

First Congregational Church Weekly Newsletter

East Longmeadow, MA

October 1, 2025

WE HAVE A NEW SETTLED PASTOR!

Candidating weekend a Success!

September 27th and 28th was our candidating weekend for our position of part time settled pastor. Saturday evening, we met in a beautifully decorated Fellowship Hall to greet our candidate, Rev. Thomas Hawkins and his wife, Jan. What a warm welcome they received. We all enjoyed the wonderful offerings at the potluck. Rev. Hawkins spoke about his time since he left us, and Jan's suggestion that he call us about our pastor position.

Sunday Pastor Hawkins led a meaningful service, accompanied by beautiful organ music from Deborah. After the service the congregational meeting was held and there was a unanimous vote to accept Rev. Hawkins as our settled pastor! We went to coffee hour to celebrate with a cake to welcome the Hawkins back to our church family.

Rev. Hawkins will begin with us on Oct. 15; his first service will be Oct. 19. Many thanks to all those who helped decorate, set up, clean up, cook, bake and handle all the other details to make the weekend such a success. We are so grateful.

The Search Committee

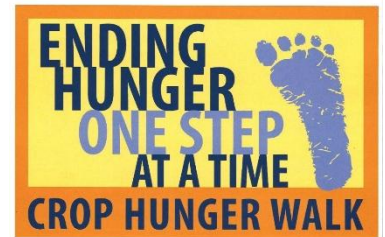


YOUTH GROUP CROP WALK

Families: This coming **Sunday, October 5th** is our next youth group event. Thank you to everyone who registered and helped raise over \$1,800 to help feed families locally and globally.

You can see our team fundraiser page here:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/first-congregational-church-of-e-longmeadow-youth-group>



On Sunday, we will gather at the church at 1:00 pm and caravan over to Trinity Church on Sumner Avenue at 1:15. Families are welcome to join us if they want. The walk through Forest Park begins at 2:00. The weather for Sunday looks like it will be perfect. I suggest applying some sunscreen and bringing a water bottle. We will carry water in our backpacks. They usually have snacks for the walkers after the walk.

I am unsure what time we will return, but I estimate 4:00. We can have them call home when we head back.

Let us know if you plan to attend.

PS: If you would like to donate to the crop walk, please scan the QR code on the poster to the right. Thanks again!!



CHANGE IS IN THE AUTUMN AIR

Pub theology is moving to a new night. We will begin meeting on the first Tuesday of the month beginning on October 7...and see how that works out for people. Many restaurants are closed on Monday nights, so this might give us some new options. Looking forward to some new suggestions to try out. Please join us.

IT WILL BE GETTING COLD

Remember that you have neighbors who have nothing to keep them warm. We will once again be collecting gently used, clean, warm clothing until NOVEMBER 19 for men, women and children (even infants and toddlers). AND we will also collect CLEAN, warm blankets. Everything will be donated to the critical work of the Springfield Rescue Mission serving your neighbors in the greater Springfield area.

Please place your donations in the box in the breezeway, or the big, blue bin outside. We are accepting warm clothing: coats, sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, boots, etc.. We also ask for NEW socks and underwear. Thank you for caring and taking the time to go through your closets. Your continued generosity will warm the lives of our neighbors in need during the coming, cold winter months. Thank you.

- Mission and Outreach Committee



WITH GRATITUDE FROM THOMAS AND JAN HAWKINS

Jan and I want to thank you for such a warm and joyous welcome last weekend. The tables were beautifully decorated and the potluck dinner we shared was absolutely delicious. So many of you greeted us with hugs, eager to share your news of the past year. On Sunday morning we worshipped together and your enthusiastic vote to call me as your settled minister made us feel so honored. Then we enjoyed more conversation at coffee hour, celebrating with a lovely cake.



We feel so welcomed! Especially, I am grateful to members of the search committee for all their persistence and discernment in opening the way for my candidacy to be considered. We are delighted to return to your faith community, to worship together and serve together in the love of Jesus Christ. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, October 19.

Thomas and Jan Hawkins

PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayers and Joys

- From Julius: the flowers are beautiful
- From Charlene: for Henry and Charlene for outpatient procedures.
- From Lyssa: for my friend Judy, who is having surgery.



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