

Glad Tidings

First Congregational Church of West Brookfield
United Church of Christ
June 2025

36 North Main Street, PO Box 371
West Brookfield, MA 01585 508-867-7078
Facebook: First Congregational Church of
West Brookfield, UCC
Website: westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org



From Our Bridge Pastor

The Holy Spirit and Us

“For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us . . .”

Acts 15:28

This Sunday we celebrate Ascension Sunday...and discover how the ascension of Christ can deeply connect with our lives; it is not just some “beam me up, Scottie” moment! But what I really can’t wait for is June 8, the church’s brightest, boldest, and most energetic day: Pentecost.

Actually, Pentecost isn’t just the Christian Church’s day; it was first of all a Jewish celebration. Fifty days after the feast of Passover (the celebration of deliverance from Egypt) comes the celebration of First Fruits, a thanksgiving for the wheat harvest and for the law given to Moses at Mt. Sinai. The feast is called Shavu’ot, or Weeks, because it is a week of weeks plus one—50 days. Pentecost is the Greek word for the 50th day.

There ends the history lesson . . . and the similarity between the Jewish Pentecost and the Pentecost which we celebrate. Shavu’ot became a quiet celebration of the old and the predictable, the certain and the dependable. The Pentecost that we celebrate as Christians is about the coming of the Holy Spirit recorded in Acts 2. Our Pentecost comes closer than any other day of the year to being raucous and out-of-control. This is the time to realize, to *feel*, that the Spirit blows where the Spirit will---unexpectedly, powerfully, amazingly, ridiculously. Pentecost evokes images and memories different than any other worship celebration: Blazing red. Winds of change. Tongues of flame. Fire of love. *If you have the chance, wear **red** to worship on Pentecost Sunday!*

The results of the Spirit’s coming were nothing short of astonishing. The followers of Christ received a power they had not known before. The Spirit breathed life and discernment and reconciliation into the disciples, and they began to share the Good News.

I hope this Pentecost propels us into a summer of the same life and power. Pentecost is not a reminder of the “good old days” when God *really* reached into and through the disciples. The fire and energy to spread the Good News of the grace of Christ and the love of God isn’t something to consign to the shelves of church history; it is the primary reason for the existence of the church today.

Our June 8 worship will recall Pentecost. But it will not recreate it. That happens only when we recognize the presence, the power, and the unpredictable press of the Spirit on *our* lives. And I pray that summer will not be a time to set aside the Spirit . . . but rather to affirm her presence and power. There is so much for the folks of FCCWB to look forward to in the coming months, with the exciting arrival of a pastor who will share and

stimulate your life and witness for years to come. But Pentecost is the most vivid reminder that The Church isn't its leaders; it is all you saints doing the work of ministry...equipped by the gifted pastor and teacher you are welcoming (Ephesians 4:11-12). You have such a bright future...if *you all* keep at it!

I pray we will all open ourselves to the power of Pentecost; that we will experience the power of the Holy Spirit to turn sadness into joy, infuse confidence where there is fear, create faith where there is doubt, and generate power where there is weakness. I pray that First Congregational Church will experience Pentecost . . . again and anew. My real excitement in life comes in knowing that *you* are where the progress of the Holy Spirit is really happening.

Godspeed,
Pastor Dennis

From our Boards and Committees

Church Council

The next Church Council meeting will be held on **Sunday, June 8th**. Please note the meeting has been moved from the third Sunday.

Board of Deacons

It has been a very busy month for us all. The Deacons did not have a meeting in May but we have still been on top of providing support for our services this month. We had candidate Sunday on May 11th that went very well. We are looking forward to working with our new Pastor. We continue to benefit from the incredible Services/Sermons provided to us by Pastor Dennis TeBeest.

The Deacons could use your support. We are seeking volunteers that would be willing to assist us in greeting folks as they arrive for service.

If you are interested, please contact Karen Murphy,

Email: kmurphy718@charter.net

Deacons: Nancy Arsenault, JoAnn Bakulski, Pat Jackman, Karen Murphy, Chris Showalter

Parish Board

As we prepare for a new Designated Term Pastor we are assessing how we can create a private office for him. We are looking into how we can rearrange the space that we have available to us to make this happen as well as keeping administrative space for our Admin and others that need to access the copier, etc. In the meantime, John L is updating some of our outlets in the office space and the fellowship hall. We also continue to repair those things that come up that need to be addressed on a regular basis.

We ask that you do not approach a Parish Board member or our handyman Dave on Sundays with a fix-it problem or a concern. We ask that you be respectful of our worship time and write anything that may need to be addressed in the notebook that is located in the Parish Board mailbox. The exception of course would be an emergency situation. The Parish Board members can also be reached via email or phone. Their numbers are in the church directory.

Parish: Juan Bacigalupi, Linda Daskowski, Wally Hall, Mike Murphy

Designated Term Pastoral Search Committee

We are very happy to report that on Sunday, May 11, our congregation at a specially called meeting following our worship service voted unanimously to call Dr. Douglas J. Williamson to serve as our church's Designated Term Minister for the next three years. Doug was ordained as a United Methodist minister, and since 2019 he has been serving a United Church of Christ church in Ohio. He was officially granted UCC ministerial standing (Dual Standing) while serving that church, and he is expected to be granted that same UCC standing while serving our church. His ministerial profile came to our search committee from our UCC Conference, which vetted him and recommended that we consider him to serve our church. Our congregation very much enjoyed meeting Doug and his wife Karen during their visit to our church on that candidating weekend.



When will Doug begin to serve our church? The short answer to that question is that he is required, according to his Call Agreement (signed by him and leaders of our church on May 11, after the congregation's vote), to begin serving our church between August 17 and the end of September of 2025. That range was chosen based on estimates of the time that might be required for him to depart from his current church, find and secure housing in our area, and move here. Doug has been clear though that he hopes he'll be able to begin serving our church sooner rather than later in that time range.

As of this writing, our search committee has learned that Doug and Karen have put an offer on a house about 20 minutes or so away from our church, and their offer has been accepted. So, that is very good news. However, that was a challenge for them because once they returned to Ohio after visiting us, they were not in a position to come back to Massachusetts to see that house in person before they bid on it. We certainly appreciate their determination to fulfill their commitment to our church. In sending our committee that recent good news, Doug also told us: "We are so looking forward to being with you folks and the rest of the church family in the very near future."

Our committee and congregation are now looking forward eagerly to Doug's ministry in our church and his help as we now move into our future and continue to pursue our designated term goals of (1) strengthening our practice of being a Welcoming Church and (2) expanding our presence in the community.

Onward and upward!

Doug Showalter, Terry Hall, Linda Barron, Angela Carville





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

****Our Famous Asparagus Chowder****

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month's Asparagus Festival! It was a GREAT day! The kitchen cooked up 64 pots of their incredible asparagus chowder and it was sold both cold and hot. Wally Hall, Karen Andersen and Crew got to work mid-week cutting mounds of vegetables and especially asparagus - and got the massive job done! Of the 64 large pots of chowder that were created over 300 quarts were sold as *Cold Quarts To-Go*. Cold quarts are truly gaining in popularity!



Our thanks to the many bakers who created the wonderful, homemade cookies, thanks to the "donators" who shopped and then donated many, many containers of half and half, chicken broth, and butter and thanks 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 \$9936 which broke all past records! Remember, all funds raised go towards the general upkeep of the church which in turn supports the Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry and the many mission projects that our church supports throughout the year.

Each year we change things up 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,
Debbie Steltzer & Wally Hall

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



Dismas Farm Dinners

We will be hosting the gents
from Dismas on

June 10th at 6.00 PM.

We are planning on having Hamburgers, Hotdogs, Salads and Desserts. We have had a donation that will cover the cost of the Hamburgers and Hot Dogs. I'll bring a potato salad. If folk could bring some other salads and desserts, hot dog and hamburger rolls that would be great. Please let us know what you can bring.

Thanks as always.

Deanna and Angela

Dismas Volunteers:

Deanna Randall - 413-436-7849
or drandall444@comcast.net

Millie Gushue - 413-436-7125;
or gushoo@comcast.net

Angela Carville - 508-347-1148 or
angelacarville67@gmail.com



From the Giguere Family on behalf of Martha Giguere's service:

Dear Dennis & Karen,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful and heartfelt service. It was beautiful in every way. And your church community was amazing. The pre-service gathering was amazing and very well sent our mother on her way to heaven. The musical accompaniment was very beautiful. Thank you!

Never have we been more aware of how much our family and friends mean to us. Your thoughtfulness did so much to ease our sorrow.

The Family of Martha W. Giguere
Monique, Lise Anne, Anthony & Betty Giguere and
all of the Guiguere Family

**The note that this message came on is on the church bulletin board. It shows a beautiful picture of Martha with wild horses. Take a look.*



Thank you to Burdett's Trash Pickup!

After the Asparagus Festival, we always have between 6 - 12 bags of trash and with the church not having regular trash pickup we needed to find somewhere for it to go. Burdett's Trash Co. in Spencer has picked up our trash as a courtesy two years in a row and we want to take this opportunity to thank them! If you have a need for trash pick up at your home we recommend that you give Burdetts a call. 508-612-8093.

Sincere thanks to Burdetts for being community-minded and a supportive local company!



Cathy Collings – 6/1
 Debbie Decoste – 6/19
 Phyllis Allen – 6/20
 Mike Spencer – 6/24
 Deanna Randall – 6/26
 Millie Gushue – 6/27

Rev. Robert & Pat Jackman – 6/13
 Doug & Christine Showalter – 6/23
 Jack & Debbie Decoste – 6/28
 Peter & Joanne Dirlam – 6/30

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR CHURCH OFFICERS & CHAIRS

Moderator: Dee Blanton – deebanton86@gmail.com
 Deacon Chair: Karen Murphy – kmurphy718@charter.net
 Parish Board Co-Chairs: Wally Hall – terryle56@yahoo.com & Mike Murphy – kmurphy718@charter.net
 Treasurer – Mary Deotte – hombai@yahoo.com
 Collector: Deanna Randall – drandall444@comcast.net
 Clerk: Terry Hall – terryle56@yahoo.com
 Church Phone: 508-867-7078

From Our Church Office

Church Secretary – Bonni Holmes – fccwbworship@gmail.com
 Office Hours – Friday 9 am – 11 am

Please note – The *Glad Tidings* deadline for July is Monday, June 23rd.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Website: westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org
 Facebook: First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC
 Instagram: Search @firstcongwestbrookfield



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.*



<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>
1 Worship 10 am Pastor Dennis Coffee & Fellowship	2	3	4 Sharing Cupboard 10 – 11:30 am	5 Sharing Cupboard 7 – 8 pm	6	7 Parish Board Meeting 11am
8 Worship 10 am Pastor Dennis Sunday School Church Council Coffee & Fellowship	9	10 Dismas Farm Potluck dinner at the church 6pm	11 Sharing Cupboard 10 – 11:30 am	12 Sharing Cupboard 7 – 8 pm	13	14
15 Worship 10 am Pastor Dennis Coffee & Fellowship	16	17	18 Sharing Cupboard 10 – 11:30 am	19 Sharing Cupboard 7 – 8 pm	20	21
22 Worship 10 am Pastor Dennis Sunday School Coffee & Fellowship Deacon's Meeting	23 Glad Tidings Deadline	24	25 Sharing Cupboard 10 – 11:30 am	26 Sharing Cupboard 7 – 8 pm	27	28
29 Worship 10 am Pastor Dennis Coffee & Fellowship	30					



The flea market is on September 13th this year. We have many new fun ideas and we need your help to pull it all together. Please save the date to help us out. We will be asking for donations and seeking the assistance of bakers. As well as, workers for set-up, clean-up and in the food tent. Please watch for the sign-up sheets and lend a hand if you can. Any questions contact Karen Murphy at: kmurphy718@charter.net.

VENDORS: If you or someone you know is interested in reserving a spot, please send an email to fccofwbfileamarket@gmail.com or contact Karen Murphy. *Reserve early to lock in your spot!*

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