

# Glad Tidings

First Congregational Church of  
West Brookfield  
United Church of Christ  
June 2024



36 North Main Street, PO Box 371  
West Brookfield, MA 01585 508-867-7078  
Our website: [Westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org](http://Westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org)  
On Facebook: First Congregational Church of  
West Brookfield, UCC

## Bridge Pastor Search UPDATE!

On Sunday, May 19 the Church Council heard from our Bridge Pastor Search Committee that they had found a candidate to serve as our bridge minister for the next few months. Rev. Beverly Prestwood-Taylor will be with us beginning Sunday, July 7 as our Designated-Term Pastoral Search Committee continues its work. Due to travel, Beverly will be away for a few Sundays. At that time, her husband Rev. Bruce Prestwood-Taylor will serve as our guest pastor (when he is available). In addition to Sunday mornings, Beverly will also put in some time each week with other church business as needed. Following is her brief bio. Please reach out to Beverly with your words of welcome when you see her on Sunday!

Mary Deotte, Angela Carville, Karen Murphy, Pat Jackman & Terry Hall

*Beverly Prestwood-Taylor is a retired, ordained UCC pastor who has served United Methodist and United Church of Christ congregations in Michigan and Massachusetts. She has been a consultant with congregations in conflict and transition since 2001. She co-founded a non-profit, the Brookfield Institute (now HomeFront Strong in Ware), where she worked with traumatized faith communities in the United States and internationally. Beverly has also worked with veterans and military families since 2009.*

*Beverly and her husband Bruce have two children. Jesse and his spouse Jen live in Philadelphia. Carrie and her spouse Ryan live in Chicago. The Prestwood-Taylors enjoy running, singing, playing the piano and visiting their children. They live with their dog Annie in Hardwick.*

## Pastor's Message

I Cor. 3:9 We are God's coworkers, and you are God's field, God's building.

Dear Friends:

What an honor to serve as your Bridge Pastor for a few months. As a member of this church AND your Bridge Pastor, it is quite evident that we are **partners together** in this calling to serve God at the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC. For this short time, I will be your pastor, with specific duties and responsibilities. After these few months, I will continue to serve with you as a member, with different volunteer tasks and responsibilities.

Our partnership with each other includes our partnership with God---or as the scripture says, “God’s coworkers.” We ask for God’s help and guidance in everything. We know if we ask, we will receive it. Yet, God’s doesn’t wave a magic wand and make instant changes (most of the time.)

We pray for good health or to be healed from illness. At the same time, we follow our doctor’s advice and try to make our lifestyle healthier.

We ask for guidance in our relationships. At the same time, we muster up the courage to tell the other person when we feel hurt or ignored or disrespected. We take risks to ask forgiveness when we have done wrong or we talk with our spouse, friend, children, or co-worker about how we can work together more harmoniously or more fully show our love for each other.

We pray for rain for the farmers or healthy food for everyone. At the same time, we try to understand how we can take care of the blessing of this earth more faithfully. We try to provide from our abundance for those who lack enough.

We petition God for a world of peace and justice, and at the same time, we try to understand what we can do to bring peace to our own communities, neighborhoods and families.

We are in partnership with God. We do not just live passively, waiting for God to act, but every day, we ACT in God’s name, modeling ourselves after Jesus.

It is so good to be coworkers together in Christ!

Blessings to all,

Beverly

P.S. Please call me Beverly!



Guest Ministers for June:

- June 2<sup>nd</sup> – Pulpit: Pastor Julie Olmsted
- June 9<sup>th</sup> – Pulpit: Pastor Julie Olmsted
- June 16<sup>th</sup> – Pulpit: Pastor Susan Tarantino
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> – Pulpit: Pastor Linda Michel
- June 30<sup>th</sup> – Pulpit: Pastor Linda Michel

## WEST BROOKFIELD'S ASPARAGUS, FLOWER & HERITAGE FESTIVAL WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!



Thanks to everyone who participated in last week's Asparagus Festival! Despite the rain it was a GREAT day. The kitchen cooked up 55 pots of their incredible asparagus chowder and the people LOVED it – as always. Wally, Karen Andersen and Crew got to work mid-week and cut mounds of onions, broccoli and asparagus - and got the massive job done! Of the 55 large pots of chowder that were created 238 quarts were sold as *Cold Quarts To-Go* (a NEW popular favorite!).

Our thanks to the many bakers who created the wonderful, homemade cookies and brownies, to the “donators” who shopped and then donated many, many containers of half and half, chicken broth, soda and water and to the “feet-on-the-ground” folks who worked in and around the tents.

*Each person was needed and each person was appreciated.*

The total revenue raised from this year's festival came to \$5949 a bit higher than last year. Funds raised go towards the general upkeep of the church which in turn supports the Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry and many mission projects that our church supports throughout the year.

Each year we change things just a bit (as we did this year) and each year things seem to run even better.

Again, a HUGE thanks to ALL who had a role in this year's festival!

“Till next year....”

The Kitchen Crew – Mike Murphy, Karen Andersen, Joann Bakulski, Mary Beth Czaja & Wally Hall

Tent Crew – Angela Carville, Linda Barron, Karen Murphy & Terry Hall



**Mike & Wally, Linda, JoAnn & Karen A., Karen M.**



Karen never minds a little rain!



**Tent Crew on the Church Lawn!**



**Angela & Dave taking care of business on the town common!**

## From our Boards and Committees

### Church Council

The Church Council will gather for a special meeting with our new bridge minister on Sunday, June 9.  
The date of the regular monthly meeting will be June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### SHARING CUPBOARD

It was 22 years ago this spring that the Sharing Cupboard opened its doors to serve the community. It was learned very early that donations locally would not sustain it. Jan King helped the pantry to become affiliated with the Worcester County Food Bank, a partnership we still have. Later when I served on the WCFB advisory board we set up service areas. Our service area is West Brookfield, Warren and West Warren. It is, however, our policy to serve anyone who comes to our door. Then we try to help them find a pantry in their community. We serve 50-60 families monthly, which covers 125 people or so. We do not have large families at the moment. We mostly have retired people who need a little support in addition to whatever other sources they have. We have great contributions so we were able to get 2 new freezers. This means we won't have to crowd the small freezer in the church kitchen. We can certainly share if the church needs temporary space (like the Asparagus Festival) just clear it with the director.

Volunteers come and go. It is always amazing how when someone leaves another volunteer appears. We are fortunate.

Thanks to our church for providing space for this service to the communities in our area.

Thanks to Dee Blanton for helping us to get a Board of Directors and Bylaws set up.

Pat Jackman - Director

### Dismas Farm Dinners

Dismas dinner will be at the farm on Tuesday, June 11, at approximately 6 p.m.  
Please contact Deanna or Angela if you wish to provide something for the dinner.  
We will leave for the farm around 5 pm.

Dismas Volunteers:

Deanna Randall - 413-436-7849 or [drandall444@comcast.net](mailto:drandall444@comcast.net).

Millie Gushue - 413-436-7125; or [gushoo@comcast.net](mailto:gushoo@comcast.net)

Angela Carville - 508-347-1148 or [angelacarville67@gmail.com](mailto:angelacarville67@gmail.com)

Thank you for your support of this important ministry!!

### Board of Deacons

The Bridge committee has contracted with Beverly Prestwood-Taylor to be our Bridge Pastor in 3-month increments beginning with June, July & August. Pulpit supply had been previously set up for the month of June so Pastor Beverly will not be doing services for June but she will take care of pastoral care responsibilities. She will begin conducting services in July.

Thank you to all who volunteer to assist with the services by reading scripture and being a greeter at the front door. If you would like to be a reader or greeter please sign up on the clipboard in the back of the Sanctuary. If you have any questions about these positions reach out to Karen Murphy or Terry Hall.

COVID 19 GUIDELINES: Even though COVID 19 remains a part of our lives the CDC has eased up on its restrictions. In staying within their guidelines, we just ask that if you are not feeling well, or test positive for COVID please stay home and take care of yourself as well as your church family. If you have questions, please reach out to a Deacon.

## Designated Term Pastoral Search Committee

It has been more than 4 months now since our search committee submitted our church's Designated Term Pastor search profile was activated [January 26] for UCC clergy across the country to consider. Since then, unfortunately, our church has still received **no** profiles from interested UCC clergy.

As the 3 month mark of receiving no profiles drew close, our committee met with the Church Council in April to see if it would be financially feasible for the DTP compensation to be raised from that of a 1/2 time position to a 3/4 time one. That step seemed important because our committee had then learned from our Conference, that churches seeking 3/4 time DTP positions typically received significantly more candidates than those seeking 1/2 time ones. At that Council meeting, we learned that such a raise should be financially feasible, and the Council is in favor of it being done.

As the 4 month mark of still receiving no profiles drew close, our search committee met with the Church Council at its recent May meeting to discuss this concern in greater detail. **As a result of that, our congregation's members have now been called to meet on Sunday, June 2, after our worship service, to discuss and vote on a funding proposal that will enable us to seek a 3/4 time DTP.** If the vote at that June 2 meeting is in the affirmative, our search committee will then strive to have our church's search profile for a 3/4 time DTP activated as soon as possible.

Over the last couple of months, our search committee came to realize that the fulfillment of Designated Term Goals in our church's profile will, to a large degree, depend on volunteers from our congregation helping our new DTP work on them. We also realized there are some additional ways we can improve our church's profile, so it may have more appeal to potential candidates. Thus, our committee has now done the following:

1. We have simplified our Designated Term Goals to two points instead of three. Those two are:
  - A. Strengthen our Practice of Being a Welcoming Church
  - B. Expand our Presence in the Community

We have also changed the wording of some of the expectations in those two goals in order to decrease the emphasis on the pastor and put more emphasis on the help needed by our congregation. Also, rather than wait to secure a new DTP, we have already begun to ask our fellow parishioners to indicate their ideas on ways to accomplish such goals and their willingness to volunteer to help work on those goals for the good of our church.

2. To help make our church's profile more appealing, we have now added to it:
  - ~ a number of the very positive aspects of our West Brookfield community,
  - ~ mention of our church's recent Capital Campaign, supported by contributors from both our congregation and community, which has enabled our church to repair its beautiful steeple overlooking the Common and also add a mini-split system to better heat and cool our church.

We hope many members of our congregation will be able to attend that meeting of our congregation on Sunday, June 2, after our worship service.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Showalter, Terry Hall, Linda Barron, Angela Carville

## Open And Affirming (ONA) Committee Formed

On April 14<sup>th</sup> volunteers stepped forward to get things started with our goal of being an even more welcoming church. Exploring what it means to be An Open and Affirming church has been discussed in the Church Council for many months (actually years) and Doug Showalter, Karen Murphy and Terry Hall stepped forward to form this committee. Linda Barron and Mary Deotte are interested in assisting with guidance and consulting. We are seeking others! If you are interested in helping the committee form a plan to guide the church in the exploration of being an ONA church please contact Doug, Karen or Terry – and watch for updates from this group over the summer. **Thank you.**

## A Different Kind of Guest Speaker

On Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup> Pat Jackman was our guest speaker and brought her portrayal of Antoinette Brown Blackwell to our morning service.

Antoinette Brown Blackwell was born in Henrietta, NY in 1825. Very early she began to speak publicly in the services of the local Congregational Church when she was only nine years old. She graduated from Oberlin College and completed theological studies there. However, she was refused a degree and ordination because she was a woman. It was at Oberlin College she met Lucy Stone and they became fast lifelong friends even marrying brothers. With great pleasure, she voted in 1920 at the age of 96 when women were given the vote.

We thank Pat for sharing Ms. Brown Blackwell's life story with us last month. It was very enlightening!



## June Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Happy Birthday!

Kathy Collings – 1<sup>st</sup>      Phyllis Allen – 20<sup>th</sup>      Mike Spencer – 24<sup>th</sup>  
Deanna Randall – 26<sup>th</sup>      Millie Gushue – 27<sup>th</sup>



### Happy Anniversary!

Rev. Bob & Pat Jackman – 13<sup>th</sup>      Chris & Doug Showalter – 23<sup>rd</sup>      Peter & Joanne Dirlam – 30<sup>th</sup>



## Parish Board

New emergency lights have been ordered and will be going in soon.

The clock in the Sanctuary will be back and mounted in June.

The steeple clock is in the process of being repaired. We are very excited that soon the steeple clock will be fully functioning again.

We need to clean the fans in the sanctuary. We are looking for someone that has a utility trailer that will go to Spencer Motors in Warren to pick-up a scissor lift and return it after the fans are cleaned. If you can help, please email the Murphys at [kmurphy718@charter.net](mailto:kmurphy718@charter.net).

It is that time of year that we all start cleaning out our garages and closets. We ask that if you have anything you would like to donate for the White Christmas Raffle or the Flea Market table, please contact Dee Blanton at [Deeblanton@ymail.com](mailto:Deeblanton@ymail.com). **Please don't just leave items downstairs.**

Thank you to Al Randall for maintaining the AED for us! Al and Deanna ordered new pads and recently replaced them. FYI – the AED machine is located on the wall in the Fellowship Hall near the rear exit door.

Also, we ask that you **do not leave anything in the shed** without talking to a member of the Parish Board. Please remember that if you see something that needs to be addressed by the Parish Board that you write it in the book in their mailbox. Thank you for helping us care for our beautiful church.

Mike Murphy, Linda Daskowski, Juan Bacigalupi & Wally Hall

### From Our Church Office

Church Secretary – Terry Hall – [terryle56@yahoo.com](mailto:terryle56@yahoo.com)

Office Hours – Friday 12 pm – 3 pm (Most Fridays, but not all. Call first – 508-867-7078)

### Fellowship Hall Bulletin Board & Church Calendar

The Church Community Calendar is located on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall and is checked often. **Be sure to add all your meeting dates and times to the calendar** so that they may appear in the monthly newsletter and to prevent conflicts in the church office. **Thanks to all who are continuing to use this calendar. The use of this small tool goes a long way in keeping all of us organized. Keep up the good work!**

**Please note** – The *Glad Tidings* deadline for June is Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>..

Terry Hall, Church Secretary

### SOCIAL MEDIA IN OUR CHURCH

As was announced in last month's newsletter, we have hired Brooke Canada to update and maintain our church website and Facebook pages and to create and maintain an **Instagram** account for our church. It is understood that to reach people today an organization needs to be very visible in the online world.

**We Now Have A Church Instagram Account!**

Are you on Instagram? Would you like to follow First Congregational? You can!

Search [@firstcongowestbrookfield](https://www.instagram.com/firstcongowestbrookfield) to check us out.



## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR CHURCH OFFICERS & CHAIRS

Moderator: Dee Blanton – [deebanton86@gmail.com](mailto:deebanton86@gmail.com)

Deacon Chair: Karen Murphy – [kmurphy718@charter.net](mailto:kmurphy718@charter.net)

Parish Board Co-Chairs: Wally Hall – [terryle56@yahoo.com](mailto:terryle56@yahoo.com) & Mike Murphy – [kmurphy718@charter.net](mailto:kmurphy718@charter.net)

Treasurer – Mary Deotte – [hombai@yahoo.com](mailto:hombai@yahoo.com)

Collector: Deanna Randall – [drandall444@comcast.net](mailto:drandall444@comcast.net)

Clerk: Terry Hall – [terryle56@yahoo.com](mailto:terryle56@yahoo.com)

Church Phone: 508-867-7078

### Spencer Congregational Church, UCC

June 2nd is the anniversary of the fire that destroyed the meeting house of the First Congregational Church United Church of Christ of Spencer. This year the 2nd falls on Sunday. We decided to hold a service at the site at 2:00 that afternoon. We want to invite people from the community and other churches to take part as we commit ourselves to continuing our mission to serve the Spencer area. As we plan a new facility to carry out what we believe God invites us to do, we want to celebrate the support and encouragement people have extended and invite them to help us meet some of the needs that we and they see around us.



207 Main St., Spencer, MA 01562

Contact Rev. Bruce MacLeod, [interim\\_pastor.bcc@yahoo.com](mailto:interim_pastor.bcc@yahoo.com) if you have any questions or would like to send words of encouragement.

Rain date: Sunday, June 9 at 2:00 pm



# June 2024

<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>
						1
2 Worship 10 am Communion Rev. Julie Olmsted Special Business Meeting following worship	3	4	5 Sharing Cupboard 10-11:30 am	6 Sharing Cupboard 7 - 8 pm	7	8
9 Worship 10 am Rev. Julie Olmsted Special. Church Council meeting	10 Mission Committee 10 am	11 Dismas Dinner At the farm 6p.m.	12 Sharing Cupboard 10 - 11:30 am	13 Sharing Cupboard 7 - 8 pm	14	15
16 Worship 10 am Rev. Susan Tarantino <b>HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!</b>	17	18	19 Sharing Cupboard 10 - 11:30 am	20 Sharing Cupboard 7 - 8 pm	21 Glad Tidings Deadline	22
23 Worship 10 am Rev. Linda Michel Church Council Meeting	24	25	26 Sharing Cupboard 10 - 11:30 am	27 Sharing Cupboard 7 - 8 pm	28	29
30 Worship 10 am Rev. Linda Michel Coffee Hour: Parish Board						

## The Dismas Family Farm

The Dismas Family Farm in Oakham provides vocational rehabilitation and supportive housing to homeless former prisoners on a twelve-acre working farm at 687 Lincoln Rd. in Oakham.

Our church has provided family-style suppers one Tuesday each month for several years. Each month we alternate between a pot-luck supper served at the church and bringing a meal to the farm in Oakham. Everyone is always welcome to join either of the suppers. Funds are available if you would like to provide an item for a meal but cannot afford to do so. See a member of the Mission Committee if you're interested in this option.

Dismas has a farm store on-site offering handcrafted wooden items, farm fresh eggs, gifts and fresh picked produce. The store is open from April to December seven days a week from 9 AM to 7 PM. In addition to selling produce in the store, their vegetables are also donated to needy families and individuals in Worcester.

The farm can always use monetary donations plus grocery cards, towels, toiletries, and sheets.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, **June 16 for their Father's Day BBQ**. They will serve food at no cost, animals will be available for petting and viewing and there will be yard games for children from 12 to 3 pm.

### SAVE THE DATES!

JUNE 16, 2024

Dismas Family Farm Fathers' Day  
BBQ

OCT. 5, 2024

Dismas Family Farm Fall Harvest  
Days

NOV. 30, DEC. 1, 7, and 8, 2024

6th Annual Dismas Family Farm  
Christmas Tree Sale

Details Later!



### By the Numbers

70 The number of former prisoners Dismas programs serve yearly as they work to rebuild their lives.

300 The number of volunteers from families, churches, and local schools, that help out at Dismas programs each year.

700 The number of former prisoners the BAR None program serves yearly through workshops and individual counsel.

6 The number of Dismas graduates living in the new Pryce House in Oakham.

\$25 The donation to Dismas that can buy work boots or a state ID for a new resident



**Our Mission and Vision Statement:** *We are a church where all are welcome to worship together, to share in fellowship and to grow spiritually in our journey with Christ. We value justice, diversity,*

*and freedom of expression. We strive to serve our community and all God's creation and to spread the love of God to all people.*

**Thank You.....**

A very special thank you to **Burdett's Trash Company** who picked up our trash after the Asparagus Festival as a courtesy. It was appreciated!

### **Coffee & Celebration!**

Each month a different committee or board from our church offers a time of coffee and sharing for all to enjoy. Coffee hour is held on the last Sunday of each month. Extra treats are always welcome!



### **Coffee Time for June: Parish Board**

First Congregational Church of W. Brookfield, UCC  
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