

MIDWEEK MISSIVE 09/13/18

Well, the kids are back at school, and the weather has cooled down (at least for now!), the Red Sox have clinched a playoff spot (and the Tigers have long been eliminated), and those things add up to one thing: we are heading in to the best season of the year in New England, Autumn!

One of the nicest things about Autumn is that it marks the beginning of a new church program year. People have been in and out all summer, on vacations, at summer homes, but now is the time we kick off the new church year! We have already begun our fall schedule of meetings with the Deacons meeting on the 2nd Monday of each month, the Lay Preachers meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month and the Bible Study meeting on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. But, to really kick things off, the Board of Directors is hosting a get together following worship on Saturday September 22nd. Sandwiches, soft drinks, chips and dessert will be provided, so plan on coming by to catch up with folks! If you are a Sunday morning-type, try out the Saturday evening service at 5, or come by about 6 to join in. And if you haven't been to either service in a while, stop by and see what folks are up to at the Candleberry Chapel! I look forward to seeing you all there!

Another fall event coming up will be hosted by the Deacons at some point in the near future. This will be a "Visioning" event where folks can share their dreams and their concerns about the future of the chapel, and we can brainstorm some ideas and paths forward. The Deacons are working on activities that can help us facilitate the discussion and allow us to get on board for the future. Watch for details!

While a "Visioning" event is always a great way to share ideas, to stimulate thoughts and make plans for the future, we also recognize that we undertake this task at a crucial point in the life of the Candleberry Chapel. With the Search Team working hard at finding the right settled pastor, we are aware that this point in time is the right time to see where we stand and move confidently forward. One of our challenges (as with most any church) is financial. If you were in worship this weekend, you saw a chart of our income and expenses for the year. Unfortunately, there was a calculation error and it should have indicated that through the first 7 months of 2018, we are approximately 7,000 in the red. This represents an approximate \$1000 per month shortfall. While this looks daunting, and should be taken very seriously, it must be put into perspective. What it means is that we are currently funding about 87% of the operating costs of the chapel each month. We have just ended the spring and summer months, which are traditionally lower months for giving. We are headed into fall and then Advent, when traditionally, giving picks up. Also, with the fair coming on October 27, we can reasonably expect that deficit to become somewhat smaller.

In the short term, it is up to the members and friends of Candleberry Chapel to continue to give, and, if you were gone over the summer, to give a bit more to help us keep on track. In the long run, the "Visioning" event will help us brainstorm ways to make our Chapel known to the community. How do we let people know who we are? How do we find ways to make ourselves known as a faith community that welcomes one and all in the worship of God, and works to serve God's people? What activities might we promote? What programs can we put in place? All of these things are aimed at finding out how the Candleberry Chapel can be the church God desires us to be, the hands and feet of Jesus Christ on earth, a community of welcome and care. When we do what we can do to maximize our mission as a church that cares, the rest will take care of itself.

This is not a time for hand-wringing, but a time for prayer and dialogue and most importantly undertaking actions that will lead us forward to our best possible place.

Be peaceful,
Rev. Brad

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Bradley J. Miller
Interim Pastor
Candleberry Chapel
381 S. Main St.
Attleboro, MA 02703
(508) 222-2525

www.candleberrychapel.com

"Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words." - Francis of Assisi