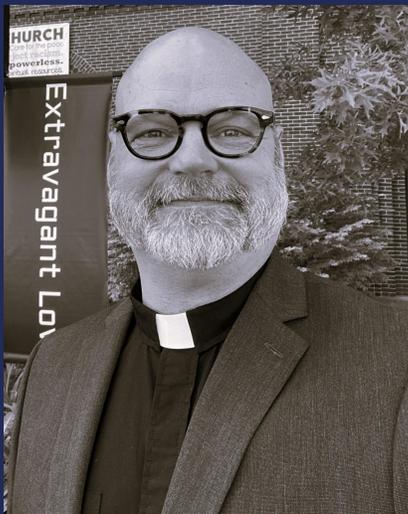


e-lation!

SOUTH CHURCH

United Church of Christ

A Message from Rev. Sean



It is hard to believe that two years have passed since I started at South Church as your Interim Associate Minister. A lot of changes have taken place. When I started, the office was closed to the public, and Jed and I led worship, looking at a camera in the empty cold sanctuary. Our meetings were over zoom, and I only saw your eyes when we met in person. A week does not go by without me thinking about how lovely it is to see people's faces. Early on, given the limitations that the pandemic placed on the church, I wasn't sure how we would accomplish all we needed to do. In true

South Church fashion, with creativity, the Spirit's guidance, and perseverance, we worked through the tasks of Interim Ministry. The Transition Team worked diligently to help us reflect on the past accomplishments of South Church, identify who we are in the present, and discern who we are called to be in the future. The Mission, Vision, and Values statement and recommendations the congregation adopted will be an indispensable guide in the future. It will help the Search Committee as they search for a Senior Pastor when Jed retires.

I am deeply grateful for the support I have received. As we considered the transformation and change the congregation is going through, I was going through my own growth period. Cancer diagnosis, successful surgical cure, and my mother's passing brought new insights and spiritual growth. The care I received from you helped me walk through those difficult times. I am indebted to my colleagues on staff, especially Jed, who was a steady, supportive voice throughout my time at South Church. Working with Jed, Alison, Abby, Walt, Kayla, Sue, and Carlene has been

fun, meaningful, and inspiring. Each brings so much to the ethos of South Church with their talents, abilities, and calling. They have risen to many challenges of a pandemic/post-pandemic world with imagination, discernment, grace, and a can-do spirit. It is an honor to have worked with them.

Change is constant and more changes are in store for South Church. It is a time of liminal space and transformation. During unsettled times in a congregation, there can be a tendency for fear to creep in, scarcity and siloed thinking to take over, and blame and anger to replace open conversations about shared values, goals, and passions. It is imperative to be on guard for these tendencies and meet them with grace, generosity, forgiveness, and love. I have come up with a list of Beatitudes for Change that I offer you during these in-between times.

- Be open
- Be gracious
- Be at peace in the tension
- Be curious
- Be the energy you want
- Be a solution
- Be forgiving
- Be loving
- Be generous
- Be creative
- Be the inspiration you want
- Be courageous
- Be honest

South Church has so much to offer that the world needs now. Cultivating these attitudes during transition time will bring you closer together. As you move into the next phase of your collective becoming, remember that your opinions matter, so voice them. Remember, everyone needs kindness, so give it and remember that through it all, God is with you.

Blessings, Sean

Faithful Stewards



Moment of Mission

This month the Faith in Action Ministry will be sponsoring a drive for supplies the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness for its Resource Center and overnight Winter Shelter. A "low barrier" shelter, it serves adults, including those with active addictions and felony

convictions, so that those in need can sleep inside during dangerously cold winter months.

Since December 2008, the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness Resource Center has been helping clients who are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, meet their immediate needs and connect with resources

that are available to them. The center provides access to showers, laundry, coffee and light refreshments, general help, resources, and case management. With the assistance of volunteers, case managers help connect clients to housing and shelter programs, Medicaid, SNAP, Disability, and other benefits, and to obtain state ID cards, birth certificates, and other vital information. In addition, the Resource Center hosts a variety of community providers on a weekly basis ranging from Archways Recovery Coalition of NH (which focuses on recovery from substance use disorders), to Easter Seals and Harbor Care for Veteran services, Riverbend Community Mental Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, physicians from Concord Hospital, and Empire Beauty School (for haircuts). The Resource Center is located behind the CCEH administrative office at 238 North Main Street, Concord.

Items Needed by the Resource Center:

- Paper towels
- Large black garbage bags
- Clorox wipes
- Cold beverage cups
- Disposable coffee cups
- Coffee
- Sugar
- Creamer
- Coffee stirrers
- Over the counter medications and wound care supplies

Seasonal and Miscellaneous Items Needed:

- New socks
- New underwear (men's and women's)
- Rain ponchos
- Backpacks and duffel bags
- \$5 gift cards to local takeout restaurants
- Gift cards for gas only (Speedway, Irving, etc.)
- Sleeping bags
- Flashlights & headlamps
- Chapstick
- Hand- and feet-warmers
- Winter boot spikes
- Hats, gloves, and mittens
- Assorted batteries
- Solar chargers (for clients' phones)

Please drop items off at the church in January where there will be a marked collection bin in the South Church side entrance. See the [CCEH website](#), for other needs and ways to get involved.



A Joyful Challenge

A generous couple issued a challenge to our congregation. They have pledged up to \$4,000 to match any gifts that are made through January toward the purchase of assistive hearing units to complete our new sound system. They desire to use their funds as a

means of encouraging the rest of us to join in celebrating and empowering those among us whose hearing is not what it used to be. If you make a gift of any size, they will match your gift 1:1 up to \$4,000. Please send a check to the office with "Hearing Assistive Units" in the memo line or stop by or call the office with a credit card to show your support of those who would love to hear our worship as clearly as we do. Your gift will be doubled! We thank you.



Yard Sale

We held our first Midnight Merrimack Yard Sale and raised about \$1,500. Thank you to the many volunteers who donated their time and stuff to make the yard sale such a FUN fundraiser. Your hard work was greatly appreciated. While many of us found

treasures, not everything sold; but we were careful about how we got rid of stuff. Many of our unsold items were donated to various locations in the Greater Concord area and hopefully disposed of properly or reused. Many of you made stops at these locations: Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, Best Buy, Family Promise, fiber recycling, general recycling, Good Will, Hopkinton Senior Center, Merrimack Valley Day Care Center, Shaker Road School, SPCA, Staples, and the YMCA. Thank you to all of those who helped and donated to support the important work we do here.

Spiritual Growth



A Compassion Listening Project

Listening with the Heart of Alabama: Join Joel Berman, Becky Field, and others who traveled to Alabama in October 2022 to listen and learn about Alabama's history, civil right struggles, creative collaboration, and vision for a better

future on **Saturday, January 7** at 10 a.m. This event will be held in Fellowship Hall with light refreshments.

WOW!



A New Nativity Play for Kids

Epiphany Tableau

This year we will be performing "Wow! A New Nativity." This nativity will be the same, but different and a little more fun. This play faithfully tells the story of Jesus' birth in a contemporary style with our favorite hymns. The children have been working hard to share the story of Christmas with you and your family. The performance will be a part of the

worship service on **Sunday, January 8** at 9 a.m. In addition to the tableau, we will celebrate Rev. Sean's departure.



Outdoor Adventure

Join other South Church members on Sunday, January 22 at 1 p.m. for a local hike at Beaver Meadow Golf Course. If there is no snow, the plan is to hike Marjorie Swoope. For more information, contact [Lorens Jorgensen](#).



Breaking Bread

Let's Break Bread with our South Church friends to renew connections, meet new people and build relationships. Join us on **Saturday, January 28** at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for a light meal and rich conversation. The soup will be

hot! Beverages will be cold! While the soup and beverages will be provided, we ask everyone to bring bread or salad to share. Interested in participating in this event, [sign-up online](#) or in Fellowship Hall. This will allow us to prepare accordingly. If you have any questions, contact [Bruce Bairstow](#) or [Zib Corell](#). Also tentatively mark your calendar for Saturday, February 25 and Saturday, March 25 for our future Breaking Bread with Friends event.

A Creative Spark



Knitters

This year our Christmas tree was titled "A Peace Tree." Among the tree were knitted heart shaped ornaments using the Ukrainian colors blue and yellow. Many church members and their friends knitted these ornaments as a reminder of the devastation the people of the Ukraine are going through. We continue to hope for peace for the people of Ukraine this holiday season. Please keep them close to your heart and thank you to all who helped with the project.

Faith Journey



Search Process

The South Church Search Committee has a [webpage](#)! It's the central place to find information and updates about the Search Committee's ongoing work. Individuals can look through the UCC's Local Church Profile development template. (It's 22 pages of detailed questions and statistics.) The UCC requires the Search Committee to use this template to develop our South Church Profile. The congregation will have the opportunity to review and provide feedback about the Draft South Church Profile as soon as it's ready in the spring. The final South Church Profile will be used to outreach to potential candidates for our Senior Pastor position, that will begin serving here in July 2024. That final South Church Profile will serve as our "want ad" posted on the UCC national jobs website of open UCC church positions. The Search Committee will continue to share updates with you, while we are working through on this big project.

Our webpage can be found on the South Church website under the "[Support Ministry](#)" tab. If you would like a hard copy of any of the documents on the Search Committee's webpage, stop by the office to pick up a copy. If you have any questions or concerns about this long, detailed process, please contact any member of our Search Committee. [Helen McGlashan](#) (Co-Chair), [Janet Zeller](#) (Co-Chair), [Nick Babladelis](#), [Aiden Ciminesi](#), [Betsy Clardy](#), [Peter Imse](#), [Laura Knoy](#), [Steve Murray](#), [Leanne Tigert](#), and [Joseph York](#).

UCC Community



Wider Mission

Environmental Justice Mission Group: A recording of the New England Environmental Justice Youth+ Summit from November 2022 is available on the NHCUCC Environmental Justice Mission Group [website](#). It includes an excellent discussion of the Doctrine of

Discovery by our Conference Minister Rev. Gordon Rankin.

The next e-Lation! will arrive on Thursday, January 19.

If you wish to add something to our newsletter,
please submit your article by Friday, January 13 to [Alison](#).

South Congregational Church, UCC | 27 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

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