



**First
Congregational
Church UCC
of Harwich**

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*"As a beacon on the top of the mountain, and an ensign on a hill."
~Isaiah 30:17*



February 2021 Beacon

IN THE INTERIM

In the eyes of God, we are all minorities.
– Bishop Krister Stendahl

Rev. Dr. Krister Stendahl was my dean when I was attending divinity school years ago. He was a bright, witty and funny man, and went on to become Lutheran Bishop of Sweden. In his memory, to make a long story short, I joined an interfaith reading group on the Cape, chaired by a retired Episcopal clergyman. On the virtual-platform there are Roman Catholics, Protestants, one Jew and one Muslim, who converted from Christianity; clergy and laypeople alike.

Because of it, I am reminded (once again) of our diversity of theological beliefs, practices and longings. After all, we are not all Christians. Some in the group(still) remind us that they pray facing Mecca five times a day, others that they are awaiting the Messiah out of the line of David, and still others that they respectfully envy having women clergy [really?]. Yet all seem to wish for peace and good will among the different traditions.

I took the time to join the group because of my commitment to local support

of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, with which I have been involved at large for a very long time. I recall years ago learning from an interfaith household, reading about "other religions," working with professors in the history of religions, studying different languages in order to be able to read their Scriptures for myself, and visiting synagogues, temples and monasteries to directly experience what was happening. And then serving in ecumenical and interfaith groups.

In recent years in the church, I have found it more difficult to find the time to cultivate this part of religious life, even if now there are many more religious groups, for example, a Reform temple in Hyannis, a Buddhist group in Quincy, and an Islamic Center in Sharon. Still, there is always the lingering curiosity and commitment, and I imagine among many of us, as we talk with others from different traditions, listen to world news, and read books by diverse American authors.

While for us, Zacchaeus and the Good Samaritan (Jews) may have been the "minority" in well-known parables, or

unnamed single women in our Gospel stories, or the slave Onesimus in the Book by Paul to Philemon, there are many more outliers today right in our midst. The Muslim, Non-Affiliated (Nones) and Evangelical/Pentecostal populations are increasing in numbers around the world.

How are we in our respective communities, churches and neighborhoods, responding to those who are religiously different from us? Granted, this pandemic does not help much, rather dis-inspires and suspends us in reaching out to new, different and captivating religious neighbors.

During this time, let us not forget our brothers and sisters, who like us

search for God in a myriad of ways, speak a variety of tongues, and try to do what is right. As Barbara Brown Taylor, an Episcopal priest, wrote in her book, Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others, "*What we have [today]...are the great religions of the world, all pointing at something beyond themselves, and these fragile souls of ours, titled toward the divine mystery that enfolds our lives.*" [p. 1369] Let us continue to follow our Great Commandment.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Dianne

SUNDAY VIRTUAL SERVICES AT 10:30 am

- February 7 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, including the Celebration of Holy Communion.
Please have ready your own bread and grape juice for the virtual service, or make arrangements by Wednesday noon, February 3rd, with Gail, the Adm Asst, to receive Communion Cups either in the office or with the aid of our deacons by Friday noon.
- February 14 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
There will be no Ash Wednesday evening service this year.
- February 21 First Sunday in Lent
- February 28 Second Sunday in Lent

PRAYER LIST

We encourage parishioners to call or email our Interim Pastor or office by midweek with any new prayers so they can be printed and lifted up at Sunday worship.

Solace & Peace: Tom J's uncle Jim P., families and friends of those 400,000 who have succumbed to Covid-19 in the U.S., and recent natural disasters.

Healing & Comfort: Joe B, Nancy S, Adelle B., James MacK, Julie and Kelly L., DeeDee's relatives Patsy and her grandson Taylor, Joe B, Jane D., Nancy L, Erika, Kay P., Lynn B's nephew Joey, Joe B's daughter-in-law Ina and nephew Tom, Gail N's

niece Bobbi, Tom, Martha, Ardene, Jack, Edie's granddaughter Heidi, Mark C, Miles, Gail N.

Joys & Celebrations: new Covid-19 vaccines to be distributed

Godspeed: the Johnson's son Ian and co-captain Jan, who set sail for FL.

Community & World: Our nation upon the first 100 Days of its 46th President Joseph Biden Jr. and VP Kamala Harris, everyone

adjusting to a world caused by Covid-19, especially the hungry, homeless, ill, unemployed, in school, those suffering from addictions, anxiety and depression, all medical staff, first responders and caregivers,

immigrants and children who have been separated from their parents, for a sustainable earth, and for peace and justice in the US and around the world.

SUNDAY VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICES

We continue to worship as a community of faith on Sundays at 10:30 am on our video-platform. If you wish to join us, and have not yet, please call or email Gail, our Administrative Assistant, by midweek. On Thursdays she emails bulletins to parishioners; on Fridays Marcia Hempel sends out Zoom invites that are to be opened on Sundays before the service. Our parishioners draw from the Cape, CT, NY, NJ and other places. Everyone is welcome!

SUNDAY LECTIONARY

It is our tradition to use the Lectionary, with designated Hebrew Bible, Psalm, Epistle and New Testament readings, and the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible for our worship services, with exceptions. Listed below are our Sunday lections for this month.

Parishioners find it useful to read these designated Scriptures in advance of our services in order to familiarize themselves with the texts, and be more ready to hear our sermons and participate in our worship. They also find it useful to study our Lectionary Guides when they are available.

Sunday, Feb. 7 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, Feb. 14 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 2 Kings 5:1-14 Psalm 30 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Mark 1:40-45

Sunday, Feb. 21 Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 43:18-25 Psalm 41 2 Corinthians 1:18-22 Mark 2:1-12

Sunday, Feb. 28 Eighth Sunday after the Epiphany Hosea 2:14-20 Psalm 103:1-13, 22 2 Corinthians 3:1-6 Mark 2:13-22

BIRTHDAYS IN FEBRUARY

2 nd	Ann Ingalls
4 th	George Porter
15 th	Jade Burrowes-Rampasard
18 th	Nancy Smith
22 nd	Orin Segall
25 th	Lynn Johnson Emily Smith
27 th	Garrett Brown



MUSICAL NOTES

First Church Choir

The choir continues to rehearse every week in the back parking lot, recording together using wireless mics. We have anywhere from 4 people to 8 people. We are working on new songs and are planning songs for services that are fun and different. Please

join us for our online services! We may even post services on YouTube, which is in the planning stages. Thanks to our choir and soloists as they work hard making recordings.

Community Radio Hour

When the weather starts to get better, I hope to have a Community Radio Hour where people can listen to a concert in their

cars. Soloists from the church and the community, the First Church Choir and Harwich Women's Chorus will be represented.

Zoom on Sundays

As you know, we have worship every Sunday at 10:30 am via Zoom. Gail sends out bulletins on Thursdays, and I send out the invitations on Fridays. If anyone needs help downloading Zoom onto their computer or

phone, we can get together remotely and work on it. We love having as many of our church friends as possible on Sunday mornings.

Prayer for Unity

Dear God, please bring together all of the people in our country, especially those in families who have different ways of looking

at things. Teach us to endure having differences. Help us in our frustrations. May we learn to be loving like Jesus teaches. Amen.
~ Marcia Hempel

THE DEACONS' DOOR

. . . is always open.

"I have let my schooling interfere with my education." ~Mark Twain

As with Mark Twain, we all learn from more than one source throughout our lifetime. In fact, our life lessons can be, and usually are, the most meaningful. Part of our life lessons is learning from one another.

As your deacons, we look forward to being able to learn from you as well as possibly provide you with some new ideas.

With so many changes occurring in our world today, please don't forget your Diaconate is still here for you and keeping each of you in our prayers.

May the good Lord continue to bless and keep us.

~Your Diaconate

Updated Deacons-to-Members/Friends List

DeeDee Dyer

adelia.dyer100@icloud.com

508-432-0643

A through E plus Green, Hanson, B. Hayes.

Jane Dalzell

jcdalzell@comcast.net

508-432-8540

F and Deacons

Edie Ruggles

508-432-2333

I through Mashoke plus Gobel, Handrens

Lynn Carver

lynncarver49@hotmail.com

508-717-1989

Mc through Par plus Gada, A Hayes, Hook

Lynn Bitzer

capecasey@hotmail.com

508-237-2216

Pel through Snow plus Gausz, Goulis, Hempel

Richard Siegel

risiegel12@comcast.net

508-430-1997

Sp through W plus Hindle, Hornig

MISSION/OUTREACH

The Veterans of the Cross Christmas Fund collection, which continued through the end of December, was \$150. It was sent to our UCC Southern New England Conference.

February is one of the months that the Mission Board sponsors another campaign

for the Cape Cod Council of Churches' Food Pantry. Those who are able may help by sending a check to the church. Please write memo: Family Food Pantry.

~Lorraine Frederickson

Libby Arnold Stevens' CORNER THRIFT SHOP

Due to the Covid 19 surge, the Thrift shop Board decided to delay the re-opening of the Thrift Shop. Thank you for your understanding, and stay safe. *~ Lynn Carver*

CABINET NOTES

January 12, 2021

Present: Rev. Arakawa, James Mashoke, Tom Jahnke, Joyce Noyes, DeeDee Dyer, Lynn Carver, Nancy Segall, Loraine Frederickson And Betty Lou Hindle.

Rev. Arakawa opened the meeting with a reading from the UCC booklet, *Emerge*.

The December Cabinet minutes were approved as written.

Tom Jahnke gave the Treasurer's report, and all is going well. The designated and generous Christmas contributions were sent out to our recipients.

It was affirmed to keep the services virtual until safe for the church gatherings to resume and vaccines have been given out to all. When the weather warms up in spring, we might have outdoor services again.

Lorraine reported the Christmas gift cards that were delivered.

DeeDee reported on continuing virtual worship, and exploring virtual Communion.

Betty and Shirley met before Christmas to finish the children's gift bags, then delivered them before Christmas. They were appreciated.

Nancy mentioned that the CPR certification cards from the fall were emailed.

Trustees reminded us of the Church's 275th anniversary next year. The spruce, split inside, was successfully removed. The bell restoration plans were discussed, and brainstorming for a fundraiser is underway.

Lynn Carver and Mary Montgomery are working on the Memorial Garden bench replacement. Suggestions were made.

Pastor Dianne thanked everyone for a safe and meaningful Christmas Eve service that drew 60 worshippers, including our regulars and a few newcomers. She thanked the deacons for their service on December 27th.

A reminder to all boards to bring any by-law changes to the March Cabinet meeting.

The meeting ended with a prayer by Pastor Dianne.

Our next meeting will be on February 9th at 4pm in the Parish House and distanced, or virtual.

~ Betty Lou Hindle

WHAT WILL BE YOUR LEGACY?

Have you thought about your legacy? When you include First Church in your will or estate plan, you leave a lasting legacy. It reflects your values and ensures the continued mission of First Church in the future.

To establish your legacy, please contact your attorney and Tom Jahnke, the Treasurer of First

Church, to discuss this matter. Before the end of a fiscal year, it is possible to establish this lasting gift, earn a full tax deduction on the bequest amount, as well as retain some income from the funds during your lifetime.

~Bob Buchanan, Trustee

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

January 5, 2021

Here is where we are in the Search process:

- First Church of Harwich has been listed on the UCC Ministry Opportunities website. If you look for it, you will see our listing page, and then you can open the first three pages of our profile.
- Interested Ministerial candidates will contact the Southern New England Conference of the UCC and submit their own individual profiles.
- Our SNE Associate Conference Minister will send that information to our Search Committee.
- Also, sometime in the near future, that Associate Conference Minister will meet with the Search Committee to discuss the interview process.
- Meanwhile, members of the Search Committee are waiting for the next step in the search to begin. Please pray for us.

STEEPLE LIGHTING

To commemorate a special occasion or remember a loved one, you may support the church with a \$5.00 donation per night to "Light the Steeple." Call the Administrative Assistant, Gail, to make arrangements.

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