



Under the Dome

**Dunbar United Church of Christ
767 Benham St, Hamden, CT 06514**

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An Open & Affirming Congregation

Weekly Services

Sunday Mornings @ 10:00 A.M.

Saturday Evenings @ 5:00 P.M.

March 2025

Pastor's Report, March 2025

Ash Wednesday is March 5 and the service this year is at Mt. Carmel Congregational church at 7:00 pm. This is a service where ministers and members and friends from a number of Hamden churches participate. There's Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist and a few UCC churches. For the past two years a minister from each of the churches gives a short reflection, rather than just one giving a sermon, as we used to do before Covid. We're supposed to make our reflection five minutes or less. If there are five or six of us, that's still a lot of words! Phew!

Anyway. Lent is almost here, a season of forty days which correspond to the forty days Jesus was in the wilderness tempted by the devil. Spiritual combat! We struggle with the voices in our heads, the angels and demons who speak to us all day and all night. The demons say, "Just look out for yourself! Don't worry about other people. Charity begins at home." The angels say — "Love one another." One voice says, "Just take care of yourself — and your family and people like you." The other voice says, "Serve others — everyone."

Lent is a time of listening and responding to the voices we hear. Some people follow a tradition during Lent where they give up something, like eating chocolate, or meat. I had an idea of something we could give up after reading an article in my favorite magazine, The Week. In a recent issue, in The Editor's Letter section, the editor-in-chief, Theunis Bates, wrote about "kindness." He said, "Kindness is so over." Bates says, since the recent election, "America is not simply moving past the excesses of progressivism...but beyond the idea that it's good to care for others at all. On social media, people have rejoiced at the slashing of U.S. food aid and medicine for people suffering genocide and famine." He tells how someone posted on X, "At this point, I just don't care about Sudanese babies." And some of our leaders have invoked medieval Catholic theology to justify closing our borders to asylum seekers, saying we have a moral obligation to take care of our own people first — before we help strangers. Interesting that none of these "America First" people mention any of Jesus teachings to love our neighbor. No one dares to mention the story of The Good Samaritan.

The world's richest man wants to cut or remove funding for lifesaving biomedical research and foreign aid. Elon Musk once told his biographer, Walter Isaacson, how his favorite video game had taught him the "life lesson" that "empathy is not an asset." Hannah Arendt was a German- born Jew who, in 1930's Nazi Germany was imprisoned by the Gestapo for performing illegal research into antisemitism. She was able to complete her degree and flee Germany before eventually escaping Europe and settling in America, where she made New York her residence. She wrote books about Totalitarianism and taught in a number of universities. She was noted for saying: "The death of human empathy is one of the earliest and most telling signs of a culture about to fall into barbarism."

Recently I read this quote again, and I believe Hanna Arendt is right. And I'm concerned that our culture, our United States, is not just falling into barbarism — we've jumped off the cliff. So, in large parts of America, spiritual gifts like kindness, empathy, and love have been discarded and replaced by self-interest, greed and power. Interesting — since we're talking about Lent — that one of the voices that spoke to Jesus in his temptation offered him these same — incentives. Jesus rejected the offer, embraced empathy and love, and went on to serve others — Jewish, gentile, rich, poor, slave, master — even his enemies, the Romans.

What if, for this Lent, we give up listening to the voices that tell us to care only about ourselves, our people, our country. What if this Lent, we give up listening to people who say "empathy is not an asset." So we can turn our attention to, and embrace, the one who said, "Love God, and your neighbor as yourself." Right now, in our American wilderness, listen to and follow the voice that speaks to us each day saying, "Love one another as I have loved you."

I love you this Lent and always,

George

Contact Pastor George @

Phone: (203) 287 -8106 or

revonweb@sbcglobal.net

Deacons

We are experiencing an increase in in-person church attendance, and we pray that this sense of community continues to grow throughout the year.

I would like to thank all the Deacons for their dedication and commitment to our wonderful church community. The Deacons are actively working to support congregation members in need, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us—we are here to help.

Respectfully yours ,
Kitty Donohue

Christian Education

CE is happy to have held Sunday School classes each week for the past several months. We are looking forward to choosing a Lenten project that can involve members of the church. We'll let you know what the children decide.

Janet Manukas

The Dunbar United Church Women's Fellowship will be accepting College Scholarship Applications again this year.

Forms must arrive by twelve noon on May 25th, 2025.

Applications can be found on our website.

Paper copies are available in the Narthex.

Completed applications can be emailed to
office.dunbar@gmail.com,

dropped off at church or mailed to:

Dunbar United Church of Christ

767 Benham Street

Hamden, CT 06514

attn: Scholarship

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will be hosting a Corned Beef Cafe church on Sunday, March 16. We will be having corned beef, potatoes, carrots and other fixings as well as a turkey and a non meat pasta alternative. We'll also be serving Barbara Hamilton's delicious Irish Soda Bread.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Breakfast is BACK! Sunrise is at 6:04am, breakfast served in Fellowship Hall directly after a beautiful outdoor service by Reverend George. There is no charge for this event, just come start your Easter celebration early with us!

Appreciate you all,
Debbie Laffin

Board of Missions and Concerns

During these first months Missions is donating \$500 to the UCC which will give our contribution to the California wild fires (church members also made donations).

Missions have also made \$100 donations to NIN (Neighbors in Need) and OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing) and Joe will also take additional contributions during designated weeks. Also we have donated to Wallingford Animal Control and St. Jude. We will also be donating to The Tumor Foundation , the American Heart Association and Paws of Honor (they provide medical care for Veteran Service dogs-thanks Jennifer J. for this info). We also bought toiletries for the Keefe Center.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support and let me know if we can be of help.

Take care,
Donna and the Missions Committee

H.O.P.E.

H.O.P.E would like to thank those that have donated this past month:

George and Janet Braen

Heather Sibley

John and Lois Kasarauskas

Bob and Karen Corona

John and Charlotte Sroka

This month we are donating to IRIS to help with food needs and Hamden Food Bank to help supply the warming shelter.

If you would like to make a donation, you can do so by visiting our website or send a check to Dunbar UCC with HOPE in the memo.

Please help us keep up Helping Other People Eat.

Thank you,
Debbie Laffin

Trustees

The Trustees met on February 16th for the first meeting of the new year.

We reviewed and approved the Treasurer's Report.

We discussed the bid from Hamden Paving to do the parking extension. The bid fit our budget but there were a few outstanding issues that needed clearing up. John will meet with a rep from the company on Feb 24 to get additional information that was requested.

We discussed moving forward with discussion with the Hamden Land Trust. Joh will meet with representatives on Feb 24 to discuss possibilities.

The Trustees are planning for additional activities in 2025 providing we have funds following the paving initiative

Respectfully submitted,
John Donohue

SOUPERBOWL RESCHEDULED TO SUNDAY, MARCH 2!!

Women's Fellowship will be holding their "famous" Souperbowl Bruncheon on Super Bowl Sunday, March 2nd! Church service will be in our sanctuary with our Bruncheon to follow. Salads and breads will be out 10:45 with soups service at 11 a.m.

A donation of \$5 is suggested for all the soup, salad and bread you can eat! Beverages and desserts included!

The current soup list is:

Corn Chowder

Pasta Fagioli

Italian Wedding

Pea Soup w Ham

Turkey and Bean Chili

Janet M's famous Chicken Elbow

Potsticker Soup

Prime Rib and Vegetable Stew

and there might be more!

Proceeds will go to the Hamden Food Bank and Hamden Senior Center.

If anyone would like to make a soup, bread, or salad, please let me know so we can coordinate all.

We will be voting on proceeds from our Apple Festival at this time. If you have a charity you would like us to consider, please let me know.

The Souperbowl Bruncheon is open to EVERYONE, please invite your family, friends, neighbors, and anybody else to join us! The more tummies we make warm, the better!

Hope to see all your faces!

Much appreciated,
Debbie Laffin

**Women's Fellowship will be holding our annual tag sale
Saturday, April 5, 9am-1pm**

When starting your spring cleaning, please save your items (especially kitchen goods, small appliances, small furniture, toys, puzzles, shoes in good shape, clothes in very good shape, towels, sheets, blankets, purses, tools, glassware, utensils of any sort, and weird stuff) and donate to us. We can store them, just please let me know what you are dropping off so I know what is for tag sale.

Debbie
203 605 4621

Sunday Service 10am every Sunday is also available online via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

Saturday Service every Saturday at 5pm
In person only

Bible Study every Wednesday via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

You can donate online by scanning this QR code.

Donations are accepted through a secure site by Vanco.



Dunbar UCC Open & Affirming Statement

We, the members of Dunbar United Church of Christ, want Jesus to be the center of our lives. Our mission is to practice the New Commandment that Jesus gave us: to love one another as he has loved us (John 13:34). We seek to follow God's will by loving our neighbors, friends and enemies alike. We seek justice for all.

We celebrate the image of God in every person. As an Open and Affirming Church, we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of our church, and affirm that the grace of God, known especially through Jesus, is a gift meant for people of every race, color, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation. Worship, leadership, ministry, and employment are open to all.

We are on a journey of faith and invite all people to join us. No matter the church or community where your journey began, you are welcome here.

Mission Statement

“We believe that Jesus calls us to love each other, serve our neighbor, and nurture God's spirit within us.”