



**First Congregational Church of Ashfield ❖ United Church of Christ**  
***Creating Community, Welcoming All***

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**Rev. David Jones, Minister**

**Reflection      November 6, 2022      “Your Young Will See Visions, Your Old Will Dream Dreams”      Bruce Bennett**

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be acceptable to you, O God, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

“Your Young Will See Visions, Your Old Will Dream Dreams”... I dreamt about baby Hugo all night after hearing about his birth on Wednesday. I guess I know which group that puts me in!... I’ve been thinking about him almost constantly ever since. And it’s not just me who is “over the Moon” about his birth. Everyone I’ve talked to seems just as excited.

I hope you weren’t upset about us having a Pentecost Sunday scripture reading today, so far out of season. Why did I choose to abandon the lectionary and instead pick the Pentecost reading from the Book of Acts? I did so because of the part in it about how people from all over, who spoke all those different languages, suddenly were able to understand each other when the Holy Spirit moved through them. Do you feel a sudden Spirit moving through us? I do.

It sounds also like something that needs to happen in many places around the world today, including right here in the U.S. So many people don’t understand each other even when they’re speaking the same language. It’s like words don’t even have a shared meaning anymore.

And I chose for our Old Testament Reading that very well-known passage from Ecclesiastes, made famous in the song “Turn, Turn, Turn.” The *New Revised Standard Version - Updated Edition* even includes the sub-heading “Everything Has Its Time.” This is a special time in the life of our church, and it’s a special time in the life of our nation and our world...not all sweetness and light...but clearly an extraordinary time.

Have you read the quote at the top of today’s bulletin? Maria Tallchief, a member of the Osage Nation and one of America’s greatest ballerinas, is quoted to have said

*“Very often you are in the right place, at the right time, but you don’t know it.”*

That could very well apply to Hugo. He’s just a tiny baby. He doesn’t know we’re all going gaga over him...and this is before we’ve even laid eyes on him.

He doesn’t know that he has arrived in the right place, at the right time. But arrived he has, a new member of our pastoral family.

He doesn’t know that by his arrival he is moving through us all.

He doesn’t know that by his arrival he is reaching out to us all, not with tongues of fire, but, maybe we can imagine reaching out with his tiny, tiny hands, grasping our pinky fingers, pulling us toward the next phases of our lives, together as a church, and together as a church community.

David is taking the first two weeks of his parental leave right away, and he plans to take the remainder of his three months probably spread out, in some way not yet fully planned, during the five-month interval from February through June.

Of course this time is special for Caity and David, a time of new life for them, but it's also special for us as a congregation. It's a time when we can ponder who we want to be: to dream, imagine, envision, propose, try out new things, and be wide open to what may call us.

Those of us who were here in the first part of 2012, when Rev. Kate Stevens had her sabbatical, may remember that we made that a special time too. In some ways we similarly dreamed and explored and tried new things.

We aren't imagining this coming time as a repeat of 2012, but we do hope that it will be special and important and a deep dive into the fullness of the spirit of this church and of us as a church community. We hope it might take us to those thin places where we could hear Divine callings from our future.

A subcommittee of the deacons, with David's guidance, has started to lay the foundation for this all-church experience to take place mostly during David's parental leave time. We'll be sharing bits of it as it starts to come together. The most important part of it is that it's not a spectator sport. It works only if everyone helps. Next Sunday there's a Congregational Meeting after worship, and we hope we can discuss it then.

I hope we can have a good turnout, young and old. "Your young will see visions, your old will dream dreams."

I hope someday soon we, all the world around, will be able to understand each other and "live as one."

Blessings to the youngest of us. Blessings to the oldest of us. Blessings to everyone in between. Blessings to all the creatures of the Earth and to our living planet Earth herself.

Alleluia and Amen.