

FAITHFUL FUTURE PLANNING UPDATE—JANUARY 2023

On Sunday, January 15, we resumed our FFP Moments to bring people up to date on our Faithful Future Planning work. We had suspended these FFP moments during Advent but we did not suspend our work.

It is helpful to restate the GOAL OF THE FAITHFUL FUTURE PLANNING AD HOC COMMITTEE:

To develop a plan, or set of scenario plans, to identify how East Church can best support its Mission and Vision. With a sense of urgency and opportunity fostered by the pandemic, we will:

- Assess who we are at present: our current active membership, our projected future membership, our current financial assets, our projected assets and liabilities. We will seek input from:
 - Our committees and groups
 - The full church membership
 - The wider church and community
 - And utilize UCC resources
- We will use the results of this assessment process to help define options for our church for the future, living out our Mission and Vision

As we complete 2 years of hard work on this process, you have all heard much about our assessments, about the focus groups on Governance, on Engaging Our Hybrid Congregation, on Building and Property. We soon will be sharing the results of our last focus group, which is Community Conversations.

As we are about to enter this third year of our work, we are engaging a new consultant, Rev. Dr. Claire Bamberg. The FFP Leadership acknowledged that we are at the point where we need some outside help. Claire is the Founder and CEO of Potentials Coaching and Consulting, an ordained UCC minister, licensed mental health professional, certified mediator, and a professional certified coach. She has more than forty years of experience and loves working with congregations like ours that are deeply invested in discerning God's call for our future mission and ministry.

We have been looking IN at WHO WE ARE. We now need to look OUT at WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR and WHO ARE WE CALLED TO SERVE AND HOW?, in identifying and implementing our next way of carrying out our Mission of "BUILDING AND SERVING COMMUNITY IN CHRIST'S NAME." Rev. Claire has been assisting other UCC congregations across the country in this type of process and is eager to work with East Church. The Leadership and entire FFP team have had meetings with her and unanimously agree she will be an asset for us.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, the date Rev. Claire will be here at East Church, preaching and meeting with us in person. This same week, on **Tuesday, February 7 @ 10:00 am and Wednesday, February 8 @ 7:00 pm** we will offer the same presentation with Claire via Zoom. Please click one of the links here to sign up for either Zoom session.

[Tuesday, February 7 @ 10:00 am](#)
[Wednesday, February 8 @ 7:00 pm](#)



WORSHIP MUSIC WHILE LYNN IS AWAY

We are very fortunate to have Emily, a multi-talented soloist/pianist/church musician in our midst, who is willing and able to offer music and lead our choir while Lynn is away. Emily knows us well, having been our primary soprano soloist now for a number of years. We give thanks that Emily will oversee our worship music, play, sing, and direct when she can, and also connect us with other similarly gifted colleagues when she cannot be with us. We also have a digital library of pandemic-inspired and recorded preludes, postludes, anthems, and more that Mark M. can tap for us, even as he continues to tap this digital library for our Milton Cable TV offerings.



We WILL continue to "praise God from whom all blessings flow," even in worship, even as we prayerfully walk with and care for Lynn during this key phase of her treatment.

SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: LITURGIST, GREETER AND COFFEE HOUR SIGN UP

We have launched a new way of scheduling Liturgists, Greeters, and Coffee Hour Set-up and Clean-up. The goal is to have an organized schedule to allow anyone at East Church to sign-up for any of these very important roles. Please click [this link](#) to select the dates and roles you are able to fill. If your plans change at any point after getting on the schedule, you can swap dates. Of note, liturgists can also perform their role via zoom. Sign up TODAY! <https://signup.com/go/ZmCMtfz>



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Venmo

GIVE TO EAST CHURCH
Thank you for your Generosity

OUR VISION

Drawn together the mystery of God and led by Christ, we will grow in the Spirit by engaging faith, embracing change, and seeking justice for all.

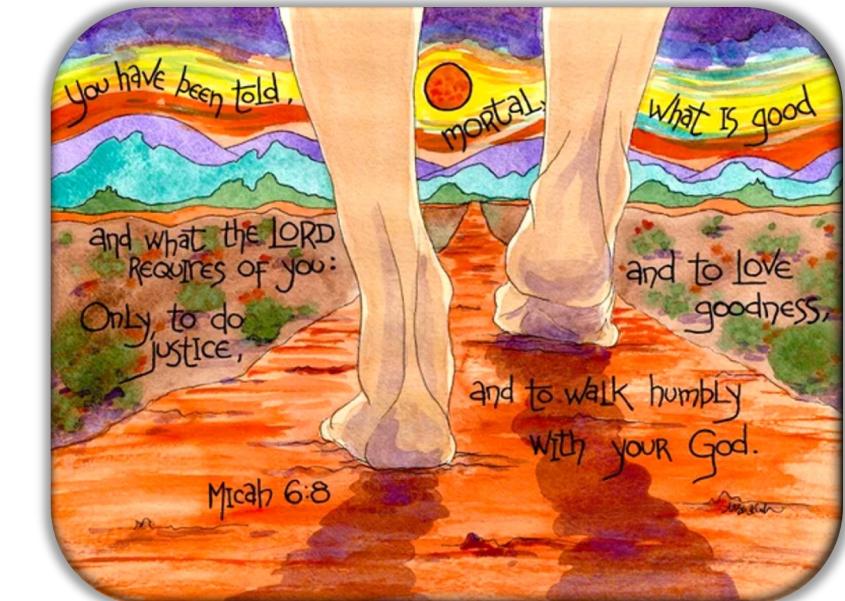
OUR MISSION

Building and serving community in Christ's name.



FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 29, 2023



East Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
610 Adams Street
Milton, Massachusetts 02186
www.eastchurch.org

Rev. Shelly Davis, Pastor
Lynn Salmonsen, Organist and Choir Director

As always, if you have any questions, please reach out to anyone on the FFP committee: Kristine H., Lynda-Lee S., Diane C., Steve N., Becky W., Donna & Darwin S., Heather McK., Jennie F., Mark W., and Pastor Shelly

THOUGHT FOR REFLECTION

“Could it be that whether we have the right answers is less important to God than whether we show compassion? Is that what the prophet Micah says?”

—Brett Younger, Senior Minister, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn

WE GATHER

PRELUDE *Morning Has Broken* arr. Keveren

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INVITATIONS

FFP MOMENT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God of our hope and our blessing,
ALL: **we gather together this morning to be church.**
One: Bless those who are absent, but not from our hearts.
ALL: **Bless those who are distant, but not from your love.**
One: Bless each of us here
that we may kindle justice in our spirits,
ALL: **draw kindness from the wells of our souls, and walk humbly in the way you open before us.**
Amen.

***HYMN** *God of Grace and God of Glory* Black 436

OPENING PRAYER

A TIME OF RECONCILIATION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

The luminous God shines in our places of shadow.
We join our voices now in confession.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we spend an awful lot of time searching for what we think you really want from us. **We look high and low, left and right, in and out, and still feel like we're stumbling around in the darkness.**

Forgive us for the times we look for ways to profit from our faith rather than turning our hearts toward prophets of our faith.

Pry open our hearts, our ears, and our lives to take in the directness and urgency of your prophet Micah, “to do justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with you, our God.” Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

God continually pours compassion upon us, casting all our sins into the depths of the sea. Thanks be to God. Amen.

A SIGN OF UNITY AND RECONCILIATION

Words and gestures of peace are shared in the sanctuary of our building and from the sanctuaries of our homes in the Zoom chat.

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

We join our voices in song with a hymn as our children and teachers depart for Sunday School.

***HYMN** *Let Justice Flow Like Streams* Black 588

WE ENCOUNTER THE GIFT OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE

Micah 6:1-8 NRSV p.861 OT
Matthew 5:1-12 NRSV p.4 NT

SERMON “With what shall I come before the Lord?” Pastor Shelly

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

WORDS OF GRATITUDE AND GENEROSITY

OFFERTORY *Give Me Jesus* arr. Hayes

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.**

WE PRAY TOGETHER

SHARING OUR JOYS, SORROWS AND UNCERTAINTIES

(through our Zoom chat and on the green prayer cards in our pew racks)

**God is good. All the time.
All the time. God is good.**

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR LORD'S PRAYER (saying Debts and Debtors)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us
our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*We have come to know God and the kingdom of God by many different names and images.
Please use the ones that speak from your heart today. (e.g. Father, Mother, Creator,
God...Kingdom, New Earth, New Realm, Kin-dom...)*

***HYMN** *God Be With You*

Black 81

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE



MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW
for these
NOURISH DATES
IN WINTER/SPRING 2023

This winter and spring we will gather **EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY EVENING** for dinner @ 6:00pm, Wacky Wednesdays for children, and great conversation and learning opportunities for adults.

DATE	LOCATION
February 1	East Church
February 15	First Congregational
March 1	East Church
March 15	First Congregational
March 29	East Church
April 12	First Congregational
April 26	East Church
May 10	First Congregational
May 24	East Church

Please note, whenever our community Covid level is high we will collaboratively cancel any NOURISH gathering with First Congregational Church that is scheduled to occur in any week following a CDC high community risk level designation (updated each Thursday by 8:00pm)

Remember to RSVP via this [link](#) to help us get an accurate count.