



The Spire

May 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

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Sexton

Valerie Fink
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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.



*Rev. Doug Bixby
leading the
conversation*

A Conversation on Church Leadership

On Saturday morning, April 25, about 25 covenant members gathered at Riley Hall, led by Rev. Doug Bixby, pastor of the First Church of Christ Congregational UCC in Longmeadow. The conversation centered on church governance and decision-making in churches in general, and in our church specifically. The event was presented by the Diaconate.

Most of our current boards, committees, officers, and staff were represented at the gathering. Rev. Bixby walked us through some ideas to simplify structures, manage conflict, clarify leadership roles, and focus our energy on mission rather than maintenance.

Our current governance structure of boards, committees, and the Cabinet worked well when we were a 500-member church, but has become harder and harder to work with, given our present membership. We discussed how we make decisions, how we get the ministry of the church done, and some of the sticking points that we encounter along the way. The group appreciated Rev. Bixby's experience, candor, and humor as he led us through the conversation. One important theme was the distinction between governance and day-to-day management.

Leadership bodies are called to focus on vision and direction, while staff and ministry teams would carry out the ongoing work of ministry. Clear roles help congregations move forward with greater purpose and less frustration. Trust was also central to the conversation. Healthy churches are built not on control, but on shared trust, collaboration, and a common sense of mission.

In the next few weeks, I will be meeting with Ava Sigsby and Ken Cheo, Moderator and Vice-Moderator, to discuss next steps as we work toward a healthy and faithful future for our church.

Faithfully,

Rev. Peter Johnston,
Senior Pastor



May 10: One Great Hour of Sharing

OGHS is a special mission offering, which supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. In On May 10 there will be special envelopes in the bulletins. We ask you to prayerfully consider a gift so that our local church can help people in need around the world.

Minister's Tea May 13 at 3:00

You are invited to tea with Rev. Peter Johnston on the second Wednesday of the month, May 13. 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!



Moonlighters Women's Group Game Night

The Moonlighters will meet in Riley Hall on Wednesday, May 20 at 6:30 pm. Enjoy a fun time of games, laughter, and deepening friendships.



**Barbara Itz with
Easter Lily**

Highlights of the Yard Sale





Youth Group Highlights

Youth Group hiked along North River Saturday, April 11. Beautiful day! They enjoyed the beauty of nature and picked up trash along the trail. Serving the community while taking care of God's world! Sunday School kids discussed how Jesus is Alive and He is Everywhere! We took a walk outside and observed our surroundings. Kids drew and shared their observations of Jesus' presence in their lives.



Bibles for Kenya

Do you have Bibles that belonged to a family member or that you no longer have use for? Bibles4Kenya may be your

answer! This is a faith based initiative that collects new or used Bibles in any condition or any language to be distributed to rural and underserved regions of Kenya. If you have a Bible that you would like to donate, please place it in the collection box in the vestry through May 17th. Please contact Dayna if you have any questions at 617-827-3955.

Little Steps, Big Faith

Thanks to the folks who have signed up to help with Sunday School, we are all set until the end of our church school year! Yay!



The Nursery/Toddler Room is still in need of weekly "on call" care until June 4th. Please write your name on the sign-up sheet in the vestry. Questions about Sunday School or Nursery/Toddler care? Please see Janet or send an email to 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.

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

New Flower Urns

The Flower committee has replaced our retired urns which have served us well for many years. They survived many bumps from snow plows, student drivers (kidding!) and winter salt baths. We thank Janet Cook who has been filling our urns with beautiful seasonal flower arrangements for the past several years.



Stewardship Report



The Stewardship Committee wishes to thank everyone who submitted a pledge this year.

The pledges totaled \$204,478 and while it fell short of our \$240,000

goal, it was a 7.2% increase from last year. We appreciate every contribution. We are excited to continue supporting the great work of our members and church.



Vacation Bible Camp

Christian Education Committee is very excited to announce we will be offering VACATION BIBLE CAMP this year! The dates are August 17 -20 from 9-12. Our absolutely fun program will be offered to children ages 4 -10. Mark your calendars now! Share the news with your families and friends! Further details and publication announcements will be given in the coming weeks.

Snug Harbor Community Chorus Spring Concert Series

*Saturday, May 9 @ 7:30 pm at the Duxbury Performing Arts Center at 73 Alden Street

*Sunday, May 10 @ 2 pm at the Ellison Center for the Arts at 64 St. George St Duxbury

Happy Together:
SONGS OF JOY, PEACE & COMMUNITY



Prayer Shawl Blessing Sunday, May 31



You Helped the Hanover Food Pantry

The coins and bills from our Lenten Giving Project tubes have been counted. Drum roll, please..... Our collections yielded a whopping \$366.25! What a wonderful gift from our church to present to the Hanover Food Pantry! Thank you to the many who contributed to this collection. You surely *Let Your Light Shine!*

Provide Stability

Help MainSpring work on a safer way for people to live. Grab a buddy and provide a meal in June. You may drop off the meal on Saturday or Sunday at the shelter in Brockton. Outreach & Service will reimburse you for a portion or even the total meal. Sign up in the church coat room or contact Dayna Scribi @ dscribi23@yahoo.com



Labyrinth Clean Up

Thank you to Sandy Adami, Dayna Scribi, Sandy Vaughn, Louise Jackson, Glenda Larson, Ruth Hall, Janet Cook, and Karen Tripp for spring-cleaning the labyrinth!





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**



FCC HANOVER
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
NEWSLETTER



MAY NEWS

APRIL was a busy month here at FCC Hanover! We followed Jesus during his last week of life on earth and celebrated his resurrection on Easter Sunday! It was wonderful to see our children and families at Easter service and also to meet and chat with visiting families to our church. We invite you to visit again as you are always welcome to church and Sunday School. In recognition of Earth Day in April, our children talked about about God's creation and designed T-shirts to display ways we can take care of God's world.

We began our church school year with the the Bible verse Matthew 5:16, *Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*" During Sunday School in **MAY** we'll revisit this year-long theme and hear about more people in the Bible who showed kindness, forgiveness, and compassion. We'll encourage our children to reflect upon these people and their stories and how they might follow in their footsteps. Come! Listen! Have fun!

**All invited! FUN and FREE
Community Event!!**

**Mother's Day Craft and Make Your
Own Sundae**

When: Friday, May 8. 6-7:30 PM

Where: Riley Hall

**Bring your children, grandchildren,
neices, nephews! Bring a friend!**



LESSONS

- May 3 - Just Shine!
- May 10- Ruth and Naomi
- May 17- Elisha Feeds 100
- May 24- The Good Samaritan
- May 31 - Jesus Blesses the Children



*The counting has been done! The total collected for our **Lenten Giving Project** to benefit the Hanover Food Pantry was \$366.25! We all **Let Our Light Shine** with our generosity shown for those in need. Thank you!*

YOUTH GROUP

Last month, Youth Group members took advantage of a beautiful spring day and hiked along the North River. Along the way, they showed their caring and service to God and community by picking up trash. They certainly left the area better than they first found it! Way to go, Youth Group!

Youth Group will lend their helping hands and their welcoming smiles at our **Mother's Day Craft Night**. If you would like your son or daughter to join in this service, please contact Youth Group leaders Jenn Bunar or Nicole Conti or reach out to Janet Cook at jcookie4@hotmail.com. Friends are always welcome to join in!

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



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 7:00am - 9:00am All Pro Dad 8:00am Scout Derby Set Up	2 Pinewood Derby 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
3 Scouts at MainSpring 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	4	5 6:00pm Tai Chi	6 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm - 7:30pm Prayer Shawl 7:00pm Big Book AA	7 6:00pm AA	8 6:00pm - 7:30pm Mothers Day Event	9 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
10 Mother's Day 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	11	12 6:00pm Tai Chi 6:30pm Trustees	13 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 3:00pm Minister's Tea 7:00pm Big Book AA	14 4:00pm - 5:30pm CE/Riley Hal 6:00pm AA	15	16 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
17 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	18	19 6:00pm Tai Chi 7:00pm - 8:00pm Diaconate	20 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 6:30pm Moonlighters 7:00pm Big Book AA	21 6:00pm AA	22	23 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
24 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship	25	26 6:00pm Tai Chi	27 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop 7:00pm Big Book AA	28 6:00pm AA	29 WHGC Set up	30 WHGC Plant Sale 10:00am - 2:00pm Thrift Shop
31 Prayer Shawl Blessing 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship						



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



The Spire

**First Congregational Church of Hanover
An Open & Affirming Congregation of the
United Church of Christ
17 Silver St., Suite 201
Hanover, MA 02339**

On Saturday, April 25 representatives of our current boards, committees, officers, and staff gathered for the presentation by the Rev. Bixby on church leadership and governance.

