



# The Pulpit Rock

The Nahant Village Church ~ 27 Cliff Street, PO Box 77, Nahant, MA 01908  
*An open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ  
where everyone is welcome*

## FEBRUARY 2021

### Scripture Reading

#### February 7

Psalms 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39

Theme: **Embracing Servanthood to Share the Gospel**

#### February 14

2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Theme: **Seeing with New Lenses as We Travel the Way of Jesus**

#### February 21

Psalms 25:1-10; Mark 1:9-15

Theme: **Wilderness as Space for Preparation, Discernment and Turning**

#### February 28

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Mark 8:31-38

Theme: **Finding Life in the Way of the Cross**

### Calendar

**Feb. 9** – Webinar on Part Time Ministry by Rev. Jeff @ 7 pm

**Feb. 11** – Connections – Nahant Memory Café @ 10 am

**Feb. 14** – Laity Sunday & Valentines Day

**Feb. 17** – Listening for Spirit with Rev. Jeff on Ash Wednesday & beginning of Lent @ 7 pm

**Feb. 28** -- 2021 Budget & Annual Meeting @ 11:30 am

#### Worship Service

Sundays @ 10:30 am

#### Bible Study

Tuesdays @ 10 am

**Listening for Spirit with Rev. Jeff**

Wednesdays @ 7 pm

#### Genesis Supper Club

Fridays @ 5 pm

All Meetings Via Zoom (instructions on the page before Contact Info)



### A Message from

**Rev. Jeff**

**MacDonald**

I believe the Holy Spirit is igniting new life in churches that were once closely tied to the dominant culture but are now countercultural outliers. Against the backdrop of a coarsening culture that's all too accepting of predation, enmity and strife, I believe the Spirit is reviving wounded souls by knitting them together. We're being formed in a holy mission to grow in the restorative way of Jesus.

I reject the commonly held idea that historic churches must find heroic pastors with endless energy, dazzling sermons and magnetic personalities to save them. I'm confident that God's new creation is being manifest through the witness and ministries of ordinary lay people, enriched by God-given spiritual gifts and wisdom refined through experience. That's how the Spirit works in 1 Corinthians 12. Why not today?

My conviction stems not only from scripture but also from my own research. Having been a journalist since the early 1990s, I urgently sought a grant from The BTS Center in Portland, Maine in 2016. My goal was to discover what's happening in congregations that do *better*, not *worse*, after they switch from full-time to part-time clergy. I needed to know *and fast* because, in my role as a part-time UCC pastor, I was serving a Newbury, MA church that had abruptly curtailed its pastorate from 40 hours to 10 hours per week. How

do churches thrive when the pastor works another job and isn't around to implement a range of ministries for them?

To find out, I visited 20 congregations in 10 states where churches are experiencing new vitality. They're increasing mission impact, growing attendance, stabilizing finances and more as lay people embrace roles that were once the pastor's province. I tell their stories in my book published last year: *Part-Time is Plenty: Thriving without Full-Time Clergy*. Now I'm drawing on their insights and experiences to help churches create systems that foster vitality while lowering expenses and endless excessive dependency on clergy. In my work outside the parish, as a writer and consultant, I aim to reach more than 26,000 mainline Protestant churches in the US that have no full-time clergy and consequently are more poised, not less, for a new day of flourishing.

I'm honored to begin 2021 by joining you at Nahant Village Church. I also invite you to join me. Let's loosen the reigns that once restrained our imaginations, gifts and passions. Let's take part in this broader movement of the Holy Spirit. Help me hone models and resources that will bear fruit, not only at NVC, but also for myriad of other congregations that need new tools to see God's handiwork in their midst and participate in it. What we do together can be part of something bigger than any of us. Starting in this season of Epiphany, or "manifestation," let's find out together what God is already doing and follow where that star points us.

## LISTENING FOR SPIRIT WITH REV. JEFF

As Rev. Jeff gets to know Nahant and NVC, he'd like to bring the congregation together online weekly. This can help us get to know him and give us a chance to see each other during the pandemic. These Zoom gatherings will be Wednesdays at 7 pm starting February 3. Agendas will evolve over time, but for starters on February 3: What would you like our Interim Pastor to know about Nahant? What makes Nahanters special and distinct? Help him get the lay of the land this month by sharing a bit with him about you and the community you love.

Meeting ID: 840 9063 1883; Passcode: 965676

## LEARN MORE ABOUT PART-TIME MINISTRY

in an Upcoming Webinar led by Rev. Jeff

This is an invitation to attend a webinar led by Rev. Jeff entitled "**How Part-Time Ministry is Different – and What to Expect.**" This free webinar is sponsored by Practical Resources for Churches. The date is Tuesday, February 9 at 7 pm. See link below to register:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/  
WN\\_sc8c1\\_IWRTCzZWWHDO\\_CQA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sc8c1_IWRTCzZWWHDO_CQA)

Part-time ministry is a fast-growing niche as more than 40% of mainline churches now have no full-time clergy. But expectations inherited from full-time pastorates can hamper success in part-time settings. In this webinar, we'll debunk common misunderstandings and myths about part-time ministry. We'll explore more realistic expectations for pastors, laypeople and church organizations. We'll set the stage for an enhanced vitality that doesn't require going back to full-time pastorates.

## LAY-LED MINISTRIES – THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING AND BEING INVOLVED

As noted in Rev. Jeff message, one of the keys to a successful part-time ministry is to shift from a pastor-centric church to one where laypeople carry out a larger share of the Church's ministries. Some real-life examples were provided in his January 24<sup>th</sup> sermon of people being called to lay down their fishing nets in service of God calling us to action where our abilities are needed, even though we might not have expected that direction. It is time to let go of the nets that we are clinging to in our own lives and at NVC.

All of us now have unique opportunities to do the things that we are passionate about within a Christian framework. You can share your artistic or music skills, help people going through hard times, be part of a team, develop or lead a new initiative, point others to God and so forth. It is a time for out-of-the-box thinking and creativity, and for putting your unique and divine gifts to

work. We want to be a Church that opens minds to new things and introduces new vitality. We want to give individuals renewed joy in ministry as people whose gifts are truly needed and valued. We want to make room for new initiatives that meet real needs in our community. There are numerous examples of the joys and benefits one derives from starting or being involved in a lay-led initiative.

**Bible Study held Tuesdays at 10 am** via Zoom.

Healthy Mindful Eating and how the Bible talks about food and eating are the focus of the **Genesis Supper Club** that meets weekly on **Friday nights at 5 pm**. The Club was started by Samantha Scolamiero during Lent of last year. The on-line gathering has proven to be a wonderful way to support one another during this challenging time.

The **Compassionate Care Group (CCG)** is another example of a lay led initiative aimed at reaching out to our Church community with love, prayers and hope. The response from parishioners has been heart warming. Many are so glad to receive a card or phone call, or a delivery of soup to a sick individual. This initiative has added vitality to our Church.



Making Nahant a more Dementia Friendly Community and the formation of **Connections - the Nahant Memory Café** is another example of a lay-led initiative—a collaboration involving the Nahant Public Library, our Church and the Nahant Council on Aging. This is a get together for individuals experiencing memory loss

and their caregivers, offering themed circle time, entertainment and a creative art activity. A restart of the small monthly gatherings is planned for **Tuesday, February 9, from 10-11 a.m.** via Zoom. See the Town Calendar for details or call 781-581-0306 for more information. Come and join, particularly if you know of someone who is experiencing some form of memory loss. You can help by telling others about this initiative and joining us once a month.

When in person gatherings resume, there also are opportunities to plan a program or activity, bring refreshments or help with outreach and sending out reminders.

We also continue to look for people to participate in the following:

- Leading the virtual coffee hour following the Sunday worship service
- Signing up for scripture readings
- And to come and share your creative expression with us!



## OTHER STEPS WE ARE TAKING

The previous examples clearly show that laypeople can take on pivotal ministries that used to be our Minister's job. However, many of us do not know how – how to do for ourselves and for one another. During Rev. Jeff's Interim Ministry he will devote some of his time to train laypeople in many aspects of their new roles in Christian ministry.

## LAY WORSHIP SERVICES

Starting in February, one Sunday per month will be a lay-led service planned by a small Christian Worship Committee that is being formed. Jen McCarthy will lead this Committee in her dual role as Chairperson of the Diaconate and the NVC Leadership Team. Jen has led or participated in such lay-led services in the past. Back a year or so ago, at a moment's notice, Jen gave a Mother's Day sermon that was inspiring and unforgettable.

Lay-led services are planned for February 14, March 14 and April 11 with future dates to be decided at a later date. We look forward with great anticipation to these upcoming worship services and seeing increased lay involvement in action.

## EXPANDING OUR CARING CAPACITY

### “Christ Caring for People Through People”

Ministers in many congregations are the primary providers of pastoral care. We realize that they cannot do all the caregiving alone. They are there at the moment of crisis but are unable to walk side by side for prolonged periods of time. The Compassionate Care Group led by Christine Alexander formed a few years ago has done yeoman's work in reaching out with love, prayers and hope to members of our Congregation and community.

The Leadership Team is excited to announce that NVC hopes to embark on a new initiative to enhance the caregiving capabilities of this Group and the Church. The program entitled “Stephen Ministry” is designed to organize and equip gifted lay people to multiply the care the Minister and CCG can provide.

The initiative will begin with a five-week training course for a few gifted individuals who have been selected and have agreed to become Stephen Leaders. Following this five-week program, these leaders in turn will train others

in the Congregation to become Stephen Ministers and subsequently provide supervision to this group of ministers. Once trained, these ministers will offer one-to-one Christ-centered care to people who are experiencing life difficulties. This program will be implemented as a partnership with the Minister and the Compassionate Care Group.

Stephen Ministries is a not-for-profit Christian education organization founded in 1975. Its staff of 40 carry out its mission to “equip God's people for the work of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12). Why the name Stephen? In Acts 6, Stephen was chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Since the time of the Apostles, caring ministry has been considered a hallmark of the Christian faith community.

Since its founding, more than 13,000 churches worldwide from 180 denominations have trained over 600,000 laypeople as Stephen Ministers. And millions of hurting people have benefited from their care. Here is one of many testimonies: “Although my needs changed as I went from wife to caregiver to widow, my Stephen Minister's love and support remained a constant. She was **there at every stage of my journey**, helping me through some of the most difficult moments of my life – so I could begin to heal.”

And what often surprises Stephen Ministers is the tremendous personal and spiritual growth they themselves experience. Below are some quotes from a few of them:

- “Stephen Ministry has taught me the power of presence – of being there for someone. The experience has changed my life forever.”
- “Stephen Ministry training has helped me understand how listening is more than just hearing the words someone says – it's responding to their heart.”
- “I'm proud to tell people I'm part of Stephen Ministry. It's changed me so much for the better, and I'm really thankful for that.”

If you are interested in this ministry or would like more information, please contact Marrit Hastings or go to [www.stephenministries.org](http://www.stephenministries.org).



## GOING FORWARD

As was pointed out in the January edition of the Pulpit Rock, Rev. Jeff is currently serving two UCC churches – one in Kensington, NH and Nahant Village Church. The Leadership Team realized that this meant that live Sunday morning worship services with Rev. Jeff would not be possible since his first obligation is to the NH church. With this in mind, we reached an agreement with Rev. Jeff that he would serve in this Interim Minister/Consultant capacity until the end of April. This was in anticipation of an end to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and an ability to re-open our doors for in person worship. Given the arrival of new strains of COVID and a tremendous uptick in COVID cases, the Leadership Team soon became aware of our unrealistic expectations. Even with the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine, it may take many months before we can safely hold indoor gatherings again.

During the course of Rev. Jeff's Interim Ministry, the Leadership Team will be in discussions with him to explore the possibility and options for extending his time at NVC. We are excited about his tenure at NVC as he helps and equips us to invigorate, renew, and grow our Church.

### Search Committee



In the meantime, the Leadership Team realizes that we must continue our search for someone to replace Rev. Jeff when the time comes. Three members of the Settled Minister Search Committee—Bill

Crawford, Marrit Hastings, and Christine Stevens--will resume their work on NVC Settled Minister Profile revisions for subsequent review by the entire Committee and submission to the UCC to initiate our next search. This work may be more extensive than first thought since much may have changed in the two and a half years since the profile was prepared.

### Seeking Your Input

The Search Committee wants to make sure that our Profile reflects the real needs and wants of each of you, our Congregation, and the Nahant community. To that end, each weekly e-news will pose two or three questions which you are invited to think about and respond to. One of the questions might be: What do you feel is special about our Church? There will be a direct link in the e-news to make it easy for you to tell us what you think. So be on the lookout for the weekly e-news and the weekly questions. We hope many of you will take the time to participate and look forward to receiving your responses. They will be one of several inputs to guide our Profile revisions.



## NOTICE OF THE 2021 BUDGET AND 2020 ANNUAL MEETING

Members of Nahant Village Church are invited to attend the 2021 Budget Meeting which will be held via Zoom on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am. The meeting also will serve as last year's annual meeting which could not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please RSVP to our NVC Administrative Assistant, Susan Gilbert, to let her know whether you plan or do not plan to attend the meeting. Also, please indicate whether you wish to receive the proposed 2021 Budget and the 2019 Annual Report prior to the meeting either electronically or via the US Mail. Susan's contact information is [secretary@nahantvillagechurch.org](mailto:secretary@nahantvillagechurch.org) or 781-581-1202. Votes to accept the 2021 Budget and the 2019 Annual Report will be done via proxy (again either electronically or via the mail provided that they are received before the budget meeting). Once you have submitted your RSVP, you will receive the link to this Zoom Budget/Annual Meeting, as well as instructions as to how to vote by proxy.



## CELEBRATIONS AND GOODBYES

### POETS AND POETRY



On January 31, a special celebration was held in honor of **Polly Bradley**'s 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. Polly has lived in Nahant for nearly 60 years with her husband Larry. She is an environmentalist who cofounded Nahant SWIM (Safer Waters in Massachusetts). She also is a poet and has published two collections of

her poetry. At this event, Polly read some of her poems, along with other guest readers. Several of these poems were set to music by former NVC Music Director Joseph Stoddard. Recordings of two of the poems set to music were heard at this event: One was sung by Amy Dow accompanied on piano by Joe Stoddard; the second was played by the Village Ringers with Peter Freisinger on piano.

### Yes for Nahant

#### A poem by Polly Bradley

Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Nahant is an island of chiming bells,  
a green gem in blue seas.

Teach Us to love the slippers shells,  
the laughing gulls, the willow trees.

Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Nahant is an island with nature's wisdom,  
the sound of the waves, the strength of the rock,

Teach us to sing to the ocean's rhythm,

Teach us to draw the beach and dock

Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!!

Nahant could be an island of peace  
a home where we learn to love each other,  
a place of joy where angers cease,  
each girl a sister, each boy a brother.

Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! for Nahant!



We also celebrate the memory of **Muriel Webster** who passed away on January 20 at the age of 92. We extend our condolences to Muriel's family, friends and long-term caregiver. Muriel taught Sunday School at NVC retiring after some thirty years (Jen McCarthy was one of Muriel's many students). She also was our

Church Secretary for a long time. Her husband John who predeceased her was a former Trustee and active in all matters relating to Buildings and Grounds. We cherish the many memories we have of this active NVC couple, as well as their substantial contributions. May you rest in peace, Muriel.

### FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Feb. 10	Bill Crawford
Feb. 17	Peter Freisinger, our Music Director
Feb. 18	Andy Karl
Feb. 19	Paul Richardson
Feb. 20	Joe Benson
Feb. 28	Patti Aswad

### THANK YOU

To the team that produces our Sunday worship services – Rev. Jeff MacDonald, Peter Freisinger, Jen McCarthy, and Christine Stevens. The services are inspirational and professionally produced. Well done!

To the group that recently gathered at the Church to take down and store the beautiful creche donated by Samantha Scolamiero's family. The take down team was led by Samantha, assisted by Joe and John Benson, Olivia Brand, and Cal and Marrit Hastings.

### ZOOM INFORMATION

**Worship Services** (Sundays at 10:30 am)

Meeting ID: 874 0946 3319; Passcode: 01908

**Bible Study** (Tuesdays from 10-11 pm)

Meeting ID: 838 6095 4980; Passcode: 01908

**Genesis Supper Club** (Fridays from 5 pm)

Meeting ID: 881 0920 8580; Passcode: 01908

**Listening for the Spirit with Rev. Jeff** (Wednesdays at 7 pm) Meeting ID: 840 9063 1883; Passcode: 965676

You can also dial in by phone: 1-301-715-8592

**See last page for Zoom instructions**



**NAHANT VILLAGE CHURCH**  
**27 Cliff Street, PO Box 77, Nahant, MA**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Call the Church at 781-581-1202, anyone on the Leadership Team, or Rev. Jeff for any urgent pastoral care or other needs. Phone messages at the Church are checked daily and forwarded to the appropriate individual on our Team.

**Church** – 781-581-1202

**Interim Minister: Rev. G. Jeffrey MacDonald**

([revjeffnvc at gmail dot com](mailto:revjeffnvc@gmail.com) or 978-270-0114)

**Leadership Team**

**Jen McCarthy** (Chair) ([edwarthy@hotmail.com](mailto:edwarthy@hotmail.com) or 781-316-7309)

also Board of Deacons Chair

**Nancy Cantelmo** ([nlc31@comcast.net](mailto:nlc31@comcast.net) or 781-599-3977 or 617-794-6477)

Memorials/Music Committee Chair

**Bill Crawford** ([crawfordwm@verizon.net](mailto:crawfordwm@verizon.net) or 781-581-0411)

Board of Trustee Chair

**Marrit Hastings** ([calhast@hotmail.com](mailto:calhast@hotmail.com) or 781-581-5691)

Treasurer/ Pulpit Rock

**Maria Welsh** ([mariawelsh@ymail.com](mailto:mariawelsh@ymail.com) or 781-856-5753) –

**Buildings and Grounds**

**Cal Hastings** [calhast@hotmail.com](mailto:calhast@hotmail.com) or 781-581-5691)

**Andy Puleo** ([andynahant@aol.com](mailto:andynahant@aol.com) or 617-293-3913)

**Compassionate Care**

**Christine Alexander** ([chris2954@gmail.com](mailto:chris2954@gmail.com) or 781-864-5367)

## ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

You can sign-in on a computer, tablet, smartphone, or dial in by phone for audio only.

For Smartphones or Tablets - download the Zoom App

For Computers - download the Zoom program

### Internet Instructions:

Go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) or [zoom.com](http://zoom.com) works also

- Click “Join a Meeting,” and enter the Meeting ID, and click the blue “Join” button.
- You may see a message that says “Launching” on your screen. If the meeting doesn’t automatically launch, click the blue “Click Here” link, and then click join from your browser.
- If you are new to Zoom, you will be asked to type your (display) name so that other participants can see your name.
- Type in the Passcode when prompted. You may have a pop up to join with or without video. If a request pops up, choose to join the meeting with Internet audio.

At the bottom of the screen, you have options to turn your microphone and camera on or off. Tap the screen if you don’t see the icons at the bottom.

### Phone Instructions:

You may wish to call before the service or meeting starts to ensure you have enough time to get into the Zoom call.

- Dial the number indicated for the service or meeting above. When prompted enter the **Meeting ID** for the listed above followed by **pound symbol #**.
- When prompted for your Participant ID, press **pound symbol: #**
- When prompted for **Passcode**, press the passcode listed for the service or meeting indicated above followed by **pound symbol: #**.

If you press any of the numbers incorrectly, press **pound symbol: #** to start over.

To mute and unmute yourself, press the star symbol and 6: **\*6**

The host may mute anyone during the service to reduce background noise.