



**First
Congregational
Church UCC
of Harwich**

697 Main Street
Harwich MA 02645

www.firstchurchofharwich.org
firstchurchharwich@comcast.net

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

June 2020 Beacon

IN THE INTERIM

Years ago, while settled in ministry, it was my good fortune get a second divinity degree. In contrast to other programs of study, this one, well-known for its “method,” included ethno-anthropology. These are fancy hyphenated words for *observing*; observing one’s subjects, just as Margaret Mead watched and wrote about hers in the wild. Of course, in her case, there was a lot of old racial cultural bias as the underlying assumption was that the “natives” needed to be tamed and westernized.

Twenty years ago, when I entered transitional/interim ministry, I became surprisingly aware that I was actually employing the same method of that I had been taught. For, I found myself being assigned to very different “villages,” (towns) and in those places had to employ my skills to observe and analyze the so-called “natives.” So far, it has not been the typical anthropological taking of notes at such cultural events as cock-fights. But as I arrive at churches-in-transition, I find that none are exactly the same as others. For, some are corporate-sized, others ma-and-pa

sized; some are sedate, others vibrant; some healthy, others dysfunctional.

This health pandemic, to me, brought out interesting behavioral patterns amongst all of us. I believe that as Christians seeking God and Christ’s ways, we have been and are being tested to see if our religious morals, values and actions make any difference in this virus- and war-warped world. As I have said, for the past three months, some of us kept on doing what we usually do (except, of course, with the washing of hands, physical distancing, wearing masks and taking our temperatures); others seemingly disappeared as into a secure and secret upper room; and still others shone like diamonds-in-the-spiritual-rough.

When I spoke with the Cabinet and deacons most recently, I asked them (us) to reflect on what has happened, and to adapt and innovate to our new living and working conditions. For, I believe, it is our Christian responsibility and call to live up to “God’s ways, known and to be made known” as the Pilgrims wrote in their Covenant way back in 1606.

During these times on Cape Cod, it will probably not be locusts, ticks, or viruses that “get” us; rather, reluctance to center ourselves, observe, listen, read, get fact-checked information, learn, and change what has not worked. We need to cultivate in new ways the eternal compassion, justice, shalom, and *agape*, which we espouse through our Redeemer, which will give us resurrected life and transform what has been into what can be in the life of the Spirit.

Christ’s call to us is clear. No more only taking care of our own, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor or George Floyd “lynchings,” take-downs when our backs are supposedly turned, power-over rather than power-with, mob violence, hatred, bigotry, Covid-19 spiritual shallowness and poverty. Rather, choose

God’s ways for life, so that we and those who inherit First Church from us may live!

As we enter the season of Pentecost, I pray that during the pandemic we have learned something new about ourselves and those with whom we live and move. I pray that we will enhance what has been positive and let go of the negative. I pray that we together will move with the power of the Holy Spirit. For, in these days it is no longer the same-old, same-old we need or violence for that matter. Our world is aching more than ever before for nothing less than the Realm of God. May it come to pass. The sooner the better.

Pentecost blessings,

Pastor Dianne

VIRTUAL WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS AT 10:30 am!

We offer Virtual Sunday Worship at 10:30 am. It includes music, the reading of Scripture, a Reflection, Prayers and two hymns. It is a 45-minute service. If able, please sign up – once -- with the Secretary Gail on weekdays before Friday

noon. She will send you an order-of-service. Call or write Pastor Dianne or Deacons, DeeDee Dyer, Lynn Carver or Murray Johnson, if you have technical questions.

PRAYER LIST

Solace & Peace

Family and friends of Julie Bradley and Dan Parr

Adelle Babin, daughter Lori and family on the death of Jim Mohr

Family of Dave Damon and those 100,000, who have succumbed to Covid-19

Healing & Comfort

Lynn Bitzer

Shirley Moyle

Rev. Terry Newberry

Martha

Ardene

Danny

Eileen S

Joanne

Jack

Edie’s granddaughter Heidi

Mark Curran
Char's sons
the Moyles' Cindy and Betty
Miles

Joys & Celebrations

Fathers' Day
graduates of schools, colleges and
universities and special programs

Kelly H

Tom L

those celebrating birthdays and an-
niversaries

Community & World

Those standing up peacefully for
anti-racism; everyone adjusting to a
new world caused by Covid-19, es-
pecially the hungry, the homeless,
ill, those suffering from addictions,
anxiety and depression, all medical
staff, first responders and caregiv-
ers; family and friends of victims of
White supremacist terrorism and gun
violence; parents and children who
have been separated; for a sustaina-
ble earth; and for peace and justice
in the U.S. and around the world.

IN LOVING MEMORY

David G. Damon

March 21, 1933-May 10, 2020

*May he rest in peace
and rise in glory.*

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 Lectionary readings 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, June 7 Trinity Sunday
Genesis 1:1—2:4a Psalm 8 2 Corin-
thians 13:11-13 Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, June 14 Second Sunday
after Pentecost Genesis 18:1-15
[21:1-7 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 Ro-
mans 5:1-8 Matthew 9:35—10:8 [9-
23]

Sunday, June 21 Third Sunday af-
ter Pentecost Genesis 21:8-21 Psalm
86:1-10, 16-17 Romans 6:1b-11
Matthew 10:24-39

Sunday, June 28 Fourth Sunday
after Pentecost Genesis 22:1-14
Psalm 13 Romans 6:12-23 Matthew
10:40-42

LECTIONARY GUIDES

Lectionary Guides by Pastor Dianne may be accessed at our website at [firstchurchofharwich.org/our ministry/lectionary](http://firstchurchofharwich.org/our_ministry/lectionary).



Plants have been given in Loving Memory to ~

My husband, Richard L. Thompson, by Carolyn Thompson

Two wonderful gardeners, my sister Anne and my husband Ken
by Katherine Smith

Our parents, Curtis and Mary Buckminster
and Samuel and Beatrice Segall,
by Orin and Nancy Segall



MUSICAL NOTES

Our Music program continues, despite difficulties. I continue to record music, singing and playing piano. I have recorded an organ concert that we will publish soon, called Spring Concert. I also have recorded files for a Children's Concert that will also include music by Jeep Mashoke and Tom Jahnke. In our weekly musical offerings, Tom and I have sung together in duets, and he has recorded some very lovely and also elaborate solos (like *Battle Hymn*). Jeep has been appearing on the church's *Facebook* page every Sunday, reading and singing. I want to thank both Tom and Jeep for helping to keep our music program going.

The choir meets every two weeks and will be meeting next on Wednesday June

3, via Zoom. I hope to have new equipment by then to help the sound in these sessions, which need a digital interface (otherwise the sound of the piano is terrible over the internet)! Little by little, I am getting more comfortable with this remote musical world we find ourselves in. The choir and I will be working together on new repertoire that we're calling our Music Sunday, and I will be recording some music files of those titles. It's nice how video-conference platforms can bring people together, who live far apart! There are some silver linings here. But admittedly, this is a hard time for all of us. We will find our courage and move forward and have faith!

~Marcia Hempel



BIRTHDAYS IN JUNE

23rd Lynn Bitzer
28th Mary Ann Janick



DOLLARS AND SENSE

Your remaining pledges and offerings for 2019-20 will continue to be gratefully received. You may mail them to the church, Attn: Treasurer, with your pledge number on the checks and memo line: pledge or offering. Or, you may drop them in a business envelope, Attn: Treasurer,

through the Broadbrooks House front door mail slot (*not* mailbox).

Your generous contributions are greatly appreciated for the ongoing ministries of this church, and especially at this time of physical distancing.

~Tom Jahnke

THE DEACONS DOOR

“Part of the pleasure of being a child the first time ‘round is that you don’t have to prove yourself yet; part of the pleasure of being a child the second time ‘round is that you don’t have to prove yourself any longer.

Very young children and very old children also seem to be in touch with something that the rest of the pack has lost track of. You can’t help feeling that whatever inner goldenness they’re in touch with will see them through in the end.” (Fred Buechner, *Listening to Your Life*)

GIVING PLANTS

Many of us enjoy giving sanctuary flowers in memory or honor of loved ones. Since that isn’t possible during the pandemic, in the interim,

the Deacons have created an opportunity to donate plants. Money collected will be put into a **Plant Fund**. When the Deacons decide that our campus can be beautified by a new

tree, shrub, or flowers, they will draw from this account.

If you are interested in contributing to this **Plant Fund**, here is the procedure:

1. Write out this information on a paper –
 - Your name and phone number
 - The name(s) of the person(s) you wish to honor or commemorate.
2. Make out a check to *First Congregational Church* for any amount you wish, and put on the memo line: *Plant Fund*.
3. Mail the information and check to Deacon DeeDee Dyer

at P.O. Box 108, Harwich, MA 02645.

4. DeeDee will contact the Secretary so that the *Midweek Message* and *Beacon* can include the name of the person(s) for which the remembrance is given, and by whom the contribution is made.
5. DeeDee will give your checks to the Treasurer for inclusion in the **Plant Fund**.
6. The Deacons will inform the congregation when plants are purchased.

If you have any questions about this temporary procedure, please call Lynn Carver at 508-717-1989.

~Diaconate

MISSION/OUTREACH

Since our church, like many others on the Cape, has been physically closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and food regulations have changed, we have not been able to collect goods for the Hands of Hope Food Pantry. However, the need for food remains, to an even greater degree, now more than before. Financial donations and gift cards are a big help toward providing

food for those in need. Please send your donations either to the church office at 697 Main Street, Harwich (with Hands of Hope on the memo line) or mail directly to Hands of Hope, 49 Route 28, Box 387, West Harwich MA 02671, Attn: Kathy Driscoll.

Thank you for your generosity.

~Lorraine Frederickson

THE ANNUAL MEETING

In mid-May, all First Church members were mailed a warrant, letter from the Moderator and Treasurer, a ballot to vote on the proposed 2020-21 budget and slate of officers, and a pre-stamped envelope. Later, all members were emailed the 2019-20 annual reports. Please return your pre-stamped envelope with ballot as soon as possible as we need a quorum to respond. The ballots will be tabulated then the results made public in mid-June. This is your opportunity to vote!

CABINET NOTES

We had an on-line GoToMeeting video-conference on May 12th at 4 pm. Cabinet and church members present included: Moderator, James Mashoke, Pastor, Dianne Arakawa, Treasurer Tom Jahnke, Trustees John Bitzer, Bob Buchanan, Deacons, Lynn Bitzer, DeeDee Dyer, Christian Education, Bettylou Hindle, Mission Outreach, Lorraine Fredrickson, Fellowship, Nancy Segall, and Memorial Garden and Justice and Peace, Lynn Carver.

Many items were brought up for discussion with hopes that video-conferencing will work for us during this Covid-19 time we are in. The subject of church services is foremost on everyone's mind, and we will do our best to keep the congregation informed on when and how we can open our doors and still be safe.

Earlier we had voted that the Annual Meeting be held on June 14th, which will no longer happen. Regardless, Tom and Bob worked out the new simplified 2020-21 budget. This budget along with a voting card to approve it as well as the list of officers will to be mailed out to all members soon. It must be returned as soon as possible in order to be tabulated. In addition, the Annual Reports will be collected from the pastor, officers, and board and committee chairs by the Secretary, then sent out to all members via email.

Pastor Dianne thanked everyone for hanging in. She reminded us about the well thought-out UCC recommendations for churches at this crisis time. See sneucc.org for invaluable updates. She also went over the printed guidelines for our new Pastor Parish Relations Committee from the committee of Lynn Carver, Mary Ann Janick and Joyce Noyes. It was unanimously approved.

Deacons introduced the new Plant Fund. (see June newsletter.) It was unanimously approved. They and the church office have been in contact with about ten church members, who do not have internet, to try to keep them informed. They will discuss virtual worship some more.

Christian Education will send Bible story books to our children. Mission/ Outreach recommends checks be sent to the Food Pantry. Fellowship, Memorial Garden and Justice and Peace are in touch with their members to discuss issues that come up.

Presently, the best way to get information is to read the *Midweek Message*, go to our website, call the Secretary for information during office hours, and check our Facebook account. I know a few do not have access to some of these, so feel free to call me if you need to talk!

~Jeep Mashoke

A WORD ABOUT PHASING-IN

For two-and-a-half months, most of us stayed at home, worked from home, or left home to do essential work. We marketed or filled gas, worked in our yards, planted gardens, took walks, did household work, and travelled to see loved ones. It has not been easy.

Thanks to front-liners, without whom we would not have fared so well and to whom we owe a debt! Thanks also to some of our

church leaders, who stopped by Broadbrooks to figure our finances, collect and sort mail, and sometimes even clean.

On May 18th Governor Charlie Baker announced his 4-staged plan of **Re-Opening** our Commonwealth. Apart from the importance of continuing to maintain distancing, wear masks, wash hands, and monitor our health and temperatures, he condoned the possible opening of churches, perhaps

first out-of-doors, then maybe later in our sanctuaries. More details were provided on the state website and by various media.

About the same time, the Bridge Ministers of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, with which we covenant, made public their recommendations for **Phasing-In**. It resembles that of the State, with attentiveness to ongoing health developments. **It asks us to develop our digital communications but delay opening physically until later this summer!**

To test these waters, I met informally (and virtually) to consult with a group of church leaders. Everyone was committed to the health and safety of our members and children. No one wished to thoughtlessly push reentry. At the same time, some hoped that church leaders might meet around June 15th to resume conversation with more information and make future plans.

During this pandemic, we have increased and increased use of our digital communications, which had been neglected. We introduced the *Midweek Message* on a digital platform; we updated our website and introduced weekly Lectionary Guides and Worship Music on it; we introduced a new video-conference platform for Cabinet and Deacons meetings; we made our *Beacons* (and monthly calendars) available on our website so we can access these at any time; we sent out our annual reports via email for the first time; and Marcia and I introduced virtual Sunday worship at 10:30. I hope that everyone, who can, avails themselves of one

or all of these new – and safe -- ways of communicating.

Whatever is decided, I ask us all to take a deep breath. Continue doing what we have been doing well personally. Improve what could be better both for ourselves, the church and wider community. Remember that, as our Scripture repeated during the Easter season, God/Christ/the Holy Spirit lives as much outside of formal places as in them; Christ lives in us. Let us not forget that when the early Church was formed, the disciples left the Temple to gather in homes to praise God, tell stories and pray.

So, I encourage us to have patience (still), keep the Faith, pray and meditate, come to our virtual worship services every Sunday at 10:20 am, use our Lectionary Guides, listen to our Worship Music, eat fruits and vegetables, walk, contact loved ones and church members, thank those who aided us, send in our pledges to support our ministries, and – if it is all too much – ask for help from me, your deacons, church friends, neighbors, Town services, or by dialing 911.

We greatly miss each and every one, whether those who have been worshipping here physically or virtually, recently returned from nearby or out-of-state, or are still about to pack up to join us for the summer.

Be patient, as God's love is unending and overflowing.

~Pastor Dianne

(reprinted from *Midweek Message*, May 20th and recently updated)

GRADUATES

Please let us know if there are any graduates of schools, colleges, universities or special programs of yours.

Katherine Smith's granddaughter, Margaret Grace Recks, graduated from the University of New Hampshire, cum laude, with a BSN degree in nursing. She will begin working at the Elliot Hospital in Manchester. In college, she worked as a CNA to help pay tuition.

Trinity Sunday is June 7th

Please feel free to print out this page for your child to use, to read, to color in, to copy, whatever. It will help them to learn about our Lord.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITY PAGE

Trinity Sunday

So, when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." ~ Acts 1:6-12

**REDEAVE FOR COLORING
BY KATHY GEHRT**



<http://colorthebible.blogspot.com>