



# BELL TOWER

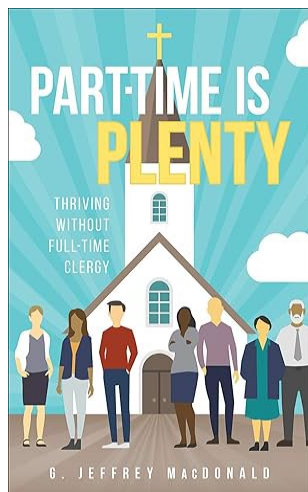
A Westhampton Church and Community Newsletter  
published by Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ,  
an Open and Affirming Church, Interim Minister Greg Briggs  
APRIL 2024 Vol. 53 No. 4

## Message from Pastor Greg - Quality over Quantity

As the days get longer, Spring is waiting to burst forth, and as Christians get ready to celebrate Easter, it's natural for us to think of new life and rebirth. The Smith College bulb show inspires many of us to dream about what we will plant in just a few weeks, while others start moving when the sap begins to flow again.

It's fitting that we are also talking about new life and vitality now in our church's transition time. So often, it's easy to confuse how a theater measures success with how churches measure success – attendance numbers, money collected, an enjoyable performance. Yet for a faith community, our measures of success are really changed lives, a deeper exploration of the mysteries of faith, and a transformed world. To paraphrase Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." We are invited to focus on the thoughtfulness and commitment of the group, instead of its size.

Sure, it's easier to count heads or dollars than assess the amount and quality of love and compassion that is put into the world. Yet, I will choose one loving person living as their authentic self over ten apathetic bystanders any day. Of course, it is easier to say we are focusing on vitality over attendance, and it's quite another thing to actually change our focus. We must learn new ways of thinking and unlearn old habits.

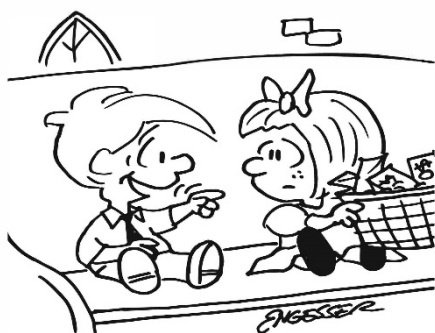


To focus on vitality and what makes a vital church, our next book discussion is on the book *Part Time is Plenty: Thriving without Full-Time Clergy* by Jeffrey MacDonald. Like the Margaret Mead quote above, I invite you to think about what you focused on when you read that title. Did you focus on thriving and plenty, or on part-time and full-time? We aren't reading this book because going part time is something the church has chosen or needs to do. We are reading this book because it gives us new ways to see ourselves as a thriving and vital faith community. You are invited to join in our conversations at our usual times, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays after worship. The church has copies of the book for \$17 dollars, and you are invited to participate even if you haven't read the book.

In addition, we are using a new survey to better understand our own church's vitality. It is a ten-question survey with room for comments, and we invite anyone who interacts with the church to fill it out, regardless of membership. We have paper copies at church, and you can find an online version at our church's website: <https://www.westhamptonchurchucc.org/>.



Vitality is often best shown through stories, not data. One of the ways I know this church is vibrant is because of how it supported me when my dad died last year. When I was really struggling, the church embodied love and care by providing me with meals, as it has done for so many families in the community. So, when you fill out your survey, please let us know any stories that come to mind when you read the questions.



"I put in a licorice jelly bean for Pastor Greg!"

I also think the size of our church enables us to be more vital, rather than less. Vitality is often linked to adaptability – the ability to respond quickly. In that, smaller churches have an advantage because there are fewer hoops to jump through and our size enables us to be able to know and talk directly to one another.

So as we live into spring and welcome Easter (for those who celebrate), I invite us to think more about quality vs. quantity. Think less about how many eggs and candy we might find, and recognize the joy of being together. Because once all the food is gone, we will forget about that, and keep our memories. *But if you REALLY need more candy to be satisfied, I'm happy to give you all of my licorice jelly beans. That's a quantity I can do without!* 😊

*Pastor Greg*

**Regular Church Meetings**

Sun. 10:00am Morning Worship  
in person and online: Zoom:  
321 069 9076 – pw 248423

Mon. 7:00pm WaS (1<sup>st</sup>)  
6:30pm Cub Scout Leadership  
7:00pm Property (3<sup>rd</sup>)  
7:00pm Council (4th)

Wed. 3:15pm Good Works (3<sup>rd</sup>)  
5-6pm Food Pantry  
6:00pm WOW (3<sup>rd</sup>)

Thurs. 7:00pm Choir

Fri. 11am-12pm Food Pantry  
7:00pm AA

Sat. 9-10am Food Pantry

**Women's Fellowship Director**

April Ilene Lorow

**Greeters**

April ↑ Sue and Richie Small  
↓ Pat Miller

**Coffee Hour**

April 7 - Shirley Raymond  
April 14 - Stacey and Tom Jenkins  
April 21 - Pat and Bob Miller  
April 28 - Anita Hickey

**Flowers**

April 7 - Jean Webster  
April 14 - Sue and Tom Morton  
April 21 - Cheryl and Steve Malinowski  
April 28 - Joanne and Ted Brooks

**Pastor Greg Briggs - Interim Minister**

**Pastor Greg's Office Hours:**  
Mon 10am - 4pm; Tues/Thurs available by appt  
Available anytime for pastoral emergencies

**Church Office Contact Info**

Pastor Greg's Email: [pastor.greg.briggs@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.greg.briggs@gmail.com)  
Pastor Greg's Cell Phone: 616-283-2971  
Office Email - [westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net](mailto:westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net)  
Church office phone - 413-527-4204  
Church website - [www.westhamptonchurchucc.org](http://www.westhamptonchurchucc.org)  
Facebook - Westhampton Congregational  
United Church of Christ

\*away at a conference/vacation April 14-28

**Regular Town Meetings/Office Hours**

Mon. 9:00 - 3:00pm Administrative Asst - Town Hall  
7:00pm SelectBoard (bi-weekly) - Town Hall

Tues. 8am - 3:00pm Board of Health – Annex  
9am - 3:00pm Administrative Asst - Town Hall  
by appt only Building Inspector – Annex  
4:30 - 8:30pm Board of Assessors - Annex  
6:00pm Fire Dept. (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) – PSC  
6:00pm Friends of the Library(1<sup>st</sup>) - Library  
6:00pm Library Trustees (2<sup>nd</sup>) - Library  
6:30pm Planning Board (2<sup>nd</sup>) – Annex  
7:00pm Zoning Bd of Appeals (2<sup>nd</sup>) – Annex  
7:00pm Historical Commission (3<sup>rd</sup>) – JuddRm

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 (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) – 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

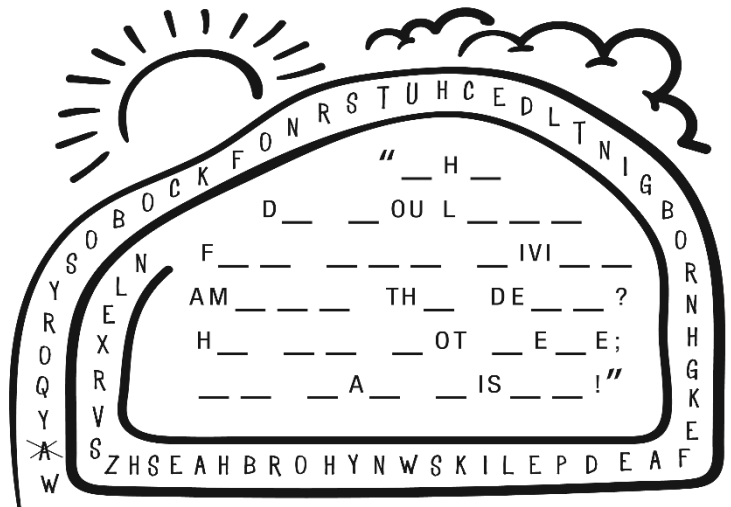
Sat. 9am - 3:00pm Transfer Station hours  
By appt only Tax Collector



**EASTER MORNING**  
*message*

Early Sunday morning, some women who followed Jesus encountered a great surprise. Solve the puzzle to see what the angels told them.

*Directions: Cross out every other letter in the maze. Write the remaining letters in order to complete Luke 24:5-6, NIV.*



LUKE 24:5-6, NIV



Answer: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" Luke 24:5-6, NIV

## Holy Week Schedule

### **Palm & Passion Sunday – March 24 @ 10am**

- Our Sunday worship service celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and tells the story of the final days leading to his betrayal and death.



### **Maundy Thursday – March 28 @ 7pm**

- Our Tenebrae worship service will begin with an optional (but encouraged) washing of the feet, the sharing of the seven last words of Jesus, and the stripping of the altar. This symbolizes the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus by the soldiers before his crucifixion.



### **Good Friday – March 29 @ 12-2pm / 4-6pm**

- Stations of the Cross traveling meditation – This meditative experience invites you to physically walk the way of sorrows to the cross through the eyes and experiences of Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples. There is no collective worship experience, it is a self-directed time of reflection.



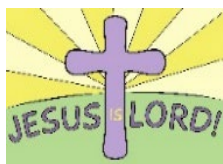
### **Easter Sunrise – March 31 @ 6:15am**

- As the sun rises, we gather up the hill to welcome the return of the Son including the celebration of communion as we break our Easter fast.



### **Easter Breakfast – March 31 @ 7:00am-ish**

- Immediately after the Sunrise service all are invited to share breakfast in the dining room.



### **Easter Sanctuary Service – March 31 @ 10am**

- We will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ in joyful worship.

## The Answer is Easter

After the April 2013 suicide of his 27-year-old son, Matthew, pastor and author Rick Warren was often asked how he was able to keep going. His frequent reply? "The answer is Easter."

In the Easter sermons Warren preached the following year, he emphasized that Jesus' resurrection is the answer to discouragement, defeat and devastating trials. "The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus happened over three days," Warren explained. "Friday was the day of suffering and pain and agony. Saturday was the day of doubt and confusion and misery. But Easter, that Sunday, was the day of hope and joy and victory."

"You will face these three days over and over and over in your lifetime. And when you do, you'll find yourself asking, as I did, three fundamental questions. Number one, what do I do in my days of pain? Two, how do I get through my days of doubt and confusion? Three, how do I get to the days of joy and victory? The answer is Easter."

~ ChurchArt Online – April 2015

## Transition Team Update

This last month has been a productive one for the Transition Team! We have started filling in the church profile! We will be reaching out to community members to help fill in some of the information, and to make sure that the profile honestly reflects our entire church.

As reminder, we have our Coffee and Conversations on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays after church, and as of March 24<sup>th</sup>, we will have begun our discussion of the book *Part-Time is Plenty* (which is available as a physical book in the Fellowship Hall, or as an e-book through Kindle). Even if you don't read the book, please come! We want to hear from you. ~ Ruth Tracy (he/him), Secretary

## From Your Outreach Committee

**Food Pantry** - The Food Pantry is open to all to supplement your needs. It is located in the basement of the Westhampton Church, accessible from the door facing North Road. *Hours of operation are Wednesdays from 5pm-6pm, Fridays from 11am-noon and Saturdays from 9am-10am.* Volunteers are always welcome to open and close the Food Pantry – visit [www.westhamptonchurchcc.org](http://www.westhamptonchurchcc.org) to offer your help!

**Take & Eat** - 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. If you would like to help, please sign-up at [www.tinyurl.com/takeandeat](http://www.tinyurl.com/takeandeat) for the March 30, 2024 meal preparation and delivery.

## From Your Stewardship Committee:

### Meeting Needs in Jesus' Name

Have you ever written to a politician or organization, urging increased support for the poor, children, the elderly or others Christ calls us to serve? How about 18,000 letters, many quite long, in just one year? Annie Armstrong (1850–1938) did just that, long before e-mail, because advocacy was central to her faith. She traveled extensively to view needs firsthand and to distribute food, clothing and Bibles. She also urged churches to persevere in prayer, giving and missions. Armstrong's efforts led to the founding of the Woman's Missionary Union, which rallies Christian women to serve local missions, and to two ongoing annual initiatives: the Week of Prayer for North American Missions and the Easter offering named in her honor. The offering goes toward missionary salaries and ministry supplies throughout the United States and Canada.



Food for thought, hmmm? What have you believed in passionately enough to make such an effort in your life, your church, your community?

	YTD Actual 3/15/24	YTD Budget 3/15/24
Pledged Local	22,295	22,481
Non-Pledged Local	3,405	2,250
Other Local	5,289	7,050
<b>TOTAL LOCAL</b>	<b>30,989</b>	<b>31,781</b>
Mission Pledged	1,679	2,510
Special Offerings	1,011	959
<b>TOTAL MISSIONS</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>3,469</b>

## **Bunco Game Night**

On Friday, April 19 @ 7:00pm, the CE Committee will host a Bunco game night. Bunco is a fun family game. Any age can play and absolutely no experience is needed! It is a fun game whereby you move around the tables. Join us!

## **Save the Date: June 15**

### **14th Annual "School's Done!" Raider Run**

5K Cross Country Race and 1 mile fun run – a fundraiser for Hampshire Regional High School Cross Country teams.

## **Good Works Group**

The Good Works group has enjoyed meeting monthly after school. Such wonderful children! Here are the remaining dates for the school year: April 10, and May 15. For more info please contact Lynn Willard 413-527-5043 or Sarah Madden [sjbmadden23@gmail.com](mailto:sjbmadden23@gmail.com) any time.

## **WES PTO**

Happy Spring! During the month of March the PTO had a few very successful and fun events going on.

- We had a great turnout at the Springfield Thunderbirds game, we thank you for supporting the PTO and cheering on a big win for the Thunderbirds!
- We had several Butterbraid orders come in.
- Also, local artist Kim Carlino is working with the WES students on a mural that all the children will participate in creating in the common area. We can't wait to see the final creation!
- Our next PTO zoom meeting will be on Monday April 1st @ 7:00pm. If you're interested in participating or have any questions feel free to email the PTO [wes.pto.news@gmail.com](mailto:wes.pto.news@gmail.com).

## **Westhampton Women's Club Citizenship Award**

Each year the Westhampton Women's Club recognizes seniors who are residents of Westhampton and are graduating from Hampshire Regional High School, Smith Vocational High School or another high school. The graduating senior is recognized for demonstrating exemplary citizenship in the community. In order to be eligible for this monetary award please send your name, address, phone, email and school name along with a typed short essay about activities and community involvement that you have participated in during your high school years.

- These accomplishments can include clubs, sports, volunteer work, community service, school and employment or jobs.
- In addition, please explain why the Women's Club should choose you as a recipient for this Citizenship Award.
- Attaching a current resume is recommended, but not required

**Please submit by May 13, 2024 to:**

Westhampton Women's Club  
c/o Charleen Diggins  
26 Chesterfield Rd.,  
Westhampton, MA 01027  
[mcdiggins@comcast.net](mailto:mcdiggins@comcast.net)



## **Council on Aging**

### **Follow-up Program on Estate Planning April 11<sup>th</sup> at Noon in the Town Hall**

Our Critical Binder program on estate planning had such a great turn-out with so many of you asking such good questions that we've decided to do a follow-up program with Attorney Carol Klyman. Atty Klyman will return to offer a follow-up presentation on trusts and will also answer any questions people have regarding estate planning. Join us for a free lunch followed by the Q & A.



## **HRHS Improv Fundraising Breakfast Saturday, April 20 @ 8 – 11am**



The HRHS Improv troupe is holding their annual Fundraising Breakfast at the Westhampton Church at 1 Tob Rd on Saturday, April 20 from 8 – 11am. They are serving pancakes with maple syrup, sausage, coffee and orange juice for \$10 a plate. And amid all that yumminess, the actors will entertain you with many improv scenarios based on suggestions provided from those of you who are there! So come on out, eat your fill, laugh a lot, and help them raise money to keep doing what they're doing! Thank you!



## **Witherell Memorial Educational Scholarships**

Applications for the school year starting Fall 2024 are open! In 2018, a bequest was given to the Westhampton Congregational, UCC by Carol Witherell, a former resident of Westhampton. The church was given oversight of the fund designed to help those eligible with higher education expenses. To apply you must be/will be a high school graduate, a resident of Westhampton and/or an active member of the Westhampton Church. This award is for people of ANY age for ANY higher education: 4 year college, community college, trade schools, retraining and certificate programs. If you received a previous award and are still in school, please remember that you can apply again. Completed applications and supporting documents must be printed and either mailed to the church postmarked NO LATER than April 30, 2024, or may be dropped off at the circulation desk of the Westhampton library during regular hours, also NO LATER than April 30, 2024. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. For more information or questions, you may send an email to [westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net](mailto:westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net). Last year, this fund awarded a total of \$50,000 to 19 deserving recipients! Apply today!

## At the Westhampton Library

Hours: Mon/Thurs 2-8pm; Tues/Wed 9am-12pm & 1-5pm; Sat 10am-1pm.

Library closed Monday, April 15 for Patriot's Day

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

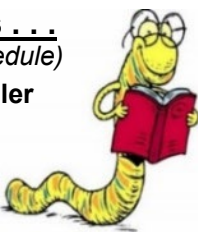
The library is open for in-person browsing and materials pickup as well as curbside pickup.

To place a request for curbside pick-up, please email [westhampton@cwmares.org](mailto:westhampton@cwmares.org) or call 413-527-5386.

### Recurring Programs . . .

(Holidays may impact schedule)

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



### Art Exhibit Extended thru April:

#### Pierre Archambault - Moments in Time

Pierre Archambault is a visual artist, a musician and a sound-designer for film. Mediums of choice for painting are oils and gouache paint. Musical instruments of choice are violin and guitar. Pierre also teaches courses in the field of sound arts and is an Associate Professor at Emerson College, Boston. Pierre's works have been exhibited nationally and internationally. Venues include the Name Gallery, Chicago, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Huret & Specter Gallery, Boston. Pierre was also an artist-in-residence at the Michael Karolyi Memorial Foundation, Vence, France. Pierre's undergraduate degree in fine arts is from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University. Pierre's MFA is from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

### Slow Yoga with Teri Anderson

**Mondays @ 6-7pm: April dates: 1, 8, 22, 29**

Registration for April classes opens on **Saturday, March 30th at 10am**. Due to space limitations, registration is required. Please call the library at 413-527-5386 or email [westhampton@cwmares.org](mailto:westhampton@cwmares.org).

Join us for a weekly slow yoga class with gentle yoga stretches, strengthening and a focus on body-mind awareness and integration. No yoga experience required. Please bring a yoga mat, a bath towel, and a blanket. (A few extra yoga mats will be available if you want to try out the class before purchasing your own yoga mat). Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund.



Classes will be led by Westhampton resident, Teri Anderson. Teri is a certified interdisciplinary yoga instructor and Body-Mind Centering® somatic movement educator. She has been teaching yoga and movement for 20+ years. Her approach to yoga is slow, gentle and meditative with attention to body-mind awareness, comfort, and ease of movement.

### For Kids & Teens

#### For Kids and Teens...

- **Homework Help - Mondays at 3:15pm**  
Kids receive mentorship and homework assistance from Academic Society HRHS teen homework helpers with support from retired teachers. Find help from peers in a low-pressure, resource rich environment! Send an email to [westhampton@cwmares.org](mailto:westhampton@cwmares.org) for more info.
- **Playgroup - Tuesdays at 3:30pm**
- **Storytime Wednesdays @ 10:30am**
- **After School Fun Thursdays @ 3:30pm**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays – LEGO Club
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays – Craft Club
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays – Nintendo Switch Happy Hour
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays – Comics Club
- **Teen Craft Night 3rd Thursdays @ 6pm – April 18**  
This month's craft is a dream catcher. Materials are limited to 8 participants and registration is required. Please register to Emily at [ewayne@cwmares.org](mailto:ewayne@cwmares.org).

### Wildlife on Wheels

**Tuesday, April 2nd at 3:30pm**

**Presented by the Zoo in Forest Park & Education Center**

Pre-registration is required to help us plan. Please email Jessica at [jloud@collaborative.org](mailto:jloud@collaborative.org) to register. Wildlife on Wheels is an educational outreach program that brings animal ambassadors\* to young children and their families to support STEAM learning and promote environmental awareness. You and your child will learn about the animals, including their special adaptations, habitats, diets and status in the wild. \*Please note, there will be reptiles, including snakes. None of the animals are dangerous and all interactions will be supervised. Free and open to all young children and their families!

### HRSD Playgroup Family Yoga Class

**Saturday, April 6th at 10:30am**

Enjoy a morning of family-friendly yoga with instructor Lorrie. Please email Jessica at [jloud@collaborative.org](mailto:jloud@collaborative.org) to register.

### Music with Caylin

**Saturday, April 13th at 11:00am**

Caylin loves to perform children's music the whole family will enjoy. With a mixture of well-known children's songs and originals, she understands the importance of music and movement in early childhood. She is well versed in Guitar, Ukulele and Banjo-Guitar. Music and movement helps promote language, gross and fine motor skills, and fun! Caylin brings scarves and shakers for lots of audience participation! Get ready to dance because she can't wait to sing with you! Special thanks to Hampshire Regional District Coordinated Family & Community Engagement Grant for sponsoring this event.



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APRIL 2024 Vol. 53 No. 4

Westhampton Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
1 Tob Rd., Westhampton MA 01027

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](mailto:westhamptonchurchucc@comcast.net) no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

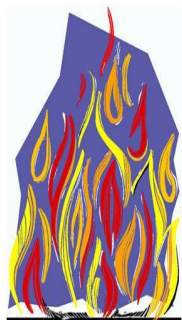
We are called to love our brothers and sisters as God loves us, freely and without reservation. Our unconditional love is inclusive of all God's people. We denounce acts of discrimination and violence against any person. As an open and affirming church, we joyfully welcome all people into our community 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.



### Burning Permits

Brush burning season goes from January 15 through April 30 each year; the Town of Westhampton only allows burning on Saturdays and Sundays between the hours of 10am - 4pm with a valid permit and approval. To obtain a burning permit, go to the Westhampton Fire Department section of the town website at [westhampton-ma.com](http://westhampton-ma.com). On the Fire Department page, read the Rules and Regulations, then in the left menu, click "Brush Burning Permit" to get into the electronic application. The electronic form will only remain active until 10am. Fill out and submit. You will receive a confirmation statement that you have been granted the permit for the day. Please print that message out and keep it with you. Information will be posted on the Fire Department's homepage as to whether or not burning is allowed that day. If you can't do this

process online, you may also obtain a burning permit by phone. Call the Fire Department's non-emergency phone number, 413-529-7181 ONLY between 7am - 8am the morning you wish to burn. Permits will not be issued to anyone calling the Department after 8am. The Department reserves the right to inspect any burning sites at any time and to revoke the permit if terms and conditions of outdoor burning are not being followed.



**Burning Permit**

### Mother's Day Bulletin Dedication

Please make a contribution of \$5.00 to help bring the warmth and comfort of a blanket to those in need through Church World Service for Blanket Sunday, which is on *Mother's Day, May 12, 2024*. You may dedicate your gift in honor of or in memory of a special mother figure in your life. Dedications will be listed in the church bulletin. Please mail this form to the church by Wednesday, May 10 at 1 Tob Road, Westhampton MA 01027 along with your check payable to Westhampton Congregational UCC.

**List my dedication in the Mother's Day Bulletin as follows:**

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

