

# THE UNION COURIER

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

220 Main Street  
Groton, Massachusetts 01450



## October 2021

### FROM THE



## Pastor

Throughout the last few weeks in worship, we have been looking at ways that we can all help foster and build a stronger sense of community, both for us as church members and for those out in the larger community. I truly believe this is the work God is calling us to do. We each have some sort of ministry where the gifts and talents of our lives meet the deep needs of the world. These individual ministries may be small and more private or they may be large and more public. When we pool all these varied ministries together, we create a powerful community ministry presence as a church. This church community can do far more than any one of us could ever do on our own.

In his book *Community and Growth*, Jean Vanier wrote, "A community is only truly a body when the majority of its members are making the transition from 'the community for myself' to 'myself for the community', when each person's heart is opening to all the others, without any exceptions. This is the movement from egoism to love, from death to resurrection; it is the Easter, a passage, the Passover of the Lord. It is also the passing from a land of slavery to a promised land, the land of inner freedom. It takes time for a heart to make this passage from egoism to love. It takes time and much purification, and constant deaths which bring new resurrections. To love, we must die continually — die to our own ideas, our own susceptibilities, and our own comfort. The path of love is woven in sacrifice."

In his letter to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul challenges these Christians to do something that brings people together. In the letter, Paul says, "You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, so clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another...and clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." What Paul is describing is the holistic well-being of a community that is made possible when people practice the love of Jesus in their church and out in the world.

As we have been seeing these last few weeks, community is something that we all need. Yet this is also something that untold numbers of people out in the larger community need as well. It's easy for people to underestimate the power of community. We often fail to see the web of connection that is all around us. When it comes to the challenging work of building community, or even just being community, it's easy to let things slide. Yet the call of the church is to embody this and then live fully into this holy vision.

Thanks for all you do in your individual lives and even more for what you do together as a community.

Peace,

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





# Our Church Family

## Ongoing Prayer List

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)).

Stephanie Booth  
Kristin Kelly  
Rudi Schmid

Matt & Mandy Spain  
Joe Marchesani  
Bill Moeller

Sakkinen Family  
Betty & Liz Waggoner  
Laurie Waye

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## Confidential Prayer Chain

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



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## Milestone Anniversary

Congratulations to **Cheryl and Bill Townsend**, who will be celebrating their **35<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** on **October 25**.

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## October Birthdays

Kirsten Sjoberg	10/01	MacKenzie Luth	10/11	Edie Tompkins	10/26
Juliet Silveri	10/03	Carly Detwiller	10/14	Michael Dabritz	10/27
Helen Misselhorn	10/06	Bob Hargraves	10/14	Andrew Howard	10/29
Joe Zambuto	10/06	Richard Ferrero	10/17	Isabella Bresnahan	10/31
Mitchell Townsend	10/09	Anna Kubick	10/18		

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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?

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## 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!

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## From the Collector

Donation Statements as of September 30 should be mailed in early October, so please keep an eye out for them. If you have any questions or concerns about your pledge, please contact Margaret Wheeler ([collector@uccgroton.org](mailto:collector@uccgroton.org)).

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## Rev. Sanderson Away

Rev. Sanderson will be away **Tuesday, October 5, through Wednesday, October 12** (returning to the office October 13). Rev. Lee Atherton will be our Guest Preacher next Sunday, October 10. For **Pastoral emergencies**, please contact **Rev. Skip Lloyd**.

# Church News

## Steeple Project

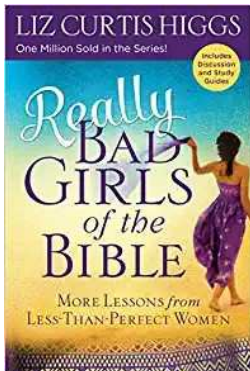
The Buildings and Grounds Committee is happy and relieved to report that the upper nine feet of the Church steeple, along with a badly leaning weather vane, were safely removed on September 22. The center king post, which is nearly 200 years old, was heavily rotted and very unsafe. Using a chain saw, it was necessary to remove that portion of the steeple. **A BIG THANK YOU to Halsey Platt and his crew, as well as all those who participated and also supplied food for our workers!**

The Church will need to assess the condition of the remaining portion of the steeple which is about 30 feet in length and determine what its options may be. We will keep you posted.



## LILIES—All Women of the Church are Invited!

*Please join us for our fall study of Really Bad Girls of the Bible, by Liz Curtis Higgs*



### Kick-off Meeting

**Sunday, October 17, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Front Lawn of the Church**

Join us for Fellowship and to pick up your copy of *Really Bad Girls of the Bible*.

**Zoom Discussions:**

Tues, 11/2	7–7:45pm	Chapters 1–3
Tues, 11/16	7–7:45pm	Chapters 4–6
Tues, 11/30	7–7:45pm	Chapters 7–8

A link to the Zoom meeting will be provided in the Friday emails.

## Sunday School

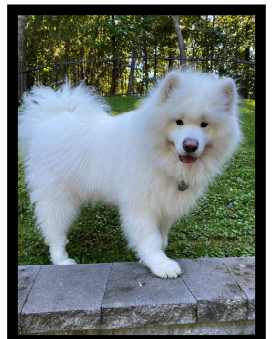
### Sunday School and Communion Sundays

As a reminder, there are no Sunday School classes on Communion Sundays. Grades PreK through 4 have "All Together Time" downstairs in Fellowship Hall for a fun activity. Grades 5 through 8 will remain in worship service. At this time, as a precaution, children attending "All Together Time" must wear a mask as is done during class time.

### Special "All Together Time" Sunday, October 3, with Blitzen

This Sunday will be our first Communion Sunday since restarting our Sunday School program this past month. We have a special event planned for this Sunday's "All Together Time" for the children. Grades 5 through 8 are also invited to attend if they wish. It will be outdoors on the front lawn or in Fellowship Hall, depending on the weather. Children must be wearing a mask to attend.

**Come meet Blitzen!** Blitzen is a seven year old Samoyed in training to get his Therapy Dog Certification. Blitzen's handler, Betsy Bridge, will talk with the kids about Therapy Dog work and the ways a dog spreads joy & comfort to people. Kids are then welcome to help with Blitzen's training by providing distractions while Blitzen stays calm & quiet.



Christian Education Committee

—Carl Prestia, Chair

—Jenn Coviello

—Bonnie Marchesani

# Welcome Back Picnic

On September 12, we had a picnic to welcome everyone back to Worship and Sunday School. The weather was great and everyone was glad to be back and be able to enjoy some fellowship time together!



# A Message from the Stewardship Team

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## Moving Forward!

With summer vacations behind us and kids back in school, worship and the picnic on September 12 welcomed family and friends back home. After almost 18 months of no gathering, or at most very limited gathering, there was plenty of catching up to do. The service was well attended and people spread out in front of the church to enjoy a beautiful day, share good food, exchange summer memories, and reconnect. 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 to be moving forward! Pledge Sunday is an opportunity for each of us to celebrate and give thanks for all that God has provided and will continue to provide. Our pledging supports not only the daily operations of our two buildings, but, more importantly, the many ministries we undertake together.

We have opportunities to support, serve, and live our faith beyond our walls. The recent Backpack Drive provided backpacks for over 100 students in neighboring towns. Last year during the pandemic, we continued to financially support *Hagar Sisters*, *Loaves & Fishes*, *Teen Challenge*, *Common Cathedral*, *City Reach* and *Unbound*. Hopefully, we can get back to providing in-person volunteer support as well.

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. We look forward to Bernard's faith-inspired musical direction, the Senior Choir, and the Handbell Choir. The children are back in Sunday School. Confirmation class is ready to begin. The Capital Campaign Committee will resume their work early next year – moving forward to make our building accessible to everyone and present a more welcoming face to Groton.

Corey's Sermons and Bible Study groups will continue to educate and spiritually energize us. He 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.

Please keep an eye out for your Pledge Invitation that welcomes all of us to celebrate through giving.

Blessings from your Stewardship Team!

## ***PLEDGE SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 14***



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**Stewardship Team**

—Jean Armstrong

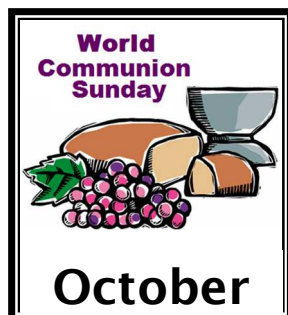
—Rev. Corey Sanderson

—Craig Smith

—Margaret Wheeler

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## October

**Sunday, October 3—10:00 a.m. Worship**

**World Communion Sunday**

Holy Communion

Sunday School—All Together Time: Come meet Blitzen (see p. 3)

6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class in the Parish House

**Sunday, October 10—10:00 a.m. Worship**

Rev. Lee Atherton (Guest Preacher)

No Sunday School—Columbus Day Weekend

**Sunday, October 17—10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School**

6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class in the Parish House

**Sunday, October 24—10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School**

Handbell Choir

**Sunday, October 31—10:00 a.m. Worship/Sunday School**

All Saints Sunday

*All Are Welcome! Masks are not required but are highly recommended.*