

JANUARY 2024

# Steeple Notes



## Pastor's Corner

Our Epiphany Brings a Season of Learning

Happy New Year, First Church! With a new year come opportunities for a fresh start. But I bet you weren't aware of how true that can be true in church life – or how rewarding fresh starts can be when they make church simpler, easier to manage, more fun, fulfilling and impactful.

Well, it's time to find out! Jan. 6 marks the start of Epiphany, a season of discovery. We'll be using Epiphany 2025 to discover how congregations are taking fresh approaches in key areas. As we learn what's working elsewhere to seize opportunities similar to ours, we'll feed our imaginations and take steps to position the church for a bright, sustainable future.

Rev. Jeffrey  
MacDonald



We might call this Our Epiphany because this strategic learning program builds on trajectories we've already put in motion with God's help. The people of FCCR have pivoted, for instance, by making the pastorate part-time, calling a three-year pastor, diversifying revenue streams and committing to simplify governance through a revision of bylaws. With these moves, the congregation has shown it's ready for new ways forward. Now's the time to discover models that might be worth exploring, enacting or adapting here.

We'll do this systematically with four learning sessions in January and February. Each will last about two hours. Schedules will be set in January when Executive Council meets. What kinds of models can we expect to learn about?

- **Discipleship.** This refers to how following Jesus shapes lives for the better – in other words, why our church exists. Big church models don't necessarily work in small churches; nor do models that were built for a different time. Let's see what's working and explore what makes sense for FCCR's approach.
- **Ministry.** I spent a year visiting congregations that did better, not worse, in terms of vitality after switching from full-time to part-time clergy. I'll bring these insights to Rowley as we look at the 3 most effective PT ministry models and how churches adapt them.
- **Revenue.** FCCR no longer depends solely on offering plate giving to fund operations. We'll look at strategies congregations use, including social enterprise and planned giving, to diversify income streams and advance the church's mission while balancing budgets.

- **Governance.** A simpler structure means a less-demanding institution that frees up more time and money for faithful activities that people love to do. Many congregations have done this by right-sizing. We'll look at what they've done, how they did it and what difference it's making.

Change isn't easy, but you've already begun the journey and started reaping benefits. Now FCCR is ready to decide which vehicles and itineraries to use toward the next destination. I look forward to traveling with you, on the route you choose as you listen for and heed God's call.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Jeff

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## Winter Greetings from your Compassionate Care Network

Sending the light of compassion to all of you and your loved ones who we hold dear as friends, and lift up in prayer when in need.

We are grateful to all of you who continue to practice compassion and understanding towards all. As human beings and Christians, we are called to kindness and understanding in all we do. The Golden Rule shines on!

In the new year, we will be exploring ways of sharing light, energy, and prayer.

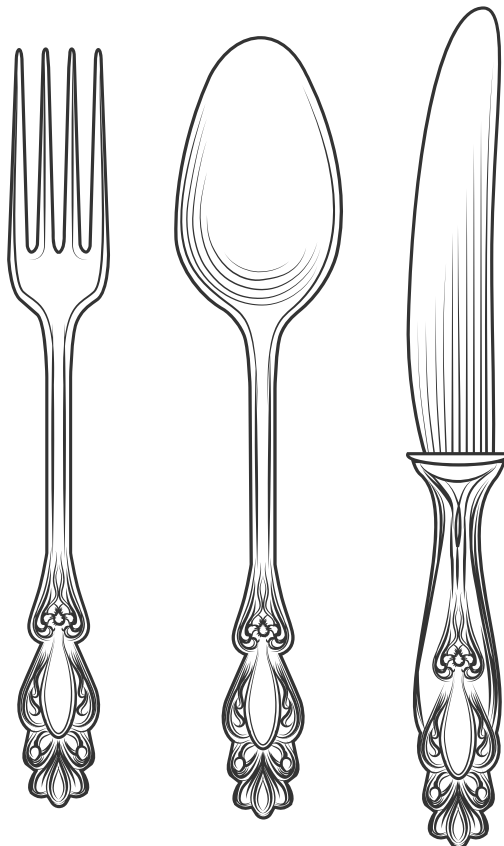
As always, feel free to contact the church office or any of us to share or update a concern, prayer, or joy. Meanwhile, we continue to hold members and friends in prayer, reach out with calls, cards and work to uplift those in need.

Penny Hurley  
Nancy & Jerry Schmidt  
Patti Cummings  
Kay Dalzell

**SPREAD**  
**KINDNESS**  
**LOVE**  
**HOPE**  
**COMPASSION**  
**EMPATHY**



AS A CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE CHURCH, JERRY AND NANCY SCHMIDT DONATED NEW SILVERWARE, (SERVING 50), TO BE ENJOYED BY ALL. YOU WILL FIND IT IN THE KITCHEN ON THE SERVICE CART IN BOXES THAT ARE LABELED.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

*JANUARY 2024*

★ ROBIN KAY 1/2

★ CHARLES HAZEN, JR. 1/2

★ NICOLA PYBURN 1/11

★ NICOLE SIRIGNANO 1/13

★ STONE BUTLER 1/17

★ AMANDA (MULKERN) JOHNAS 1/17

★ DOUG CHADBOURNE 1/21

★ LUKE CONFALONE 1/28

★ ZACHARY WARD 1/30



# MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

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## After Church Fellowship Assignments

January – Compassionate Care Network  
February – Thrift Shop  
March - Diaconate  
April – Missions  
May – Music Committee and Inspirational Singers  
June – Finance/Trustees  
July – Thrift Shop  
August - None  
September – Missions  
October – Finance/Trustees  
November - Diaconate  
December – Music Committee and Inspirational Singers.



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## Steeple Notes Entry Schedule



January -Compassionate Care Network  
February - Missions  
March - Deacons (including Christian Ed.)  
April - Finance/Trustees  
May - Music Committee  
June - The Thrift Shop  
July - Pastoral Relations Committee  
August - Getting to Know You  
September - Golf Tournament & Flower Committee  
October - Old Tyme Country Fair  
November - Community Dinner Team  
December - Pancake Breakfast Team

***Welcoming additional entries as needed!***

**TOGETHER**

# EVENTS



## **COMMUNITY CAFE - FREE**

FREE MONTHLY EVENT TO HAVE  
COFFEE, TREATS, AND CONVERSATION  
WITH AMAZING PEOPLE

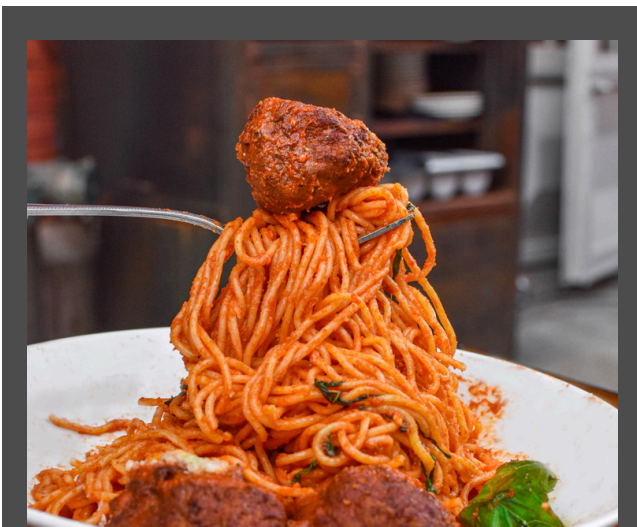
**JANUARY 29TH 2024 8:30A - 10:00A**



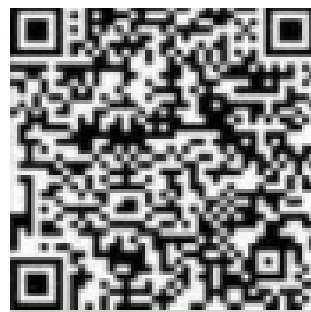
## **PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

**JANUARY 11TH 8:00A - 9:30A**

**\$10.00 - UNDER 12 FREE!**



## **COMMUNITY DINNER - FREE**



←  
**RSVP HERE!**

## **COMMUNITY DINNER**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 25TH 2024**

**4:30PM OR 6:30PM**

**TO-GO AND DELIVERY AVAILABLE**

**MUST RSVP TO NEIL BUTLER**

**BUTLEREL76@GMAIL.COM**

**RSVP 978-948-7627**

We are a church that lives by faith, is known by love... a voice of hope  
serving the community



# PROGRAMS AND TIMES

## PROGRAMS



- **COUNCIL ON AGING FITNESS**  
MONDAYS & THURSDAYS 9-10:30A
- **COUNCIL ON AGING LINE DANCING BEGINNER**  
MONDAY 4:30P - 5:15P
- **COUNCIL ON AGING LINE DANCING INTERMEDIATE**  
MONDAY 5:30P - 6:15P
- **GETTING TO KNOW US**  
WEDNESDAYS 10AM - 12P
- **ALCOHOL ANONYMOUS**  
SATURDAYS 7-8PM
- **AL ANON**  
FRIDAYS 7-8:15PM

## THRIFT SHOP



### Hours

Thursdays 3- 6PM  
Saturdays 9- 1PM

## NICOLE'S OFFICE HOURS

Tuesdays and Saturdays  
9:00A - 1:00P

Remote hours daily, reach out  
any time!

[firstchurchrowley@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurchrowley@gmail.com)

# SNOW CANCELLATION NOTICES:

SNOW CANCELLATIONS WILL BE  
ANNOUNCED ON OUR WEBSITE,  
[WWW.FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY.ORG](http://WWW.FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY.ORG)  
BY 7:00AM THE MORNING OF  
WORSHIP

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## 2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES

OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025 ARE  
AVAILABLE AT THE BACK OF PARISH HALL ON THE SMALL  
GREEN TABLE. PLEASE TAKE YOUR BOX AND CHECK YOUR  
NAME OFF ON THE LIST.

THANK YOU.  
THE FINANCE AND TRUSTEES BOARD

**Free Dinner...  
for all in our Community!!**



*Led By  
faith*

**JOIN US FOR A  
SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALL DINNER!**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 25TH 2024  
175 MAIN STREET ROWLEY MA 01969  
4:30 PM OR 6:00 PM SEATING  
TO-GO AND DELIVERY AVAILABLE**

**RSVP REQUIRED**

(TO ENSURE WE HAVE FOOD FOR YOU!)

**EMAIL: BUTLEREL79@GMAIL.COM**

**PHONE: (978) 948 7627**

**OR BY QR CODE**



(978) 948 3993  
firstchurchrowley@gmail.com

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