

The Bell Tower

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Hatfield, UCC

2020

February

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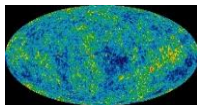
“To the church in Hatfield”

How many of us as kids cut a magnet into smaller and smaller pieces trying to discover a magnet that only had a positive or negative pole? Do you remember trying to move as quickly as you could after cutting the magnet in the hopes you would find that elusive monopole before it had a chance to change back to a normal magnet? And do you remember never being successful?

Well, some extremely intelligent people grew-up and never relented in the search for the monopole, the single pole magnet. These extremely intelligent people became theoretical particle physicists. In their mathematical hieroglyphics, they argued that in the earliest fractions of moments after the Big Bang there would have been plentiful monopoles created. Since not one has ever been discovered, they had to go back to their mathematical hieroglyphics and figure out why.

Alan Guth is a professor at MIT. He postulated a theory called *Inflation*. He argues that an instant’s instant after the Big Bang the universe exploded in expansion – hence *Inflation*. This helps explain why the universe looks so similar wherever we look.

He proposes that there are vast regions of the universe that after *Inflation* are forever isolated – us from them and them from us – because information travelling even at the speed of light cannot catch up with the universe’s expansion. Even though these regions are unseen, they are not unknowable because the universe is similar throughout. The whole is seen in the particular.



I share this little anecdote this month (to show that science and religion do not have to be at odds with each other) to help explain a truth we hold that the local church contains the fullness of church.

It was quite apropos that on the Sunday of our Annual Congregational meeting the suggested reading was from Paul’s opening salutation in 1 Corinthians.

Later writings attributed to Paul (They’re referred to as Deutero-Pauline letters.), such as Colossians and Ephesians, speak of the church as the mystical Body of Christ, all being united through the headship of Jesus. But the whole is also found in the particular.

Earlier writings, such as the opening passage from 1 Corinthians, dwell on the church as its local, more concrete expression: “To the church of God that is [that just happens to be] in Corinth ...” (1:2) This is the ecclesiology (the theological study of the church) reflected in the Communion cup that was presented to our church in 1814 by the Billings family and remains in use to this day. The inscription



The reads:

the church in This does not building or even

in use to this inscription “Presented to Hatfield.” refer to the to the

denomination. It reflects this early Christian, Congregational and UCC ecclesiology that the entirety of church, its entire spiritual calling and charism, are manifest in the local congregation.

The local church does not define or limit the Body of Christ any more than one part of the universe restricts any other. Rather, just as with the cosmic inflation example, the local signifies the whole. What is found locally is due to the fact that it is inherent universally.

This ecclesiology is empowering and uplifting. It promises that what we do here, what we do personally, is done as and for the universal church. And it promises that all the gifts and authority of the Spirit are shared generously with us. Our motto is “God is still speaking,” but also God is still acting through us as local Christians and church.

It is this same ecclesiology that manifests itself in the UCC’s centuries long embrace of the biblical doctrine of *covenant* (the remainder of 1 Corinthians 1:2). Covenant is a binding relationship among parties. It is a mutually agreed upon respect among the covenant partners. Each part of the whole supports the other. Or, in the imagery Paul used, we are together the parts of the one body of Christ.

We never want to forget or minimize that we are church. Bills will need to be paid, volunteers will need to be found, but in our home at 41 Main Street, it is Jesus who leads and strengthens us. Jesus is among us to comfort and to inspire. Trust in this and see what awaits. Church is not limited by us because church is so much more than us.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Sun. 2 nd	Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive. Association Youth Group meets at the South Amherst Church at <u>2:00PM</u> (Please note special time).
Mon. 3 rd	<i>Exploring the Bible</i> study group meets from 7 – 8:00pm.
Sat. 8 th	Youth Group sponsored Spaghetti Supper from 5 – 6:30pm.
Sun. 9 th	Rev. Gordon Pullan's Ordination at the N. Hadley Congregational Church at 3:00PM.
Mon. 10 th	Volunteer opportunity at the Food Bank from 1 – 4:00pm.
Tue. 11 th	HEADS Up sponsored "Beyond Gun Laws" panel discussion from 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Hatfield Elementary School. Snow date, Wed. the 12 th .
Wed. 12 th	Monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:00pm.
Thur. 13 th	Rev. Randy will attend the Clergy Committee of Practice lunch in Hadley. Rev. Randy will attend the Association Church and Ministry meeting in Easthampton at 5:30pm.
Fri. 14 th	Happy Valentine's Day.
Sun. 16 th	Church Council will meet after Service in the parlor.
Mon. 17 th	<i>Exploring the Bible</i> study group meets from 7 – 8:00pm.
Sun. 23 rd	Benevolence Committee will meet after Service in the parlor.
Wed. 26 th	Ash Wednesday. Rev. Randy will participate in the Service at the Montague Congregational Church at 7:00pm. All are welcome to attend.
Thur. 27 th	Rev. Randy attends the HEADS Up meeting at the elementary school at 6:00pm.

REGULAR GATHERINGS

Sundays: Worship Service begins at 10:00am. Sunday School at 10:15 am. Chat and Coffee at 11:00am.

Tuesdays: Yoga classes are offered every Tuesday in the church parlor at 5:30pm.

Wednesdays: Hatha Yoga classes take place every Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Thursdays: Choir rehearses in the sanctuary at 6:30pm.

Saturdays: AA meets at the church every Saturday at noon.

"Any fool can know. The point is to understand." - Albert Einstein.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING FOOD DRIVE

The Souper Bowl of Caring food drive began in 1990 with a church youth group's unease over how much attention is given to Super Bowl party food day. This led to a national food drive that As people are shopping for party food, Bank, as well. Hopefully, we can help the our communities. Please bring your thank you.



while so many among us go hungry every coincides with the Super Bowl every year. they are asked to shop for their local Food Souper Bowl of Caring lessen hunger in donation to church on February 2nd. And

ASSOCIATION YOUTH GROUP

The Hampshire Association Youth Group will gather at the South Amherst Congregational Church on Sunday, February 2nd. Since this is Super Bowl Sunday, and we don't dare compete against the Big Game, the gathering will begin at 2PM rather than 5:30. We will all be home in plenty of time for the Super Bowl.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Massachusetts Bible Society's Executive Director Rev. Anne Robertson has authored a three-volume text called *Exploring the Bible*. If you have Bible in general, this study group may be in and see what it's about? If you like it, you can buy the books at that time or borrow the set we have in the church's library. We'd love to see you.



ever wanted to know more about the what you are looking for. Why not pop

YOUTH GROUP SPONSORED SPAGHETTI SUPPER

The Youth Group is sponsoring a Spaghetti Supper on Saturday, February 8th from 5 – 6:30pm. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger. All proceeds will help our young people fund their activities.

Your support is much appreciated. Tickets are required in advance and may be ordered by contacting Rev. Randy or by purchasing them on Sunday mornings.

ORDINATION TAKING PLACE IN THE ASSOCIATION

Gordon Pullan will be Ordained as a Minister of the United Church of Christ on Sunday, February 9th at the North Hadley Congregational Church. Ordination of a new Minister is an important and sacred event in the life of the church. When one occurs in our own Association, we are expected to have a representation to give physical expression to our covenant relationship with another local church. I will be in attendance and I hope you will think about being a part of Gordon's Ordination, as well.

FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers from our church gather with Linda Milewski at the Western Mass Food Bank on the second Monday of the month to help this worthwhile organization. However, that day is a holiday in November so we will gather one day later on Tuesday. If you can share three hours of your time or even an hour or two, it will help our neighbours who struggle to feed their families. Please speak with Linda about this.

BEYOND GUN LAWS PANEL DISCUSSION

HEADS Up is sponsoring this event at the Elementary School on the 11th, with a snow date of the 12th. This is a powerful group of voices gathered to discuss gun violence in our schools and communities. Please visit our FaceBook page or website for more information.

ASH WEDNESDAY & THE SEASON OF LENT

The liturgical season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on the 26th. Lent is a 40-day period of spiritual preparation based on Jesus' 40 days in the desert before He began His public ministry. As Jesus fasted and prayed in order to determine the will of God and to prepare Himself spiritually, so we do the same to prepare ourselves as we approach Jesus' Last Supper and cross, and as we anticipate the great mystery that is His resurrection.

We are all asked to make our spiritual lives this, we are invited to join other local Congregational Church on Ash Wednesday upon our foreheads symbolize our do that is disrespectful of His perfect sacrifice



more of a priority during Lent. To help with congregations at the Montague at 7PM for their Service. The ashes imposed humbleness before Christ for everything we upon the cross.

We will also gather with other local Wednesdays for the 23rd annual Lenten Discussion Series. The general theme of the talks will be *Wondering What God May Think*. The schedule of topics, presenters and locations will be published on our website, Face-Book page and in next month's newsletter. In advance, though, please set aside time on those Lenten Wednesdays so that you may be able to join us for these interesting discussions.

BULLETIN COVERS

A sign-up sheet is available in church. Special bulletin covers are used several times a year. If you would like to donate a set for any given occasion, it will be acknowledged in church. The cost is \$10.

SANCTUARY CLOCK

In the 1890's, the Real Folks group donated an E. Howard Gallery Clock to the church. It has been repaired and restored by *The British Clock Maker* in Newfane, Vermont. Ray and Richard Bates are a father and son team who have been in the high-end clock repair business for over half a century. This clock is an heirloom that the congregation should be proud of. Accordingly, we are budgeting the funds to restore this clock to its original condition as part of our congregation's 350th anniversary. The final cost is \$3,350. Real Folks has made a generous pledge toward this cost. We are also asking our members to consider a donation. If you would like to help in this way, your generosity will be much appreciated.

REQUESTS

- Some of our members have breathing problems that are aggravated by perfumes and other scents. Please keep this in mind when getting ready for church. We appreciate your attentiveness to the needs of others.
- Please remember to close and latch the kitchen door when leaving the building. The wind has blown the door open already this winter and we do not need the extra heating cost. Thanks.

VIEW CHURCH SERVICES ON-LINE AND ON TV

We air our Services twice a month on public access television. They take place on alternate Sundays. This allows people to see what happens inside our church building and it also reaches into the homes of people who are unable to be with us in church. The recorded Services air on Hatfield Community Television on Saturdays and Sundays at 8 am and 4 pm. All of our taped Services may also be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/FCAT-Media/videos> or at <https://www.youtube.com/user/HatfieldCommunityTV>. We could use the help of a few more volunteers to operate the camera on a rotating basis during the Services. If you could help, please speak to Rev. Randy.

HATFIELD'S 350TH

The town's 350th Committee is looking for farms, even dogs and horses. They will be Committee is hoping to print an anniversary CherNicholas@comcast.net.



old photos of town buildings, people, copied and returned to you. The book. Please contact Cher Nicholas at

The Committee is taking reservations for a walking tour of historic homes of Hatfield. It will take place on April 25, 2020 and is limited to 35 participants. They are sure this will be filled. I've already signed-up. If you would like to participate, please contact Cher Nicholas at the email above.

General Community Events

- February 1, 2020 – 350th Night at the Springfield Thunderbirds
- February 20, 2020 – Parade Float Building Workshop
- February 22, 2020 – 350th Night at UMass Hockey
- June 13, 2020 – 350th Parade
- June 20, 2020 – Annual Strawberry Festival (Partnership w/ Hatfield PTA)
- August 22, 2020 – Summer Celebration
- October 10, 2020 – Annual Bonfire (Partnership w/ Firefighters Association)
- December 19, 2020 – Luminarium/Fireworks (Partnership w/ Firefighters Association)

Historical Events & Tours

- April 25, 2020 – Historic Homes of Hatfield Walking Tour
- May 31, 2020 – Incorporation Day and The Crossing of the CT River
- October 10, 2020 – Narrated Wagon Rides

Agricultural Events & Tours

- May 16, 2020 – Farm 5K Race
- June 4, 2020 – Farm to Table Dinner
- September 12, 2020 – Barn Mural Wagon Tour
- October 2, 2020 – Tractor Parade

Additional events are currently being planned and will be announced as details become available. For the latest information, visit www.hatfield350.com or follow us on Facebook @Hatfield350th.

CONTACT INFO: HATFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Website: www.hatfieldchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-of-Hatfield-UCC

Pastor: Rev. Randy Calvo 413-824-1630 randyc1897@gmail.com

Committee Chairpersons:

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Music Minister, Anthony Tracia 781 738-6284
Real Folks Society, Martha Zigmont 413 247-5453
Benevolence, Amy Novak 413 210-3965

Deacons
Trustees, Jonathan Bardwell 413-530-6262
Church Moderator, Amy Novak 413-210-3965

