

ROXBURY UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, U.C.C.

Newsletter

January/February 2023



LIGHTING THE CHURCH

The church is lighted by Scott Sabol in memory of his parents, Joe and Ruth Sabol; and by Tammy Drinkwine in memory of her parents, Dick and Evelyn Drinkwine.

If you would like to light the church, please contact Claire Chomentowski at 485-7779.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL, PLEASE SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO PASTOR SUE AT sue.church43@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY VIDEO SERIES

We are currently watching 11-22-63 by Steven King. We continue to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month when the weather cooperates.

FOOD SHELF

The food shelf is open from 12 to 1 PM every Wednesday. Many thanks to all who volunteer, especially Linda and Barb, helping to serve the members of our community. Our food shelf refrigerator bit the dust in December. Claire applied to the Vermont Food Bank for funds to purchase a new fridge. We have been awarded a grant for \$2500 for that purpose.

CANDLES

We are looking for 8" tapered unscented candles. We use 2 candles to light our worship space each Sunday. Pairs of candles – white, green, red, yellow, pink, purple, blue. You can drop them off at the church during Food Shelf hours on Wednesdays or any Sunday morning.

LENT AND EASTER

Lent starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on sundown of Holy Saturday (day before Easter Sunday). So it is 46 days from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday. But Sundays are excluded from fasting during Lent and with 6 Sundays removed from the count we get Lent being a 40-day liturgical period.

Lent begins this year with Ash Wednesday on February 22. We will celebrate with a service at 6:30 PM on Ash Wednesday.

Palm Sunday is April 2 beginning Holy Week. Thursday, April 6 is Maundy Thursday. Easter is Sunday, April 9. We will provide information about worship services in the March/April Newsletter.

DID YOU KNOW?

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Our denomination, The United Church of Christ, works builds a stronger faith-based movement for peace, justice, equality, and inclusivity. Our work is rooted in the teachings of scripture and the policies of our General Synod. Our justice ministries include Racial Justice Ministries, Environmental Justice Ministries, Economic Justice Ministries, Health and Wholeness Ministries, and our Office of Policy and Advocacy in Washington, DC.

Wider Church Ministries encourages and supports local churches, Associations, Conferences, and the national expressions of the United Church of Christ to participate in the global, multiracial, multicultural church and to support United Church of Christ ministries around the world and the nation. The Ministry provides public witness on behalf of the policies and resolutions of the General Synod.

Our website, ucc.org, has a wealth of information including areas where we can be proactive, such as support for the immediate needs of Pakistan; urging expedited protections and critical supports, including visa processing and access to resettlements, for Afghan refugees; urging congressional action to defend our democracy by supporting the For The People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Over the course of several months, I have been focusing on incarnation. I suppose that is not surprising given where we have been in the Christian liturgical year – Advent, Christmas, Epiphany. It will come as no surprise to you most of you that one of my favorite authors/thinkers is Richard Rohr. When his book, [The Universal Christ](#), was published, I read it and was captivated by the ideas presented. It made so much sense to me and I thought, “Why hasn’t someone explained these ideas so understandably before?” I have been rereading the book and taking it at a slower pace making time to savor and contemplate the ideas presented.

“The core message of the Incarnation of God in Jesus is that the Divine Presence is here, in us and in all of creation, and not only ‘over there’ in some far-off realm. The early Christians came to call this seemingly new and available Presence ‘both Lord and Christ’ (Acts 2:36), and Jesus became the big billboard that announced God’s message in a personal way along the speedy highways of history. God needed something, or someone, to focus our attention. Jesus serves that role quite well.”

“In Jesus Christ, God’s own broad, deep, and all-inclusive world view is made available to us.”

“Incarnation did not just happen two thousand years ago. It has been working throughout the entire arc of time and will continue. This is expressed in the common phrase ‘The Second Coming of Christ,’ which was unfortunately read as a threat (‘Wait til your dad gets home!’), whereas it should more accurately be spoken of as the ‘Forever Coming of Christ,’ which is anything but a threat. In fact, *it is the ongoing promise of eternal resurrection.*”

These are some of the thoughts/descriptions that speak to me, and this is just in the first chapters of the book! I wonder if they resonate with you. What do you think about the idea that God is present in everything, in all of Creation, and that incarnation is a continuing process which is the promise of eternal resurrection?

Let’s continue to explore together.