



The Congregational Church of Needham

An open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ

September 17, 2017 10:00am
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

“Hope” is the thing with feathers - (314)

By Emily Dickenson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chillest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

Welcome to our worship service.

Please join us for refreshments and time for fellowship immediately following the service.

PRELUDE

Elevation
Felix A. Guilmant (1837 - 1911)

WELCOME SONG

All Are Welcome

Selected Verses (see insert)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike

CONGREGATIONAL GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

God is with you
And also with you

*Let us pray in silence that we are anchored in Christ
(pause for silent reflection)*

Let us pray together:
**Almighty God, Mother and Father of us all,
give us such a vision of your purpose
and such an assurance of your love and power,
that we may ever hold fast the hope
which is in Jesus Christ our Lord
who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God now and forever.
Amen.**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN #576 (Black, New Century) For the Healing of the Nations

TIME FOR CHILDREN

(Children leave for Christian Education after Time for Children)

CHILDREN'S HYMN *(As the children leave we will sing.)*

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine
All through the house.... All over this world
Everywhere I go.....**

ANTHEM

Steal Away
African American Spiritual arr. Lloyd Larson

SELECTION OF READINGS

Contemporary Lesson from Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence
Christian Churches and the Global AIDS Crisis by Donald E. Messer Fortress/Augsburg Press
2004

Love, however, is never abstract, but always personal. It becomes incarnated when we pull ourselves close to the bedside of a loved one and seek to provide care and compassion. Love is when we hold their hand and share their pain. Love is when they say they are thirsty and we lift the straw to their lips. Love is when they feel sick and we fetch a basin, wrap an arm around their spasm-wracked shoulders, and wipe the sweat from their forehead.

Love is not some sexy movie star or romantic film scene, but love is when we say, "Let me help you sit up." Ultimately "love is not a smoldering glance across the dance floor, the clink of crystal, a leisurely picnic spread upon a sandy beach. It is the squeeze of the hand." It is saying: "I'm here. I'll be here no matter how long the struggle. Water? You need water? Here. Drink. Let me straighten your pillow."

In an age of incredible suffering, let us personally join God's merciful angels in loving and caring and healing. Doing so will be a way of visiting the sick as Jesus commanded (Matthew 25:36). It will be discovering a "means of grace" as deeply spiritual and meaningful as partaking in Holy Communion or being baptized. It will be experiencing anew the splendor of God's grace. Yes, as we do it to "one of the least" of God's children, we will be doing it to Christ.

Epistle 1 Corinthians 12: 12-26

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

HYMN #543 (*Black, New Century*)

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life

SERMON

“Creating a Human Rope”

Rev. Dr. Donald Messer

President Emeritus, Iliff Theological Seminary

HYMN #539 (*Black, New Century*)

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?

COMMUNITY PRAYERS

Concerns and Celebrations

Prayers for Our Friends and Families, Our Church, Our Community, and the World.

Lord's Prayer (please pray whatever form is familiar to you; many choose to pray Our Father, Our Mother, Our Father and Mother, Our Creator, or Our Maker, or Father/Mother God...debts/debtors or trespasses/those who trespass...)

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

In each of our pews today is a black friendship book which we encourage you to fill out and pass to the person next to you during the offering. If you have been with us before, just put down your name, but if you are new today, please let us know who you are.

Thanks!

Offertory Anthem

Idylle

Benjamin Godard

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise God, all creatures here below,

Praise God above, ye heavenly host,

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING HYMN #438 (*Black, New Century*)

When Peace, Like a River

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Prelude

John Rutter

Flute - Bruce Goody

Worship Assistant: Gretchen Lanka Allen
Deacons: Dibby Moder, Kirby Salerno
Altar Guild: Denice Koljonen
Ushers: Jim Conroy, Mike Normile, Janet Jankowiak, Bob Everts
Flowers: Debbie Wentworth
Flower Delivery: Martha Lamb

The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Alma Treen by her family; Jane, Adam, Matthew, and Kara Brand.

Thank you to Bruce Goody for sharing his talent on the flute today.

Notes on today's liturgy

The theme of today's worship is "Hope". The poem for meditation is by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) who spent most of her life in seclusion in Amherst MA. Here's a short fresh look at her work <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/08/04/her-own-society> August 4, 2008 issue of The New Yorker . also last year's film A Quiet Passion. The opening prayer is from the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer.



We welcome former Needham residents Don and Bonnie Messer to worship today. Don is our guest preacher.

Donald E. Messer, President Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Practical Theology, Iliff School of Theology, Denver, founded and directs the Center for Health and Hope that supports and advocates for persons infected by HIV and AIDS around the world. Author of sixteen books, Messer holds a M.Div. and Ph.D. from Boston University. Website: www.centerforhealthandhope.org;

Areas/Topics of Expertise: Academia, Activism, LGBTQ Advocacy, Non-profits, Pastoral Ministry, Second Career Students, and UMC Ministry

Welcome to all who are new or here for the first time! If you are interested in learning more about our church, please email Rev. Jim at revjim@needhamucc.org, Rev Heike at revheike@needhamucc.org or call the office at 781-444-2510 to set up a conversation.

For updates on church life, our family ministries, Christian Education and Youth Ministries follow us at: **@NeedhamUCC on Instagram**

Congregational Church of Needham UCC on Facebook

@needhamucc on Twitter www.needhamucc.org

Please silence your cell phone before attending the service. You can Check In on Facebook and let people know you are here. Feel free to Tweet, Snapchat, or Instagram during the service. If you would like or need a hearing device an usher will be able to assist you. Children's Child-care is offered for infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers in the Nursery located downstairs during the service.

Rev. Jim Mitulski's Office Hours

Please contact the church office to schedule an appointment during his office hours of Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm; Thursday 2-5pm Evening hours are also available by appointment.

*If these times do not work for you please contact the office for alternate availability.

Staff

Interim Senior Minister—The Rev. Jim Mitulski
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The Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton, Pastor Emeritus

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

September 17, 2017

TODAY! August Delegation Reportback: Sept. 17, 11:30 am, Linden Hall. Please join the August delegation travelers' who will share their experiences and various exciting updates from Santa María Tzejá. Light refreshments will be served.

Meditation Book Group! Thursday Sept. 21 at 7pm

The Meditation Practice Group will be leading a book group once a month on the third Thursday at 7pm. The first book we will read is called, "Full Catastrophe Living" by Jon Kabat-Zinn. At our first meeting on Sept. 21st, we will watch the documentary, "Mindfulness Goes Mainstream" and then we will discuss the book schedule. Everyone is welcome!

DON'T MISS OUT! Guatemala Partnership Founders Dinner, September 23, 6 – 9 pm

The Guatemala Partnership will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the project with founders Clark and Kay Taylor. ALL ARE INVITED to attend this festive but casual event that includes a catered reception and dinner, marimba band, photo exhibit, and stories. Reservations close Sunday night, Sept. 17th, so please contact Brenda Metzler ASAP (bmetzler7@verizon.net) or (781) 449-5696 to purchase tickets (\$25/person). We hope to see you there!

Sunday, September 24, 7:00 – 8:30 pm, at the Johnson's home (505 Great Plain Ave.)

Conversation with International Accompanier, Caya Simonsen.

Caya has just completed 6 months of work in Guatemala, accompanying individuals and organizations who are at risk due to their human rights activities. Caya's work, supported in part by funds from the Guatemala Partnership/Ministry Team, has been largely with organizations or communities attempting to defend their rights and land from repression and environmental harms from international mining companies and hydroelectric dam projects.

SAVE THE DATE – Super Saturday – October 21st A day of workshops, worship and fellowship! Join us at the UCC's Super Saturday event and find out what is going on in other UCC churches in our area. We would like to bring a group of 8-12 people representing our church. Talk to Rev. Jim or email the church office at office@needhamucc.org to get registered, or with any questions.

SIGN-UP NOW FOR FEBRUARY 2018 DELEGATION

Brenda Metzler and Fred Moder will co-lead the church's upcoming delegation to Santa María Tzejá (February 14-25, 2018). We are seeking a few more adults and high school youth to complete the delegation. Total cost is approximately \$1,500. Sign-ups will close as soon as the delegation is filled (late September or earlier), so don't delay in contacting Brenda or Fred with your interest/questions: bmetzler7@verizon.net; or fmoder@verizon.net.

Mindfulness Meditation – Sunday, Sept. 24, Oct. 8 & 22 at 11:30am

The Mindfulness Practice Group has decided to meet twice a month on the second and fourth Sunday's for Mindfulness Meditation in the Chapel.

Bible Study Please join us in the reception room from 11:30-12:30 for Bible Study. We gather to read and discuss a few chapters of the Bible each week. This fall we will be reading Revelations. No advance reading required, so please drop by if you would like to try us out! For questions, contact Sunu Yeh at dormouse99@gmail.com.

Get ready for another season of CHIMING! Rehearsals begin on 9/17, and we welcome anyone, men, women, young adults, youth--who wants to join in music making. You don't have to be a musician or read music (Many of our chimers mark their music with the 2 NOTES they play), but you will need 2 good arms/wrists, an ability to keep time as you make music with others, and commitment to coming to rehearsals (after church 11:30-12:15). We are looking for regular chimers and subs (who cannot make a regular commitment). Our leader Crosby Goshgarian makes chiming a lot of fun, and everyone is so patient and encouraging. **TRY OUT CHIMING AFTER CHURCH TODAY**--in the hallway or in Fellowship Hall. Contact: Joanne Seiden (jseiden@basiclink.com, 781-449-6535) for more information or speak to one of the chimers. **WE NEED YOU!**

Village Fair News : The Village Fair Needs You!! November 18, 9:30 am-3:00 pm!

Volunteer! Join in the fun and fellowship of preparing for and helping at this festive annual event! We need prep cooks, sorters, pricers, servers, cashiers ... Look for sign-up sheets at coffee hour. We welcome new faces! This is a great way to meet and mingle with other members of your church family.

Bake! Bakers needed! What's your specialty? Pies, breads, cookies, bars? Maybe even a cake? Baked goods can be dropped off at Fellowship Hall on Friday, November 17 -- except for pies, which should be dropped off the morning of the Fair. Pie pans will be available for pie bakers to pick up starting in mid-October.

Knit! Do you have a talent for knitting and needlework? Consider sharing your talents, with a handmade donation to our Knitting and Handcrafts Table.

Donate! What can you donate? All kinds of things!

Used Books --Pass on those summer reads and other used books! (CDs, DVDs and puzzles welcome, too.)

Timeless Treasures – Wondering what to do with Great Aunt Tillie's candlesticks? Or that vase you received for your wedding that you've just *never* used? Pass them on to someone who will cherish them! We welcome donations of dishes, glassware, vases, linens, decorative items and the like.

Jewelry – Take a look through your jewelry box (check in the back!) If you find something that you don't wear any longer, please consider donating it. Donations of both fine and costume jewelry accepted.

Donations of hand knit items, used books, jewelry, and items for Timeless Treasures can be left on the stage in Fellowship Hall -- at the back left corner behind the curtain. Please label your box or bag "Village Fair."

Garden Fence – Christmas-related items -- green wreaths, small trees, ornaments and decorative items, as well as interesting containers and baskets -- can be repurposed into new decorations and displays to bring joy as a gift or to brighten your own home during the holidays.

Recycle, Re-purpose, Re-invent – The EMT team is looking for donated items – such as wine corks, wooden picture frames (medium to large size), battery powered candles, old mirrors, fall and holiday silk flowers and foliage -- which can be given new life and repurposed into new creations.

Donations for Garden Fence and Recycle, Re-purpose, Re-invent can be dropped off in the box labeled "Village Fair Donations" located in the hall by the chapel.

Village Fair questions? Contact Jane Brand at ajbrand@comcast.net.

2017 Village Fair Auction Your auction team wants to thank you for your generous donations to the Auction last year. We raised over \$4,000.00 for the church and its programs last year. We are again looking for donations for this years Auction. Please consider making a donation. Some items that work well are: restaurant gift certificates, vacation homes, sports tickets, spa get-a-ways and a weekend away . . . You get the idea. Be creative. Your Auction team chairs, Caryl Johnson, caryljohnson@gmail.com and Fabienne Madsen, fabienne@fabienmadsendesign.com

Thank you in advance for your consideration and donation to this great cause.

Note: If you want to help us or join our team please let us know. Thank you.

Bylaws Review. A team of Deacons and Board Members has initiated a review of our Church's bylaws to identify areas where updates would be helpful. The intent is to have any proposed changes ready for Congregational review in the late fall and for a vote at next January's Annual Meeting.

The team is not contemplating changing the Church's governing structure. We are considering clarifying responsibilities of Church Committees (including the Board and Deacons), as well as clarifying which Board actions require approval of the Congregation at an Annual or Special Meeting. We are also Plan to make the Parish and Pastoral Relations Committee (PPRC) a per-

manent Committee of the Church.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for the team, feel free to contact any one of its members: Susan Lively, Mike Normile, Sharmon Priaulx, Howie Sesso, and Scott Stewart.

You can find a copy of the current Bylaws on the church web site. Click [here](#). Or, from the Church home page (needhamucc.org) mouse over “Come” in the upper left. A pop-up menu will appear, click on “Who We Are”. The “Who We Are” page will appear. Click on “Our Church Bylaws” near the top.

One Book One Community – 2017 Community Book Read in Needham

The Needham Free Public Library is partnering with several other community organizations to sponsor a One Book One Community Program this summer. The chosen book is “In the Country We Love: My Family Divided” by Diane Guerrero.

“In September, the library and co-sponsors will present discussion groups and a lecture to wrap up the program,” said library Director Ann MacFate. “These programs will provide a forum for people to come together and discuss the ideas in the book.” For information, contact the library at 781-455-7559, option 2 or check the online calendar at <http://needhamma.gov/calendar.aspx>. No registration is required to attend.

Book Discussions are scheduled as follows:

Sunday, September 24th at 2:00 PM

Community Room at the Library

Tuesday, September 26th at 7:30 PM

Community Room at the Library

9/10/2017 Collections* = \$3,935.25

9/10/2017 Worship Attendance = 127 People

August Electronic Pledge Amount: \$12,245.37

Please contact the church office 781-444-2510 or office@needhamucc.org to find out how you can give electronically.

*Collection amount does not include additional pledges received electronically. Our current pledge amount for 2017 is \$367,804.00. This represents a budget shortfall of \$56,459.00 for the year.

September 17th—October 1st

Sunday September 17th Blessing of the Bicycles	8:15 am 8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 4:00 pm 6:30 pm	Men's Breakfast, <i>Library</i> Choir Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Chimer's Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Bake Sale Guatemala Report Back, <i>Linden Hall</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group
Monday September 18th	9:00 am 7:30 pm	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i> Property Committee Meeting, <i>Library</i>
Thursday September 21st	7:30 pm	Meditation Book Group, <i>Library</i>
Saturday September 23rd	6:00 pm	Guatemala Founders Dinner
Sunday September 24th	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 4:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Choir Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service— Ride for Food, <i>Sanctuary</i> Who We Are Now-Who We Are Next, <i>Linden Hall</i> Meditation with Sue Findlay, <i>Chapel</i> Bible Study, <i>Reception Room</i> Chimer's Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Junior High Youth Group Senior High Youth Group Guatemala Partnership: Conversation w/ International Accompanier, <i>Johnson's Home</i>
Monday September 25th	9:00 am	Cancer Support Group, <i>Reception Room</i>
Tuesday September 26th	7:00 pm	Finance Team Meeting, <i>Conference Room</i>
Sunday October 1st	8:30 am 10:00 am 11:30 am 4:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal, <i>Sanctuary</i> Worship Service, <i>Sanctuary</i> Chimer Practice, <i>Sanctuary</i> Church Town Hall Meeting, <i>Linden Hall</i> St. Francis Pet Blessing Service Mystery Dinner Theater Rehearsal Guatemala Meeting

FAMILY PICTURES!

Send in a current picture of
you/your family for the



NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

Pictures can be sent as an email
attachment to office@needhamucc.org.
Deadline: Monday, October 16th