



United Congregational Church



VOICES Newsletter

July 2018



Message from the Pastor

Dear friends,

This past June, a family friend who was very dear to me died – not unexpectedly (he was, after all, 92) but still – suddenly. As anyone who has ever lost a loved one knows only too well – our hearts don't easily accept deep loss – we can't quite wrap our minds around a world without this person who has been so much a part of our lives. This person, so dear to me, was also a pastor and an author; he's published several books of his reflections, illustrated with photographs he's taken.

(Side note: Dan and I bought the Jaffrey, NH home he and his wife lived in for 30 years when they moved into assisted living just over a year ago....there's something so lovely about keeping their beloved home "in the family"!)

One of the last times I saw him, he gave me a copy of his latest anthology – a compilation experiences he'd had over the years and of quotes from his favorite authors. I offer you one of his stories that seems just right for the (hopefully!) quieter pace of summer:

One summer day in Deerfield, Massachusetts, I visited a crafts fair. Ambling from booth to booth, I was captivated by an exhibit of photographs. One photograph in particular caught my eye, a stereotypical Vermont farm scene, spectacular mainly in its unusual and dramatic lighting. My interest in photography emboldened me to approach the man tending the booth.

"Are you the photographer?" I asked.

"I am," he said.

"Well, I'm curious about how you got that picture. Did you see that scene and then sit there for hours waiting for the light to change?"

"No," he said, "I can't stand waiting around for things to happen."

"So, the secret, then," I asked, "is simply to be there at the right moment?"

"No," he replied, "the secret is to know you're there."

How much slips by us each day – simply because we don't see what is right there? And

what a gift it is to be able to see something new, something unexpected, some glimpse of God in each moment?

This is my prayer: that as summer unfolds – with all its moments of busyness, of quiet, of heartache and of grace – that we “*know we are there*”, and that we trust God is there with us, and that we experience grace.

**Blessings,
Nancy**



PASTOR NANCY'S VACATION

Nancy will be on vacation from **August 13-20**; please contact the church office or Gretchen Switzer, who will be covering for her during that week, with any pastoral concerns or emergencies; Gretchen can be reached at 508-789-8113.

...SAVE THE DATE:

Our annual church picnic, at the wonderful and welcoming home of Emerson Brooks, will be **September 9**, immediately after church! More details to follow, but know there will be good food, great conversation, and lots of fun!

SABBATICAL UPDATE

Nancy has been our pastor for 7 ½ years, and it is the practice of the UCC to offer pastors a sabbatical after 7 years of ministry. The Board of Ministries, acting on the recommendation of the Pastoral Relations Committee, has voted to give Nancy sabbatical for the **month of February 2019**. A task team has begun to arrange for pastoral coverage during that time, and will keep you updated as plans unfold.

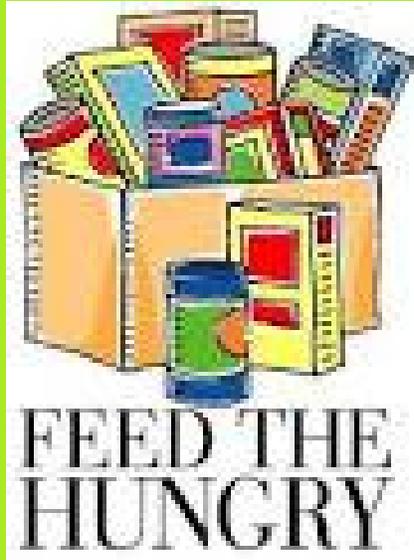


MESSAGE FROM OUR MUSIC MINISTER

~ Mae Stroshane

On July 1st, we had the surprise treat of special music by **Cesar** and **Ricardo Coloma** ~ a joy to have Ricardo with us again and to hear him play his guitar!" The congregation knows them, and so I don't think we need to say more...and I don't 100% trust my memory about where Ricardo has played!!! If you ask Celsa for his CD, I'm sure she has a copy she can get for you!

CARTY FOOD CUPBOARD



Just a reminder that volunteers are needed to staff the Carty Cupboard from 5:30 to 7:30 on the evening on Monday, July 30th. Carty is located at Wesley Methodist Church, 114 Main Street in Worcester, and is one of the largest food pantries in the city.

I hope everyone will consider joining the team of dedicated volunteers from United who greet clients and distribute groceries at Carty. We have a lot of fun while helping to feed the hungry every month! Please feel free to contact me anytime for more information on this vital ministry.

One of the many ministries supported by United Congregational Church is the Carty Cupboard, one of the largest food pantries in the Worcester area. Donors should consider contributing foods like pasta or Minute Rice (both brown & white), instead of canned meals. Canned vegetables should be of the low sodium variety, and canned fruits packed in fruit juice or light syrup. And as always, items like cereal, peanut butter, jellies, and pasta sauce are welcome. In addition, Carty can also use personal care items like toothpaste, shampoo, and diapers (in sizes 1-6).

Monthly reminders will always be placed in Voices and United's Google Group.

Anyone wanting more information about donations or volunteering can contact Tim Camp anytime at 508- 798- 6997, or at timbcamp@aol.com. We also thank everyone who has feed the hungry through their involvement with Carty Cupboard.

United's Missions & Outreach Ministry

United Calendar



July 9-29 Pastor Nancy's vacation
July 30 Carty Cupboard / Wesley United Methodist Church
Aug 13-20 Pastor Nancy vacation
Aug 27 Carty Cupboard / Wesley United Methodist Church
Sept 9 Church Picnic

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/>)

