



FOCUS

June 2015 | Vol. 38 Issue 6

Worship In June

Theme:

The Acts of the Apostles

June 7

Youth Sunday

June 14

Rev. Heike

June 21

Father's Day

Rev. Susan

June 28

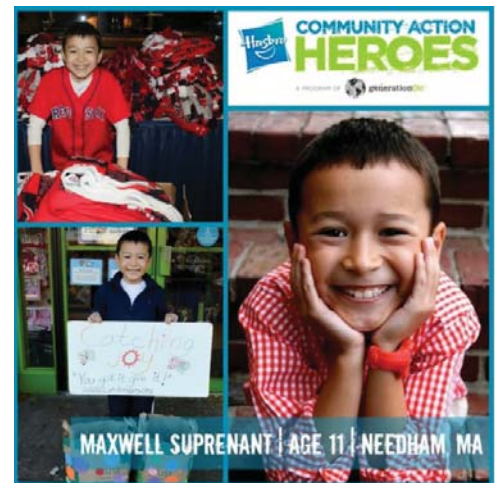
Hymn Sing

A Message from Rev. Dr. Susan Cartmell

There is an 11 year old boy in Needham who has been getting a lot of press for his humanitarian efforts. A fifth grader at St. Joseph's, Maxwell Suprenant had been traveling a lot recently. He went out to Los Angeles where he was honored by the Hasbro Corporation. He has been to the Kennedy Library to receive an award, and he went to Washington DC to meet President Barak Obama where he was among the honorees. Suprenant is working with his mom to their non-profit called Catching Joy . Their program designs humanitarian projects to help the homeless and the less fortunate through random acts of kindness.

What impressed me most about Maxwell was that he seems happy in a way that really is contagious. His face radiates joy. His story reminds us that joy comes to you from acts of mercy and kindness. It also emphasizes that we all have the potential to make a difference. We live that reality every day in our church. As a community of faith we

are intentional about our commitment to address issues of inequity in our world on two levels – with mercy and with justice. We try to reach out in ways that help lift the spirits of people who are struggling. But we also address the under-lying conditions that create suffering and try to alleviate those, where we can.



Maxwell has Catching Joy, but I think our church is a place where you Catch Faith. When you Catch Faith – you commit to being part of a community of people who are intentional about changing the world in large and small ways. Often the work takes patience and perseverance. But the promise we have is that we can make a difference. Whether we always see the impact of our efforts or not, there is something really joyful about trying. It cannot help but make you smile.

As a congregation we have an amazing opportunity to use our new space and some of our more familiar space in new ways. We can lighten the load of the poor, address issues of injustice and reach out to the community in new ways. I invite you to pray about this opportunity, to think creatively, and to keep your ideas and suggestions flowing. This period of discernment holds the potential to make a real difference in the church's life and in the lives of so many others.

Summer Preaching – this summer we hope to worship in our newly renovated Chapel. It should be a wonderful treat. The painters are working this week but the work is progressing. This summer our sermon theme is The Acts of the Apostles. Rev. Heike has suggested we look at the early church and how it got its start. I think it is a great idea.

This summer our Seminary intern Sandra Summers will preach 2 times and help out in worship several times as well.

I would also like to make the offer that you send me your suggestions for sermons. I will try to craft sermons in July that respond to the questions or ideas you give me. I love responding to your ideas. So bring 'em on.

Blessing,
Susan

Music Ministry News by Dr. Bobby DeRegis, Director of Music

It is hard to believe that summer is coming so quickly. The clock always seems to run faster when the days are longer, but please keep church in your busy schedules. We have our Friendly Chime Ringers playing in the service on June 14th; our wonderful Chancel choir with flautist Bruce Goody on May 31st (Confirmation Sunday); and special music from our young members on Youth Sunday, June 7th.

Summer services promise to be quite lovely in our newly refurbished and air conditioned chapel. Our youth music director Valerie Becker will be playing the beautiful Steinway recently donated by Rick and Dana Devereux. Members are encouraged to offer solos and instrumental voluntaries during the service as well.

Please contact the church office if you are interested. I will be off most Sundays in the summer, but I look forward to seeing you all after Labor day. I wish all of you a peaceful and restful summer.



FROM KRISTEN HYDINGER INTERIM YOUTH DIRECTOR

Thank you all for welcoming me, supporting me, and working with me! Palm Sunday doesn't seem that long ago and yet my time here is drawing to a close. I am in awe of the community I see active and alive and working for God's justice, mercy, grace, and peace on a daily basis here. It has been an invaluable learning experience for my own personal discernment of my vocational call - plus a lot of fun! If you ever want to say hi, starting July 1, you can find me at the West Suburban YMCA in Newton where I am their Member Services Coordinator.

Peace and grace to you and yours.
~Kristen Hydinger

FOCUS

Focus is published monthly. Contributions from members and friends of the Church are invited. Please submit materials by e-mail to office@needhamucc.org.

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ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIESTEAM NEWS

...EARTH STEWARDSHIP FOR OUR LIVES TODAY...

LED Bulb Donations to continue.



If you are out shopping for energy efficient LED bulbs for your home, please consider purchasing one or two for the church. Please leave bulbs in the donation box located near the mailboxes in the church office. Here is a list of what is needed for the church:

- 14 12W (800-1100 lumens) A-21 lamps
- 45 8W (450-800 lumens) A-19 lamps
- 30 8W (450-800 lumens) G25 lamps

All of the lamps should have a temperature of 2700K which will provide warmer light.

Check out the EMT bulletin board for more information about LED bulbs.

Luther and Germany by Rev. Heike Werder, Assoc. Minister

A few days ago I made some final arrangements for our Germany trip. I had to get up early to talk to "real" people in Berlin and Wittenberg, two places that we are going to visit on our Germany tour.



It feels good when long-term plans finally come together and become a reality. As the school year comes to an end, a group of 12 from our church and beyond are getting ready for a summer adventure.

For 8 days your Germany travelers will explore the life and times of Martin Luther. We will stay two days in Lutherstadt, Wittenberg to visit the places Luther taught, preached, and raised his family. We will visit Leipzig where JS Bach set Luther's hymn to beautiful music. And we will visit the Wartburg, the castle that was home to Luther while the world was out to get him.

I am delighted to also show off my favorite city in Germany - Potsdam, and take the group to my home town of Falkensee. I have never been a tour guide for a whole group before but I am really looking forward to our trip.

We hope to keep you well informed about our trip either via blog or Facebook or the website. We will let you know how we are going to do that.

I get to share my love of history with you. The life of the great Reformer has a special place in my heart. Here are a few things you might not have known about Martin Luther, the great Reformer:

1. **Sing me a song** - An accomplished Lute player, Luther composed countless hymns and is regarded as one of the most important German composers prior to Bach. He is considered by many the father of congregational hymn singing.
2. **Wittenberg: an artists' colony** - Wittenberg, where Luther lived much of his life, was a tiny town in the Germany of that period. Yet Luther found himself living only a few doors away from two of the greatest German painters of the day, Lucius Cranach and his son. The Cranachs are responsible for the series of striking portraits of Luther that still survive.
3. **The 'Fish Barrel' incident** - Luther's wife was an ex-nun who had managed to escape from her convent by hiding in barrel that had once contained pickled fish.
4. **The dawn of a new faith** - With his translation of the Bible into German, Luther attained permanent fame as a unificator of the German language. Today some 70 million believers on all five continents are members of the Lutheran Church.

5. **The animal activist** - Luther was bitterly opposed to hunting. When he was disguised as a knight in the castle of the Wartburg, he refused to take part in the customary rabbit hunt. One ran up his leg to escape the dogs, but they still bit through the cloth and killed it.

6. **Surrounded by relics** - Although Luther objected to the holy relics he discovered in Rome, there were at least as many on his own doorstep. The Castle Church of Wittenberg contained a collection of over 1500 relics including bones of saints and bits of the true cross. Every All Saints day, these would be spread on the grass in front of the church for the local populace to come and gaze at.

7. **The most infamous woodworker and gardener of his time** - Luther was paid no wage, and took no payment for his services. At the end of his life, with six children, he installed a lathe and learnt woodworking in order to keep the money coming in. He was also a keen gardener, apparently producing fantastic lettuces, beans, melons and cucumbers.

8. **Extreme repentance** - As a young monk Luther was obsessed with atoning for his sins and went to ridiculous lengths to punish himself. This ranged from extreme self denial, physical and mental tests to self flagellation. One punishment consisted of lying in the snow, through the night at the height of winter until he had to be carried back inside.

9. **Luther the Family man** - Many considered Luther a brute. His table manners were deplorable and he always spoke his mind. It surprised many that he actually did get married to Katharina von Bora. Luther once said of wives, "They'll never give me one", even though he encouraged all clergy to marry which would advocate an end to the monasteries. Eventually, he set the example himself and married Katharina. Together they had 6 children.

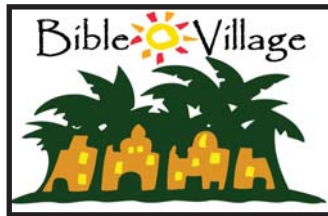
10. **Health and Death** - Luther was born in the small mining town of Eisleben, in the Thuringian Forest. It was there he died of natural causes. His health was always precarious. He suffered from many ills, like constipation, hemorrhoids, Ménière's disease and cataracts. In 1536, he developed kidney and bladder stones, arthritis and even an ear infection (that ruptured an ear drum). The medical abilities of his wife kept him going for longer than anyone would have thought.

Luther had felt the effects of angina by 1544. In 1546, after the negotiations with Count Albrecht of Mansfeld over his family's copper mining trade was successfully concluded, Luther experienced chest pains. An apoplectic stroke deprived him of his speech. He finally left this world on February 18, 1546. Martin Luther was (and still is) buried in the Castle Church in Wittenberg.

Youth Ministry News from Kristen Hydinger, Interim Youth Director

Bible Village End of Year Celebration

On Sunday, June 14, 2015, from 11:30-12:00, Sunday School children and families and the church community are invited to Fellowship Hall for an end of year celebration. The Christian Education Committee will be scooping out ice cream, certificates will be given to children who attended Bible Village, Sunday School teachers will be thanked, Preschoolers entering Bible Village in the Fall will participate in a rising up ceremony, and the children will lead all gathered in Amazing Grace.



of youth willing to help you out!

Looking Ahead

ALL adults are encouraged to volunteer with the Bible Village program. You don't have to have kids in the program. You do not have to be a church members. And you don't need to have any special expertise. Lesson plans are easy to follow and all supplies are in classrooms. Keep an eye out for the Sign Up Genius link for the 2015-2016 school year in your email inbox later this summer.



- Crib/Toddler/Preschool: Assist our preschool teacher and help watch the babies from 10-11am.
- Workshop Teachers: Ideally, teachers lead 3 sessions of the SAME lesson to different age groups. This provides consistency and continuity for the children and allows the teachers to become familiar with the lesson. Like to be silly, sign up to teach games. Want to snack and teach? Sign up to teach cooking. Enjoy reading? Sign up to teach story. The children of the church are grateful for your gifts of time and presence.
- Shepherds: Guide kids from the sanctuary to Children's Chapel and Bible Village classrooms.

Summer Worship Childcare

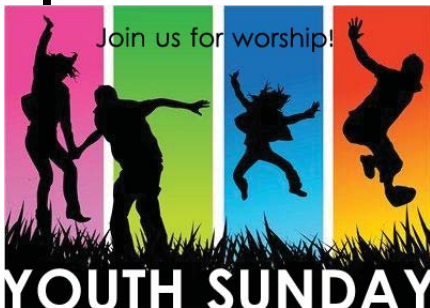
From June 21 through August 30, there are no Sunday School classes, but childcare will be available for all kids ages 6 and under downstairs in the Preschool Room. Older children are invited to join their families in worship.

Need a Babysitter?

We are compiling names of Needham UCC youth willing to hang out and wear out your kids while you're at work or play. Need someone to watch them the last week in August since there's no VBS? Looking for someone with a car who can pick up your child from camp throughout the summer? Be on the lookout for a list



YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS



Youth Sunday

Mark your calendars for Sunday, June 7 for Youth Sunday, when senior high youth lead the morning worship service in word, song, and prayer.

R-Z: Drinks.

Hot dogs, burgers, and veggie burgers will be provided. Youth and parents and siblings welcome! Rain location at the church.

Senior High In-house Day of Service

Thursday, June 25, 8am-7pm, at the church

Come in your painting gear and prepare to give parts of the church a touch up! Snacks and dinner will be provided. Please bring your own lunch. Bringing \$15 helps offset the cost of supplies and food. Please RSVP to Kristen Hydinger via email (youth@needhamucc.org) by June 20.



Combined Junior & Senior High Youth Group End of Year BBQ

June 7, 2015, 4-6pm, Rock/Priault residence (483 Great Plain Ave, Needham)

Please bring a dish to share based on your last name: A-D: Dessert, E-K: Appetizer, L-P: Salad/side dish,

An Update from David Dirks, Moderator

This month, we moved forward on several fronts with the new building. We finished plans for construction in the rear of the building, received town approval for use of the building for classrooms, and finalized a lease with Temple Beth Shalom (TBS), who will be helping us to fund some of the needed construction as well as providing rent for their occupancy into late 2016. The board is grateful to Don Libbey for building this partnership with TBS and to the entire construction team for their hard work to keep us on schedule. There were some setbacks along the way. For example, we discovered that the windows needed to be replaced. But TBS offered to help, and in the end we will have better, more energy efficient double-pane windows in the building which will serve us well for years to come. As you can imagine there are many moving parts that had to come together to make all this work, and we are thankful to everyone who pitched in to keep us on track.

There are other construction initiatives that are moving forward as well. Blair Wentworth and the Environmental Ministry Team have been assessing our current heating system and planning the installation of a new gas boiler for our church which will save money and provide the church with cleaner, more efficient heat. We believe this could be installed this summer, although we do not have all the final plans in place just yet. We are also continuing to evaluate elevator designs for the south entrance of the church. This has turned out to be a complex endeavor with many options for design at a wide range of costs. Elevators need to be custom-ordered well ahead of installation and unfortunately it does not look feasible to have this done over this summer given where we are in the design process. We will look at alternative time lines and report back as we make progress.

The Pastoral Relations Committee (PPRC) which was launched earlier this year following the church-wide survey taken last year, has been speaking with staff, ministers, and church members over the past couple of months to develop an informed view of the concerns of our membership. The Board and Deacons look forward to meeting with the PPRC in early June to hear their feedback, to understand how they think the committee can be most helpful, and to consider any recommendations they have for improving the church.

Finally, Katy and I are looking forward to welcoming you all to our home on May 30th for an evening of fun, fellowship, and fundraising. If you haven't bought your tickets yet, please just come and buy them at the door. The rain that's coming later this weekend is forecast to hold off until later Saturday night, but even if it doesn't, we'll just shelter in the barn. So let's put our day-to-day concerns and worries aside and come together to thank God for everything we have been given and enjoy each other's company as a church community.

- Dave



CHURCH RENOVATION NEWS

with Keith McClelland

Our new building at 1180 Great Plain Avenue:

- Temple Beth Shalom's pre-school will be our temporary tenant in the space in the rear portion of the building this September. Construction will be completed before the end of the summer.
- The staff and Board's discernment process for how to use the space after the first tenant has moved out is continuing.

Our main building at 1154 Great Plain Avenue:

The construction committee and the EMT is hoping to update the old heating plant with new energy-efficient gas-fired boilers and associated equipment.

Our Chapel:

All of the work in the chapel will be completed in June including:

- A new hardwood floor at a single level.
- A new paint scheme based on congregational input.
- New lighting consisting of 100% dimmable LEDs.
- A starter set of beautiful worship seats.

COMMUNITY FARM SATURDAYS



JUNE 13 & JULY 11 9AM-NOON

Do you like to get dirty? Do you like to garden? Or maybe you are just looking for a service opportunity....: if so, please join us at the Needham Community Farm on Saturday, June 13th or Saturday, July 11th from 9am-12pm. The Outreach Committee has created this opportunity to support our giving theme of aiding the fight against hunger in our local community. If interested, please visit <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0844a8aa23a2fd0-outreach> to sign up .

Questions, please contact Heidi Wiesel at Heidi.wiesel@gmail.com or 781-467-9503.



25th Annual Guatemala Yard Sale Is Hugely Successful!



fitting that the 25th anniversary of this yard sale yielded an unprecedented \$5,700 in funds. And in addition to celebrating the funds raised for education in Santa Maria Tzeja, we also celebrate the reuse/recycling of items that people donated, the camaraderie and satisfaction of working together on something meaningful, and the community

awareness fostered by this event. Volunteers ranged in age from grade-schoolers to 80-year-olds, notably including Tillie and Nora Slosser who ran the yard sale's first lemonade stand to support the sale. Thanks to all who contributed in a variety of ways to make this such a fun and memorable event.

It is

Partner Family Letters for August Delegation: It is time once again for partner families and scholarship donors to write their letters to send down with the early August delegation. We need plenty of time to let our volunteers translators do their work, so please send your letter as soon as possible to: Davebjohnson@verizon.net. Thank you.

It's not too early to be planning to join the February 2016 delegation to Guatemala! Travel dates are February 10-21, 2016. We hope to have a healthy mix of adults and high school youth to represent the church. Since airline tickets must be purchased in late September, please contact delegation leader Brenda Metzler as soon as possible with your interest or questions: (781) 449-5696 or bmetzler7@verizon.net.

JUNE 2015

Sunday	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2 Community Dinner	3	4 Lunch with Heike	5	6
7 Youth Sunday Bible Study *The Reformation Continues	8 Cancer Support Group	9	10	11	12	13
14 Bible Study	15 Cancer Support Group	16	17	18	19	20
21 Men's Breakfast Bible Study	22 Cancer Support Group	23	24	25	26	27
28 Worship	29	30				

STEPPING BACK INTO CHURCH HISTORY

THE REFORMATION CONTINUES
Sunday June 7, 11:30am

How has the Protestant Reformation informed and changed the centuries that followed. We are going to explore how the Reformation is still affecting us today.

FELLOWSHIP & SPIRITUAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP
Monday at 9:00am

Rev. Susan Cartmell leads this weekly support group on Monday mornings, from 9 to 10:15 a.m.

THURSDAY LUNCH
Thursday June 4, Noon

Food builds community. We all have to eat, but

we don't have to eat alone. Everyone is cordially invited to have a simple lunch at the church on the first Thursday of every month. Soups are vegetarian based (most of them) but always lactose and nut free. Everyone is welcome!

COMMUNITY DINNER – EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
Tuesday June 2
6 to 7 p.m., Linden Hall

Everybody is welcome to join us for dinner. If you like to help with dinner prep, set up and clean up, please contact Rev. Heike. Otherwise just come! Dinner starts at 6 pm and ends around 7 pm.

BIBLE STUDY
Sunday 11:30am - 12:30pm

Gospel of John. We will meet in the reception room from 11:30-12:30 after church to continue our study of the book of John. This is a great opportunity to discuss your spiritual questions with other people of faith. Everyone is welcome to drop in and join us. For more information, contact Sunu Yeh at dormouse99@gmail.com.

NEW GRIEF GROUP



Grief does not end with a funeral. When you lose someone you love it takes a long time to adjust to the change. Whether the grief you experience is a death or other loss, sometimes it helps to know you are not alone. Living with someone who has memory loss is a grief process. Often it helps to be with others who have some similar experiences. If you would be interested in joining a prayer support group for those who are grieving please speak to Rev. Susan or send her an e-mail - revsusan@needhamucc.org.



CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF NEEDHAM

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Men's Breakfast, Sunday June 21st Father's and Faith!

On Sunday, 6/21, the Men's Breakfast Fellowship will welcome all church men to breakfast. Our topic will be about fatherhood and faith.

The Men's Breakfast brings men of all ages and persuasions together in the Library on the 3rd Sunday of the month before worship in honest and lively discussion touching our faith and our lives in today's complex world. We welcome men of all ages and accommodate those with scheduling challenges. Arrive at 8:15 AM for fellowship and breakfast or by 9:00 AM for the discussion.

Contact: John Baldwin (jsbaldwin@comcast.net) or Rob Dunlavey (rob@robd.com) for more information.

address

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