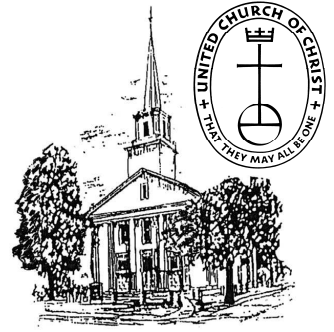


THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450

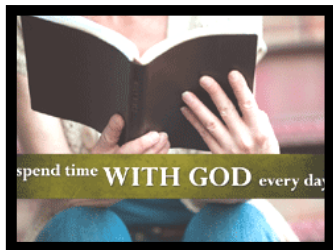


February 2015



On January 4th in worship, you were invited to make Faith Resolutions, that is, things you might do to strengthen your faith and deepen your relationship with Christ. I was inspired by what you want to do this year, and share some of the 41 resolutions here so that everyone can be encouraged and inspired as well.

Fifteen people resolve to pray more in a variety of ways — with their families, out loud, in the car, at bedtime...



Ten people resolve to read more — the Bible, daily devotional, email devotionals — individually and together as families.

- Have more faith that everything will be okay, don't worry, be happy.
- I vow to spread the love and blessings God has bestowed on me.
- To refrain from negativity.
- Grow stronger in my faith.
- I hope this year I can become more involved and give more of my own talents and gifts and time to the church.
- Be more outspoken about my life and how God works to guide me on my journey. Encouraging others to follow God.
- Ask God first.
- Show up at church every Sunday on time.
- To take a moment each day to slow down, be quiet, and be grateful to God.
- To be confirmed.
- To join the church as a contributing member.
- Be kinder with my words.
- I would like to continue learning more through adult education or on my own. I would like to find more ways to serve my church and others.
- To learn more about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.
- To reach out to those in need.
- This year I would like to follow Jesus and God better as in putting myself aside more often and loving others regardless of the annoyance they cause me. In other words, my New Years resolution is to proclaim my faith through my loving actions toward EVERYONE.

Wow! And Yes! Let's!

Gail





Our Church Family



Ongoing Prayer List

Our Ongoing Prayer List: (These names are prayed out loud at Open Sanctuary Time each Wednesday.)

Marvin Bernstein	Carol B. Hess	Leigh Mezzetti	Joe Swales
Jim Breault	Sean Koller	Holly Norton	Erin Tucker
Marlene Byron	Doris Lewis	Karen Sands	Gerry Westendorp
Betty Goulet	Lavon McMurrian	Opal Smith	

This list has been refreshed as of January 1, 2015 (requests received after November 15 have been included here). If you would like to add a name to the list, please notify Gail Miller or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org).



Confidential Prayer Chain

Need prayer and need it now?

Simply email prayer@uccgroton.org and your request will go to the confidential pray-ers; or call Lori McElroy (978-448-2841) and she will put your prayer request in motion for you. Prayer requests are held in confidence among those who are praying for you, and you may request that your name be withheld.



- Thanksgiving for Dick Burrier's continued recovery from brain cancer surgery.
- The Gervais family, in the death of John's father, Steve Gervais.
- Bob and Ellen Hargraves, in the sudden death of Bob's brother-in-law, Dick Catalini, on December 26.

The Birthday Fund

This is a fun way to contribute above and beyond your regular giving to the church to something above and beyond our normal operating budget. Simply make a donation on (or around) your birthday in the amount of your age (Memo: Birthday Fund)! If everyone participates, this will add up to a significant amount. The Church Council and the Finance people will work out the details around deciding what the Birthday Fund Gift will be each year. We are grateful to Helen Misselhorn for planting the seed of this idea at her 90th birthday celebration last October.

Birthday Fund to date: \$716.00

February Birthdays

Anthony DiCenzo	02/01
Ryan Carey	02/02
Mark DeBinder, Jr.	02/04
Carl Haas	02/04
Rebecca Brennan	02/06
Henry Richardson-Irvin	02/07
Jon Morgan	02/07
Christopher Brown	02/10
Julia Mendel	02/11
Ben Gambuzza	02/13
Charlene Kelly	02/14
Travis Bugbee	02/16
Brian Milner	02/17
Kerry Gale	02/19



**BLESSINGS
ON YOUR
BIRTHDAY**

Arianna Boucher	02/19
Kelsey Dumont	02/20
Steve Flynn	02/21
Tom Wickham	02/22
Charlotte LaGasse	02/22
Clarissa LaGasse	02/22
Lily Burgess	02/23
Dylan Hughes	02/24
Jessica Plausse	02/25
Arianna Barker	02/25
Tommy Wickham	02/27
Matthew Hecht	02/27

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?



Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 1, after Worship

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1, in the Sanctuary immediately following Worship. All are encouraged to attend (especially church members)! We will go over the Annual Report, approve nominations for Committees and Ministries, and approve the 2015 Budget. We will also hear a report from the Endowment Committee, the GPS Task Force, and discuss any other business that may come before us.

—Stefanie Lempp, Moderator

Committee's Dinner and First Meeting

Wednesday, February 11 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

All Committee and Ministry members are invited to a dinner hosted by the Church Officers to welcome you to a new year of serving together. Whether this is your first time serving or you've been around for a while, getting together to start the year on the same page in fellowship is important. You'll receive some nuts and bolts information about our work together, as well as consider the greater purpose of our serving in the church. Committees will hold their first meeting with their new constituents and set meeting dates for the year to come – bring your calendars! Questions? Contact Stefanie Lempp, Moderator (;).

Sunday Worship in the event of a storm...

If weather should impede your ability to get to church, know that you are freely released from any responsibilities you had—whether for Sunday School, Choir, worship leading, Fellowship Hour. We will worship as we can with whomever we've got—adjusting the service accordingly and making decisions in real time. If church is cancelled, it will be posted on our website by 8:00 a.m. that morning.

March Courier

Please submit items for the March Courier by Friday, February 13, 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.

Janet and Don Kennedy welcome another grandchild. **Clara Grace Pina** was born to Leanne and David Pina on December 11, 2014. Congratulations!

GPS (God's Purpose Seekers) Update

We have developed a draft Vision Statement about what we hope to become as a church;

A welcoming Christ-centered church sharing His life-changing message of love, joy and forgiveness in service to all people for the glory of God.

We will be expanding on this statement in a more detailed way at the stated meeting on February 1st as well as in church on February 8th. Please plan to attend one of these events as we think you will find it quite informative.

Have you ever thought about what we value as a church? We are also considering that now as a group. Look for that in the spring. And after that we will be working on recommendations to the church about next steps.

As always please continue to pray for us as we listen for His direction.

Prayerfully submitted on behalf of the GPS,
Mary Hanson

GPS Task Force

—Bonnie Biocchi
—Pete Hnath
—Halsey Platt

—Tim Dumont
—Stefanie Lempp
—Larry Robinson

—Mary Hanson
—Gail Miller

Christian Education

Sunday School



Christian Education Committee

—Anne Cahill, Chair

—Jean Armstrong

—Dena Hance

—Diane Landry

Bible Study

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

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

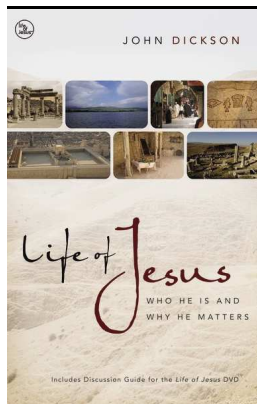
Another way to view the theme of hope is through the eyes of Ezekiel. "*Visions of Grandeur*" examines the glory of God as Ezekiel expressed it as life-giving water, which was a symbol of God's presence and blessings. We close our study of hope with Isaiah. God is our "help and shield, giving the faithful hope and reason to rejoice." *Contact Janet Kennedy, if you are interested in joining.*

Thursday Morning Bible Study

10:00 a.m. in the Church Parlor February 12-April 9

Starting February 12 (while Marvin is away) the Thursday Morning Bible Study continues to meet in the Church Parlor for study focusing on the lectionary. During Marvin's absence, Rev. Skip will do the background work and members will take turns facilitating discussions. Sunday Worship, Church School, and Bible Study will be in sync from Feb 12 to April 9. Meetings at Marvin's house resume Thursday, April 16. *Contact Marvin Caldwell ()*

Adults Education



Faith Fridays — *The Life of Jesus* Begins February 27th (runs five weeks during Lent) 9:30 - 11:15 a.m. in the Parish House

What really happened back in the first century, in Jerusalem and around the Sea of Galilee, that changed the shape of world history? Who is this figure that emerges from history to have a profound impact on culture, ethics, politics, and philosophy? *Life of Jesus*, a video-based study, will help you and your friends dig deeper into what is known about Jesus' life and why it matters. **Contact/Questions?** Kelli Hnath () or Gail at church.

Family Ministry/ Ash Wednesday /Spring Fair

Family Ministry



Skiing at Crotched Mountain (Bennington, NH)

Sunday, February 1

Meet in lodge at 2:00 p.m.

Join us for an afternoon of skiing on Sunday, February 1, at Crotched Mountain ski area in Bennington, NH (<http://www.crotchedmountain.com/>). Don't worry, we'll be done skiing in time to watch the Super Bowl! We will meet in the base lodge at 2:00 p.m., so that we're ready to begin skiing at 2:30 p.m. Lift tickets from 2:30 - 5:00 p.m. are \$35 and rentals are only \$10/person as part of Crotched Mountain's family afternoon skiing promotion. Contact: Corissa Robinson () or ().

Ash Wednesday



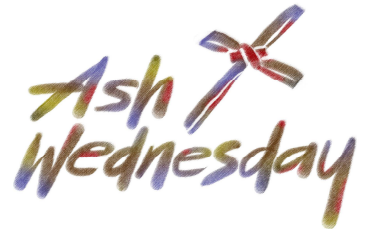
Begins...

Ash Wednesday, February 18

Dinner and Worship

6:30 p.m.: Simple Soup Supper

7:15 p.m.: Brief Worship Service/Communion



Let's begin our Lenten journey together. If you can't make it for dinner, come at 7:15 p.m. for worship. Families with children are encouraged to attend. (You'll be home by 8:00 p.m.) **If you are coming for dinner, please R.S.V.P.** to the church office (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org) or on the sign-up sheet by the coffee on Sunday mornings.

Spring Artisan/Craft Fair



10th Spring Artisan/Craft Fair

Saturday, March 28

10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Church Craft Table-We need help with set up/pack up and sales as well as new items. Crafters, keep us in mind when you are working on your projects!

Kitchen-Joel Hughes will head up the kitchen and will need one-two people to make muffins for breakfast. Do you have a great soup or chili recipe? Please consider donating a batch or two for the fair. Fair day kitchen help will also be needed.

Set-up/Breakdown-We will need people to set-up the hall and decorate; then break-down/rebuild on Saturday.

Bake Sale-Start thinking about 'different'. Let's get inspired for Spring treats!

Updates forthcoming!!! Contact: Bonnie Martin () or ()



Church World Service Blanket Drive February 1 and 8

Consider showing your love by giving a “Valentine” blanket in honor or memory of someone special. These blankets will serve people in a disadvantaged region of the world. Stop by the Missions table during coffee hour, where valentines will be sold for \$5 each to cover the cost of one blanket used for warmth, shelter, transporting goods and other functions.

Thank You!

Christmas Angels

Your generous response to December’s Christmas Angel appeal collected a **total of \$3,115**, distributed to the following:

2015 Mission Trip	\$1,518.75
Heifer*	\$ 648.75
Unbound	\$ 183.75
Loaves & Fishes*	\$ 763.75

*Both contain \$30.00 of 2013 Christmas Angels received in January 2014.

Included in the amounts above was \$155 given as “general” and was split evenly among all four categories. Thank you to everyone supporting these missions.

Groton Community Dinner January 30

Thank you to everyone who helped with cooking, serving and clean up at the January dinner. Your support of this local mission is appreciated!

Also, the **Christmas Clergy Fund**, providing aid to retired and disabled clergy, received \$3,007.70 collected on Christmas Eve. Thank you!

Missions Committee

—Janet Kennedy, Chair
—Janice Flynn

—Tony DiCenzo
—Larry Robinson

UCC Conference Super Saturday



Super Saturday!

March 21, 2015

Ludlow High School, Ludlow MA

8:00 a.m.—3:45 p.m.

Super Saturdays have been held twice a year since fall, 2009, making this the tenth Super Saturday. This spring’s event will be the biggest yet, with more workshops than have ever been offered before. Register early to reserve your spot! The day will feature The Rev. Ruben Duran (left), Program Director for New Congregations for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, who will speak in the morning on Church for the Life of the World. He is responsible for promoting the development of area strategies, local initiatives and emerging models for the multiplication of new communities of faith in the USA and the Caribbean.

Cost: \$54 per person or \$44 per person in church groups of five or more who register at the same time.

For more information and to register: <http://www.macucc.org/supersaturday>
Registration deadline is March 6

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

Fall Office Hours

Tuesday: 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Wednesday*: 2:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

Thursday—Friday: 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

*available by cell phone or email in the morning

Carol Zaiatz—Office Administrator

unioncc@uccgroton.org

Office Hours

Tuesday — Friday

8:00 a.m. — 3:00 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

February Deacons

Greg Balligan/Andrea McDonough

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 the 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:

Anne Cahill

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
United Church of Christ
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February Highlights

- ♦ **Sunday, February 1**
Annual Meeting of the Congregation after worship (see p. 3)
2:00 p.m. Family Ministry Skiing at Crotched Mountain (see p. 5)
- ♦ **Sunday, February 8**
GPS (God's Purpose Seekers) to present a Vision Statement during worship (see p. 3)
- ♦ **Ash Wednesday, February 18 (Lent Begins!)** (see p. 5)
Simple Soup Supper and Worship
- ♦ **Faith Fridays—The Life of Jesus—starts February 27 (five weeks)**
in the Parish House (see p. 4)