



THE AGAWAM ARROW

November 2023

November

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: Pastor Tom Howells Pastor pastortomacc@agawam.com

Organist/ Choir Director: Ann Tapply

Administrative Assistant: Dawn Stevens office@agawamcong.com

Church Sexton: Dave Christian **Deacons of the Month:** Warren Tapply

Website: www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com

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



Sad to say, but this will be the final “From the Pastor’s Desk” article for me as I conclude my Interim time with you on November 30. We anticipate and wait hopefully for God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit to provide a new pastoral leader in the near future. I know it’s been a difficult and sometimes painful journey, but getting it right is important.

Speaking of ends, the arrival of November reminds us that we are approaching the end of another calendar year, and the conclusion of another church year. (The new Liturgical year begins with Advent in December). We begin the month on November 1st, with “All Saints Day”. Many Christians know All Saints day as the time in which we remember and celebrate, not just canonized Saints, but all those who have entered the Church Triumphant. We honor our beloved members who have died (some this past year) and value the faithful service of those that helped the church arrive as the vital place in which we celebrate our faith.

On November 5, we celebrate “Veterans Day Sunday”. This is the Sunday preceding Veterans Day, which is always on November 11. and we reflect on the words cited in the 1926 congressional resolution proclaiming: **“Commemorate this date with thanksgiving and prayer ... to perpetuate peace through goodwill and mutual understanding.”** These statements apply today more than ever. We join all Americans in “Honoring Those Who Served.” We will recognize those veterans present on that day and celebrate the nation they served with reciting together the “Pledge of Allegiance” to the American flag and the nation for which it stands. (Matt Blackak, our dear and faithful member who died this year made sure we did this as a church each year -God bless you Matt).

As we as individuals and as a church look back over the events of this year so far and consider our current situation, what is our attitude? Toward the end of the month there is a day set aside for giving thanks. While this is a national and not a religious holiday, it was originally based on God’s provisions for the nation. (See President Washinton’s proclamation elsewhere in this newsletter). Thanksgiving is a wonderful experience when observed properly and sincerely. We need to be careful that we do not misuse the concept of giving thanks as an opportunity for personal or national pride. There is sometimes the pride expressed in the prayer of the Pharisee in scripture; “Lord, I thank you that I am not like other men.” Thanksgiving of comparison is always misplaced for it tends to denigrate the position of another. Thankfulness for God’s provision ought to be from humility not pride. Remember that the emphasis is thanksgiving “to” not “for”. God is the object of our thanks and therefore it is a personal interaction between you and God. Even when thanking another person, the emphasis should be on thank YOU. The short form “thanks” just doesn’t personalize it. (That’s my opinion anyway).

Speaking of leaders, on November 26, we observe “Christ the King” Sunday. This is the last Sunday in the Church year. While democracy is the best form of government we have at the current time on earth, sometimes following the will of the people is not a good thing. The Kingdom of heaven is not a democracy. God does not take opinion polls, nor can he be recalled or voted out of office. This is a good thing. It is better to have a perfect God ruling than imperfect man subject to whims and fads. Remember Jesus redefined the nature of kingship. He “came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many”. (Mark 10: 45)

That being said, I want to thank God and you for the privilege of being your pastor *ad interim* these past few years. When it comes to your involvement in the church, I hope that you do it in thankfulness to God for who God is – who apart from any particular blessing is worthy of thanksgiving. But also for what God has done for you and the church. We express our thankfulness through what we give in time, talent, and resources. Meeting the needs of others is our moral responsibility if we have been blessed by God with abundance (which is anything over that which is sufficient for us). We are not to be driven from thankfulness to a guilt complex – giving because we feel obligated. God loves a cheerful giver, whether it is of material things or verbal gratitude. We cannot have a “happy church” with unhappy gifts. You know that I believe a church should be a place of joy. May your giving thanks be an opportunity to reflect on your relationship with God and renew your covenant with Him and His church.

God bless you and the Agawam Congregational Church
Pastor Tom

A Thanksgiving Proclamation - October 3, 1789, by President George Washington

*Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor, and whereas **both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness. Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be.** That we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks, for His kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of His providence, which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war, for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed, for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted, for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which He hath been pleased to confer upon us. And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.*

Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

— George Washington

Parish Cupboard

All types of nonperishable food items

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's fellowship will meet on **November 11th** at 7:30 am at **Bobby J'z**

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Woman's fellowship will be on Wednesday, **November 8th at 12pm in Bryan Hall**. This will be a **POTLUCK** including men. Sign up in Bryan Hall.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

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

Thank you.

There is a stocked food cabinet for members and friends in need! Please reach out, we can help in these challenging times. Stop and see Dawn in the office!

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 spot lights 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 3rd Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. Sauce and **ELBOW** macaroni are always appreciated! 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.

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

We met this month with the Area Conference Minister to discuss the rewriting of our Church Profile . It came to light that certain items needed to be changed and so once they have been completed, we shall be submitting the final draft again for confirmation. The profile will then be replaced on their ministries opportunity website. Meantime we are trying to reconnect with a previous applicant. Please keep us in your prayers as we move forward.

God Bless, Lesley Young, Chairperson



NOVEMBER FLOWERS

- Nov 5 – Loving MEMORY DANIEL GAGNE, husband of LINDA GAGNE
- Nov 12 – Loving MEMORY of KENNETH & MARION POND, parents DOROTHY (Pond) DUDEY, sister & WILLIAM & GLORIA LYNCH, Parents from RAY & DEBRA POND
- Nov 19 – THANKSGIVING BASKET from the FLOWER COMM & CONGREGATION (2) Loving MEMORY of LORI, Daughter of JOHN & JOAN HAUSER
- Nov 26 – Loving MEMORY of EVI I. & FREDRICK SANFORD, Parents of CINDY SANFORD TAYLOR, BEV FOLLIS & ANN BEHFAR



Deacon of the Month of September: Warren Tapply

Fall is here, the leaves are falling, the time is about to change, (fall back), don't forget to turn your clock back, 1 hour, so you can be in church at the right time. If you can't come to Church, I hope you are watching the service on your Tablet, Computer or TV, by going to YOU TUBE. All you have to do is go to search, type in Agawam Congregational Church, and click on the date of the service you want to watch. It's almost as good as being there, except you can't visit with your friends! You can certainly share your love more readily by attending Church, however God truly blesses us wherever we are.

We are saddened to announce that Pastor Tom has given his notice that he will be leaving us at the end of November. Pastor Tom has served us faithfully the past four years, but he now feels, as he turns 80, that it is time to truly retire! The Deacons have voted to except his resignation with regret. As you know, God has given us Jesus and Pastor Tom, and all the Deacons truly believe that our belief in Him will give us eternal life!

November 5 will be the last Sunday Pastor Tom will be serving us Communion, so we hope that you will make every effort to attend.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Because of the growing threat of fraud, if you need to change your address, email address or phone number, please give the **written information** to Pastor Tom, a Deacon or Dawn in person.

MISSIONARY

When we met in October, we signed up our members for the items to be purchased for the Xmas bags that we donate to the Parish cupboard in December. As we have coffee hour for the month of November, we also allocated people to the various jobs. For the month of November, we shall have a display for the blanket fund set up in the narthex so please keep your eyes open for this and make a donation if possible.

Lesley Young, Chairperson



HOLIDAY WREATH BAZAAR

The Holly Wreath Bazaar this year will be held on November 18th from 9:00 – 2:00 pm. It will include vendors, Country Store (baked goods), Raffles, Luncheon, and Santa's Seconds. We will need help from members on this day, the day before, Nov. 17, and after the bazaar. If you wish to help, there will be a ***sign-up sheet*** in Bryan Hall for the various functions: Baked Goods, Raffles, Kitchen, Santa's Seconds and Vendors. If you have any questions, see the following individuals after church at coffee hour.

Kitchen staff – – Dave Christian

Baked Goods – – Donna Decoteau/Sharon Christian

Santa's Seconds – – Dale Melanson

Raffles – – Nancy Mitchell

Vendors – – Cindy Sanford

Any questions contact Cindy Sanford by email:
cindyagawam@comcast.net

Agawam Congregational Church **Holly Wreath Bazaar**

Country Store
Bakery
Farmers Market
Raffle Table
Crafters
Café
And Christmas Corner



745 Main St
Agawam

November 18th, 2023
9 am—2 pm

Trunk or Treat

What a success our annual Trunk or Treat was on Sunday, October 29th despite the inclement weather. I estimate that we had over 200 children with adults in attendance. There were 8 trunks that were set up in Bryan Hall along with games and popcorn. In addition, we had a raffle for the donations that were made to our Loaves and Fishes ministry. Dave Christian tells me we are now well stocked. We also had a raffle for and for the best trunks. Five Nights at Freddy's won both "Most Creative and Kids Choice". Cookie Monster won "Funniest". I want to give a **BIG** thank you to Dave Christian (popcorn) and Dick Bassett (popcorn), Cindy Taylor (trunk table layout), Leslie Young (games), Marilyn Alexander (games), Dale Melanson (ushering) and Roberta Page (publicity). I couldn't have done this without all of you! Also, this event wouldn't have been possible without the following that Janet Brown established back in the day. Two of the trunks told me of the fond memories of when their children attended Playgroup and followed her with Trunk or Treat...what a legacy she left with us! Check out the Agawam Advertiser and <http://wwlp.com/> (search Agawam Congregational Church) for coverage of our event.

Donna Decoteau
Chairperson

Playgroup

What a wonderful month October was...our Playgroup had so much fun with art projects related to our Fall theme story times together. Such topics included leaves, squirrels along with their gathering of nuts and of course Halloween. We had our first painting project, and it was amazing to see such creativity with pumpkins that Mrs. Pond provided us with. We also saw our largest gathering of 11 children with their grandmothers and/or mothers. What fun we are having making new friends. In **November** we will be exploring the adventures of Clifford the Red Dog and will continue to meet in the Family Ministry Room each Tuesday from 10 – 11 a.m. Remembering..."Jesus Loves the Little Children" and reminds us that "all are precious in His sight" and no matter your race, gender or nationality, God wants to see all children come to Him.

Donna Decoteau and Deb Pond



Pinocchio

-the original animated film-

is coming to

Agawam Congregational Church

Saturday, December 2, 2023

6:15 p.m.

-----FREE-----

(Child With An Adult)

POPCORN & WATER

Reservations by
Thursday, November 30th at NOON

contact the church at **413-786-7111**

or e-mail office@agawamcong.com

745 Main Street

In Agawam's Historic District

NOVEMBER 2023

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 10 am Bible study	2 6:30 Choir	3	4 9am Drive by canned food drive Boy Scout Clean up day
November 						
5 10am Worship Holy Communion	6 7pm Property	7 10am playgroup	8 10 am Bible study 12pm Women's potluck Fellowship in Bryan Hall	9 6:30pm Choir	10 	11 7:30am Men's Fellowship @ Bobbie J'z 5pm Turkey dinner
12 10am Worship Service 12pm Church Without Walls	13 	14 10am playgroup 7pm Deacons	15 10 am Bible study	16 6:30pm Choir	17	18 9am-2pm HOLLY WREATH BAZAAR
19 10am Worship Service	20 1pm Trustees 4pm Loaves & Fishes	21 10am playgroup	22 10 am Bible study	23 Happy Thanksgiving!! OFFICE CLOSED	24 OFFICE CLOSED	25
26 10am Worship Service	27	28 10am playgroup	29 	30 Pastor Tom's last day!		