our lives together because we are blessed to be a church that shows up when there is a need.

Blessings and Peace,

Pastor Jeff



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Greetings, Beloved Community.

April went by in a flash of goodness! We ushered it in with a meaningful intergenerational Palm Sunday worship service, we danced and shouted Alleluia on Easter, and have been quite busy learning about the aftermath of Jesus' resurrection in Sunday School.

As you may have noticed on Easter that the children are participating in ribbon dancing or flagging with Debbie Bowman in the chapel area of the Sanctuary. You may be curious as to why that is and I'd love to shed some light on that for you!

Dancing is mentioned throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, particularly in the Psalms, we are called to dance with joy in praise and thanksgiving to our Creator. Miriam danced before God singing in praise. In the Beatitudes, Jesus says, "Leap with joy for yours in the kingdom of heaven!" This expression of worship is as spirit filled as singing, or praying, or preaching.

Another reason that children are being invited to dance with ribbons during musical moments of worship is that some cannot read or cannot read well enough to follow in a hymnal, so this is their opportunity to participate in worship. Dancing is a tool in our toolbox as we teach our children to worship God.

Dancing is not just for the young in years. Next time "Spirit" is sung in worship, take note that the entire congregation is almost swaying in unison as the music moves us. If you feel like dancing, DANCE! Join our children and Debbie in the chapel or dance in your pew. Let us fill our worship space with as many ways for people to worship God, thank Jesus, and encounter the Holy Spirit.

My prayer for this month is that we release our expectations of ourselves and others to truly experience the goodness that Jesus brings with his Good News! May it be so.

In Peace,
Dani



CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROCKTON, MA

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

Applications due
June 1st

If you are headed to higher education and a part of our beloved community, you are welcome to apply for the scholarships we have available. We will recognize scholarship recipients on Sunday June 11 in morning worship.

You can access the application [here](#).

Please make a copy of the file before entering your information.

All application materials must be submitted by June 1st.

Click the link in the Nearly Weekly for the application or contact Dani at ce@brocktonucc.org with any questions



MAY

FAITH FORMATION @ CCC



On this page you will find what is happening in the wing this month. You can find reminders and more detail about events and more in the mid-monthly Faith and Family Newsletter as well as the Nearly Weekly emails.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

From now until the end of the program year in June, Sunday School (held during worship on the 2nd-4th Sundays) will be combined Kindergarten through 7th grade with break out discussion groups during the lessons.

In April, Sunday School focused on believing even when it is hard, like "Doubting" Thomas and the men on the road to Emmaus. The last Sunday of the month we made placemats for Meals on Wheels to be delivered to people with their meals.

CONFIRMATION

Students 8th grade and up meeting at **11:15am** in the Youth Prayground in the Sanctuary with Pastor Jeff on **May 7 and 21**.



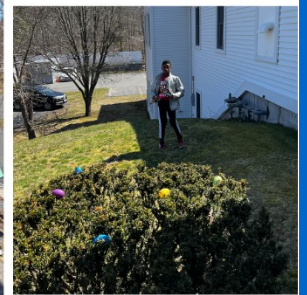
NURSERY

Nursery is available on Sundays for ages birth-4, drop off starts at 9:45am. Ms. Tammy combines free play, bible story, and structured activity most weeks



YOUTH GROUP

Stay tuned for more information via the Nearly Weekly for our next event!



SAVE THE DATES

- **Sunday May 7:** Intergenerational Worship (No Sunday School)
- **Sunday June 11:** Baccalaureate Sunday Worship Service
- **Sunday June 18:** Children and Youth Sunday Worship Service
- **Sunday June 25:** Pride Sunday Worship Service

No Sunday School from June 25-September 10



CE Director contact information:
Dani Kardisco ce@brocktonucc.org
717.387.1559

NOTES FROM MURRAY



As we have passed Easter and are in the wonderful season of Eastertide, we start to turn our attention toward Summer. It is a time of reflection and contentment. The music program transitions from choral music to small groups and solos for the summer months. If you have a gift for music, please consider sharing it with us during these weeks. Reach out to me before or after a service or whenever you see me. We want to hear you.

The summer season holds so much for us. We rejuvenate. We relax a bit more than we seem able to do during the other three months of the year. Why is that? Is the Liturgical calendar at play here? When we get to September, we start to look toward Advent and Christmas. This season is filled with joy, but much hustle and bustle and trying to fit in all of the merriment we can. We have a brief respite in January, but it quickly turns toward Lent and Easter. Somehow, it seems that, for many of us, our professional lives get busy during this season, too. When Easter is finally here, it seems as though much of the rough and tumble pace slows down. Maybe I am projecting from the point of view of a church musician, but seeing my colleagues in other disciplines, I sense this from them, too. What are your thoughts on this? Do you agree? While I feel a bit less frenetic, there are still just as many things to do, but it seems a tiny bit less wrought with stress. I would be curious to hear your thoughts.

Last of my BIG questions. What is worship? How do you, yourself, define it? What are the details of it and how would this manifest itself in a church service? What do you find missing in our own worship services? What have you seen in other churches that you miss about the worship service in ours? What about ours do you enjoy and find conducive to worshipping God? I could list many different types of details, but I don't want to suggest anything for fear of priming the pump. **Please reach out and let me know.** I am very curious.

Sincerely,
Murray



FROM THE BOARD OF MUSIC



Earth Day at Fellowship Time on April 30

Plan to stay for Fellowship Time on Sunday April 30, when the Board of Music will host a special Fifth Sunday time celebrating Earth Day. We are a **Green Church**: solar panels, recycling, reducing waste and more. See how you can help!

***Arts & Music at Christ Church
Midday Music on May 10
DRUMMING CIRCLE WITH
GREG FERNANDES***



We can't let the children have all the fun! Come at 12:15 pm on **Wednesday May 10** and join a drum circle with Greg Fernandes, the director of Rose Conservatory. Free event, bring a friend, donations always welcome.

Board of Music: *Donna Costa, Henok Kaptimer, Leigh-Ann Larson, Luane Rich, Candy Savage and Murray Kidd (ex-officio)*

Arts & Music at Christ Church: *Donna Costa, Audrey Jones, Candy Savage and Betsey Serjak.*

Christ Congregational
Church, UCC

SAVE THE DATE

YARD SALE

Saturday, May 20th 2023

9am - 1pm

(Rain Date TBD)

Rent your own table:

\$15 Church Members - \$25 Outside Vendors

Or donate for the church to sell

Volunteers Needed!

Call the office to sign up (see info counter)

or for more info

(508)586-3022

A Message from the Madden Family

Having the love and support from our church family helped us through a very tough period. A heartfelt thank you to Pastor Jeff for a wonder tribute to my dad, to the Deacons for their support and help before, during, and after the memorial service, to Anton for playing the music he loved, and to Karl Koza for doing the solo hymn that my dad hid away for us to find just in time for the service. Special thanks to Sheppo Fisher and Leo Larson for streaming the service so my family on the west coast could watch and be apart of it. Finally thank you to the congregation for all your prayers, words of support, and for being there in our time of need. We love our Church Family and are blessed to have you all.



- Chris, John, and the entire Madden Family.

April 10, 2023

Dear Pastor eff,

Just a quick note of "Thanks" to all, I noticed on the service card "Prayer Concerns" that Glenna Paananen's great granddaughter Aubry has been on the prayer list. Happy to report that just last week Aubry had her final chemo and is in remission (dare I say cured?). She's only just 4 and has been on chemo for 2 1/2 years! For leukemia.... We are all so grateful for all the love and support she has received.

Thanks to All!

Mary Lou (Paananen) Durden



We want to thank you for the lovely tulips you gave us on Easter. The color is just gorgeous. We will plant it outside and then it will come back up next spring.

Again thank you for the plant,

Steve & Carolyn Bennett



4-25-2023

For all you do...

THANK YOU



I thank you for the beautiful Easter Lily. I also appreciate Jeff bringing me communion and the cards I receive from the Deacons.

Anna Thomas

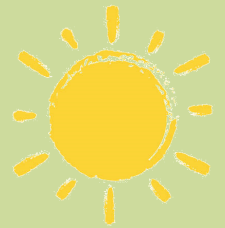
4-13-2023

Dear Church Friends,

Thank you so much for the beautiful Tulips. They are so bright and sunny. There is nothing like the hope of spring when everything blooms.

Sincerely,

Linda Alvilhiera



Thank you so much for all the cards that were sent to me while I was at Life Care. It was real comforting to me that so many people care.

Thank you so much again,

God Bless,

Ruth Copeland



To the Board of Deacons...

Thank you for your continued support and communication. Thanks also for the beautiful tulips delivered by Janet Eckstrom. I continue to watch the services online.



Blessings,

Nelda Hayes

I'd like to thank the Diaconate Board for giving me the beauriful pink tulips for Easter.

Ruth U. Scrivens



SAVE THE DATE!

Board Retreat

Who? Come one – Come all Committee members!

What? The 2023 Leadership Retreat

When? Sunday, June 4th, 12:00 to 3:00 p.m

Where? Fellowship Hall

Why? Our annual gathering of outgoing and incoming committee members, a time to enjoy lunch, conversation, and a planning session, and to get acquainted or (re-acquainted) with your fellow board members for the upcoming term.



Please see future announcements and emails for further information

CELEBRATE
MAY BIRTHDAYS



lw

Wishing all the best on your Birthdays

James Ferguson, Connor Nocivelli, Sharon Silvernail, Nancy Simonis, Sandra Alden, Sue Koza, Harriet Dunklee, Richard Calvin, Nora Deyoe, Darlene Gilson, Richard Pursell, Mickey Carey, 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, Michelle Young-Ferguson

(listed in order of day of month from 1 to 31)



We pray for the family of Priscilla Keyser, may she rest in peace.

A Note From A Deacon

Hello Church Members and Friends,

I attended the last service of the Stoughton Church and was very impressed with the people that attended in showing their respect for the hundreds of years that Church was active in the community!

Imagine, being active since 1744! With many ups and downs they stayed together to keep their Church family together and alive.

Now comes the time to decide what to do with the declining membership (like so many other Churches) and the merging of the two families with Christ Church. We welcome these members with open arms and want to help them be part of the one family together, together we are stronger. Let us not forget our many mergers in the past, our fears, our thoughts and our past relationships. Let us ALL gather together and be ONE!

George Manoogian

"Changing people one person at a time."



Last Chance!

To Get Tickets for Our Annual Scholarship Fundraiser

"SPRING FLING"

This Saturday 5/6 from 5:00-8:00 pm

Tickets - \$20 (\$25 at the door)

Over 15 Baskets/Gifts to be Ruffled Off!
(In total, a value of hundreds of dollars!)

- Delicious Food!
- Exciting Trivia & Game Challenges
- Childcare Available!
- Guaranteed FUN!!!

Can We Help?

Need a Ride or help with the cost of the ticket?

Call the Church Office (508-586-3022) or
Michelle Young-Ferguson (508-517-3788)

As in the past, ALL profits go directly to our Scholarship Fund. The money raised, helps many of our young adults (of all ages) with furthering their education.



A Update From Finance and Property

Putting together some information for you... The Annual Report you will review for the meeting on May 21st was a summary of the year just passed. Now we want to look ahead to things coming up in the next few months.

Please let us know what is of interest or other ideas you have for our Beloved Community as we get closer to summertime possibilities. And add these to your calendar so you can participate as you are able.

A yard sale is planned for Saturday May 20th from 9:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m. For CCC tables we can use your help with set-up, 6:30 a.m. on; table coverage, clean-up 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. or so. If you want to have your own table or you have friends or neighbors interested, the more the merrier. Tables are \$15 for members and \$25 for others. At this writing there may be a food truck or we may have light refreshments, depending on volunteer availability.

We have some ideas for summertime fundraisers; again depending on the interest of volunteers to support our efforts as well as “customer” interest. **Picnic Pick-Up:** a suppers to-go idea in the works; possibly 3 or 4 Wednesdays or Thursdays with menus such as chopped salads w/ protein; fried chicken; pasta, fruit or potato salad; lobster roll (if prices allow) or other sandwich option.

Please let us know your interest.

The CCC On-Line Services is an important Ministry of our church. The summer is a good time to try out and take a turn in the Media Tech Room. You can do it, give it a try. Sign-up to train with a seasoned volunteer.

Work for the Annual Harvest Fair takes work year round. The beautiful craft items you find for sale take many months of our Crafters’ time. The days for sorting and cleaning of general store, clothing and upscale items is intermittent and necessary. If you have time during the week or early evenings please let us know and we can coordinate as items arrive.

If you have any hours to donate over the next few months for our facilities, inside or out, please let us know. Whether it is for a deeper cleaning of a room or area inside or helping with tasks like watering or weeding in our outdoor gardens, your time and talents are greatly appreciated.

When September rolls around there will be increased activity for many of these endeavors. Regular efforts during the summer will help alleviate some anxiety in the run-up to the fair event.

Thank you everyone for making our Beloved Community a wonderful place to be!

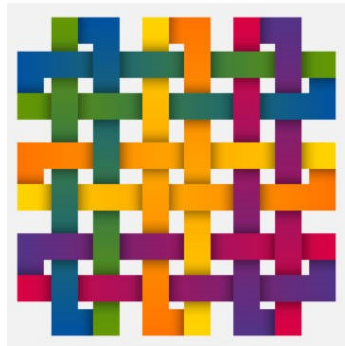
From the Moderator

Spring is here- a time for new beginnings- we eagerly welcome the returning buds and blossoms, and the return of the sweet sound of birds singing around us. In last month's Courier we read comments from Marcia Olson, Moderator of First Congregational Church of Stoughton. Her words ring in my ears at this time of earth's reawakening "Journeys ending, Journeys begun..."

In April our friends from Stoughton commemorated the official closing of their church with a "Service of Gratitude and Blessing for the Completion of a Church. Their church building has been sold. In the past few weeks, we have been moving items of historic, sentimental and practical importance to our location. You will see these items being woven into our facility and become part of our facility.

Please continue to hold our Stoughton friends in your hearts as they process the impact of these changes and new beginnings. Welcome them as we continue to weave together the beautiful tapestry that is our community of faith- new beginnings indeed.

Sue Koza, Moderator



Newly Woven Church

Have you ever experienced struggling to find the just the right words? A few weeks ago, Pastor Jeff asked me to share a few words with you as the Stoughton church is in this frenzied period of transition. What to say? This morning as I tuned in to CCC worship remotely and clicked on the order of worship, my eyes fell upon the words of the Threshold Moment: "Journey's ended, journey's begun: to go where we have never been, to be beyond our past ..." There it is. Our time at 76 Pierce Street has ended and was but part of our long faith journey, one that began in 1744 and led us to several houses of worship through the generations. And now the journey continues. The Spirit has called us to this "beloved community" at Christ Congregational Church so that our shared ministries can be woven together and made stronger. Change can be difficult and scary. Change can be good and full of hope. But change is always inevitable. We have been so blessed to have been given such a warm welcome by everyone at CCC as we have been getting to know one another and navigate this journey of endings and new beginnings. You have been gentle with us, given us a soft landing as you walked beside us, and allowed us the time and space we needed to catch our breath. Thank you. There is much to love about beginning anew at CCC – caring people with helping hands outstretched, a beautiful and welcoming sanctuary space, a vibrant music program, and a truly engaging intergenerational community with so many opportunities to grow and serve. We also appreciate how accepting you have been to incorporate some of our traditions such as the prayer shawl ministry and the lighting the votive candles during worship. As we continue to weave our two congregations together, we look forward to sharing other ministries we have supported at UCC Stoughton such as Mainspring House dinners and the Outdoor Church to see if they might be a good fit in Brockton. It is perhaps fitting that we are end our ministry in Stoughton just after Easter and start our next chapter at Christ Congregational Church with the promise of new life and new beginnings. We are an Easter people. So let me close with the words of one of my favorite Easter songs from our former children's choir. Every morning is Easter morning from now on.

Christ Congregational Church, UCC, Brockton, MA

Annual Spring Congregational Meeting Warrant

May 21, 2023

In accordance with Article XIII, Church Meetings, Sec. I-B of the Christ Congregational Church, UCC, Brockton, MA Bylaws (amended on November 20, 2016), the **Annual Spring Church Meeting** of the membership has been called for **Sunday, May 21, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.** The meeting will be held in a hybrid format; in person and via Zoom and telephone connections in order to accommodate those members who are unable to join in person.

- Article I** To call the meeting to order, and to open the meeting with prayer.
- Article II** To hear and act on a motion to accept the hybrid meeting format as an official Congregational meeting. An explanation of remote voting procedures will be given.
- Article III** To hear and act on the minutes of the November 13, 2022 Fall Annual Church Meeting and the March 26, 2023 Special Meeting.
- Article IV** To hear remarks from the Moderator.
- Article V** To hear and act upon any reports of the Church Officers, Boards, Committees, Organizations, and Staff.
- Article VI** To hear and review the Financial Reports for the Fiscal Year 2022 and current fiscal status for Fiscal Year 2023.
- Article VII** To hear the annual report of the Endowment Trustees.
- Article VIII** To hear the report of the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee for Officers, Boards, Committees and Delegates for the Church year 2022-2023 and to elect persons to those positions.
- Article IX** To hear a report from the Pastoral Housing Committee.
- Article X** To hear and celebrate the presentation of the annual "Light of the World" award.
- Article XI** To hear and act upon any other business that may properly come before the membership.
- Article XII** To hear remarks from the Vice Moderator.
- Article XIII** To ratify, either individually or jointly, any action taken by the membership at this meeting in accordance with Article XIII, Section 3C of the Church Bylaws, including the election of officers.
- Article XIV** To adjourn the Annual Spring Church Meeting and to close the meeting with prayer.



Show and tell was exceptionally colorful at the April meeting with bed quilts and table runners being shown. Members brought in their finished NICU quilts for South Shore Hospital. **DRUM ROLL:** We have a total of 47, that's forty seven, beautiful little quilts to donate the NICU.

Next meeting will be Tuesday May 16th from 1-3pm in the quilt/craft room. We will be layering a lap quilt started at the April meeting. Questions call Nelda @ 508-238-6004 or Janet @ 508-583-0505.



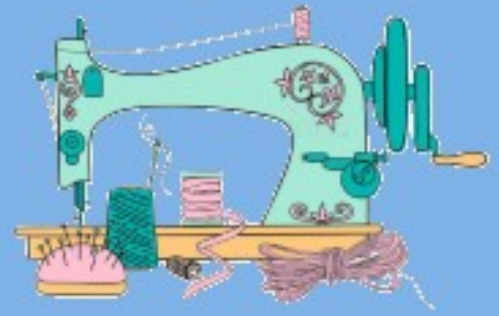
This table runner with the festive fall colors was made by Deana Colby.



Kristine Blanchard made this quilt for a family member in beautiful shades of purples and blues.

A pinwheel baby quilt for another lucky family member was made by Kristine Blanchard.





This Halloween quilt with appliques and an arrangement of quilt squares was made by Carol Bradford with the generously donated fabric from the Whitman Family of Abington.



These two adorable NICU quilts were made by Nelda Hayes





CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROCKTON, MA

ANNUAL MAY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Sunday, May 21st
After Worship**

Zoom information for those who would like to connect remotely can be found in our Nearly Weekly and Nearly Weekly-Weekend Edition, or by contacting the church office.

CONTACT US

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

Tel: 508-586-3022
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.

CREATING BELOVED COMMUNITY

Whoever you are, and wherever
you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!



Christ Congregational Church, UCC
1350 Pleasant St.
Brockton, MA 02301-2840