



United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

November 2018



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends –

I am writing this before the November 11th election, so am still in that anxious, unsettled place of “not-knowing”...and somehow, that feels like a faith-full place to be: knowing that while there is so much that is beyond our control, there is also so much for which we have responsibility. We are all too aware of the huge divisions within our country and of the fragility of any peace we feel, of human rights we have gained. In the past week and a half, any illusions we have of a lessening of racial and religious violence has been shattered. We see clearly, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, the “*shroud that is cast over*

all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations”.

This is where faith comes in ~ faith that inspires us to not just see light in the darkness, but to *be* light in the darkness; faith that empowers us to not just *feel* God's love, but to *be* love – even with those it seems most difficult to love.

Our stewardship theme this year builds on our fall retreat, with the theme, “**For Such a Time as This**”, calling us to claim our place and power as people of faith in the midst of these times that have such great need of our faith, our light, our love. And so even though I am writing this before the November election results have been tallied, the call for a faith-full response in “**...such a time as this**” remains the same.

By the time you read this, we will know more about what this time is for our country and world, and I hope and pray we will have a strong sense of our part in serving as God's hands and heart in our community and world. I cannot imagine how I would live through these times without the grounding I experience in the church – and in *this* church in particular. As members of United Congregational Church, UCC, we are part of a community of faith that believes in caring for Creation and for the “least of these, our brothers and sisters”; we believe in witnessing to the radical welcome and love Jesus embodied; we believe that no one falls outside of the power of God's redeeming grace; we believe that we can faithfully and prayerfully discern what is asked of us in “**...such a time as this**”, and that the Holy Spirit will guide and empower us.

You will soon be receiving our stewardship letter, inviting you to prayerfully consider how you will support the ministry and witness of our church **"For Such a Time as This"**. We are part of a unique and blessed congregation, and our presence in this city – and in our lives – is vital. The challenges we face in these times are great – but by the grace of God and with the strength of one another, we are up to facing them! In this season of giving thanks, I am most grateful for that!

Blessings,

Nancy



GIVING THANKS

On Thanksgiving Sunday, **November 18th**, we will collect non-perishable food (canned goods, pasta, etc.) and new socks (white, adult) to deliver to the Carty Food Cupboard and to Worcester Fellowship. Please bring your contribution to church on the 18th, and place it on the altar – filling our altar to overflowing with our Thanksgiving gifts for others!



**“for such a time as this”
Stewardship Campaign 2019**

United Congregational Church's Stewardship Campaign in support of our 2019 budget has begun. Please read the letters, inserts, and Google Group messages prayerfully remembering that we are called to be a light of Christ's love in the world. Our goal this year is to have 100% participation from the congregation. No matter the size of your pledge we are asking that everyone turn in a pledge card; if you didn't receive a pledge card and letter in the mail, extra copies are available on the Welcome Table. You may change your commitment at any time by notifying a church officer. Our pledges support our renewing worship, our inclusive welcome, our outreach mission and our work for social justice and our community family. Pledges will be collected on December 2nd when we light the first candle of advent – the candle of HOPE.



THANKSGIVING POTLUCK ~ NOVEMBER 18!!

Join us after church on November 18th for our annual Thanksgiving Potluck!! We will transform Merriman Chapel into a world-class dining experience, feasting on all the Thanksgiving favorites: turkey, stuffing, gravy (prepared by our resident chefs in the Community and Fellowship Ministry) ~ and whatever we all contribute as side dishes! Stay for dinner, even if you haven't signed up ~ and if you can contribute something for our dinner (dessert, salad, side dish) – wonderful!! If you can't, not to worry – there is *always* more than enough to eat!!



MESSAGE FROM MAE STROSHANE

~ Music Minister

Greetings, Friends!

I can't believe it is November already! I'd like to thank everyone who has stepped up to play or sing in our services, including Audrey White, Althea Chan, Cesar and Ricardo Coloma, Pat and Peter Keck, our Sunday School children, Rich Stroshane, 3/5 of the Beggars, Greg Wilfrid, Karen Wilfrid, and last but not least, our faithful Pickup Choir!

Another important accomplishment is the adoption of the "Chalice Hymnal" as our main hymnal during the services. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we have begun to enjoy these fresh, lovely hymnals every week. No more shuffling of notebooks and Xeroxes! Special thanks to our Hymnal Task Team who worked hard to test drive and approve the Chalice, and to our Deacons and Board of Ministry for giving the final seal of approval.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, the Sunday School children will offer a special song of thanks by Betsy Rose. The Pickup Choir will sing a Thanksgiving favorite. All are welcome to join us! We have a busy Advent season ahead. I hope you will consider enriching our services with a solo.

On Sunday December 16th, we'll have our annual intergenerational Christmas Pageant. No rehearsal is required!

For any questions about our music program or requests for particular music, feel free to speak to me at Coffee Hour or by email at musicladymae@gmail.com

Advent and Christmas Eve at United



Hard though it is to believe, Advent is fast upon us! December 2nd is the first Sunday of Advent, ushering us into the holy season of preparing for the coming of Jesus into our world. We will light the candles of Advent each week during Advent and will fill the church with poinsettias on December 16th, the first Sunday of Advent. December 16th will also be our Christmas pageant Sunday. Our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be in the Sarah Wyman Whitman Gallery (the former sanctuary) on Monday, December 24th, at 5:30.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS!

December 16th is the 3rd Sunday in Advent and Merriman Chapel will be decorated that morning for the season! If you would like to help decorate for Christmas by purchasing a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office or fill out an order form in the Sunday bulletins on December 2nd and December 9th; deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 9th. Poinsettias cost \$15; please mark your slip or let the church office know if you would like to donate your poinsettia to one of our less mobile members or would like to bring it home. Flower order slips will be provided as inserts as well as on the Welcome table for your convenience.

United Calendar



Nov 18 Annual Thanksgiving Potluck
Nov 22 Happy Thanksgiving Day!
Nov 28 Board of Ministry Meeting
Dec 2 1st Sunday of Advent

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/>)



Hope for Housing (HFH) cards make great holiday gifts

If you're looking for an ideal stocking stuffer, HFH cards may be the answer.

By giving a gift of a HFH card, you will be benefiting not only the person receiving the card, but also CMHA's effort to prevent family homelessness. CMHA receives 3%-10% of the face value of the card to provide local families with assistance that includes help with rent in arrears or to prevent the shutoff of utilities.

HFH Cards can be purchased every Sunday from Helen Bross and used while shopping at:

-
- **Big Y**
 - **CVS**
 - **Dunkin' Donuts**
 - **Hannaford**
 - **Panera**
 - **Shaw's**
 - **Stop & Shop**

Here's just one example from Ann Gibbons-Smith of CMHA on how funds raised from HFH cards are making a difference in our community:

"Much good is being accomplished because of you.

Recently a couple from Leominster with 3 children, one is 8 and the other two are under the age of 4, came to CMHA looking for assistance. Parents had both been working full time with a monthly income of \$3,000 and making ends meet, never falling behind and living in the same apartment for 4 years. Like so many others they never thought they would be walking through our doors but Joseph lost his job and slowly things were getting very difficult to make ends meet. Their monthly rent was \$895.90 and on one income and dollars stretched they fell behind one month's rent. HFH prevention dollars were able to pay the one month's rental arrears of \$895.00 to get them back on track and stay in their home.

Thank you!!!!"

Also, thanks to Helen Bross for everything she does in support of HFH!



United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

November 2018



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends –

I am writing this before the November 11th election, so am still in that anxious, unsettled place of “not-knowing”...and somehow, that feels like a faith-full place to be: knowing that while there is so much that is beyond our control, there is also so much for which we have responsibility. We are all too aware of the huge divisions within our country and of the fragility of any peace we feel, of human rights we have gained. In the past week and a half, any illusions we have of a lessening of racial and religious violence has been shattered. We see clearly, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, the “*shroud that is cast over*

all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations”.

This is where faith comes in ~ faith that inspires us to not just see light in the darkness, but to *be* light in the darkness; faith that empowers us to not just *feel* God's love, but to *be* love – even with those it seems most difficult to love.

Our stewardship theme this year builds on our fall retreat, with the theme, “**For Such a Time as This**”, calling us to claim our place and power as people of faith in the midst of these times that have such great need of our faith, our light, our love. And so even though I am writing this before the November election results have been tallied, the call for a faith-full response in “**...such a time as this**” remains the same.

By the time you read this, we will know more about what this time is for our country and world, and I hope and pray we will have a strong sense of our part in serving as God's hands and heart in our community and world. I cannot imagine how I would live through these times without the grounding I experience in the church – and in *this* church in particular. As members of United Congregational Church, UCC, we are part of a community of faith that believes in caring for Creation and for the “least of these, our brothers and sisters”; we believe in witnessing to the radical welcome and love Jesus embodied; we believe that no one falls outside of the power of God's redeeming grace; we believe that we can faithfully and prayerfully discern what is asked of us in “**...such a time as this**”, and that the Holy Spirit will guide and empower us.

You will soon be receiving our stewardship letter, inviting you to prayerfully consider how you will support the ministry and witness of our church **"For Such a Time as This"**. We are part of a unique and blessed congregation, and our presence in this city – and in our lives – is vital. The challenges we face in these times are great – but by the grace of God and with the strength of one another, we are up to facing them! In this season of giving thanks, I am most grateful for that!

Blessings,

Nancy



GIVING THANKS

On Thanksgiving Sunday, **November 18th**, we will collect non-perishable food (canned goods, pasta, etc.) and new socks (white, adult) to deliver to the Carty Food Cupboard and to Worcester Fellowship. Please bring your contribution to church on the 18th, and place it on the altar – filling our altar to overflowing with our Thanksgiving gifts for others!



**“for such a time as this”
Stewardship Campaign 2019**

United Congregational Church's Stewardship Campaign in support of our 2019 budget has begun. Please read the letters, inserts, and Google Group messages prayerfully remembering that we are called to be a light of Christ's love in the world. Our goal this year is to have 100% participation from the congregation. No matter the size of your pledge we are asking that everyone turn in a pledge card; if you didn't receive a pledge card and letter in the mail, extra copies are available on the Welcome Table. You may change your commitment at any time by notifying a church officer. Our pledges support our renewing worship, our inclusive welcome, our outreach mission and our work for social justice and our community family. Pledges will be collected on December 2nd when we light the first candle of advent – the candle of HOPE.



THANKSGIVING POTLUCK ~ NOVEMBER 18!!

Join us after church on November 18th for our annual Thanksgiving Potluck!! We will transform Merriman Chapel into a world-class dining experience, feasting on all the Thanksgiving favorites: turkey, stuffing, gravy (prepared by our resident chefs in the Community and Fellowship Ministry) ~ and whatever we all contribute as side dishes! Stay for dinner, even if you haven't signed up ~ and if you can contribute something for our dinner (dessert, salad, side dish) – wonderful!! If you can't, not to worry – there is *always* more than enough to eat!!



MESSAGE FROM MAE STROSHANE

~ Music Minister

Greetings, Friends!

I can't believe it is November already! I'd like to thank everyone who has stepped up to play or sing in our services, including Audrey White, Althea Chan, Cesar and Ricardo Coloma, Pat and Peter Keck, our Sunday School children, Rich Stroshane, 3/5 of the Beggars, Greg Wilfrid, Karen Wilfrid, and last but not least, our faithful Pickup Choir!

Another important accomplishment is the adoption of the "Chalice Hymnal" as our main hymnal during the services. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we have begun to enjoy these fresh, lovely hymnals every week. No more shuffling of notebooks and Xeroxes! Special thanks to our Hymnal Task Team who worked hard to test drive and approve the Chalice, and to our Deacons and Board of Ministry for giving the final seal of approval.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, the Sunday School children will offer a special song of thanks by Betsy Rose. The Pickup Choir will sing a Thanksgiving favorite. All are welcome to join us! We have a busy Advent season ahead. I hope you will consider enriching our services with a solo.

On Sunday December 16th, we'll have our annual intergenerational Christmas Pageant. No rehearsal is required!

For any questions about our music program or requests for particular music, feel free to speak to me at Coffee Hour or by email at musicladymae@gmail.com

Advent and Christmas Eve at United



Hard though it is to believe, Advent is fast upon us! December 2nd is the first Sunday of Advent, ushering us into the holy season of preparing for the coming of Jesus into our world. We will light the candles of Advent each week during Advent and will fill the church with poinsettias on December 16th, the first Sunday of Advent. December 16th will also be our Christmas pageant Sunday. Our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be in the Sarah Wyman Whitman Gallery (the former sanctuary) on Monday, December 24th, at 5:30.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS!

December 16th is the 3rd Sunday in Advent and Merriman Chapel will be decorated that morning for the season! If you would like to help decorate for Christmas by purchasing a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office or fill out an order form in the Sunday bulletins on December 2nd and December 9th; deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 9th. Poinsettias cost \$15; please mark your slip or let the church office know if you would like to donate your poinsettia to one of our less mobile members or would like to bring it home. Flower order slips will be provided as inserts as well as on the Welcome table for your convenience.

United Calendar



Nov 18 Annual Thanksgiving Potluck
Nov 22 Happy Thanksgiving Day!
Nov 28 Board of Ministry Meeting
Dec 2 1st Sunday of Advent

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/>)



Hope for Housing (HFH) cards make great holiday gifts

If you're looking for an ideal stocking stuffer, HFH cards may be the answer.

By giving a gift of a HFH card, you will be benefiting not only the person receiving the card, but also CMHA's effort to prevent family homelessness. CMHA receives 3%-10% of the face value of the card to provide local families with assistance that includes help with rent in arrears or to prevent the shutoff of utilities.

HFH Cards can be purchased every Sunday from Helen Bross and used while shopping at:

-
- **Big Y**
 - **CVS**
 - **Dunkin' Donuts**
 - **Hannaford**
 - **Panera**
 - **Shaw's**
 - **Stop & Shop**

Here's just one example from Ann Gibbons-Smith of CMHA on how funds raised from HFH cards are making a difference in our community:

"Much good is being accomplished because of you.

Recently a couple from Leominster with 3 children, one is 8 and the other two are under the age of 4, came to CMHA looking for assistance. Parents had both been working full time with a monthly income of \$3,000 and making ends meet, never falling behind and living in the same apartment for 4 years. Like so many others they never thought they would be walking through our doors but Joseph lost his job and slowly things were getting very difficult to make ends meet. Their monthly rent was \$895.90 and on one income and dollars stretched they fell behind one month's rent. HFH prevention dollars were able to pay the one month's rental arrears of \$895.00 to get them back on track and stay in their home.

Thank you!!!!"

Also, thanks to Helen Bross for everything she does in support of HFH!



United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

November 2018



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends –

I am writing this before the November 11th election, so am still in that anxious, unsettled place of “not-knowing”...and somehow, that feels like a faith-full place to be: knowing that while there is so much that is beyond our control, there is also so much for which we have responsibility. We are all too aware of the huge divisions within our country and of the fragility of any peace we feel, of human rights we have gained. In the past week and a half, any illusions we have of a lessening of racial and religious violence has been shattered. We see clearly, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, the “*shroud that is cast over*

all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations”.

This is where faith comes in ~ faith that inspires us to not just see light in the darkness, but to *be* light in the darkness; faith that empowers us to not just *feel* God's love, but to *be* love – even with those it seems most difficult to love.

Our stewardship theme this year builds on our fall retreat, with the theme, “**For Such a Time as This**”, calling us to claim our place and power as people of faith in the midst of these times that have such great need of our faith, our light, our love. And so even though I am writing this before the November election results have been tallied, the call for a faith-full response in “**...such a time as this**” remains the same.

By the time you read this, we will know more about what this time is for our country and world, and I hope and pray we will have a strong sense of our part in serving as God's hands and heart in our community and world. I cannot imagine how I would live through these times without the grounding I experience in the church – and in *this* church in particular. As members of United Congregational Church, UCC, we are part of a community of faith that believes in caring for Creation and for the “least of these, our brothers and sisters”; we believe in witnessing to the radical welcome and love Jesus embodied; we believe that no one falls outside of the power of God's redeeming grace; we believe that we can faithfully and prayerfully discern what is asked of us in “**...such a time as this**”, and that the Holy Spirit will guide and empower us.

You will soon be receiving our stewardship letter, inviting you to prayerfully consider how you will support the ministry and witness of our church **"For Such a Time as This"**. We are part of a unique and blessed congregation, and our presence in this city – and in our lives – is vital. The challenges we face in these times are great – but by the grace of God and with the strength of one another, we are up to facing them! In this season of giving thanks, I am most grateful for that!

Blessings,

Nancy



GIVING THANKS

On Thanksgiving Sunday, **November 18th**, we will collect non-perishable food (canned goods, pasta, etc.) and new socks (white, adult) to deliver to the Carty Food Cupboard and to Worcester Fellowship. Please bring your contribution to church on the 18th, and place it on the altar – filling our altar to overflowing with our Thanksgiving gifts for others!



**“for such a time as this”
Stewardship Campaign 2019**

United Congregational Church's Stewardship Campaign in support of our 2019 budget has begun. Please read the letters, inserts, and Google Group messages prayerfully remembering that we are called to be a light of Christ's love in the world. Our goal this year is to have 100% participation from the congregation. No matter the size of your pledge we are asking that everyone turn in a pledge card; if you didn't receive a pledge card and letter in the mail, extra copies are available on the Welcome Table. You may change your commitment at any time by notifying a church officer. Our pledges support our renewing worship, our inclusive welcome, our outreach mission and our work for social justice and our community family. Pledges will be collected on December 2nd when we light the first candle of advent – the candle of HOPE.



THANKSGIVING POTLUCK ~ NOVEMBER 18!!

Join us after church on November 18th for our annual Thanksgiving Potluck!! We will transform Merriman Chapel into a world-class dining experience, feasting on all the Thanksgiving favorites: turkey, stuffing, gravy (prepared by our resident chefs in the Community and Fellowship Ministry) ~ and whatever we all contribute as side dishes! Stay for dinner, even if you haven't signed up ~ and if you can contribute something for our dinner (dessert, salad, side dish) – wonderful!! If you can't, not to worry – there is *always* more than enough to eat!!



MESSAGE FROM MAE STROSHANE

~ Music Minister

Greetings, Friends!

I can't believe it is November already! I'd like to thank everyone who has stepped up to play or sing in our services, including Audrey White, Althea Chan, Cesar and Ricardo Coloma, Pat and Peter Keck, our Sunday School children, Rich Stroshane, 3/5 of the Beggars, Greg Wilfrid, Karen Wilfrid, and last but not least, our faithful Pickup Choir!

Another important accomplishment is the adoption of the "Chalice Hymnal" as our main hymnal during the services. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we have begun to enjoy these fresh, lovely hymnals every week. No more shuffling of notebooks and Xeroxes! Special thanks to our Hymnal Task Team who worked hard to test drive and approve the Chalice, and to our Deacons and Board of Ministry for giving the final seal of approval.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, the Sunday School children will offer a special song of thanks by Betsy Rose. The Pickup Choir will sing a Thanksgiving favorite. All are welcome to join us! We have a busy Advent season ahead. I hope you will consider enriching our services with a solo.

On Sunday December 16th, we'll have our annual intergenerational Christmas Pageant. No rehearsal is required!

For any questions about our music program or requests for particular music, feel free to speak to me at Coffee Hour or by email at musicladymae@gmail.com

Advent and Christmas Eve at United



Hard though it is to believe, Advent is fast upon us! December 2nd is the first Sunday of Advent, ushering us into the holy season of preparing for the coming of Jesus into our world. We will light the candles of Advent each week during Advent and will fill the church with poinsettias on December 16th, the first Sunday of Advent. December 16th will also be our Christmas pageant Sunday. Our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be in the Sarah Wyman Whitman Gallery (the former sanctuary) on Monday, December 24th, at 5:30.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS!

December 16th is the 3rd Sunday in Advent and Merriman Chapel will be decorated that morning for the season! If you would like to help decorate for Christmas by purchasing a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office or fill out an order form in the Sunday bulletins on December 2nd and December 9th; deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 9th. Poinsettias cost \$15; please mark your slip or let the church office know if you would like to donate your poinsettia to one of our less mobile members or would like to bring it home. Flower order slips will be provided as inserts as well as on the Welcome table for your convenience.

United Calendar



Nov 18 Annual Thanksgiving Potluck
Nov 22 Happy Thanksgiving Day!
Nov 28 Board of Ministry Meeting
Dec 2 1st Sunday of Advent

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/>)



Hope for Housing (HFH) cards make great holiday gifts

If you're looking for an ideal stocking stuffer, HFH cards may be the answer.

By giving a gift of a HFH card, you will be benefiting not only the person receiving the card, but also CMHA's effort to prevent family homelessness. CMHA receives 3%-10% of the face value of the card to provide local families with assistance that includes help with rent in arrears or to prevent the shutoff of utilities.

HFH Cards can be purchased every Sunday from Helen Bross and used while shopping at:

-
- **Big Y**
 - **CVS**
 - **Dunkin' Donuts**
 - **Hannaford**
 - **Panera**
 - **Shaw's**
 - **Stop & Shop**

Here's just one example from Ann Gibbons-Smith of CMHA on how funds raised from HFH cards are making a difference in our community:

"Much good is being accomplished because of you.

Recently a couple from Leominster with 3 children, one is 8 and the other two are under the age of 4, came to CMHA looking for assistance. Parents had both been working full time with a monthly income of \$3,000 and making ends meet, never falling behind and living in the same apartment for 4 years. Like so many others they never thought they would be walking through our doors but Joseph lost his job and slowly things were getting very difficult to make ends meet. Their monthly rent was \$895.90 and on one income and dollars stretched they fell behind one month's rent. HFH prevention dollars were able to pay the one month's rental arrears of \$895.00 to get them back on track and stay in their home.

Thank you!!!!"

Also, thanks to Helen Bross for everything she does in support of HFH!



United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

November 2018



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends –

I am writing this before the November 11th election, so am still in that anxious, unsettled place of “not-knowing”...and somehow, that feels like a faith-full place to be: knowing that while there is so much that is beyond our control, there is also so much for which we have responsibility. We are all too aware of the huge divisions within our country and of the fragility of any peace we feel, of human rights we have gained. In the past week and a half, any illusions we have of a lessening of racial and religious violence has been shattered. We see clearly, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, the “*shroud that is cast over*

all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations”.

This is where faith comes in ~ faith that inspires us to not just see light in the darkness, but to *be* light in the darkness; faith that empowers us to not just *feel* God's love, but to *be* love – even with those it seems most difficult to love.

Our stewardship theme this year builds on our fall retreat, with the theme, “**For Such a Time as This**”, calling us to claim our place and power as people of faith in the midst of these times that have such great need of our faith, our light, our love. And so even though I am writing this before the November election results have been tallied, the call for a faith-full response in “**...such a time as this**” remains the same.

By the time you read this, we will know more about what this time is for our country and world, and I hope and pray we will have a strong sense of our part in serving as God's hands and heart in our community and world. I cannot imagine how I would live through these times without the grounding I experience in the church – and in *this* church in particular. As members of United Congregational Church, UCC, we are part of a community of faith that believes in caring for Creation and for the “least of these, our brothers and sisters”; we believe in witnessing to the radical welcome and love Jesus embodied; we believe that no one falls outside of the power of God's redeeming grace; we believe that we can faithfully and prayerfully discern what is asked of us in “**...such a time as this**”, and that the Holy Spirit will guide and empower us.

You will soon be receiving our stewardship letter, inviting you to prayerfully consider how you will support the ministry and witness of our church **"For Such a Time as This"**. We are part of a unique and blessed congregation, and our presence in this city – and in our lives – is vital. The challenges we face in these times are great – but by the grace of God and with the strength of one another, we are up to facing them! In this season of giving thanks, I am most grateful for that!

Blessings,

Nancy



GIVING THANKS

On Thanksgiving Sunday, **November 18th**, we will collect non-perishable food (canned goods, pasta, etc.) and new socks (white, adult) to deliver to the Carty Food Cupboard and to Worcester Fellowship. Please bring your contribution to church on the 18th, and place it on the altar – filling our altar to overflowing with our Thanksgiving gifts for others!



**“for such a time as this”
Stewardship Campaign 2019**

United Congregational Church's Stewardship Campaign in support of our 2019 budget has begun. Please read the letters, inserts, and Google Group messages prayerfully remembering that we are called to be a light of Christ's love in the world. Our goal this year is to have 100% participation from the congregation. No matter the size of your pledge we are asking that everyone turn in a pledge card; if you didn't receive a pledge card and letter in the mail, extra copies are available on the Welcome Table. You may change your commitment at any time by notifying a church officer. Our pledges support our renewing worship, our inclusive welcome, our outreach mission and our work for social justice and our community family. Pledges will be collected on December 2nd when we light the first candle of advent – the candle of HOPE.



THANKSGIVING POTLUCK ~ NOVEMBER 18!!

Join us after church on November 18th for our annual Thanksgiving Potluck!! We will transform Merriman Chapel into a world-class dining experience, feasting on all the Thanksgiving favorites: turkey, stuffing, gravy (prepared by our resident chefs in the Community and Fellowship Ministry) ~ and whatever we all contribute as side dishes! Stay for dinner, even if you haven't signed up ~ and if you can contribute something for our dinner (dessert, salad, side dish) – wonderful!! If you can't, not to worry – there is *always* more than enough to eat!!



MESSAGE FROM MAE STROSHANE

~ Music Minister

Greetings, Friends!

I can't believe it is November already! I'd like to thank everyone who has stepped up to play or sing in our services, including Audrey White, Althea Chan, Cesar and Ricardo Coloma, Pat and Peter Keck, our Sunday School children, Rich Stroshane, 3/5 of the Beggars, Greg Wilfrid, Karen Wilfrid, and last but not least, our faithful Pickup Choir!

Another important accomplishment is the adoption of the "Chalice Hymnal" as our main hymnal during the services. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we have begun to enjoy these fresh, lovely hymnals every week. No more shuffling of notebooks and Xeroxes! Special thanks to our Hymnal Task Team who worked hard to test drive and approve the Chalice, and to our Deacons and Board of Ministry for giving the final seal of approval.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, the Sunday School children will offer a special song of thanks by Betsy Rose. The Pickup Choir will sing a Thanksgiving favorite. All are welcome to join us! We have a busy Advent season ahead. I hope you will consider enriching our services with a solo.

On Sunday December 16th, we'll have our annual intergenerational Christmas Pageant. No rehearsal is required!

For any questions about our music program or requests for particular music, feel free to speak to me at Coffee Hour or by email at musicladymae@gmail.com

Advent and Christmas Eve at United



Hard though it is to believe, Advent is fast upon us! December 2nd is the first Sunday of Advent, ushering us into the holy season of preparing for the coming of Jesus into our world. We will light the candles of Advent each week during Advent and will fill the church with poinsettias on December 16th, the first Sunday of Advent. December 16th will also be our Christmas pageant Sunday. Our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols will be in the Sarah Wyman Whitman Gallery (the former sanctuary) on Monday, December 24th, at 5:30.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS!

December 16th is the 3rd Sunday in Advent and Merriman Chapel will be decorated that morning for the season! If you would like to help decorate for Christmas by purchasing a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office or fill out an order form in the Sunday bulletins on December 2nd and December 9th; deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 9th. Poinsettias cost \$15; please mark your slip or let the church office know if you would like to donate your poinsettia to one of our less mobile members or would like to bring it home. Flower order slips will be provided as inserts as well as on the Welcome table for your convenience.

United Calendar



Nov 18 Annual Thanksgiving Potluck
Nov 22 Happy Thanksgiving Day!
Nov 28 Board of Ministry Meeting
Dec 2 1st Sunday of Advent

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/>)



Hope for Housing (HFH) cards make great holiday gifts

If you're looking for an ideal stocking stuffer, HFH cards may be the answer.

By giving a gift of a HFH card, you will be benefiting not only the person receiving the card, but also CMHA's effort to prevent family homelessness. CMHA receives 3%-10% of the face value of the card to provide local families with assistance that includes help with rent in arrears or to prevent the shutoff of utilities.

HFH Cards can be purchased every Sunday from Helen Bross and used while shopping at:

-
- **Big Y**
 - **CVS**
 - **Dunkin' Donuts**
 - **Hannaford**
 - **Panera**
 - **Shaw's**
 - **Stop & Shop**

Here's just one example from Ann Gibbons-Smith of CMHA on how funds raised from HFH cards are making a difference in our community:

"Much good is being accomplished because of you.

Recently a couple from Leominster with 3 children, one is 8 and the other two are under the age of 4, came to CMHA looking for assistance. Parents had both been working full time with a monthly income of \$3,000 and making ends meet, never falling behind and living in the same apartment for 4 years. Like so many others they never thought they would be walking through our doors but Joseph lost his job and slowly things were getting very difficult to make ends meet. Their monthly rent was \$895.90 and on one income and dollars stretched they fell behind one month's rent. HFH prevention dollars were able to pay the one month's rental arrears of \$895.00 to get them back on track and stay in their home.

Thank you!!!!"

Also, thanks to Helen Bross for everything she does in support of HFH!
