



# United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

August 2017

## Message from the Pastor



Dear friends –

A while ago, someone introduced me to a Facebook group, available only to seminary graduates and their spouses: “Things They Didn’t Teach Us In Seminary”. It’s been interesting to me to read the different posts about challenges my colleagues in all denominations and around the country face in ministry.

Sometimes I’ll read about a parish situation and wonder how on earth the church can survive when there is this kind of dysfunction; other times, I am reminded of the stress on clergy and their families as we try to balance the needs of family and parish; always, I am impressed by the compassion and wisdom my colleagues offer one another – even through the somewhat impersonal medium of a Facebook chat group.

It is easy for clergy to become “burned out”, and leave ministry and sometimes the church altogether. After 37 years in ministry, I am grateful that I continue to find challenges that interest and engage me, rather than drain or frustrate me – and very grateful to be here at United! I don’t take this congregation or the ministry we share for granted – ever!

I am delighted that we will welcome a new seminarian to United this fall – our fourth Andover Newton student in the past five years. Debbie Duval will begin her year of field ed with us on September 10<sup>th</sup>; I hope you will be here that morning to welcome her! As I read posts on the clergy Facebook page, I am even more aware of how valuable our early experiences in ministry can be and how important the foundation is that we offer seminary students. Tom McMillan and I will co-supervise Debbie, and Joy Hennig is putting together a Teaching Parish Committee who will work closely with Debbie to make sure that her experience here is all that it can be. I am looking forward to the gifts Debbie will bring to United and to sharing ministry with her – hopefully teaching her things she won’t learn in seminary!

Blessings,  
Nancy



## NEW MEMBER GATHERING

Are you interested in becoming a member of United? Would you like to learn more about the ministry we share here? A gathering for anyone interested in joining United will be held on Sunday October 15<sup>th</sup>, immediately after worship; we plan to receive new members on **October 29<sup>th</sup>**, during our morning worship. Please speak to Nancy if you are interested.



## THANK YOU!

Many thanks to those who provided pastoral and pulpit coverage for me while I was on vacation in July: Tim Camp, Larry Iannetti and Debra Cottis for preaching, and Helen Bross, Sue Tarantino and Dave Cote for providing pastoral coverage. Always, thanks to Karen in the office for fielding calls and concerns, and to Ed Bourgault and Tim Camp for making sure things run smoothly! A special thanks to Peter Keck and Andy and Carolyn Dzaugis for taking care of sexton responsibilities while Ed and Tim were away, and to Pat Keck for playing the piano while Suzie Hager was away! Truly – we are blessed to have so many people able and willing to support the life and ministry of our church!!

~ **Pastor Nancy**



## IN MEMORIAM

We offer prayers of gratitude for the life of Beverly Osborn, who died on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Beverly was a life-long and faithful member of United, especially active in missions and on the Diaconate; she made countless contributions to the city of Worcester as well as to the church she loved. Her smile was a blessing to all who knew her, and her kindness shone in all she did. A memorial service was held for Beverly in Merriman Chapel on Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00. We hold her family in our prayers.

We give thanks for the life of Dan Lewis, who died at home in the loving care of his wife, Ann, on July 19. Dan was a gifted poet and well known and loved within the arts community in Worcester, which recognized his work a year ago by awarding him the Stanley Kunitz medal. A memorial service will be held in Merriman Chapel on Saturday September 16<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 (time tentative). We hold Ann, and their extended in our prayers.

We pray for Diana, Jannatha and Nate Coffin, as they mourn the death of Diana's husband, Charlie, on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Although Charlie lived in a nursing home these past several years, his family lovingly and faithfully cared for him. We give thanks for Charlie and ask God's comfort for those who knew and loved him.





## CHURCH PICNIC!

Plan now to come to our annual picnic at Emerson Brooks' home on Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup>, immediately after church. This is a wonderful afternoon with hamburgers, hotdogs and potluck salads and desserts; there will be games and other activities to enjoy – along with simply having time to catch up after the summer! More information to follow - but put the date on your calendar now!

### United Calendar



- Aug 23 Board of Ministry Meeting
- Aug 28 Carty Cupboard Volunteer Monday / Wesley United Methodist Church
- Sept 16 Dan Lewis Memorial Service
- Sept 17 Annual Church Picnic ~ Home of Emerson Brooks
- Oct 28 One Day Fall Retreat ~ in Holden

### Resources

- UCC Lectionary Information (<http://www.macucc.org/pages/detail/220>)
- United Congregational Church (<http://www.ucc-worcester.org>)
- UCC Mass Conference (<http://macucc.org/>)
- National UCC Web Page (<http://www.ucc.org/>)



## A NOTE FROM DEBBIE DUVAL

My name is Debbie Duval and I am in my last year of the MDiv program at Andover Newton Theological School. I am very excited to begin the field education piece of my journey and cannot wait to see what God has in store for us as we join together in ministry at Worcester United!

A bit about me.....My husband Duncan, our grandson Derek, and I live in Framingham. Duncan and I have been members of a UCC church for almost thirty years. We are also deeply committed to our "Spirit's home", Star Island, (check it out at [www.starisland.org](http://www.starisland.org)) and I currently serve on their Board. We have three adult children; Jasmine, Jessie and Cameron. We also have five awesome grandchildren (Derek, Piper, Tripp, Scotia and Felix) and two slobbering, loyal and loving yellow labs. Duncan is a full-time firefighter in town and I have worked for a small property management company that owns and operates apartment communities in both Florida and Massachusetts. When I am not at school/church/work, I enjoy spending time with friends, cycling, running, reading, and camping in Maine with my family.

I believe that I am being called to do ministry with one foot deeply rooted in the church and one foot out in the community. With this call in mind, I will also be partnering in ministry with Worcester Fellowship and will be helping to lead worship on Sunday afternoons and spending time with their community at their Thursday Café. As we get to know each other, I would love to hear what "one foot in" and "one foot out" might look like for you and Worcester United.

I look forward to meeting you on September 10<sup>th</sup>! Until then, my prayer is that you will find ways to enjoy the slower pace that this season offers.

Summer Blessings and the Peace of Christ to you,  
Debbie Duval



## **VIRGINIA CHURCH SHOWS LOVE OF CHILDREN BY STITCHING TOGETHER SMALL QUILTS**

August 07, 2017

Written by Anthony Moujaes

A small United Church of Christ congregation in Virginia is showing that its size is determined more by its heart than the number of members. Through a 3 Great Loves mission project making quilts for distribution in the surrounding community, Mt. Calvary UCC is visibly demonstrating its love for children.

The Rev. Clara Young is the designated pastor of Mt. Cavalry Church, one of two UCC churches in Woodstock, Va. (The other church is Woodstock UCC, where Young serves as interim pastor part-time). On average, the attendance of Sunday morning worship is between seven to nine people at Mt. Cavalry, Young said, and the congregation is in a time of transition as it discerns its future.

"This Mission Project is a good way for them to define their present," Young said. "They worked for two hours on this project. A couple of the quilts went home to be finished. I believe this project will produce 16 to 20 hand-pieced quilts to go out with our love and blessing to children in Shenandoah County."

The first workday on July 29 brought together nine people to make kid-sized quilts, including three who are not regulars and one who was a friend of the organizer. The congregation has more quilting days scheduled in September and another one in November.

Mt. Cavalry member and quilter Regena Miller came up with the idea for the small quilts, first suggesting it in the fall of 2016 before the idea resurfaced this summer and was developed into a mission outreach project.

"The congregation is an aging and very small," Young said. "As part of my ministry there, I tried to think of ways they might do something beyond Sunday morning worship hour, because this is a church that has always been very active in mission and outreach support in the past... I

remembered a project that I did decades ago with Camp Fire Girls - making simple stuffed animals to give to children in need. I proposed that as a possibility to be involved in mission and as a way that all ages could participate. Regena added the idea of the quilts, and did the amazing work of piecing these beautiful quilts together for finishing."

Beyond the workdays in September and November, Young isn't sure how far into the future the congregation will make quilts. "I am hoping that by connecting in this very tangible way to our local shelter for victims of domestic abuse might either continue with this kind of support or develop into some other activity in support of their mission," she said. "Time will tell."



You can help those who are in danger of losing their housing by supporting Hope for Housing. When you buy Hope-for-Housing gift cards you get the full value of the cards and the stores contribute a percentage also, so it is a win-win situation.

Contact **Helen Bross** who has the cards for: Big Y, CVS, Dunkin Donuts, Hannaford, Panera, Shaw's and Stop & Shop . Thank you!