



Village Church Times

Chester Congregational Baptist Church

Catch the Spirit
November 2019

Upcoming Events

All Saints' Day

Friday, November 1st

Daylight Saving Time Ends

Sunday, November 3rd

Veterans' Day

Monday, November 11th

Church Work Day

Saturday, November 16th ~ 8am—noon

Commitment Sunday

November 17th

Happy Thanksgiving!

Thursday, November 28th

Christmas in the Village

Saturday, December 7th



Please join us every Sunday for Worship at 10:00am
Communion is the 1st Sunday of every month

lines from linda,

Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God's diverse gifts. Whoever speaks should do so as those who speak God's word. Whoever serves should do so from the strength that God furnishes. Do this so that in everything God may be honored through Jesus Christ. To him be honor and power forever and always. Amen. (1 Peter 4:8-11 CEB)

November is historically the time when we deal with stewardship and pledges toward the Church Budget. While we tend to think about our giving in terms of the budget, this passage should help us to focus on the bigger picture. We are to be “good managers of God's diverse gifts.” We are to be good stewards of all the gifts that God gives us. Some of these gifts include time, talents, grace, strength, encouragement, love, and abilities as well as money. In this passage we are to love each other and serve each other. How do we do this? When we use the gifts given by God to love, help, and care for each other, then we are honoring God through Jesus. We are not honoring ourselves, we are showing that we are disciples of Christ.

In the article about stewardship entitled “Caretakers of the Way,” found on the next page in this newsletter, the metaphor of being “caretakers of the paths connecting us to our Creator and guiding our steps.” Again stewardship is about more than money. It is about living our lives in relationship with God. How we live out that relationship determines what we do with the resources we have.

On October 26, we had a fantastic evening learning about the Meetinghouse Preservation Project and finding out that we are two-thirds of the way toward our goal. A lot of time and energy was spent over the last few months in order to achieve this. In addition to the money, some surprising non-monetary gifts have come out of all of this work. One is the strengthening of relationships with church people working together. Another is the new band which will occasionally be providing music in church. A third is the developing of relationships with people outside the church. Stewardship takes on many forms.

Perhaps it seems as though we have been focused on stewardship from a monetary and building perspective. That has been a goal and we do need to support the building and the budget so we can continue to do the work of God in Chester.

Yet as we enter the season of celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas, we cannot neglect our spiritual lives and our connection with God. It is a time of giving thanks and remembering all of our gifts from God. We should be thanking God for all that we receive. The article in “Caretakers of the Way” reminds us that “Stewardship is the practice that generates and regenerates the path of faith.” Stewardship is about our relationship to God and our faith.

May we be “good managers” of all “of God's diverse gifts.”

Shalom,

Pastor Linda



Caretakers of the Way

Humans leave traces of connection. The British naturalist Robert MacFarlane has written

"that once you begin to notice them, you see that the landscape is still webbed with paths and footpaths Pilgrim paths, green roads, drove roads, corpse roads, trods, leys, dykes, drongs, sarns, snickets –say the names of paths out loud and at speed and they become a poem or rite – holloways, bostles, shutes, driftways, lichways, ridings, halterpaths, cartways, carneys, causeways, herepaths." Robert MacFarlane, *The Old Ways*, p. 13

Faith too is a path of connection but unless the way is practiced it disappears. Stewardship is the practice that generates and regenerates the path of faith.

Stewardship is less about sharpening our pencils and more about sharpening our tools for trail maintenance, equipping ourselves to be caretakers of the path connecting us to our Creator and guiding our steps.

Robert MacFarlane reports that in the 19th century small sickles were hung on stiles or posts where paths connecting communities began. Walkers would pick up the sickle or hook to lop off branches as they walked. They would then leave the 'hook' on the stile or post at the end of the path so a walker going in the opposite direction could do the same. This shared caretaking of the path benefited each individual walker but also the larger community.

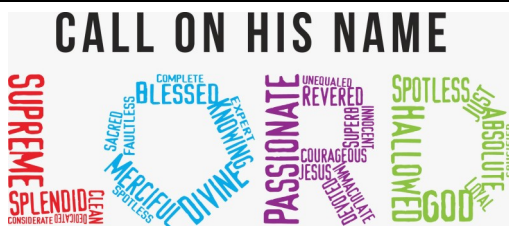
The early Christian movement was known internally as well as to its persecutors as the way (Acts 9). The life of faith is a way of being human, a way of interpreting, a way of practicing, a way of living.

As we journey towards the reign of God, we are following in the tracks of others, ways walked by Jesus himself, paths as ancient as Abraham and Sarah. Today we are not just signposts pointing the way but the caretakers, the stewards of that way. Come and join in the way.

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## **Commitment Sunday, November 17th**

The Stewardship letters and pledge cards have been mailed out. You can bring your completed pledge card to Church and place it in the offering plate on Commitment Sunday, or you can mail it to Church. Please send the card in by the end of November to aid the BORF in completing the 2020 budget.



## BOARD MEETINGS

### Upcoming Board Meetings:

**BORF** – Wednesday, November 3rd at 6:30pm

**Deacons** – Sunday, November 17h at 11:00am



### Welcome Glenna Rockwell Williamson!

She was born on October 21, 2019.

Weighed 7lbs 5oz. and was 19" long.

Parents are Tom & Emily Williamson

Grandparents are Nate & Lynn Rockwell



### Remember to shop AmazonSmile!

Amazon.com offers an amazing income opportunity for non-profit groups and Chester Congregational Baptist Church is part of AmazonSmile. You do not need to set up a new Amazon.com account and your purchase price does not increase. Amazon is willing to share its sales commission with non-profits. All it takes is anyone who wants to make an online purchase using Amazon.com. Use the Amazon link below to start shopping:



**Lillian Arthur**

**JB**

**Dan Barter**

**Erica Bob**, she is a friend/colleague of Deb Field's daughter Brittany. She lost her mother tragically on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Jim Brown**, friend of Pauline Hoyt

**Matthew Cicero**, Lynn Rockwell's nephew

**Colman Family**: John, Nancy (wife), Nancy (sister), Elizabeth (sister), Mike (nephew) and Steven (brother)

**James Cooney**, friend of Mike Elliott

**Skip Corwin**, Lynn Rockwell's step father

**Joyce Diemer**

**Debbie Drew**, prayers for son and family

**Peggy Elliott**, Mike Elliott's mother

**JJ Finney**

**Steve Hebert**

**Hayden Lane**

**John Lighthall**

**Janet MacGray**

**Avery and Linda Millsaps**, Cliff's family members

**Cliff Millsaps**

**Shirley Pike**

**Brenda Price**

**Sally St. Clair**

**Phil Streeter**

**Elaine Storlazzi**, friend of Colleen Towle

**Dean Towlas**

**Jack and Joan Towle**, Colleen Towle's brother and sister-in-law

**Bill Veazey**, Lynn Rockwell's father

**John Ward**, Dot Avery's brother

**Clarence Ware**

### For those who are in Nursing Homes...

**Janet MacGray**

**Barbara Rice**

### Our prayers and sympathy go out to the families of...

**Evelyn Wise** who died on October 16<sup>th</sup>

**Abby Collins**, Jane Collins' granddaughter (Jane is Marge Pagliuca's sister), who died on October 22<sup>nd</sup>



## Here's what's happening!



### **Church Clean Up Day**

Saturday, November 16th

8am to noon

### **News Flash!**

“Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat...” Instead of putting “a penny in the old man’s hat”, have you thought of using that “penny” in Alternative Giving? That is where you send money to a non-profit organization in someone’s name as a Christmas present. I will have on a table in the Vestry Christian catalogues for giving. If you have any questions, ask me.

*Mary Hamblett*



### **Thanksgiving**

D I N N E R

### **HAMPSTEAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH** **COMMUNITY POT LUCK THANKSGIVING DINNER**

Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup>

Dinner begins at 1:00pm

Do you find yourself alone on Thanksgiving? Are your kids with the ex? Grown kids too far away? Are you unable to travel home this year? Has your family unit shrunk so there are just a few of you?

Thanksgiving is always better with a large group of family and friends. Harking WAY back to our Pilgrim roots, HCC will be hosting a pot luck Thanksgiving Dinner. We will roast the Turkey. You bring your famous sweet potatoes, Grandad’s favorite pie, Mom’s cranberry relish, Aunt Mildred’s green bean casserole, or even rolls and butter from the grocery store. We will share what arrives and be thankful for it! A good will offering will be accepted (but not required) at the door with proceeds going to local food pantries.

Hampstead Congregational Church, UCC, 61 Main St. Hampstead. Please RSVP by Sunday Nov. 24th (so we know how much turkey to cook!) By Phone to the Church: 603-329-6985 or by Email: HCC1752@gmail.com.



### **Loaf and Ladle**

Colleen Towle is looking for folks to make bread for the Loaf and Ladle lunch. She is also going to need people to make desserts, however she is not sure what she is going to serve at this time. If you can make bread or a dessert, please contact Colleen by email at [kittygrammy@mygsc.com](mailto:kittygrammy@mygsc.com).



## **Christmas in the Village**

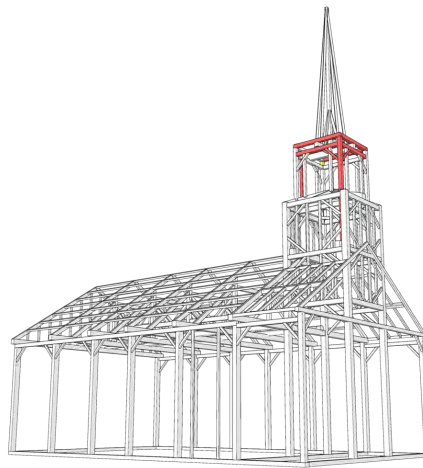
**Saturday, December 7th**

**9am – 2pm**

**Chester Congregational Baptist Church Vestry**

**Our craft sale features quality, handmade crafts, unique holiday gifts, delicious bake shop, Tiffany's of Chester, live music and hot cider for all to enjoy.**

**At Stevens Memorial Hall:**  
**Loaf and Ladle Lunch will be served from 11am-2pm**  
**Chester Seniors Cookie Walk begins at 9am**



### **Meetinghouse Preservation Project Update**

Wow! The dinner/information night on October 26<sup>th</sup> was a wonderful success! Thank you to all who helped to make it so special.

There were about 80 people that gathered in the Senior Cafeteria at Pinkerton Academy. Sincere thanks to our Dinner Coordinators Becky Hanna and Deb Field for decorations, arranging for a delicious dinner by Fratello's of Manchester and providing easy access to the A/V equipment that all blended together smoothly. Monica Pagliuca handled the PowerPoint presentation beautifully.

Lynn Rockwell, as chair and emcee for the evening, welcomed everyone and thanked the members of the Executive Committee and many others for their parts in this project.

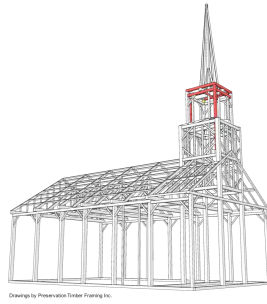
After dinner, we were treated to an entertaining storytelling of the history of the church building by Gen Rowell and Rev. Linda Rackliffe. They reminded us that, in the late 1700s and early 1800s when it was built and then renovated into a Greek Revival style, there was no separation of church and state, and this is why we call this building the Meetinghouse. Many anecdotes, provided by Joanne Millsaps, were told about the early years. The town's history is deeply intertwined with this building and it truly belongs to everyone in Chester.

Next, Arron Sturgis of Preservation Timber Framing Inc. presented slides of the interior of the steeple and gave a fascinating talk about her structure. He enthusiastically described that we have one of the best standing examples of construction from this era. The repairs needed are relatively minor compared to some buildings that he has seen all over New England, and the basic framework is strong and robust. We should be proud to have this gem of a building, and he is very excited to have been given the opportunity to do the necessary work. Even those who don't normally care about building structure found his enthusiasm contagious and wanted to know more. Fortunately, Chester Cable TV filmed the entire talk and will re-broadcast it so that many more people can see it. **Click [here](#) to link to the Chester Cable video of the dinner.**

Then it was time to reveal how far we are toward our 3-year \$450,000 goal. A lot of work has been happening behind the scenes, and we currently have pledges of . . . drum roll please . . . **\$304,100 !!** That is so exciting !! We had a marked board as a visual prop and kept stretching red duct tape up and up, higher and higher, until we reached the dollar amount, and the room exploded and cheered!

*Continued on next page....*





## **Meetinghouse Preservation Project Update...continued**

Every pledge and donation makes a difference, and we are so grateful to those who have already given. Please keep up with the pledges that you have made! Please make a pledge if you have not yet! We are applying for grants, but those are very competitive and we can only guess at how much we may receive. In reality, we do not know how much the final cost of the 3-year project will be until we get there. It is anticipated that the actual work will be done in 2021, as the grant process takes a year or more, and also the summer of 2021 is when Arron is available to do the work.

Being 2/3rds of the way to our goal is fantastic at this point! We projected and hoped to reach the interim goal of \$300,000 and we are so grateful. This also provides the opportunity for the generosity of our members, friends, and Chester community to help us to take it over the top over the next 2 years.

Many people took home brochures and pledge cards and plans to talk to their neighbors and friends at the end of the evening. We have tried to make it very easy for everyone to donate to this project and encourage you to mail in a card with your contribution or to go on the church website [www.chesternhchurch.org](http://www.chesternhchurch.org) and click on the DONATE button there. Pledge cards can be requested from our church office. Checks can be made payable to: Chester Congregational Baptist Church, Attn: Meetinghouse Preservation Project.

The question was raised at the meeting: What if we exceed our \$\$ goal? What a wonderful problem to have! It was answered by Donna Foote, our grant writer, who said that we must show the LCHIP grant people that we have the capacity to maintain the repairs to the structure that have been invested in for at least the next 10 years, and that it is appropriate to maintain a Capital Improvement fund specifically for that purpose. Arron Sturgis also spoke up that, as with any older building, there will always be unexpected costs and that a Capital Improvement Fund is the correct way to hold any additional funds that are given, and he will provide the correct documentation that is needed. We assure you that 100% of your tax deductible dollars will go to capital improvements.

We do hope to accomplish this entire project in time for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chester in 2022. It is clear that this gem of a building belongs to everyone in Chester, and we will continue to keep this project in the public's eye for opportunities to help us to preserve her. Thank you for your help!

*Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn Rockwell, Chair, Meetinghouse Preservation Project*





Did you visit our church building on Hallowe'en? Or stop at the parsonage? Even if you didn't, many, many people of all ages (infant to ?) did so and enjoyed listening to Mark Lutton playing the organ and getting a piece of candy. Mark posted this event on our church's Facebook page. Check it out!

Again, many thanks to Mel and Judy Balk for sharing the flowers from their garden—highlighting some aspect or person of our church and enhancing the worship service.

Although one of November's emphasis is Thanksgiving, the Deacons will begin planning for Advent. We will be looking for individuals and families to do the readings and lighting the Advent candles during the four Sundays preceding Christmas and lighting the Christ candle on Christmas Eve. If you would like to participate, please speak to one of us.

We rejoice with our church reaching our first goal of \$300,000 of the Meetinghouse Preservation Project. Now on to the final \$150,000 push. Prayers are needed as we work to keep Christ a visible presence in Chester.

We have started a prayer time from 9:40 to 9:50 in the Vestry each Sunday morning. Come join us as we lift up Pastor Linda in prayer, the church in prayer, any concerns that are shared.

Although the money aspect of Stewardship is the work of the Board of Resources and Finance, we lift up the pledging in prayer. The Deacon of the month is Paul Scott.

*The Deacons for 2019 are Deb Field, Mary Hamblett, Paul Scott and Teresa Rogers.*

## Briefing from the BORF



As we begin preparing for the upcoming winter season and the very popular scarecrows have retreated indoors, we now turn our attention to those projects that need to be done prior to the snows arriving. As is evident to anyone driving by, Arron Sturgis and his crew from Preservation Timber Framing have begun to do some of the preliminary stabilization work on the roof area around the steeple and tower. Our hope is that this alleviates some of the leaking in the sanctuary prior to the start of the main project scheduled for 2021.

Even though we all love the beautiful trees that provide such a wonderful autumn display, they do produce lots of leaves that require raking and removal! Our originally planned Saturday morning work days on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and November 9<sup>th</sup> needed to be rescheduled to Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup>. This is later in the season than desired and while we hope that we can have a group effort to do this clean up, we realize that this date may also be affected by weather. With that in mind, we would like to encourage anyone who would be willing to do some “solo” work on the properties to do so. The need is basically the raking and disposing of leaves, twigs, etc. from the foundations, fences and gardens at both the church and the parsonage. If you have any questions or need some direction, please contact a member of the BORF. We also will be trying to schedule some inside projects that are able to be organized outside of the scheduled Saturday work day. If you have an inside project that you would like to bring to the BORF, or lead yourself, please see Jean Gagnon.

The Stewardship Campaign has begun and this year's theme is entitled “The Way”. You should have received your stewardship letter and pledge cards by now and November 17<sup>th</sup> has been designated as Stewardship Sunday. While the Meetinghouse Preservation Project is very exciting and successful to date, we need to remember that in the midst of this, we need to prayerfully consider the need to continue supporting the basic church budget.

The BORF is also discussing some areas we would like to focus on in 2020 since we will still be in the fundraising stages with the capital project and will not be starting any major work on the steeple until 2021. We realize that we have three buildings to maintain and here is the initial list of projects that we will be investigating.

- New furnace for the vestry.
- Repairs to the parsonage (outhouse area, holes in the barn, etc.).
- Refurbishing salvageable shutters.
- Vestry/parsonage gardens and landscaping.
- Vestry roof replacement.

As always, the BORF would like to thank all who graciously continue to contribute all their gifts and talents to help whenever the need arises.

*Respectfully submitted by the 2019 Board of Resources and Finance.*

*The Board of Resources and Finance for 2019 consists of Nate Rockwell, Fran Bechtold, Norman Field, Donna Foote, Jean Gagnon and Penny Henderson.*

## **NEWS FROM THE WIDER CHURCH SETTING**

There is a star just off our coast that has been a source of respite, inspiration and community for decades for everyone who visits. It is *Star Island*, and the *UCC* and *UU* are the two denominations that have been most connected to this special place. Several in our church have attended conferences, retreats or workshops there over the years, and even more have taken the ten mile boat ride to explore the island and the facilities for a few hours. I attended a Unitarian Youth Camp there for a week when I was thirteen, and I have gone back several times as an adult, both to attend a church event, and also just to visit for an afternoon with family.

Now the Board of Directors, with heartfelt input from colleagues and staff members, has developed an educational resource they call ***The Beloved Community Project***, which they created to project the sense of harmony among people and with nature that has always been part of *Star Island* 'on site'. They offer this as their way to try to counteract the divisiveness and hate that now seems to surround us. It is available for local congregations, study groups, and others to use in various ways, as they choose. They suggest that, first, and most simply, it can just be read and enjoyed. But because it is separated into a number of small sections, a reader can go more slowly and reflect on each section, or a group can do this together for it to serve as a 'conversation catalyst' for sharing ideas, hopes and prayers about some of today's difficult issues.

### **QUOTES FROM CONTRIBUTORS**

"I believe in grace. I believe that grace requires honest confession. I believe that everyone, yes, everyone, needs more confession and grace."

*Rev. Eric Cherry*

"The tasks needed to reach our destination of a *Beloved Community* are mine, and yours, to do."

*Rev. Patrice Curtis*

"We can pay for heartache or we can pay for healing. The choice is ours of what will be. ***The Beloved Community Project*** made its decision to trust. That decision brought us a great deal of joy. Will you join us?"

*Rev. Dr. Leon Dunkley*

*From Star Island News..... Submitted by Joanne Millsaps*



Set-up for the Thanksgiving baskets is Thursday, November 20th at 3:00pm in the Vestry. We will distribute the baskets on Saturday, November 23rd from 9am to noon.

### **Thanksgiving Basket needs:**

Stuffing  
Pie Crust

Gravy  
Cranberry Sauce

Pie Filling  
Boxed Baked Goos

### **Current Food Pantry needs:**

Cereal  
Peanut Butter  
Spaghetti O's or other canned pasta  
BBQ Condiments—mustard, ketchup, relish, etc.

Powdered drink mixes  
Canned Fruit  
Jams and Jellies

Oatmeal  
Macaroni & Cheese  
Pancake mix

**\*\*Supermarket gift cards are always welcome (\$15, \$20, \$25 and \$30 amounts) \*\***

Please contact Cindy at 887-4626 if you have any questions.

*Thanks. Cindy McLaughlin*



# Chester Congregational Baptist Church

## November 2019

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                               | Monday                                                                                                                                                | Tuesday | Wednesday                      | Thursday                                                                                                             | Friday | Saturday                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday Church Service:</b><br>*10:00am Worship<br>*Communion is on the first Sunday of every month*                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                       |         |                                |                                                                                                                      | 1      | 2                                                                      |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                    | 4                                                                                                                                                     | 5       | 6<br>6:30pm<br>BORF<br>meeting | 7                                                                                                                    | 8      | 9                                                                      |
| 10<br>11am Choir<br>Rehearsal                                                                                                                                                        | 11<br>11am<br>Veterans' Day<br>Ceremony<br><br><b>VETERANS DAY</b> | 12      | 13                             | 14                                                                                                                   | 15     | 16<br>8am-noon<br>Church<br>work day                                   |
| 17<br>11am<br>Deacons' meeting<br>11am Choir<br>Rehearsal<br><br><br><b>Commitment<br/>SUNDAY</b> | 18                                                                                                                                                    | 19      | 20                             | 21<br>3:00pm<br>Set-up for<br>Food Pantry                                                                            | 22     | 23<br>9am-noon<br>Distribute<br>Food Pantry<br>Thanksgiving<br>baskets |
| 24<br><br>CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY                                                                  | 25                                                                                                                                                    | 26      | 27                             | 28<br><br>Happy<br>THANKSGIVING! | 29     | 30                                                                     |



**Chester Congregational Baptist Church**  
**United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches**

**Worship Service**

Family Worship 10:00 am

*\*\*Communion is received the first Sunday of every month\*\**

Join us for Coffee Hour in the Vestry following Worship

**Office Hours**

Admin. Assistant: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am to noon

Pastor Rackliffe: By appointment

**Staff**

**Pastor:** **The Rev. Linda J. Rackliffe**

Administrative Assistant: Frances Kenison

Custodian: Teresa Rogers

**Community Food Pantry**

Open 4th Saturday of each month, 9am to noon, in the Vestry.

For more information call: Cindy McLaughlin at 887-4626

**Contact Us**

**Parsonage Phone:** 603-887-4792

**Pastor Email:** [chesternhpastor@mygsc.com](mailto:chesternhpastor@mygsc.com)

**Office Phone:** 603-887-4799

**Office Email:** [chesterchurchoffice@gsinet.net](mailto:chesterchurchoffice@gsinet.net)

**Church Website:** [chesternhchurch.org](http://chesternhchurch.org)