

faith matters

The Roxbury Congregational Church
A Congregation in the United Church of Christ

Continuing Testament
Extravagant Welcome
Changing Lives



Church Office, 24 Church Street
Roxbury, Connecticut 06783-1703
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Vol. 281, Issue 2, February 2024

Pastoral Reflections

The Reverend David F. Peters, Minister

Since the global pandemic was declared in March 2020, many of us have endured extended emotional and psychological stress. That experience may be dramatically worsened by the ugly realities of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia or poverty. Our anguish has taken the form of sadness in isolation, anxiety in uncertainty, grief over loss, stress over economic challenges and worry over events beyond our control — including the tremendous impact of the crisis on our children. This pandemic threatened our mental health just as much as our physical health. For millions of us adults living in the United States, receiving the vaccine and the hope it brings has alleviated our unease, sorrow and grief. (If you haven't, please get the latest one...)

This past year has provided some of us with a deeper understanding of and empathy for the ongoing mental health challenges endured by our neighbors, friends and family. During Mental Health Awareness Month, especially, our church intentionally recognizes the anguish our siblings in Christ experience daily — pandemic or not — and the fear many of them feel about sharing their stories. As a church we also acknowledge the true depths of these invisible illnesses. Our children, neighbors and friends grappling with mental health issues need to know that God does not love them any less. They need to hear that they, too, are embraced by God's unfathomable love.

Our church cautions against judgmental words and actions that might suggest to someone that their faith is not strong enough or that their outlook on life would improve if they would change certain behaviors. Praying, socializing and exercising are great activities that can help someone get out of a slump or move past a painful episode. But this is not always the solution for moderate or severe depression, bipolar depression, anxiety or even grief. Telling someone they aren't doing enough to be happy creates a sense of stigma that they are not living correctly. We need to listen so that our words of care and compassion guide others to the help they need. We need to support people in their struggles, walking side by side in partnership with them through the good days and the bad. Dear church, God loves us all. No matter how we are grappling, we are not alone; God is with us. We must seek ways to erase the stigma surrounding mental illness and continually love everyone compassionately as a child of God. We must embrace the benefits of therapy and encourage the use of medication, when necessary, in supporting and sustaining mental health and wellness. We must also work to ensure access to affordable mental health care for all people, especially those living in poverty or in historically marginalized communities.

Our faith teaches that caring for health is a shared endeavor. Being the body of Christ means carrying one another's burdens; it also means placing our burdens in God's hands and admitting to a caring person close to us that we need help. This is true no matter how great or small our anguish may be.

It is my hope that our congregation will make support for mental health one of our priorities this year.

Shalom, *David*

ANNUAL MEETING



ANNUAL MEETING,
February 11, 2024, following worship

In-Person and Online

Notice and Call is hereby given of the 280th Annual Meeting of the Roxbury Congregational Church, Inc., of Roxbury, Connecticut, to be held Sunday, February 11, 2024, following the morning service of worship, on Zoom for the following purposes:

1. To receive Annual Reports from the officers and committees for the year 2023;
2. To act upon any such business arising from such reports;
3. To act upon the proposed Budget for 2024;
4. To receive the report of the Nominating Committee;
5. To elect officers, boards, and committees beginning in the year 2024;
6. To act upon other such business which may properly come before the meeting.

To attend, you can just stay on Zoom after worship.

If you are not attending worship :- Use the link for worship found on the website.

If on Zoom, we ask that you keep your microphone on MUTE when not speaking

All members of the congregation are invited to attend.

Please speak with Rev. Peters at 860-355-1978, or Brian Neff at 860- 354-3177 if you have any questions.

thank you

To everyone who continues to bring food pantry donations during these cold winter months.

*Thank you to these businesses
for your in-kind donations!*

Please consider using them and be sure to thank them for supporting our church:

Kevin Dumas & Dumas & Co. for accounting services for the church.

Frank and Howie White for mowing our lawns at the church and parsonage, the spring and fall lawn clean up as well as misc. tasks, at reduced rates.

Mark Lowe of Roxbury Garage – snow plowing.
Consider getting your gas from Mark's Roxbury Garage.

Jim Lowe for coming to our rescue a couple of times, first, this past August when we had flooding in our heating unit and this past month when our heating unit in Fellowship Hall leaked as well as having to have the fan and motor replaced.

Thank you to David Lincicome for each month baking the delicious communion bread.

Thanks to our financial team of Treasurer, Dale Pinchbeck, Collector, Beverly Wolmer, and Secretary, Luanne Awlasewicz for receiving donations, paying bills and recording them.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 11 after worship

Join in our Annual Meeting in the Meetinghouse or on-line after worship on Sunday, February 11. This is a time we hear the reports of the previous year and the nominees for the various openings for the officers and boards of the church.

Annual Reports for 2023 will be available after worship on Sunday, February 4, and on our website – www.roxburychurch.org

For the pot luck lunch, each family group is asked to bring a dish to share to feed at least 8. The Fellowship Committee will do the set ups with silverware, drinks, etc.

Fellowship Event for Adults “Mardi Gras” Party

Saturday, February 17 – beginning at 6:00 p.m.
At the home of Jeanne and Chris Steers
19 Blueberry Lane (off Chalybes Rd)

Technically, not Mardi Gras and in the season of Lent already, but you know how much we like to get together, socialize and eat!

Come bring a side dish to share and BYOB.

Mission Matters

Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, February 11

You are invited to participate and help our youth as they raise money and collect food for our chosen feed program, the



Roxbury Food Pantry. You are invited to make a donation by check or on the church’s website (roxburychurch.org/org) to support the Roxbury Food Bank and/or drop off a bag of nonperishables in the church entrance foyer (Narthex) Join the movement transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and serving.

Hands-on Mission Opportunities

Daily Bread Food Pantry in Danbury – monthly distribution of non-perishables.
Contact: Sue Stauffacher.

Food pantry donations continue to be needed as the number of clients is huge. You are encouraged as you do your shopping to fill an extra bag with nonperishable food items for daily bread. This Danbury pantry serves many working-poor and the homeless. Your donations can be placed either in the basket in fellowship hall near the opportunity table or in the coat closet. This is one way to share God’s love with the world. There is a list of needed items on the opportunity table.

There are a few church members who work at the food pantry on donation days; Tuesdays from 11:30 - 1:30 and Wednesdays from 2:00 - 4:00. If you are interested in doing this, please contact Karen Pricken at kchristine24@gmail.com to sign up. She will let you know what slots are available.

If you have questions, call Sue Stauffacher at 860-354-1274 before 7:30 p.m.

Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen –New Milford serves a meal monthly to approx. 26-30 people. A three-person rotating team. Contact: Mike Wilcox.



The team serves dinner to those who are homeless or are underemployed and find having enough food hard. We live out Christ's direction by serving others. If you want to help one month on the 4th Wednesday, speak with Mike Wilcox. This photo is from a few years ago.

Roxbury Church Mission Partners

Being a part of and support of the Roxbury Church allows you to extend your reach to place that you normally might not be. By joining together, we are able to have a sizable impact!

Here are some of our partners:

Andover Newton Seminary at Yale, New Haven,
Association of Religious Communities, Danbury,
Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, MS
Brian O'Connell Homeless Project, Naugatuck
Church World Service (International)
Grants, Blanket Program, Hygiene Kits
Daily Bread Food Pantry, Danbury, CT
Fuller Center for Housing (US) Georgia based
Global Ministries — Child Sponsorship
Greenwood Counseling & Referrals - Litchfield
Center for Empowerment and Education –
(Women's Ctr) Danbury
Heifer Project (International)
Holy Joe's Café Military US Chaplains
IRIS Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services
Loaves and Fishes Hospitality House, New Milford
Roxbury Resident Relief
Roxbury Food Pantry
Seafarer's Friend, Maritime Ministry - Boston, MA
Silver Lake Camp & Retreat Center, Sharon, CT
Simply Smiles, Mexico & SD
UCC Micro-loan Program (International)
United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries
Washington Refugee Resettlement Project

Please take a look at the Mission Committee Book “Extending Our Reach” in the Fellowship Hall. It has been reorganized and updated to reflect current information

Mindfulness Meditation Continues

Mindfulness Meditation continues to meet on Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom only. Please contact Charlie Stauffacher at 860-354-1274 for more information. Check out the church's Mindful Meditation page for meeting links and further information.

Lighting the Steeple



The Steeple can be lit in loving memory of someone or in celebration for a month. We ask for a donation of \$25 to the Memorial Fund. Contact Rev. Peters to make arrangements.

The Meetinghouse

Steeple lighting schedule:

January 2024: Lynn and Bill Fichtel

in memory of Barbara McClendon

February 2024: Patricia Fraley

in memory of her husband, Dean

March 2024: Carol Goodwin

in memory of Andersen & Goodwin loved ones

April 2024: Barbara and Norman Cover

In memory of Ken Cover and Dan Went

May 2024: Patty Metzger

In memory of her mother, June

June 2024: Paul & Patty Metzger

In memory of his parents, William and Ada

July 2024: _____

August 2024: _____

Congregational Bulletin Board

None submitted this month

(If you have something to me listed for one month, submit an email to info@roxburychurch.org)

Is There Interest? An Adult Fellowship Event – Jesus Christ Superstar



The Fellowship Committee invites you to join us for an in-person on the stage of the Palace Theatre in Waterbury, Thursday April 4 at 7:30 p.m.

The Fellowship Committee is trying to gauge interest so we can buy a block of tickets. The cost is \$47. Each. If you would like to go either sign up on the Opportunity Table or contact Jeanne Steers at 203-948-0554 or jsteers@me.com.

Thinking ahead to the Summer...
**Silver Lake Camp
and Retreat Center**
223 Low Road, Sharon, CT
860-364-5526

Summer Conferences - 2024
Registrations for Summer Camp open now!

Conferences fill up *f a s t*! - So plan now or you may not be able to attend when or what you desire!

Silver Lake summer camp registration is now open They are planning to have 5 week-long sessions (Sunday-Saturday) this summer, running from June 30 through August 3. Camp is for those entering grades 4-12 in the fall.

2024 Standard Program* Tiered Pricing: \$745 / \$670 / \$595

*Some programs may have slightly different pricing, or an additional program fee.

Silver Lake provides life-changing experiences of God's love in creation! We can't wait to see you at "the Lake" this summer! The Camp is American Camping Association certified.

For information and registration go to their website: <https://www.silverlakeect.org>

Silver Lake follows the immunization requirements for students enrolled in Connecticut schools. In addition, Silver Lake requires all guests to our site to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19. If your camper has a medical exemption, please contact us for more information.

As a ministry of the Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ (SNE UCC), Silver Lake adheres to all the policies put in place by the Conference.

Speak with Rev. David with any questions as well to apply for a grant from the Church to go towards the cost of a session at Silver Lake!



Star Island
Isles of Shoals, NH

Star Island is one of the nine Isles of Shoals located seven miles off the coast of New Hampshire and Maine.

Star Island hosts a number of week-long conferences during the summer. 2 weeks are specific for United Church of Christ (us!) folks. They are July 28-August 4 and August 4-11. Charlie and Sue Stauffacher, Nancy Desmond and Rachel Gerowe all have attended in the past. Star is owned and operated by the nonprofit Star Island Corporation.

For more information go to:

<https://starisland.org/programs/>



Easy Ways to Support the Ministries of Roxbury Church



The Cash for Causes program

The coordinator for this popular program is Susan Zappulla-Peters (860-355-8830 - zappullapeters@mac.com) and an emphasis on the local grocery stores.

It is hoped that you would consider getting in the habit, like some, to purchase your cards on a monthly basis.

NEW: The second Sunday of each Month will be Card Ordering Sunday.

Next Time: Sunday, February 11, 2024

We would like to have a set day so it is easy to remember to order and easy for processing...

The concept is simple.

- You buy the card at the face value (ex. \$100) and we purchase a cash card from the store.
- They charge approx. 5% less and the church keeps the difference.
- You spend the same amount, but by using the card, your Church gets a 5% benefit!!

We work primarily with Stop & Shop, Big Y, and Shop Rite cards

We do have a few \$100 cards for Stew Leonards at his time.

Contact Susan directly or speak with her on Sundays after worship.

She may have a few extra cards for the different stores with her.

LaBonne's Receipts

A continuing Thank you to everyone who contributes LaBonne's receipts to the church. This has been an on-going source of revenue to add to our mission funds. Please save your receipts and place them in the wooden box on the table in Fellowship Hall.



SERRV Shop

Looking to buy a unique gift and help others at the same time? Try SERRV! Our shop is open each Sunday after worship in Fellowship Hall with affordable jewelry, handicrafts, candles, tea, soup mixes and so on. Questions? Speak with Susan Zappulla-Peters.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 10 Regina Kay
- 12 Julie Whitney
- 18 Brett & Bernie Kibbe (A)
- 19 Caston Bergeron *formerly Tiffany Horton*
- 19 Dawn Collette
- 19 Zachary Collette
- 24 Matthew Collette
- 26 Jean Neff
- 27 Diana de Vries



"I've got two more time zones before it's Lent everywhere."

Word & Sacrament for February 2024

Deacon of the Month: Charlie Meade, assisted by Chris Childs
Those scriptures underlined are the readings for Lay Readers

Sunday, February 4 –*Boy Scout Sunday*

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany –

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c

Mark 1:29-39

Greeters: Boy Scouts

Lay Reader: Boy Scouts

Zoom Tech: Charlie Stauffacher

Refreshments : Patty & Paul Metzger

Sunday, February 11 *Annual Meeting Sunday*

Souper Bowl of Caring Offering

Transfiguration

Psalm 50:1-6

Mark 9:2-9

Greeters; Barbara Biafore & ____? _____

Reader: Barbara Biafore

Zoom Tech: Barbara Cover

Refreshments: Fellowship Committee

Sunday, February 18

First Sunday in Lent

Psalm 25:1-10

Mark 1:9-15

Greeters: Janet & Chris Childs

Reader: Chris Childs

Zoom Tech: Charlie Stauffacher

Refreshments: Tom & Chris Farrell

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday in Lent

Psalm 22:23-31

Mark 8:31-38

Greeter: Bill Steers & ____? _____

Reader: Bill Steers

Zoom Tech: Barbara Cover

Refreshments: Barbara Cover

2024 Flower Calendar

The 2024 Flower Calendar is now posted in Fellowship Hall. If you have a particular day/date on which you would like to place flowers, please

sign up on the newly decorated sign-up sheet. It was decorated by Luanne to entice more folks to sign up ahead of time to place flowers on the Communion Table on a particular Sunday. Please write clearly on the chart and add any memorial or celebratory dedication you wish printed in the bulletin.

So, Your Minister Can Help / Support

If you are hospitalized and desire pastoral support, you or your family should notify our minister of the hospitalization as soon as possible, by calling 860-355-1978. Federal regulations do not permit him to find this information directly from the hospital

If there are any needs that we can help with, Rev. Peters is available by phone, email, or text for a pastoral ear and support.

For Awareness and Advocacy

Rev. Peters last month suggested that the Church Investigate some special ministry opportunities.

Mental Health Awareness and Advocacy

See page 1... The congregation has the opportunity to be pro-active with those who are affected by mental health challenges. the mission to being Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged in the Mental Health of the community and the wider world. – A WISE Congregation. More info at: <https://www.mhn-ucc.org/becoming-wise/>

Green Church Designation

The Green Congregation Challenge is a step-by-step approach that helps churches take small, but consequential, steps towards protecting God's Creation. Environmental awareness and advocacy are primary in this process including somethings we already do. More information at: <https://www.sneucc.org/green-congregation-challenge>



**Don't just make a plan,
make a difference!**

Your gift can create a lasting legacy

For over 200 years people like you have been making bequests and life income gifts that have helped generations of church people. Just like you, shared God's love to the Roxbury community and the wider world. Perhaps this congregation has made a difference in your life, provided important support and comfort to a neighbor or friend, or inspiration that led you to change your life. Now you can honor that gift with one of your own. By your charitable financial plans including the church, you can make a difference in the future of the church.

Types of Planned Gifts

Gifts through your will

The Roxbury Congregational Church can be named as a beneficiary in your will and you can specify an outright gift of cash, securities, real estate of tangible personal property. If your estate is subject to the federal estate tax, a charitable bequest can save significant tax dollars.

Appreciated Stock

By making a gift of stock you receive an income tax deduction and eliminate the capital gains tax.

Charitable Remainder Trust

You can use under-performing appreciated assets to create steady income for the rest of your life. You receive a significant charitable deduction and the capital gains tax is eliminated. Your trust can be professionally managed.

Charitable Lead Trusts

A charitable lead trust can enhance your ability to make larger current gifts to the Roxbury Congregational Church and you can preserve assets for your family while still supporting the church. You can also reduce your taxable income and your estate tax.

Gifts of Life Insurance.

This can be done either by purchasing a new life insurance policy or by contributing a policy which you currently own, but no longer need.

Roxbury Congregational Church can be designated as the beneficiary of the policy, while you retain the right to change the beneficiary at a later date and otherwise retain ownership of the policy.

Benefits

- Tax advantages are substantial, especially on appreciated securities and properties.
- Total income, estate and capital gains tax savings and the probate expenses savings can come close the amount transferred.
- Many giving options can assure you of income for the rest of your life.
- Your assets remain in your control during your lifetime.
- You can modify your gift to a particular agreed-upon purpose.
- While unrestricted gifts allow the church to allocate funds to areas of greatest needs, we can also help you direct your giving to the areas where you have the greatest passions.

By making a planned gift to the Roxbury Congregational Church, your generosity will live into the future and help ensure that this tradition, this faith community, continues.

For more information, please contact Rev. David Peters at the Church Office or speak with your financial planning specialist. (We have a few within the congregation.)

February 2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|--|--------------------|---|
| 28 ■ 9:15AM Choir Rehearsal ■ 10:30AM Worship In-person & Virtual ■ 11:35AM Refreshments | 29 | 30 David Peters' day off ■ 3:30PM Piano Lessons (Sandy) | 31 ■ 7:00PM Trustees Budget meeting | 1 ■ 7:00PM Deacons | 2 Groundhog Day | 3 ■ 10:30AM Mindful Meditation |
| 4 ■ 9:15AM Choir Rehearsal ■ 10:30AM Worship In-person & Virtual ■ 11:35AM Refreshments | 5 | 6 David Peters' day off ■ 1:00PM Choir Rehearsal ■ 3:30PM Piano Lessons (Sandy) | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Lunar New Year ■ 8:00AM Mens Breakfast ■ 10:30AM Mindful Meditation |
| 11 ■ 9:15AM Choir Rehearsal ■ 10:30AM Worship In-person & Virtual ■ 11:35AM Refreshments ■ 12:00PM Annual Meeting & Luncheon | 12 ■ 9:00AM Daily Bread Food Pantry team | 13 David Peters' day off ■ 3:30PM Piano Lessons (Sandy) | 14 Ash Wednesday Valentine's Day | 15 | 16 | 17 ■ 10:30AM Mindful Meditation ■ 6:00PM Mardi Gras Party |
| 18 Newsletter Deadline ■ 9:15AM Choir Rehearsal ■ 10:30AM Worship In-person & Virtual ■ 11:35AM Refreshments ■ 11:45AM Council | 19 Presidents' Day | 20 David Peters' day off ■ 3:30PM Piano Lessons (Sandy) | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 ■ 10:30AM Mindful Meditation |
| 25 ■ 9:15AM Choir Rehearsal ■ 10:30AM Worship In-person & Virtual ■ 11:35AM Refreshments | 26 | 27 David Peters' day off ■ 3:30PM Piano Lessons (Sandy) | 28 ■ 3:00PM Loaves & Fishes Meal | 29 ■ 7:00PM Roxbury Housing Trust Directors | 1 | 2 ■ 10:30AM Mindful Meditation |

Church Newsletter Deadline for the March 2024 issue: February 15th

Leadership Listing (Through Feb. 11, 2024)

(All 860- unless noted)

Ministers: The Congregation
 Moderator: Brian Neff, 354-3177
 Clerk: Patricia Fraley, 868-0051
 Treasurer: Dale Pinchbeck, 355-4297
 Collector: Beverly Wolmer
 Deacons: David Lincicome
 Trustees: Bill Steers, 354-7210
 Stewardship: Sue Stauffacher
 Missions: Charlie Stauffacher, 354-1274
 Fellowship: Jeanne Steers, 354-7484
 Pastoral Relations:

Men's Group: Charlie Stauffacher, 354-1274
 Historian: Dale Pinchbeck, 355-4297
 Librarian: Joan Temple, 350-0529
 Secretary: Luanne Awlasewicz, 355-1978
 Minister of Music: Sandra Kleisner, 868-9040
 Custodian: Bruce Rossiter
 Pastor: The Rev. David F. Peters,
 office: 355-1978 home: 355-8830
 david@roxburychurch.org

Roxbury Congregational Church, UCC
24 Church Street
Roxbury, CT 06783

Address Service Requested

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NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2024

Worship – Sundays 10:30 a.m. In-Person and online

We Are A Community Seeking To Share God's Love!

Worship on Zoom (link on church website) or Facebook Live (fb.com/RoxburyChurch)

No Matter Who You Are, or Where You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here!

