

The Congregational Church of Westborough

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
57 West Main Street, Westborough, MA 01581

1724 – 2023



Photo by Deb Boucher

The Evangel
February 2023

Rev. Betsy Dorsi, Pastor
Joseph Stillitano, Director of Music

A Message from Rev. Betsy...

So in Christ, we though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

-Romans 12:5

Friends, it is wonderful being back full time as your Pastor! Having only begun to serve at CCW in July, being forced by illness to be away for 10 weeks, was frustrating and very upsetting for me. It seemed as though I had waited a very long time to start my Call and then almost immediately I had to be away. Well, I'm back now! Full of energy and inspired to lead you in faith and ministry development. I am so thankful for your patience while I was recovering from surgery!

It is always a bit difficult to come to a new congregation to be Pastor. You arrive knowing only the members of your Search Committee. You have to use a GPS to get around town, you feel very alone. So, imagine how much worse that feels when shortly after arriving you need surgery! I am blessed that several of my long-time friends were able to travel here and stay with me right after surgery, but they soon had to leave. It was then, while I still could not cook, clean, or drive, that I discovered how much this big loving family of CCW cared about me! The cards and phone calls kept my spirits up, food (even bland postsurgical food) kept me from going hungry, the visits and household help, the rides to appointments and the many offers of assistance that I couldn't accept as I had so many, provided the warm embrace and care I desperately needed during the frightening and painful time of recovery. Indeed, the body of Christ at CCW takes great care of its members! Thank you everyone!

During these winter months as we tend to hibernate a little more and rest up for the busy months of spring, let's all remember our members and friends who for varying reasons need to feel that warm embrace as much as I did. The elderly and home-centered folk who may need rides, grocery delivery, friendly visits, and calls. The lonely, the harried parents of young children, those struggling with chronic physical and mental health afflictions. Let us open our arms wide and wrap them all in a huge God hug delivered from The Congregational Church of Westborough.

Keep shining brightly!

Rev. Betsy



PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

New Prayers: Edward Birch – Linda’s son; Steve Lindberg; Janet Harvey; Carolyn Bent’s sister-in-law Debbie Bent; Margaret’s daughter, Hannah Vhatty; Ed Wong.

Continued Prayers: Brenda Lord and her family; Cathy Purcell, her doctors & family; Kevin, Pam Kapitz’s nephew; Tom Morgan’s brother Harry; Dee Mumby, Cathie Achorn’s mother; Nancy Walker (Deb Boucher’s mom); Roberta Di Terlizzi’s mother Donata; Dan (a friend of Deb and Rich Boucher)

Prayer requests: You can place prayer concerns on the church’s email distribution list at epayers@uccwestboro.org. If you would like a prayer request included in today’s service, please let a Deacon know prior to the start of worship. Prayers will remain listed for 8 weeks. If you would like a prayer renewed, please call the church office.

LENT PROGRAM

We will kick off Lent with a traditional evening service on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Chapel. Every Wednesday following, we will meet for a family dinner of soup, salad and bread, a simple meal to help us reflect on the personal sacrifices we should be making during this holy season. Following dinner Rev. Betsy will lead an adult education program on the Seven Last Words of Christ. As we reflect together on Jesus’ final sacrifice for us and His last moments on earth, we will draw closer to Him and prepare ourselves for the Sacred Mysteries of Holy Week. Please let the office know if you plan to come and will need childcare. Plan to join us for a time of community building and Lenten preparation.

SCOUT SUNDAY



February 12, 2023, The Congregational Church of Westborough will be hosting all local Boy and Girl Scout troops at our regular 10:00 Worship Service. Together we will celebrate the relationship between Scouting and the church and the central role Jesus’ teachings have in the core values of Scouting. The Service will feature Scouts in Worship leadership positions and will help us all remember and celebrate the bond between Scouting and our church. Please join us on this special day! Scouts, please let the church office know if you plan to attend so we can include you as a Worship leader. Come in your Scout uniform to show your pride in Scouting.

STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship Committee wants to thank those pledging units who have signed up to support the operations and missions of our beloved church in 2022. Last year, 101 pledging units answered the call, pledging a total of \$232,853 for operations and \$32,855 for Missions, whereas this year’s pledges total \$238,083 for operations and \$33,301 for Missions. The 2023 budget plan for operations has been established at \$239,622 as we welcome our full-time pastor for the first time in four years.

Statistically, there were a total of 93 pledges received, including 3 new pledges, 45 increases, 37 unchanged, and 8 decreases. During last year, some people moved away and others experienced changes to their living arrangements, resulting in lost pledges of \$6,800. In general, our aging congregation and the pandemic have had a negative effect on these numbers; but thanks to the generosity of those who made a pledge, we did not come out behind our operations budget despite having fewer pledges.

Pledging for operations expenses is the largest income component for the 2023 budget at 68%. Hence, it is essential that all church members who

are able need to prayerfully consider their participation.

If you did not receive a pledge card in the mail, please call the church office at 508-366-2000 or stop in during office hours and fill one out. Pledge cards are also available in the vestry on Sundays. Just a reminder that the pledge card has entries entitled “ministries” and “wider mission,” which refer to the church’s “operations” and “missions” categories, respectively.
The Stewardship Committee
Linda Crawford, Ted Jaworski, Janice Shaw, and Dave Smith

FAITH FORMATION

On December 18th, the children and youth of the church performed in the Christmas Pageant. It was a huge success and everyone who participated should be very proud.

“A NIGHT IN BETHLEHEM” CAST

MARYNora Hubbard

JOSEPH.....Louis Hight

INNKEEPER.....Jeffrey Stillitano

SPEAKING SHEPHERDS

Mateusz Moskal

Al Regnier

Lucy Stillitano

Lawson Snow

Welles Snow

WISE MEN Sebastian Moskal

Maciej Moskal

Kristina Di Terlizzi

ANGELS Dylan McCoskery

Ayla McCoskery

Sabrina Caron

Susie Di Terlizzi

Aeva Snyder

STAGE MANAGER..... Cora Fitzgibbons

DIRECTORS Linda Borglund

Nancy Hubbard

Doug Wales

FROM THE TREASURER

Please note that we no longer use numbers on our Pledge Envelopes as we are consolidating our church database. Please make sure you print your name on your pledge envelope each time you make a contribution. Thanks for your cooperation!

PARISH LIFE

GAME NIGHT!

Our game night was cancelled to to extreme weather. We will be rescheduling so be on the lookout for the new date.

The Famous Pancake Brunch

Join us Sunday, Feb. 19th after church for our annual Pancake Brunch where you will enjoy pancakes and toppings, bacon, eggs, sausage, fruit, juice, coffee, and tea. For more information, call Cathie Achorn at 508-380-8671.

(Come celebrate Shrove Sunday or Mardi Gras before Lent starts on Ash Wednesday.)



Looking Ahead...

Saturday, March 11, 2023 - Progressive Dinner

Back by popular demand! (invite your friends). Sign up in the vestry after Feb. 1 and pick up the letter explaining the Progressive Supper. Appetizers will begin at 5:30 pm. Stay tuned for more details.

Saturday, April 29, 2023 - Game Night – Save the date.

COMMUNICATIONS

TECH MINISTRY UPDATE

You may have noticed something different in the sanctuary the last 6 or 7 weeks - the cameras in the pews are gone! Which means the cables and cords are too! The AV/Tech team has been working hard behind the scenes to continue to improve our Outreach Ministry to members and friends who are not able to worship with us in person - those who join us via Facebook or Zoom, or even watch us on Westborough TV Monday nights. The Tech team purchased new cameras, which are located up in the balcony. These new cameras replace the ones which were in the pews, set up quickly during covid. (The pew ones were always meant to be temporary - it just took a bit to find the "right fit" camera for our use.) Special pre-sets on these new cameras allow us to (almost) automatically zoom in on a specific person or group involved in worship - the choir & bells, liturgist, pastor, special readers, etc. We try to make the "at home" experience as close to being "in person" as we can.

If you do join us from home, we'd love to hear from you! Please email deb.boucher.15@gmail.com with questions or concerns. Thank you!



ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON INFORMATION AND/OR PRAYER NOTICES?

It's an easy fix! Simply send your email address to either Lisa or Deb, and we will add you to one or both email listserves. Once we add you, you'll need to click a link that will come in an email from "Enews" or "Eprayers" to subscribe. Lisa's email: westboroucc@verizon.net, Deb's email: deb.boucher.15@gmail.com

MISSIONS

Giving Tree Update

2022 Giving Tree Update - Over 120 tags were taken, and gifts purchased for children from Westborough and Friends of the Children of Boston! Thank you so much for your caring and generosity. These children will have the joy of receiving a gift on Christmas morning. And thank you to all mission team members who helped with all phases of this ministry. You are the best! Pam Faustine

In the Hour of Need (IHN) Family Shelter

Our next week of hosting at the IHN Family Shelter is March 12th - 19th. We will need dinner hosts each night from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. (you do not have to bring dinner), and overnight hosts from 8:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. weekdays and until 8:30 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. This is a great way to share hospitality and caring for families who are homeless and seeking permanent housing. Most parents work during the day or evening so a little help with the children or a dinner are most welcome. Overnight is usually very quiet. Grocery cards are appreciated as well. If you are interested or want to learn more, please contact Pam Faustine at 978-505-7031 or anyone on the Mission Team.

Food Pantry Update

For February, the Food Pantry is asking for juice. Specifically, the large bottles of juice (they have a supply of children's juice boxes). Apple, grape, orange, papaya - all kinds are needed. You can leave donations in the basket at the front entrance to the church or place them in the big white box at the side entrance. Thank you to everyone for your donations.

Dismas House Dinners - If you like to cook why not prepare a meal for the men at Dismas House? The men are rebuilding their lives after incarceration and truly appreciate a home cooked meal. Not comfortable going on your own - Karen Hutchinson or Pam Faustine will go with you. There are usually 7 to 9 men and they will clean up everything after the meal. We can even drive the meal in if you are unable to deliver it yourself.

FROM THE BELL LOFT



HAPPY NEW YEAR from the Festival Ringers! We gathered on Tuesday 1/24 to set up our schedule to ring through June. Our first rehearsal was held on Tuesday 1/31 from 7-8 pm. Currently we have 10 members so we will ring 4 octaves, leaving out the lower bells. We're looking forward to playing some new music and replaying a favorite piece or two.

If anyone is interested in joining us, there are two openings available at this time. Please speak to me after church, come to a rehearsal to observe, or call me at 508-341-8239. Help us bring back the big bells! Sue Menzel

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Monday, February 6, 2023

Meeting at 6:15 pm in the Vestry. After the meeting at 7:00 pm we will go to the sanctuary for a musical program.

**Is The Piano The Same As The Organ?
Is The Organ The Same As The Piano?**

You Decide!

A presentation and mini concert by Linda & Jim Duncan using both the piano and organ. This will be held at the Congregational Church, in the Sanctuary. This program is sponsored the Women's Fellowship and is open to the public. The event is free and there will be refreshments. You don't need to be a musician to appreciate the information.



Missions for February:

- 1) Monetary donations for Valentine Gift cards to send to our college students with a card letting them know how much our church we think about them.
- 2) We are also collecting for The Purse Project as they have asked for items. There is a box in the library for donations of small shampoo, lotion, toothpaste etc. For information about this contact Donna Morgan (DKMNM@aol.com) or Cathie Achorn (508-380-8671)



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP VALENTINE GIFTS

The Women's Fellowship will be sending some love from our church for Valentine's Day to our college students, and our active-duty military. This year we will again be sending Amazon Gift Cards.

Parents / guardians / grandparents:

- PLEASE put their names and addresses in writing...it helps reduce mistakes. To have an envelope returned would prevent them from getting it in time for Valentine's Day.
- Please get back to me (DKMNM@aol.com) as soon as possible.

The deadline is Monday, February 6th, but the sooner we know the number, the better (and easier) it is for us. We want all the recipients to get them in time. We will mail them out as soon as we get the names and addresses of the students/service person.

Thanks for your help – Donna Morgan



Looking Ahead...

March 6, 2023 meeting at 6PM in the Vestry POTLUCK SUPPER, Appetizers at 6PM - Dinner at 6:30PM - Short Meeting after 7PM - Bring a dish to share.

WF mission for March is the Food Pantry.

GROCERY CARDS

Profit: \$4,882.50

Goal for 2022: \$6,000

YTD 2023: \$ 461.25

Goal for 2023: \$6,000

Year End Update: Although we didn't quite reach our goal for 2022, we saw our profit increase by 10% over 2021. With a bit of a push from all of you while enticing new folks to participate, we feel optimistic about reaching our 2023 goal. Office sales have been strong, delivery list is increasing, and we love to see you on Sunday morning. And don't be shy about asking to be put on our delivery list. We'll bring the grocery gift cards to you! Shop local and stay well. Thanks! The Grocery Card Team: Karen Hutchinson 508 870-1782 or millarhutch@aol.com, Sally Petersen 508 259-2788 or sbpetersen4@gmsil.com, Nancy Quimby 774 843-4431 or nquimby11@gmail.com, Linda Crawford 508 898-9527 or lindacrawf@gmail.com.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Many thanks for the beautiful poinsettia plant that was delivered to our home. It is still blossoming. Thanks to the delivery person too – sorry we weren't at home.

Love to you all – Linda & Jim Duncan

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To My Church Family,

Thank you so much for the lovely plant! I miss being there, but it's nice to feel connected! Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year to all!

Marge Butcher

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Dear Congregational Church Members,

On behalf of our clients and volunteers, we thank you for your generous offerings: \$75, \$200 Walmart cards, \$575 Stop & Shop cards

With Sincere Thanks,
Donna Kittredge, Westboro Food Pantry

CONTACT INFORMATION

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General Church email
WestboroUCC@Verizon.net

Church web site
www.UCCwestboro.org

www.facebook.com/TheCongregationalChurchofWestborough



Photo of some of the tech equipment described in Tom's article →



OUR VIDEO OUTREACH MINISTRY (PART 1) – BY TOM MORGAN

Deb Boucher wrote in her Tech Ministry Update (page 5) that the AV/Tech team has been working hard behind the scenes to continue to improve our Outreach Ministry to members and friends who are not able to worship with us in person - those who join us via Facebook or Zoom, or even watch us on Westborough TV Monday nights.

This is supported currently by Steve Achorn, Brett Borglund, Deb Boucher, Rich Boucher, Dana Crawford and Tom Morgan.

Deb described the latest stage that this effort has reached: with the continuing support of the congregation, the “temporary inconvenience” of cameras on tripods and cables across the Sanctuary, and the legacy technologies of video projectors and screens, has led to the “permanent improvement” of computer-controlled cameras above the floor, and large video displays.

But there is a much longer history behind our use of video to support our worship and outreach. This note describes some of those early efforts. Future articles will bring that narrative to the present.

I began working with video in 1984. My connection with video in our church goes back nearly that far: the oldest such recording on the shelf is of Children’s Day in May, 1988. In the early 90’s the church acquired a pair of full-sized VHS camcorders, and video of most services started sometime in 1995.

The strategy of that time was to capture a worship service in simple documentary style, largely using wide-angle perspective from the rear of the Sanctuary, along with what close-ups the cameras could achieve of the worship leaders and musicians.

Over time, we moved to using two or three “Hi-8” 8mm camcorders for each service, with central monitors and a video switch to record the majority of the service “live.” Because there was only loose coordination among the camera operators, each camera recorded its video to supply missed shots, etc., in “post-production,” to create the final recording of the service – that usually took about 8 hours.

For a time, those recordings were played back regularly on Westborough TV, and we created DVD’s for the assisted living facilities in town. However, the overhead to create these proved too much for the volunteer labor available, and this attempt at video outreach could not be sustained.

As the 2000’s became the 20-teens, the church did support improved technology for the video ministry effort, providing SD-card-based, High-Definition cameras, and a DVD recorder. Westborough TV loaned the church an integrated video switching and recording computer system for many months. However, the effectiveness of our recording efforts was still limited by the time needed to create a final production. And by the low-tech Standard Definition technology of that final product – whether on DVD or public access playback.

(Credit Donna Morgan, Brett Borglund, John Truesdell, Linda Sharkey and Kris Knutrud as the primary cinematographers in those days.)




In 2017, the church supported the major upgrade of the Sanctuary sound system, based on a digital mixer, and designed by Josef Reznicek, a local sound engineer who has since become a friend of the church. About that time, I began to visualize how to make the transition to High-Definition recording, which many television viewers now expected, and to incorporate live-streaming, which many internet users now expected.

For this, I envisioned a video production system of three networked computers: one for handling content such as PowerPoint and pre-recorded video; one for capturing the camera inputs, doing switching, integrating the prepared content and processing the final video; and one for live-streaming that video.

In 2018, through Josef, we received a donation of three identical small office computers – perhaps sufficient for the church’s move to that next level.

In my home studio, I started the engineering work....and then came COVID.

~ February 2023 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 3:30 Journey Home Singers 6:30-8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	2	3	4
5 10am Worship Service/Sanctuary, Zoom, Facebook COMMUNION	6 6:15 pm WF Meeting/Vestry 7 pm WF program in Sanctuary Church Office Closed	7 7-8 pm Bells Rehearse	8 3:30 Journey Home Singers 6:30-8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am Called to Care	9 7- Trustees/Kerygma Court of Honor/Sanctuary & Vestry	10 6-10 pm Vestry in use/Tom Morgan	11 9am Mens' Breakfast/Vestry
12 10am Worship Service/Sanctuary, Zoom, Facebook 11:15 am Budget Meeting/Sanctuary 12:30 pm Youth Group meets at WHOP SCOUT SUNDAY	13 6:30-8:30 pm Cub pack 100/vestry Church Office Closed	14 7 pm Vestry in use/Tom Morgan 7-8 pm Bells Rehearse 	15 3:30 Journey Home Singers 6:30-8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7 pm- Cabinet/Kerygma	16 10:30-Noon/Kerygma Rm in use 7:30 pm Missions	17	18
19 10am Worship Service/Sanctuary, Zoom, Facebook 11:15 am Pancake Breakfast	20 Church Office Closed	21 7-8 pm Bells Rehearse	22 3:30 Journey Home Singers 6:30-8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service/Chapel 	23	24	25
26 10am Worship Service/Sanctuary, Zoom, Facebook	27 Church Office Closed	28 7-8 pm Bells Rehearse Dinner/Dismas House	 LENT			