



# THE AGAWAM ARROW

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March 2025

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## **AGAWAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

United Church of Christ, 745 Main Street, Agawam, MA 01001

A church where the Holy Spirit is alive, uniting people with Christ through:  
Transforming ministries, vibrant worship, diligent study, and warm fellowship.

“A place to call home – A people to call family”.

*We are gathering together to worship on Sunday morning. Please join us  
in person or livestream on Facebook through our website.*

### **Church Staff:**

**Pastor:** Reverend Daniel Cohen

**Organist/ Choir Director:** Ann Tapply

**Administrative Assistant:** Dawn Stevens [office@agawamcong.com](mailto:office@agawamcong.com)

**Church Sexton:** Dave Christian

**Deacon of the Month:** Warren Tapply

**Website:** [www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com](http://www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com)

**Office phone:** 413-786-7111 **Office hours:** Mon-Fri 8am-12pm



Hi everyone,

For my first newsletter insert I'm using the "pastor's report" I handed out to some of you at the annual meeting. But before I do, let me just say a hearty "Thank You!" to the church. First, for having such a great search committee that made me and my wife Christine feel so welcome. Second, for voting to make my position full-time as I was hoping you would. Third, for negotiating my contract in good faith. And Fourth, for all your love and support and voting unanimously to make me your settled pastor! I want you all to know that not only are both my wife and myself thrilled about my new position and the prospect of moving into the parsonage soon, I've had confirmation from God Himself on this assignment, as a special Spirit settled upon me when I got home the day I negotiated the call agreement. You have all been so special and loving and supportive and we couldn't be happier!

### **Pastor's Report**

I just wanted to say a few words today to introduce myself and give you a quick – and very early – pastor's report.

As your new pastor – your brand spanking new pastor who preached his very first service here two weekends ago – I am, not surprisingly, still getting to know the church and her needs.

As such, I am focusing on LISTENING to as many of you as want to share your hopes, dreams and concerns about the church with me.

That said, I can tell you already that my immediate goals are to

- 1) Learn more about you and the Agawam community, listening to you individually, attending meetings and events, and reading up on the church, its history and the area. As I already mentioned in the sermon, I'll be commuting an hour or more from Hamden Connecticut (next to New Haven) for potentially the next three months, but will be available on Thursdays and often one other day per week in person, and every day by phone, email, zoom or text for anyone who wants to talk to me.
- 2) Visit the sick and shut in. I have already called some of these folks and will work on visiting them starting this week.
- 3) Brainstorm ideas for growing the church – including reaching out to younger folks as well as those of us who are older and wiser. To that end, I plan to talk with the deacons about having a Family and Friends Sunday sometime in the Spring.

- 4) I also plan to talk with the deacons about doing a book sale/presentation event where I'll share the book I wrote on humility with you and offer it at a discount with all of the proceeds going back to the church. The book includes 70 humility paths or "mental happiness tools" and ends with an altar call to Christ, making it a great way to share your faith with someone who doesn't yet know Christ. For those of you who can't wait to read it, It's Not All About You! The Secret Joy of Practical Humility is available in print, as an audiobook or kindle version on Amazon or I can get you a copy myself.
- 5) I also plan to share a daily Lenten devotional series with you based on those humility paths.
- 6) I am working on publicizing the church by seeing if I can connect with local media and get an article about ACC's new pastor, and potentially an ongoing column in a local or regional newspaper.
- 7) I will also be starting a Bible Study in the not too distant future, but am praying on the right time to start that.

These are just a few of my ideas. And while I have others, I intend to move carefully as I've learned the importance of not trying to change too much too fast, but also balancing that with moving TOO slow. As 1970s folk singer Cat Stevens sang "I listen to the wind come howl, telling me I have to hurry, I listen to the robin's song, saying not to worry." We shouldn't rush, but we needn't dawdle either. As with most things in life, balance is key.

Of course, I am also focusing on my sermons and trying to make them as relevant and powerful as possible.

Finally, let me close by asking you all for your patience as I learn how to work with you to meet your needs and discern God's plan for OUR church. If I accidentally step on anyone's toes, please show me the same grace I show you, but also please let me know if I do anything you don't like very much so I don't continue to do it unknowingly. I am just as human as you, and by giving me room to make mistakes, you will free me to help US make Agawam Congregational Church the best version of Christ's love it can be.

God Bless!

The Pastor

## **MODERATOR'S NOTE**

This winter has been different than the past few which were relatively mild. We had brutal cold, snow and ice all on successive weekends when we cancelled our Sunday service. In New England we know that the weather is always changing as is just about everything in this life. For nearly six years our church has changed as we've searched for a settled pastor. That search is now over but the changes are not. This was evident at the recent Executive Board meeting where we got a glimpse of what God has in store for us. As God gradually reveals his plans for us, let us renew our commitment to Christ and his church. We can use this upcoming Lenten season to reflect on where our church has been and prepare to embrace the coming changes. As the Psalmist wrote:

"Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will have no end." - Psalms 102:25-27 NKJV

Yours in Christ,

David Bertagnolli, Moderator

### Parish Cupboard

**All types of nonperishable food items**

### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's fellowship will meet on Saturday,  
**March 8<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30 am at  
**Bobbie J'z**

### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's fellowship will be on **Wed., March 5<sup>th</sup> @12:30pm at the Take 5. Please let Sharon know if you're attending.**  
[Csharon63@yahoo.com](mailto:Csharon63@yahoo.com) or 413-210-4438

### PROPERTY COMMITTEE

All concerns should be addressed to the Property Committee first please, not the Executive Board. Tom Mathes is our Property Committee chair and is available to speak with anyone.  
Thank you.

Thank you, Marilyn Alexander, for sending cards and bulletins to the shut-ins. It makes a difference in people's lives knowing that they are missed and thought of often as they so truly are. **Any and all donated cards are welcome!!**

### UpperRoom and Our Daily Bread booklets

are available in the the church office. Feel free to stop by and pick one up and allow the Lord to refresh your soul as you read the word of God on a daily basis.

### CHURCH LIGHTING

This is a wonderful way to honor a loved one, a birthday, an anniversary, or any event in your life. Your generous contribution is used to light the lower spotlights in the front of the church.

Suggested Donations:

One week: -\$20.00 & One Month: -\$75.00

### JUNK FOR JESUS

We are now collecting scrap metal to raise funds for the church. Please contact Dick (413.786.2430) or Dave (413.854.8416)

***Want to earn Free \$\$ for the church?? Bring your used INK CARTRIDGES to the church and we recycle them for money! Leave ink cartridges by the office door. In the past few months, we have earned 50.00 in free \$\$! This has helped pay for color ink. Thanks to Dave Bertagnolli for heading this project up.***

### Lending Cupboard Ministry:

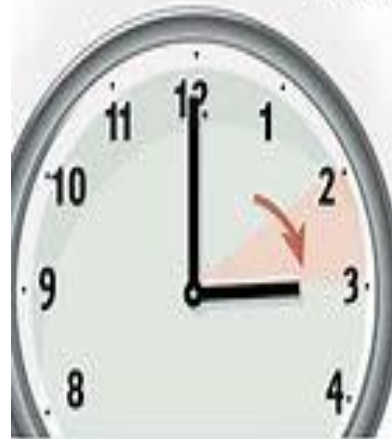
We have medical equipment for those in need; please call the office for more info. We are accepting donations to this ministry as well. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

### LOAVES & FISHES

Volunteers are needed to help **serve!** We meet every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. Sauce and **ELBOW** macaroni are always appreciated! Thank you!

# Spring forward

Don't forget to set  
clocks ahead  
one hour  
at 2 a.m.  
Sunday.



**AP**

### Financial update from the Treasurer – Donna Decoteau

Category	Jan	Total Actual	2025 Budget	Actual vs. Budget %
Income from Pledges	12,573	12,573	121,000	10%
Other Income (rent, fundraising, Groups, etc.)	5,462	5,462	30,675	18%
Income from Invested Funds	-	-	55,395	0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>18,035</b>	<b>18,035</b>	<b>207,070</b>	<b>9%</b>
Pastor's Expenses	1,600	1,600	86,492	2%
Other Personnel Salaries	4,478	4,478	55,848	8%
Other Operational Expenses	4,464	4,464	64,730	7%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>10,542</b>	<b>10,542</b>	<b>207,070</b>	<b>5%</b>
January represents 1/12 or 8%				

### SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

**Members: Cindy Sanford, Debbie King, Dee Cyr, Marilyn Alexander, Betty Burrage, Donna Decoteau, Warren Tapply, Tom Mathes & Allen Runshaw**

**The applicant, Pastor Daniel Cohen, met with the Executive Board and after some negotiations were made, the Call Agreement was accepted on both sides. We then moved forward with a meet and greet weekend, followed by Pastor Cohen preaching to the Congregation which was the day that the congregational vote was taken to decide whether to receive Pastor Cohen as our new settled full time Pastor. Despite bad weather conditions, we were able to accomplish all of this by rearranging this for Saturday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>.**

**I am very pleased to confirm that vote was 100% in favor of employment which began on Monday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>.**

**I cannot thank all the members of the Search Committee enough for their dedicated work over the 5 years that we were working to find our new Pastor. With the support of our congregations and our wonderful Bridge Minister, Susanne Hayes, we were finally able to accomplish our task. A lot of time and prayers went into this, and I trust that we can now move forward with Pastor Daniel, who will be able to lead our church and church family into a promising future. “The Search Committee, signing off!”**

**Lesley Young, Chair of the Search Committee**



**Deacon of the Month of February: Warren Tapply**

**Our Patience has paid off!**

After 5 years we have finally found a new settled Pastor, Rev. Daniel Cohen who has accepted our call as full time Pastor. We are pleased to report that he will serve Communion the first Sunday in March. Truly our patience has paid off.

Paul says in Romans 8:25 *but if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently.* We did and the wait paid off!

Part of developing Patience is trusting in God's love for us.

In 1 John 4:7 it says *Dear friends, Let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is born of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God—for God is love!*

*Vs.9 God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love has been brought to full expression through us*

Truly with all our **Patience and the Love of God and fellow members and friends in Christ**, we now look forward to developing new pathways to move forward in our church!

My friends, continue to pray for **Patience and Love for one another** as we listen for Gods guidance, and we move forward in the life of our Church!

Warren Tapply, Deacon of the month

**MARCH FLOWERS**

3/2 – In loving MEMORY of JANELLE CHRISTIAN, daughter of DAVE CHRISTIAN  
(2)loving MEMORY of LORI, daughter of JOHN & JOAN HAUSER

3/9 – In loving MEMORY of LOVED ONES, from DIANE JESERSKI

3/16 – In MEMORY of CLARICE SCOVILLE, Mother, from LORRAINE & PAT DOWD

3/23– loving MEMORY of FRIEDA BASSETT, moth of DICK from DICK & CAROLINE BASSETT

3/30 – loving MEMORY of KEN FORNI, Husband, Father & Friend to all, from SANDI FORNI



**MISSIONARY**

Well, once again we had a SUPER “Souper Bowl” and we collected 80 cans of soup, and a box of Ramen noodles which we delivered to the Parish Cupboard in West Springfield. Thank you all for your kind donations, which I am sure will be greatly appreciated in this spell of cold weather. We shall be collecting undies for the Springfield Rescue Mission for the month of March. Collection baskets will be placed in the Narthex for your donations.





Lesley Young, Chair





March 2025

Agawam Congregational Church  
745 Main St., Agawam, Ma 01001 Phone: 786-7111

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
10am Worship Service Communion	7pm Property	6:30pm Missionary	<b>Ash Wednesday</b> 12:30 Women's fellowship @Take 5	6:30pm Choir		7:30am Men's Fellowship@ Bobbie J'z 10am Deacons
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
10am Worship 12pm Church Without Walls <b>Daylight savings time begins</b>				6:30pm Choir		
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
10am Worship Service <b>Soup Lunch</b>	1pm Trustees 4pm Loaves & Fishes			<b>1<sup>st</sup> day of Spring!</b> 6:30pm Choir		
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
10am Worship Service				1pm Executive Board 6:30pm Choir		
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					