



# United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

July 2017

## Message from the Pastor



Dear friends –

....summer is here ~ and hopefully bringing with it time to enjoy a slower pace and time away from our usual routines and demands. One of my favorite poets is Mary Oliver and I offer you her poem, “Why I Wake Early” for your summer reading:

### **Why I Wake Early**

*Hello, sun in my face.  
Hello, you who make the morning  
and spread it over the fields  
and into the faces of the tulips  
and the nodding morning glories,  
and into the windows of, even, the  
miserable and the crotchety –*

*best preacher that ever was,  
dear star, that just happens  
to be where you are in the universe  
to keep us from ever-darkness,  
to ease us with warm touching,  
to hold us in the great hands of light –  
good morning, good morning, good morning.*

*Watch, now, how I start the day  
In happiness, in kindness.*

*From New and Selected Poems Vo.2, by Mary Oliver*

May your summer days start ~ and be filled ~ with happiness and kindness!

Blessings,  
Nancy



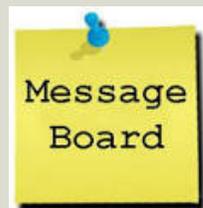
## PASTOR NANCY'S VACATION

While Nancy is out of the office, the following people have graciously offered to provide pastoral coverage. Please contact them or the church office with any pastoral concerns or emergencies:

July 24 – July 30: Sue Tarantino  
July 31 – August 6: Dave Cote

### Many thanks....

....to all who are keeping things running smoothly during the summer months: overseeing the Fellowship Table, sharing responsibilities for Sunday sexton tasks, providing pastoral coverage and preaching, lay readers, musicians, child care providers, ministry members ~ and always, those who work behind the scenes: Peter, Karen, Tim and Ed! Thank you!



### SPIRITUAL LIFE AND DIACONATE MINISTRY

...a reminder that the next meeting for this ministry will be on **August 13**.

**ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC** on: **Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>**, after church at the home of Emerson Brook's.

**FALL RETREAT** on: **Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>**, a one-day event this year in Holden.



## Carty Food Cupboard

### **HUNGER DOESN'T TAKE VACATION**

With school being out for the summer, the Carty Food Cupboard is actually experiencing an increase in demand. Most students are home all day now, and therefore are not participating in school lunch programs. Right now Carty especially needs items like Cereal, Pasta & Sauces, Peanut Butter and Jelly. Canned Fruits and Vegetables, as well as Juice Boxes, are also appreciated. These items should be low in sodium and/or sugar if possible. Donations can be placed in the collection hamper at the entrance to Merriman Chapel. Anyone wanting more information can contact Tim Camp anytime at [timbcamp@aol.com](mailto:timbcamp@aol.com), or 508- 798- 6997. Thanks go to the many United members who have already donated food this summer. Your support of Carty, one of the biggest food pantries in Worcester, is very much appreciated!



International  
Overdose  
Awareness Day

**#EndOverdose**

THE CITY OF WORCESTER INVITES YOU TO

# A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL OF MEMORY AND HOPE

TIME TO REMEMBER. TIME TO ACT.

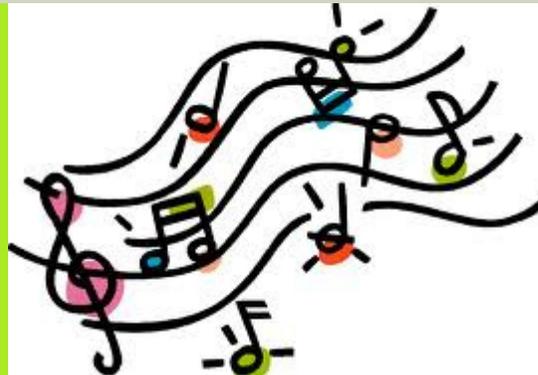
August 31, 2017

5:30 p.m.

Worcester City Hall Plaza

455 Main Street

Join us for a remembrance ceremony, speakers and recovery resources. This event is free and open to the public. All are welcome to attend.



## GOOD NEWS ABOUT MUSIC!

United Congregational Church has always been blessed with great music, and now a Music Task Team has been formed to help continue that tradition. The team is comprised of 5 church members, with Pat Keck serving as chairperson. Beginning this month, these members will try to discover the best music programs for our worship services, and also explore ways of encouraging our congregation to share its many musical talents. Once these decisions are made, the team will then prayerfully search for a new part-time Community Musician for our church.

We are very fortunate meanwhile to have Suzie Hager, a recent Music Studies graduate, serving as our Interim Musician for the next few months. Thanks go to Suzie, who brings her considerable talents to United every Sunday, and also to our Music Task Team members, who have volunteered to assist our church with this vital ministry! We plan to have more details on the music team's work in a future issue of Voices, but meanwhile anyone desiring more information about music issues is encouraged to contact Chairperson Pat Keck, or Church Moderator Tim Camp ([timbcamp@aol.com](mailto:timbcamp@aol.com), Home Phone: 508- 798- 6997).

## United Calendar



- June 26 Carty Cupboard Volunteer Monday/ Wesley United Methodist Church
- July 24-30 Pastor Nancy's vacation
- July 31 Carty Cupboard Volunteer Monday / Wesley United Methodist Church
- Aug 13 Spiritual Life and Diaconate Ministry Meeting
- 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/>)



**Declaring the Earth is the Lord's, UCC calls for environmental imperatives for a new moral era**

**July 04, 2017**

**Written by** Tim Kershner

**The United Church of Christ, noting both the urgency of climate change and the continued debate over its existence, is "raising its prophetic voice" to urge the "healing of the Earth."**

**On Monday, July 3, the delegates of the General Synod passed a resolution that calls on clergy across the life of the church to preach about the moral obligation to protect God's creation, and appeals to its members to lead efforts to educate and advocate for legislation to reduce the human impact on the environment.**

**"The climate crisis is an opportunity for which the church was born," said Rev. Jim Antal, president and conference minister for the Massachusetts Conference United Church of Christ, and the author of the resolution. "This sets the stage for engagement and hope. This is a proclamation of truth and the love of God's gift."**

**The resolution, "The Earth is the Lord's-Not Ours to Wreck," which passed with more than 97% of delegates in favor, was first adopted by the denomination's Southern California Nevada Conference at its June meeting in response to the United States withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. Since then, more than 16 additional regional conferences endorsed the resolution at their annual meetings.**

**"No resolution has arrived to General Synod with this much momentum," Antal said.**

**While addressing climate change, the action primarily calls attention to efforts, often politically motivated, to belittle the science behind climate change and deny what climate supporters say are obvious impacts on the environment. "The truth is under attack," says Marilyn Kendrix, chair of the Synod committee that considered the resolution. "It is up to us to reclaim truth."**

**The resolution relates the Bible's description of the encounter between Jesus and Pilate. When asked, "So you are a king?" Jesus responds by declaring to Pilate, "I came into this world to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."**

**Science, Kendrix adds, has no political opinion or bias. "Science is the basis of our understanding of climate change, and science is under attack. [This resolution] is about the truth."**

**The Rev. Denise Mason Bullitt, interim conference minister of the Central Atlantic Conference, agreed. During the Synod committee process, she said, "Science has everything to do with our responsibility and accountability to address climate change. Scripture tells us we have a firm foundation in the truth."**

**The resolution calls on UCC clergy, churches and members to speak from the pulpit and in the "public square," and to set an example "through words and actions." In the committee process, specific references to the current U.S. administration were changed to reference to the "powers that be." Kendrix says this added a more "biblical focus" and recognized that criticism of climate change can happen with future U.S. administrations as well as other governments around the world.**

**The committee also added language to recognize impact of climate change on poor communities, communities of color, and indigenous people.**

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**Other General Synods have addressed environmental concerns, with 19 previous resolutions, beginning with the second General Synod in 1959, and most recently including a measure adopted in 2015 calling for responsible stewardship of the outer space environment. John Lof, a delegate from the Iowa Conference, says he voted for that resolution and supports the action the UCC is taking in 2017.**

**He called on delegates to "go home and put this resolution to work."**

**Pam Arifian, Connecticut Conference, reminded delegates of a previous presentation calling on the church to focus on its three great loves: love of children, love of neighbor, and love of creation. "This is a natural extension of our witness and our three great loves."**

**Emphasizing that he may be "speaking to the choir," Phil Porter, a delegate from Northern California Nevada Conference, urged the church to "sing together loudly."**

**Reflecting on how quickly this resolution came together with the cooperation of conferences throughout the country, Southern California Nevada Conference Minister Rev. Felix Villanueva says this "proves what happens when we network with one another."**

**"Let's work together now to save the world."**

*Tim Kershner, celebrating his 13<sup>th</sup> Synod as a newsroom volunteer, is associate vice president of marketing & communication at Centenary College of Louisiana.*

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