



The Congregational
Church of Needham

FOCUS

FEBRUARY 2017

UPDATE FROM THE BOARD

Fellow Congregants,

The Board's January meetings were devoted to preparing the budget and reports presented in the Hearing on January 22 and the Annual Meeting on January 29. Copies of the Annual Report will remain available in the narthex and in the office. Please be sure and pick one up and read about all the great work being done here.

As Focus is being prepared we have received pledges in the amount of \$344,319 from 118 pledgers (individuals or families.) If you have not made your pledge yet, please do so right away so it can be reflected in the budget and in our planned mission as a church community

in 2017. Please note, if you give electronically, we still need to hear from you with your 2017 pledge amount and ask that your prayerfully consider increasing your pledge over last year. We will keep you updated on Stewardship results.

The Board remains in active discussion with potential tenants and our broker regarding rental of 1180 Great Plan Avenue.

The Board and Deacons are planning a joint retreat on February 11 where we will work together on our vision for the coming year and on next steps in moving toward preparing to begin a search for a permanent Senior Minister.

Faithfully,
Jackie Allen

OUTREACH: GIVING AND OPPORTUNITIES

Outreach Giving for the month of Jan. 2017:
At its first meeting of the new year, the Outreach Committee has committed to fund one scholarship to Noah's Ark Preschool for the 2017/18 school year.

Volunteer Opportunity:

Are you interested in doing some volunteer work with Homeless women and children? Consider volunteering at the Women's Lunch Place in Boston.



Each year, over 120 volunteer groups prepare and serve meals or work on special projects. The breakfast shift is from 7-11 a.m., lunch shift is from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and groups of 3-6 volunteers can be accommodated during each shift. The shelter is open year-round, Monday

through Saturday, including holidays.

Volunteers also sell Mother's Day cards, help at fundraising events, conduct in-kind donation drives or host house parties. We also welcome church members to join our Young Professionals who organize events to raise funds and awareness.

To learn more, visit womenslunchplace.org or contact Volunteer Manager Lisa Brown at lisab@womenslunchplace.org.

Future Programs:

The Outreach Committee would like to invite to and sponsor an Interfaith Bookclub event later this spring. Together, with other Social Action Committees (or anyone interested) of our neighboring congregations we would like to read the book "Toxic Charity - How Churches and Charities Hurt those they Help (And how to reverse it)." Copies of the book will be available at our bookstore by March 1, 2017.

SUPPORT GROUP AND FELLOWSHIP EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

9:00am, Mondays - February 6, 13, 27 & March 6, 13, 20, 27
1154 Great Plain Ave.

Our Cancer Support Group will meet every Monday morning, except on holiday Mondays or school vacations.

Come, if you need an extra hug or prayer said for yourself or a family member.

COMMUNITY DINNERS

6-7pm, Feb. 7, March 7, April 4
Linden Hall

Dinners coincide with monthly Baby Basics distribution. Volunteers are welcome to join in our effort to provide a healthy dinner for our guests and members of the church.

Volunteers are welcome to help set up, serve, visit and eat with our Baby Basics families, and clean up. Please contact Rev. Heike or Diana Conroy.

THURSDAY LUNCH WITH REV. HEIKE

Noon-1pm, Feb. 2
1180 Great Plain Ave.

Food builds community. We all have to eat, but we don't have to eat alone. Everyone is cordially invited to have a simple lunch on the first Thursday of every month. Soups are vegetarian based (most of them) but always lactose and nut free. Everyone is welcome!



LENTEN LUNCH WITH REV. HEIKE

Noon-1pm, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & April 6
1180 Great Plain Ave.

Lent is will be upon us sooner than you think! We are gathering once again for a weekly Lenten soup lunch on Thursdays at noon. Most soups are vegetarian based and they are always nut and lactose free! Everyone is welcome.

FOCUS

Contributions are welcome. Please submit materials by e-mail to office@needhamucc.org.

March issue deadline:
Monday, February 20th

Rev. Jim Mitulski
Interim Senior Minister
revjim@needhamucc.org

Rev. Heike Werder
Associate Minister
revheike@needhamucc.org

Maddie Downer
CE & Youth Director
youth@needhamucc.org

Valerie Becker
Music Director
musicdirector@needhamucc.org

Danielle Jurdan
Administrator
office@needhamucc.org

Cindy Sullivan
Office Assistant
office2@needhamucc.org

Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton
Pastor Emeritus

The Church Board
board@needhamucc.org

Jackie Allen, Moderator
moderator@needhamucc.org

The Deacons
Susan Lively, Chair
emaildeacons@needhamucc.org

To provide feedback about any aspect of the church, email feedback@needhamucc.org



ADULT ED OPPORTUNITIES

WORSHIP DESIGN TEAM

6:30pm - February 2 & 16, 1180 Dining Room

Would you like to be part of a design team for lent worship services? February 2 and 16 come meet with Rev. Jim at 6:30pm at 1180 Great Plain Ave. to add input to these upcoming services.

DIVERSITY BOOK READ - MARCH BOOK

I
7pm - February 28th at First Baptist Church

The Diversity Book Read is for people interested in reading non-fiction works that promote understanding and diversity across cultural, religious and gender boundaries. This quarter, we will be reading **MARCH, Volume 1**, a graphic novel by Congressman John Lewis. The book, as described by www.amazon.com as...

"March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement.

Book One spans John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall. "

FAITH EXPLORATION OPPORTUNITIES

BIBLE STUDY

11:30am - Sundays, Reception Room

Interested in joining a small group which will support your own faith journey? Join us for weekly Bible Study immediately after church from 11:30-12:30 in the Reception Room. For more information or to be on the mailing list to receive weekly summaries, please contact Sunu Yeh at dormouse99@gmail.com.

CONFIRMATION EXPERIENCE

6pm - February 27, March 6, 13, 20, 27, April 3, 10, 24 - Linden Hall

If you have a 9th grader who wishes to participate in confirmation class, please contact Rev. Heike.

If you would like to explore becoming a confirmation mentor, also contact Rev. Heike. Confirmation mentors are the "heart beat" of the experience. Passing on one's faith is one of the most important gifts we can make to a young person in search of a meaningful faith.

Feb. 5, 2017 - Parents' only meeting at 8:30 am in Library (breakfast goodies available)

Feb. 12, 2017 - Mentor meeting only at 8:30 am in Library (breakfast goodies available)

Feb. 26, 2017 - Confirmation participants and mentors in church service for introductions

Feb. 27, 2017 - First Confirmation session from 6 to 8 pm in Linden Hall.

ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIES TEAM NEWS ... EARTH STEWARDSHIP FOR OUR LIVES TODAY...



How can we, as individuals, address the climate crisis? On Sunday February 12, at 3 p.m., the powerful 90-minute climate change film, *Time to Choose* will be shown at First Parish in Needham, 23 Dedham Ave. "With footage from five continents, *Time to Choose*

explores the scope of the climate change crisis and the power of solutions already available." The film will be followed by a discussion of concrete steps to address climate change. Attendees can also enjoy refreshments and a chance to browse informational tables from local groups. This free event is sponsored by First Parish in Needham and Green Needham Collaborative, as well as 8 Metro West environmental groups, local League of Women Voters groups, and houses of worship. For more information, see greenneedham.org.

February

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	
<p>5 8:30am - Choir Practice Confirmation Parents Mtg 10am - Worship - Rev. Jim, Youth Choir 11:30am - Super Bowl Subs Guatemala Meeting Bible Study</p>	<p>6 9am - Cancer Support Grp</p>	<p>7 10am - Prayer Shawl Knitters 6pm - Community Dinner</p>	
<p>12 8:30am - Choir Practice Mentor Confirmation Mtg 10am Worship - Rev. Jim 11:30am - Parent Open House Guatemala Information Mtg Friendly Chimers Youth Committee Meeting Bible Study</p>	<p>13 9am - Cancer Support Grp 11am -Parish Deacon Ministry Team Mtg 7pm - Finance Team Mtg</p>	<p>14</p>	
<p>19 8:15am - Men's Breakfast 8:30am - Choir Practice 10am - Worship - Rev. Jim 11:30am - Adult Ed - Selma Friendly Chimers Bible Study</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	
<p>26 8:30am - Choir Practice 10am - Worship - Rev. Heike, Shepherd Staff Choir 11:30am - Mindfulness with Sue Findlay Friendly Chimers Bible Study</p>	<p>27 9am - Cancer Support Grp 6pm - Confirmation Class</p>	<p>28 7pm - Outreach Book Discussion Grp - MARCH Book 1</p>	
<p>MAR. 5 8:30am - Choir Practice 10am - Worship - Rev. Jim 11:30am - Let's Talk, Let's Listen Friendly Chimers Youth Committee Meeting Bible Study 7pm - Guatemala Meeting</p>	<p>MAR. 6 9am - Cancer Support Group 6pm - Confirmation Class 7:15pm - EMT Meeting</p>	<p>MAR. 7 10am - Prayer Shawl Knitters 6pm - Community Dinner</p>	

2017

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Noon - Lunch with Rev. Heike 6:30pm - Worship Design Team 7:30pm - Choir Practice	3	4
	8 7pm - Deacon's Mtg 7:15pm -EMT Mtg	9 7pm - CE Meeting	10	11 Deacon & Board Retreat
	15	16 6pm - Holy Homework 6:30pm - Worship Design Team	17	18
	22	23	24	25
	MAR. 1 7am - Ashes at the church 7pm - Ash Wednesday Service	MAR. 2 Noon - Lunch with Heike 6pm - Holy Homework 6:30pm - Music Team Meeting 7:30pm - Choir Practice	MAR. 3 Jr. High Youth Retreat	MAR. 4
	MAR. 8 7pm - Deacon's Mtg Lenten Vespers	MAR. 9 Noon - Lenten Lunch 7pm - CE Meeting	MAR. 10	MAR. 11

Youth News

@ the Congregational Church of Needham

Maddie Downer, CE & Youth Director

Feb. 2017

WINTER OPEN HOUSE Sunday, February 12

Immediately following worship, parents are invited to join their students in the church school classrooms for a tour. We will also have registration forms available and the ability to sign up to teach and shepherd classes. Students will be invited to decorate a cookie as their parents navigate the open house with different decorations in each classroom.

Youth Band... let's play before Youth Sunday!

We are gathering the youth band to play in late March. If you are interested, please email Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org. You must be able to make 2 practices plus the practice on March 25. Practices are the last 15 min. of JR High and the first 15 min. of SR High on Feb.12, 26, and Mar. 12 with an additional practice on Saturday, March 25 .

JR HIGH WINTER RETREAT

Fri, Mar 3 - Sun, Mar 5

Providence, RI

We'll be exploring faith and community building - one of our activities will be seeing the musical Little Women! Reserve your space by Feb. 5:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gsg0mOTs96zbiWe47YcbHsU6pntXXYQaH508NNWNLGs/edit?usp=sharing>

Youth Ministries

Date	Jr High	Sr High
Sun.. Feb. 5	Super Bowl Sub Making & Sales Please be at the church at 9:15 on Sunday, February 5 to help with sub making! We will be in the large kitchen at 1154. Sales will take place after church in the Fellowship Hall. We will take sub orders in church through January 29 and have additional subs available for sale the day of!	
Sun., Feb. 12	5:00-6:30 Junior High Youth Group Snacks, activities, games, discussion, fun!	6:30-8:00pm Senior High Youth Group Holy Homework & Fellowship
Sun. Feb. 26	5-6:30pm Junior High Youth Group Snacks, activities, games, discussion, fun!	6:30-8:00pm Holy Homework & Fellowship
Fri., Mar. 3 - Sun. Mar. 5.	Junior High Retreat Registration extended to Feb. 5. More info and print the reg form here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gsg0mOTs96zbiWe47YcbHsU6pntXXYQaH508NNWNLGs/edit?usp=sharing	No Sr. High Programming
Sun., Mar. 12	5:00-6:30 Junior High Youth Group Snacks, activities, games, discussion, fun!	6:30-8:00pm Senior High Youth Group Holy Homework & Fellowship

VBS: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to help with all aspects of VBS - checking students in and out, preparing snacks, setting up classrooms, teaching, and shepherding. Whether you like cooking, games, crafts, or are up for anything, your help is needed! 2 adult volunteers (18+) are needed for each day of VBS.

Students in grades 6 through 8 can participate in VBS as volunteer counselors in training. Students in grades 9 through 12 can sign up as counselors and are paid \$25/day.

Please contact Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org if you are interested in participating as an adult volunteer, volunteer CIT, or High School counselor.

save THE DATE!

MAY 19-20

Women's Retreat
@ Craigville Conference Center

For more info, email
revheike@needhamucc.org



Informational Session: Guatemala Partnership Opportunities/Needs, Sunday, Feb. 12, 11:30 am

Please join us in Linden Hall to learn about opportunities for participating in the work of the partnership. There are lots of ways, large and small, to engage in sustaining this long-running outreach effort that has touched the lives of many of us and our children. So please come with your questions and interest.

February Delegation To Guatemala (February 15-26, 2017)

As we enter the 30th year of our church's partnership with Santa María Tzejá, we are delighted to be joined on this delegation by the partnership's founders, Clark and Kay Taylor! Our full delegation will be rounded out by co-leaders Brenda Metzler and Fred Moder, Joan Evans, Jerry Durbin, Theresa Garrett, Angela Kyn, Lauren Valle, Scott and Joene Pike, and two travelers from Texas and Colorado. We're looking forward to taking down letters from partner-families and scholarship donors, school and medical supplies, scholarship and middle school funding, and project funds for

the village. Please plan to join family, friends, and supporters for a brief **Delegation Send-Off gathering on Tuesday, February 14th, from 7-8 pm at Dave and Caryl Johnson's, 505 Great Plain Avenue.**

30 Ways to Celebrate our 30-Year Anniversary!

We've been thinking of ways, large and small, to celebrate our 30th-anniversary year in 2017. If you have ideas, please submit them to: theresagarrett@comcast.net. For starters:

1. Write your Partner-Family Letter (LAST CALL! Send to: davebjohnson77@gmail.com.)
2. Sign up to become a Partner Family. Write twice a year to a family in Santa María Tzejá. (Contact Dave Johnson.)
3. Attend the Send-Off Gathering for the February Delegation: Tuesday, Feb. 14, 7-8 pm at the Johnson's (505 Gt. Plain Ave.)
4. Attend the Reportback Presentation by the February Delegation: Sunday, March 12, 11:30 am, Linden Hall

Watch for details of other events and activities that will highlight our 30th anniversary year.



The Congregational Church of Needham

1154 Great Plain Avenue
1180 Great Plain Avenue
Needham, MA 02492-2202

T: 781-444-2510
office@needhamucc.org

On the web at
needhamucc.org

On the twitter
[@needhamucc](https://twitter.com/needhamucc)

Like us on
Facebook
Congregational Church
of Needham UCC

Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Sunday, February 19

On Sunday, 2/19, the Men's Fellowship Breakfast will welcome all church men to breakfast.

The Men's Breakfast brings men of all ages and persuasions together in the Library on the 3rd Sunday of the month before worship in honest and lively discussion touching our faith and our lives in today's complex world. We welcome men of all ages and accommodate those with scheduling challenges. Arrive at 8:15 AM for fellowship and breakfast or by 9:00 AM for the discussion.

Contact: John Baldwin (jsbaldwin@comcast.net) or Rob Dunlavey (rob@robd.com) for more information.

address

stamp

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
NEEDHAM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
1154 Great Plain Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492-2202



SPRING VBS

Tues., April 18 - Fri., April 21

9:30 AM - Noon

Lunch Bunch - extended
program, pick up by 1:00 PM

Got questions? Email youth@needhamucc.org
or call (781) 444-2510.

Our storybook-themed VBS will offer kids the chance to be brave princesses, adventurous knights, and to explore the continuing story of God's people through arts and crafts, theater, singing, and games. Vacation Bible School is open to students in Pre-K (toilet trained) through grade 5.

VBS DATES are Tuesday, April 18 - Friday, April 21 from 9:30 AM - Noon; Lunch Bunch extended program, pick up by 1:00 PM. Registrations will be accepted until Sunday, March 12, 2017.

Payment is due by April 1, 2017. Students may be wait-listed if program capacity is reached. Scholarships are available. If cost would prevent your student from participating in VBS, please reach out to Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org.

April VBS Registration Form: Please fill out one per child.

Child Name: _____ Grade: _____ Birthday:(mm/dd/yy) _____

Requested friend(s)/sibling(s) in same class: _____

T-shirt Size (All sizes are Youth sizes): S M L XL

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone(s): _____

Email Address(es): _____

Emergency Contact Name & Number (other than parent(s) listed above) : _____

Special needs/medications/allergies: _____

Please check all of the sessions you would like your child to attend.

Tuesday April 18
 VBS 8:30am-noon
 Lunch: noon-1pm

Wednesday April 19
 VBS 8:30am-noon
 Lunch: noon-1pm

Thursday April 20
 VBS 8:30am-noon
 Lunch: noon-1pm

Friday April 21
 VBS 8:30am-noon
 Lunch: noon-1pm

Forms and fees can be dropped off at or mailed to:
The Congregational Church of Needham, attn: VBS
1154 Great Plain Ave, Needham, MA 02492