

January 2024

Southwick Congregational Church
488 College Highway
P.O. Box 260
Southwick, MA 01077-0260
Return Service Requested



*The **Good News** Newsletter of the*
Southwick Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Southwick, MA

Please join us Sundays for Worship Service 11:00 am
and Coffee Hour to follow

Website: [www. SouthwickUCC.org](http://www.SouthwickUCC.org)



MISSION STATEMENT

Southwick Congregational Church is a faithful Christian presence in the community of Southwick since 1773, and we look to the future. We are a diverse and loving congregation, joyfully serving, teaching, and sharing with one another, according to the gifts we have been given.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We invite you to join us each Sunday for our in-person service at 11:00 am and coffee hour that follows.

OFFICE HOURS

The church office hours are Tue, Wed & Thu 9:30-4.

Leave a voicemail message or an email if you need anything nonemergent after hours.

Rev. Paul has office hours.
If you would like a visit,
please call the church office at
(413) 569-6362 to schedule.
Office Hours by appointment.



VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

Our Facebook page is
Southwick Congregational Church UCC
Please check it out, "like" us, and follow us!!!
Keep track of what our very busy church is doing!

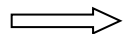
REV. PAUL'S CORNER

“First and Ten, Do It Again”

Even though the Patriots are not playoff contenders this year, many of us may still follow the team and pay attention to what happens on the field. If the Patriots aren't going to score, at least we can root for a “first down” and see if maybe, just maybe, they will get on the board. If you follow football, you know that subsequent first downs will lead the team down the field to a touchdown or at least field goal position. The old cheer, “first and ten, do it again,” exhorts the team to keep moving the ball.

Sometimes, we need to be reminded to “do it again” when it comes to our actions. As we started the New Year of 2-23, I asked all of us to consider random acts of kindness. So many of our members followed this advice and, as a result, so many wonderful things happened not only in our church but also in our community. Countless people have been fed and clothed due to our donations to the Food Pantries in both Westfield and Southwick. Dinners with the Pastor in Southwick have provided a vehicle for all to gather in New Fellowship Hall while Westfield hosted the Food Pantry's Food Truck every Monday and Thursday throughout the spring, summer, and fall. This culminated with the Thanksgiving luncheon in First Church's Fellowship Hall and the return of the area-wide Ecumenical Thanksgiving Prayer Service.

As we begin 2024, may we have a resurgence of energy to continue to be Christ in the community as we



REV. PAUL'S CORNER, CONT.

continue to answer His call to serve those in need. May our blessings be many as work together to bring the Reign of God to fruition here in the Southwick-Westfield area.

Happy New Year!!

Peace and love,

Rev. Paul

Jubilee Year

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| January, 2024 | TBD |
| February 9, 2024 | Soup Sale |
| Friday, March 15, 2024 | Jubilee Pasta with the Pastor |
| Sunday, April 14, 2024 | Jubilee Service and Celebration |
| Thursday, April 25, 2024 | Historical Society Dinner |
| Saturday, June 15 | Strawberry Supper |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Custodian seeks a new, small, inexpensive car. If you have any info, please let the office know. Thanks much.

The 2023 Annual Meeting

of Southwick Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Southwick, Massachusetts, will be held immediately following our service of worship on

Sunday February 4, 2024,

in Old Fellowship Hall. Please try to be there to express your thoughts and to support our church.

There will be a POT-LUCK luncheon, so bring something or just yourself—there will be plenty for all.

JANUARY PRAYER LIST

Roberta & Ted K., Eleanor B., Jim R. (Eric N.), Julie & Emilie (Dawn), Emma C., Ron R., Wanda C., Keith H. (Lorraine & Bob), Jim & Lisa B. (Patty), Jeanne S., Jane W. (Patty), Robert R., T.J.W., Raymond F., Diane R., Brian C., Chris L. (Robin), Patsy B. (Janice), Cara C., Dolores T. (Robin), Sharon W., Owen L. (Melanie), Sarah B. & Susan U. (Patty), Bill M., Teresa B. (Melissa), Jennifer, Maria S. & Mariana (Amla), Sherwood M., Patty B., Ken F. (Robin), Niko K. (Dawn), Sklarski family with the passing of Sylvia, the family of Jeff Piper, Paul F., (Deb), Jill (SteveP), and Avanya.

Nursing Homes/Assisted Living:

Joan H., Michael C.

Serving in our Military at home and abroad:

Samantha P.

Jan 2024



Sunday *Monday* *Tuesday* *Wednesday* *Thursday* *Friday* *Saturday*

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30 | 3 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm | 4 Church Office 9:30-4 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 5 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm | 6 Thrift Shop 10-1 |
| 7 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T1 OA-330pm | 8 GSA OFH 630-730 | 9 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30 | 10 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm GSA Dickinson 7-9 | 11 Church Office 9:30-4 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 12 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm | 13 Thrift Shop 10-1 |
| 14 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T2 ALL CHURCH MTG OA-330pm | 15 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 16 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30 | 17 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm Rev Paul OUT | 18 Church Office 9:30-4 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 19 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm Souts overnight NFH | 20 Thrift Shop 10-1 Scouts NFH |
| 21 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T3 OA-330pm | 22 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 23 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30 | 24 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm | 25 Church Office 9:30-4 GSA 530-730 NFH/ OFH | 26 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm | 27 Thrift Shop 10-1 |
| 28 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T4 OA-330pm | 29 | 30 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30 | 31 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm | | | Annual Meeting Feb 4 |

ALL CHURCH MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Terry Putnam at 7:05 pm followed by an opening prayer by Kirsten Allhusen. A motion was made to accept the Minutes of the November 12th All-Church Meeting which was seconded and passed unanimously.

Pastoral Relations

Bob Franzen said his group met recently with Rev. Paul by email. No issues were determined and he will schedule an in-person meeting early in 2024.

Building & Grounds

Eric Nitsch reported he has signed the contract with Valley Roofing and paid the deposit on behalf of the church. Work is scheduled to begin late March or early April. The church's building inspection was recently done and we have an occupancy permit. The church's manger scene was set up on the town green and a nice outdoor ceremony was held by Rev. Paul on Nov. 25th that was well attended. Eric had an energy audit done of the church which showed many areas of the church were not insulated. Some of the recommendations by the audit will be completed free of charge but Eric is also waiting for a quote on the cost of projects not covered. The annual snowplowing contract is all set.

Boy Scouts

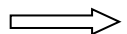
Eric Nitsch, representing the church, has signed the annual Boy Scout Charter with Ron Hall.

Christian Ed

Kirsten Allhusen reported things are going well with her core group of four children. She is planning to have the youth take over a future Sunday service and inquired about the sound system the church has. She is looking for storage space for supplies.

Finance

Melanie Nitsch reported a rental increase letter was sent to the tenants. Rent will increase by \$50 per month as of 2/1/24 making the rent charged to be \$1,600 per month. Virgil Paggen has informed the Committee he will be stepping down from his roles in Stewardship which included weekly counting of the offering as well as managing the church's Stewardship campaign. We can't thank him enough for his close to ten years of service. He has been a pillar of confidentiality in maintaining the Stewardship financial records. Melanie and Jim Putnam will be speaking with the



ALL CHURCH MEETING MINUTES (CONT)

Executive Committee about our plans going forward. Stewardship letters went out at the end of November and everyone is reminded to turn in their pledge cards as soon as possible. The Holly Bazaar went very well with the wonderful Holly Inn. Approx. \$2,000 was deposited but expenses still need to be deducted. Jim as asked to send a contribution of \$1,000 to the SNEUCC for 2023. All committees are asked to look at their budgets and submit to Finance for early January and to turn in their Annual Committee Reports to the office by mid-January. The church has a \$175 refund from the Dept. of Unemployment Assistance they are holding on account for us. Joseph will work on applying for that refund. Lastly, the church's domain has been hosted by Doodlekit which is going out of business. Joseph has been researching and it has been decided we will switch to GoDaddy at a cost of approx. \$156 per year.

Due to the change in housing allowing for the pastor from \$15,000 annually to \$10,000 annually, the following motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously:

“Beginning January 1, 2024, the housing allowance paid to Rev. Paul Nesbit shall be \$10,000 annually, paid in bi-monthly installments of \$416.67. This amount shall be designated as a housing allowance pursuant to Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code. Furthermore, the designation of \$10,000 as an annual housing allowance shall apply to 2024 and to all future years unless otherwise provided.”

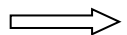
Pastor's Report

There will be a Blue Christmas Service on Wednesday 12/20 at 7 pm at Second Congregational Church in Westfield. Rev. Paul's Christmas Eve schedule is as follows:

9:30 am service in Westfield for both churches, 1 pm service at Southwick Villages, 4:30 pm candlelight service in Westfield, 6:30 pm candlelight service in Southwick. The Associate Conference Minister Terry Ogawa will attend our Jubilee Celebration to be scheduled with a church service and then followed possibly by a historical presentation.

Deacons

Dawn Turgeon reported they are all set for Advent readers and will do the traditional bell ringing during hymns at the Dec. 31st combined service at our church with Southwick and Westfield. Chrismon Sunday will be Dec. 17th and the manger on the altar will be all set up.



ALL CHURCH MEETING MINUTES (CONT)

Memorial Gifts

Funds have been used to pay the deposit on the roofing project.

Treasurer's Report

Jim Putnam reported an approx. \$13,000 operating deficit in our budget which is better than expected. He is working on gathering pledges for 2024.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Nitsch, Clerk

Executive Board Meeting

The committee met immediately following the All-Church meeting so that Finance Committee could share their thoughts and plans going forward for the weekly counting and recording of pledges. Going forward, all Stewardship financial records will be maintained on the church's office computer. Jim Putnam made a motion to authorize our office administrative assistant, Joseph, acting as system administrator, to change the password to the office computer and to issue it only to the Moderator, the Treasurer, the Chair of Finance, and the Minister. The motion was seconded and after discussion of how often the password should be changed, was approved unanimously. Virgil Paggen has provided Melanie and Jim with all his financial records and working spreadsheets so the process can continue confidentially and accurately, as has been the case for many years.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Nitsch, Clerk

A very special Thanks to all who made and donated mittens, gloves, scarves and socks for the Mitten Tree. 44 hats, 34 pairs of mittens/gloves, 2 scarves and 4 pairs of socks were collected, to be donated to local schools to distribute to kids in need.



COMMITTEE CHAIRS

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--|--------------|
| Moderator: | Terry Putnam | hannahput@yahoo.com | 413-569-9283 |
| Buildings & Grounds: | Eric Nitsch | eric.nitsch@gmail.com | 413-695-4164 |
| Christian Education: | Kirsten Allhusen | kirstenla@comcast.net | 570-762-1313 |
| Deacons: | Patty Banasik | preciousbana@aol.com | 413-237-4717 |
| Finance: | Melanie Nitsch | emnitsch@gmail.com | 413-454-7043 |
| Memorial Gifts: | Karen Brzezinski | karenbrzezinski@hotmail.com | 413-569-6816 |
| Music: | Joyce Paggen | joyce.paggen@sbcglobal.net | 860-653-6610 |
| Pastoral Relations: | Bob Franzen | bobfranzen@hotmail.com | 413-355-3061 |
| Treasurer: | Jim Putnam | Jim-putnam@comcast.net | 413-569-9283 |

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488 College Highway; P.O. Box 260
Southwick, MA 01077-0260

Church Office Hours: Tue, Wed, Thu 9:30am-4pm

Church Office Phone: 413-569-6362

Pastor: Rev. Paul Nesbit

Office Hours: By appointment

Rev. Paul's Email: RevPaulNesbit@gmail.com

Church Website: www.southwickucc.org

Office e-mail: southwickucc@gmail.com

Facebook: Southwick Congregational Church UCC

You Tube: Southwick Congregational Church

Staff: Choir Director/Organist Roberta Kowal
Custodian Christopher Robin Roberts
Administrative Assistant Joseph Stiefel



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