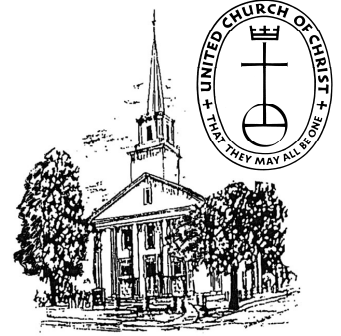


THE UNION COURIER

Union Congregational Church
(United Church of Christ)
220 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450

Website: www.uccgroton.net
Email: unioncc@uccgroton.org
Phone: 978-448-2091



October 2019

A Message from the Interim Pastor Search Committee **Reverend Corey Jason Sanderson**

The Interim Pastor Search Committee is excited to announce Reverend Corey Jason Sanderson as our Interim Pastor. His first Sunday leading worship will be Sunday, December 1, the start of the Advent season. He will be available for meetings for a few days during the week before that Sunday.

Reverend Sanderson received his undergraduate degree (Bachelor's in Psychology) from UMASS Amherst and then his Master of Divinity Degree from Boston University. He grew up in a UCC church and was ordained in the United Church of Christ in 2001.

Reverend Sanderson is currently serving as a Settled Pastor in Western Massachusetts, where he has been for the past seven years. Before that, he served as an Interim Pastor for two churches, a settled or part-time pastor for three churches, and was called to start a new UCC church in Michigan. If you have a chance, be sure to ask him about starting a new church from scratch — an incredible (and successful!) challenge.

The Search Committee has been excited about Reverend Sanderson since the first time we read through his profile. Here are some of the highlights of what we learned about Reverend Sanderson in our conversations with him:

- The first line of his profile is – **“Being a minister is not something I do, it is who I am.”** He describes his life’s purpose as living as a disciple of Jesus and showing, teaching, and leading others to do the same.
- Reverend Sanderson told us he is passionate about “teaching churches to do faithful and powerful ministry in our modern cultural context.” He strives to help churches learn how to grow, be more effective, and create vital new ministries.
- He is also passionate about joyful and meaningful worship, working with students, teaching adult faith classes, mission work, building inter-religious dialogue, and fostering creative ministries.
- Reverend Sanderson feels that “shaping the beliefs and values of our youngest members is a high priority.” He hopes to go on next year’s Mission Trip along with his 15 year-old son!
- He is a musician and takes weekly banjo lessons at The Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Reverend Sanderson will bring experience, passion, energy, and new ideas to our church. We think you’ll find him approachable and enjoyable to speak with. He feels called to serve in Groton and he is as excited as we are about the upcoming interim period!

The Deacons are in the process of planning a “meet and greet” with Reverend Sanderson sometime before his official start date. Stay tuned for more information on that event.

Interim Pastor Search Committee

—Kim Burgess
—Charlene Legge

—Bill Gale Jr.
—Craig Smith

—Kelli Hnath



Our Church Family



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 contact Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or unioncc@uccgroton.org).

Ruth Allen
Megan Bettison
Robina Carestia
Mike Corbett & Family
Peg Elwood

Tiffany Gibb
Ellen Hargraves
Frank Kanour
Joe Marchesani
Bill Moeller

Myrtle Murphy
Karen Sands
Rudi Schmid
Matt & Mandy Spain

Diane Thorne
Edie Tompkins
Karen & Marc Vandenburg
Betty & Liz Waggoner

Prayers for:

- Gail, Mike and Sophia in the death of Gail's aunt, Jan Miller.

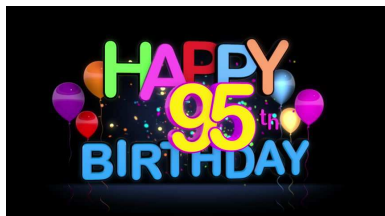


Ed and Kathy Stratton have moved from Groton to Lowell. Their new address is:

525 Pawtucket Boulevard, Unit 301
Lowell, MA 01854

Tony and Carolyn DiCenzo have moved to:

23 Jewett Street
Pepperell, MA 01463



Helen Misselhorn Turns 95 *Sunday, October 6*

Come join us during Fellowship Hour to celebrate another milestone birthday for Helen! In addition to the normal Fellowship Hour refreshments, there will be a cake

*If you would like to send Helen a card, her address is:
15 Douglas Drive, Ayer, MA 01432*

October Birthdays

Kirsten Sjoberg	10/01	MacKenzie Luth	10/11	Anna Kubick	10/18
Juliet Silveri	10/03	Carly Detwiller	10/14	Nevan Rosenfeld	10/21
Charlie Nelsen	10/05	Bob Hargraves	10/14	Connie Brown	10/23
Helen Misselhorn	10/06	Casey Cunningham	10/15	Edie Tompkins	10/26
Joe Zambuto	10/06	Richard Ferrero	10/17	Michael Dabritz	10/27
Mitchell Townsend	10/09			Andrew Howard	10/29

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

Year-to-Date



Pledge
Statements

From the Collector

Year-to-date Pledge Statements through the end of September will be mailed in early October. Should you have any questions about your donations so far this year or concerns about meeting your pledge, please contact the new Collector, **Margaret Wheeler** (collector@uccgroton.org).

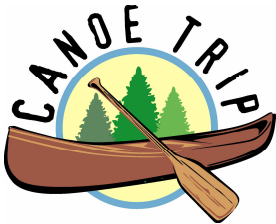


Ladies' Lunch

Friday, October 11 (Meet at the church at 11:30 a.m. to carpool)

Potluck Lunch at Edie Tompkins' (401 Old Ayer Road, Groton)

All women of the church are invited! There is a signup sheet for food items on the table in the downstairs hall at church. **Contacts:** Janice Owen, Brenda Semienko, or Peg Lloyd



Men's Fellowship – You Are Invited!

Canoe Trip on Saturday, October 12 (rain date Oct. 13)

2:30 p.m. – Meet at Nashoba Paddler (West Groton)

Steve Legge has organized a canoe trip on the Nashua River for the men in the church. The trip would be casual. Steve will lead it and offer some nature commentary along the way. The trip will be about 2-3 hours in duration. *If you have not responded*

yet, but are interested in joining them, please contact Carol at the Church Office (unioncc@uccgroton.org); or speak with Steve Legge directly.

Do You Feel Called to Give a Sermon?

The Deacons were wondering if someone in our Congregation might feel the calling to prepare and give a sermon during the month of November? We have a couple of Sundays to choose from and wanted to reach out to everyone before all of the Sundays are filled with Guest Preachers.

If you should have any questions or would like to volunteer for this opportunity, please contact Charlene Legge.

An Evening Under God's Universe

Astronomy Lesson and Telescope Viewing (weather permitting)

Saturday, October 19, at 6:30 p.m.—Meet in the Fellowship Hall



All are invited! We will start at Fellowship Hall for a lesson in basic astronomy and then travel to a nearby location (TBD) to view celestial objects through a telescope. Bring a flashlight, bug spray, appropriate attire for the weather, and a portable chair (if you wish).

Questions: Carl Prestia



Annual Stated Meeting of the Congregation Sunday, October 27, after Worship

This meeting is usually held in June, but was delayed due to Gail's departure. One of the items on the agenda will be voting on whether to move forward with a capital campaign for the Accessibility Project. This is a very important meeting for our church, and we hope you will join us.

Thank You from Edie Tompkins



A huge THANKS YOU to our singers and bell ringers who took part in the **Groton Interfaith Council's (GIF)** musical event ***Global Fusion*** that took place **Sunday, September 15, at the Church of the Latter Day Saints**. I am certain that all of you and those from our congregation who attended will agree that this was an extraordinary afternoon.

As UCC's representative to the GIF, and an organizer of the program, I am humbly proud that our community of Groton could come together as one body to celebrate the amazing diversity of faiths that exists among us. Unitarians, Congregationalists, Catholics, Muslims, Native Americans, Jews, Mormons and Hindus embraced each other in love, respect, acceptance and an eagerness to know each other better. And joy and peace filled our hearts.

For me, that wonderful experience Sunday afternoon was a microcosm of what our world could be if only.....

Blessings,
Edie Tompkins

Sunday School



October 6—*Activity in the Fellowship Hall (PreK-4th grade)*

October 13—*Ten Men Healed, Luke 17:11-19*

October 20—*Jacob Wrestles, Genesis 32:22-31*

October 27—*The Pharisee and the Tax Collector, Luke 18:9-14*

Christian Education Committee

—Carl Prestia, Chair

—Bonnie Marchesani

—Amy Nickerson

Bible Study

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

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

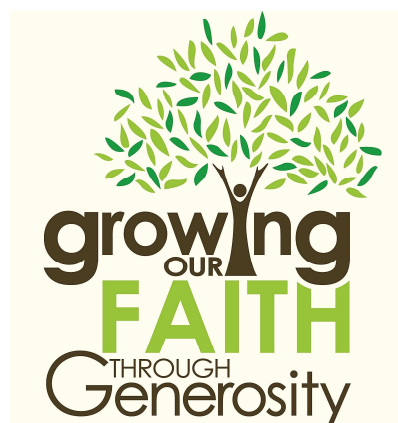
Contact: Janet Kennedy

Thursday Morning Bible Study

10:00 a.m. (26 Court Street)

Contact: Marvin Caldwell (978-448-5496)

A Message from the Stewardship Team



WE ARE BLESSED!

With summer vacations behind us and kids back in school, the picnic following worship on September 8 welcomed family and friends back home (see pictures on pg. 6). The front lawn was full of people on a beautiful day, sharing good food and dessert from the ice cream truck, exchanging summer memories and reconnecting. It was a celebration of fellowship and it was more. It was a celebration of everything that God has bestowed upon us.

We are blessed! Pledge Sunday is an opportunity for each of us to celebrate and give thanks for all that God provides. Our pledging supports not only the daily operations of our two buildings, but, more importantly, all of the many ministries we undertake together. Please keep an eye out for your Pledge invitation that welcomes all of us to celebrate through giving.

We have opportunities to support, serve, and live our faith beyond our walls. At the upcoming Harvest Fair, we are raising money for *Hagar's Sisters*, serving victims of domestic abuse. This summer, our youth served a community in West Virginia as they grew in their relationship with God and each other, and our congregation provided backpacks and supplies to more than 200 students in neighboring towns. We learn about and demonstrate our Christian love for each other through serving the homeless (*Common Cathedral*), those with addictions (*Teen Challenge*), and those who lack basic needs (*Loaves & Fishes* and *Our Father's Table*).

Within the walls of our church, we are blessed with God's gifts of disciples who teach us about Him and lead us in meaningful worship. Bernard's faith-inspired musical direction enhances every Sunday service. Gail's sermons have educated and spiritually energized us for many years. In her absence, Gary Gumuchian, Reverend Skip Lloyd and Reverend Marvin Caldwell have graciously provided continuity and guidance in our time of transition.

And there is so much to look forward to! The Accessibility Steering Team has presented a beautiful design for an addition that will make our building accessible to everyone and present a more welcoming face to Groton. As we enter our next chapter of life together with Reverend Corey Sanderson, we are open to what God has in store for us. Corey preaches for the first time on December 1 and will lead us through our interim period, helping us to discern who we are and what God is calling us to do and be. His experience, enthusiasm, and passion will help guide us in our search for our next Settled Pastor.

Blessings and faith to us all from your Stewardship Team!

Stewardship Team

—Jean Armstrong

—Halsey Platt

—Craig Smith

—Margaret Wheeler



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Accessibility Project Update

A Conduit of God's Hospitality

On Sunday September 22, the Accessibility Steering Team and Architect Paul Adison presented the proposed Schematic Design plans (SD plans) to congregants at fellowship hour. The team's mission from the start was to come up with a conceptual plan that would make both main floors of our church fully accessible for all who have physical challenges. In more spiritual terms, this project will allow our church to be a conduit of God's hospitality.

As you can see in the rendering, the plan proposes an addition on the rear of the church that addresses our accessibility needs while also creating attractive and welcoming space. This addition, as designed, also would be expandable toward Hollis Street if the church body desires to do that in years to come. Plans are viewable at the church, at fellowship hour, or through contacting one of the team members.

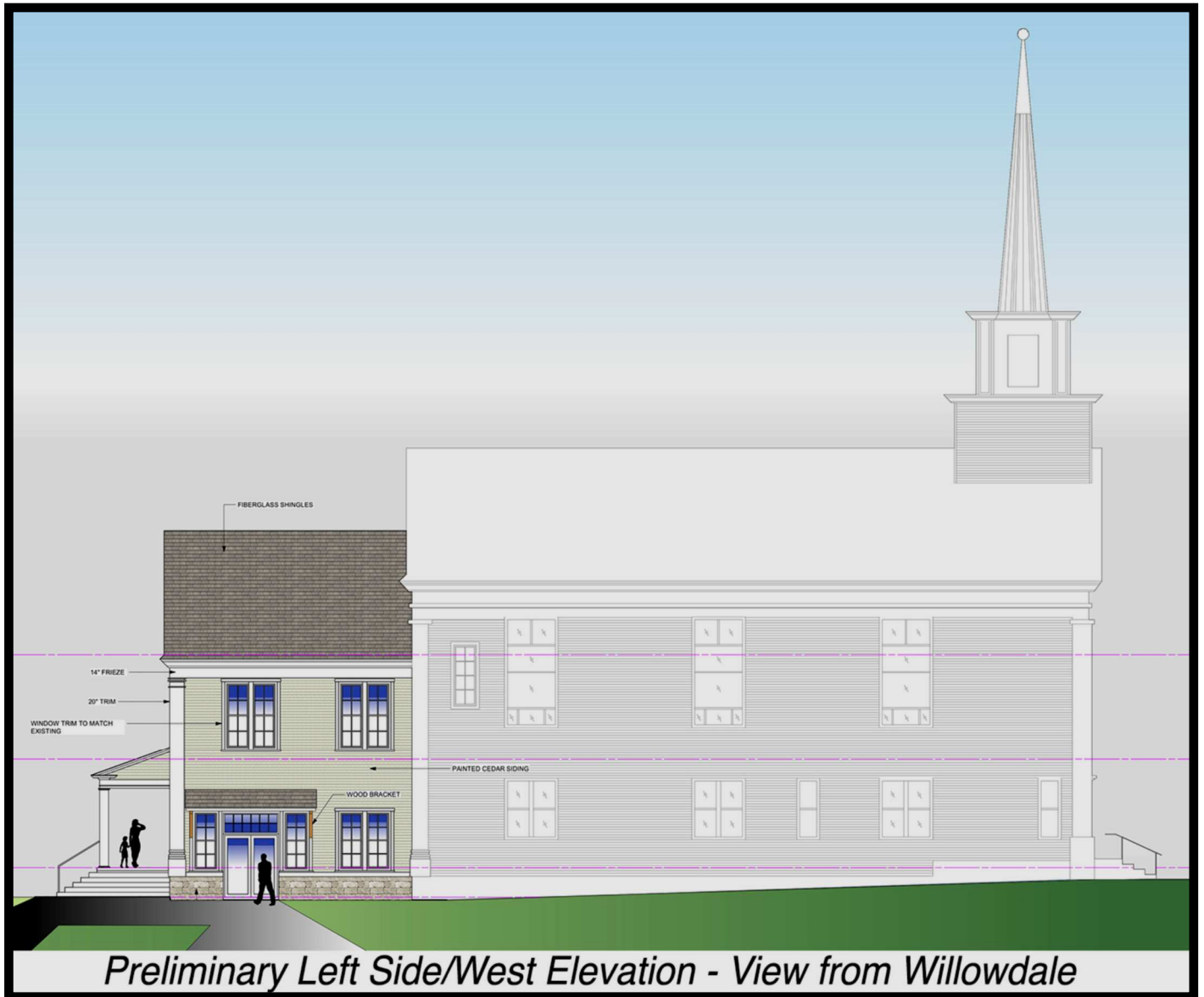


Highlights of the current SD plans are the following (second picture on next page):

- Fully accessible entrance on Willowdale Road
- Sidewalk level lobby with four-stop elevator
- Exterior finishes coordinated with existing
- Elevator large enough for a casket
- Elevator stops are at basement, street, Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary levels
- Four new ADA compliant lavatories—two on each floor
- New stairway to sanctuary level
- New stairway access to basement
- Safe access and egress that meets fire code
- Small porch and entrance facing Hollis Street
- New full height basement space
- Welcoming gathering space
- Music room on Sanctuary level
- Deacon's storage room on Sanctuary level
- The addition allows for future expansion



Accessibility Project Update (cont.)



The estimated cost for the project is \$1.2 million. Paul Adison obtained this estimate from a prominent and trusted construction company, Hutter Construction of New Hampshire.

What's next? If you haven't seen the plans and/or want to know more about the project, there are many ways to do that. You can reach out to one of the team members. You can send an email to bebe.goudey@gmail.com or call the church office and leave a message to the team with your phone number. You can come to church and meet with us during coffee hour. You can request a home visit and one of us will come and "walk" you through the plans. The team hopes all who love this church will be interested in learning about this project and we pray that, with the help of God, our members will show robust support for the project through a vote at the October 27th Congregational Meeting so that the capital campaign pledging season can begin soon after. THANK YOU!

Accessibility Steering Team

—Bebe Goudey, Captain
—Karen Sherwin

—Anne Cahill
—Christopher Sullivan

—Chip Detwiller
—Sara Zambuto

Missions Committee

Opportunities to Serve and Participate *Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives*



Harvest Fair—October 5

Ending the cycle of abuse through the transforming power of God

All proceeds of the Fair this year are going to *Hagar's Sisters*, ending the cycle of domestic abuse through the transforming power of God, and offering holistic services that empower women to find healing and freedom from abuse. **Join us on October 5** by helping with baking goodies, setting up, breaking down, inviting your friends and donating generously!



Teen Challenge Banquet

Friday, November 8

Doors Open at 5:00 p.m.

Double Tree by Hilton (700 Elm Street, Manchester, NH)

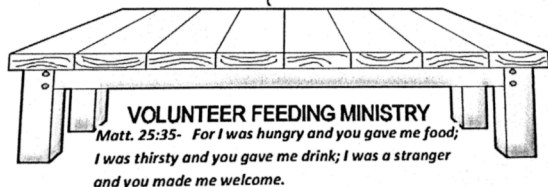
As a church, we will buy tickets for an entire table of UCC Groton church friends. This is a fun and inspirational evening! See any member of the Missions Committee to sign up.



Loaves & Fishes

Your donations of non-perishable food items at the top of the stairs are always welcome. Thank you for your generous donations to our neighbors in need.

Our Father's Table



Our Father's Table

October 29 or November 26

Two or three people from our church are invited to help with serving dinner and a light clean-up at Our Father's Table in Fitchburg. The time commitment is 4:00- 6:30 p.m., including travel time. **If you would like to serve on October 29 or November 26**, please contact Julie Platt (julielp@verizon.net).

Missions Committee

—Julie Platt, Chair
—Sue Lunt

—Brenda Barker
—Lynn Manalo

—Stefanie Lempp
—Halsey Platt

Union Congregational Church
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Groton, MA 01450

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October

- ♦ Sat., Oct. 5 Join us for our Harvest Fair! 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
All Profits go to *Hagar's Sisters*
- ♦ Sun., Oct. 6 Worship (World Communion Sunday)
Special Offering: *Neighbors In Need*
Activity in the Fellowship Hall (PreK-4th grade)
Happy 95th Birthday to Helen Misselhorn!
Paul and Donna Brown will be visiting—they will stay for Fellowship Hour
- ♦ Fri., Oct. 11 Ladies' Lunch—Potluck at Edie Tompkins (see p. 3)
- ♦ Sat., Oct. 12 Men's Fellowship Canoe Trip (see p. 3)
- ♦ Sun., Oct. 13 Worship/Sunday School
- ♦ Sat., Oct. 19 Astronomy Lesson/Telescope Viewing (see p. 3)
- ♦ Sun., Oct. 20 Worship/Sunday School
- ♦ Sun., Oct. 27 Reformation Sunday!
Annual Stated Meeting after Worship