

Concern in Action

The Newsletter of Union Congregational Church

East Walpole, Massachusetts

November 2019

"A Plentiful Harvest"

It's been almost four months since I became Union's pastor. During that time, I have been surprised again and again by the abundant life I've experienced in this church. There have been the big moments—the Apple Harvest fair, when 2,000+ people packed our church grounds; the baptisms, when we welcomed extended families into our worship—but the abundance of life in this church has been on display in little moments too. I see it in the busy “worker bees” who renovated the parsonage and who keep things shipshape around our church property. The abundant life of the church manifests as shared joy in the announcements of birthdays and anniversaries each week in worship. It shows up in the little acts of kindness—prayers, cards, flowers, visits—that lift people's spirits. Most of all, I see abundant life in the relationships that thrive here between friends, both old and new.

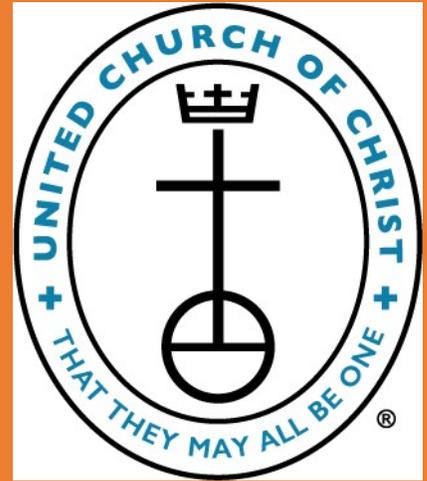
“The harvest is plentiful,” Jesus told his disciples, “But the laborers are few.” This is the other side of my first few months here. I have felt the anxiety in the church about sparsely populated pews on Sunday. I have heard how many people are feeling worn down. I have seen how hard it is for people of all ages to fit church life into the rest of life. When the laborers are few, the labor is always harder and more tiring. It is something I hear from many who wonder who has the energy to do the work of the church today, tomorrow, and in the years to come.

Yes, the laborers are few...but, on the other hand, the harvest is plentiful! Both of these things have been true since Jesus said it way back when; and God is still speaking that truth to us today. We may be small in number, and we may be weary with the old tasks and tribulations of “church work.” But this church is also bursting at the seams with joy, care, and deep Christian love—the kind of connection between people that can sustain us in our labors. There is still plenty of life here.

In November, we enter a season of Thanksgiving and Stewardship: expressing gratitude for all that we have as a church, and considering how we will use our resources of time, treasures, and talent in the coming year. Guided and inspired by the call to “Be the Church,” I hope that we all hold on to our sense of abundance and the plentiful harvest here at Union. Even so, let us do as Jesus instructed his disciples, and pray “to ask the Lord of the Harvest to send more laborers.” Let us invite others into the life of this family of faith. Let us pray, with our words and our deeds, that others may join us in the work of compassion and care, building deep relationships, and living life together, connected through Christ. I am thankful to Be the Church with you all.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Shepherd



WHAT'S INSIDE

Pages 2-4: Announcements

Page 5: Thanksgiving Activities

Page 6: November Birthdays and Anniversaries

Page 7: November Events Calendar



BE A HERO with UNICEF

Outreach kicked off its annual collection for UNICEF on October 12, asking all members of our congregation to set aside spare change over the coming weeks to donate to UNICEF, an organization aimed at providing food, water, education, vaccines and medicine to children across the globe. Bring in your donations on **November 3rd and 10th** and **Be a Hero** for a child in need!

A New Church Photo Directory!

Sign ups are now open for portrait sessions on Nov. 25

It's about time we updated our Church Photo Directory! Just in time for Christmas, we are hosting a Portrait Session with Lifetouch Studios at Union on **Monday, November 25th from 2-9 pm**. You can sign up for a time slot during Fellowship Hour on Sunday. Online sign-ups will be available later in the month.

Each person or family will receive a complimentary 8x10 inch portrait, and have the opportunity to purchase prints for Christmas cards or gifts. Once completed, our new directory will be available both in print and online!

November Food Pantry Donations

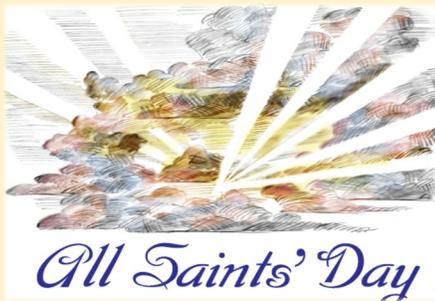


Hash
Chili
Stew
Canned Beans

Prayer Requests



Contact Pam Doty (508-660-1063, alan.doty@comcast.net) if you are in need of prayer, or know someone who is. Our Prayer Circle prays for our members and their requests each day at between 7-8 am.



Celebrate All Saints Sunday November 3rd

Come light a candle and pray for those who have died in the past year. We will also celebrate communion and dedicate our new communion pitcher during worship. Don't forget to set clocks back one hour to get to church on time!



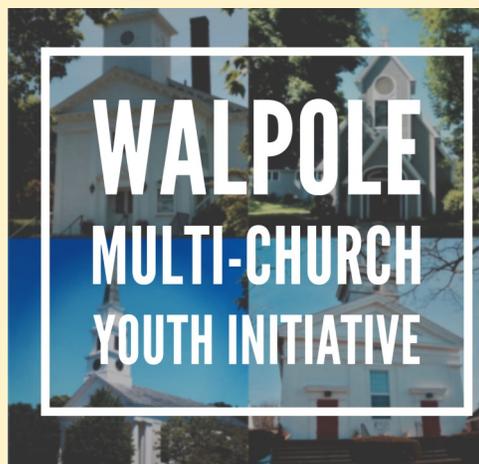
An Excuse To Do Some Early Christmas Shopping!

With a late Thanksgiving this year, the “shopping days’ may be fewer, but we are hoping for a great turn-out for our annual City Mission Christmas drive, which will kick off on November 24 and be completed on December 8!

City Mission’s Christmas Shop brings hope and joy to those most in need in the Boston area during the holiday season. They are asking for NEW winter coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, socks, underwear, gift cards, toys, culturally relevant dolls, games, sports balls, puzzles and books for all ages.

Spring Rummage Sale

The Outreach Committee and the Church Cabinet would like feedback about the planning and organization of the Spring Rummage Sale. Last year, the Rummage Sale raised money for the Summer Mission Trip, as well as our other local missions. However, preparation for the sale is a lot of work and takes many volunteer hours. If you would like to be involved, or have ideas about other potential fundraisers for the Summer Mission Trip, please contact the Outreach Committee.



YOUTH GROUP

Our multi-church youth group is off to a great start! In November, Pastor Shepherd will be leading the Youth Group’s “Base Camp” gathering on Sunday, November 3rd. On November 10, the youth group will be headed to 5 Wits in Foxboro for some Escape room fun! Later in the month, youth will help bake bread and sweets for South Walpole UMC’s Thanksgiving Meal delivery program.



Christian Education

Christian Education has been hosting a series entitled “**Deeper Connections**”, a DVD based study with group discussion. We chose a six-part group of studies titled The Life of Jesus.

There are five other studies which we may choose to do at another time. They are: The Miracles of Jesus, The Parables of Jesus, The Prayers of Jesus, The Last Days of Jesus, and The Forgiveness of Jesus.

The DVD begins in the historical location of the events. So far, we have been to a cave in Bethlehem (for Jesus’ birth), the Jordan River (for his baptism) and the Judean Desert (for the Temptations).

Each study session stands alone, so you can attend one, a few or all for thoughtful discussion and laughter, with some learning and fellowship along the way.

We have been meeting on Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. at the Shirosky’s house, 111 Gay Street, Norwood. The next scheduled meetings are November 14th and 21st. We hope to have this completed by the beginning of Advent (December 1) and will then consider our next steps.

If you have suggestions for future Adult Christian Education programs, please reach out to Margie Shirosky or Pastor Shepherd. All ideas are welcome!

Did You Know??

Halloween (or “All-Hallow’s Eve”) is celebrated the day before All Saint’s Day, November 1st. All Saint’s Day was first celebrated on that date in 835AD, over 1,000 years ago! Some think that this date was specifically chosen to coincide with the Celtic festival *Samhain*. Many of the traditions of that festival are similar to modern day Halloween: people would dress in costumes to scare away ghosts and ghouls and make little lanterns out of hollowed-out turnips and candles. They would even go door to door asking for food! (not candy, though)

Fellowship and Volunteer Opportunities:

Fall Cleanup Day

Our annual Fall Cleanup around the church grounds is scheduled for **Sunday, November 17th from 12-2 pm**. Bring your gloves, tools, but, most importantly, your selves for a fun afternoon sprucing things up before the Holiday Season. (Those leaves aren’t going to rake themselves!!)

City Mission Christmas Shop Sorting

On **December 8 after worship**, volunteers will deliver our donations up to the First Church of Winchester, where all donations are received for the City Mission Christmas Shop. We are planning a roadtrip to make our donations, and then stay for a two-hour shift where we will help organize, pack and sort gifts. Please email Christine Bemko (cbinspired@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining!





O, Give Thanks...

A Taste of Thanksgiving

Mark your calendars (paper and electronic) for **Sunday, November 24th**. Bring your most delicious Thanksgiving side dish and be prepared with the recipe in case you are asked! Turkey and beverages will be provided.

There is a sign-up poster outside the office for food and the many big and little tasks which are required (set-up, decorations and clean-up).

It just so happens that the Taste of Thanksgiving coincides with Stewardship Sunday, when we bring our pledges of time, talent and treasure to be blessed. Let's make this year a great celebration!

From the Church Archives: November 1973

TOWN-WIDE ECUMENICAL
THANKSGIVING SERVICE
7:30 p.m.

THANKSGIVING EVE AT UNITED CHURCH

In what may be a first, Union, United, Epiphany, South Walpole Methodist, St. Mary's, and Blessed Sacrament Churches will hold an ecumenical service of Thanksgiving on Thanksgiving Eve, November 21, at 7:30 p.m. United Church will be the host for this service which is being planned as a community-wide service of gratitude and praise.

The Choirs of the four Protestant Churches will combine that evening to form one Choir, whose power and beauty many can attest to. It was this combined Choir that inspired all who came last spring to the Choir Festival with Dr. Peloquin here at Union Congregational.

The service will include prayers and litanies by members of the various churches. Rev. Joseph Antonellis of St. Mary's will give a brief Thanksgiving meditation.

The churches of Walpole have much to be thankful for. This past year especially has seen the cooperation between them grow and deepen in many areas, beginning with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the dinner at Blessed Sacrament, followed by prayer meetings each day at one of the churches.



Lent saw a jointly sponsored Bible study program at South Walpole; and in May the Choir Festival was here. Thus this Thanksgiving Eve Service is the culmination of a year of combined effort.

All members of our Church are urged to set this time aside - 7:30 p.m., November 21 - and to demonstrate our continuing concern and support for ecumenical efforts in this town by celebrating Thanksgiving with their friends from other churches.



Thanksgiving Meals on Wheels

Anyone needing a meal should contact

*From our Friends at
South Walpole United Methodist*

Dianne Langer at 508-384-7053 (leave a message with your name and phone number) or email:

ladydilanger@juno.com

Please sign up before November 26th, if possible, but no one will be turned away. Calls and emails will be confirmed.

South Walpole Methodist Church has started their requests for food. Email **penldean@aol.com** to see what is needed.



NOVEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

1 Charlie Grant

7 Elsa Carlson

9 Danielle Sandahl

10 Rebecca Hollarand

11 Susan Challis

14 Barbara Maiewski

Francis Scott

19 Barbara Carroll

21 Charlie Calusdian

26 Joanne Grant

28 Steven Cain



NOVEMBER

ANNIVERSARIES

November 19 Jeff and Kim DiNicola

November 24 Horace and Martha Thayer

November 28 Elsa and Dick Carlson

November 2019

November

December

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	11/1	2
10:15a Worship Servic 11:15a Fellowship Ho 11:15a 2019 Budget U 8:5p Youth Group: :			7p AA Meeting 7p Choir Rehearsal	Halloween Halloween 7p ACOA Meeting		7:30p AA Meeting
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:15a Communion Si 10:15a Worship Servic 11:15a Fellowship Ho 8:5p Youth Group:		Election Day Election Day	7p AA Meeting 7p Choir Rehearsal 7p Choir Rehearsal	7p ACOA Meeting 7:30p Deacon's Meeti	12p Fire Alarm Te	7:30p AA Meeting
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:15a Worship Servic 11:15a Fellowship Ho	Veteran's Day Veteran's Day	7:30p Cabinet	7p AA Meeting 7p Choir Rehearsal	7p ACOA Meeting 7:30p Christian Educa		7:30p AA Meeting
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10:15a Worship Servic 11:15a Fellowship Ho 12p Fall Clean Up			7p AA Meeting 7p Choir Rehearsal	7p ACOA Meeting 7:30p Christian Educa		7:30p AA Meeting
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:15a Worship Servic 11:15a Fellowship Ho 11:30a A Taste of Thar	2p Church Directory I		7p AA Meeting 7p Choir Rehearsal	Thanksgiving Day Thanksgiving Day 7p ACOA Meeting	Day After Thanksgivir Day After Thanksgivir	7:30p AA Meeting