



UCC NEWS

September 2017

An Open and Affirming Church

"A fellowship in Jesus, the Christ showing God's love to all people."

A monthly publication of

United Church of Christ, First Congregational

11 West Main Street, Norwich, NY 13815

The Rev. Mr. Joseph Connolly, Pastor and Teacher



Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
Childcare Provided

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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From the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

It's September! **Change** is in the air. And certainly meteorological **change** is in the air. But I think it also seems to many of us that, since September brings the "new school year," we equate that with the start of the church year, hence **change** even in church.

But the church year does not start in September. The church year starts on the First Sunday in Advent, four Sundays before December the 25, the Feast of the Incarnation, commonly known as Christmas.

By the way, the peculiarities of the Gregorian calendar put in place in 1582 and named for Pope Gregory, this year place December the 25th on a Monday. Hence, the Fourth Sunday in Advent is also Christmas Eve. (See this space for the schedule of services.)

Back to **change**— if this was sometime before 1860 we would not think of this as the start of the school year or the church year. Timing, if not time, was perceived in a very different way back then.

Why? School (for those privileged enough to be in school and they were a very, very small minority) generally ran throughout the summer. Especially in areas with farms (and before 1860 that was most of the country) in September school was dismissed so children of all ages might help with the harvest.

And again back to **change**— a recent article in *The New York Times* pointed to some **change** which is surely on the horizon. "Self-driving vehicles could upend the transportation sector and eliminate a million or more jobs. The list of professions and sectors soon to be obsolete grows steadily by the day. New technologies are rattling the economy on all fronts. Clearly, we need to adjust for the turbulence ahead."

The article then took a different turn. "But we may be preparing in the wrong way. Both history and psychology tell us our capacity to predict the future is limited, while our capacity to believe in such predictions is unlimited. We have always been surprised by **change**. So, rather than planning for the specific **changes** we imagine, it is better to prepare for

the un-imagined— prepare for **change** itself.”

While in terms of its details the article did concentrate on the technological **changes** our society has and will experience, it also recognizes we are human and adaptation (something many sociologists believe we are hard wired to do) is necessary for both growth and for survival. But, I would argue, one without the other is a meaningless pursuit.

Economist Joseph Schumpeter’s (1883-1950) analysis noted for the new to spread and improve our lives, when **change** happens, there will always be what he termed “creative destruction.” Our impulse is to resist **change**, especially that destruction stuff. But history shows resistance is not a wise course.

Change (there’s that word again) will happen. So, perhaps the best route to take is not to predict *what change* will happen but to be ready to meet the challenge presented by **change**.

Why? The safest prediction is that reality will outstrip our imaginations. After all, look at the creators of the *Star Trek*, the several versions of the television series and the movies.

Even these inventive writers peering into the future could not imagine a self-driving starship *Enterprise*. The spacecraft routinely relied on a navigator and a pilot. And today, as mentioned earlier, here we are looking at self-driving cars.

All that brings me back to preparing for **change**. How can we do that? It seems like such an overwhelming task.

I hope this does not sound too pedantic of me. But I would suggest there is only one way to prepare for **change**. And that is education.

I believe learning, especially learning about what we do not know, is a path on which we need to travel if we are to grow and survive. And, in fact, we need to educate ourselves on a number of topics.

As a teacher of the Bible, I would suggest that Scripture is a place we need to start. Why?

Just look at the writings of Paul. The true letters of Paul were written before the Gospels. That fact alone would be news to many Christians.

But given what Paul writes a number of things become evident. Perhaps prime among them, however, is Paul, in striving to be faithful to God, was clearly open to the movement

of the Spirit of God. And the Spirit of God was clearly calling the people of God to **change**. **Change** is all over the writings of Paul.

And surely one of the next places at which we need to look is the polity and practices of the United Church of Christ. **Change** will be happening in the course of next several years and there will be times we need to rely heavily on the denomination.

And part of my point is these two— Scripture and our denominational ties really are linked. So, in laying out those two areas I am not predicting what **change** will happen. I am presenting a challenge. The challenge is are we willing to prepare for **change**?

Like I often say at the end of these missives— see you in church. See you in church where **change** is a given. The only question on the table is are we willing to prepare for **change**?

In Faith,



Joe Connolly



Paper Products Sunday - September 17th

Bring in **paper products** (toilet tissue, paper towels) and **personal care items** (soap, feminine products, razors, shampoo) for donation to Our Daily Bread Food Pantry. A basket will be at the rear of the Nave for your donations.

Covenant Share: September 24th

On Sunday, September 24th, we, this church, will accept the Annual **Covenant Share** offering.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT COVENANT SHARE

What is Covenant Share?

Covenant Share is an offering that goes directly to our New York Conference to help support the mission of the Conference.

The New York Conference? Who is the New York Conference?

You are the Conference. In the United Church of Christ the church gathers in three distinct settings. It is the church in each of these settings. So each member of each church, by dint of membership, is a member of that church and, equally, a member of an Association *and* a member of the New York Conference. **You are the Conference.**

Doesn't our church contribute to the Conference?

Why yes, this church does make a significant contribution to the New York Conference. However, the **Covenant Share** offering gives each individual an opportunity, as a member of a church, an Association and a Conference, to make a contribution directly to the work of the Conference.

So, a direct contribution to Covenant Share means I am working with other members of the New York Conference in covenant with them?

Why, yes. Our denominational structure, the structure of our church, the church local and the church in all the aforementioned settings, is not driven by hierarchy (top/down) but driven from the bottom/up. Because we are bottom/up, each individual *needs* to take a part in doing the work of the Conference. That is part of our covenant with one another. Hence, what we, the people of the Conference (*the people of the Conference would be us*), endeavor to do with the **Covenant Share** offering is to work collaboratively to meet the needs of the people not just in each local church but to also meet the needs of people in the congregations all around our New York Conference. That bottom/up empowerment shapes and drives the ministry responses taken by the Conference staff.

So, Covenant Share is really about me?

Yes, Covenant Share is about you. You are the **church**. You are the **Association**. You are the **Conference**.

Statements from Many Faith Traditions about the Violence in Charlottesville, VA

A Pastoral Letter From the Officers of the United Church of Christ at the National Level

As a response to the violent clashes between white supremacists and counter demonstrators in Charlottesville, Va., that left a woman dead and 19 injured, the national leadership of the United Church of Christ issued this Pastoral Letter:

Last weekend, a group of white supremacists came to Charlottesville, Virginia, and incited violence to protest the removal of a Confederate monument. Although protest is the bedrock of our nation's democracy, coming in riot gear proves that they intended to do more than simply protest.

We, the Council of Conference Ministers and Officers of the United Church of Christ, strongly condemn the acts of violent hatred expressed by these white supremacists, Neo-Nazis, and Ku Klux Klan members. Their white robes and burning crosses were replaced with polo shirts, khakis, and tiki torches, while their lynching was replaced with a speeding car barreling through a group of peaceful protesters with the intention of harming and killing others, which it did. Their vitriolic hatred is the same.

We confess that the events of Charlottesville are systemic and communal expressions of white privilege and racism that continues to pervade our nation's spiritual ethos. And if we only condemn the acts of August 12, 2017, without condemning the roots of racism, which perpetuate discrimination in our American schools, justice system, business, and healthcare systems, then we have sinned as well. We must work toward the Kin-dom of Heaven here on earth now for the sake of a just world for all.

We do this by committing to follow the ways of Jesus, who stood with the oppressed, spoke out against political and religious powers, and courageously embodied a just world for all as he sought to create it. Today, we must follow the ways of Jesus in addressing the hatred of white supremacists and

racists among us.

Our local UCC churches must be true solidarity partners with those who march in the streets. Our UCC churches are encouraged to move from the sanctuary and walk alongside other clergy and community leaders who seek to resist, agitate, inform and comfort. We must resist hatred and violence. We must also agitate ourselves, and our neighbors to acknowledge any racism within or among us. We must inform ourselves, and our neighbors what our sacred stories reveal to us of a just world for all. We must lament and grieve with those who are injured or murdered during violent confrontations with those who mean us harm. And we must comfort those who have been discriminated against with the transformative love of God.

As we go forward, let us model the legacy of activism through our sacred call given to us by our UCC ancestors: May we be prophetic truth-tellers like our Congregational Christian forebears, who marched in public squares demanding equality for all. May we serve others, and remain faithful witnesses like our Evangelical and Reformed forebears, who tended to the needs of the forgotten. And may we be courageous like our non-UCC forebears, who left their spiritual home and joined the UCC in order to fully live out who God created them to be.

In the days to come, may God's truth, mission, and courage be our guide to embodying the Kin-dom of Heaven here on earth.

ELCA Commitment to Confronting Racism and Anti-semitism

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), stands against all forms of hatred and discrimination. The church believes that cultural, ethnic and racial differences should be seen and celebrated as what God intends them to be— blessings rather than means of oppression and discrimination.

The ELCA's social statement "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture" states: "Racism— a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice— is sin, a violation of God's intention for humanity. The resulting racial, ethnic, or cultural barriers deny the truth that all people are God's creatures and, therefore, persons of dignity. Racism fractures and fragments both church and society."

The social statement, adopted by the ELCA 1993 Church-wide Assembly, calls on the church to make confession for complicity, name the spiritual crisis at the roots, commit to change and make pledges to public witness, advocacy and action to confront racism.

“We recognize that the kind of violence we witnessed in Charlottesville last weekend is very real and affects all of us,” said ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton. “We need to stand up firmly against racism and anti-Semitism, show up for and advocate with others. Jesus, who makes visible those who are invisible, is already there. We need to show up, and we need to listen in each of our communities.”

The ELCA is a church that belongs to Christ and Christ’s church universal, where there is a place for everyone. The job of Christ’s people today is to celebrate the diversity of God’s creative work and embrace all people in the spirit of love, whatever race or ethnicity, economic status or gender.

Bishop Bruce Ough, president of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, Statement on Charlottesville:

My shock, dismay and grief over the clashes between white supremacy advocates and counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, continue to grow. I grieve for the lives lost, and pray for the family of Heather Heyer, the families of the two state troopers killed while monitoring the Charlottesville demonstration from the air, and for the healing of all the injured. I am shocked by the blatant resurgence of white nationalism, neo-Nazism and racially motivated domestic terrorism in the United States. I am dismayed (and frightened) by the animosity, division, extremism and evil that is spiraling out of control in the U.S.

Let there be no excuses or political justification for the evil that was on full display in Charlottesville last Saturday. Nor, let us forget that many such displays of white supremacy, racism and hatred go un-reported or under-reported in many places. White supremacist and neo-Nazi ideologies are abhorrent and entirely inconsistent with the Christian faith.

Jesus called his followers to “love your neighbor.” It is clear this key spiritual imperative means all neighbors without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. And, Paul taught that “enmities, strife, jealousy, anger,

quarrels, dissensions and factions” are among many works of the flesh that are antithetical to the kingdom of God. “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5: 19-23) These works of the Spirit lead to peace-making and the kingdom of God.

The Social Principles of our United Methodist Church are a clarion call and powerful witness in times such as these. “We affirm that no identity or culture has more legitimacy than any other. We call the Church to challenge any hierarchy of cultures or identities.” (Para. 161A, *The Nurturing Community*, page 110, 2016 Book of Discipline). And, from Para. 162A *The Social Community*, page 120: “Racism, manifested as sin, plagues and hinders our relationship with Christ, inasmuch as it is antithetical to the gospel itself... Therefore, we recognize racism as sin and affirm the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons... We commit as the Church to move beyond symbolic expressions and representative models that do not challenge unjust systems of power and access.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. echoed a similar sentiment when he challenged the United States to transform the thin paper of the Declaration of Independence that affirms the self-evident truth “that all men are created equal, are endowed with certain inalienable rights” into thick action.

I pray that the shock, dismay and grief of Charlottesville will be a turning point for the U.S. and even our global United Methodist church. We share collective responsibility to turn our thin words into thick action. We share collective responsibility to break our silence. We share collective responsibility to restore health to the communities and relationship out of which extremism, hatred and racism grow. We share collective responsibility, as followers of the Prince of Peace, to create non-violent communities where people with different political and religious views respect each other. We share responsibility to articulate the vision of the Beloved Community where no person feels endangered on account of their social, racial or cultural identity.

This collective responsibility begins by each of us examining our own hearts for the prejudice that contributes to attitudes of supremacy or hatred, or to violence, or silence or fear. Peacemaking and reconciliation always begins within.

This is the moment for The United Methodist Church and all peoples of faith to be bold in our witness against racism and white supremacy. The vision of the Beloved Community lies not behind us, but before us. I urge us to pray for the Holy Spirit to break through and work through The United Methodist Church to heal our broken world and make tangible, visible the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

**President of U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops,
Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston**

On behalf of the bishops of the United States, I join leaders from around the nation in condemning the violence and hatred that have now led to one death and multiple injuries in Charlottesville, Virginia. We offer our prayers for the family and loved ones of the person who was killed and for all those who have been injured. We join our voices to all those calling for calm.

The abhorrent acts of hatred on display in Charlottesville are an attack on the unity of our nation and therefore summon us all to fervent prayer and peaceful action. The bishops stand with all who are oppressed by evil ideology and entrust all who suffer to the prayers of St. Peter Claver as we approach his feast day. We also stand ready to work with all people of goodwill for an end to racial violence and for the building of peace in our communities.

Last year a Task Force of our Bishops Conference under Archbishop Wilton Gregory proposed prayers and resources to work for unity and harmony in our country and in our Church. I am encouraging the bishops to continue that work especially as the Feast of St. Peter Claver approaches.

As we learn more about the horrible events of yesterday, our prayer turns today, on the Lord's Day, to the people of Charlottesville who offered a counter example to the hate marching in the streets. Let us unite ourselves in the spirit of hope offered by the clergy, people of faith, and all people of good will who peacefully defended their city and country.

We stand against the evil of racism, white supremacy and neo-nazism. We stand with our sisters and brothers united in the sacrifice of Jesus, by which love's victory over every form of evil is assured. At Mass, let us offer a special prayer of gratitude for the brave souls who sought to protect us from

the violent ideology displayed yesterday. Let us especially remember those who lost their lives. Let us join their witness and stand against every form of oppression.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies Decries Charlottesville Violence

American Baptist Home Mission Societies denounces and condemns— in the strongest manner possible— the violent and deadly demonstration led by a host of white supremacist organizations and individuals in Charlottesville, Va., on Saturday.

The human toll of three lives lost senselessly and more than two dozen individuals injured stains our American stature on the world stage. The racial and religious hatred expressed by the neo-Nazi, alt-right, Ku Klux Klan and other racist organizations in opposition to the city’s decision to remove a monument memorializing the American Civil War’s Confederacy and its standard bearers is an affront to democracy and our social order.

We join with people of goodwill across our country who seek to make America’s public squares, government grounds and city streets safe for all citizens.

Furthermore, we commend and pray for all the valiant clergy, students, justice workers and others who gathered in Charlottesville to say “no” to violence, threats and intimidation from the white supremacist demonstrators.

In the wake of yet another terrifying episode of violence in America’s public square, we pray for the families and loved ones of Heather Heyer, whose life was tragically taken during the vehicular assault on dozens of peace workers. We pray, too, for the families and loved ones of Lt. H. Jay Cullen and Trooper-Pilot Berke M.M. Bates— the Virginia state police troopers who died in a helicopter crash related to the situation in Charlottesville— along with those who were victims of assaults and trauma, both physical and emotional, resulting from the violence.

“We call upon people of faith and goodwill to continue to pray and work on behalf of freedom, justice and peace in the United States of America and throughout the world,” says Dr.

continued on page 14

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September 2017						
					1 Church Office Closed	2
3 9:00 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship/Communion 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	4 Labor Day Church Office Closed 10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry, Chapel	5 1:00 p.m. TNT Quilters 	6 2:30 p.m. .A. Humer, Nave 6:00 p.m. Bible Study, Chapel 7:00 p.m. .Choir, Nave	7 11:00 a.m. UCC NY Conference Meeting	8 4:00 p.m. .Colorscape Volunteers, Kitchen	9 8:00 a.m. Colorscape Volunteers, Kitchen 9:30 a.m. UCCNY Conference Meeting
10 8:00 a.m. Colorscape Volunteers, Kitchen 9:00 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship	11 7:00 p.m. Executive Council Mtg., Chapel 7:30 p.m. Music Club Board Meeting, Nave 	12 1:00 p.m. TNT Quilters	13 9:30 a.m. CAM Meeting, Homer 2:30 p.m. .A. Humer, Nave 6:00 p.m. Bible Study, Chapel 6:30 p.m. Chenango Change, Founders' Rm. 7:00 p.m. .Choir, Nave	14 6:00 p.m. Piecemakers, Founders' Rm. 7:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting, Chapel	15	16 10:00 a.m. Wedding Counseling Mtg.
17 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:00 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Paper Products Sunday</i> 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 3:00 p.m. Pastor Joe shares the Word at Chenango Valley Home	18 10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry, Chapel 4:00 p.m. .Tutoring, Kitchen 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi, Founders' Rm.	19 9:00 a.m. Head Start Policy Council 1:00 p.m. TNT Quilters 5:00 p.m. .Deacons Meeting, Chapel	20 12:00 p.m. Food Pantry Volunteer Luncheon and training. 2:30 p.m. .A. Humer, Nave 6:00 p.m. Bible Study, Chapel 7:00 p.m. .Choir, Nave 7:00 p.m. .Democratic Committee, Founders' Rm.	21 6:00 p.m .Alzheimer's Support Group, Founders' Rm.	22 	23
24 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:00 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Covenant Share Offering</i> (See p. 5) 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	25 4:00 p.m. .Tutoring, Kitchen 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi, Founders' Rm.	26 1:00 p.m. TNT Quilters	27 2:30 p.m. .A. Humer, Nave 4:00 p.m. Norwich Interfaith Council, Chapel 6:00 p.m. Bible Study, Chapel. 7:00 p.m. .Choir, Nave	28 9:00 a.m. Senior Flu Shot Event. (See p. 15).	29 9:00 a.m. Collate and mail October Newsletter.	30 9:00 a.m. Susquehanna Association Fall Meeting, Walton 

STATEMENTS *continued*

Jeffrey Haggray, ABHMS executive director. “Never were these prayers and this work needed more.”

Note: American Baptist Home Mission Societies partners with American Baptists to promote Christian faith, cultivate Christ-centered leaders and disciples, and bring healing and transformation to communities across the United States and Puerto Rico.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

In the aftermath of the events of August 11 and 12 in Charlottesville, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms its condemnation of white supremacy and racism, names them as sin, and renews its commitment to disrupting them and working for justice and equity.

We give thanks for the presence and faithful witness of church members who stand against white supremacy and racism. Individually and collectively the church, including Presbyterians, stood against hate in Charlottesville. Individually and collectively the church, including Presbyterians, works to disrupt racism and to build racial equity in places across the country. We grieve for Heather Heyer, who was killed while standing witness; we grieve for state police officers H. Jay Cullen and Berke Bates, who died in a helicopter crash while monitoring events in Charlottesville; we pray for the recovery of all who were injured.

We acknowledge that Scripture has been misused to justify white supremacy and racism. However, we proclaim that the Bible’s message presents a far more consistent and insistent witness to God’s love for diversity and justice. This may be observed in God’s delight in the varied creation; heard in the words of prophets who reject oppression and commend justice as true worship; seen in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, who values all persons regardless of any aspect of their identity; and experienced through the work of the Holy Spirit, who consistently blows through all the divisions we create, to reveal God’s love for all humanity.

White supremacy and racism stand in stark, irreconcilable contradiction to God’s intention for humanity. They reject part of the human family and are utterly contrary to God’s Word

made incarnate in Jesus. They are idolatries that elevate human-created hierarchies over God's freely given grace and love. They are lies about the human family, for they seek to say that some people are less than other people. They are lies about God because they falsely claim that God favors some people over the entirety of creation.

But as we give thanks, we acknowledge the church's complicity in the creation of white supremacy and racism. We confess the church's failure in challenging and disrupting white supremacy and racism. Too often we have accepted the status quo. Too often we have stood silent in the face of injustice and oppression.

By God's grace may we remember the events in Charlottesville; repent of our acquiescence and failures; and renew our commitment to proclaim and live the good news of Jesus Christ. May that commitment lead us to stand against, speak against and work against racism and white supremacy, this day and every day.

May it be so. Amen.

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Tony De La Rosa
Interim Executive Director - Presbyterian Mission Agency
Rev. T. Denise Anderson & Rev. Dr. Jan Edmiston
Co-Moderators of the 222nd General Assembly (2016)

SENIOR (60+) FLU SHOT EVENT
September 28 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Norwich YMCA

**Medicare Part B- no charge
without Medicare - \$17.**

**Sponsored by Chenango Co. Dept. of Public Health
and Area Agency on Aging.**

For information call 337-1660 or 337-1770.

Look in the Mailbox

Dear UCC,

Thank you so much for the scholarship. It will definitely be helpful and I am so, so grateful for all of your continued support. My experience at Brown has been so enlightening and I am so excited for the next two years. Thanks again!

Morgan Hagenbuch

Dear UCC,

Thank you for your recent gift to the Chenango SPCA. We really appreciate your continuous support and it is your thoughtfulness that allows us to provide animals with the care and safety they need. Thank you so much for always being so generous to us. We are over-flowing with animals these days and this will surely be put to good use!

Annette J. Clarke, Executive Director
Chenango SPCA

Dear Pastor Joe and UCC Church Family,

I wanted to express my sincere appreciation towards receiving the UCC Memorial Gift Scholarship. I am very grateful to be awarded the money and wanted to let you know it will help assist me with my college expenses. In the fall I will be attending LeMoyne College majoring in Business/Marketing, as well as playing golf on the team. Lastly, thank you for the additional gifts I received at the time of my confirmation and all the support you have shown to me throughout my childhood. Thanks again.

Ryan Johnson

Dear UCC,

Thank you for the generous gift of the Theodore Dolgos Scholarship. Your continued support is greatly appreciated and has helped me to reach my goals. Thanks again.

Briana Phelps

Dear UCC,

Thank you so much for honoring me with the Scholar of the Month award. I truly appreciate the recognition as well as the funding this award encompasses.

Makenzie Maynard

Dear UCC,

I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of a scholarship. Thank you for your generosity, which has allowed me to use this money towards my fall tuition at SUNY Cobleskill. Thank you again for your thoughtful and generous gift.

Taylor Munson

Dear Friends at UCC,

Thank you so much for awarding me this scholarship! This will be very helpful as I attend Cornell in the fall. I just pre-enrolled in my courses to major in biology in the fall and I couldn't be more excited! Thank you again so much,

Nathaniel Garry

Dear UCC,

Thank you so much for the Pack & Play for my son. My son loves it so much. Thank you again. It was very thoughtful of you to do that for me. Thank you so much.

[name withheld to preserve privacy]

Thank you notes also received from:

Mothers & Babies Perinatal Network

Doctors Without Borders

Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County

American Red Cross Disaster Relief

Chenango County Habitat for Humanity

Andover Newton Theological School

Danielle House

An Epic Storm needs an Epic Response



The UCC Disaster Ministries is already engaged in response by supporting partners and planning for recovery. Giving to the Harvey appeal ensures that 100% of your support will be used for disaster relief and rehabilitation targeting the unique needs of vulnerable individuals and families. We do this by being nimble and adaptable in each disaster which allows us to fill gaps in services through provisions of spiritual care, community organizing, repair and reconstruction of homes, tools, building materials and volunteer coordination.

Please pray for continued strength and resolve for those whose lives have been impacted by Hurricane/Tropical Storm Harvey. Please also pray for the First Responders, disaster coordinators, and many volunteers who are working tirelessly to provide relief after Harvey, now and in the days, months, and years to come.

Donate Money. The response and rebuilding will be long-term. Your generous contribution now makes this long-term response possible.

www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey.

Assemble CWS Clean-up Kits. The UCC has matching grants available, even if you previously assembled kits in 2017:

www.ucc.org/disaster_2017_matching_grants_for_cws_kits_home_page

HURRICANE HARVEY RESPONSE

Every loss we experience needs a corresponding period of grieving. The length of time and depth of grief should correspond to the nature of the loss. The devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey is the same. Some are deeply impacted, with loss of loved-ones, homes, valuables, memories; while others may have been impacted only by images they saw in the news.

Whatever the connection, it is important to know that a loss has taken its toll on many. And it will take many to help those deeply impacted, recover. Let them know they are not alone.

*God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.*

Psalms 46:1-3

Let Us Pray

One: O God of mercy and God of grace, strengthen us during this time of turmoil, loss, and grief. Help us to lean on you. Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust. Help us to provide a helping hand to all who need it. Help us to lend our hearts to the broken hearted.

All: God in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Please make your checks payable to the United Church of Christ with Hurricane Harvey Relief in the memo section of the check and mail to:



700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland OH 44115
216-736-3215

Make secure online donations at:

www.ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

Linda L. Oehme

Rally Day will be on September 17th. We will kick off the 2nd year of the *Whole People of God* curriculum. This curriculum serves children from 3 to 12. We meet most Sundays at 8:30 a.m. Come and see what it is all about. Also we will continue to have Adult Bible Study most Sundays at 8:30 a.m. and most Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. We're never too old to learn and refresh our faith.

This year Kerrienne Kelly will be our **Nursery** Coordinator. She is a Teaching Assistant in the Norwich Schools. She will be assisted by Shea Breese. Together they will prepare the little ones for church and church school.

Vacation Bible School was a great success! Jen and I were very pleased with the 24 energetic and well-behaved children the program. The Nave was transformed into *Hero Central* with an elevator and buildings. Everybody loved it! Everyone who wanted to dress up as their favorite superhero did so on the last night! The students experienced what God's Superheroes possess! God's Heroes have Heart, Courage, Wisdom, Hope, and Power! They learned to "Do good! Seek peace and go after it!"

A big THANK YOU goes out to everyone who helped us in this wonderful community endeavor... especially, the leaders and workers... all volunteers and contributors.

Thank you, Thank You, THANK YOU!!!!

Without you, Jen and I could not meet the needs of our children. If you loaned us costumes or let us borrow anything and have not gotten them back, please call me and I will leave the stuff in the office where you can stop during open hours. This summer was:

Super!

Revised Common Lectionary

You may be aware that the readings used at services of worship in most Mainline Protestant churches and in Roman Catholic Churches are from the list of assigned readings known as The New Revised Common Lectionary. In our Congregational tradition, while pastors are encouraged to use the assigned readings, it's not mandatory. This is published in the hope that some may use these readings in their personal prayer and devotional time.

September 3 Proper 17 (22) 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 3:1-15

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b Jeremiah 15:15-21

Psalm 26:1-8 Romans 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28

September 10 Proper 18 (23) 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 12:1-14

Psalm 149 Ezekiel 33:7-11 or Psalm 119:33-40

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

September 17 Proper 19 (24) 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 14:19-31

Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21

Genesis 50:15-21

Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

September 24 Proper 20 (25) 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 16:2-15

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

Jonah 3:10-4:11

Psalm 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16



Prayer Concerns

Let us keep in our prayers the following concerns:

- * families-those families that may be going through particularly difficult times, families seeking God's guidance;
- * those who are moving because of their work, those looking for work, and those looking for meaning in their work.
- * those who are ill, who are recovering from illness or surgery, or who anticipate going to the hospital.
- * those who grieve over the death of someone they love.
- * our church, that it might be faithful to its calling, our pastor, all staff members and committees.
- * peace in the world.
- * gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgendered persons, and all those who feel isolated and alone.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



These are the birthdays of members and friends of our church family. If you know someone on the list who's having a birthday, feel free to send that person a card. Even if you don't know anyone on the list, feel free to send any celebrant a card. More importantly, strive to hold each of these people up in prayer on the anniversary of their birth. Please call the church office with additions or corrections (334-3434).

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 5 Chad Conant | 11 Samantha Gage |
| 7 Burt Bridge | David Varela |
| Maxine Gage | 14 Sam Miller |
| Kassidy Miller | 20 Annetta Dunkle |
| 8 Joan Griffith | Stacy Gage |
| Janet Johnson | 22 Karley Miller |
| Bob Oehme | Pat Burke |
| 9 Jay Conant | 23 Arlene Wade |
| 10 Wadeanthony Burke | 24 Henry Carpenter |
| John Kolb | 25 Gary Sprout |
| Rev. David Spiegel | |

Visitors at Worship Services in July and August

Judy Andersen	Esta Polanco
Ludoyic Angyal	Marylou Rhodes, Brooklyn
Todd Bachman	Cam Richardson
E Bronson	Emma Richardson
Charity Brown	Jessica Richardson
Michelle Brown	Shayne Richardson
Homer and Jan Burch	Doreen Rowe
Marjorie Close, Norwich	Martha Ryan
Betty & George Echentile, Norwich	Carol Sacks, Norwich
Fred Garner, Norwich	Michael Saunders
Jessie Golden, Oxford	Connie Shaw
Gib Harrington, Norwich	Daisy Shaw
Grace Holmes	Larry and Marcia Shaw, Norwich
Diane Hust, Rochester	Anne Shepherd, New York, NY
Phyllis Jackson, Norwich	Barbara Sheridon
Jeannine Jeter	Sandra Smith
Shawn Jiles	Prosser Speer
Caroline Keith	Ruth Speer
Rosalie Keith	David, Nicole, Micah, Delilah, Colton Spiegel, Norwich
Carolyn Larsson, Norwich	Martha and David Spiegel, Norwich
Connor Mallozzi	Melanie Valencia
Doris Matott, Norwich	Wendi VanOrder, S Plymouth
Mike McCollough, Norwich	Carol Wells, Norwich
Laura Metcalf, Norwich	Karen and Vincent Mallozzi, Norwich
Barry Midock, Norwich	Ann Roman, Fairfax, Virginia
Michael Moren, Sherburne	
Brian Murphy, Norwich	
Betty Phillips-Brewer, Norwich	

Bulletins from Other Churches

Bonnie Connolly - First Parish Church, United Church of
Christ, Brunswick, Maine, July 30, 2017

UCC NEWS

United Church of Christ
First Congregational
11 West Main Street
Norwich, NY 13815-1612



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Pastor and Teacher: **The Rev. Mr. Joseph Connolly**
Moderator: **Robert Oehme**
Director of Music Ministries: **Mary Williams**
Director of Youth Ministries: **Linda Oehme**
Parish Coordinator: **Cheri Willard**
Counselor, Family Counseling Ministry:
Joanne Ferguson