

THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



October 2015



For the 1971 opening of the Kennedy Center, Leonard Bernstein wrote a work simply entitled, *Mass*. Following the form of the Latin mass, it's a marvelous mixture of styles and languages. Like Handel's *Messiah* and Andrew Lloyd Weber's *Requiem*, it is a performance piece.

Bernstein's *Mass* begins with a young man in jeans playing the guitar as he sings God "a simple song ...make it up as you go along..." But as the Mass progresses so does the young man. He becomes a priest. There are songs of doubt, of thanks, of tender love, and of almost-blasphemy. We sense his longing to know God, his hunger for truth. And like so many musical settings of the mass, the piece reaches a crescendo and climax at the Sanctus. The music is louder, more complicated. The priest invokes the Hebrew of Isaiah, "kadosh, kadosh, kadosh, " "sanctus," "holy!"

With the complexity of the music we notice that the life of the priest has grown complicated too. No longer a simple song by a young man in jeans with a guitar. He is now an almost bishop-like figure, surrounded and smothered by "stuff." The music and tension build. Wine is consecrated, and then — something breaks.

The chalice breaks and smashes to the floor. The music breaks. The faith of the priest seems to break too, just like glass. "Things get broken," he sings. People get broken. Lives get broken. The Church, too, breaks and shatters. At this point in the opera even the theater-goer relates to the crushing force of the drama. And then, with a single spotlight on the broken chalice, we are pointed toward the One in whose name this drama is reenacted, the One who "took bread, and blessed and broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, 'take, eat; this is my body broken for you ...my blood shed for you'".

We all experience brokenness. It may come as disease, or fatigue; stress or worry or overwork. We may even be broken by doubt. When we are famished, perhaps overfed on the things of the world, but still hungry spiritually, Jesus says to us, "You who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise you up at the last day."

In Bernstein's *Mass*, after being honest with the broken pieces of his life and faith around him; after identifying with the brokenness of Christ, the priest begins to be healed. He comes to himself — and turns again to God in simple faith, awestruck by the beauty of sheer grace.

This Sunday (October 4) we will offer thanks to God for the gift of the Lord's Supper, the means of grace that sustains us daily.

Gail



This Sunday — CityReach Staff are our Preachers...They know a lot about the sustaining grace of God!



Our Church Family



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

Linda Barrett
Jimmy Breault
Kristen Collins
Becky Cross
Harold Gould

Alex Haas
Carol Hess
Jonathan Greenleaf
Xavier Johnson
Sean Koller

Doris Lewis
Holly Norton
Karen Sands
Rudi Schmid
Priscilla Simmons

Alan Smith
Opal Smith
Annik Spencer
Joe Swales
Liz Waggoner

This list has been refreshed (and will be refreshed twice a year). Feel free to contact Gail Miller or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org) to add a name to this list.



- Tim Dumont and family in the death of Tim's father, Leonard Dumont.
- Dave Woods, recovering from hip replacement surgery.
- Pat Woods, home recovering from surgery.
- Janet Carey, recovering from neck/back surgery.
- Brian Keese, Sr., dealing with health issues.



Confidential Prayer Chain

Need prayer and need it now? Share your concern with the Confidential Prayer Chain. 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. Want to be a pray-er? Use the same email to let us know and you'll be added to the list. (This email is a private address seen only by the administrators of the prayer chain.)



September Baptisms

Congratulations to the Pina/Spencer/Kennedy families on the Baptism of Clara Grace Pina and Amelia Charlotte Spencer on September 13!

October Birthdays

Kirsten Sjoberg	10/01
Alex Ansted	10/02
Joanna Chase	10/05
Helen Misselhorn	10/06
Joe Zambuto	10/06
Mitchell Townsend	10/09
Lorrie Morgan	10/13
Christopher Morgan	10/13
Bob Hargraves	10/14
Maggie Wickham	10/15
Richard Ferrero	10/17



*Birthday
Blessings
to You All!*

Anna Kubick	10/18
Meghan Lofgren	10/18
Lyra Harper	10/19
Nevan Rosenfeld	10/21
Ben Ansted	10/22
Cooper Caiozzo	10/23
Cameron Fraser	10/27
Andrew Howard	10/29
Isabel Bresnahan	10/31



Harvest Fair Saturday, October 3 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Donation Drop-off at the Parish House:

Friday, October 2, all day

- Children's Clothing – Upstairs Room (top of stairs)
- Attic Treasures – Front Room
- Children's Toys – Carol's Office
- Books – Kitchen
- Yard Sale – Shed



Bake Sale Drop-off at the Table in the Fellowship Hall:

Friday, October 2, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 3, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Craft Items Drop-off at the Church

Place all donated items in separate labeled bags or boxes according to these categories.

Note: Extra plastic bags and paper bags are needed for the sales.

Saturday, October 3

Fair Set-up starts about 7:30 a.m. for everything outside – we need many helpers for a couple of hours. **Yard Sale particularly needs help setting up tables.**

Tear-down from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.:

- Help return items to original locations
- Clean up trash and leftover yard sale items
- Rebuild the nursery
- Pack-up/store yard sale items (boxes needed) and dump all trash from the day (strong backs for lifting are needed)



Profits from the fair will go to *Common Cathedral*, an outdoor congregation for the housed and un-housed on Boston Common. *Come to the fair and meet Pastor Mary Eaton and members of the staff, who will also be preaching on Sunday (October 4).*



Common
cathedral





September Meeting Summary

The 2015 budget is ahead of predictions for income and as expected for expenses.

A very preliminary 2016 budget was presented. Committees have been asked to submit not just their 2016 budget, but to also think three years ahead for possible larger projects.

A capital campaign is still in the forefront; by next fall, we hope to have a master plan and hire a consultant. There will be feedback circles to help form this master plan — stay tuned!

The Music Committee has been discussing their role and function in the church and brought that conversation to the Council for consideration.

The Birthday Fund will be used for a gift (or gifts) that will be announced in November.



Feedback Circles

On August 30, 15 people gathered after worship to reflect on Summer Worship this year. We shared how we experienced many aspects of coming to church in the summer — from what it took to get to church before worship, through the service (sermon, music, liturgy), to fellowship hour afterwards. The conversation was fruitful and, by the next Sunday, at least one of the comments shared had inspired a change the following week (chairs outside during Fellowship Hour). Comments that pertain to particular aspects of Sunday morning will be forwarded on to the appropriate group/committee. (And, of course, if you were unable to attend, but have feedback to share, Pastor Miller and the Deacons are always interested to hear your thoughts.)

Our next Feedback Circle is November 8 after worship, and the topic will be the Harvest Fair.



Our Stephen Ministers Can Help!

Remember, we have seven trained Stephen Ministers at our congregation. If you, or someone you know, is going through a rough patch or crisis (loss of a loved one, health issues, divorce, loss of a job, etc.), it is important to have someone who cares and is there to listen and offer **confidential** Christian support. Speak to Pastor Gail Miller (978-448-2091) or Andrea McDonough (), our Stephen Leader, to find out more.



November Courier

Please submit items for the November Courier by Friday, October 16, 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.

Year-to-Date



A Message from the Collector

Year-to-date Pledge statements through the end of September will be mailed in early October. Should you have any questions or concerns about your pledge, please contact Bob Goudey at .

Sunday School



Make an Impact BE A TEACHER!!

We continue to use *Spark*, which includes online access to make it easier for you to prepare (we will also have hard copies available at church). Please consider teaching our children about Jesus! The Sunday School sign-up board is in the downstairs hallway at church. You can also talk to anyone on the **Christian Education Committee** (Jean Armstrong, Anne Cahill, Diane Landry, Kelli Hnath, or Anne Larsen); or contact Carol Zaiatz (unioncc@uccgroton.org or 978-448-2091) in the Church Office and she can put you on the schedule according to the week or weeks that work best for you.



Christian Education Committee

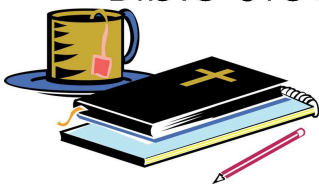
—Anne Cahill, Chair
—Diane Landry

—Jean Armstrong
—Anne Larsen

—Kelli Hnath

Bible Study

Bible Study



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

Our study of justice through the words of the Old Testament prophets continues with Amos and Micah. As stated in the Leader's Guide, "Justice, kindness, and humility as expressions of faith in the world are difficult to maintain." We are challenged to, "Love your neighbor, especially the poor, oppressed and dispossessed, and pay attention to ways you contribute to systems that oppress and impoverish others. The prophets speak with one voice: God requires it." Join us on Wednesday evenings—new people always welcome! *Contact: Janet Kennedy*

Thursday Morning Bible Study

10:00 a.m.

As we read and discuss John Bunyon's *Pilgrim's Progress*, we are walking with a Christian as he goes from a guilt burdened sinner to a forgiven Christian vowing to walk the way of Christ. For all of us, The Way, though straight and narrow, has enticing by-ways and people who try to deflect us from The Way. Bunyan has Christians meet a great variety of well crafted characters such as Timorous, Mr. Worldly-Wise, Pliable, and others who may well remind us of ourselves on our journeys. He also meets such folk as Evangelist, Mr. Goodwill, and the Porter who help him on his way. The language and times are that of the King James Bible, but are also timeless. You will recognize phrases that linger in our own lexicon. Join us for good conversation, tea, and cookies. *Contact: Marvin Caldwell ()*

Worship Plus Two!

Growing

Serving

Changing Lives... ..Yours!

You Are Invited

STICKY FAITH: Help for Christian Parents

Parenting is like riding a bike down a water slide: Exciting in theory, difficult in reality! We're constantly improvising. Guessing. Hoping what we're doing is best. We need each other and some guidance! #stickyfaithfamily



5 Sundays: Oct. 18—Nov. 15

4:45—6:00 p.m. (During Groton Christmas Chorus Children's rehearsal time)

Host: Kelli Hnath

RSVP/Questions:

You Are Invited

Sing To The Lord A New Song! ~Ps. 96:1

FAITH FINDS ITS VOICE...IN MUSIC



A musical walk through the centuries; we will discover how faith in Christ has laid the foundations for the music of western civilization from the time of Jesus to the present day, giving us a music that lasts and lasts. Video, recordings and documented materials.

6 Wednesdays: Oct. 7—Nov. 11, 7-8:30 p.m.
Leader: Bernard Crane (at church)

Questions: Bernard

RSVP: 978-448-2091 (church office)

Sharing Christ... ..With Others!

You Are Invited

FEED THE HOMELESS (Cambridge)

Mon., Oct. 12 (Columbus Day)
10:00 a.m. —2:00 p.m.

We will make sandwiches, assemble sack lunches, fill backpacks and head in to Alewife. We'll then take the T to Central Square and walk a route organized by the *Outdoor Church* (a homeless ministry in Cambridge), handing out lunches, and extending the warmth of God's love. Children in upper elementary grades and their families are welcome to join Pastor Miller and Sophia.



RSVP/Questions: gail@uccgroton.org, 448-2091

You Are Invited



CITY REACH (Boston)

Fri.-Sat, Nov. 20-21
(5:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.)

Overnight: Church on the Hill (140 Bowdoin St.)

Cost: \$75 (supports *City Reach* and our expenses)

This is the ministry which is receiving the profit from our fall fair (Rev. Mary Eaton, pastor).

In 24 hours, we sort donations, prepare a meal, visit with the homeless, tour the city with our hosts (homeless and former homeless who serve as *City Reach* staff)... a meaningful opportunity to learn, serve, and grow in our understanding of poverty, homelessness, and the Gospel of Christ's love.

DONATIONS: winter clothing / blankets will be received at church throughout Oct. and Nov. (see details on p. 8)

Questions: Pete Hnath

RSVP: Pastor Miller (gail@uccgroton.org)

Middle School Youth Ministry—Fall 2015

October

12th, (Monday/no school), 10:00—2:00: *Sandwich Run in Cambridge (Contact: Gail)*



23rd, Friday, 7:00 - 9:00, at Church: *Halloween Party/Pumpkin Carving/Games—Wear Costumes!*



November



15th, Sunday, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Youth Group (4:00 p.m.) and Family Dinner (5:30 p.m.) at church

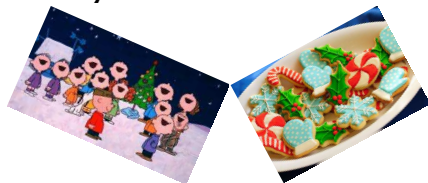


December

4th-5th, Friday-Saturday: *Overnight (local, tbd)*



20th, Sunday after church: *Cookies 'n' Carols!*



Contacts: Pete Hnath (Mary Hanson (

), Jean Armstrong (), or Pastor Miller (978-448-2091)

), Janet Cary (



Serving the Homeless in Boston—CityReach

We will be collecting clothing donations throughout October!

Donations can be dropped off in the alcove adjacent to the nursery in the Fellowship Hall

ITEMS NEEDED

- Backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels (used and in good condition)
- Travel-size toiletries such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, Chapstick, toothpaste, and shaving cream in small sizes, as well as tooth brushes and disposable razors, and tampons in small quantities (please no aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol)
- New white socks (there can never be too many of these)
- New underwear (again, there can never be too many — 80% for men, 20% for women)
- Sleeping bags and blankets (clean and in good condition)

USED CLOTHING, including:

- Nylon jackets and pants, ponchos, and raincoats for Spring & Fall
- Warm coats for Winter
- Sweat shirts and sweat pants (especially hooded sweatshirts)
- Sweaters
- T-shirts
- Long-sleeve shirts
- Jeans, khakis and other casual pants (80% for men)
- Waterproof boots, comfortable shoes, and sneakers
- Hats, waterproof gloves, coats
- Belts



Donations for the
Homeless

Youth Mission Trip

Stewardship



Youth Mission Trip 2016

June 26 - July 3

Queens, NY

Middle and High School Youth

We invite kids (in grade 6 THIS year and up) to serve in mission in Queens, NY. We will clean/repair homes, visit in nursing homes, work in a community garden, lead a kids camp.... And through our serving we will share Christ's love and grow in our own knowledge and love for the Lord. While we will travel and serve as one youth group, we will split into two groups (middle school and high school) for our evening youth group time and for our retreat days in Pennsylvania on the weekend after serving (July 1 - 3). Cost to families is \$300/youth (scholarship available — see Gail). We are excited to offer this opportunity to so many in our church. **Your payment (\$300 --> UCC, memo: Youth Mission 2016) secures your child's spot.** Questions? Seek out Stefanie Lempp, Halsey Platt, Pete Hnath or Gail Miller.

Stewardship



Gail once described a Christian Life as being one that was filled with a “steady drip of Joy.” She explained that first we recognize Christ as our personal savior, and then we savor each day focusing on the joy that is present. This is not a foolishly optimistic view of life that ignores inevitable pain, it is a spiritually mature view recognizing Christ’s constant generosity toward each of us. The generosity and love that Christ shows to us is what we are called to hold in our hearts and then mirror out to the world. Joy flows freely out of our lives when we are able to exercise our generous heart.

On October 11, every family in church will receive “Generosity Boxes” to take home in order to “flex our generosity muscles.” The exercises are fun and regular — each day every member of their family will write down one thing that they did that day that was generous toward someone else. This might be an act of service, or being kind to someone, or sharing something. Or you can share a moment when someone was generous toward you.

This can be a wonderful way to create another “family Christ moment” each day in your house; you might make this an activity at dinner — a way to talk about generosity and the ups and downs of your day. This can be an opportunity to talk about the fact that it is okay to be broken, to be human, to be out-of-sorts, to be tired — Christ not only still loves us in these conditions but is our strength to get back to that joyful place! Or you might talk about the box for two minutes in the morning before everyone bolts out the door for their day as a reminder to be generous, to remember Christ throughout your day. Or it could be a great bedtime activity that helps us all to get to sleep remembering Christ’s love for us as we rest up for the next day.

Ask yourself now: Who is the most joyful Christian you know? What does that person look like? How do they behave... how do they interact with us? Then ask: How did they get to be like that? Yes, certainly by the Grace of God, but I would bet that they also practiced and exercised and prayed and studied the Bible. If this joyful Christian is someone that you would like to emulate then your Generosity Box is an exercise, a discipline that can be your next step there. And the best part of this Generosity Box exercise is that we will all be doing it together! Christ calls us to community, to love and teach each other, to worship together. Gail has been inviting and encouraging us to exercise our Christianity beyond church on Sunday — and here is a way to do this! This exercise will strengthen your Generous Heart and help you find the Joy that flows from it!



The 2015 Stewardship Team

—Bob Goudey
—Halsey Platt

—Liz McQuillin
—Craig Smith

—Gail Miller

Missions



Our Partner at the Harvest Fair: *Common Cathedral*

Common Cathedral will be the recipient of the profits from the 2015 Harvest Fair. They are an outdoor congregation, for the housed and un-housed, sharing God's love through community, pastoral care, creative expression, and worship on Boston Common. They are non-proselytizing and ecumenical. They welcome and support all people. *Common Cathedral's* goals are:

- to remind chronically un-housed adults in downtown Boston of who they are — children of God, loved by God, worthy in the eyes of God;
- to form supportive spiritual community with chronically un-housed adults in downtown Boston, with those moving off the streets into housing, and between housed and un-housed people; and
- to advocate for and with un-housed people toward ending the condition of homelessness in Boston and the Commonwealth.

The Rev. Mary Eaton, the Associate Pastor from Common Cathedral, preached on September 20th about her work with people that are homeless in Boston. She shared the following with us:

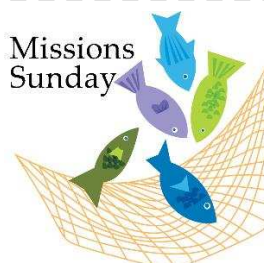
- There are over 8,000 homeless individuals in Boston.
- The leading causes of homelessness are addiction and mental health issues.
- These individuals lack a support system and a sense of community.

Rev. Eaton and a few members of her staff will spend the day with us at the fair. Please help us welcome them, spend a few minutes getting to know them, and support their work by supporting the Harvest Fair.



Neighbors in Need Offering October 4 and 11

Neighbors in Need is a UCC special mission offering that supports works of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The theme for 2015 is "Unexpected Places" which connects to the work of the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). The UCC Justice and Witness Ministries uses two-thirds of the receipts, to be awarded by grant to various churches and organizations, to help fund efforts for community service projects or advocacy efforts. One-third of the offering supports CAIM.



Missions Sunday October 18

Our own Youth Missionaries will preach and present a slide show about their service last summer to the people living at the Pine Ridge Indian

Reservation in South Dakota during worship. This day gives us the opportunity to learn about the organizations and projects our church supports through your generous pledge and contributions. After worship, join us downstairs in the Fellowship Hall at our Missions Market to learn about the organizations in more detail. There will be an opportunity for the children to color a picture and write a note to Carlos, who lives in El Salvador. The Church sponsors Carlos through our donation to *Unbound*.

Loaves & Fishes Backpack Drive

The annual Backpack Drive is underway. Thank you to all who have contributed by donating supplies and backpacks. We've received plenty of the small and medium size backpacks. The greatest need is for NEW LARGE GENDER NEUTRAL backpacks that will hold large binders. There are a few supply items still requested, which are posted on the display in the hallway at church. Please leave your donations on the stairway where you drop off groceries. Thank you!

Missions Committee

—Janet Kennedy, Chair
—Julie Platt

—Brenda Barker
—Pete Hnath

—Halsey Platt

For Laughs and Edification

In worship on Sept. 27, we learned that the word “disciple,” which we typically think of as “following” (disciple of Christ = following Christ) really means LEARNER. So, to be a disciple is to be a STUDENT of Jesus!

To that end, Pastor Miller suggested that we each take a step toward LEARNING more about Christ / God / our Faith. Some ways you can do this:

- ⇒ Participate in one of the offerings on p. 6
- ⇒ Take your Bible off your shelf and keep it out on a table where you’re more likely to read it.
- ⇒ Download a Bible app and read when you’re stuck waiting somewhere or listen while driving. Try one of these three:



YouVersion



Olive Tree



Daily Bible

www.glasbergen.com



**“If I send my prayer as a text message,
will I get a faster reply?”**

© Randy Glasbergen
www.glasbergen.com



“I downloaded them from a cloud.”

© Randy Glasbergen
www.glasbergen.com



**“Yes, the disciples followed Jesus...
but not on Twitter.”**

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

Office Hours

Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 2:00—5:00 p.m.

Friday: 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Carol Zaiatz—Office Administrator

unioncc@uccgroton.org

Tuesday—Friday

8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

(Church Office is closed Saturday—Monday)

Music Director: Bernard Crane

Cherub Choir: Bonnie Marchesani

Handbell Choir: Cheryl Townsend

Church Officers

Moderator: Stefanie Lempp

Treasurer: Dennis Carey

Clerk: Lori McElroy

Collector: Bob Goudey

Internal Auditor: Bruce Wyman

October Deacons

Brenda Semienko/Erica Davenport

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 and give dates/times to Carol so she can input them into the calendar.

Sermons: Copies of Pastor Miller's sermons are available on the website.

Weekly News Email: We now send this email through MailChimp.

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:

Chris Sullivan

Christian Education:

Anne Cahill

Church Council Member-at-Large:

Pat Woods

Diaconate:

Tim Dumont

Endowment:

Mary Hanson

Missions:

Janet Kennedy

Music:

Sheila Mitchell

Pastor Parish Relations:

Bebe Goudey

Stewardship & Finance:

Don Kennedy

Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
220 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
GROTON, MA 01450
PERMIT #23

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

[] PLEASE REMOVE ME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST
Please return to your mail carrier.



October

- ♦ Sat., Oct. 3 Harvest Fair, 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. (p. 4)
Pick-up your T-shirt at church
- ♦ October 4 World Communion Sunday
CityReach Preachers
Neighbors In Need Special Offering (p. 9)
- ♦ October 11 Receive your Generosity Box in Worship (p. 8)
Farewell to Bill and Martha Dean
Neighbors in Need Special Offering
- ♦ Mon., Oct. 12 Serve the Homeless in Cambridge (p. 6)
- ♦ October 18 Youth Mission Trip Slide Show
- ♦ Fri., Oct. 23 Middle School Youth Ministry—Halloween Party (p. 7)
- ♦ October 25 Reformation Sunday!



**All Month: Clothing Drive for Overnight
Serving Boston's Homeless (see p. 7)**