

# THE SPIRE

May 2024

We seek to be a Christian community by worshipping God through prayer, music, and the proclaimed Word. Following Christ's example, we enthusiastically reach out to everyone with compassion, respect, and love so that we may grow in faith and commitment together.

**Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC**


142 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054

[www.millisucc.org](http://www.millisucc.org) • (508) 376-5034 • [millisucc@msn.com](mailto:millisucc@msn.com)



**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

*Worship God, Serve our neighbors, Share God's love.*



We lift up all mothers  
in our prayers to God.



Dear Friends,

It's been a whirlwind of two months since I started my journey with you, the merry band of congregants at the Church of Christ, Congregational in Millis, MA! Time flies, and we've already shared some powerful moments of unity and community spirit, especially during our Earth Sunday celebration. We have some more key dates coming up.

Mother's Day is on May 12<sup>th</sup>. It's time to celebrate the amazing women in

our lives --- who have nurtured, taught, and shaped us. They are pillars of grace, strength, and love. If you feel moved to share your stories or reflections during worship on Sunday May 12<sup>th</sup>, please find me after worship or send an email. Let's make it a day of heartfelt gratitude and shared memories!

Then, we've got Pentecost on May 19<sup>th</sup>, remembering the moment the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. It's a day that marks the birth of the Church and its mission to spread the Word. Pentecost is a powerful reminder of our unity and diversity, pushing us to live out the Spirit's power in fellowship and service.

I want to wrap up by saying thank you. Thank you for the warm welcome, for the moments of connection and growth we've shared. Our church is a living testament to the vibrant faith, hope, and love that thrive in our community. As we look ahead, I pray we continue to strengthen our relationships, embracing both the challenges and joys with open hearts and a united spirit.

May peace and blessings be upon you.

With gratitude, Pastor James



### Saturday May 11, 2024

The uniting of two great races  
Soles of Medfield's Medfield  
10K and the New Life 5K Trail  
Run.

Whether you crave the  
challenge of a 10K race or a  
friendly 5K, New Life's and  
Soles of Medfield's combined  
5K/10K event promises an  
experience like no other.

#### Location:

1 Stonegate Dr.  
Medfield State Hospital  
Medfield, MA 02052

#### Description:

Get ready to lace up your  
running shoes and make  
history at the iconic Medfield  
State Hospital. Against the  
backdrop of its historic grounds,  
participants of all abilities ---  
from seasoned runners to  
casual walkers---can enjoy a  
fun day out.

#### Schedule of Events:

8am: Bib pick-up opens & Day-  
of registration available  
9am: Fun Run – Fun Run for  
ages 4-10, \$5 onsite entry fee.  
9:30am: Race Start  
10:45am: Prizes and awards

Missions continues to support  
New Life Furniture Bank annual  
fundraiser. **We have two free  
race entries if anyone is  
interested in running this  
year's event.** Please contact  
Jan Krohn with any questions.



Join Us for Fellowship Breakfast on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Sunday of every month!

**NEXT MEETING: May 19th 8-9am**

Cooking starts around 7:30am. Please  
bring a breakfast item to share.

All are welcome!



The Welcoming Committee is  
pleased to host the **Visitors Tea in  
Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, June  
18 from 2-4pm.** The Visitors Group  
continues to reach out to members of  
our congregation who aren't able to  
attend events on a regular basis.  
They spend time calling, visiting and

corresponding with several people in our congregation. The Tea is a gathering of both the visitors and those they reach out to over the year. The current members will be sending invitations to the Tea. Be on the lookout for yours!



In an effort to spruce up James' office and make things more functional, we are in search of the following items:

- A free-standing or folding room divider
- A white noise machine
- 3M command strips (any size)
- Two multi-line phones.
- A desk

If you know of someone getting rid of any of these items, or have a lead on where to obtain them at a reasonable price, please contact Laura in the office.



Friendly Reminder! Spire Articles are due each month by the 20<sup>th</sup>.



## Millis Community Garden

The Garden has officially opened! We still have a few available plots. If you're interested in gardening for free, please email

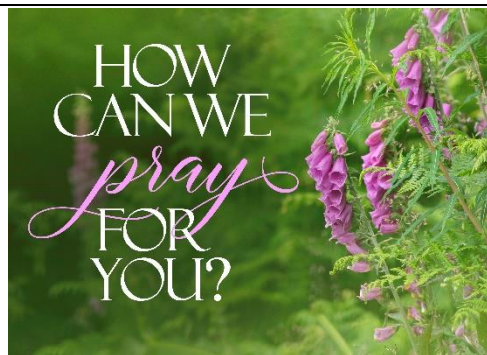
[millisuccgarden@gmail.com](mailto:millisuccgarden@gmail.com)

We are also hoping to host some events throughout the season. If you, your organization, or your business would like to host a brief presentation or event structured around themes such as:

- Agriculture
- Plant identification
- Food justice
- Unique uses for plants
- Similarly related topic

Please email

[millisuccgarden@gmail.com](mailto:millisuccgarden@gmail.com)



*If you would like to be added to the prayer chain, or if you or someone you know wants to receive prayers for a specific situation, please*

**Contact Mary Jensen.**





Exciting times are on the horizon as James' Ordination begins the planning phase. Be sure to watch your emails and future issues of The Spire for updates as the plans unfold for this momentous occasion.



The Upper Room devotionals are available in the rack by the side door. Please help yourself. If you enjoy these and they are all gone, please let Laura in the office know so we can order more copies going forward.



Thank you to Kathy and Jen for their dedicated work putting on coffee hour.

Thank you to Sue, Art and Wendy for their efforts in our outdoor clean up day.

Thank you to Wendy for organizing our Electronics recycling day, and Green Day Electronics for a successful fundraiser. We look forward to collaborating again with them in the Fall for another recycling day.



### **Monday Morning Fellowship**

Every Monday from 10am-noon in the Parlor

All are welcome! Bring your handwork if you have it, or just come to socialize. We'd love to see you there!



## **Total Eclipse Provides Perspective**

By Sue Conte

On Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, I was privileged to witness the solar eclipse in Burlington, Vermont. Unlike some other places in the path of totality, we had clear blue skies, wispy clouds, and a temperature of 61°. Many people had congregated in Burlington, including David Muir of ABC News. I was on a bus with 36 other people from the Cape Cod area to view the eclipse and tour other points of interest. On the ride to Burlington, I noticed that most of the cars that passed our bus had Massachusetts plates.

On Monday afternoon, after waiting for one and a half hours to be seated at a table at a downtown restaurant, my sister and I found a seat on our hotel's patio that was reserved for our tour group. Our hotel was on a hill, overlooking Lake Champlain and Waterfront Park. We had walked to the park that morning and saw the ABC News truck (but no David Muir), food trucks, and many, many people

with blankets, chairs, air mattresses, and a cool vinyl bubble tent. As the eclipse began, one could hear oohing and aahing and the people began to wear their special eyeglasses and aim their phones at the disappearing sun. As the eclipse progressed, the temperature became noticeably cooler, the birds stopped singing, and the streetlights went on. As it progressed, the increasing moon and decreasing sun reminded me of Pac-Man. When the sun was in total eclipse, there was a roar from the crowd down in the park, then clapping, whistling and more clapping. Many people were taking pictures with their phones, including myself, but the pictures didn't do it justice. Many people said that they wished it had lasted longer. As the moon continued its journey and the sun started to make its reappearance, we could see the "diamond ring" that formed, when the solar flares formed the ring, and the emerging sun formed the diamond.

I feel very fortunate that I could witness this natural phenomenon, as the next total solar eclipse will not happen in this part of the country until 2079. I think that everyone who witnessed it was in awe of the beauty and magnificence of this occurrence, and it reinforced my reverence of the natural world and its Creator. I still get goosebumps when I tell people about my experience. The photo of the eclipse was shared by a lovely lady named Jean Kennedy.

## **Eclipse Musings**

From Pastor James

On April 8<sup>th</sup>, a celestial event captured the attention of many around the world ---an eclipse. This extraordinary phenomenon not only provided a stunning display in the sky but also offered a moment of connection and unity for our communities at large. Many from our congregation embarked on journeys to witness this awe-inspiring event, underscoring the sense of community and shared experience that lies at the heart of our faith.

The eclipse served as a powerful reminder of the unity we share, not only within our congregation, but with the wider world as we stood together, eyes skyward, marveling at the beauty of the universe. It was a poignant demonstration of how, despite our differences, we can come together to experience moments of wonder and reflection. Such events prompt us to reflect on our place in the cosmos and the bonds that tie us together. They remind us that we are part of a much larger community, one that transcends geographical, cultural, and spiritual boundaries.

Interestingly, the feelings of awe and unity evoked by the eclipse find a parallel in the story of Easter, a central narrative of our faith. You may recall my children's message from this past Easter, featuring the empty juice cup. It highlighted a significant truth---the

varying interpretations we bring to our faith experiences.

When the disciples found the empty tomb, they each reacted differently, their responses shaped by their person encounters with Jesus and their understanding of His teachings. Today, we too, have our interpretations of the empty tomb. For some, it represents hope and resurrection; for others, a call to faith and action. Yet, despite these differences, the story of the empty tomb is a unifying thread that runs through our faith, bringing us together in belief and purpose.

The eclipse can be seen as a metaphor for the empty tomb. Just as the eclipse drew people from various backgrounds to share a single experience, the empty tomb calls people of all walks of life to come together in faith. Both events invite reflection and interpretation, challenging us to see beyond the surface and find deeper meaning.

Furthermore, the eclipse, much like the empty tomb, elicits a wide range of reactions. Some view it as a rare astrological event to be celebrated and marveled at. Others approach it with superstition, choosing to stay indoors and avoid the celestial spectacle. Yet, regardless of one's perspective, the eclipse, like the empty tomb, stands as a testament to the extraordinary and the inexplicable. As we reflect on the eclipse and its relation to our faith, let us also remember the importance of seeking

understanding and unity. Just as the eclipse brings people together in a shared experience, may our faith in Jesus Christ bring us together in love and service, despite our differences. Let us embrace the mystery and wonder of both events, finding inspiration and hope.

The recent eclipse, then, serves as a vivid illustration of how moments of wonder can bring us together, prompting us to reflect on our beliefs, our relationships, and our place in the universe. It encourages us to seek common ground, to appreciate the diversity of thought and experience within our congregation, and to celebrate the unity that emerges from shared moments of awe.

Let us carry with us the lessons of the eclipse and the empty tomb. May we continue to find unity in our diverse interpretations and experiences of faith. And may we always remain open to the awe-inspiring moments that remind us of the beauty and mystery of the divine.



Wednesdays at 7:00pm  
Current topic: Women of the Bible

All are welcome to join us for a Hybrid Bible Study with Pastor James. You may attend in-person in James's Office or via Zoom. We will gather to read scripture and talk about our faith in today's world.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87832179786?pwd=L1lRmjlNRWjEzNGxzZnRpdmc5RmlWZz09>

Meeting ID: 878 3217 9786  
Passcode: 181480



Pastor James viewing from the church.



Our Admin Laura, and her son, viewing from Texas.



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*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

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