

Congregational Church of Hooksett

February 2024 Newsletter



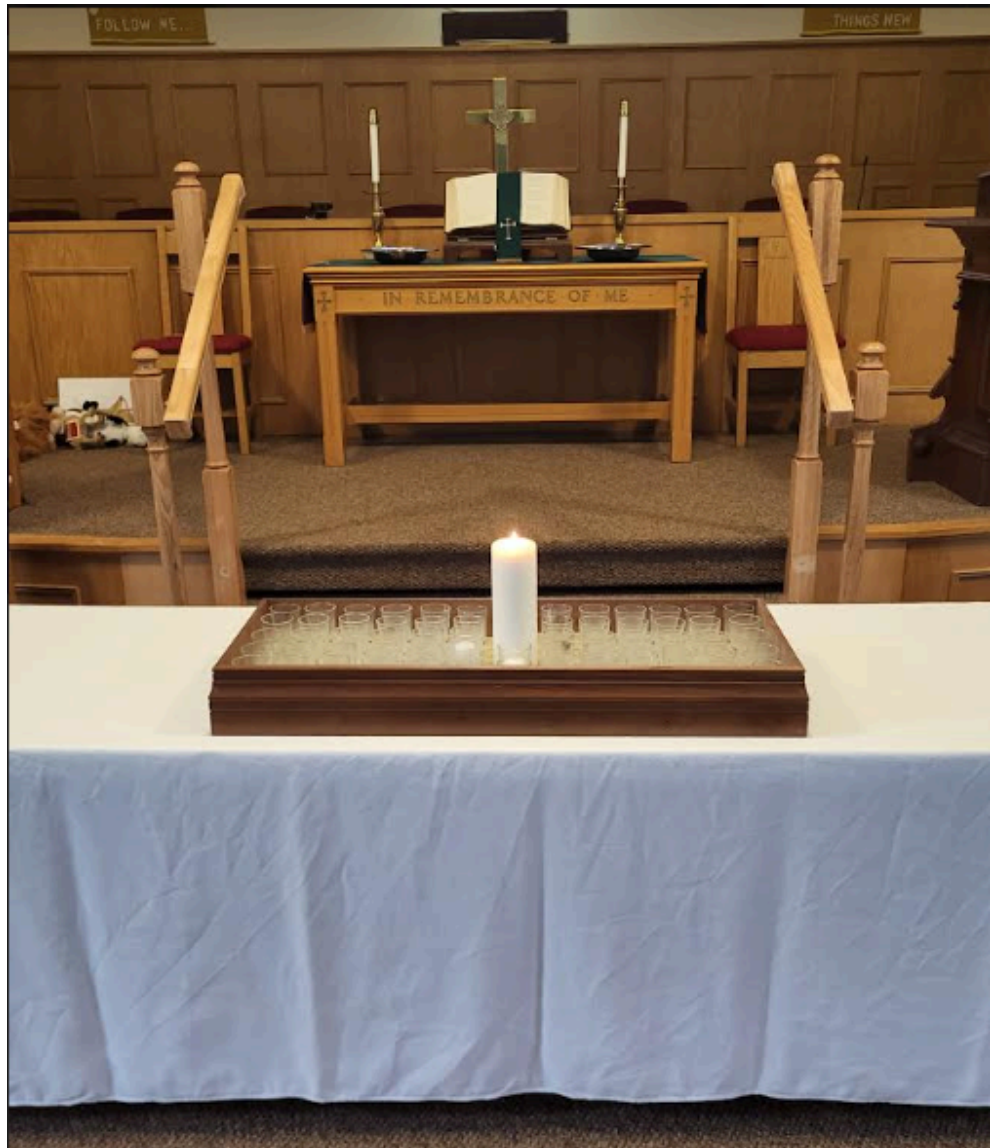
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Kerry's Corner:

Greetings, my brothers and sisters in Christ,

February is a very interesting month, for starters we have new people in new positions that will govern your Church. A very big thank you for those who have stepped up to help, and to those who thought they were done!!

The other interesting thing for me is the Ash Wednesday happens to on the same day as Valentines Day. For a lot of people Valentine's Day is a time to "renew" their love for each other, it's a huge boost to the economy, flowers, candy, and cards. Interesting that we must create a special day for such a thing.

On the 14 th we will also gather to start our Lenten journey starting with Ash Wednesday, where we will mark people with ashes with the words, "from dust you came and to dust you will return". It seems like such a sharp contrast between the two events.

Lectionary Readings for February

February 4

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Isaiah 40:21-31

Psalms 147:1-11, 20c

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

February 11

TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalms 50:1-6

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Mark 9:2-9

February 18

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalms 25:1-10

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

February 25

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalms 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

The Lenten journey allows us to “repent” which is a word that we put in place of the Hebrew word, which was to change or turn around. We have a history of thinking that it involves doing away with something or to stop doing it for the 40 days, thinking that will help us better understand what Jesus was enduring for his 40 days of being tempted. I am not sure we can fully appreciate or understand unless we truly want to “change”.

I just ask that when you get that card, chocolate, or flowers, how would you feel or better yet react if you didn’t get all that? Our partners are trying to communicate affection with these gifts. Jesus is asking for your love without any attachments, unconditional love.

I do hope you will join me for the Lenten study starting with Ash Wednesday.

Your servant in Christ,
Pastor Kerry

From the Diaconate:

Daniel 9:3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

GREETINGS FROM THE DIACONATE

The Diaconate Board meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm in Fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in learning more about our activities are welcome to attend our meetings. A major goal for early 2024 is to create a directory of members and friends of the Hooksett Congregational Church. This directory will enable interaction on behalf of Church business and communication between one another. Messages from the Church regarding special services and important updates will provide timely news to members and friends. Stay tuned for more details!

Thank you to all those who have signed up to the very important roles of Worship Leader or Usher or served as Acolyte or Church Bell ringer, serving coffee or contributed snacks at Fellowship Hour. If you have any questions or would like information about these and other opportunities to serve our Church, please seek out any member of the Diaconate Board (we wear the red name tags!).

The Lenten season is almost upon us, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 14.

Yours in Faith,	
Norm Boucher	Mary Ellen Kresel
Bonnie Boucher	Paula Vaughn
Walker Brown	Nancy Vaughan
Lynn Chevrette	Mary Ann Wells
Kathleen Dube	

February's Hooksett Food Bank Collection is Canned Meats



From The Community Outreach Committee:

Our committee continues to seek ways to help others in our church and the community at large.

We received some responses to our survey. This was sent out asking for the congregation's input on where we might focus our efforts for the upcoming year. Families in Transition, RIP Medical Debt Association, David's House, and Church World Service (which includes the Crop Walk and Blanket Sunday) are some of the options we plan to focus on.

Be on the lookout for some fun activities in the upcoming months! A candy bar Bingo is being planned, as well as a possible breakfast for the congregation.

This year we are also interested in finding ways to become more involved with our partner church in Gweru Zimbabwe. It feels like the perfect way to reach across the world and spread our mission of love and caring. We will keep you posted on any progress we make.

As always, we continue to collect food for the Hooksett Food Pantry. Food for the month of February is canned meats.

Please contact anyone on the Outreach Committee with new ideas or questions. We are always interested in hearing from you! "How wonderful it is that nobody wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." Anne Frank

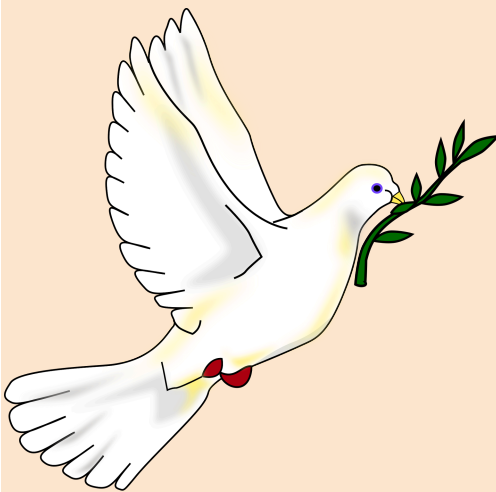
Faithfully submitted,
The Community Outreach Committee

From The Music Committee:

Looking back...the Music Committee reviewed the music of the past Christmas season. We also got great feedback from some folks in the congregation and the verdict is in...while we appreciate the inclusive language of our New Century Hymnal, we would really enjoy singing our favorites with the traditional lyrics. So, fear not, I bring you news of great joy! Next year, the committee will make sure that we will sing 'em the way we know and love 'em! Thanks to all who made their feelings known!

Looking ahead...February...the month of hearts and love...when there is a song for every emotion that thinking of valentines brings. After Christmas, this is probably the second bluest holiday of them all despite the red hearts floating around everywhere. While many are sharing romantic meals and sending valentine cards, others are missing loved ones lost for all the reasons that they leave. Whether you're celebrating the day with your significant other, your family, or remembering times gone by, there is one love story that will go on forever, regardless of any circumstance you can imagine. That is the love between our God and his people. The love of a parent, the love of a brother, the love of the spirit. A love that we can't destroy regardless of our shortcomings. A love song that celebrates this





love is "Jireh", by Elevation Worship, which includes the words, "wasn't holding you up, so there's nothing I can do to let you down...I'll never be more loved than I am right now." Jireh is the name for God first used in the old testament in the story of Abraham and Isaac on the mountain. It means the God who provides.

You can listen to this song by clicking this link. [Jireh](#)

In the words of April Motl of Christianity.com "From the great needs of our soul for issues like salvation and forgiveness to the yearning of our hearts... God Provides - He is our Jehovah-Jireh. God Sees. God is with Us. It is His promise and His character. It is His very name!"

May the hearts you see this February remind you of the heart of our provider, Jireh, and may that be more than enough!

From the Prayer Team:

It is hard to be a bystander to the events going on in the world that make peace seem like an impossible dream. Hear this prayer for peace and hope from the Church of England. Although it specifically recognizes Israel and Palestine, surely this prayer covers all those all over the world who are suffering violence and warfare.

O God of all hope and peace, we bring to you the needs of our broken and hurting world.

Our hearts are breaking with images of lives lost and torn apart by grief in Israel and Palestine.

We pray for an end to violence and warfare so that the challenging work of rebuilding may begin.

Help us, O Lord, to affirm our common humanity so that in our differences we may build together for justice and peace.

In Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Matthew 18:11

The Son of Man has come to give life to anyone who is lost. 12 Think of it this way: If a man owns a hundred sheep and one lamb wanders away and is lost, won't he leave the ninety-nine grazing on the hillside and go out and thoroughly search for the one lost lamb? 13 And if he finds his lost lamb, he rejoices over it, more than over the ninety-nine who are safe. 14 Now you should understand that it is never the desire of your heavenly Father that a single one of these humble believers should be lost."

The prayer team meets after service on the third Sunday of every month and welcomes all who would like to sit in with us as we lift our voices to God and share readings and meditations. We meet in the vestry around 11:30. If you need prayers, please contact prayer@hooksettucc.org. May the peace of Christ surround you as we celebrate love this February.



Other News:

Now that the cold months of winter are in full swing, what better way to stay warm than spending time with friends. Our church is planning to revive Candy Bar Bingo and also plan a dance. Anyone interested in helping plan either of these events please chat with Kristen Hamilton at kduvs@yahoo.com.

We have started digital announcements again. Before church, announcements will be displayed in a slideshow format on the TV in the Vestry and after church on the TV in Fellowship Hall. If you have an announcement that you would like to add to the slides please let Kristen Hamilton know via email: kduvs@yahoo.com.

Last, our Church TVs are equipped with Google Chromecast. This allows us to “cast”, or send something to the TV without hooking a computer up to it. With this said, the Church is looking for 2 tablets or unused smartphones that we can sync Chromecast to. Think of these as remote controls. If you have a smartphone or tablet that does not get much use anymore, please consider the Church as it’s next home. Please contact Kristen with any information on a device.

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Happy fundraising,

Kristi Sisay

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Winter is the best time to get cozy, relax and read! Read any great books? Ready for another? Bring in your books to share and take one. We have set up an area inside the ramp door for this purpose. There are several puzzles as well. Please help yourself!

Want to know what is going on throughout the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ? Click this link to sign up for their weekly digital newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/y9kct9zj>



