



# The Spire

March 2024

## The Newsletter of First Congregational Church of Hanover, United Church of Christ

**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

**Valerie Fink**  
Bookkeeper

### 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.

## Tips for the Everyday Evangelist

Dear Friends,

Evangelism is a tricky word. For some people it's a perfectly familiar word that they use to describe how they live their faith. For others, it's a scary word, conjuring images of fire-and-brimstone preachers. It's not a word that we often use as New England Congregationalists. This month, I ask you to consider this word, and consider how you might adopt the mantle of evangelists for our own community of faith.

Here are some examples of simple things that you can do to spread the good news about First Congregational Church of Hanover, UCC.

### Facebook Users:

- Like every post on Facebook - share the good news with your friends

- Invite your Facebook friends to like the church

### Other Social Media:

- Leave a Yelp review

### Everybody:

- Submit a faith story - for publication and for the website.

Contact Hal Thomas (halhanover@msn.com)

- Wear your nametags in church
- Invite, invite, invite! 80% of church visitors come on the arm of church members.

God has blessed us with a faithful and welcoming church. Let's do our best to "*Go into the world, and preach the Gospel.*" (Mark 16:15) In the meantime, we continue to move toward the cross in our Lenten journey.

Peace to you in the season of Lent,

Rev. Peter Johnston,  
Senior Pastor

### Dictionary

Definitions from [Oxford Languages](#) · [Learn more](#)



e·van·ge·lism

/əˈvɒnjəˌlɪz(ə)m/

noun

the spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness.

- zealous advocacy of a cause.  
"I arrived in a state of high evangelism"

## Fundraising Fun.....

Fundraisers are popping up all over the church as we work together to raise funds to support our programs and activities. There is something for everyone and everyone can get involved. Here is an update of what has been accomplished and what is coming up....

Our **February Lasagna Sale**, led by Adrienne Rafferty, sold 52 lasagnas and raised \$1,600. Many volunteers helped with the assembly, everyone had a great time, and the lasagna was delicious.

**April 13** is our **All-Church-Giant-Yard Sale**. Start de-cluttering your garage and attic! We are looking for volunteers to donate items, bake cookies, and work at the sale.

Bob Meader is leading a **Build-A-Shed Fundraiser**. Members of our church are willing to build a timber frame shed with some of the proceeds benefiting the church. Contact Bob for further information.

**Flower Fundraiser:** The Flower Committee will be making mini-bouquets from the altar flowers each Sunday and selling them for \$5 during coffee hour in the vestry. Take one home to brighten your week or to give to a friend!

A **Rummage Sale** is being planned for the end of the summer.

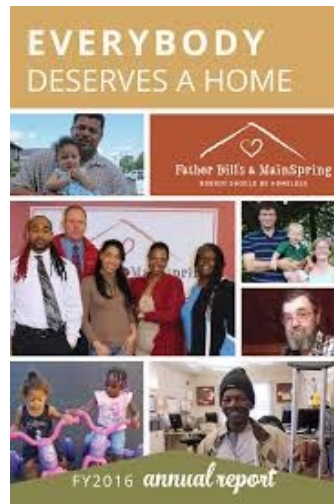
A **Church Cookbook** is in the works. Start looking through your recipes for favorites to contribute.

We have an ***Anonymous \$5,000 Match to the first \$5,000 we raise through our fundraising activities this year! Our first \$5,000 becomes \$10,000 thanks to this wonderful offer!***

More detailed information about upcoming projects will be forthcoming in the days ahead. It is very exciting to see all of these activities being planned. We need you to get involved! Send us your ideas about more fundraising fun opportunities and *join us at our next fundraising fun event!*

Thank you all for your support,

The Finance Committee



## Spotlight on Father Bill's & MainSpring

For many years FCC Hanover has supported the MainSpring homeless shelter in Brockton through food donations and meal preparations, sock drives, clothing donations, etc.

On March 17th we will welcome a representative from MainSpring to speak to us during our Sunday service. The following is their mission statement:

***Our mission is to end and prevent homelessness in Southern Massachusetts with programs that provide emergency and permanent housing and help people obtain skills, jobs, housing, and services. We help people who are struggling with homelessness, or are at risk of homelessness, achieve self-sufficiency.***



## CWS Hygiene Kits April Drive

In April we will once again be collecting hygiene kits for CWS. CWS hygiene kits may be donated through April in the church vestry or at the church office in Riley Hall. These hygiene kits offer a refreshing daily boost for people who are forced to abruptly leave their homes because of emergencies. The items requested are very specific and should be placed in a zip locked bag. Please do not include any extra items!

The specific list of 7 items can be found on the forsythia tree in the vestry. ~ Thank you from the Outreach & Service Committee!



## March 20 Potluck with the Moonlighters Women's Group

The Moonlighter's March meeting will be at the home of Dayna Scribi on Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30 pm. Please contact Dayna at [dscribi23@yahoo.com](mailto:dscribi23@yahoo.com) to let her know what you will bring.

## Moonlighters Served the Hungry

On February 4, the Moonlighters provided and served a delicious meal to approximately 130 clients at MainSpring House. 16 chicken/stuffing casseroles, corn, green beans, cranberry sauce, and dozens of cookies and brownies were enjoyed. Thank you to all the Moonlighters for preparing the food, and to Libby, Cindy, and Dayna for serving.



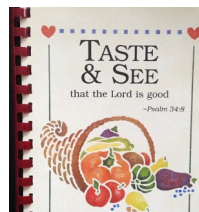
## Church Yard Sale, Saturday, April 13

Let your family and friends know that we are planning for a yard sale on the second Saturday in April. We're accepting gently used household items and clothing.

**\*\* No electronics or heavy furniture.\*\***

Drop off upstairs in Riley Hall Tue/Thu 9-1 or Wed/Sat 10-2. We're looking for volunteers to help and bakers to bake! Sign up at coffee hour or contact Adrienne Rafferty at [adrraf@verizon.net](mailto:adrraf@verizon.net).

Also we'll be collecting recipes for a **church cookbook**. So we'd love to include that special recipe you have or the one everyone asks you for! You may email them to [adrraf@verizon.net](mailto:adrraf@verizon.net).



## Upcoming South Shore Habitat Build

FCC Hanover is scheduled for Saturday, May 11 for a build in Cohasset.

If you are interested in finding out more or to be put on the list, please contact Ken Cheo at 508-735-5399 or [kcheo@oursalescoach.com](mailto:kcheo@oursalescoach.com)



## Goods and Services Auction Friday, May 3 at 6pm

Don't miss out! Mark your calendars NOW for the FCC Hanover Night at the Auction (with potluck desserts and snacks) to be held at Riley Hall, Friday May 3, 6:00 p.m.

We're putting out the word for this fund-raiser months ahead so that you can : A. Make sure you keep the date **FRIDAY, MAY 3** free to attend; and B. Start brainstorming your contribution to the services (or goods) offered.

It has been many years since we held an auction of this kind, but those who attended the last one may remember some of the items up for bid, such as: landscape planning, custom mailbox post delivered and installed, babysitting, cabin or vacation condo rental, music lessons, pet sitting, custom quilts and knitting, custom tasty treats or meals, gardening, website design, behind the scenes tour, party planning, etc.

It's a great opportunity for new members, old members, friends and family to share their skills, talents, and interests with others, while reducing the deficit! What do you have to offer? You have a couple of months to figure it out.



## Easter Offering

Beauty and freshness await us all as spring approaches. The spirit of Christ's resurrection awakens the church as it did to the women at the tomb. They cried with sorrow and fear at first, and then with enormous joy for the Easter renewal.

Life in the church is returning after a cold winter. The membership has recommitted to building ministries and pushing beyond any challenges that came before them. To do that, new plans and programs to fill budget gaps have been advanced. Members have stepped up with generous hearts. Many have increased their pledges to ensure success of the plans for the coming year. There is much more needed, however, and everyone needs to examine their support.

Please look at your budget and see if a stronger commitment is possible. There are so many places where choices can be made to reduce extra expenses and increase pledging.

Consider your Easter offering and whether a larger gift may be made this year.

As we leave the tomb, may the Joy of Easter fill us and give us hope of great renewal.

Thank-you ~ Stewardship Committee.

## Behavioral Covenant In the Works

What should govern our own behavior?



Church leadership is reviewing what is meant by "holy manners." If you would like to contribute your thoughts on ways to have helpful and safe conversations, no matter what the topic, please contact a member of the Diaconate or the church office. Over the next few months your ideas will be discussed with those of others, as we craft a behavioral covenant. The final result should be ready for congregational review in the fall.

## 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.



---

## EASTER LILY ORDERS

Now is the time to place your orders for Easter lilies to decorate the altar on Sunday, March 31. Use the form below and either give it to a member of the Flower Committee (Glenda Larson and Janet Cook) or return it to the church office (17 Silver St, Ste 201, Hanover MA 02339).

**The price is \$15 each. No orders can be accepted after March 18.**

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

How many? \_\_\_\_\_

In (Memory/Honor) of: \_\_\_\_\_

In (Memory/Honor) of: \_\_\_\_\_

*On Easter:*

I will take \_\_\_\_\_ Give to Homebound \_\_\_\_\_





## Faith Formation

The secular calendar and the church calendar collided this year, offering Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday on the same day. A colleague called it Lententines.

Lent is a time of reflection, repentance and renewal for Christians. A time to slow down, reflect, and start again, with renewed trust and hope in God and in our selves. Lent offer us a time to be with God in a special way, to pray, to fast, and thus to follow Christ on his path to Jerusalem, Golgotha, and the final victory over death: resurrection revealing the truth that new life springs from death and that nothing - not even death - can separate us from the love of God.

For me, the season of Lent is about as sacred as my life gets. I treasure when ashes are placed upon my forehead in the sign of a cross and I am reminded from ashes I came and to ashes I will return. And this year I also got to open messages of love and friendship because Ash Wednesday was also Valentine's day - a day we celebrate love. As a Christian the meaning of love has evolved into being an active verb. Jesus teaches us to love God and to love our neighbors and ourselves.

My children as college students would make their mandatory weekly call home on Sunday evenings. We would often discuss the difficult side of their lives while away, the gut-punches they were living as they became young adults. The closing sentence of our conversations would be, I never promised it would be easy, but always remember...love wins. I will go outside and look into the night sky and because it is the same sky as yours, I will be with you. Never forget, I love you and God loves you.

The longer I live the more gravity the promise that love wins possesses. I see the attrition of my friendships, the disconnection in so many families, the acrimony of strangers, the callousness of those in power, the fractures out there in the world, and it all feels fairly hopeless at times. I feel resistance to my love and mistake it for my failure. But this pushback to goodness should neither surprise nor dissuade me, and I refuse to accept it as a defeat. Love has rarely won, because it has gone unopposed. It's won

because of stubborn trust and belief that people are worth fighting for, bleeding for, waiting for, sacrificing for. Love is proven not only in passion, but in the perseverance of its work. That's the Gospel's message and promise.

When I look in the rearview mirror of my life, love's character becomes very clear: When love won in my marriage, it won because, in the face of some very dark days when leaving would be far easier, I chose to stay. When love won in my family, it won because we decided to endure the deep flaws that show themselves at close proximity. When love won in my parenting, it won when I pushed through fatigue to be fully present for one more storybook, watching from the sidelines in the rain, school committee meetings ad nauseam, or creating some needed life lesson. When love won in my heart toward others, it's because I resisted my most ingrained and fortified places of selfishness, vanity and fear.

So, yes, I do still believe after all these many years that love wins, because ultimately love is an act of choice and defiant persistence; of staying, enduring, waiting and still loving when we cannot see the difference. Love wins in the choice we make to have one last conversation, make one more plea, give one more day, listen one more time, perform one more action.

Love like Lent wins when we pass through the dark nights of disappointment, disillusionment, and desperation with trust, that like Easter, we will find new life as we somehow manage to greet the sun of expectancy and hope. May we each continually extend our open hands of love to this needy and broken world, instead of a cruel closed fist which will always destroy and crucify love and mercy.

I will be ending my ministry with and amongst you at the end of this month. I do so with deep love for my time with each and every one of you. It has been a blessing and honor and I will treasure it always.

Shalom with love always,

Elsa Marshall, Minister of Faith Formation



# LENT & HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Sunday, March 3 - Third Sunday in Lent**  
*Sacrament of Holy Communion*  
 Rev. Peter, Preaching

**Sunday, March 10 - Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
*Scout Sunday*  
 Rev. Peter, Preaching

**Sunday, March 17 - Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
*Fr. Bill's & MainSpring*  
 Kim Engle, Preaching

**Sunday, March 24 - Palm Sunday**  
*Celebration of Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*  
 Rev. Peter, Preaching

**Thursday, March 28 - Maundy Thursday**  
*Service of Tenebrae*  
 Rev. Peter, Preaching

**Sunday, March 31 - Easter Day**  
 Celebration of Christ's Resurrection +  
**Sunrise Service - 6:15 a.m.**  
 Kim Engle and the Confirmands, Leading  
**Festival Worship at 9:30 a.m.**  
 Special Music by the Choir  
 Rev. Peter, Preaching

## **Ecclesiastical Council for Kim Engle** **Thursday, April 11 at 6:00 p.m.** **Church of the Pilgrimage in Plymouth**

We are excited to announce and invite you to a special event. What is an ecclesiastical council?



Lay people and clergy are invited to gather at Kim's home church, Church of the Pilgrimage in Plymouth.

At that meeting Kim will present her ordination paper and then folks will have the opportunity to ask questions about her theology and her plans for ministry. When Kim has passed this examination, she is "ordainable pending call." Please join us for this special evening as Kim prepares for ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

Blessings, Kim, on your path to ordination!



The Melchin family would like to thank all our friends at FCC who helped make the collation for Ed Melchin very special.

## **Youth Group Easter Social**

**Sunday, March 24, 2024**  
**6:00-7:30pm**


Join us for an Easter Social and to discuss future events. Light refreshments will be provided! All Middle School and High School Students are welcome to join at any time! You are also more than welcome to bring a friend! Please reach out to Kristyn Falcione if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Her email address is [kfalcione57@gmail.com](mailto:kfalcione57@gmail.com).

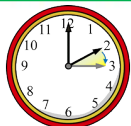
This includes Don, Dave Vaughan, Dennis, Hal, Dave Fiske for the set up; Maddie for the arrangement of the centerpieces; Cindy, Karen, Ruth, Dennis & Robin, Sandy Vaughan, Jessie, Deb, Sandy Adami, Dayna, Linda, Ginny, Ericka, Maddie, Joyce, Glenda, Irene, Priscilla, Susan and Adrienne for food, drinks, and set up; and all those who made contributions in Ed's memory. Hopefully, I have listed everyone!

~ Marilyn Melchin

**Youth Group**



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 8:00am All Pro Dads 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	<b>2</b> 8:30am - 9:30am Tai Chi @ Classroom
<b>3</b> Communion Sunday 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 1:00pm Girl Scouts 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm Tigers	<b>6</b> 4:30pm - 6:00pm Brownies 6:00pm Prayer Shawl 7:30pm BigBook AA	<b>7</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA	<b>8</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	<b>9</b> 8:30am - 9:30am Tai Chi @ Classroom 12:00pm - 4:30pm Larson Family
<b>10</b> Daylight Savings Scout Sunday 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi	<b>13</b> 3:00pm - 4:00pm Minister's Tea 6:30pm Trustees 7:30pm BigBook AA	<b>14</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Church Cabinet	<b>15</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	<b>16</b> 8:30am - 9:30am Tai Chi @ Classroom
<b>17</b> Father Bill's Rep 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi	<b>20</b> 7:00pm Moonlighters 7:30pm BigBook AA	<b>21</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 4:30pm - 6:00pm Brownie 6:00pm AA 7:00pm - 8:00pm Finance	<b>22</b> 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	<b>23</b> 8:30am - 9:30am Tai Chi @ Classroom 2:00pm - 4:30pm Scouts-Bears
<b>24</b> Palm Sunday 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 4:00pm SSCC 6:00pm Tai Chi	<b>27</b> 7:30pm BigBook AA	<b>28</b> Maundy Thursday 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish 6:00pm AA 7:00pm Tenebrae Service	<b>29</b> Good Friday 8:00am - 1:00pm CakeWish	<b>30</b> 8:30am - 9:30am Tai Chi @ Classroom
<b>31</b> Easter Sunday 6:15am Sunrise 9:30am Worship and Church School 10:30am Coffee Hour	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Church Cabinet Dates</b></p> <p>A friendly reminder that all committees should have elected their chairpersons for 2024. Please let Susan in the office know as soon as possible who they are so she can update her records. <b>The next Cabinet meeting will be Thursday, March 14, 2024.</b> This is a change to the second Thursday of the month. The remaining Cabinet meetings in 2024 will follow the traditional first Thursday schedule for June 6, September 5 and December 5.</p>					



Daylight Savings  
Time Begins

**Note: Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 10, so please set your clocks ahead. Latecomers are invited to listen to the postlude.**



## **The Spire**

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

**Sunday, March 24 at 9:30 a.m.**

### **Palm Sunday**

*Celebration of Jesus' Triumphal  
Entry into Jerusalem*

**Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m.**

### **Maundy Thursday**

*Tenebrae Shadows and Light*

**Sunday, March 31 - Easter Day**

**Sunrise Service - 6:15 a.m.**

**Easter Worship at 9:30 a.m.**

*Celebration of Christ's Resurrection*

**Holy Week in Hanover 2024**