

From the Hill



First Congregational Church of Georgetown

7 Andover Street, P.O. Box 200

Georgetown, MA 01833

Telephone: 978-352-8443

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November 2020

A Sacred Season

In the calendar of the Church year, Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday are the central moments of worship, celebrating Christ's arrival in human flesh and then his resurrection from human death. And yet for me, it's the times of preparation for those moments that I find the most meaningful and the most healing.

In America, we quite naturally associate November with a time of gratitude, culminating in our celebration of Thanksgiving. But the month begins with All Saints' Day on the first Sunday, as a moment for giving gratitude to God for the lives of Christians who have gone before us. We traditionally pray for character and strength to follow in the footsteps of those saints. Protestant churches also take the opportunity to remember specific members of the congregation who have died during the previous year.

The four weeks of Advent begin after Thanksgiving. They mark an intentional preparation for the birth of the Christ child. The first week of Advent traditionally focuses on the promised *second* coming of Jesus at an unknown day in the future. The following weeks typically focus on Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah and on John the Baptist as preparing the way for Jesus.

This year Advent begins on Sunday, November 29th. The Christian Development team will be providing brass Advent wreaths and taper candles for our families with children. Additional wreath/taper sets will be available on request to the church office for a suggested donation of \$15. Live greens from your yard can be laid around the wreath on a table top, and devotionals for a daily lighting of the candles at home will be available to all church members. Stay tuned for details!

On Wednesday, December 2, I will lead a brief time of teaching about Advent ("Advent 101") beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. And on each of the four Sundays of Advent, I'll lead an adult Sunday school class based on four traditional hymns of Advent ("O Come, O Come Emmanuel"). Details are in the body of this newsletter. I hope you'll bring a mug of cocoa and join me for these!

In all the hustle and bustle of the mad rush toward Christmas, All Saints Day, Thanksgiving, and Advent provide sacred moments for reflection and prayer as we once again prepare to celebrate

the coming of Emmanuel, God with us. Wishing you a beautiful, sacred season of preparation.

Blessings,

Dallas

“Advent 101”

Why do we celebrate Advent in the church? What does the lighting of the candles mean? Bring a cup of cocoa and learn more about the four weeks set aside on the Church calendar to prepare for the coming of the Christ child. And plan to celebrate Advent in your own home this year!

Wednesday, December 2, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86736379561?pwd=T3FLVjdxSkE4c1FrL1dhZFYxWVFKZz09>

Meeting ID: 867 3637 9561

Passcode: 808905

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel: Hymns of Advent”

We’re all familiar with the wonderful carols of Christmas, but did you know that the season of Advent has some glorious music all its own? This adult Sunday school class will explore four Advent hymns across the four Sundays of Advent. There’s no book to read. Lessons will be attached to the Friday eblasts, together with a link to a recording for you to preview each hymn before class.

Sundays, November 29 and December 6, 13, 20 at 9:45 a.m. via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84858817643?pwd=aEZ0bDM3ZEIxSU9XeDEyMDVxMVB5QT09>

Meeting ID: 848 5881 7643

Passcode: 477009

From The Member-at-Large

The Church Council is very interested in your ideas as to how we can grow spiritually as a church. How can we expand what we do well so that it reaches beyond our own walls? Please share your thoughts with me or with any of the Council members. Other thoughts and concerns may be shared at any time. Our Member-at-Large to the Council is Janice Murphy.

Light The Church Fund



Contributions for lighting the church can be made in memory of loved ones or in honor of someone special. If you would like to make a contribution or need more information please contact Bob Knapp at 978-352-7489.

Our church will be lit for November in memory of loved ones by Sylvia Johnston.



Thomas Chaffee

Sam Perley

Katherine Desisto

Philip Rosene

Nicole Galley

Gloria Webster

Timothy Lee

Outreach News

GREETINGS FROM THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Our congregation has always been incredibly generous doing our best to alleviate some of the suffering that surrounds us. In addition to other projects, we have traditionally tried to help people at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Here is information on two ways you might like to help our high priority missions.

THANKSGIVING

This year Our Neighbor's Table (food pantry) cannot accept our traditional bags of Thanksgiving meal items due to lack of quarantine space. You may send a monetary donation to them so they can purchase food in bulk directly from wholesalers. P.O. Box 592 Amesbury, MA 01913. www.ourneighborstable.org Note: The Georgetown COA food pantry received a grant and is in good shape at this time.

CHRISTMAS

We wish to continue our Annual Christmas Gift Drive for children in Orland, Maine which we have supported for 45 years. Logistically it will be a bit tricky with much at our church happening virtually, but here are the plans for this year:

See website soon for list of requested items (fccgeorgetownma.org)

Nov 15 – Dec 6 collection (early deadline due to need to quarantine)

20 kids to be helped (one clothing & one fun item each)

If participating then choose one or more items

Gifts approximately \$25 to \$35

Gift wrap and tag with the code you will find on the website

Drop off at church NARTHEX on Sundays or indicate if pick-up needed.

NOTE: For those receiving a hard copy of the newsletter and no access to the website to fulfill a wish, please contact Mary Ann.

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS can be directed to Mary Ann or Joan.

Mary Ann (978-352-2765) Joan (978-352-8033)

Thank you in advance for your support during these trying and unusual times. You continue to bring joy to so many!

Blessings to all,
Your Outreach Team,
Joan Chatterton, Marion Harding, Martha Lucius,
Mary Ann Nelson, Jean Perley

Greetings from the Diaconate

"In fall everything is made out of magic, leaves, trees, foxes, and people."

Frances Hodgson Burnett ~

Enormous blessings! Feeling thankful!! Gratefulness! I am sure some of you reading this November Newsletter of 2020 are thinking that our diaconate, especially our chair, Gladie, has lost their minds! This is COVID, this is anxiety, this is fear.... not here, with our Church Family. Since March we have been so overwhelmed with everything around us being 'different' and 'frightening' but we also have found so many reasons for gratefulness, thankfulness and blessings! Our summer services with the themes of beach and camp hopefully brought us together with memories, laughter and love. Along came autumn, with the air as crisp as an apple, with the glorious fiery colors of reds, oranges, yellows and the brightest of blue skies that only God's paintbrush can provide. Again, heartfelt gratitude for our beautiful New England landscape. Who among us can drive by our beautiful historical white church with the background of autumn trees and the bluest of skies and not feel God's assurance and comfort?

Three Sundays in November, Dallas will be enjoying some time away. This is an opportunity for your deacons to share these Sunday worship services with you. I would like to approach these Sundays with the 'theme' of Thankfulness and Blessings. I hope you will join us, either in person, or via zoom to share old traditions, new ideas and the warmth of friendship.

All of our expert teams at church, as well as our dear Church Family bring their gifts of time, talent and love to each of us. Blessings one and all. Your deacons, Antoinette, Emily, Marie, Pam, and Rachel work hard to be there for each of you, to listen and above all, to care.

The mellowing light of November, casts a gentle glow over our homes. The anticipation of Thanksgiving, albeit perhaps different this year, gathering with our loved ones around a table laden with our favorite savory flavors of the holiday, or sharing the day with those loved ones on our zoom screen. Perhaps even baking or heating up one of our famous Apple or Blueberry Church Pies ... mmm, the smells of this day prompt so many warm and cozy memories.

May you enjoy the wondrous gifts of this season, reflecting on cherished memories and blessings that are deep in your heart.

Gladie





Each month we meet to talk about books selected by book club members. Meetings are held in different houses or at the church. If you are interested in attending, contact the Church Office or any of the people listed below to get directions to that month's meeting.

All are welcome and you do not have to RSVP to attend. Below is a list of books that will be discussed in the coming months in case you want to get the book ahead of time or you might just be looking for a good read.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85759618690>

Meeting ID: 857 5961 8690

Passcode: 527292

Date 2020	Title	Author	Location/Hostess/Phone Number
September 30	<i>The One-in-a-Million Boy</i> ©2017	Monica Wood	Zoom
October 28	<i>When Time Stopped: a memoir of my father's war and what remains</i> ©2020	Ariana Neumann	Zoom
December 1 (combined Nov/Dec)	<i>Redhead by the Side of the Road</i> ©2020	Anne Tyler	Zoom
2021			
January 27	<i>The Nickel Boys</i> ©2019	Colson Whitehead	TBA
February 24	<i>Simon the Fiddler</i> ©2020	Paulette Jiles	TBA
March 31	<i>In the Country of Women: a memoir</i> ©2019	Susan Straight	TBA
April 28	<i>The Last Train to Key West</i> ©2020	Chanel Cleeton	TBA
May 26	<i>Coco Chanel: Pearls, Perfume and the Little Black Dress</i> ©2018	Susan Goldman Rubin	TBA
June 30 or June 23?	<i>The Cactus</i> ©2018	Sarah Haywood	TBA



We have PayPal!

Go to our website and you can donate to or pay for church fundraisers at First Church using your credit card; you can get the points and help our church out, too. Just remember that we get **93%** of what you give. Please send an email message to the church office to let us know about the donation, and if it is going to a particular place.

Have You Started Christmas Shopping?

The FCC Georgetown is set up to receive a percentage of your purchase when you shop AmazonSmile.

www.smile.amazon.com

- sign in or sign up
- find the dropdown for your account
- find Your AmazonSmile on the list & click on it
- change or select a charity—put in First Congregational Church of Georgetown (there will be 2 options, one is Boxford)
- You are all set to shop and the church will benefit from your purchases.

When you shop, be sure to go to www.smile.amazon.com for the church to receive credit - not the regular Amazon account (this won't give us credit).



We are in our **Season of Stewardship** and you should be receiving in the mail the 2021 Stewardship and Pledge information. November 22nd is designated as Stewardship Sunday. We realize that this has not been an easy year for our Church or the congregation, but we ask you to do what you can. This year we suggest that the forms be mailed to the church office (P.O. Box 200, Attn: Collector).

Thank you for your generous spirit. Remember, every gift counts!

Blessings from the Stewardship Committee,

Toni Cassidy, George Comiskey & Sylvia Johnston

**YOUR GIVING
MATTERS!**

Thank You!

Dear Church Family

This note comes with gratitude for all the kindnesses that come from participating in the life of our Church. Many thanks for the gorgeous Birthday Rose that Pam Sheehan brought to me. It is in a place of honor in my home, and a constant reminder of the love and support my Church Family has shown me over the years.

Joan Chatterton



Looking Back at November:

60 years ago:

The two candelabra were purchased.
Smoking is now permitted in the church except for the sanctuary.

50 years ago:

Mother / Daughter banquet. (The males had theirs in April.)
Every member canvas. (Someone from the church visited your home to "help" you decide your pledge amount for the following year!)
Country Store Fair chaired by Pat Pingree & Betty Davidson (Yes, the fair was in late November.)
4th Annual ecumenical Thanksgiving eve service held in our sanctuary.

40 years ago:

One of the houses recently purchased by our church on Cottage street is torn down.
(Their used to be 4 tiny houses on the church's side of Cottage street where we now have parking.)
14th Annual ecumenical Thanksgiving eve service held at St. Mary's.
Pilgrim fellowship paper drive.

30 years ago:

Among those joining the church are Beth & George Desrochers.
Organ concert with Douglas Rafter.
24th Annual ecumenical Thanksgiving eve service held at St. Mary's. Our bell choir played.

20 years ago:

Our web page is started.
34th Annual ecumenical Thanksgiving eve service held at St. Mary's.

10 years ago:

Ecumenical Thanksgiving service held at St. James Episcopal church.



CONTEST

Let's Make a Gingerbread House!!

Join us for a time of fellowship as we celebrate the Advent Season at the First Congregational Church in Georgetown. This year's event will occur virtually due to the pandemic. We're hoping everyone will join us for this festive activity!

1. While sign up is optional, we would like to know who is participating. Please sign up if you can, which will occur online on our website at fccgeorgetownma.org.
2. Order / Purchase your materials at local stores, or you can pre-order the supplies by completing the sign up form by **Sunday, November 29, 2020**.
3. Join the event on **December 6 @ 1 PM** via ZOOM. The ZOOM information will be shared soon.
4. Take a picture of your completed house and email a copy to ChurchOffice@fccgeorgetownma.org by **Friday, December 11, 2020**.
5. The awards will be posted to the website on Sunday, December 13, 2020 and announced during the worship service.

If anyone has any questions about the event, please contact a member of the Christian Development Team.

Thanks,
Rich Brock
Mary Ann Nelson
Tom Chaffee





November 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:45 am Sunday School Adult 848 5881 7643 Passcode 477009 Children 762 897 0602 10:30 am Worship	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 9:45 am Sunday School Adult 848 5881 7643 Passcode 477009 Children 762 897 0602 10:30 am Worship	9	10 6:00 pm Finance	11	12	13	14
15 9:45 am Sunday School Adult 848 5881 7643 Passcode 477009 Children 762 897 0602 10:30 am Worship	16	17	18	19 6:30pm Council	20	21
22 9:45 am Sunday School Adult 848 5881 7643 Passcode 477009 Children 762 897 0602 10:30 am Worship	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive
	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Annual Gift Drive	Happy Thanksgiving	Office Closed	Annual Gift Drive
29 9:45 am Sunday School Adult 848 5881 7643 Passcode 477009 Children 762 897 0602 10:30 am Worship	30					
	Annual Gift Drive					

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Inside This Issue

Book Club	6
Calendar	11
Diaconate News	5
Gingerbread Contest.....	10
Light the Church, Birthdays, History	3,9
Outreach News	4
Pastor’s Message	1,2
The Stewardship Team.....	8

Our Church Mission Statement:

*“To nurture those in our own faith community
and to act on our faith by reaching out to others.”*

We are an Open and Affirming church of the United Church of Christ.