



The Spire

The Newsletter of First Congregational Church of Hanover, United Church of Christ November 2023

OUR STAFF

Rev. Peter Johnston
Senior Pastor

Chad Weirick
Minister of Music

Elsa Marshall
Minister of Faith Formation

Kim Engle
Field Ed. Student 2023-2024

Kristyn Falcione
Youth Director

Susan Vetterlein
Office Administrator

Karen Tripp
Sexton

Jim Millins
Facilities Steward

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.

Talking to Our Children about Difficult Subjects

As Christian parents, grandparents, Aunts and Uncles, as families of faith, how do we talk to our children about the carnage and chaos, the broken places in our world created by human hands and human hearts? How do we discuss all that is in the daily news that is ongoing? Especially all that is happening in Ukraine and is now erupting in the Holy Land now? These are hard topics. I feel first we must know the facts and what is true so that we can choose what to share in appropriate ways and suitable language with our children. As you learn, remember these three points:

1. At their heart, the conflicts are political in nature, not religious. Before the middle of the 20th century, Muslims, Christians and Jews (all Arabs, all Semitic peoples) lived in mutual respect and support for each other. They shared (and still do!) a culture, language and life, and the same God.
2. In situations like Ukraine and the Middle East the people in power usually control the narrative, therefore that is the story that gets told globally about what's happening on the ground.
3. The Gospel teaches us in order to hear the full story, we have to pay attention and also listen to the powerless, the dispossessed and the oppressed. In the end, talking with our kids about this topic is the same as talking about any other topic: stick to the truth. Which aspects of the truth we choose to tell depends, of course, on the age of the child. But we always tell them what is true, and I have found that a child of nearly any age understands and knows instinctively and profoundly this sad truth: Hurt people hurt people. Sadly I don't know how and why but even the youngest child reacts that when one feels hurt, our first instinct sadly is often to hurt back. Someone takes your turn on the swing? You might be inclined to push them off. Someone calls you a bad name? You start thinking of a worse one to hurl back. And if you can't unleash your pain back onto the person who harmed you, you might find it directed somewhere else – maybe even onto someone else entirely, unfairly. Hurt people hurt people...

(Continued on page 2)

Talking to Our Children (Continued from page 1)

As parents, our job is to help our children to learn how to control those instincts, to talk through the pain someone has caused us, to use our words, to practice forgiveness. But we know how hard it is to do any of these things at every age. But as followers of Jesus, we know there is another way. We are taught to love our neighbors. We have been shown by Jesus how it is possible to stop the cycle of pain and hurt, to forgive, to move forward with mercy, love and compassion, to turn the other cheek, not as a passive victim but as a radical and courageous act of love.

We know it is not easy to offer kindness and love, we know we will often fail, but as Joshua in the Old Testament declared: "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord". May we all continue to practice Christ's Way. We can pray together that one day there be leaders in the Holy Land who are committed to creating for all a courageous life of tolerance, generosity, kindness and forgiveness.

Shalom with love always,

Elsa Marshall
Minister of Faith Formation



FALL TEA TIME

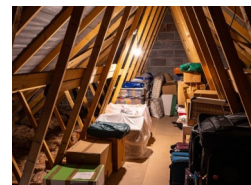
*You are invited to tea
with the pastor*

On Wednesday, November 15, you are all invited to a special time to gather with Rev. Peter and members of the church. The event takes place in the vestry (under the sanctuary) from 3:00-4:30 p.m.

If you would like to gather with Rev. Peter and your church family, this is a time for beverages, snacks and warm Christian fellowship.

Riley Hall Attic Clean-Out

The Trustees will be cleaning out the attic in Riley Hall to reduce the risk of fire hazard. If you have stored items in the attic space over the kitchen, please contact Mike Wolongevicz (mikewolo@hotmail.com) **before November 26**. Anything not identified to be saved will be thrown out, recycled, or donated.



Veterans' Day Worship, November 12

All United States military veterans and their families of our congregation and wider community are invited to join us for worship on Sunday, November 12 (the day following Veterans' Day) for morning worship at 9:30 am.

Our church will be honored to recognize all who have served. We are pleased to host American Legion Post 149 Commander Ray Miller who will participate in the program. Hymns and musical offerings during worship will be in keeping with the spirit of the day.

Following the worship service, our Minister of Music, Chad Weirick, will perform songs of the branches of the armed services.

There will be coffee, refreshments, and fellowship downstairs in the vestry to end the morning's gathering.

2024 Church Calendar



Pick up your pre-ordered copy of the calendar today. Sign up in the vestry. Cost is \$12. Copies will also be available at the Church Fair.

Ways of Giving

First Congregational Church of Hanover needs the financial support of its members and friends in order to fund the work and ministry of the church. In addition to our Sunday morning offering, you may also contribute electronically from your phone in church or from afar.

To contribute, simply scan this QR code which brings you to the church's Giving page on our website. Thank you for your contributions to the ministries of your church.



Christmas Poinsettias

Get ready to place your orders for poinsettias to decorate the altar at Christmas time. **Members of the Flower Committee will accept orders on Sunday, December 3 and 10. The price is \$15 each. Deadline for orders is December 11.** Orders may be mailed to the church office at 17 Silver Street, Hanover, MA 02339 with checks payable to First Congregational Church Hanover and marked "Poinsettia" in the memo portion. ~ The Flower Committee

Christmas Poinsettias

Given by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

How many? _____

_____ I will take on Christmas Eve Sunday, Dec. 24

_____ I wish to donate my poinsettia



Faithfully
FORWARD...

Stewardship Sunday is November 27. On this day, we receive and celebrate the gifts that the church's members and friends give to us to fund our work and ministries. The theme of the campaign is "Faithfully Forward."

We look forward to the following Stewardship Moments:

November 5: Kathy Facchini, Director of Housing Services, will speak about Immigrants

November 12: Melissa Boynton will speak about South Shore Habitat for Humanity

November 20: Kirsten Oberoi, Founding Artistic Director, South Shore Children's Chorus, will speak about her organization.

Please watch your mail and prayerfully consider what gifts you will share for the year 2024, and plan on joining us on Stewardship Sunday.

~Your Stewardship Committee.

Hanover Food Pantry Needs

In mid October many of the shelves at the Hanover Food Pantry were quite sparse. The following items are currently needed:

- * peanut butter & strawberry jam
- * canned mixed vegetables and canned corn
- * tuna
- * pasta sauce
- * salad dressing
- * soups
- * crackers & cookies



Donations may be brought to the Hanover Food Pantry at the Sylvester School.

Moonlighters Women's Group

Come check us out! We meet on the third Wednesday of the month in Riley Hall. **On November 15** we will assemble gift baskets for the homebound.





Brass Quintet to play at First Congregational Church

Sunday, December 3, 2023, Hanover
(across from Town Hall)
3:00-4:00 pm



You may know these talented musicians! The members of the Cranberry Brass Quintet are well-known on the South Shore

Sheri Fernandes (french horn) was the Director of Music, and High School Band and Chorus Director in East Bridgewater before joining the faculty at Boston Conservatory. She is also director of the Apponequet Regional High School Marching Band in the Freetown-Lakeville School District.

Austin Glass (tuba) is in his nineteenth year as the Band Director at Pembroke High School where he teaches Honors Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, 9th Grade Band, Marching Band, and Jazz Band.

Matt Harden (trumpet) is the K-12 Department Chair for Fine & Performing Arts for the Hanover Public Schools and Director of Instrumental Music at Hanover High School where he directs the marching band, symphonic band, jazz ensemble, and various chamber ensembles

John O'Briant (trumpet) has taught instrumental music at Norwell High School since 2006, where he also serves as the K-12 Arts and Wellness Curriculum Coordinator.

Julienne Thornell (trombone) has been a public school music educator since 1996, and is in her 23rd year as the Band Director at Hanover Middle School. Julienne has been on the faculty of South Shore Conservatory, teaching low brass since 2013.





Faith Formation

November is a month traditionally where we have a celebration of gratitude, a day called Thanksgiving. Oftentimes, we think of Thanksgiving as one day—a time to gather family around the table, to lay out a Thanksgiving feast (don't forget the pies!), and to give thanks for our many blessings. But when reading the Bible, every day is a day of thanksgiving. There are 19 thanksgiving Psalms, the phrase give thanks appears 37 times in Scripture, the word thanksgiving 35 times and gratitude 157 times. Henry Van Dyke said, "Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received. Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse." Over the years, I have learned quite a bit about the science and psychology of giving thanks. When we think about the gifts that surround us — provision, love, support, the wonders of nature — we refocus and reframe our experiences. We literally learn to *see* the world differently. But not in a kind of Pollyanna-ish, denial way. Rather, gratitude gives us a wider lens, one that allows for deeper dimensionality and realistic color, that enables us to draw previously invisible meaning and purpose from life and opens us to possibilities of hope and compassion we didn't know we had.

The word gratitude is derived from the Latin word *gratia*, which means grace, graciousness, or gratefulness (depending on the context). In some ways, gratitude encompasses all of these meanings. Gratitude isn't magic, but its benefits are enormous. There are numerous studies on how practicing gratitude benefits well-being, physical health, and fosters community. According to the Harvard Medical School gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships. To quote Brother Steindhl Rast, "It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful."

At FCC Hanover, November is also a month when the congregation shows their gratitude and thankfulness by offering one's time, talent and treasure during the church's stewardship campaign. Stewardship entails a process of continually renewing and recommitting oneself to God. By incorporating moments of daily gratitude, we are reminded of the spiritual dimension of our existence amidst the bustle of daily life. It is a way of reorienting ourselves, re-centering our focus towards the eternal and divine amidst the transient and mundane. "To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything." ~Thomas Merton

Psalms 28:7 offers this wisdom, "You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." May it be so....

Shalom with love always,

Elsa Marshall
Minister of Faith Formation



Youth Events

Our monthly youth group programs continue into the fall.
Watch your email and social media for news on upcoming events.



Pilgrim Association Fall Meeting

Sunday, November 5 at 2:00 p.m.

First Trinitarian Congregational Church, UCC
381 Country Way, Scituate, 02066



Keynote Address:

Better Together:

***How the Association Helps Every Church
and Every Church Helps the Association***

**Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver, Academic Dean of PATHWAYS
Theological Education, Inc., and Moderator of the
Old Colony Association.**

Gathering

Roll Call

*Worship

Keynote

Association Meeting

Sending Forth

Refreshments and Fellowship

Rev. Karen Bailey François, Scribe

Kim Engle, and Patti McLennan, MIDs

Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver

Rev. Dr. Mary Lou Gifford, Moderator

Sheppo Fisher, Treasurer

Ann Aaberg, Corresponding Scribe

****The offering will go to the Rev. M. Alicia Corea Scholarship Fund.***

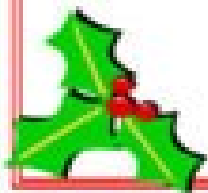


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 4:30pm - 6:00pm Brownies 6:00pm Prayer Shawl 7:30pm BigBook AA	2 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA	3 Fair Set up 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	4 10:00am - 2:00pm Church Fair 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
5 Daylight Saving Time Communion Sunday 9:30am Worship; no Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	6 7:00pm Bible Study	7 Election Day 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm Tigers	8 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm Trustees 7:30pm BigBook AA	9 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA	10 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	11 Veterans Day 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
12 9:30am Worship; no Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	13 7:00pm Bible Study	14 1:00pm - 2:30pm Girl Scouts #83310 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi	15 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 3:00pm Minister's Tea @ Vestry 7:00pm Finance 7:00pm Moonlighters 7:30pm BigBook AA	16 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 4:30pm - 6:00pm Brownie 6:00pm AA	17 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	18 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 2:00pm - 4:30pm Scouts-Bears
19 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	20 7:00pm Bible Study	21 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm Diaconate	22 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:30pm BigBook AA	23 Thanksgiving Day 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA	24 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	25 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
26 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	27 7:00pm Bible Study	28 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi	29 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:30pm BigBook AA	30 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA		



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First Congregational Church of Hanover
United Church of Christ
17 Silver St., Suite 201
Hanover, MA 02339



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF HANOVER, UCC

Laura's Country Church Fair

**Saturday, November 4, 2023
9:30 am-2:00 pm**

Unique Handmade Items, Crafts,
Holiday Decorations

Baked Goods, Jewelry,
Plants, Gift Baskets

"New" Peace Love Kindness Table

SNACK BAR

FREE HOT DOGS!
(while they last)



RILEY PARISH HALL • 17 SILVER ST.
Hanover (across from Library)