

June 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!

Festive Visioning

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the Festival of Homiletics in Pittsburgh, PA. Homiletics is the art or practice of preaching. I understand that this would only seem “festive” to a group of ordained ministers, but it was filled with beautiful worship services, great singing, mostly fantastic sermons, and some stirring lectures that affirmed what I do here in both churches. Fear not, I also learned a few things along the way, but you won’t see any drastic changes.

Besides the “festival” aspect of my time there, I was also able to connect with ministers from different denominations throughout the country and Canada. We were also afforded the opportunity to see the city of Pittsburgh and what it had to offer. It will come to no surprise to most that I sampled various restaurants in the area. One place was a former Catholic church that had been converted into a brewery and restaurant. They kept a great amount of the architecture while being respectful to the memory of the church.

While eating and enjoying the company of new friends, I couldn’t help but think what went through the minds and hearts of the parishioners when their church closed and needed a new purpose for the building. Before anyone gets nervous, neither First Congregational nor Southwick Congregational is on the brink of closure. It did get me to think, though, that we need to plan for the immediate future, mid-future, and far futures of our church buildings and communities.

REV. PAUL'S CORNER

Over the summer months, I invite you to engage in some time of reflection and discussion as to where you see our churches in the next five years, ten years, and even twenty years from now. Granted, some of us won't be here in twenty years; we have done a wonderful job of ensuring that our churches are maintained and will be used in even twenty years. But think beyond what will happen to the buildings and what our ministry will look like even after we are gone. Take into consideration that we are still called to worship each week but what can we do with our buildings to further the establishment of the reign of God in the greater Westfield-Southwick area.

As we gear up towards a time of rest and relaxation, please know that Holy Spirit is constantly at work in us. I encourage us all to listen to what the Holy Spirit may have to say as we envision our awesome future together. We can engage in a Festival of Visioning!

Peace and love,

Paul

Rev. Paul B. Nesbit
Pastor

JUNE PRAYER LIST

Roberta & Ted K., Eleanor B., Jim R. (Eric N.), **Julie & Emilie** (Dawn), **Emma C., Ron R., 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., Sharon W., Owen L.** (Melanie), **Sarah B. & Susan U.** (Patty), **Bill M., Teresa B.** (Melissa), **Jennifer, Maria S. & Mariana** (Alma), **Sherwood M.**, the family of **Ken F.** (Robin), **Paul F.**, (Deb), **Jill** (SteveP), **Avany**, the family of **Alexander M., Dick A.** (Kirsten), **Jon, Michael** (Lori), **Patricia F., Judy R.** (Kristy), **Dennis W.** (Eric), **the Family of Angelo Melloni**, at his passing, **RobA** (SteveP JimP), **Scott** (Patty), **R.J.** (Robin), **Jane T, Geneva's family**, and **Bob B.**

Nursing Homes/Assisted Living:

Joan H., Michael C.

Serving in our Military at home and abroad:

Samantha P.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Strawberry Supper 6pm Sat June 15. Call the office for dine in reservation, or takeout.

Church office will be closed June 17 through June 28



Joint service at Southwick with First Congo Wstfld Sunday June 30

June 2024

6

7



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

						1 Thrift Shop 10-1
2 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T1 OA-330pm	3	4 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30	5 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm	6 Church Office 9:30-4	7 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm	8 Thrift Shop closed
9 Music Sunday Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T2 OA-330pm	10	11 Church Office 9:30-4 Boy Scouts 6:30	12 Church Office 9:30-4 Cub Scouts 6-8 pm	13 Church Office 9:30-4 Halls in use 4 prep	14 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm Halls in use 4 prep	15 Thrift Shop 10-1 Strawberry Supper 6 
16 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T3 OA-330pm	17	18 Office Closed Boy Scouts 6:30	19 Office Closed Cub Scouts 6-8 pm	20 Office Closed	21 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm	22 Thrift Shop 10-1
23 Worship 11 Coffee Hr follows T4 T5	24	25 Office Closed Boy Scouts 6:30	26 Office Closed Cub Scouts 6-8 pm	27 Office Closed	28 Thrift Shop 10-1 OA-6 pm AA-7:30 pm	29 Thrift Shop 10-1
30 Worship 11 JOINT w Wfld						

What Are the Rules, Anyway?

Have you ever found yourself doing something by rote or routine, even though it makes no sense to do it that way? I often think about this whenever I open the dishwasher. It is usually much better for me to have a totally empty dishwasher. Then, I can load this thing the way it is supposed to be loaded. Also, I like to partially rinse the dishes. This is something we were “trained” to do at my parents house because they did it this way at my grandparents house.

We know that there is no right way to load the dishwasher. One of my friends from the neighborhood in Pittsfield posted, and I am paraphrasing, “In every relationship there is one person who stacks the dishwasher like a Scandinavian architect and one who stacks in like a rabid raccoon.” Do you load a dishwasher like a Scandinavian architect, a rabid raccoon, or something in between? Show of hands?

Here is the catch—there are no official rules for how to load or stack the dishwasher. There might be some guidelines out there, and some may think they know more about it than anyone else, but there are still no official rules. Just our interpretations of how it is best accomplished. It is not unlike what Jesus found that day in the Temple. The Pharisees thought they had the answers to how the Sabbath should be celebrated. Jesus wanted them to look at it differently. Not exactly Scandinavian architects versus rabid raccoons, but you get what is coming.

Let’s take a look at the Pharisees. The actions of some Pharisees gave them all a bad name. But, the “good” Pharisees were dedicated to a strict adherence to the law. Some, however, were quick to point out the faults of others while refusing to look within themselves. For example, the early part of the Gospel reading talks about how David and those who accompanied him had to pick something to eat on the Sabbath. Normally, all food preparation was completed before the start of the Sabbath so that no one had to work. (Folks of a certain age, how many Sunday dinners did you have to cook?) But if anything was done on the Sabbath outside of praying, the general populations risked the fact the Pharisees would call them on it.

When Jesus pointed this out to them, they grumbled. When Jesus blatantly told that man to hold out his arm, they were absolutely furious. How could they allow for Jesus to “break” the Sabbath rules. Should Jesus have allowed the man to continue to suffer? Or did Jesus do the right thing in healing the man? I don’t think that anyone here is going to doubt the work of the Messiah.

How many of us have had to work on Sunday? If you had parents who worked as firefighters, police officers, ministers, doctors, nurses, hospital personnel you know that they went off to work on Sundays and holidays—even on Christmas and Thanksgiving. My own mother would have to choose between Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. She also worked every other Sunday. You see, not everyone had the choice to have the normal “Blue Laws” Sunday. Ministers, Church Musicians, and Sextons have always worked on Sundays.

Jesus simply pointed out that sometimes things had to happen on the Sabbath. Lives would need to be saved, people would have to work (i.e., cook or pull a plant—exert some sort of energy) in order to survive. The Sabbath was established so that people would have a chance to worship AND to rest from their labor. Even in 2024, we come together on the Sabbath (most churches from 4pm the day before through sometime on Sunday) to worship God, hear the Sacred Scriptures, and interact with their church community. While we don’t recommend that you schedule major construction projects on the Sabbath, we do what we have to do in order to survive.

Each one of us has to determine our own set of rules as to how we can legitimately keep holy the Sabbath day, be it on Sunday when folks have the chance, or on another day when Sunday does not allow for it to happen. So, my Scandinavian architects, rabid raccoons, and everyone in between, let us be careful to not exert undue authority over rules that are not put down in writing. There are not set rules for how to load that dishwasher. There are no set rules for how we are to keep the Sabbath Day holy. Let us encourage each other to be true to observe a Sabbath day that is appropriate for each person in his/her/their own relationship with God.

The Historical Southwick Congregational Church
invites you to our



Annual Strawberry Supper

488 College Hwy, Southwick, MA 01077

Saturday, June 15, 2024
6:00 PM

Ham 🍓 Baked Beans 🍓 Coleslaw 🍓 Pea Salad 🍓 Mac&Cheese
Strawberry Shortcake & Real Whipped Cream

Adults: \$21 Children (5-10): \$10 (under 4): Free

For reservations or to sign up to help, please call the Church Office
Call ~ (413) 569-6362

Public is Welcome ~ Take out is Available between 4:45-5:30

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:	Jenn Hall-Cotto	jenncotto@comcast.net	413-218-5335
Pastoral Relations:	Bob Franzen	bobfranzen@hotmail.com	413-355-3061
Treasurer:	Jim Putnam	Jim-putnam@comcast.net	413-569-9283

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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	Robertta Kowal
	Custodian	Christopher Robin Roberts
	Administrative Assistant	Joseph Stiefel



Support the “Roof Raising”! For Southwick’s Historic Meetinghouse

The roof needs to be replaced and updated after 30 years of protecting the building from the elements 24/7/365. Imagine the stresses that it has endured in that time – ice storms, 100+ degree days, high winds, and more. While we continue to repair and maintain the roof, the experts tell us that the roof is now vulnerable to problems.

This is a big project for our small Church congregation - \$56,000 from the lowest and best bidder! Your help is needed to help maintain this iconic town landmark for the future.



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