

THE UNION COURIER

Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Reverend Gail L. Miller, Pastor

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



May 2014



Joy and Purpose

Those two words best summarize my sabbatical time in Cape Town, South Africa. Our days were filled with joy and purpose.

Joy: I often speak of the difference between joy and happiness. How joy is deeper than happiness and a by-product of faith in Christ. He brings joy no matter what the situation is at hand. It is not superficial nor naïve.

And in Cape Town, we were surrounded by people who know the joy of the Lord: the volunteers we joined in serving, the people running the various local ministries, the children in the schools and programs, the teachers and principals, the folks at church. Their lives were not easy, the challenges many faced were immense; but Christ was present and they knew their Lord, and the joy was contagious!

Purpose: The blessing of sabbatical and of traveling far from home is that our lives had a singular focus. Our days were full and often busy, but all of it pointed in one direction: serving God by serving however and whomever we could. "How can I be of help?" "What else can I do?" "No really, that's what I'm here for."

I pray daily that these two — Joy and Purpose — will remain at the forefront for me. But even more, how I want to share them! And I truly believe that the only way for joy and purpose to increase is to KNOW OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. We cannot manufacture these qualities in our lives — they are God given and are a gift.

To live in the joy of the Lord and God's purposes will also require that we make some changes and some choices. But if you are seeking after Christ, they will be for the better — for you, for those in your immediate circle, for the greater good of the communities in which you live.

Don't just be a "fan" of Christ's, cheering from the stands while all the action is down on the field. Join in the game and be a "follower." You will know joy and find purpose you never imagined.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail".

Sabbatical Presentation with Slide Show
Wednesday, June 4, at 7:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall



Our Church Family



Ongoing Prayer List—Refreshing June 1

Starting June 1, we will be “refreshing” our prayer list twice a year. We will “start over” on June 1, so if there is a particular name you would like to remain on the list or add to the list, please let us know by May 28. Contact Pastor Miller or Carol (978-448-2091 or email: unioncc@uccgroton.org). Thank you.

Ruth Allen	Bruce Elder	Janet Luttrell	Holly Norton
Kristen Beyer	Ann Emerson	Liz Macarilla	Lynn O'Brien & Family
Tony Biegler	Donald Fitzgerald	Diane Mahon	Margrit & John Oldenburg
Sue Bisceglia	Jackie Huggins	Rita McNally	Brent Peters
M. E. Bluestone	Hannah Keenan	The Meyer Family	Betsy Pielocik
Kathi Bond	Walter Kelleher	Kathy Miller	Karen Sands
Virginia Bugbee	Emma Kennehan	Maddy Grace Milot	Spurling Family
Will & JC Dinyes	Scarlett Kostum	Linda Morey	Lucille Temple
Doug Downen	Suzanne Lampognana	Shelby Murphy	Bert Tompkins
Roslyn Edmunds-Bauer	Doris Lewis	Lavon McMurrian	Margaret Watson



- Hasi, recovering from surgery in April.
- The family of Cynthia Ladley, who died on April 9 at the age of 94.
- Norman Faunce, recovering from surgery on April 24.
- Helen Misselhorn, at Beth Israel Medical Center



Thank You!

We would like to thank all the families who purchased Easter flowers to help decorate the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday. The Sanctuary was glorious in celebration of the resurrection of Our Lord!

—The Flower Ministry

May Birthdays

Daniel Evans	05/01	Kyle Plausse	05/14
Anne Cahill	05/03	Joel Hughes	05/15
Monique Meehan	05/04	Kelly Sullivan	05/16
Lila Jean Dooney	05/04	Mike Smith	05/20
Jocelyn Byron-Kelly	05/05	Ginny Fraser	05/21
Charlotte Caiozzo	05/05	Emily Hanson	05/21
Cristina Davy	05/06	Katie Milano	05/23
Dena Hance	05/07	Drew Davenport	05/24
Deb Sheilds	05/08	Bill Gale, Jr.	05/24
Rob Chase	05/10	Caleb Brennan	05/28
Margaret Sullivan	05/10	John Fortier	05/30
Nancy Huguenin	05/12	John Brooks, Sr.	05/31
Ariel Dumont	05/14		



*Birthdays
Blessings
to You All!*

If we missed your birthday, it is not in our database. Please email unioncc@uccgroton.org to give us your birthday. Also, we would like to recognize significant anniversaries — would you share that information with us?

Church News



We Need Your Input! Church Assessment Survey Due Sunday, May 4 (by end of day)

The GPS Task Force is asking everyone to complete the Church Survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/uccgroton>. *We are hoping to get 150 responses. So far, we are halfway there!! Please be sure to get your survey in by the end of the day on May 4.* (Your responses are anonymous.) We ask that each member of your household over the age of 14 complete the survey. This survey will take no more than 30 minutes to complete. If you have any question, please see anyone on the GPS Task Force: Bonnie Biocchi, Tim Dumont, Mary Hanson, Pete Hnath, Stefanie Lempp, Halsey Platt and Larry Robinson



April 30, 2014

Our finances are healthy and on track as anticipated to this point in the year. The endowments have increased \$30K since the beginning of the year — \$20K in gifts and \$10K from interest on investments.

We discussed the PPRC's suggested changes to their purpose and duties, anticipating a proposed change to the By-Laws at the next Stated Meeting.

We enjoyed "roundtable reporting" from a number of committees, highlighting the Handbell Concert on May 17, and the Missions Committee's need for additional members. An all-church family retreat was also suggested for 2015.

—Lori McElroy, Clerk



From Your Sabbatical Pastor

Thank you so much for the opportunity of serving you for Gail's sabbatical. I enjoyed every moment of my time with all of you. Thank you for welcoming me into your church family.

I also wanted to thank you for the silver bookmark. I will treasure it always knowing that everytime I pick up my Bible and see it, memories of my time with you will come flooding back. Thank you for such a special gift.

Many blessings to all of you as you continue to grow and flourish in God's love.

Peace of Christ,
Christina



June Courier

Please submit items for the June Courier by Thursday, May 15, in order to be sure they get into this issue. *All submissions to the Courier should be emailed to Carol Zaiatz at unioncc@uccgroton.org. Thank you.*



New Members Class

Sunday, May 18

12:00 — 3:00 p.m. in the Church Parlor

New to the Church? Want to Know More?

Wondering About Membership?

A group of us will meet on Sunday, May 18, to talk about the Christian faith and how it gets lived out in a local congregation — this congregation. Attending the class does not obligate you to join. Curiosity and questions are most welcome. Childcare and lunch are provided. R.S.V.P. to the Church Office (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org) so we can plan for food and babysitting. Questions? See Gail or any Deacon. (If you are interested but cannot make these date, please let us know.)



May 4—*The Road to Emmaus*
Luke 24:13-35

May 11—*Early Believers*
Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-37

May 18—*God's House*
John 14:15-21

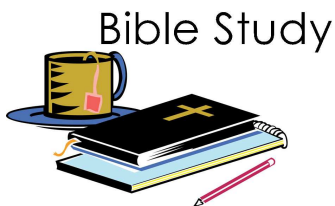
May 25—*The Promise of the Holy Spirit*
John 14:15-21

Christian Education Committee

—Pete Hnath, Acting Chair
—Dena Hance

—Jean Armstrong
—Diane Landry

—Anne Cahill



Bible Study

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

7:30 p.m. in the Pastor's Office

We continue with the *Old Testament* to understand the connections made between David's reign and the lord-ship of Christ; beginning with the promise of David in line and ending with scripture from *Revelation* concerning John's vision in the heavenly court. Everyone is welcome! Join us as we read the scripture and the lesson from *The Present Word* together. Contact: Janet Kennedy

Thursday Morning Bible Study

10:00 a.m. at 26 Court Street

Hebrews is proving to be a rewarding study with a great mixture of theology, scripture, and exhortation. The author's passion for Jesus comes through in the writing. We will meet May 1 and 8 and then not until June 5, as Marvin will be away. We will continue with Hebrews until school ends for the summer. Join us for tea, coffee, cookies and good conversation. Contact: Marvin Caldwell ()

Coming in June...



Family Ministry—Let's Play Ball!

Lowell Spinners Game

Saturday, June 14 at 5:05 p.m.

Springtime means baseball is in the air! Let's catch a minor league game together before the school year is over. If you are interested in attending this game, please contact Corissa or Larry Robinson () or look for the sign up sheet during coffee hour starting Sunday, May 4. Ticket prices will be around \$6-8/person, depending on the number of people that attend the game.

Spring Craft Fair—Thank You!

Thank you to all who volunteered your time and talents to make the Spring Craft Fair (April 12) a success. Our final total for the day was \$1,400. We exceeded last year! A special thank you to Joel Hughes and the kitchen folk. The food was delicious (Rappie Pie) and the service was outstanding! Thank you to our church crafters. There were lots of new items and the table looked great! Thank you to Tom Hanson and his breakdown/set-up crew.



Thank you to Mark Rzeknikiewicz and our bakers for providing delicious treats and manning the Bake Table. An extra special thanks to Bonnie Martin for her guidance, experience and time.



Fall Harvest Fair

Friends of the Harvest Fair Meeting **Sunday, May 4, after Coffee Hour** **Parish House Front Room**

We will meet in the Parish House Front Room after coffee hour. While our last meeting was quite fruitful, we still need your help! If you have any ideas or are interested in a particular area, please join us. Thank you to those who have already volunteered. The following areas now have Chairs:

- Bake Table—Mark Rzeznikiewicz
 - Books—Martha Dean
 - Children's Clothing—Krista Kubick
 - Children's Toys—Charlene Kelly
 - Christmas Table—Lois Berg, Lori McElroy, and Barbara Wyman
 - Church Craft Table—Drew & Erica Davenport
 - Clean-up Crew for Fellowship Hall and Nursery—Tom Hanson
 - Craft Table/Setting Up Eating Area—Bonnie Martin
 - Jewelry Table—Mary Hanson
 - Kitchen—Joel Hughes
 - Pie Baking—Mary Hanson
 - Publicity, including being Carol's primary contact—Lorrie Morgan
 - Silent Auction—Kristen Ansted
 - Yard Sale—John Biocchi
-



Harvest Fair **Saturday, October 4**

Spring Cleaning? Do you have children's clothing in clean, good condition? Do you have any books, CDs, DVDs, or VHS tapes you would like to "clean out" and donate to the church for the fall fair? Boxes are available for you to bring them in now and clear up that space; there's no need to wait. Just put them in the boxes under the mirror in the hallway outside of Fellowship Hall.

Children's Clothing: We are looking for children's clothing that is in clean good condition. Think Fall and Winter. Please place in a bag, labeled for size.

Books: We need a new supply of books. All kinds welcome (no textbooks or encyclopedias please). We also need printer paper boxes.

Silent Auction: It's never too early to start thinking about this year's Silent Auction. That masterpiece painting, the throw blanket, the doll house, baby clothes, etc. Whatever your talent or hobby, please consider making an item for auction. And the following items are always crowd pleasers... tickets to sporting events, concerts, performances and vacation house weekends. The Silent Auction is always a great success, and we can make it even better this year with your generous contributions!

Handmade Items/Woodworking: Keep us in mind this summer as you are busy creating new things!

Contact
(Bonnie Martin (or) or
Lorrie Morgan (or om)

Missions

The Heifer Project

We thank all the children and their families who worked hard earning quarters to help us fill the coin tubes over the past couple of months. With the addition of traveling cows, Hope, Faith and Charity, we were able to expand and promote the Heifer project within our community. The Missions Committee is very excited to meet in May to discuss which animals will be purchased with your generous donations...stay tuned.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you for hosting our little herd of cows traveling for Heifer! Many thanks to the cow couriers who transported the cows to their many destinations. Preliminary count for cows and coins is a little over \$800!!! Watch this space for the grand announcement of which animals we will send, along with training to empower people to create better lives for themselves. The grand goal is to end hunger and poverty while caring for the earth.




Strengthen the Church Offering

This is one of four special mission offerings we take to support the United Church of Christ.

- Funding new church starts and invigorating existing congregations
- Nurturing lay and pastoral leadership
- Building youth and young adult ministries
- Supporting the *God is Still Speaking Ministry* and its extravagant welcome for all within the United Church of Christ.

The collection will take place in worship on May 11 and 18. Your gifts are directed to activities and programs of the Massachusetts Conference, as well as the UCC's national ministries.



234 Barnum Road • Devens, MA
P.O. Box 1 • Ayer, MA 01432
978-772-4627 • www.loavesfishespantry.org

The following are food donations that are most needed at our local food pantry, *Loaves & Fishes*:

Ensure/Instant Breakfast
Baked Beans/Pork-n-Beans
Canned Meats/Stews/Hash
Mac & Cheese
Pasta -Ziti/Rotini/Shells/Rigatoni
Helpers/Pasta Sides
Rice-a-Roni/Boxed Flavored Rice
Canned Tomato Products

Beans - Garbanzo & Re-fried
Canned Beets/Spinach/Sauerkraut
White Tuna
Depends (Lg & XL sizes)
Poise
Feminine Care Products
Shampoo/Conditioner
Deodorant

Bring your odnations to church and place them on the landing on your way into worship.

Missions Committee

—Janet Kennedy, Chair
—Larry Robinson

—Tony DiCenzo

—Janice Flynn

Music



Music Appreciation Day Sunday, May 11

All the choirs will participate in worship on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11. We hope you can join us for worship and for the fellowship hour afterward, when we will offer our choir directors tokens of appreciation for their dedicated leadership.



Spring Handbell Concert *The New England Ringers "Nocturnal Journey"* Saturday, May 17, beginning at 4:00 p.m. Our Sanctuary

Mark your calendar, invite your friends! Come join us at a Spring Handbell Concert here at church, featuring our very own Liz Smith and Cheryl Townsend, who currently ring with *The New England Ringers*. Tickets for the concert are \$10.00 each and are available in advance through the Church Office (978-448-2091) and at coffee hour.

Spaghetti Supper Afterwards (Mission Trip Fundraiser)

Donations will go directly to help support the Youth Mission Trip to Queens, NY, this June. Plan to stay for a home-cooked meal, served by the youth.

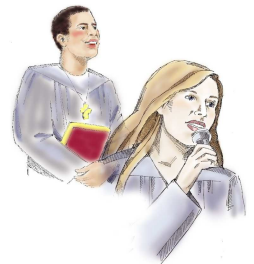


Good music and good food — an evening not to pass up! Hope to see you there!!



Summer Musicians Needed!

Spring is finally here, and summer is just around the corner. In fact, we go to our Summer Worship Schedule on June 22, and so we are looking now for musicians from the Congregation to provide music in Worship. Do you sing or play an instrument (piano, organ, or other)? Please contact Pastor Gail, Bernard Crane, or anyone from the Music Committee, if you wish to schedule a date. Let us know soon so you can get the date that you want. We may have a men's chorus one Sunday, as we have in the past, and perhaps a women's group as well.



Music Committee:

—Sheila Mitchell, Chair
—Jon Morgan

—Paul Brown
—Bonnie Marchesani

—Heather Houde
—Barbara Wyman

Big House

Just So You Know

Join Us!



Big House Youth Group Open to Students in Grades 8-12

Sunday, May 4 (UCC)

7:00-8:30 p.m. *The Case for Service*

Saturday, May 10

Post Office Food Drive Service Project — watch for more details on this

Saturday, May 17

3:30—8:00 p.m. Spaghetti Supper at UCC

Just So You Know

Union Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

220 Main Street

Groton, Massachusetts 01450

978-448-2091

www.uccgroton.org

The Reverend Gail Miller

Cell phone: 978-877-2177

gail@uccgroton.org

Tuesday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
or by appointment (please call the church office).

Carol Zaiatz—Office Administrator

unioncc@uccgroton.org

Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday, 9:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
(Church Office is closed on Mondays)

Music Director: Bernard Crane

Cherub Choir: Bonnie Marchesani

Handbell Choir: Cheryl Townsend

Church Officers

Moderator: Stefanie Lempp

Treasurer: Kelli Hnath

Clerk: Lori McElroy

Collector: Bob Goudey

May Deacons

Greg Balligan/Steve Legge

Committee Chairs

Buildings & Grounds Committee:

Jeff Kubick

Christian Education Committee:

Pete Hnath (Acting Chair)

Church Council Member-at-Large:

John Gervais

Diaconate Committee:

Tim Dumont

Endowment Committee:

Lorrie Morgan

Missions Committee:

Janet Kennedy

Music Committee:

Sheila Mitchell

Pastor Parish Relations Committee:

Bebe Goudey

Stewardship & Finance Committee:

Liz Smith

Union Congregational Church
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220 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



May

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May Highlights

Sunday, May 4

Holy Communion

Sunday School: *The Road to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35*

Friends of Harvest Fair Planning Meeting After Coffee Hour
in the Parish House Front Room (see p. 6)

Sunday, May 11 (Mother's Day) — Music Appreciation (see p. 8)

Senior, Junior, Cherub and Handbell Choirs

Sunday School: *Early Believers, Acts 2:43-47, 4:32-37*

Saturday, May 17

New England Ringers Handbell Concert at 4:00 p.m. (see p. 8)

And stay after the concert for a...

Spaghetti Dinner (Fundraiser for the Youth Mission Trip)

Sunday, May 18

Sunday School: *God's House, John 14:1-14*

New Members Class 12:00—3:00 p.m. (see p. 4)