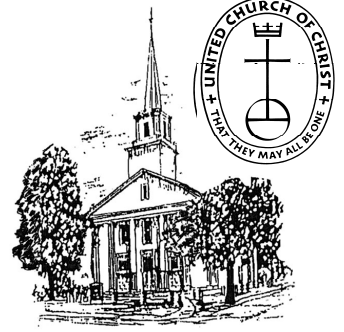


# THE UNION COURIER

Union Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
The Rev. Corey J. Sanderson, Interim Pastor

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



## February 2020

*The  
Season  
of  
Lent*



### ***A Message from Your Pastor***

In the life of the Christian church, we often talk about spiritual practices, or what are sometimes called spiritual disciplines. These are the foundational practices that lead us to a deeper life of faith, to a greater awareness of God's presence, and to a fuller understanding of our purpose in life. The most essential of these spiritual practices are familiar to us all; prayer, worship, reading the Bible, serving, and giving. While these certainly are the most essential practices, they aren't the only ones.

During the season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday (2/26), we will look to some of the lesser-known spiritual practices. Why some might seem a little less 'churchy' than you'd expect, they can be just as powerful and just as effective in our faith development. Whenever we pause to take stock of how our faith journeys are unfolding, we have the opportunity to learn, experience, and grow in new and different ways.

In addition to the thematic sermons, each Sunday bulletin will include a related insert for your weekly personal devotions. These inserts will have prayers, questions of self-reflection, recommended scripture passages, and topical quotes that you can use throughout the week.

I encourage you to make this season of Lent a time to re-engage or engage your spiritual growth. As we make our way through these six weeks, we will surely find an even greater joy awaiting us on Easter Sunday. Below is an initial outline of the intended topics.

#### ***Lenten Sermon Series***

**Ash Wednesday, February 26**

*The Call to Reconciliation and Healing*

**Lent 1: Sunday, March 1**

*Fasting / How We Can Make More Room for God?*

**Lent 2: Sunday, March 8**

*Yielding / How We Can Submit to God's Will?*

**Lent 3: Sunday, March 15**

*Meditation / How Can We Listen for God Voice?*

**Lent 4: Sunday, March 22**

*Confession / How We Come Clean To God And Others?*

**Lent 5: Sunday, March 29**

*Simplicity / How Can We Find Freedom In God?*

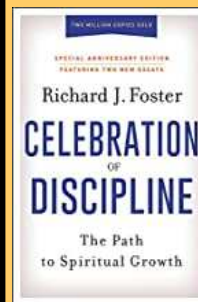
**Lent 6: Sunday, April 5**

*Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday*

**Easter: Sunday April 12**

*Easter*

#### **Expand on this Series with...**



**Adult Faith Formation  
Six Sundays of Lent**

**12:00—1:30 p.m.**

**Parish House**

Join Pastor Corey after Fellowship Hour each Sunday during Lent to expand on his sermon series. We will use

*Celebration of Discipline, The Path to Spiritual Growth*, by Richard J. Foster. If you plan to participate, please order a copy in whatever format you like. Additional information is in the weekly email.

The Deacons and Christian Education committees and I look forward to journeying with you along the path that Jesus walked.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Corey".



# Our Church Family/Church News



## 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](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)).

Connie & Bob Brown  
Mike Corbett & Family  
Tiffany Gibb  
Ellen Hargraves

Betty Goulet  
Chris Joyce  
Frank Kanour  
Jack Lyons

Myrtle Murphy  
Betty Sampas  
Rudi Schmid  
Matt & Mandy Spain

Joe Marchesani  
Bill Moeller  
Betty & Liz Waggoner  
Laurie Waye



- The Bond Family, in the death of Toni Bond on Friday, January 10.

## February Birthdays

Tony DiCenzo	02/01	Travis Bugbee	02/16	Chloe York	02/22
Ryan Carey	02/02	Arianna Boucher	02/19	Lily Burgess	02/23
Carl Haas	02/04	Steve Flynn	02/21	Dylan Hughes	02/24
Rebecca Brennan	02/06	Lily Dabritz	02/22	Arianna Barker	02/25
Henry Richardson-Irvin	02/07	Charlotte LaGasse	02/22	Jessica Plausse	02/25
Emily Howard	02/10	Clarissa LaGasse	02/22	Ryleigh Cunningham	02/28
Charlene Legge	02/14				

If we missed your birthday, it is not in our database. Please email [unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org) to give us your birthday. We would also like to recognize significant anniversaries — would you share that information with us?

## Capital Campaign



**SAVE THE DATE...**

**Capital Campaign Kickoff Event**

**"Celebrating the '20s"**

**Sunday, March 8, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

**New Groton Center (163 W. Main Street)**

Our church's cornerstone was laid in 1826, and we will lay a new cornerstone for the addition in the 2020's. Let's come together and celebrate the beginning of this new era for our church with a "Sweet & Savory" kickoff to "Celebrate the '20s!" We'll have food, music, and some fun themes around the 1820s, 1920s, and 2020s.

This is an exciting time for our congregation! Watch your email and 'snail mail' boxes for more information over the next few weeks. Questions? See any member of the Capital Campaign Team (*Bonnie Biocchi, Kelli Hnath, Bebe Goudey, Bob Goudey, Don Kennedy, Halsey Platt, Karen Sherwin, Cheryl Townsend*).

***Coming Together - Lifting Up - Reaching Out***

# Church News

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## Church Council

### January 29 Meeting Summary

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2. Regarding committee nominations, some people have agreed to stay on through the summer or for one more year.

**Pastor's Report:** *CityReach* weekend was a fabulous experience. On February 9 we will have a guest pastor as we serve as a "Neutral pulpit" – a neutral location so that a searching parish can hear a prospective pastor preach. Also on that day, Carl Prestia is bringing in some Boy Scouts who may be involved worship. Corey plans to be on vacation from Feb. 18-25, so Gary Gumuchian will fill in on the Sunday he is away (2/23).

The Deacons requested something on spiritual practices during Lent, so Corey plans to do a sermon series on this, as well as a book study.

Corey met with the PPRC (Pastor-Parish Relations Committee) – Andrea, Jeff Kubick, and Bill Gale. One of the things Corey noticed is that there needs to be a forum within the church for people to get questions answered. We thought it would be a good idea to have occasional small forums where people can ask questions. Corey feels his communication with the congregation has been limited, mostly to Sunday mornings. He would like to piggy-back with the Friday email, maybe send something out once a week to communicate with the whole parish.

Corey would like to simplify the way meetings are scheduled and asked if there is a way that all the committees could pick some days and times to anchor down. With new committees starting up in February, this is the perfect time to do that.

**Finance Update (Dennis Carey):** In the budget for 2020, we assumed a pledge number of 261,000. We increased Missions from 3% to 5% of net income. Unfortunately, pledges came in much lower than anticipated – just 246,000; too low to keep the original budgeted amount. The following two changes were made to the budget: we reduced the pledge donations down to 255,000, and we had to put Missions back at 3% rather than raise it to 5%.

**Capital Campaign (Bebe Goudey):** Bebe stated there will be an announcement about an upcoming kickoff event. They are zeroing in on a logo and talking about having a series of small dinners at people's homes, etc. They are not just trying to raise funds to build a building; it's not "fundraising" so much as it is "faith-raising". We have raised over \$55k to date.

**Birthday Fund:** It was agreed at the last meeting that we would go with lighting for the sign. We investigated what it would cost to run an electric line out to the sign; this is more expensive than anticipated (at least \$1,800). We are back to solar, which should actually be less expensive than originally thought. John Biocchi is going to investigate further. We would also like to add a hard-wired light on the front of the building, which we have done on our own in the past but we really need to hire an electrician. Dennis said the remaining 2019 balance in the birthday fund is just over \$1,000.

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## From the Collector

Donation statements for 2019 have been mailed. If you have not received your statement, please contact Margaret Wheeler (collector@uccgroton.org).



Dear Friends,

There is a scam going around where someone impersonates a local church pastor and asks people in the church to buy Gift Cards for them. The church people are asked to mail the gift cards to a certain address or take a picture of the bar code on the back side of the gift card with their phone and text it to a number (which allows the scammer to then use the gift card online).

Scammers can find email lists, Facebook posts, newspaper articles, lists of people in church leadership, and all sorts of information to find who is part of the church. They can easily create a fake email that shows up looking like pastor@uccgroton.org, but it has nothing to do with me. *Please know I will NEVER ask for money, gift cards, help in posting bail, etc.*

The best way to respond is to do nothing; just delete it. If you respond, they know you are 'active' and you will likely get added to other scam lists. If there's no response they will assume it is an old email, a defunct cell phone, or even a land line.

Peace,  
Corey

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## Sunday School

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February 2

*Holy Communion—Activity in Fellowship Hall*

February 9

*Salt and Light* Matthew 5:13-20

February 16

*No Sunday School—School Vacation*

February 23

*All Sunday School Lesson in the Fellowship Hall*

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Christian Education Committee

—Carl Prestia, Chair

—Amy Nickerson

—Jenn Coviello

—Bonnie Marchesani

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## Bible Study

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**Wednesday Evening**

**7:30 p.m. in the Parish House**

Contact: Janet Kennedy

**Thursday Morning Bible Study**

**10:00 a.m. 26 Court Street**

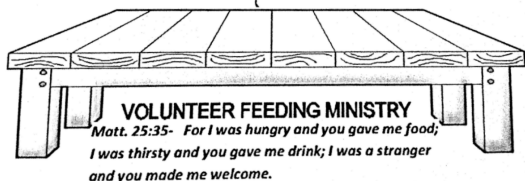
Contact: Marvin Caldwell (978-448-5496)

## Missions—Opportunities to Serve and Participate

### Christmas Angels

Thanks to all who have committed to pledging a few hours of their time in service of others. The Missions Team will contact you with details about how you might help. If you haven't signed up and are interested, fill out a form (they can be found in the back of the sanctuary or in the downstairs hallway), and give it to someone on the Missions Committee.

### Our Father's Table



### Our Father's Table

New for 2020! Grab a friend and pick any Tuesday or Thursday evening to serve a buffet dinner and do a light clean-up. The time commitment is 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. (including travel time). No experience is needed and we can provide a simple set of instructions to let you know what to expect! Please contact Carol in the Church Office ([unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org); 978-448-2091) or any Missions member for information.



### 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!

### 2020 Missions Committee

—Brenda Barker  
—Sue Lunt

—Krista Kubick  
—Lynn Manalo

—Stefanie Lempp  
—Julie Platt

## Lent Begins...



### Ash Wednesday February 26 Dinner and Worship

6:30 p.m.: Simple Soup Supper

7:15 p.m.: Brief Worship Service/Communion and Imposition of Ashes

Let's begin our Lenten journey together. If you can't make it for dinner, come at 7:15 for worship. Families with children are encouraged to attend. (You'll be home by 8:00 p.m.)

RSVP signup will be posted on the bulletin board in the downstairs hallway at church. Any questions, contact the Church Office (978-448-2091 or [unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)).

Union Congregational  
Church  
United Church of Christ  
220 Main Street  
Groton, MA 01450



**DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

[ ] **PLEASE REMOVE ME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST**  
*Please return to your mail carrier.*

## **February Highlights**

### **February 2—Worship and Holy Communion**

Annual Meeting after Worship

### **February 9—Worship**

Guest Preacher: Anthony Coleman

Scouts participate in Worship

### **February 16—Worship**

New Members Join

### **February 23—Worship**

Guest Preacher: Gary Gumuchian

5:00—6:30 p.m. Mission Trip Meeting (youth only)

**Lent Begins on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 26)** (see p. 5)