

THE SPIRE

March 2023

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

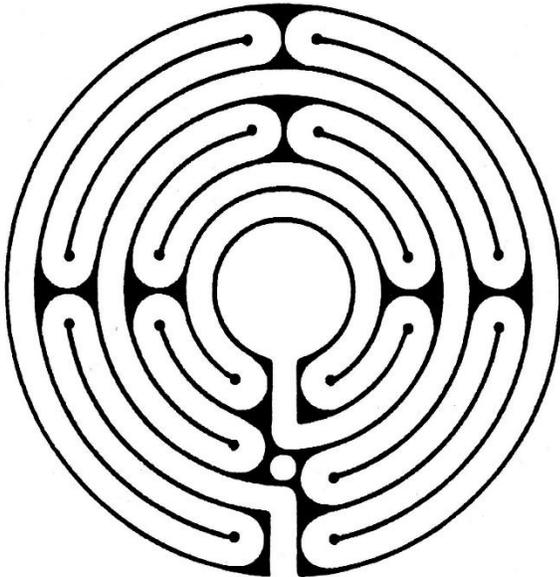
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An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Labyrinth of Life

From the Interim Pastor

A labyrinth is different than a maze. A maze has dead-ends and places to get lost. A labyrinth has just one path from the outside to the center. It is a spiritual journey. While it appears that the goal is to get to the center it is the journey there that is nourishing. The path winds near the center and then far away. This mimics our life. Sometimes we are on target and other times we feel very far afield. Sometimes we might feel like we have come to a dead end but often it is just a place to pause and make a turn.

Our goal in living this life is not to get to the end as fast as we can but rather to thoroughly enjoy the journey. The six weeks of Lent come around every year to give us a new opportunity to spend time in self-examination. As we age it seems this planet spins faster and faster and the

season come and go as a blur. Lent is a time to purposely slow down. To not focus so much on the horizon as much as to look down and check out each step. Just for this time. We do need to keep both the horizon and our next step in mind; we just don't have to do it all at once.

Let go of something for the next six weeks to give yourself more space to just be. Walking the labyrinth is calming because there is no hurry and no destination. Step out of the maze and into the labyrinth of being, where you know God is there, sometimes near and sometimes far but always there. May you observe a blessed Lent.

Worship in March

Our Lenten theme is Labyrinth. During worship we will hear stories of folks feeling near and far from God. We, too, have a fluctuating relationship with God and our faith. Lent is a time to do some self-examination and course correction if needed. Come put your spirit in the company of God on Sunday mornings.

March 5 Lent 2; Communion
Genesis 12:1-4a; John 3:1-17

March 12 Lent 3; Sunday School; Daylight Saving Time Starts
Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:5-42

March 19 Lent 4; One Great Hour of Sharing
John 9:1-41

March 26 Lent 5;
John 11:1-45

April 2 – Palm Sunday; Communion

Timeline for Congregational Discernment

During the month of March this congregation will engage in a four-part process to create a clear Pastoral job description that includes the type of pastor desired, the scope of their work and how the position will be financed. This discernment will also include defining expectations for members in fulfilling the Church's mission in conjunction with the pastor. There are multiple opportunities to participate in each of the four parts. Please find the one that works best for you.

1. March 3-5 Share information
 - a. Information will be shared with the congregation via email, USPS or hand-delivered.
 - b. A brief presentation will be made on 3/5 during Fellowship Time and Sunday evening on Zoom
2. March 5 – 12 Gather feedback to generate a comprehensive list of views/options
 - a. You can put your thoughts in writing and send to the church office.
 - b. You can call a member of the Church Council.
 - c. In-person gathering on 3/7, 1 PM and on Zoom 3/8, 8 PM
3. Evaluate strengths and limits of each option
 - a. March 12, after worship
 - b. March 14, 8 PM on Zoom
 - c. Another gathering if needed to include as many folks as possible
4. Discuss proposal & decide.
 - a. March 19, Council presents a proposal to the congregation with opportunity for discussion after worship; March 21, opportunity for Zoom discussion.
 - b. March 26, Congregational vote on the issue.

Congregational Polity

The question was raised as to who are the Corporate Directors of the Church? The church doesn't have directors as all legal business must be conducted by the Active Members of the congregation through congregational meetings. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts asks not-for-profit organizations to list officers and directors. To fulfill this requirement the church has, in the past, listed the chairs of committees as directors. At the moment, only the officers of the church are listed with the moderator being listed as a director also.

From the Constitution of Church of Christ, Congregational, in Millis, MA

Article IV – Polity

Affiliation with National Church

12. This Church is a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961, and as subsequently amended, relating to local churches.

Government

13. This church is an independent ecclesiastical body in matters of doctrine, order and discipline. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all of its affairs, subject to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relating to ecclesiastical organizations.

Article V – Officers

14. An officer is a church member who has responsibility and authority when representing the corporate body of the church. The officers of the church will consist of the Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Investment Fund Manager, Collector, and Assistant Collector.

Communication

This congregation values everyone's voice. If you have an idea, proposal or concern having to do with the church, please speak directly to the lead person in that area. (See list of committees at the end of the Spire.) If you are unsure with whom to speak, please contact the Moderator who is currently Jan Krohn. Jan will direct you to the correct person or will bring your idea or concern to the Church Council.

From Your Deacons

"In February, we wrapped up our worship series on SAD and began planning for worship during Lent. Throughout Lent and beyond, we are looking for volunteers to help with scripture readings—please see one of the deacons if you are interested in being a reader.

We have also been looking ahead to services during Holy Week, which will include a Maundy Thursday soup supper and service, vigil on Good Friday, and sunrise and family services on Easter. We also discussed how services will be run after Rev. Geary's final service with us on April 23, and we looked ahead to the summer when we will hopefully continue both outdoor worship and our joint worship with the Norfolk Federated Church.

Please keep an eye on the Spire and bulletin for important worship dates coming up, and please contact the deacons if you have any ideas or wish to volunteer for an aspect of worship.

Lauren, Allen, Kathy, Katie, and Doug



Missions News

New Life
Furniture Bank of MA



Recycling furniture. Rebuilding lives.



For those who helped to put together the dining tables for New Life on our Thanksgiving Sunday Service project here is a picture of the finished product. The two tables we assembled were painted and given to families last month. Thanks for your help and the families were most grateful.

Our Giving this Month



We sent \$500.00 to Global Ministries which is an UCC and Christian Church program and \$500 to GlobalGiving another non-profit program. Both organizations have been conducting rapid assessment and given assistance to the people of both Syria and Turkey after the disastrous earthquakes. All donations to these funds will support Turkey and Syria earthquake relief and recovery efforts. Initially, the fund helps first responders meet survivors' immediate needs for food, fuel, clean water, medicine, and shelter. As needs evolve, They we will prioritize longer-term recovery efforts run by local, vetted organizations in the impacted areas.

Service Opportunities



Again, this year South Shore Habitat has a house build in Kaua'i Hawaii. It will be the week of October 14 to 22, 2023. The cost of trip is \$1643 plus your air fare. Speak to Sue/Andy Bolton or Mary Smith or Wendy Schneider about their last year's rewarding experience. Any questions or interest please contact Jan Krohn

One Great Hour of Sharing



**OFFERING DATE:
MARCH 19, 2023**

1. What is One Great Hour of Sharing®?

One Great Hour of Sharing, part of Our Church's Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation.

2. Who participates in One Great Hour of Sharing?

Several Christian denominations – *American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and Church World Service* – work together to develop common promotional materials thereby sharing ideas, costs, and a commitment to faithful service. Each denomination receives and manages its

respective One Great Hour of Sharing offering.

3. How is the United Church of Christ's offering used?

Over fifty-five percent (55%) of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives. The offering also funds refugee resettlement, disaster preparedness and response, and disaster-related volunteer initiatives in the U.S. and internationally.

4. Where and how are One Great Hour of Sharing funds shared?

The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs in the world. Nearly one-fifth of the UCC's OGHS offering is shared through Church World Service to support refugee, and disaster programs worldwide.

5. How many dollars are given to the UCC's One Great Hour of Sharing offering?

2020, the OGHS offering was only \$1.2 million. Nearly sixty percent of UCC congregations participate annually.

6. What percentage of One Great Hour of Sharing donations are used directly for the mission?

On average, of every dollar given to One Great Hour of Sharing, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming; and 5 cents for interpretation materials.

7. How are decisions made to fund the various projects?

Most of the expenditures are put into the budget to support long-term sustainable development. All funding is reviewed and monitored by a leadership committee that also reviews grant requests for long-term disaster rehabilitation initiatives.





The mission committee welcomes suggestions from the congregation of charitable organization(s) and/or a service activity we can contribute. Please contact any member. Art Payne, Judy Kosinski, Casey Woodley or Jan Krohn.

Are You Interested in Joining the Church?

A few folks have expressed interest in becoming members of the Church of Christ, Millis. New member class will be on Zoom at 8 PM on 3/6. Please contact the office or pastor prior to get the Zoom link.
- Rev. Jennifer Geary

March 12



Don't be late for Worship!

Please see the article below from the South Shore Habitat for Humanity



“You Don’t Have to Swing a Hammer to Build a Home

Volunteer to be a South Shore Habitat Ambassador

South Shore Habitat for Humanity needs Ambassadors as “Site Greeters” to greet the volunteers at its current build site at [302-304 Whiting Street](#) in Hingham and its future build site at [808 Jerusalem Road](#) in Cohasset.

Being a Site Greeter is an enriching experience that provides the opportunity to give back to the community while helping to build safe, healthy, and affordable homes for local families in need. It is truly a heartwarming act of kindness.

Each Build Day a Site Greeter welcomes the volunteers, provides a brief orientation, and then helps volunteers have a good experience. Training is provided to guide you through the Site Greeter steps. As a Site Greeter you have the chance to help as often or as infrequently as suits your schedule.

Currently Build Days in Hingham on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Site Greeters are needed in Hingham from April to June, and then the second half of the year in Cohasset.

If you want to learn more about becoming a Site Greeter or other Habitat volunteer opportunities, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Janice Richards at 781-337-7744 x130 or jrichards@sshahabitat.org.

The generous donation of your time supports Habitat in its mission to provide strength, security, and stability through shelter.



Thank you to...

- Everyone who made the pancake supper possible. The food was delicious, the atmosphere was fun, and the fellowship was soul strengthening. It was great to have this back after missing it for 3 years.
- Rick Jones for repairing the drain for the parlor sink.
- Katie Andrews for installing the wifi extender so we now have good WIFI in the parlor and chapel.
- Kathy Stevens, Judy Kosinski, Jo-Ellen Briggs and all the helpers and attenders who gifted Pat Spearing with a wonderful send off.



Thanks to all who generously contributed to the Millis Fund. We received \$1702.00 and the mission matched \$1702 for a total of \$3404. Thank you again!!!!

- The Millis Fund has helped more than 450 Millis families cope with financial emergencies since its founding.
- 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 two from our Church.

Youth Group Tradition Continues!



During the past seven plus years we have remembered and encouraged our college age young people by preparing a gift box to be sent to them during the winter months. This year we'd like to include all of our young adults, whether they are in college or working at a job. If you would like to have a loved one included in this tradition, please contact Doug Briggs or the church office by March 12th and include their name and current address. The congregation will be decorating and filling the boxes sometime in March!

Gather with other Families

The Christian Education committee is glad to see that more families with young children are attending Sunday worship services and are dedicated to providing opportunities for monthly Sunday School activities for the children.

We are excited to begin offering family fellowship events after Sunday School! These events will be local, informal gatherings with activities offered to provide engagement for the children, while offering opportunities for the parents (and the children) to get to know each other. Events will be weather dependent, so we might not be able to say exactly what we'll be doing a week or so in advance, but within a few days we will have a plan. If you haven't yet shared your contact information with Doug, Kelly, or Brenda, please do, so we can contact you directly with updates. Upcoming dates for Sunday School and family fellowship will be March 12th and April 2nd.

We hope to see your families at these events. Please contact any of us with any questions.

Doug, Kelly, and Brenda

From the Welcoming Committee Opportunities Await!

Lent has begun and spring is around the corner. The warm weather this winter has already started the flowers and trees to show signs of awakening. How about you? Are you feeling a little lighter in your step? Are you looking for a new venture? Here's an idea: Be a Greeter on a Sunday morning.

Who: Individuals, families and children, friends

Where: Side entrance or front narthex of church

Time commitment: 15-20 minutes before church

Action: Warmly welcome folks as they enter for worship and give directions if needed.

I will be contacting people directly to participate in this fantastic opportunity. If you want your first choice of a Sunday, contact me first!

Thank you in advance,
Wendy Schneider

Closure

The Church Office will be closed on Tuesday, March 28th.

Inclement Weather

Please use good judgement and only come to worship and other events if you feel safe to drive or walk. Most events can be joined via Zoom. If in-person worship is cancelled, a message will go out via email.





Is Golf your Game?

We have received a request for a golf enthusiast, who would be interested in taking an 80 year old gentleman from the community to a short course and/or driving range once or twice a week throughout the season. If you or anyone you know would be interested in this opportunity to brighten someone's day and enjoy a bit of golf as well, please contact the church office for more information.

Host with the Most?

As the church expands the rental of the building to more one-day users, we are in need of a cadre of Church Hosts. These Hosts would unlock the church and make sure lights and heat are working and then lock up afterwards, making sure lights and heating are off. There would be no monthly meetings other than to coordinate who's covering which days. There's no heavy lifting or moving of furniture. You would not need to be on-site the entire time. It will require a brief training about the facility. If you are interested in being a Church Host, please contact Julie in the office



The Spire deadline for April is
March 20th, 2023

Worship Bulletin

The 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=MVpJT21NelpRck9wM1UyaUtBalZs
Zz09](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>



Wi-Fi Changes

Sometime over the next month the Wi-Fi name and password will change. If you find yourself not getting service like you used to at church, you will probably need to update your settings. We will let you know when the change happens.



Ordering Flowers for Easter Sunday

Order forms will be available in the church office and in the Sunday bulletins beginning on March 19th. Last day for order will be Palm Sunday, April 2nd.

Lily and tulip prices this year are \$12/each and \$12.50/each if foiled.



Refreshments

Each Sunday we all enjoy a drink and snack following worship, but these don't magically appear. Everyone sharing a little, creates a feast. Please look through your calendar and pick a Sunday - next month, during the summer, next fall – when you will provide the refreshments. When we all take a turn, we only need to do it once per year. Please contact the church office with your preferred week. If when the time comes you cannot be there, we'll just find someone to swap Sundays with you.

Please be Praying for...

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



Visitors' Update

Myrna Rybczyk

Our next meeting is March 9th when we will be writing Easter cards and cards that celebrate or note life events such as hospitalization, recovery, etc. Please make myself or a member of the Visitors aware if you know of someone who needs a lift in their day with a card, call, or visit.



Sunday School for Children March 12 at 10 AM

One Sunday a month, Sunday school is offered for those in grade 8 and younger. We divide the students into two groups by age depending on who is there on a certain week. Children in grade 3 and older are encouraged to bring their Bibles with them.

Mark your calendar, so you don't miss the March classes on the 12th!

Please contact Doug Briggs or Kelly Williams for more information or to volunteer to help.

You can find the registration form and policy information on the church website www.millisucc.org under the "about" tab/forms.

Do You Like Writing Policy?

A Team is being formed to read through and propose updates to the current Constitution. Please consider sharing your skills in this important task.



Contact the church office or Moderator, Jan Krohn



Online Bible Study

Each **Wednesday at 9:30 am**, two different groups gather 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 "Worship in March" section on page 1 of this newsletter.

Bible Study Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87641484473?pwd=aGM2c2I2aGExMU1IS0NHVHRycjVldz09>

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

Meeting ID: 876 4148 4473

Password: 02054



Men's Fellowship Breakfast Sunday, March 19 at 7:30 AM

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

Socializing with the M&M's Mondays in the Parlor!

The M & M's (Monday Morning Needlework Group) gather in person in the Parlor every week!

Join in the fun on Monday mornings, any time **10 AM – 12 PM.**

All are welcome – bring hand work if you have it or just come to socializing!

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.

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

*John Smith, Jo-Ellen Briggs, Linda Jones
and Jennifer Payne*



To protect our members from scammers, we will no longer be publishing personal phone numbers or email addresses in the Spire. All members and friends should have a copy of the Church Directory where that information can be found. You can always contact the church office as well.

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, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20 and 2/27.**

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.

COVID Protocols

We continue to follow current Health Department COVID protocols. Masks are optional in the building; however, we ask that you please continue to maintain a distance between you and others. Thank you for caring for others by engaging in these simple acts.

Opportunities to Serve

On the next page you will see the new committees for 2023. There are several open slots where you would be welcomed to serve. Terms of commitment are 2 years for committees, 1 year for officers. Please contact the church office or Moderator, Jan Krohn if you would like to be an officer or join one of the committees.

Leadership & Committees

Moderator	Jan Krohn (22)
Church Clerk	Sue Conte (22)
Treasurer	Gail DiGioia (22)
Assistant Treasurer	Open
Investment Fund Manager	Open
Collector	Brooks Corl
Assistant Collector	Open

Diaconate		
Katelyn Andrews (23)	Doug Briggs (23)	Lauren Briggs (21)
Kathy Stevens (23)	Open	Open
Allen Williams (23)	Open	////////////////////////////////////
Missions		
Casey Woodley (22)	Jan Krohn	Art Payne
Open	Open	////////////////////////////////////
Trustees		
Open	Open	Open
Open	Open	////////////////////////////////////
Prudential		
Open-2 yrs	Doug Coutts (21)	Bill Wright
Open-2 yrs	Open-2 yrs	////////////////////////////////////
Christian Education		
Brenda Marrero (23)	Doug Briggs (22)	Kelly Williams (21)
Open-2 yrs	Open- 2 yrs	////////////////////////////////////
Welcoming Committee		
Wendy Schneider (23)	Open	Open
Open	Open	////////////////////////////////////
At-large Members of Church Council		
Art Payne (21)	Judy Ackerman (21)	////////////////////////////////////
Pastoral Relations Committee		
Linda Jones (21)	John Smith (21)	Jo-Ellen Briggs (21)
Jen Payne (21)	Open	////////////////////////////////////
Memorials Committee		
Sue Conte (21)	Open	////////////////////////////////////
Delegate		
Open	Open	Open

**Church of Christ
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Millis, MA 02054**

Phone:
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We're on the Web!

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Saint
Patrick's
Day

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