



FRANKLIN FEDERATED CHURCH

Connections

MARCH/APRIL 2017

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FFC is going nut-free

From celebrations to Connect Groups, our congregation shares in prayer, laughter and food.

Franklin Federated Church prides itself on being an inclusive congregation, but we've come to learn that some people have been inherently excluded without us even realizing it. People, including a member of my own family, cannot fully integrate into our church family due to severe food allergies and the risks presented at our gatherings.

Food allergies have been a hot topic in recent years. Food allergies in children have increased 50% between 1997 and 2011, affecting an estimated 4 million children in the United States.

Peanuts have become the most common cause of food-related death. Even a small trace amount of the allergen can cause a severe reaction, anaphylaxis, that may require quick use of an EpiPen and/or an emergency room visit.

To mitigate this risk, schools across the country have begun implementing peanut- and tree-nut-free classrooms and lunch tables.

The world is certainly changing and once again FFC is preparing to change with it. Starting on Easter Sunday, food at Franklin Federated Church gatherings will be nut-free.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

When bringing food for FFC activities such as coffee hour, luncheons, and other church celebrations ensure they are PEANUT AND TREE-NUT FREE.

You can do this by checking labels for statements such as "may contain/contains peanuts or tree nuts" and "manufactured in a facility that processes peanuts and tree nuts". Many baked-goods manufacturers feature a "Peanut Free Facility" symbol on the front of their containers.

When preparing foods at home, please wash your hands and cooking surfaces with soap and water. Hand sanitizers do not wash

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FFC Staff

Minister	Charley Eastman
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*A Welcoming and Affirming congregation
affiliated with the United Church of Christ
and American Baptist Churches, USA*



Going nut-free (cont'd)

» CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

away the peanut oil that can be left behind by peanut products.

FEELING OVERWHELMED?

When I was first introduced to my daughter's allergy I was overwhelmed by all of the information out on the Internet — all the risks and consequences if I got it wrong.

What I found is that my favorite brands have substitutes. Some examples: for cakes, I typically grabbed Betty Crocker cake mix, but now I use Pillsbury. Peanut butter recipes can be substituted with Sun Butter, made from sunflower seeds.

It does take a little time to adjust and I appreciate all of you for taking the time to protect my child, and any others who have life-threatening food allergies.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to me, Amanda Jackson, or my family.

— Amanda Jackson



A handy guide of safe snacks is available online at <https://snacksafely.com/safe-snack-guide/>

AFFIRMANDS

Affirmands prepare for CityReach

"I don't want to forget my experience. I look forward to going to CityReach again, to helping common cathedral, and to not diverting my gaze anymore." — LANA COLLIER, CITYREACH PARTICIPANT

The FFC Affirmands will participate in a retreat through CityReach, an overnight urban outreach program in Boston, Friday, April 28th. CityReach is a program of common cathedral.

Our program starts on a Friday evening when we will be addressed by staff who are experiencing, or have experienced, homelessness. We will walk through the city guided by members of common cathedral

and end the evening with a simple worship service. We will sleep on the floor of a Boston church.

On Saturday morning we will offer the clothing, gear and toiletries we have collected, along with a small meal to guests who come to "shop" among the donated items. Some of us may return to the street, taking sandwiches and clothes to people at South Station, Copley Square, or Boston's waterfront.

Then, we will eat lunch and reflect about the experience in light of the Gospel. We will write a prayer, and talk about our next steps.

If FFC attendees and members have any gently used items (listed on page 3), or if you would like to contribute a new item to this ministry, they can be left in the Parlor at FFC or contact an affirmand.

— Charlotte Colella

AFFIRMANDS

Items requested for Affirmands' CityReach trip

The 2017 Affirmation Class is collecting items in anticipation of their mission trip to Boston's CityReach on April 28-29th.

Our collection is ongoing through April 23rd, a few days before heading to Boston. We would prefer to receive items sooner than later to make preparations easier.

We need to collect three types of items: new items, used items, and food items.

CLOTHING AND OTHER ITEMS NEEDED FROM ALL GROUPS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO GUESTS:

Please think about what you would wear camping or hiking. Such comfortable, rugged clothing is just what is needed.

Also, we will have about four times the number of male guests as female guests, so about 80% of what you bring should be for men or unisex. Large sizes (XL, XXL, and XXXL) are very much in demand. Hooded sweatshirts and sweat pants are much appreciated.

NEW ITEMS

» Travel-size toiletries such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, Chapstick, toothpaste, and shaving cream in small sizes, as well as tooth brushes and disposable razors, and tampons (no aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol).

» New white socks (there can never be too many of these)
 » New underwear (again, there can never be too many and be sure to bring 80% of the underwear for men. All sizes, from small to XL needed.)

USED ITEMS AND CLOTHING, CLEAN, IN GOOD CONDITION

» All kinds of carrying cases such as backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels
 » Sleeping bags & blankets
 » Nylon jackets and pants, ponchos, and raincoats in Spring & Fall
 » Warm coats in Winter
 » Sweatshirts and sweatpants (especially hooded sweatshirts)
 » Sweaters
 » T-shirts
 » Long-sleeve shirts
 » Jeans, khakis and other casual pants (80% for men)
 » Waterproof boots, comfortable shoes, and sneakers
 » Hats, waterproof gloves
 » Belts

FOOD ITEMS

» Enough snacks and caffeine-free soda/juice for sharing on Friday night
 » Bread and filling to make enough sandwiches for 4 times the number in your group, (4x12=48). Suggested fillings include peanut

butter and jelly or fluff, cold cuts, tuna fish, egg salad, and cheese.

» Cookies, brownies, soft granola bars or other individually packaged snacks for 3 times the number in your group (36). Hard boiled eggs and fruit that is easy to chew (oranges, bananas, grapes, but not apples) are also appreciated.
 » 2 boxes of cereal for breakfast. Individual packets of oatmeal are also welcomed.
 » 1 gallon of milk (1 or 2 percent)
 » Gallon bottles of juice
 » 1 large size can of coffee
 » 1 tub of hot chocolate mix with NO marshmallows (the kind to which water is added — about the same size as a large can of coffee); not individual packets
 » 1 package of extra-large (60 gal) garbage bags
 » Approximately 100 hot cups + 100 cold cups
 » 1 roll of paper towel, one sponge, dish soap
 » 100 sandwich bags
 » Plastic/paper/shopping bags for guests to carry away the clothes they receive

For food, please refer to the sign-up list in the parlor, or contact Deb Colella. Food items may be returned by Sunday, April 23rd unless they are perishable. Thank you!

— Deb Colella

EASTER

Holy Week 2017 at Franklin Federated Church

Please join us for Holy Week
Services at the Franklin
Federated Church

Everyone is Welcome!

Palm/Passion Sunday

Sunday, April 9th, 10 a.m.

The day will be marked by the singing of hosannas to mark Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As the service unfolds, it will transition toward the somberness of what is to occur in the week ahead — Jesus' betrayal, trial, and crucifixion.

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 13th, 6:30 p.m.

We will gather for a Tenebrae Service and a simple meal of soup and bread in the dining room. All are welcome and no reservations

are needed for supper.

The meal will be followed by a worship service in the sanctuary and the serving of Communion to commemorate Jesus' last meal with his Disciples.

Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 16th, 6:30 a.m.

at Camp Haiastan, 722 Summer St.

Franklin Federated will join the First United Methodist Church of Franklin for an ecumenical Easter sunrise service at Camp Haiastan. Dress warmly to greet the hope of Easter morning's sunrise amidst the rustic beauty of Uncas Pond.

Traditional Easter Worship

Sunday, April 16th, 10 a.m.

Traditional Easter Service at

10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary where we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ with flowers, hymns and praise! This beautiful tradition harkens our spirits to the promise of new life. "Christ the Lord is Risen Today".

He is risen indeed!

Whoever you are and wherever your journey has taken you, the Franklin Federated Church Welcome Ministry invites you to any and all of the Holy Week services.

God is still listening and speaking in the world today. There is always a place for you at Franklin Federated Church.

*In faith,
FFC Welcome Ministry*

EASTER

Deadline for ordering Easter flowers is April 2nd

We are now taking orders for Easter plants to be placed in church on Sunday, April 16th.

The deadline is April 2nd — so place your order now!

The cost for hyacinths, tulips, daffodils, and lilies is \$7. Order forms are available in the front hallway.

We are unable to order specific colors this year. Order forms (with payment attached) may be placed in the "Easter Plant" box on the table

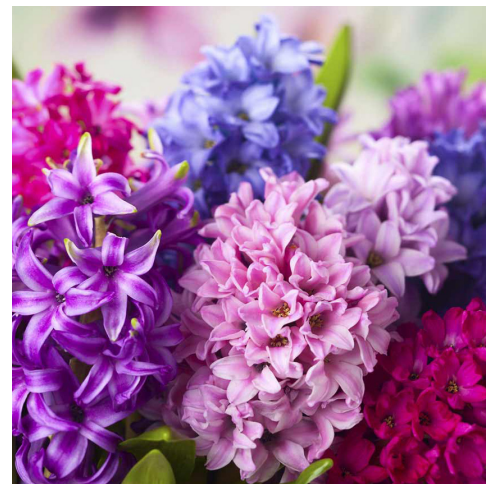
in the front hallway, or place them in the offering plate clearly marked "Easter Plants."

Please plan on taking your plant(s) home following the Easter service. Any plants not picked up by April 21st will be disposed of.

For more information please email Debbie Holleran at debbieholleran241@gmail.com

Thanks!

— Debbie Holleran





MISSIONS

Spring collection underway for CWS hygiene kits

We will be collecting Hygiene Kits for Church World Service. CWS distributes these kits around the world whenever and wherever a natural disaster strikes. We will be delivering the kits to Plymouth Church in Framingham the beginning of May.

We collected 32 kits during Fall 2016, with a combined Fall/Spring goal of 100 kits total. That leaves us 68 more to go for our spring drive.

Please place your finished kits in the basket in the narthex. The last day for the spring collection is April 30th. Missions would like to thank you for your support each and every year.

The following items should be placed in a one-gallon plastic bag with zipper closure:

- » One hand towel measuring approximately 16" x 28" (no fingertip or bath towels)
- » One washcloth
- » One wide-tooth comb removed from the package
- » One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from package (no metal files or emery boards)
- » One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- » One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- » Ten standard size Band-Aids®
- » \$2 cash for shipping costs

Please do NOT add toothpaste to the hygiene kit. Toothpaste with an extended shelf date will be added to the kit just prior to shipping.

— Deb Stiffler

MISSIONS

Kids assemble CWS kits

The Sunday School children helped pack Church World Service school kits with supplies donated for their Fall Mission project. Over 40 kits will be sent to Church World Service in May.

Thank you, kids, for helping children around the world!

A special thank you to Lonnie Grillo, Don Goddard, and Lesa Rogers for sewing the beautiful school bags!

— Deb Stiffler



YOUTH GROUP

Let the youth group clean you out!

We want to make you penniless! Yeah, you read it right...PENNILESS! No one's gonna stop us either, so don't bother trying!

And why would you stop us anyway? You'll get a beautifully clean car out of the deal and will be helping to support Heifer International.

Oh, you're confused? Well here are the details.

WHO: The Youth Group

WHAT: Car Interior Cleaning

WHEN: Saturday, May 6, 2017

WHERE: The church parking lot

COST: Every penny you've got



Just bring your car to us and we'll vacuum it, dust it, wipe down the interior, and make it shine! In return, all we ask is that you let us take the pennies we find shoved in the seats, dropped in the cup holders, hiding under mats, etc. to give to Heifer International. Just imagine, a beautifully clean car interior, and it won't cost you a dime...just lots of pennies.

(Oh, and in case you're wondering, the Youth Group members are really smart and know that all those nickels, quarters, and dimes can be exchanged for pennies too.)

Come by and help the Youth Group help Heifer International.

— Colleen Hughes-Paterno, on behalf of the Youth Group

Volunteers for April Sunday Services

	APRIL 2ND	9TH	16TH	23RD	30TH
GREETERS	Carol Schaaf Nancy Ross	Katherine Weir Michelle Smits		Bob Miller Laura Anderson	Dottie Diskin Bob Miller
USHERS	Marilyn Sutcliffe	Deb Stiffler Marilyn Sutcliffe			Brenda Simoncini
CANDLE LIGHTERS	Beth Fisk Janice Houlihan	Carol Schaaf Brenda Simoncini	Lesa Rogers Phoebe Eastman	Dottie Diskin	Deb Stiffler
DEACON	Pete Smits	Tom Pfeifle	Karen Leenhouts	Seth Newton	Karen Leenhouts
COUNTER	John Wagner	Seth Newton	Lesa Rogers	Susy Affleck-Childs	Annette Thompson
CHECKER	Larry Childs	Brenda Simoncini	Allen Sawyer	Amanda Jackson	Michelle Smits
LITURGIST	Mireille Eastman	Stephanie Potts	Larry Childs	Marilyn Sutcliffe	Jake Houlihan

CONNECT GROUPS

Book Group thrives on enthusiasm and courtesy

When everyone is present, 18 people attend the Tuesday morning Book Group, marvelously defying the expectations for a literary discussion group.

How can an enthusiastic bunch of readers possibly share ideas and explore the finer points of literature with that many people?

The answer: Leader Don Goddard has high standards for courtesy and fair play. The group has received good-natured coaching in taking turns and is encouraged to speak loudly enough so that all can hear. Don opens each gathering with carefully chosen prayer, and then encourages members' prayer requests before sharing a bit of wisdom from the ages. Then, it's on to the discussion with plenty of fun and laughter and interesting sharing of ideas and opinion.

Newest Book Group member Deb Cormay selected *The Soldiers Wife*, the group's current read, set during WWII in Deb's native and beloved Guernsey Island, situated in the English Channel off the coast of Normandy. Her accounts of the island and artifacts she has shared add a fascinating dimension to the reading.

Books are generally read over the course of several weeks. "Take-Away Tuesday" marks the completion of each book, and at that time a round-robin procedure allows each person to share a personal "take-away" — a



connection with life or another book, an unresolved question, a new understanding or reflection on life. Then, it's on to the next book with equal enthusiasm.

Check out the slide announcements each Sunday morning before worship where the group's current book title and the week's reading assignment is projected onto the wall. The information is repeated in the Staying Connected flyer in the bulletin each Sunday.

The next semester of Connect Groups will be here before we know it. Perhaps you will consider being part of this unique and popular reading experience.

— Jane Sweden

CONNECT GROUPS

Crunching numbers adds up to fun and camaraderie



Did you know that some 80 people in eight different groups are currently enjoying weekly meetings of FFC Connect Groups during this Winter/Spring session?

Groups offer variety and plenty of fun. A favorite this semester is the 'Appy Hours and Party Games group (at left).

Connect Groups meet once a week in a place other than church to enjoy an activity together, to get to know one another more fully, and to pray for each other. That's it. It's fun. All are welcome.

— Jane Sweden

RESTORATION CAMPAIGN

Restoration Update

We are in year two of the Restoration campaign, and looking back, we've hit some major, tangible milestones.

However, as much as we have to celebrate, we are pivoting to even more opportunities in the near future.

During 2017, we've set our sights on the following projects:

First up, **Fire protection**. We have three stages to this: getting a survey (done), making fire protection plans, and implementation. We are in stage two. We have estimates on fire protection plans from two companies, and plan on hiring one in the coming months. Once those plans are created, we move to the third phase: installation, likely in 2018.

Next up, **Electrical**. You may recall that we already replaced and

grounded the main electrical panel and several sub-panels. We have one more to go. Along with that work, we will be asking our electrician to do a complete inspection of all wiring in the church building.

Third, **water intrusion**. We will be soliciting advice and estimates from roofing companies to identify the roof leaks and make repairs.

Fourth, we're looking at **parking lot repairs**, which involve the possible re-paving of the full lot and driveways.

Fifth, after heating season is done, we will be replacing the **parsonage boiler**, which is at the end of its useful life.

Sixth, whenever we are graced with nicer weather, we will be making needed repairs to the current **wheelchair-access ramp**.

A seventh project, recently added to the list, is addressing the **sinking stairs** leading to the basement hallways.

Moving from projects to everyone's favorite topic, finances. People have pledged about \$504,000. We have spent about \$162,000, including \$10,000 to New Hope. We have about \$158,000 in the bank, plus about \$25,000 of stocks, as working capital to tackle upcoming projects.

All of these improvements are made possible through your generous giving to the Restoration Campaign. On behalf of everyone on the Restoration Campaign committee, thank you for your ongoing support.

— Greg Flynn, on behalf of the Restoration Campaign committee

CARING MINISTRY

Seeking note writers

The Caring Ministry is seeking two or three people to write notes over the next months.

If you have ever received a note or a postcard from the Caring Ministry, then you know what a lift they provide as you celebrate joys and concerns and pray for family, friends and people you love.

Most months, the commitment is to write notes for three Sundays, since FFC does sticky note prayers

the first Sunday service of each month. Cards or notes are sent the 2nd through 4th Sunday of the month and an occasional fifth Sunday.

Stamps, cards and an address list are provided to you at the beginning of the month.

This is a meaningful ministry. You can make a difference in someone's life.

Please consider being a note

writer. You might be surprised by what it means to you.

Please contact Maridee Kirwin if you are willing to write. Yes, it does take a little time. Yes, it may bring joy to someone and yes you are giving of yourself.

As a middle school youth said recently, "Your instinct tells you when to help someone." We need you! Thank you.

— Maridee Kirwin

STEPHEN MINISTRY

How it's doing depends on you

Many of you take the time to ask “How is Stephen Ministry doing?”

The answer is: “It depends.”

The good thing is that Franklin Federated Church has three Stephen Ministers who are firmly committed to providing quality Christian Care to members of our church family. They have undergone 50 hours of training over 20 weeks and are eager to serve the Franklin Federated Church.

We all have times in our lives when things seem to be challenging and unpleasant, and we could certainly benefit from having someone to walk with us during these times. Someone who is there

for you, and will show up every week, without fail. Someone who will keep the conversations confidential, and not pass judgment. Someone who is concerned about you and your difficult situation. Someone who will keep you in prayer.

So, how can there be anything bad in a ministry that is so good? Many have been offered the gift of a Stephen Minister, yet they have said “No”. Imagine saying no to spending an hour a week with someone who will devote their time to caring just for you. This offer is a gift that many have declined.

Several members of our church



family have expressed positive feelings, and seem to be genuinely interested in this ministry; however, unless people say “Yes” when a Stephen Minister is offered, Stephen Ministry will sadly say “No” to the future of this ministry. Stephen Ministry is for you, and without you, it cannot exist.

If you are going through a difficult time and would like to have a Stephen Minister, please speak with Pastor Charley or Marilyn Sutcliffe. It could be the best gift that you will ever receive.

*In Christ,
Marilyn Sutcliffe*

RUMMAGE SALE

Calling all Crafters

We are thinking of having a craft table at the Rummage Sale. In order to do that, we need to know if there are any folks interested in making and donating handmade craft items to sell.

It can be anything from wooden items/toys, handmade jewelry, Christmas ornaments or wreaths, handmade cards, knitted or crocheted items, any type of decorations, dog toys or treats, clothing items (like aprons), American Girl doll clothes or

accessories, candles, painted glassware, etc.

You get the idea: anything!

If you are “crafty” and have something you would be interested in making and donating, please let me know ASAP so that we can decide if this is something that we can incorporate into the annual sale to generate more income. If interested, you can email me at lesa.rogers@comcast.net or call me at 508-282-0868.

— Lesa Rogers

A temporary Rummage Sale strategizing committee has been created to bring new ideas and perspectives to the annual fall rummage sale. Dottie Diskin, Carrie Flynn and Amanda Jackson have joined this group and are working with rummage sale coordinators, Lesa Rogers, Chris Brown and Dayle Maltais. Updates concerning the sale will appear in an upcoming issue of *Connections*.

— Chris Brown

CARING MINISTRY

Do we see ourselves as living or existing?

What is April? Do we wait for its arrival with eager anticipation of the green buds, the slow or quick retreat of the snow? Do we await the rain and mud knowing that the earth will replenish and there will be snow flowers, crocuses, hyacinths and more trying to burst forth and say, "See me, look at me, I am real and I live."

Do we see the gray sky or the nights when there is no twilight or sunset over which to marvel? Do we look at the night sky and notice the quarter and scimitar moon? Do we drive to work in the dark and stop to marvel at the brilliance of the

sky before getting in the car? Do we stop when we see the yellow, peach, azure or lavender of a gorgeous sunset?

Do our spirits lift or are they weighed by imminent change, by worry, by opportunity and hope? Are we buoyant as we consider the longer day and the possibilities that lie before us?

Do we suddenly realize that children have grown and that they are observing all the time and what they see and hear makes them who they will be as adults? Do we say I want this or that? Do we acknowledge how important something is to us?

As Jesus' death and resurrection draws near, do we see ourselves as living or existing? Does fear or hope consume us? Can we believe that living our lives to the best of our ability and then a little more may please God? Can each of us consider where our faith or the search for it is taking us? Can we remember that there is a light and it shines on each of us as a new month of opportunity, reflection, prayer, doubt and faith lies before us? Joy and love abound and yet, who we are, what we can be and where we will go is determined by all of us as just as our actions impact one another.

— Maridee Kirwin

CHURCH COUNCIL CORNER

News from February

» Church Council voted to become a nut-free church during fellowship and other events frequented by people with peanut allergies. It is taking the plunge effective Easter Sunday, April 16, 2017. Thank you for supporting this action and making FFC welcoming in yet another way for those who could not otherwise attend FFC.

» Council's belief that the congregation would support the

Jazz Sunday through a free will offering was correct. Thanks to you, funds were raised to pay for the Jazz trio and with the help of a generous donor to hire a trumpeter to play at the Easter service and enhance the joy of singing the Hallelujah chorus at the end of service.

» Council continues to consider finances and met with a representative of the Massachusetts United Church

Of Christ Conference to consider dues and tithing for the future. This is the beginning of a dialogue.

» Council urges anyone who likes to sing to join the choir in the Hallelujah chorus and truly raise your heart and voices to all that is Easter.

» Thank you for all that you do and give to FFC.

— Maridee Kirwin, Moderator

March Birthdays

- 2 Shirley Bennett
Amber Kinson
- 3 Peter Huie
- 6 Steven Wallace
- 7 Lois Dauley
- 8 Megan Newton
- 11 John Houlihan
- 13 Clare Ames
Mikayla Kelly
- 14 Samuel Colella
Richard Rigby
Justin White
- 15 Emilee Rose Purdy
- 17 Jeremy Kinson
- 20 Kathryn Loder
- 21 Matt Kelly
- 22 Allison Dumart
Stephanie Murphy
- 24 Phoebe Eastman
Cheryl Hobbs
- 28 Andrew Leenhouts
- 29 Herb Hunter
- 30 Joyce Annis
Debbie Holleran
- 31 Andy Savaria

Anniversaries

- 1 Erin & Andrew
Poirier
- 11 Shirley & Frank
Bennett
- 13 Rebecca & Dan
Ballinger

April Birthdays

- 1 Stephen McKelvie
- 2 Michael Kinson
Jonathan Scully
- 4 Virginia Hobbs
- 6 Barbara Schaaf
- 8 Lisa Burr
- 10 Seth Newton
- 11 Al Wahlers
- 12 Jessica Potts
- 14 Joseph Gorman
- 15 Mariah Scully
- 16 Jennifer Fischer
- 17 Michelle Doucette
- 18 Cheryl Rigby
- 19 Susy Affleck-Childs
- 20 Jane Giallonardo
Peter Smits
- 21 Stephanie Slason
- 26 David Hobbs
- 28 Bill Wallace

Anniversaries

- 6 Lesa & Gerry Rogers
- 9 Diane & Steven
Winslow
- 12 Phyllis & George
Dempsey
- 19 Lesley & Matt Kelly

*Want to include your
birthday or anniversary?
Send your info to
greg@covalentdesign.com*



MEALS ON WHEELS

Big thanks for a big clean

Thanks to a group from Meals on Wheels, the FFC kitchen is now much cleaner.

On March 22, Laura Newton and her crew removed some serious dirt and grease from the shelves and other surfaces in the kitchen. A day earlier Jane Sveden and Nancy Ross went through the items on the shelves, getting rid of a lot of old, unused items, finding homes for other items, and cleaning off what was put back. Just like most us, FFC has accumulated lots of stuff!

More changes (good ones!) will be taking place in the Dining Room prior to the Mystery Dinner on June 10. Slowly but surely, many are working to make our church home a place we can be proud to call home and share with others in the community. Thank you!

— Nancy Ross

Have you read this one yet?

The bookshelf in the parlor has many fiction and non-fiction books, some of which you always intended to read but never did, including: *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*; *Saturday*; *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*; *Gilead*; *Charles and Emma*...and many more. Books for kids too! Check them out and borrow a few!

— Nancy Ross

Minister's Hours Pastor Charley Eastman is available Sunday to Thursday, with days off on Friday and Saturday.