

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
— Stockbridge, Massachusetts —

PO Box 825 Stockbridge MA 01262



July 2023

Pastor: The Rev. Brent Damrow - bdamrow@stockbridgeucc.org

Minister of Music: Peter Frost - music@stockbridgeucc.org

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(413) 298-3137 | www.stockbridgeucc.org

Office hours: 9:00-2:00, Monday - Friday

July 2023

The First Congregational Church, UCC, Stockbridge

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Livestream worship at stockbridgeucc.org						1 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
2 Worship 10:00 a.m. Gathered & online	3	4 Holiday – office closed <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	5 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm	6	7 Service League 10:30am	8 Rehearsal for Lee Dixon concert 2:00 – 4:00pm <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
9 Worship 10:00 a.m. Gathered & online Field trip to Mission House 11:30am	10	11 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	12 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm Lee Dixon concert 3pm Church supper 5:30pm Council 7:00pm	13	14 Service League 10:30am	15 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
16 Worship 10:00 a.m. <i>Gathered & online: outdoors</i> Church picnic 12:00pm	17	18 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	19 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm Meetings of the Boards 5:00pm – 9:00pm	20 Newsletter deadline	21 Service League 10:30am	22 Cathedral of the Beloved – using kitchen 9:00-1:00 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
23 Worship 10:00am Cathedral of the Beloved serving in Pittsfield	24	25 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	26 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm	27	28 Service League 10:30am	28 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
30 Worship 10:00am JE Room input session 11:30am	31					



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

July 2023 Newsletter

Dear Church Family,

Summer offers a chance for a much-needed change of pace. Summer offers a tantalizing invitation to seek beauty, rest, and peace.

Summer offers the excuse to let go of some of the formality and seriousness of our living and find delight in the delightful, truthful simplicity of reality.

This Summer we are currently working on plans to offer new ways of connecting. We will continue offering our community meals on the second Wednesday of each month (including a cook-out) on July 12th. The Church Picnic is planned for July 16th. A

planning team will meet in the coming days to imagine some additional outdoor “worship” possibilities. Another group will be combing Rachel Held Evan’s final work *Wholehearted Faith* to see what possibilities might emerge. Finally, our Sunday Morning Worship will undergo a few tweaks to make it fit the mood, comfort, and feeling of the summer months.

The texts assigned for the month of July by the Revised Common Lectionary are stunning. They span vast differences in genre and style ranging from Paul’s theological masterpiece Romans to the love poetry of Song of Solomon and from the prophetic inspiration of Isaiah to the parables of Jesus in Matthew. Each week we will settle on one not to take on more obligation or duty, but

rather to allow the grace of these texts to reveal the beauty of God’s truth that already is and that invites us to lay down our burdens and simply follow.

Worship will intentionally be more comfortable and casual. With gentle breezes flowing through open windows, we hope to present a worship experience both deep and freeing; both relaxed and compelling. We will have childcare in the Nursery where kids can go if they want or need to. Worship will include a “time for children” as well as some different activities each week to engage them. All will be welcome.

Summer presents wonderful opportunities here in the Berkshires and I hope that you are able to take advantage of this magical place we call home. I know that there will be weeks when other possibilities take you from 4 Main Street on a Sunday Morning. I also want you to know that we will be here on Sundays and other days too offering the chance for community and connection in the feeling and liberating spirit of Summer.

These days are precious. They offer the chance to find things that rejuvenate and inspire. Here at the church we will continue connecting our lives to our faith, and our living to God’s love and grace. Come and see!

Pastor Brent



HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 1	Gary Schieneman
July 2	Vicky Cooper
July 4	Carl Bradford Frank Russell
July 5	Maddie Alsdorf
July 6	Conor Hall
July 7	Christine Rasmussen
July 8	Mia Freeman
July 9	Tom Ruffing
July 11	Jill Fleming
July 14	Jay Wise
July 16	Patricia Strauch
July 17	Margaret Hornick Teresa Gentile
July 24	Steve Hassmer



If you or someone you know has a need for some prepared meals after injury or surgery, or during illness or some other crisis, just tell Pastor Brent, administrator Will Garrison (413-298-3137), or any member of Mission & Action (primary contact: Cindy Brown). We will reach out to you to work out the details.

Dear Meal Train Folks,

You are the best! Thank you so much for food (and flowers!) Gene, Erving and I enjoyed every bite! So many wonderful menus, every one a taste delight!

Anne, Gene, Erving and Pele

Classified Advertisement

Church members seek rides to worship!

Drivers wanted traveling from the north, south, east and west with a large heart, an extra passenger seat and willing to make a stop en route to and from church.

We have several members in need of transportation to and from worship and would like to help our friends be part of our congregation. Current requests are from Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Otis, Stockbridge.

We envision creating a team of 3-4 drivers to

accommodate each individual in order to cover Sundays when drivers may not be available. We seek drivers willing to make a regular weekly commitment as well as those available on an as needed basis.

More information will be available soon via email blasts and other announcements. In the meantime, if you are interested, please contact Will at office@stockbridgeucc.org or 298-3137.

Thank you for helping us assist our friends in need!



Berkshire Beauty Art Show

All church artists are invited to show art this summer – July, August, and September using any media: graphite, colored pencil, watercolor, oil, acrylic, multimedia, photography, small sculptures, etc. Please bring your artwork to church and place it on the shelves in the JE Room beginning July 2 until the end of September. Be sure to label your creation with your name, a title, media used, and contact information. Artists who wish to discuss putting their art on sale should contact me or Will Garrison in the church office.

Questions? Call me at 413/644-9846 or Will Garrison at 413/298-3137.

With Love & Blessings, Olga Schwede

View from Tanglewood, by Olga Schwede



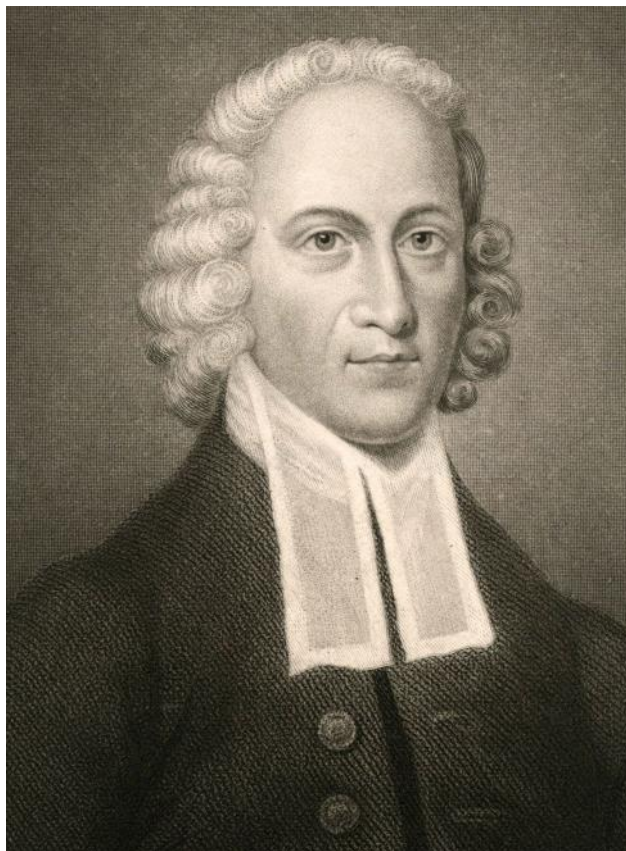
p.s. Many thanks to all our church family who contributed to the church's Capital Campaign Fun by purchasing my art. It is received with much joy and appreciation.

Jonathan Edwards Needs Your Help!

One of the major projects of the Capital Campaign is the renovation of the Jonathan Edwards Room. While the Trustees oversee the implementation of all these projects, they need a plan for the JE Room that reflects the needs of all who use it. We have collected input from all the program boards as well as outside groups who use the room. Now, we need suggestions from individuals in the congregation. A working group, to be appointed this summer by the Council, will sort all the ideas and come up with a plan for the Trustees to work with.

There will be forms for your input in the JE Room and the Narthex. You may send them to Will in the church office or put them in a special box in the JE Room. These forms will also be sent out in the church weekly e-mail during July. We need your response by July 30. Also, we will have an in-person feedback conversation after worship on July 30. Plan to attend!

THANK YOU! ~ Ron Hanft



From the Service League

Weddings, graduations, and family miscellany, continued: Patty Fadding is justifiably proud of her granddaughter, Trudy, who graduated from Williams College since we last wrote, (see photo right) and Helen McCormick is off to yet another wedding of another nephew. I'm delighted to have my son Ted (old-timers may remember him from his orange hair days) home for the first time since the pre-pandemic era, with his delightful girlfriend Maggie Ehimika and my granddog, Olive. That's more activity than I've seen in my house in several years, but I still remember the drill (sort of). Next, we're all (except Olive) going to my great-niece's wedding on the Chesapeake Bay.

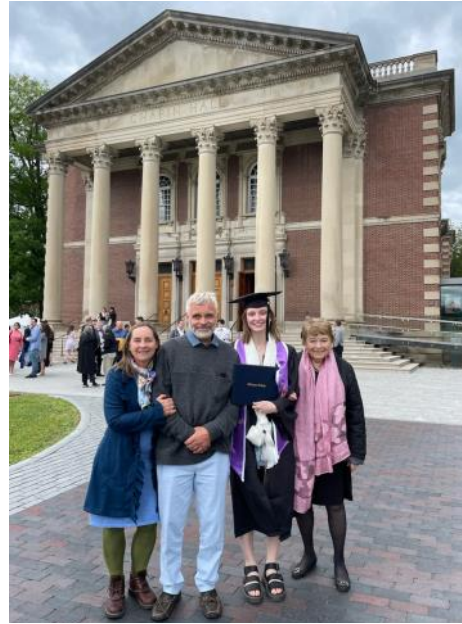
When not racing around attending these special events, the Service League is still at work in the classroom every Friday, sorting and pricing a bumper crop of Grandma's Attic donations and otherwise planning for the Summer Fair, on August 12. Don't worry, I won't let you forget!

And in the No Good Deed Goes Unpunished department, we were all very happy and relieved to see Anne Hutchinson return two weeks ago, with the help of a knee rover, after

surgery for a broken ankle sustained in the line of battle at the People's Pantry. It's good to be reminded once in a while of how much we depend on certain individuals, and Anne is near the top of that list. We did manage, however, with Vice President Nancy Wilcox covering. For a small group, we've got a pretty deep bench!

Until next month -

~ Margaret Hornick, for the Service League



Après Choir Appreciation Sunday boat ride! Minister of Music Peter Frost supplied the boat and the lovely views the afternoon of June 11.



Justice Task Force

On June 1, Don and Charlotte Rodgers, Ted Randolph, and Diane Piraino met with Jeff Bendremer and his brand new assistant, Sarah, archaeologists with the Preservation Office of the Stockbridge-Munsee tribe, to dig a hole. Said hole was to accommodate the post to CE's new Little Library. By the side of the road in front of Procter Hall, armed with a shovel, a post hole digger, a wheelbarrow, a screen, and a cooler of iced bee balm tea, they made the first collaboration to honor a request made by the tribe.

The Justice Task Force has been charged with writing a Land Acknowledgment. As an accompanying action, the tribe has asked us to consult with their archaeologists if we need to disturb any of the land that once was their homeland and contains burial sites. We contacted Jeff and he was glad to come and meet with us. He sifted all the dirt from the hole and found some slate, maybe from a roof, and a couple of small fragments that might be ceramic. He and Sarah were excited. They were also deeply appreciative that we had begun this partnership with them.

As Jeff put it, the hole was small but the precedent was huge. He sees our action as



profoundly Christian, honoring ancestral Stockbridge-Munsee tribe members who were also members of our first church in Stockbridge. He looks forward to continuing this work with us.

On July 9 and August 20 the Justice Task Force members will lead a walk to the Mission House exhibit “Our Lands, Our Home, Our Heart” after the worship service for anyone who would like to learn about the Mohican people who lived here before English settlers arrived, and who were the very first members of our church. Learning more about the people who later became known as the Stockbridge-Munsee tribe of the Mohican Nation is fundamental to our process of writing a land acknowledgment and formulating actions to show our respect for their descendants, who are still very much tied to this place spiritually. For background reading about the history of the church and the process of Land Acknowledgements, check out the Justice page on the church website.



News from Mission & Action

Cathedral of the Beloved - July 23
~ Sign up to participate!

This ecumenical ministry holds a worship service and offers a free meal each Sunday afternoon on the lawn in front of St. Joseph's Church on North Street in Pittsfield. This ministry serves the marginalized, isolated, and homeless, seeking to meet people where they are on the street, and to share God's love by being part of the community.

The meals serve 40-50 people, providing a total of 75-80 meals to include take-away. Churches volunteer to cook and serve a meal. We have participated in the past, and are gearing up to do it again.

Our congregation is on their schedule for 2 Sunday afternoon meals: July 23rd and September 24th. **We need volunteers to sign up** to help the Mission & Action Board to shop for groceries, cook together in the church kitchen on the Saturday before, and/or set up and serve the meal for these two dates. **Please check out the sign-up sheet on the JE Room bulletin board.**

As Jesus said in Matthew, chapter 25: "I was hungry and you gave me food. Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

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## A Word from Growth and Fellowship

This June we welcome two new members to the Board of Growth and Fellowship. Donna Jacobs and Ted Randolph bring years of board experience and lots of enthusiasm, we welcome them as we begin planning for the new church season.

You may have seen or received the new church birthday greeting cards – we are now including you in the process! Each month we will put out the cards on a table during fellowship, and you'll have the opportunity to sign cards and send your birthday wishes along. Don't miss it!

Summer is a time for a slower pace, which gives us time to gather after worship and catch up with friends! Summertime also means lots of visitors to the Berkshires – and maybe new families moving in – what a great time to welcome them! Finally, summer is a great time for YOU to jump in and try out being an outdoor greeter, or, host coffee/fellowship time after worship!

Helping with hosting Fellowship (or greeting) is EASY – a member of G & F can walk you through the steps and make sure you are ready. Interested in helping us, and getting to know one another better? Please reach out to any member of Growth and Fellowship, or let Will know. Thanks, and see you at fellowship this summer!

~Donna Jacobs, Brian Farrell, Ted Randolph & Charlotte Rodgers

A Pride Sunday worship service was held on Father's Day, June 18. Elizabeth Young dished up an appropriately themed cake.





## Wednesday Dinners Continue: Cookout on July 12



Eating together is a wonderfully and radically connective endeavor. It nourishes our bodies and our souls.

The food will be ready at 5:30 p.m. and we will generally serve until about 7:30 or so. People may arrive whenever is best for them and stay as long as they like. The food will be simple, nut-free, and always include a vegetarian and gluten-free option. If you have any other dietary needs,

please contact the church office so that we can honor those needs too.

No one is obligated to bring anything. One of the important things about church is that it is a place where we are also served, so if this can be a gift to you, let it. For those who wish to contribute, help cook, or otherwise be involved that is wonderful and never a requirement. People who want to bring a dish can. People who wish to donate to help offset costs can. Most importantly, don't worry about obligations; simply come and be part of the meal.

I will generally start cooking around 4:00 and always enjoy company when I cook. **The July menu will include hotdogs**

**(meat and vegan) and watermelon.**

As we live into these times as followers of Jesus, I hope that these meals can do for us what they did thousands of years ago to those who did the same – provide connection, purpose, love, and hope. I look forward to the chance to gather with you at the table with glad and generous hearts.

In gratitude, Pastor Brent

### Lee Dixon (1932-2023)

Lee Dixon passed away after a brief illness on May 19, 2023. An amazing music teacher, she would often be found perched on the piano bench surrounded by happy children sitting in a circle on the floor.

With her passion of music as choir and chorus director, singer and accompanist many lives were touched by Lee's music.

A memorial concert and remembrance will be held at the First Congregational Church of Stockbridge on Wednesday, July 12 at 3:00pm followed by a reception.





### Claudia Cooke

It was in spring of 1978 that I spent my first night in Stockbridge at the Red Lion. In 1981, a dear friend moved to the Berkshires and I have come up every year, a few times a year, ever since, until establishing my own home in Stockbridge in 2016/2017. It is the place that I feel most at home. Where there is a mountain, I am never alone.

In the spring of 2017, I came to my first service at the UCC in Stockbridge. My spirits were lifted, my heart was moved, and my mind was stimulated. Incredibly, every time I attend the services, this is my experience. The simplicity of the interior, the lone cross at the altar, and the clear glass windows with a view to nature remind me warmly of the low-church Episcopal parish in which I was raised.

One of my favorite Bible passages: All things are possible through Him Who strengthen me. And this one: if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

Biological family is small in numbers and scattered across the globe. I am fortunate to have a family of dear friends, near and far, who sustain me in the love we share. The Ragu spaghetti sauce commercial from the 1960s also gave me these words to live by from the mustachioed announcer who ended his pitch for Ragu by saying, "In my life there are no strangers, only friends I haven't met."

My miniature WH dachshund Peep is my constant companion who would come to church if he could but who is also happy to sleep in the sun on Sunday mornings.

We are **Beth & Gary Cilley**. We have lived in Lee since June 2020 (yes, moving at the height of the pandemic was something), having moved from New Hampshire where we both grew up, raised our family and spent our professional careers. Our decision to move to the Berkshires is the result of our daughter living in Lynn, MA and our son, his wife and our three grandchildren in southern New Jersey and looking to split the difference in distance between them.

Boring but pertinent facts:

Gary worked in Undergraduate Admissions and then the Online division of the University of New Hampshire. Beth was also employed at UNH in Financial Aid and then the Graduate School.

Fun stuff:

Gary- I enjoy traveling, languages, riding my bicycle all over South County and into NY & CT, reading (esp. historical novels) and am working at honing my photography skills.

Beth- Gardening, visiting museums and botanical gardens, reading, traveling and family are what I enjoy.

We have traveled extensively, mostly in Europe. However, our most memorable experience was attending the World Nomad games in Kyrgyzstan (ask us about Kok-Boru).





## **Marty Noyes**

I was born and brought up in Gardner, Massachusetts and went to college in Keene, New Hampshire. I was so blessed to have met and married an incredible man, Michael Noyes. We had two children (Rebecca and Craig, best life experiences ever!). We lived in Alabama; Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, and Long Island, New York while Mike flew helicopters for the Air Force. He passed away in 2008 from cancer.

I had a 25-year career in education teaching first grade for 20, what fun! My children married and each have two children, more love and joy. I am immensely grateful to have met and found love again with Tim Bosworth which is an amazing story. We were married in 2012. Combined we have eight children and 14 grandchildren. Yikes! We moved to Lenox two years ago, returning to our home roots.

Walking, hiking, skiing, theater, being outdoors, nature and especially music are at the top of my list of greatest interests. I love reading about all religions, exploring sacred texts and spiritual works from great thinkers/sages as well as learning from peoples' experiences and their love for God. Tim and I are excited and grateful to become a part of this church community.

## **Tim Bosworth**

Tim is a Lenox-born native of the Berkshires who has wandered far.

For the first 14 years of his life, Tim lived at the Lenox Community Center in a small apartment on the second floor. His Dad was the founder/director of the Community Center and the apartment came with the job.

After graduating from Taconic High School, Tim took a 7-year tour of colleges and graduated from Boston College in 1981. His professional life consisted of technology marketing and sales roles for several companies. Eventually, his patience for corporate life expired and he got his electrician's license in Texas in 1999. He is now retired, though he occasionally twists wires for friends and family.

Tim's first marriage resulted in the creation of 6 wonderful children – 2 boys and 4 girls. All were born in Pittsfield but, in 1996, Tim and family moved just outside of Fort Worth, Texas, because of a job promotion. Beginning in 2001, Tim became a single father with six kids, two jobs, and no free time. It was the hardest, best work of his life. Happily, the Universe connected Tim with Marty Noyes. They were married at Ventfort Hall in 2012 and Tim left Texas to be with Marty on Long Island. In Marty, Tim found his best friend, teacher, and life partner. He suspects that Marty swooned to his cooking talents but... whatever works is good! And life kept getting better – between Marty's two children and Tim's six, there are now 14 grandchildren!

Tim has been involved in sports throughout his life. His favorite was ice hockey where he competed as a goalie. He played his last hockey game in 2010 but has recently gotten the pickleball bug!

Once Tim and Marty retired around 5 years ago, they began searching for a home in the Berkshires. In July 2021, they found the perfect house in Lenox! Then they found First Congregational Church in Stockbridge! It is grand and humbling to feel at home – in civic and church communities. Tim's life journey has had many twists and pitfalls but it's in a great place now. He's happy and thankful to be here!





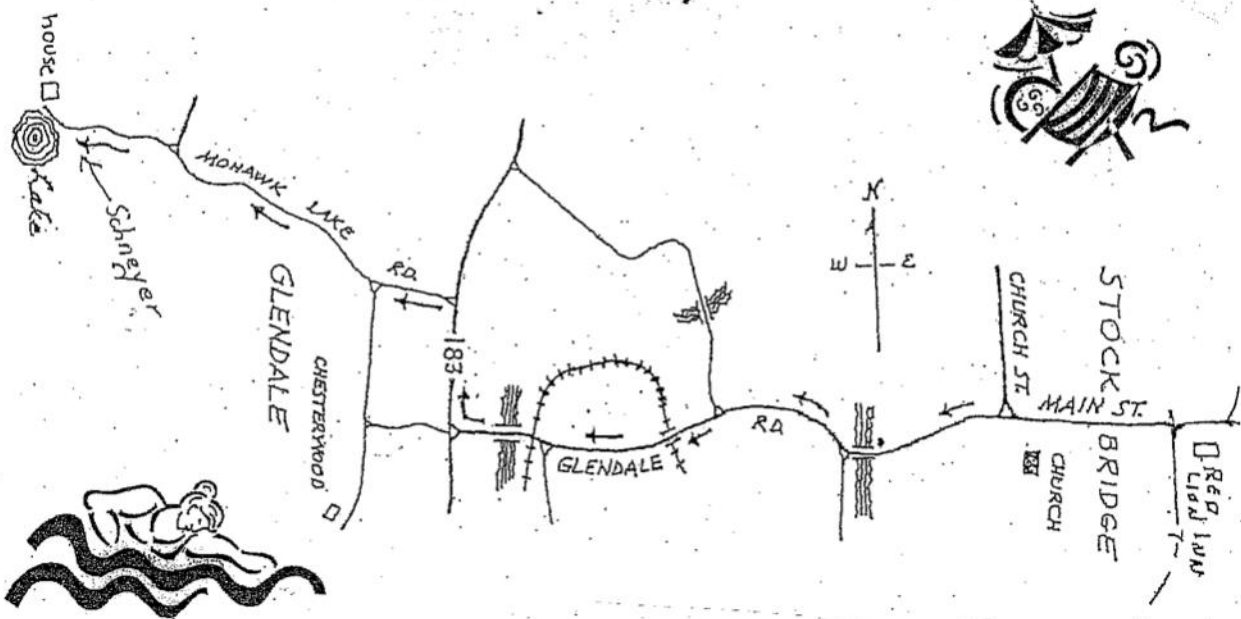
## All Church Picnic: Sunday, July 16 at 12:00 noon

**Wear your swimsuits to church!** After outdoor worship on July 16, head on over to the All Church Picnic at the Schneyers' beautiful gazebo with lawn sloping down to picturesque Mohawk Lake in Glendale (see map). This is a relaxed time of picnicking, fellowship, swimming, and boating for all members of our congregation – your friends and family are welcome too. We're asking everyone to bring their own meat & buns or main dish and their own soft drinks (no alcohol) —a grill will be available. Please also bring a dish to share: salad, side dish, dessert, or munchies. Condiments, paper products (plates, napkins, cups), cutlery and ice will be provided.

This is a great day to come to church dressed for a picnic. Just don't forget to pack your bathing suit, towel, sand toys, hat, sunscreen, bug repellent, and a chair or blanket. Floaties for small children are fine, but please don't bring any large rafts or boats. There are boats available at the lake. The Schneyers have a house next to the lake where we can change clothes or use the restroom (it's a walk up a hill).

Please note that parents are responsible for their own children's safety. Mohawk Lake is a private lake and our hosts kindly request no fishing, no outside boats, and no dogs. Carpooling is encouraged as parking is somewhat limited. If it rains (which it won't!), we will find a rain date later. Any questions, ask Ted Randolph or Cindy Brown.

### Map to Schneyers' Lake



**Mock-sology** Tune: "Lasst Uns Erfreuen"

*Put on your sunblock head to toe;  
There is a place we love to go:  
All Church Picnic, All Church Picnic.*

*Food, fun, and friends and so much more,  
Swimming or lounging at the shore  
Of Lake Mohawk, of Lake Mohawk,  
Get your suit on; have a blast at:  
The All Church Picnic*