



# THE AGAWAM ARROW

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November 2024

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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 Dr. Susanne Hayes

**Organist/ Choir Director:** Ann Tapply

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

**Church Sexton:** Dave Christian

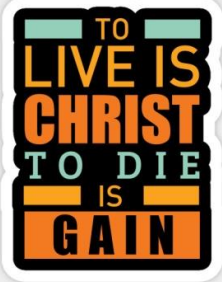
**Deacon of the Month:** Nancy Mitchell

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

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



## The Pastor's Musings



I don't know about you, but I have some really favorite pieces of scripture. I remember when I was in seminary many years ago, there was one particular verse that really grabbed my attention, even though it really confused me and I really didn't understand what it meant.

So the situation made me wonder why this scripture verse called out to me so loudly, which meant I had to try to understand it. And I think it is such an important piece of scripture that I want to share it with you, and of course, also share what it means.

In Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, he wrote this one sentence: "For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1.21). To live is Christ and to die is gain. Those words really struck me as being extremely important in my life and my ministry. But I had to figure out why!

And here is what I discovered. This one short verse, taken in its entirety, totally sums up Paul's approach to life and death. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." By saying "to live is Christ," Paul first declares that the focus and reason for everything that he does while alive on this earth is for the purpose of glorifying Jesus and making Jesus known to as many people as he possibly could.

But then Paul makes known his tremendous excitement about being with Jesus after he dies. And being with Jesus when he dies is the biggest gain he could ever have! "And to die is gain!" So is it better for Paul to continue his work on this earth, or would it be better for Paul to make that step into eternity with Jesus?

"To live is Christ" clearly defines Paul and should define all of us as well. Of course we joyously await heaven as he did, but our lives on earth are also wrapped up very tightly in Christ. Paul declared Jesus and His saving grace from the moment he met Him until he was martyred for his faith. He spoke of Jesus in synagogues, on riversides, in prison, before and after shipwrecks, and to disciples, passersby, governors, emperors, sailors, travelers, philosophers, priests, Jews, Gentiles, women, men, and prison guards. He intentionally determined that in his life, he would pursue nothing else.

So his dilemma was in trying to figure out which is better - living and even suffering as Christ lived and suffered, or to die and be at rest with Christ for eternity. Paul knew he was called to speak for Christ. But he also knew that, in his death, he would forever be with the Christ that he loved so much.

And this became my dilemma as well! While I love Christ and am honored to be able to speak of Him, I also firmly believe that eternal life with Christ, after my own death, will be “gain,” the gain and excitement of knowing Christ face to face.

As Christians, our lives are lived for Christ, each and every day, in all that we do and all that we say. In other words, “To live is Christ!” To live is to live like Christ! And as Christians, we will experience an indescribable “gain,” when we meet Christ after death, and as we experience His eternal love, grace, and comfort.

During our lives, Jesus gives us the privilege of joining in His work. I pray that we will all be good and faithful Christians, who will one day hear our Master say, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master” (Matthew 25:21).

And may we, with Paul, be able to declare that “to live is Christ and to die is gain!” May we live as Christ, knowing the glory that awaits us!

Godspeed,  
Rev. Susanne

### **Moderator's Notes**

During the meeting in October the Executive Board spent some time reviewing the many activities our church is involved in. We are so thankful for those in our congregation who contribute their time and talents to all these ministries. We are also thankful to those who have turned in their pledge cards for 2025. For those who have not yet made their commitment for next year, we encourage you to do so soon. Your pledges provide the basis upon which we plan our future ministries. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

*“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

*II Corinthians 9:7-8 NIV*

Yours in Christ,

David Bertagnolli, Moderator

### Parish Cupboard

**All types of nonperishable food items**

### 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)

### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's fellowship will meet on **November 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**12<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30 am at  
**Bobbie J'z**

***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.***

### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's fellowship in November will be on Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm at 141 Main St. Deli

### 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.

### 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.

### 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!

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.

### SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our new church profile was placed on the SNEUCC website at the beginning of October.

To date, we have not received any new applications for the position of Pastor. Meantime, we are working alongside the Deacons, contacting possible new Bridge Ministry Pastors and/or pulpit supply

**Lesley Young, Chairperson**

### 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



**Deacon of the Month of October: Nancy Mitchell**

As we enter the month of November, we are reminded to be thankful for what we have. Our health, home, family, Friends, church and for those still working, a job. We try to remember God's commandment to us, to be strong and courageous as we go through each day. When situations come up, we try not to be frightened or dismayed, instead we look toward Jesus for the strength we need to get through each day. We pray for his guidance as we move forward to another day. I hope everyone has a happy and healthy Thanksgiving.



Nancy Mitchell, Deacon

**NOVEMBER FLOWERS**

- 11/3 – In loving MEMORY of DANIEL, husband & parents & sister of LINDA GAGNE
- 11/10 – In HONOR OF ALL VETERANS from the FRIENDSHIP COMMITTEE  
(2) loving MEMORY of KENNETH & MARION POND, parents,  
DOROTHY(POND)DUDLEY, sister of RAY,  
WILLIAM & GLORIA LYNCH, parents of DEBRA, from RAY & DEB POND
- 11/17 – Thanksgiving Sunday! Food collected for the Parish Cupboard from the FLOWER COMMITTEE & CONGREGATION  
(2) Loving MEMORY of LORI, daughter of JOHN & JOAN HAUSER  
(3) Flowers in HONOR 102<sup>nd</sup> BIRTHDAY of ALICE ORR from FLOWER COMMITTEE
- 11/24 – In loving MEMORY EVA & FRED SANFORD, from CINDY SANFORD TAYLOR, ANN BEHFAR & BEV FOLLIS



**MISSIONARY**

Due to the two back-to-back hurricanes, it was decided to hold a special collection on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> 19<sup>th</sup> to collect funds to donate to Samaritan's Purse to assist in their rescue efforts for those in need. We have asked for the donation to be placed in North Carolina and used for their most needed project, which apparently is a new water filtration system. All other donations during October will be donated to the Loaves & Fishes ministry. For the month of November, our mission will be the Blanket Fund.

Lesley Young, Chairperson



## Financial update from the Treasurer

See below a summary of the operating income and expenses as compared to the budget. A big thank you to the congregation for supporting the operating expenses with your faithful giving on a timely basis.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Decoteau.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Total Actual	2024 Budget	Actual vs. Budget %
Income from Pledges	13,550	8,549	10,708	10,626	8,199	8,488	14,685	6,485	6,758	88,048	115,000	77%
Other Income (rent, fundraising, Groups, etc.)	2,316	4,346	6,114	4,807	3,382	2,357	6,418	495	4,829	35,064	49,675	71%
Income from Invested Funds	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	1,388	0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>15,866</b>	<b>12,895</b>	<b>16,822</b>	<b>15,433</b>	<b>11,581</b>	<b>10,845</b>	<b>21,103</b>	<b>6,980</b>	<b>11,587</b>	<b>123,112</b>	<b>166,063</b>	<b>74%</b>
Pastor's Expenses	3,676	3,676	3,676	3,676	6,067	4,154	4,633	3,676	4,154	37,388	58,753	64%
Other Personnel Salaries	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	3,851	34,659	46,700	74%
Other Operational Expenses	5,091	6,051	4,019	4,070	5,062	2,853	3,930	3,933	7,133	42,142	60,610	70%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>12,618</b>	<b>13,578</b>	<b>11,546</b>	<b>11,597</b>	<b>14,980</b>	<b>10,858</b>	<b>12,414</b>	<b>11,460</b>	<b>15,138</b>	<b>114,189</b>	<b>166,063</b>	<b>69%</b>
September represents 9/12 or 75%												



## **TRUNK OR TREAT 2024**

Our Trunk or Treat was a huge success again this year...sunny weather even if it was a bit chilly...over 300 trick or treaters with some very amazing and creative costumes See below for my favorite homemade costume. I would like to thank everyone that supported the Trunk or Treat event at our church on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. Whether you donated candy, money, or your time we would not have done it without you! I especially want to thank Dennis King for bringing the King Gray Haunted Bus...it was utterly amazing and entertaining. Dennis also provided free popcorn which was quite the hit...exceptionally long waiting lines! Also, Ray Pond amazed me with his antique fire truck that was as big as what is in place today. Lastly, a big hit with children and adults was the police department canine unit.

Looking forward to next year!

Donna Decoteau



Dale Melanson is honoring her family members and all Veterans that served our country this Veterans Day with the inscription on the Bridgewater Veterans Memorial. This memorial is for those that gave their service to our country during World War II (December 7, 1941 - December 31, 1946), The Korean War (June 25, 1950 - January 31, 1955) and Vietnam Era (December 22, 1961 - May 7, 1975). The inscription is a poem written by Lindsey Williams and is on the face of the Bridgewater Veterans Memorial which is located in Bridgewater, Windsor County, Vermont - The American Northeast (New England).. Her family members are listed on the left panel of the memorial for World War II and are Clyde Robinson, Harold Robinson, Hilda Robinson and Maurice Robinson.

I Know Who You Are  
I Know Where You Were  
I Know What You Did  
But I Don't Know  
The Pain You Went Through  
Lindsay Williams  
Bus 6

In Memory of  
Earl B. Thomas 1926 – 1993  
A dream comes true ...





# AGAWAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## HOLLY WREATH BAZAAR



Country Store  
Bakery  
Farmers Market  
Raffles  
Crafters  
Café  
Christmas Corner



**Saturday, November 23, 2024**  
**9am-2pm**  
745 Main Street Agawam

November 2024

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			11am Bible study		1	2 
3 10am Worship Service Communion	4 7pm Property	5 10am playgroup	6 11am Bible study 12:30 Women's fellowship 141 Main St. Dbl	7 6:30pm Choir	8 	9 7:30am Men's Fellowship@ Bobbie J'z
10 10am Worship Service 12pm Church Without Walls	11	12 10am playgroup 7pm Deacons	13 11am Bible study	14 6:30pm Choir	15	16
17 10am Worship Service	VETERANS DAY 18 1pm Trustees 4pm Loaves & Fishes	19 10am playgroup	20	21 6:30pm Choir	22 9am Bazaar set up	23 9am HOLLY WREATH BAZAAR
24 10am Worship Service	25	26 10am playgroup	27 11am Bible study	28 HAPPY THANKSGIVING 	29 OFFICE CLOSED	30