



# BELL TOWER

A Westhampton Church and Community Newsletter  
published by Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ,  
an Open and Affirming Church  
FEBRUARY 2025 Vol. 54 No. 2

## After Epiphany...

We were blessed with an Advent season full of hope and celebration. There was caroling, Christmas Eve worship with illuminaries, the creche in front of the church, lighting of the Advent candles weekly, and decorations in the church. We thank all who participated in making this start of the church year full of light, joy and hope. We are now in the post Epiphany season and soon will have the Easter season upon us, starting with Ash Wednesday on March 5<sup>th</sup> and ending with Easter Sunday on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Our transition team has been hard at work and has sent our Designated Term Pastor application to our Associate Conference Minister and we expect that our search team will begin to interview pastoral candidates soon. In the meantime, we will continue to work with area ministers to provide leadership for Sunday worship. We have been fortunate to have some wonderful preachers in our pulpit lately. The Worship and Spirituality committee can always use ideas and help in facilitating worship, whether it's volunteering to be a lay reader, or the message for all ages. Contact one of the deacons if you have ideas or want to help. ~ Kevin O'Keefe, *Worship and Spirituality*

## The Gift of Love ~ 1 Corinthians 13: 1-13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels,  
but do not have love,  
I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.  
And if I have prophetic powers,  
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,  
and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains,  
but do not have love, I am nothing.  
If I give away all my possessions,  
and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,  
but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind;  
love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.  
It does not insist on its own way;  
it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing,  
but rejoices in the truth.  
It bears all things, believes all things,  
hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end;  
as for tongues, they will cease;  
as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

For we know only in part,  
and we prophesy only in part;  
but when the complete comes,  
the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child,  
I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child;  
when I became an adult,  
I put an end to childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly,  
but then we will see face to face.

Now I know only in part;  
then I will know fully,  
even as I have been fully known.

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;  
and the greatest of these is love.



### 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> )
	7:00pm	Property (3 <sup>rd</sup> )
	7:00pm	Council (4 <sup>th</sup> )
Wed.	5-6pm	Food Pantry
	7:00pm	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

February Dolores Thornhill  
and Lorraine O'Keefe

### Greeters

February ↑ Maureen Dempsey and Rick Tracy  
↓ Louise and Mike Raymond

### Coffee Hour

February 2 - Maureen Dempsey and Rick Tracy  
February 9 - Pat and Bob Miller  
February 16 - Charlotte Wood and Marion Miller  
February 23 - Louise and Mike Raymond

### Flowers

February 2 - Julie and Stephen Holt  
February 9 - Louise and Mike Raymond  
February 16 - Marion Miller  
February 23 - Paul Aloisi

### Church Office Contact Info

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

For pastoral care and emergencies  
please contact the church office.

### Many Thanks!

- We want to express our appreciation to the Carolers who came by on Sunday, December 22nd. You not only us brought a lovely basket of fruit and goodies but offered some of our visiting family their first experience with caroling. Your beautiful music was enjoyed by all! ~ Anita and Dave Goddard
- Thank you for the fruit basket delivered to my home for Christmas. It was very much appreciated. ~ Norman Cotnoir
- Ted says thank you for the nice basket of fruit and goodies. He doesn't usually have cookies so that was an extra treat! ~ Ted and Joanne Brooks

### 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> ) – 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 (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

Westhampton's new website is now:

[www.WesthamptonMA.gov](http://www.WesthamptonMA.gov)

### Church's Snow Cancellation Policy

Occasionally during the winter months it becomes necessary for us to cancel Sunday morning worship for safety reasons. In the event of a cancellation, the announcement will be added to NBC Channel 22's list of cancellations that stream along the bottom of the television screen continually throughout the morning.



- A special thank you to the carolers who visited our home and entertained me with their heavenly singing, and also the delicious goodies. It warmed my heart and was very much appreciated. ~ Jeanne Bridgman
- We wish to thank you for the caroling and the Christmas basket. We enjoyed it very much! ~ George and Karen Hollywood
- What wonderful voices from Westhampton Carolers!! Thank you for the "Noels" and the lovely fruit and cookie basket. Happy New Year! ~ Ann Boynton
- Thank you so much for the attractive and delicious fruit basket that you gave me. It's a very nice outreach you do at Christmas time. ~ Lilly Baxter
- Thank you so much for the goodies. Doesn't seem possible after all these years that I sang with the group...now you're remembering me! Sorry I missed you! ~ Betty-Anne Gould
- Thank you to the Women's Fellowship for the wonderful Christmas gift this year. ~ Mike Raymond



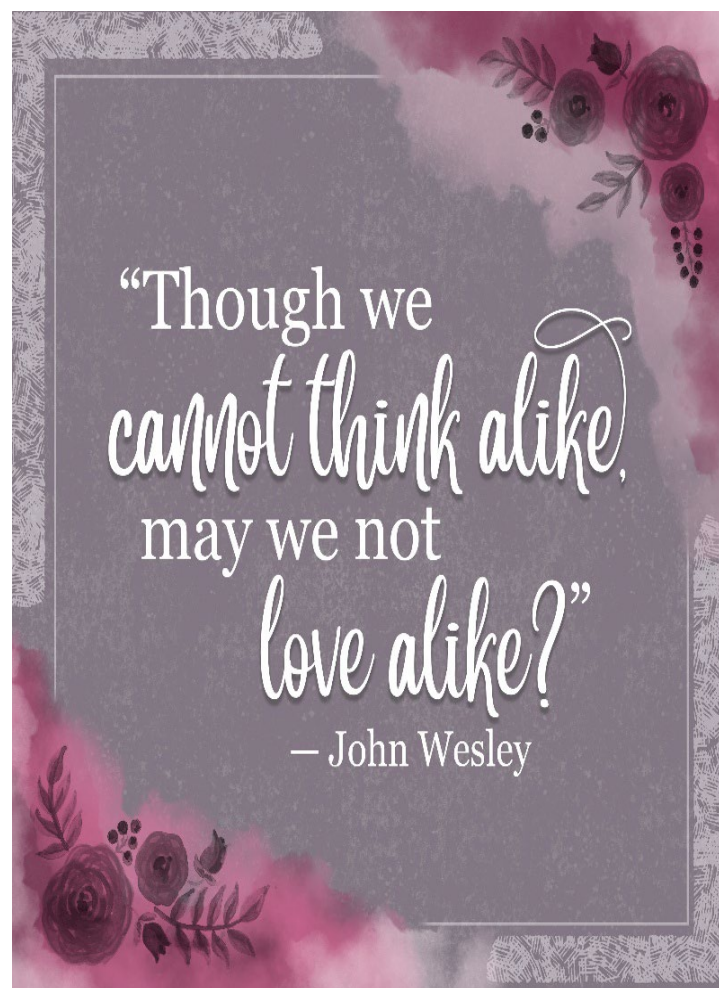


## Our Outreach Programs

**Food Pantry** - The Food Pantry is open to all to supplement your needs. You may stop by to pick up what you need, and we invite you 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 or find more info on the Food Pantry at [www.westhamptonchurchcc.org](http://www.westhamptonchurchcc.org).

**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. Please visit [www.tinyurl.com/takeandeat](http://www.tinyurl.com/takeandeat) to sign up for the February 21 meal preparation and delivery.

	Final 2024 Actual	2024 Annual Budget
Pledged Local	102,037	89,923
Non-Pledged Local	15,499	9000
Other Local	25,710	28,202
<b>TOTAL LOCAL</b>	<b>143,246</b>	<b>127,125</b>
Mission Pledged	10,050	10,040
Special Offerings	4,069	9,236
<b>TOTAL MISSIONS</b>	<b>14,119</b>	<b>19,276</b>



## Message from Stewardship:

### A Cheerful What?

When St. Paul was seeking to encourage the church members of Corinth to participate in a church offering, he wrote: *"Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly, or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"* (2 Corinthians 9:7). Where the stewardship of giving is concerned, each must make up his mind freely and approach the matter with a cheerful attitude. It is prayer and commitment that lead us to the mindset we should have about the matter.



Guideposts editor Mary Ann O'Roark recalls hearing the phrase "cheerful liver" so often in church as a girl that she asked her grandmother what a liver is. "It's a part inside you, like your stomach or your heart," Grandma replied. Rather confused, O'Roark tried to figure out how to be cheerful from the inside out. Then during Sunday school one week, a classmate explained that God loves a cheerful giver, not liver. Years later, however, O'Roark realized that her younger self wasn't too far off the mark. After all, God does indeed love someone who *lives* cheerfully, spreading the hope and joy that he longs for all people to know! After all, it was Jesus who said, *"I came that [all] may have life, and have it abundantly"* (John 10:10, NRSV). ~ Your Stewardship Committee: Lynn Cooper, Larry Didier, Sue Tracy Small [Source: ChurchArtPro September 2021 issue]

### Big Y Gift Card Fundraiser



Mikki Nevins, Pat Miller, and Jackie Didier are in charge of the church's new Big Y Gift Card fundraising opportunity to help the church raise money by purchasing Big Y gift cards once a month, in any amount. Orders and payments will be taken monthly by Mikki

Nevins at the church at coffee hour following worship **on 2nd Sundays**, and your purchased gift cards will be distributed at church during coffee hour the following week on 3rd Sundays. If you cannot come in person, you may give your order and payment to Mikki Nevins prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday deadline, and likewise, if you cannot come in person to pick up your gift card, you may contact Mikki and make arrangements to pick up your card at her house. Mikki's contact info: [mikjnev@yahoo.com](mailto:mikjnev@yahoo.com); 413-977-9222; 63South Rd, Westhampton.

This is an easy way to put a little extra money into the church budget since many of us shop at Big Y anyway. You receive the full value of the gift card and the church makes 5% on every sale. Please consider shopping with a gift card regularly!



*Gift Card  
Fundraiser*

## The Young...

### Good Works Group

The Good Works group got off to a great start to 2025! We were busy making Valentines for some special residents of Westhampton. I hope that some of you reading this are on our mailing list! 😊 **Just a friendly reminder that in February we meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday because of school vacation.** Good Works dates for the remainder of the year are: February 26, March 19, April 16 and May 21. Email Sarah Madden with any questions or ideas. [sjbmadden23@gmail.com](mailto:sjbmadden23@gmail.com) ~ Sarah Madden

### WES PTO

The WES PTO will be holding a calendar raffle for the month of March, each day of the month will have a prize and there will be one winner a day. Our calendars will be \$10 each and will be sold throughout the month of February please reach out to us at [wes.pto.news@gmail.com](mailto:wes.pto.news@gmail.com) or you may text Becca at 413-686-1161 if you're interested in purchasing one. Thank you very much to all the businesses and individuals who donated prizes, we are greatly appreciative. Also, if you forgot to purchase a Kindergarten calendar for 2025 we have a few left for sale. Be on the lookout for information regarding sales of Springfield Thunderbirds family night tickets coming up in March!

## And the Young at Heart...

### Council on Aging

#### COA Luncheon

**Thursday, February 13 @ Noon at the Church**

Join us for lunch on February 13 at noon. This month we have no set program but are open to suggestions for entertaining ourselves. Food will be home cooked by volunteers. If you enjoy cooking and would like to be in the rotation, please reach out to any Board Member to let us know.

**Save the Date – the March Luncheon/Program on March 13 will be the Fourth Grade Talent Show!** As always, Ms. Overstreet and her students are sure to delight. Grandparents are especially welcome and we always make space for family members from out-to-town to join us. Pizza will be served.

#### Chicken Soup – Home-Delivered!

**Thursday, February 28 – sign up by Feb 19**

The Council on Aging is teaming up with the HRHS Life Skills program again in February. Back by popular demand, our Life Skills friends are bringing you warmth and nutrition in the form of a pint of delicious chicken soup. All you need to do is heat it up! Delivery is planned for Thursday, February 28. Please sign up by February 19 to have our soup delivered right to your home. Contact Julia Lennen at [jslennen@gmail.com](mailto:jslennen@gmail.com) or 413-537-9880. Let us know if you need one or two for your home.



## Women's

### Fellowship Events

#### February and March



#### Planning Breakfast

**Saturday, February 1 at 9am**

The Women's Fellowship program year runs from April - March, so it's time to begin thinking and planning for that...specifically we need to decide on officers, monthly directors, committees and programs. We begin that work with the Women's Fellowship Planning Breakfast on Saturday, February 1 at 9:00am at the church. All women are invited and encouraged to come and help make as many of these decisions as we can when we're all together, but follow-up calls will be made afterwards as needed.

#### Books! Tuesday, February 11 at 7pm

Join us for one of our favorite programs every year! All are invited to talk about what you've been reading over the past year and bring some books to share if you wish. Pat Miller has graciously offered to host this meeting at her home at 7 Stage Road. Maureen Dempsey will open the program with a brief moment of reflection, and Dolores Thornhill will provide refreshments.

#### Volunteers Needed to host World Day of Prayer

**Lunch/Worship March 7**

It is Westhampton's turn to host this year's World Day of Prayer luncheon and worship service, but we need a couple volunteers to take charge of that if it is to take place here. Please contact the church office or Women's Fellowship president Maureen Dempsey to volunteer.

#### Annual Banquet with Chef Fletcher March 8

And here's something we look forward to every year! This year's banquet will take place on Saturday, March 8 @ 6:00pm in the church dining room. Our favorite gourmet chef, Fletcher Nehring will again delight our taste buds with his delicious meal creations. We never know what the meal will be until that night, but it's always a special treat. The banquet is for women only, who will be pampered and waited on by men of the church, followed by some entertainment following the meal. It's an evening you won't want to miss!

#### Women's Fellowship Booklet

This valuable little booklet will be prepped and printed by the end of March, once all our people and programming decisions are done.





## At the Westhampton Library

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

Library closed Monday, February 17 for Presidents' Day

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

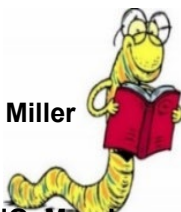
The library is open for in-person browsing and materials pickup as well as curbside pickup.

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

### Recurring Programs . . .

(Holidays may impact schedule)

- **COA Computer Class is back with Bob Miller**  
2<sup>nd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays @ 10am-12pm
- **Knitting Group Mondays @ 6pm**
- **\*Yoga – Please note there will be NO Monday evening yoga sessions in February.**
- **Scrabble Group Tuesdays @ 2pm**
- **Book Group 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays @ 7pm BUT...** We will be meeting on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 7pm to accommodate the holidays – see separate article for book details.)
- **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**
- **Storytime - Wednesdays @ 10:30am**
- **After School Fun Thursdays @ 3:30pm** – Fun activities every Thursday this month after school!
  - 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
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Thursdays – Board Games
- **Teen Craft Night – 3rd Thursdays at 6pm: Feb 20**  
This month's craft is a cord buddy. Materials are limited to 8 participants and registration is required. Please register by emailing Emily at [ewayne@cwmmars.org](mailto:ewayne@cwmmars.org). Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring all teen crafts.

### Library Friends - Join us !

Have you or your family enjoyed a program, class, or workshop hosted by our Library? Do you have children who participate in Kids and Teens programming? Have you attended a Field of Dreams Concert or borrowed items from our Trybrary? If so, the Friends of the Westhampton Library Board (FOWL) invites you to get involved!

FOWL supports the library's mission in partnership with library staff and co-sponsors the Fall Festival — an event that thrives on the efforts of volunteers like YOU! We meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm with additional communication through email.

We're looking for new board members to join our team and help make a difference in our community. For more information, please contact Anita Goddard at 527-0349 (not cell) and leave a message.



### February/March Artist - Jim Crowell

#### Opening Reception:

**Thursday, February 13th @ 5:30 - 7:30pm**

Jim Crowell, of Hatfield, is a maker. Now retired from professional cabinetry and finish carpentry, Jim continues to make, creating sculpture, vessels, and bas relief wall pieces that reflect his deep interests in nature and the natural world. Birch bark is his primary material.

Trained in woodworking techniques in his native Florida, Jim Crowell moved from Boston to Hatfield in 1982 and eventually established himself as the consummate local craftsman. He worked as a cabinetmaker, woodworker, and finish carpenter in historic restoration projects for many years, both self-employed and for various local contractors. Jim became well known for his artistry, creativity, and problem-solving skills on the job and in the field. With this body of work, Jim combines his skills as a woodworker with his artistic vision.

### Breakfast and a Movie!

**Saturday, February 15 @ 10:30am - 12:30pm**

Bring the grandkids to the library for a sweet, family-friendly movie in celebration of Black History Month. The kiddos will choose from *The Princess and the Frog* (2010), *Soul* (2021), or TBA. Breakfast pastries and juice will be served. Pajamas and stuffies are welcome and encouraged. Special thanks to the Friends of Westhampton Library and the Lyn Keating Program Fund for sponsoring this event.



### Music with Mr. Liam

**Saturday, February 22 @ 10:30am**

Mr. Liam (Liam Hurley) has been singing, dancing, and educating in the Pioneer Valley for 8 yrs and toured the world drumming for Josh Ritter & the Royal City Band before that. Join us for a fun-filled performance utilizing ukuleles, drums, puppets, and bubbles! This program is geared towards preschool aged children and funded by EEC (Early Education and Care) and the CFCE grant (Coordinated Family and Community Engagement).



### Open Needle Felting for Adults with Jo Martin

**Thursday, February 27 @ 6:00 - 8:00pm**

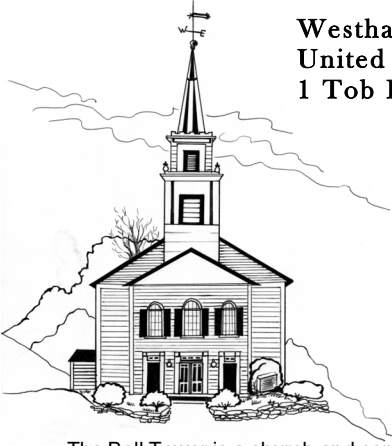
Feeling crafty and creative? Join Jo to design your own needle felting project with guidance from an experienced felter. All materials will be provided. Materials are limited and registration is required. Please call 413-527-5386 or email [westhampton@cwmmars.org](mailto:westhampton@cwmmars.org) to sign up.

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Westhampton Congregational  
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1 Tob Rd., Westhampton MA 01027

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
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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 is allowed in Westhampton between January 15 to May 1. 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, you must submit the request ONLINE** at <https://westhamptonma.gov/departments/fire-department/>, the Fire Department's section of the town website (or from the home page, you can find the Fire Dept under the Governance tab). There you can read rules and regulations about open burning, **but the Request an Open Burning Permit tab will ONLY be visible and available on Saturdays and Sundays between 7 – 10am.** Click that request tab, fill in your contact info, agree to the rules and regulations, then click Submit. You will see an immediate response online, but no email will be sent. Information will be posted on the Fire Department's homepage as to whether or not burning is allowed that day.



**Burning Permit**

**IF you can't do this process online, there is a phone call option ONLY between 7 - 8am the morning you wish to burn,** you call the Fire Department non-emergency number - 413-529-7181. Permits will not be issued by phone to anyone calling after 8am.

The Department reserves the right to inspect any burning site at any time and to revoke the permit if terms and conditions of outdoor burning are not being followed.

## SWEET Benefit Breakfast for Habitat for Humanity

**Saturday, February 22 @ 7am – 1pm**

Westhampton's annual opportunity for a seasonal treat combined with the sweet feeling of helping others happens on *Saturday, February 22 from 7am - 1pm.* Steve's Sugar Shack will open for the season on that day, and on behalf of the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ, Steve will donate a portion of the day's profits to Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity. When you place your order, you will also have the opportunity to donate \$1 beyond your breakfast price directly toward Habitat, and there will be donation jars on the tables to accept your own more meaningful donations as well. Thank you for supporting Habitat year after year!

