

THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



June 2018



FROM THE PASTOR

Last Sunday was Trinity Sunday; and I want to share the last portion of my sermon with you again here:

When we say we're a Trinitarian church, we often are distinguishing ourselves from the Unitarian church and what we believe about who God is. But it's got to be about more than that. When we say we're Trinitarian we're also saying that relationships are the most important thing about us and, even more specifically — relationships that radiate love for others more than ourselves.

So what does that look like?

It looks like our knitting group knitting prayer shawls for others — including little pouches for babies who are stillborn.

It looks like the Confirmation classes sharing home communion with Bert Tompkins a number of years ago; and having dinner with Charlie Elwood more recently so they could experience the faith of these great men first hand.

It looks like our Harvest Fair profit making a real difference in the lives of those in recovery or without homes.

It looks like providing 250 backpacks to children who are living on the edge. (You can read more about this on p. 3-4)

A few weeks ago, I suggested three questions to guide our identity as a church:

Are we including everyone?

Are we valuing people over things?

Are we caring for others more than ourselves?

A Trinitarian Church makes relationships that demonstrate God's love their priority — as individuals and as a body.

We print it on the front of our bulletin every week:

Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives

Creating a Christian foundation for families

Learning more about Jesus

Living our faith beyond our walls

If the Trinity = love (and it does),
then the Church = love as well.

Amen and Amen!

Gail





Our Church Family/News



Ongoing Prayer List—Refreshed as of June 1

In order to keep our prayer list current and relevant, it is refreshed twice a year. Names added recently, and any other names requested to remain are here. As always, if you would like other names added, 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.

Megan Bettison
Joel Eaton
Frank Kanour
Scott Joyce
Chris Laursen

Joe Marchesani
Bill Moeller
Myrtle Murphy
Debbie Sampson

Rudi Schmid
Edie Tompkins
Laurie Wade
Liz Waggoner



- Cassie Sampas, at home recovering from pneumonia, as well as from knee replacement surgery in April.
- Peg Elwood and family, in the death of Charlie Elwood.
- Erica Davenport, recovering from surgery.
- Barb Avey and family in the death of her brother, Fred Halbritter.
- Tim Dumont in the death of his brother Daniel. (Tim's address: 132 Main Street, Rindge, NH 03461)
- Bonnie Martin, recovering from carpal tunnel surgery earlier in May.

On the first Sunday of June,
Pastor Miller celebrates
12 years as our Pastor!

Celebrating 
An Anniversary This Month

Milestone Anniversary

Anne and Jerry Cahill will celebrate their **25th Wedding Anniversary**
on **June 26**. Congratulations!

June Birthdays

Bill Gale, Sr.	06/01	Jacob Elibero	06/11	Alison Houde	06/24
Liam Clinton	06/01	Aiden Luth	06/11	Cailidh Houde	06/24
Gerry Cahill	06/05	Sammi Smith	06/11	Kim Burgess	06/25
Barbara Avey	06/07	Grant Howard	06/12	Ruth Silva	06/25
Jillian Van Pelt	06/08	Amy Nickerson	06/13	Madeleine Street	06/25
Doris Barreiro	06/09	Gregory Poser	06/13	Isabella Meehan	06/27
Caroline Cocossa	06/09	Kathy Bates	06/14	Bill Semienko	06/28
Peg Elwood	06/09	Mary Cocossa	06/18	Ed Stratton	06/28
Hayley Cahill	06/10	Daniel De Binder	06/21		

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?

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



May 23 Meeting Summary

What's next for our church? This was a significant focus of this month's meeting. In light of the building project being put on hold, what are our priorities now — what is the most important issue (or issues) we want to address? Keeping in mind the results of this question previously being posed to the congregation, accessibility of the sanctuary remains the number one priority, and we discussed options for moving forward.

We continued our discussion of the book *Lasting Impact*, by Carey Nieuwhof. The focus was on how we, as church leaders, can and should respond as people attend church less often. This subject also ties into our sub-committee group, which is reading *Multiply Your Impact* (by Paul Nixon and Christie Latona) and will soon be prepared to make recommendations for next steps.

We are moving forward with our recommendation to the church that we formally take on ownership of the *Loaves & Fishes* Backpack Drive. This will be an agenda item at the June 3 church meeting.

The Hallway Project (first phase) takes place Father's Day weekend, June 15-17. We are looking for donations of time, talents, and money to support this project.

Improving Our Welcome: The Hallway Project

We will begin renovations on the big hallway downstairs at church in a manner similar to last year's bathroom renovation. You are invited to offer your skills, time, and support in a variety of ways. First stage of the work begins on June 15; estimated cost of the entire renovation is \$5,320, and we have already received \$4,000!

To streamline obtaining the materials, the Stewardship team will purchase all items. We invite you to make a general contribution toward costs, or indicate a specific item toward which you'd like to contribute.

	Total needed
Flooring	\$1,500
Trim	\$970
Ceiling	\$900
Lighting	\$1,950

Go to our website (www.uccgoton.org) for links to donating time and/or money. Thank you for your support!



Annual Stated Meeting of the Congregation Sunday, June 3, after worship

Please join us! We will discuss and decide on the *Backpack Drive* and hear updates on other topics, including a finance report. All are invited.

Backpack Drive

Loaves & Fishes is looking for another organization to run the Backpack Drive. Much of what happens is on "auto pilot" and run by a volunteer who'll stay with the program. Our volunteer efforts would be needed primarily the last week of August (right before school starts!) to organize supplies and then assist the families who will receive them. (All this takes place at the Devens Community Center.) Approximately 250 children are blessed by this program! (see p. 4 for more information)

Backpack Drive

Union Congregational Church, Groton - Backpack Drive!

Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives

Creating a Christian foundation for families
Helping people learn more about Jesus
Living our faith beyond our walls by serving others



1 Start Soliciting Donations (May/June)

Donations of supplies & \$\$ come from established sources (much on "auto pilot")

2 Registration (June)

Families in need register at L&F for backpacks, specifying the ages and grades of their children.



3 Set up for Distribution Day (Aug. 20-23, Mon.-Thu.)

At Devens Community Center we arrange the donated supplies to allow for easy selection by families



4 Inventory Management (July/Aug.)

Receive the forms from L&F and create a "names & needs" spreadsheet. Track incoming supplies & donations.

3

5 Distribution Day!!! (the Friday before school starts: 8/24)

Adult volunteers help parents & students select supplies from the broad array donated

6

Whatever is left goes to local schools



No advance backpack stuffing!



Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives!



From the Collector

There are two ways to keep your donations current as you start your summer vacation season:

- Use the online giving tool on our church website. You can quickly set up an account, amount and frequency. Go to www.uccgroton.net and click on "Giving." We currently have eight families doing this.
- If you use a bank provided payment tool, set up UCC Groton, 220 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450, as a payee. Then create payment amount and frequency. We currently have ten families doing this.

Questions, please contact me. Enjoy your summer holidays!! Be safe — be a blessing.

Bob Goudey, Collector

Spring Fair Thank You!

We thank all who crafted, baked and worked in the kitchen...as well as those who got the hall ready for the fair and those who rebuilt it at the end of the day. Our profit was approximately \$1,145.



Nursery News

Welcome **Allie Cebollero**, our new Nursery Caregiver. She will officially start on June 3 (which will be Lauren Prestia's last Sunday with us). Allie is Doris Barreiro's granddaughter. Please stop by to welcome Allie and to say good-bye to Lauren.



2018 Graduates

Congratulations to all our recent graduates and wishing you God's blessings for a bright and happy future!

- **Madeleine Grace Bugbee** received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design from the University of Connecticut this past May. Her final senior semester was spent studying abroad in London at Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, an internationally-renowned centre for arts and design education.
- **Russell Byron-Kelly** graduated with Honors from UMass Lowell and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a Graphic Design Concentration and a Business Minor. He has been working at Gibbet Hill Grill for the past three years and also completed his internship there last summer. Russell is looking forward to starting his professional career in the Graphic Design field.
- **Laurel Anne Cassidy, granddaughter of Bob and Ellen Hargraves**, graduated on May 20 from Colgate University in Hamilton, NY.
- **Jack Horsman** graduates from Lawrence Academy in June. He's going to Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, PA.
- **Parker McMinn, Pat and Dave Woods' grandson**, graduated from Fairport High School (Fairport NY) and will be attending SUNY Binghamton (NY).

Handbell Concert—Sunday, June 10



Spring Handbell Concert

The New England Ringers "Color Wheel"

Sunday, June 10 at 4:30 p.m. in Our Sanctuary

Join us and invite your friends! Tickets for the concert are \$10.00 each and are available in advance this Sunday or through the church office or our website (www.uccgroton.org) if you wish to purchase online and then pickup at the door.

Sunday School



June 3—The Great Commission

Luke 24:36-53

June 10—(Last Day of Sunday School)

June 17—Youth Sunday

with activities for young children in the Fellowship Hall

Teacher Appreciation Sunday

June 10 During Worship

During 2017-2018, 16 people volunteered their time to teach our Sunday School classes. Some have consistently taught for multiple years, while others taught or helped for the first time. Together, they taught approximately 107 classes to approximately 30 children during the course of the year! On **June 10**, we will acknowledge our Sunday School Teachers in worship. What a wonderful way to share the Word of God with our children!

Christian Education Committee

—Krista Kubick, Chair
—Carl Prestia

—Jean Armstrong
—Bonnie Marchesani

—Amy Nickerson

Summer Worship

Summer Worship starts Sunday, June 24: Holy Communion (first Sunday of the month) is by "intinction." Worship (still at 10:00 a.m.) is at a more relaxed pace, with a shorter (45 minute) service. ***When you are not away on vacation, we hope you will continue to worship with us during the summer months!***

Something for the Children: Our new Nursery Attendant, Allie Cebollero, will lead/supervise an activity for children in the Fellowship Hall during worship each week.

Fellowship Hour: Weather permitting, our Fellowship Hour team will serve outside on the front lawn to enjoy fresh air while the children play in the front yard. Hot coffee will be supplemented by cold beverages and lighter fare. If you are assigned Fellowship Hour on a summer Sunday and will be away, please contact the Kitchen Ministry or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091) as soon as possible. *Questions? Greg Balligan, Janet Carey, Bill Colbert, Joel Hughes, Wendy Jones or Sara Zambuto.*

Altar Flowers: Again this summer, we would like to have flowers from your gardens on the altar from June 24 through Labor Day. We have an assortment of vases available in the kitchen, if you'd like to make your arrangement here. *Please sign-up on the Flower Chart in the hallway downstairs at church.* Thank you!

Greeters, Ushers and Readers: With people away on vacation, we need your help. If you are interested in serving as a Greeter or Usher, please contact **Juliet Silveri**; Reader, contact **Holly Haase**. And, if (after volunteering) your schedule changes (even at the last minute) and you can't make it, just let us know. Remember, summer worship is more relaxed and we welcome whatever help you can give!

Women's Group

Bad Girls this Summer



This was started as a group of women from the church that read and discussed the book *Bad Girls of the Bible* together. Even if you couldn't participate in those discussions, know that you and ALL women of the church are invited to gather throughout the summer for various activities. Come as your schedule allows — this is a great opportunity to meet and make friends! (And watch for a new name for this sometime soon.)

Wednesday, June 13

Prayer Journal Activity @ 6:30 - 8:00 (Raquel's House, 86 Main Street)
Join us to learn about the power of prayer journaling. This activity will be lead by Kelly Sullivan and is guaranteed to be a fun and engaging.

Wednesday, July 11

Bible Bingo @ 6:30 - 8:00 (Raquel's House)
Join us for a fun night of fellowship and Bible bingo.

Wednesday, July 18

Hike or Yoga @ 6:30 - 8:00 (Location TBD)

Sunday, August 19

Tour of Life Gate (66 Boston Road, Groton) @ 6:30 - 8:00
Join us for a personal tour of Groton's newest holistic facility. More information will be posted later in the summer.

Wednesday, August 22 **Service Activity @ 6:30 - 8:00** (TBD)

Contacts: Raquel Majeski
Myra Lockett

Summer Pails for *Marguerite's Place*

Twenty summer pails (containing toys and activities for children) were assembled (during the Wednesday Evening *Bad Girl's* Meeting on May 30) to support mothers and children who live at *Marguerite's Place*. Thank you to all who were able to donate and for those who have been lifting these women and children up in prayer.



From left to right: Raquel, Sara, Andrea, Kim, and Myra

Marguerite's Place is a transitional housing program for women and children in crisis (located in Nashua, NH). Case Managers work with moms to help them establish career goals and to enroll in specific training or education programs to enhance their long-term income opportunities. Women exiting the program are usually able to leave behind the welfare system, menial employment and other stigmas associated with poverty. As individual women take on the responsibilities and benefits of consistent employment and a secure home environment, they serve as self-assured and powerful role models for their children and other resident families.

Missions



Brenda Barker and Lynn Manalo on the left.

Hagar's Sisters

On May 5, members of the Mission Committee served at the Hagar's Sisters Comedy Benefit in Burlington, MA. They assisted as part of the set up crew, preparing the tables and hall for the special event. The benefit featured live comedy, silent and live auctions, live music, door prizes and decadent desserts! The funds raised will provide scholarships for 48 new women they expect to serve in 2018.

Hagar's Sisters is celebrating 10 years of service that, through the transforming power of God, has brought hundreds of women into a new life, free from abuse.

Loaves & Fishes — Help Needed with Food Delivery

We are looking for a volunteer to shuttle the donations each month to the *Loaves & Fishes* Food Pantry, located in Devens. Donations can be dropped off Monday & Wednesday evenings from 7 – 8 pm. or during the day while there is an open pantry session (go to www.loavesfishespantry.org for more details). If you are interested, contact Julie Platt. ***A big thank you to Janice Owen for serving in this capacity this past year.***

Youth Mission Trip

June 24—July 1
Lynn, MA

Please hold these kids in your prayers and offer your gratitude to the adults who are serving as their advisors. How blessed we are to have this opportunity, and so many who said “yes” to God’s call on their lives to serve in this manner.

Youth

Ryan Carey
Hasi Gedara
Emily Hanson
Jason Hnath
Kristina Hnath

Alison Houde
Cailidh Houde
Anna Kubick
Ellie Kubick
Charlotte LaGasse

Cassie Mckiel
Emma Milano
Katie Milano
Jacob Morrill

Curtis Prestia
Kirsten Sjoberg
Sophia Smith
Bryce York
Chloe York



Advisors: Gail Miller, Mary Hanson, Pete Hnath, and Liz Smith
Retreat Advisors: Carl Prestia and Tom Hanson



Important Mission Trip Dates

Sunday, June 3

6:30 p.m. Mission Trip Meeting (Kids only)
7:30 p.m. Parents and Kids (FORMS ARE DUE)

Sunday, June 24

10:00 a.m. Worship — Commissioning Prayer in Church and Departure
All are invited to “pray us off” and wave goodbye!

Harvest Fair / Mid-Summer Courier / Ladies' Lunch



Harvest Fair Saturday, September 22 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.



This year, the Harvest Fair is supporting **Teen Challenge**, which offers Christ-centered, faith-based solutions for youth,

adults, and families struggling with life-controlling problems, such as addiction. *Teen Challenge* 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 donating to the Children's Clothing room.
- Do you have suitable items to **donate to the Attic Treasures**? Not sure? Talk to Liz McQuillin (lizmcq22@aol.com) or Barbara Wyman (barbatdhr@aol.com).
- 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...). Contact Liz Brennan (Liz.Corcoran@Bain.com)
- **Bake and freeze things for the bake table**. Do you have an extra crop of blueberries? Save them for blueberry pies!
- **We need someone to lead Pie Baking this year**. Do you have new ideas? Contact Mary Hanson.

Do you have an idea for the fair or want to help somewhere specific? Let Mary Hanson know.

Mid-Summer Courier

The "Mid-Summer Courier" will be available the beginning of July and will include information for **July and August**. Please email (unioncc@uccgroton.org) your information by **Friday, June 15**; and remember to include anything that needs to be known for early September. Thank you.



Ladies' Lunch Friday, July 6

Join us for our once a month gathering for lunch. All women of the church are invited! It's a great opportunity to get together with friends and meet new friends. Look for more information in the bulletin announcements and the Friday email as to what restaurant we will go to on July 6.

Meet at the church at 11:30 if you wish to car pool; and if you need a ride, contact Janice Owen, Brenda Semienko or Peg Lloyd.

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June Highlights

Sunday, June 3

Worship and Holy Communion

Annual Stated Meeting after Worship (p. 3) — childcare provided

6:30 p.m. Mission Trip Meeting—Kids only (p. 8)

7:30 p.m. Mission Trip—Parents and Kids (FORMS DUE)

Sunday, June 10

Teacher Appreciation Sunday (see p. 6)

4:30 p.m. *The New England Ringers*—Handbell Choir Concert (see p. 5)

Sunday, June 17 10:00 a.m. (Happy Father's Day)

Youth Sunday (Our teens will lead us in a worship service they have planned)

Donuts for Dads following Worship

Sunday, June 24

Commissioning Prayer for Mission Trip participants

Mission Trip departs — Join us to say good-bye!

Sunday, July 1 Mission Trip participants return in the afternoon

Guest Preacher: The Reverend Kaz Bem (Pastor in Marlboro)