

EST. 1639



First Church of Rowley

...A voice of hope serving the community

January Steeple Notes

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175 Main St Rowley MA 01969

firstchurchrowley@gmail.com

Pastor's Corner

REV. JEFF MACDONALD

Hooked on Spiritual Fitness

As the New Year arrives, everyone wants a fresh start. Gyms fill up, calorie counts go down and saving surges as our society strives, almost collectively, for better physical and financial health.

Spiritual health might be harder to measure, but it's key to our overall wellbeing, quality of life and sense of connection.

How we orient our lives makes a world of difference. To be grateful to God and alive in God's grace brings a glow and abiding joy that doesn't hinge on circumstances. Conversely, carrying bitterness or self-loathing around can feel like a dark cloud of our own making that's forever following us.

Taking part in church life is like a gym for the soul. It conditions us to love what's worth desiring for ourselves, for others and for the world. By practice, we learn to want such things habitually, almost naturally, even though we weren't born craving all that leads to healthy relationships and societies.

It involves acquiring a taste. At first, for instance, it might feel awkward to hear one or several people pray out loud. But like an exercise that gradually starts to feel good, group prayer fosters intimacy with God. It can happen as we listen in silence, or when we pray aloud for someone else's needs or aspirations. Soon we feel close to God in a way that doesn't happen on our own. We're connected and aware of it. It's an acquired taste that keeps many coming back.

The same holds for volunteering, hymn singing, getting to know new friends, or discussing real-life dilemmas in a reassuring, social and Biblical context. Once the taste for a God-centered life begins to grow in us, the benefits flow and flow and flow.

First Church of Rowley's touch points for developing such an acquired taste are expanding. For instance, if you appreciate hearing how regular people are navigating life's twists and turns with a Christian lens, Life Group meets on Mondays from 6:30 to 7:45, starting Jan. 5. Newcomers are always welcome.

Or maybe you enjoy helping neighbors who need a financial break, or just love to finding hidden treasures with practical value. If that's you, our Thrift Store welcomes volunteers, especially on Thursday afternoons. There's more where those opportunities came from. A good place to find them is 9:30 AM worship, followed by our friendly coffee hour.

So, as you're getting hooked on that bicep machine... or finding that some "New Year, New You" meals can actually taste pretty good... don't forget that the soul loves training too. Hope to see you soon.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Jeff

COMPASSIONATE CARE NETWORK

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”
Colossians 3:12

The “official” members of the Compassionate Care Network are noted below – but this year continues to bring this small church into the prayers and acts of compassion, aided by Rev. Jeff and by Nicole, our ever helpful and forward-thinking Administrator.

We have seen prayers and requests for help flow through many channels – just as it should be. There is no one way to offer prayers and compassion. We continue to stay connected with those in our special prayers, but also express our gratitude to the many among you who reach out to those in need. Please reach out for any assistance / any requests for a prayer shawl, and we will do our best.

Finally, in these times of uncertainty, the weekly Inspirational Messages seem to be appreciated to lighten the days.

Patti Cummings
Kay Dalzell
Penny Hurley
Nancy Schmidt
Jerry Schmidt

Penny Hurley

HAPPY Birthday



1/2 Charles Hazen, Jr.

1/11 Nicola Pyburn

1/13 Nicole Sirignano

1/17 Stone Butler

1/17 Amanda (Mulkern) Johnas

1/21 Doug Chadbourne

1/28 Luke Confalone

1/30 Zachary WardMerry

12/25 Rhonda Ward

12/30 Margaret Niska

12/30 Matthew Blouin

Many Hands make light work

After Church Fellowship Assignments



- 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.

Steeple Notes Entry Schedule

- January -Compassionate Care Network
- February - Missions
- March - Deacons (including Christian Ed.)
- April - Finance/Trustees
- May - Music Committee
- June - The Thrift Shop
- July - Pastoral Relations Committee
- August - Getting to Know Us
- September - Golf Tournament & Flower Committee
- October - Old Tyme Country Fair
- November - Community Dinner Team
- December - Pancake Breakfast Team

Welcoming additional entries as needed!



EVENTS

AT A GLANCE

WED

GETTING TO KNOW US
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
ALL ARE WELCOME

MON
5, 12, 19

LIFE GROUP
6:30 - 7:45PM - HYBRID FORMAT
THEME: PRUNING, ALL ARE WELCOME

SAT
10

PANCAKE BREAKFAST
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM
\$10 PER PERSON, 12 & UNDER ARE FREE

SUN
25

DEATH CAFE
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM
DEATH, GRIEF, LIVING AND LOVING

TUE
27

COMMUNITY CAFE
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
FREE TO ALL

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ROWLEY
175 MAIN STREET
ROWLEY MA 01969

LIFE Group

- Our theme will be pruning. As the New Year begins, what's ready to grow in your life? How are you pruning, cutting back or clearing room for it to blossom?

MONDAYS
6:30 - 7:45 PM

JANUARY
5TH 12TH 19TH

HYBRID FORMAT

Life Group is always open to newcomers. As we share life experiences, we discuss how we're navigating life's complexities with a Christian compass. Scripture is a conversation partner, as are others in the group. No one has to talk. It's OK to attend and just listen.

Questions: email Rev. Jeff at
firstchurchrowleypastor44@gmail.com

175 MAIN ST ROWLEY MA 01969

PANCAKE BREAKFAST



SAT JAN 10TH 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

**\$10 PER PERSON
CHILDREN UNDER 12 EAT FREE**

**FIRST CHURCH OF ROWLEY
175 MAIN STREET
ROWLEY MA 01969**



Community Cafe

TUESDAY JAN 27TH
9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

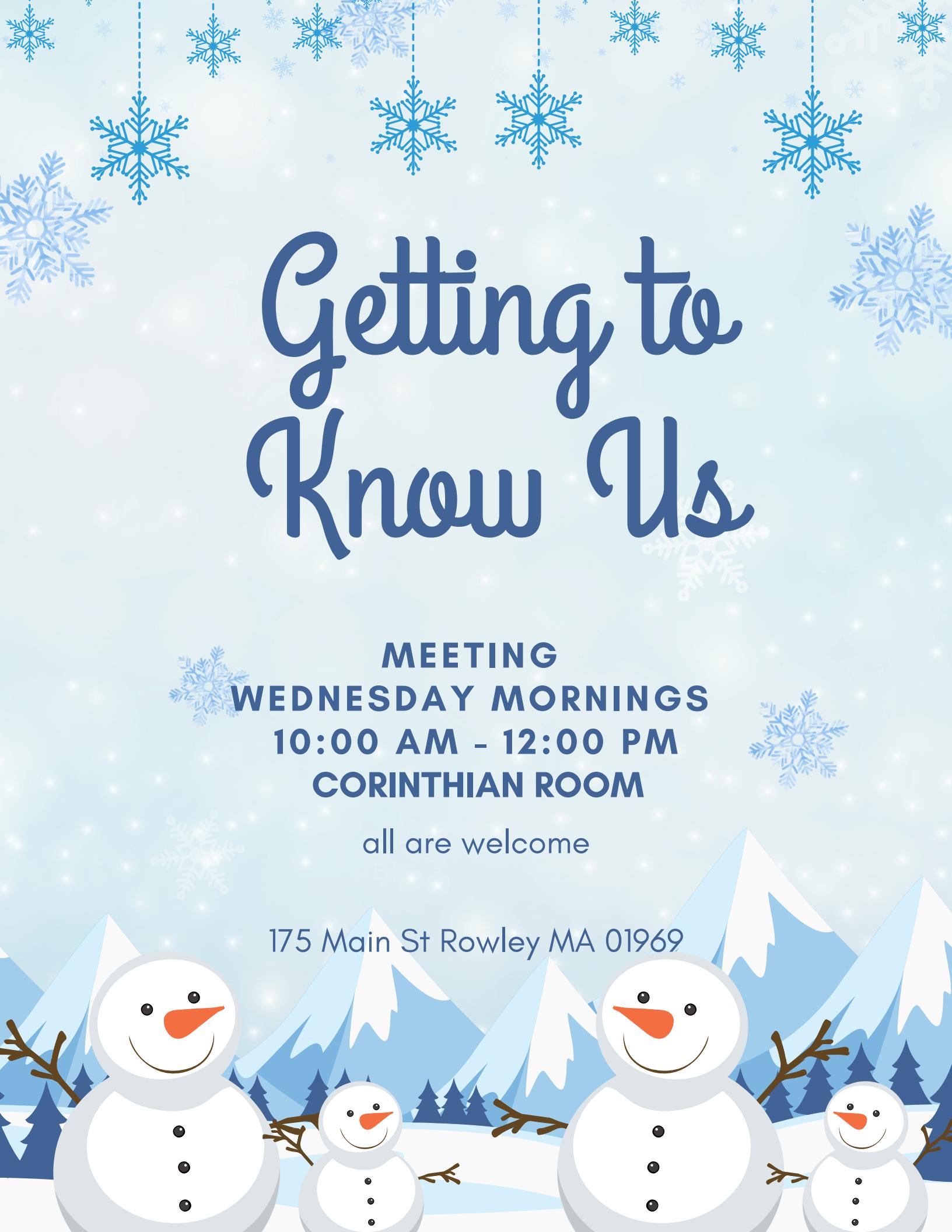
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ROWLEY
175 MAIN STREET ROWLEY MA 01969

Getting to Know Us

MEETING
WEDNESDAY MORNINGS
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
CORINTHIAN ROOM

all are welcome

175 Main St Rowley MA 01969



ROWLEY'S

DEATH

CAFE



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

*Death, Grief, Living & Loving
Cake too!*

Location:

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

**NOV 30, DEC 28, JAN 25, FEB 22
LAST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH
5-6:30PM**

Info: Angie@I'llStandByYou.Net
FB & IG: @CommConvosDeathCafe

