

February

AT PARK AVENUE
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

DIGITAL PRAYER Wednesdays at 10:30 am
on ZOOM and Facebook

BIBLE STUDY 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7:30 pm
on ZOOM

VIRTUAL GAME NIGHTS
EVERY SATURDAY EVENING IN FEBRUARY

CONFIRMATION CLASS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6

SARAHS CIRCLE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR CHALLENGE

VALENTINES DAY, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14

FAMILY FRIENDLY LENTEN SERVICE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Find all the details for these events inside



The SPIRE

Park Avenue Congregational Church, Arlington, Massachusetts
The Reverend Leah Lyman Waldron, Minister

FEBRUARY 2022



GREETINGS FROM OUR PASTOR



Hello PACC friends,

First, please make sure to read an **update from the Regathering Team** on page 6. (Short version: **we will meet virtually only through February 13 and then revisit the Covid data.**) Please also take a look at the blurb for our upcoming **Feb. 27 family-friendly Lenten service** on page 6.

Now for some fun stuff in this long slog of a season. I wanted to share some adapted and **belated, but still applicable, highly entertaining thoughts on new year's resolutions** from a Jesuit I follow on Instagram named Brother Matt Wooters. Br. Matt's musings are applicable year-round, and focus on delight and wonder instead of on numbers or accomplishments:

"It has been brought to my attention that I like New Year's resolutions more than most. I know a lot of people don't like resolutions because they feel like a failure when they don't do them, which is weird to me because they are made up and non-binding. Also, I add to them all year because again, this whole premise is made up and there are no rules. So here are my tips:

-What stuff do you WANT to do? One of mine for last year was to bike every bridge in San Francisco because I thought it would be fun to do before I moved away. And it was! Or I saw my cousin went to a rodeo the other day and thought "Hot damn, I want to do that!" and added it to my list. Googled bull riding. Found out it's in my city on Friday. I'm going.

-Any resolution based on how you look or what you weigh is doomed to fail if it isn't rooted in joy. "I want to lose 20 pounds" is boring and has a very high failure rate. But "Becky and I will do the half marathon at Disney in May (even if we have to walk)" moves away from self-sabotage to something fun, interesting, and awesome.

-Who do you want to be? Either big picture or small; the vaguer, the less helpful. For example: "I want to be more kind" - yawn. Eye roll. What does that mean for you? Make it achievable. For example: "I want to drink my coffee before I look at my phone instead of inserting the glowing terror directly into my eyeholes at 6am." Doable. Put your phone in the kitchen at night and you are halfway there.

-Shoot for the moon. These are all made up anyways. One of mine this year is "Meet my friend Luca's family and see where he grew up in Italy." If it happens, great. If it doesn't,

who cares; I'll try again later. I'm just naming a cool desire based off of my friendship with Luca whom I consider family.

-This year is hard and heavy. Resolutions can be a fun way to let off steam. A cousin was feeling choked by the pandemic last year so one of her resolutions was to artfully use a different bad word each day. Hilarious. Fun. Creative.

-I break them up into categories. What do I want to do for my intellect; body; soul; others; and adventure. E.g., for intellect: My friend Jake knows a lot about plays. I don't know anything. "I want to see a Broadway show with Jake." Achievable. Doable. Fun. If Covid mucks those plans then Jake and I will just get a beer and he will give me an in-person Ted Talk on how Andrew Lloyd Webber altered the American Imagination. Or, for adventure: "One Saturday a month, regardless of weather, spend four hours outside and phoneless." Now it becomes an adventure! I have no children and I'm not a surgeon so this is doable for me. What's doable for you?

-"Oh, but Brother, it's already February, I can't start now!" Who cares? It's all made up! Add some joy to your life. One of my resolutions is to become pen pals with a 70-year-old waitress I met one time because she was hilarious. Guess who has her first letter coming to her this week?

Go forth! Dream big! Adventure! Because as Jesus said, "I came so that you may have life, and have it more abundantly."

Friends, I hope this put a smile on your face, and maybe even inspired you to come up with some belated resolutions, Br. Matt-style. Because I think he has hit on something important: we will make it through this season, and through the processing we'll need to do when the worst of it's over, by being gentle with ourselves: a little less focused on rules, a little more grace-filled with our expectations for ourselves and others, a little more open to seizing joy whenever and wherever we can find it. In other words: a little more oriented towards the places where God's love is welling up in unexpected corners of our lives and world, even - especially - in the midst of hardship.

With Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leah".

Reverend Leah Lyman Waldron, Pastor

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN SERVICES AT PACC

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 10:00 AM



Due to the pandemic, we are mostly worshipping virtually via ZOOM and Facebook Live. Pastor Leah sends out an e-mail a day or two before worship with a link to ZOOM and our Facebook page. We also update our Facebook page and website to let you know when we are having in-person services in conjunction with virtual streaming. Contact the office at office@pacc-ucc.org to sign up for those e-mails.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY

To participate in worship via ZOOM from your computer or smartphone:

Use this link just before 10:00 am (it's okay to join late):

<https://zoom.us/j/742148863>

You can choose whether to use the video function or just audio.

To participate via ZOOM from your phone (audio only):

Call this number: (929) 205 6099. If asked for a **meeting ID**, enter: **742 148 863**

To participate via Facebook:

Go to our Facebook page just before 10:00 am Sunday to watch live, or visit the video part of our page after we finish worship to watch a recording. If you have a Facebook account, make sure to click "Following" on the Park Avenue page to get an automatic alert when we go live.

IN-PERSON GUIDELINES

If we are having an in-person worship service in the sanctuary we kindly ask that you follow these guidelines.

- If you are feeling unwell on the day of worship, please stay home and worship with us remotely. Please reach out to your Deacon or our Care Ministry if you need help.
- Please wear a mask and maintain social distancing while inside the building.

Did you miss live worship?

Check the website: www.pacc-ucc.org/sermons on Sunday afternoons or any time during the week for a video recording of the entire service plus an audio recording of just the sermon. Thanks to Nick Dokos for making this possible!

SEEKING LITURGISTS: Have you thought of volunteering to be a liturgist?

There are opportunities to be a liturgist for our in-person and virtual services. If you would like to know more, please contact Bonnie Hayner or Dave Morrissette at bmwjh@comcast.net or drmorriss@comcast.net. Even if you haven't been a liturgist before, We can guide you through the steps. It is a great way to be part of the service.

PACC COUNCIL OF DEACONS 2022

OFFICERS AND MINISTRY ASSIGNMENTS

Moderator	Tim Durning
Vice Moderator	Dave Morrisette
Clerk	Linda Cohn
Treasurer	Mark Tuttle
Administration	Mike Rich
Care	Linda Cohn
Christian Education	Josh Young
Fellowship	Hong Chin
Finance	Don Cohn
Property	Eric Rochon
Membership	Cindy Manson and Betty Gitlin Rich
Mission & Justice	Jill Lewis and Damon Sidel
Music	Ethan Brush
Stewardship	Sharon Hamilton
Worship	Bonnie Hayner and Dave Morrisette

2022 PACC PERSONNEL

Financial Secretary	Don Cohn
Acting Collector	Christine Rochon
Collector*	<i>TBD when PACC returns to consistent in-person worship</i>
Assistant Collectors*	Linda Cohn, Tim Durning, Bonnie Hayner, Leanne Marden, and Judy Miller
Assistant Treasurers	Tim Durning and Alicia Tapper
Head Usher	Valerie Censabella
Assistant Head Usher	Betty Rich
Historian	Linda Cohn

* *To be reinstated or determined when PACC returns to consistent in-person worship*

Regathering Team Update

A quick update from the Regathering Team: as Omicron numbers continue to drop, we are both hopeful of a return to in-person worship in the near future and mindful that because the spike was so high, it will be at least a few weeks more before case rates are back to where they were before the spike. Therefore, **we will meet virtually only through Feb. 13**, and then revisit the Covid data trends to see whether we might be able to return to in-person, livestreamed worship for the second half of February. Whatever the outcome, we will continue to communicate with you and we ask for your continued patience and prayers as we do our best to navigate a challenging situation.



Family Friendly Lenten Worship

Family-friendly Worship Service on February 27 - all are welcome!

We had such a good time in November that we will have another in-person, outdoor, family-friendly worship service on Sunday, February 27 at 2:00 pm, to kick off Lent (which begins on Wednesday, March 2). We know it's hard to get to Ashes to Go with kids in tow, so **come receive some early-bird ashes, learn about Lent and what it means to change our hearts, and pick up your family-friendly Lent activity** to help your family find meaning in this beautiful season leading up to Easter. Look for an email later in the month confirming the location and to RSVP so we have enough supplies on hand. All people, with or without kids, are welcome to attend.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6 - Weston Rochon | 15 - Alex Brush |
| 10 - Dave Morrissette,
Roger Nicoll | 16 - Jackie Kim |
| 11 - Steve Colello | 17 - Matthew Jacobo-Zudeck |
| 13 - Rachel Sexton | 19 - Aaron Ford |
| 14 - Mark Sexton | 24 - Margaret Berman,
Justin Lawless |



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH CHOIR

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Warm Greetings, beloved PACC families, as we weather this cold stretch of winter! It is so wonderful to see your faces on Virtual Church - whether listening to a story, or singing and doing hand motions to a new song!

As you know, in-person worship continues to be suspended as we ride out this current Omicron surge. Watch for details about some upcoming family events, including a *Valentine's project*, *3rd-Sunday All Ages*, and some *at-home Lenten activities*!

Confirmation Class will meet on February 6.

A very special THANK YOU to Marianne McPherson, who has been such a wonderful shepherd and support for our CE program over these past two pandemic years. She'll be stepping down from the Council this year, and Josh Young will step in as Deacon for Christian Education. Thank you ALL for your continued enthusiastic participation and support! We look forward to seeing you soon, and as always, feel free to contact us with your thoughts! Andy *or* Ella

YOUTH CHOIR

Hello beloved singers and families! I hope you are all doing well. Great to see many of you in Virtual Church, and thank you for your participation. I hope we'll be able to sing in person at some point soon, even if outdoors again when it gets warmer! I'll be reaching out soon about a Youth Choir Zoom meet-up, and some future music-making opportunities. Thank you for your wonderful musical spirits, and hope to see you soon! Feel free to contact me with any questions! *Andy*

GROUPS AND MINISTRIES AT PACC

WOMEN'S GUILD

We will wait and trust that by **March 17** we can safely gather again!

SARAH'S CIRCLE

The nuts and bolts and basic beliefs of Islam was the focus of our January meeting. This month, we will be discussing the problems associated with putting beliefs into practice in a vastly different world. February's selection is the true-life story of Ayaan Hirsi Ali, one of today's most admired and controversial political figures. Raised in a strict Muslim family, Hirsi Ali survived civil war, female mutilation, brutal beatings, adolescence as a devout believer during the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, and life in four troubled, unstable countries ruled largely by despots. She escaped from a forced marriage and sought asylum in the Netherlands where, as a member of Parliament, she fought for the rights of Muslim women and the reform of Islam. She was demonized by reactionary Islamists, disowned by her father, expelled from family, marked for assassination and ultimately stripped of her citizenship. Our date with ***Infidel by Ayaan Hirsi Ali*** is February 12 at 11:00 am. Please contact Joan via email to be included on the ZOOM link.

MISSION AND JUSTICE MINISTRY

ARLINGTON EATS

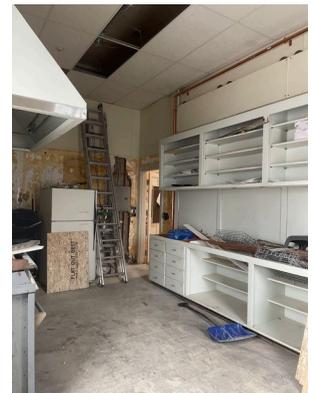
Please consider a monetary donation to Arlington EATS as they experience higher than usual need and lower than usual contributions during the pandemic.

You may donate directly here: <https://www.arlingtoneats.org/help/donate-money/>
OR send a check to PACC with "Food Pantry" written on the memo line.

PROPERTY MINISTRY

Exciting things are going on around the building. We're renovating the kitchen, the second floor bathrooms and the second floor kitchenette.

Click this link to see some progress photos and updates: [February Progress of Renovations](#) .



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

In celebration:

Congratulations to **Jim and Claire Gibbons**, who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on January 27!

Warm birthday wishes to Margaret Berman, who will celebrate a milestone birthday, her 80th on February 24!

In our prayers:

Libby Victor's husband **Jesse**, who is recuperating at home after a hospitalization followed by rehab.

Susan and Hong Chin, at the deaths of **Lorraine Wagner**, Susan's cousin, and **Carolina Chin**, the wife of Hong's cousin **Bing Chin**, both of whom died on January 11.

Mike Rich's brother **Jeff**, who spent several days in January in the hospital with COVID.

Meredythe Schober's daughter-in-law **Maureen**, who is making improvement as she recovers from surgery for bladder cancer, and her great-grandson **Colin**, who is making progress after a brief hospital stay for COVID.

Margaret Bell Berman, who is working hard at physical therapy to help her move from using a walker to a cane.

Pam Lepri's father **Ron**, who is still having vision problems after his eye surgery.

***Prayers for those who are dealing with mental health challenges including addiction and depression. ***

Also, please keep in your prayers: **Dorothy Brawn, Jim and Linda Brinkman, Anita Clarke, Yvonne Crockett, Janet and Kingsley Doe, Connie Dugan, Lisa Forté, Norma Gormley, Janet Hoffman, Marilyn Janssen, Tom Janssen, Jamie Kelly, Florence Marshall, Tricia McConville, David McKenzie, Liz McMahan, Susan Neary, Chickie Olson, Kimball Payne, Jane Puopolo, Norma Sherwood, and Doris Wilson.**

**If you or someone you know at PACC is celebrating a milestone birthday (turning 80 or 90), please let Linda Cohn know. Thank you! **

Messages from PACC members and friends

Jim and I appreciate all the beautiful music, Leah's messages and the church services this past Christmas season. They were so very special and thank you for the lovely poinsettia that Alicia brought to us.

~ Jim and Claire Gibbons



To help make it through another winter with Covid, PACC will hold virtual game nights WEEKLY through February. Game nights start at about 6:30 (join whenever you can) and we are planning to schedule a couple of earlier "all ages" start times as well. We've got Scattergories, GeoGuessr, Pictionary, and a couple of drawing games that are really fun, but we're also always happy to add new games, so bring yourself and your ideas, and jump on in.

Saturday, January 29, 6:30 pm - about 8:00 (or later if you like): primary game: GeoGuessr. We'll try to extend our three-state streak. We can add a room for Scattergories and any other games.

Saturday, February 5, 5:30 pm: primary game: All ages drawing game: DrawPhone or Garticphone. (We are open to suggestions about both time and good all-ages games).

Saturday, February 12: Suggestions welcome for time/games. Maybe we'll try Pictionary or just go with one of the ones we already like, or a Valentine's theme?

Saturday, February 19: Suggestions welcome for time/games.

Saturday, February 26: Suggestions welcome for time/games.

Let Cindy Manson and/or Betty Rich know if you have questions/suggestions. Looking forward to seeing you!



“Love Your Neighbor Challenge”

Local organization, www.everydayboston.com, has an annual valentine’s day challenge. They have some great suggestions for how to spread some love this **Valentine’s Day, on Monday, February 14.**

Let’s join in PACC!

We’ve outlined the idea below, but feel free to make it work for you and in your local towns!

**** Youth Group, keep an eye out for an e-mail with an opportunity to meet up virtually to chat and work on your valentines together via Zoom! ****

Everyone can use a little extra kindness during this winter season.

Here’s the plan:

1. Cut out a card of any size, shape or color.
2. Write some encouraging words on it.
3. Add your first name (or not if you don’t want to), and sign it #yourwickedawesomeneighbor.
4. Share it!

Ways to share it:

- Post a picture of it on social media
- Display it in the window of your home or workplace or the side of your car
- Tack it on a bulletin board of a coffee shop or another public space for others to see
- Slip it under the door of a small business
- Put it in your neighbor’s mail box
- Mail it to someone in PACC
- Send a picture of your card to CHAT@pacc-ucc.org to share with all your PACC friends.
- Leave it on a windshield
- Drop it off at a workplace of essential workers
- Give it to your bus driver, mail person, teacher, doctor! The opportunities are endless!

What ways will you help spread the love this year?





The SPIRE

Park Avenue Congregational Church

The United Church of Christ

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Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

TO:

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Tel.: 781-643-8680

Email: Office@pacg-ucc.org

Website: www.pacc-ucc.org

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Christine Rochon, Office Admin.

Jeffrey Brody, Music Director/Organist

Andrea Hart, Youth Music Director

Victor and Sue McNary, Sextons

Officers

Tim Durning, Moderator

Dave Morrisette, Vice Moderator

Linda Cohn, Clerk

Mark Tuttle, Treasurer