



The Link



First Congregational Church of Stoughton, United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

November 2018

Our Vision

*We are called together to embrace God's transformation of our lives and our world
by becoming and serving as Christ's disciples.*



Dear Friends in Christ,

November is often considered the season of gratitude. We certainly have much for which to be thankful. Each of us has a roof over our head, food to eat, and people who care about us. When I look at my own life I see an abundance of blessings! I am the pastor of a loving, caring congregation and also a daughter, wife, mother, and grandmother. Most of you know that over the past few months I have felt a pull to spend more time with my family. Two of my three children live in other parts of the country. My parents and in-laws are getting older and require more of my help. So, with the support of Church Council, I will be reducing my hours to $\frac{3}{4}$ time, effective this month. What that means is that I will work three weeks each month and have the fourth week off. My salary and benefits will be adjusted accordingly.

Many people have wondered what will happen during the week that I am not at the church. Our office assistant, Ellen, will come in on Wednesday morning to work on the bulletin and Notes & Notices. I will continue to respond to pastoral emergencies unless I am out of town, when my friend and colleague Rev. Carol Steinbrecher will cover. I am collaborating with the Worship and Music ministry team to plan meaningful worship services on the Sundays that I am off. Sometimes you will have a pastor or seminarian lead worship. Other Sunday mornings might involve a short prayer service followed by a hands-on project to benefit people in need. We are also planning a Hymn Sing Sunday and possibly a Taize service.

Thank you for your willingness to honor my need to spend more time with my family. I am grateful for each of you and I'm excited to think about the growth and opportunities that lie ahead for all of us. God is good, all the time.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Mary

Pledge Sunday, November 18



“No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.” Luke 6:43-45

We have various idioms in the English language that refer to our labors and fruit. Maybe you’ve heard the one that says: “the fruits of one’s labor” (meaning the results of one’s work) or “bear fruit” (meaning yield good work) or this one, “a tree is known by its fruit” (meaning that people judge your character by what you do.)

We have long used fruit as a standard for measurement. In our congregation, some of the fruits of our ministry include so much more than what you see on Sunday morning. Our ministry to alleviate hunger and food insecurity happens year round through our community garden, our shared ministry with our United Methodist neighbors at the Ilse Marks Food Pantry through our monthly food donations, weekly support of the Tuesday Café, and bimonthly Mainspring House dinners. Our prayer shawl ministry wraps those who are suffering or in pain in the love and comfort of God’s grace. The school kits put together by Friendly Service and the children’s donations to the Heifer Project let us reach out to our neighbors around the world. And that is only the tip of the iceberg!

Each of these ministries contributes to the gospel message and they are planned and prepared by leadership, staff and volunteers who are deeply committed to our becoming who it is God is calling us to be, the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. The ministry and mission of our church take place because of the spiritual *and financial* gifts our members and friends choose to offer. These are the resources that fuel our mission; and yes, it does cost real money to provide these spiritual things! Stewardship considers the fruitfulness of our ministries and how we will continue funding opportunities with our time, our talent, and our treasure.

Our prayer is that you will be with us during the remaining weeks of our *What Shall We Bring?* Stewardship campaign, that you will join us on **Pledge Sunday, November 18**, for a worshipful celebration where we will come with our fruits . . . our offerings not of a fruit tree, but representing our time, our giftedness, and our money. May what we give in this moment be a blessing of our work, and our faith, back to the world. The gifts we bring make good things happen. Thank you for being a part of it. You were mailed a commitment card last month. Challenge yourself to give in a generous, regular and disciplined way.



Book of Life

Deaths:

Frederick Biffin, whose funeral service was led by Pastor Mary at Farley Funeral Home on October 5.

Uretha Meeks, whose funeral service was led by Pastor Mary at our church on October 16.



A huge thank you goes out to **Marcia Olson** for the many hours she spent on the transition of the Link newsletter to its new digital format. We also thank **Anita Keenan** for her leadership and creativity with the new Playground children's worship area. We thank **Charlene Smith, Dottie Rother**, and all who are helping with the Church Fair Supper. Last but not least – thank you to all who helped make our annual Trunk or Treat event such a success! We are very blessed!



Please submit any Sunday worship bulletin notices to the church office by **8:30 am on Tuesday**. Articles for the **December LINK** will be due by **November 17**. Contact the church office with any changes or additions to the church calendar.



PROJECT 275

Did you know our church is approaching its 275th anniversary? We were first gathered as a community of faith in Stoughton in 1744. This is cause for celebration, a time to “look back in gratitude and look forward in faith!”

For our next Project 275 conversation on **Sunday, November 18**, we are going to take a collective breath after our very busy month of church fair and supper activities and talk about your ideas for celebrating this historic birthday. Yes, our congregation faces many challenges, but also exciting possibilities for change and rebirth. How shall we celebrate and give thanks for God's faithfulness?

We will begin our discussion with prayer in the sanctuary at the end of worship and then move to the church hall for light refreshments and a 30-40 minute conversation. Think big!

Our next Project 275 on church governance will take place on December 2. Look for more details in the December Link.

**HARVEST FAIR SUPPER
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 AT 6:00 P.M.**

BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS TO A DELICIOUS CHICKEN DINNER

Featuring musical entertainment by The Gilmartin Brothers



**\$15.00 PER PERSON
\$8.00 for CHILDREN 10 and UNDER**

TICKETS CAN BE RESERVED BY CONTACTING THE CHURCH OFFICE

office@uccstoughton.org | 781-344-2371

OR

AFTER WORSHIP FROM DOTTIE ROTHER OR CHARLENE SMITH



Sharing God's Bounty

Dear Church Family,

We would like to thank everyone who helped make the Community Garden a success over the last two seasons. Together we grew tomatoes of all shapes, hues, and sizes, great bunches of greens and herbs, as well as many large cucumber and squash fruits. We had so much at peak harvest that we were able to give coolers full of fresh, nutrient dense, and chemical free food to feed our neighbors in need.

The "Lasagna Garden" method we chose specifically for its frugality and fruitfulness. Layers of carbon like cardboard, leaves, and paper were layered with a nitrogen, either compost or livestock manure. These layers build the soil upward while also taking excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and putting it into the soil. The diversion of organic matter like compost, manure, and carbon from landfills also prevents methane from escaping into our atmosphere. Methane is 20x a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Healthy, biologically active organic soil provides nutrients to the plants, which in turn provides nutrients to us. The flowers we grew fed our native pollinator friends and attracted beneficial insects. These various allies pollinated our plants and ate other bugs that would otherwise eat our vegetables first.

Together we grew organic nutrient dense food and removed a tiny bit of CO₂ from the atmosphere. With just a few square feet of garden space what we accomplished in co-creation with the Earth is kind of miraculous. Imagine the potential and possibilities that exist in the untrod green spaces all around us.

Fall Blessings!

Lindsey and Roisin



Friday, November 9, 4 - 8 pm

(\$2 admission for adults – 1 free raffle ticket and the best selection of bargains)

Saturday, November 10, 10 am - 2 pm

(Free admission all day)

* Attic Treasures * Jewelry Box * Book Nook * Knit Goods * Bakery and Candy Shoppe * Crafts * Theme Basket Raffles * Snack Bar
* Raffles * Silent Auction * Kid's Toys *



50/50 Raffle drawing each day; \$1.00 per ticket / 6 for \$5

The church fair is almost upon us and we have already been hard at work making crafts and knit goods, soliciting silent auction items, and collecting attic treasures. But now more hands are needed. Please contact one of the fair chairpersons below to cover a shift, donate a silent auction item, craft or baked good, and sell raffle tickets.

Set-up (Sunday, November 4) – help us set up tables and pull all the donations out of storage immediately following coffee hour.

Organizing, cleaning, sorting and pricing (Sunday, November 4– Friday, November 9) - whatever time you can give to help us with this enormous task will be greatly appreciated. The usual Attic Treasures crew is willing but small and we could really use some new faces helping out. Day or evening, a few days or a few hours – every little bit helps. Contact **Marcia Olson**.

Attic Treasures – Don't forget to bring your no longer needed treasures to the church! Please NO computers, TVs, clothing, or large pieces of furniture. **Last day to drop off items for Attic Treasures will be Sunday, November 3.** Contact **Marcia Olson** if you need to arrange a drop-off at 781-344-9547 or via email her at baglole.olson@verizon.net.

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Books & DVDs – pass along those great reads, music and movies you have enjoyed and get yourself some new ones! No textbooks or magazines. Contact **John Baglole**.

Baked Goods and Candy – Dust off your best recipes for tasty and tempting treats to fill up our bakery. Contact **Charlene Smith** or **Gwen Bailey**.

Jewelry – look through your jewelry boxes, ask your friends and family to do the same, and bring your donations to the church by the end of October. Contact **Marcia Olson**.

Knit Goods – We need to replenish our mitten supply and other handmade items. Children's sweaters, baby items, towels, pot holders, mittens, hats, scarves and throw pillows are always great sellers. If you are looking for yarn to make items for the hand-knit table, please contact **Dee Hayes** or **Maurine Upton** at 781-344-4609.

Crafts – Are you a crafty person? Our Holiday crafts table is in need of your creative talents. Contact **Barbara Bingamon**.

Silent Auction – Can you donate tickets to a Bruins, Celtics, Patriot's or Revolution game? How about theatre tickets or a gift certificate to a local eatery or business? Can you offer a weekend away at a vacation home, give a few hours of computer troubleshooting, or prepare a gourmet meal for two? Perhaps you have a lovely antique or other decorative item that no longer fits in with your home décor? Contact **Janet Clough**.

Raffle Baskets and Gift Baskets - If you would like to donate a basket or items that could be made into a gift basket please let **Leanne Kerman** know. She has the baskets and shrink-wrap so just give her the items and she will put the basket together. If you would prefer to make a cash donation she will do the shopping for you. If you have any questions or would like to sponsor a basket, contact her at 781-297-7368 or email her at LeanneK462@comcast.net.

Staffing tables during the fair - We especially need help staffing the raffle tables and floaters who can cover for many tables so people can take a quick break and shop the fair themselves. In Attic Treasures we need at least 4 -5 people at all times to cover each of the rooms, be a cashier, and wrap purchases. Help is most especially needed the first few hours of the fair on Friday when the big rush in Attic Treasures usually takes place.

Cleanup - We need to get the rooms back into shape for regular post-fair activities. If you can be available to help restore order from chaos Saturday afternoon, that would be great!



It takes many, many hands to pull off a successful fair – it takes all of us working together and giving whatever time we can when we can. Won't you join us and lend a hand? Please contact Marcia Olson, 781-344-9547 | baglole.olson@verizon.net.



Back Bay Ringers – December 9

Mark your calendars! We will be hosting the Back Bay Ringers holiday handbell concert, featuring music from Charlie Brown's Christmas, on **Sunday, December 9 at 7:00 pm**. The Back Bay Ringers are a non-profit advanced handbell ensemble that has performed at Faneuil Hall, Symphony Hall, and other locations in the Boston area. Look for ticket information in upcoming Notes and Notices.



What's Happening This Month?

Faith & Fellowship Opportunities

- October 31 (Wed): While you are out trick or treating, stop by the church as we host our 6th annual **Trunk or Treat** with cars decorated for Halloween and plenty of candy treats - just the right size for little feet. All are welcome.
- November 1 (Thu): Please join Pastor Mary in the Fireplace Room at 11:45am for **Lunch with the Pastor**. Bring a brown bag lunch and she will provide beverages and dessert. This is a nice way to share what's going on in our lives. Bring a friend! All are welcome.
- November 4 (Sun): **Healing Prayers**. Pastor Mary will remain in the sanctuary after worship to meet with you privately and pray with you. If you are in need of any kind of physical, emotional, or spiritual healing or simply need to know that God cares... please come.
- November 24 (Sat): **The Breakfast Club**, a group of faithful ladies and gents, meets on the last Saturday of every month at 9 am at Bickford's Restaurant, Oak Street, Brockton. All are welcome. If you have any questions or need a ride, contact Bob Kuver at 781-341-2751.
- November 25 (Sun): **Special Needs Bible Club** meets this month at 3pm. For more information contact Bonnie Bittner or Dottie Rother.
- November 26 (Mon): **Women's Fellowship** will meet in the Fireplace Room at 4 pm. Look for details in the Notes and Notices.



Opportunities to Serve

- November 19 (Mon): **Friendly Service** meets from 10am to 2pm to work on community and worldwide service projects such as quilts for local homeless shelters, school kits for Church World Service, and mending kits for Seafarer's Friend. You can even bring projects to work on at home if you are unable to make our monthly gathering. Many hands make light work. Please contact Janet Clough at 781-344-3860 for more information.
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry**: Our group meets every Wednesday at 10am to knit prayer shawls for those who need to feel God's loving care wrapped around them. We also work on knit goods for the church fair. Please join us.
- **Coffee Hour Hosts**: We all enjoy visiting with friends over a snack and a cup of coffee after worship. Please consider taking a turn hosting a coffee hour and sign up on the volunteer board to cover a Sunday.



Opportunities to

- **Bags of Hope Advent Project**: On Sunday, March 24 the confirmation class will be sponsoring a **Bags of Hope** event to highlight the problem of human trafficking, addiction and homelessness and to help spread hope into the lives of women and girls affected by this scourge. As a special Advent mission project, we will be handing out Bags of Hope tote bags on the first Sunday of Advent on December 2 and asking that each household fill the bag with one item a day throughout Advent that are most needed by these women who are living on the streets of Boston. This will go a long way toward kickstarting our collection drive in advance of the March 24 event.

Items needed are toothpaste, toothbrushes, hair brushes and elastics, 12 oz. bottles of shampoo and conditioner, trail mix snack packs, women's socks, chapsticks, deodorant, nail polish, small packages of wipes, feminine products, winter hats, gloves and scarves, \$5 Dunkin Donut gift cards, and notes of encouragement. All items must be new, full-size and individually wrapped.

- **Mitten Tree**: Area neighbors will have a warmer winter when we fill the branches of our Mitten Tree in the church hall with hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves. We will start collecting items during the Church Fair and throughout November and December when they will be distributed to **Evelyn House** and the **Ilse Marks Food Pantry** before Christmas. Please consider adding an item or two to the Mitten Tree. Thanks for your generosity to our neighbors.

- **Food Pantry:** Each month on Communion Sunday we collect non-perishable food items to share with our neighbors who are facing challenging circumstances and food insecurity at the Isle Marks Food Pantry. As we come to the Lord's Table, let us share our blessings with others.
- **Bottles and Cans:** Please donate your clean, redeemable bottles and cans from your holiday events and parties. They can be left in the drop-off box at the bottom of the stairs just before the church office. Monetary donations are always gratefully accepted, and the money collected is used for various church ministries and operational needs. Contact Maurine Upton for more information.
- **Needy Persons Fund:** Every Communion Sunday we invite you to make a special donation to this fund through which we are able to offer assistance to individuals in need. Please put your donation in the white offering envelopes found in the pews, which unless marked otherwise, will be placed in the Needy Persons' Fund. Through your generosity, we are able to help many people. Thank you! If you are experiencing difficult financial circumstances and could use some help through our Needy Persons' Fund, please speak to Pastor Mary in confidence.
- **Altar Flowers:** Help to enhance our worship services by donating altar flowers in memory of a loved one or to commemorate a particular milestone. Each arrangement costs \$30. Checks can be made payable to the First Congregational Church of Stoughton with "altar flowers" in the memo line. Include a note stating for whom and on what date you would like to dedicate the flowers. You can drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or contact Janet Clough at 781-344-3860.
- **Memorial Gifts:** In the event of a loved one's passing, please consider having memorial gifts directed to the church. Donations may be made to the Memorial Fund or the general operating budget. These contributions will help us live out our mandate to bring Christ's love to the world. Thank you!



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

It is time to think about decorating our altar for the Advent season. Would you like to have a poinsettia dedicated to someone special? If you wish to donate a plant in memory, honor, or celebration of a loved one, please drop a note in the collection plate or mail your information to the church office indicating your dedication. In order to have your memorial appear in the Christmas bulletin, your donation must be received no later than **Sunday, December 9**. In order to purchase good quality plants that will last, a suggested donation is \$10.00, but all donations will be accepted. After the Christmas Services, if you have purchased a plant, you are welcome to take it home with you. Members of the Caring Committee will deliver the remaining plants to our sick and housebound. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Clough at 781-344-3860 or cloughjr@verizon.net.



AT HOME, IN NURSING HOMES, AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES
For those who wish to send greetings, the following list is included:

Jennifer Alholm
 156 Dean Street
 South Easton, MA 02375

Wayne Alholm
 149 Homeland Drive
 Whitman, MA 02382
 (781) 523-1640

Doris Bamberg
 Copley at Stoughton Nursing Care Center
 380 Sumner Street
 Stoughton, MA 02072
 (781) 341-2300

Walter Bamberg
 2330 Central St.
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Amanda Cushing
 103 Benson Road
 Stoughton MA 02072

Fred Dimond
 382 Prospect St.
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Clifford and Amy Fowler
 The Arbors
 2121 Central Street
 Room 219
 Stoughton, MA 02072

Maizie John
 Bridges by Epoch
 140 University Ave.
 Westwood, MA 02090

Betty Lambert
 19 Rose Street Unit #4
 Stoughton, MA
 (781) 436-3416

Rev. Jean Lenk
 229 Old Plymouth Road
 Sagamore Beach, MA. 02562

Dorothy Dawe
 The Arbors
 2121 Central Street
 Apt 112
 Stoughton, MA 02072
 (781) 344-8367

Muriel Rowland
 92 Cedar Hill Dr. Apt. 202
 Windsor, VT 05089

James Williamson
 Hellenic Nursing and Rehab Center
 601 Sherman Street
 Canton, MA 02021

NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>28 Pastor Mary Study Leave 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen</p>	<p>29 Pastor Mary Study Leave 7:00 PM Rel Addiction</p>	<p>30 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 6:30 PM Cub Scouts</p>	<p>31 HALLOWEEN 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 5:00 PM Trunk or Treat</p>	<p>1 ALL SAINTS DAY 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:30 AM Caring Committee 11:45 AM Lunch with the Pastor 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC</p>	<p>2 6:00 AM BRC-FR 9:30 AM 12 Step Group 11:00 AM Arthur John memorial service 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 81007 5:00 PM Girl Scouts</p>	<p>3 6:00 AM Boston Renewal Church 9:00 AM Red Hat Society 11:00 AM AA 6:00 PM Church Fair Supper</p>
<p>4 CHURCH FAIR SETUP COMMUNION 10:00 AM Faith4Life Class 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 11:00 AM Healing Prayers 11:30 AM Confirmation Class 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen</p>	<p>5 CHURCH FAIR SETUP 7:00 PM Rel Addiction</p>	<p>6 CHURCH FAIR SETUP 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline</p>	<p>7 CHURCH FAIR SETUP 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 11:45 AM Missions/Outreach 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>8 CHURCH FAIR SETUP 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC</p>	<p>9 CHURCH FAIR SETUP 6:00 AM BRC-FR 9:30 AM 12 Step Group 4:00 PM CHURCH FAIR</p>	<p>10 10:00 AM CHURCH FAIR 11:00 AM AA</p>
<p>11 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen</p>	<p>12 7:00 PM Rel Addiction</p>	<p>13 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline 6:30 PM Cub Scouts</p>	<p>14 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl</p>	<p>15 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC</p>	<p>16 6:00 AM BRC-FR 9:30 AM 12 Step Group</p>	<p>17 LINK Deadline 11:00 AM AA</p>
<p>18 PLEDGE SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 11:00 AM Project 275 Meeting 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen</p>	<p>19 10:00 AM Friendly Service 7:00 PM Rel Addiction</p>	<p>20 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline</p>	<p>21 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>22 THANKSGIVING 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC</p>	<p>23 6:00 AM BRC-FR 9:30 AM 12 Step Group</p>	<p>24 9:00 AM Faithful Gents-(Bickfords) 11:00 AM AA</p>
<p>25 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Coffee Hour 1:00 PM BRC-Sanctuary/2ClassRm 3:00 PM BRC-FH/Kitchen 3:00 PM Special Needs Bible Club</p>	<p>26 4:00 PM Women's Fellowship 7:00 PM Rel Addiction</p>	<p>27 6:00 AM BRC-FR 8:30 AM N&N Deadline</p>	<p>28 6:00 AM BRC-FR 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl</p>	<p>29 6:00 AM BRC-FR 7:00 PM AA 8:00 PM BRC</p>	<p>30 6:00 AM BRC-FR 9:30 AM 12 Step Group</p>	<p>1 6:00 AM Boston Renewal Church 9:00 AM Red Hat Society 11:00 AM AA</p>

