



The TIDINGS

Covenant Congregational Church

February 2024

Celebrating 140 years of ministry

Friends, we have included a portion of our annual report which describes the wonderful work of Christ in our midst. We invite you to read the full report in the annual report booklet. Be blessed this year!

Our third year in Easton was punctuated by the “highs and lows” of ministry. This year we celebrated 140 years as a church, saw some of the best attended services in at least the past 5 years and, after forecasting a large deficit, met the financial budget. At the same time, our church held 13 funerals. Many of these were for dearly loved and core members of our congregation. It was a year of contrasts, to be sure.

In October, we held a special service in celebration of our congregation’s 140 years of ministry. The theme verse was “from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise (Psalm 73:9)”. A wonderful meal followed a vibrant worship service which was highlighted with uplifting music and video greetings from previous pastors and friends of the congregation. It was a memorable day.

Our church gathered to remember often this year, as we held 13 funerals and memorial services for members, attendees and friends of our congregation. Most were individuals connected closely with our community and many were key figures in church life. Several of these followed significant illnesses and all the care that involved. It was a grief filled year, but one also filled with good memories of lives lived for Christ.

Most of the year was marked with **people engaging with Christ and our congregation** in new ways: 13 students are in our current confirmation class; there are several active Bible studies; a robust choir, children’s choir and bell choir; Sunday school classes and regular missions drives and activities. Events and ministries included as widely varied options as: Women’s and Men’s Retreats, Vacation Bible School, Gospel Music Sunday, Painting class, a food drive at Shaw’s, a Church Yard Sale, and the ALPHA experience. We are deeply grateful for the many hours and thoughtful planning of these ministry areas and their leaders. Even this small sample gives a glimpse into how the church looked to “walk with God” this year.

This increase in mission and ministry mirrored an increase in engagement by people actually coming to events and worship. There are many reasons for this uptick, particularly intentional outreach work and a new class for birth to PreK called “**Wiggle Worship**” run by our High School girls. We anticipated attendance of a small handful for the class, but have been delighted that 9 families participated.

Our focus for the fall in worship was “**Walking with God**” and “ups and downs” of this year certainly mirrored this. As a result of these shifts in the church, our work has shifted, as well. More energy and effort is needed, particularly in the area of pastoral care in illness and the welcome of new attendees. We are spending more time resourcing, supporting and assisting committees as they plan and execute events and activities.

This great and wonderful new movement will require something of us all, as well. We should be people who look to the “higher elevations”, thinking about Christ and his priorities in our ministry and church. We might ask: how can I get to know one or two new people at our church? How can a ministry or area I’m involved in welcome in another person and their ideas? How can I care for my neighbor? In this vein, we are excited to look forward to the “**Finding Our Why?**” day long conference on Saturday, March 2nd. Outside presenters will guide us through thinking about God’s work in our midst and encourage us to focus on *why*. *All in our church family are encouraged to attend.*

We desire to **thank all of you** who have done so much to make our church a place which shines Christ’s love to others.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Ephesians 3:20)

Serving Christ alongside each of you - Pastor Devyn and Pastor Ryan

February Music Notes

We continue to be blessed by the dedicated participation of so many in our Music Ministry. It is with joy that we are able to provide music for Sunday worship. There is always an open spot for any interested...just let Ginny know!



For questions or information,
contact:

Susan Santry
Chair of Worship & Music
Ministries
Ginny Elson
Director of Music Ministries

Rehearsal Schedule

Choir

Sundays, February 4, 11, 18, 25 at 9:00 a.m.

Thursday, February 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Handbell Choir

Wednesdays, February 7, 21, 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Men's Choir Sectional

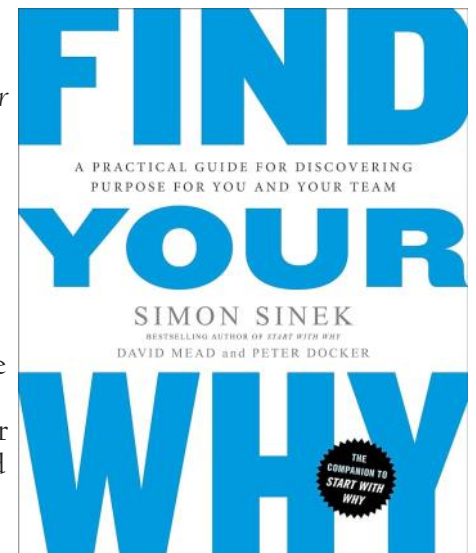
Wednesdays, February 7, 14, 21, 28 at 1:00 p.m.

Finding Our Why?!

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10)

Saturday, March 2nd from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lunch provided. An interactive seminar for the entire church. Special guests will lead, this is a next step beyond the "Higher Elevations" seminar of last year. More details coming soon.

Based on Simon Sinek's book *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team*, this workshop focuses on discovering the ultimate reason a specific congregation exists. Some congregations exist primarily to provide care, others to feed the poor. Some focus on international mission, others on neighborhood outreach. Whatever God's reason for the existence of a particular church in a particular location in a particular time, it is imperative to discover that purpose and then to organize everything else around it. Frederick Buechner wrote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." The same is true with the "why" of a congregation. This experience is deeply satisfying as congregations realize how actively the Spirit of God is moving among them, and as they work to discern their calling.



Words of Appreciation

Thank you, Church!

Your church staff is so grateful for your donations toward our bonuses, and our Christmas Gift. We each want to extend our gratitude for your generosity.

Thank you for thinking of us.

It is a joy to serve you,

Pastor Devyn, Pastor Ryan, Nick,
Kym, Ginny, and Marlena

Dear Church Family

Thank you for the wonderful support you have shown us during the past several weeks. A gentle smile, kind words or a warm hug meant so much. Your cards, meals, flowers and visits were so appreciated.

We especially felt your love during Don's Memorial service and during the luncheon that followed.

A special thanks to those of you who worked so hard to make that time special for all who attended. We are truly blessed to be part of this caring group of people.

Fondly,

Joan Macleod
Deb and Michael Fiore
Mik Fiore Jr.
Katie and Joe Dorfler
Andrew and Jocelyn Fiore

Gifts of Love

For the month of February, Missions and Service Ministry will be collecting Gifts of Love for Father Bill's and MainSpring. There will be a bin in the Narthex from February 4th thru 25th.

Please help by bringing in any of the following new items to be put into "Welcome Home Packages" for individuals transitioning from emergency shelter to permanent housing:

Bath towels	Deodorant
Hand towels	Shaving cream
Washcloths	Razors
Dish towels	Hand sanitizer
Sponges	Dish soap
Dinner plates (light weight)	Disinfectant cleaner or wipes
Cereal bowls (light weight)	Laundry soap
Tumblers (not glass)	Liquid hand soap
Flatware	Hand sanitizer
Sharp kitchen knife	Tissues (box or individual packages)
Shampoo	Paper towels
Conditioner	Toilet paper
Body wash	Trash bags (kitchen size)
Body lotion	

We will also be collecting the following for families affected by homelessness:

Diapers
Diaper wipes
Gently used baby clothes

Dear Covenant Congregational Church,

Thank you for your thoughtful gift of \$100 to Father Bill's & MainSpring (FBMS). Your generosity is greatly appreciated, and we are honored to have your support. ***Thank you.***

Massachusetts is facing a growing crisis right now. More individuals and families are losing their homes due to the increased inflation of basic needs like food, utilities, and transportation. And affordable housing is nearly impossible to find amid a shortage of units. An increase in elders, young adults, and families with young children are coming to our doors seeking help, support, and a safe place to live. ***FBMS does not want to turn anyone away, and because of donors like you, we are prepared to offer help and support.***

Thank you, Covenant Congregational Church, for being a friend to FBMS, your neighbors, and your community. Friends like you help advance our bold plan to end homelessness. For example, we are excited to share that we have now officially opened our Yawkey Housing Resource Center in Quincy. Learn more at helpfbms.org/yawkeyhrc.

Your support makes our work possible. If you would like to learn more about the work that we do, or see our mission in action, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at 508-427-6448.

With Appreciation,



Lynn Calling
Director of Development

Thank you for
your support!



Community Lent Reading Plan

Read the Gospels

Join our CCC Community in reading through the Gospels during Lent. By reading 1-3 chapters each day, you will read all four gospels by Easter. Follow the 40-day reading plan on the opposite page — take Sundays off, or use them to catch up.

Pray before you begin reading

Ask the Lord to give you wisdom, discernment, and an open heart to receive the truths revealed in the Scriptures. Ask that his Word will bring light, comfort, and transformation to your life and that you might come to love Him more deeply through your time with Him.

Reflect after you read

Are there specific verses that stood out to you? How does the passage relate to your current circumstances? In what ways does the passage shape or reinforce your beliefs about God? Bring your thoughts, praise, questions, and concerns before God in prayer.

Share with the community

Feel free to share your reflections in our CCC Community Facebook Group so we might learn from and encourage one another during Lent.



“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly”
—Colossians 3:16

CCC Lent Reading Plan 2024

40 Days Through the Gospels

Note: Take Sundays off

DAY	DATE	READING	✓
1	Feb 14	Matthew 1-3	
2	Feb 15	Matthew 4-6	
3	Feb 16	Matthew 7-9	
4	Feb 17	Matthew 10-12	
5	Feb 19	Matthew 13-14	
6	Feb 20	Matthew 15-16	
7	Feb 21	Matthew 17-18	
8	Feb 22	Matthew 19-20	
9	Feb 23	Matthew 21-22	
10	Feb 24	Matthew 23-24	
11	Feb 26	Matthew 25-26	
12	Feb 27	Matthew 27-28	
13	Feb 28	Mark 1-3	
14	Feb 29	Mark 4-6	
15	Mar 1	Mark 7-9	
16	Mar 2	Mark 10-12	
17	Mar 4	Mark 13-14	
18	Mar 5	Mark 15-16	
19	Mar 6	Luke 1-3	
20	Mar 7	Luke 4-6	

DAY	DATE	READING	✓
21	Mar 8	Luke 7-9	
22	Mar 9	Luke 10-12	
23	Mar 11	Luke 13-14	
24	Mar 12	Luke 15-16	
25	Mar 13	Luke 17-18	
26	Mar 14	Luke 19-20	
27	Mar 15	Luke 21-22	
28	Mar 16	Luke 23-24	
29	Mar 18	John 1-2	
30	Mar 19	John 3-4	
31	Mar 20	John 5-6	
32	Mar 21	John 7-8	
33	Mar 22	John 9-10	
34	Mar 23	John 11-12	
35	Mar 25	John 13-14	
36	Mar 26	John 15-16	
37	Mar 27	John 17-18	
38	Mar 28	John 19	
39	Mar 29	John 20	
40	Mar 30	John 21	

Gary Hight	4	Jim Elson	13	Judith Wohlen	18
Marilyn Mears	7	Elijah Jee	13	Tucker Zayas	19
Thomas Whitley	8	Ty Siciliano	15	Cameron Gay	24
Allyson Greene	9	Bridget Dumoulin	16	William Goodwin	24
Maeve Wallace	10	Armen Varadian	17	Carl Knowlton	24
Wendy Norrman	11	Naaman Wheeler	18	Mary Stevens	26
				Gloria Long	26



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday Prayer Service: A meditative service of prayer and song. Wednesday, February 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the church sanctuary. Ashes will be offered, if desired.

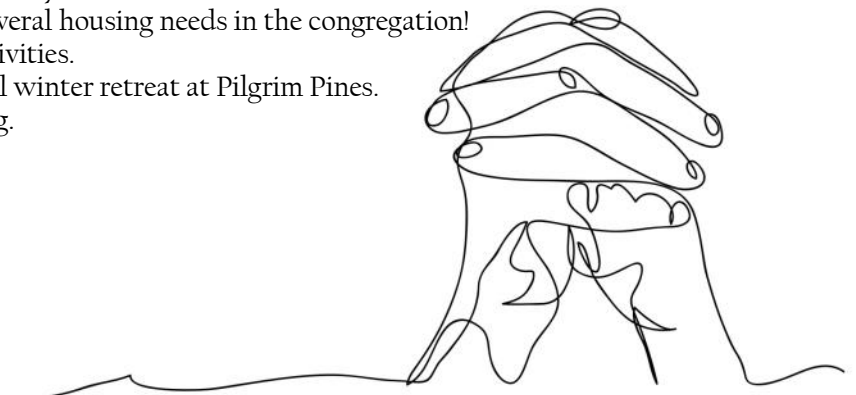
Care Ministry

Prayers of Petition

- Would we read and pray the Bible and trust that the Lord is with us
- May we bear with one another in love (Eph. 4: 1-6).
- Those dealing with addiction, isolation, financial trouble, and loss.
- The health of marriages in the church and for those who long to be married.
- Friends of Steve and Sandy Willette, Cassy and Kathy, who both have metastasized cancer.
- Continued prayers for those with health challenges: Bob Davis, Karen Bassett, Rebecca Carroll, Carole DesLauriers, Lynda Valenzuela, Matt Silva, Kym Silva, Linda Wainwright and Tom Hyde.
- Prayers for those grieving the loss of loved ones: particularly the family of Nancy Hall, the family of Don MacLeod and the family of Geraldine Wallace.
- Prayers for Karen Bassett's recovery from surgery.
- For Pastor Devyn's cousin Carly Absher battling stage 4 appendix cancer.
- For Pilgrim Pines as they continue to recover after massive flooding this summer.
- For the war in Israel and Gaza. May God bring peace!
- Prayers for Jeff Goldberg and David Branco who have both entered hospice.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Celebration

- For a wonderful visit with Rev. James Tang, missionary to South Sudan.
- For the way God has provided the resolution to several housing needs in the congregation!
- For many new faces in worship and fellowship activities.
- For the 5 students who attended the middle school winter retreat at Pilgrim Pines.
- For a productive and well attended annual meeting.



February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:00a Choir Rehearsal (sanctuary) 10:30a Worship (sanctuary) 7:30p Men's Basketball (gym) Winterblast Retreat	5 5:45p Yoga (fireside) 7:00p Knitting (fireside) 7:00p Men's Bible Study (library) 7:00p Missions & Service Ministry Meeting	6 7:00p Worship & Music Meeting (fireside)	7 1:00p Men's Sectional (sanctuary) 7:00p Handbell Rehearsal (fireside)	1 7:30p Prayer Hour (chapel)	2 Winterblast Retreat	3 10:00a Women's Bible Study (fireside)
11 Scout Sunday 9:00a Choir Rehearsal (sanctuary) 10:30a Worship (sanctuary) 3:00p Confirmation (fireside) 7:30p Men's Basketball (gym)	12 5:45p Yoga (fireside) 7:00p Knitting (fireside) 7:00p Men's Bible Study (library)	13 7:00p Council Meeting (fireside)	14 Valentines Day Ash Wednesday 1:00p Men's Sectional (sanctuary) 7:00p Ash Wednesday Service (sanctuary)	15 7:30p Prayer Hour (chapel) *Tidings Deadline*	16	17 10:00a Women's Bible Study (fireside)
18 9:00a Choir Rehearsal (sanctuary) 10:30a Worship (sanctuary) 5:00p Confirmation (fireside) 7:30p Men's Basketball (gym)	19 Presidents' Day 5:45p Yoga (fireside) 7:00p Knitting (fireside) 7:00p Men's Bible Study (library)	20 7:00p Children & Youth Ministry Meeting (fireside)	21 1:00p Men's Sectional (sanctuary) 7:00p Handbell Rehearsal (fireside)	22 7:30p Prayer Hour (chapel) 7:30p Choir Rehearsal (sanctuary)	23	24 10:00a Women's Bible Study (fireside)
25 9:00a Choir Rehearsal (sanctuary) 10:30a Worship (sanctuary) 5:00p Confirmation (fireside) 6:30 Youth Group (gym) 7:30p Men's Basketball (gym)	26 5:45p Yoga (fireside) 7:00p Knitting (fireside) 7:00p Men's Bible Study (library)	27	28 1:00p Men's Sectional (sanctuary) 7:00p Handbell Rehearsal (fireside)	29 7:30p Prayer Hour (chapel)		



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CCC AT A GLANCE

Sunday Mornings

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

(Online and In-person)

Staff:

Pastor Ryan & Pastor Devyn Chambers Johnson

Co-Pastors

Ginny Elson

Director of Music Ministries

Marlena Silva

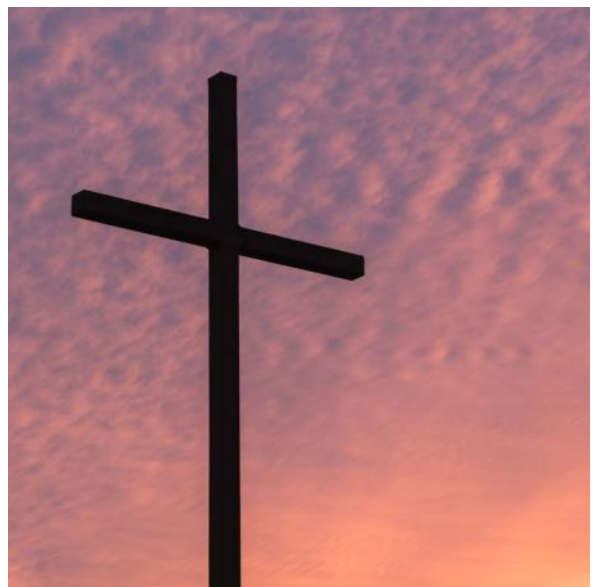
Office Administrator

Nick Zelinski

Church Custodian & IT Wizard

www.ecovchurch.org

508.238.6423



Our Mission

To *Connect* the generations to Christ, to

Grow in our love for His Church, and to

Serve God in the greater Community