

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

Church of Christ Vision Statement:

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

Interim Pastor's Message

Path finding

Last May you invited me to join you in the wilderness. Together we have been living through unknown territory. We have had moments of wandering and moments of clear direction but here we are, still living in the not-anymore but not-quite-yet.

Some of the gospel writers tell us that right after Jesus was baptized, he spent 40 days in the wilderness preparing to begin his ministry. We are about to enter the 40 days of Lent wishing we had spent just 40 days in this wilderness of Corona Virus. Jesus faced many challenges and tests during his wilderness days and came out of it a changed person. We, as individuals and as the church, will come out of this wilderness changed also.

On Epiphany Sunday we each received our "star word". We also chose a word for the congregation. That word is "Pathfinding". I invite us, together, to use the upcoming season of Lenten as a time of intentional pathfinding. What path or paths will we take to move us out of the wilderness to a time when we feel like the ground isn't constantly shifting below us? What paths are God clearing for us to take? What brambles must we cut away for us to see the path? What stumbling stones must we move? What must we put in our backpacks to take along for this journey into the future?

continued on page 3



Church of Christ, Congregational
United Church of Christ

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, February 7, 2021

on Zoom

Immediately following the
10:00am worship service.

See p. 2 for details.



Are You Interested in Joining the Church?

Join others at 7:00pm on March 1st and 8th to explore what church membership means and what is involved in joining.

Please RSVP to Rev. Geary at:
pastoruccmillis@gmail.com or
(774) 993-9407.

The sessions will be held on Zoom.
Link information will be provided closer
to the session dates.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING
of the Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC
Sunday, February 7, 2021

on Zoom - following the 10:00am worship service

(The meeting will not start before 10:40am. If you arrive after 10:00am please mute upon entry.)

The Annual Meeting is open to all, however, voting is restricted to members of the Church of Christ, Congregational, Millis. This is an important event in the ongoing business and life of our congregation and reflects our responsibility of membership and the use of the democratic process within our congregation and in society at large.

Zoom Link for the Annual Meeting:

To join using a computing device, click on this link:

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

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

Meeting ID: 875 6209 1923

Password: 02054

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87562091923?pwd=MVpJT21NelpRck9wM1UyaUtBalZsZz09>

ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT
Sunday, February 7, 2021

To the Members of the Church of Christ, Congregational Church in Millis, County of Norfolk, Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of said church will be held on-line on Zoom, on Sunday morning, the 7th of February, 2021, immediately following the 10:00am on-line worship service for the following purposes, to wit:

Article 1. To receive and act upon reports of the Church officers and committees.

Article 2. To choose all necessary Church officers and committees for the church year 2021.

Article 3. To appropriate money for all Church expenses and to determine the manner of raising same. (Review the 2020 spending and set the budget for 2021.)

Article 4. To authorize Trustees to construct a third bathroom using Capital Funds if needed due to Covid-19 regulations.

Article 5. To transact any other business which may legally come before said meeting.

Nydia Rice, Clerk
- January 2021

From the Interim Pastor continued from page 1

Most of all, I invite us to put conscious effort into knowing who is on the journey with us. There is much that has kept us separated, but with technology, there is much that can bring us together. Please contact one person each week with whom you haven't spoken in months, and check in with them. Perhaps you are new or there are new folks whom you don't really know, here's your chance to get to know each other a little better. Yes, it might feel and be awkward, but we are all doing this awkward thing together and can offer grace to one another.

As we begin to see the clearing on the edge of the wilderness, I pray we will arrive there together. Let us not leave anyone behind in the wilderness.

As always, please feel free to contact me at any time, via email, phone, text, facetime or zoom.

Grace,

Jennifer



Resources for Children, Youth and Young Adults

Parents – Each week in the Friday email and on the church [website](#), we post children's activity sheets to go along with the liturgy.

Millenials – For the 20-30 crowd, Southern New England United Church of Christ (SNEUCC) has a Millenial Ministry, which includes monthly virtual meetings. [Click here to check it out.](#)

Lenten Packets to Enhance Home Worship

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17th. To enhance your worship experience, Lenten kits have been assembled and will be available for pick up on:

**Tuesday, February 9th
between 10:00am - 1:00pm
and
Thursday, February 11th
between 4:30 - 6:00pm**

These kits are designed for all ages but families with children are especially encouraged to pick one up to help their children learn about the season. If you are unable to pick up during those times, please contact the church office to make other arrangements.



Leadership Retreat on Zoom February 27 – 9:00am-Noon

The leadership of the congregation, all officers and all members of committees, will gather for a morning of organization and conversation, making significant plans for the coming year.

If you have been elected to serve on a committee or as an officer you are expected to attend.

Please mark it on your calendar, February 27, 2021 from 9:00am-Noon. The zoom link will be provided closer to the retreat date.



Sunday Worship in February

There will be two opportunities for live worship each week and you can worship via recorded sessions at any time. Sunday mornings we gather on zoom at 10am. See below for the link. On Wednesday evenings we gather on Facebook Live at 7 pm, on the church's facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MillisUCCChurch/> (You do not need a facebook account to participate.) To view the recorded services, visit our YouTube Channel: [Millis UCC - YouTube](#)

To join Sunday worship services by Zoom, click on 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 **Password:** 02054

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87562091923?pwd=MVpJT21NelpRck9wM1UyaUtBalZsZz09>

Ordinary Time

February 7 Souper Bowl Sunday, Annual Meeting
Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

February 14 Three Great Loves, Communion
Isaiah 54:10; 1 John 4:7-12

Lent – Pathfinding through the wilderness

February 17 Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21 God's Covenant
Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; Mark 1:9-15

February 24 Dying and Rising
1 Peter 3:18-22

February 28 Conscience Choices
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

March 3 Reckoning faith
Romans 4:13-25



Three Great Loves Service – February 14th

God's gift of love enables us to love our neighbor, love children and love creation. You are encouraged to arrive at worship with a story, a picture, a Bible verse, a poem, a song or an object that expresses one of the three great loves or just come and enjoy what others share.

Here are some resources from UCC to inspire you:

- [3 Great Loves Theme Song Music Video, "I Will Sing of Your Love, Love, Love"](#)
- [Coloring pages: https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/3GL-Coloring-Pages-Stacked.pdf](https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/3GL-Coloring-Pages-Stacked.pdf)

A Message from the Deacons

The Annual Meeting will be held on February 7th via Zoom following our 10:00 a.m. church service. The Deacons are pleased to announce the nominations of Katelyn Andrews, Lauren Briggs and Suzanne Sennott to the Diaconate. Their approval will be voted on at the meeting.

Thanks to technology, the congregation was able to watch the baptism of Calvin Bratsos during our Sunday morning service on January 10th. Calvin was a very joyful little one throughout the service.

We have begun discussing and planning services for the Lenten season. Also on February 14th, the Sunday service will be centered around the theme of love. Watch the Friday email for information.

If you have gone by the church recently, you will notice a new and improved sidewalk swing sign. The previous sign had given us many years of service, but was falling apart and could not be repaired.

Souper Bowl Sunday is February 7th. Traditionally the offerings of the day are donated to the Millis Fund. If you are able and wish to carry on the tradition, please see page 8 in this issue for information on how to donate to the Millis Fund.

Lastly, we would like to thank Paul Rice for his many years of service as he leaves the Diaconate this month.

Be well and stay warm,
Wendy Schneider, Sue Conte, Doug Briggs, Joan Nichols, Paul Rice



Youth Group Adventures

On January 15th, we hiked up Noon Hill in Medfield, and were rewarded with this view! Many thanks to Wendy Schneider for being our tour guide and snapping the picture.

February events will be coming soon! Watch your emails for details, and as always, check your spam folder just in case an email lands there.

The youth group is open to anyone grades 7-12. If you're interested in joining or learning more, contact Doug at dbriggs498@gmail.com.

M & M's Help Spread Message of Hope, Healing & Peace Through Donations to KNITTING4PEACE

Several members of the M & M's (Monday Morning) knitting group took a break after creating items for the Jolly Holly Fair recently to make items for Knitting4Peace. This is a Denver-based organization whose mission is "dedicated to crafting **hope, healing, & peace** one stitch at a time through nonviolent compassionate action. Knitting4Peace is dedicated to knitting together the global Beloved Community. We do our work one person at a time...one stitch at a time...one delivery at a time...one day at a time. The tangible items we create are personally delivered to women, teens, children, infants and families in global areas of conflict, including our own neighborhoods and countries around the world."



Since its founding in June 2006, the organization has delivered requested handmade items to more than 190,083 people living in communities across the United States and 82 countries around the world.

In the past, M & M's have donated just Peace Pal dolls, but this time we sent a variety of items, including Peace Pal dolls, Baby Peace Pal dolls, washcloths, baby bibs, warm hats and mittens, and baby booties. There is an intentional element of **three** in all the projects, which symbolizes the person who creates the project, the person who receives it, and the Mystery of Creation that creates and unites all of Creation.

Items we made might have had three colors, or contained three stitches, and were made in multiples of three. Three also represents the importance of the Abrahamic faith traditions to global peace. These three traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) represent two-thirds of the world's population, so until our Abrahamic Family is knit together, there is virtually no hope for global peace.

"As we knit, crochet, weave, or quilt each item, we pray for each other; we pray for the recipients of the items we create; we pray for those who deliver our items; and we pray for hope, healing and peace throughout our world."

Socializing with the M&M's Mondays on Zoom!

The M & M's Monday Morning Needlework Group gathers virtually on Zoom! Join the Zoom meeting 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=VENBMmRob2krQW83RFJhNGJkQjJkUdz09>

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

Meeting ID: 298 790 4285

Password: 866156



Visitors' Group Meeting – February 18 at 11:00am on Zoom

The Visitors' Group will be meeting on Thursday, February 18 at 11:00 on Zoom. We are looking forward to reconnecting as a group! If you need help getting on zoom, leave a message at the church office and someone will contact you.



To join the meeting with a computing device, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88213664370?pwd=bCtRTkpPNE5HYVVvZUxodUx6ZThYQT09>

To join using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 882 1366 4370

Passcode: 02054

We hope that we will be getting the vaccine soon, and we pray that everyone is doing well under these circumstances. ***"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*** Matthew 11:28

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

A Message from the Music Director

On a cold, grey February day, it's hard to plan for a joyous Easter celebration.

It was difficult to prepare for Christmas as well, but these two seasons are the bedrock of our faith and were fully observed.

Lent, a dark season of waiting seems in keeping with our state of mind in this time of deep concern for our country and our health. It is a season of reflection and contemplation which has been fulfilled with word and music for centuries. Now we need to find new ways to continue raising our voices in praise.

We were successful in doing this at Christmas using internet technology, and we continue Sunday Worship Services, Bible study, and weekly check-ins. Using Zoom, we have been able to be in contact with one another: helping with food, company, and prayer. A year ago, I wouldn't have been making a call for singers to record themselves for an Easter anthem, and yet – here we are. I am reaching out to all who wish to participate in making another recording. The response to our Christmas effort was reassuring and encouraging; "It helped," was the response I received most frequently. Simple and heartfelt- "It helped."

So, in this difficult time, I hope you will join in an effort to help one another and ourselves through Easter music. Several people who participated in the Christmas project have offered to coach singers through the technical challenge of recording; please, consider joining in. The music will be familiar and joyful and not difficult. Think of this the way you would in making a cake; ingredients are added one at a time, mixed together and baked, creating something that all can enjoy.

Feel free to call, text, or email at any time for more information: myrnmusic@comcast.net; home phone: 508-376-3729; or cell: 508-745-8280.

Let us join our voices in testimony and witness to what we believe Christ's message and example to be; you can kill me but that is not death.

Myrna Rybczyk, Music Director

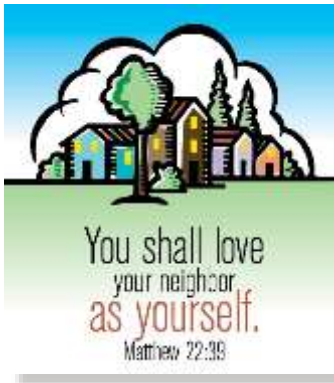




Join us on Wednesdays at 7:00pm for our live weekly check-in where you'll hear a **brief devotional**, the latest news, and announcements from the church.

You don't need a Facebook account to access the Church Check-In. Just click the link below to get to our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/MillisUCCChurch/>

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7th IS MILLIS FUND SUNDAY



The Millis Fund helps Millis families with temporary financial emergencies by paying bills directly to creditors. Applications for assistance are reviewed and evaluated by a nine member Operating Board of Millis citizens. Three Millis churches including ours, Ael-Chunon Congregation, and a generous Millis business gave founding donations in 1993.

Please consider making a generous contribution to the Millis Fund on or around "Souper Bowl Sunday", February 7. You can donate by sending a check (payable to The Millis Fund) to 142 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054. Did you know that:

- The Millis Fund has helped over 400 Millis families cope with financial emergencies since its founding.
- Over 99% of funds collected by the Millis Fund go directly to aid families rather than to administrative costs.
- The Fund is administered by an ALL VOLUNTEER OPERATING BOARD of Millis citizens, including three from our Church.
- Your donation is tax deductible for 2021 under IRS Code 501(C)(3). The Millis Fund's Tax Identification Number is 04-3228631.
- If your employer matches charitable contributions, the Millis Fund will almost certainly qualify to be included. Please consider applying for this match if it's available to you.

For more information on the Millis Fund, please contact Steve Howie, Joan Nichols or me; or call the church office. THANK YOU for prayerfully considering a generous donation on or about Sunday, February 7th!

Brooks Corl,
 Millis Fund Operating Board member and Treasurer



On-line 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 February" section on page 4 in the newsletter.

Bible Study Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87641484473?pwd=aGM2c2I2aGExMU1lS0NHVHRycjVldz09>

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

Meeting ID: 876 4148 4473

Password: 02054

Rev. Geary's Monday Office Hours on Zoom

Rev. Geary will be available to church members on-line via Zoom, from 10am-Noon on Mondays.

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

Gratitude Corner

Thank you to all those who played a role in making the Jolly Holly Fair a reality on that first Saturday in December – in particular, co-chairs Becki Abalutzk and Gail Luck for leading the way and for motivating a dedicated group of helpers with their determination and commitment to keep the tradition going.

An additional note of gratitude goes to Gail Luck for managing the massive undertaking of this year's Silent Auction. Her willingness to devote countless hours learning how to set up an on-line Silent Auction, and then with the help of Sue Purkis and Sue Conte, adding pictures and descriptions to the on-line site, was the key to the Jolly Holly Fair's ability to survive during the Covid pandemic.

Thank you to Rick Jones for taking on the project of restoring the beautiful music coming from the church during the Christmas season. We received many comments and thank yous from grateful neighbors. They truly appreciated those moments of joy, especially in such a challenging year.

If you would like to express your gratitude to others, either anonymously or with your name attached, please email the church office at millisucc@msn.com

We're
ThankFUL
for
YOU!

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

IMPORTANT COVID SAFETY REMINDERS

Currently, even when there are people in the building, the exterior doors are kept locked as a Covid safety measure.

If work needs to be done in an area used by any of our tenants, please schedule it through the office (millisucc@msn.com or 508-376-5034) or through the pastor (pastoruccmillis@gmail.com or 774-993-9407), so that we can coordinate it with the tenants.

If you are at the church property:

- Observe posted signs and safety protocols (copies of the church's protocols are posted on our website and the office door)
- Wear a mask
- Use hand sanitizer & wipe down surfaces
- Sign the contact tracing sheet

Thank you for helping us function in a safe environment!



Church of Christ, Congregational
142 Exchange Street
Millis, MA 02054

