



Herald of Good TIDINGS

“Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”
Isaiah 40:9

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR:

In just a few short hours, it'll be Memorial Day weekend... the beginning of outdoor eating season. Yay for grills and hamburgers, salads and sodas. Let's hear it for abundant chips and even hard-boiled eggs.

But, well, I don't want to spoil the joy, but . . .

I want to take a moment to think with you about anger and hatred, of which there is so much these days. Life this summer is not only the joy of picnics, but the challenge of anger.

Over the past month or so, we have seen one demonstration after another at one college or university or another. Students have been barred from graduation at some schools, have walked out at others, all in the hope that somehow their actions will make a difference.

This past week, I read an essay by Dean Sarah Drummond, of Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, calling us to think more intentionally about anger – not just in demonstrations but in our political life these days. She wrote:

Being angry requires a lot of energy, and staying angry is a chronic drain. Therefore, it's important for those who are trying to get something done to pause from time to time and ask if they are carrying any anger that has some potential resolution. They could be using that energy for something else, after all. Anger's an important emotion but not one to which we want to be-

come so accustomed that it drains our accounts without our noticing. (<https://sbdummond.medium.com/expelling-versus-directing-our-anger-f0a7f3bb20f8>)

Dean Drummond is right – letting anger be our primary focus, no matter the reason – drains our energy. It makes it much more difficult, if not impossible, to find a future direction. Yes, there are a lot of things in our world that don't work as we hoped, and sure, we can easily be angry about the short-falls.... but if we allow that anger to be our primary action, we will never be able to solve our problems.

Why are we angry? Is it because something's gone wrong? Is it because no one is paying attention to our concerns? Or is it because being angry makes us feel as though we have power? Anger is good; it can make us aware of problems. But living in perpetual anger is destructive.

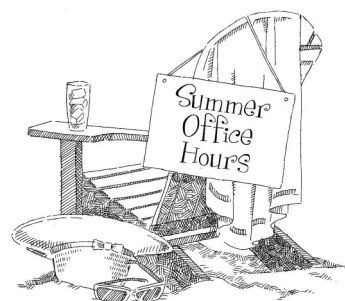
As we approach a national election this fall, our call as Christians is to be people who do not feed the anger of our culture. We are to be the people who pay attention to the “why's” of our world, who step back a little from the charged feelings, who make sure they know what's going on, who help build a community of folks who differ and who yet still respect one another.

Let us be people of love, going forward.

Blessings, Pastor Virginia

SUMMER CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

will be Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, 9 a.m.—2 p.m. beginning the week of June 24. Since, at times, we will be a one-person office this summer, we suggest you call ahead before coming in, just to be sure the office is open.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Anthony Gervasi - June 6th
 Alyse Bukoski - June 16th
 Lisa Rockwood - July 21st
 Reanna Largesse - July 26th
 Pat Bukoski - Aug. 5th
 Skip Bigelow - Aug. 10th

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:**

Kim & Bob Davis - July 14

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- 6/2 Confirmation Sunday - join us in welcoming our newest church members.
- 6/9 Children's Sunday - this celebration of our precious children includes our **annual Church picnic** following the worship service.
- 6/30 New Member & Baptism Sunday
- 9/7 Boy Scouts 100th anniversary celebration!
- 9/8 Rally Day - the return of Sunday school!
- 9/14 Nathan Minor's Eagle Scout project delivery and
- 9/15 set-up on church lawn
- 9/21 Pumpkin Delivery - the **PUMPKINS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE DELIVERED ON SEPTEMBER 21st**. We will need **A LOT** of help with unloading the delivery. Also, please set aside days to cover the pumpkin patch hours, 9/21-10/31. Your help with this church fundraiser is needed and appreciated!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH THE YARD SALE ON JUNE 8TH

At home **bake for our coffee/baked goods table.** Please wrap items individually (baggies work) and **be sure to list if item contains nuts** and drop off to the church on Friday, June 7, between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. or at 6 p.m. Please call the office, 508-832-2845, if you need to arrange for another time to drop off your baked goodies.

6pm 6/7 bring tables out on Friday night (approximately 60 minute time commitment)

6/8/24:
7am 'til noon Sign-up for a 1 hour shift at our coffee and baked goods table at the yard sale on Saturday morning, June 8th.

1-3pm carry tables back into building at end of yard sale and help with general clean-up. (approximately 90 minute time commitment)

As you can see, none of these important tasks will demand too much of your time.



PLEASE SEE THE SIGN-UP SHEETS IN FELLOWSHIP HALL AND OFFER YOUR HELP OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE, 508-832-2845, TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST.

FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH:

We are still accepting donations for El Buen Samaritano (The Good Samaritan). They accept donations of non-perishable food items (check the dates), gently used clothing for all age groups, and toys. Baby formula and pet food is in high demand. The big black and red plaid box in fellowship hall is for donations. Thank you!

A LETTER TO THE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF THE CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2024

By now, I am sure everyone is tired of hearing about how wonderful I think this class is. I cannot help it!!! They are pretty awesome! But this time, I have a message for you.

Raising children is really hard! The ups and downs and ins and outs are enough to make any person crazy! I know. I am in it with you! We manage moods, and we manage the many different schedules we are presented with, every moment of our lives. Thank you for fitting Confirmation Class into your schedules. Thank you for encouraging good attendance even when you are dealing with a moody teenager.

When I brag about the awesomeness of the students, I want you to know that is also (perhaps even more so) praise to YOU! I see that all the students have a strong foundation of love, kindness, curiosity, faith and integrity. They have this because of YOU! A parent is a child's first teacher, and a big part of that is leading by example. Thank you for the opportunity to teach your child about the basic, most simple aspects of being a Christian. Thank you for giving me a piece of that foundation to help strengthen.

I am a little different today than I was before this class began. My faith has grown. Your child taught me as much as I, them.

Someone recently asked me if I was relieved this year has concluded. Happy that I have some time back and a little less stress? NOPE! I am sad. There will be a little emptiness in my heart without this group. I looked forward to Tuesday every week. I was filled with joy and love consistently from my experience teaching your child. Thank you!

You are doing a great job with your teen!!!! Give yourself a little "pat on the back."

Love Always,

Shannon Hartmann, Director of Religious Education

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no July or August *Tidings*. Look for our next issue in September. (**SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS AUGUST 20th.**) Have a great summer!

Our **Community Yard Sale/Plant Sale** is June 8th, 8am-1pm

This is the time of year to thin your perennials, so please pot up any extras for our

PLANT SALE!

A big seller is RHUBARB! (cut and bundle in 6 stalks).

Please mark each pot with the name of the plant.

Please list what color and what height the plant is when grown.
(A permanent marker on a white plastic knife is ideal for this purpose.)

Drop off your plants anytime after 1 p.m. on Friday, the 7th.

If you are looking to purchase annuals or perennials before our sale, please go out to Christine's on Whittemore Street, directly across from Leicester High School. She donates to our sale. Her house is about a 1/4 mile from Route 56; her greenhouses are on the left, next to a blue cape house. Parking is across the street.

Thank you...Looking forward to another great year making all yards more beautiful.





Here We Grow Preschool June Tidings

As we come to the end of our 35th school year, I cannot say enough about how grateful I am to our current staff—Katelyn Aguiar, Brenda Carbonneau, Anne Coyne, Jill Myhre, Mary Soderberg, Jill Stohlman, and Courtney Tomaszewicz, for all their hard work and dedication. These ladies work tirelessly to keep us going and keep Here We Grow the awesome program that it is. I am looking forward to working with these fantastic ladies again in September.

We are preparing for our end-of-the-year programs. Our three-year-old classes will have their programs in the classrooms, with just their parents in attendance. The four-year-olds will again graduate on the steps of the sanctuary on June 6 and 7 in front of family and friends. It has been a pleasure watching the children grow and mature over the last year.

At this time, I would like to say thank you to the members of the Here We Grow Board: Todd Dube, Nick Stockhaus, Michele Schillinger, Carrie Grimshaw, and parents Rachel Girardi, Nichole Nduati, Michelle Wagaman and Nicole Vecchio for the support this year.

Currently, enrollment for the 2024-25 school year has minimal openings left; if you know of anyone looking for a great school, please send them our way.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our fundraisers this year, whether you donated to our clothing drives, ate at Papa Gino's, or purchased tickets for our calendar raffle, we appreciate all the support.

Go outside, dig in the dirt, play in the rain, and enjoy all that summer has to offer. I look forward to the fall and continuing the success of this program.

Cristi Corey, **Here We Grow** Director

FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

As a reminder, the 2024 'partial year' statements that cover 2024 pledges from January 1st through August 31st will be mailed out in September. To save on postage, only outstanding pledges will be mailed and not those currently caught up in their pledges. Please be assured that from every pledge received, no matter the amount, your gift of love and support, in turn, is blessed and appreciated. As always, and especially during the summer months, thank you for helping us with our yearly budgeting needs. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your pledge, contact me (Sue MacPhee) at home: 508-832-9347, or email me at: susiemac2002@gmail.com. Please include your name and call back number with some details that will help me in responding. Thank you.



Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 9th**, and plan to join us as we celebrate our children on

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY!

After the worship service that day, we will have our annual church picnic. We are looking for donations of desserts and side salads to round out our menu of hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the Board of Ed. Please see the sign-up in fellowship hall or call the church office to have your name added to the list.

All are welcome!

OPEN POSITION FOR SETTLED PASTOR:

In keeping with our church policy for open positions, we are posting the Settled Pastor opening. If anyone is interested in applying for this position, please visit <http://oppsearch.ucc.org/id/6064> to see the profile and job description. You may send your profile/resume to Ron Hanks at hanksrl@gmail.com.

Our Pastoral Search Committee has been working since July of 2023, and we have made a lot of progress. We have received 11 profiles of candidates for the position. Of the 11, we have interviewed 6. The process is going very well and we are hoping to secure a candidate soon.

FROM OUR ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR

The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12 “There are different gifts but the same Spirit...To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.” In other words, we all have our way of bringing God to those around us. Music is one of those gifts. Ps. 111: “Alleluia! I will thank God with all my heart...”

I thank God for the singers and bell choir ringers who have worked hard all year--week after week, rehearsal after rehearsal--to make the most beautiful music we can in order for all of us to experience something of the divine—to deepen our connection to God. They are an amazing group of people. And now we have two new choir members, Juan and Kaylyn, who joined us after Easter. Welcome! We all look forward to working together! If anyone wishes to join us, either in choir or bells, see me or any member and we will help you find your place among us.

As an assembly, we also are asked to “Sing joyfully to God” Psalm 100. Some older translations say “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord.” So we must all give voice to praising God through singing the hymns. Pastor Virginia has challenged us this year to learn hymns unfamiliar to some of us. Learning something new can be uncomfortable. But the next time we sing them they will be a bit more familiar. Our hymnal has over 700 hymns! Let us continue to be open to learning new hymns—it’s adding to our store of knowledge. Science tells us that when we do music our brains “light up”—every part of our brains is working! We are wonderfully made!

Therefore, as Psalm 100 says, “Sing joyfully to God, all you lands; serve God with gladness; come before God with joyful song.” Alleluia! — Paulette



FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month, National Migraine and Headache Awareness Month, and National Scleroderma Awareness Month.

June 6th is my Parish Nurse seminar at St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire. It is the second in-person seminar since COVID and I am looking forward to seeing other Parish Nurses.

It's time for the sunscreen and being careful when you are outside.

Have a wonderful healthy summer.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse

Cell: 508-612-4521

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES: As mentioned previously, the windows in Fellowship Hall, along with the Education wing, are in poor condition and the Trustees would like to replace them this summer. Here We Grow Preschool is paying to have all the windows on the first floor replaced. We cannot thank them enough for this generous gift to our Church.

We are looking for financial help with the windows on the second floor. **Thank you to everyone who has donated thus far.** The cost is \$800.00 per window. **It is not too late,** if you would like to give towards this project. **We would like to have donations into the church by the beginning of June.**

We will be honoring the donations either with the names of the donors on a plaque or at each window, which, we have not yet decided.

Thank you for your support.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!



Lorenzo Cariglio, the grandson of Cherolyn Cariglio and the late Lawrence Cariglio, graduated with honors from Auburn High School in 2023. While at Auburn High, Lorenzo was involved with chorus, basketball, and football and received the 12th Man Award in football. He is currently enrolled in the Electrical Program at Porter & Chester Institute (PCI). Lorenzo will be receiving a scholarship derived from the church's Allard and Bernice Prouty Scholarship Fund.*

Brooke Castellano, the daughter of Brian and Amy Castellano, will be graduating from Auburn High School on May 31. While at AHS, Brooke was involved with the varsity field hockey, varsity lacrosse and varsity swim teams. She also received the English Honors Award and Anatomy and Physiology Honors Award. Brooke will attend Westfield State University in the fall as an honors nursing student and will swim on the WSU Swim Team. Brooke will be receiving a scholarship derived from the church's Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund.*

Addison MacPhee has graduated Summa Cum Laude with a 4.0 GPA from the College of Charleston, SC where she earned a B.S. Degree in Computer Science with a minor in mathematics. Addison is the daughter of Brian and Christy MacPhee and Emilee Brown and granddaughter of Stan and Sue MacPhee. She has been working part time for Dominion Energy since the summer of her Sophomore year of college and is now a full time employee of Dominion Energy.

Rebecca McPherson, daughter of Rich and Jean McPherson, graduated from the University of Maine Farmington with a B.S. in Special Education. Rebecca has accepted a teaching position until December in Jay, Maine.

Jarrett John Towne will be graduating from H.H. Ellis Technical High School in Danielson, Connecticut on June 14. While in high school, Jarrett was a member of the varsity golf team and captain in his senior year. He also achieved high honors in academics. Jarrett will be attending CT State Quinebaug Valley College where he'll study Liberal Arts & Sciences/Engineering Technology. He is the son of Christopher and Jodi Towne, grandson of John and Sally Watson, and great-nephew of Richard and Marilyn Israelian-England. Jarrett will be receiving a scholarship derived from the church's Craig Whitcher Scholarship Fund.*

*At printing, a date for Scholarship Sunday had not been determined. Look for more information to come.

HERE WE GROW JOB POSTINGS

Cleaning Person

Responsible for cleaning 4 classrooms at the end of school day. Including, but not limited to, vacuuming, mopping, sanitizing. Must have reliable transportation and be comfortable working alone. Hours are Sun.-Thurs. or Mon.-Fri. evenings. \$15/hour Please send inquiries to director@herewegrowpreschool.com.

Part-time Assistant Teacher for the 2024-2025 school year Hours: Tues.-Thurs. 8:30-noon; sub as needed
Qualifications:

High School Diploma, successful completion of a CORI, SORI, BRC and fingerprinting. Willing to meet all current Dept. of Early Education and Care requirements. Willing to attend after school meetings and functions. Certification in First Aid and CPR. Freedom from communicable diseases, TB test and physical within 6 months. Experience in ECE program implementation and classroom management preferred.

Responsibilities:

Full knowledge of Here We Grow policies and procedures. Conduct self in a professional manner with parents, children, co-workers. Attend all weekly staff meetings and monthly teacher trainings. Be sensitive to children's needs. Work cooperatively with co-teachers, aides, volunteers, student observers and parents.

Starting pay of \$15.50/hour

For more information, call Cristi Corey, Director, 508-832-8184 or email: director@herewegrowpreschool.com.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The 2023/2024 Sunday School year is coming to an end. A perfect time for me to reflect on things that worked well and the things that need improvement. It is a blessing to have my Sunday School teachers and the Board of Christian Education to talk this out with.

I have 2 questions that I am consistently asking myself throughout the year. I think of them as “check in with myself” questions. #1 – Are the children happy when they are here? #2 – Are the children engaged in topics related to the Bible and our Christian faith? Yes! And Yes! So high fives all around!

What we did well: Rally Day was successful with about 12 or 13 registered Sunday School students. At one point during the winter we had over 20 students joining us in the Sunday School wing. We opened a third classroom to accommodate the age and learning variations. Our Fellowship Hall prayer time continued to be well received. We had new students willing to find their courage and read the prayer for the first time! The Christmas Pageant was a huge success. Palm Sunday was a lot of fun and the children were wonderful in the way they marched through the sanctuary.

What we need to work on: we need to fill our classrooms with curious minds, eager learners, growing friendships and the joy that only a child can offer; consistently throughout the year. We will work on doing a better job creating a space that is exciting and nurturing so that our youth choose Sunday School over sleeping in. (As a mother of 2 athletes, I relate to the challenges of managing schedules. I completely support all our students with commitments outside of church. Including, but not limited to, sports, scouts, dance, theater, and family.)

Children are a special gift to all of us from God. God works through people. He sends people into our lives according to His will. We meet people for a purpose. Children are messengers from God to teach us and to teach their peers. This year’s confirmation class and process taught me so much! One of those things is the importance of simply showing up! I speak for every student when I tell you that their attendance this year was better than any other year. They showed up! (Probably because their grown-ups made them, I know!) As a result of simply showing up, I saw friendships grow. I watched their faith in God grow. There was a personal growth in each student that was fostered by their place in the confirmation class. Support. Love. Growth. Joy. They showed up and the Holy Spirit led the way! Sunday School is an opportunity to begin all that growth sooner!!!! I cannot wait to see you all next year at Rally Day 2024 to begin a brand new journey!!

As God always does for us, He surrounded me with the support and love I needed to make this year great. Huge “Thank You” to Michele and Michael Schillinger. Your commitment to the students is immeasurable. Without any doubt, I know I can depend on you both. You have relieved most of the pressure that I sometimes feel in this role. I love you both!!!

“Thank You” to Lilly McPherson for supporting me and all the students. Monadnock, Sunday School, confirmation and sometimes just lunch; you played a role in many aspects of our youth program.

“Thank You” to Haydn McPherson and Scott Stone for also joining us at Monadnock.

“Thank You” to the BOCE!!!! I appreciate your guidance and support. You are always looking out for the best interests of our students and our church. Thank you for always looking out for me too!!!

“Thank You” to Rev. Virginia for including me in special church occasions. It was really nice getting to know you this year.

“Thank You” to Denise!!!!!! Too much to list, but as they say on social media iykyk (If You Know, You Know)!!!!

Thank you to everyone for a great year!!!!

Proverbs 27:17 proclaims: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another”

Peace and Love,

~ Shannon Hartmann



COMMUNITY YARD SALE & PLANT SALE!!!

SATURDAY, JUNE 8TH ~ 8 A.M. TO 1 P.M. ~ RAIN OR SHINE

WE WILL NEED ALL HANDS ON DECK TO HELP!

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO BAKE ITEMS TO SELL WITH COFFEE

AT THE YARD SALE/PLANT SALE. Please wrap items individually and be sure to note if nuts are included. Baked items may be dropped off between 12:30-2:30 p.m. or 6-7 p.m. on Friday, June 7th. If these hours do not work for you, please call the church office, 508-832-2845, to make alternate arrangements. Thank you!

So, please plan to support this church fundraiser by VOLUNTEERING TO HELP. We'll need help with set up (carrying chairs/tables out) on Friday night beginning at 6 p.m. and breakdown at 1 p.m. on Saturday. You may also lend your support by helping at the coffee/baked goods table. Please invite your friends and neighbors here for coffee and baked goods and/or hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch, followed by a day of bargain shopping!

Please see the volunteer sign-up sheets in fellowship hall and offer your help with the yard sale, or call the church office, 508-832-2845 or email: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org to have your name added to the list.

When separating perennials in your gardens, **PLEASE KEEP THE PLANT SALE IN MIND** and put up a few to donate. The plants are a huge part of the church's profits.

*** * * THANK YOU TO ALL WHO RENTED A SPACE AND TO ALL WHO ARE HELPING WITH THIS YEAR'S YARD SALE/PLANT SALE! * * ***

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

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United Church of Christ
128 Central St., Auburn MA 01501**

Phone: (508) 832-2845

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Email: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org

or InterimPastor@auburnfirstucc.org

*God's church in Auburn Center
doing Christ's work in the world.*

Web: auburnfirstucc.org



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