



# United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

June 2018



## THOUGHTS ON MUSIC MINISTRY

Dear Friends

It's been an honor to serve as your musician here. Recently I requested a change in my title from "Church Musician" to "Music Minister." I think of ministering as reaching out and touching others with one's time and talents. Sharing my music with you makes the whole worship hour a "Light of God" moment, and I always welcome you to join me!

Though I could play all day on your beautiful piano, that's not the main reason I'm here. I see my role as leading us into God's presence with prayerful, joyful song. I believe music should serve worship, not the other way around. For example, while playing for the Offertory, I watch the progress of the plates around the room. When the ushers are finished, I bring my music to a close. That's not the time for a Bach Cantata or a Beethoven sonata! As a lifelong church musician and songwriter, I'm often inspired to write songs based on Scripture, such as stories of Bible women from their point of view. Other songs, such as "Make a Joyful Noise," and "Shout For Joy!" are taken from Psalms, and I use them as gathering songs for the whole congregation. Christmas pageants have inspired me as well. One year I wrote a modern Nativity story called the "Innkeeper's Rap." Twenty years ago, I wrote "Good News!" an Elton-John style song celebrating Jesus's joyous arrival. I believe that singing together should bring us closer to God. This might be a good time for the church to consider changing to a fresh hymnal. We'll explore several possibilities during the Hymnal Potpourri on June 17<sup>th</sup>. I hope you'll join us for this musical, enjoyable occasion!

Sincerely,  
**Mae Stroshane**  
**Music Minister**



Dear Nancy and United members,

Thank you for the festive sendoff Sunday morning. The cake was delicious and I treasure the card with your signatures and best wishes. Of course it's always a joy and an encouragement to join you for Sunday worship because of its surpassing vitality and hospitality. It's easy to see why so many are drawn to United and then go on to find a church home with you. I'm grateful, too, for the chance to exchange a personal word with many of you before and after the service – thank you for your kindness through the years and what a wonderful and eventful time we've shared together. It's been one of a kind – and that's not ministerial hyperbole! Blessed be the tie that binds United and WAMS.

**Bob Bachelder**  
**Minister and President**  
**Worcester Area Mission Society**



## PASTOR NANCY'S VACATION

Nancy will be on vacation from July 8 – July 30. In case of pastoral emergency or concern, please contact the church office or the following people who are covering for her:

**July 9-15:** Tom McMillan (978-886-3528)

**July 16-23:** Jo-an Bott (508-755-8207)

**July 23-29:** Gretchen Switzer (508-789-8113)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO:

**Parker Switzer**, on his graduation from Burncoat High School. Parker will be attending Quinsigamond Community College next year, and we wish him every success as he begins this next step in his life.

## ...AND CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS FOR:

**Kristina Reardon** and **Jorge Santos**, who were joined in marriage by Nancy on June 29<sup>th</sup>. We pray that their marriage be blessed with much love and joy for all the years to come!

## A NOTE OF THANKS!

My Beloved United Family,

Thank you so much for the wonderful send off you gave me in May: the beautiful card, the cake and the stole! The stole is such an affirmation for me of my next steps toward ordained ministry. I miss you all and keep you in my daily prayers.

Blessings and love,

**Debbie Duval**



## IN MEMORIAM

We offer thanks for the life of **Walter Cushman**, who died on May 27<sup>th</sup>, and whose life was honored at a service at United on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Walter was a long time, faithful member of United ~ whose light shone through his gracious welcome to all who came through our doors, and through the gentle love he offered all who met him. We give thanks for the gift of his presence in our lives and church, and pray for God's comfort for his family and all whose lives were touched by his own.

## SUMMER FELLOWSHIP



Now that summer time is finally here, there will once again be changes to our church's Fellowship Table! Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, there will not be any assigned hosts for the after-worship Fellowship we all enjoy. Beverages will still be provided every Sunday, but all church members are instead invited to occasionally bring some snacks to share. This informal system has worked well the past few years, while allowing our regular hosts to enjoy a well-deserved break. The regular Fellowship schedule will resume September 16<sup>th</sup>, but meanwhile let's all enjoy the relaxed conversations and sharing each Sunday this summer!

~ Submitted By: Tim Camp

### United Calendar



July 9-29 Pastor Nancy's vacation  
July 30 Carty Cupboard / Wesley United Methodist Church  
Aug 27 Carty Cupboard / Wesley United Methodist Church

## 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/>)

