



# The Courier

Newsletter May/June 2024



## Worship

May 5<sup>th</sup>  
Sixth Sunday of  
Easter

May 12<sup>th</sup>  
Seventh Sunday of  
Easter

May 19<sup>th</sup>  
Pentecost Sunday  
Annual Meeting

May 26<sup>th</sup>  
First Sunday after  
Pentecost

Dear Friends,

I'm excited to be with you during this busy season in the life of the church. We've had a wonderful Holy Week and Easter, we've had an exuberant BEER + BITES and the joy that comes with reaching out to the community, and we're now gearing up for our Annual Meeting, the children's communion class, blessing of the animals, and celebrating graduations and the end of the program year.

I'm still getting to know the rhythms and flow of life that happens at MHCC, but what definitely stands out is that, as a congregation, you are dedicated to making things happen, to being present to one another, and for caring about the lives of people both in the church and those who are outside of it. I'm glad to be part of that, and am humbled to be serving as your pastor in such a vibrant community.

## Worship

June 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Second Sunday after  
Pentecost  
First Communion

June 9<sup>th</sup>  
Third Sunday after Pen-  
tecost  
Heifer Marketplace

June 16<sup>th</sup>  
Fourth Sunday after  
Pentecost  
Blessing of the Animals

June 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Fifth Sunday after  
Pentecost  
Final Sunday of the pro-  
gram year.



*continued*

It's fitting that our upcoming Annual Meeting will be on the day of Pentecost, when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit and the "birthday" of the church. It's a powerful reminder that God's Spirit can join us wherever we are and whenever we gather. We are moved by the Spirit, and God's ongoing work in the world is something that happens through the work of our bodies and our church. At our Annual Meeting we get the chance to reflect on the work of the past year, and celebrate those accomplishments, as well as looking toward the future to where we might follow the Spirit together.

It's also a reminder of what it means for us to be a Congregational church: the church works as an organization, and comes together as a community because we each make it happen, and we can let our own consciences and the Spirit be our guide into the future.

May we each find that Spirit and connection together in this exciting time at MHCC. Blessings and peace,

Pastor Chris



*From Birthday Sunday, January 2024*

## From the Desk of the Moderator

And just like that, it's May!

So much has happened since the last issue. Pastor Chris took the helm and settled in nicely, leading our Holy Week and Easter services with agility, skill, and grace. And immediately after that, we managed to pull off another successful Beer + Bites fundraiser -- great teamwork!

And now that things have quieted down (a bit), it's time for us to come together for Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 19. In the spirit of community, we will do our usual potluck lunch immediately after church, and then discuss how MHCC is doing and how we want to move forward. The agenda will include examining the budget, getting status updates from our various teams, electing a new slate of church officers, and more. And as Moderator, I'll make sure to keep things running smoothly and efficiently.

Beyond that, there's plenty to look forward to in the final weeks of the church year -- Mother's Day, Father's Day, Blessing of the Animals, and we'll wrap things up on June 23.

This can be a hectic time of year for all of us, and I truly appreciate all of the time, effort, and love you continue to pour into keeping MHCC going strong. Thank you again for helping keep the Holy Spirit alive at MHCC!

Warmly,  
John Swanson

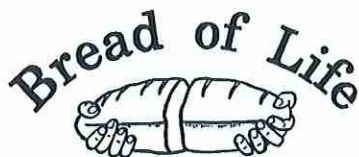
## Service and Outreach

### Service and Outreach Happenings

April was a very busy month for the Service and Outreach Team. Below are some of the highlights:

- 1) MHCC was able to create 29 Birthday Boxes for Birthday Wishes. Birthday Wishes is an organization that helps children living in homeless shelters celebrate their birthdays by providing birthday party supplies and gifts.
- 2) MHCC was able to donate \$500 to support the grad nights for Melrose and Wakefield high school seniors. These parties are meant to give kids a safe place to celebrate their graduations.
- 3) MHCC was able to donate \$600 to support Church of the Holy Spirit in Mattapan. This church is hosting a day shelter for migrants to the Boston area.
- 4) The Service and Outreach Team is currently using \$250 in match funds from the UCC to create an additional 24 hygiene kits. These kits will be delivered to people surviving natural disasters and others in need.
- 5) Jeff and Lauren Parks hosted the April Bread of Life meal for MHCC.
- 6) MHCC donated \$5,000 of the proceeds from Beer and Bites to Bread of Life in Malden.

Thank you to everyone who supported these efforts!



### Bread of Life – June Meal

Jeff and Lauren Parks are hosting the Bread of Life meal on Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in helping to sponsor the meal, donate using the QR code below or via our MHCC website donation page.



## Service and Outreach Continued

### A Servant's Heart Food Pantry

Due to an increase in donations and partnerships with local organizations, A Servant's Heart has asked us to prioritize to **non-edible items** that they are need of. All donations are important, however, these would have the most impact:



- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Kitchen trash bags
- Dish and laundry detergent
- Shampoo
- Air freshener

If you would like to donate **edible items** to the food pantry, here are most needed items at this time:

- Cereal, (no sugar cereal) Special K original, Raisin Bran, Rice or wheat Chex's etc
- Mayo
- Cooking oil
- Ground coffee
- Snack pack pudding, or Jell-O
- Snack pack fruit. 4pk or 6pk
- Popcorn
- Brownie mix
- Tea (small boxes)

Currently, they are overflowing with pasta, canned vegetables, canned beans, tuna, ravioli, and soups and would prefer to not accept donations for those items at this time.

Donations can be brought to church on any Sunday or dropped off at Faith Evangelical Church (200 Franklin St. Melrose). You can enter the driveway on the Albion St. side of the church and locate a wooden shed to place your items. Thank you for your continued support!

## Sunday School News

**First Communion:** On Sunday, April 28th, we started the first of four communion classes. The remaining classes will be held on Sunday, May 5th, Sunday May 12th, and Sunday May 19th. We will also be baking bread for communion on Saturday May 18th at 11 a.m. at MHCC. We encourage all those making their first communion this year to attend if possible. First Communion will be held on Sunday, June 2nd.

**Heifer:** This year our Heifer Marketplace will take place on Sunday June 9th. We will be hosting a bake sale/craft sale to raise money to support Heifer International. Heifer is a non-profit organization that works to end poverty and hunger in 19 countries around the world. This year, the Sunday School will be raising money to support Heifer's clean water initiative. Many people do not have access to clean drinking water. Heifer International is working to provide treadle pumps, rainwater wells, and solar powered wells to these communities.



Hello Anne

As always, it was a pleasure hosting Bees & Bites and working with you and the hardest working volunteers! Thank you for allowing us to host Bees & Bites once again. I look forward to seeing you once again on April 5, 2025.

Best Always  
Kathy P-B

## Dirty Sunday Garden Party



Building and Grounds is hosting their annual pre-worship grounds cleanup on **Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**. We will meet on the church lawn at 7:30 AM, work till 9:30, have some coffee and then get ready for worship. There will be plenty of garden tools or bring your own. Thanks in advance from B&G. (Rain Cancels)

## Lunch Bunch

Please join us for lunch on Wednesday, May 15th at 12:30 at Burtons Grill & Bar, 1355 Market St., Lynnfield. RSVP to Dianne Cheney at 781-662-9138. All are welcome!



## Annual Meeting

Congregational  
Meeting



Join us at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 19th at 11am in Fellowship Hall. There will be a pot-luck lunch, fellowship and reports from the various committees of the Church.

### WARRANT FOR ANNUAL MEETING

To the Legal Voters of the Melrose Highlands Congregational Church

You are hereby notified, in accordance with Article 6, Section 4 of the By-Laws, that the Annual Meeting of the Melrose Highlands Congregational Church will be held after worship on Sunday, May 19, 2024, in Fellowship Hall.

1. To hear and act upon reports of Officers, Stewards, Deacons and Teams.
2. To discuss and vote on a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.
3. To hear updates on Ministries of the Church with specific needs.
4. To elect the Officers, Deacons, and Stewards of the church.
5. To transact any other business that legally must be brought before the meeting.

John Swanson  
Moderator

May 1, 2024





*Please join us in praying for God's  
comfort and  
guidance in their lives and this world,  
as well as for all those whom you  
know need God's love and caring.*

*Please call or email the church office to add a name to our prayer  
list.*

Nancy Chappel  
Christyne Cheney Daley  
Mary Edwards  
Mary Steele Hartung  
Laurie Lowman  
Lois Mackey  
Jack McLeod  
Jill Steeper  
Rachel Steeper  
Carol Trout  
Andy Wescott  
Ana Wescott  
The Andrews Family

Our Sunshine List: *Please send cards, visit and hold in your prayers.*

Barbara Kenworthy, The Fitch Home, 75 Lake Ave., Melrose, MA 02176

Charlotte Swan, Greenwood Nursing & Rehab Center, 90 Greenwood St.,  
Wakefield, MA 01880

Janice Blanchard, 90 Greenwood St., Wakefield, MA 01880

Beverly and Michael Harrison, Steele House, One Nason Ave., Apt. 514  
Melrose, MA 02176

Judy McSween, 57 Nowell Rd., Melrose, MA 02176

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 10am - Worship 11am - Greater River 2pm - Pack 615 den	29	30 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	1	2 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	3 6pm - Mark Morgan 7pm - Greater River	4 10am - tentative In Christ
5 7:30am - Dirty Sunday 10am - Holy Communion 10am - Worship 11am - Greater River	6 7pm - EC meeting	7 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	8	9 12pm - TM Art Fair - FH	10 5pm - Dance Everybody 7pm - Greater River	11 10am - tentative In Christ
12 10am - Worship 11am - Greater River	13	14 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	15 6pm - Cricklewood 7pm - Finance Team	16 10:30am - Piano Tuning	17 5pm - Dance Everybody 7pm - Greater River	18 1pm - Beethoven Society
19 10am - Worship 11am - Annual Meeting	20	21 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	22 5:30pm - Orchestra Pizza	23	24	25
26 10am - Worship	27 10am - Piano Recital - 7:30pm - Outreach Team	28 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	29	30 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	31	1

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 10am - Worship	27 10am - Piano Recital - 7:30pm - Outreach Team	28 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	29	30 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	31	1
2 First Communion 10am - Holy Communion 10am - Worship	3 7pm - EC meeting	4 12pm - Bible Study 6:15pm - Polymnia -	5	6 12pm - TM Graduation -	7 5pm - Hoover School	8 10am - Music 101 Recital
9 Heifer Marketplace 10am - Worship 2pm - Pack 6:15 planning	10	11 12pm - Bible Study	12	13	14	15 10am - Music 101 Recital
16 Blessing of the Animals 10am - Worship 1:30pm - Music 101	17	18 12pm - Bible Study 12pm - TM year end	19 11am - Bread of Life 7pm - Finance Team	20	21	22
23 10am - Worship	24 7:30pm - Outreach Team	25 12pm - Bible Study	26	27	28	29
30	1 7pm - EC meeting	2 12pm - Bible Study	3	4 7pm - Choir - Sanctuary	5	6



*We strive to love our neighbor by building caring community, connection, and acceptance. We nourish ourselves spiritually by sharing God's love, nurturing youth and serving those in need.*

### Vision Statement

Our mission at MHCC is to strive to "Love our Neighbor" by building caring community, connection, and acceptance. We nourish ourselves spiritually by sharing God's love, nurturing youth and serving those in need.

As an Open and Affirming community, we welcome into the full life and ministry of this church all persons, whatever their races, ethnicities, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, family structures, faith backgrounds, abilities and economic circumstances. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome in this church.

*Wherever you are on life's journey - you are welcome here!*



### Sunday School

We welcome children and youth from kindergarten through Grade 8 into our Sunday School; our classrooms are located on the upper level. We welcome children under five to stay with us during worship, but also provide nursery care if you would prefer, directly up the main stairs by the restroom. Fussy babies are very welcome to stay in worship! We also pipe in the audio into the parlor, to the right when you leave the sanctuary.

Our Sunday School classes are for Kindergarten through Grade 8; we integrate service into our program. Your child is welcome to visit a class any Sunday. Children stay in worship until the Children's Message and then are sent to Sunday School. On holidays, they remain in the sanctuary for worship.

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