

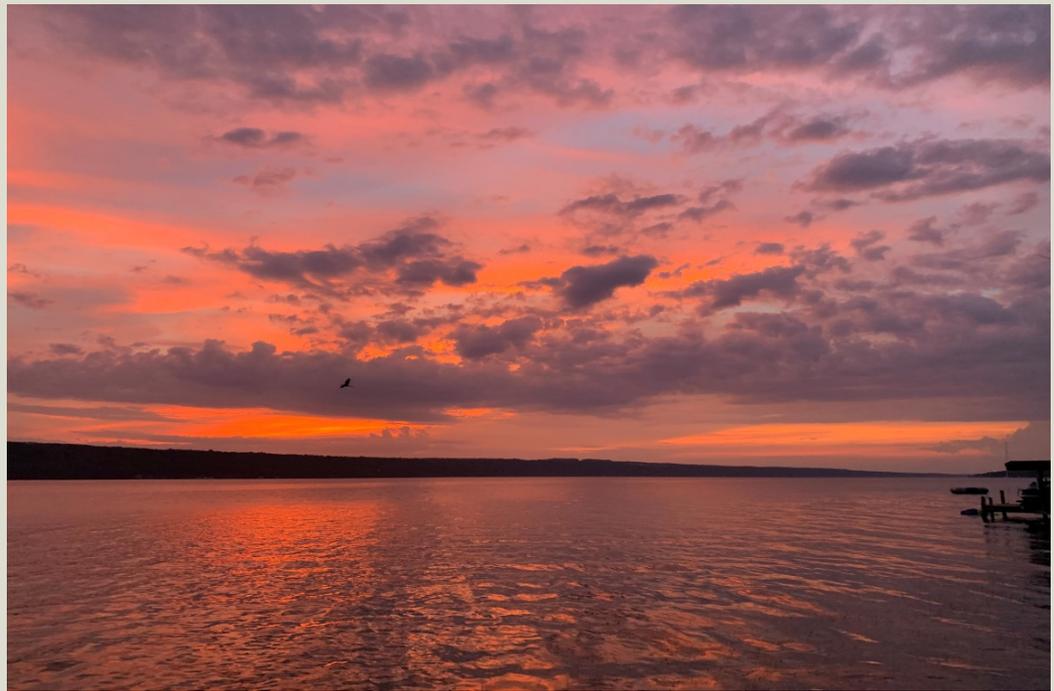


United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

August 2019



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends,

It was back around 1940 that my Grampa Cartmell bought a cottage on Seneca Lake, one of New York State's Finger Lakes. The cottage is around 100 years old – and shows it. It's a pretty bare bones place – we still use many of the dishes and blankets (nothing like those really really really old scratchy, moth-eaten blankets!) that came with the cottage, which didn't have hot water until maybe 15 years ago, and it was just last year my sister did the unthinkable and had a shower put in! We spent a month there every summer growing up – swimming, reading, picking berries – and all our Cartmell cousins would wander through at some point during the summer. My grandfather was wise to choose a cottage on the east side of the lake, so that we get spectacular sunsets almost every night...we make a camp fire, watch the sunset, sing (really goofy) songs, make s'mores, and go for a late night dip to

cool off.

The cottage is “part” of me: those times with my family, cousins and grandparents – doing the same things the same way every year – are traditions I cherish, and it amuses me to see my children following the same traditions. This past July when we were at the cottage, my son Greg made a rush trip to the local Dandy-mart for graham crackers, marshmallows and chocolate bars, wandered the beach to find drift wood for the fire, and by the time we came down to the beach, he’d laid a fire and started it burning ~ it wouldn’t be summer without a campfire! We sang a few of our goofy songs, watched the sun set, and made s’mores....it was lovely. It was peaceful. It was tradition.

There is something so comforting about traditions. When so much in our world and lives seems chaotic and unsettling, familiar traditions and routines are healing...when we’re uncertain about what to do, the familiar grounds and centers us.

What are the traditions you cherish? The habits or routines that help to focus you, to give you confidence, relax you?

There can be a fine line between a tradition that grounds and delights us, and a tradition that becomes “writ in stone” – something that must be done this way, this time, always. (Side bar here: Greg didn’t buy the usual Hershey’s bars for our s’mores...he bought PEANUT BUTTER CUPS!!! GASP!! And actually, the s’mores were great that way! New tradition!!)

We have traditions here at United (and I hope one of your traditions is spending Sunday morning here at 6 Institute!) and we also try new things ~ and I hope both the new and the old free us to hear God’s Word and feel God’s presence.

Is there something new you’d like to try? Tell me! Is there something we **used** to do, but don’t any longer, that you’d like to bring back some time? Tell me! This is a place where we can celebrate familiar traditions and create new ones ~ what a gift!

Blessings,
Nancy



PASTOR NANCY'S **AUGUST** VACATION SCHEDULE

Nancy will be away from **August 12 – 26** (with one of those weeks on Seneca Lake!); **Helen Bross** will provide pastoral coverage from **August 12 – 18**, and **Linda Michel** will provide pastoral coverage from **August 19-26**. Please contact Helen or Linda, or the church office, in case of any pastoral emergencies or concerns.

JUST PEACE CONVERSATION

~ Submitted by: Tom McMillan



United bills itself as “An Open and Affirming and Just Peace Congregation.” We have a pretty good idea what Open and Affirming means, but what is Just Peace all about?

We’ll be exploring that question in three after-church sessions on **September 29, October 6, and October 13**. Among the topics to be discussed are how and why United adopted that designation, the range of Christian responses to issues of war and peace (e.g. pacifism and just war theory), how Just Peace differs from traditional responses, and what it might mean for United to live more intentionally as a Just Peace congregation.

Put those dates on your calendar. And keep watching for more details!



OUR ANNUAL PICNIC ~ SEPTEMBER 8!!

....will take place Sunday September 8 right after the regular church service. Emerson Brooks once again offers the venue at his home, 12 Nelson Place, Worcester. This popular gathering will once again offer grilled items and drinks, with everyone encouraged to bring their own favorite potluck contribution. A signup sheet is out so we can get an idea of what is being brought.

Conversation and eating have always been the favorite "entertainments," but if anyone has a something in the way of an instrument or game to bring along, please do.

Questions or comments can come to any Community and Fellowship Committee member (you know who we are).

CARTY CUPBOARD NEWS

"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat (Matthew 25:35)".

Scripture reminds us that just as we are loved by Christ, we in turn should love others. The Carty Food Cupboard, a ministry supported by United Congregational Church for the past eight years, has shown this love by feeding literally hundreds of people each month. Our congregation supports Carty's mission in a variety of ways. One is through donations of non-perishable food items such as cereal, peanut butter, pasta and canned fruits, which can be left in the collection hamper at the entrance to Merriman Chapel. Personal care items (shampoos, soap, toothpaste, diapers etc.) are also appreciated.

Another method of aiding Carty is through the purchase and donation of Hope for Housing cards, which are available at church every Sunday. These cards are handed out to Cupboard clients on gluten free or diabetic diets, so they can buy the needed food at local super markets.

Volunteer opportunities are also available at Carty Cupboard, where everyone is welcome to join the team from our church who bag and distribute groceries. United's team volunteers on the last Monday of each month, and beginning in January, on each second Monday evening as well.

Anyone wanting more information about Carty Cupboard, or wishing to donate Hope for Cards, should contact Tim Camp(508- 798- 6997; timbcamp@aol.com), or Pastor Nancy Elder -Wilfrid.

Because of the generosity of United's congregation, plus several other downtown churches, Carty continues to show God's love through its feeding of many. Thanks to all of you who have supported this vital ministry!

United Calendar & Prayer Intentions



CALENDAR:

August 12-26 Pastor Nancy's vacation
August 21 Board of Ministry meeting
August 26 Carty Food Cupboard (Wesley Methodist Church)
Sept 8 FRIENDLY REMINDER: Summer Picnic!

AUGUST PRAYER INTENTIONS:

We are a community of faith: praying for and with each other! Each week in our Sunday bulletin, we list several members of United for whom we pray during the coming week. We are including that list in Voices so that those who are unable to come to church will know who is being prayed for, and can join their prayers with ours.

For Sunday, Aug 4TH: Peggy Israelian, Nick Johnson, Pat & Peter Keck, Marilyn Kerr.

We pray for them to feel the blessing of our prayer as deeply as they feel the loving presence of God.

For Sunday, Aug 11TH: Arline & Fred Kimball, Elise Kreiger, Meri Kruse.

For Sunday, Aug 18TH: Elizabeth & Aaron LaBranche, Audrey White, Ann Lewis.

For Sunday, Aug 25TH: Sandra Longvall-Johnson, David Maciewski, Nicole & Cooper Belanger.

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/>)