



THE AGAWAM ARROW

December 2022



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

Children & Family Ministries: Janet Brown Janetbrown@agawamcong.com

Administrative Assistant: Tiffany Candelaria office@agawamcong.com

Church Sexton: Dave Christian **Deacon of the Month:** Dick Bassett

Website: www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com

Office phone: 413-786-7111 **Office hours:** Mon- CLOSED Tues-10 am – 1 pm

Wed – Fri 10am – 2pm



From the Pastor's Desk

“As we come to the end” and “As we begin”, are two thoughts that come to my mind with December. It is the last month of the calendar year (the end). I am aware of the darkness it encompasses. It is the “dark month,” because it contains the shortest day and longest night of the year in the Northern hemisphere. It is not only the physical darkness that concerns me, but the darkness of our experiences – with the continued focus on COVID and its variants and the social unrest and divisions in our country and the nasty negative political atmosphere surrounding the elections in November, but continuing through this month - it looks very dark indeed.

Well, so much for the negative attitude and message. The good news is that while “we come to the end” of the calendar year, “we begin” the church liturgical year. Beginning the last Sunday in November, we continue in December with Advent, emphasizing the anticipation of the coming (advent) light into the world in the person of Jesus at Christmas. The Liturgical year is centered on Jesus - His life, death, resurrection and promised Holy Spirit to continue His mission through us his followers.

Christmas is the shining event in December. We can enjoy it for it brings HOPE. We will have two services on Christmas Eve this year: at 5 pm (a multi-generational Interactive Worship service with candles and carols) and at 10 pm (a traditional candles and carols service). We will be using electric candles, but the visual effect will be the same. It is the collective light of our individual candles, symbolizing our lives living in the light of Christ that will bring truth and definition to our dark world. Christmas is on Sunday this year and having had two services on Christmas Eve, we will have a brief interactive service Sunday beginning at 10 am.

Jesus is savior. It is the meaning of his name given by the angel to Joseph and Mary. “...You are to name him **Jesus**, for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matt 1:21, Luke 1:31). If ever we needed a savior in the world it is today (actually again, for the world has had many dark times).

If our nation and its leaders would only follow Jesus and his teachings, maybe we will come through this in good shape. I am afraid there is more hope than faith in that concept, but that may be just me. We need to think of the positive message of our faith; beginning with the Transforming Triad – FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, that we read several times in scripture. During Advent we add the concepts of PEACE and JOY. All of these are positive and uplifting if we live their reality. As we live through this current darkness, which will probably spill over into next year, may we do so in the light of Christ’s presence in our lives.

This month, as always, hold onto Faith and Hope so that you may experience Peace and Joy and be able to express Love in all you do.

Merry Christmas and may God Bless

Pastor Tom

ACC Children & Family Ministries

Dear Friends,

Where has the year gone? I am so excited that we are in the season of Advent. When we think back to the story of Jesus' birth, there weren't lavish holiday parties, busy gatherings with mountains of presents or to-do lists a mile long. Perhaps, this year, as we gather in with those closest to us, we can remember the small gathering around the manger, Mary and Joseph and their new baby. The love of God was as strong then as it is now. May you feel it anew in the joyful celebrations this year!



Here's what's coming up:

HOLIDAY GIVING TREE – Look for the Christmas Tree in Bryan Hall in the next few days. We have four families that we have selected to supply with gifts this holiday season. Their wants and needs will be listed on ornaments on the tree. Please take one and bring the ornament back with the gift you have purchased. I know that those who are struggling will appreciate your generosity and sharing the love of God during this Advent season. The **LAST DAY** to drop off gifts at the church is Sunday, Dec. 18th.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING – Dec. 18th after church, we will enjoy pizza and then board the coach provided by King-Gray to travel around and share the holiday spirit. Email me or sign up in Bryan Hall.

ADVENT SUNDAY SCHOOL – Dec. 11 & 18th! Join us as we prepare our hearts for Christmas!

Thank you to our Men's ministry for setting up the Nativity Scene out front again this year. It reminds all who drive by of the reason we celebrate this season!

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE – Dec. 24th at 5 pm. We will again celebrate Christmas with the whole family in this fun, interactive retelling of the Christmas story. Can't wait to welcome Jesus together! Wishing you a season filled with hope, peace, love and joy!

Janet Brown, Director of Family Ministries
janetbrown@agawamcong.com
cell – (617) 640-206

Christmas Eve Services



5:00 p.m. Family Candle-Light Service

10:00 p.m. Traditional Candle-Light Service

All Are Welcome

Parish Cupboard Item for December
All types of Pasta Thank you to Matt Blackak for bringing our donated goods to the Parish Cupboard every month!

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's fellowship will meet on **December 10th** at 7:30 am at **Bobby J'z**

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's fellowship will meet on **December 7th** at **1 pm** in Bryan Hall

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

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

Don't forget to use Amazon Smile for your online shopping needs!

Thank you to all who continue to make purchases through Amazon Smiles and earn ACC free \$!! For more information go to:

<https://smile.amazon.com/>

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 (413-306-0916) 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 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 are still working diligently at trying to find a new Pastor for our Church. In the past months the SNECUU have brought in new updated salary guidelines for the hiring of a Pastor, which we need to adhere to so that we remain viable. Hence this meant that the Trustees and Finance people had to meet to ensure that we can sustain our request for a full-time position as advertised. We are currently working on this. We have received 2 further applications during October and have conducted one in person interview and rejected the other applicant. Please keep us in your prayers as we continue our work seeking a new Pastor.

Lesley Young, Chairperson

*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 Tiffany in the office!*





Deacon of the Month: Dick Bassett

ST. JOHN CHAPTER 1 VERSE 6-10

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name WAS John.
7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light,
that all MEN through him might believe.

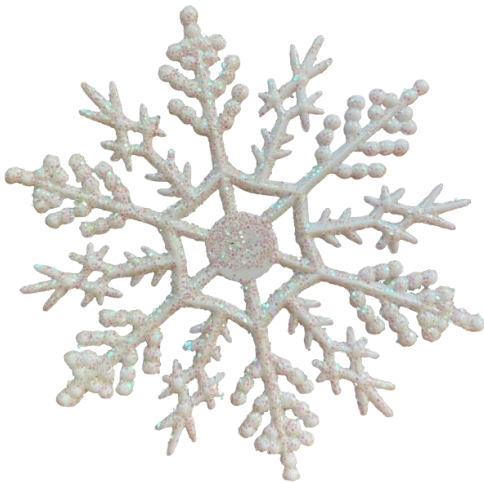
8 He was not that Light but WAS SENT to bear witness of
that Light. 9 THAT was the true Light, which lighteth every
man that cometh into the world, 10 He was in the world, and
the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

The Light the shepherds saw the night Jesus was born
in the stable was the same light the wise men followed two
years later.

I put a star up to communicate the birth of our Saviour
JESUS CHRIST. Many people decorate their houses,

DO YOU SEE THE LIGHT?

Deacon Dick Bassett



DECEMBER FLOWERS

12/04 - In Loving Memory of
Robert & Berta Towers
Parents of Sharon Antaya & Diane Towers

12/11 – In Loving Memory of Robert Shields
From his parents, siblings & family

12/18 – Poinsettia Tree – In Memory of Alice Moore
From, The Flower Committee

12/24 – Altar Flowers
In Loving Memory of Carol Hallock
Mother of Sue Tapply & Family

12/25 – In Honor of Jesus Christ

Flowers in honor of Dick Bassett's Birthday

In Memory of Ronald & Muriel
Parents of Donna, Sandra, Marica & Bruce



**We will NOT be taking Poinsettia orders this year. The Flower
Committee purchased a few plants for display December 18th, 2022.**

We would like to Thank You for your past orders.

Sincerely,

The Flower Committee

Some reminders to consider as we begin a new year of contributing to the church.

If your pledge was for each week or each month, this is how the church budget was calculated – not just a contribution when you attend.

1. There are additional envelopes provided for holidays – Easter, Christmas, etc. and should not be used for weekly offering. The holiday envelopes are for an additional gift.
2. If you are giving for 2 or more weeks, one check and one envelope is sufficient.
3. If your offering missed the collection basket, I prefer you don't hand it to me during the week.
4. If you find you need to decrease or increase your pledge, just let me know (363-9970).

Thank you—

Secretary Ann Tapply



ACC WOMANS FELLOWSHIP

CHRISTMAS TEA AND YANKEE SWAP!

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022, AT 1: pm.
AT THE CHURCH IN BRYAN HALL**

Bring your favorite dish for our potluck lunch, sign-up sheet is at church in Bryan Hall.

Let's make it festive if you have any Christmas plates, cups, saucers etc... for the tables we would appreciate it if you could share them with us. All gifts up to \$15.00.

Please also bring your favorite Christmas ornament, or decoration. One that tells a story. For example: Something that was passed down from generation to generation or something your children made you in grade school that you still have.

Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Remember if you need a ride, or have any questions feel free to call Sharon Christian at 413-210-4438.



ACC FAMILY PLAYGROUP
Play, Learn and Grow... Together!
WHO: OPEN TO ALL KIDS BIRTH-AGE 5 W. A CAREGIVER
WHAT: FREE PLAY, STORYTIME & CRAFTS
WHEN: TUESDAY MORNINGS 10-11 AM

Come join us **December 18, 2022**, following Sunday Worship for our yearly **Christmas Caroling**. Sign up sheet is available in Bryan Hall.



Our Christmas Day Service will be held on Sunday, December 25, 2022, at 10: 00 am.

Our New Years' Service will be at 10 am January 1, 2023.



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Agawam Congregational Church

745 Main St., Agawam, Ma 01001 Phone: 413-786-7111

December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			12:30 pm Women's Fellowship lunch @Bobbie J'z	1 pm Executive Board	2	12 pm Boy Scouts Clean-up
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10 am Communion Sunday & Sunday School	7 pm Property Meeting	10 am Playgroup 6:30 pm Missionary 7 pm Deacons	10 am Bible Study 12:30 pm Women's Fellowship Lunch	6:30 pm Choir Practice	Boy Scouts Shut in	7:30 am Men's breakfast Bobbie J'z
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10 am Worship & Sunday School Cantata 12 pm Church w/out Walls		10 am Playgroup	10 am Bible Study	6:30 pm Choir Practice		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10 am Worship Sunday School Christmas Caroling	4 pm Loaves & Fishes 6:30 pm Trustees	10 am Playgroup	10 am Bible Study	6:30 pm Choir Practice		Christmas Eve Services 5pm 10pm
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10 am Worship Merry Christmas				6:30 pm Choir Practice		