



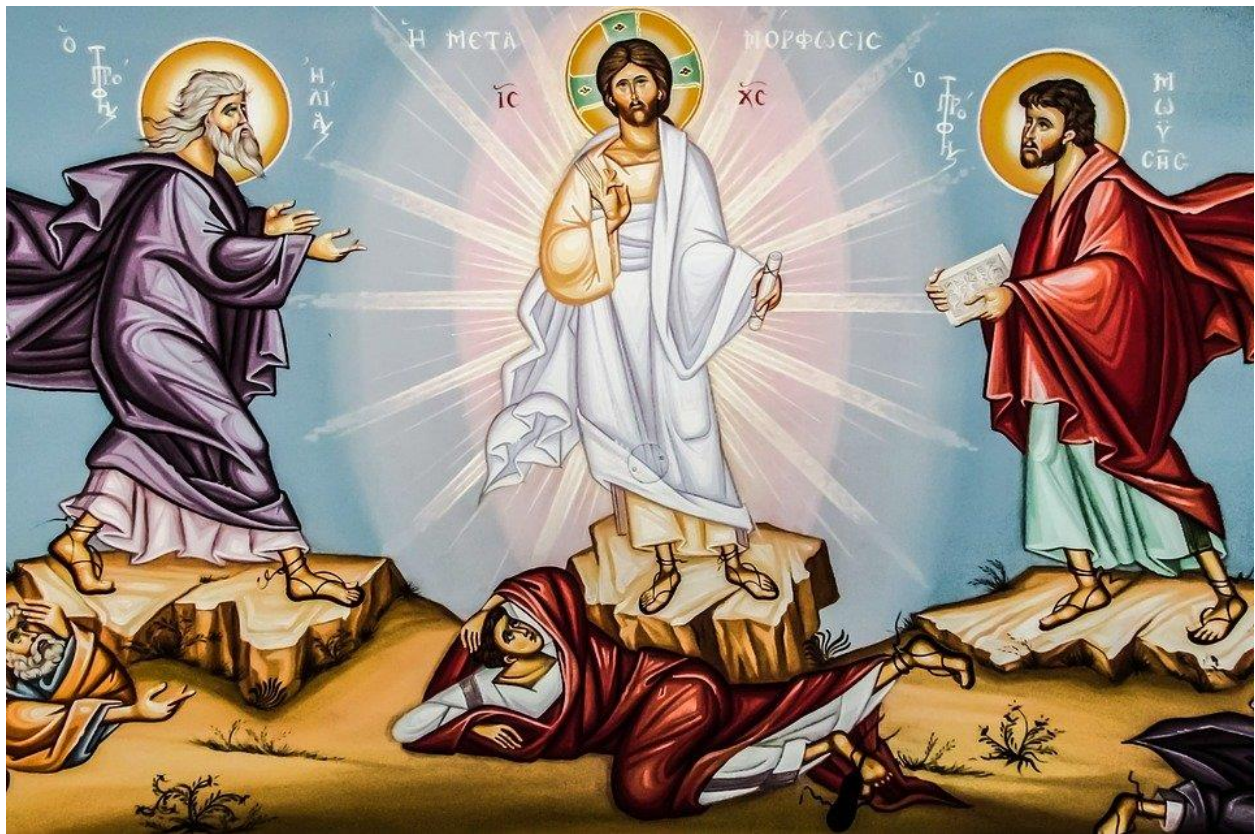
Crossroads

*News from South Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

*45 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105
(413) 732-0117 www.sococh.org*

*We are an inclusive community of faith; courageously following Christ;
serving our neighbors in love.*

February 2022



The season of light that is Epiphany ends on February 27 with the Transfiguration of Christ on the mountain. We then begin our journey through Lent.

From the Pastor

Dear South,

On Sunday, January 30, South's Viability Working Group led the reflection in worship. Here is [the link](#) to the recording of that worship service.

As they described, "we are aiming to talk about viability, sustainability and where (physically and spiritually) we imagine South being in the next few years **so that we can ultimately have a plan and action steps**. We are doing this with you because we will need to make decisions together and choose to act together."

One way into the planning and acting is engaging in *informed wonder*.

Specifically, as South, as members and part of the wider community of South, informed wonder means reflecting on these questions:

What do we Know? about South, about the context of ministry, about the nature of church, about the pushes and pulls of today that impact our viability and sustainability, about the capacities and incapacities of South...

What do we Trust? What really guides us.

What do we Fear? about change, about where we are and where we might be in a few years, about where we want to be or don't want to be...

therefore

What do we Wonder about? How is what we trust leading us?

What do *you* know, trust, fear and wonder about as you reflect on the viability and sustainability of South?

Feel free to share your thoughts with any of the members of the Viability Working Group

Polly, psouthworth@hotmail.com

Trea, thetalentedtenthrealized@gmail.com

Bill, wgcinmass@aol.com

Rev. Lindsey, revlindseypeterson@gmail.com

Note: Worship will continue on Zoom through the month of February. See the worship schedule later in this issue for login information.

From the Moderator

When you get to read this, it will be February and we are gaining daylight minutes. I think we made the right decision by having worship service via Zoom. They were wonderful and well attended.

We are not finished with holidays and celebrations in February. We have Groundhog Day on February 2.

(My dear father was always excited to hear the result from the groundhog.) We have President's Day and then Valentine's Day on Feb. 14.

St. Valentine's Day originated in the Western Christian Church as a liturgical feast day to honor one or two more saints named Valentinus. It has become widely known to show "love".

Mark 12:31 – Jesus said when asked; the second commandment is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Do you need more advice than that commandment? Maybe we should call the first day of every month Valentine's Day as a reminder to love. I think it would make a better world.

South Church has been busy in January even with Covid restrictions.

The three coordinators, Dennis Badger, Worship Team, Elaine Lentino, Care Team, and Jeanne O'Brien, Church without Walls, are up and running. Thank you to them and the teams for the great job they are doing.

At our February 2 Leadership Circle Meeting we decided on Zoom Worship for the month of February.

Happy Valentine's Day!

- *Nick*

A Condensed February Calendar

- Sundays at 10 a.m. – Zoom worship (see worship schedule for login information)
- Wednesdays at 7 p.m. – Zoom Bible Study (use the Sunday worship login)
- Wednesday, February 2 at 7 p.m. – Leadership Circle on Zoom
- February 11 & 22 at 10:30 a.m. – South Church Cooks
- Every day except Wednesday – Loaves & Fishes at noon & 5 p.m.

Zoom Bible Studies!

Join us for Tuesday night Bible studies at 7 p.m. Use the Sunday worship access code and password. Here is the schedule:

- February 2 – Leadership Meeting (No Bible Study)
- February 9 – Luke 6:17-26 (led by Betty Jack)
- February 16 – Luke 6:27-38 (led Polly Southworth)
- February 23 – Luke 9:28-36 (led by Larry Picard)

Director of Music

A church member recently asked me a question about our choir. While stating that he was very happy with the high-caliber musical offerings he hears from our paid, professional singers, he wondered if it were not possible to get more volunteers involved in the group. I have been asked about this fairly often in the past and my answer has usually been “yes...but...” Then I have a short list of reasons why it is more difficult in our situation to attract and keep volunteer singers. Consider the following:

- Because we have paid up to eight professional musicians to provide sung offerings for us each Sunday, the pace at which we rehearse is pretty fast. Time is money, as they say, and our professionals are expected to have a good handle on the part they have to sing. Putting all the parts together has often been a race against time on Sunday morning, and the poor volunteer who sings but has not had as much musical training as the professionals can get left behind. I will say that our paid singers have been very supportive of the volunteers over the years and have tried their best to help them along, but the volunteers often drift away discouraged.
- One of the aspects we value the most here at South is our diversity, and that can also present a challenge when asking individuals from very different musical and cultural backgrounds to fit in to an ensemble based on a European and American mainstream church concept of sacred music. Someone who was raised in a black or Latinx church tradition might learn and embody church music very differently than those of us who grew up singing in traditional New England churches. Then there are those of all traditions and cultures who have no church background or experience at all, for whom our musical culture is equally foreign.
- In churches everywhere, but especially in the Northeastern region of the U.S., choirs are aging and shrinking. In talking with several of my colleagues, they report that their groups were already becoming smaller before the pandemic, and now the pandemic has further decimated their singing groups for various reasons.

Well, should we just forget the whole idea, then? I say no. There is still wonderful music to be made by groups of people singing together, and the experience itself is very cathartic. The difference between a church choir and, say, a community chorus, is that in the latter, the volunteers are there for the sole purpose of singing together. One hopes that a church choir forms with individuals who are already part of a body of people who want to learn about, serve and glorify God. So, if you count yourself in that category and you want to sing with us, let me know! I'll find a way to make it work.



And now, an announcement. On January 16 I marked 15 years as the Music Director here at South, and I was already thinking about something I would like to have happen as a means of renewing myself and bringing new life into my ministry. I recently asked the Leadership Circle to approve a four-month sabbatical for me, and they did so without objection. So, beginning May 16 of this year I'll be away from you for a while, returning on the Sunday after Labor Day. I hope to divide the time between rest, learning and traveling, and I'm going to try to visit some different churches and learn how they are moving through the 21st century, particularly with music. While I'm gone, you'll have a variety of musical experts to make your worship experience meaningful, some you already know and some you don't. And before you know it, it will be September and I'll be back, ready to continue with you the spiritual path we have been following.

But don't say good-bye yet. That time is still three months away. – *Larry*

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE (See instructions below for joining Zoom worship services)

February 6 (Communion): Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

February 13: Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson (Benevolence Team meets immediately following worship.)

February 20: Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

February 27 (Transfiguration Sunday): Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

To access Sunday Zoom worship: from your phone, dial **1-929-205-6099**. At the prompt, enter access code 975 811 240 followed by the # key. Then enter the password: 041663 and the # key again. From your computer, tablet or smart phone, log on to **zoom.us**. Click on “join a meeting” and enter the access code and password.

Please Pray for

The family of Jo Smith, Jan Ziegler, The family of Chad Alexander, Tanya Dudley, John Burris, Karen Buske, Dan Myers, Bruce Wright, Karen Kress, Peter and Margie Nelson, Raj Ramaswamy, Stella Boulware, Sue Wood's friends, Jodi Clements and her mom, Kastle and Cynthia, Sue Wood's cousin, Diane O'Hara, Bert Montagna, Shirley McCready, Betty Eaton, Jean Steup, her family and her grandmother, Ruth Kilcoyne, Rev. Lindsey's father, Bob Peterson, Merle Olson, Ginny Robbins, Gordon Dodge, Winfield Moore, Marjorie Munroe, Leila Cohen, Timmy Miller, Priscilla Price, Deborah Price, Silvia Walker, Jan McDonald, Mike Wright, Rev. Louis Mitchell, Jeff Johnson, Jane Closson, Rubin Reyes, Bob Stack, Beverly Lynch, Silvio Vasquez and his family in Venezuela, Renee Silva, Pastor Clemmons, Anthony Wysocki, Roland Fenton, Irene Rappa and all those suffering with Covid-19. *If you would like to be added or removed from the Prayer List, please reach out to Jackie at: secretary@sococh.org or call/text her at: 413-654-8086.*

Benevolence News

The Benevolence Team will hold a meeting on Sunday, February 13, immediately after the church service. It will be held on Zoom, so stay logged on after the service ends. For further information contact Nancy Montagna: nancy31053@hotmail.com.

The Benevolence Team is happy to announce that your generous donations to our Advent Offering will be much appreciated by ARISE for Social Justice. We are happy to announce that a check in the amount of \$1222.00 was sent to them so they can continue to help our community.

Happy February Birthday!



4 Tarji Brathwaite-Duggins
7 James Guevin
9 Thomas Gallagher

9 Paul Duprey
10 Nadia Woodman
19 Cynthia Duprey

22 Alice Lee
23 Elaine Lentino
25 Karen Kress

**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
45 MAPLE STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01105**

Rev. Lindsey Peterson

Designated Term Minister

Larry Picard

Director of Music Ministries

Jacqueline Fredenburgh

Office Administrator

Cynthia Lage

Bookkeeper

Jared Spencer

Custodian and Property Manager

Polly Southworth

Sunday School Superintendent

Crossroads is the newsletter of South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Stories and items of Church interest are welcome and are due by the 20th of the month for the next month's issue. Submissions should be sent to Larry Picard at lpicard@sococh.org or by post to his attention at the church address.

South Congregational Church UCC www.sococh.org

A Jesus-centered, Open & Affirming Community

**God is still
speaking,**

