

The Spire

A publication of the Original Congregational Church

November 2023



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A Night of Music in Tribute to Ken Graves

Many years ago Ken Graves turned his love of music, and a dream to run a coffeehouse concert series for all to enjoy, it became a reality here at the OCC. The variety and talent of the musical acts was amazing. The pandemic years impacted all gatherings and the series came to an end. When it was time to think about hosting another concert, sadly, Ken's health declined and he passed after a brief illness.

One of our favorite groups, Southern Rail Bluegrass, contacted Pastor Ken and offered to create an affordable event in tribute to Ken's joy of music and getting people together. This past Saturday October 28th, the OCC welcomed back Southern Rail to the stage in the Fellowship Hall in Ken Graves memory. It was a great night of music, and remembrance.



The Kitchen Elves meet the first Wednesday of each month to prepare and deliver meals to members in need. Preparers and drivers are always welcome. Next date is **November 1st**

Bible Study meets Tuesday mornings in person and by Zoom at 10:00 am. Join Pastor Ken and friends in our beautiful parlor.

Lunch Bunch meets at noon in Fellowship Hall the 3rd Wednesday of each month for a light lunch of soup, sandwich, desserts and beverages. There's always an element of fun with friends. Next date is **November 8th**,

Highlight Dates

November 01 Kitchen Elves
November 05 Ingathering Bags go out
November 08 Lunch Bunch
November 11 Panhandling for Veterans
November 18 Church Mouse Fair
December 10 Christmas Concert 3pm

The Ladies Breakfast Club meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month, and 5th when there is one. We meet at 9:30 am at the Village Griddle in Plainville. Contact Emmie Foster or Sue Schwarm if you plan to attend.

As November brings an awakening within the whole church, consider getting involved by joining a team or committee. If you've been thinking of becoming a formal member of the church, it might be time for you to consider your Affirmation of Faith. Committee chairs, Pastor Ken and AnnMarie are available to answer your questions and help you get started.



Choir Rehearsals

Rehearsals for the Chancel Choir are Thursday evenings at 7:15 pm with Justin Kisch.

Rehearsals for the Bell Choir are now Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm with Martha Goodman.

If you'd like to share your music gifts with us at the OCC, please contact Justin Kisch or Pastor Ken.



Celebrating Wrentham's 350th Anniversary

Pastor Ken and members of the OCC joined in a large gathering of local citizens on Sunday, October 15th to dedicate a Time Capsule in honor of the town's 350th anniversary. The sizable stainless steel box contains a large number of Wrentham artifacts for future residents to enjoy. Included in the capsule is a booklet of story boards prepared by Joan and Dick Shirley for the church's 325th year in 2017. The pictures of all 20 settled pastors of the OCC since 1692 plus historical descriptions made for a fine contribution. A beautiful stone quarried in Wrentham marks the spot on the town common. The time capsule is to be opened again in 2,073 for the town's 400th anniversary. See you then!





MITTEN TREE

Beginning in October, Outreach will place an unadorned Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall. Hopefully, during the month, you and your family will begin to hang donated winterwear for children and adults. Hats, mittens, gloves and scarves can be added to the branches of our tree. As the month ends, all these donations will be given to the families assisted by New Hope and families attending the Food and Friends meal sites.

As the temperatures begin to drop, pick up an item as you are shopping, to add to the tree. The more donations, the more colorful the tree!

Thanksgiving InGathering 2023... Bags go out Sunday, November 5th

The Outreach Team will be sponsoring our annual In Gathering all-church Offering this year, beginning on Sunday, November 5th. Grocery bags will be handed out after service in Fellowship Hall. Staped to each bag will be a list of needed items which can be collected in these bags during the month of November. Additional bags will be available in the church office for those unable to attend church on November Sundays. On Sunday, November 19th the bags should be returned to our sanctuary, as the church makes their offering to those less fortunate than us. Bags may also be dropped off at the church office that following week. This year Grit and Grace, a women's sober house in Attleboro has been chosen to receive our donations.

Grit and Grace for Women provides a residential program for up to 13 women dealing with sobriety and developing healthy life skills. As well as needing personal toiletries and non-perishable groceries, the mothers there have requested Uber gift cards, giving them an opportunity to attend nearby AA meetings together while in recovery.

Pick up a bag after church or in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, November 5th and remember to bring it to the Sanctuary on Sunday, November 21st. For those unable to attend church at this time, please contact the church office at (508) 384-3110 to arrange to pick up a bag.



The Prison Book Program runs out of the United First Parish Church in Quincy and is alive and well. I know this, because I spent an enjoyable and educational evening with them a few weeks ago on a Thursday night. It had been several years since I went to the Lucy Parson Bookstore. When I entered the church basement, I saw a hive of activity with volunteers seated at multiple tables. They were getting books ready for a mailing to go to inmates throughout our country. In another room, volunteers were reading letters and doing their best to find the books that matched the interest of the inmate. Rooms had been renovated to accommodate the growing needs of the prison population who desired fiction, nonfiction and educational reading materials. Many changes have been made to the Lucy Parson Bookstore program, all positive. I had a wonderful evening working along side other volunteers of all ages and interests. Please look up their website at prisonbookprogram.org for more information on how you can become involved with this vital organization. You can even volunteer from your home! Anyone over the age of 16 welcome. You will be given a tour, instructions, a snack and even a visit to John and Abigail Adams!

Pam Jennette
Outreach



Panhandling for Veterans: Saturday Nov 11th

This year as we go out to panhandle this year, we want to collect for our veterans. Usually, our teens gather in the spirit of Homeless Awareness Weekend to focus their work for the homeless, especially teenagers and children struggling with this crisis. This year however, it has been decided to turn our efforts to veterans in our area, who may also be battling with Stress and Homelessness. Friday November 10th we will gather to build signs and share pizza in Fellowship Hall. This weekend activity is not just for the youth of our church, but also any person wanting an opportunity to thank veterans for their service and honor them for the price they may have paid to serve our country. Saturday, we will begin panhandling on the common from 10 AM until 1 PM. A casual lunch will conclude our efforts and hopefully provide us with an opportunity to give gratefully to others. Any questions or concern, contact the church office or an Outreach team member.



The Church Mouse Fair

November Spire Edition

Saturday, November 18, 2023, 9 am – 2 pm
The Original Congregational Church of Wrentham
1 East St. Wrentham Ma 02093

Fair preparations are well underway, and we are in the home stretch!

The OCC annual church fair is an all-church community event and our largest fundraiser of the year. Continue to check Sunday church bulletins for weekly updates. Visit the church Fair Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall for ongoing fair information and sign ups! Listed below are things much needed in these remaining days leading up to the fair..

Consider donating a gift basket for the Silent Auction!

There are baskets available in Attic Treasures. Please wrap in clear cellophane or leave your filled but unwrapped baskets in the office (please list your name, items and value). List of gift basket theme ideas is on the Fair Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you for all of the fair donations so far! Donations are still welcome.

We continue to collect donations for Attic Treasures, Gifts, Jewelry, Christmas Decorations, Books, Plants, Crafts, and the Silent Auction. Drop off during office hours on the bench near the office.

Please indicate which table your item is designated for.

Fall Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm.

Volunteers are needed leading up to and on fair day!

The Food Table welcomes your culinary talents, and baked goods (please list ingredients) can be dropped off the night before or morning of. Craft sessions are happening. Strong workers will be needed to help carry heavy Attic Treasure items to cars. Youth workers are welcome! Consider being a floater (before or after shopping!) to help give table workers a break. Sign up after church with chairperson Gordon Wetmore in the Fellowship Hall. We greatly appreciate your efforts and time!

Shoppers and fair attendees are the heart of the fair!

The Children's Fair promises to be loads of fun with crafts and games, a scavenger hunt (it was a huge hit last year!), and the yearly return of **Santa Claus!** Visit the **Food Table** for an array of amazing baked goods, and the delicious **Brunch** is always a favorite for hungry shoppers. For unique items check out the many **Vendor** tables! Look for the **50/50 Raffle** ticket sellers in and around the fair. The **Crafts, Jewelry, Gifts, Christmas Decorations, and Plants Tables** will be full of exciting goods! Don't forget to visit the much-anticipated **Silent Auction** in the Sanctuary, **Books Room** in the Chapel, and **Attic Treasures** in the Vestry. And while you are shopping...take in how we have "decked the halls" with the wonderful decorations celebrating the fair theme!

Thanks in advance and we look forward to the fun!

Barbara Ligon and Gordon Wetmore
The Church Mouse Fair Co-Chairpersons
bvligon@gmail.com, gwetmore168@gmail.com

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Welcome back to school! We begin our fall schedule of Tuesday morning Bible Study Class on September 5, 2023. Each Tuesday, all are welcome to attend our Bible Study at 10:00am in the Parlor. And, we will broadcast on Zoom for those who would like to tune in remotely. Please contact the office if you are not currently on our Bible Study Zoom list. We have a time for gathering conversation, we read the passage for the day, and discuss the context and meaning of the text for our spiritual life. Come on down and join us!

“Today’s flowers are dedicated ...”

Any given Sunday you can dedicate the altar flowers to anyone in your life. Notify the office of your chosen day and you can make a donation to the Flower Fund, or bring in an arrangement yourself. For further information contact Donna in the office.

Bulletin and Spire

If you need to contact the office to submit anything for the bulletin or Spire, please e-mail the office at office@occhurch.net or call the office at 508-384-3110. Every effort is made to accommodate your needs.

Facebook is used for information purposes.
Messages are checked randomly

NEWCOMERS WELCOME!

If you would like to become a member of our church, which affirms your regular participation in our worship life and support of our work and service to the wider community, please be sure to contact Pastor Ken or Donna in the office at anytime. We have a few families and individuals who are interested in being a part of our next service of Reception of New Members. See details at the worship hour and in the worship bulletin. We look forward to growing along with you in your spirit journey!

Justin Kisch



- Hopefully many of you joined us to see the **Bluegrass** band **Southern Rail** on October 28th. I'm writing this a few days before the event, but I can't wait to hear them play!
- Make sure to join us for worship **November 5**. The choir (plus some extra volunteers will sing **Schubert' German Mass** (Deutsche Messe), with assistance from a few guest instruments.
- The Wrentham wRingers will play worship on Sunday November 19.



Mark your calendar for December :

- **The Christmas Concert** will be **Sunday December 10 at 3PM**. It will feature the choir, the Wrentham wRingers, and special guests. A potluck dinner will follow. Members of the congregation and their families are welcome to perform. **Would you, your children, or grandchildren like to perform a holiday piece for this festive occasion?**
- **Calling all kids!** This year, the **Christmas Pageant** will be at the 10 a.m. Worship service on Christmas Eve, December 24. Stay tuned for more details.
- The **evening service on Christmas Eve** will be at **10 p.m.**, featuring Monica and the choir.



PK the elf is ready for the Fair, are you?
See Gordon or Barbara if you want to help.



- Pat Webster would like to thank everyone at the OCC for the birthday cards she received from on her 95th birthday. The cards and messages made her day extra special. She would also welcome visits.
- Lynette Beaudro also sends her thanks for cards. It was nice being remembered by the OCC family in honor of her birthday.

Dear OCC Family,

November 11, 2014, my first day. Oh, was I nervous. I felt like I belonged from the day I interviewed and knew I would make it work. I had to. You gave me a chance.

There were many hurdles. The typical learning curve of course, getting to know who is who and what they do, and what team they are on, and what that team does. And the personalities, ooh, well let us just say the hardest part was getting into graces. Then of course the holidays hit one month into my starting the job, and that nearly put me over the edge. So many documents to produce to print and fold, I hardly knew what I was doing and was I completely overwhelmed.

But there you all were, so helpful to me that year. Pastor Ken, always encouraging. The Panera Pickers volunteering to fold for me. Marge Kellner reading over each document for me, editing with perfect English grammar. Joan Korslund making sure I knew what the church needed for flowers and banners and making sure I had the holiday bulletins she ordered and the Christmas letter out. Mike Foster, always there, asking if I needed anything. Bob and Sandy Cummings with an occasional after work pep talk. I made it thru. And I knew I would be here forever. I knew that I would grow and learn everything I could and do my best to be there for anyone who needed anything, because all of you **volunteer** your time and hearts to a place you love. You gave me that chance.

And just like that, nine years have passed by. Some I worked with closely have changed, but not the spirit. Covid 19 changed a lot of things, but not the hope or the desire. And I retired, and left, but my heart will never leave.

In researching for others, I discovered my Fairbanks ancestors helped to establish this church in the 1600's. Fitting that I should be so comfortable here and enjoy this job so much. I said that I would be here forever, or until my brain wasn't able to do the job, and in that case, someone would have to tell me. But instead, "Snowbird" life calls. It's time to try something new while the brain and the body can still enjoy it. I guess like them, I will adventure out into a new world and be happy I have had the gift of being part of something so wonderful. Thank you for making my work life so wonderful these past nine years.

With my deepest gratitude,
Donna



An Appeal

In the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans, Paul makes a final appeal in 16:17 saying, "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to what you have been taught."

We recall Abraham Lincoln's famous scriptural quote used to great effect, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." We live in divisive times. In the world we see the movements of extremism that seek their own power and control using methods of division and conquering. Sadly, so much of the human condition involves the great suffering of the innocents.

What is a faith person's response to these times? Faith brings meaning and purpose to life. We do not consider life to be an endless series of fateful events. To a person of faith, we hear the voice of God that issues us an appeal, a deep claim on our days. By faith, we serve not ourselves, but a larger cause of life for all God's children.

When we love creation, we bring loving of our Creator. When we assist the poor, we are serving a concern of God's. Dwelling in goodness and mercy, a person of faith is living in the Spirit. Faith is not so much a gaining of wisdom and power but learning how to surrender. We give over our life, heart and soul and body, not to the earthly powers causing division and obstacles to peace, but we give ourselves to God by faith. We listen to God's appeal, and we follow the call.

In short, faith would not leave us in despair at the end of the day. We see the challenge. We hear the need. And, we respond. Paul's prayer is that we are made strong by faith. Though faith deals with the mystery of life and death, good and evil, right and wrong, judgment and mercy, in it all God's concern is revealed to us.

In these days with wars raging, so many peoples migrating away from violence and hopelessness, and leadership unable to reach consensus to work together, we the people of faith have much to do and to say. The world is the Lord's and we have been issued a great appeal.

To love the Lord and to love the world with all our strength and soul.

May the Lord increase your strength of soul and may your faith return goodness and mercy to all whom you meet, serve and love.

Pastor Ken

1 East Street
P.O. Box 657
Wrentham, MA
02093

Live on YouTube
Sunday' Mornings
at 10:00am

We're on the web
[www.
occhurch.net](http://www.occhurch.net)

