



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.*

March 2022

Power Love Justice

Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.

Martin Luther King Jr.

From the Pastor

Faith in Action: Faith Forum 2022

I had the honor of joining the Pioneer Valley Project (PVP) federation recently - February 28 through March 3 - for the Faith Forum 2022 in Washington D.C. PVP is part of a national organization called [Faith in Action](#). Faith Forum was the national convening of Faith in Action to center on the organizing priorities for this year which are focused on Voting Rights and Immigrant Rights. "Faith in Action is a national community organizing network that gives people of faith the tools that they need to fight for justice and work towards a more equitable society." It was energizing to be gathered with people of diverse faiths who are moved to create a more equitable society.

As most of you know PVP has their offices in South's building. It was thanks to PVP's organizing work that South was able to provide sanctuary to Gisella. They have and are continuing to build a strong grassroots network within Springfield and neighboring communities. I am energized by the possibilities that exist for South to partner with PVP to make the beloved community more real in our communities. Specifically, this year there may be a way that we can share in the mission of increasing the voter turnout in Springfield elections. I loved a shirt that one of the organizers this week was wearing: "Faith got me living risky!" Yes, indeed. Faith can provide us comfort and a sense of peace *and* it can agitate us to organize to make the world a more beautiful and equitable place!

- **Rev. Lindsey**

Please Pray for

Jo Smith, Tanya Dudley, John Burris, Karen Buske, Dan Myers, Carol Stewart, 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, reach out to Rev. Lindsey: revlindseypeterson@gmail.com.*

From the Moderator

I am sitting at a table next to a wide window on the south side of our home looking at a clean coat of fresh snow. The New England sun in February makes me feel like it is summer. What an amazing world our Lord has made.

Wow, it is March and Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, has just happened. Typically, the ashes come from olive branches or palm leaves that were blessed on the previous year's Palm Sunday.

Rev. Lindsey has presented a wonderful calendar of events during Lent. Please take the time to participate. Doing Lent makes for a more meaningful Easter.

At the last Leadership meeting on February 2, we focused on Christian Education at South and the challenge of getting children to attend Sunday School. Jan Burdewik shared her insight from a mentoring program and summer outreach programs at Faith Church. Polly Southworth and Betty Jack are planning an event for our neighbors this summer.

At our next meeting, Larry Picard, our Music Director will have a conversation with LC about South's Music Program.

We will continue to meet with our different teams.

I think this is a good time of the year to invite people to church including our own families. With what is going on in the world today, it is a good time to know there is a God that loves us.

If you have something you would like Leadership to discuss, please let me know. We welcome your input.

We are looking forward to seeing you "LIVE" in March at church.

Take care - **Nick**

MARCH WORSHIP SCHEDULE (Worship is at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary or on Zoom – see access information below.)

March 6 (Lent 1/Communion): Worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

March 13 (Lent 2): Worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson. DAYLIGHT SAVINGS RETURNS! Set your clocks ahead one hour Saturday night.

March 20 (Lent 3): Worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson.

March 27 (Lent 4): Worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson.

Zoom: Call-in number: 1-929-205-6099; MTG: 975 811 240; Password: 041663

Director of Music

In my article in the February Crossroads issue, I talked about reasons why the South Church Chancel Choir has been comprised mostly of paid, professional singers, and what that means for encouraging volunteerism in that ensemble. After reading the article, Rev. Lindsey pointed out that I started a process that could be taken farther, by looking at how we as a body of worshippers can continue to express ourselves through music as we move forward through time and adapt to an ever-changing world. I'll quote a paragraph from that article that she referred to:

"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."

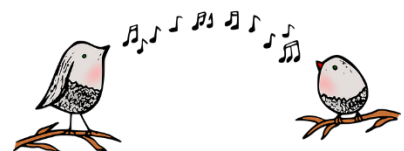
Possibly because I was working against a deadline to get the Crossroads issue into your mailboxes, I only shared half the story. I just described a situation where there was a *structure* in place that a diverse group of individuals might try to fit into and find themselves frustrated by the difficulty of doing so. The South Church Chancel Choir works within such a structure, one that has been in existence for nearly the amount of time that South has existed. The issue is not that there is a lack of volunteer talent in the South Church membership. Indeed, I can think of many people off the top of my head who have fine singing voices and would be valuable assets to music in our worship. So, it might be more accurate to say that it is the diversity of our many talents that makes uniting together in song both rewarding and challenging.

Think about how we all have traditionally sung in worship. How does it feel to sing a hymn from a hymnbook, reading words and notes on a page? Is it different than singing with me by ear as I stand and face you in the center aisle? Which method do you respond to more? When I speak of European and American styles of music in worship, the tradition for some centuries now has been to *read* the music in order to learn it, much in the way actors learn a script to present a play. In many cultures, however, including some that exist in Europe and North America, music is learned and embodied by *call and response*, or what we know as singing by ear.

There are arguments for both ways of learning song. Using the reading method you can learn a lot of music more quickly without having to memorize it. On the other hand, call and response seals the music in your brain, your body, and your soul without having to hold a page of music in front of you. Suddenly, you are free to do something to magnify your expression of praise. You are free to move! You can sway, clap, dance, snap your fingers – whatever the Spirit leads you to do.

So, what if there were a volunteer choir at South that did just that? No words or notes on a page, just listening, singing, and moving. Sound interesting? I am very willing and excited to get such a group going. We just need people (of course). Call me, message me, or catch me in person on Sunday morning. Let's try something new!

- Larry



Play and Pray Thursdays in Lent



We are going to play in abundance this Lent.

Even in these very challenging times, we are connected to an abundant God.

Let's reconnect to that foundational blessing, that abundant beginning, and the bountiful call of this generous God.

Every Thursday in Lent, Rev. Lindsey will be creating a space for reflection, creativity and play.

In person at 45 Maple Street. Starting Thursday March 10, 12:00-1:00 pm

12:00-12:15ish will be a time of gathering and music

12:15-12:45ish will be activity time

12:45-1:00, will be a time to continue the activity, linger and continue connection.

Join for the full hour, or for any portion of it.

Some of the activities: music, art, labyrinth, vision boards, story sharing



A Condensed March Calendar

- Sundays at 10 a.m. – Worship in the sanctuary and on Zoom (see worship schedule above for login information)
- Wednesdays at 7 p.m. – Zoom Bible Study (use the Sunday worship login)
- Thursdays at noon: Play & Pray Lenten series, at the church.
- Thursday, March 3 at 7 p.m. – Leadership Circle on Zoom
- March 11 & 29 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 Wednesday night Bible studies at 7 p.m. Use the Sunday worship access code and password. Here is the schedule:

- March 9 – Luke 13:31-35 (led by Polly Southworth)
- March 16 – Luke 13:1-9 (led by Betty Jack)
- March 23 – Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 (led Larry Picard)
- March 30 – John 12:1-8 (led by Polly Southworth)



Happy March Birthday!



1 Ashanta Smith
2 Beverly Lynch
5 Oboya Omot

10 Nancy Montagna
11 Jan McDonald
17 Stella Boulware
23 Joycelyn Rennix

24 Peter Paul
29 Polly Southworth
31 Renee Silva

Benevolence News

The Benevolence Team invites you to join us on April 3 as we recognize the agencies which we have decided to support this year. With your generous donations and the Ethan Taylor Benevolent Fund we are able to distribute \$21,350. Each agency will have a display in the Parish Hall after the service which you may visit and learn more about the important work they are doing in our community. The following agencies will be present:

Action Centered Tutoring (ACTS)

The Gray House

Baystate Health Foundation

New North Citizen Council

Big Brothers, Big Sisters

Open Pantry

The Children's Study Home

Springfield Boys & Girls Club

Community Music School

Suzuki Talent Education Partnership (STEP)

The Drama Studio

Valley Eye Radio

Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation

Youth Social Educational Training (YSET)

Gardening the Community

The Ethan Taylor Benevolent Fund began in 1906 when Ethan Taylor passed away and left much of his estate to South Church. His will stipulates that the assets from his trust should be used each year to benefit charitable organizations.



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

Rev. Lindsey Peterson
Larry Picard
Jared Spencer

Designated Term Minister
Director of Music Ministries
Custodian and Property Manager

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*

