



# The Congregational Church of Needham

*An open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ*

**November 19, 2017 10:00am**

**Thanksgiving Sunday  
Pledge Campaign 2018: Our Future is Now**

*Welcome to our worship service.*

*Please join us for our Village Fair and refreshments immediately following the service.  
Students in Kindergarten through 8th grade begin in the sanctuary and are dismissed to their  
classrooms after the Anthem.*

**And Bob Dylan Too**

By Mary Oliver, published in *A Thousand Mornings*

Anything worth thinking about is worth singing about.  
Which is why we have songs of praise, songs of love, songs of sorrow.  
Songs to the gods, who have so many names.  
Songs the shepherds sing, on the lonely mountains, while the sheep are  
honoring the grass, by eating it.  
The dance-songs of the bees, to tell where the flowers, suddenly, in the  
morning light, have opened.  
A chorus of many, shouting to heaven, or at it, or pleading.  
Or that greatest of love affairs, a violin and a human body.  
And a composer, maybe hundreds of years dead.  
I think of Schubert, scribbling on a cafe napkin.  
Thank you, thank you.

**PRELUDE**

Adagio  
*Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*

**WELCOME SONG** (*see insert*)

**Welcome**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

**CONGREGATIONAL GREETING**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Almighty and gracious Father and Mother, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #21** (*Red, Pilgrim*)

**We Gather Together**

**ANTHEM**

Together in Thanksgiving  
*William Bradbury arr. Stan Pethel*  
Shepherd's Staff Choir

**TIME FOR CHILDREN**

*Children leave for Sunday School after the Anthem this week.*

**ANTHEM**

You Will Be Found (From Dear Evan Hansen)  
*Pasek and Paul*  
Once in A While Choir, under direction of Cici Hunt

**SELECTION OF READINGS**

Leviticus 13:45-46

“The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip<sup>[b]</sup> and cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean.’ He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Gospel Luke 17:11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out, saying, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!’ When he saw them, he said to them, ‘Go and show your-

selves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, ‘Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?’ Then he said to him, ‘Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.’

**HYMN** (*see insert for music*)

**Simple Gifts**

**‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free.  
‘Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right.  
‘Twill be in the valley of love and delight. When true simplicity is gained.  
To bow and to bend we shant be ashamed. To turn, turn, will be our delight.  
‘Til by turning, turning we come ‘round right.**

**SERMON**

Rev. Jim Mitulski

**HYMN** (*see insert for music*)

**Simple Gifts**

## **COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

*Concerns and Celebrations*

*Prayers for Our Friends and Families, Our Church, Our Community, and the World.*

*Lord’s Prayer (please pray whatever form is familiar to you; many choose to pray Our Father, Our Mother, Our Father and Mother, Our Creator, or Our Maker, or Father/Mother God...debts/debtors or trespasses/those who trespass...)*

## **OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS**

*In each of our pews today is a black friendship book which we encourage you to fill out and pass to the person next to you during the offering. If you have been with us before, just put down your name, but if you are new today, please let us know who you are. Thanks!*

Offertory Anthem

Thank Ye The Lord  
*Johann C. Geisler(1729 - 1815)*

**\* Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication***

**CLOSING HYMN #29** (*Red, Pilgrim*)

**Now Thank We All Our God**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

Postlude  
*Dmitri Kabalevsky*

*Worship Assistant:* Tom Mollerus

*Deacons:* Carol Miller, Sue Cotton

*Altar Guild:* Jean Veigas

*Ushers:* Jim Conroy, Mike Normile, Janet Jankowiak, Bob Everts

*Flowers:* Jan Rubenstein

*Flower Delivery:* Caryl Johnson

*The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Robert Treen by his daughter and son-in-law, Jane and Adam Brand.*

## **Covenant**

We strive to be a joyful, welcoming Christian Community.

We seek to be faithful in a world torn by suffering, injustice, oppression, and war.

We are inspired by God, Christ's Ministry, and the examples of other faithful people.

We join together in worship and song, fellowship, study, and mission to embrace the risks and challenges of continuing Christ's ministry

We struggle to live out our faith in the world by furthering justice and peace, witnessing to the truth, and proclaiming God's love and mercy for all people.

## **Open and Affirming Statement**

As a covenant community we are committed to the belief that all people are created equal before God.

In affirmation of the inclusive love of Christ Jesus, we welcome persons of any race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and economic circumstance to full participation in our community life and ministry.

We strive to reflect these beliefs in the language and content of our worship and in our lives together.

*(This statement adopted in 2000, reflects the welcome of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people and their friends and families.)*

Welcome to all who are new or here for the first time! If you are interested in learning more about our church, please email Rev. Jim at [revjim@needhamucc.org](mailto:revjim@needhamucc.org), Rev Heike at [revheike@needhamucc.org](mailto:revheike@needhamucc.org) or call the office at 781-444-2510 to set up a conversation.

For updates on church life, our family ministries, Christian Education and Youth Ministries follow us at: **@NeedhamUCC on Instagram**

**Congregational Church of Needham UCC on Facebook**

**@needhamucc on Twitter [www.needhamucc.org](http://www.needhamucc.org)**

Please silence your cell phone before attending the service. You can Check In on Facebook and let people know you are here. Feel free to Tweet, Snapchat, or Instagram during the service. If you would like or need a hearing device an usher will be able to assist you. Children's Childcare is offered for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers in the Nursery located downstairs during the service.

#### **Rev. Jim Mitulski's Office Hours**

Please contact the church office to schedule an appointment during his office hours of Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm; Thursday 2-5pm Evening hours are also available by appointment.

\*If these times do not work for you please contact the office for alternate availability.

#### **Staff**

Interim Senior Minister—The Rev. Jim Mitulski  
[RevJim@needhamucc.org](mailto:RevJim@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 106

Associate Minister—The Rev. Heike Werder  
[RevHeike@needhamucc.org](mailto:RevHeike@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 105

Director of Children & Youth Ministries—Madelyn Downer  
[Youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:Youth@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 104

Organist/Accompanist—Sangyoung Kim

Housekeeper—Sanira Alchaar

Church Administrator—Danielle Jurdan  
[Office@needhamucc.org](mailto:Office@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 101

Office Assistant & Bookkeeper—Cindy Sullivan  
[Office2@needhamucc.org](mailto:Office2@needhamucc.org)  
781-444-2510, ext. 100

Music Director—Valerie Becker  
[musicdirector@needhamucc.org](mailto:musicdirector@needhamucc.org)

Handyman—Bill Donovan

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*The Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton, Pastor Emeritus*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

**November 19, 2017**

**Begin the Holiday Season with our Christmas Concert:** The church's annual Christmas Concert will be held **Sunday, December 3 at 4:00 p.m.** with a reception to follow in Fellowship Hall. We encourage you to support this event— provided by Music Director Valerie J. Becker, the Chancel Choir, the Friendly Chimers and guest harpist Martha Moor. You may make a donation, specify a memorial, honorarium, or remembrance and your name will be listed in the concert program.

Invite your friends and neighbors and support this fun event with your presence and your monetary donation. Checks may be made payable to the Congregational Church of Needham with “Christmas Concert” noted on the memo line.

### **Friendly Society Meeting - Thursday, December 7th at 1:30pm**

Calling all Friendly Society members and friends! On December 7th after Rev. Heike's delicious Soup lunch, we will gather to make Cheese Balls to sell for Holiday festivities. The Women's Morning Fellowship members have the expertise and experience and we'll enjoy their guidance as we revive this tradition. We'll meet at 1:30. If you have a food processor to bring or that we can borrow, please let Rev. Heike or Martha Lamb know at [martha\\_lamb@aol.com](mailto:martha_lamb@aol.com).

### **SAVE THE DATE - Friendly Christmas Luncheon and Advent Lunch on December 14th. Details to follow.**

**Mindfulness Meditation November 26 at 11:30am.** The Mindfulness Practice Group meets twice a month on the second and fourth Sunday's for Mindfulness Meditation in the Chapel.

**The Transition Team** has several goals in the process of preparing our Church Profile. While the survey completion is critical, we also are striving for as much transparency as we can achieve. With that in mind, we will be putting blurbs into the bulletin each week with updated information. A lot of this will be generated by questions that we get from the congregation, so thank you for your interest and involvement. Look for a “Transition Team” page on the church web site where each week's message will be archived. Refer back to it for information that you may have missed.

Who is God Calling us to Become? Only we can figure this out, and it starts with YOU! Taking the survey is the first step of our Church Profile Process. So far, we have 72 surveys completed, so we are off to a good start. Please aim to get your survey completed as soon as possible. As always, we welcome any and all questions. If you ask a question, it will likely be one that several people have, and we will address it!

If you have not had the opportunity to attend church for the last few weeks, please see the Transition Team page on the church website. (Click on the “connect bar” then choose Transition Team from the drop-down menu to read all past Bulletin blurbs and the letter sent out on October 28.)

After the Survey results have been professionally analyzed and presented to the Transition Team, we will start offering small group meetings to offer more opportunities for feedback. Members of the team and interested volunteers will also meet with groups in the Community to both get a sense of how our church is viewed by them, and how we can become more helpful and involved in the Community. After all of this is compiled, we will complete our Church Profile which will become the framework through which the Search Team starts the work of selecting the best Candidate.

We welcome your questions and will have members of the Transition Team available at coffee hour to help with any questions you may have.

Our choice of our next minister will be influenced by our Church Profile, which will be prepared using the answers to the survey and the input from the Congregation. The survey is one of the tools through which YOUR VOICE will be heard. Every individual should complete the survey, and please note that it will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The way the survey is set up, each question must be answered, and it must be completed in one session. We thank you for your input and opinions!

Have a question for the transition team? Want to set up a meeting with a transition team member? Here's the address to do so. All opinions are welcome! [transitionteam@needhamucc.org](mailto:transitionteam@needhamucc.org)

Here is the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CongregationalCNeedham>

**Free Thanksgiving Day Dinner!** November 23rd Thanksgiving Day at Masonic Hall (1101 Highland Ave. Needham, MA). Dinner provided by The Rotary Club of Needham, The Needham Community Council and The Needham Masons. Doors open at 11:30am and dinner is served at Noon.

**Calling all Bakers!** As part of our Membership care efforts, the desire has been expressed to improve upon our coffee hour offerings. And what better way than to offer home baked and nut free goodies, including also gluten free items. Rev. Heike invites anyone to a monthly afternoon of baking at the church. The next date is December 20, 2017 in the 1154 GPA kitchen. We can bake a lot in one afternoon and then freeze the goods for Sunday's coffee hour. If you wish to contribute to coffee hour but cannot help us bake, we gratefully accept donations. Please contact Rev. Heike if you want to help or donate.

**NEEDHAM UCC FAMILY COOKBOOK:** Submit Your Recipes Now! Our Youth Groups

will be compiling recipes through January for a new Congregational Church of Needham cookbook! You are invited to contribute your favorite recipe to be included. You can email the recipe to [youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:youth@needhamucc.org) or bring a printed copy and put it in Maddie's mailbox in the copy room! Additionally, if you'd like to share one or two sentences on a memory related to your recipe we will include that as well! Recipes will be collected through January 31. The cookbooks will be released in time for preparing your Easter dinner!

**Bible Study** Please join us in the reception room from 11:30-12:30 for Bible Study. We gather to read and discuss a few chapters of the Bible each week. This fall we will be reading Revelations. No advance reading required, so please drop by if you would like to try us out! For questions, contact Sunu Yeh at [dormouse99@gmail.com](mailto:dormouse99@gmail.com).

**What are you doing next Sunday?** Would you like to contribute to the life of our church, but are worried that you might not have the time? Consider ushering! Ushers serve one Sunday per month, and need to be in the sanctuary from about 20 minutes before and 20 minutes after service. Interested? Please speak with Eric Slosser or email him at [eric@slosser.net](mailto:eric@slosser.net).

**12 Ways to Green Your Thanksgiving** Take these small steps to make your Thanksgiving celebration more environmentally friendly:

- 1. Use the good dishes and cloth napkins.** Disposable dishes and plastic utensils create a ton of waste. If reusable won't work, choose disposable plates, cups, napkins and utensils made from 100 percent post-consumer waste recycled paper, sugarcane and corn—they are compostable, too.
- 2. Decorate with nature.** Forget the petroleum-based plastic and synthetic decorations and adorn your table with natural and homemade festive decor. Fill clear vases with pinecones, acorns and colorful leaves. Popped open your organic wine bottles already? Carve a small slit in the corks, and slide in a piece of paper with a guest's name to create unique, upcycled place settings.
- 3. Use reusable or borrow rather than buy.** Choose reusable leftover containers and cookware or borrow extra dishes, platters and special bakeware. If you're going to someone else's house, bring your own reusable container for leftovers.
- 4. Take a look at your energy use.** If you have several dishes that need to be in the oven at the same temperature, put them in at the same time to reduce energy use and prep time. Start some of your ingredients, like butter, at room temperature to reduce stove-top melting time.
- 5. Stay close to home or carpool.** There's no way around it: traveling miles and miles to share a single meal with family and friends is not the greenest of ways to spend a Thanksgiving. Sticking closer to home means a smaller carbon footprint. If you are attending a large family gathering for Thanksgiving, carpool with other family members. Make sure your tires are inflated properly.
- 6. Prepare less food.** Everybody feels compelled to put a huge turkey in the oven and prepare numerous courses. Choose a smaller bird and skip some of the less-popular dishes to re-

duce food waste.

**7. Use smaller plates for less food waste.** Kids tend to eat small amounts and then leave to play while adults tend to fill their plate with everything that looks appealing. A smaller plate means your guests will choose less in the first place.

**8. Shop local and organic.** Why not pay your local farmer a visit? Buying local and sustainable food can help create jobs and grow our rural and urban economies, preserve farmland and improve the environment and provide fresh and healthy food to our family and friends. Use the National Resources Defense Council's buy local app to find a farmers market near you and check out what is in season ahead of time.

**9. Compost your kitchen scraps.** Composting kitchen scraps can have a big impact. Twenty-four percent of the waste Americans send to landfills is organic waste, meaning kitchen scraps. Keeping that waste out of landfills doesn't just save space, it also reduces greenhouse gas emissions, as decomposition in landfills creates methane, a greenhouse gas 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

**10. Serve tap water.** Bottled water creates plastic waste, isn't safer than tap water, is expensive to buy and is often just tap water in a bottle.

**11. Use candles made from soy or vegetable wax.** Soy wax is clean-burning, without soot or harmful emissions, and has a low melting point so it burns at a cooler temperature.

**12. Bring a local or organic bottle of wine for your hosts.** Many wineries, such as Fetzer, are making efforts to be a sustainable business. You can also look for the Eco Glass label on many different bottles of wine. Eco Glass uses 25 percent less glass than traditional wine bottles, saving materials and shipping weight, which saves delivery truck fuel use.

**Noah's Ark Preschool** is in the process of enrolling children for the 2018 – 2019 school year! Noah's Ark offers priority enrollment to returning students, siblings, and Congregational Church of Needham members, respectively, now through November 17<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to tour the school and to receive more information, please call Laurie Davis at 781-449-2439. Additional information can be gathered from our website at: [www.noahsarkneedham.org](http://www.noahsarkneedham.org).

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL & FAMILY MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***THIS WEEK:*** *Students in Kindergarten through 8th grade begin in the sanctuary and are dismissed to their classrooms after Time for Children.*

**NEXT WEEK:** Students remain in the sanctuary for a Family Sunday worship service.

### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: SIGN-UPS BEGIN SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5**

ALL are invited to participate in our Christmas pageant during our 4:00 PM worship service on Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24. We have parts for the littlest littles (paging a baby Jesus!) all the way through our most seasoned members! Sign-ups are ongoing through Sunday, November 26. Our rehearsal schedule is listed below; participants need to be able to make at least one rehearsal prior to Christmas Eve along with the Christmas Eve rehearsal and service. Please

come to Maddie, our youth director, with any questions!

Sunday, December 10: Lunch and rehearsal 11:30

Sunday, December 17: Lunch and rehearsal 11:30 (costumes distributed)

Sunday, December 24: Rehearsal 2:30-3:30, worship begins at 4

### **ADVENT LUNCH & WORKSHOP: Sunday, December 3, after worship**

Families are invited to participate in our Advent lunch and workshop on Sunday, December 3rd following worship. We will gather in Linden Hall to make Christmas ornaments, cards, and Advent wreaths. Sandwiches, salad, and Christmas cookies will be served. RSVPs are not required but if you know you can make it, please sign up on the sheet outside Maddie's office.

### **COOKIES WITH SANTA: Saturday, December 17, 11:30-1:30 PM**

Join Santa Claus in the reception room for cookies and pictures. Parents, bring your phone or camera to take a picture of your little with the jolly old elf himself! Santa's favorite snack of milk and cookies will be served to all! Gluten-free and nut-safe options will be available.

## **YOUTH MINISTRIES ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THIS WEEK: JR High, SR High, and their families** gather from 5:00 - 7:00 PM for a pot-luck dinner. JR High students should bring a side dish to share. SR High students should bring a dessert. Maddie will bring the main course.

**NEXT WEEK:** There will be no youth meetings on Sunday, November 26. Maddie's community office hours are on Tuesday, November 28, 2:30-4:00 PM at Dunkin Donuts on Highland Ave.

### **UPCOMING: SR HIGH LOCK-IN: Friday, January 5-Saturday, January 6, 2018**

Senior High Youth Group students gather for their winter lock-in here at the church at 7:00 pm on Friday. On Saturday, we will head to snow tubing at the Nashoba Valley Tubing Park before returning at 2 PM. Meals: Students will eat dinner on Friday and breakfast and lunch on Saturday. The cost to students is \$50. If this event is cost-prohibitive for your student or family, please reach out to Maddie at [youth@needhamucc.org](mailto:youth@needhamucc.org). Friends of youth group members are welcome to join! RSVPs for this event are due Sunday, December 3, 2017 on the signup sheet outside Maddie's office. We are in need of 1 adult chaperone for overnight on Friday and 2 drivers on Saturday. Minimum of 6 students.

11/12/2017 Collections\* = \$1936.75 11/12/2017 Worship Attendance = 115 people

October Electronic Pledge Amount: \$13,581.93

Please contact the church office 781-444-2510 or [office@needhamucc.org](mailto:office@needhamucc.org) to find out how you can give electronically. \*Collection amount does not include additional pledges received electronically. Our current pledge amount for 2017 is \$367,804.00. This represents a budget shortfall of \$56,459.00 for the year.

## November 19th—December 3rd

Sunday November 19th	8:15 am 8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am  1:00 pm 4:00 pm  5:00 pm	Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Village Fair, <i>Fellowship Hall</i> Chimer Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Choir Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Interfaith Thanksgiving, <i>Saint Joseph Parish—1350 Highland Street, Needham</i> Junior & Senior High Youth Group Potluck
Monday November 20th	9:00 am	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i>
Tuesday November 21st	7:00pm	Outreach Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Thursday November 23rd		<i>Thanksgiving Day—Office Closed</i>
Friday November 24th		<i>Church Office Closed</i>
Sunday November 26th	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Chimer Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Meditation w/ Sue Findlay, <i>Chapel</i>
Monday November 27th	9:00 am	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i>
Sunday December 3rd	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am  4:00 pm  6:30 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship, <i>Sanctuary</i> Chimer Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Guatemala Meeting, <i>Library</i> Family Advent Wreath Workshop, Christmas Concert, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group

## 3152

## Welcome



1. Let's walk to- geth - er for a while and  
 2. Let's talk to- geth - er of a time when  
 3. Let's dream to- geth - er of the day when



ask where we be - gin — to build a world where  
 we will share a feast, — where pride and pow - er  
 earth and heaven are one, — a ci - ty built of



love can grow and hope can en - ter in, — — to  
 kneel to serve the lone - ly and the least, — — and  
 love and light, the new Je - ru - sa - lem, — where our



be the hands of heal - ing and to  
 joy will set the ta - ble as we  
 mourn - ing turns to danc - ing, ev - ery



plant the seed of peace, — sing - ing wel - come,  
 join our hands to pray, — sing - ing wel - come,  
 crea - ture lifts its voice, — cry - ing wel - come,



wel - come to this place. You're in - vit - ed to



come and know God's grace. All are wel - come the



love of God to share \_\_\_\_\_ 'cause all of us are wel - come here; —



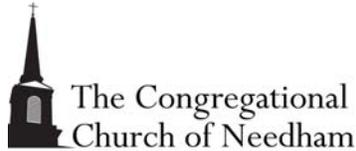
— all are wel - come in this place. \_\_\_\_\_

## 'Tis the gift to be simple

Irregular

SIMPLE GIFTS

'Tis the gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the  
 gift to be free, 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be, And  
 when we find our - selves in the place just right, 'Twill be in the val - ley of  
 love and de - light. When true sim - pli - ci - ty is gained, To  
 bow and to bend we shant be a - shamed, To turn, turn, will  
 be our de - light, 'Till by turn - ing, turn - ing we come 'round right.



### **Opportunity for Hospitality and Possible Partnership-**

We have a unique opportunity to provide hospitality to a church here in Needham. The High Rock Church has outgrown their space, and are at the end of their lease at the Presbyterian Church. They contacted us two months ago about the possibility of renting space from us.

I met with High Rock's executive minister, Rev. David Swain., and we began to consider options. On September 24, David and several members of their staff met with members of our board. We had the opportunity to get to know each other better, as we continued to talk about possibilities involving both our church building and the building next door.

The Board has been willing to consider the possibility of at least helping High Rock Church while they continue planning for long term solutions to their space problems. Currently, we are considering their use of Fellowship Hall on a trial basis on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m., holding their Sunday school in Stevenson Hall, having an office area and occasionally using meeting rooms during the week. Parking would be off site and their worship service would be at 9:00 on Sundays. We are also considering options relating to 1180.

The Board felt the next step would be to inform the congregation of this possibility and to have a trial run to see whether the logistics of such a proposal are realistic. The trial experience will take place on Sunday, November 26. High Rock Church will worship in Fellowship Hall at 9:00 a.m. and have Sunday school in Stevenson Hall. Then everyone is invited to come together after our worship service for fellowship and coffee hour to get to know each other and ask questions. Based on the trial Sunday feedback, we will continue to consider what logistics will work best and a final decision will not be made without a vote of the congregation. I urge you to come that Sunday especially and meet the people of High Rock Church. You also can go to church there before hand and meet them and experience their somewhat more lively service.

How are they like us and how are they different? They are our neighbors. We have similar historic roots. They are Congregationalists in polity who left Europe because they rejected a state church and a monarchy for the freedom to worship. They are more evangelical than we are theologically, and more contemporary in their worship style.

More importantly, they are in need right now. By providing hospitality it can only do us good spiritually, even if it works for a relatively short term. Right now we're trying to see if it's possible, so we're asking everyone to have an open mind.

One truth is, we have a lot of unused space much of the time, and a question we are asking ourselves is how can we best be good stewards of this space? How can we pay for the upkeep and deferred maintenance of our church building so that we and others can use it without depleting our endowment?

If you would like to visit High Rock Church, currently they meet at 10 am at the Presbyterian Church at [1458 Great Plain Avenue](#). Come and meet them on November 26 so we can discuss this possibility as a congregation. No decisions have been made beyond what you have read here. We can't proceed without your input so let's experience and discuss this together. Please keep an open mind and an open heart and let's continue to pray for options and opportunities, for our church and for theirs.

-Jim Mitulski

Interim Senior Minister, Congregational Church UCC of Needham MA

Note: The upcoming visit has been discussed in a couple of different arenas including meetings of the Transition Team, The Finance Team, The Deacons and Board of Directors. We continue to ask for people to keep an open mind, to ask questions as they occur to them as we can find answers, to be present if possible on the exploratory Sunday, and then participate in the decision making process. Some people want to know about the Covenant Church: [www.covchurch.org](http://www.covchurch.org). About their association [www.highrock.org](http://www.highrock.org) and about this congregation in particular <https://www.highrockmetrowest.org/>