



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
200 Main Street, P.O. Box 1300 - Wellfleet, MA 02667-1300

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You Are Invited to Join Us at Our

Celebratory Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Saturday, December 24, 2022 ~ 4:00 P.M.
200 Main Street, Wellfleet, MA 02667

Come, join the members and friends of the First Congregational Church of Wellfleet, United Church of Christ, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus with our traditional family-friendly Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Hear the simple, wondrous story of Jesus' birth with familiar, well-loved Christmas carols, presented by guest musicians. We invite you to join us with your families and children early in the evening at 4:00 p.m. Make this your Christmas Eve tradition as you connect with old and new friends at this wonderful service and rejoice at the opportunity to welcome the Christ Child into our world.

***Please join us with your family and friends at the Christmas Eve
Celebratory Candlelight Service
to rejoice and celebrate the birth of our Savior Christ.
All are welcome!***



TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY TO THE WORLD!

*God rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ, our Savior, Was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

Dear Friends:

This 18th century English Carol is quite familiar to us as it speaks of the purpose of the coming of Jesus into the world. But how many of us really pay attention to the message of these lyrics? Some years ago, I became aware of an organization called, "Alternatives for Simple Living". It was organized in 1973 as a protest against the commercialization of Christmas, and encourages people of faith to examine and challenge our consumer society. It's important for us to revisit the marvel of Christmas in thanksgiving for God's gift of love in giving us our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Traditionally, Advent is a time of waiting. In a flurry focused on family and friends, we wait for Christmas to unwrap our gifts and hopefully to wrap our lives with meaning. In our churches and in our spiritual lives, we wait for Christ to come again to fulfill the hopes that remain unfulfilled from that initial coming. Spiritually, we are waiting. It is our responsibility to attend to all that was left undone by the One who was sent to prepare a way of justice and compassion. We are those who have been charged with a mission: believers filled with a spirit, messengers sent as Jesus was sent, to do the will of God. The Spirit of Jesus is with us, and, wonder of wonders, within us. The Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, is God's abiding presence forever incarnate in human flesh as a gift to all the ages.

This Advent, let us pause to give thanks for this gift that lives within us, and let us recommit ourselves to live in the Spirit of Jesus and to follow him. May every gift we give and receive during this Christmas season remind us of all that we have been given, and all that we ourselves have to give throughout the coming year. May we remember that the real gift of Christmas is God's Gift of Love. God doesn't send us brightly ribboned packages with store-bought gifts inside. Some things we cannot hold nor touch nor even see: The gifts of courage, trust, and creativity that somewhere deep inside us hide, until we search for them, as shepherds did for the Babe in Bethlehem, and seeking wise men found their King.

May you, too, this Christmas, with the wonder of a child, find God's generous gift of love in everything. As we draw near to the end of the year 2022, I urge you to take time each day to savor the moments of this blessed season of "Tidings of Comfort and Joy" and I wish you all a blessed Christmas Season filled with hope, peace, love and joy!

Shalom,
Pastor Sheila



Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!!



From the Moderator....

As church members, we each have different favorite causes and callings that inspire us the most. For some, that passion is for charity. For others, fellowship is the main calling. Still others are motivated by study and reflection. We seek to make room for all of these in our church. While individuals might have personal favorites, we realize over-focus on our individual callings can narrow our thinking in contradiction to our church's broader vision as stated in our Bylaws: "United in Christ's love, a just world for all." Our church is multi-faceted, and our personal ministries wrap together under the broad tent our church provides. Great reward lies in discovering that by working cooperatively to achieve the sum of our diverse personal callings, we gain tolerance and understanding. By working well with others, we best achieve the full scope of our church's vision.

Peter Cook
Moderator

Stewardship Sunday, December 11, 2022

The Treasurer, Personnel & Finance Committees are drafting the church budget for the coming year. They're placing their trust in God and believing in our members and friends to support the church's ministry. Let us all show our faithfulness with good stewardship through our time, talents and treasure.

**To Make Online Donations to The First Congregational
Church of Wellfleet, UCC using the Paypal App
Please Scan Qr Code**



Thank you....

Our 3rd Annual Thanksgiving Pie Sale Fundraiser was a great success! Many "HUGE THANKS" to all the pie bakers, buyers, donators, & volunteers! We made \$1,773.00 for the HS Scholarship Fund! This would not be possible without your help. It was quite a sight to see a line of people waiting for the doors to open to buy pies & holiday crafts.

Much Appreciation ~ Nancy Porteus

We express our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Scott Blakeley.

Scott Blakeley, son of Ruth Anne Dykeman and brother of Holly Lajoie, passed away on 10/7/22, just shy of his 70th birthday. Visiting Hours will be held at Chapman Funerals & Cremations, 58 Long Pond Drive, Yarmouth on Friday, October 14th from 4 - 7 PM. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Ruth Anne in care of Holly Lajoie, P.O. Box 1076, South Wellfleet, MA 02663.

We express our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Warren Dyer

who passed away on 10/20/22. Warren is the uncle of Nellie DiPinto. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to the Dyer Family - 65 Old High Toss Bridge Road, Wellfleet, MA 02667

We express our deepest sympathy to Victor Rubdi on the death his sister, Rose Vastrad
who passed away on 11/26/22. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Victor & Sheila Rubdi, 211 Main Street, Wellfleet, MA 02667

“In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God!”

Prayer List

Please contact the church office to add a name or update this list.

“If one member suffers, all suffer together...If one member is honored, all rejoice together.”(1 Cor. 12:26) May the presence of Jesus Christ be with those on our PRAYER LIST and with those who care for them. Pray for:

*Jean Cooper
Barbara Nowell
David Powers
Jack Troxel*

*Barbara Knapp
Gina O'Connor
Todd Roy
Dennis Ubriaco*

*Christy Milliken
Madeline Oberding
Carol Spencer
Fred Vitek*

And for those who are chronically ill and confined to their homes, nursing homes and hospitals. **Please notify the Pastor or the church office when family or friends are hospitalized.**

Board of Missions & Outreach

Pie Sale and Crafts Fair Saturday 11/19/22. All pie sale proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund. Sign-up sheets for bakers and helpers posted on bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Additionally, we will have a table for a children's craft activity, a Christmas ornament or small gift for them to make. Nancy Boyles is coordinating the children's activity – please contact her with suggestions or to help at the table.

Living Water Acupuncture – article on this outreach ministry of our church recently featured in Southern New England UCC newsletter. Volunteers needed to assist at clinic, one time or ongoing. If you think this might be of interest to you, please see sign-up sheet on bulletin board or call Margaret Tilton (603-459-9161) for details/questions. For December through March, clinic will be held twice a month. Weekly clinics resume in April 2023.

Get out your favorite soup recipes! **Community lunches** are scheduled to resume **January 19, 2023** and will take place monthly October through April, on the third Thursday of the month at 12:30 PM. Soup, bread, salad, and dessert will be on the menu. We anticipate a hybrid of food prepared in the church kitchen and offerings brought from home. Watch for sign-up sheets to appear in early January.

Our third annual Church World Service **Crop Hunger Walk** campaign, led by Dr. George Vitek, was a resounding success this year, with **almost \$11,000 raised** to support local, national, and international efforts to fight hunger! **It is not too late to donate**, either through a check to CWS-Crop Walk left at the church office, or on the website:

www.crophungerwalk.org/lowercape. Thanks to volunteers at our church's tables at the Wellfleet Farmers Market, Makers Mart, and OysterFest: George and Nancy Vitek, Nancy and Ron Boyles, Susan Eenigenburg, Dot Oberding, Christie O'Campbell, Rob Leatherbee, and Margaret Tilton. This year's walkers on rainy Sunday 10/23 were Susan Eenigenburg, Katherine (who comes to our acupuncture clinic), Rob Leatherbee, Rick Nolin, Victor Rubdi, and Margaret Tilton. We are grateful to the many local businesses that support this effort with their donations of gift certificates for the raffle.

At our last Missions & Outreach meeting, Pete Cook brought up the intriguing idea of offering **after-school tutoring** to local schoolchildren as an outreach opportunity for the church. This is an idea that could match a local rich resource (retired educators, others in the community with time and talent to share) with a local need. A New York Times article on 10/24/22 described an alarming drop in math scores in nearly every state and a decline in reading scores for schoolchildren nationally compared to pre-COVID levels. We invite anyone interested in exploring this idea to attend the next **meeting for Board of Missions and Outreach**, which will be held **11/2/22 at 2:00 PM** in Fellowship Hall.



THE CLEANEST AIR AROUND!

To any of you who may be feeling hesitant about returning to in-person services, please remember that we have newly installed filtration upgrades for both air conditioning and heating systems that are designed to inactivate 99.4% of virus molecules! In addition, masks and sanitizers are easily available, and there is plenty of room to observe social distancing.

Tell your friends!



Living Water Acupuncture

Our Tuesday afternoon free clinic has had a busy summer, with regular referrals from healthcare agencies, recovery programs, and local nonprofits who provide direct services to people in need. In recent weeks we've been averaging over 20 people per clinic. Participants find the treatment helpful for a variety of concerns, including maintaining sobriety, managing stress, decreasing anxiety, and dealing with chronic pain. Some come nearly every week, others for a session or two or for a couple of months. I hear so many expressions of gratitude to our church for offering this ministry. Some folks serve regularly as volunteers to help set up and to assist with check-in. One weekly attendee goes up into the sanctuary to pray after every session and once left a note with a prayer request on the pulpit. I like to think we're projecting a welcoming, nonjudgmental, and consistent presence that is helping people as they navigate life challenges and shows that we, as a church, care about them.

See the SNEUCC article about the Living Water Acupuncture clinic at <https://www.sneucc.org/newsdetail/how-acupuncture-became-a-church-health-ministry-17088480>

CELEBRATE OUR CHURCH'S SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES!

By Susan Eenigenburg

Our church's Settled Pastor Search Committee (SPSC) ended our work on 11/6/22 when the church voted to call Rev. Jonathan Elsensohn as our next Settled Pastor. The SPSC consisted of chair Rob Leatherbee, Gerry Nolin, Suzanne Thomas, George Vitek, Matthew Erikson, and me, Susan Eenigenburg. Suzanne took the place of Richard Robicheau, who served during the first part of our work together.

It took a while for all of us in SPSC to find our footing in this "small-group" process. In the end, I have to say (with others) that our small-group work came to mean a great deal to us. Slowly we bonded, came to know and love each other, care for each one as a brother or sister, all within the context of a Christ-centered small group of our larger church. We came together to make decisions, evoking the Holy Spirit as our guide. I would say it took a deep faith within each of us to keep going with patience through this laborious process. We learned how to discern together the movement of the Holy Spirit to guide us to which of the 17 candidates who applied would be the best for our church. Our SPSC Chaplain, Gerry, led us in prayer, devotions each time we met. What held us together for the lengthy process: our mission to find the best person to be our next settled pastor.

From this experience, I would like to lift up the small-group experience within our church as the laboratory for us to build trusting relationships with our brothers/sisters. For in sharing with each other we support each other. I know I feel blessed to know each person's faith, which in turn nurtured my faith in Jesus Christ.

On Sundays I celebrate our choir, which is a great example of a small group within our church. I see each Sunday how the bond of coming together to sing has created a committed group that presents as enjoying each other's company as well as fulfilling its mission to guide our service musically. I credit Brad Williams as Music Director and Choir leader for leading this wonderful small group.

And there are other small groups: Barbara Knapp, a Deacon, has led the Care Team for years, and I appreciate its ministry, its meeting regularly to provide outreach ministry to those members who may be unable to attend church at this time. Our church's Bible Study, meeting on Zoom, offers another opportunity for small group sharing, learning together. I appreciate the experience of small group interaction, even on Zoom.

Each Board of our church: Deacons, Trustees, Christian Education, and Outreach—all present opportunities for small-group fellowship. Small groups do need a leader or chair, which is an important role of sharing ownership with everyone in the group, through delegation, inviting others to take a role, listening to group input.

In closing, I'm quoting George Vitek who shared with the rest of us on our SPSC journey in 3/22: "I wanted to share something I just happened to stumble upon this morning. It is a quote from Pope Francis and expresses my own wish for our church: "The Lord wants us to belong to a Church that knows how to open her arms and welcome everyone, that is, not a house for a few, but a house for everyone, where all can be renewed, transformed, sanctified by his love—the strongest and the weakest, sinners, the indifferent, those who feel discouraged or lost." From *The Church of Mercy*.

Choir Practice
Sundays at 9:00a.m.

Alcoholics Anonymous
Saturdays at 7:00p.m.

Mission & Outreach Meeting
No meeting in December

Craft Fair
Saturday, December 10, 2022
11:00a.m.-4:00p.m.

Diaconate Meeting
December 11, 2022 11:15a.m. in office

Trustees Meeting
December 21, 2022 7:00p.m.

Council Meeting
December 18, 2022 following worship.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24, 2022 at 4:00p.m.

White Gift Sunday – December 11th

You're invited to bring a toy wrapped in white paper and marked for a boy or a girl. Please consider teen members of our communities whose families are in need. Stop & Shop offers a variety of gift cards for purchase, such as iTunes cards, Barnes & Noble, Best buy and American Express gift cards. Please label gift card "**for teenager**" or "**for child**". Gifts for teens will be donated to the Lower Cape Outreach and children's gifts will be donated to Mass



A Fond Farewell

Too quickly the time has passed us by,
now it's time for us to say good-bye,
Please join us in wishing

The Rev. Sheila & Victor Rubdi the very best.

Potluck luncheon
in honor of our Interim Pastor
The Rev. Sheila & Victor Rubdi
Sunday, January 15, 2023
11:30a.m. (following 10:00a.m. Worship)

First Congregational Church of Wellfleet, UCC
Fellowship Hall
200 Main Street
Wellfleet, MA 02667

R.S.V.P. to Nellie DiPinto or Brad Williams at
508-349-6877 or wellfleetchurch@gmail.com
by **January 5, 2023**
(Also indicate if you would care to bring a dish to share)

To express our gratitude to Pastor Sheila for her four years of wonderful ministry to our church, please consider contributing to a purse to be gifted to her at our farewell luncheon. A donation of any amount will be appreciated and may be sent to the church in care of Nellie or Brad.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS!

12/6 Nathan Graham
12/11 Jordan Nye
12/17 Sarah Porteus & Nancy Boyles
12/24 Siri Lindberg
12/27 David Lajoie
12/28 Ava Currier & Jana Currier
12/30 Brittany Souza



JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS !

1/4 Andrew Porteus
1/5 Brielle Lajoie
1/6 Lynne Milliken
1/11 Elaine Dee
1/12 Peter Swanson
1/15 Emma Smith
1/20 Addie Winslow
1/22 Shema Rubdi
1/26 Faye Lindberg
1/31 Boone Scalcione

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

12/4 Frank & Suzanne Thomas

Cookie Walk



Cookie walk & Church Fair Saturday, Dec. 10th 11am-4pm



Featuring:

- ❄️ Baked Goods, Christmas Cookie Walk
- ❄️ Knit goods
- ❄️ Crafts
- ❄️ Jewelry
- ❄️ Unique America Doll clothing
- ❄️ Books
- ❄️ Decorative Greens

First Congregational Church of Wellfleet – December 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AA = Alcoholics Anonymous MS = Mustard Seed WHS = Wellfleet Historical Society Handicap Accessible				1	2	3 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA
4 Second Sunday of Advent 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship, Communion	5 8-10am – MS	6 8:00-11pm – MS 10-12 WHS Mtg. 3-5pm - Living Water Acupuncture Clinic	7 9:00-2pm – MS	8	9	10 11-4pm Craft Fair/Cookie stroll 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA
11 Third Sunday of Advent Stewardship Sunday White Gift 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship 11:15am – Diaconate	12 8-10am – MS	13 8:00-11pm – MS 3-6pm - Living Water Acupuncture Clinic	14 9:00-2pm – MS 12:00pm – Bible Study via Zoom	15	16	17 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA
18 Fourth Sunday of Advent 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship 11:30am – Council mtg.	19 8-10am – MS	20 8:00-11pm – MS	21 9:00-2pm – MS 7:00pm – Trustees mtg.	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Svc. 7:00pm AA
25 Christmas Day 9:00am – Choir Reh. 10:00am Worship Service & Baptism	26 8-10am – MS	27 8:00-11pm – MS	28 9:00-2pm – MS	29	30	31 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA

First Congregational Church of Wellfleet – January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 First Sunday after Christmas New Year's Day 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship & Communion	2 8-10am – MS	3 8:00-11pm – MS 10:00am – WHS mtg.	4 9:00-2pm – MS	5	6 Epiphany	7 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir reh. 7:00pm AA
8 First Sunday after Epiphany 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship	9 8-10am – MS	10 Annual Reports due in office 8:00-11pm – MS 3-6pm - Living Water Acupuncture Clinic	11 9:00-2pm – MS	12	13	14 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA
15 Second Sunday after Epiphany 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship. 11:15am Potluck Luncheon/Pastor Sheila's last service	16 8-10am – MS	17 8:00-11pm – MS	18 9:00-2pm – MS 7pm – Trustees mtg.	19 12:00pm Community Luncheon 4:30pm Mission & Outreach mtg.	20	21 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA
22 Third Sunday after Epiphany 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship 11:30am – Council Mtg.	23 8-10am – MS	24 8:00-11pm – MS 3-6pm - Living Water Acupuncture Clinic	25 9:00-2pm – MS	26	27 Deadline for submitting articles for newsletter	28 Custodian cleans in morning 4:00pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm AA
29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 9am – Choir reh. 10:00am Worship 11:30am – Annual Meeting	30 8-10am – MS	31 8:00-11pm – MS 10:30am – Care Team Ministry				AA=Alcoholics Anonymous MS = Mustard Seed FH = Fellowship Hall WHS = Wellfleet Historical Society Handicap Accessible