

THE NEW COVENANT



News from The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

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Bell Tower Reconstruction Update

We are moving along! Below is the list of steps Building Restoration Services (BRS) gave us on February 10. Items 1 – 3 have been checked off, and work by Isaac Blair Co. will begin on Wed., March 1. That work is expected to take about a week, but as soon as their work is finished, the sanctuary building will be safe for occupancy.

1. Preliminary site visit (was 2/3 and 2/8/23)
2. Submit Proposal: Week of February 13, 2023
3. Approval of Proposal: Week of February 13, 2023
4. Work start (by Isaac Blair): On or around March 1, 2023: Consisting of scaffolding construction and steel support of tower parapet walls.
5. Scaffold complete: On or around March 10
6. BRS to start demolition of the parapet walls (and walls below as needed): Week of March 13 or so. BRS complete walls and provide temporary roof: Week of March 27th

In addition to negotiating the contract with BRS, who subcontracted with Isaac Blair Co., work has been done on securing a bank loan and investigating grant funding through the MA Historical Commission. The church qualifies for an emergency grant, and the various documents needed for that application are currently being collected.

(Continued on page 4)

March
2023

The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville

51 Cottage St. (church) - 7 Spring St. (office), Whitinsville, MA 01588

Phone: 508.234.8220 Website: www.whitinpres.org www.facebook.com/whitinpres

Office E-mail: whitinpres@gmail.com Rev. Dr. Susan DeHoff: sldehoff@verizon.net

Office Hours: As noted in the weekly Scoop

The church office is CLOSED on Thursdays

If you would like to see the newsletter in color, please view it on the website.

~ MARCH 12— APRIL 2 ~

	March 12	March 19	March 26	April 2
Worship Leader	J. Finnegan	L. Walsh	R. Thomas	S. Santoro
Greeter	J. Baker	B. Giemza	T. Morin	D. Baker
Sound Board	G. Giemza	M. Thomas	G. Giemza	G. Giemza
Power Point	K. Mercer	S. Lamar	M. Thomas	K. Remillard
Media	K. Remillard	K. Remillard	K. Remillard	K. Mercer
Camera	J. Baker	J. Baker	J. Baker	J. Baker
Coffee Hour	T. Morin	T. Morin	G. McCrea	R. Thomas
Junior Church	C. Pilibosian	S. Santoro	L. Walsh	C. Pilibosian
Counters	K. Mercer L. Walsh	M. Alling D. Baker	G. Giemza T. Morin	G. McCrea C. Pilibosian

Communion (March 12):

Sanctuary — G. Giemza, G. McCrea, B. Giemza, S. Santoro

In-Home — L. Walsh, S. DeHoff, G. McCrea, B. Giemza

March Birthday Corner



Susan Mateer	3/1	Ashley Giemza	3/21
Stephen Connelly	3/2	Jim D. Baker	3/26
Ava Whitney	3/3	Katrina Ireland-Bilodeau	3/29
Zack Morin	3/8	Christopher Lee	3/30
Harriett Platt	3/10	Laurie Sabourin	3/31
Gay McCrea	3/18		

Sunday Morning Worship Schedule

Adult Education	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM & 12:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Morning Worship Service	10:30AM - 11:30AM
Coffee Fellowship	11:30 AM



March is always the month when we observe Lent. It is probably fair to say that it is not observed in our homes the way Advent is observed in December. It really is quite hard to commercialize Lent: no gift giving, no parties, no special sweet foods, and no festive songs. Toward the end of Lent we do our best to plan festivities around Easter egg hunts, a big family dinner with lots of favorite family food, and large family get-togethers, quite like what we do for Christmas, but that is not part of our Lenten celebration. Easter gets commercialized just like Christmas, but not Lent.

I suppose part of the reason folks don't really appreciate Lent is that it is thought of as a somber time, a time to give up something one really likes, especially a favorite food, as well as a time to reflect honestly on all the thoughts, feelings, actions, and spoken words of the previous 12 months for which one should feel repentant and seek forgiveness. All of that is, indeed, part of the purpose of Lent. But there is much more to Lent, or at least there could be.

Lent is a time to reflect not only on the less than perfect state of one's life, both external and internal, but also on what one's life *could* be with God's help. What good is it to become aware of one's imperfections and shortcomings if there is no way to a better life? God does not expect anyone to be able to strive toward a more perfect life solely on one's own. That idea flies in the face of Jesus' death and resurrection and is actually an affront to him.

In the final analysis, it is not hard to identify where you need to make improvements. What is more difficult is to find out how to take the first steps on the path toward improvement. There is more than one way to begin, but let me suggest a particular one here. Start by sitting down and having a conversation with God. No "high-toned" words of prayer, just an honest conversation with God over a cup of coffee or tea similar to one you could have with a trusted friend, concerning a desire to make life better in some way.

Then devote some time to reading something that will nourish faith, maybe by challenging it, and help faith grow. Elders and Deacons are reading *Sailboat Church*, by Joan S. Gray, and then spending a few minutes at the beginning of monthly meetings discussing the reflection questions. The concept behind the book is that Sailboat Churches move by allowing the Holy Spirit to fill their sails. The other kind of church, a Rowboat Church, moves by church members operating the oars.

But that is also true of our individual lives. You can travel through life in a rowboat, making the boat move by using your own energy and strength, or you can travel through life in a sail boat, allowing the wind of the Holy Spirit to move you along.

One of the reflection questions at the end of chapter one is "What difference would it make in your life if you took seriously these words of Jesus: 'Without me you can do nothing?'" That is a good question for each person to spend some time contemplating. Most people follow the idea that "I can do anything I want." Really?

A reflection question at the end of chapter 2 is "How do you experience yourself as a partner with God in God's work in the world?" It is very easy to ask God to be *your* partner. You do that all the time: God give me strength to do this task; God please bless this job with a successful outcome, and on and on it goes.

Make good use of Lent this year. Don't use it just as a time to think of all the things you do wrong. Include confession, certainly, but spend even more time pondering what might be, with the help of God. Seek God's help in finding ways to make what *might* be become a reality. Remember Jesus said, "Seek and ye shall find." Life is such a precious gift. Live it abundantly! That is Jesus' desire for you.

Rev. Dr. Susan L. DeHoff

Bell Tower Update Continued from Page 1

This is going to be an expensive undertaking! The work itemized above comes at a cost of \$210,530.00. Then there is still the reconstruction cost yet to be determined. The church will begin making loan interest payments by the end of March, and your contributions to the Building Repair Fund are very much appreciated. So far, the church has raised \$1600 through contributions. The interest on a loan of this size is going to be substantial, so your continued donations to the repair fund are very much needed. Loan interest payments will continue until the loan is paid off.

It is hoped that the reconstruction phase can benefit from grant funds, but the amount of the grant is not known at this time. It will be possible to wait on reconstruction until funding other than another bank loan can be obtained. The downside is the additional cost of needing to move the equipment back to the site.

God has led the church to some excellent contractors who in addition to providing the talent to get the job done have also exhibited a genuine interest in the church. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin the work, particularly as cranes begin putting strapping around the tower on Mar. 1 to keep it from falling during the initial demolition work.

If you have questions, you may contact any of the Trustees, Session members, or Pastor Susan.

DEACON'S CORNER

Good Day from your Board of Deacons. Here is an update about what took place at our last meeting.

The Deacons met on **January 23, 2023** in a Zoom meeting due to bad weather. The Elders and Deacons will be studying a book called Sailboat Church by Joan Gray. It compares a sailboat church to a rowboat church. A sailboat church is God powered by the Holy Spirit while a rowboat church is powered by it's people. We want to be a Sailboat Church.

NAC Easter Gifts - NAC recommends that churches support the same families at Easter that we supported at Thanksgiving and Christmas but suggested that instead of us buying the food items, a gift card to Shaw's or Hannaford's be given instead, in order to allow families to choose the foods they'd like to eat instead of us choosing their meal for them. We will provide \$200 for this cause and divide up the gift cards by the size of the families they go to.

A Deacons' collection is planned for March 12th.

We then discussed the well being of our care receivers and then went over an extensive list of prayer concerns and joys which you can see in the Scoop. As is always the case, the Deacons thank each of you for your words of encouragement, financial support and for keeping us in the loop regarding situations that could use our help and prayers.

It is a blessing to work with each of you doing God's work here at UPCoW. I hope you find this little article uplifting and informative as you are kept abreast of what your Deacons are up to!

In His Service,
Deb Baker

The Parables of Jesus, Part II

Rev. Keosaian returns on March 15 to begin a 6-week course on “The Parables of Jesus, Part II.” We welcome those who attended the daytime series last fall to join us again. Newcomers are also welcome to join! We will be including Parables not previously studied, as well as revisiting some of the earlier one’s (e.g. The Good Samaritan) with new insights. The classes meet in the conference room of the Church Office Building, 7 Spring St., from 7:00 to 8:30pm.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY 16, 2023

Regular stated business meeting was held on January 16 at 6:30pm.

Under old business it was noted that the gutter issues have been repaired and paid for.

The organ has been repaired and in fine condition.

New business: updated the rolls of the congregation and recorded deaths and new members.

Confirmed e- votes for POB large donations from Uni bank and Boy Scouts.

Confirmed Christmas Eve offering to the general fund.

Elected Diana Pedersen as assistant treasurer.

Authorized Deacon Gaye McCrea to act with the Trustees.

Approved Elders Suzanne Santoro and Tayna Morin as co chairs of the Missions study committee.

Updated the names for the Koopman account.

Approved Central Mass Roof Restoration of Oxford Ma. to begin the process of restoring both towers of the church.

PHOTOS

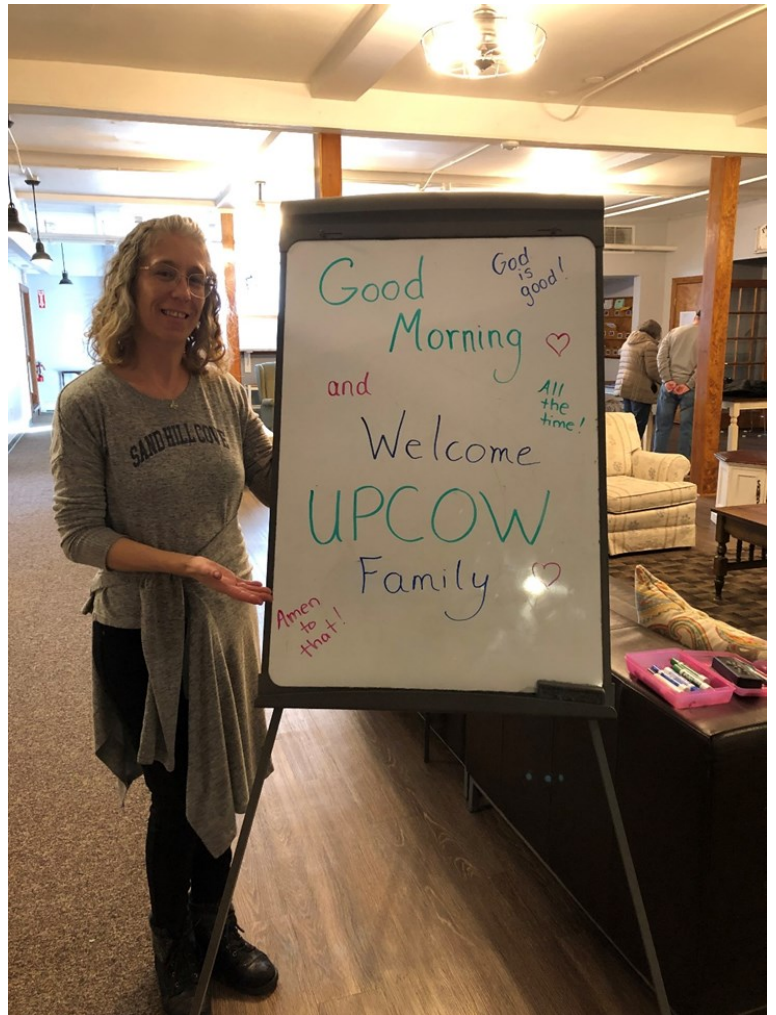
Left: Tanya Morin and Ken Remillard are very happy to announce that they became engaged on Valentine's Day! As a token of love, Ken gave Tanya a beautiful diamond heart superimposed on a gold infinity sign. They will select rings together. The wedding is to be held in our sanctuary, and the date will be set after there is no more scaffolding around the bell tower!

CONGRATULATIONS, KEN AND TANYA!!

Right: Sunday Service at Pleasant Street Christian Church-February 19, 2023



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2023 Mid-Week Lenten Services in March Wednesdays at 4pm

Updated 2-13-2023

Date	Host Church	Preacher	Text	Accompanist
3/1	Village Congregational Church 5 Church St. Whitinsville	Susan DeHoff	John 13:1-17	Leah Marley
3/8	B.V. United Methodist 61 Linwood Ave. Whitinsville	Joel Vande Werken	John 14:1-14	Ron Sainio
3/15	Fairlawn Christian Reformed Church 305 Goldthwaite Rd. Whitinsville	Michael Lavalley	John 15:1-17	Ron Sainio
3/22	Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church 25 Cross St. Whitinsville	Kim Manion	John 16:1-15	Leah Marley
3/29	United Presbyterian Church(tentative) 51 Cottage St. Whitinsville	Ethan Druthus	John 17:1-19	Eileen Straub

Trustees Fund Drive

Trustees are collecting clothing to take to Savers on May 20. We need to have 1000 lbs. You may include clothing, shoes, and blankets. Clothing earns 20 cents per lb.

Trustees are also holding a book drive. Books will be taken to Savers on May 20. Books are 5 cents per lb, and there is a bonus of \$50 if we take 700 lbs.

Clothing should be placed in plastic bags and placed in the white bin at the garage end of the driveway.

Books should be placed in boxes. Trustees will let you know where to bring them when we are back in the sanctuary building.



THANK YOU CORNER

THANK YOU

Thank you Mike Sabourin for lending us your keyboard for the Feb 12th Worship Service, helping with the folding chairs and being available for meetings with the contractors about the tower problem — Lynne Walsh

A big thank you to Mike Sabourin, Gay McCrea and all who helped to clear out the office building for our move over to Pleasant Street for Worship Services. Your help made a big job a lot easier. — Jim Baker

Deb Baker thanks Brandy for always being willing to be a greeter every time she is asked (even on very short notice).

A special thanks too, to my Coffee Fellowship helpers, Gay and Tanya for always making themselves available to pinch hit. — Deb

A huge thank you to everyone who helped set up our temporary worship space at Pleasant St. Job well done! Pastor Susan

Thank you, Lynne Walsh, for getting our demographic and statistics report to PC(USA) done accurately and on time!! That's another one of those time consuming, tedious, and thankless jobs - just the kind of thing you do so well on our behalf! - Session

The entire church says a big THANK YOU to all our brothers and sisters in the NAC churches, St. Pat's, Pleasant St. CRC, and Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church especially, for all the help and support you have given UPCoW as we deal with a deteriorated bell tower. We are especially grateful for all the prayers! - The Family of Faith at UPCoW

A heartfelt thanks to the members of Session and the Board of Trustees for all the meetings you've attended and hard work you've done these past few weeks to address the needs of the bell tower. Your work together and the support you are giving each other have been truly heart-warming to see. - Pastor Susan

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONCERN

2/12/23

- Patty Reynolds has a prayer of joy that her daughter, Jessica, is engaged to her boyfriend, Joshua, and they plan on a September wedding.
- Ken Remillard asks continued prayers for his 6 year old grandson, Wesley. Recent test at Boston Children's Hospital were inconclusive, so additional tests are needed. Pray for a definitive diagnosis of Wesley's stomach pain soon.
- Tanya has a prayer of joy. As she was walking to her car, she bent down to pick up some litter. Before discarding it, she noticed it was a lottery ticket that didn't have all the numbers scratched off. She scratched off the numbers and won \$1000 just for picking up some trash! God does work in mysterious ways!!
- Jimmy Tobin has a prayer of thanks that his Dad's stay in the hospital was short and that his Dad is doing much better now.
- Tanya Morin has a prayer of joy that Zack and his girlfriend, Olivia, are now engaged. They are planning a June 2024 wedding.
- Please keep Pam Leveillee's husband, George, in your prayers. George continues to be in ICU at UMASS Memorial due to complications from Covid. Pam says his heart, lungs, and kidneys are all healthy, but the drs. cannot get him stable enough to diagnose what is wrong and begin treatment.

2/19/23

- Bev Keeler asks prayers for her to manage living in the facility where she now lives.
- Ken and Tanya have a prayer of joy and praise: they became engaged on Valentine's Day.
- Lynne Walsh asks for prayers for her childhood friend Kim and her husband as they mourn the loss of their son Richard.
- Judy Salzberg asks prayers for her grandson, Dan Salzberg (21), who had Covid last week. This week he has a Flu-like virus with high temp and is feeling pretty poorly. Please pray for a speedy recovery.
- We keep Becca Widner in our prayers for a good recovery from back surgery.

MARCH 2023 CHURCH CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 1

- Tower work begins
- Lenten service, Congregational Church (4:00 PM)
- Peace of Bread, Methodist Church (5:30 PM)
- Worship Committee meeting (6:30 PM)

Monday, March 6

- Session prayer meeting (7:00 PM)
- Nominating Committee (7:00 PM)

Wednesday, March 8

- Lenten service, Methodist Church (4:00 PM)
- Peace of Bread, Methodist Church (5:30 PM)
- C G & N, 19:00 (7:00 PM)

Thursday, March 9

- Presbytery meeting via zoom (7:00 PM)

Sunday, March 12

- Resume worshipping in UPCW sanctuary
- Clocks move forward by one hour

Wednesday, March 15

- Lenten Service, Fairlawn (4:00 PM)
- Peace of Bread, Presbyterian Church (5:30 PM)
- The Parables of Jesus, Part II (7:00 PM)

Friday, March 17

- April newsletter submission deadline

Monday, March 20

- Session business meeting

Tuesday, March 22

- Lenten Service, Pleasant St. (4:00 PM)
- Peace of Bread, Presbyterian Church (5:30 PM)

Monday, March 27

- Deacon's Meeting

Wednesday, March 29

- Lenten Service, Presbyterian Church (4:00 PM)
- Peace of Bread, Presbyterian Church (5:00 PM)
- The Parables of Jesus, Part II (7:00 PM)