

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.

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR MAY 19TH MEETING

As I have done in the past, I am writing my Annual Report as my newsletter article.

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3: 20

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.

God's power is at work within us! Accomplishing more than we can ask or imagine! Let the people say, "Amen!" (Amen!) The Spirit of Christ continues to move through this congregation, and out into the world. So many signs of that powerful Spirit in this place! I was moved by the depth, thoughtfulness, and faithfulness of the Statements of Faith shared by our confirmands – Peter, Laura, and Micayla – last May. I was pleased to accept the 2008 People of Courage award from Safe Homes because of this congregation's support of and efforts on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth. I was gratified to learn from our Interfaith Hospitality Network guests that they experienced the folks at United as welcoming and friendly; comfortable eating and conversing with them, sharing and laughing, listening with open hearts to their stories of struggle and hope.

God's power at work in us, accomplishing more that we can ask or imagine! I was excited by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the lively, deeply respectful, passionate, eloquent, and intelligent discussion that took place during our congregational meeting in September. It was at this meeting that a vote of the congregation determined that we would form a Merger Exploration Task Team to examine the possibility of merging with another congregation. What a fine group - truly representative of the congregation, and willing and eager to share their opinions, perspectives, and insights! Praise be to God!

God's power at work in us, accomplishing more than we can ask or imagine! Fewer in number, yet worship alive with beautiful music and strong voices; Joshua relentlessly learning how to live the gospel from God, Jeremiah, and his critter friends; participation in the meaningful and wonderful Interfaith Thanksgiving Service; phone calls made and notes written to our less mobile members; children and adults together telling the Christmas story in the adapted Shepherd Knapp and Children's pageant; chocolate, wonderful treats, and fun at the Valentines' Tea! We experienced a holy Lenten season, beginning with a pancake supper and somber Ash Wednesday service.

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We journeyed with Christ into his last week, quietly and prayerfully, with a Women's Communion Breakfast, a Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service, a Good Friday service. We rejoiced with Jesus at sunrise on Easter morn with music and art and breakfast. We praised the risen, living Christ later in the morning with trumpets and music and dancing and glad rejoicing!

We saw God's power in the world doing more than we can ask or imagine as we witnessed the election of our first African-American president. And yet we do struggle to see God's power at work in us, and in the world, as we face ongoing wars, desperate economic struggles, grief, despair, and illness.

But I am confident that new life and transformation are yet possible. I rejoice that there are many in this world who embody Christ's compassionate, healing, reconciling, justice-making presence! Because I have seen it! I am humbled that there are so many in this congregation who give witness to the power of God working within us, accomplishing more than we can ask or imagine! Because I have seen it! I give abundant thanks for God's Spirit that never ceases to move through this congregation! Praise be to the living God, to the risen, loving Christ!

Terry



Add to your prayer list

issues.

- Prayers of healing and strength for Robert Wadleigh who has had eye surgery.
- Prayers of hope and healing for those living with HIV/AIDS.
- Prayers of courage and strength for all men and women who are serving in our Armed Forces, especially in areas of conflict.
- Prayers of courage and peace for the families of soldiers who have died and have been injured.
- Peace and hope for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Prayers for the people of Zimbabwe, the Congo, the Sudan, Kenya, Tibet, and for the people of the Middle East.
- Prayers of hope for all people and countries that are struggling with conflict and disease.
- Prayers of hope for all whose lives have been devastated in our struggling economy.
- Prayers of strength and wisdom and safety for our leaders in government.
- Prayers of comfort for the loved ones of those killed in the shootings in Binghamton, NY.
- Prayers of comfort and strength for all the victims of the earthquake in L'Aquila, Italy.
- Prayers of comfort for loved ones of all children and family members killed in violent acts.

- Prayers of healing for Matthew, Ed Fenner's great grandson.
- Prayers of healing for Michele Merenda who is facing serious health

**ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING
SUNDAY, MAY 17
FOLLOWING WORSHIP**



A legacy of faith

You're blessed when you have a mother, a grandmother or any relative or friend who passes down a strong faith to you. In the Bible, Timothy was influenced by his grandmother and mother.

Complete 2 Timothy 1:5 (NIV) below by filling in the blanks with the correct vowel.

VOWELS: 1 = a 2 = e 3 = i 4 = o 5 = u

“₃ h₁v₂ b₂₂n r₂m₃nd₂d₄
y₄₅r s₃nc₂r₂ f₁₃th, wh₃ch
f₃rst l₃v₂d₃n y₄₅r gr₁ndm₄th₂
L₄₃s₁nd₃n y₄₅r m₄th₂r
₂₅n₃c₂₁nd, ₃₁m p₂rs₅₁d₂d,
n₄w l₃v₂s₃n y₄₅ls₁₄.”

2 TIMOTHY 1:5 (NIV)

Answer: "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."