



The Spire

March 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

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Sexton

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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.

Lenten Practices

Beloved Church,

March in the Northeast keeps us guessing. One afternoon feels like spring is right around the corner. The next morning we're back in scarves and boots. It is an in-between month—and that feels just right for Lent. I made it home from Florida at 2 a.m. after the snow-pocalypse, and next week's weather will be in the 50's.

Lent is an in-between season, too. Not quite winter, not yet Easter. It is a time to slow down, to tell the truth about our lives, and to gently ask: where is God inviting me to grow?

I see those choices in you every week.

I see them in the volunteers who prepare meals and welcome strangers. In the teachers forming our children in stories of justice and compassion. In the choir, lifting beauty into the sanctuary. In the steady generosity that keeps our ministries strong. You are living the gospel in ways that matter—here in this country, in this neighborhood, in this moment.

Lent also reminds us that hope is not shallow optimism. It grows when we face the hard truths of our world and refuse to give up on love. As we move toward Holy Week, we will walk again through the story of betrayal and courage, grief and grace. We will not rush past Maundy Thursday, because we trust that resurrection is real and that God is always working beneath the surface.

Even now.

Even here.

Thank you for your faithfulness, your compassion, and your courage. It is a gift to serve as your pastor. I am grateful for you.

Let us walk this season together—with honesty, with tenderness, and with hope.

With gratitude,

Rev. Peter Johnston
Senior Pastor

Rev. Peter Johnston
Senior Pastor





Sunday Morning Hospitality & Greeters

A Note of Appreciation to our Congregation

Thank you to all who generously volunteer to host Sunday Morning Coffee Hour & also to those who are Greeters. You are the welcoming and friendly face when our members and new attendees arrive.

A special thank you to Hal Thomas, who brews that coffee most Sunday mornings—we couldn't do without that coffee!

Our Hospitality Hosts efforts are much appreciated by all who attend Sunday Morning Worship. We do enjoy that post-service fellowship time.

Thank you too for the cash gifts, as they do help us defray costs-for punch, juice, cream and paper supplies, allowing the Sunday Hosts to focus on providing the breads, cookies, cheeses & crackers that we enjoy.

Since the annual meeting we have welcomed Kimmarie Blanton to the Hospitality Team - thank you for joining us, Kim!

We continue to have the sign up sheets for Hospitality and Greeting next to the Coffee Table. There is a committee member assigned to each month as a contact if you need help or have any questions. Thank you, FCC Congregation!

~ Sandy Adami, Hospitality Team



Minister's Tea March 11 at 3:00

You are invited to tea with Rev. Peter Johnston on Wednesday, March 11. 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!



A Quick Note Lenten Bible Study Postponed

I am not able to lead a Lenten Bible Study this year, but I look forward to offering something over the summer when schedules are less hectic.

~Mary Lou Gifford



Steeple Lights & Carillon, April and Forward

Yes! I Would Like to Light the Steeple and Ring the Carillon!

Name _____

Telephone _____

In honor of In memory of _____

For the month of: _____, 2026

Please return this form to the church office with a payment of \$50.00.



Five Wishes Advance Directive Workshop Sunday, March 15 10:45-11:45

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. Dev Spratley and
Rev. Dr. Laura Delaplain



Christian Education News

Volunteers are needed through April to help with Sunday School and child care in the Nursery/Toddler room. There are sign-up sheets in the vestry. For Sunday School, please consider volunteering for 2 consecutive Sundays. In that way, the children have consistency and get to better know our adult members. We've had many female helpers and would love to have help from the guys in the congregation, too!

Thank you for supporting the CE program in this way. If you have any questions, just reach out to Janet in church or via email at jcookie4@hotmail.com.



Church Yard Sale, Saturday, April 11

Start your Spring cleaning now! 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.

THE MODERATOR

From the Moderator

This year's first meeting of the Church Cabinet is scheduled for Thursday, March 5, at 7:00, in the church vestry. Church officers, delegates, and chairpersons of boards and committees are expected to attend and share reports in order to "maintain a general oversight of the fellowship and work of the church," according to our Bylaws. Our Bylaws also indicate that our quarterly Cabinet meetings are to be held in "open session." That is, anyone in our church family who is interested in the work of the Cabinet is welcome to attend. The vestry is a large room and there are plenty of chairs available. Please feel free to join us as we meet.

~ Ava Sigsby



Moonlighters International Potluck Wednesday, March 18

Moonlighters March Meeting is a Mediterranean Themed Pot Luck on Wednesday, March 18 at 5:30 pm at 49 Cobblestone Lane in Hanover.

We always welcome newcomers and invite you to join Moonlighters for a yummy meal and warm fellowship! And Bring a Friend Along!

Please contact one of the hosts if you would like to attend.

Potluck hosted by
Glenda Larson # 617-838-3741 and
Sandy Adami #617-312-1785

February CE Highlights

Our Sunday School children hosted Warm Up Coffee Hour, perfect for February 8's frigid temperatures! They baked and decorated delicious cookies and served hot chocolate. Our Youth Group made Valentine goodie bags for everyone. We also welcomed Boy Scouts to our church and had a special coffee hour for Scout Sunday. We are showing our faith and love for God through our service to church and community!



Bring Joy to the Altar with Easter Flowers

You may donate lilies to decorate our altar on Easter Sunday, April 5. Members of the, Flower Committee will be in the Vestry during coffee hour on March 22 and 29 accepting orders. Or, complete this order form and return with payment to the church office or place in the offering plate with payment folded inside. **The deadline for ordering is Monday, March 30.** The price is \$15 each.

Given by: _____

Number of Lilies: _____ at \$15 each Total Enclosed \$ _____

In (Memory/Honor) of: _____



FCC HANOVER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



MARCH NEWS

We know **February** as the short month but in Sunday School we were not short on learning and caring. We heard about how Jesus healed the sick and learned about his 12 disciples. We learned a new song telling about how Jesus made his disciples fishers of men! We baked and decorated yummy sugar cookies for our Warm Up Coffee Hour. At the same, we collected winter hats and mittens for Friends of the Homeless South Shore. Together, we served God through our kind acts and open hearts. Finally, we ended the month with the beginning of our learning about the Lenten season.

During the month of **MARCH**, we'll follow Jesus during Holy Week as he nears the last days of his life on earth. We'll learn about his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Jesus clearing the temple, The Last Supper with his disciples, connect with the mourning of his crucifixion and the joyous feelings of his resurrection on Easter Sunday! There's so much to hear and learn in Sunday School! Join us!

MORE MARCH FUN! (not to be missed!)

2 FREE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Bring a friend! All welcome!

March 8 Lindsay and Her Puppet Pals

2:00. Riley Hall

Enjoy the show and refreshments!

Make a puppet or two!



March 29. Easter Egg Hunt

11- 1:00 PM

LESSONS

- March 1 - Jesus in the Wilderness
- March 8- Jesus Enters Jerusalem
- March 15- Jesus Clears the Temple
- March 22- The Last Supper (activity)
- March 29 - Jesus' Resurrection (activity)

Lenten Giving Project!

Serve God during Lent by collecting coins for the Hanover Food Pantry. If you didn't get a collection tube at church, no worries! Just bring your coins to church and drop them in the jar.



YOUTH GROUP

Last month, during our Warm Up Coffee Hour, congregation members were delighted to be the recipients of wonderful goodie bags made by our Youth Group. Homebound folks received thoughtful cards made and sent in the mail. Youth Group members definitely showed their service to church and community with these acts of kindness!

Stay tuned for the **March** meeting- a visit to a guinea pig shelter! 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!

FREE



Free Family Event

PUPPET SHOW

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

RILEY HALL

17 SILVER ST

HANOVER MA

Featuring Lindsay & Her Puppet Pals



SUNDAY, MARCH 8 2:00 PM

RERESHMENTS SERVED

FCC Hanover Cares about Kids!

MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	2	3 6:00pm Tai Chi	4 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm - 7:30pm Prayer Shawl 7:00pm Big Book AA	5 6:00pm AA 7:00pm - 8:00pm Cabinet Meeting?	6	7 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
8 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 2:00pm - 3:00pm Puppet Show Riley Hall	9	10 6:00pm Tai Chi 6:30pm Trustees	11 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 3:00pm Minister's Tea 7:00pm Big Book AA	12 4:00pm - 5:30pm CE/Riley Hal 6:00pm AA	13	14 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
15 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:45am 5 Wishes Workshop	16	17 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm - 8:00pm Diaconate	18 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 5:30pm Moonlighters 7:00pm Big Book AA	19 6:00pm AA	20	21 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
22 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	23	24 6:00pm Tai Chi	25 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:00pm Big Book AA	26 6:00pm AA	27 7:00am - 9:00am All Pro Dad	28 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
29 Palm Sunday 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 11:00am - 1:00pm Easter Egg Hunt	30	31 6:00pm Tai Chi				



To submit items for the church calendar, bulletin or the Spire, please email fully composed articles (and pictures!) to Office@FCHanover.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



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