

United Congregational Church, UCC
6 Institute Road
Worcester, MA 01609



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UNITED VOICES

A Newsletter of the United Congregational Church, UCC
6 Institute Road, Worcester, MA 01609

508-752-3785 staff@ucc-worcester.org Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

VOLUME XXIX

JUNE 3, 2009

NUMBER 8

OUR PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT CONTINUES...

At our Annual Congregational Meeting (May 17), there was a report from the Merger Exploration Task Team (whose members include Larry Iannetti, Miriam Montalvo, Dorista Goldsberry, Ray Gaspari, Peg Manoogian, Sandra Johnson, Walter Cushman, Barry Jones, and Terry Fitzgerald, ex officio).

The report reviewed the process and work of the Task Team. The summary included some essential facts: after early preliminary discussion, the group had determined a set of criteria which led them to contact 3 local churches – Wesley United Methodist Church, Hadwen Park Congregational Church UCC, and First Baptist Church ABC. The first two churches contacted ultimately decided that the time was not right for merger discussion. The Governing Board of First Baptist Church did meet twice with the Merger Exploration Task Team and is interested in continuing exploratory discussions about merger possibilities.

The meetings were lively, hospitable, friendly, and engaging. While we have been involved in this discernment process for over 2 ½ years, the subject is new to the folks at First Baptist. They are going to begin their own process of discussion – beginning with a newsletter article, then forming an Exploration Task Force which, among other things, will gather input from congregation members. The folks at First Baptist will vote at some point, possibly in the fall, on whether or not to continue the merger discussions.

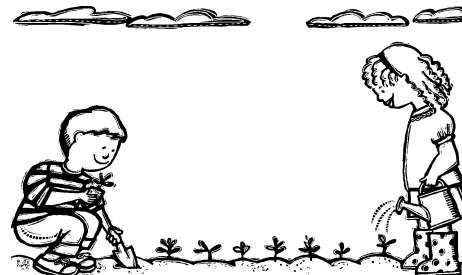
There were many specific questions asked at our Annual Congregational Meeting, but it was emphasized that the discussions with First Baptist were only preliminary. Our Merger Exploration Task Team did share that we had learned that First Baptist has a considerable number of people worshipping on a Sunday morning and an excellent choir; that there is an Associate Pastor hired to work with youth and children; that First Baptist has been involved with outreach into the community. In the report at our Annual Meeting it was further discussed that a merger would mean the coming together of two bodies in the creation of a new entity, while still maintaining denominational ties and affiliations. While there is an understandable desire to have a sense of how the specific details of such an arrangement might be worked out, that discussion would potentially take place after the folks at First Baptist have explored this merger possibility, voted, and affirmed going ahead with further conversation.

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*An Open and Affirming and
Just Peace Congregation
of the United Church of Christ*

Please be considerate...

Many of us are involved with projects, ministries and events sponsored by United, and it is tempting to just “ask a simple question” or “say a few words” pertaining to church business to others on Sunday mornings. It has been brought to our attention, however, that some feel interruptions of this nature before and/or during the worship service disrupt the flow of the service and their personal thoughts and prayers. Please be considerate of your fellow worshippers and speak to them at another time.



PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Terry Fitzgerald is usually at the church Tuesday through Friday. (508-752-3785 ext. 106) She is also available evenings and Saturdays for appointments as needed. Monday is her day off. Her home phone number is 508-753-5867, e-mail: tfitz47@charter.net.

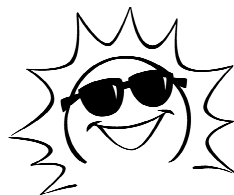
If you need to contact the church on Sunday morning, you may now leave a message on the church answering machine. Follow the instructions contained in the greeting to leave a message. The Sunday Host, Ed Bourgault, will be checking for messages frequently on Sunday mornings.

Please call the church office directly if you or a loved one is in the hospital. We recently learned that we are not always informed when a church member is hospitalized. We need you to help us as we try to respond to the needs of our members and friends.



**TO EACH AND EVERYONE
WHO HELPED WITH THE
POSTAL FOOD DRIVE!**

SUMMER COFFEE HOUR



Many thanks to all our coffee hour hosts for providing us with goodies, coffee and juice to enjoy while we talked with old friends and made new

ones after worship.

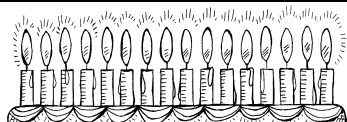
Our Summer Coffee Hour will be starting on July 5. If you are attending summer worship, please consider bringing a cold drink (or a few treats) to share! Cups and napkins will be provided.

**A MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR ROY BOURGAULT**

will be held at United on Saturday, June 13 at 1 p.m. Calling hours will be held on June 12 from 5 to 8 p.m. at Caswell-King Funeral Home, 474 Grove St., Worcester

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!**

- Sharon Breslin
- Susan Hafner
- Lisa Marie Hella
- John and Siobhan Petrella
- Jeffrey Roberts
- Lynne Roethel



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Miriam Rogers-Montalvo	2
Elsie Wanerka	3
Robert Healey	4
Mustafa Fofana	6
Sue Withington	
Earl Ward	
Peter Mott	10
Lorna Snow	12
Kit Murray	15
Cheryl Laliberte	16
Kyle O'Donnell	
Marion Orczyk	17
Marilyn Brooks	19
John Henry	21
Stanton Whitman	
Walter Cushman	24
Mattina Falco	25
Dorothy Wright	29
Jeanne Berggren	30

*May our hearts be encouraged,
being joined together in love,
so that we may have the ability
to spread that love to others,
today, tomorrow, and throughout
the year...Adapted from Colossians 2:2*

May 18, 2009

Dear Friends of Christ,

What does your church mean to you? Mission? Compassion? Community? Praise? Prayer? Peace? We could sit in a circle asking that question and come up with as many different answers as people! But the value at the heart of every answer would likely be the same: Love. Our church is love.

When we think about the church's love and how God's love has transformed and nourished us, we want to share it. We want others to feel the blessings of grace and acceptance, to know the joy of service and the freedom to live fully in God's moment-whether it brings joy or sorrow, struggle or laughter.

Each year, we receive a special offering that helps the church's love to grow and thrive. Called **Strengthen the Church**, this special offering funds new congregations and renews existing ones. It supports programs for youth and young adults, nurtures current and future leaders. The God is Still Speaking Ministry, which spreads the message of God's unconditional and inclusive love also receives support from this special offering.

We will receive this offering on Sunday, June 14 –the week before the anniversary of the U. C. C. Checks should be made out to *United Congregational Church, with Strengthen the Church in the memo line*. Please show your generosity by contributing to the **Strengthen the Church** special offering. Your generous gift today ensures a vibrant church tomorrow.

Spread the Love... Strengthen the Church... God is still speaking.

Yours in Christ,

Wider Church Ministry

