



Amicable Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Friendly Messenger February 2021



I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, God, my Parent, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

- John 17:20-21

The Bible is an important guide to living, because it speaks truths about the human condition. The Hebrew Scripture stories, the teachings of Jesus, and the work and words of the early church as recorded in the Bible are not unique. They do not represent a “one off”. They are stories of humanity; they are our stories. Meditating on writing this, my last epistle to you as your pastor Jesus’ prayer in John’s Gospel came to mind. In this prayer Jesus speaks of the unity he has with God. This unity is a oneness; no, it is the Oneness of creation – “as you, God, the Parent, are in me and I am in you.” Jesus is praying that his followers and those who come after will also recognize how they, too, are in God as God is in them.

What Jesus is praying is also my prayer. It is a prayer that you will continue to unite in the work of Amicable Church. This work is founded on understanding the Oneness of creation; understanding that God is in us and we are in God. You may recall that the Apostle Paul alluded to this Oneness, when he wrote: "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." This Oneness is a radical challenge to see in the person or persons we dislike or despise, as well as those we love, that they are a part of us, a part that wants and needs to be loved and listened to as much as we want and need to be so loved.

This Oneness is more than our being challenged to love our enemies and do good to those who persecute us. The most powerful lesson I have learned over the last 10 months, isolated by the present pandemic, is how much we suffer, when we are not together. We humans need human contact. What is a new revelation for me is seeing that gathering for worship is not just about giving God thanks, practicing our spiritual practices, or creating community. We are recharging our batteries – body, mind, and spirit batteries, as we sit together in the same building. I was given a charging station for my cell phone. I just place my phone on the station and the battery is charged. I don't have to plug it in. In much the same way, when we sit together in worship our batteries are being recharged. This is why, after over 10 months of physical-distancing, my batteries feel so low, why I am feeling so tired all the time.

This is just one of the negative effects of our not gathering in-person, as a church family. Another is the sad truth that our children and youth are not experiencing the love they would be shown when they are in the building and interacting with their Sunday School teachers and the rest of the gathered congregation. I cannot emphasize enough how important the experience of Amicable Church's supportive love is to the well-being of children and youth as they grow in body, mind, and spirit.

Please know my prayer is, and will be, that you "may all be one"; a unity created and maintained by coming together, recharging your batteries, and serving the world, which is a part of you in the Oneness that is God.

Yours in Christ,



Worship Themes

February 7 This Sunday we will focus on the problem of homelessness in our state and country. Rev. Sterrett will have spent the night outdoors in front of the church on Saturday, January 30th, to raise moneys for the Fall River homeless shelter, First Step Inn. We hope youth group members will do the same at their homes.

February 14 The Worship Team is planning a special Valentine's Day service with our focus, naturally, on Love. Not necessarily the Hallmark-greeting-card or flower-and-candy take on love, rather on Divine Love in all of its forms. Whether it is the love between friends, romantic love, love of our pets, etc., Love Is Love. All forms of authentic love are an expression of Divine Love in the world. The service will be a special blend of readings, songs, and hymns that focus on these different aspects of love. This service promises to be both moving and entertaining!

February 21 This is the First Sunday in Lent. The Gospel reading from Mark 1:9-15 tells of Jesus' baptism, his being sent into the wilderness, and his return, preaching the nearness of God's reign. Finding one's way in the wilderness can be scary, but it was there that Jesus experiences God's nearness. Out of this experience Jesus came preaching good news to the poor. This story contains a powerful message for Amicable Church at this time in our life together.

February 28 This is Rev. Sterrett's last Sunday as Amicable's pastor. His message will focus on his faith journey with Amicable Church and saying goodbye.

Deaths

It is with sadness that I report the death of Thelma Durfee. Thelma died on Saturday, January 9. A funeral service was held on January 13. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, especially her life partner, Clem Cotta.

It is with sadness, yet also relief, that I report the death of Dorothy Brooks. Dot was in the nursing unit at Brookdale at Sakonnet Bay under hospice care and died on Saturday, January 23rd. Her last weeks were difficult and her death was a release. Last April Dot celebrated her 100th birthday. Her good nature and kindness will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with her daughter, Ruth, as well as Dot's son-in-law and granddaughter.

We pray that all who are mourning the loss of a loved one will find comfort and support in the knowledge that love lived and shared never dies; that our loved ones are with us always, albeit in a new way.



Valentine's Day Request to Parents/Grandparents

Valentine's Day falls on Sunday this year, and we're excited to be doing a special St. Valentine's service on Sunday 2/14. We would really appreciate it if you would ask your kids and grandkids who attend Amicable to draw a valentine(s) to a friend, teacher, etc. at Amicable (or elsewhere!) for the service. We're thinking it would be cool to run them as a montage during the prelude. We would need them **by Tuesday, February 9**. Please submit them by **taking a picture of them and emailing them to Vaughn at vaughnbryner@msn.com**

Love Sunday: Renewal and Recommitment

Valentine's Day falls on a Sunday this year and we would like to take this opportunity to focus on LOVE, specifically in all its complexities. We recognize that many of our relationships (spouse, partner, siblings, family, friends, even pets) have been tested this past year due to the stresses brought on by COVID19, be it from job loss, financial worries, health concerns, schooling, anxiety about the future, or being together in the same space for a prolonged amount of time.

We invite you to renew your commitment to one another by writing new vows to each other, sharing a special poem or song, a meaningful quote or phrase. You may videotape yourselves reciting these vows or other writings, or submit them to share during the service. **Please send your submissions to Vaughn Bryner via email at vaughnbryner@msn.com** . Please include the following in the subject line: Love Sunday Submission.

Please contact Vaughn via email with any questions.



Thank You and Farewell



Dear Friends,

As you may know by now Reverend Sterrett is retiring at the end of February this year. Bill will conduct his final Service of Worship with us at 10:00 on February 28th, 2021. This service will mark the completion of his 33 years as pastor, at Amicable. This will be the longest pastorate in our 275-year history. Please plan to share with us his last worship service on Sunday, February 28. Knowing that so many who have had the good fortune of knowing Bill and experienced his dedication to his flock and his caring and involvement in our entire community, we are offering the following ways to express our love and

1. Submit a brief video that will be blended into a video montage.
2. Attend a Zoom "party" following the February 28th worship service.
3. Write a personal note to Bill and/or Barbara at any time.

If you are interested in the video and/or Zoom options, please e-mail for instructions to: Charles Simonson at charles-simonson@cox.net or Jack Leandro at jleandro24@gmail.com

Notes to Rev. Sterrett and Barbara Beckmann are addressed to:
243 Stone Church Road, Tiverton, R.I. 02878

Any or all of these can be your way to be a part of a good "farewell".

We will be sending a follow-up letter in mid-February with last minute news on Farewell Arrangements. Please look for it.

From the Farewell Planning Group:

Ted Baer, Jack Leandro, Martha MacNaught, George Papineau, and Charles Simonson



Homeless Awareness Sleep Out

On Saturday, January 30th Rev. Bill Sterrett spent the night outdoors in front of our church around the burn barrel. This was Bill's 21st and last Homeless Awareness Sleep Out but, this year due to social distancing rules our Church youth did not participate.

This year our Sleep Out was a fund raiser for First Step Inn, a shelter in Fall River that helps to transition those who are homeless into permanent housing. If you would like to support this mission please send a check to the church, made out to Amicable Church with Homeless Awareness in the memo line. You might want to give a dollar for each hour that Bill was outdoors, which was a total of 12, from 7:00 pm Saturday, January 30 to 7:00 am Sunday, January 31.

Employment Opportunity

We are looking to hire a part time (up to 10 hours per week) Office Secretary. The hourly rate ranges between \$15 to \$20 per hour depending on experience.

If you or someone you know are interested please email office@AmicableChurch.org and we will provide a detailed job description.

Financial Notes of Interest – January 2021

- 2021 kicked off with status quo re Church Closure but with weekly Worship Services still being presented via Zoom and via Amicable's Facebook page.
- A good month for 2021 regarding donation receipts getting started, with all varieties of giving methods being utilized – mail, drop-offs at church, transfers into Amicable's bank account, via Amicable's Website option, general PayPal donation.
- The Thrift Shop was closed thru January except for its 2021 reopening day on Saturday, Jan. 30th; and it had a very busy and good day, almost making its monthly budget on that one day. Of course being closed for sales does not mean there was not a lot of work and hours put in preparing for the opening.
- Expenses were standard for the first month of the year – no surprises in January.
- Contribution receipt summaries for 2020 were sent out to pledgers and contributors. If you have questions or did not get one please contact the Treasurer.

Respectfully Submitted:

Treasurer, Roger Gauthier (624-2323, r.c.gauthier@cox.net)

Milestones



02/02 Barry Brayton
02/03 Cooper Mello
02/11 Michael McCoy
02/11 Boone Obolensky
02/12 Melody Ishihara
02/14 James Durfee, Jr.
02/14 Leland Thombs
02/15 Deannedre Dufour
02/19 Ed Oullette
02/24 Benjamin Goldenbloom
02/25 Hank Gediman
02/25 Raleigh Silvia
02/25 William Sterrett
02/27 Vaughn Bryner



02/01 Sheila & Hank Gediman
02/07 Ira & Midge Chace
02/17 Roger Gauthier & Martha MacNaught
02/20 James & Jackie Durfee
02/25 Tiffany & Hunter Marosits

February 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 Church Council Zoom 6:30 PM	4 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00	5	6 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00
7 Worship 10 am Facebook	8	9 Trustees Zoom 4:00 PM	10 Choir Zoom Chat 5:30 pm	11 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00	12	13 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00
14 Worship 10:00 am Facebook	15	16	17	18 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00	19	20 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00
21 Worship 10:00 am Facebook	22	23	24 Choir Zoom Chat 5:30 pm	25 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00	26	27 ACTS 10:00 - 2:00
28 Worship 10:00 am Facebook Rev. Sterrett Farewell Zoom party after worship						