

THE SPIRE

MARCH 2022

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 • (508) 376-5034 • millisucc@msn.com



An Open and Affirming Congregation

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

Path of Blessing 2022 Lenten Theme

Lent is a symbolic journey that we take with Jesus as we travel the path to Easter. We are aware that many have walked this path before us, and yet because of the dimension of time, we are also aware that no one has ever been here in quite this way before. The path may not be easy, but we are assured there are many blessings for those who set out on the journey.

During this time of self-reflection, we attend to parts of our lives we often neglect. It is a time for us to stop, listen, look, breathe and open ourselves to new possibilities.

What brings blessing? What gets in the way of blessing? We will look at what it means to be a community called to follow Christ by living changed lives and to face difficulties with hope and faith.

We look forward to worshipping together as we journey on the Path of Blessing.

Wendy Schneider on behalf of your
Worship Team: Myrna Rybczyk, Wendy
Schneider, Suzi Sennott, Kathy Stevens

Worship in March

March 2 – Ash Wednesday 7:00 PM
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sundays 10:00 AM

March 6 – First Sunday in Lent, Communion
Fast from complaining; Feast on appreciation
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Luke 4:1-13

March 13 – Second Sunday in Lent, New Members
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism
Psalm 27; Luke 13:31-35

March 20 – Third Sunday in Lent
Fast from self-pity; feast on joy
Psalm 63:1-8; Luke 13:1-9

March 27 – Fourth Sunday in Lent
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness
Psalm 32; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Worship Bulletin can be found at:
www.millisUCC.org

To join Sunday worship services by Zoom, use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87562091923?pwd=MVpJT21NelpRck9wM1UyaUtBalZsZz09>

If using phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656 US (NY)

Meeting ID: 875 6209 1923

Passcode: 02054

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc6vTurh6j>



Lent Begins
Ash Wednesday

Trustees Report

Thank you to those who responded to our letter regarding the steeple repairs and to the congregation who attended the annual meeting in person and on zoom. We had a good discussion on the choices for repairing and/or redesigning the steeple exterior.

At the annual meeting the voting members gave the Trustees up to the amount in the Capital Find, approximately \$31,432.00, to make the steeple weather tight.

To complete the project for that amount of money we will remove the non-functioning clocks, repair the interior, then re-shingle the steeple sides.

The Trustees are also working on replacing the windows in the parlor and the minister's office which are long overdue for replacement.

Kathy Stevens



From the Deacons

*Sometimes we can only find our true direction
when the wind of change carry us.*

Mimi Novic

March is an odd month. We know as New Englanders it can be more like winter, but the calendar tells us it is spring. March begins the season of change, although the last two years have been nothing but change. As we reflect on our lives, the upheavals we have weathered individually and as a community of faith, it can be overwhelming. That being said, there are indications we are at the beginning of the end of the current state of the pandemic. Let us gently care for each other, as we each seek our path forward in our own time and comfort.

This year Lent begins early March, with Easter being in mid- April. The Deacons will be working with Rev. Geary and the Worship team to create a meaningful Lenten and Easter season for our church community. Watch for information in the bulletin regarding ordering lilies and/or tulips in honor or memory of friends and/or family for Easter.

During the coming weeks we will be asking for volunteers to assist with various parts of our Sunday services, including greeting, ushering, scripture readers, and assisting with coffee/fellowship hour once it resumes. Each part requires a minimum time of participation and is an easy way to become a more active participant in the life of our church. We ask that you prayerfully consider this opportunity when contacted.

Happy Spring!

Your Deacons,

Lauren Briggs, Wendy Schneider, and Suzi Sennott

What does a “Can-do Congregation” look like? A Lenten Study

We've been invited to be part of a pilot study on can-do congregations. Two ordained ministers who are also researchers are working on creating an assessment tool to answer that question: What are the attributes of a can-do congregation. Barbara Laymon and Jake Morrill were presenters at the Clergy Clinic that Rev. Geary attended at the beginning of February. They asked the participants to take their tool back to the local church and take it for a test drive.

They created this assessment using a similar tool created by Daniel Papero to assess personal and family health. We will use the first five weeks of Lent as an opportunity to do some self and congregational discovery by using the assessment. When we are done, we will share our feedback with the researchers as to how helpful the assessment tool was.

This 5-week study will occur after worship each Sunday at 11:15ish beginning March 6th. Each session will go for an hour. Please notify the church office if you are interested so we can send you some preparatory information. Walk-ins will be welcomed also.

Healing Services

Come gather for
healing prayer on
Monday, March 14 at
7:30 pm in the Parlor.

All are Welcome



Committee Meeting Times

All the committees of the church have met, selecting their chair and meeting time as follows:

- Diaconate** – First Tuesday, 6:00 PM
- Christian Education** – First Wed., 2:00 PM
- Trustees** – Second Monday, 6:00 PM
- Mission** – Third Tuesday, 7:00 PM
- Visitors** – Third Thursday, 10:00 AM
- Church Council** - Third Thursday, 7:00 PM
- Prudential** – Fourth Tuesday, 11:00 AM
- Welcoming** – TBD
- Pastoral Relations** – As needed

See the list of all elected leaders on the last page of the Spire. The person with the * is the chair of the committee.



New Members Joining

New members will be covenanting with the congregation on Sunday, March 13th during worship. If you would like to become an Active Member of the congregation by participating in the service, please contact Rev. Geary immediately. There is some preparatory material that must be reviewed with in the next week to be eligible to join.

MEMORIES

At the Leadership Retreat at the beginning of February, I asked the church leaders to spend some time pondering the way memories work. We used 1978 as our starting point because there was so much talk about that snowstorm. If you remember the storm of '78, you might get anxious when the meteorologists suggest we could get another storm like that. But it's important to allow our memories to grow up. The amount of wind and snow that was experienced in '78 would be experienced differently in 2022. The forecast system is so much better so folks have greater warning. The snowplow technology has advanced significantly so we are better able to clear the roads today. We have cell phones now, so communication is better. This doesn't mean we don't need to be prepared for a storm, we do; but we don't have to have the anxiety that the same sized storm will bring the same sized problems. We need to let our memories grow up.

By the same token, if we had a wonderful experience in our past, we might try to recreate it by going to a certain place or gathering with certain people. Often though, it just isn't as good. Instead of trying to recreate something from the past, it is more promising to get in touch with the pleasurable emotions we felt back then and allow them to grow up. Consider what you might do today that would bring those same positive emotions to your current self.

Our second example was to have folks imagine their 1978 self, attending a worship service where the congregation was singing out of a 1914 hymnal. For everyone that hymnal was old. There are 64 years between 1978 and 1914. There are also 64 years between 1958, the year the last Pilgrim Hymnal was published and 2022. It's the same number of years but for many in the congregation the Pilgrim Hymnal isn't old. This is because it was published in their lifetime. None of us was alive in 1914. How we date an object often has more to do with our relationship with it rather than its actual age. I'm sure you can think of items that are defined as old or not old based on your relationship with them rather than their actual age.

Lastly, I asked folks to be their 1978 self and to remember the older people in their lives. Who were the wise people and what did they do? Many of us are now the age that those wise people were back then. Is it possible to see ourselves as those elders? Those wisdom holders? What did we think was the responsibility of those elders to the community back then? What do we think our responsibility to the community is now?

Memories can be tricky. They can trap us in our past, hindering our ability to live fully today. They can also be a firm foundation on which to build our present. And, memories can be a springboard to propel us into the future.

Rev. Jennifer Geary

An interesting aside, all the folks who are younger than 44 couldn't remember 1978, because they hadn't born yet.

Missions Moment

The Missions Committee met to plan for March and are looking at ideas for the future. We are open to suggestions for donations of Missions funds or an activity/project that church and community members would participate in.

March brings One Great Hour of Sharing on Sunday, the 27th. This is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC within Wider Church Missions.

Food Pantry Project update: The mural was completed in January, but the rest of the project was put on hold due to an increase in COVID cases. We are now ready to start up again. We will be moving food, shelves, cleaning, and painting during the last two weeks of March. Specifically, March 22, 23, 24 and 29, 30, and 31 from 3:30-5:30 PM. This project has been shared with the Millis High School juniors/seniors and the Recreation Dept. Youth Serves Millis group.

Our plan is to have four youth and two adults participate in each session. Please contact a Missions member with any questions regarding this project. Please use this Signup Genius link if you wish to participate.

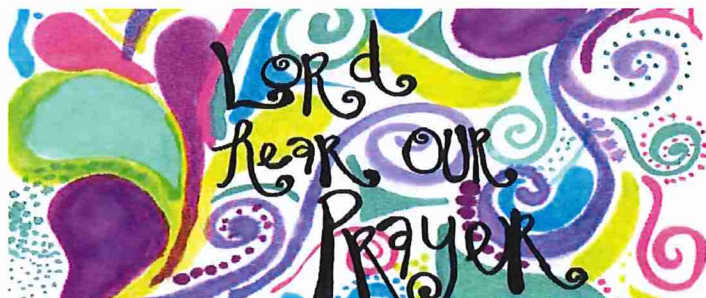
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4DA8A82EA0FBCF8-millis>

We will be sharing information on Heifer International's Fill the Ark program for Lent. This is a four-week family devotional with a focus on gratitude for our blessings and a generous spirit of giving to our neighbors in need. We have ordered materials for families to pick up to participate. For more information on the program go to: <https://www.heifer.org/what-you-can-do/get-involved/faith/fill-the-ark.html>

We would like to thank Sue Bolton, Art Payne, Jen Payne, Casey Woodley and Mary Smith for sharing the mission of collecting food donations from the Food Pantry bin at Roche Bros. each week and delivering it to the pantry.

Your Missions Committee:

Jan Krohn, Art Payne, Wendy Schneider, Mary Smith and Casey Woodley



Gratitude Corner



I owe Wendy Schneider a big debt of gratitude for leading the Diaconate so ably during the past two years. Our names are both designated co-Deacon, but in reality, I have just ridden on Wendy's coattails! Also, I am grateful for the years of service by Doug Briggs, Joan Nichols, and Katelyn Andrews. And last, but not least, I am grateful for the stewardship of Reverend Jennifer Geary, who is tirelessly working to help prepare us to welcome a new settled pastor.

Sue Conte



The Power of the Prayer Chain:

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, send an email to Mary Jensen at: mejensen7@verizon.net.

Volunteers Needed

The Christian Education Committee is looking for volunteers to assist in providing supervision for our young people during service. A member of the committee will always be there for leadership, but as the committee is small, we will require additional support.

If you are interested, please contact:

Doug Briggs
(508) 498-0927

dbriggs498@gmail.com

YOUR VOICE AT THE PRC

The Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) is meeting with Rev. Jennifer Geary, our Interim Pastor, on a regular basis. We individually seek your feedback and ideas for our church, and assure you a safe, confidential welcome for your closely held concerns.

Jo-Ellen Briggs: dcb.joel@verizon.net
Linda Jones: pariswoman44@gmail.com
Jennifer Payne:
paynejenpayne@verizon.net *ave ideas*
John Smith: jfs249@comcast.net

We are all striving to be one Body in Christ. Please remember, Rev. Jennifer Geary truly welcomes your voice.

*John Smith
For the PRC*

Rev. Geary's Office Hours on Zoom or In Person

Rev. Geary will be available to church members on-line via Zoom, or in person from **11am-1pm on Mondays**, and from **12pm-2 pm on Wednesdays**.

To connect via Zoom from your computer, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81936525328>

If using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 819 3652 5328

You can call, text or email Rev. Geary at other times, but might need to leave a message.

Phone: (774) 993-9407

Email: pastoruccmillis@gmail.com

Socializing with the M&M's Mondays on Zoom and In Person!

The M & M's Monday Morning Needlework Group gathers virtually on Zoom, and in person in the Parlor! Join in the fun on Monday mornings, any time after 10am. All are welcome – even if you're not working on a needlework project, join in for the socializing!

By computer, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2987904285?pwd=VENBMmRob2krQW83RFJhNGJQJjUdz09>

If using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 298 790 4285

Passcode: 866156

Online Bible Study

Each **Wednesday at 11:00am**, a group gathers on Zoom to listen to and discuss one or more passages from the upcoming Sunday's worship service. Each gathering is a stand-alone event. For a list of each Sunday's passages, see the "Sunday Worship in March" section on page 1 in this newsletter.

Bible Study Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87641484473?pwd=aGM2c2I2aGExMU1SONHVHRycjVldz09>

If using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 876 4148 4473

Password: 02054



April Newsletter



The deadline for entries for the April Spire will be **March 17**. Please have all your info in by then. Thank you.

COVID Protocols

We continue to follow current Health Department COVID protocols. Masks are optional in the building; however, we ask that you to wear a mask during singing. Please continue to maintain a distance of at least six feet between you and others. Thank you for caring for others by engaging in these simple acts.

Super Saturday

March 19, 2022

9 AM – 3 PM

"A Future With Hope:
Relevant, Prophetic and Transformative"



Due to the increase in Covid cases, Super Saturday is now Virtual.

Registration Deadline: March 13, 2022

[Super Saturday - Southern New England Conference of the UCC \(sneucc.org\)](http://sneucc.org)

Visitors Group

The Visitors' Group will be meeting on Thursday, March 17, at 10 AM in the church parlor. We hope that we will be able to visit more people soon.

If you know anyone who would like to be visited or may like to receive a phone call, please let us know.

Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Mathew 7:7 (NIV)

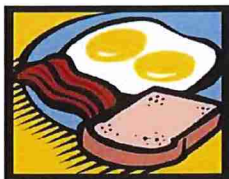
"Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the people who guide us closer to you. Thank you for always opening the door when we knock." Amen

Shelley C. Hu (California, USA)

The Visitors:

Judie Ackerman, Ellie Costa, Ginny Demery, Pam Johansson, Linda Jones, Judy Kosinski, Pat Spearing, Kathy Stevens, Rev. Jennifer Geary

Men's Fellowship Breakfast Meeting in Person Sunday, March 20 at 7:30 am



Please join the Men's Fellowship in Fellowship Hall for our monthly Breakfast Meeting. Hope to see you there!

****Covid Protocols Will Be Followed****

Summer 2022 at Silver Lake


Come to Camp!

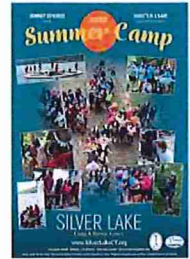
Registration Opens January 15th!

SUMMER 2022
CONFERENCE DATES:
Pioneer: June 19-25
Week 1: June 26-July 2
Week 2: July 3-9
Week 3: July 10-16
Week 4: July 17-23
Week 5: July 24-30
Week 6: July 31-Aug. 6
Week 7: Aug. 7-13

Save \$50! Register by
Jan. 31 and use the code
EARLY22 at checkout.

 facebook.com/SilverLakeCT

 @silverlakeconfcenter



Summer Camp for grades 4 through 12; register online at
WWW.SILVERLAKECT.ORG

Change A Life This Summer

SILVER LAKE CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

SUMMER CAMP 2022

Now Hiring

- COUNSELORS
- LIFEGUARDS
- ROPES FACILITATORS
- PROGRAM STAFF
- KITCHEN STAFF
- MAINTENANCE STAFF

**PAID AND VOLUNTEER
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

16 AND OLDER

www.SilverLakeCT.org/Employment
JennKC@SilverLakeCT.org

Adult Education

Please give us suggestions for topics or presenters you would like to see from the free adult education presentations. Contact Rev. Geary for more information, or to make a suggestion.

Leadership & Committees

Moderator	Jan Krohn
Church Clerk	Sue Conte
Treasurer	Gail DiGioia
Assistant Treasurer	Mary Smith
Collector	Brooks Corl
Assistant Collector	Maria Melchionda

Diaconate		
	*Lauren Briggs	*Wendy Schneider
	Suzi Sennott	
Missions		
Casey Woodley	Art Payne	Wendy Schneider
*Jan Krohn	Mary Smith	
Trustees		
*Andy Bolton	*Kathy Stevens	Wayne Carlson
Rich Manzano	Bonnie Mac Donald	
Prudential		
Susan Bouchard	Doug Coutts	*Bill Wright
Christian Education		
*Doug Briggs	Meghan Prescott	*Kelley Williams
Welcoming Committee		
Judy Kosinski	Bonnie Mac Donald	Maria Melchionda
	Myrna Rybczyk	Katelyn Andrews
At-large Members of Church Council		
	Judie Ackerman	
Pastoral Relations Committee		
*Linda Jones	John Smith	Jo-Ellen Briggs
Jen Payne		

*The Pastoral Relations Committee is formed based on nominations from the Pastor, the Moderator and the Senior Deacon.

**Church of Christ
142 Exchange St.
Millis, MA 02054**

Phone:
508-376-5034

E-Mail:
millisucc@msn.com



We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.millisucc.org



LENT

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