

# THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



## May 2016

### *From Your Pastor*

This month I want to share some excerpts from an article I read recently: *Teach Us to Number Our Day Aright*, by Brian Keepers. How often we hear / say, "This is such a busy time...." I appreciate the "reorienting" of time presented here.

*Our culture teaches us that time is a precious commodity, a possession we own, and so wisdom involves mastering technology and techniques for good "time management." We prize the virtues of efficiency, productivity, multi-tasking and "getting things done" above all else. Conversely, the chief sin of our age is to "waste" time.*

*But can time really be managed, commodified, and controlled by us as finite creatures who, unlike God, are bound to exist within time? The result of all our efforts to manage time efficiently is that we become excessively time-conscious, obsessed with watching our clocks and fighting against time. I'm weary of feeling like I'm always fighting against the clock and lamenting that there never seem to be enough hours in the day.*

*But here is a great irony. Did you know that clocks were first invented and developed in the monastery, of all places? Because Benedictine monks were committed to prayer at set hours during the course of each day, it was crucial they discover a way to call the community to prayer. "When the clocca rang," writes Dorothy Bass in her marvelous book *Receiving the Day*, "they drew attention to the eternity of God and brevity of human life." (p.26)*

*So clocks were first invented to help humans be God-focused and stay attentive to the way eternity breaks into ordinary time here and now. Instead of being so time-conscious, we become increasingly God-conscious, and perhaps able to receive time as a sheer gift of grace.*

*"Time is not our enemy," writes Bass. "It is a meeting place, a point of rendezvous with God." (p.11) In Jesus, God did not call us to escape time or gain mastery over it. The eternal Word became flesh, entered fully into time so as to redeem it and thus make every moment holy.*

*Time is not a commodity. Time is not my possession. Time is not something I need to "squeeze the most out of." Part of living as one who belongs to God in Christ means recognizing that even "my" time is not my own. And the more God's grace enables me to uncurl my white-knuckled grasp of time to release it, the more it seems like I have time in abundance.*

I find here, words of both challenge and encouragement.

**Challenge:** To be freed from the tyranny of the urgent, I need to focus more on God/Christ rather than work harder to manage my time better.

**Encouragement:** Eternity entered time in Jesus Christ. God is with us in OUR time, while simultaneously continuing to operate on (and in) HIS time.

Be encouraged!

With you on the journey,





# Our Church Family/Church News



## Ongoing Prayer List

Beverly  
Sheila Craigen  
Cathleen Currie  
Harold Gould

Alex Haas  
G. Keith  
Alex Martin  
Holly Norton

Holly Norton  
Russ Robichaud  
Bradley Roesch  
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.



- Norman Faunce, in the death of his wife, Marjorie, on April 25.
- Ellen Hargraves, home recovering from hip replacement surgery.
- Tom Wickham, home recovering from a viral infection
- Liz Smith and family, who buried her father, Art Smith, on April 2.

## May Birthdays

Anne Cahill	05/03	Nancy Huguenin	05/12	Katie Milano	05/23
Chris Hecht	05/03	Kyle Plausse	05/14	Drew Davenport	05/24
Monique Meehan	05/04	Joel Hughes	05/15	Bill Gale, Jr.	05/24
Jocelyn Byron-Kelly	05/05	Kelly Sullivan	05/16	Dennis Carey	05/25
Charlotte Caiozzo	05/05	Mike Smith	05/20	Caleb Brennan	05/28
Sara Zambuto	05/06	Ginny Fraser	05/21	John Brooks	05/31
Deb Shields	05/08	Emily Hanson	05/21	Tyler York	05/31
Margaret Sullivan	05/10				

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!

## 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 four 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 ( )*.



## April 27 Meeting Summary

The Congregational Stated Meeting will be June 12.

The next Feedback Circle will be on June 5; the topic will be the worship service. Look for the sign-up sheet during coffee hour on May 15 and 22.

The FaST team is meeting with the architect every 2-3 weeks. They have a detailed schedule from Jonathan Levi Architects through October. They have met with Atty. Robert Collins for advice regarding when and how to navigate with various town boards.

The conversation on staffing is continuing, exploring how we decide how and when to add staff — either new positions or changing a position from volunteer to paid.

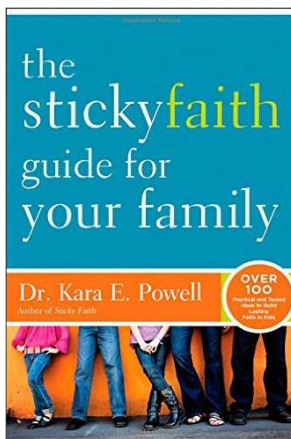
It is time for a new photo directory. If you are interested in helping, let Rev. Gail or Stefanie Lempp know. We are interested in something simpler and more versatile (digital) than using one of the companies we've used in the past.



## June Courier

Please submit items for the June Courier by Friday, May 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](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org). Thank you.

## Parenting Discussion Group



### May 1, 15 and 22

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

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.

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

**May 1:** *Communication: Talking Faith with your Kids (Chapter 8, p. 129)*

**May 15:** *Handling Mistakes: Showing Sticky Forgiveness (Chapter 3, p. 41)*

**May 22:** *Connecting: Finding Ways to Relate to your Teenager (Chapter 5, p. 79)*

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

# Summer Worship / Sunday School / Bible Study



## Summer Worship starts on June 19

### 10:00 a.m. Worship

After hearing your feedback during our "Summer Worship Feedback Circle" at the end of last summer, we have decided to **keep worship at 10:00 a.m.** again this summer. Summer worship is at a more relaxed pace, with a shorter (45 minute) service. Keeping worship at 10:00 a.m. allows people to be less rushed getting to church on Sunday mornings; and the difference between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. doesn't increase the "heat factor" significantly. ***When you are not away on vacation, we hope you will continue to worship with us during the summer months!***

#### Diaconate

—Greg Balligan, Co-Chair —Steve Legge, Co-Chair —Paul Brown —Erica Davenport  
—Holly Haase —Ellen Hargraves —Andrea McDonough —Janice Owen

## Sunday School Schedule



### Sunday School



#### Christian Education Committee

—Anne Cahill, Chair —Jean Armstrong —Kelli Hnath —Krista Kubick  
—Diane Landry —Anne Larsen

## Bible Study

### Wednesday Evening Bible Study

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

The second unit from *Sacred Gifts and Holy Gatherings* studies the traditions of love, marriage, and death. We'll read scripture from *Genesis*, *Song of Solomon*, *Hosea 1*, and *John*. 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. ***The last Bible Study for the summer will be Thursday, June 2. Contact Marvin Caldwell ( )***





## Teen Challenge Luncheon

The visit from *Teen Challenge* on April 17 was a time where we were able to listen to true testimonies of how Christ can change lives. Many thanks to all who brought food to contribute to the delicious luncheon. All of the leftover sandwiches, salads and desserts were packed up and sent home with the men from *Teen Challenge* who visited. The Missions Committee has allocated \$800 to this ministry, which is more than enough to sponsor two men who are beginning their journey on the road to recovery from addiction.



## Special Offering

## 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 15 and May 22.



## Opportunity to Serve *Common Cathedral* Sunday, May 8 (Mother's Day)

We will make, take, and serve lunch at *Common Cathedral* (Boston Common). How you can help:

- Shop for lunch supplies (shopping list and reimbursement provided)
- Prepare/cook hard-boiled eggs (drop-off at church kitchen before worship)
- Help make sandwiches at 8:30 a.m. that Sunday to take to *Common Cathedral*
- Serve lunch in Boston and attend Outdoor Worship

If you can help, please use the link to *Signup Genius* provided in the Friday email or contact Julie Platt ( ).

### Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair  
—Pete Hnath

—Brenda Barker  
—Lynn Manalo

—Halsey Platt

## Harvest Fair



## Harvest Fair Meeting

Sunday, May 15

11:45 a.m. in the Church Parlor

Our meeting in April generated lots of interesting ideas. We're moving forward with the chili competition idea. Do you have a chili you think could win? We hope music will be a big part of the fair this year. 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. Come hear first-hand what the discussions are all about.

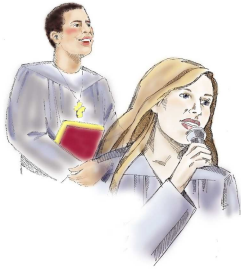
We will be donating all the profits to *Common Cathedral* again this year. How wonderful to be able to share the blessings in our lives with others. And, because this is all for charity, we can have a more joyful day knowing that we are living our faith and sharing Christ with our community!

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



## Music Appreciation Day Sunday, May 22

Special plans for music are in the works, including pieces presented by the Handbell, Adult, Junior, and Cherub Choirs.



## Summer Musicians Needed!

Spring is finally here, and summer is just around the corner. In fact, we go to our Summer Worship Music Schedule on June 19, and so we are looking 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 or Bernard Crane if you wish to schedule a date. Let us know soon so you can get the date that you want; and watch for an invitation to sing in a men's or women's group.

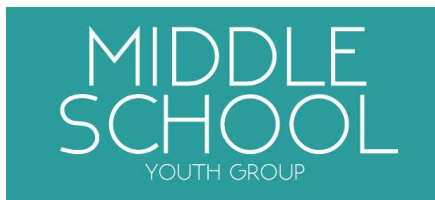


## A Message to the Cherub Choir from Ms. Bonnie

Hello to all my Cherubs! I have loved singing with you at the beginning of each Sunday School session this year — you always make my day with your wonderful voices and beautiful smiles! Our year is soon coming to a close — we will be singing on Music Appreciation Sunday, which is May 22. We will be singing *We Shall go Forth With Joy* (the one where we sing about the trees of the field and then clap). Thank you for a wonderful year, Cherubs.

—Bonnie Marchesani

## 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, 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)

## Community



## Grandparent Camp July 3-9

Oceanwood (Maine)

In summers past, members of our church have attended this camp at Oceanwood, located in Ocean Park, Maine (right next door to Old Orchard Beach). Bond with your grandkids at the beach. Observe or join in on all your grandkids favorite camp activities. Participate in daily Bible Study times and live music as a family! This is a great opportunity for grandparent(s) and grandchild(ren) (ages 6-13) to come together for six days to eat, sleep, play and pray together. Counselors take the

children to these activities, but grandparents are welcome to observe. For more information and to register, visit [www.oceanwood.org](http://www.oceanwood.org). If you have any questions, contact Ellen Hargraves ( ).

# 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)*

**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:** This is sent out Friday afternoon through MailChimp.

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

## Committee Contacts

### Buildings & Grounds:

John Brooks

Barb Lefebvre

### Christian Education:

Anne Cahill

### Church Council Member-at-Large:

Pat Woods

### Diaconate:

Greg Balligan

Steve Legge

### Endowment:

Mary Hanson

### Missions :

Julie Platt

### Pastor Parish Relations:

Bebe Goudey

### Stewardship & Finance:

Liz McQuillin

## Church Officers

**Moderator:** Stefanie Lempp

**Treasurer:** Dennis Carey

**Clerk:** Lori McElroy

**Collector:** Bob Goudey

**Internal Auditor:** Bruce Wyman

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## May Sunday Highlights



### **Sunday, May 1**

Holy Communion

Sunday School: *Lydia*, Acts 16:9-15

4:00 p.m. Parent Discussion Group at the Hnath House (see p. 3)

4:30 p.m. Queens Mission Trip Meeting (kids only)

### **Sunday, May 8 (Mother's Day)**

8:30 a.m. Meet at church to prepare sandwiches for *Common Cathedral* (see p. 5)

Junior and Senior Choir

Special Envelope Fundraiser for Youth Mission Trip to Queens

Sunday School: *Paul Silas*, Acts 16:16-40

### **Sunday, May 15 (Pentecost Sunday—wear Red)**

Sunday School: *The Holy Spirit*, Acts 2:1-4, 36-42

11:45 a.m. Harvest Fair Planning Meeting in the Church Parlor (see p. 5)

4:00 p.m. Parent Discussion Group at the Hnath House (see p. 3)

4:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Meeting/Dinner (see p. 6)

### **Sunday, May 22—Music Appreciation Sunday (Trinity Sunday)**

Senior, Junior, Cherub, and Handbell Choirs

Sunday School: *Praise God, Psalm 8*

4:00 p.m. Parent Discussion Group at the Hnath House (see p. 3)