



Rev. Eric's Corner

Let's Talk: Confronting Our Differences

Congregation

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OUR VISION STATEMENT

We strive to be a church that welcomes all and empowers all in Christ to share their God given talents.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are a community of inclusive love that has no walls or barriers, where all who enter are loved, respected, and accepted for who they are, reaching beyond social class, gender, race, and sexual orientation, welcoming all into our circle of love. We are a community of growth and transformation that is not content with the status quo but a community filled with the love and compassion of Christ, and an overwhelming desire to share that love. We are a community committed to not only praying together on Sunday mornings, but putting our faith into action daily.

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As I write this corner our federal government is in shutdown mode with thousands of federal workers, including those in the Coast Guard and federal correction officers, not guaranteed a paycheck. The shutdown is just one example of how our country is descending deeper into polarization and paralysis. I am deeply concerned that we are losing the capacity to have sustained conversations about our differences in many aspects of society, including in academic settings, faith based organizations like churches, and even in families.

Professor friends of mine tell me today that academic freedom on university campuses is being eroded in light of larger societal pressures and movements. There are forces in play now that are threatening to tear churches apart. Will we have red churches and blue churches or will we have churches that are mixed? Several church members have told me in early December they were not looking forward to gathering with family on Christmas Day because of polarizing viewpoints held by various family members that would surely be discussed over Christmas dinner.

We need to learn how to work through differences rather than exacerbate or ignore them. The answer is not creating an insulated existence in which we preprogram all that we hear to conform to our tastes and beliefs. With technology it is possible to preprogram our music, listen to select news sources that promote a particular agenda, and exclude the voices of others, others who do not see the world in the same way that we do.

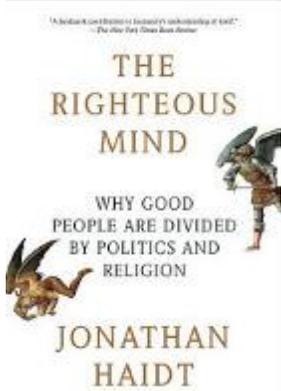
Two thousand years ago tension existed in the early church between two groups of Christians. One group insisted that Christians strictly keep the law of Moses and the other group insisted that the virtue of love, and not law, should be the primary concern. After much arguing and debating among the two groups a centrist view was embraced that respected in some form both views but, most importantly, emphasized bringing unity among the two groups.

During the month of January and early February we as a church will be exploring how scholars, clergy, and others are wrestling with this urgent problem of polarization and paralysis. Whether we think of the political world, the academic world, the world of churches, or even relationships within our own families, we must find ways to address our differences openly, candidly, and sensibly. What is at stake is the concept of community and what it means to be a community healthy enough to tolerate different perspectives and be able to learn and grow from them.

If we, as Hebrews 10:24-25 suggests, "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another," we might find that our difficult conversations are more about lack of complete understanding of one another than the divisions between us. Most importantly, Jesus challenges us to live out the great commandment of loving thy neighbor as thyself, which makes the need to find common ground not only something which can free us from polarization and paralysis, but a holy task that enables us to better love others and ourselves.

GROWING IN FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

PASTOR ERIC'S JANUARY SERMON SERIES ON THE BOOK *THE RIGHTEOUS MIND* LISTING CHAPTER OF BOOK AND SCRIPTURE BEING FOCUSED ON EACH SUNDAY



January 6-Where Does Morality Come From?, chapter 1, 1 Corinthians 15:33-34

January 13-Taste Buds of the Righteous Mind, chapter 6, Genesis 6:9

January 20-Why Are We So Groupish?, chapter 9, Galatians 3:28

January 27-Religion is a Team Sport, chapter 11, Psalm 131:1

The Rev. Don Remick, Interim Conference Minister of the Massachusetts Conference, is coming to preach at worship on February 3. In preparation of his visit he has challenged people to take a look at the book, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Copies of the book are available for a reduced purchase price of \$10.00 in the vestry. The book points out the importance of dialogue between divergent views and challenges readers to see how left and right viewpoints are yin and yang, each contributing insights to which the other should listen. Also, starting January 6 Pastor Eric will begin a four week sermon series on four different chapters in the book using a different scripture each week to provide theological focus to the theme of the chapters.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND FEBRUARY 10 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 10 at 10:45 am. Annual reports are to be sent to the office email in Word Format at office@fcchanover.org no later than Monday, December 31 at 2 pm. No annual reports will be accepted after that date.

Church expense reimbursements will be made Friday, January 4, 2019. Please contact the Treasurer at carol@fcchanover.org if you have any concerns.



ANDREW TALBOT WILL CHOOSE HYMNS FOR JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

The Music Committee, in collaboration with Eric and Chad, is designating one of its members each month to assist in the selection of hymns for our worship services. Got a favorite hymn or carol you'd like to sing? We encourage you to share your ideas with us in person or by email. The Music Committee contact for the month of January is Andrew Talbot (drew3424@comcast.net). The Music Committee members who will be the point person in the months ahead are Priscilla Cedrone, Ginny Hunt, Ava Sigsby, and Maddie Thomas.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MOONLIGHTERS JANUARY 16

Our first meeting of the new year will be on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 7:30 pm in Room 5 of Riley Hall. This is our annual HAPPY BIRTHDAY MOONLIGHTERS EVENING at which we do a Yankee Swap of gently used or new items. To top the evening off we will enjoy a delicious birthday cake for all. At the meeting we will also be signing up for our Mainspring Dinner in February.



COME AND ENJOY A FUN-FILLED EVENING WITH SOME GREAT GALS.



MERRIWEDS NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION AT MIA REGAZZA

Join the Merriweds for fellowship and dinner on Saturday, January 12 at 5:00 pm at Mia Regazza of Marshfield. (Mia Regazza is right off of Route 139 at 1 Proprietors Drive right beyond Roache Brothers Supermarket.) **Please RSVP by Saturday, January 5 to Cindy Shaw** (wcsretired@verizon.net; 781-826-8948) if you'll be attending. For further details or if you need transportation, please contact either Sandy Adami (781-826-2970; sandraeadami@gmail.com) or Linda Wall (781-293-5948; law@gmail.com).

GROWING IN FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP



FINANCIAL *Peace*
UNIVERSITY

IT'S TIME TO MAKE FINANCIAL PEACE AT FCC HANOVER

Planning for the future is hard when you are still paying for the past! There is a better way. **FCC will be hosting a weekly Financial Peace University Group every Tuesday night at 7 pm starting on January 15, 2018.** Participants will learn how to beat debt and make a plan for the future...

together! Financial Peace University is a nine-lesson course, taught by David Ramsey and his team of financial experts, and provides practical instruction on budgeting, saving for emergencies, retiring with dignity, and giving generously. The course will also include website access to the Financial Peace University's library, course materials and budgeting and financial tools. The cost is \$109 per person or family to include 12 months of membership access, or \$69 for one month of membership access with optional \$9.99 per month ongoing access. If interested or to enroll, please visit their website at <http://www.fpu.com/1079142>, or feel free to contact Chris Faddis at faddisc@gmail.com.

RSVP FOR THE FEBRUARY MERRIWEDS COFFEE HOUSE EVENT



Join the Merriweds at the Church Hill Coffee House at the Church Hill United Methodist Church, 11 Church Street, Norwell on Friday, February 22, 7:30 - 9:00 pm. *Peter Eldridge & The Natural Born Fools* will be performing. Admission is \$10 at the door; please plan to arrive by 7:15 pm. Coffee, drinks, homemade pies and desserts are available for purchase.

"Peter Eldridge & The Natural Born Fool - a group of multi-talented musicians that enjoy sharing the beautiful songs that James Taylor has put on this earth! Their music has been carefully arranged and selected for a wide listening audience." (<http://www.chumcnorwell.com/templates/System/details.asp?id=33862&PID=1052704>).

The Merriweds encourage all adults to join in. Please contact Hal Thomas at halhanover@msn.com or 781-826-7952 for further details. **If you plan on attending,**

please RSVP to Hal by Friday, February 15 so we can get seating together. Hal recommends, "The Coffee House has a nice relaxed atmosphere with good music and homemade pie that won't disappoint!" Ted and Sandy Adami will drive anyone who needs a ride. Please contact them at sandraeadami@gmail.com or 781-826-2970.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT TO BEHOLD

The Flower Committee would like to thank all who donated the beautiful poinsettias that graced our Christmas altar. By your generosity over twenty homebound received a special Christmas blessing from the church.



EMBRACE GOD'S GRACE FOR 2019

Pledges make sure our church is an important presence on Hanover Street and in the wider world. We ask all who have not yet completed a pledge card for 2019 to considering doing so. Your financial gifts are greatly appreciated. Your generosity extends Christ's love to others in a personal way, through gifts of love, of food, and encouragement.

CORDIAL USHERS NEEDED

We are still in need of people to help out with ushering whether it be on a monthly or an "on-call" basis. Ushers greet each person with a smile, shaking hands, and handing out bulletins. They are also available to answer visitors' questions and extend extra help in seating those who need the assistance. If you are new to the church, this is a great way to meet new friends. If interested please contact Al Alexander (abalexander45@verizon.net) or Ruth Hall (rnannyruthie@aol.com).



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



SERVING INDIVIDUALS, VETERANS, & FAMILIES
for more than 30 years

HELP, HELP, HELP WITH THE SOUP KITCHEN MINISTRY

We are looking for folks to spend a Sunday afternoon preparing a meal and then delivering and serving at Mainspring House in Brockton. There is a menu book available and guidance can be given (location, meal prep, reimbursement, etc.). Please check the sign-up sheet in the church coat room for dates that are available. Please contact Karen Tripp from Outreach and Service at 781-878-8566 if interested. THANK YOU

HANOVER CHURCH GIVES \$325 TO HEIFER PROJECT TO CHANGE LIVES

We are happy to report that we will be sending approximately \$325 to Heifer – earnings from both our bottle/can collection and our annual Christmas Alternative Gift Giving. Thank you to all those who have participated in either or both of these life changing projects.

A huge thank you goes out to all the folks at South Meadow Village in Carver who save all the fliptop tabs from cans throughout the year, and to Audrey Wilber for assuring that these tabs reach our church. We then donate them to the Shriners by way of the Masonic Temple in Hanover. Located in the Vestry is a plastic jug for the fliptops. You may leave your cans intact and drop them off at Riley Hall to the left of the entrance to the main hall.



LOADED WITH WHITE GIFTS - A BLESSING TO HANOVER FAMILIES AT CHRISTMAS

On December 9 church members placed Christmas gifts wrapped in white tissue paper on the altar and the gifts were blessed. All the gifts were picked up the following day by the Hanover Visiting Nurse Association, overflowing two vehicles with white gifts from you, our congregation! All who participated in this long time tradition had fun shopping for various items listed on the tags from our Christmas Giving Tree. It is truly a blessing for this church to bring gifts to our community in the name of the Christ Child.



BLANKET SUNDAY - LOVE MADE TANGIBLE

A Church World Service Blanket isn't just a blanket. A CWS blanket helps provide shelter from the wind and rain, is a source of warmth, a place to sit and eat a meal, or a carryall for a family's possessions. With the devastating weather we have experienced here in the USA there is a larger need for the availability of these blankets. **Beginning January 20**, Outreach and Service will have a table in the Vestry where you can purchase the Church World Service blanket for the price of \$10. Make a donation in memory of someone special or in honor of a birthday celebration.



WAUGH FOOD PACKAGING EVENT ON JANUARY 13

We are excited to be partnering with Outreach once again to package dried, nonperishable meals to be distributed to the food insecure in our community. Many of you have joined us for prior events and know many hands make light work! We need your help in making this event a success! There are two important ways to help: Donate and Volunteer! We are raising the money to purchase the dried food product. Just \$1 feeds a family of four. **Use the following link, <https://give.classy.org/Waughfood>, to donate and help us reach our goal of \$12,500 (50,000 meals)! Sign up to volunteer for a food packaging shift at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B45AEA92AA4FC1-2019>.** This is a wonderful community-building, family fun (children 6 and up welcome!), feel-good event! We hope you can join us!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH



SOUTH SHORE HOMELESS FAMILIES RECEIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Thank you to the Outreach and Service Committee, members of the Moonlighters and an anonymous family who provided Christmas gifts to three individual families this giving season. Our Outreach and Service has been working with South Shore Friends of the Homeless for several years now, reaching out to local families who are truly in need. Thank you for all your support in this mission.

FCC HANOVER PARTNERS WITH HANOVER VNA TO PROVIDE ABUNDANTLY AT THANKSGIVING

We extend abundant thanks to you for your ongoing support, efforts and contribution to the Hanover Visiting Nurse Association Thanksgiving Give Away Event. How very thoughtful, kind, and generous of you all. Thank you, Terri Milley and Karen Tripp, for again coordinating this with the First Congregational Church and the HVNA, as well as for assisting to load the many bags of groceries in to our cars, despite the heavy rain we had on the pickup day. You all made this Thanksgiving special for so many. We could not have done this without you.

With heartfelt gratitude and appreciation, Doreen Zeller



WORK FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE - BUILD WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY



For more than 32 years, South Shore Habitat for Humanity, together with donors and volunteers, has delivered homes to 58 families in 21 communities. As a nonprofit organization, they rely on volunteers and donations to help build these homes so local families in need can build a better tomorrow. With several current and upcoming projects in Duxbury, Easton and Hingham, they are in need of volunteers to help build, coordinate fundraising activities, and donate.

A **FAITH BUILD DAY** welcomes up to 12 people per build site. The work day begins at 7:45 am and ends at 3:30 pm. Arrive promptly at 7:45 a.m. for safety training and prayer. Work days are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Lunch is to be provided by the group that is volunteering that day. Volunteers must register and sign a waiver. The minimum volunteer age is 16 years old. Habitat builds in all weather conditions so dress for the weather and wear layers. Habitat suggests wearing sturdy, comfortable clothing that you do not mind getting dirty or stained. All tools and safety equipment are provided. During the Faith Build Day our group will work alongside a Habitat partner family to help them build their home. No previous construction skills are needed. To help raise funds needed to cover construction costs, which includes insurance, materials and construction staff, they respectfully request a donation of \$500 for each scheduled build day. Our Outreach and Service has granted the \$500 needed for the first build we do.

Presently Habitat is working in Duxbury on a six family unit. **If you are interested in volunteering to build, coordinate coffee breaks, coordinate lunch menus, participate in fundraising activities, or donate, please contact Ruth Hall at 781-585-1869 or rnannyruthie@aol.com.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT



YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Senior and Junior High Fellowship will meet jointly for most events. Membership is open to youth in grades 6 through 12. All are welcome! Attend meetings as you can, and bring a kind heart, an open mind and, of course, your ideas! If you have any questions, or would like to know more about Youth Fellowship, please email Carol Gillis at youthgroup@fcchanover.org.

BLOOD DRIVE AT FCC HANOVER

The Youth Group is sponsoring a Blood Dive on January 19 from 9-3 at Riley Hall. Please let your friends and neighbors know about this event.



YOUTH GROUP HIGHLIGHTS FROM NOVEMBER

The Youth Group helped decorate the trees for the second year in a row at Colony Center for Health & Rehabilitation in Abington. The Group also made 100 holiday cards and handed them out to each resident which brought lots of smiles to many faces. After their hard work they enjoyed drinking hot chocolate with marshmallows & cupcakes.

Kraft Family Blood Donor Center



Please join us at the
First Congregational Church of Hanover
BLOOD DRIVE

Aboard the DFCI/BWH Blood Mobile in the parking lot near Riley Hall entrance.

Saturday, January 19, 2019 9:00AM - 3:00PM

APPOINTMENTS: Logon tinyurl.com/FCCHanoverJan2019

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS: Email BloodDonor@partners.org

Appointments recommended. Walk-ins taken as time allows.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Be in good general health
- Feel well the day of donation.
- Weigh at least 110 pounds.
- Be at least 17 years of age.

AMONG OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Antibiotics: Be 72 hours free AND symptom free for 3 days.
- Dental Work: Be 48 hours free of completed procedures – includes cleaning. Please contact the blood donor center with questions.
- Medications or Medical Conditions: Contact blood donor center.
- Travel Outside USA: If traveled to a malaria risk area within the last 12 months please contact the blood donor center.
- Living Outside USA: If lived for 5 years or more, please contact the donor center with detailed dates and locations.
- Tattoos: If tattoo was done in a Massachusetts regulated facility and the area is healed, then OK to donate.
- Body Piercings (includes ears): If piercing was done in a Massachusetts regulated facility then OK to donate.

All blood collected will benefit patients at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Brigham and Women's Hospital

PHOTO ID REQUIRED FOR ALL DONORS
Drink extra water 🍷 Eat before donating

PEOPLE NEWS



We extend our sympathy to Dick Bancroft in the passing of his wife, Jan Bancroft, on November 30, 2018.



We congratulate Evan Anthony Wolongevicz on his baptism on December 30. His parents are Rebecca and Michael Wolongevicz.

We congratulate James Marshall White on his baptism on December 30. His parents are Andrew and Jeannie White.

Mary Beth Ciulla is getting married to Robert Tarnauskas on August 3, 2019.



- ◆ An article that Rev. Eric wrote on the three-year anniversary of the church thrift shop was published by the Hanover Mariner on December 12. With the article a photo of four thrift volunteers was also published. The article stated how three years ago the thrift shop immediately became profitable and now raises several thousand dollars a year for church programs with a volunteer base which has grown from 5 to 20 workers.
- ◆ An edited version of Rev. Eric's Corner article from last month's December Spire on why Jesus was born male instead of female was published in the December 5 edition of the Hanover Mariner, Marshfield Mariner, and by the online news site snewsi.com.

VIDEO MINISTRY CONTINUES TO TOUCH LIVES OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH

Thanks to Don White who faithfully videotapes the worship services every week and the gift of the camera by the Greene family in memory of their son Steven. The 9:30 am worship service airs regularly on cable TV on Wednesdays at 10am, Thursday at 8 pm and Saturdays at 7 pm. Dr. John Fox recently remarked how he has watched the services while at home recuperating. Worship services are broadcasted other times based on schedule availability. The broadcast can be accessed online at:

<http://schedule.hanoverctv.org/CablecastPublicSite/search?channel=1&query=first%>



- ◆ Thank you for the wonderful fruit basket the church sent in remembrance of my father. It was very hectic so everyone enjoyed a healthy snack. We all appreciated the kind gesture. I also appreciate all the prayer support throughout my Dad's health issues. Regards, Jim and Pam Hoyes
- ◆ Thank you to the person or people who fixed the railing on the back entrance to the church. It's very important to have a solid railing to grab onto. Thanks again, Pat Merritt
- ◆ FCC Youth Group, Thank you for volunteering your time during this holiday season to decorate our Christmas trees! Merry Christmas, Colony Center Staff and Residents
- ◆ Thank you to Marilyn Melchin's sister for the donation of the deacon's bench. It adds some class to the vestry. Melissa Fearon, thanks to you, too, for the chairs. I know there are many people who will appreciate having seating with arms. Plus it add a comfortable little section for visiting. Bob Sigsby
- ◆ Al and I would like to thank you all for the flowers, cards and food after my recent mishap. I'm trying not to repeat any of them. It's so nice to know you are in people's thoughts and prayers. Again, thank you! Susan Alexander

FCC HANOVER JANUARY CALENDAR

First Congregational, Office Calendar, Holidays in United States

Jan 2019 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Baptisms No SunSoh 8:30am - Choir 8:30am - Worshp	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day	2 10am - ThriftShp 5:16pm - AA(W) 7:30pm - PryrSh 8pm - AA(M)	3 8pm - AA	4 7pm - Cub Den 2 7pm - Cub Den 4	5 10am - ThriftShp 3pm - ScoutSetu 6pm - Eagle80ou
6 Communion 8:30am - Choir 8:20am - SunSoh 8:30am - Worshp 11am - JtConfrm 2pm - MnSprg	7 10:30am - BibleS 7:30pm - BibleS	8 8:30pm - Trustee 8:45pm - Scouts 7pm - Finance	9 10am - ThriftShp 5:16pm - AA(W) 8pm - AA(M)	10 8pm - AA	11 6pm - Cub Den 4 7pm - Cub Den 2	12 10am - ThriftShp 6pm - Mrrwds
13 FoodPackaging 8:30am - Choir 8:20am - SunSoh 8:30am - Worshp 11am - Confrmnd	14 10:30am - BibleS 7:30pm - BibleS	15 8:45pm - Scouts 7pm - FnlPo	16 10am - ThriftShp 5:16pm - AA(W) 7:30pm - Mnltre 8pm - AA(M)	17 8pm - AA	18 7pm - Cub Den 2 7pm - Cub Den 4 7pm - Paok 37	19 10am - ThriftShp 10am - YFBloodD
20 8:30am - Choir 8:20am - SunSoh 8:30am - Worshp	21 Martin Luther No Bible Study OffceClcdHoliday 8am - Spire Due	22 8:45pm - Scouts 7pm - FnlPo	23 10am - ThriftShp 5:16pm - AA(W) 8pm - AA(M)	24 10am - Collation 8pm - AA	25 6pm - Cub Den 4 7pm - Cub Den 2	26 10am - ThriftShp
27 8:30am - Choir 8:20am - SunSoh 8:30am - Worshp 12pm - StaffLneh	28 10:30am - BibleS 7:30pm - BibleS	29 8:45pm - Scouts 7pm - Diaconate 7pm - FnlPo	30 10am - ThriftShp 5:16pm - AA(W) 8pm - AA(M)	31 8pm - AA	1 7pm - Cub Den 2 7pm - Cub Den 4	2 10am - ThriftShp

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HANOVER, UCC

Where God is still speaking

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office@fcchanover.org

www.fcchanover.org

[facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchHanover](https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalChurchHanover)

Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30-2:30 PM

[Information for monthly Spire](#) is sent to Susan Vetterlein at office@fcchanover.org

[Information for the Sunday Bulletin or Sunday Power-Point](#) is sent to office@fcchanover.org

[Any other office correspondences](#) can be sent to Susan Vetterlein at office@fcchanover.org or Susan can also forward any information to all staff.

NEW YEAR'S PRAYER BY BILLY GRAHAM

Dear God, in the midst of life's uncertainties in the days ahead, assure us of the certainty of Your unchanging love. In the midst of life's inevitable disappointments and heartaches, help us to turn to You for the stability and comfort we will need. In the midst of life's temptations and the pull of our stubborn self-will, help us not to lose our way but to have the courage to do what is right in Your sight, regardless of the cost. We pray for our nation and its leaders during these difficult times, and for all those who are seeking to bring peace and justice to our dangerous and troubled world. As we look back over this past year we thank You for Your goodness to us—far beyond what we have deserved. May we never presume on Your past goodness or forget all Your mercies to us, but may they instead lead us to repentance, and to a new commitment to make You the foundation and center of our lives this year. And so, our Father, we thank You for the promise and hope of this new year, and we look forward to it with expectancy and faith. This I ask in the name of our Lord and Savior, who by His death and resurrection has given us hope both for this world and the world to come. Amen.

