

WEEKLY GOOD NEWS EMAIL
First Congregational Church of Hanover, Massachusetts
And Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ



In her Monday writing, Diane Butler Bass wrote: In these days, when we fear we are drowning under the waves of the pandemic, the crisis of racial injustice, economic unraveling, and the climate crisis, we might remember the ancient sign of the bow in the sky – that sign of what Nigerian poet Jenim Dibia calls, “the unrelenting hope for rainbows,” the promise that draws our eyes to the beauty of light breaking through the darkest clouds.

From Pastor Terry
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September 6, 2020

SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION

Call to Worship (based on Psalm 149)

God puts a new song in our mouths as we praise him. Sing to the Lord a new song, sing his praise in the assembly of the faithful. God made a new covenant with his chosen people, writing his love on their hearts. Let Israel be glad in its Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their king. Let the faithful look to the one of hope; let them sing the joy of salvation. Yet God puts a new heart and a new spirit within us; And we sing to the Lord his new song!

Invocation:

Direct and help us, O Lord, in all our deeds, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 18:12-20

¹² "Look at it this way. If someone has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders off, doesn't he leave the ninety-nine and go after the one? ¹³ And if he finds it, doesn't he make far more over it than over the ninety-nine who stay put? ¹⁴ Your Father in heaven feels the same way. He doesn't want to lose even one of these simple believers.

¹⁵ "If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him - work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you've made a friend. ¹⁶ If he won't listen, take one or two others along so that the presence of witnesses will keep things honest, and try again. ¹⁷ If he still won't listen, tell the church. If he won't listen to the church, you'll have to start over from scratch, confront him with the need for repentance, and offer again God's forgiving love.

¹⁸ "Take this most seriously: A yes on earth is yes in heaven; a no on earth is no in heaven. What you say to one another is eternal. I mean this. ¹⁹ When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action. ²⁰ And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I'll be there."

Hymn: *The Church's One Foundation*

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word:
from heav'n he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from ev'ry nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with ev'ry grace endued.

'Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union with the God the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won:
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we,
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.



Sermon: *Conflict Resolution – Jesus' Style*

Hymn: *They'll Know We Are Christians*

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who make us one:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

Lots of Good News

This Sunday we begin worshipping in Riley Hall. There will be social distancing and facemasks required. Just no need for a lawn chair. It being the first Sunday of the month, we will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion.



We will continue to record worship each week and make it available on our website.

YARD SALE UPDATE: Adrienne Rafferty wrote to the church office that the clothing give-away went very well. The stories some of the folks chose to share were inspirational. One woman who runs a homeless shelter on Atlantic Ave in Boston was thrilled with the event and took 15 bags of men's clothing! She just happened to be driving by and saw the sign. Definitely a God moment.

During the month of September, the **SOCIAL MATTERS COMMITTEE WILL BE COLLECTING FOOD** for the Hanover Food Pantry.

Pre Covid 19, it was estimated that 1 in 11 Massachusetts households faced hunger, which amounted to 9% of residents. Earlier this summer it was now estimated that up to 18% of households in the state are now food-insecure, with 1 in 5 of households with children not getting enough to eat and with people of color being disproportionately impacted.

The Hanover Food Pantry is open to any Hanover resident as well as any member of a Hanover church congregation. At this time the Pantry is preparing for children returning to school. A few suggested donations items include: Cereal bars, pudding cups, Jell-O cups, fruit cups, juice boxes, cookies/cracker/chip/pretzel snack packs, and cereal.

Donations bins will be made available throughout September at our Sunday outdoor worship services, as well as during the week on Tuesday and Thursdays from 10-2 at Riley Hall. Thank you for your support. We are all in this together.

It's September and you know what that means!! **RALLY SUNDAY** is coming! Join us 9/13 at the Riley Hall service for registration, stories and a craft (socially distanced of course)!

The first official **ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE**, which was formally incorporated on Jan. 1, 2020, **will be held September 26 online** due to the extended State of Emergency in Massachusetts. The Meeting will be woven through with vibrant worship, will include small group break-out sessions focused on shared ministry interests, and will include the election of the Conference's first Executive Conference Minister, the Rev. Darrell Goodwin. Visit the Annual Meeting page at sneucc.org/2020AM for details, delegate materials and online registration.

THE SEPTEMBER CABINET MEETING will be held by Zoom on Thursday, September 10, 7-9 pm.

READ THE UPPER ROOM DEVOTIONAL on-line at:
<http://www.upperroom.org/standingorderchurches>.

Church Calendar

SUNDAY: The virtual coffee hour is at 11:30.

MONDAY BIBLE STUDY AT 7 PM will not meet on September 7. See you again on the 14th!
<https://zoom.us/j/93375349480pwd=OWlkcjRmV2llaEt0M202RUhKRtA4UT09>
Meeting ID: 933 7534 9480; **Password:** 006430

WEDNESDAY: Search Committee.

WEDNESDAY HOUR OF FELLOWSHIP AT 2 PM Join
<https://zoom.us/j/5848654652?pwd=WHlD5nlhWkIwc2FGS0c3VWgwNmMzZz09;>
Meeting ID: 584 865 4652; **Password:** 531416

EVERYDAY – if you miss seeing someone from church give them a call!

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Please email your celebrations and concerns to John Terry or to the church office.

Celebrate with

Donald and Lynn White: *Thank you for all the prayers and love. It is a blessing that John Henry is coming home next week.*



Barbara Itz: *We thank Barbara Itz for her three decades of service to the Hanover Food Pantry. On July 29, Barbara turned in her keys to the Hanover Food Pantry. Barbara was on the founding committee for the Pantry and served many roles, including Pantry president.*



Please pray for:

- Bill O'Donnell, Susan Vetterlein's brother-in-law, with metastatic prostate cancer
- Mary Bare, sister-in-law of Rev. John Terry, recovering at home
- Barbara Winsloe, mother of Deborah Springhetti, in failing health
- Desmon Silva, RN, nursing colleague of Jessie Berry, now at rehab facility
- Jaycee Hall, Ruth Hall's daughter-in-law, with remitting auto immune disease

AN UPDATE FROM THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

We are still working! We continue to meet via Zoom and email and have been assembling our Church "Profile", a major report required for posting our position with the United Church of Christ. The Profile includes data on our membership and organization, assesses our ministry needs, and helps us clarify the calling of the congregation.

As you may know, we held outreach meetings with the congregation in June on the second of three questions contained in the Profile: "Who is our Neighbor?" We offered on-line Zoom meetings and distributed a questionnaire. Approximately two dozen members participated in the Zoom meetings, and we received a few written responses. We want to thank participants for the meaningful input you shared about the Church and our current environment. We have taken your responses to heart.

We are now turning to the last, and perhaps most important, question we need to answer: "**Who is God calling us to become?**" This will really define the type of leader we need to shepherd us into our desired future.

With a congregation of over 200 members and friends, we paused our outreach over the summer in hopes of increased participation in a better public health climate this fall. While the Covid situation has certainly improved since the spring, we will still need to offer multiple venues for your input.

We plan to offer two in-person meetings. These will be immediately after Church services either outside on the lawn, or in Riley Hall. Meetings will be in small groups of six, with masks and social distancing. The meetings are tentatively planned on September 27 and October 4. They will be dependent on public health guidelines at the time. In addition, we will again offer on-line Zoom meeting participation. Those meetings will be offered at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, October 6, and Thursday, October 8.

You will receive an invitation with additional information on these options in early September. We will also send a questionnaire for those who prefer a written response.

Thank you for your help. The Pastoral Search Committee