October 2022

Steeple Notes

First Church of Rowley

United Church of Christ

175 Main Street • P.O. Box 364 • Rowley, MA 01969

Sunday Worship Services
10am
Reverend Tom Bentley*

Sunday, October 2
Rev. Donna Spencer Collins
Holy Communion
Marge Thurston, organist

Sunday, October 9

Sunday, October 16
Inspirational Voices

Sunday, October 23

Sunday, October 30

**except where noted*

Purpose of the FCCOR Strategic Plan for Revitalization

Strategic planning is a systematic process that helps an organization prepare for its future and determine how best to achieve it. The primary purpose of a strategic plan is to connect its mission and vision to a well-orchestrated plan outlining how to achieve the ultimate goals.

The strategic planning process included: 3 All Church Meetings; 2 surveys based on information derived from All Church Meetings; a strategic plan workgroup and input from the Executive Committee.

Mission Statement
"We are a church that lives by faith, is known by love...A VOICE OF HOPE SERVING THE COMMUNITY."

Continued on page 3

Reverend Thomas Bentley

Ushering in the New Season

The author of the book of Ecclesiastes in its third chapter offers these famous words:

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot...

The list goes on. In some verses we see a good thing move to a not so good thing. Then sometimes the reverse happens moving from sad to happy such as -

a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build...
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

When I looked up the Hebrew word "season" translated in the opening line, it turns out a better translation might be "cycle". Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter are our natural seasons. A cycle is something that repeats over and over again, and sometimes that repetition can mean the same things will keep happening.

Here we discover the subtle message of the author of Ecclesiastics. He is really telling us that we cannot escape the inevitable cycles of our lives. We have no choice but to let these things take their course. BUT we do have a choice in how we participate.

Before I met my beloved wife Jeannie, I was a single fellow, and I was convinced I would eventually move out of New England to escape the winters. Once Jeannie was in my life, I realized such would never happen because she loved winter and the change of seasons. It was then I resolved to fall in love with winter... and I did. Now I love it's clean cold, its beautiful blue light, its crispy mornings, its invitation to make a fire and get warm!

Life can seem like "one damned thing after another" – over and over again

OR

Life can be new and amazing and beautiful and different with every breath on the way.

It's your choice... It's my choice... It's our choice together.

Grace and Peace to You All,
Rev. Tom

Strategic Plan Goals, Years 1-3

Theme and Focus year 1, 2 – Focus: Community Immersion

"And they will know we are Christians by our love."

1. Introduce and leverage the newly defined mission statement. Execute branding via written materials and social media
2. Create community programs and events that demonstrate our mission. Collaborate with other community organizations as co-sponsor. This will be one of the primary vehicles that drive interest in affiliating with the church.
3. Collaborate with local businesses and community leaders to define opportunities where FCCOR can be of support.
4. Collaborate with another other church, or churches, to engage share best practices and community events.
5. Identify and respond to needs of those in the community who are under served or marginalized.

Theme and Focus Year 2, 3: Renewal

"Holy Spirit Rain Down"

6. Create a multigenerational worship experience.
7. Simplify the governance structure with the goal of increasing communication, effectiveness, and ease of execution of decisions.

Next Steps:

Work Teams for each goal have been created. Each team is working to create a detailed plan which will be presented at the December 7th, Cabinet Meeting. Everyone is invited to attend this important meeting. We'll have a potluck dinner at 6:00. The meeting will begin at 6:30.

MUSIC NOTES

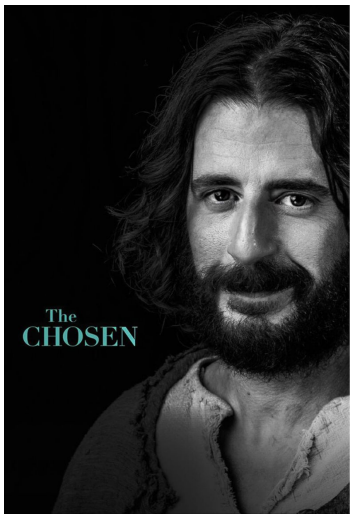
The Music Committee is ramping up for fall!

Our first meeting was held on September 25. We started talking about the feasibility of a set monthly schedule of music (for example, having organ music for the first Sunday of the month, contemporary music one week, the Inspirational Singers another week, etc.). We hope to explore some other options, too, such as leading the congregation in a monthly hymn sing accompanied by keyboard or guitar. Hopefully this will allow us to have a variety of styles of music throughout the month.

On another note, Nicola Pyburn is organizing a group to go to the "Voices of Hope" Concert at the North Shore Music Theatre on Saturday, October 8. Voices of Hope is a group whose fundraising efforts support the Termeer Center for Targeted Therapies at MGH's Cancer Center. The concert features the works of Sondheim, Schwartz, and Webber and begins at 8:00 pm (there is a silent auction at 7:00 pm). If you are interested in being part of the group that attends, please contact Nicola by October 2.

More to come soon – we will keep you posted!

Join us as we watch *The Chosen,* on Mondays at 2pm in the Parlor. We will watch and then have a conversation about the story.



October 3 - Season 1 Episode 3
Jesus Loves the Little Children.
Jesus befriends and teaches the group of children who discover His camp on the outskirts of Capernaum.

October 10 - Holiday (church closed)

October 17 - Season 1 Episode 4
The Rock on Which it is Built
With his life and family under threat from Rome, Simon spends one last night fishing in a desperate attempt to square his debts. Andrew spots a familiar face waiting for them on the shores of Galilee.

October 24 - Season 1 Episode 5
The Wedding Gift
Nicodemus interrogates John the Baptizer while Jesus and his students make their way to a wedding celebration in Cana. During the ceremony, Jesus' mother Mary makes a special request.

October 31 - Season 1 Episode 6
Indescribable Compassion
After witnessing the healing of a leper on the road to Capernaum, the friend of a paralytic takes desperate measures to get him through the crowd to meet Jesus.

Veteran's Day Brunch

in collaboration with the Council on Aging

Thursday, November 10th

Brunch will be served at 10am.

Reserve your seat today call Marty Blanchard
at the COA 978-948-7637

COUNCIL ON AGING
We have an ongoing food drive to benefit the COA. Please deposit donations in the box adjacent to the kitchen.

UPCOMING PROJECTS
Missions is working closely with the church's visioning process and is interested in shaping our team to support the needs and desires of the congregation and our wider community. Input is always welcome.

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe

is updated for Fall / Winter Season

Drop in on Thursdays 3-6pm
and Saturdays 9am-1pm

COA
Fitness/Exercise Classes

Mon & Thurs
9:30 - 10:30 am

(YMCA)
Wed & Fri
1-2 pm

First Congregational
Church of Rowley

No classes on holidays,
contact COA for information

PANCAKE BREAKFAST
Saturday, October 8, 2022
8:00-9:30am
Fluffy delicious pancakes, toppings and whipped cream,
Bacon, Turkey Sausage
Coffee, Tea, Milk and Juice
$8
free for kids
under 6
First Congregational Church of Rowley
175 Main Street, Rowley, MA
www.FirstChurchRowley.org

First Congregational Church of Rowley

Presents:

Sunday School

Kick off Carnival

Sunday October 16, 2022

10am Sunday School

11am Kick Off Carnival

175 Main Street, Rowley

Please join us for carnival games, cotton candy, popcorn, Ice cream sundaes and more!

Join us-
all levels, all ages, all beliefs

Ballroom Dance Classes

Taught by

Professional Dance Instructor:

Reeva Gibley-Cooper

The First Congregational Church of Rowley will be holding Ballroom Dance Classes for the community.

Place: First Congregational Church of Rowley
175 Main Street, Rowley, MA

Dates & Times: Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30pm

Cost: Free Will Donation

RSVP at: PaulKChang2000@Yahoo.com with Ballroom Dance in the subject line or text Paul at 857-206-0792

www.firstchurchrowley.org

A Rowley Holiday Tradition!

Saturday, November 19, 2022

9:00 am-2:00pm

Delicious baked goods, Beautiful handcrafted items
Festive holiday greenery, Unique attic treasures
Visit from Santa, Zeke's Country Store, Silent Auction
Savory homestyle lunch 11:00 am-1:00 pm *(Take out available)*
Games, puzzles, books and more!

There is no better way to start the Christmas season!

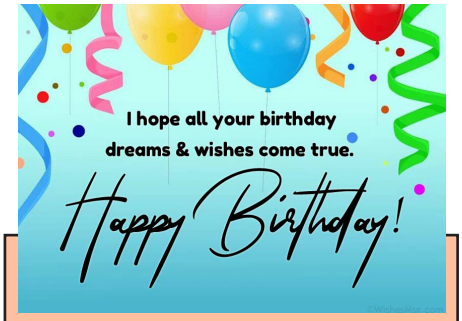
First Congregational Church of Rowley

175 Main Street, Rowley, MA 01969

Phone (978) 948-3993 email: firstchurchrowley@gmail.com

October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Every Thursday Thrift Shop 3-6pm Alanon 7pm		1 Every Saturday Thrift Shop 9a-1p
2 Worship 10am Communion	3 CoA Fitness 9:30am The Chosen 2pm	4 Ballroom Dance 5:30pm	5 GTKU 10am YMCA fitness 1pm	6 CoA Fitness 9:30am	7 YMCA Fit 1pm Boy Scouts 6pm	8 Pancake Breakfast 8am-10am AA 7pm
9 Worship 10am	10 Holiday	11 Ballroom Dance 5:30pm Executive 6:30pm	12 GTKU 10am YMCA fitness 1pm	13 CoA Fitness 9:30am	14 YMCA Fit 1pm Boy Scouts 6pm	15 AA 7pm
16 Worship 10am Sunday School 10am Inspirational Singers	17 CoA Fitness 9:30am The Chosen 2pm	18 Ballroom Dance 5:30pm	19 GTKU 10am YMCA fitness 1pm Diaconate 6:30pm	20 CoA Watercolor 9a	21 YMCA Fit 1pm Boy Scouts 6pm	22 AA 7pm
23 Worship 10am	24 CoA Fitness 9:30am The Chosen 2pm	25 Ballroom Dance 5:30pm	26 GTKU 10am YMCA fitness 1pm Trustees 6:30pm	27 CoA Fitness 9:30am Girl Scouts 5:30p	28 YMCA Fit 1pm Boy Scouts 6pm	29 AA 7pm
30 Worship 10am	31 CoA Fitness 9:30am					



Shawna Kelley	10/3
Mary Hitaj	10/10
Karen Schmuch	10/11
Nancy Schmidt	10/29

Deadline for November Steeple Notes Monday, October 24

Prayer List

Rev. Susan (Kathy O's Sister)
Alice (Al Locke's Daughter)
Rev. Tom and Jeanne Bentley
Marilyn Diehl
Mary Behringer
Gerry Hayes
Pat & Steve True
Hank Chase
Richard Bentley
Kathy Yanias (Doug Phillips' cousin)
Bob Chapman
Margaret Niska
Tom Murray
Kathleen George
Jerry and Nancy Schmidt
Dede Todd