



The Brick Meetinghouse Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2018

**First Congregational Church of Swanzev
United Church of Christ
Rev. Damon Anderson, Pastor
Cindy Sweeney, Editor**

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR:

Renewal and Revitalization to the People who are the First Congregational Church of Swanzev.

We are living into a new way as church and pastor in 2018. There will be a time of adjustment as the the pastoral position has moved to part-time. I want to remind everyone that I can still be reached during a crisis or emergency on my cellphone. The number is (603) 903-5998.

The parsonage phone has been disconnected. Please continue to leave messages on the church phone (603) 352-6689 or email pastorswanz@ne.rr.com for everyday concerns. I anticipate working three full days a week. At present, this will be Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. On Thursday, I will be keeping office hours in the morning. Please call if you would like to make an appointment during another day or time.

I want to express my thanks to the church and the members of the newly formed Pastor Relations Committee. I believe the formation of this group reveals some of the growth that is taking place. This group will be a great asset to this church and to me, personally, as the pastor.

A booklet from the United Church of Christ states that: “The Pastoral Relations Committee is a standing committee in a local church that seeks to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the pastor and members of the congregation. The committee serves in two primary ways: as an advisory group to the pastor and as a support for the pastor's leadership. As an advisory group the committee shares ideas, dreams, hopes, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor. As support for the pastor, the committee interprets roles, functions and needs of the pastor to the congregation.” The members of the committee are: John Goodman, Carol Roof and Rachael Schnyer.

In communicating with members of this group, I have the opportunity to reflect on the church and the role of pastor. Please understand that this change to a part-time pastor is something that has been talked about for a long time and has been done for a reason. This is taking place, not because something is or has been done “wrong” but because it is necessary and potentially healing.

Upon becoming pastor of this church, I was confronted with the fact that despite a top notch education and leadership roles in multiple settings, I was ill-prepared for the realities facing me. Since 2012, I have been working to deepen my understanding and my Self. During that time, a new sense of call has emerged – but one that has not led me away from the Little Church that Could. Instead, I have been called to expand my work with those who are in crisis, dying, abused or in trauma.

This has taken place as I was formed as an Interfaith Spiritual Director by the Silver Dove Institute and as a Chaplain at the Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock. I also continue my personal inner work exploring healing and symbol through Jungian psychology. I most recently attended the Winter Clinical Intensive at the CG Jung Institute Boston in mid-January 2018. I believe having the pastor position go to half time is just the next step allowing for a new thing for the church and me to take place.

At the January Pastor Relations Committee, I read the following quote by Murray Bowen. I want to share it with everyone, as I believe it is how I view the essence of leadership. This quote is what I hope to embody.

“Change begins when one can find a leader with the courage to define self, who is as invested in the welfare of the organization (i.e. family, congregation, corporation, regiment, club, political party, town, city, state, nation, religious judicatory, etc.) as in self, who is neither angry or dogmatic, whose energy goes to changing self rather than telling others what they should do, who can know and respect multiple opinions of others, who can modify self in response to the strengths of the group, and who is not influenced by the irresponsible opinions of others.”

As we continue our sacred work together, please join us for the following opportunities:

- February 4 – Soup-er Bowl Sunday! Who will win? The New England Patriots or the Philadelphia Eagles? The only guaranteed winner is local families in need. Please bring canned goods to help score a win against hunger, no matter your team!
- February 4 – Scout Sunday
- February 14 – Ash Wednesday – We will mark Ash Wednesday at 5:30 pm with a shared meal, brief worship service and imposition of ashes.
- February 18, 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25 – Lenten Simple Soup Supper and Study at 5 pm
- February 24 – “Prepared to Serve” – If you have ever wondered about the United Church of Christ beyond what you experience in Swanzey, an opportunity to take part in the larger church is “Prepared to Serve” on February 24, 2017. Last year over 500 individuals from throughout New Hampshire gathered in Pembroke for a day of worship, education and fellowship. This year over 50 workshops will be held on a variety of topics to help deepen relationships, cultivate action, expand knowledge and foster faith. Car pooling takes place and rides are available. If you are interested in attending or learning more, visit the website:
<http://www.nhcucc.org/ConferenceMinistries/PreparedToServe/>

I will be on a silent meditation retreat from Wednesday, February 21, through Sunday, March 4. If a pastoral emergency arises during this time, please contact Rev. Cindy Bagley at (603) 361-5674.

Continue to bless. . .and be blessed.
Pastor Damon

THIS N' THAT

- ◆ **MONTHLY CALENDAR:** The calendar is often updated during any given month. A corrected version will be posted on the bulletin boards with any changes.
- ◆ **PRAYER REQUESTS:** To all those who need our prayers and support, please contact Pastor Damon to let him know your situation or have a friend or family member call the church. Because of privacy, sometimes we are not aware until you tell us.
- ◆ **DEACON COVERAGE FOR FEBRUARY:** Barb Sault
- ◆ **ONLINE NEWSLETTER:** Please consider a shift from your paper newsletter to one sent via email. It would mean a great savings on stamps

Milestones

(**Please note:** If you are new to the church, or if we've missed you on our monthly milestones list, or even if you wish to have your name or a family member's name removed from the list, please contact me at: officeswanzucc@ne.rr.com or 603-352-6689. Thanks. Cindy Sweeney, Admin. Assistant.)

MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES: February 13, 1955~Peg Hanrahan; February 17, 2002~Sue Dejnak, February 6, 2005~Kristen Goodenough, Peter Goodenough, Ernie Kirouac, Marlene Ballou.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES: None this month

BIRTHDAYS: February 2~Finley Avery; February 5~Kristen Goodenough; February 19~Liz Colby; February 24~Evan McCutcheon; February 26~Joanne Gale.

“SOUPERBOWL” SUNDAY: On February 4, we are asking that you bring canned soups to church to provide for those families in need. Thank you!



ADULT POT LUCK LUNCHEON & SPEAKER **Wednesday, February 28, 2018**

We gather for our Pot Luck luncheon at 11:45, pray & eat at noon. For the luncheon, kindly provide a main dish, salad, or dessert to share. Beverages are provided. We hope you will join us for a time of good food and fellowship! You don't have to be a member of the church to attend. Bring friends and neighbors. The more, the merrier! After lunch Angela Nicoletti will be presenting information on the “Cheshire Village Home” organization. Please feel free to call me at 357-0125 if you have any questions.

Deb Sprague

WORLD SERVICE

At Ethel Nilsen's Celebration of Life, we sang the familiar words of "Jesus Loves Me". As I sang the song the thought came to me that people with troubles and hardships may find it hard to believe they are loved. As part of the World Service team, we strive to provide opportunities each month to show others God's love through us.

We have just concluded a drive to provide warmth to the people who use the 100 Nights Shelter. Thank you, Rachael Schnyer, for heading this up. Although the last donations will be taken on Sunday, February 4th, you can always drop off donations right at the shelter.

Souper Bowl Sunday is February 4th! Please, bring cans of soup to help feed hungry people in our community.

Third Saturday Supper-February 17th. See menu farther on in the newsletter. This one is different, though. Proceeds from the supper will strengthen the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, a fund to help people in despair in our own community. **Price for this supper will be by donation.** Please come and be as generous as possible so that we can show God's love LOUDLY in our community--and help alleviate a little worry from one of God's other children.

Caring does not have to cost money. Sincere prayers for others is a wonderful offering. Remember;

- our church
- our friends in Zimbabwe
- our youth programs
- those in need...

In February, Linda Svok will be taking charge of the World Service ministry. I have truly enjoyed overseeing this portion of our church lives. Your incredible generosity and willingness to work for others is truly inspiring. Thank you, Sandy Allen

EDUCATION MINISTRY

There are several parts to this ministry. Not only does it involve Sunday School and Kid's Club, but also adult education. If there are things you would like to study, please let me know.

There has been a very interesting study on the book of Mark, led by David Stinson on Thursday mornings at 10:00. This will continue until Easter. Join us, if you have time.

If you would like to be part of the Education Advisory Team to share your ideas and insights, please let me know. Sandy Allen

ADULT BIBLE STUDY OF MARK: Every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. for one hour, at the First Congregational Church of Swanzey, 679 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey NH. We are studying the Gospel of Mark. Rev. Dr. David Stinson, who is leading the class, has taught scripture for over forty years to small groups in churches. For more information about the study, please call the church at 352-6689.

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Ministry Leadership team meeting was held on January 18 to go over the minister's job description and to learn who the new pastoral relations committee is comprised of. The minister's job description was accepted with a few minor changes in the wording of some of his duties. The Pastor's Relations Committee is made up of the following people: Rachael Schnyer (352-5117), Carol Roof (357-4072) and John Goodman (242-3126).

Please feel free to call them with any questions you may have. Be sure to pick up your copy of the general duties of the Pastor, which is in the narthex and will also be in Friendship Hall on Sunday. Our next meeting will be on February 8 at 5:30 p.m.

KIDS' CLUB

There will be no Kids' Club in February. Our next scheduled one is the 3rd Thursday, March 15, but since that is a no-school day we will celebrate Easter on the 4th Thursday, March 22.

Our schedule is as follows-

- February ~ No Meeting
- March 22, **the 4th Thursday** ~ celebrate Easter
- April 19th ~ Earth Day Celebration
- May 17th ~ Last meeting of the year.

We hope many kids will join us in these celebrations.

Mrs. Ells, Mrs. Tatro, Mrs. Stinson, and Mrs. Allen

CRAFTS, COFFEE AND CONVERSATIONS ~ 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 10:30. a.m.
Come and bring ideas for future crafting. Your ideas are important. Thanks! Sandy

GRANGE MEETINGS: Just a note to let you know that the Grange will be meeting here effective March 1. They'll meet in the Classroom on the first Thursday of every month, from 6:00-8:30 p.m.

"BE MY VALENTINE" Supper



To Benefit:

Local Missions (neighbor to neighbor)

February 17th 2018
5:00 - 6:30 PM

Menu

Baked Ham with Pineapple
Southern Sweet Potato Casserole
Green Beans Almondine
Salad, Rolls & Beverages
Presidential Cherry Delight

*Takeout
Available*

Cost:

DONATION

*Handicapped
Accessible*

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February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Mark Bible St 10:00 a.m. FH 5:30-8:00 FH Girl Scouts	2	3 11-4:00 FH Birthday Party
4 10:00 a.m. Svc. Souperbowl Blue & Gold Banquet FH 1-4:00 Scouts	5 Happy Trails 6-8 p.m. FH	6 6:30-7:30 Cubs CL & FH	7 10:30-12 FH Caring Crafters Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30	8 Mark Bible St 10:00 a.m. FH 5:30 Ministry Leadership	9	10
11 10:00 a.m. Svc.	12	13 6-7:30 FH Interact	14 5:30 Ash Wed Service Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 CL Choir 6:30	15 10-11 am Mark Bible St NO KIDS' CLUB THIS MONTH 5:30-8:00 FH Girl Scouts	16 Supper Prep	17 3 rd Saturday Supper - Valentine
18 10:00 a.m. Svc. 5:00 FH Soup & Supper	19	20 Pack Mtng FH 6:30-8:00	21 Damon out 10:30-12 FH Caring Crafters Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30	22 Damon out Mark Bible St 10:00-11:00 Classroom	23 Damon out	24 Damon out Prepared to Serve - Pembroke NH
25 10:00 a.m. Svc. 5:00 FH Soup & Supper Damon out	26 Damon out	27 Damon out 6:30-7:30 Cubs CL & FH	28 Damon out 11:45-1:30 FH Lunch/Speaker Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30	1 Damon out	2 Damon out	3 Damon out

CALENDAR WILL BE UPDATED AS NEEDED

FH = FRIENDSHIP HALL

DAMON OUT OF OFFICE FEBRUARY 21 – MARCH 5

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



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