



Steeple Notes

The First Congregational Church of Rowley
United Church of Christ

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

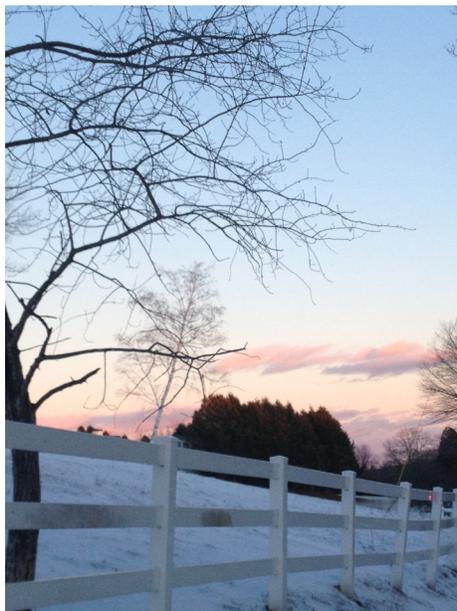


Sunday Worship Services
10am
Reverend Tom Bentley

Drive In Church - located in the parking lot behind the church.

Tune to FM 90.3 to listen in
Sunday, February 6
Sunday, February 13
Sunday, February 20
Sunday, February 27

January 2021 Covid Numbers for Rowley were the highest they have been since the pandemic began. For this reason, the Executive committee voted unanimously to continue outdoor services.



Winter Photos by Penny Hurley

God of the future and of the past;
God of hope and of worry
As we face another year,
we want to feel more hope and less worry;
we want to face the future and forget the past.
We don't know what else we will face,
but we know you will be there.
Let us be comforted by this
and know that although tomorrow is not promised, YOU are.
In you we trust Lord,
Amen

By Alexandra Priddy, Elder and Children's Church Leader, Trinity URC



February Thaw

The last week of February is usually a time when weather patterns shift for just a few days, and in New England we get a thaw. As a child I remember enjoying this change. I would take off my heavy snow suit jacket and play by myself in the gurgling brooks that ran near my home in Sutton MA. The melting ice created an infinite assembly of images. Faces everywhere. Dark lines and foreboding shadows as the transparent, glass-like ice revealed the mysteries of the stream's rocky and muddy bottom. When you pitched in a rock, the explosion of chards was a miracle of reflecting light and precious jewels.



As the day leaned toward Noon, the sun would shine higher in the sky. The ground would grow soggy and rich with aromas.

My friends and I would play in a swampy wetland area which was now charged with exciting dangers as we walked tenuously on the thin ice from clump to clump of exposed sod and dry field grasses.

I remember there was a feeling of heroism as suddenly the ice gave way and one descended into the muck - sometimes waist-deep. Ah... yes! The joys of boyhood. We were heroes as we struggled to survive, and then more so as we rescued one another by extending long sticks to the "drowning" victims. Then home we would go to traumatize our mothers as we drank our hot chocolate and smeared our muddy bodies on the kitchen furniture.

In 2022 we are hoping for an extended February thaw. Yet our yearning is not only for warmer weather as much as a fading of the cold cruelty of the ongoing Covid Omicron Pandemic. Our prayers we lift heavenward beseeching that a health and happiness may again prosper.

The good science is telling us we can beat this thing if we vax and mask to the max. If we can join in that spirit of heroism that once flowed so naturally from our hearts when we were children - we will prevent one another from sinking and drowning. Then we can go home for hot chocolate!

Grace and Peace to You All

Rev. Tom

Winter Photo: Penny Hurley

Fellowship Thrift Shoppe

Open for Shopping and donations

Thursdays 3-6:00pm & Saturdays 9am-1:00pm

Have you seen those TV shows where the “organizer” comes in and helps you go through your treasures and helps you realize what you “love” and what you can do without? As you know there are many ways to clear that clutter...or if it’s not clutter, it’s certainly something that someone else could get more use from.

Donating to our thrift shop is a great way to pass on those items with a good feeling that they are being loved and used by someone else in the community. (And it’s tax deductible.)

Dishes, pots and pans, silverware, serving dishes, glasses, mugs, art, lamps, chairs, tables, book shelves, are among some of the items folks are looking for when they thrift shop.

Of course, right now, warm winter jackets, and winter clothes are in demand. So if you’re looking through your closet and see something you haven’t worn all winter, maybe it’s time to let someone else put it to good use.

Please no toys, stuffed animals or electronics.

6 Reasons to Love



Thrifting

The cheap thrills

The variety in merchandise

It’s eco-friendly

Unearthing one-of-a-kind finds

You never know what will turn up

I can donate and keep the cycle going.

Contact Paul Chang 857-206-0792 if you have furniture to donate, or email the church office at FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com.

8 LANGUAGES

French	Bon anniversaire!
Italian	Buon compleanno!
Spanish	Feliz cumpleaños!
Portuguese	Feliz aniversário!
English	Happy Birthday!
German	Alles Gute!
Dutch	Gefeliciteerd!
Swedish	Grattis!



IELANGUAGES.COM

Happy Birthday!

Amy Hanson	2/2
Patti Cummings	2/13
Marie Grover	2/21
Ken Sanford	2/21
Nancy Hill	2/22
DeDe Todd	2/28

February/March Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday
& Thursday
10am-3pm

email:
FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com

Facebook and Instagram:
@FirstChurchRowley
#FCRowleyCares



Missions has gone into a bit of hibernation as we lay back waiting until we can all gather together again.

We have gathered 10 coats and jackets for Lazarus House, but due to Omicron hitting their office we were unable to get those warm clothes delivered. Hard to consider when we have had such cold days. But hopefully before the end of January those will be delivered. Any men's coats and jackets in good shape are wanted, right through February. If you have one to donate please leave it at church.

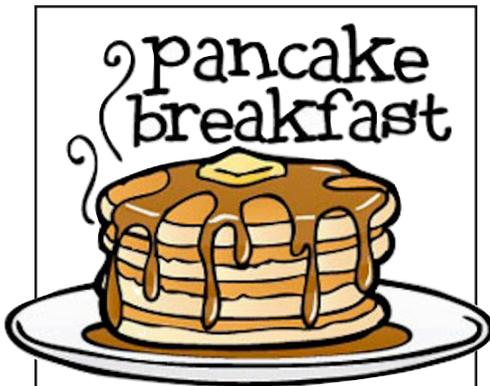
Donations for the Rowley Food Pantry can be left at the thrift shop on Saturdays or at the Sunday drive-in service.

We are waiting to hear word if the Afghan families will be let into the United States and land in our neighborhood. Very sad situations. Families on our southern border are still in dire circumstances. We need to push our government to listen to those working on the border and alleviate that painful situation.

We will be working further on climate saving initiatives and hope that you will be engaged. One earth one love right?

We will take a fellowship walk in February! Details to follow. Be well, stay well, Find that faith and positivity by realizing you make a difference.

Danby, Missions Chair

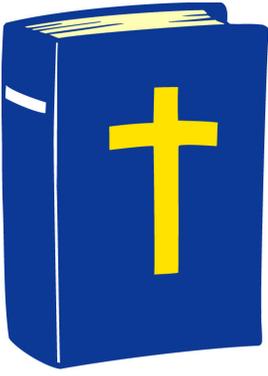


**Pancake Breakfasts
will be back in the
Spring!**

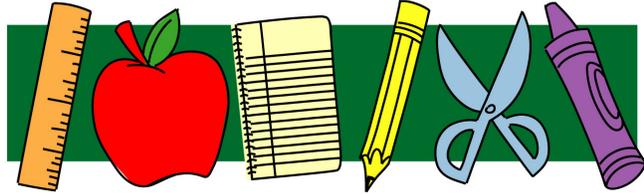
Annual Giving Letters will be mailed out this week.

If you need to have your information for taxes, please email the office

FirstChurchRowley@gmail.com



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Contact Amy Hanson for information regarding our Christian Education Program.

@aleehanson@hotmail.com



Jesus in the Temple

[Luke 2:41-52](#)

Every year Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, they made their yearly journey to Jerusalem to celebrate.

When Passover was over, Mary and Joseph started walking home. They soon noticed that Jesus was not with them! Mary and Joseph looked for Jesus, but they couldn't find him. They were scared.

After three days, Mary and Joseph finally found Jesus. He was in the temple talking to the temple leaders. Jesus understood so much about God that the leaders were amazed!

Mary said, "Son why have you done this to us? We have been worried! We have been looking everywhere for you!"

Jesus did not understand why Mary was upset. Jesus asked, "didn't you know I would be in the temple, my father's house?"

Jesus returned to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph, and Jesus obeyed them. Jesus grew up and became wise. God was pleased with Jesus, and so were all God's People.

Write your thoughts below:

Can you think of a time when your Mom or Dad could not find you?

Do you know why Mary and Joseph were scared and worried?

How do you think Jesus understood so much about God that the leaders were amazed?



The First Congregational Church of Rowley

United Church of Christ

All Church Meeting November 28, 2021

This was the second in a series of five meetings to evaluate our current and future state as a congregation. In the first meeting, participants were invited to reflect on how sometimes in our lives, both personal and church, we become “lost in the wilderness.” In that meeting we shared insights about how a journey in the wilderness, despite its challenges, creates new opportunities for creativity and inspiration.

The second meeting focused on our values, with the underlying question of “who are we and what do we believe is important?” To address these questions, we broke into dyads and shared a story about an everyday act that someone in the congregation did that was admired or that touched us in some manner. Following this sharing, we reflected on the values that were embedded in each story. Each table of participants identified a combined set of values.

A consolidated list of all values mentioned at each table were added to large poster paper and everyone was asked to vote on their top 5 values that the church represents.

The results are ranked below in order of number of votes for each value

Top 5 Values listed in rank order

1. Community = 16
2. Caring = 14
3. Service = 10
4. Dedication = 9
5. Acceptance = 8
6. Teamwork & Music = 7
7. Commitment & Collaboration = 6
8. Friends, Love & Joy = 5
9. Children = 4
10. Loyalty and Heritage = 3

Based on the responses of our top ranked values, following is an initial statement that emerged at the close of the meeting. We will be working toward clarifying and refining our vision/mission within the community as we move forward in our All-church meetings.

“The First Congregational Church of Rowley is a community of caring and accepting individuals dedicated to service.”

Current Vision Statement:

“Rooted in faith, supported by love, a beacon of God's light, welcoming ALL!”

Next All Church Meeting

The focus of our next All-Church Meeting will be on evaluating our assets with the faith question focusing on, “What tools and resources do we have?” Given we have moved to an outdoor service; we will need to re-evaluate the format for these meetings.

Please stay tuned for more details regarding this important conversation!



Whenever there is a need for spiritual support, you are encouraged to call anyone on the Prayer Chain with your concerns and they will inform the others so that our prayers of love and support can be with you immediately.



- The Prayer Chain members are as follows:*
- Patti Cummings(978) 948-8176.....Patti.Cummings@livanova.com
 - Kay Dalzell(978) 948-2674kdalzell@comcast.net
 - David & Donna Irving(978) 948-7020dvd Irving@aol.com
 - Nicola Pyburn(978) 948-2598..... nicola.pyburn@gmail.com
 - Ken Sanford(978) 948-2847kcsanford1@gmail.com
 - Jerry & Nancy Schmidt (978) 388-1417schmidtnancy36@gmail.com,
jschmidt22@comcast.net
 - Les Warren(978) 352-7551.....leswarren3@gmail.com

Beverley Phillips	Sally McRae
Merle Phipps	Pat and Steve True
Helen S. Dobbins	Dede Todd
David Irving	Jean Short (Kay Dalzell's neighbor)
Janet Brown	Lisa Levandowski
Al Locke	Arnold and Patti Cisco
Helen Downing	
Paul DuVal	
Millie and Nat Dummer	

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Worship 10 am	31 1pm - CoA Fitness	1 First Day of Black 6:30pm - Boys 6:30pm - 7:30pm - Missions	2 10am - GTKU -	3 7pm - Alanon @	4 5:30pm - Boy	5 9am - Fellowship 7pm - AA @
6 Worship 10 am	7 1pm - CoA Fitness	8 9pm - American	9 10am - GTKU -	10 7pm - Alanon @	11 5:30pm - Boy	12 9am - Fellowship 7pm - AA @
13 Worship 10 am	14 Valentine's Day 1pm - CoA Fitness	15	16 10am - GTKU - 7pm - Diaconate	17 Steeple Notes 9am - Council On 7pm - Alanon @	18 5:30pm - Boy 5:30pm - Rowley	19 9am - Fellowship 7pm - AA @
20 Worship 10 am	21 Presidents' Day 1pm - CoA Fitness	22 7pm - Executive 9pm - Fannie Lou	23 10am - GTKU - 6:30pm - Trustees	24 7pm - Alanon @	25 5:30pm - Boy	26 9am - Fellowship 7pm - AA @
27 Worship 10 am	28 1pm - CoA Fitness	1 First Day of 6:30pm - Boys	2 10am - GTKU -	3 7pm - Alanon @	4 5:30pm - Boy	5 9am - Fellowship 7pm - AA @