



# The Brick Meetinghouse Newsletter

## NOVEMBER 2017

First Congregational Church of Swanzey

United Church of Christ

Rev. Damon Anderson, Pastor

Cindy Sweeney, Editor

### A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR:

Endurance and Grit to the People Who are the First Congregational Church of Swanzey.

As daylight begins to fade and the earth grows dormant, we remember that one season gives way to the blessings of another. Though the days shorten, we celebrate Autumn's harvest with a day of Thanksgiving resplendent with family and food. We are reminded again of the natural cycle of life, death, and rebirth. When the Spirit initiates this sacred pattern, Christians call it – resurrection.

Our church continues to face difficulties and struggles as we address our own time of transition that may lead to our longed-for renewal. Word and story have been guides during this trying time. We have been able to sense the movement of this congregation in the sacred story of Exodus and have painfully heard the saga of the Little Church That Could amidst the pages of Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer's *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World* in our book study.

As Dorhauer reminds us, churches must do the hard work of grieving, believing and perceiving. These tasks can orient a faith community to the new normal being faced by much of Protestant Christianity. The new normal is one of diminishing resources and membership numbers as well as aging property and growing anxiety.

Grief often is resisted because it is about recognizing loss. Loss hurts. We are never the same after loss, however grief can bring a deepened sense of meaning. Just as grief changes us, we also realize it does not have the final word. We believe in something greater.

We believe in the Eternal Presence of God and the Way of the Christ. This belief sets us apart. It is part of our core values. It helps us define who we are. However we must go further. We must perceive and listen for our specific vocation. We must actualize what we are uniquely called to do and be. We must discern a purpose and reason for existing. This will be what no other social group, faith community, or civic organization can do for Swanzey and the world. Finding and enacting this Way will be what revitalizes this church.

I want to express my gratitude to those that have turned in a total of nineteen evaluations. I have heard your heartfelt words, including some growing that I need to do. In addition to the evaluation, I am well-pleased to report that a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee is being formed. This will help ensure open communication and a place where concerns can be heard and addressed. Work on a sustainable and viable future for the church is also under way. This includes exploring resources, assessing the true value of physical assets, and “right-sizing” the position of pastor based on financial resources, the need

of the church, and the possibility of sharing a pastor with another congregation. Stay tuned for updates and how you can be involved.

Other opportunities in November include:

- *Bible Study* – Rev. Dr. David Stinson will be leading a new Bible Study on the *Gospel of Mark* starting on November 2 at 10 am. The study will run through March most Thursdays at 10 am. Rev. Dr. Stinson has recently retired from Glen Ridge Congregational Church, bringing insight and passion for teaching the Gospel. Please join us on November 2, 9, 16 & 30 @ 10 am.
- *Simple Supper and Study* – The book we have been reading is *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World* by the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. This book has acted as a touchstone and conversation starter as our congregation looks at our present reality and plans for the future. The study will continue on November 5 & 19 at 5 pm.
- *Prayer Flags* – Please help us decorate the church for Advent and the Christmas Season! On November 12<sup>th</sup> (**time to be announced**) join us at the church for the soup supper and learn about prayer flags and how we will use them for decorations. Open to all ages and no creative skills are necessary to make these simple flags. We would love to fill the sanctuary and adorn the doors with prayers during this special season!

I will be away from November 6 – 12 on a retreat. Please look at the church bulletin or call the office if a pastoral emergency arises.

In our grieving, believing and perceiving, the Way of resurrection!

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 NOVEMBER:** Rick Allen
- ◆ **ONLINE NEWSLETTER:** Please consider a shift from your paper newsletter to one sent via email. It would mean a great savings on stamps, and **THE E-MAIL VERSION IS IN LIVING COLOR!** Leave a message for Cindy in the office at 352-6689 if you want to make the switch. Thanks!

## November 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](mailto:officeswanzucc@ne.rr.com) or 603-352-6689. Thanks. Cindy Sweeney, Administrative Assistant.)

**MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES:** 1954~Betsy Lane; 1983~Katie Delaney; 1989~Jane Parent, Ron Parent, Rebecca Hays; 1993~Pam O'Connor; 1998~Fanny Kelley; 1999~Cindy Nikiforakis, Joan Hagar; 2001~Torie Lechluder, Wayne Lechluder, Judy Avery.

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:** November 25, 1967~Rick & Sandy Allen; November 10, 1969~Richard & Barbara Sault; November 12, 1977~Mark & Theresa Corliss; November 25, 1993~Wayne & Torie Lechluder; November 29, 1997~Brandie & Kyle Roof.

**BIRTHDAYS:** November 11~Theresa Corliss; November 23~Sue Dejnak, Judy Avery and Fanny Kelley.



### **ADULT POT LUCK LUNCHEON**

**No Luncheon in November due to the Christmas Fair Set-up!**  
**There will NOT be a luncheon in November, but plan ahead for our**  
**December luncheon and Yankee Swap!**

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**BASKET RAFFLE LIST:** Thanks to all who have signed up to create baskets. For this year's Christmas Fair. You are so appreciated for your participation and amazing contributions. The Christmas Fair is scheduled for Friday, December 1, from 4:00 to 6:30 and Saturday, December 2 from 9:00-1:00. Last chance to sign up. The list is coming down on November 1.

**KITCHEN PROTOCOL:** Kindly put all trash from the kitchen wastebaskets into the large covered trash basket. The bugs find the open baskets and feast on the leftovers! Help us keep the bugs out!

**TIME CHANGE:** Remember to “fall back” before you go to bed on November 4th. Daylight savings time starts on Sunday, November 5th. Enjoy the extra hour of sleep!

**SAFETY REMINDER:** If you plan to take a walk in the woods during hunting season, please remember to wear bright red or orange clothing, so the hunters don't mistake you for supper!

**PRAYER FLAGS:** Do you have a Christmas wish or prayer for yourself, your family, church, community, or world? You can help decorate the church for the Advent and Christmas seasons! On November 12th (time to be determined) join us at the church for the soup supper and learn about prayer flags and how we will use them for decorations (no book study that night). Open to all ages and no creative skills are necessary to make these simple flags. We would love to fill the sanctuary and adorn the doors with prayers during this special season!

**KIDS' CLUB:** Come celebrate Thanksgiving with us on November 16<sup>th</sup>!

**CRAFTS, COFFEE AND CONVERSATIONS:** Join us on November 1 and November 15 at 10:30 in Friendship Hall. We will be making greeting cards. **\*For sale:** wooden ever-lasting pumpkins. Good for Halloween and Thanksgiving. Also, adorable tea cup, saucer and spoons, bird feeders, succulent garden space \$10. Great Gifts!

**MISSION TEAM MEETING:** Tuesday, November 14, at 6:30 p.m. Please join us if you are interested.

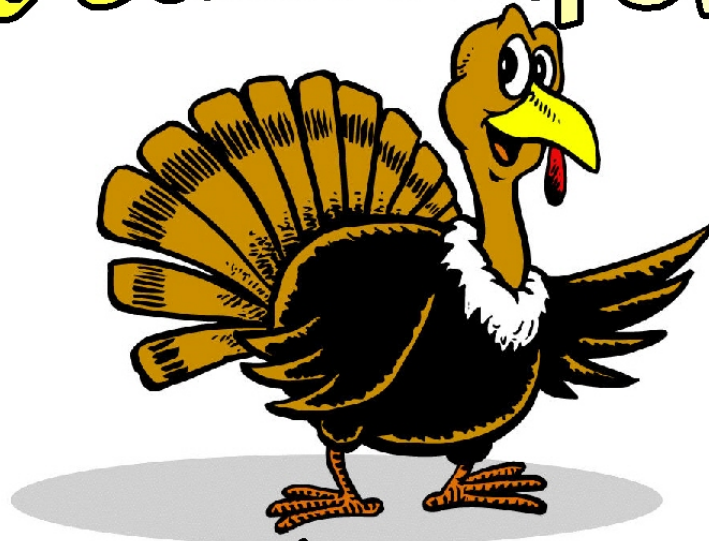
**PARTY TIME!** Mark your calendars now for Saturday, December 9! It's the annual pot luck and Yankee Swap at the Allen's house, 74 Holbrook (formerly Homestead) Avenue in West Swanzey. 6:00! More details in the December newsletter.

## Mission Moments

“Others, Lord, yes others/Let this my motto be. Help me to live for others that I may live like thee.”

- ◆ Thank you to all who donated to the Neighbors in Need drive. We don't have the totals yet, but enough was donated to make a difference in people's lives.
  - ➔ We sent 25 hygiene kits to Church World Services. Blessings to you and to the people who receive them.
  
- ◆ Another thank you to those who ate at Nick's on Mission Night. The proceeds will go toward our mission projects. If you go back to Nick's any time, please thank them for sponsoring this.
  
- ◆ November is here. Our Christmas Kids' mission is about to start. Look for the Wish Tree in the Narthex about the middle of November.
  
- ◆ Gert's Pantry is always in need of protein foods. There is a basket on the altar for contributions.
  
- ◆ Sack Sacks are in need of hot chocolate packages, granola bars, small cans of fruit, crackers...good snack food.
  
- ◆ Continued prayers: for our world, its existence and inhabitants-
  - ➔ For our church
  - ➔ For those in need
  - ➔ For those who feel discouraged and depressed

# Third Saturday Supper



## November 18, 2017

First Seating - 4:30PM Second Seating - 5:30PM

### Menu

Roast Turkey with Gravy  
Mashed Potatoes    Homemade Stuffing  
Green Bean Casserole    Squash  
Spiced Cranberry Sauce    Rolls  
Choice of Apple, Pumpkin, Mincemeat or Chocolate Cream Pie

*Takeout  
Available*

\$12.00 for Adults  
\$5.00 for Children 6-12  
Children under 6 - Free

*Handicapped  
Accessible*

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# November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> 10:30-12:00 FH Caring Crafters  6:30 Choir Sanctuary	<b>2</b> 10:00 a.m. FH Bible Study  5:30-8:00 FH Girl Scouts	<b>3</b>  6:30-8:00 FH Happy Trails Banquet	<b>4</b> 8-5:00 pm FH Basket Guild  SET CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR
<b>5</b> 10:00 a.m. Svc. Daylight Saving  5:00 Soup & Study FH	<b>6</b> <b>Damon away on retreat 11/6 to 11/12</b>	<b>7</b> <b>Damon away</b>  6:30-7:30 Cubs CL & FH	<b>8</b> <b>Damon</b> 9:30-4:00 p.m. Garden Club FH Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30	<b>9</b> <b>Damon away</b> 10:00 a.m. FH Bible Study 6-7:00 p.m. CL Tiger Scouts	<b>10</b> <b>Damon away</b>  6-9:00 p.m. JoJo Rehearse Huskies?	<b>11</b> <b>Damon away</b>  7:00-1:00 p.m. Girl Scouts FH
<b>12</b> <b>Damon away</b> 10:00 a.m. Svc. JoJo Mead <b>Concert 3:00</b> <b>6:00 Soup &amp; Prayer Flags</b>	<b>13</b>    7:00 Trustees	<b>14</b> 6-7:30 p.m. Interact FH <b>Mission 6:30 Lng</b> Bears CL 6:30-7:30	<b>15</b> 10:30-12FH Caring Crafters 4:30 Ministry Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30	<b>16</b> Bible study 10:00 a.m. FH 3:3-5:00 Kids' Club 5:30-8:00 FH Girl Scouts	<b>17</b> Set-up Supper  Huskies?	<b>18</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sat. Supper <b>Seatings at 4:30 &amp; 5:30 pm</b>
<b>19</b> 10:00 a.m. Svc.  Last Soup & Study 5:00 FH	<b>20</b> J & J 10:30 FH Thanksgiving	<b>21</b> J & J 10:45 FH Thanksgiving  6:30-8:00 FH Pack Meeting	<b>22</b>  Daisy Scouts 5:50-7:30 FH Choir 6:30 Sanctuary	<b>23</b> No Bible Study  Happy Thanksgiving!	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 10-3:00 FH Birthday Party 4:00-7:00 FH Northern Lights Dinner
<b>26</b> 10:00 a.m. Svc.	<b>27</b> Set-up Fair	<b>28</b> Set-up Fair	<b>29</b> <b>NO POT LUCK</b> Set-up Fair Daisys? Choir 6:30 Sanctuary	<b>30</b> 10:00 a.m. FH Bible Study Girl Scouts Set-up Fair	<b>1</b> Christmas Fair 4:00-6:30 p.m. FH	<b>2</b> Christmas Fair 9:00-1:00 p.m. FH

**CALENDAR WILL BE UPDATED AS NEEDED**

**FH = FRIENDSHIP HALL**

**NEW ADULT BIBLE STUDY OF MARK TO BEGIN:** The class will meet on Thursday mornings for one hour, beginning November 2. The first book to be studied will be the Gospel of Mark. Rev. Dr. David Stinson, who will lead the class, has taught scripture for over forty years to small groups in churches. He looks forward to getting to know more members of our church and to studying Mark. For more information about the group, please speak to him or to Pastor Damon in church.



**First Congregational Church of Swanzey, UCC**  
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**RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**



**NOVEMBER 2017**