



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

PO Box 825 Stockbridge MA 01262



August 2023

Summer Fair - August 12

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

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

Administrator/Sexton: Will Garrison – office@stockbridgeucc.org

Financial Secretary: Marion Pomeroy - finance@stockbridgeucc.org

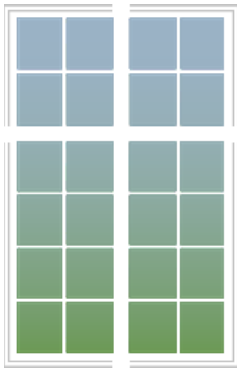
(413) 298-3137 | www.stockbridgeucc.org

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

August 2023

The First Congregational Church, UCC, Stockbridge

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Livestream worship at stockbridgeucc.org		1 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	2 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm Council 7:00pm	3	4 Service League 10:30am	5 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
6 Worship 10:00 a.m. Gathered & online	7	8 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	9 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm Church supper 5:30pm	10	11 Service League 10:30am	12 Service League Summer Fair 10:00- 1:00pm <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
13 Worship 10:00 a.m. Gathered & online Church picnic 12:00pm	14 <i>Berkshire Choral Sing</i> 6:30pm	15 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	16 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm Meetings of the Boards 5:00pm – 9:00pm	17	18 Service League 10:30am	19 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
20 Worship 10:00 a.m. Gathered & online Field trip to Mission House 11:30am	21 Newsletter deadline	22 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	23 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm	24	25 Service League 10:30am	26 <i>Wedding 3:00pm</i> <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
27 Worship 10:00am Gathered & online	28	29 Brent's Sabbath Day <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i> <i>AA 8:00pm</i>	30 Morning Prayer 8 am <i>Yoga 9:00am</i> Bible Study 1:00pm	31		



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

August 2023 Newsletter

Books are a treasure in so many ways. They can, all at the same time, be both grounding and freeing. They can draw you into their story even as they remind you to see your own in new ways. They can set you off on a great adventure while they also evoke your true home. Books are a treasure (amen?).

Right now, I am going back through the Harry Potter books and finding meaning in details I had missed, intrigue in the ways the books differ from the movies, and joy in remembering the ways these books have been important to my family. I remember the first time I read them and the times I read them with Jake. I remember watching them come alive on the screen and Jakes utter amazement when he did too. I remember endless Lego kits we all put together and of course traveling to Universal to enter those stories in unbelievable ways.

As much as I love Harry Potter and the way those books have been part of my life, there is another set of books I find even more amazing and important to my life and my family's too – the Bible. I am still astonished that all these years later, after seminary and after more than 15 years of ministry I continue to come alive whenever I read the Bible. I find new details, new grounding, new mysteries, and new invitations. The Bible is not the whole of my faith, but it is one of the most important ways I connect to the source of it and the journey that flows from it.

I have been working this summer on two ways to explore the treasures of our sacred texts. This fall, there are two important ways we will engage the Bible in our shared life. This year we will use the Narrative Lectionary (developed by Luther Seminary and the Working Preacher group). The Lectionary will provide the texts for worship and the stories we share with our kids. It will give us a

map to follow for the whole program year. Here is some information about that Lectionary from their own website:

On the Sundays from September through May each year the texts follow the sweep of the biblical story, from Creation through the early Christian church. The texts show the breadth and variety of voices within Scripture. They invite people to hear the stories of Abraham and Sarah, Moses and the prophets, Jesus, and Paul. Listening to the many different voices within Scripture enriches preaching and the life of faith.

Along with that great sweep of the Biblical Story on Sundays, I am excited to lead a new comprehensive Bible Study from the Kerygma Program. I love the attention given by the curriculum to “seeing the interconnections among the many parts of the entire Bible” and its hope to move beyond learning the text to finding “new understandings and experiences of faith and life.” Our goal will be to treat the Bible as a treasure – one that grounds us and that frees us to live boldly and faithfully – one that helps us look at the Bible's stories and our own in fresh new ways, and one that sets us off on a great adventure while offering the gift of the comfort and sanctuary of home. We will be figuring out the logistics soon and plan to start shortly after Rally Day (September 10). If you have questions or want to talk about the study, just give me a call.

I hope that you are savoring every moment of summer here in the Berkshires. I look forward to exploring the great treasures of our faith and our church family through the lens of my favorite book of all. I look forward to doing it with you!

In Gratitude,
Pastor Brent

HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

August 2	Jacob Geldert Damrow
August 6	Susan Moyle Lynch
August 8	Muriel Wermuth
August 9	Ashley Collins
August 13	Ronnie Cunningham Janet Canning
August 14	Kinney Frelinghuysen Kim Ruffing
August 17	Helen McCormick Mary Lou Ryce
August 18	Nora Randolph Linda Hoddy
August 21	Emily Brown Joan Nimmo Linda Russell Miles Wheat
August 24	Joe Roy
August 25	Natalie Doerr
August 26	Jon Geldert
August 27	David Cooper
August 29	Joshua Hall
August 31	Steven Bankert

From the Scholarship Committee

Calling all students who are matriculated in undergraduate or graduate programs: If you're a church member, or child of a church member or employee, please apply for a scholarship by August 30. All you have to do is send an email request to Will (office@stockbridgeucc.org) or me (mhhornick@gmail.com) specifying where you are enrolled and what degree you're pursuing.

We hope to hear from you!

Margaret Hornick, for the Scholarship Committee



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.

If you are interested, [click here](#) for an online form, or contact Will in the office. Thank you for helping us assist our friends in need!



End of Summer, by Terry Wise

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 now 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



Rally Day - Sunday, September 10

As summer winds down, we traditionally gather for a special Sunday. This church calls it Rally Day – other UCC churches call it Re-Covenanting Sunday. Both names are helpful for they describe what is at the heart of that Sunday – a joyful day to reconnect in relationship and faith. On September 10 – we kick-off the program year for the church. The Choir will be up in the loft, Sunday programs for children resume, adult studies launch, and more. It is a day where we share the adventures of our Sunday even as we set off on new adventures together as a church.



Following worship, there will be a special fellowship hour planned for the front lawn (weather permitting). Mark your calendars, bring your friends and family, come and see!

From the Service League

We are all happy to hear that Anne Hutchinson is walking and driving after what she calls "a long ten weeks. But even hobbling with a boot and a knee scooter, she managed to take her

grandkids on a whirlwind tour of Costa Rica. Lesser mortals might have cancelled the trip, but not Anne...still, she was very happy to see Debbie Paine-Goodwin with her Golden

Retriever spreading peace and comfort to weary travelers at Bradley Airport. Just as Anne's spirits were flagging (TSA security checks can do that) Debbie summoned a wheelchair and an attendant to get Anne to her gate. What are the chances??

Except for prepping for the Summer Fair (as I said, I won't let you forget) on August 12, we were behind the scenes at a lovely memorial service for Lee Dixon on July 12, hosting the reception in the JE Room. Many of the singers whom Lee accompanied came to sing their hearts out in her honor.

Occasionally I'm asked if we are still accepting donations for Grandma's Attic - and the answer is always YES. There is no cut-off date and we always appreciate your treasures - which we will gladly convert into support for our mission projects. Other things we'll happily accept for the Summer Fair include your yummy baked goods, your cut flowers, and your extra produce.

Thank you!

~ Margaret Hornick, for the Service League

Summer Fair

Sat., Aug. 12, 2023
10 am – 1 pm

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
4 Main St., Stockbridge, MA



Mini Grandma's Attic
Baked Goods • Crafts
Cut Flowers • Fresh Produce
Silent Auction



Visit the church's Little Library - take a book, leave a book. Painted by the Sunday School students.



News from Growth & Fellowship

Hello from the Growth & Fellowship (G & F) crew! We hope that you are enjoying the summer services and connecting with members and friends of our congregation at Fellowship hour, a time for light refreshments including lemonade – and of course, coffee! Many thanks to all of you who have already volunteered to serve the Fellowship Coffee. Remember, it can be very simple, or, if you wish, you can bake goodies to share.

Are you interested in hospitality - saying hello to people, volunteering – but without a big time commitment? If so, being a Sunday morning greeter is for you! All you need to do is arrive at church a bit early, about 9:45. You simply station yourself/yourselfs on the front sidewalk near the front doors of the church, and welcome folks as they arrive! It's a great thing to do on your own, or with your family. G & F will be working with the Deacons to create a signup sheet for volunteers. Meanwhile, speak with any of us on G & F for information.

Stay tuned for more G & F news here ... much is being planned for the fall - and you don't want to miss it.

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

Overlapping Melodies

The banner currently hanging in the choir loft was designed and made for a specific event sponsored by Berkshire Institute of Theology and the Arts in 1992. Max and Jean Stackhouse founded this Institute and organized wonderful events for a decade, bringing people to the Berkshires from all over the world. Yo-Yo Ma was on their board of directors, and during the summer of 1992 when he was performing the six Bach Cello Suites at Tanglewood, he and theologian Jaroslav Pelikan presented a conversation on Bach's spirituality, punctuated with excerpts from the Cello Suites. The banner is made of many layers of colorful nylon tulle, backed by sheer silk to allow light to pass through. I listened to the many-layered voices of Bach cantatas while configuring the abstract imagery to visually mimic the steady bass notes, the interwoven fugue motifs and the lightness of joyful, overlapping melodies. ~ Terry Wise





News from Mission & Action

WELCOME TO NEW M&A MEMBER

Alice Collins! We're delighted to have her join the Board of Mission & Action. And we bid a fond but sad goodbye to Cary Quigley and Bruce Wilkens, who have rotated off the board.

IT'S CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST!

Our beloved M&A board member Ronnie Cunningham suggested that our congregation provide gifts to our local war veterans. M&A and the Church Council couldn't agree more. So in the entire month of August, we are asking the congregation to purchase new items that will be given to the local veterans' organizations. Here is what they are requesting:

PURCHASE ALL NEW:

- Razors and Shaving Cream
- Lotion
- Soap (individually wrapped)
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Men's Undershirts (M, L, XL)

And more items may be requested later. Keep an eye on our weekly Thursday emails.

DONATION BOXES will be located in the:

- Narthex (behind the sanctuary)
- Jonathan Edwards fellowship room
- Back Hallway under the coat rack
- Inside the Pop Up Pantry Shed behind the office wing (for when the building isn't open)

DONATIONS WILL BE GIVEN TO:

- Northampton Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Leeds
- Veterans Affairs Central Western Mass Pittsfield Outpatient at Federal Building in Pittsfield
- Soldier On in Pittsfield

POP UP PANTRY

For about 3 years now, our congregation has provided a small 24/7 self-serve pantry with non-perishable food items, in a shed behind the office wing. The pantry has proved to be very popular and needed, and we run through food items quickly and make frequent grocery runs. We are always happy to take donations from the congregation, which are greatly needed. A donation bin is in the back hallway. Here are some ideas:

- Box Cereal (regular and gluten free)
- Oatmeal (quick oats or box of instant packets)
- Crackers (regular and gluten free)
- Box Rice
- Mac & Cheese (regular and gluten free)
- Pasta (regular and gluten free)
- Pasta Sauce in bottles
- Box Milk
- Peanut Butter (creamy and crunchy)
- Nut-Free Butters
- Can Beans
- Can Soup
- Can Fruit
- Can Vegetables
- Can Diced Tomatoes
- Can Tuna or Chicken
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels & Kleenex
- Toothbrushes & Toothpaste
- Bar Soap (individually wrapped)
- Lotion
- Other more fun non-perishable food items (check expiration dates!)
- MONETARY DONATIONS for grocery runs (checks payable to First Congregational Church, Memo: Pop Up Pantry)
- PAPER GROCERY BAGS

MISSION & ACTION RECENT EXPENDITURES

- \$125.00 to Appalachian Trail Ministry (Local Needs) (This is in lieu of sending a team to host a day this summer.)
- \$250 to Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity's Discretionary Fund (Local Needs)
- \$500 to Berkshire Housing Services, Inc. (Local Needs)
- \$500 to People's Pantry in Gt. Barrington (\$165 Restricted Fund, \$335 Local Needs)

Habitat for Humanity

The house is move-in ready for the new homeowners!

Thank you to Cathy Clark and Diane Fogarty (pictured here) who answered a last minute request from Habitat to clean the house we have been working at all year in Great Barrington. Thanks to Nick for bringing bagels for breakfast and his parents, Anne and Bob Pohl, for providing lunch.



Affordable Housing Panel

An informal survey of our congregation in February identified affordable housing as a priority for our Mission & Action Board. In response, we presented this program on June 25. Approximately 35 people attended to learn more about affordable housing. To view it, go [here](#) (or contact church office).

Carolyn Valli, CEO, Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity, participated in the worship service, sharing the mission and outreach of her organization.

After a hearty coffee hour, the panelists offered insightful information about their organizations and how they are addressing current housing issues. Panelists included: Carolyn Valli, CEO, Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity, Eileen Peltier, CEO, Berkshire Housing Services, Inc., Jennifer Meehan, Director of Community Engagement, Berkshire Housing Services, Inc., Matthew Russett, Legislative Assistant to Congressman Richard Neal, and Kate Coulehan, Construct.

A letter to the Editor of the Berkshire Eagle summed it up nicely:

Kudos to local housing nonprofits for outreach efforts

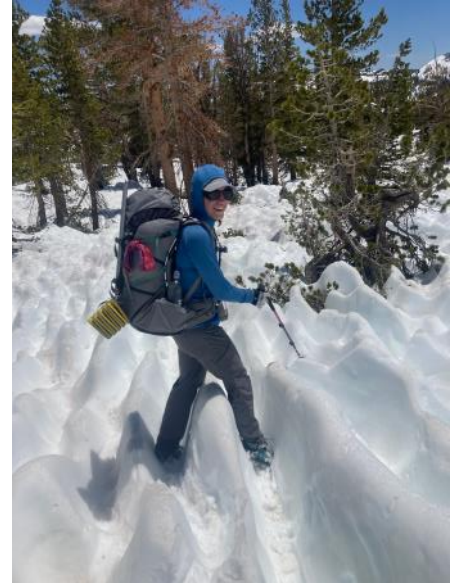
To the editor: On Sunday, the Congregational Church in Stockbridge hosted representatives from Construct, Habitat for Humanity, Berkshire Housing and others for an informed discussion regarding affordable housing in the Berkshires and the current initiatives trying to solve this ongoing problem in our community.

I'm inspired by their work, knowledge and the time taken to educate community members of the need for dynamic changes to make Berkshire County a balanced, equal and affordable place to live and work.

Annie Rye, Lenox

Family News

Our daughter and her husband (Nora and Eli) spent three weeks in July hiking the 210 mile John Muir Trail in California.



Plenty of the winter's unusually high snowfall in the Sierra Nevada remained, creating challenges such as disappearing trails, impassable streams, and the snow formations called "sun cups" seen in the photo. The southern terminus of the trail is the summit of Mt. Whitney, where they arrived in time to see the sunrise. They are home now with

plenty of stories to share, and had an incredible time in spite of all the extraordinary obstacles.

~ Ted Randolph and Diane Piraino

Save the Date – Church Tag Sale! Monday, September 3 (Labor Day)

As part of our Fundraising Goal for the year, the Church will hold a Tag Sale Labor Day morning here in the church parking lot. We invite your participation in several ways, including:

- Volunteering to help.

- Donating “good/quality” items for the church to sell.
- Hosting your own table (and contributing a % to the church).

More details to come, but for now make plans to be here (and start looking around your home for treasures you might want to part with).

Questions – contact the church office!



BERKSHIRES' COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA
Tracy Wilson, Musical Director

Stockbridge SINFONIA

SUMMER 2023

Salute to Women Composers

REPERTOIRE

Overture in the Classical Style by Gerald Elias

Berkshire Triptych (River, City, Mountain) by Alice Spatz
(premiere of entire suite)

Scherzo from Nonet by Louise Farrere

Symphony No. 1 by Amy Beach

PERFORMANCES

Sat., August 5, 3pm

Lenox Memorial Middle & High School, East Street, Lenox

Sat., August 12, 3pm

Zion Lutheran Church, First Street, Pittsfield

(📺) This concert will be live-streamed on our website!

Sun., August 13, 6pm

Saint James Place, Main Street, Great Barrington

stockbridgesinfonia.org

Concerts are FREE and open to the public. For more information, call 413.822.1318.

Stockbridge Sinfonia's 2023 summer season is supported in part by grants from the Alfred Ernest Becket Grant Foundation, Lenox, Richmond and Stockbridge Cultural Councils — local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



BerkshireBank



Berkshire Lyric presents

UBI CARITAS



Sunday August 6

3:00 Saint Mark's R.C. Church, Pittsfield
400 West Street, Pittsfield

5:00 Saint Joseph's R.C. Church, Stockbridge
11 Elm Street, Stockbridge

Berkshire Lyric's select young chamber chorus in two identical concerts of sacred and secular music for a cappella chorus, conducted by Lyric's artistic director, Jack Brown

A free will offering to benefit local food pantries will be taken by each church.

For more info, visit www.BerkshireLyric.org or call 413-298-5365.

Berkshire Lyric 60th Anniversary Season 1963-2023.

Wednesday Dinners Continue

Eating together nourishes our bodies and our souls. All are welcome to dinner on **August 9** at the church. The food will be ready at 5:30 p.m. and served until 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 include a vegetarian and gluten-free option.

No one is obligated to bring anything. Those who wish to contribute, help cook, or bring a dish can. But don't worry about obligations; simply come and be part of the meal.

I look forward to the chance to gather with you at the table with glad and generous hearts.

In gratitude, Pastor Brent

New Date: All Church Picnic - Sunday, August 13 at 12:00 noon

After worship, 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. Please bring your own meat & buns (a grill is available) or main dish and soft drinks (no alcohol). 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.

Bring 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, although a golf cart will be available this year to make the journey easier.

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. Any questions, ask Ted Randolph or Cindy Brown.

