

The Congregational Church of Westborough

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
57 West Main Street, Westborough, MA 01581

1724 – 2026



The Evangel
March 2026

Rev. Betsy Dorsi, Pastor
Joseph Stillitano, Director of Music
Linda Borglund, Director of Faith Formation

A Message from Rev. Betsy...

“Come to me all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

- Matthew 11:28

My dear siblings in Christ, Lent is a time to prepare our hearts to celebrate the most important event in all of history: Jesus’ rising from death to new life. This truly is a miracle without any human conceivable explanation. It is also the only miracle ever needed. We can’t explain how but relying on eyewitness testimony of the crucified and risen Jesus, we can believe it happened. Our belief in this miracle, this gift from God, makes Easter a true day of joy and celebration!

We look at the 40 days of Lent, which precede Easter, as a time of sacrifice and service as we prepare our hearts. This is a good way to prepare. However, this year, think about sacrificing some things you like to do in order to read your Bible every day. In the Bible we find stories of people very much like us who lived a very long time ago. They had similar questions, doubts and misunderstandings about God, and sins, as we do. Their stories can help us learn more about the nature of God, understand better how God wants us to live, grow stronger in our faith, and even feel better about ourselves when we sin against God’s law of love. Some of the people we meet in the Bible are really interesting. We learn about how kings lived, how war was conducted, how marriages were arranged, even how people sought help from the gods of their neighbors when God didn’t answer them quickly enough!

Spending time getting to know God by reading your Bible is a time to slow down, lay your work, responsibilities and cares at Jesus’ feet and find rest and renewal.

Pray before you open your Bible. Ask the Holy Spirit to open God’s message for you. Ask that your time in God’s Word may bring you closer to God. While you are reading, ask God questions you have about what you are reading. Sometimes pretend you are one of the people you are reading about. Think about how you would react to the events in the narrative. Ask God what you are supposed to be learning from this passage. End by thinking about one thing you learned and thank God for that message. Reading your Bible this way every day is a great way to prepare your heart to celebrate Easter.

Keep Shining Bright!

Rev. Betsy



Office Hours:

Monday - Closed

Tuesday - Friday

9am - 1pm

PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Bereavement: Family and friends of Nancy Reimann upon her passing this week.

Continued Prayers: Ted Jaworski and Betty Gray; Elaine Moore; Julia O'Neil-Welsh; Sue Menzel; Bev Hall; Jackie Smith; Adam Beckloff, Linda Birch's nephew; Betty Gray's niece Heather; Diane Travers; Judy Ellis' daughter, Syreeta Peddlesden; Ron, brother-in-law to Betty & Ted; Betty Simino; Debbie Grega – Amy Glennon's mother; Betty Gray's niece Heather; Cathie Achorn's sister-in-law, Lorie Mumby

Prayer requests: You can place prayer concerns on the church's email distribution list by emailing lisa.coffey@uccwestboro.org.

PROPERTIES

LET IT SNOW!

As Chair of the Properties Committee, I want to acknowledge the selfless, hard work of those members who have been clearing snow from the sidewalks and entrances of the church as well as clearing the driveway and entrances at 7 Church St. Thankfully, the town is now plowing the church parking lot, but the fellows have also been sanding and salting all the surfaces which have been so challenging to anyone wanting to walk on them.

Please thank these fellows for all they have done for the church this winter: Steve Achorn, Rich Boucher, Ted Jaworski and Mike Lawler.

Dave Smith

MISSIONS

Meal Packing Event

Save the Date! On Sunday March 22, 2026, we will roll up our sleeves and don our masks to pack 20,000 meals. Some meals will go to our Westborough Food Pantry to feed our hungry neighbors, and the rest will go to food pantries around New England. The need is great. There will be a lunch/refreshments room. Bring a friend and share the joy of helping others.

Food Pantry - For the month of **March**, the Westborough Food Pantry is in need the following: *Mustard, Pickles, Brownie Mix, Toothbrushes & Toothpaste*. The Westborough Food Pantry has thanked us for our continued support in helping to feed local families in need. Please continue to consider donating additional (non-perishable) food of all sorts to the white box. Thank you. The Mission Team

Dismas House - Do you like to cook for people who really appreciate your efforts? If so, please consider making a meal for the men at Dismas House. The men are working towards re-assimilating back into a normal life with friends and family after time in prison. They really love home cooked meals. If you can cook a meal but can't deliver it, we can probably arrange to bring the meal. If you are a first-timer, one of our team can go with you. You can stay for dinner with the men or simply deliver the meal. Nothing fancy, just a tasty meal. If you can help, please contact Pam Faustine at 978-505-7031 or pfaustine@princeton-ma.us

BUILDING COMMITTEE NEWS

The Church Building Committee continues work on two major projects for the Church – Modernizing the Church bathrooms and Updating our Church kitchen to current commercial standards.

For the bathroom project, we reviewed the estimates that ranged from a basic paint/tile only upgrade to total renovation of the

Handicapped Bathroom, Men's Room and Ladies' Room (including adding a third stall to the Ladies Room by eliminating the bathroom opposite Rev. Betsy's office). After considerable review, our recommendation to the Trustees and approved at the Congregational Meeting is a plan that we feel will thoroughly modernize the Men's and Ladies' Rooms while not changing the footprint of either bathroom. Additionally, the Handicapped bathroom will be updated with new tile and paint. We are currently reviewing options for tile, faucets, sinks, etc. and working with the contractor to put together a timeline for the renovation. For the Kitchen Project, much of the initial requirement analysis and design has been completed. We are currently identifying firms that are experienced in commercial kitchen renovation. They will review our design criteria and provide estimates and potential times for the actual renovation.

Bob Petersen for the Church Building Committee

PARISH LIFE



There will be a Pancake Brunch on **Sunday, March 29th**. Steve Achorn will make his famous pancakes, and the Parish Life Committee will serve fruit salad, scrambled eggs,

bacon and sausage. Many toppings for the pancakes and juice will be served. If you would like to help, contact The Parish Life Committee. Hope to see you there. Cathie Achorn (508-380-8671), Linda Borglund and Sandy Horton.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We gather in joy and in celebration of Christian Fellowship and Service. All Women are invited to join us for these evenings of fellowship. Bring a friend or neighbor.



April 6, 2026 Meeting

Women's Fellowship will meet on **Monday, April 6, 2026**. Social Time/Refreshments is at 6:30 PM, Meeting is at 7PM and the Program will start at around 7:30 PM.

Kristin will lead us in a session of Gentle/Chair Yoga. It will include "good stretching" alternating with standing exercises. She will also include disco music to keep us moving! All church members, friends and neighbors are invited.

The Mission of the Month is: The Little Free Food Pantry located in the parking lot at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Westborough. This is a 24/7 community cupboard, offering non-perishable foods, household and personal supplies to anyone in need. Several organizations in town help to supply and take turns making sure it is organized and stocked. Donations range from canned goods, box meals, school snacks, feminine products, plastic-wrapped plastic utensils, ramen noodles, baby food, etc. There is also a Little Free Pet Food Pantry located beside it. This means pet food is also excepted.

For Info. Call or text Cathie Achorn at 508-380-8671

LOOKING AHEAD

*The next meeting will be the **Women's Fellowships Annual May Dinner** at The Post Office Pub in Grafton on **May 4, 2026**. Appetizers and short business meeting at 5:30-6:30pm. Dinner is at 6:30PM. Back by popular demand.....there will be door prizes! Sign up deadline will be April 27, 2026.*

STEWARDSHIP

“Dreaming God’s Dream”
No gift too small, no dream too big.

The Stewardship Committee thanks all those who responded to the 2026 stewardship drive for their participation. The figures below are a summary of this year’s campaign through February.

Planned expenses for 2026	\$247,446
Total Expenses pledges	80 for \$226,092
Pledge Increases	37
Unchanged Pledges	32
Pledge Decreases	10
New Pledge	1
Total Missions Pledges	\$32,900
2025 Missions Pledges	\$32,122
Expenses Pledges for 2025	86 for \$232,315

It’s never too late to make a pledge, you may contact the church office or any member of the Stewardship Committee: Neil Bock, Betty Gray, Janice Shaw or Dave Smith.

Holy Week Calendar of Services



- **Thursday, March 26th at 6:30 PM:** Seder Supper in the Fellowship Hall
- **Sunday, March 29th at 10 AM:** Palm Sunday Service
- **Thursday, April 2nd at 7 PM:** Maundy Thursday Service
- **Friday, April 3rd at 12 PM:** Ecumenical Good Friday Service at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

- **Sunday, April 5th at 10 AM:** Easter Sunday and Communion Sunday

Alternative Worship Time

- **Saturday, April 11th at 5 PM:** Mission Project Worship Service in Fellowship Hall

Dates of future alternative worship times coming soon.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

The following organization has acknowledged donations/contributions from our church:

UCC – Neighbors In Need \$ 640.00

CONTACT INFORMATION

Reverend Betsy Dorsi, Pastor
Rev.Betsy.Dorsi@uccwestboro.org

Sue Menzel, Handbell Director
westcongmusic@gmail.com

Joseph Stillitano, Music Director
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Linda Borglund, Director of Faith Formation
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Ariana Dello Stritto
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Lisa Coffey
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General Church Email
info@uccwestboro.org

Church Office Phone (508) 366-2000

Church Website
www.UCCwestboro.org

www.facebook.com/TheCongregationalChurchofWestborough

“Beyond the Savers Fundraiser”

I thought I'd share some of the good that our church has spread beyond the **savers** fundraiser.

As you know, Cathie Achorn had set up our own church account with **savers** so that we could benefit from the 'leftovers' (from Yard Sales, Grandma's Attic and other church events). That included books, household goods, small appliances, clothing, DVDs, linens and toys...pretty much everything and anything. But we took some of these items and directed them to other missions that we, the Women's Fellowship, support.

To start, we put 3 large totes in the library for donations. (They are still there if you have some things you'd like to get out of your home.)

Someone had asked if their donation could go to **Abby's House**, instead of **savers**, because it was new (clothing) with tags.

I had asked Cathie if I could take some household goods and bring them to **Fresh Start**, and some clothing for **Abby's House** and for **Veterans, Inc.** Since we get such a very small amount of money per pound from **savers**, she said I could.

In the process, we took out 2 large bags of shoes, boots, mittens, gloves, scarves and clothing to be brought to the nurse at **Hastings School**. She was delighted to get her diminishing supply replenished. This 'unofficial' mission is a discovery of Cathie's that we can easily contribute to throughout the year.

Another contact that Cathie made (through her daughter, Julie's fundraising projects) is Lori Olson. Cathie met her while helping Julie during their Girl Scout Yard Sale. Lori works with the **Homeless Ministry** of the **Cornerstone Church** in Uxbridge. She goes on the 4th Sunday of the month and hands out clothing and other needed items to the homeless in the parking lot of the Worcester YMCA.

I was able to contact her to learn of what we might be able to help with. She said that she would take any warm clothing, boots, shoes, towels, etc. that we would like to donate.

She met me at our church to pick up what we had already put aside and to go through some of the bags that I hadn't had a chance to get to. We started with 3 large black bags of winter coats, clothes, and boots...but ended up filling her car to the brim. Since she was going the next day, it was good timing. This woman is amazing!!! Talk about boots on the ground!!

(Going forward, Lori said they can also use tents, sleeping bags, backpacks and men's belts that they frequently need.)

Abby's House, in Worcester offers shelter, advocacy and affordable housing to battered, homeless and low-income women. The WF supports them both monetarily and with donations of clothing and household goods.

Anita Lawler volunteers at **Abby's House** and is happy to bring anything we collect. She took several bags of clothing and shoes for their Thrift Shop. She does this *year-round* so we don't have to wait for a fundraiser to support these women.

Starting March 7th, **Abby's House** will be accepting Spring and Summer clothing.

Fresh Start in Hudson helps people who are leaving shelters and going into their own apartments. They don't sell or profit from donations and all families are checked out. The families go to the 'Furniture Bank' and pick out what they need. (Household goods that are 'leftovers' from our Yard Sales go to **Fresh Start**.)

Again, some of the clothing that come in was very nice and I asked our 'friend of the church', Carole Judge, to come and pick out the better things so that she could consign them. She has opened up an account for the church at a consignment shop in Northboro that she's affiliated with. She frequently brings checks to the office, and it's all earmarked for the kitchen renovation.

The result was so much more than a kitchen fundraiser....it became an extensive mission project that reached many people who could use a little kindness.

Thank you all for making this possible. - Donna Morgan

"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." Matthew 25:40



I loaded up my van and delivered *many* household goods and linens to **Fresh Start Furniture Bank**. I'm going to take another load this week.

Wendy, the volunteer coordinator, said that they are low on everything and was so appreciative for our donations.



Cornerstone Church in Uxbridge is part of this Outreach Ministry.



Lori filled her car and was able to take it to distribute to the homeless in Worcester the next day!



Abby's House takes its name from Abby Kelley Foster, the abolitionist and women's suffragist, and a key force behind the first U.S. Women's Rights Convention, held in October 1850 in Worcester. **Abby's House** offers shelter, advocacy and affordable housing to battered, homeless and low-income women.



Having the Chapel to spread out all of the donations was a blessing. Thanks for your patience!

saversTM
SHOP. REUSE. REIMAGINE.





Note how big this trailer is!

It was loaded with 'leftovers' from Grandma's Attic, the Yard Sale and other church projects. Many thanks to the Achorns, the McCoskery family and Gavin Caron. This was truly a family affair!!



Unloading the bags of clothing and household goods at **savers**.

~ March 2026 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 COMMUNION 10am Worship Service Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast	2 6:00 pm WF Meeting/Fell. Hall 6-8 pm Scouts/Board Rm Church Office Closed	3 6:30 pm – Building Committee/ Board Rm 7:00-8:00 pm - Bell Rehearsal	4 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal EVANGEL DEADLINE	5	6	7 4-5:30 pm Scouts/Fellowship Hall
8 10am Worship Service 11:15 am – Deacons Meeting	9 7:00 pm- Trustees/Board Rm Church Office Closed	10 10:30 am – Whitney Place Service 6-10 pm – AV Setup 7:00-8:00 pm - Bell Rehearsal	11 9 am – Weavers/Fellowship Hall 9:30 am Called to Care 11:00 am – Staff Meeting 6:30-8:00 – Choir Rehearsal	12	13 9 am – 5 pm Weavers Workshop Fellowship Hall	14 9 am – 5 pm Weavers Workshop Fellowship Hall
15 10am Worship Service	16 Noon-2pm -PCCM/Board Rm 7:00 - pm Church Board//Board Rm Church Office Closed	17 6:30 pm – Building Committee/ Board Rm 7:00-8:00 pm - Bell Rehearsal  ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 6:30-8:00 – Choir Rehearsal	19 6:00 pm – Pride Connections	20 6-10 pm – AV Setup	21 9:00 am – Men's Breakfast Noon – Set up for meal packing
22 10am Worship Service MEAL PACKING EVENT	23 7:30 pm – Missions/Zoom Church Office Closed	24 7:00-8:00 pm - Bell Rehearsal Dinner/Disma House	25 11:00 am – Staff Meeting 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30-8:00 – Choir Rehearsal	26 6:30 pm - Christian Seder Meal	27	28 Parish Life setup for Pancake Brunch
29 PALM SUNDAY 10am Worship Service 11:15 am – Pancake Brunch	30 Church Office Closed	31 7:00-8:00 pm - Bell Rehearsal				

~ April 2026 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal EVANGEL DEADLINE	2 – MAUNDY THURSDAY 7:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Service/Sanctuary	3 GOOD FRIDAY Noon – Good Friday Service at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	
5 EASTER SUNDAY 10am Worship Service COMMUNION	6 6:00 pm WF Meeting/Fell. Hall Church Office Closed	7 6-10 pm – AV Setup 6:30 pm – Building Committee/Board Room 7-8 pm -Bell Rehearsal	8 9 am – Weavers in Fell. Hall 9:30 am Called to Care 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal	9	10 6p Tom in Fellowship Hall	11 9 am Men's breakfast/vestry 5:00 pm – Alternative Mission Service
12 10am Worship Service	13 Noon – 2pm – PCCM/Board Rm 7:00 pm- Trustees/Board Room Church Office Closed	14 10:30 am - Whitney Place 7-8 pm -Bell Rehearsal	15 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal	16 6 - 8 pm – Pride Connections	17	18
19 10am Worship Service	20 7:00 - pm Church Board/Board Rm Church Office Closed	21 6:30 pm – Building Committee/Board Rm 7-8 pm -Bell Rehearsal	22 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal	23	24	25 YARD SALE
26 10am Worship Service	27 7:30 pm – Missions/Zoom Church Office Closed	28 7-8 pm -Bell Rehearsal Dinner/Dismas House	29 3:30 - 4:30 pm - Journey Home Singers/Choir Rm 6:30 - 8:00 - Choir Rehearsal	30		