



# Steeple Notes

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ROWLEY, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
 175 MAIN STREET, PO BOX 364  
 WWW.FIRSTCHURCHROWLEY.ORG - 978-948-3993

## From the Pastor's Corner Blog

Hello All,

This morning I had to perform a dreaded task; I had to go to the Registry of Motor Vehicles. My oldest son Josiah turned 16 last week. Ann and I want to get him driving as soon as possible. For this to happen he needs to get his permit. A necessary first step in this process is going to the RMV. My lack of enthusiasm for the RMV is in no way unique. I don't think anyone enjoys going there.



My past experiences indicate that this lack of enthusiasm is felt just as strongly by the people that work at the RMV as it is by those who have to go there to accomplish some task. I have found the workers to be dismissive, condescending, and rude in other ways.

As I sat waiting for my number to be called I was prepared for an unpleasant interaction. When I did get called up to speak with an RMV representative I was pleasantly surprised. She was matter of fact but also pleasant and helpful. I noticed a screen to the left of her desk with a cute dog on it. I asked if it was hers, she confirmed it was. She answered several questions from me and asked several of her own. Within a few minutes Josiah and I were on our way.

The business of the RMV is inherently unpleasant. Few people are excited to show up at a place that requires specific paperwork and fees that can limit a person's ability to drive. I think the people that run the RMV are probably aware this is the case.

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 A voice of hope serving the community



**From The Pastor's Corner (Blog), Cont...**

I would bet they set up the computer screens that I saw the worker's dog on for this exact reason. The screen is a means of humanizing the employee that would otherwise be viewed as the face of an organization that nobody particularly likes.

The Bible tells us to love our enemies. One of the best ways to facilitate that action is to learn more about them. When you get to know someone it is often more difficult to think of them in a purely negative light.

Meditation Verses: Matthew 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.


**In Christ,  
Brent**

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**Summer Sabbatical**

**Reverend Brent and his family will be away until September. Let us pray for them!**

Please pray for the Fugate family - while they are on Sabbatical and even when they return (we should always be in the habit of praying for our pastors, elders and spiritual leaders). Pray for the Fugate family's safety, pray that they will rest and that they will spend many memorable moments together.

Pray that that Reverend Brent and his wife will be refreshed during Reverend Brent's sabbatical and that Reverend Brent will receive fresh insight and perspective from God during this time. And pray of course for anything the Lord puts on your heart. 

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## State of the Thrift Shop for Steeple Notes By Paul Chang

First of all, thanks to all the volunteers that help out at the Thrift Shop: Pam Sanford, Nicola Pyburn, Lisa & Richard Jesinowski, Donna Irving, Ellie & Billie Manning, Gale Penton, Penny Hurly, James & Robin Kay, Sharon Emery and Jerry Schmidt.

And an additional thank you to Angie Estevez and Eric Fila for helping whenever I need help posting something or moving something heavy.



It is because of their work that we can say that the sales have increased by 41% since this time last year (comparing April '23 to April '24). I think customers continue to see that we offer great prices on quality merchandise, so they keep coming to spend more of their time and money with us. And as we continue to spread the word through social media and newspaper articles, our customer base will continue to grow.

### **So, in an effort to continue to grow I believe we will need to:**

1. Increase our presence on social media (weekly ads in Rowley Talks, Daily featured items on FB, news stories in the local papers, including Rowley Common and the Newburyport newspaper... These things could be performed by additional volunteers).
2. Proactively seek out donations on Craigslist, Marketplace, Freecycle (could use more volunteers for that)...
3. Offer more social & community help and let the local newspapers know about us and what we do.

### **Some things that the Thrift Shop could benefit from:**

1. More volunteers (we could open on an additional day or more; Or a volunteer could help procure merchandise from Craigslist, Marketplace, Freecycle...).
2. A donated truck to use in picking stuff up (we could also charge for delivering stuff). It could also be used for plowing our driveway/parking lot.
3. More high quality donations

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**@SkateTheStates\_ by Angie F. Estevez**

Hawaii is State #29! I rollerskated in Hawaii recently and wanted to share some of my photographs with you.

While in Hawaii, I got to visit Pastor Wayne Cordeiro's church "New Hope Oahu" which had been on my bucket list for a very long time.

Another highlight was visiting the Hawaii Conference United Church of Christ Offices in Honolulu.



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@SkateTheStates\_ , Cont...



Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ Communications Director - Julie Butto (top)  
Monique - Conference Receptionist (Bottom)



My cousin Christine and I at lunch with Julie.

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## Update from Branding/Compassionate Care Network

You may not have noticed, but our Parish Hall now displays fresh new quotes, scriptures, photos & seasonal flowers & vines! This spring's display features Faith as the theme, building upon Hope.

We have added a special new section to the left of the long serving tables featuring some of the beautiful pictures celebrating our history. Many thanks to Sharon Emery for our first very personal contribution!

Feel free to contact Penny if you have a special photo you would like to have featured.

penelopehurley@gmail.com  
978-618-0949 cell



## Recap of May 2nd Prayer Service at First Baptist Church of Rowley by Angie F. Estevez

On May 2nd, eight members from our church joined about twelve parishioners from First Baptist Church of Rowley at a prayer service, one night before the National Day of Prayer.

Pastor Ed opened up with prayer, we sang a hymn and then Pastor Ed gave us instructions on praying through a prayer list that he distributed to all of us before we broke off into four separate groups.



All four groups were tasked with praying through each prayer point (out loud in their respective group). After we prayed through that list, we were encouraged to lift up some of our own prayer requests. The group I was in, was primarily made up of people from our church (Eric, Pam, Kay, Stu and I). In addition to lifting up some of our own prayer requests, we also lifted up requests that were specific to our church.

After the four groups finished, we reconvened for one final group prayer and hymn. The service was about an hour long.

I've included the prayer list we used for your reference. It offers some important prayer points, especially in light of National Prayer Day and its emphasis on praying for government.

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## Recap of May 2nd Prayer Service, Cont...

### National Day of Prayer – May 2024

#### *Our City, State, and Nation* – general prayer points

- Wisdom and well-being (1 Tim. 2:1-4)
- They would reward good and punish evil (1 Pet. 2:14; Prov. 17:15)
- Believers stand against evil (Prov. 28:4; 1 Pet. 2:15-17)
- Salvation of the lost (1 Tim. 2:4-6)
- Recognize their accountability before God (Rom. 13:1-4)

#### *Personnel*

- Rowley – Board of Selectmen (Cliff Pierce / Chris Kneeland / Deana Ziev / Sheri David / Bob Snow); School Board; Police Chief (Scott Dumas / Stephen May) and Fire Chief (Mark Emery)
- MA: Governor Maura Healey / State Rep (Kristin Kassner) and State Senator (Bruce Tarr)
- U.S. Rep (Seth Moulton) and Senators (Elizabeth Warm and Ed Markey)
- U.S. President and Cabinet
  - 1) Secretary of State – Antony Blinken
  - 2) Secretary of Defense – Lloyd Austin
  - 3) Secretary of Treasury – Janet Yellen
  - 4) Attorney General Merrick Garland
  - 5) Etc.
- U.S. Supreme Court Justices (John Roberts / Clarence Thomas / Samuel Alito / Sonia Sotomayor / Elena Kagan / Neil Gorsuch / Brett Kavanaugh / Amy Coney Barrett / Ketanji Brown Jackson)
- Leaders in military / business / education / etc.
- Issues:
  - 1) Disregard for life
  - 2) Rampant immorality and its promotion in media and the arts
  - 3) Corruption → widespread injustice, irresponsible spending, and failed foreign policy
  - 4) Marxist promotion and propaganda → increasing Federal Government control
  - 5) Election integrity
  - 6) Lawlessness at our Southern border and ungodly relations with foreign nations (Prov. 28:4)
  - 7) Healthcare crisis – including misinformation
  - 8) Education crisis – including promotion of Marxism, immorality, and independence from parents
  - 9) Substance abuse and other harmful addictions
  - 10) God would raise up leaders who love and obey Him first

#### *The Church*

- Have God's mission – love Jesus Christ supremely / make disciples
- Proclaim and live the absolute truth of the Bible
- Teach and live God's design for marriage and family
- Reject worldliness → live lives that glorify God (1 Jn. 2:15-17)
- Humble ourselves / pray / seek God's face / turn from our wicked ways (2 Chron. 7:14)



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Memorial Day Parade



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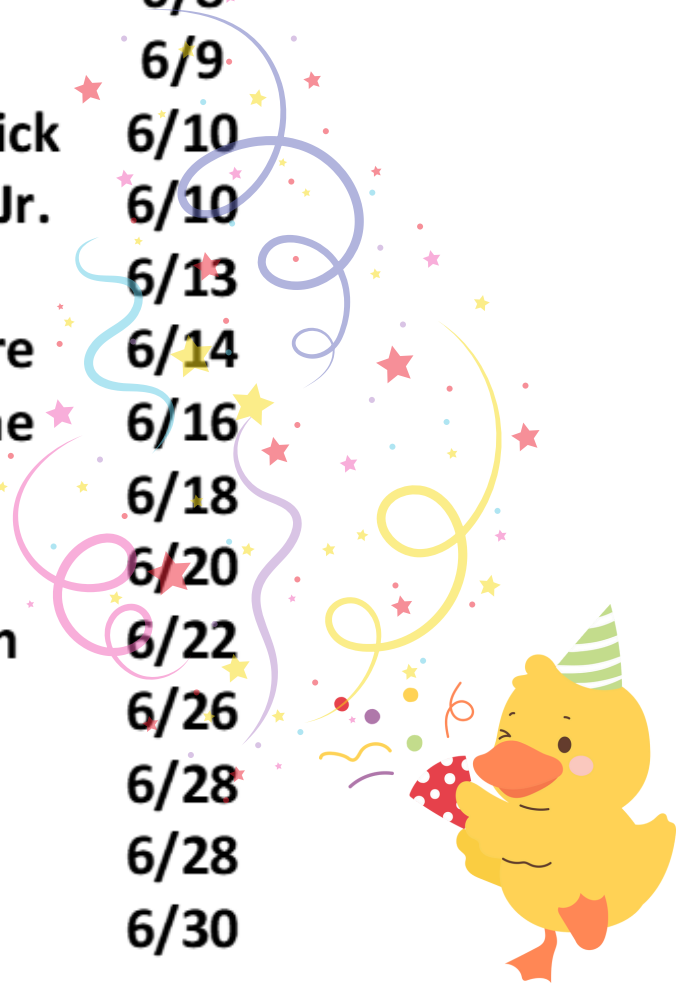
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Aidan	Davey	6/1
Youssef	Salib	6/1
Erin	Savage	6/2
Burton	Gray	6/4
Travis	Faircloth	6/7
Cheryl	Watson	6/8
Al	Locke	6/9
Mariah	McCormick	6/10
Jim	Somers, Jr.	6/10
Rev. Lee	Ireland	6/13
Abeba	Whitmore	6/14
Abigail	Confalone	6/16
Donna	Irving	6/18
David	Roberts	6/20
Sean	Gundrum	6/22
Joe	Blazonis	6/26
Mike	Blouin	6/28
Kay	Dalzell	6/28
Lisa	Stevens	6/30



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HAPPY  
*Anniversary*

Jeff Nickless and Louise DiMella 6/7

Ken and Pam Sanford 6/10

Charles & Jennette Loring 6/23

Tom & Nancy Reed 6/27

Don & Marge Thurston 6/28

Paul Chang & Holly Ardito 6/29



**Steeple Notes Schedule**

**January - Compassionate Care Network**

**February - Missions - Holly**

**March - Deacons (including Christian Ed) - Jerry and Nancy (for 2024)**

**April - Finance/Trustees - Doug**

**May - Music Committee, including Inspirational Singers - Karen Schmuch**

**June - The Thrift Shop - Paul Chang**

**July - Pastoral Relations Committee - Penny**

**August - Getting to Know You - no response**

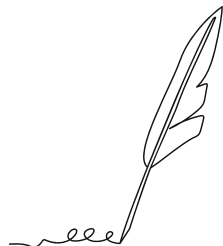
**September - Golf Tournament and Flower Committee - Debbie Confalone**

**October - Old Tyme Country Fair - Donna Irving and Kay Dalzell**

**November - Community Dinner Team - Liz Butler**

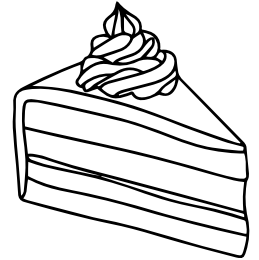
**December - Pancake Breakfast Team - Jerry Schmidt**

**Staff - Any month as needed - you know this team :)**



## After Church Fellowship Board/Committee Assignments

### Pastry or treat 1st and 3rd Sunday Updated Schedule



- 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.

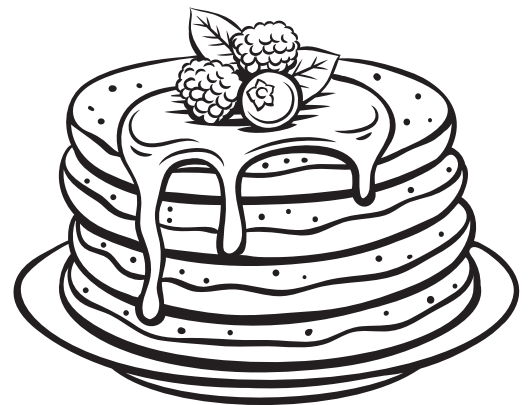


\*The schedule will be posted at coffee hour and reminders will be sent via email.

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## Community Pancake Breakfast

2nd Saturday in each month from  
September 2023 through April 2024  
\$10.00 - Under 12 free!  
Looking Forward to Seeing you!



# Bon Voyage Rev. Brent & Family



HAPPY AND SAFE SABBATICAL.  
MAY YOU BE RENEWED AND MAKE MEMORIES THAT  
WILL LAST A LIFETIME .  
WE APPRECIATE YOU!

