

ON THE COMMON

June 2026

From the Pastor's Desk...

BY REV. SEAN AMATO

"Friends -

Welcome to the season of Pentecost - a time in which we, like the disciples who went before us, seek the energizing and affirming presence of the Holy Spirit as we go out into the world. Pentecost is known as a fiery, busy season: a time in which Christian ministries start and end, a time in which people begin to seek out new opportunities for engagement with churches and church life. This is a time to consider taking part in the greater life of our church - a time in which you might step back, consider all the work done by our community through committees and special events, and ask yourself: "Could I do that, too? Why aren't I doing that with them?"

Over the last year, one group at our church has moved with an energy that I can only watch and applaud: that is, our Outreach & Action Committee. Though they were only 'formally' established in January of this year, the seeds for their work were planted years ago when our congregation took an important vote to establish Slatersville Congregational Church as 'Open & Affirming' within the United Church of Christ (UCC) - a label we attach to ourselves, one that signals our willingness to work with and affirm the entire body of Christ, including those parts and people who have been treated so haphazardly by other worshiping bodies. Being an Open & Affirming church is, as the UCC suggests, an important sign of our willingness to act as "effective witnesses of Christ's extravagant welcome" for the LGBTQ+ community - and I have to say, my friends, we do it well. But with the Outreach & Action Committee's work, our welcome has expanded even further!

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OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

Rick Stelle, Moderator
Ruth Mills, Clerk
Jean Meo, Financial Clerk
Margaret Hanoian, Treasurer

CHURCH STAFF

Sean Amato, Minister
Joseph Godfrey, Music Director
Jill Boday, Handbell Choir
Donna Myers, Administrative Asst
Patricia Renaud, Organist
Hope Paul, Nursery Attendant
Romeo Mendes, Sexton

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Ruth Mills, Caring
Mary Stelle, Christian Ed
Michell Eskeli, Diaconate
Jim Robshaw, Hospitality
Teri DeBoise, Karen Yetter, Missions
Mark Colton, Music
Bonnie Drolet, Outreach & Action
Kerri Conway, Property
Bob Meo, Stewardship
Bob Meo, Fundraising, Projects

DIACONATE

Michell Eskeli, Chairperson
George Briggs
Marcia Brodeur
Richard Brodeur
Sandy Gamache
Martha Hunt
Darlene Magaw
April McAllister
Jim Robshaw
Stephen Wowk

From the Pastor's Desk ... (Cont.)

Our Outreach & Action Committee acts as an extension of our spiritual ethics and community approach, drawing attention to and educating people on the histories and lived experiences of those who surround us in Slatersville – important tasks that give us context for how and why we live out our faith. To date, the committee has hosted programs addressing sensitive topics such as local race relations, and even best practices in regard to mental health – matters that many churches shy away from – and have enhanced these events by inviting those outside our church into participation. This is hard work, my friends! Echoing the contributions made by our Missions Committee to the Trevor Project and other justice-minded groups, our Outreach & Action Committee has already shown itself to be a powerful reflection of our church's heart out in the great community – a reflection of our spiritual and ethical values, too, which we all too often keep to ourselves.

This month, our Outreach & Action Committee will be representing our church at Woonsocket Pride – a special event at River Park in Woonsocket on Sunday, June 14th, from 12:00pm to 6:00pm. The committee's participation represents our church's first appearance at an event like this, which is brave and new... and, I can imagine, a bit nerve-wracking for your fellow congregants. Considering how special this moment is, I might ask you a favor: show up to support your brave fellows!

Whether you've been to a Pride event in your life or not, I would like to invite you to spend time this year at Woonsocket Pride. I invite you to consider engaging with the width and breadth of God's children, right in our greater backyard of Northern Rhode Island, even if the parking's difficult; I invite you to spend time with your fellow congregants at our church's booth, even if it's only for a little while. Come and see what our church is doing in our community; come and show those in attendance that we are the church we say we are! Harness that Pentecost spirit, that fiery righteousness, and be part of our special witness this year! I'll be there, and I hope I'll see you there, too.

- Pastor Sean



Missions Moment

BY GAIL ELLIOTT

May is both Foster Care Awareness Month and National Mental Health Awareness Month. In recognition of that, this May the Missions Committee voted to contribute \$350 each to two Rhode Island based organizations, Foster Forward and Tides Family Services.

Foster Forward's mission is to empower lives impacted by foster care. They recognize the strength and potential of youth in and aging out of foster care and deliver programs to help them thrive. Foster Forward offers employment training including paid work-based learning experiences and a mentoring program connecting youth with positive long-term adult role models.

Foster Forward runs a Youth Drop-in Center that, among other things, provides showers, a washer and dryer, food, clothing, computer access and clinical supports. They also operate a rapid re-housing program for youth who have aged out of foster care and are experiencing homelessness. Foster Forward believes every young person deserves a safe home, a supportive network, and the chance to pursue their dreams.



TIDES FAMILY SERVICES

WE NEVER GIVE UP ON A KID... NEVER!

Tides Family Services addresses the needs of children at-risk ages 6-21. Their programs promote family preservation by providing community and home-based services including individual, family, and group counseling; educational and court advocacy; home visitations and a 24/7 immediate crisis response program. By extending services to an entire family,

Tides Family Services is able to keep a large percentage of youth at home instead of in residential programs and group homes. This leads to a higher rate of school achievement and a greater chance for youth to reach their potential.

Tides Family Services also operates two small schools. These schools have a no-reject philosophy accepting any student a school department refers to them and providing multiple opportunities for students to be successful. On their website Tides Family Service's notes:

"We never give up on a kid...never!"



Vacation Bible School - July 6-10

Christian Education News

BY MARY STELLE

Christian Education will have its next monthly Sensory Service on Saturday, July 11 at 5 pm. This service is a shorter, quieter service for those who wish to attend. Attendees may stand, walk around, use fidgets to allow neurodivergent people to feel more comfortable. Those who don't identify as neurodivergent are welcome too! We have a light supper with pizza and fruit salad. Gluten free foods are also available. Our July Service will also feature some fun VBS Activities!

During the summer months, the nursery will welcome students up to and including Grade 2. There are no Sunday School classes from June through August, but VBS (Vacation Bible School) will be held July 6-10 from 9am-12noon.

Please see Michell Eskeli for more information about VBS. Sensory Services will continue throughout the summer as well, on July 11 and August 1 at 5 pm. If you are Looking for more information feel free to ask Mary Stelle.



To Register your Children - use the QR Code above or click on the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5SNuRRId_g7J6mCPfWYKHQPJ_oogr_662LZfvFNID6V89iA/viewform?usp=header



Handbell Choir News

BY JILL BODAY

Save the Date: On Monday evening, June 15 at 7:30pm, we will be hosting a concert of The Wesley Bell Ringers of Christ UMC, Salt Lake City, Utah! The Wesley Bell Ringers are one of the premiere youth handbell choirs in America. Each year the choir performs on a two-week summer tour to a different area of the United States. This year they are traveling with 18 student ringers and 6 adults throughout the Northeast. You don't want to miss this night of wonderful music!

Our handbell choir will continue to play during worship services through June. New ringing members are always welcome in the handbell choir. We rehearse Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:30pm, right before Senior Choir rehearsal. Stop by! After June we will officially be on summer break, but watch for more music-related events to pop up during the summer months, including some chime activities for kids during our annual Vacation Bible School this July 6-10!

THANK YOU from Mathewson Street Church!

Our Friends from Mathewson Street Church would like to convey a Big THANK YOU! for the many sneakers that were collected during the Sneaker Drive. They are very grateful for your thoughtfulness. A short reminder about their ongoing clothing drive - Helen Lupu is the SCC contact if you have any clothes to donate!



North Smithfield Food Pantry

June

For the Month of **JUNE** our Food Pantry hours are:

Saturday, **June 20**
@ 10:00 am

Tuesday, **June 23**
@ 5:30 pm

Saturday, **June 27**
@ 10:00 am

Tuesday, **June 30**
@ 5:30 pm

This month we are asking for Baked Beans, Canned Pasta and Pasta Sauce.

Thank You!



Fundraising News

BY JEAN MEO

Many thanks to all who helped make our Yard and Flower Salesuch a success! We made a little more than \$2800 and the credit goes to all those who donated “treasures” and especially to the volunteers who sorted and organized, set up and cleaned up, and gave of their time to be there. Hats off to you! Special thanks to Jackavone Nursery in Johnston and Leeway in North Smithfield for the beautiful plants and flowers that were such a big part of our success! The flowers are gorgeous and the tomatoes are delicious!!

Our Mother's Day Breakfast was a hit as well. We made almost \$500! Again, our thanks to all who attended, and special thanks to the Kitchen Crew headed by Master Chef Kevin Carlson!

Happy Summer and see you in the Fall for more FUNdraising!



Outreach and Action Committee

BY DARLENE MAGAW

The Outreach Action Committee is participating at the Woonsocket Pride event on June 14th at River Island Park while promoting our church and our efforts to nurture a safer inclusive space for all. Our theme will be Faith with Pride and feature information about SCC and offer friendship bracelets. A sampling of the bracelets are available on the back table as you enter the sanctuary - thank you to Kristen Thomas-Arnold, our bracelet artist.

We also recognize Juneteenth, 6/19, the federal holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States and encourage our faith community to reflect on the ongoing pursuit of civil rights and equity.

