



# Steeple Notes

First Church of Rowley United Church of Christ  
175 Main Street • P. O. Box 364 • Rowley, MA 01969

## “Why Annual Meeting is not Town Meeting”



*I have served A number of churches that were the founding churches when their towns were incorporated.*

*Way back then before 1835, when Massachusetts ended its theocratic form of government, a new town could not incorporate until it had its meeting house built and a pastor called to serve the new parish. These rules were in place when Rowley began in 1639.*

*The founders did not call the church building a church. They called it a meeting house, because this space would also function as the town hall for the convening of town business Including the annual town meeting. Most often the founding deacons of the church were also the first selectmen in the town.*

*This always invited the temptation to confuse the secular governance with the sacred covenant.*

*In town meeting majority rules. In a church’s annual meeting consensus and relational authenticity are first required before the group makes a decision.*

*This is because there is a difference between the sacred Covenant (promise) and the social contract citizens have with their state.*

*Covenant is living out the spirit of God’s love through our human actions. Jesus never led his people by majority rule.*

*Last Sunday was our annual church meeting. It was a joyful and authentic time together. I truly felt at that moment we all mutually “owned” the Covenant. Never did the contest of majority rule rear its ugly head.*

*Because we rely on the quality of human relationship first, it is more difficult to serve in our community of faith. This is true for both staff and volunteers.*

*Going forward. I hope we can be sympathetic to this challenge. We must find the critical balance between avoiding conflict all together and/or getting too wrapped up in it.*

*Again, if we simply ask “What would Jesus do?” The Holy Spirit will lead us and help us keep the Covenant.*

*Peace and best wishes,  
Rev. Tom.*

Sunday Worship Service  
10am  
Reverend Tom Bentley

Plant Sale  
Saturday, May 20,  
9am-1pm



Community Dinner  
(Burgers & Hot Dogs)  
May 20, 4:30 & 6 pm  
seatings



May Community Cafe  
May 31, 8:30-10:00 am  
The cafe will resume in  
the fall



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

★★★★★  
**Memorial Day Parade**  
 REMEMBER AND HONOR  
 ★★★★★

We invite you to participate in the  
**Rowley Memorial Day Parade**  
**Monday, May 29, 2023**  
 Line up at Pine Grove School at 10:30 am  
**Parade will begin at 11:00 am**

The parade will begin at PGS and continue to the common for the raising of the flag in honor of all of our fallen soldiers. While at the common, we will sing the National Anthem.

We encourage everyone to wear **RED, WHITE & BLUE**. Students are also welcome to wear their Boy Scout, Girl Scout or Sports Uniforms if they'd like.




**The Mother/Daughter Tea will be rescheduled**

**Game Nights May 6 & June 10, 4:30-7pm**

**COA Blood Drive June 1, 12-5pm**

**Thrift Store Hours: Thursdays, 3 - 6 pm  
 & Saturdays, 9 am - 1 pm**

**Getting To Know Us- Women's Study Group  
 (Wednesday mornings 10am - noon)**

**LET'S PLAY GAMES**  
 AND EAT PIZZA TOO!



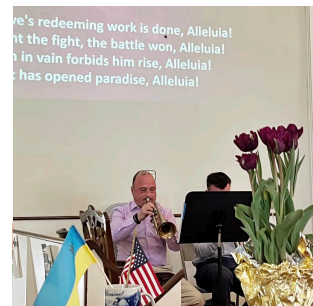
May 6 & June 10  
 4:30-7pm  
 Cost: FREE

Family friendly activities for all ages.  
 Game tables include: Chess, Uno, Connect 4, Dominoes, Cards, Checkers, Parcheesi and more

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

FirstChurchRowley.Org  
 For more information, contact:  
 firstchurchrowley@gmail.com, 978-948-3993

## April Was a Busy Month!



## MEETING REMINDERS

Cabinet Meetings - The first Wednesday in the following months: March, June, September December

Annual Meeting - The last Sunday of April.

Semi Annual Meeting - The first Sunday in November

The Executive Committee - The first Wednesday of the month between Cabinet Meetings.

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