

THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



Mid-Summer 2017

Youth Mission Trip to Rutland, Vermont June 25—July 2

Our youth (and advisors) served in retirement homes, community gardens, trail cleaning, a soup kitchen and thrift store in the Rutland area. What a wonderful way to Share Christ and Change Lives beyond the borders of our town.

Youth: Taylor Ansted, Destiny Bou, Becca Brennan, Hayley Cahill, Matt Carey, Ryan Carey, Taryn Emerle, Jackie Gervais, Emily Hanson, Kristina Hnath, Jack Horsman, Robert Houde, Anna Kubick, Charlotte LaGasse, Clarissa LaGasse, Katie Milano, Jacob Morrill, Curtis Prestia, Sophia Smith, Bryce York

Advisors: Mary Hanson, Tom Hanson, Pete Hnath, Bonnie Marchesani, Gail Miller, Carl Prestia



Youth Mission Trip (cont.)





Our Church Family



Ongoing Prayer List

This prayer list is refreshed twice a year (June and January). If you would like other names added (or any name removed), please email Carol Zaiatz (unioncc@uccgroton.org) with the person's name and the prayer request, or contact Gail Miller directly (gail@uccgroton.org). Thank you.

Diane Black
Kathi Bond
Megan Bettison
Jack Cornforth

Jack Lyons
Nevan Rosenfeld
Debbie Sampson

Donna Sattler
Rudi Schmid
Liz Waggoner



Good-Bye to Leigh Maynard

Leigh, our *Common Cathedral* friend, is retiring and moving to Suffolk, Virginia, to live with his daughter and grandchildren (6 of them!). **He will be in worship**

with us one last time on July 16th before leaving at the end of the month. (A heartfelt thank you to all who donated toward his train ticket to Virginia back in June!)



- Lynn and the Manalo family in the death of her father, Ronald Gosselin.
- Jenn Luth and all who mourn her father's (Ron LaPointe) death on June 22.
- Katie Goudey and Christopher Morrison, married on 6/25.

July Birthdays

Charlie Bridge	7/1	Rylan Rosenfeld	7/16
Eleanor Ferrero	7/2	Brent Emerle	7/18
Reaghan Carleton	7/3	Leslie Howard	7/18
Sara Clinton	7/3	Caroline Clinton	7/19
Peg Lloyd	7/3	Cassie Sampas	7/19
Jennifer Gervais	7/4	Thor Berge	7/20
Bob Goudey	7/4	Jon Sjoberg	7/20
Chip Detwiller	7/5	Cameron Grasso	7/21
Lisa Maciejowski	7/7	Betsy Bridge	7/22
Paige Carleton	7/8	Colin Grasso	7/24
Lynn Manalo	7/9	Amy Sjoberg	7/24
Robert Houde	7/10	Lois Berge	7/25
Abigail Howard	7/10	Leigh Maynard	7/25
Eleanor Kubick	7/10	Destiny Bou	7/26
Janet Kennedy	7/12	Caden Rosenfeld	7/27
Cloe Bridge	7/13	Sarah Flynn	7/30
Finley Clinton	7/14	Bryce York	7/31
Mary Kubick	7/15		

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?



Milestone Anniversaries

- Dick and Sheila Smith celebrate their 55th Wedding Anniversary on **July 22.**

Ten Year Anniversaries

- Mark Rzeznikiewicz and Bonnie Martin on **August 5**
- Robert and Alison Rosenfeld on **August 26.**

August Birthdays

Maya Milner	8/1	Matt Carey	8/23
Jack Van Pelt	8/1	Pat Woods	8/24
Ellen Hargraves	8/8	Macie Bridge	8/25
Diane Landry	8/8	Kristina Hnath	8/26
Kristin Ansted	8/9	Steve Legge	8/26
Leo Biocchi	8/13	Jennifer Boucher	8/27
Barb Lefebvre	8/14	Makaila Meehan	8/28
Janice Flynn	8/16	Beth Hughes	8/29
Patrick Daly	8/16	Nancy Bugbee	8/30
Bebe Goudey	8/17	Alex Platt	8/31
Jenna Plausse	8/20	Jason Zambuto	8/31
Pete Hnath	8/21		

September Courier

The next Courier will be the September issue. *Email your submission to Carol Zaiatz at unioncc@uccgroton.org by Tuesday, August 15. Thank you.*

Church News

A Death in Our Church Family

The Reverend Donald Ward was the pastor here from 1943 - 1949. He died in 1989, but his widow Anna Katherine, known as Nancy, lived another 28 years, dying on June 21st at the age of 100! She had 4 children, 8 grandchildren, and 9 great grandchildren. She died peacefully at the Havenwood Health Facility in Concord, NH.

A memorial service will be held on July 21, at 2:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Concord NH.

Vacation Schedules

Pastor Miller will be away July 19—August 7. She'll return to the office on August 8 and to worship on August 13. The Reverend Skip Lloyd (

) will be available for pastoral emergencies in her absence. Guest Preachers will be The Reverend Dr. Betsy Waters and The Reverend Kaz Bem.

Carol Zaiatz will be on vacation August 7—August 11. Erica Davenport will stop by the office periodically to collect mail, check voicemail and email. Carol will be back in the office August 15.



Stated Meeting (June 4) Summary

The congregation approved the Building Project in concept.

The congregation approved a Capital Campaign Feasibility Study.

The 2017 budget is where we expected with expenses and pledges. Committees have been spending conservatively so far this year. (If they want to spend more than 5% above their budget, they must get approval from Church Council.)

Endowments principal is \$435,550 as of May 26. Endowment disbursements have been used for an assortment of things over the years, including partially paying for the sanctuary piano, monitors for the classrooms and the lower sanctuary, Sunday School furniture, housing needs for members and defraying the cost of the Mother's Day brunch.

Church Council (June 21) Summary

The Treasurer reported that pledges and expenses continue to be on track. Also, round banquet tables have been purchased from last year's Birthday Fund; the delay was due to lack of storage space.

There was a lengthy discussion on the direction that the 2018 budget should take; the discussion included representatives from Finance and also from Stewardship.

Bernard Crane will be away for the month of July.

Sunday School



Fall will be here before you know it, and we are busy at church preparing for Sunday School. We are adjusting the classes to keep the number of kids per class in balance and assigning rooms in the Parish House accordingly.

Sunday School Teachers will again teach in teams (3-4 teachers per team per grade). Each team will divide up the Sundays as fits their schedules, and coordinate directly with each other. This provides consistency for the kids and ready support for the teachers, while simplifying communication regarding the kids and the classes. We are still seeking a couple of teachers at each grade level. Please contact Kelli Hnath (kbhnath@yahoo.com or 978-272-1223) or anyone on the Christian Education Committee if you are interested in helping as a teacher or being on our "sub" list.

Christian Education Committee

—Kelli Hnath, Chair
—Bonnie Marchesani

—Jean Armstrong
—Carl Prestia

—Krista Kubick

—Anne Larsen

Confirmation



Confirmation Sunday

On June 11, we celebrated the Confirmation of eight of our young people. What a wonderful, joyous day!

At the end of their year, they were asked to write a letter to the Deacons, in which they shared their faith and beliefs. Here are some excerpts from those letters.



In their own words. . .



Patrick Daly (Mentor: Halsey Platt)

I have found that God lives with me more than I thought. Jesus and his teachings are an influence to do the right thing and to set me on the right path. He has guided me and given me a deeper understanding of how I should go through my daily life. His death shows to me that God loves me. The Bible is a reminder to me that God is with me wherever I go. It is comforting that He is always listening to what we have to say during prayer. I like to think of the little church "motto" as something that guides me in my faith journey - Sharing Christ, Changing Lives.

Taryn Emerle (Mentor: Bonnie Biocchi)

Being a Christian has made a great difference in how I live, and how I view the world...and how I face issues, because I pray and rely on God to help me through difficult times. To me, Jesus is an example and a moral compass. I think that a member of this church does three things: believes, respects, and helps. I think it is very important to believe in God and the Trinity, but it will make the most difference if you find a community to learn more with, and apply it.



Kristina Hnath (Mentor: Mary Hanson)

Jesus told us to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, to show everyone we believe that Jesus is God, and to become a part of the church community. As I go through stages of my life with the roller coaster of emotions, I feel as though God is right next to me. Some days, I feel as though I know what the right thing is, from the wrong thing, but some days I don't. When that happens, that is when I feel connected to God because I hear a small voice inside my head telling me what's right from wrong, and the voice also guides me through those difficult times. Praying helps me relax through hard moments, makes me feel safe and know that God is listening to my prayers.

Confirmation—In their own words (cont.)

Robert Houde (Mentor: Tom Hanson)

To me, baptism is a parental decision that we don't really get a say in. In my life, Jesus has been a guide to how I should live my life. The fact that Jesus died for us means a great deal to me, because it makes me feel as though I should live up to his expectations. Being a Christian has made me a better person. The Bible is also very important to me because I view it as a code of conduct. Prayer is also important to me because it is my connection to God whenever I need it. He is always listening 24/7.

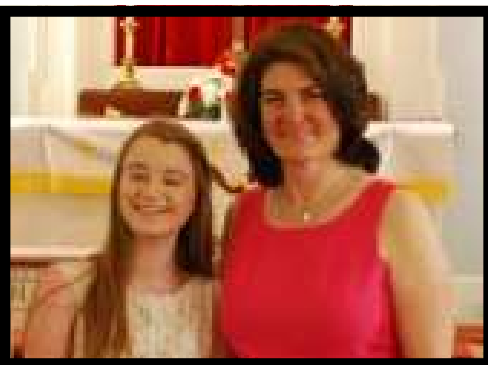


Charlotte LaGasse (Mentor: Bonnie Marchesani)

Almost every Sunday for as long as I can recall my parents have been dragging me to worship. After a while what seemed like a waste of time transformed into something I enjoyed doing. As my fondness of worship grew, so did my faith. I believe that Jesus is pure and without sin...my savior and always by my side, he is my example of how much God loves us. God gave us the gift of life to spread His holy word, and to serve others. By becoming involved in the community, offering resources to those in need, and praising God, I will do my part in spreading the Christian faith.

Clarissa LaGasse (Mentor: Julie Platt)

During my life, Jesus has been a guide for me to follow and know what decisions to make. He also motivates me to be a better Christian and to continue my faith journey every day. I have been a Christian for as long as I remember, and I cannot think of living another way. Being a Christian, I have met so many amazing people and had so many eye-opening opportunities. Along with the Bible, I find prayer so important in my living. Having that connection with God, and knowing that God is always listening to our prayers, is so valuable in my life.



Katie Milano (Mentor: Bebe Goudey)

In my life Jesus helps me in many ways. He helps me get through studying and homework, he helps me get through difficult classes and finals. Prayer is also important to me. When I have problems with my friends and I can't find an answer I will ask God, and He will help me find an answer. Living in the time we do is hard because there is a tragedy that seems to appear every day. During these times I am close to God, so I feel protected and loved during a time of hate and fear.

Kristin Sjoberg (Mentor: Pete Hnath)

By being confirmed I am stating that I believe in the Trinity, and that Jesus was born, died, and raised. This is the greatest belief of the Christian faith: God put Jesus on the Earth for us. Though the purpose was to alleviate our sins, and to guide us back to God, this action strikes the strongest for me as a show of love. God would go to such lengths for us, to put his only son on Earth, to go through horrible pain, for these tiny, little creatures down there. This reminds me that I am loved, so deeply that I cannot fathom it, and that I will not be left alone, regardless of what I have done, or where I am. It also reminds me to forgive as God does, because I have been forgiven, every second of every day.



Bible Study / Missions / Harvest Fair

Bible Study

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Thursdays (July and August only)

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

Contact: Janet Kennedy

Thursday Morning Bible Study is on break for the summer. They will resume in September.

Missions Committee



Loaves & Fishes

Help Needed with Food Delivery

Last month our congregation donated 186 pounds of food. Thank you to all who contributed! Feel free to visit their website for a listing of the most needed items: www.loavesfishespantry.org

We are currently looking for a volunteer to deliver the donations each month from our church to the *Loaves & Fishes* Food Pantry located in Devens. Deliveries can be made Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 - 8 p.m. or during the day while there is an open pantry session (the *Loaves & Fishes* website has more details). If you are interested, contact Julie Platt ().

Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair
—Lynn Manalo

—Brenda Barker
—Halsey Platt

—Ellen Hargraves



Harvest Fair

Saturday, September 30 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Who are we Fundraising for this year?



Teen Challenge offers Christ-centered, faith-based solutions for youth, adults, and families struggling with life-controlling problems, such as addiction. *Teen Challenge USA* is holistic – meaning that they are concerned with the body, mind, and spirit of those who come to them for help. They endeavor to help people become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well and spiritually alive.

How can you help NOW?

- Save your kids clothes for the Children's Clothing part of the fair.
- Do you have suitable items to donate to the Attic Treasures? Not sure? Talk to Liz McQuillin () or Barbara Wyman ().
- Do you have an idea for the Silent Auction? It can be a physical thing (tickets to an event, a vacation home, a painting, a handmade blanket....) or you could offer your services (house painting, making dinner, cleaning a yard...)
- Bake and freeze things for the bake table. Do you have an extra crop of blueberries? Save them for Blueberry Pies!
- Do you have an idea for the fair or want to help somewhere specific? Let Mary Hanson know ()

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Summer Fun—All Are Invited!

The Sunset Tiki Bar & Grill at Nashoba Valley Wednesday, July 12

4:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Families, kids, adults of all ages are invited to hang out, play in the sand and water, have dinner. Come as early as you can to help claim a table by the water. Look for Pastor Miller and Sophia!



Breezy Picnic Grounds (Douglas, MA)

Monday, August 14

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

This place is great! Swimming, waterslides, picnic, sandy play areas, game rooms, snack bar. Bring a picnic lunch and join us for some or all of the day. Twenty participants gets us the group rate (\$16/person). RSVP to Gail or the church office.

*We hope you will continue to worship with us on
Sundays when you are not away!*