



The Spire

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
35 Conant Street, Beverly MA 01915

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February 2025



**Second Congregational
United Church of Christ
Sunday – 9:30 a.m.**

From January 26 through February 23, we are going to be reading and examining the “Sermon on the Plain,” some of Jesus’s most central teachings as found in the Gospel According to Luke. This is a shorter counterpart to the “Sermon on the Mount,” which is found in Matthew’s Gospel.

February 2

Worship with Communion

Gospel According to Luke 6:27-35

Rev. Adam preaching

Liturgist: Glenn Morris

February 9

Gospel According to Luke 6:36-38

Rev. Adam preaching

Liturgist: Donna Kendall

February 16

Gospel According to Luke 6:39-42

Rev. Wendy Linares preaching

Liturgist: Joyce Mosher

February 23

Gospel According to Luke 6:43-49

Rev. Adam preaching

Liturgist: Gail Goodell



Light of the World

During the month of February, the Church Spire will be illumined in loving memory of **Jack & Jean Card** by daughter Marcia (Card) Reilly and son Jack Card, Jr.



Tree of Life

Christian Love & Sympathy is extended to family and friends of Glenn E. Terry (husband to Cynthia, father to Lauren, Kristin and Lynne), who died January 21.

Rev. Adam will be on vacation from February 10–17. Rev. Wendy Linares will be covering worship and any pastoral emergencies that come up during that time. The church office will be closed on Monday, February 17 in observance of Presidents Day.

FINDING CLOSURE

Finding Closure Issue 5: “The Turning of the Tide” - Rev. Adam Isbitsky

I’m writing at what seems to be a turning of the tide. From large scale to small scale, things are happening at a face pace in our world this month.

Starting with the obvious: we are witnessing the hard lurch of a shift in the federal government. Many executive actions taken by the Trump administration oppose the values we hold dear in our church’s Open and Affirming Covenant. And I expect many laws to be passed that will also threaten our people and our values. Already, executive actions narrowed the federal government’s definition of sex and gender; revoked the protections against discrimination in hiring in the federal government based on race and other categories; and have tried to stop the government’s efforts at diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Although our commitment to inclusivity and mutual respect stays the same no matter who is in power in government, the federal government’s actions make our task that much harder. We know that people are welcome in our church building and community, but since the majority of our lives happens outside of church, this country just became a much more hostile, cruel, dangerous, and uncaring place. People, our people, are rightly afraid, and angry.

In other change, a couple of weeks ago we gathered for a Special Congregational Meeting to approve the purchase and sale of our building and land to Lifebridge North Shore. This was a huge step, and yet, as we said, there will likely be many months before the deed can actually be transferred to them while the courts review our petition.

So even as we look toward creating a lasting legacy, we must ask ourselves what our Christian witness is for today. My heart is fortified by colleagues such as Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, who took time during her homily at the inaugural prayer service to remind our elected leaders of the core Christian value of mercy to others, especially those who are not like themselves.

Finally, and a little closer to home, just yesterday Jan Allen reminded me that I had just celebrated one year as your legacy pastor! As year one turns to year two, I ask that we make the most of our shared time together. We have a lot to do in this time that will be remembered for the ages.

Central Board News and Notes:



The Central Board met on January 15th as announced in church and the weekly E-News.

Rev Adam told the Central Board that he met with the Multi-Faith Coalition to draft and issue a statement opposing antisemitism. That statement can be read in the Beverly Patch. He thanked the Board for their work to make the congregational meeting on January 12th a success.

The SNEUCC annual Super Saturday will be held on March 8th in Shrewsbury. The meeting can be attended either in person or via zoom.

The office will be closed on January 20th and again on February 17th. Rev Adam will be on vacation from February 10th to the 17th. He will ask Rev. Wendy to cover for him.

The Legacy Team was pleased with the congregational meeting on January 12th. The P&S has been signed and forwarded to our attorneys. The deposit check has been received and forwarded to our real estate attorney. Jason Etheridge from Lifebridge will meet with all of the groups that currently use the church.

Historic Beverly met with Jack, Adam, and Mary Jane. They reviewed the items to be archived. There will be a congregational meeting to vote on the agreement between Second Congregational and Historic Beverly. There will be a joint presentation at that time.

The Property Team reported that the Children's Theater will hold a presentation of the Li-on King on March 22nd and 23rd.

The pile of trash has been removed.

The next Central Board Meeting will be held on February 19th.



Spirited Women gathered on January 26th after worship to learn about Valentines and how it is celebrated around the +world. Then we had fun making are own Valentines



SPIRITED WOMEN GATHERING

Spirited Women will be meeting on Feb 16th in the parlor after worship. A request has been made to make the shrink wrap Ukrainian eggs once again. It seems that you liked doing it so let's do it again!

Grab a coffee then come down to the parlor. We look forward to seeing you and thinking about Springtime!

SCHOLARSHIPS 2025



The Second Congregational Church Scholarship applications have been sent to local high schools and are available for 2025 high school graduates and college students. *“Awards will be made to students, without regard to religious affiliation, place of residence, race, color, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Awards will be made to those whose experiences and values are in keeping with the United Church of Christ’s social justice mandates centering on equality for all: having exhibited a willingness to educate or serve others in a chosen career and having a need for financial assistance.*

*Application, grade transcripts and 3 letters of recommendation are due in the church office by the Tuesday, **April 15th deadline.** Applications available in church office, narthex and can be emailed to students: parishad-min@beverlysecond.com.*



My thanks to all who participated in the Congregational Meeting on the Purchase and Sale Agreement (P&S) between Lifebridge North Shore and Second Congregational Church. We had a large turnout in the sanctuary and many more on Zoom. Due to state requirements, we needed approval from a vote of 2/3 of the active membership. In mid-December we determined that there were 85 Active Members. That started a process of emails, letters and phone calls to each of the 85 Active Members to make sure they were Active Members and whether they would be at the meeting. Thank you to those who responded, and we determined that there were actually 71 Active Members. We needed at least 47 Active Members for a quorum (under the state requirements) and had 54 participants. The vote passed with 52 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

This was an important vote in the life of Second Church. It is the continuation of a long, complicated process. As I said at the meeting, it could take six months to a year, or even longer, before we get the necessary approvals from the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Division of Public Charities and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Until that occurs, we wait and continue doing what we have always done: meet, worship and pray.

If you missed the presentation, it can be found on the Second Congregational Church website under the Central Board ([Beverly Second: CENTRAL BOARD - Home](#))

The P&S has been signed by both Second Church and Lifebridge. A \$5000 deposit check was received from Lifebridge, and everything has been transmitted to our attorneys for their submission to the state. We will continue to follow up with our attorneys to determine the status of the P&S and accompanying documents.

Next, we will be finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Historic Beverly. They have been selected to do the archiving of our church records, allowing the records to stay in Beverly. Further, they will digitize the records so there will be online access. The MOU will establish what will be archived, and how it will be maintained and cared for in the future. We have gone through the files with Historic Beverly, and they are preparing the MOU and expected costs based on what they have seen. What is being archived includes historical paper records, recent files, books, photographs, digital records and some physical assets such as artwork. The terms of the MOU will be presented at a future Congregational Meeting.

Submitted by:

Jack Terrill, Chair

Last month, a Beverly resident was arrested after credible threats of heinous violence against Jews in our community. He was found with a large amount of guns, ammunition, and cash to carry out possible attacks. In response, the Beverly Multifaith Coalition gathered at Temple B'nai Abraham in solidarity with the local Jewish community. We issued the following statement:

The Beverly Multifaith Coalition expresses deep concern over the persistent expressions of hatred against Jews that circulate too readily in our communities, the readiness of some to act on such hatred, and the networks of ideas and resources that make these threats tangible.

We stand in solidarity with the Jewish community in Beverly and beyond during this challenging time. Together, we reaffirm our commitment to upholding the dignity, rights, and safety of all members of our community while fostering understanding, respect

We urge every member of our community to take a strong stand against all manifestations of hate and prejudice. Let us exercise care and responsibility in our words and actions to promote unity and understanding.

We call on everyone to remain vigilant in identifying those who, in these turbulent times, might act with hate or malice toward Jews or any other group.

Educate yourselves. Reach out to your neighbors, particularly Jewish community members who may be experiencing heightened anxiety and concern.

May we all strive to live together in peace, understanding, and mutual respect.

Initial signers of this statement included the following:

Rev. Elizabeth Assenza – First Parish Church in Beverly

Rev. Dr. Gail Cantor – The Center for Belonging, Endicott College

Rev. Greg Carmer – Church in the Cove

Mollie Clark – InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Salem State University and Endicott College

Nancy Coffey – North Shore Friends Meeting

Jennifer Day – Landmark School

Rev. Valerie Doering-Crisman – Pilgrim Church

Rev. Kathryn Elledge – St. John's Episcopal Church

Rev. Bill Ferguson – Chaplain, Landmark School

Diane Vener Goldenberg – Landmark School, Temple Emanu-El, Marblehead

Gail Goodell – Second Congregational Church

Rev. Adam Isbitsky – Second Congregational Church

Rev. Julie Flowers – First Baptist Church in Beverly

Dr. Daniel Johnson – First Baptist Church in Beverly

Rev. Ann Perrott – St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Dr. Emilia Phillips – The Bahá'ís of the North Shore

Carole Rein – North Shore Friends Meeting

Rev. Christopher Whiteman – St. Peter's Episcopal Church



Do You Want to Get Involved in Local Justice Efforts?

The Essex County Community Organization (ECCO) is a multifaith network of 59 congregations and the North Shore Labor Council that works to create a world where everyone belongs, where we all can thrive, and where we all have a say in the decisions that shape our lives. They have been operating for decades in our area to help cut across divides and get things done to help people.

This year, two of ECCO's main areas for work are housing justice and immigration justice. There are regular meetings online and in person and several different ways for you to get involved. Are you a rabblouser? A letter writer? A coalition builder? A fundraiser? A good listener? A writer? There is a way for you to do good work that will make immediate help to your neighbors. One of the main strategy meetings will take place on **Thursday, February 13 from 6:00–8:30 p.m. at the First Church in Swampscott UCC.** Visit ECCOaction.org or talk with Rev. Adam for more information on this meeting or other efforts.





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Southern New England Conference
United Church of Christ
Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

The Southern New England Conference UCC invites you to Super Saturday on March 8! This is a wonderful day of worship, fellowship, learning, networking, and workshops on a variety of topics. In these times when it's easy to feel isolated, events like this, when we gather with members and friends from the 500+ churches in our conference, remind us that we are not alone and reinforce our covenant. There is an option to attend onsite in Shrewsbury or online only. Learn more and register at <https://www.sneucc.org/SuperSat2025>.