



# The Spire

April 2026

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

**Rev. Peter Johnston**  
Senior Pastor

**Chad Weirick**  
Minister of Music

**Janet Cook**  
Director of Education

**Susan Vetterlein**  
Office Administrator

**Peter Jansky**  
Sexton

**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.

## An Important Conversation about Our Church's Future Saturday, April 25 from 9-Noon

Our congregation will soon have a special opportunity to learn and grow together as we welcome Rev. Doug Bixby, senior pastor of First Church in Longmeadow, UCC, who will be leading a conversation on church governance and decision making here in Hanover.

This is an important and timely conversation because our board and committee structure was designed decades ago for a church with a significantly larger, younger congregation with more volunteers than we have now. *Quite frankly, we no longer have the people to fill all of the roles that by-laws call for or even possibly need.*



Rev. Bixby has helped many congregations rethink how they organize themselves so that the structure of the church supports ministry rather than getting in the way of it. His conversation on Governance & Decision Making will focus on simplifying church structure, streamlining decision-making, improving communication, and finding healthier ways to deal with conflict so that it does not interfere with community, commitment, and congregational development.

This workshop will be especially helpful for cabinet members, deacons, committee chairs, and is open to all members of the church. Church governance may not sound exciting at first, but how we make decisions, how we communicate, and how we organize ourselves has a direct impact on the health, energy, and direction of the congregation. Healthy governance helps a church focus on its mission, reduces unnecessary conflict, and makes it easier for new people to get involved and for leaders to lead.

After this conversation, the whole church gets to decide how to move forward from here. Please bring your faith, your questions and your enthusiasm to the table!

**The event will take place on Saturday, April 25 from 9:00 a.m. to noon in Riley Hall, with coffee and pastries served.**

Please plan to join us for this important and hopeful conversation about the future of our church and how we can organize ourselves for faithful, effective, and joyful ministry long into the future.



### **CWS Hygiene Kits Drive April 5-26**

It's that time of year again when we will be collecting hygiene kits for Church World Service. These essential kits offer a refreshing daily boost for people who are forced

to abruptly leave their homes due to emergencies. The items requested are very specific and should be placed in a zip locked bag. Feel free to take a list of the exact nine items from the forsythia tree in the narthex. Donations of CWS Hygiene Kits will be gladly accepted April 5-26 in the church narthex or at the church office.

~ Thank you from the Outreach & Service Committee

- \* Washcloth
- \* Fingernail or toenail clipper
- \* Toothbrush (in original pkg.)
- \* Bath-size bar of soap (in original pkg.)
- \* Travel-size stick deodorant (3.4 oz or less, non-aerosol)
- \* Travel-size lotion (3.4 oz or less, fragrance-free)
- \* Travel-size shampoo (3.4 oz. or less)
- \* Travel-size toothpaste (3.4 oz. or less)
- \* Sturdy wide-tooth comb (removed from pkg, with at least 6" of teeth)

### **Minister's Tea April 8 at 3:00**

You are invited to tea with Rev. Peter Johnston on Wednesday, April 8. The event takes place in the vestry (under the sanctuary) from 3:00-4:30 p.m. This is a time when

members of the church family can sit and enjoy delicious treats with good company. Please plan on joining us, and feel free to bring a neighbor!



### **SPECIAL MEETING CALL**

To the Qualified Voters of the First Congregational Church UCC of Hanover

You are hereby warned and notified of a Special Meeting in the Sanctuary immediately following the **Sunday, April 19, 2026, 9:30** Worship Service to vote on confirmation of new members to the Finance, Flower, and Hospitality Committees, and to transact any other business that might legally come before the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cynthia Price Taylor  
Church Clerk

### **Moonlighters Women Group Celebrates the Mediterranean**

The Moonlighters raised their glasses (of seltzer water!) on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at their annual International Potluck Dinner held at the lovely home of Sandy Adami. The theme was Mediterranean, and wonderful appetizers, salads, main dishes and yummy desserts represented many countries of that area. Several recipes were shared by the end of a fun-filled evening of laughter and friendship. Our thanks to the hostesses of the evening, Sandy Adami and Glenda Larson.



# YARD SALE

**Church Yard Sale,  
Saturday, April 11**

Let your family, friends, and co-workers know about this opportunity to donate their unwanted items. Items can be dropped off upstairs in Riley Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-2 and Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10-2. You'll see a designated spot for drop off. We accept gently used household items and clothing.

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

Contact Adrienne Rafferty for more information at [adrraf@verizon.net](mailto:adrraf@verizon.net).



## **Teach the Joy of Worship**

Thanks to the folks who taught Sunday School during the month of March. Louise Jackson, Elisabeth Meader, Glenda and Dean Larson did a terrific job teaching the children about the events of Holy Week. The kids had fun learning the lessons, playing Jesus in the Desert Bingo, and putting their acting skills in motion pretending to drive those moneychangers out of the temple!

We are a small group, but we have lots of fun and laughs in Sunday School! Will you consider being a part of our class by helping to teach our children? All it takes is two Sundays. Help is needed during April, May, and June. Volunteers are also needed for "on call" Nursery/Toddler Care. Please jot your name next to 2 dates for the coming months. Questions about Sunday School or Nursery/Toddler care? Please see Janet or email [jcookie4@hotmail.com](mailto:jcookie4@hotmail.com).



## **Five Wishes Advance Directive Workshop Sunday, May 3rd at 10:45.**

Advance care planning is an ongoing process of exploring and discussing goals, values, and experiences related to the end of life, as well as understanding one's health to guide future treatment considerations and choices. An advanced directive is a tool which puts those considerations and choices into writing so that loved ones and health care providers know your wishes.

The Five Wishes advance directive is an easy-to-understand document that lets you state your medical, personal, emotional, and spiritual wishes for end-of-life care, covering who makes decisions (health care proxy), desired treatments, comfort, how you're treated, and what loved ones should know. Five Wishes helps families avoid guesswork and ensure that dignity is honored.

A user-friendly advanced directive, Five Wishes has been used by over 40 million people. It's valid in almost all states and addresses all aspects of care in one place, making difficult conversations simpler. Come to learn more about the advanced care planning process, and to understand more about the Five Wishes Advanced Directive.

Blessings on the next chapter of your ministry!

~ Rev. Deb Spratley and  
Rev. Dr. Laura Delaplain



## Flowers Adorn the Church

Our 2026 Flower calendar on the bulletin board in the Vestry.

Order an arrangement to honor someone special. The cost remains at \$25. You may take home the flowers or donate them to be made into small bouquets for fundraising. Order forms are available on the bulletin board and can be placed in the collection or mailed to the Church office (please mark envelope "Attn: Flower Committee"). Please include a check payable to FCC Hanover and note Flowers on the memo line. We all appreciate fresh flowers that beautify the sanctuary!

### To the Clergy and Delegates of The Pilgrim Association

You are requested to attend the

### PILGRIM ASSOCIATION SPRING MEETING 2026

Sunday, April 19, 2026 at 2:00pm

at

Christ Congregational Church, UCC  
1350 Pleasant St Brockton, MA  
02301

#### Featuring Guest Speakers:

Janine Carreiro-Young and  
William Dickerson

Co-Executive Directors of the Massachusetts  
Community Action Network

<https://www.mcan.us/>

### "Building Collective People Power"

#### Agenda

2:00 Welcome and Gathering Worship

2:25 Roll Call and Business Meeting

3:00 Featured Speaker and Q&A

4:00 Closing Prayer and Fellowship &  
Refreshments



## Moonlighters Craft Night Wednesday, April 15

The Moonlighters will meet on Wednesday April 15 at 700pm in Riley Hall. We will be working on an assortment of crafts for the Church Fair.

If you are not a Moonlighter already, come join us and share in our fellowship!

All Families Welcome

# P.A.C.E

Parent and Child Enrichment

August 2-8, 2026

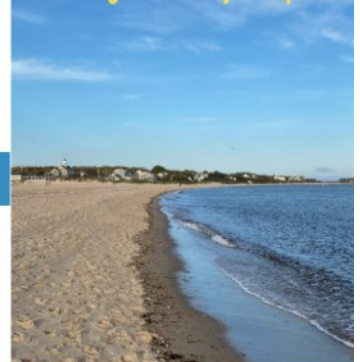
Extended stays or early check-in on  
July 31. Late departure on August 9.  
Your preference.

All-inclusive – six-night vacation, includes 17  
meals. Check in early or extend your  
vacation with a late departure. Scholarships  
available. Inquire.

### About - All Programs Optional

- Lodging in Craigville's historic & air-conditioned Inn
- Private life guarded beach with a game room and an ocean raft
- Tennis & volleyball courts, ball field, and playground
- Morning program, arts & crafts, music, & skits
- Evening activities: kite flying, outdoor concerts and games
- Tabernacle and outdoor chapel for quiet reflection
- Lots of free time to explore the Cape and its beaches
- Adult Bible Study [optional] with Rev. Ed Deyton, facilitator
- Jeopardy Night with former contestants on each team!

Craigville Family Camp



P.A.C.E yourself this summer and enjoy the warm south shore waters and beach in Cape Cod, MA – Nantucket Sound.

### CONTACT • MORE INFO.

Call or text  
508-309-0386

familycampvacation@yahoo.com  
Craigville.org





# FCC HANOVER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



## APRIL NEWS

The month of **March** led us to our study of the happenings of Jesus' life during Holy Week. We celebrated His entry into Jerusalem with palms and cloaks; we acted out His anger when moneychangers were in the temple; we learned about the betrayal of Judas with 30 silver coins and an identifying kiss; we learned about the bread and wine at The Last Supper, and we felt the sadness of Good Friday knowing this was the day Jesus was crucified on a cross and died for us. On **Easter Sunday**, we'll celebrate Jesus' resurrection! We'll sing loud praises of joy and Hallelujah! We'll have a special Easter activity along with Easter bingo. Come and celebrate Jesus' resurrection and the joy of Easter with us!

In the weeks following Easter, we'll engage in games of Believe It or Not and talk about Doubting Thomas. We'll understand the life Jesus wants us to lead as we discuss being good shepherds of God's world. Please join us for the fun!

 **Mark your calendars now!**   
**FREE COMMUNITY EVENT**  
**Bring a friend! All welcome!**

**May 8** *Mother's Day Craft  
and Make Your Own Sundae*  
Riley Hall 6-7:30 PM

## LESSONS

April 5 - He has Risen! activity  
April 12 Doubting Thomas  
April 19,26 God's Creation &  
Earth Day T-shirts



We'll be counting the coins from Our Lenten Giving Project to donate to Hanover Food Pantry. Remember to bring your collection tubes or jars to church and leave them in the vestry.

## YOUTH GROUP

**April** brings warmer temperatures and a renewed desire to be outdoors. Our **Youth Group** is planning a fun nature hike along the North River. Not only will they be observing nature but their eagle eyes will be hunting out any trash to be picked up along the trail. Way to go, Youth Group! Details for date and time will be announced in the weekly bulletin. New members are always welcome. Bring a friend!

*It doesn't matter if you are able to join us a lot or a little; you are always warmly welcomed at FCC Hanover!*



May 8th



# MOTHER'S DAY

## CRAFT

**6 - 7:30 pm**

Not sure what to get your Mother for Mother's Day? We've got you covered!

**FREE**  
event

Kids'  
craft

Ice cream  
sundae

Bring your kids for a Friday night dessert treat and make a gift to celebrate Mom or Grandmother!

**First Congregational Church**

**Riley Hall  
17 Silver St  
Hanover**





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm - 7:30pm Prayer Shawl 7:00pm Big Book AA	2 6:00pm AA	3	4 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
5 Easter 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	6	7 6:00pm Tai Chi	8 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 3:00pm Minister's Tea 7:00pm Big Book AA	9 4:00pm - 5:30pm CE/Riley Hal 6:00pm AA	10 Yard Sale Set Up	11 9:00am - 2:00pm Church Yard Sale 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
12 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	13	14 6:00pm Tai Chi 6:30pm Trustees	15 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm Moonlighters 7:00pm Big Book AA	16 6:00pm AA	17	18 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
19 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 11:00am - 12:00pm McGue Baptism	20	21 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm - 8:00pm Diaconate	22 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:00pm Big Book AA	23 6:00pm AA	24	25 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 3:00pm - 7:00pm Hnvr Girl Scouts @ Riley Hall and Kitchen
26 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	27	28 6:00pm Tai Chi	29 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:00pm Big Book AA	30 6:00pm AA		



To submit items for the church calendar, bulletin or the Spire, please email fully composed articles (and pictures!) to [Office@FCCHanover.org](mailto:Office@FCCHanover.org)



## **The Spire**

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

# Holy Week



**You are Invited to our  
Holy Week Services**

**Palm Sunday, Sunday, March 29 at 9:30 a.m.**  
*Jesus' Triumphal Entry into the City*

**Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 7:00 p.m.**  
*Service of Light and Shadows*

**Easter Sunday, April 5**  
*6:15 a.m. Sunrise Service Labyrinth, 17 Silver Street*  
*9:30 a.m. Festival Service of the Resurrection*



First Congregational  
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United Church of Christ