



EST. 1639

First Church of Rowley

...A voice of hope serving the community



NOVEMBER 2025 STEEPLE NOTES



(978) 948 3993
175 MAIN ST ROWLEY MA 01969
FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY@GMAIL.COM



PASTOR'S CORNER

Giving is Gratitude in Action

In this month of gratitude, we'll be counting our blessings and recalling what matters most to us. We'll be thinking of family, friends, activities that renew us & the God whose provision sustains and redeems us.

As part of living gratefully this month, we'll bring fresh intention to our charitable giving. November 9 will be "Stewardship Sunday," a day for reflecting on giving as a spiritual practice.

As a virtue, generosity doesn't happen automatically. It's a muscle of the heart that grows with exercise.

Americans are famously generous toward causes they support. They gave \$593 billion last year, according to a 2024 Giving USA report. Where did they learn to be like that?

More often than not, they (or their parents) learned it in church – a church like ours, where people lean on grace to build habits that reflect God's heart and serve their communities well.

In church, children are taught to give a portion of what they have received. Adults are encouraged to practice what they learned as kids.

Giving is not just good for causes and organizations. It's good for givers as well. A seasoned giver's heart swells with care, courage and confidence over time. Isn't that a change we'd like to foster in ourselves and each other?

Sometimes we wonder how to put faith into action. Giving is something practical we can do. Any amount can make a difference. Giving boldly musters faith.

I invite you this November to feel grateful, count blessings and put gratitude into action by giving. Let's be grateful and generous together.

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Jeff

HOW HYMNS GET CHOSEN

At First Church of Rowley, music planning helps us make a joyful noise to the Lord!

That's why the Music Committee worked hard over several weeks this year to develop guidelines for hymn selection (see next page). In these guidelines, we have criteria for picking hymns that facilitate faithful singing.

This set of coherent, amendable guidelines is essential. Without it, we'd be at the mercy of the pastor's guesswork and/or divergent requests from individuals. That would lead to perpetual frustration and never-ending uncertainty about how decisions are made.

We're not stuck. We have a system, and if it's not getting the results we seek, then all we have to do is tweak the guidelines. That gives the pastor and musician the direction they need.

These guidelines come from the congregation. All I did in creating them was to distill themes that were expressed in committee members' written input.

If you're interested in music at First Church, please have a look at the guidelines so that you know how hymns are chosen.

If you believe our hymn selection could benefit from new approaches, please reach out to the Music Committee (Nicola Pyburn and Richard Jesionowski) to propose changes to the guidelines. Tell them specifically what you'd like to see added or subtracted. They will take your input under consideration. That's the right way to pursue the results you seek.

If the Committee adopts new coherent guidelines, I will bring them to bear when selecting hymns. Otherwise, I'll keep working with the ones I have, and we'll keep making a joyful noise together.

~ Rev. Jeff





GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING HYMNS AT FCCR

Approved by Music Committee, January 2025

A. The music we sing together is meant to:

- praise God
- enable everyone to participate
- elicit positive and authentic feelings
- help parishioners receive the word of God
- reinforce themes in the worship service
- foster appreciation for a variety of styles from classic to contemporary

B. We value opportunities to sing:

- Familiar classics from our 2 hymn books
- Songs that are new to us as long as they're relatively simple, easy to learn and easy to sing the first time
- Songs played with upbeat tempos & uplifting effects
- Songs with messages relevant to scripture, themes in the service, ordinary people's lives and today's world
- In a variety of musical styles and types

C. When we have a keyboardist, we aim to sing:

- Selections from our two hymnals: The Pilgrim and The New Century
- A mix of familiar chestnuts and new songs that are worth trying because they meet criteria noted above
- Energetic, except when the day's themes call for a different spirit

D. When we sing along with YouTube videos, we strive to choose songs that:

- Are no more than 3 minutes long
- Are easy to follow with large, easy to read lyrics
- Are visual and feel / look modern
- Foster appreciation for types of music we don't find in our hymnals, such as contemporary styles and music from other Christian cultures
- Can be taught so that everyone can get comfortable singing them

E. We try not to select music that:

- Is unknown, obscure, rhythmically complex or hard to follow
- Is set in a minor key, unless it's familiar or sung only occasionally
- Sounds like a dirge, unless it's appropriate for a solemn day



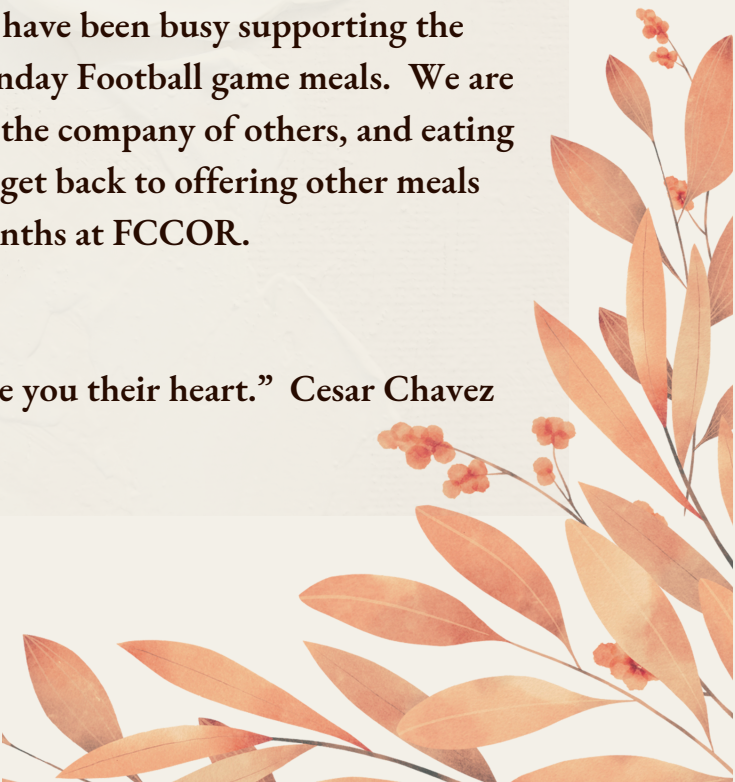
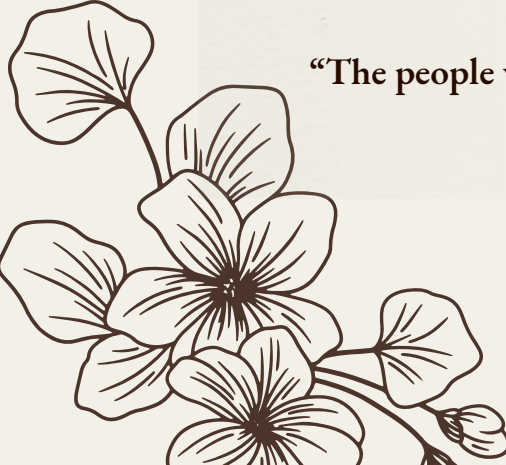
Community Dinners

Dinner is a time during our day where we gather together, enjoy a yummy meal, and reflect on what is happening in our lives. Sometimes we can enjoy that dinner with those who live in your home, maybe with family or friends in their homes, or maybe when you enjoy an evening out. We have been very busy enjoying our time together at home, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. As we settle down into fall with a less busy schedule, we are excited to prepare for another

Community Thanksgiving. This will be our third Community Thanksgiving! We will be enjoying a delicious turkey with all the fixings and ending with delicious pies made by a third grade girl scout troop. You can already sign up to enjoy a meal with us or to have one delivered to you. We are excited to open the doors to all in the community who may not have the opportunity to have company, who need a delicious home cooked meal, or for anyone who would like to enjoy dinner with the community members.

Members of the Fed by Faith team have been busy supporting the Rowley Veterans Association with Sunday Football game meals. We are out there in the community, enjoying the company of others, and eating some yummy meals! We do hope to get back to offering other meals during the winter months at FCCOR.

“The people who give their food, give you their heart.” Cesar Chavez



The background of the card is decorated with various autumn-themed illustrations. At the top, there is a large orange maple leaf on the left, a small acorn in the center, a red leaf on the right, and a green fern frond on the far right. On the left side, there is a brown oak leaf, a small branch, and a green fern frond. On the right side, there is a red leaf, a small branch, an acorn, a brown oak leaf, and a red leaf. At the bottom, there is a red leaf on the left, a small acorn in the center, a green fern frond on the right, and a small orange flower on the far right.

Happy Birthday

11/1 Anika Whitmore
11/1 Janine Balistreri
11/5 Bob Mulkern
11/7 Jonathan Sanford
11/18 Adam Hanson
11/20 Grace Fyrberg
11/20 Brian Pyburn
11/21 James Kay
11/28 Jeremy Schmidt
11/29 Jessica Faircloth
11/29 Ashli Pyburn



*Happy
Anniversary*

NOVEMBER 25TH

Donna and David Irving

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

MON

LIFE GROUP (OCT 27, NOV 3, NOV 10)

WED

GETTING TO KNOW YOU (EVERY WEEK!)

8TH

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

22ND

OLDE TYME COUNTRY FAIR

27TH

FREE COMMUNITY DINNER:
THANKSGIVING

28TH

COMMUNITY CAFE

175 MAIN STREET ROWLEY MA 01969

Life Group



IN PERSON/HYBRID

MON OCT 27
MON NOV 3
MON NOV 10

6:30PM - 7:45 PM

175 MAIN STREET
ROWLEY MA 01969
CORINTHIAN ROOM

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/83978471269](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83978471269)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ROWLEY

JOIN TOGETHER FOR



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

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

175 Main Street Rowley MA 01969



EST. 1639

First Church
of Rowley

...A voice of hope serving the community

Pancake Breakfast

Saturday November 8th

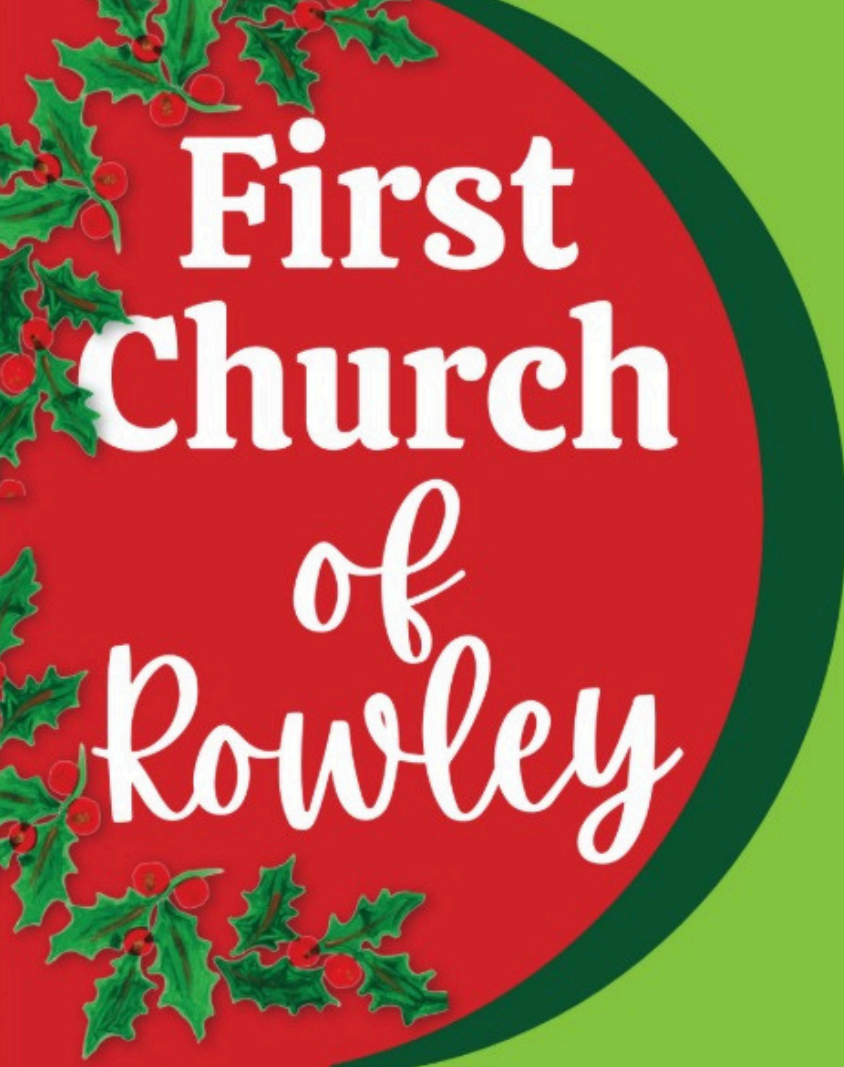
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

\$10

per person, under
12 are free



175 Main Street Rowley MA 01969



Olde Tyme Country Fair

*We are a church that
lives by faith, is known by love
A voice of hope serving the community.*

A Rowley Holiday Tradition!
Saturday
November, 22, 2025
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

- Delicious baked goods •
- Beautiful handcrafted items •
- Festive holiday greenery •
- Unique attic treasures •
- Visit from Santa •
- Zeke's Country Store •
- Silent Auction •
- Savory homestyle lunch •
- Games and puzzles •
- Books and more! •

First Congregational Church of Rowley

Phone: (978) 948 3993

Email: firstchurchrowley@gmail.com

Web: www.firstchurchrowley.org

**There is no better way to
start the Christmas Season!**



Community

CAFE



**TUES
NOV
25**

**9:00 AM
TO
10:30 AM**

FREE TO ALL

**175 Main St
Rowley MA 01969**

FREE DINNER

Thanksgiving Day
~ November 27th ~

1 PM

175 Main Street, Rowley

To Go Dinners & Deliveries too!

Please RSVP to reserve your seat

RSVP by email: butlerel76@gmail.com

RSVP by phone: 978-580-0695

RSVP by QR Code:



*Please join us for an amazing
Community Thanksgiving Dinner*

Brought to you by:

Fed By Faith
&

The First Congregational Church of Rowley

Church Office at 978-948-3993