

The Newsletter

First Congregational Church of Westfield

April 2024

Christ is Risen!

“Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King. Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.”

These words found in the Episcopal version of the Exultet initiate the celebration of Easter at the Great Vigil that is celebrated after sundown the night before Easter. It lifts any weight or burden that Lent may have bestowed and allows us to rejoice in the light that has conquered over darkness. All of us join the church in a fifty day celebration of Easter that will encompass the whole month of April and will culminate with Pentecost on May 19.

Throughout the Season of Lent/Season of Love we did our due diligence to ready ourselves to receive the love in the supreme sacrifice of Jesus and how it is brought to glory in the Resurrection. WE are the recipients of God’s ultimate act of love. WE are the recipients of the unconditional love offered to us freely and constantly by God. Indeed, all of us are called to rejoice in this Eastertide or Easter Season.

In the past few weeks we have basked in increased light as the hours of daylight grow longer. We see the initial signs of Spring that awaken and cause Mother Earth to rise again in all her splendor. The earth awakes from its slumber and echoes the Resurrection! This is also a reason to celebrate, despite any allergies, that the warm months of summer are soon to arrive.

Let us celebrate the Resurrection and unconditional love offered to us by God!

“This joyful Eastertide,
away with sin and sorrow!
My Love, the Crucified,
has sprung to life this morrow...”

Christ is Risen, indeed!

Peace and love,

Paul

Rev. Paul B. Nesbit
Pastor



The Interfaith Breakfast will be held at Westfield State University on Wednesday, April 17 at 7:30am in the Scanlon Banquet Hall. Rev. Paul has purchased a table for First Congregational Church. Six of the eight seats are available; . If you would like one of the seats, please see Rev. Paul or call the church office.

Meet the New Moderator

SECTION 6. Moderator. The Moderator shall preside over the annual meeting and special business meetings of the Church and all meetings of the Church Council. The Moderator shall appoint all special committees except where otherwise provided, appoint the three standing Safe Church Administrators, the Trustees of the Continuing Education Fund and the members of the Special Committee on Decorations. The Moderator may attend, without vote, meetings of all committees. The Moderator shall be responsible for the implementation of these By-Laws and shall, on behalf of the church, sign contracts with approval of the Church Council or the congregation as required. In the Moderator's absence a Moderator pro tempore shall be selected.

An introduction to your new Moderator.

First thank you for selecting me as the Moderator for the First Congregational Church of Westfield MA. My name is Daniel Koehne and I have been a member of First Church since 2016. My wife, Grace Chan, and I moved to Iowa from Australia in 1998 for work, and then on to Agawam, Massachusetts in 2005.

I stand here in 2024 feeling blessed to have inherited, with you, our Church's 345-year history and accomplishments. I see the results that our past members worked so diligently to achieve, our magnificent Church buildings, our excellent Sunday services, our Church community, our financial foundation, and our ministry in Westfield and beyond.

I am also really excited with all the status of our Church, our excellent spiritual ministry and leadership, our superb music ministry, the rebirth of our family and children's ministry, and our outreach to the Westfield community. Together with God's help, we can continue to build a future for our Church and the future residents of Westfield, MA.

I would love to hear from you and spend time talking with you and hearing your ideas. You can contact me via email at koehned@gmail.com or call me at 413-433-7599.

Ephesians 2:19-22

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Daniel Koehne

Church School

A lot is happening!!

The Youth will be involved with handing out palms on Palm Sunday - a First Church tradition. There were Easter goodie bags available for children on Easter Sunday.

Unfortunately the Pot Luck game night was postponed to a later date to be determined. In April Michelle Winer has scheduled a Thunderbirds Hockey game outing for April 13th. \$20.00 will buy you a ticket, hot dog and drink.

The Bowling Night is April 19th and is open to all FCC members & their families.

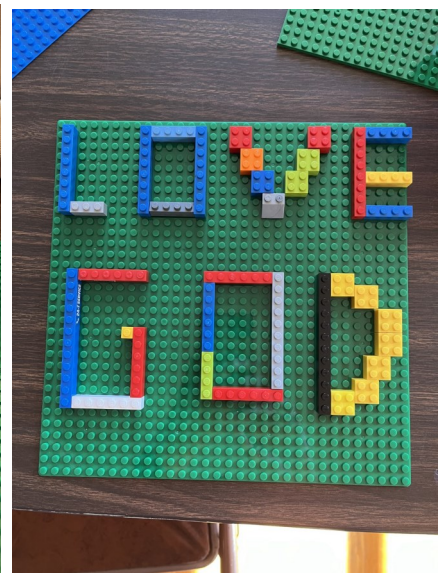
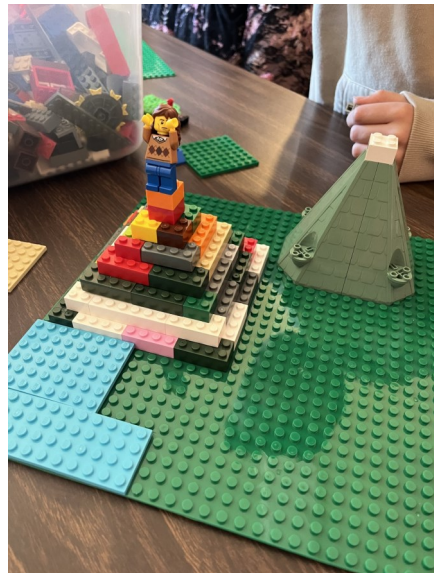
Amy has been in contact with the Feeding Hills Congregational Church about having our youth participate in a Crop Walk to be held on April 28th. Westfield's Food Pantry will receive canned goods for our youth's participation

An intergenerational service will be on June 9th which will be the last day the youth meet on Sunday mornings till the fall. A canoe outing with Nancy Condon is also being planned for June - more details will follow.

VBS will be in July – plans are being worked on. Please watch for information on how you can volunteer.

Looking forward to the Fall we are planning a welcome back picnic at Stanley Park on September 15th and having a joint service with Southwick

Gail Ives



DEACON'S CORNER



BABE AND ROSIE

I was given permission to write about my experience visiting two large special horses on Tom Samwell's farm land in Granville. The breed's name for these two girls is Belgian Draft Horses. Their jobs required them to be bred bigger than most work horses. Rosie and Babe's size is 1800 to 2200 pounds, and they stand at least 16-17 hands high. One draft horse can pull 8000 pounds. They are special gentle giants. They are nearly the size of Clydesdales, and they are inseparable.

Rosie was Born on May 16, 2012, and her half-sister, Babe was born 8 days later on May 24, 2012. Their color is chestnut with a cream-

colored mane, and both are quite a magnificent sight.

I love horses. I also respect horses and know they are still wild animals in their heart. They are capable of causing some damage when they want to be free of their enclave, saddles, and that ever kicking-on-the-side to giddy up. No matter how large horses are, they have issues with riders who are heavy.

I watched a farrier work on Babe and Rosie. A farrier needs strength and trust with the animals they are shoeing and trimming. Zack Addington worked very patiently giving these girls their manicure. It was like a girl's night out.

Tom has a large plot of land, 10 acres. He has fenced areas, a genuinely nice large barn for his girls to lodge in and be out of the weather when it turns cold, or snows, or rains. They are very spoiled girls as Tom put it. He mentioned he uses them to gather and pull logs from his nearby woods and uses that wood in his home, so he is always cozy and warm. He has special blankets to keep the girls warm too.

Babe and Rosie were delivered to Tom's farm on April 27, 2013, when they were 11 months old. Babe and Rosie were born in Cookeville, Tennessee.

Rosie was registered with the North American Draft Horse Association as WK Supreme II, and Babe was registered Babe's Dixie. Both of these names come from variations of the parents' names.

When purchased, these horses were advertised as coming from southern Indiana pulling stock.

A lifetime dream of Tom's was to own draft horses, and this became a reality in 2013. Since then, he has done an extraordinary job of keeping them happy, well-fed and room to exercise. They need hay 24-7 {they share 4 bales a day}, and that feed along with 6 dry quarts of grain and 1 1/2 pound of carrots daily, keeps them content and happy. Tom truly loves his girls, Babe, and Rosie, and they and he are all blessed to have each other.

While I was there my thoughts went to how these lovely girls could be seen by visitors who

would come, especially at the time the hydrangeas are in bloom.

Tom could sell lovely bouquets of hydrangeas, which would help to pay for the girl's food. Also, I thought they could be ridden, if possible, or, for hayrides.

Their history, all three of them, Tom, Rosie, and Babe, is delightful information to know. An idea is it would be nice if some church folks at First Congregational Church would be interested in being out there and serve hot apple cider and donuts for those enjoying the hayrides, or those just having a personal relationship with Babe and Rosie.

Tom contributed the information about his two special girls, Babe and Rosie, and Anne Gelinas wrote their story with some embellishments. It truly is a love story.



April Newsletter- World Service Committee

John 3:16 God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life

Thank You

Our Community Table/Westfield Soup Kitchen: Thank You to each person who has baked a dessert, assisted with meal preparation, delivered meals, and/or assisted in serving the meal. We could not serve the community without your generosity and assistance.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING OF YOUR TIME AND RESOURCES

Westfield Food Pantry: April 21, 2024 – 3rd Sunday of each month: Each month we bring items for the Westfield Food Pantry. Items that are requested include Spaghetti sauce, Pasta, Soup, Crackers, Macaroni & Cheese, Rice, Tuna fish, canned veggies: Corn, Green Beans, Peas, Carrots, Cereal, Canned Fruit, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Cooking oil, Juice, Coffee, Tea, Sugar.

Our Community Table/Westfield Soup Kitchen – April 23, 2024 -4th Tuesday of the month: We will need desserts for the meal, Cupcakes, cookies, brownies, sheet cakes are greatly appreciated by those who share a meal at the soup kitchen. Each donation must serve **24** people. If you are willing to bake a dessert, please contact **Nancy Condon**, Goodie Guru at 413-297-0778 or at nancy@paddleforwater.net Tuesday 23rd bring your dessert to the church by 2:00pm or take it to the Soup Kitchen at 101 Meadow St between 4:00 & 4:30. It would be great if you could stay and help, **CALL Cindy or Mayme 568-2833** to learn how you could help.

Franklin Avenue School: They and Abner Gibbs will move into their new school starting January, 2025. We will keep you updated on the needs of the new school. The number of students will probably double as will their needs. The new school name is Westfield River Elementary School.

Easter: We mailed out the Easter Offering letters on March 7th, if you have not received your letter there will be envelopes in the pews. Thank you in advance for your donations as it will be used in World Service budget.

HELO Haiti: The donations we give each year have helped the young people grow in their life. See the bulletin board about the Students who were able to Graduate because of your generosity.

Prayers: prayers for children and adults who live where violence and hate that is common throughout the **World**

World Service Committee, Ray Salois, Nancy Condon, Gail Ives, Jean Zimmerman, Dorothy Cichonski, Jennifer Waldorf

Corned Beef Dinner Success

A special thanks to all who helped make our Annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner a huge success. 96 meals were served and 8 were sold on Sunday. A profit of over \$800.00 was added to the church's fundraising line item.

This year's helpers included:

Mike Stefanik, Jim Kinney, Tom Samwell, Mayme Lajoie, Marla Pignatara, Val Liptak, Amy Platt, Cindy Reynolds, Carol Whalen, Gail Ives, Jennifer Barkyoumb, Rev. Paul, Alice Flyte, Steve and Christina Pierce, Lynn Brownlee, Ed LaPlante, Chief Marty, Martha Roman, Martha Scavotto.

Please forgive me if I forgot anyone.



Dear Friends,

We would like to thank you for all the love and support that you have shown us these last difficult months.

You have ridden with me to visit Rick in the nursing home and hospital. That so helped make a difficult situation a little easier, Many have called or sent cards to keep in touch.

The number of you who came to the calling hours and church service made us feel so loved. I thank God for putting so many warm, kind people in our lives.

The Hauk family
Linda, Rebecca, Jeffrey

Thank You!



SECTION 17. Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee. The Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee shall consist of not more than five (5) members. It shall be the purpose of the Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee to facilitate open communication and resolution of major issues of concern within the congregation. It shall function as a liaison between the Pastor(s) and the congregation and shall conduct an annual review of the Pastor(s).

Pastoral Congregation Relations Committee

Your PCRC committee is working to review the successes of our church programs and Rev. Paul's impact. We need your perspective on our progress. In order to get your feedback we will provide a short survey for you to complete. This will be available in church on Sunday April 14th and Sunday April 21st. There will be boxes in the front and back of the church to place your survey in. We appreciate your time and responses.

If you are not able to be in attendance copies will be available in the church office or you can request an email copy by contacting the church office at fccwestfield@outlook.com or Mayme Lajoie at 568-1057

Mayme Lajoie, Lynn Brownlee, Martha Roman, Jim Yesu, Darlene Biggs

Christian Fellowship

April 10th at 1PM

Presents

Ann Lentini

Executive Director

at Domus Incorporated

“Creating Communities”



All are Welcome

Refreshments will be served

Attention Committee Chairs

Committee Chairs are reminded to put your meeting dates on the church calendar, check your mailboxes each week and make sure lights are out and doors are locked after your meeting. Please remember the newsletter deadline is the 18th of each month.

Hearing Devices are available for your use during the worship service. If you are missing any words of our service we suggest you give it a try. Just ask an usher for one. We are sure it will make the service much more enjoyable.

Church News

Blessed Buys Thrift Shoppe Thursday and Saturday 10AM-2PM

**Donation's of Spring and Summer
items are needed.**

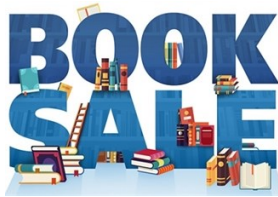
**Please call the Church office for
information and arrangements to
drop off your donation**



First Congregational Church
20 Broad Street
Westfield, MA 568-2833

April Birthdays

4/01-Beverly Gamble
4/05-Elizabeth Dillingham
4/07-Ardelle Zych
4/10-Sтивен Downs
4/11-Daniel Albee
4/11-Marylyn Smith
4/12-Joan Deacon
4/12 Nick Platt
4/13 Paul Nesbit
4/14-Martha Roman
4/19-Mark St. Jean
4/30-Julia Kraus



The Friends of the Westfield Athenaeum
will be having our Annual Book Sale
Thursday April 25th through Saturday April 27th
at the First United Methodist Church,
located at 16 Court Street in Westfield.

Donations of books for all ages and jigsaw puzzles will be accepted Monday April 8th through
Saturday April 13th.

No musty or damaged books, encyclopedias, textbooks,
Reader's Digest books or outdated manuals, travel or self-help books
will be accepted.

Email us at info@friendsofwestath.org. For more information





First Church Hockey Night !!!

Saturday, April 13th 7:05PM \$20.00

Springfield Thunderbirds
vs. Charlotte Checkers

*Tickets include thunderbirds ticket and a voucher for
hot dog and soda.*

Please see Michelle Winer if interested.

Memorial Flowers

Each Sunday our Sanctuary is decorated with fresh floral arrangements on the Altar. There are many people and several groups in the Church who give flowers as a memorial, special celebration or holiday remembrance. After each service, the flowers are made into smaller bouquets which are given to sick, bereaved and shut-in members. If you would like to give Altar flowers for a particular Sunday, Please call the church office 568-2833. The cost of an arrangement is \$25.00.

First Congregational Church of Westfield Family Bowling Night

April 19th 5-7pm

\$5 Per Person /\$20 Family

Free Shoe Rental

Pizza and Soda Included

all FCC members & their families.

Spare Time Bowling
Pleasant Street
Northampton



Free to Good Home

Singer Sewing Machine with Stand

Please call the church office

if interested 568-2833



Continuing Education Fund

The Committee for the Bishop, Seher, Swartz and Taylor, Moore Continuing Education Fund is now accepting applications for the **2024-2025** school year. Please obtain an application from the church office. Completed forms may be returned to the church office. All applications must be returned by **5/31/24**.

Also, should anyone desire to make a gift or bequest to the scholarship fund, please see Cindy LaPlante, or you may pick up an information pamphlet outside the church office.

Cindy LaPlante, Daniel Koehne, Gail Ives



Meet the Director!!!

Amy Platt is the new Director of Faith Formation & Family Ministries. She is a lifelong resident of Western MA. She graduated from Cathedral High School, Westfield State (B.A. Mass Communications) and Cambridge College (M.Ed. Special Education). Amy started her career working in television at 22News & ESPN before returning to the classroom. She has now worked in Special Education for almost 25 years. Fun facts: She is fluent in American Sign Language, is a HUGE Disney fan and earned a black belt in Tae Kwon Do when she was 40 years old!! She is honored to be part of the Westfield FCC community and truly appreciates how everyone has embraced her and her family.



The Arbors Dedicates flagpole on March 14, 2024.
Barry Plumley spearheaded the efforts.

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18 Broad Street
Westfield, MA 01085
Office (413) 568-2833

www.firstcongregationalchurchwestfieldma.org

