



THE AGAWAM ARROW

February 2023



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: Dawn Stevens office@agawamcong.com

Church Sexton: Dave Christian **Deacon of the Month:** Sharon Christian

Website: www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com

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



February is the shortest month in the calendar year. Even with an additional day in Leap Year (not in 2023), it still is shorter than any of the other months. That doesn't make it any less important. It just means we have less time to get things done during the month. There is a lot going on behind the scenes in politics, in business, in the church and maybe even in our personal lives. We are often kept in the dark about issues that impact our lives until they are brought forth in public. I am not going to go political on you but want to look with you at what it means to go public with our faith. We ended January, with the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, especially as it relates to "Happiness." If you missed Janet Brown's sermon that day you can view the service for January 29 in our archives on Facebook and our website.

On the first Sunday of February, we have a continuation of Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount." (Matthew - chapters 5:13-20). In this passage, Jesus refers to the impact we ought to have on our society, in principal if not in specifics. He said, "you are the salt of the earth". "How Salty are You?"

On February 12, we have two events to celebrate. We will have the dedication of our "SOUPer Bowl" response. We are thankful for your response to this challenge to help feed the needy. Our Goal was CCXXVIII cans or packages of soup (that's LVII cans per team per half). We surpassed that goal with your generous donations. The soup will be shared between the *Parish Cupboard* in West Springfield and the *Mass Military Foundation Empowerment Center of Western Mass* in Agawam. ACC is both missionary minded and community involved in helping others.

On February 12, we will also be celebrating "Scout Sunday." Scouts and their leaders will participate in the service in a limited way, and we want to recognize and celebrate our Scout Troop 82 and Scouting in general. I have a son who is an Eagle Scout and one who is a Life Scout and know the value of this excellent organization. The values taught and the character developed are wonderful preparations for responsible and faithful citizens of this nation and the world.

Responding to Love" – Since LOVE is the popular theme for February, I will be going off Lectionary and look with you at John 3: 1-17. We hear and read a lot about love this time of year. For one day a year we are encouraged to express our love for that special someone with a card, flowers, candy, or gift. We should not need to be reminded that love unexpressed is no love at all. Nor that it is not a one-day a year occurrence. But maybe some do need to be reminded or opportunities will slip by, leaving some feeling unloved. The Scripture tells us that God loves us and expressed that love in a very tangible way. What is our response to that love? This passage contains that very familiar verse John 3:16 which unfortunately has been abused by some in their exuberance to let people know of God's love. In the middle of the verse is the clue to our response.

The other text for the second Sunday in February is I Corinthians 3:1-9, in which the Apostle Paul mentions the inappropriate attitudes and actions of members of a church community and at the same time refers to the fact that we are "God's fellow workers". The difference he says is between being "worldly" or "spiritual". How are we behaving in the church? How are we expressing love in what we do? Each one is responsible for his or her own labor and will be rewarded accordingly.

February contains Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. We will have a service observing Ash Wednesday, February 22 in the late afternoon. We hope you will be able to join us to begin our Lenten journey toward Easter. Because of my illness (COVID), we had to suspend our Wednesday morning Bible Study on the Life of Christ. We will resume the study on Feb 8 and 15 and combine it with the Ash Wednesday service on the 22.

We don't know what the future holds for the church, but we know that God is in charge and will provide for whatever it is. We are still looking toward new leadership and ask you to pray to that end. The Apostle Paul cautions each one to be careful how he or she contributes to the building of the church. He also challenges us to be fools at times in order to become wise. We probably don't have much trouble with the first part since it seems to come naturally. We do need to be careful about how we hold up our personal ideas with regards to how things are or should be. Come and join us in learning good building practices for the church to aid and not hinder the building process.

ACC Children & Family Ministries

Dear Friends,

It is a new month, a time to celebrate the love of God and family and friends and of course, football. This month, I am curious...do you truly believe that God's LOVE never fails? In the struggles of our life, it can be hard to remember that God loves us. I have a Valentine challenge for you! This month, I have left a stack of valentines outside of the Sanctuary. I hope that you will take one, hold onto it for a week or so, and then give it to someone else you encounter. It could be someone that you know, or someone that you don't know! But we all need to know that God loves us and His love never fails. Most things in our lives are continuously changing, but God's love is eternal. Even as we are in a period of transition here at ACC, we can find peace in the constancy of His love.

This month, Sunday School and playgroup continue so put them on your calendar! This is the perfect time of year to find a way to remind your kids that God loves them. Maybe it's a scripture verse on a paper heart you leave for them to find or a special prayer you can pray together this month. May your heart be warmed by God's love this season and always!



Janet

Blessings,

Janet Brown Director of Family Ministries

janetbrown@agawamcong.com

cell (617) 640-2061

Parish Cupboard

All types of nonperishable food items

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 **February 11th** at 7:30 am at **Bobby J'z**

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's fellowship will meet on **February 8th** at **1:00 pm** at the **Buccaneer Lounge**.

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 (413.786.2430) or Dave (413.306.0916)

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.

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!





FEBRUARY FLOWERS

02/05 – LOVED ONES from Jan Nooney

02/12 – LOVING MEMORY of VIC RUBY

02/19– In Loving Memory of DOTTIE HULSE
(2)Loving Memory BRUCE SPARROW

02/26 – In Loving Memory of AL PECKHAM,
Father, DORIS & RAYMOND MELANSON
& JIM MORRISON & LES MELANSON

Deacon of the Month: Sharon Christian

Welcome to February Everyone.

This is the month of love, joy, happiness, and new beginnings. Children laugh and look forward to their winter vacations. Babies being born, and of course Valentine's Day.

What is Valentine's Day? It originated as a Christian feast day honoring one or two early Christian martyrs named Saint Valentine, and through later folk traditions, has become a significant cultural, religious and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.

Psalm 4: 1-7

Hear me when I call O God of my righteousness. You have enlarged me when I was in distress. Have mercy upon me and hear my prayers.

God has put gladness in my heart, more than in the time of which things were bountiful.

Sharon Christian
Deacon of the month



ANNUAL MEETING

March 5, 2023

directly after service



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

An illustration at the bottom of the flyer shows several children's hands of various colors (red, blue, green, yellow) holding up a white banner.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10 am Worship Communion	7pm Property	10am Playgroup	1pm Woman's Fellowship Buccaneer Lounge	6:30 Choir Practice 		7:30 am Men's breakfast Bobbie J'z 
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10 am Worship & Scout Sunday		7pm Deacons Meeting  10am Playgroup		6:30 Choir Practice		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10 am Worship	6:30pm Trustees 4 pm Loaves/Fishes  Presidents' Day	10am Playgroup	Ash Wednesday	1 pm Exec. Board 6:30 Choir Practice		
26	27	28				
10 am Worship &						