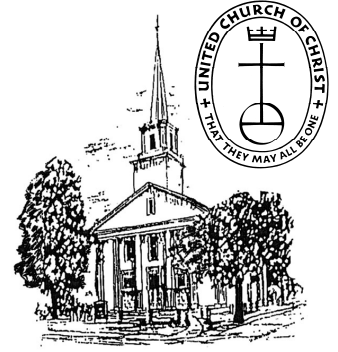


THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



September 2018

FROM THE



PASTOR

No One Likes Change!

Well, I don't know if that's true.... I've known plenty of people who seem to embrace the changes that life brings with resolve and even joy. I also know a good number of "bloom where you're planted" types, who can move their whole family across the country with a sense of adventure and hope, rather than fear and dread.

Churches, and the people who inhabit them, have a reputation for being "change-averse," that is, not embracing, not welcoming, and most certainly not seeking out change. I was talking about this with one of you this summer and you said, "You ought to preach a series on this!" And so I will!

Beginning September 23 and for four Sundays, we'll explore *change* and what it means for Christians and the Church. We'll look at three different things we experience when we find ourselves facing change: the need to learn, facing loss, and discerning the situation. It will look like this:

Sept. 23 *Encountering Change: What Are We Learning?*

Sept. 30 *Experiencing Change: What Are We Losing?*

Oct. 7 *Engaging Change: What Are We Doing?*

Oct. 14 *Embracing Change: What's Next For Us?*

If you have any personal experiences or stories related to these themes, please call / email / text me, as I'd love to hear about them.

The Bible says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow" (Hebrews 13:8). What good news this is! I look forward to exploring these themes with you as we worship our God whose goodness never changes!

With you on the Journey!

Gail



Blessing
of the Backpacks

Blessing of the Backpacks **Sunday, September 9, during Worship**

Kids will bring their backpacks to church and we will bless them during worship! We want kids and their families to be reminded that God is with them every step of the way. (We'll have a little gift for each one as well!)



Our Church Family/Church News



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.

Megan Bettison
Joel Eaton
Frank Kanour
Scott Joyce
Chris Laursen
Joe Marchesani

Jan Miller
Bill Moeller
Myrtle Murphy
Debbie Sampson
Rudi Schmid

Edie Tompkins
Karen and Marc Vandenbulcke
Laurie Wade
Connor Welles
Liz Waggoner



- Lois Berge and family in the sudden death of her husband, Thor Berge, on 7/16.
- Betsy Bridge, recovering from surgery in July.
- Peg Lloyd, recovering from a broken wrist after a fall on 8/22.
- The family of the Reverend Jim Bronwell, who died August 31. Jim was the Interim Pastor here from 2004-2006.

Confidential Prayer Chain

Need prayer and need it now? Simply email prayer@uccgroton.org and your request will go to the confidential pray-ers; or call Carol or Gail in the Church Office (978-448-2091) and they 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.



Milestone Anniversaries

- A belated congratulations to **Tom and Mary Hanson**, who celebrated their **20th Wedding Anniversary** on **April 25!**
- Congratulations to **Craig Smith and Stefanie Lempp**, who will be celebrataing their **25th Wedding Anniversary** on **September 18**. Congratulations!

September Birthdays

Julie Sutherland-Platt	09/01	Brian LaGasse	09/10	Emily Townsend	09/21
Gianna Hitsos	09/02	Hannah Van Pelt	09/17	Jillian Coviello	09/26
Marin Colbert	09/03	Russell Byron-Kelly	09/19	Jacob Gervais	09/29
Paul Meehan, Jr.	09/05	Daniel Flynn	09/20	Cathy Fuller	09/30
Karen Sherwin	09/06	Ryan Kingsborough	09/20	Nathan Townsend	09/30
Terri Cappucci	09/07	Alyssa Hughes	09/21		
Christine Brooks	09/08	Kathryn Kingsborough	09/21		
Cheryl Townsend	09/09				

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



Ladies' Lunch

Friday, September 7

Mariano's (Pepperell)

All women of the church are invited! Meet at church at 11:30 a.m. to carpool. If you need a ride, contact Janice Owen, Brenda Semienko, or Peg Lloyd.



Welcome Back BBQ Potluck Lunch

Sunday, September 9, After Worship

Feed Your Soul AND your Stomach! Our summer schedules take us here and there; so let's gather to reconnect as the school year begins again. Plan to stay for good food (sandwiches, hot dogs, and Italian sausages), good friends, and good fun! RSVP on the church website or contact Carol Zaiatz (unioncc@uccgroton.org; 978-448-2091) to confirm your attendance. Questions? Please contact Janet Carey at janetdenniscarey@gmail.com.

Getting to Know You...

September 30 after Worship

New to Church?

Light Lunch and Conversation

You are invited to gather in the Parlor, for an opportunity to meet others who are also new and to get to know Pastor Miller and the Church a little better. Bring your questions as we get to know each other. RSVP to the Church Office (unioncc@uccgroton.org or 978-448-2091) so we can plan for food. Babysitting will be provided — again, let us know if you will need this.



Knitting Group

Wednesdays

10:00 a.m. in the Church Parlor

Do you knit, crochet, needlepoint? Come join us—all are welcome! We meet every Wednesday (come when you can).

LILIES (Lord Inspired Ladies in Eternal Sisterhood)

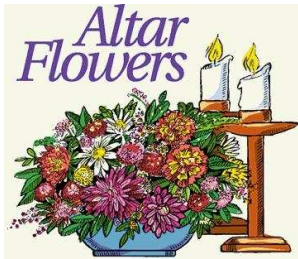
6:30—8:00 p.m. (Zambuto Home)

ALL women of the church are invited to grow in faith and friendship as we explore the biblical story of Esther — a short little book of the Bible which reads like a novel, and is full of great spiritual lessons. The greatest being that God protects His people. Even though God is never mentioned, we see how God is at work even when we don't see Him. Over four sessions we'll follow a self-guided study — *Esther: Fulfilling Life's Mission*.

September 17
September 24
October 1
October 15

We'll gather at Sara Zambuto's home (500 Pepperell Rd., Groton). Come when you can — you do not need to attend every session to participate. If you would like a copy of the materials (pdf), email Raquel or Myra. You are invited!

Contacts: Raquel Majeski
Myra Lockett



After a break this summer to allow people to bring their own flowers, we will startup our "standing order" with Country Florist on September 9. If you would like to dedicate flowers on a particular Sunday, please: 1) Fill in your name and dedication on the Flower Chart downstairs in the Church Parlor; 2) send a check for \$25 (made out to the UCC; memo: Altar Flowers) to the Church Office (220 Main Street, Groton, MA 01450). After worship, the Deacons will deliver the flowers to someone in the church who could use a gift of love. Call Carol in the office if you have any questions (978-448-2091).

Hallway Project — Thank You!

Your generosity of time, talent, and treasures has made our church more inviting. We thank all who supported the renovations downstairs in a variety of ways.

Jean Armstrong
Leon Avey
Greg Balligan
Betsy and Charlie Bridge
Paul Brown
Andrea and Dick Burrier
Anne and Gerry Cahill
Janet Carey
Jen and Chris Coviello
Carly and Chip Detwiller

Bebe and Bob Goudey
Connie Wall-Haas
Holly Haase
Mary and Tom Hanson
Ellen Hargraves
Steve Legge
Myra and Bob Lockett
Bonnie Marchesani
Bonnie Martin and Mark Rzeznikiewicz
Andrea McDonough

Sheila Mitchell
Amy Nickerson
Janice Owen
Carl Prestia
Kirsten Sjoberg
Sheila and Dick Smith
Bill Townsend
Margaret Wheeler
Pat and Dave Woods
Sara and Joe Zambuto
Penny and Dave Zwicker

Christian Education

Sunday School

Sunday School information packets are available at church and Registration Forms are available on our website and in the Friday email. Even if your child only attends occasionally, we ask you to complete this form so that we have accurate allergy and contact information. If you have any questions, please contact Carol (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org).

Sunday School Teachers

Can You Help! We will again teach in teams (3-4 teachers per team per grade). Each team divides 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 (PreK-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8).*** Please contact Krista Kubick or anyone on the Christian Education Committee if you are interested in helping as a teacher or being on our sub list.

**September 9—*Welcome Back!*
Decorate Classrooms**

**September 16—*Peter's Faith*
Mark 8:27-38**

**September 23—*Who Is the Greatest?*
Mark 9:30-37**

**September 30—*Share God's Love*
Mark 9:38-50**

Third Graders to Receive Bibles Sunday, September 23, during Worship

This is a gift from the church, and we hope all families of third graders who consider this their church will be in worship on September 23 for this special day. As of mid-August, our records show the following kids from our church in the third grade:

Gregory Barbon
Adam Elibero
Alaina Foss

Cameron Grasso
Julia Zambuto

Also, if you are new to the church and have children in the upper elementary grades who don't have a Bible and would like one geared toward children (3rd—8th graders), please let us know. It is important to us that we not miss anyone, so if your son or daughter is not listed, please call the church office (978-448-2091) so that we can make sure they receive a Bible.

—Pastor Miller and the Christian Education Committee



Confirmation Class (for kids 8th - 10th grade)

Sunday, Sept. 30, 6:30 –7:30 p.m. Informational Meeting

Sunday, October 14, Students Receive Bibles During Worship

Sunday, October 21, 6:30-8:00 p.m. First Class

This is an opportunity for our teenagers to learn more about the Christian faith, and how it gets lived out in our daily lives and in our church. This year we are inviting youth in the 8th Grade, who are ready to go deeper into the faith, to join with the 9th and 10th graders, Pastor Miller and Pete Hnath. The Confirmation experience runs through the middle of June, and involves faithful attendance at worship, engaging with an adult mentor in the church, 14 "class" sessions at the church, and a variety of other activities to give our teens a full and fun year together. ***Be sure to attend the Informational Meeting on the 30th — Parents and Kids — even if you're not sure if Confirmation is right for your family, come to learn about it and then decide. Contact Gail if you have questions.***

Christian Education Committee

—Krista Kubick, Chair
—Bonnie Marchesani

—Jean Armstrong
—Carl Prestia

—Amy Nickerson

Bible Study

Evening Bible Study

Wednesdays

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

Contact: Janet Kennedy

Thursday Morning Bible Study

10:00 a.m.

Contact: Marvin Caldwell

Super Saturday



Saturday, October 20, 8:00 a.m.—3:45 p.m.

Keefe Technical Regional High School, Framingham

A full day of workshops, forums, networking, a marketplace and worship, featuring Dr. David M. Csinos, Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Atlantic School of Theology (Halifax Nova Scotia, Canada). Founder & President of *Faith Forward*, an ecumenical organization for innovation in ministry with children and youth.

Register online: MACUCC.org/SS-October2018

Registration Deadline 10/6

Grotonfest—Saturday, September 29



UCC Grotonfest Booth An Opportunity to Serve 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Grotonfest gives us the opportunity to be visible in the community and to answer any questions people might have about our church. If you would like to be one of those smiling, welcoming people, please sign-up. We would like two people for each time slot.

NEW THIS YEAR — COTTON CANDY

We are planning on having a cotton candy machine at our booth. In addition to those serving at the booth itself, we will need an additional person on each shift to make and hand out cotton candy. This is a great opportunity for some of our teenagers to get involved!



You can signup through the Signup Genius link provided in the Friday email or contact Carol Zaiatz (unioncc@uccgroton.org or 978-448-2091). Thank you!



Harvest Fair Saturday, September 22 10:00 a.m.—3:00 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* is holistic: they are concerned with the body, mind, and spirit of those who come to them for help. They seek to help people become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well, and spiritually alive.

How can you help?

- **Pie Baking:** We have not found anyone to lead the pie baking, so we are asking people to bake pies on their own and drop them off at the Bake Table.
- **Chili Contest:** Participate in the Chili Contest — entry forms are available in church or on our website (uccgroton.org). Prizes will be awarded. Contact Bebe or Bob Goudey (bebebob.goudey@gmail.com)
- **Music in the Sanctuary:** You can sing or play an instrument. Contact Stefanie Lempp or Carl Prestia
- **Bake Table:** You can bake for the bake table — just bring it on Saturday (ask Mary Hanson if you need ideas)
- **Children's Clothing:** Recycle your kid's old clothes to the children's clothing room. Contact Krista Kubick
- **Children's Toys:** Recycle your children's old toys.
- **Volunteers Needed:** You can volunteer a little of your time at one of the many areas (making pizza, serving chili, playing with the kids in the toy area or outside with the games, help in the kitchen...). A link is provided in the Friday email or contact Carol Zaiatz at unioncc@uccgroton.org or 978-448-2091 and she can sign you up.
- **The Silent Auction** is a long-standing (and fun) tradition at our annual Harvest Fair. Do you have an item or service to donate? Examples include:

Services such as yard work/window washing/painting	A week or weekend at your vacation home
Gift certificates to your (local) business	A one-of-a kind treasure

Please contact Liz Brennan

Missions Committee

Teen Challenge Visit Sunday, September 16



Teen Challenge will join us during worship to share their ministry with us. They will also be joining us on September 22 at the Harvest Fair! We will be donating all the profits from the Harvest Fair to *Teen Challenge* this year. As 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!

Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair
—Lynn Manalo

—Brenda Barker
—Halsey Platt

—Ellen Hargraves

Our Choirs ~ You Are Invited!



Senior Choir

Senior Choir

Rehearses Thursdays, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

All are welcome! We are particularly in need of more women (sopranos and altos). High school students are invited to join us. If you like to sing, please join us. **Rehearsals start Thursday, 9/6.** Bernard Crane, Director



Youth Choir

Rehearses Mondays, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

We'll be incorporating great new music, old standards and kids' favorites. ...Kids (grades 3 and up, even high schoolers), you don't want to miss this! Bernard Crane, Director



Handbell Choir

Rehearses Monday evenings, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

This Fall we look forward to playing some congregational favorites like *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, *Sing to the Lord of Harvest*, *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*, and *Beautiful Savior*. We also hope to mix things up a little — piano w/handbells, Calypso rhythms, handbells w/flute, and adding in a Cajón drum, so stay tuned! If you have any fun ideas — let me know. There is always room for new ringers. **Rehearsals start 9/10.** If you are interested, contact Cheryl Townsend, Director.



Youth Group – Games & Games!

Sunday, September 16

After worship until 12:30

All kids (middle and high schoolers) are invited to stay after church for lunch and games! We'll play some fun games ourselves and then organize some games for the upcoming Harvest Fair. Contact: Mary Hanson

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220 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



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Welcome to Church!

Sunday, September 9

Start of Sunday School: (Pre-K through 8th graders)

Blessing of the Backpacks (see p. 1)

Welcome Back BBQ and Picnic after Worship (see p. 3)

Sunday, September 16

Teen Challenge will be with us during Worship (see p. 7)

Youth Group after worship — Games & Games (see p. 7)

Saturday, September 22

45th Annual Harvest Fair, 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m. —Volunteer Opportunities! (see p. 6)

Sunday, September 23

Third Graders receive Bibles during Worship (see p. 5)

Saturday, September 29

UCC Booth at Grotonfest—Volunteer Opportunities! (see p. 6)

Saturday, September 30

Confirmation Class Informational Meeting at 6:30 –7:30 p.m. (see p. 5)