

# THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



## Mid-Summer 2020



### *Remembering and Forgetting*

As people of faith, we are used to living between two worlds. Every year, during the season of Advent, we are reminded that we are waiting for the Christ Child to be born even as Christ has already come. Throughout the rest of the year, we hear passages of scripture that speak to the tension of living between the 'already' and the 'not yet.'

The most recent deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor have reminded us all of this tension. On one hand, we have our nation's past, which was founded on the sinful practice of slavery. On the other hand, we have the world of God's promised future where all humanity is made one in Christ Jesus. In times such as these, the world of God's promised future can feel so very far away. These days we are bound to feel more like we are closer to the world of our nation's terrible past, where not all people are free, where some people can't breathe, and where the lives of some people simply do not matter. So, how do we, as people of faith, get from the here and now to that promised world of God's future Realm?

The only way, like it or not, is to revisit the world of the past. We have to remember the past, in order to redeem it. There's a powerful passage in the book of Exodus where God speaks to Moses. God explains that while He is merciful, gracious, compassionate, and always ready to forgive, the sins of the parents are still passed down from generation to generation to the children. It's a stark reminder that **we are a people with a past**. Try as we might, we can't escape it. Try as we might, we are not immune to the consequences that come from our history. God instructs Moses to tell the Hebrew people to *remember* this. Why? This kind of deep remembering not only shapes the people's hearts in gratitude and in worship, but also in seeking justice and practicing mercy.

The poet **Maya Angelou** said, 'History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage need not be lived again.' In other words, it's only by remembering and redeeming the past that we can begin to claim God's promise of a brighter future.

When the Jewish people gather to celebrate The Passover, it is a time to remember. It's a time to remember how they were once slaves in Egypt and how God redeemed them from their chains. The Jews are a people of deep memory. The wisdom of scripture says that if we fail to remember, this suffering will get passed along. The suffering we feel in our lives will then inflict other people. It will spread like a virus. Even though we are in the midst of this massive global pandemic, the greatest virus of history is the willful forgetfulness that perpetuates suffering from one generation to the next.

It is a good and holy thing to want to eradicate the racism that has been in the soil and water for these last four hundred years. The best place to start is by looking openly and honestly at your life — your personal history, your family story, and your entire lineage. Before you can do anything to fight racism, you first have to come to grips with your personal past and our shared past as a nation. You can't pass 'Go' without doing the hard and uncomfortable work first.

The truth is that we can't work for the freedom of others if we can't name the sufferings, whether caused or experienced, in our own lives, as these sufferings have us shackled like Pharaoh's chains. When we are courageous enough to embrace them and own them, we can then begin to be freed from them. We either remember our history, or we repeat it. We either transform our suffering, or we transmit it.

In the days ahead, there will be opportunities to do some of this work. I hope you are able to take advantage of them.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Corey'.



# Our Church Family



## Ongoing Prayer List

**This list is refreshed in January and June.** If there is a name you would like to add or remove from this list, please contact Carol Zaiatz (978-448-2091 or [unioncc@uccgroton.org](mailto:unioncc@uccgroton.org)).

Peggy & John Blair  
 Connie & Bob Brown  
 Mike Corbett & Family  
 Tiffany Gibb  
 Betty Goulet

Bob Hargraves  
 Chris Joyce  
 Brian Keese, Sr.  
 Liz Lienhard  
 Joe Marchesani

Bill Moeller  
 Myrtle Murphy  
 Betty Sampas  
 Rudi Schmid  
 Matt & Mandy Spain

Margaret Temple  
 Betty & Liz Waggoner  
 Laurie Waye

- Bob Hargraves, who broke his leg and is in rehab at Encompass Health Rehab of New England, 1071 Varnum Avenue, Lowell, MA 01854. If you wish to send a card, please send it to the home address (21 Temple Drive, Groton, MA 01450), as they are unsure of his discharge date.

July Birthdays				August Birthdays			
Charlie Bridge	7/1	Corey Sanderson	7/15	Jack Van Pelt	8/1	Pat Woods	8/24
Eleanor Ferrero	7/2	Rylan Rosenfeld	7/16	Ellen Hargraves	8/8	Gregory Barbon	8/25
Reaghan Carleton	7/3	Brent Emerle	7/18	Grace Johnson	8/12	Macie Bridge	8/25
Peg Lloyd	7/3	Leslie Howard	7/18	Leo Biocchi	8/13	Kristina Hnath	8/26
Bob Goudey	7/4	Cassie Sampas	7/19	Barb Lefebvre	8/14	Steve Legge	8/26
Chip Detwiler	7/5	Jon Sjoberg	7/20	James Leonard	8/15	Makaila Meehan	8/28
Paige Carleton	7/8	Cameron Grasso	7/21	Janice Flynn	8/16	Nancy Bugbee	8/30
Lynn Manalo	7/9	Betsy Bridge	7/22	Patrick Daly	8/16	Alex Platt	8/31
Robert Houde	7/10	Colin Grasso	7/24	Bebe Goudey	8/17	Jason Zambuto	8/31
Abigail Howard	7/10	Amy Sjoberg	7/24	Jenna Plausse	8/20		
Eleanor Kubick	7/10	Lois Berge	7/25	Pete Hnath	8/21		
Janet Kennedy	7/12	Destiny Bou	7/26	Matt Carey	8/23		
Cloe Bridge	7/13	Caden Rosenfeld	7/27				
Mimi Dabritz	7/14	Sarah Flynn	7/30				
Mary Kubick	7/15						

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. Also, we would like to recognize significant anniversaries — would you share that information with us?



## Milestone Anniversaries

- **Don and Janet Kennedy**, celebrating their **45<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** on **July 12**.
- **Peg and The Reverend Skip Lloyd**, celebrating their **45<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** on **July 26**.
- **John and Christine Brooks**, celebrating their **25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** on **August 5**.

# Church News

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## From the Collector

Thank you to everyone who has sent their offerings and pledge donations to the Church Office, given online through their bank, or through the Online Giving. If you have any questions or concerns about your pledge, please contact Margaret Wheeler.

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I want to thank everyone that participated in the surprise parade for my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. You all made my day incredibly special!

*Barbara Avey*

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## LILIES

LILIES will continue to gather over Zoom! All women of the church are invited to join in. We are focusing on how to bring intentional prayer into our daily lives. Our next meetings are:

**Thursdays, July 9 and July 23**  
**7:00-7:30 p.m.**

*For more details, please contact: Raquel Majeski or Betsy Bridge*

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## 2020 Graduates

Here are some additions to the list of graduates for this year (which appeared in the June newsletter). Congratulations to all our recent graduates and wishing you God's blessings for a bright and happy future!

- **Ellen and Bob Hargraves' grandchildren:**

- Marin Lannon graduated in January from Westfield State University
- R. Matthew Lannon graduated from U Mass Amherst in June
- Gordon Hargraves graduated from Bates College in June

- **Travis Bugbee** graduated from the University of Connecticut in May. He majored in Computer Science, minoring in Digital Media.

# Backpack Drive 2020

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## *Sharing Christ ~ Changing Lives ~ Providing Backpacks!*

We are ready to launch our third annual UCC Groton Backpack Drive on August 21, 2020. While school may look different in the Fall, the needs of families for help with school supplies will be greater than ever. We are working on logistics of a re-imagined distribution day in the era of COVID-19. This will be an outdoor event that balances keeping people safe with creating excitement around the start of a new school year.

Cheerful volunteers are the key to making this program a success. Here's how you can help:

**Volunteer** (with masks and smiling eyes):

- ***Volunteer to help stuff backpacks*** in the **2<sup>nd</sup> week in August**. This will be an outside, backyard activity in Groton, which involves putting school supplies in backpacks by grade.
- ***Volunteer at Devens Community Center on Friday, August 21:***
  - Use your truck to help transport backpacks to the Center in the morning/early afternoon.
  - Greet families, direct cars, restock supply kits and/or distribute backpacks in the parking lot at the Center. Due to privacy concerns, volunteers must be adults.
  - Help set up and/or break down of tents and tables at the center.
- ***Volunteer Monday/Tuesday the following week*** to distribute extra supplies to area schools and organizations.
- ***Decorate a poster*** – let us know if you'd like to make a poster and we will deliver the poster board for you to paint or decorate!

**Donate** – we will be accepting ONLY the following types of donations:

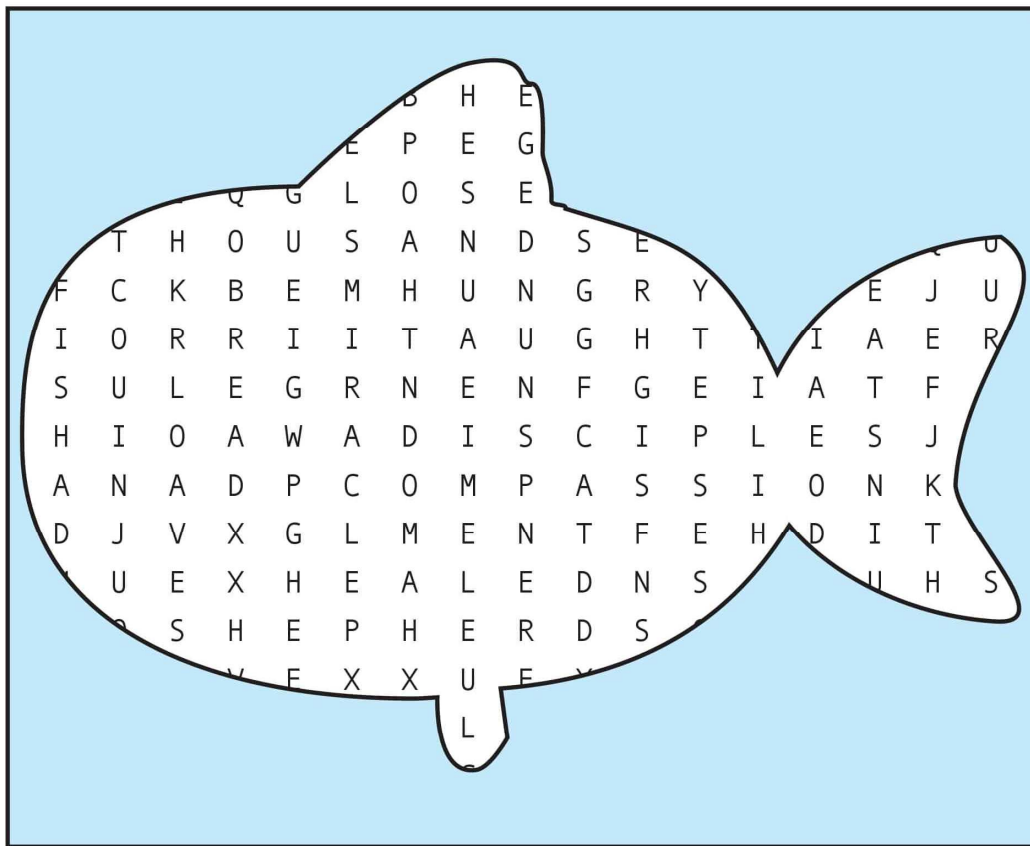
- ***Monetary donations:*** These will be used to buy school supplies and backpacks. Checks can be made payable to "UCC Groton," with "Backpack Drive" in the memo line.
- ***Backpacks:*** We are in need of unique styles, colors, and sizes of backpacks. If you would like to make a donation of new backpacks, please purchase these and coordinate getting them to us no later than August 1, 2020.
- ***Bulk school supplies:*** We have created an Amazon Wish List to donate items in bulk. It's easy! Just copy and paste the following link into your browser. Once you have selected the items you wish to donate, proceed to checkout and be sure to select Stefanie's address to have the items shipped directly to her. [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/27X3M5IGM0KUR?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/27X3M5IGM0KUR?ref=wl_share)
- ***Masks:*** Handmade child- and adult-sized masks in gender-neutral fabrics.
- ***Helium-filled balloons to decorate tents:*** We will need red, yellow, green, royal blue, purple, and navy blue to designate tents for particular grades.
- ***Loan us*** your 10' x 10' tent and/or fluorescent cones (any size) for traffic control.

*Please contact Stefanie Lempp with any questions, if you'd like to volunteer, or to coordinate pick-up, delivery, or shipment of bulk supplies. We would love to hear from you!*

# Just for Fun...

## Jesus Fed the People Word Search

Find the words on the list that are hidden in the puzzle.  
The words can be right to left, up and down, or diagonally.



BREAD  
COMPASSION  
DISCIPLES  
EAT

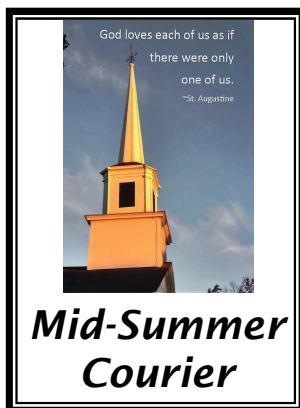
FISH  
HEALED  
HUNGRY  
LOAVES

MIRACLE  
SHEPHERD  
TAUGHT  
THOUSANDS



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**CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED**



**DATED MATERIAL**  
**PLEASE DO NOT DELAY**

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

A large photograph of a white church steeple with a weather vane, set against a blue sky with light clouds. The steeple is illuminated from below, giving it a warm, golden glow. Overlaid on the right side of the steeple is the text: "God loves each of us as if there were only one of us. ~St. Augustine".	<p><b>Over the summer, please be sure to read the latest emails from Rev. Sanderson for the most up-to-date information.</b></p>
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