

# THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



## April 2016

FROM THE



Jesus' resurrection, celebrated Easter Sunday, marks the beginning of a season of new life. The Roman Catholic church receives new members on Easter for this reason; and we celebrated a baptism for this reason. And with the turning of nature's seasons we are reminded that there is a fresh, new start right around the corner.

This is also a season for a new start for our Building Project. The steering task force overseeing the start up of the project is aptly named: Facilities Steering Team - or FaST for short! Because this project has been discussed in some form or fashion for decades, we feel that it is time to move forward with real plans for a real project. (FaST is: Tim Dumont, Pete Hnath, Stefanie Lempp, Julie Platt, Bernard Crane and myself)

And so we have hired Jonathan Levi Architects (JLA) to develop a Master Plan for us. We interviewed three different firms and enthusiastically selected JLA for a variety of reasons. The main thing we value in them (Jonathan Levi and Philip Gray who will be working on our project) are their superb listening skills, and their ability to ask the right questions of us. They continually brought our conversation back to our purpose and mission as a church, and how our facilities must support that.

They came to us by the recommendation of one of my friends (Pastor Jim Chase of the Federated Church of Charlton) who sang their praises before I had finished asking, "Do you know any architects to recommend?"

Jonathan loves churches and is very eager to work with us on making our classic, historic building one that will draw people to it and enable them full access to all our ministries. Philip knows the area well as he has a place on Sandy Pond in Ayer and looks forward to working "in the neighborhood."

By the time you read this we'll have had our kickoff meeting with them to begin the process. We will have shared with them much of the information you shared with us in the Dream Big Conversations in January, as well as thoughts on the needs of the main ministry areas of the church - Sunday School, Music, Worship, Administration - with accessibility being the common denominator. (And consolidating everything on the property of 218 Main St., so that we can eventually sell the Parish House at 220 Main St.)

Our goal is to have a Master Plan to present for approval this fall. In the meantime, you'll receive updates on our progress in a number of forms and fashions, and as always we welcome your thoughts. This is a very exciting time and I invite you to join me in lifting the entire process in prayer. Here is a prayer of John Baillie that I shared at the start of our FaST meeting at which we decided on Jonathan Levi Architects:

*Open my mind, O God, so that I may welcome any new insights or knowledge that you wish to give me. May I not cling to the past so tightly that I limit the life ahead of me. Give me courage to change my mind when that is needed. Help me to be tolerant to the thoughts of others and open to the truths they may teach me. Amen.*

And for us as a church:

*Open our mind, O God, so that we may welcome any new insights or knowledge that you wish to give us. May we not cling to the past so tightly that we limit the life ahead of us. Give us courage to change our mind when that is needed. Help us to be tolerant to the thoughts of others and open to the truths they may teach us. Amen.*

With you on the Journey!

This month, Sophia and I will join my mother and my aunt for a ten-day trip to Costa Rica from April 14-23. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, *Teen Challenge* will lead worship. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, we have a guest preacher from *Common Cathedral* (see p. 8), and I will lead the rest of the service as usual.



# Our Church Family



## Ongoing Prayer List

Beverly  
Sheila Craigen  
Harold Gould

Alex Haas  
G. Keith  
Alex Martin

Holly Norton  
Karen Sands  
Rudi Schmid

The Vincent Family  
Liz Waggoner  
Joe Swales

This list is refreshed twice a year (January and June). Please contact Gail Miller or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091, [unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)) to add or remove a name.



### Confidential Prayer Chain

**Need prayer and need it now?** Simply email [prayer@uccgroton.org](mailto:prayer@uccgroton.org) and your request will go to the confidential pray-ers; or call Lori McElroy ( ) 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.



### Keep in Your Prayers...

- Peg Lloyd, recovering from knee replacement surgery
- Tim Dumont, recovering from surgery
- Helen Misselhorn, home following a hospitalization
- Janet Kennedy, in the sudden death of her brother, James Young
- Liz McQuillin, in the death of her father, Stafford J. McQuillin
- Patricia Whitney, in the death of her brother, Don Crandlemire
- Tom Wickham, home recovering from a viral infection
- Ellen Hargraves, having hip replacement surgery on April 14



**Nina Marie Morrison was Baptized on Sunday, March 27 (Easter Sunday)!** Congratulations to her mother, Shauna Morrison, and the Morrison Family.

## April Birthdays

Stefanie Lempp	04/01	Liz Brennan	04/07	Larry Robinson	04/21
Devin Goudey	04/03	Michelle Emerle	04/07	John Gervais	04/23
John Hitsos	04/04	Ben Coviello	04/09	Danika Manalo	04/23
Jason Hnath	04/04	Georgia Row	04/09	Irene Koutrouba	04/29
Randy York	04/04	Julia Zambuto	04/12	Grace Nickerson	04/29
Georgia Brooks	04/06	Chris Clinton	04/17		

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

**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. Please participate and watch our gifts grow!

# Church News / Clean-up Day / Stephen Ministry

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## Greeters and Ushers at Sunday Worship

If you would like to be a Greeter or an Usher at Sunday Worship, please contact Ellen Hargraves (6 or ). Thank you!

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## Church Council Meeting Summary—March 30

FaST has chosen Jonathan Levi Architects to produce a Master Plan. Look for a presentation in the Fall. (see p.1)

Missions has multiple volunteer opportunities this spring (p.8). The profits from the Harvest Fair will support *Common Cathedral* again this year.

Check out the new church website at [uccgroton.net](http://uccgroton.net). Photos are requested; committees are encouraged to send comments to Mary Hanson.

We discussed the criteria for determining possible new staff positions.

Thank you to Tom Hanson for researching and installing the new sound system which was funded by money given in remembrance of Howard Misselhorn.

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## Online Giving

This is a simple way for you to arrange for the direct deduction of your offering and special gifts from your checking, savings, credit or debit card accounts, in one simple session via any device with an Internet connection. **For more information go to our website ([www.uccgroton.org](http://www.uccgroton.org)) and click on the "Giving" box on the left side.** You can donate to the church, the 4 UCC Special Mission Offerings (*One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen The Church, Neighbors in Need* and the *Christmas Fund*), Youth Mission Trip and the Birthday Fund. Contact: Bob Goudey ( , ).

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**May Courier** Please email all submissions for the May Courier by Friday, April 15 ([unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)). Thank you.

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## Church Spring Clean-up Day

**Saturday, April 9**

**8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

You are invited! Outdoor cleanup and raking will be our primary job. More hands make the work fun and go faster. Please bring a rake and tarp if you can—and show up anytime for whatever time you can give! If you have any questions, contact John Brooks ( , ), Barb Lefebvre ( , ), or any member of the Buildings & Grounds Committee. **We appreciate your support.**

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### Buildings & Grounds Committee

—John Brooks, Chair  
—Bill Gale Jr.

—Bonnie Biocchi  
—Barb Lefebvre

—John Biocchi  
—Joe Zambuto

—Ken Lefebvre

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## Stephen Ministry

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"Living our Faith Beyond our Walls" extends to Stephen Ministry as well!

Our Stephen Ministers also look after people outside of our church, including people in Townsend, where we've formed an alliance with the Townsend Congregational church.

So, maybe everything's good with you, but you have a neighbor or close friend living nearby that could use the caring, listening, confidential support of one of our Stephen Ministers. If so, call Pastor Gail (978-448-2091) or Andrea McDonough, the Stephen Leader for our church ( ; ).

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# A Thank You from Steve and Charlene Legge

Fellow brothers and sisters in Christ,

We would like to take this opportunity to express our warmest and most sincere appreciation for everyone's well wishes during the past month as we celebrated our marriage on Sunday, March 13. It was a very happy occasion for us, and we felt blessed beyond measure with all of the support and helping hands from our Congregation contributing to making our wedding day so special.

We thank Reverend Gail for her time with us over the months, Bernard for his musical support, Cheryl and her bell choir for beautiful interludes, Mary Hanson for being our very efficient wedding coordinator, Barbara and Bruce Wyman for food and service beyond our imagining, and all of you for being there and for caring for us on our special day.

We felt the love, and we extend our love to all,  
Steve and Charlene





**WELCOME**  
to Our Newest Members!

**Doris Barreiro** is the mother of two adult daughters and a grandmother of four (three girls and one boy). Originally from western Pennsylvania, she and her husband, Joe, live in Shirley. She recently retired from her full-time job as a Registered Nurse at Lahey and now works "very" part-time at Nashoba Hospital. In her spare time she enjoys hiking, gardening, and reading. Before coming here she was a member of the Nashua Christian Church in Nashua, NH. Being raised in the Presbyterian Church, Doris finds the Congregational Church both familiar and comfortable; she finds us to be welcoming place.

**Janice Owen** is from Georgia and now resides in Pepperell. She is the mother of two adult children. Janice was an accountant (now retired) and sang professionally in many churches. In her own words, "I've sung just about every church music style there is." She is now retired and spends her spare time volunteering and working on her music. The things she likes best about our church is the music and the people.

**Carl Prestia** lives here in Groton with his wife, Christine, and their son, Curtis. He grew up in Melrose and Andover and wound up in Groton because "it's a nice little town." They have lived here for 16 years. Originally Carl worked as an engineer for 20 years, but now he is a stay-at-home parent. In his spare time he enjoys outdoor activities, nature, music (he plays guitar), and cooking. He comes from a Roman Catholic background and came to UCC Groton because he was interested in a new church. He quickly found that our beliefs align with his beliefs as a Christian and he likes the diversity of our church.

**Hannah and Randy York** have three children and live in Groton. Hannah is the daughter of Missionaries. She was born in Swaziland, African, where she grew up. She graduated from school in Ohio, and moved to Austin, Texas. Hannah (in her own words) is "horse crazy" and the proud owner of an off-track thoroughbred named Solomon. She loves hiking and is happy that there are so many trails to explore in this area. **Randy** was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, then moved to Austin. He is a Software Engineer/Software Architect, which is basically both sides of a business – technical and management. He once was a professional photographer, but now says it's a hobby and much less stressful. Previously, Hannah and Randy went to the First Evangelical Free Church in Austin, Texas. When asked what they like about UCC Groton, Hannah said she likes our Outreach programs and the family atmosphere; Randy likes the small town feel of UCC Groton.

## Bible Study

### Wednesday Evening Bible Study

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

Join us as we begin a new study, *Scared Gifts and Holy Gatherings*, focused on "traditions" in the Old and New Testaments. The first unit studies the way we honor God: observing the Sabbath, following the commandments, dedicating our children, and giving our gifts. Each week we read the selected scripture aloud and then engage in discussion as we continue to read the rest of the weekly lesson together. *Contact: Janet Kennedy*



### Thursday Morning Bible Study

**10:00 a.m.**

Jesus was very busy during his final week on earth. Perhaps he was tidying up loose ends, making sure everything was as much in place as possible before he left. Mark carefully and faithfully takes us through Jesus' final days. Join us as we probe the lessons of the past for our living in our days. Spirited conversation, coffee, tea, cookies and fellowship inform us. *Contact Marvin Caldwell (*



## Teachers Needed

We need volunteers to spend one hour doing some of the most fulfilling work of the church—teaching our children about God's love. We still have openings on the calendar. Please sign up on the white-board in the hallway downstairs at church or email Carol Zaiatz in the Church Office (unioncc@uccgroton.org). Once signed up, Carol will send out an email the week before your class that gives instructions for the online system and how to access the curriculum for activities, etc.



## Christian Education Committee

—Anne Cahill, Chair  
—Diane Landry

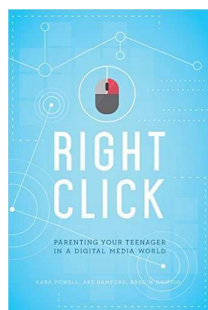
—Jean Armstrong  
—Anne Larsen

—Kelli Hnath

—Krista Kubick

## Parenting Discussion Group

This is for parents of kids of any age. We talk, we laugh, we cry, we pray, as we support and encourage one another. Christian families struggle as all families struggle. Which is why getting together is so important. Come to one meeting or to them all! Everyone is invited. Snacks and refreshments are served.



**April 10 and 24**

**4:00 - 5:30 p.m. at the Hnath House (155 Indian Hill Road)**

**Topic: Navigating Digital Media/Technology**

We'll read and discuss the book, *Right Click: Parenting Your Teenager in a Digital Media World*.

## Looking Ahead:

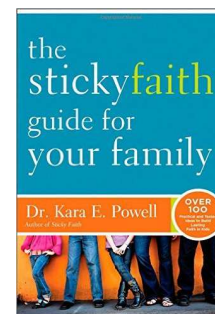
**May 1, 15 and 22**

We'll read and discuss three chapters from the book, *The Sticky Faith Guide for Your Family*:

**Handling Mistakes:** Showing Sticky Forgiveness

**Connecting:** Finding Ways to Relate to Your Teenager

**Communication:** Talking Faith with Your Kids



Both *Right Click* and *The Sticky Faith Guide for Your Family* are available in the church office (reimbursing the church is optional), or you may purchase your own.

# Christina William's Ordination

# Fair Information



First Parish Church United of Westford  
cordially invites you to the

*Ordination of  
Christina Rutter Williams*

**Sunday, April 17, 2016 at 3PM**  
*A Celebration will follow in Fellowship Hall  
Clergy are encouraged to robe*

First Parish Church United  
48 Main Street, Westford, MA  
RSVP by April 9, 2016 to [crwilliams444@hotmail.com](mailto:crwilliams444@hotmail.com)

## Spring Craft Fair

**11<sup>th</sup> Spring Artisan/Craft Fair**  
**Saturday, April 30**  
**10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.**



### Needed:

**Kitchen:** Joel Hughes ( ) needs a kitchen crew and cashier, as well as some folk to make muffins and soups.

**Bake Table:** Mark Rzeznikiewicz ( ) Snacks and yummy desserts. All donations will be greatly appreciated! Please wrap and label for nuts.

**Craft Table:** Lois Berge ( ) — always looking for new items!

### Set-up Help Needed:

**Sunday, April 24:** After church, break-down the Nursery.

**Wednesday, April 27, at 6:00 p.m.:** Set-up the Fellowship Hall

**Saturday, April 30, starting at 2:30 p.m.:** Break-down the fair and rebuild the nursery

**Come shop for Mother's Day, birthdays, weddings, yourself! All "Made in America"!**

**Contact:** Bonnie Martin ( )

## Upcoming Harvest Fair Meeting



**Mark Your Calendar!**

**Harvest Fair Meeting**

***What Will The Fair Look Like This Year?***

**April 10 after Worship (in the Parish House)**

This year we will once again be donating all the profits to *Common Cathedral* (see p. 8)! How wonderful to be able to share the blessings in our lives with others. And because this is all for charity, we can have a more joyful day knowing that we are living our faith and sharing Christ with our community!

We're looking for ideas to freshen up the fair this year. Perhaps some live entertainment? Perhaps a 'Best in Town' chili competition? Let's hear those ideas!! Help make the fair a memorable day again this year. Please join us to discuss ideas you may have and how you are thinking about participating this year.

**Contact:** Mary Hanson ( ) with any ideas you might have to make this the best fair ever!

## Teen Challenge

**Sunday, April 17, during Worship**

On Sunday, April 17, we will welcome men from *Teen Challenge* Manchester to lead in worship. They will discuss the impact that *Teen Challenge* has made in their lives and the lives of women and men who have struggled with drug and alcohol dependencies. The mission of *Teen Challenge* is “to provide youth, adults, and families with an effective and comprehensive Christian faith-based solution to life-controlling drug and alcohol problems in order to become productive members of society.” Programs include Bible study, work projects, social, educational, and recreational opportunities. Following graduation from the program, members are encouraged to join educational and religious organizations. Please join us after worship for a light lunch and an opportunity to talk with our guests.

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## Common Cathedral

**Sunday, April 24, during Worship**

On Sunday, April 24, we will host Amanda Grant-Rose, Executive Director at *Common Cathedral*, to share with us about this ministry.

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.

**Save the Date! On May 8** there will be a special opportunity to serve *Common Cathedral*. Stay tuned for more information in the Sunday bulletin announcements and the May Courier!

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### Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair  
—Halsey Platt

—Brenda Barker  
—Pete Hnath

—Christine Brooks  
—Lynn Manalo

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## Middle School Youth Group

All 5<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> graders are invited to fun and fellowship — held in the Fellowship Hall at church.

### Sunday, April 10

4:00 p.m. Youth Group Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Family Dinner

### Sunday, May 15

4:00 p.m. Youth Group Meeting  
5:30 p.m. Family Dinner



**Contacts:** Jean Armstrong ( ), Janet Carey ( ), Mary Hanson ( ), or Pastor Miller (978-448-2091)

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## Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser—THANK YOU!

### Spaghetti Supper on March 20

Thank you to all those who worked at and attended our Spaghetti Supper Fundraiser for this year’s Youth Mission Trip. Due to your generosity, we were able to raise \$1,000 toward their trip this summer! What a great way of supporting these young adults!



# Just So You Know

## Union Congregational Church

### United Church of Christ

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450  
978-448-2091  
[www.uccgroton.org](http://www.uccgroton.org)

### The Reverend Gail Miller

Cell phone: 978-877-2177

[gail@uccgroton.org](mailto: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](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)

Tuesday—Friday

8:30 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

## April Deacons

Andrea McDonough/Janice Owen

**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 Contacts

### Buildings & Grounds Committee:

John Brooks

Barb Lefebvre

### Christian Education Committee:

Anne Cahill

### Church Council Member-at-Large:

Pat Woods

### Diaconate Committee:

Greg Balligan

Steve Legge

### Endowment Committee:

Mary Hanson

### Missions Committee:

Julie Platt

### Pastor Parish Relations Committee:

Bebe Goudey

### Stewardship & Finance Committee:

Liz McQuillin

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## April Highlights

### Sunday, April 3, 10:00 a.m. Worship

Holy Communion

Sunday School—*The Empty Tomb*

**Sunday School Feedback Circle after worship** in the Parish House (upstairs Blue Room)

4:30 p.m.—*Kingdom Agenda* (Robinson House)

4:30 p.m.—Mission Trip Meeting

### Sunday, April 10, 10:00 a.m. Worship

Handbell and Senior Choir

Sunday School—*Saul to Paul*

**Harvest Fair Planning Meeting** after Worship (see p. 7)

4:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group Meeting (see p. 8)

4:00 p.m. *Sticky Faith* at the Hnath House (see p. 6)

### Sunday, April 17, 10:00 a.m. Worship

**Teen Challenge in Worship** (see p. 8)

Sunday School—*Peter and Tabitha*

3:00 p.m. Christina William's Ordination at First Parish Church in Westford (see p. 7)

### Sunday, April 24, 10:00 a.m. Worship

**Common Cathedral** Executive Director, Amanda Grant-Rose, in Worship (see p. 8)

4:00 p.m. *Sticky Faith* at the Hnath House

### Saturday, April 30, 10:00—2:00 Spring Artisan Craft Fair (see p. 7)