

BELL TOWER

A Westhampton Church and Community Newsletter published by Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ, an Open and Affirming Church NOVEMBER 2024 Vol. 53 No. 10

Message from the Worship & Spirituality Committee (WaS)...

Transitions - The Path Forward

As surely as summer has transitioned to fall, our church is continuing in its transition of pastoral leadership. Pastor Greg, our interim pastor, accepted a position of settled pastor in Michigan to be near his family. His last worship service with us was October 6th. We thank Greg for his inspiration, hard work, and guidance over the past two years. We hope that his call to his new church home will be happy and productive.

So where does that leave us in our journey to call our next settled pastor?

Our transition team has been working hard for many months and has our church profile almost completed. I have seen the format of the new style of church profile. It is much larger and more detailed than the style used during our last two pastoral searches. Once it is published by the United Church of Christ, it will help UCC ministers who are searching for their next congregation.

After that, the search committee will need to evaluate those ministers who submit their ministerial profile so that our congregation can call our next pastor. It is a process of narrowing the choices, meeting with candidates, and reviewing their ministry.

In the meantime, we have committed to hiring a transformational consultant to help us start a church organizational structure study and church bylaw revision. The last time our bylaws were revised was in 2010 and much has happened since then.

The WaS Committee...aka Deacons...will be working with the Council to engage a bridge minister to provide worship and pastoral services to our congregation until we call our next pastor. And we will hire pulpit supply minsters to help where needed, and continue with lay led Sundays. If members have something to contribute to lay led services please contact the Deacons. ~ Kevin O'Keefe, Deacon



Regular Church Meetings

Sun. 10:00am Morning Worship

in person and online: Zoom:

321 069 9076 – pw 248423

Mon. 7:00pm WaS (1st)

Wed.

7:00pm Property (3rd)

7:00pm Council (4th) 5-6pm Food Pantry

6:00pm WOW (3rd)

Thurs. 6:00pm Transition Team

7:00pm Choir

Fri. 11am-12pm Food Pantry

7:00pm AA

Sat. 9-10am Food Pantry

Women's Fellowship Director

November Maureen Dempsey

Greeters

 ♦ Wendy Blow & Kathy Robbins

Coffee Hour

November 3 - Lorraine and Kevin O'Keefe

November 10 - Anita Hickey

November 17 - Kathy Robbins & Jessica Carriveau

November 24 - Marcia Sullivan

November 26 - Charlene, Max, Mera Cross

Flowers

November 3 - John Gugenberger November 10 - Kathy & Mike Robbins

November 17 - Dolores and Mark Thornhill

November 24 - Janice and Bill Tracy

November 26 - Janice and Bill Tracy

Church Office Contact Info

Office Email - westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net
Church office phone - 413-527-4204
Church website - www.westhamptonchurchucc.org
Facebook - Westhampton Congregational
United Church of Christ

For pastoral care and emergencies please contact the church office.

Town of Westhampton's NEW Website

As of November 1, the Town of Westhampton will have a new website: www.WesthamptonMA.gov

We would love your feedback!

Send questions and comments

to mail@westhamptonma.gov

Regular Town Meetings/Office Hours

Mon. 9:00 - 3:00pm 7:00pm Administrative Asst - Town Hall SelectBoard (bi-weekly) - Town Hall SelectBoard (bi-weekly) - Town Hall Board of Health - Annex Administrative Asst - Town Hall Building Inspector - Annex Board of Assessors - Annex Fire Dept.(1st, 3rd) - PSC

6:00pm Friends of the Library(1st) - Library 6:00pm Library Trustees (2nd) - Library 6:30pm Planning Board (2nd) - Annex 7:00pm Zoning Bd of Appeals (2nd) - Annex 7:00pm Historical Commission (3rd) - Judd Rm

Wed. 8am - 4:00pm Town Clerk - Town Hall 8am - 3:00pm Board of Health - Annex

9am - 3:00pm Administrative Asst - Town Hall

6pm - 8:00pm Transfer Station hours

7:00pm Conservation (1st, 3rd) – Town Hall Thurs. 9am - 3:00pm Administrative Asst - Town Hall 10am - 12pm Board of Assessors – Annex

8am - 3:00pm Board of Health – Annex

Fri. 7:00pm AA (weekly) – Church dining room

Sat. 9am - 3:00pm Transfer Station hours

By appt only Tax Collector

Town of Westhampton: Help Wanted

The Town of Westhampton is looking for a qualified person to help to operate the town's transfer station.

The Westhampton Transfer Station is open regularly on Wednesday evenings from 5:00 – 7:00pm, and Saturday from 9:00am – 2:00pm. The assistants provide help to residents if needed; verify that all have a valid permit; ensure that all materials are placed in their proper containers; keep the area clean and clear of snow or ice; secure the facility upon closing; monitor all equipment to be sure of good operational condition; operate all equipment, including trash compactor, hand tools, etc.; and ensure proper disposal of all recyclable and hazardous materials. This is an outside, four-season job, so assistants will need to work even in poor weather conditions; persons should be physically fit (able to lift 50 - 75 lbs. with frequent bending, lifting, standing, use of hands to operate equipment, etc.). If you're interested, contact the Highway Department (413-527-0136) to learn more.

Election Day November 5 Polling Hours 7am – 8pm



The 2024 United States Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. During this presidential election year,



the president and vice president will be elected. In addition, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate will be contested to determine the membership of the 119th United States Congress. Thirteen state and territorial governorships and numerous other state and local elections will also be contested.

Cast your vote at the Westhampton Town Hall, 1 South Rd. Westhampton MA 01027. Polling hours are from 7:00am – 8:00pm.

Community Thanksgiving Gathering

A Community Thanksgiving Gathering will be held at the church on *Tuesday, November 26 at 7pm*. All are welcome from all faith traditions as we join together to remember and give thanks for all our many blessings. There will be time for those who wish to share a song, poem, reading or a favorite memory or tradition. If you know ahead of time what you may wish to offer, please feel free to call or email the church office with that information to be printed in the bulletin. Or you may decide in the moment if you feel moved to share. Come, let us give thanks together!



HOLIDAY HOUSE FAIR -

Saturday, November 23, 2024 9:00 – 2:00 P.M.

HOLIDAY

It's that time of year when we're encouraging you to think about what you can make and donate to

our annual Holiday House Fair! In the past, we have been renowned for offering a beautiful array of exceptional hand-crafted wood, pottery, knitted, and other items, including homemade food, all due to your generosity. We are also accepting new or gently-used toys, small tools, and other items for our Kids Gift Shop, where children can buy gifts that you and your family would enjoy receiving as a gift from a kid. **No clothing, please.** Christmas wrap, assorted gift bags and tissue paper will also be welcome for children to wrap their purchases.

Thank you for your past generosity, and we look forward to being able to once again offer quality items to raise funds that will allow us to continue supporting charitable work not only within our community, but also to outside charities. Any questions, please contact Erika Subocz, Chair, at 413-297-3780; or erika.subocz@gmail.com.

Our Outreach Programs

Food Pantry - The Food Pantry is open to all to supplement your needs. You may stop by to pick up what you need, and you may stop by to donate items as well. The Food Pantry is located in the basement of the Westhampton Church, accessible from the door facing North Road. Hours of operation are every Wednesday from 5 - 6pm, Friday from 11am - 12noon, and Saturday from 9 - 10am. Volunteers are always welcome to help with various tasks of opening/closing and staffing the space. You can volunteer your help or get more info on the Food Pantry by visiting www.westhamptonchurchcc.org.

<u>Take & Eat</u> - The Take and Eat program is a non-denominational effort that serves elder and home-bound in need, by preparing and delivering weekend meals for up to 100 clients. Please visit <u>www.tinyurl.com/takeandeat</u> to sign up for the November 23 meal preparation and delivery.

	YTD Actual 10/20/24	YTD Budget 10/20/24
Pledged Local	79,525	74,936
Non-Pledged Local	11,244	7,500
Other Local	23,696	23,502
TOTAL LOCAL	114,465	105,938
Mission Pledged	7,705	8,367
Special Offerings	2,458	3,197
TOTAL MISSIONS	10,163	11,564

Stewardship Campaign: Imagine Together



Imagine: God speaks to us through prophets of ages past and through visionaries and leaders today. God speaks in our heart "with sighs too deep for human words" (Romans 8). And God speaks through spirited debate as we seek to discern the right thing to do. In all these ways, God stretches our imagination for what's possible and what's necessary.

Together: God calls us into community. We follow Jesus as siblings in faith. United with other believers, we form a Christian movement living the way of Jesus. Faith is not a solitary life but one that brings our hearts close to others. As a statement of faith from the United Church of Canada affirms, "we are not alone; we live in God's world."

The theme of this year's Stewardship campaign is "Imagine Together." The spiritual practice of generosity arises from imagining all that God calls us to do as a community. As you know, we have been doing the challenging work of discerning our church's future during this interim time. Working together, our gifts to this congregation make it possible to turn what we imagine into a reality! God has done, and continues to do, remarkable things through us and with us – things that matter in our congregation and in our wider community!

While there are many ways to support the congregation, in the coming weeks, we ask everyone to think in a particular and prayerful way about the choices we make with our money in support of the church. This time of study and reflection will

culminate on *Commitment Sunday, November 17th*, during our morning worship service. As part of our community celebration of commitment, we hope you will join us for a pancake breakfast immediately preceding our time of worship.



The work of our church can happen because of the generous financial and volunteer support of our community. Imagine what we can continue to do together!

Thank you for all you do, and thank you for walking alongside us as part of the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ. ~ Your Stewardship Committee: Kelly Challet, Lynn Cooper, Larry Didier, Sue Tracy Small





Council on Aging Happenings!

COA Thanksgiving Potluck Luncheon

November 14 @ 12noon

Join us for a free Thanksgiving-themed potluck lunch at the Westhampton Church. We'll have fun chatting with friends and neighbors while eating delicious traditional Thanksgiving foods! Everyone is always welcome to join, especially new people. Join us!



Veterans Day (after)

Breakfast at Outlook Farm

November 12 @ 7 - 10am

The Friends of the Westhampton Council on

Aging along with Outlook Farm Barn and Eatery will once again be sponsoring a free breakfast for our local veterans. This event will take place on November 12 at Outlook Farm between 7 – 10am. All who have served or are currently serving in our Armed Forces are welcome.

The Poop Museum: Fun for the Whole Family Saturday, November 30 @ 10am



The Poop Museum is the place to come for those who are curious and have questions about poop, and also, like Susie Maguire, they LOVE poop, and think it's fascinating!

Susie is a poop expert who thinks poop is **THE** most interesting subject in the world. She has studied poop for years and loves nothing more than sharing her expansive knowledge of poop with the people of the world. At The Poop Museum, everyone learns many fantastic, fabulous and fun facts about human, animal and insect poop, many of which truly amaze and surprise. Just a few of the poopers that visitors to the Poop Museum will meet, include:

- The world's messiest pooper
- The animal that has poop attack powers
- The animal that uses poop as protection
- The rainbow pooper
- The animal that has to hold its poop ALL winter long

At The Poop Museum, everyone learns A LOT, and some of the facts that are shared are mind blowing! But The Poop Museum is also full of laughter... because... well... our subject is poop and Susie has found a wonderful way to blend solid science with the hilarity that humans love when it comes to poop.

So come see us to learn and laugh and talk all about poop when The Poop Museum visits Westhampton! We look forward to seeing you there!

Sand Deliveries for Westhampton Older Adults

Predictions are for a warmer and wetter winter -- could this mean ice? Keep your steps and walkway safe with sand delivered to you by the Highway Department. Please note that the sand does include some salt -- it is the same mix used on our roadways. Contact Julia Lennen at (413) 537-9880 or by email at jslennen@gmail.com. Please specify the location (for example, near the garage, at the top of the steps) for your delivery. If you have an old bucket with only a little bit left, please leave it out for collection.

Community Gardens

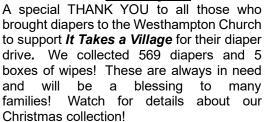
How exciting! Winter is just around the corner and even more exciting is that spring is around the next! So now is the time we begin to plan for 2025 in the school/Community Gardens.

The second year in the school/community garden went well. It grew by three school beds and eleven community beds. All have now been put to bed for the winter with either a cover crop to improve the soil or four beds of garlic – double the amount of last year, which the school cafeteria used, enjoyed and reported as delicious.

We were a bit slow getting started – I guess weather will do that! - and yet we still provided green peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, radishes and herbs – all organic - for school lunches.

If you would be interested in having a bed at either HRHS or WES, which would then allow us to build more school beds and buy the organic compost needed, please contact Sue O'Rourke at sueorourke@comcast.net who will provide all the information you would need to make a decision.

Thank you!





Good Works Group

We continue to enjoy our time together at Good Works! For our October meeting we packed up the care packages for college students from Westhampton. I am sure there will be many happy receivers. Thank you to all who helped with donations for the packages for college students! Also, we made placemats for Veterans for the Veterans Day Breakfast at Outlook Farm. For more information about Good Works and a copy of the permission form, check out the church website under the "Programs" https://www.westhamptonchurchucc.org/. You may send the permission form with your child or email Sarah Madden. Mark your calendars! Remaining dates for the year: 11/20, 12/18, 1/15, 2/26, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21. Any questions? Feel free to contact Sarah Madden at sibmadden23@gmail.com or call Lynn Willard at 413-799-6774.

WES PTO

Fall is in full swing and so is the PTO. We have already started off the school year with a scholastic book fair, a bake sale, Fall Festival, and our spirit wear store is open for Westhampton Wildcat gear! We would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all the volunteers and local businesses who donated their time and generosity to help make the Fall Festival another very successful and fun year! We have another busy month ahead we are working hard to support our teachers and staff. Our next Zoom meeting is on Monday. November 4th @ 7pm. If you're interested in joining or have any questions please reach out to us @ wes.pto.news@gmail.com.

At the Westhampton Library

Hours: Mon/Thurs 2-8pm; Tues/Wed 9am-12pm & 1-5pm; Sat 10am-1pm. Library closed November 11 for Veterans Day; closing at 12pm November 27 and closed November 28 for Thanksgiving

Please check the town website or Facebook or Instagram @WesthamptonPublicLibrary for library updates.

The library is open for in-person browsing and materials pickup as well as curbside pickup.

To place a request for curbside pick-up, please email westhampton@cwmars.org or call 413-527-5386.

Recurring Programs . . .

(Holidays may impact schedule)

- COA Computer Class is back with Bob Miller 2nd / 4th Mondays @ 10am-12pm
- Knitting Group Mondays @ 6pm
- Scrabble Group Tuesdays @ 2pm
- Book Group 4th Tuesdays @ 7pm
- Walk-in Wellness Clinics: W'ton's Public Health Nurse 1st/3rd Weds @ 10-11:30am
- Coffee & Chat Wednesdays @ 10am-12pm

For Kids and Teens...

- CFCE Playgroup Tuesdays @ 10am
- Sensory Playgroup Sat, Nov 30 @ 10:30am
- Storytime Wednesdays @ 10:30am
- After School Fun Thursdays @ 3:30pm
 - 1st Thursdays LEGO Club
 - o 2nd Thursdays Craft Club
 - o 3rd Thursdays Nintendo Switch Happy Hour
 - o 4th Thursdays Comics Club
 - 5th Thursdays Board Games

Teen Craft Night – 3rd Thursdays at 6pm – Nov 21 This month's craft is Pom Pom Coasters. Materials are limited to 8 participants and registration is required. To register, please email Emily at ewayne@cwmars.org. Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring teen crafts.

Yoga - Mondays at 6pm

Brian Mulligan teaches the fourth Monday of each month. Teri Anderson teaches all other sessions. Registration for November classes opens on Monday, November 4 at 2pm. Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring yoga at the library! Call I413-527-5386 or email westhampton@cwmars.org to register.

<u>Outdoor Access Project –</u> Public Information Session

Saturday, November 2 @ 11:30am - 12:30pm

Hear about the Outdoor Access Committee's proposal for an All Persons viewing and gathering deck in the library yard. Cider and donuts will be served! We will meet in the library yard. In the event of rain, we will meet in the community room.

October/November Artists

Tom Martin's drawings sit somewhere between a two-paged picture book, a glass free shadowbox, and formally framed ink drawings. Viewers are invited to "*lift the tab*" on an outer drawing to look at another drawing underneath. The work is meant to be tactile and minimally interactive.

Sally Lawton will also have an exhibit of small works on paper and ceramics in the glass display cabinet.

Rescheduled Field of Dreams Concert Otis & the Hurricanes - November 8 @ 7pm

Join Otis & the Hurricanes for a high energy show that promises a wildly good time with their musical mash-up of funk, rhythm and blues with a New Orleans flavor. On Friday, November 8 @ 7pm, the Westhampton Town Hall will be transformed into a raucous dancehall event, with the advent of Connecticut's south shore-based Otis & the Hurricanes. The group was originally scheduled to play this past summer with an August date, but as fate would have it, a tornado warning carrying the threat of a power outage cancelled the event. Otis & the Hurricanes, led by Chris Cross, feature a highly regarded group of musicians, whose members included membership in the Mavericks, and Robert Palmers' and Debbie Davies' touring bands. Otis and the Hurricanes will unleash their magic on Friday November 8th! Admission is free and all are welcome. Sponsored by Friends of Westhampton Library, Westhampton Cultural Council, Easthampton Savings Bank, Greenfield Cooperative Bank, Florence Savings Bank, and Marek Builders, Inc. Listen to their music here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMlgwY-9qMk

Westhampton Cemetery Commission Notice

Fall clean-up will start on November 1, 2024 at the Westhampton Cemetery. If you or a relative has a loved one in the cemetery with a marker that has flowers at the site, please follow these rules:

- Annual flowers are allowed only within 12 inches in the FRONT of the headstone. There are to be no flowers around the entire headstone. Remove all flowers from the cemetery before November 15, including containers. Flowers should be annuals, not perennials so they do not spread.
- Please remove all refuse from the cemetery.
- Holiday arrangements are allowed until April 1, 2025, and should be removed by you before April 15, 2025.
 Any holiday arrangements left on site after April 15 will be removed and placed near one of the buildings for one month to be claimed.
- All bushes, shrubs and trees are not allowed, and they will be removed. If you have planted a bush, shrub or tree for a loved one, please remove it.
- Glass, ceramic or other fragile items are subject to breakage. If you need to leave a couple at the site, please keep them very close to the front of the headstone. We use large powerful equipment to perform maintenance on this large site.

Thank you for your assistance in keeping these hallowed grounds looking good. All questions or concerns, please contact John Shaw 413-207-4527 during reasonable hours Monday thru Friday. ~ *John Shaw, Commissioner*

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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID EASTHAMPTON, MA PERMIT No. 6

The Bell Tower is a church and community newsletter whose intent is to inform and inspire. The Bell Tower shall promote the identity, programs and events of the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ. As an added service, the Bell Tower shall also provide information on community news and events to the residents of Westhampton. We invite you to join us for Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00am. Submissions to the Bell Tower for church and community articles and announcement may be sent to Julie Holt at the church email address westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net no later than the 15th of each month prior to the upcoming Bell Tower issue.

Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ Mission Statement

With God as our witness, we of the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ, commit to our Savior Jesus Christ as our model and guide. While cherishing our heritage, we look to the future, accepting ourselves and each other as individuals uniquely created in God's image. We covenant together to grow in our understanding of God's will. We nurture each other in faith so we may be empowered to serve in our community and the world.

We are called to love our brothers and sisters as God loves us, freely and without reservation. Our unconditional love is inclusive of all God's people. We denounce acts of discrimination and violence against any person. As an open and affirming church, we joyfully welcome all people into our community of faith, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnic background, socioeconomic status or physical/mental abilities. Each person is invited and encouraged to participate in all aspects of our church life and ministry.

Looking ahead to December...

Advent Festival

Advent begins on Sunday, December 1. It's a season of waiting, a season of unbridled anticipation as we count the days to Christmas. All ages are invited to our Advent Festival, which begins during our Morning Worship Service at 10am and includes lighting the first candle of the Advent Wreath, hanging new ornaments on the sanctuary Christmas tree, hanging the banners, and setting out wreaths and candles in the sanctuary windows. After the service at approximately 11am, we will enjoy an expanded Coffee Hour, then it's on to MORE fun stuff as we decorate the downstairs windows, add greens and hang up the steeple star, set up the Christmas post office, build the life-size creche on the front lawn, and fold 1000 bags in preparation for the illuminaries on Christmas Eve. Join us!

No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant

All children and adults are invited to participate in a norehearsal Christmas Pageant during the Sunday service on December 15th. Come play a part in the Christmas story and experience it in a whole new way! More details next month...

Mark Your Calendars for a Christmas Family Movie Night on December 6

On Friday, December 6, the CE Committee is hosting a free Family Movie night at the Church. We will provide pizza at 6:30pm, with the movie beginning in the sanctuary at 7:00pm.

We will be watching *The Star (PG)*. This movie is a tale of faith and friendship and is an animated version of Christ's birth told from the animals' perspective. Bo (Steven Yeun, The Walking Dead) is a brave young donkey who has grown tired of his daily grind working at the village mill. Longing for something bigger, brighter, and well, something a little easier on the hooves, he breaks free and embarks on an adventure of a lifetime. Joining forces with Ruth (Aidy Bryant, Saturday Night Live), a warmhearted sheep who has gotten separated from her flock, and Dave (Keegan Michael-Key, MADtv), a dove who has aspirations to be part of the king's royal parade, the trio becomes the unlikeliest of heroes in making sure Mary and Joseph find a place for Baby Jesus to be born. Along the way, they encounter three fun-loving camels and a manger full of slightly quirky animals. This movie is a great way to kick off the Christmas season! Feel free to bring a pillow and blanket and come enjoy pizza and a fun movie with your friends!