

THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



November 2018

Introducing...

FROM THE



Gary Gamuchian and a new opportunity for us!

Gary is a member of the Congregational Church of Littleton and is completing his final requirement on the way to becoming a Pastor in the United Church of Christ. He will be doing an internship (unpaid) with us beginning at the end of November through June. Since he has already done an internship at his church in Littleton and as a University Chaplain (UMass Lowell), his time with us will provide him an opportunity to minister in a church that doesn't already know him.

His primary areas of ministry with us will be: Worship, Visitation, Preaching, Administration, and a couple of New Initiatives that we will discern together. Since he has served as the Christian Education Director at his Littleton church (2012-2018), he will not be serving in our "education" department. He will lead worship every week, preach occasionally, visit folks in their homes and in hospitals / facilities, learn about how our church functions, and develop a new initiative or two with us. He will attend different committees and ministries of the church, as well as worship planning meetings with the music staff and me. As his supervisor, we will meet weekly; and he will also meet with an Intern Advisory Team of three lay people monthly.

All this is approved and supervised by the Committee on Ministry for our Central Association of the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ (wow that was a mouthful!), and we will make mid-year and final reports to them in March and June.

Gary graduated from Andover Newton Theological Seminary in 2017, and before that he had a career in customer relations and as an engineer. Gary is widowed and has two children, Gordon, a junior at Littleton High School, and Calista, an eighth grader at Littleton Middle School. They are both very involved at their church in Littleton, so we won't be seeing them on Sundays, just Gary.

Gary will be with us on November 18th to "meet and greet" us; and then he'll begin officially on December 2nd, the First Sunday of Advent.

I believe the Holy Spirit is at work in bringing Gary to us and us to Gary at this time. And I look forward to serving with him and discovering what we can learn from him as well as what he can learn from us.

With you on the journey, with our eyes fixed on Jesus!

Gail



Our Church Family/B&G



Ongoing Prayer List: This list is refreshed in January and June. If there is a name you would like to put back on this list or one you would like to add, please let Gail Miller or Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org) know.

Megan Bettison
Joel Eaton
Peg Elwood
Frank Kanour
Julie Kenyon

Scott Joyce
Hillary Lindquist
Chris Laursen
Joe Marchesani
Jan Miller

Bill Moeller
Myrtle Murphy
Debbie Sampson
Karen Sands
Rudi Schmid

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



PRAYERS
CHURCH

- Heather and the Houde family in the death of Heather's mother, Helen Collins.

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.

November Birthdays

Lisa Hitsos	11/02	Krista Kubick	11/08	Kelli Hnath	11/19
Makayla Hughes	11/02	Halsey Platt	11/10	Bryce June	11/21
Karen Sjoberg	11/04	Jacqueline Gervais	11/11	Robert Rosenfeld	11/22
Hailey Sullivan	11/05	Erica Davenport	11/12	Sally Waite	11/22
Nina Morrison	11/06	Bob Brown	11/16	Anna Moon	11/23
Connie Wall-Haas	11/06	Heather Houde	11/16	Izzy Smith	11/24
Liam Colbert	11/07	Kim Daly	11/18	Briana Manalo	11/25
Curtis Prestia	11/07	Leon Avey	11/19	Barbara Gale	11/26

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?

Buildings & Grounds



Volunteers Needed for Winter Shoveling

Your Buildings & Grounds Committee will be prepared for the upcoming snow, but could use additional help. We'll have shovels, salt, and sand at church — when you finish your driveway, please lend a hand here on Sunday mornings after a storm to clear a sidewalk or two. Contact: John Biocchi

Buildings & Grounds

—John Biocchi, Chair
—Bill Gale, Jr.

—Bill Gale, Jr.
—Joe Zambuto

Serving on Committees and Ministries

As we prepare for the Annual Meeting in January/February 2019 (when the "turnover" of committee members occurs), the Church Council invites you to let us know your interest in serving on Committees and Ministries. Committee positions require formal membership in the church and Ministry positions allow for anyone to serve.

Committees: Buildings & Grounds, Christian Education, Diaconate, Endowment, Missions, Pastor-Parish Relations, Stewardship & Finance

Ministries: Fair, Kitchen, Technology, Youth and Family

Feel free to approach Stefanie Lempp (Moderator) or Pastor Miller with your questions or to express an interest in serving.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 18

After Worship in the Sanctuary

Copies of the proposed 2019 Operating Budget will be available in the Sanctuary and the Church Office beginning November 4. Then on November 18, after

worship, all are invited to a meeting at which the membership will approve the Operating Budget for 2019. Questions may be directed to our Treasurer, Dennis Carey, Mary Hanson Stewardship & Finance, Moderator Stefanie Lempp, or Reverend Gail Miller (gail@uccgroton.org).

Church Council Meeting

October 24

Confirmation class for the 2018-19 year begins this week and Gail has a large group of 16 kids. This is always an exciting time for Gail and for the many people in our church who are involved with our youth, whether it be as mentors, teachers, or parents.

A pastoral student has asked to take on an Intern role in our church this year. Gail presented his responsibilities and learning goals and the Church Council has approved the plan. He will begin working with us more closely in December with Gail as his supervisor.

A budget update was provided in advance of the November 18 Congregational Budget Meeting. At that time the budget for 2019 will be approved. We also discussed how we might use the Birthday Fund and the Endowment Fund monies, which the Council decides to spend. Suggestions for expenditures were made, and the Council will make a decision regarding these at our meeting in November.

We continued our discussion of the book *Lasting Impact*, specifically with regard to the idea that churches need to be flexible and adaptable in order to thrive and grow. We also need to provide opportunities for engagement beyond attending worship. The "Multiply Your Impact" subcommittee reported on some excellent ways in which this can happen.

Stewardship...An Invitation

A parishioner reflects on worship:

Sitting in church before the service starts, a feeling of peace and stillness settles on me. All the chatter of daily life goes away and I am restored by God's grace. I feel so much joy being in church worshipping Christ with our congregation. I need this peace I find each Sunday morning so I can recapture it as I go about my day-to-day.

Because our lives are so busy, Sunday morning service becomes essential (even more important) in order to slow down, restore and reconnect with God.

What does worship mean to you? How might you respond?

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.
~2 Peter 1:2

Pledge Sunday is November 18

Stewardship Team: Jean Armstrong, Bob Goudey, Andrea McDonough, Gail Miller, Halsey Platt, Craig Smith

Sunday School/ Missions / In the Community...

Sunday School

November 4—All Saints Sunday
A Message from God— Deuteronomy 6:1-9

November 11—*The Widow's Offering*
Mark 12:38-44

November 18—*Be Ready*
Mark 13:1-8

November 25—Carols and Crafts
Fellowship Hall

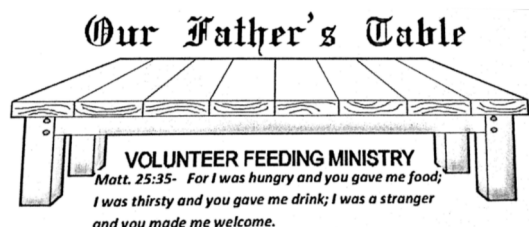
Christian Education Committee

—Krista Kubick, Chair
—Amy Nickerson

—Jean Armstrong
—Carl Prestia

—Bonnie Marchesani

Missions



Our Father's Table

(40 Boutelle St., Fitchburg)

November 27, December 18
4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Anyone 18 years and older is invited to serve at *Our Father's Table* (a volunteer feeding ministry in Fitchburg). **We would like to send 2-3 people on the last Tuesday of each month.** (You would be serving with someone from our church who has served there before.) The time commitment includes commute time to and from Fitchburg.

Sign-up in the hallway downstairs at church, online (link provided in the Friday email), or by contacting Carol (978-448-2091; unioncc@uccgoton.org) in the church office.

Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair —Brenda Barker
—Lynn Manalo —Halsey Platt
—Ellen Hargraves

In the Community...



A Time for Listening...



*Have you experienced
Sexual Assault, Violence or Harassment?*

Do you care for someone who has?

*Have recent events in the news made you feel
angry, frustrated, unsafe?*

**You are invited to a time to be heard
and lifted into God's healing love**

Thursday, November 15, 2018

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

**Federated Church of Ayer
21 Washington St.**

This conversation will be facilitated by:
Rev. Gail Miller of Union Congregational Church, Groton
Rev. Joyce Scherer-Hoock of St. Andrew's, Ayer

*All are Welcome + Sharing and Listening + God's love found here!
Jesus says, "Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

For questions: info@standrewsayer.org

Upcoming Christmas Season

Advent Swag

Sunday, November 25

Each year we make available to you candles to light, calendars to open, devotions to read, and stickers to stick for the children — all to help you experience the journey to Bethlehem more deeply. *Be sure to visit the table downstairs at church on November 25.*



Journey to Bethlehem

Friday, November 30, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Faith Evangelical Free Church (54 Hosmer St., Acton)

Meet at the church in Acton at 6:45 p.m.

Join Pastor Miller and her family on this adventure, which takes you back to biblical times and reenacts the journey a family would have taken to Bethlehem to be counted in the census as Mary and Joseph were. It's not a show, it's a journey that winds through the grounds of the church and can't be described with words. (visit the church's website to learn more and see photos www.faitheefree.org/nativity.html). This is appropriate for children of all ages.



Decorate the Sanctuary

Saturday, December 1 at 9:00 a.m.

Start the season with the Deacons for the annual decorating of the church Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Bring the whole family for a festive morning of beautifying the church. There will be hot cocoa and coffee available. Everyone is welcome—please join us!



Community Tree Lighting

Sunday, December 2 at 4:00 p.m.

We invite your donations for a reception in our Fellowship Hall afterwards.

Groton Community Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 9
2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Monday, December 10
7:30 p.m.



When A Child is Born

Come and enjoy the 44th Annual Groton Community Christmas Concert. There will be wonderful music of the season, sung by children and adults from Groton and 11 surrounding communities; Edie Tompkins, Director. This concert is held in our Sanctuary and is free (though donations will be accepted at the door).

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

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Please return to your mail carrier.

November Highlights

Friday, November 2— Ladies' Lunch (meet at church at 11:30 a.m.)

(Daylight Savings ends—turn clocks back Saturday night)

Sunday November 4—All Saints Sunday

- ♦ Holy Communion
- ♦ We name out loud those who have died in the past year

Thursday, November 15, 7:00—8:30 p.m.

- ♦ *A Time for Listening* at the Federated Church of Ayer (see p. 4)

Sunday, November 18—Pledge Sunday

- ♦ We bring our Pledges forward in worship as an offering to God
- ♦ New Members join
- ♦ Senior and Handbell Choirs
- ♦ Congregational Budget Meeting after Worship
- ♦ Confirmation Class at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall

November 25—Christ the King Sunday

- ♦ Advent calendars, activities, and devotions will be available to take home.

December 2—First Sunday of Advent

- ♦ Community Tree Lighting at 4:00 p.m.



**Annual
Stewardship
Campaign**