



The Spire

A publication of the Original Congregational Church

February 2024



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February 14th 2024

THE SEASON OF LENT BEGINS

Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024 7:30pm

Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 10am

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024 7:30pm

Good Friday, March 29, 2024 Noon

Easter Sunday

6:00am Sunrise Service

10:00am Easter Worship Service



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

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.

Rehearsal for choir are Thursday evenings at 7:15pm with Justin Kisch.

Join Pastor Ken and friends for Bible Study in person and by Zoom, Tuesday mornings at 10am 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.

Rehearsals for Bells are now Thursday evenings at 6:00pm with Martha Goodman

Highlight Dates

All are welcome! **The SPIRE is available on our website!!**

- February 1st Kitchen Elves
- February 14th Ash Wednesday
- February 21st Lunch Bunch

Go to the OCC page at www.occhurch.net.

“Today's flower's 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 AnnMarie in the office.

NEWCOMERS WELCOME



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

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.

the office at 508-384-3110. Every effort is made to accommodate your needs.

See details at the worship hour and in the worship bulletin. We look forward to growing along with you in your spirit journey!

Facebook is used for information purposes. Messages are checked randomly and it is not a recommended way to connect for anything important.

Thank you for your cooperation.

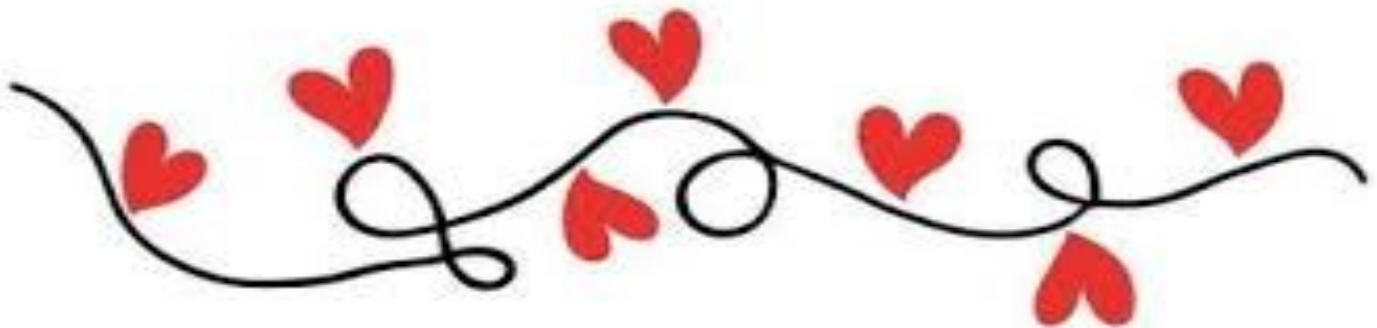


Red Cross Blood Drive Coming Our Way

The Red Cross is excited have us commit to a blood drive at our church once again. While scheduling our upcoming drive, the Red Cross representative shared that our church has had fifteen drives in the past with an average of 29 units with each drive. It was very interesting to discover this.

So, mark your calendars for Friday February 9th and schedule a donation, if you are able. For experienced donors, scheduling is easy on their website; www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive Or if you'd prefer some assistance, reach out to Joan Mello at church or by calling 508-223-3367. We are also asking for volunteers to give an hour or two during the drive. We will be greeting and guiding any donors through the steps before or after their donation. We are publicizing this as a kid friendly event, so anyone wishing to help at the Valentine craft table would also be greatly appreciated! Teens can earn community service hours while helping children with card making.

We are looking forward to greeting our neighbors, inviting them to get to know us a little better, and providing an opportunity to give to a much-needed cause.



PASTOR KEN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Spire Announcements for February 2024

LUNCH & LEARN begins *Sunday February 11*

We are pleased to announce a new faith education program for all to enjoy.

On **Sunday, February 11** we welcome you to our first “Lunch and Learn” event at the OCC. Once a month we will have a “souped up” coffee hour followed by a presentation and discussion in the parlor. A pot of soup and fresh bread will be available with coffee hour immediately following worship for all to enjoy. At 11:30am, Pastor Ken will lead a presentation regarding a variety of faith-based topics, and we would conclude by 12:15.

In honor of *Black History Month* and *Racial Justice Sunday* our first presentation will lift up three topics from OCC and UCC history: The OCC Anti-Slavery Resolution of 1839, The OCC Pastor Horace James’ work to establish a self-sustaining community for African Americans freed in the Civil War, and an introduction to the African American experience in the UCC.

Future “Lunch and Learn” events will present these topics:

Sunday, March 10, “Let Go in Lent” We will discuss ways of simplifying our spirit lives as we seek to de-clutter our material, intellectual and spiritual selves.

Sunday, April 7, “For the Beauty of the Earth” We will present scriptural verses that guide our love and care for Creation, and create a prayer that expresses our wonder and worry for the future wellness of people and the planet.

Sunday, May 5, “Becoming a W.I.S.E. Congregation” In honor of May as *Mental Health Month* we will introduce the topic of how a congregation can nurture a “Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged ministry for those who are affected by mental health challenges.

We hope to have you join us for Lunch and Learn at the OCC!

DAILY DEVOTIONS in Lent

During the season of Lent our daily devotions turn to Lenten themes. We invite you to walk with us in 40 Days of Daily Prayer this Lent. These brief devotions of about 120 words lift up faith questions, offer spiritual encouragement, and close with a brief prayer. These are meant to make spiritual meditation accessible as a discipline to focus on your faith life a little bit more each day. This year, Pastor Ken will be introducing the work of New York Times bestselling author Kate Bowler. In her book *Have a Beautiful Terrible Day* she offers meditations for the ups and downs of life. We will take our inspiration and interact with her reflections in Lent. Can we expand our capacity for courage, love and honesty, while nurturing resiliency on hard days and discovering divine moments on all days? Pastor Ken’s daily devotions are posted on the OCC Website, are available by Email, and Printed Copies are placed on the Office Hall Table. Come, let us journey through Lent together in prayer!

FOOD, FUN AND FAITH

We are excited to try a new thing here at the OCC this year! We are seeking to offer a time for folks of all ages to gather in our Fellowship Hall for a time of “Food, Fun and Faith.” We will put supper on the stove like Hot Dogs, Beans and Bingo, or have a Pizza and Play, or Chicken Nuggets and Mac N’ Cheese Madness to get families and friends together for a simple and easy meal, and to play Board Games, Bowling for Balloons or Whipped Cream Relay. Our goal is to give folks a chance to be together at church at a time that works for you, meet new friends, share in laughter, and receive a blessing.

For our first gathering we are planning for Wednesday February 28th, from 5:00pm—7:00pm. Grace will be at 5pm and the food will be available throughout the whole event if you arrive later. Please contact Monica Yohn at Mltlove3@gmail.com if you would like to contribute and participate.

Please save the dates!

Wednesday, February 28, 5pm-7pm

Wednesday, March 13, 5pm-7pm

Wednesday, April 10, 5pm-7pm



Sharon and Marge are enjoying the Florida weather and doing well. Both are quite active in their church with Marge conducting the choir and handbell choir.



Donna and Raymond are doing well enjoying beautiful sunsets from their condo balcony in Tarpon Springs, Florida.



During the Annual Meeting, Joan Roberts was surprised with a cake for her 90th Birthday.

Happy Birthday Joan from your Family and Friends at the OCC!!!!!!

REMINDER

2024 Spring Yard Sale

The 2024 spring yard sale will be held on May 11 from 8 am to noon. Many donations are needed. Donations may be dropped off in the Vestry at any time. Call Mike Foster if you need assistance. As usual, **do not bring any clothes, books** that aren't in pristine condition, **TVs, computers, large stereos, or large furniture**. In addition, please do not bring **baby furniture, strollers, car seats etc.**



2024 Annual Meeting

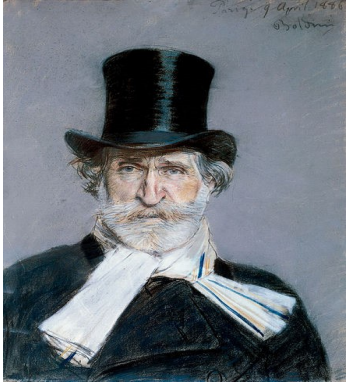
The OCC 2024 Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 28, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall with 42 members attending and a total of 55 in attendance. Before the meeting got underway lunch was served, many thanks to the Kopas Family for organizing the luncheon! We celebrated Joan Roberts' 90th birthday with cake, balloons and a whole-hearted singing of "Happy Birthday" led by Justin Kitsch on piano, and we then sang a favorite hymn, "Joyful, Joyful," also led by Justin.

Our Moderator, Steve Tiller, called the meeting to order and Pastor Ken gave an Opening Prayer. All articles were passed unanimously, with an addition of Alice Casavant joining the Outreach Team. It was noted we have open slots on a number of teams and committees, and the congregation is encouraged to fill those openings. Pastor Ken noted our participation in the gala fundraiser held by Old Colony Habitat for Humanity last October at which Pastor Ken gave the opening devotion and a number of folks from our congregation attended the fundraiser. Ralph Lambalot gave an update on the Pillar Project and we are close to signing a contract with Valley Restoration with a possible start date on the project in April 2024.

Pastor Ken closed our meeting with prayer and noted we had a great year and look forward to continuing our ministries in 2024. Steve Tiller adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Lesley Whittemore, Clerk



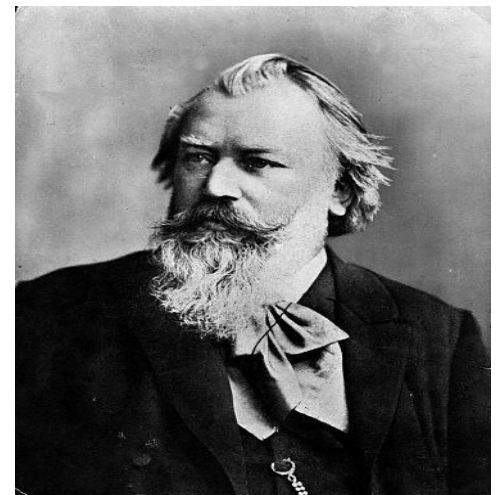


As we move into Lent, February and March are a busy time for the choir. Make sure to join us for the Ash Wednesday service on February 14 at 7:30.



On March 3, the choir will sing selections from famous requiems (by Mozart, Brahms, and Verdi), with guest instrumentalists, during the worship service.

And of course there will be special music for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter, all of which fall in the month of March, this year. We look forward to seeing you then!



THE ORIGINAL
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH

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

Live
Sunday Mornings
at 10:00am

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



Caring Friends

Beloved in Christ,

There is nothing more wonderful in life than having a caring friend. A caring friend goes with you in good times and bad. A caring friend is willing to tell you the truth. The truth is that you are always a work in progress. And you are a work that is worth making progress!

What we know about our life journey is that we are continually being transformed. Imagine the little ones losing a tooth. In order to have big teeth, we have to let go of our little teeth. We are growing up. We are the same person, but not the same. As we gain confidences in life, we begin to see that we don't see everything. Or to put another way, everything we have seen is just a glimpse of what is. God is much bigger than our picture of who God is. Faith encourages us to let God surprise us.

We enter Lent having read the story of the Transfiguration of Jesus. In Mark 9:2 Jesus takes his disciples up a high mountain apart and there is transfigured before them, his clothes "a dazzling white." He is in communion with the prophet Elijah and Moses. A heavenly voice from above the clouds says, "This is my Beloved. Listen!" Faith encourages us to care for each other's soul. Soul care. This requires listening. This is why an old friend who truly cares makes all the difference in life. We are fully known through truth telling.

Faith encourages to befriend our own and each other's soul. Can we befriend our changing bodies and senses? Can we befriend our inner heart and world? Can we befriend our struggles in this world? Can we befriend our own passion as Jesus will walk through his passion? The season of Lent invites us to contemplate how we are being transformed. Can we befriend these changes and see them with gratitude instead of regret and resentment? A true friend would affirm our struggle and bless our newly emerging self.

Spring has a way of helping us see new life emerging from the cold dark earth. By faith, we accept what is happening to us by letting our heart and mind be transformed into who we are now, not what we were in previous life passages. This Lent, let us befriend all the amazing ways God is changing us, in body, mind, and heart. Our soul needs tending just as there is work to be done to prepare the early garden. Take time to pray. Take time to be in fellowship with others. Take time to serve God by serving other's needs. *May the Lord watch over you in all the ways you are being transformed, and may the Lord grant you all the good gifts of a faith that generously supplies new insights and new strength.*

Pastor Ken



Senior Pastor: Reverend Kenneth C. Landin
Organist & Music Director: Justin Kisch
Bells Director: Martha Goodman
Church Sextons: Bob and Sandy Cummings
Church Office Administrator: AnnMarie Helmar

THE ORIGINAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
1 East St. P.O. Box 657, Wrentham, MA 02093
Office: 508-384-3110 Website: www.occhurch.net Facebook

