

The Messenger

First Congregational Church
34 Center Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719-2931



11/2024

Let It Snow... Let It Snow... Let It Snow (Or....how to know if church is cancelled)

It's that time of year again when snow can be expected—it's inevitable here in New England. While we hope we will not have to cancel any Sunday church services this winter, we need to be prepared. You may wonder how we decide if a service should be cancelled. Our first consideration is the safety of everyone. We weigh things like amount of snow, whether streets have been plowed, ice that can make driving and walking treacherous, and how low the temperature has gone.

There are four ways to find out if church or a church activity has been cancelled on a particular day: (1) If you are on the church's email list you will get an email as soon as we decide to cancel; (2) The cancellation will be posted on the home page of our website (www.firstcongfairhaven.com); (3) There will be a message announcing the cancellation on the church's voice mail (508-993-3368); (4) The cancellation will be on the church's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/firstcongfairhaven).

Please remember that, even if church is not cancelled, consider your safety first—we would rather miss you on one Sunday than have you injured.



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Volume 73 No. 4 First Congregational Church Fairhaven, Massachusetts Nov/Dec 2024

First Congregational Church of Fairhaven

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Pastor

Rev. Bette McClure
508-951-1792

Administrative Assistant

Barbara Bishop

Music Director

David Touchette

Pianist

Isleila Rodriques

Office Hours:

Tues thru Thurs
10:00 am—2:00 pm



"Our mission is to provide opportunities to experience God's presence and in humble and caring ways to use all of our resources to welcome, love, challenge, and equip each other for Christ's ministry in our community and the world."

Old Time Holiday Fair December 14th, 2024

The Old Time Holiday Fair is back again! There is still time to **donate items for the craft or jewelry tables**. Our Chance Auction is waiting for donations of all kinds, including **gift cards** which are always a big hit! We will be running a baked goods table, so be sure to bake some goodies. Bill & Ginny Vining will be staffing the famous cheese table.

We will continue our holiday luncheon with the menu consisting of Lobster Rolls, Clam Chowder, Stuffed Quahogs, and Hot Dogs.

There is a sign-up sheet to work in the kitchen for the Lobster Luncheon, or talk to Donna Perry. Many volunteers are needed for this popular event.

Other help for the fair is always welcomed. We are currently looking for people to staff the craft and jewelry tables. The tables will be set-up with merchandise, so the only task would be on Saturday to collect the money. If you only have an hour or two that would be great. Let Donna Perry know if you are willing to give of your time to set up, clean up, or cover tables for lunch breaks etc.

This is a major fundraiser for the church and without you this fair would not happen!

Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:12-15



Dear Ones,

I am writing this column and you will be reading it just a few days before our Presidential election. During the last few months our country has been experiencing much anxiety and worry and more than a little dissension and even hateful words and actions. We have all been affected by all the difficult things that are going on in our world. I've heard many folks express how hard it has been to keep a positive outlook in their lives.

The following piece spoke to me when I read it and it reminded me to continually reflect on how I am feeling and how I am acting lest I add to all the negativity that so often surrounds us. I hope it might help you to do that also.

"You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you or shakes your arm, making you spill your coffee everywhere.

Why did you spill the coffee?

"Because someone bumped into me!!!"

Wrong answer.

You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup.

Had there been tea in the cup, you would have spilled tea.

Whatever is inside the cup is what will spill out.

Therefore, when life comes along and shakes you (which WILL happen), whatever is inside you will come out. It's easy to fake it, until you get rattled.

So we have to ask ourselves... "what's in my cup?"

When life gets tough, what spills over?

Joy, gratitude, peace and humility?

Anger, bitterness, victim mentality and quitting tendencies?

Life provides the cup, YOU choose how to fill it.

Today let's work towards filling our cups with gratitude, forgiveness, joy, words of affirmation, resilience, positivity; and kindness, gentleness and love for others.

(Widely attributed to Pastor Jasper Williams III)

Many blessings,

Rev. Bette

Thank You! Obrigado! Danke! Gracias! Merci! Takki!

However you may say thanks, appreciation is overflowing for everyone who helped out to do some cleaning in the sanctuary and began the process of refinishing the pews. Helpers ranged in age from 3-80-something! It was a joy to see everyone working together. Hats off to the following (if I missed your name, my deepest apologies!).

Gil	Jim	Carole	Molly	Sandy	Joanne
Bill	Ginny	Marty	Melody	Violet	Kraig
Donna	Macius	Jeff	Lucy	Norm	Sue
Siena	Christina	Laurie	Bruce	Ginny	

Prayer List

Please include in your prayers the following people:

Rev. Russ Chamberlain	John Ross	Sandy Orr
Laurie Noel	The Johansens	Peter Sowden
Linda Ferland	John Rondeau on the death of his father	



Celebrations Page

It is always a celebration when we baptize a little one or host a wedding. However, it is even more joyful when those involved have a strong connection to our church family.

In October we were blessed to baptize Peyton Kay McCarthy, daughter of Brooke (Chandler) and Ryan McCarthy. Brooke's family has a long history at this church. Proud grandparents are Laura and Steve Chandler and serving as Godmother was Kendall Chandler.

On October 25th at beautiful Fort Phoenix, Emily Dorian was wed to Chris Sieber. Joyfully celebrating were Emily's parents, Sharon and Steve Dorian and her sister Meghan.

All Saints Day

On this Sunday we will celebrate All Saints Day. It is a day in the church calendar where those who have gone before us in faith are remembered. So, we invite you to bring a picture or other memento of someone that has shined God's light on you, taught you about Jesus, or fed your faith in some way. It can be a parent, grandparent, teacher, neighbor, friend, minister, even a beloved pet. The person can still be alive or may have died years ago.

We will display the items on the Communion Table and celebrate their impact on us.

Hope to see you Sunday—remember to turn your clocks back!

Rev. Bette's 25th Ordination Anniversary

On November 17 we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Rev. Bette's ordination. Directly after Sunday worship you are invited to a luncheon in Maddaford. Several people have signed up to bring their special dish and, if you are interested in making a food contribution, please contact Sue Burr or Carole Mahaney.

Also, if you have any personal pictures from a wedding, baptism, or other event that involved Rev. Bette, we would love to put them on the picture board. Please drop picture(s) at the office. They will be returned.

The Rev. Dr. Patty Kogut, Area Minister for the Southern New England Conference of the UCC, will be preaching that day.

We hope everyone will be able to attend.

Community Thanksgiving Gathering

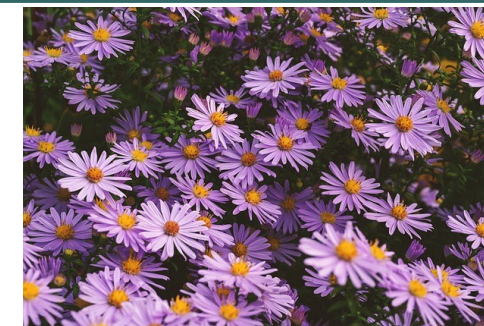
Sunday, November 24, 2024 – 6:00 PM

St. Joseph's Church Hall – 74 Spring St., Fairhaven

For the past year we have been offering a variety of gatherings and services with our neighbors in faith from Trinity Lutheran Church and St. Joseph's Parish. This has been an opportunity to gather with others who might believe and worship a little differently than we do here but who are no less faithful.

For Thanksgiving this year we have decided to gather for a potluck supper. It will be hosted by St. Joseph's but we will all bring food to share. The plan is to gather around tables with folks from different churches and, while we enjoy the food, to talk about thankfulness. There will be some prayers and a song or two included. Our hope is to create a comfortable space for us to better know and understand one another.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the William St. Lobby but even if you decide to come at the last minute, just show up. Let's make a good showing like we did for the Pentecost Gathering at Trinity Lutheran.



Feeling So Blessed!

There is a hymn that we sang recently – “God of the Sparrow God of the Whale” – that contains the line “how does the creature say Thanks.” I find myself searching for a way to express my deepest thanks to all of you for the outpouring of love that I felt on Pastor Appreciation Sunday. The surprise hymn accompanied by top hats and pictures, the special anthem and the expansive spread at coffee hour were all wonderful. Special thanks go to those who planned, coordinated, cooked, set up and cleaned up. I don't know all who were involved but I do want to thank Sue Burr, Kellie Medeiros and Carole Mahaney who I do know spent much time, energy and thought in making it such a special day! My heart soared with joy to see all the pictures from my ministry and to read the notes of appreciation. And the basket with such generous gift cards was the icing on the cake. It is such an honor to serve this church and to walk along with you in faith. Blessings and deep appreciation to each and every one of you.

Thank You! Obrigado! Danke! Gracias! Merci! Takk!

Action for Christ News

AFC October, November & December Missions

Sock-tober

Thank you to all who donated to the sock drive which will benefit **Gives to Give**. It is a wonderful organization that meets the needs of children by helping with child poverty and literacy. They want to ensure that children are connected to what they need, both physically and mentally.

Volunteers are always welcomed at their facility!

Every year, thousands of volunteers process donated children's items to create individual gift packages which are then gifted to local children-in-need. With over 70,000 local children living in poverty the need is overwhelming and their volunteers are a critical component to helping these children.

Sock-tober will end on Nov. 3, to be succeeded by ...

The Mitten Tree

December 3 - 22, 2024

In December for the last 20 or more years our generous congregation has donated all sizes of mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, socks and hand warmers. Action for Christ will have a Christmas tree up in the sanctuary for all the donations and as in past years, the tree will slowly disappear with the many items covering all the branches. The donations are sorted and half of the winter wear is brought to Sister Rose's House, which is a homeless shelter and daily soup kitchen. "Gifts to Give" will receive the other half of your generosity. And then ...

Child and Family Holiday Hope Project

Child & Family Services, Inc. invites you to share the joy of the upcoming holiday season by participating in the 2024 Holiday Hope Project. Holiday Hope matches sponsors with Child & Family's clients who are burdened with financial worries, illnesses, mental and physical disabilities, limited education and resources, and personal tragedies, which have left them unable to provide for themselves or their families. Please share your holiday spirit and give to the most vulnerable. This year we will be giving to a Mom & Two Children and more information will be forthcoming.

Action for Christ News cont'd.

Food Drive Nov. 3rd—17th

Action for Christ is challenging you to donate much needed groceries, not only for our pantry, but for the Thanksgiving Baskets to be assembled for our neighbors in need. Our pantry needs are great, as the pantry was hit with pantry moths this August and we've been cautious about putting dry goods back on the shelves. We happy to say the pantry is ready to be stocked again.



Each year we make between 10 and 16 Thanksgiving Baskets for families in our community. We receive names from the Council on Aging, Community Nurses, and the Veterans Office.

If you know of someone in need, please speak to Reverend Bette or anyone from Action for Christ: Carole Mahaney, Donna Perry, Peg Rogers, LeeAnn Wood.

This is a list of items that are welcomed in the Food Pantry:

PROTEIN FOODS

Canned ham
Spam & other canned meat
Canned fish
Peanut butter
Baked beans
Nuts
Quinoa

PASTA/RICE

Pasta
Rice
Macaroni & Cheese
Instant potatoes
Sauces

BREAKFAST FOODS

Cereal, hot or cold
Granola bars
Muffin mixes

VEGETABLES

Peas & Carrots
Corn

FRUITS

Canned pie filling
Cranberry sauce
Peaches & Pears
Fruit cocktail
Packaged fruit
Applesauce

DESSERTS & SNACKS

Cake or brownie mixes
Snacks or cookies
Pudding, Jell-O
Crackers

HEALTH & BEAUTY AIDS

Toothpaste & Tooth brushes
Toilet paper
Deodorant
Shampoo
Feminine pads
Soap

MISCELLANEOUS

Hearty soup
Small soup cans
Stuffing
Jelly
Coffee, Tea, Cocoa
Juice, Fruit Drink

We have a large quantity of tuna, so other meats would be welcomed!