



Steeple Notes

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ROWLEY, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 175 MAIN STREET, PO BOX 364
 WWW.FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY.ORG - 978-948-3993

Pastor's Corner



Hello All. As a parent I frequently correct my kids. I try to get them to use the backboard when doing layups in basketball. I tell them what good manners consist of. I show them why they got a problem wrong in math. Providing correction is one of the main responsibilities of parenting. My attempts to show my children the right way to do things are not always successful, but I must keep on trying. The attempts I make to help them be the best people they can be are a result of the love I have for them. At the same time if I am constantly correcting their every misstep they are going to feel frustrated, not loved.

A challenge for me is determining when I should correct my kids and when I should let it go. Sometimes they do things that are clearly wrong that don't actually need to be corrected. An example of this is how a couple of them drink from a can. On the rare occasion they have the opportunity to drink a soda a couple of them immediately tear off the tab used to open the can. This is clearly wrong! I get annoyed everytime I see them do this. At the same time I realize how they drink a soda doesn't actually matter. I have to accept that this is not actually worth correcting. Although I cannot for the life of me understand why they would prefer to drink from a can with no tab.

Whether it is children, coworkers, or spouses we all have to decide what is worth trying to correct others about in life.

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 A voice of hope serving the community

Pastor's Corner, cont...

There are some issues that are worth addressing, many are not. If Christians are always critical towards others about things that don't really matter we will drive others away. Sometimes we just need to let others do what they want even if it makes no sense to us, because not every action is worth correcting.

Meditation Verses:
Ephesians 6:4 Fathers,
do not provoke your
children to anger, but
bring them up in the
discipline and
instruction of the
Lord.

In Christ,
Brent

P.S. Thank-you to Nancy Schmidt for her leadership.



The PRC - Pastoral Relations Committee

Greetings from your Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC)

We are here to help you navigate information and communication between the church, our pulpit supply pastors/providers, and our Church Administrator.

There are several good sources to keep you up to date: in addition to the Sunday power point, bulletin, & periodic emails, Steeple Notes is available online (along with the archived previous months' issues).

Our website was redesigned with the expert help of Rich Jesionowski and maintained/updated by both Rich and our Church Administrator, Angie, working to bring us the news of all that's happening. The website is an excellent way to check for information/events/updates/inspiration!

firstchurchrowley.org

Your patience and understanding of all who help this church is invaluable. We are a small group working together to bring hope to one another and our community. Thank you for being a part of First Church Rowley.

Your PRC members:

Penny Hurley, Chair

Les Warren

Ken Sanford

Paul Chang

Jen Loring



A Message from the Compassionate Care Committee

We want to express our appreciation to all of you who continue to practice compassion and understanding towards all. We are all worthy of kindness and respect.

You may contact any of us to share a new concern, prayer, or joy. Meanwhile, we continue to hold members and friends in prayer, reach out with calls, cards and work to uplift those in need.

Penny Hurley - penelopehurley@gmail.com

Nancy & Jerry Schmidt, Patti Cummings & Kay Dalzell



GTKY

We are anxiously waiting to meet you, so we can get to know you more personally. You are always welcome to come visit with us. Coffee, conversation, be comfortable... We are here for one another. Hoping to see you soon. Marge, Nicola and Judy



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Missions

The Missions team's mission is to provide outreach and fellowship to the church and the community. We support organizations in Rowley and surrounding towns who are serving people in need. We also have recognized a need to bring people together in community, to have facilitated events and activities where people can connect with each other.

We are small but mighty. For the last few years our members have been Pam Sanford, Holly Ardito and Danby Whitmore, with frequent assistance from Angie Estevez.

Danby has chosen to rotate off the committee and we will miss her energy and dedication to helping others. Ellen Barrett has generously agreed to join us, and we are excited to be working with her!



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Missions, Cont...

During the past year we have:

- Partnered with the International Institute of New England (IINE) and the UCC churches in Georgetown and Byfield to host an informative event on the refugee crisis.
- Revived the Bookworm Café - an annual event featuring guest appearances from local authors, used books for sale and home-cooked food.
- Hosted a Community Café on the last Wednesday of each month, partnering with Burwell Beans gourmet coffee roasters.
- Sponsored our second annual "Pop-the-Trunk" food drive to support Lazarus House Ministries in collaboration with three area churches and a number of community organizations.
- We also collected food donations for Rowley Food Pantry.
- Collected used clothing and new undergarments and sanitary supplies for Triton middle- and high schools. This is done with support of our church members and also in partnership with the Fellowship Thrift Shop.



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Missions, Cont...

- Sponsored 10 children and teens in the local DCF system for the local holiday Giving Tree.
- Collected warm hats, mittens, scarves and coats for Lazarus House ministries.
- Sponsored monthly "Missions Walks" - gentle strolls in nature where we can commune with nature and with each other.
- Hosted 4 summer "Movie Nights" inviting the congregation and the community to watch a movie and eat ice cream.
- This year we will likely be continuing many of the same activities.

The next Bookworm Café will be in March - stay tuned for details. We also look forward to new opportunities to partner with other churches. The event with IINE has left us excited about brainstorming opportunities to support refugees in our own community.

We are always looking for new ideas on how we can be of support to the congregation and the community. We welcome your suggestions.



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Church Website

Have you visited our church website?

A church's online presence provides an excellent way of connecting with the community. In this day and age of social media, it is important to have a website. There are a lot of people who do not use Facebook but still go online. A website is a good way of reaching these people.

A website should look good and clearly communicate information to the community. Since a website is available 24/7, it provides a great resource for posting updates and announcements. When a person in the congregation needs information, they can always find it on the website. It's a great way to keep everyone up to date on everything that is happening at the church. The church staff cannot work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but a website can.

A church website connects the congregation. It creates a sense of community for church members. Fellowship can take place even when people are not physically together. A website gives members a way to interact and helps build unity. It is also a great place to organize and announce church events.



First Congregational Church Of Rowley



The First Congregational Church of Rowley is a community church that serves Christ.

We are a church that lives by Faith, is known by Love. A voice of Hope serving the community.

We are in covenant with all of God's Children and all faiths across the world. We strive to be relevant in the modern world while honoring our rich heritage and history.

As Christians, we strive to be good stewards of God's resources so that we may serve both our community and the world.

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Church Website, cont...

A website is also a great way to reach out to anyone looking for a place to worship. It is where new visitors are introduced to the church. Knowing that the vast majority of people who discover a church will discover it online, it is important to recognize that first impressions matter. How people perceive a church's website is how many will perceive the entire church as a whole. Take a quick minute to search for churches in our area and check out their websites. What impressions did you have before you even read a word? You probably made assumptions about which churches are more established or relevant to you simply based on how their sites look and feel.

When designing the new website for the church, I wanted it look modern and be easy to navigate. It was also important to have it to look good whether seen on a computer, phone, or any other device. This was accomplished using a technique called "Responsive Web Design". This technique is a design approach to make web pages render well on all screen sizes and resolutions while ensuring good usability. The new church website accomplishes this goal.

The best church websites make information easy to find without overloading a visitor with too much too soon. It is all about having a nice clean look and easy to use menus. Our website organizes information in logical groupings.

We have pages about the church including Worship Time, Contact Information, Statement Of Faith, Vision Statement, Church History, Sunday School, and Christian Education. There are also pages that describe all of the Church Committees. We even have a page titled "Getting To Know Us".

There are pages to help the community get involved. Upcoming Events are listed on the home page. There are individual pages for all church events including the Community Cafe, Community Dinners

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Church Website, cont...

Pancake Breakfasts, Rowley Prays, and Mission Walks. The Church Calendar is also available to view.

Every church needs to reach out for financial support. Weekly donations are wonderful and greatly appreciated but they do not cover all of the church's expenses. The website has pages for fund raising events like the Ezekiel Rogers Golf Tournament. There is a page for making donations for those who wish to contribute online. We also have a page that features the Fellowship Thrift Shop, which is a great revenue source for the church.

The church website also provides valuable information. The Steeple Notes newsletter gets published every month. We also have a great Blog that gets updated regularly.

The website was designed to connect the congregation and it belongs to all of us. Hopefully you will visit the website often and explore all of the ministries and events happening.



We are live

WWW.FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY.ORG



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Meet Ian and Lauren Patrick

Ian and Lauren met at Houghton University, a small Christian university in Western New York, in a musical theatre production. They were friends for a few years first and began dating long distance during Lauren's senior year, while Ian was working in Philadelphia. They were married in 2020 (small covid wedding!) and moved to Massachusetts from Pennsylvania to be closer to Lauren's family in 2022. Ian works as a production manager and journalist for FISM News, a Christian ministry that focuses on delivering high-quality Christian media in an online platform.



Lauren teaches music and directs the choral program at Covenant Christian Academy in Peabody. Some of their favorite things to do together include making music and playing board games (which usually involves intense competition.) They are honored to be worshipping with new friends at Rowley Congregational.

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Steeple Notes Schedule

January - Compassionate Care Network

February - Missions - Holly

March - Deacons (including Christian Ed) - Jerry and Nancy (for 2024)

April - Finance/Trustees - Doug

May - Music Committee, including Inspirational Singers - Karen Schmuch

June - The Thrift Shop - Paul Chang

July - Pastoral Relations Committee - Penny

August - Getting to Know You - no response

September - Golf Tournament and Flower Committee - Debbie Confalone

October - Old Tyme Country Fair - Donna Irving and Kay Dalzell

November - Community Dinner Team - Liz Butler

December - Pancake Breakfast Team - Jerry Schmidt

Staff - Any month as needed - you know this team :)



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A Message From the Moderator

During the course of the church's calendar year, six scheduled meetings occur that involve the church body:

- The Annual Meeting (April)
- The Semi-Annual Meeting (November)
- Quarterly Cabinet Meetings (March, June, September, and December)



Our bylaws require that the agenda for the Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings be posted at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Included on the agenda is a bullet: "Any other business that needs to come before the congregation." This allows for topics to be included that have been raised by a parishioner and/or a board or committee since the agenda was published. At times, a vote may be required depending on the topic submitted.

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that needs to come before the congregation." This allows for topics to be included that have been raised by a parishioner and/or a board or committee since the



agenda was published. At times, a vote may be required depending on the topic submitted. I am respectfully requesting that all agenda items for the Annual or Semi-Annual Meeting be submitted to me and/or to the Clerk (David Irving) prior to the meeting and that a brief explanation about the background of the topic be provided. This process will help us avoid asking individuals to cast a vote when they do not feel fully informed of the subject matter.

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A Message From the Moderator, cont...

Should you be in any congregational meeting and asked to vote on a subject on which you feel you do not have sufficient information to cast a vote, you may make a motion to "table" the vote.

This motion needs to be seconded by someone and voted. If there is a majority vote to "table" the motion, then the discussion is no longer debated, and it is tabled until an agreed upon time. If, however, the vote to "table" does not pass, then the original motion is voted on.

From Robert's Rules: Parliamentary Procedures at Meeting: <http://www.rulesonline.com> "To table a discussion is to lay aside the business at hand in such a manner that it will be considered later in the meeting or at another time("I make a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting. In the meantime, we will get more information so we can better discuss the issue.")

I hope this revised process for setting the agenda and providing background information that leads to an informed vote, is both helpful and leads to a more informed and inclusive process.

Nancy Schmidt,
Moderator



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After Church Fellowship Board/Committee Assignments

Pastry or treat 1st and 3rd Sunday Updated Schedule

- January - Compassionate Care Network
- February - Thrift Shop
- March - Diaconate
- April - Missions
- May - Music Committee and Inspirational Singers
- June - Finance/Trustees
- July - Thrift Shop
- August - None
- September - Missions
- October - Finance/Trustees
- November - Diaconate
- December - Music Committee and Inspirational Singers.



*The schedule will be posted at coffee hour and reminders will be sent via email.

Community Pancake Breakfast

2nd Saturday in each month from
September 2023 through April 2024

\$10.00 - Under 12 free!

Looking Forward to Seeing you!



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Amy	Hanson	2/2
Gidget	Roberts	2/2
Alexandra	Flodman	2/11
Patti	Cummings	2/13
Hannah	Conrad	2/14
	Somers ,	
James	III	2/14
Joanne	Blouin	2/19
Marie	Grover	2/21
Ken	Sanford	2/21
Nancy	Hill	2/22
Karen	Harding	2/23
DeDe	Todd	2/28



February 2024



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Gale and Bobby Penton 2/18
Nicole and Alex Sirignano 2/22



Contact Missions for more information if you are interested in learning more or donating

The First Congregational Church of Rowley Mission Committee is going to resume collecting food and other needed items for the pantry.

Food Items

Jarred pasta sauce
Canned soup
Canned tuna/chicken
Coffee
Saucepan beans
Spaghettios/Chef Boyardee
Brownie mix
Cake mix
Jams/jellies
Snack bars
Ketchup
Yellow mustard
Mayonnaise
Pancake mix/syrup
Cereal
Rice Pilaf
Canned fruit
100% Apple juice bottles
100% Juice Boxes

Personal Care

Deodorant
Razors
Shaving Cream
Shampoo
Conditioner

Household Items

Facial tissues
Toilet paper
Paper towels
Napkins
Dishwashing liquid
Laundry Detergent
Cleaning supplies



February 2024

Join us on
Saturday, February 17th...
for a

Ham with Homemade Mac and Cheese Dinner!

(Ham, macaroni and cheese, salad, rolls, and dessert!)



This dinner is free & Open to all in the community

Two seatings will be offered 4:30 and 6
To-Go Dinners are available!

RSVP is required! (To be sure we have food for you!)

RSVP by email: butlerel76@gmail.com

RSVP by phone: 978-948-7627

RSVP by QR Code:



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Church Office at 978-948-3993

*led By
faith*

Heritage Sunday

February 2024

