

THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



June 2014

FROM THE *Happy Anniversary!*



As we undergo the shift from "school year" to "summer schedule," which takes place this month, it's easy to miss an important anniversary date. On June 1st, I'll have served as your pastor for 8 years! And, taken historically, I will become "average."

Since its founding in 1826, our church has had 20 pastors (not including interims); and the average length of stay is 8 years. (For the number types among us, the MEDIAN length of stay is 6 years.) The longest pastor to serve was Paul Wedlock (1972 - 1996) and the shortest was Charles Kittredge (1833 - 1835). Of the 20 pastors, 8 of them served four years or less.

I read their names on the back walls of the Sanctuary and often wonder about the stories behind the names and dates. I imagine the celebrations shared in the Sanctuary through the decades – weddings, baptisms, confirmations; the meals shared in the Fellowship Hall; the prayers offered by the bedside and by the graveside. How I'd love to see a video montage of the history of our church – little vignettes of what it was like before there was electricity, or before the Sanctuary was raised up to the second story.

I wonder about the volumes of sermons preached from the pulpit, the hours of pastoral care shared, the miles covered (by horse and buggy and then by car), the sleepless nights of worry, the hands held, the joyful moments shared between these pastors and their congregations through the years. And I wonder how their ministries, and the congregations of our past history in this place, have shaped OUR congregation today.

They say that congregations have a DNA – that is the deep structures of identity that shapes (pre-determines even?) who we are now. It's an interesting, and fitting, image for the church which is the BODY of Christ.

While I was in South Africa, I read a book by Desmond Tutu and his daughter (also a pastor) Mpho Tutu entitled *made for goodness, and why this makes all the difference*. In it, they call the reader to hope, to joy, and to claim the goodness we were made for.

With God's eyes we can see ourselves as we are, with all of our pride, every lack, all our limitations, and each prejudice. And we can see ourselves as we truly are - not sinners in need of saving but saints in need of seeing. And all of us are good. No, not just good, but very good. We are precious to God; the crown of creation, beautiful beyond compare. Very, very good. (p. 199)

And I would hope that we would see our church similarly. And that, as we pause to reflect on where we've been and where we are going, we never lose sight of this fundamental truth. What a joy it is to serve with you here in this place and at this time. Happy Anniversary!

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



Our Church Family



Ongoing Prayer List—Refreshed as of June 1

In order to keep our prayer list current and relevant, the Deacons have decided to "refresh" the list twice a year. Our first "refresh" will be Sunday, June 1, where we will "start over." If you would like to add or return a name to this list, please email Carol Zaiatz (unioncc@uccgroton.org) with the person's name and the prayer request, or contact Gail Miller directly (gail@uccgroton.org), and we will gladly add the name to the list. The list below consists of names we have received notification to keep or add to the list as of June 1. As always, names can be added or removed at any time with a call or email to Carol or Gail.

Sue Adams
Kristen Beyer

Mr. C.
Suzanne Lampognana

Janet Luttrell
Lynn O'Brien and Family

The Middlemiss Family and
baby Jack
Brent Peters



- David, Nancy, Maddie and Travis Bugbee, in the death of David's mother, Virginia Bugbee.
- Barbara Lefebvre and family in the death of her mother, Margaret Watson.
- The missing girls in Nigeria and their families.
- Brent Peters, recovering at home after recent surgery.
- Bonnie Martin, undergoing surgery for a kidney stone on Monday, June 2.

June Birthdays

Bill Gale, Sr.	06/01	Amy Nickerson	06/13	Kim Peters	06/25
Liam Clinton	06/01	Kathy Bates	06/14	Ruth Silva	06/25
Gerry Cahill	06/05	Mary Claire Cocossa	06/18	Isabella Meehan	06/27
Barbara Avey	06/07	Liz Smith	06/21	Bill Semienko	06/28
Peg Elwood	06/09	Carol Zaiatz	06/24	Edward Stratton	06/28
Conor Bresnahan	06/09	Jenn Quinn	06/24	Bill Nickerson	06/29
Caroline Cocossa	06/09	Cailidh Houde	06/24	Jonathan Foster	06/30
Haley Cahill	06/10	Alison Houde	06/24		
Sammi Smith	06/11	Kim Burgess	06/25		

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

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Forum Sunday, June 1, after church

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will host an open discussion focusing on their purpose and scope. Over the past year the committee has prayerfully considered the direction in which this committee should grow, mindful that times and needs change. They have read articles, books, and other churches' descriptions of their PPRC's. They would like to share their thoughts with you and listen to your input and concerns. In particular, we are hoping to hear from people who were involved in the church between 1995 and 2005, as well as those who are interested in learning about our recent past. (Refreshments will be served.)

Church News



CHURCH COUNCIL **May 28, 2014**

The annual reviews of church staff will occur in June.

The Stewardship & Finance Committee continues to improve the budgeting cycle; they also plan to review and implement appropriate controls to ensure best practices in all areas of our financial life.

Buildings and Grounds have accomplished much and have plans for even more; they will begin to budget for larger projects.

We discussed the Harvest Fair and the transitional "season" we are in regarding its leadership and purpose in the congregation.

Sabbatical Slide Show

Two Showings this Month

Wednesday, June 4, 7:00 p.m. and

Wednesday, June 18, 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

Gail will share details of her recent time serving in mission in Cape Town, South Africa.



Annual Stated Meeting of the Congregation

This year, we will be holding the **Annual Stated Meeting on September 14** instead of in June. If you have any questions, feel free to contact our Moderator, Stefanie Lempp ().



Nursery Update

After three years of service, we say good-bye to Marcia, our Nursery Attendant, who has resigned in order to spend more time with her growing family of grandchildren. The Christian Education Committee will review and update the job description for the Nursery Attendant, publicize the position and interview candidates. If you know someone who might be interested in this job, direct them to Gail or Carol in the office for details/job description.



Summer Coffee Hour

Summer Coffee Hour begins June 22. Helpers needed!

With the warmer weather we'll switch to a relaxed mode for Fellowship Hour. Hot coffee will be supplemented by cold beverages and lighter fare. Weather permitting, we'll set up on the front lawn to enjoy fresh air and watch the children play on the grass. Join us!

Please sign up to help out! It's beyond easy!
Go to <http://tinyurl.com/UCCFellowshipHosting>

Questions? See Joel Hughes, Mark Rzeznikiewicz, Gordon Row or Irene Katrouba

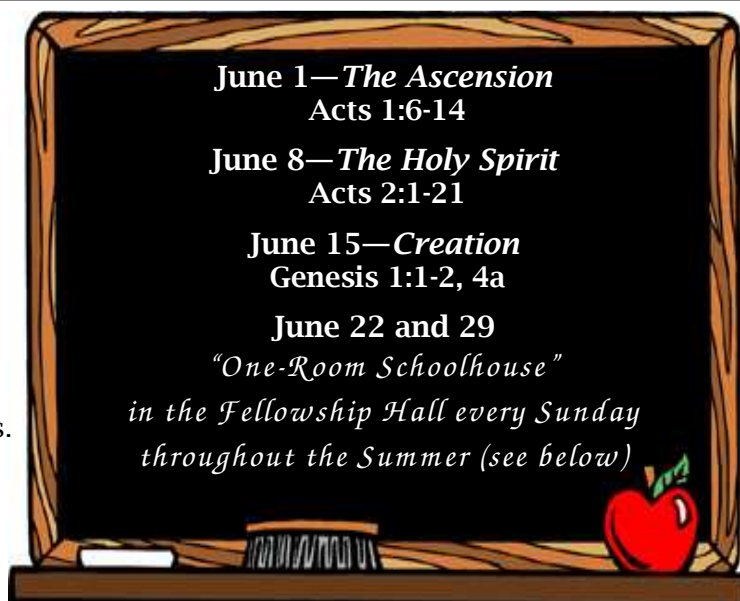


Mid-Summer Courier

The "Mid-Summer Courier" will be mailed the beginning of July and will include information for **July and August**. Please email (unioncc@uccgroton.org) your information by **Monday, June 16**. *This should include any upcoming Sunday School information that will need to get to the Congregation prior to September.*

Sunday School Teacher Appreciation

In 2013-2014, 40 people volunteered their time to make our Sunday School classes possible. Some are long-time participants, while others taught or helped for the first time. Together, they taught approximately 140 classes to over 50 children during the course of the year! In their honor we have purchased and inscribed Children's Bibles to go in the pews alongside the adult Bibles and in the Sunday School classrooms. **June 8** we will acknowledge our Sunday School Teachers in worship. Sharing the Word of God with our children is such a joy!



Something for Children During Summer Worship *One-Room Schoolhouse*

The Christian Education Committee is committed to making Sunday worship during the summer months inviting for families with children. Offering something for children (as well as nursery care) allows parents to worship undistracted, and it keeps us more “together” rather than so scattered.

We are looking for a person (or two) for each of the summer Sundays who would spend 20 minutes or so with the children downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. The church has a variety of kid-friendly activities to choose from, including reading a story, doing a craft, or singing songs. You need no Sunday School teaching experience, simply the ability to be with a small group of children in a leadership role. If you can share a few minutes of your time, we'll give you an activity to do with the children — it's that simple!

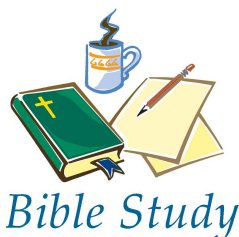
Please contact Gail Miller (978-448-2091 or gail@uccgroton.org), if you can take a Sunday between June 22 and August 31.

Christian Education Committee

—Pete Hnath, Acting Chair
—Dena Hance

—Jean Armstrong
—Diane Landry

—Anne Cahill



Wednesday Evening Bible Study 7:30 p.m. in the Pastor's Office

The early Christians used Hebrew scripture to help them understand and interpret Jesus' crucifixion. We'll read from Hosea and Isaiah along with Luke to gain insight into the resurrection and the fulfillment of the Hebrew promises through Jesus' life. Join us at 7:30 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

Thursday morning Bible Study will wrap up our study of Hebrews in time for summer vacation. It's been interesting to find gems of verses and phrases of the sort: So that came from Hebrews. We recommend it for summer reading. We'd love to have you join us come September for sparkling conversation, tea and cookies. *Contact: Marvin Caldwell (978-448-5496)*

Fall Harvest Fair / Family Ministry / Music

Next *Friends of the Harvest Fair* Meeting

Sunday, June 8, after Coffee Hour

Fellowship Hall

If you have any ideas, are interested in a particular area, or want to participate in any way (large or small), please join us. Thank you to those who have already volunteered so far:

- Attic Treasures - Barbara Wyman and Liz McQuillin
- Bake Table - Mark Rzeknikiewicz
- Books - Martha Dean
- Children's Clothing - Krista Kubick
- Children's Toys - Charlene Kelly
- Christmas Table - Lois Berg and Lori McElroy
- Church Craft Table - Drew & Erica Davenport
- Clean-up Crew for FH 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
- Wood Items - Leon Avey
- Yard Sale - John Biocchi

Family Ministry



Family Ministry—Let's Play Ball!

Lowell Spinners Game

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

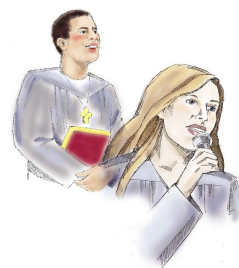
Springtime means baseball is in the air! Let's catch a minor league game together before the school year is over. If you are interested in attending this game, please contact Corissa or Larry Robinson () or look for the sign up sheet during coffee hour starting Sunday, May 4. Ticket prices will be around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

Summer Music



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

Missions

Youth Mission Trip

At the half way point of this year, the Missions Committee has requested expenditure of half of the budgeted amounts to be disbursed to charities that were selected by the committee. The following organizations will receive donations that are included as part of the Missions budget with the source being pledged donations:

Loaves and Fishes: \$412
Hagar Sisters \$312
Pepperell PACH (food pantry) \$250, which represents an annual amount
UCC (Our Church's Wider Mission) \$1,500

Amounts received from special collections this year include One Great Hour of Sharing (\$935) and Heifer Project (\$909 to date). Thank you for the support for all these worthy causes!

The committee wants to wish the Youth Mission Trip participants safe travels and a rewarding experience on their Mission Trip to Queens, New York!

Missions Committee

—Janet Kennedy, Chair
—Larry Robinson

—Tony DiCenzo

—Janice Flynn

Youth Mission Trip

June 22—June 29

Queens, New York



Please hold these kids in your prayers and offer your gratitude to the adults who are serving as their advisors. How blessed we are to have this opportunity, and so many who said “yes” to God’s call on their lives to serve in this manner.

Youth

Will Cullen
Maddie Eggiman
Nicki Eggiman
Michaela Estes
TJ Fetterolf
Andrew Gingras
Connor Johnson
Eleanor Keytel
Anthony Lovezzola
Danika Manalo
Cary Peregoy
Abby Pezanowski

Leah Pezanowski
Alex Platt
Gordon Platt
Will Premru
Sean Prestia
Kathryn Preston
Amy Sjoberg
Casey Sjoberg
Izzy Smith
Sammi Smith
Olivia Straw
Mitchell Townsend

Advisors: Pete Hnath, Stefanie Lempp, Gail Miller, Halsey Platt

Important Mission Trip dates:

Sunday, June 8 6:15—7:00 p.m.—Parents and Youth Information Meeting
7:00—8:30 p.m. at church—Big House Youth Group

Sunday, June 22 9:00 a.m. Worship—Commissioning Prayer in Church and Departure

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.

(Summer Office Hours starting 6/23)

Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
9:30 a.m.—5:30 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

June Deacons

Tim Dumont and Greg Balligan

Prayer List

Feel free to call the church office to add or remove names from the prayer list.

Booking Events

When planning meetings, please call the church office to be sure the space is available.

Sermons

Copies of Pastor Miller's sermons are available on our website.

Weekly News Email

Gail prepares the email to be sent from the Office Administrator's account, usually on Fridays.

Name Tags help us become friends. Please wear yours. Sign up on the nametag list on the small table in the vestibule, call or email the church office. You can use one of the blank name tags in the basket on the table until yours is ready.

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

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June Highlights

Sunday, June 1

Worship and Holy Communion

Senior Choir

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Forum after church (see p. 2)

Sabbatical Slide Show—Two Showings this Month

Wednesday, June 4 **and** **Wednesday, June 18**

7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, June 8 Teacher Appreciation Sunday



Sunday, June 15

Music: Maggie Wickham (solo); Cherub Choir



Sunday, June 22 9:00 a.m.

Summer Worship Begins!

Children's Activities during Worship

Queens, New York, Mission Trip departs

After worship—stick around to “wave us off”!