



The Spire

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

Rev. Adam Isbitsky: Legacy Pastor
Music Director: Marshunda Smith

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January 2025



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

January 5

Celebrating Epiphany

Worship with Communion and Star Words

Gospel According to Matthew 2:2-18

Sermon: "Follow the Star"

Liturgist: Dale Earl

January 12

Celebrating Baptism of Christ

Worship with Remembrance of Baptism
Liturgy

Gospel According to Luke 3:1-21; Second
Letter to Timothy 1:5-10

Sermon: "Why We Still Baptize"

Liturgist: Gail Goodell

January 19

Observing Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Weekend

Paul's Letter to the Philippians 1:27–2:18

Sermon: "Why Jesus Cannot Be White"

Liturgist: Suzanne Munroe

January 26

Gospel According to Luke 6:12-26

Sermon: "Mountains and Plains"

Liturgist: Glenn Morris

The Northeast Association invites members and friends of all area UCC churches to join in a service of ordination for Stacey Keane Blagg at First Church in Ipswich, on **Sunday, January 12, 2025** at 3:00 p.m. Ordinations are wonderful and celebratory services!



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

During the month of December, the Spire was lit "*In loving memory of Marie Lane Lowe,*" by her daughters, Pam, Donna & Rhonda."

During the month of January, the Church Spire will be illumined, "*In loving memory of Louise & Samuel J. Hansbury,*" by their daughter, Susan Nichols.

CHRISTMAS BLOSSOMS

Poinsettias adorning the sanctuary on Christmas Eve were given:

In memory of loved ones by Dave & Patty Boynton, Mary Jane Clark, Don Dodge, Dale Earl, Leah Falkowski, Donna Kendall, Nancy Koch and Ruth Moran.

In memory of Kit Taylor by Kathy Taylor

In celebration of Ruth Cleveland by George & Elsie Jacobson.

"God Bless Us Everyone" by Donna Kendall

"Merry Christmas" by Peggie Morris

"Peace, Love & Joy" by Kathy Taylor

Central Board News and Notes:

The Central Board met December 18th as announced in church and weekly E-News.



Rev. Adam and the Central Board discussed Advent Season services based on his sermon themes of “God Bless Us Everyone,” an homage to The Christmas Carole, that included reflections of Ebenezer Scrooge, and music by the choir and handbells. He also hosted “Holden Evening Prayer” services for the first 3 Mondays of Advent, and arranged for a licensed community screening of “The Muppet’s Christmas Carole” in the SCC Sanctuary the first Saturday of Advent – Second Church continues to be quite a busy place, especially given the small size of the congregation! Christmas Eve preview included Rev Adam holding a morning service at Colonial Gardens, our 4pm Family Service at Second Church, and then co-leading an 11pm service at 1st Baptist Church in Beverly.

Rev Adam attended the closing service at the Wollaston UCC Church to observe another example of how congregations approach that type of service. George and Elsie Jacobson attended as well; Elsie grew up in that church and they were married there.

Alex Shea-Will resigned and left his position as Northeast Area Conference Minister a few weeks ago. Katie Omberg has been named as interim while the SNEUCC searches for a replacement. Most of the Central Board meeting was consumed by discussion related to Legacy Team progress and proposed plans forward. Historic Beverly (HB) was selected to receive and archive our records and possibly other artifacts, too, and we now have the draft Memorandum Of Understanding document with a few questions to resolve, before bringing it to the congregation for a vote. We expect preliminary values from Kaminski Auctions for a few of the more valuable assets of the church (several silver items) which will help inform the recommendation to the congregation as far as what to donate to HB for occasional display and what to sell at auction.

The Legacy Team reviewed the updated P&S agreement Lifebridge and their attorneys have agreed to. A thoughtful discussion of the pros and cons of deciding whether to bring the P&S forward for a vote as soon as possible or waiting, led to the CB agreeing with the LT recommendation of working toward a congregational meeting and vote January 12. A communication plan was developed to help get the word out, and to also try to affirm how to get at least 2/3 of our 85 active members to attend a church meeting (a MA state statute requirement). The CB recognizes that with church attendance and congregational meeting attendance more typically in the range of 25-40, there is likely a significant number of active members that wish to receive information from SCC but are inactive as far as our bylaw definitions. Therefore, the communication plan will include an RSVP email and a phone canvass of members not responding to understand their intent as far as attending and voting. The Legacy Team will also host an important Forward Chat January 5th, to take detailed questions in person and via Zoom to help all active members understand the proposal. Look for more details in emails, meeting calls and other communication beyond those in this Spire.

***The next Central Board meeting will be Wednesday, January 15 at 7pm via Zoom.
Contact Dale Earl or another CB member if you'd like to attend.***

You are invited to a Forward Chat



There will be a Forward Chat after church on January 5th @ 10:30am. This is a gathering without voting where you can bring your questions about topics for the upcoming meeting on January 12th (see other pages for information).



Rev. Adam, Josh Del Dotto, and Ruth Moran led a Christmas Eve service at Colonial Gardens at 11:00 a.m. on Christmas Eve. Residents enjoyed the service and singing carols together. This photo was taken by Colonial Gardens resident Carol Kiley.

Mission and Social Action 2024

Mission and Social Action continues to meet and distribute funds to many organizations throughout our region.



Here is a list of our contributions for 2024:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Family Promise North Shore Boston | \$3000.00 |
| • Elevate New England | \$3000.00 |
| • River House, Beverly | \$3000.00 |
| • Plummer Youth Promise | \$2000.00 |
| • Salvation Army | \$2000.00 |
| • Ellis Square Friends | \$2000.00 |
| • Strengthen the Church UCC | \$2000.00 |
| • LGBT Asylum Task Force | \$2000.00 |
| • UCC Hurricane Disaster Relief | \$2000.00 |
| • Recovery High School- gift cards | \$2000.00 |
| • NAMI | \$200.00 |

For a total of \$ 23,200!!

As long as we have funds to distribute, Social Action will continue to meet and to allocate funds to those in need!



Thoughts from the Building Our Legacy Team

For over 300 years Second Congregational Church has been a place of worship, family, community, hope and acceptance. In the coming weeks, we have the opportunity to ensure these values continue in the future.

The Building Our Legacy Team and Lifebridge North Shore (Lifebridge) have come to terms on a Purchase and Sale Agreement (P&S) for our church building, its contents and property. Active Members will have the opportunity to vote on the future of the building and how we want to continue our legacy.

As we have reported in the past, the Legacy Team recommended, and you agreed, that Lifebridge be our preferred organization to sell the building to. According to their Letter of Intent, Lifebridge plans to offer day services for the vulnerable members of the community including the unhoused, recently housed and those at risk of losing their housing. Lifebridge already operates two day centers in Salem and Gloucester. These day centers, called Grace Centers, provide a single point of entry for individuals who are homeless and those in need of a safe environment. They offer meals, the use of restrooms, shelter from harsh weather and provide services and offer referrals to partner agencies. The Letter of Intent has been incorporated into the P&S. The P&S specifies the terms which Second Church and Lifebridge will follow.

The Legacy Team will hold a Forward Chat on Sunday, January 5, after the worship service. We will go over the terms of the P&S and answer your questions. In addition, you can email questions to SCCLegacyTeam@gmail.com or talk to any of the Legacy Team members. We encourage you to attend the Forward Chat.

On Sunday, January 12, immediately following worship, there will be a Special Congregational Meeting where Active Members will be asked to vote for or against selling the building to Lifebridge. You can attend the meeting in person, by Zoom or by telephone on the phone numbers provided by Zoom.

It is important that all Active Members be at the congregational meeting. All Active Members should have received a letter, an email, or both asking you to confirm your plan to attend the meeting. You will also be given the choice to become an inactive, non-voting member of Second Church. Inactive members can still attend and be involved, just not able to vote. If you have responded to the letter or email, thank you! If you have not, please do so ASAP. Note: Inactive members will not have received the letter or email.

What happens if we vote in favor of selling the building to Lifebridge? Our attorneys will file the necessary paperwork with Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Then we wait. How long? We do not know. What do we do while waiting? We continue what we have always done. We worship together, we be a family, continue to serve our community and provide hope and acceptance.

In the coming months we will provide more information on archiving our church records and objects. We will also discuss holding an auction for items within the building that will no longer be needed. We will discuss what to do with our restricted funds, and we as a congregation will decide when to dissolve Second Congregational Church. It will be important to stay informed of these developments and we will strive to provide you with the information you need.

Jack Terrill, Chair

Message from the Finance Team

We want to express our gratitude to the congregation for their generous response to the Stewardship Campaign this fall. At the Annual Budget Meeting on December 15, 2024, the proposed budget for 2025 was approved unanimously. Despite uncertainties about exactly what the timeline for the coming months will look like, we are pleased with your faithful support that will allow SCC to plan for meeting our financial obligations through a full calendar year if need be.

Thank you, - The Finance Team

Second Congregational Church
Beverly, Massachusetts

***** OFFICIAL CALL TO MEETING *****

At the call of the Moderator, a meeting of the Second Congregational Church will be held in person and via Zoom following the worship service on Sunday, January 12, 2025. The meeting will begin at 10:30 am.

The Business of the Meeting will be:

- (1) To vote on authorizing the signing of a Purchase and Sale Agreement (P&S) with The Salem Mission, Inc./d/b/a Lifebridge North Shore for the purpose of selling the property at 35 Conant Street, which includes the Second Congregational Church building, land, and contents as described in the P&S.

Dale R. Earl
Clerk

READ:
Sunday, December 22, 2024

READ and POSTED ON:
Sunday, December 29, 2024
Sunday, January 5, 2025



Second Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
35 Conant Street
Beverly MA 01915



SPIRITED WOMEN GATHERING

Next meeting will be on January 26th following worship. We will meet in the parlor after worship and will conclude the program by noon.

The program will be announced soon, but do plan to join us ! All women in the church are welcome to come to any of the monthly meetings. It's a great time of fellowship and we would love to have you join us!