



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

By Reverend G. Jeffrey MacDonald



A Newcomer's Take on FCCR's Top 10 Blessings
With Thanksgiving fresh in the memory, it's fitting to count our blessings -including those we might take for granted, but which stand out to newcomers who are rightly impressed.

Here are the Top 10 things for which First Congregational Church in Rowley can give thanks this year, according to this new-to-town observer:

10) Collaboration. FCCR pulls off some complex events that appear easy because you're a cohesive crew. Being able to serve and have fun together is a great blessing.

9) Variety. Some people love meetings; others would rather do physical projects or contribute in other ways. There's room for multiple styles of participation at FCCR.

8) Visibility. FCCR has a prime location on 1A. You couldn't ask for a better place to get noticed or to promote what God is doing in Rowley.

7) Music. Many in the congregation play music, appreciate hearing it or both. This ensures you'll have a rich soundtrack for doing life together. What a blessing!

6) Food. FCCR has a knack for making people feel welcome with a home-cooked meal and other types of refreshments. You're onto something there...

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A voice of hope serving the community

5) Tradition. The congregation hasn't forgotten where it comes from. Through rituals and events, you make room for remembering roots and building on deep foundations. This sense of identity and continuity with the past is a strength.

4) Place. FCCR has ties to the land going back to the town's founding. No one has a better perch to foster appreciation for the land, for local agriculture and for all who've ever called this area home, including animals, plants and indigenous peoples.

What an opportunity!

3) Beauty. A more serene, comforting sanctuary would be hard to find in this region. That we're able to be inspired by visiting it every week never gets old.

2) Word. FCCR has a culture of listening for God's voice, reflecting on what we hear and praying often. This keeps us grounded, no matter what the world throws at us.

1) God. "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25) is not just for Job to say; the people of FCCR know it too. It shows in how you order your lives to perceive and respond to what the Redeemer is doing among you. And it makes all the difference.

-- Yours in Christ, Rev. Jeff

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Fed by Faith

Who's hungry?...We always are:) That's why we have loved doing the community dinners.

The idea started one night when we were reminiscing about the Youth Group's Spaghetti Dinners and the drive through Covid dinners, which Mike Blouin started. We were talking about a time for people to come together, no matter what is happening in their lives, but just neighbors having a meal. We asked ourselves, "Why not start community dinners?" And so it began...

It has been almost two years since we started. We have hosted ten dinners, serving over 750 meals, and are just preparing for the second Community Giving! We have donated to several food pantries, supported families in need, and purchased much needed supplies for the church's kitchen, as well as donating right back into serving the next dinner!

As we have been doing the dinners, we reflect on the purpose and how much it means to us and those who are enjoying the meals. Therefore, Fed by Faith was created...a phrase we felt encompassed our faith and our love of food.

We believe the dinners are a time for people to get together, enjoy a meal, and enjoy conversation with those in our community.

When asked "What do you love about the community dinners?"...

Liz says, "Neil loves cooking and always cooks too much food, so it has been fun for him." "The Fed by Faith Team is so much fun!"

Madi says, "she loves to see the smile on everyone's face when they can come into a stress-free environment."

Cam says, "It's a really awesome group of people that get together to do something that's actually good for the community and it's an opportunity to reconnect with people I don't see very often. Honestly, just a lot of fun doing them but then again you guys do all the heavy lifting!"

Noah says, "I enjoy community church dinners because it helps the community as a whole. I love seeing the people's smiling faces when they are given their food knowing that they are about to enjoy a great meal."



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Stone says, "It's a good way to connect with the community regardless of all the issues in life."

Neil says, "You do not have to be a member of our church or have a certain belief, as I feel we have more in common than we do not have in common." "What a fun time it is to have a good meal, sit down, and laugh with neighbors, then go home with a full belly. And if you didn't like it, Liz cooked it"

With all the dinners we have done, as well as the advertising for the dinners, other groups, like the Rowley Veterans Association and COA, have reached out to Fed by Faith, to help support their events, which we have gladly obliged. It is a way for us to do community outreach, as church members, good Christians, and part of the Rowley community.

With all that said, we would not be able to do what we do without the support of the First Congregational Church, along with our volunteers: the Grenier Family, Mike and Katie Blouin, Lisa Stevens, Adam Hanson-our amazing dessert maker, Tom Siedschlag, Kylee Simmons, Thomas Flynn, June and Cheryl Watson, and those who helped during last Community Giving -Sheri and Scott David, The Arena Family, Cheryl and June, Rowley COA, Nerissa Wallen, Triton Middle School Student Council, Senator Bruce Tarr, Rowley 4th Grade Junior Troop 70357, Kadie Zabar and her Triton students, the Hasting Family, Market Basket, The Irving's, The Rowley/Ipswich Rotary, and all the volunteers who were ready to help!

It is exciting to say the community dinners will be back in action in January. We look forward to the next dinner, where we can be together. We hope you all enjoy them~Thank you for attending!

**"Good food is the foundation of genuine happiness." -
Auguste Escoffier**

Fed By
Faith

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Hey Friends!!!

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve First Church Rowley as Administrative Assistant and most recently as Chaplain too.

As of Sunday, December 1st, I will no longer be the person manning the church's email account or social media profiles. For those of you that want to reach out or stay in touch, please do so - but use my personal email address from here on in -
let's grab coffee!

*"...May the Lord of shalom Himself give you
shalom at all times and in every way..."*

Angie



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Happy Birthday!



Robert	Mulkern	12/4
Judy	Robillard	12/4
Neil	Butler	12/5
Pam	Sanford	12/14
Elizabeth "Liz"	Butler	12/16
Karen	Merry	12/21
Rhonda	Ward	12/25
Margaret	Niska	12/30
Matthew	Blouin	12/30



HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Elizabeth (Somers) & Bradley Reep 12/16



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Missions Committee

Sponsor a Child Christmas Gift Giveaway - The Missions Committee has agreed to sponsor several area children this year. You may select gift tags from the Christmas tree for the children we are sponsoring, they are:

- Gifts for 5 Pine Grove Children
- Gifts for 5 DCF Children
- Gifts for 2 Rowley children whose mom has cancer and whose dad recently passed away

Please choose your selected tag from the tree (or more than one), purchase the gift, and place the unwrapped gift under the tree by December 15th .

Missions is also collecting gloves, mittens, scarves and hats for Lazarus House through the end of January. For more information, contact Missions c/o Pam or Ellen.



Windows, Windows and More Windows

Last month, Eric worked diligently at installing new windows in the Thrift Shop - 6 in total!

Most recently, he worked at removing the screens from the sanctuary and installed storm windows in order to retain more heat in the sanctuary during the winter months!

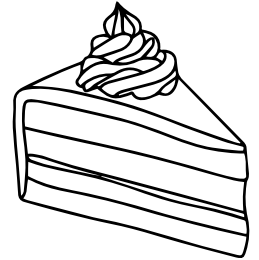
Thank you Eric!



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After Church Fellowship Board/Committee Assignments

Pastry or treat 1st and 3rd Sunday Updated Schedule



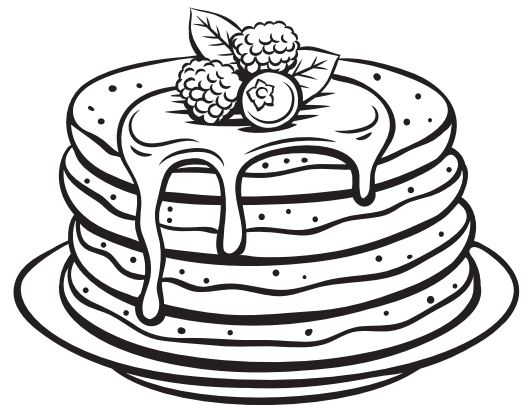
- January - Compassionate Care Network
- February - Thrift Shop
- March - Diaconate
- April - Missions
- May - Music Committee and Inspirational Singers
- June - Finance/Trustees
- July - Thrift Shop
- August - None
- September - Missions
- October - Finance/Trustees
- November - Diaconate
- December - 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 2024 through April 2025
\$10.00 - Under 12 free!
Looking Forward to Seeing you!



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 Schmuck**

June - The Thrift Shop - Paul Chang

July - Pastoral Relations Committee - Penny

August - Getting to Know You (Judy submitted for July)

**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 :)



Poinsettias Order form

**Deadline to submit your order is:
Sunday, December 15, 2024**

Cost \$11.50 per poinsettia

Please return your order form to the church.

Checks should be made payable to
First Congregational Church of Rowley

When placing your order, please provide the following:

- **Name:**
- **Telephone:**
- **Email:**
- **Dedication information for bulletin:** (i.e. given in memory or in celebration of...)

Color and Quantity

- Red _____
- Pink _____
- White _____

www.firstchurchrowley.org

For more Information
Contact the Church Office, or
Debbie Confalone at: dconfalone@comcast.net





DON'T SKIP
YOUR
BREAKFAST!

Community Pancake Breakfast

December 14th

- The second Saturday of every month 8-9:30am
- Adult \$10.00 - Children under 12: FREE
- Longstanding Rowley tradition!



175 Main Street
Rowley, MA 01969
www.firstchurchrowley.org

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**Community Café
@First Church Rowley**

**December 11th
8:30 -10:00am**



175 Main Street
Rowley, MA 01969

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WWW.FirstChurchRowley.Org

SUBMIT RECIPES FOR THE COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

RECIPES FROM MASSACHUSETTS

SUBMISSIONS ARE FREE!

Submission Requirements:

- Submit your recipe including ingredients needed, measurements of ingredients, then a brief description of how to put it all together
- Submit your first name and last initial (or family name if you prefer) along with the town you're from to post with your recipe. If you wish to be anonymous, please write "anonymous". No name will result in anonymous submission credit
- Include any photos, if applicable. Author may include photos if none are provided.
- Duplicate recipes will be named as a "Community Favorite" with multiple people listed OR will be stated as "Community Favorite"

Profits will be
donated to
LOCAL charities
and/or causes



Contact



**SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGE OR
COMMENT IS ACCEPTABLE**



cookbook.MA@gmail.com

All submissions are submitted with the understanding that they will be used to publish in a cookbook for sale. Submissions are not entitled to any profits or compensation for submissions. Any errors, omission, or exclusions are the authors discretion. Donations will be chosen by Author.