



THE AGAWAM ARROW

January 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:** Dave Bertagnolli

Website: www.agawamcongregationalchurch.com

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



From the Pastor's Desk

It's hard to believe that this is my sixth January Newsletter article. I wrote two during my first time as your interim in 2014 and 2015. I thought that I would be writing two more this time, but things haven't turned out that way. So here is my sixth message to start a year as a church.

What is the church about? We are a Christian Church; therefore, our being has something, if not everything, to do with "Christ". We are Christians - followers of Jesus Christ. With that in mind, in January we will begin a Bible Study on the Life of Christ, to be certain we know whom we are following and what his life and ministry tell us about being the church. I know I've mentioned before the meaning of the name "Lord Jesus Christ" whom we follow and serve. You may not have been here in 2014 when I wrote about it or you may have forgotten it, so I will summarize here. We know his name is "Jesus". In the Christmas story that we just rehearsed, the angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will conceive and bear a son and she is to give him the name "Jesus". The angel that appeared to Joseph after he learned that Mary was with child, adds the meaning and therefore the reason for the baby's name. "You are to give him the name 'Jesus', because he will save his people from their sins." "Jesus" is his name. It means savior and that is what he is. We believe in Jesus and recognize or receive him as our savior. We'll get into that more during our Bible Study.

He is also "Christ". This is from the Greek word meaning "anointed". It is the equivalent of the Hebrew "messiah". To be Christ, therefore, is to be the "anointed one of God". In other words, God has chosen him for a special task. "Christ" is his office. He is anointed as king – chosen by God to serve that office. We are to acknowledge him as such. He is both savior and anointed one.

He is also referred to as "Lord". This is his title. It is possible to relate to Jesus as savior and not get to acknowledging him as Lord. This is the next step in our relationship with Jesus. As savior, we receive what he does for us. As Lord, we give what we can for him. Jesus said two interesting things about the concept of Lordship. In Luke 6:46, Jesus says "why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I tell you?" Calling Jesus Lord implies obedience - He is in charge! The second thing he says about Lordship is, "not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21)

The one we follow is the "Lord Jesus Christ." His name is "Jesus" (savior), his office is "Christ" (anointed one), his title is "Lord" (the one to be obeyed). It is not just the saying of the name that matters, but the commitments to him as savior and obedience to him as Lord. In order to obey, we need to know what he expects of us. The church is about more than programs and worship services, though both are important, it is about being church – followers of Christ. As you welcome a new Pastor in the year ahead, keep in mind that the Pastor is there "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4: 12-13)

This is, of course, all theoretical until you apply it in reality is your involvement in the church. But God has promised to bless our efforts. We will not be perfect as a church until we see Jesus in glory and become exactly like him. But we are in process and that makes it exciting and hopeful.

I hope that you have experienced and are experiencing the Lord Jesus Christ, so that together we can be a Christian Church – followers of Jesus, doing what God wills (or wants) in our community and the world. I believe that the mission and ministry of the church depends upon both pastor and laypersons working together to become God's people living in a way pleasing to God and beneficial to society. And as I always say: "We should have fun on this adventure together!"

Love,

Pastor Tom

ACC Children & Family Ministries



Dear Friends,

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope that your holiday celebrations were joyful this year! It was wonderful to be together on Christmas Eve, at 5 PM with the ABC's of Christmas and our special visitor, and at 10 pm for the traditional candlelight service. We were able to bless so many local families with our Holiday Giving Tree this year. We also had a great time Christmas Caroling to our shut-ins as well. Many thanks to everyone who came, and to the King Family for providing us with our transportation. Every year is a little different, but we will continue to have Sunday School and weekly Family Ministry Moments each week. I look forward to being together in the new year as a church family as we grow our faith together.

Isaiah 43:19 from the Good News Translation reads, "Watch for the new thing I am going to do. It is happening already—you can see it now! I will make a road through the wilderness and give you streams of water there." What is new for us here at ACC? I am excited to see what God will do in this New Year, and how we as a church can continue to grow. I know we cannot keep growing without you! As you head back to school and routines, I pray that you will be open to God's leading you into new things! Know that your church family loves you and continues to pray for you by name. Stay in touch!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet".

Janet Brown, Director of Family Ministries

janetbrown@agawamcong.com

cell – (617) 640-206

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 **January 14th** at 7:30 am at **Bobby J'z**

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's fellowship will meet on **January 14th** at noon at **Bobby J'z**

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 (413.854.8416)

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

Just updating you, and letting you know that we are working diligently to find our new pastor. We are still receiving applications and will be conducting an interview with a prospective applicant in the first week of the new year. Please keep the committee in your prayers as we continue in our work into 2023

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 Dawn in the office!*



Deacon of the Month: Dave Bertagnolli

A vacation to Savannah, Georgia, followed by a visit with family last fall gave me an opportunity to have my bike serviced. I expected the repairs to take about three weeks but as that stretched to six then eight weeks I became discouraged. I know that most things take longer than expected but this was ridiculous. Good riding weather was giving way to rain and snow and the daylight hours were diminishing with each passing day. It seemed I wouldn't enjoy another nice bike ride for a long while. Around that time an Upper Room devotional directed me to the words of the Psalmist ***"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance."*** - ***Psalms 42:5***. This scripture provided the encouragement and perspective I needed to help me through what would turn out to be a very small and temporary inconvenience.

I started my daily devotional years ago when I was facing serious life challenges, but it also helps me through the small problems in life. Our church offers many ways to help in your daily walk with the Lord and I welcome an opportunity to help you in finding a suitable resource.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2023. Attending worship service and participating in church ministries are other ways we fulfill our Covenant to be ***"...doers of the Word and not hearers only."*** - ***James 1:22***

Yours in Christ,
David Bertagnolli, Deacon for the month of January 2023

SOUPER Bowl Sunday -The Football Super Bowl in the past has been an opportunity to emphasize a SOUPER Bowl for the needy. We are collecting cans of soup throughout January, ending on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 12th. They will be donated to the Parish Cupboard in West Springfield as well as the Mass Military Foundation Empowerment Center of Western Mass in Agawam



JANUARY FLOWERS

01/01 - In Loving Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Max Kozynoski, Sr., parents & Richie Kozynoski, brother from Mr.&Mrs. Max Kozynoski Jr.

01/08 – In Honor of 67th Anniversary of Dick & Caroline Bassett♥

01/15 – In Loving Memory of Les Melanson, husband From Dale Melanson

01/22 – In Loving Memory of Edna Baxter, Mother From Deseree Blair

01/29 – In Loving Memory of our Mothers From Warren and Ann Tapply



JANUARY STEEPLE LIGHTING

01/15 - - In Memory of Tim Bassett, Son From Dick & Caroline Bassett

Thank you

Many thanks to all of you who contributed to our staff Christmas gifts.

With sincere appreciation,

ACC staff

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,
Ann Tapply, Financial Secretary**



ACC FAMILY PLAYGROUP

**WHO: OPEN TO ALL KIDS
BIRTH-AGE 5 W. A CAREGIVER**

WHAT: FREE PLAY, STORYTIME & CRAFTS

WHEN: TUESDAY MORNINGS 10–11 AM



Annual Reports

It's that time of year once again where Annual Reports are due. Please be sure to pass your report to office no later than **January 27th** please!

MISSIONARY



The world would be such a good place if they took a lesson from our giving congregation. **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU** for your generous donations in December to our Mitten Tree. Items will be donated to the Parish Cupboard, Between Bridges Ministry and The Springfield Rescue Mission. Together we collected 42 sets of hats and scarves, 87 hats, 64 scarves split between men, women and children, 19 assorted sized gloves, 4 pairs of mittens, 4 blankets, 5 pairs of socks and 3 baby sets. Thanks to Matt Blackak and his son for delivering the donations.



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 am Worship Communion Sunday	7pm Property Meeting *Office closed	6:30pm Missionary				
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10 am Worship		10am Playgroup				*7:30 am Men's breakfast Bobbie J'z *Women's Fellowship 12 pm Bobbie J'z
12 pm Church without Walls		7pm Deacons Meeting				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10 am Worship	4 pm Loaves/Fishes 6:30pm Trustees	10am Playgroup		7pm Maundy Thursday		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10 am Worship		10am Playgroup 7pm Council Meeting				
29	30	31				
10 am Worship		10am Playgroup		