



FOCUS

May 2016 | Vol. 39 Issue 5

A Message from Rev. Heike Werder

For five days in April (10th-15th), I went to Kripalu, cashing in the generous gift certificate you gave me as a birthday present back in December. I had no idea how much I had needed these five days of rest, exercise and good food. I cannot thank you enough for this very special and thoughtful gift.

Coming back and entering work and home life was a little hard. It was nice not to have to worry about "stuff" for a few days. It was nice not having to listen to the mean political rhetoric that is darkening our TV screens from morning to night. It was nice to step away from the problems that riddle our world. I know, I know, one cannot stay in the "nice" for too long, because life happens and the world goes on.



But I was wondering, wouldn't it be nicer if the world was filled with more good news than bad? Would our

lives be different? Would we feel differently? Would we act differently?

In my ponderings I came across a website: www.amazingnews.org. It is a website that just reports good news, positive events, medical and scientific

breakthroughs, and cool tips. You can read stories like:

- A firefighter saves man during a 10 k run
- A police officer skates with community to create real bonds with the kids
- A high school boy buys flowers for all the girls
- How a pink shirt raises awareness for bullying, and
- How a scientific breakthrough could clean up landfills.

Curious? Take a look at the website. It certainly lifted my spirits. We need good news for our souls. We need to know that people still care about other people, about the environment, about making healthy and wholesome connections. We need to know that kindness will always win in the end, even it does not look like it at the moment.

May your spring be filled with good news, kind interactions with the people around, and inspirations that feed your soul and the souls of your loved ones, neighbors, and strangers.

Blessings,
Heike

Preaching Schedule for May

After Jesus was resurrected from the dead, he appeared to his followers 12 times, adding up all the gospels' accounts. He entered their lives again and in his instructions he gave them gifts that would support them as they continued their ministry.

Here are the next few sermons in the Easter season until we get to Pentecost:

- May 1 - "Christ's Gift of Trust" Rev. Heike Werder
- May 9 - Christ's Gift of Forgiveness and Healing" Rev. Heike Werder
- May 15 - Pentecost "Christ's Gift of Enlivening Power" Rev. Heike Werder
- May 22- The Rev. Wendy Vanderhart
- May 29 - Madelyn Downer, M.Div.

WELCOME....

The Rev. Wendy Vanderhart is our Associate Conference minister of the MA Conference of the UCC.

In her positions with the conference, Rev. Wendy assists with pastoral searches and transitions, provides support for churches and pastors and works with Association committees in the Andover, Essex and Metropolitan Boston Associations.



Our own, Maddie Downer, is a M.Div. graduate of ANTS (2015) and has been our CE & Youth Director for the past year.

YOU ARE INVITED!

On Sunday, May 22, 2016, at 4 p.m., John Allen will be officially installed as the 23rd Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Milton. You are invited to attend this festive worship service. John. Martin B. Copenhaver, President of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, will preach. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Music Ministry News by Valerie Becker, Director of Music

During the month of April we acknowledged the Armenian Holocaust. The Chancel Choir performed the Lord's Prayer, the "Hayr Mer" and "Der Getso" - a prayer for the Armenian people - in Armenian on April 24th. This day is a day of remembrance for that community and the many people that were lost. We hope that you were moved by these two pieces.

As we go into May we celebrate Mother's Day. Our youth choirs will sing "A Mother's Silent Prayer." They are excited to sing for you all again! And on Sunday May 22, the Friendly Chimers will play our prelude and we will present a few selections that

were written by our alto section leader, Maggie Furtak. Maggie has composed a number of choral works and the Chancel Choir has been learning some of her music this spring.



I also wish to again ask for music volunteers for our summer services. Please let me know if there is something that you might like to share with the congregation! These services are low key and it is a lovely way to share your gifts with everyone!



News from Our Spring Fundraising Season! 'Not Your Average Talent Show' Appreciation:

The Guatemala Partnership wants to thank Director Cici Hunt and all the musical contributors, young and young-at-heart, who made the recent Not Your Average Talent Show concert and Silent Auction such an uplifting community event and successful fundraiser. It is a pleasure to acknowledge and celebrate the blessings of our generous and multi-talented church community! And the education projects in our sister village will greatly benefit from the \$3,200 raised.



Guatemala Serv-a-thon Acknowledgments:

Thanks to all who made financial pledges and to the volunteers who carried out community-service work in the church and at the Needham Community Farm 3 weeks ago. One team (fortified by Anne Hayek and Debbie and Blair Wentworth) painted a lower-level hallway and cleaned tables in Fellowship Hall at the church, while another prepared 12 spring beds for planting at the Needham Community Farm's garden at Newman School on Central Ave. Workers learned that the Newman site produced more than 1,000 pounds of fresh vegetables for the Needham community last year! Check out the work in person or see photos on the Guatemala bulletin board near Fellowship Hall.



Plain Ave.) -- Don't miss this opportunity to donate your items, to volunteer, and/or to shop at one of Needham's largest yard sales! Those who have worked or attended this long-running event look forward to it every year as a wonderful, fun community activity that recycles your treasures and raises funds for education in Santa María Tzejá. Donations (and volunteers) are needed: We are seeking items in clean, working condition (no clothing), including: Children's gear, toys/games, sports equipment, household items, collectible or vintage items, jewelry, artwork, DVD's, books, bikes, electronics (no TV's or computers), tools, garden supplies, outdoor furniture, or small indoor furniture items. Drop-Off of Donated Items begins at 7:00 pm, Sunday, May 8th thru Noon, Friday, May 13th at Dave and Caryl Johnson's garage (505 Great Plain). Please lift the left-side garage door and put donations inside. For questions or to volunteer, please contact Brenda Metzler at: bmetzler7@verizon.net or (781) 449-5696. Thank you.

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.

June issue deadline:
Thursday, May 26

Rev. Heike Werder
Assoc. Minister
revheike@needhamucc.org

Maddie Downer
CE & Youth Director
youth@needhamucc.org

Valerie Becker
Music Director
musicdirector@needhamucc.org

Danielle Jurdan
Administrator
office@needhamucc.org

Cindy Sullivan
Office Assistant
office2@needhamucc.org

Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton,
Pastor Emeritus

UPCOMING EVENT: 26th Annual Guatemala Yard Sale (Sat., May 14th, 9 am -2 pm, 505 Great

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BOARD NOTES

Here is a brief summary of the Board's April meeting.

The Board approved the Interim Minister Search Committee's recommendation to offer the interim minister position to Rev. Jim Mitulski, and also approved the compensation package negotiated by a special subcommittee of the Board.

The Board appointed Howie Sesso to the Board to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Len Chang. In accordance with the bylaws, Howie will serve until the next annual meeting. (He may choose to stand for a full three-year term at that time.)

The Board anticipates another vacancy this summer due to a relocation. If you are interested in serving on the Board, or would simply like more information, please send an email to board@needhamucc.org. The commitment would be to serve until the January, 2017 annual meeting, when you may choose to stand for a full term if you wish.

The board discussed progress on several of the longer-term projects identified in last month's Focus. Again, these projects include:

- Reviewing all of the Church's various committees and ministry teams with an eye toward increasing opportunities for all congregants to participate in the life of the church.
- Reviewing the Church's personnel policies and revising them as necessary to ensure compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.
- Reviewing the Church's Bylaws
- Improving communications between the Church leadership and the congregation
- Reviewing the status of the capital campaign and building projects
- Reviewing the Church's efforts in the areas of stewardship and membership development

If you would like to participate in any of these efforts, or if you have suggestions or comments you would like to share, please send an email to board@needhamucc.org.

As a reminder, the full, formal minutes of board meetings are available for viewing in the church office. Our clerk, Keith McClelland, has implemented a new process for approving minutes and making them available in the office much more quickly than in the past.

Yours in Christ
The Board

ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIES TEAM NEWS

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

GREEN GARDENING, LAWN CARE AND TREES
Now is the time to think about your yard, trees and gardens. We all have to be aware of the chemicals and water we use to fertilize and sustain our flowers, vegetables, trees and lawns.

If you plant native species, those that have a symbiotic relationship with other native birds, insects and animals, you are more assured of a successful garden and you will have to use less water and fertilizer (organic or otherwise). Check the EMT bulletin board for a list of native plants or go to www.plantnative.org.

As you know, we need trees to absorb CO2 and provide us with life giving oxygen. Purchasing trees can be expensive, but if you check arborday.org, you will find suggestions on native trees for our area, planting and caring for new trees and they will even send you saplings for a small donation. The

EMT bulletin board has flyers from the Arbor Day foundation - "Plant Trees for America" as well as other fliers to help you with your gardens, trees and lawns in a responsible way. www.arborday.org
Don't use pesticides on your grass! They kill the microbial life necessary for healthy soil and kill the pest's natural enemies. Even the birds who depend on insects for food are affected. Mow your grass high and leave grass clippings on lawn as a fertilizer. Water only when soil is dry 6" down. 1" per watering is enough. Healthy soils with thriving micro-organisms lead to deep rooted grass. Deep roots require less watering, less fertilizing, and save you money. Add soil amendments based on soil test which can be done by sending a sample to the Umass Soil testing Lab - www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest

Other information on the EMT bulletin board: "Keep Needham Green with Trees", "Healthy Lawns and Landscapes" and "Water-wise Landscaping (Xeroscaping) in Needham".

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Partner-Family Letters Due June 1st for August 2016 Delegation: It's time once again for partner families to write their letters to send down with the August delegation to Santa Maria Tzeja. Our volunteer translators need your letters well in advance of the departure date (August 3) in order to get the nearly 150 partner-family and scholarship donor letters translated, so please get your letters to Dave Johnson by June 1st. Send to: davebjohnson77@gmail.com or drop off your letter in the Guatemala Box or at the Church Office. Thank you.

AN UPDATE FROM YOUR DEACONS

The start of spring has been busy for the Deacons. Shortly after the Equinox we held our Maundy Thursday dramatic reading. This service presents a different way for us to give to the congregation and we would like to acknowledge the participants for their efforts and hard work:

Evangelist - Joanne Seiden

Jesus - Kirby Salerno

Judas - Sunu Yeh

Peter - Rick Devereux

High Priest - Frank Luppino

Soldier - Stephanie Oddleifson

1st Disciple - Jean Veigas

2nd Disciple - Carol Miller

Lighting - Sally Fitzgerald

If you missed this service, mark your calendars for next year. It is truly a unique and solemn way to experience the Easter season.

Immediately after Easter the Deacon Covenant Team hosted what was termed an evening of Fellowship and Feedback. The purpose was to offer a creative and interactive way for all to provide feedback on various aspects of church life while also enjoying each other's company. The format involved writing your thoughts on post-it notes and then placing them on poster boards categorized to capture activities you would like the church to either start, stop or continue. The night was successful from a fellowship perspective (over 60 people in attendance and plenty of food) as well as in the feedback received (over 300 comments). Next steps involve transcribing all of the comments into a more user friendly format and sharing them with members and pertinent committee members for consideration. This event was not designed to kick-start major changes in church activities but rather to serve as an important first step in engaging the entire congregation in a discussion that

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INTRODUCING OUR NEW INTERIM SENIOR MINISTER - REV. JIM MITULSKI

I am pleased to announce that The Reverend Jim Mitulski has accepted our call to serve as our Interim Senior Minister. He plans to join us on August 1.

Jim Mitulski was born and raised in Royal Oak, Michigan. His education includes a BA from Columbia University, an M.Div. from Pacific School of Religion, an honorary doctorate in sacred theology from Starr King School for the Ministry, and he was a Merrill Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School

Jim comes to us from Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) of the Rockies where he is currently serving as Interim Minister. Prior to that he served an eighteen month tenure as Interim Senior Pastor of Cathedral of Hope United Church of Christ, Dallas, TX- the largest GLBT church in the world and one of the UCC's largest churches. He also served as the interim executive director of the Cathedral's social justice partner, Hope for Peace and Justice.

Jim has served four churches as interim pastor. In prior years he was an associate pastor in New York City (1983-86), a senior pastor in San Francisco (1986-2001), a solo pastor at an experimental interfaith church in Los Angeles (2003-2006) a campus minister in Berkeley of a multi-denominational church at Pacific School of Religion (2007-2012) where he still serves as adjunct faculty. He has served as a denominational executive, and directed the Clergy Development program for MCC, networking with theological schools in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Mission work has included HIV/AIDS work in Zimbabwe and South Africa, and more recently he served a faith delegation to El Salvador to safeguard transgender rights.

Jim was ordained in 1983 and has ordination credentials in the United Church of Christ, the Disciples of Christ/Christian Church, the Metropolitan Community Churches, and the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries. Prior to being a minister, Jim was a legal reference librarian, and also worked as a Program Coordinator for the San Francisco Public Library.

He is a trained specialist in interim ministry through the Interim Ministry Network and at one time directed the Transitional Ministry Program for the MCC denomination.

A message from Rev. Mitulski is included in this Focus. I am sure you will join me in thanking the Search Committee (Fred Moder, Jason Johnson, Lee McNally, Diane Conroy, Mary Lou Hughes and Christine Weitzel) for their hard work and the selection of such an outstanding interim minister. Please also join me in keeping Rev. Mitulski in your prayers as he makes this transition; and in looking forward with anticipation to welcoming him to our faith community.

Faithfully,
Jackie Allen (Moderator)

A MESSAGE FROM REV. JIM MITULSKI



Dear friends- I am so excited to be joining you August 1 to serve as your interim senior minister. You will see from my bio that I have done a lot of things in ministry, and nothing excites me more than being part of the renewal of a congregation. You have such an amazing history in Needham. I am honored to join

with you as that history continues to unfold, and to work with you to make sure that your next years build on your current successes. We'll do some hard work together, and we will also enjoy a time of spiritual and institutional transformation that will position you for the future. I have already been impressed by Rev. Heike and the staff members I've met, and by the extraordinary care and love for you shown by the Search Committee as we explored the possibility of working together.

Please pray for me over the next few months as I finish my work in Denver on July 3 and drive to Boston with my two cats. I'm coming to Boston in May to find an apartment. In July I'm teaching a two

week class on "HIV and Theology," at Pacific School of Religion, where I was trained as a pastor 30 years ago, where I later served as campus pastor and adjunct faculty.

I have loved my time in Denver, even though we had a blizzard last week (last year we had one on Mother's Day!) and I look forward to loving all of you as we get to know each other. Coming to Boston is a kind of homecoming to me- I've twice gone to school in Cambridge, and I love the culture, the history, the natural beauty of New England, and the quirky independent nature of New Englanders. Be patient with me as I re-acclimate- though I went to school in New York City and Boston, I still have a lot of California, Texas and Colorado in me. I know you love the church as much I do and we will do great work together.

I'll write more next month. And I promise to keep you in my daily prayers.

Warmly,
Jim

p.s. you are welcome to follow me on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram (although be forewarned I post a lot of cat pictures on IG) @revmitulski

Deacon Update Continued from page 4

will soon be joined by our Interim Senior Minister. In that regard we feel it was a great success.

During the April Deacon's meeting much of our discussion focused on plans for services and activities that will take us into the summer. Reverend Heike has done an outstanding job maintaining the vibrancy of the church while also trying to balance that with realities of our current staffing limitations. The resulting schedule through spring and early summer contains a strong slate of activities, sermon themes and guest preachers to keep us spiritually enriched heading into summer.

In May we be unveiling our Deacon Wall outside the conference room in the main church building. The board will contain photos of current Deacons as well as updates on our meetings and activities in an effort to increase transparency and make us accessible to all. Please feel free to chat with any of us after services to share whatever is on your mind! Also in that vein, our general feedback email is up and running! If you would like to provide feedback to the church but are not sure where to send it, you can use our general mailbox at feedback@needhamucc.org. We can't promise everyone an individual reply, but we can promise you that your suggestion will be read and passed along to the appropriate team or committee for consideration.

Blessings,
The Deacon Communication Team

FRIENDLY SOCIETY NEWS



EVERYONE (church members, spouses, friends) IS invited to an evening of LOVE SONGS and STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE at Friendly Society's May 26 meeting. Musicians Carolyn MacGregor and Cici Hunt will present romantic French songs by Ernest Chausson, Edith Piaf's La Vie En Rose, and several pieces from musicals of the early 1900s, including Showboat and The Music Man. The program will begin at 7 pm in the Sanctuary. Afterwards, all are welcome to complete the evening with a delicious strawberry shortcake dessert in Linden Hall.

If you plan to stay for dessert, please RSVP Joanne Seiden (jseiden@basiclink.com) so we'll be sure to have enough for everyone!

Otherwise, just come and enjoy this delightful evening of music and fellowship.

Quarterly Update from the Finance Team

Congregational Church of Needham
Quarterly Report of Budget to Actual Income and Expenses
First Quarter 2016

	2016 Annual Budget	Pro Rata Budget 3 Months	Actual to Date	Favorable (Unfavorable)
Income				
Pledges	395,146	106,396	101,783	(4,613)
Income from Endowment	1 82,000	45,500	45,500	-
Endowment for Sr. Minister	1 02,107	34,036	34,036	-
Rentals	175,000	43,750	45,896	2,146
Other Income	28,060	14,515	12,883	(1,632)
Total Income	882,313	244,197	240,098	(4,099)
Expenses				
Benevolence Giving	65,000	16,250	16,250	
Minister Compensation	328,748	68,287	71,853	(3,566)
Sr. Minister Severance	102,107	34,036	35,957	(1,921)
Interim Minister	104,638	-	-	-
Associate Minister	101,003	29,001	29,505	(504)
Youth Director	21,000	5,250	6,391	(1,141)
Christian Education	13,400	3,350	2,011	1,339
Music	60,178	15,045	15,484	(439)
Parish Administration	136,643	34,161	34,704	(543)
Building Maintenance	155,919	38,978	39,440	(462)
1154 Utilities & Direct Maintenance	24,800	6,200	4,883	1,317
1180 Utilities & Direct Maintenance	38,600	9,650	9,858	(208)
Other Committees	1,525	381	407	(26)
Loan Interest: Needham Bank	49,000	12,250	12,738	(488)
Other Expenses	8,500	2,125	1,390	735
Total Expenses	882,313	206,677	209,018	(2,341)
Operating Surplus or (Deficit)		37,520	31,080	(6,440)

Compared with budget, total operating expenses exceeded income by \$6,440 or 2.7 percent for the first three months of 2016.

On the income side, pledges collected were below budget by \$4,613 or 4.3 percent. Rental income exceeded budget by \$2,146.

Total expenses were \$2,340 over budget. Most of the overrun was in Minister and other staff compensation and is largely due to timing of payments. Minister compensation, however, will be underrun for the year as the Interim Minister was budgeted to start at the end of the first quarter and will now start on August 1. Seasonal expenses, such as electricity and outdoor maintenance, were slightly over budget, but should even out through the course of the year. Overall energy expenses were lower than a year ago due to a milder winter and the efficiency of the Church's new heating system.

MAY 2016

Sunday	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Sat.
1 1st Formal Communion Worship New Member Orientation	2 Cancer Support Group	3 Prayer Shawl Knitters Community Dinner	4	5 Thursday Lunch	6	7 GREAT CHILI COOK-OFF
8 Mother's Day Worship - Bible Sunday Bible Study	9 Cancer Support Group	10	11	12	13	14 Guatemala Yard Sale
15 Men's Breakfast Worship - Confirmation Bible Study	16 Cancer Support Group	17	18	19	20 Women's Retreat	21
22 Worship - Rev. Wendy Vanderhardt Bible Study	23 Cancer Support Group	24	25	26 Friendly Strawberry Festival	27	28
29 Worship - Maddie Downer Bible Study	30 Memorial Day - Church office closed	31				

COMMUNITY DINNERS
6-7pm, May 3 & June 7
Linden Hall

Every month we prepare and share dinner with the families of Baby Basics. Everyone is invited to join us for dinner, and/or if you are looking for a volunteer opportunity for your family, this is an opportunity for children and adults alike. Dinners are the first Tuesday of the month.

Help is needed with shopping for food, meal preparation, eating with our guests, and clean up. Please contact Rev. Heike or Diana Conroy if you are interested in participating in the service project.

THURSDAY LUNCH WITH REV. HEIKE
Noon-1pm, May 5 & June 2
1180 Great Plain Ave.

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 on the first Thursday of every month. Soups are vegetarian based (most of them) but always lactose and nut free. Everyone is welcome!



WOMEN'S RETREAT!
Friday May 20-Saturday
May 21

We have a few spaces left for you to sign up for this year's

Women's Retreat at Craigville Conference Center May 20-21, 2016. Space is limited but it is not too late to attend! This retreat is open to all women of the church. The topic this year will center around "Finding our Balance". Please contact Rev. Heike if you are interested in going.

INTERESTED IN A BIKE RIDE THIS SUMMER?

After our Germany adventure I was asked "Where are we going next year?" Well, I have an idea: anyone interested in biking the Erie Canal bike path, from Buffalo to Albany around the end of June, beginning July? This 400 mile ride is an adventure for all levels of bikers. It is not quite as exotic as a trip to Europe but it can be great fun doing it together. Talk to Rev. Heike if you are interested.



SAVE THE DATE
END OF THE YEAR BBQ
Sunday June 12
11:30am-2pm
Food, Fellowship & FUN!



CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF NEEDHAM

1154 Great Plain Avenue
1180 Great Plain Avenue
Needham, MA 02492-2202

T: 781-444-2510
office@needhamucc.org

On the web at
needhamucc.org

Like us on
Facebook
Congregational Church
of Needham UCC

Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Sunday May 15th

On Sunday, 5/15, the Men's Fellowship Breakfast will welcome all church men to breakfast.

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.

CE & YOUTH MINISTRIES IN SEARCH OF...

Our Christian Education programs and Youth Ministries, as well as our community offering - The Center - are looking for some particular items. We are in need of both new and recycled items for our regular programming as well as for special events. While you are in the midst of spring cleaning, take a look over this list and see if there is anything you have that we can use! A donation box for smaller items will be located in the entryway opposite the Chapel.

In the case of furniture donations, please make arrangements with Maddie to arrange drop off.

The list will be updated as needs are fulfilled/if new needs become apparent; you can reach Maddie Downer, CE & Youth Director, at needhamuccyouth@gmail.com. View the "Wanted" list on Google Docs:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HkHFvJr5CFi-PeIORn6Sx03YUk5hZ4LEMkbyvMmYYXI/edit?usp=sharing>

address

stamp

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
NEEDHAM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
1154 Great Plain Avenue
Needham, Massachusetts 02492-2202

Youth News

May 2016

@ the Congregational Church of Needham

Maddie Downer, CE & Youth Director

Youth Sunday is Sunday, June 5

If you are interested in participating in the youth band, in speaking in church (we still need a sermon!), or in helping with the service in some other way, please email Maddie at needhamuccyouth@gmail.com ASAP!

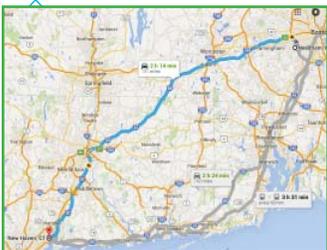
WE WILL HAVE TWO MEETINGS TO PLAN WORSHIP!

If you are participating in Youth Sunday and are in Junior or Senior High, please come to the Senior High youth group on Sunday, May 15 from 7-8:30 or to the 6:8 Sunday School class on Sunday, May 22 during worship (10 AM).

Date	JR High Youth Group	SR High Youth Group
Sunday, May 15	5 - 6:30 Stevenson Hall	7-8:30 Stevenson Hall
Sunday, May 22	No Jr. High Youth Group	4:00 PM - 7:00 PM Dave & Buster's Trip RSVP required. Chaperones needed!
Sunday, June 5	Youth Sunday	

SENIOR HIGH SUMMER MISSION TRIP

Sign-ups for the Senior High Summer Mission Trip to New Haven, CT are ongoing through May!



Please fill out an RSVP form. Forms are available on the CE & Youth Bulletin

Board and to print at: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AVkC0z2Sg2ZoR-tRNVbVAC8gAn-CD-BO85iCDzbcxbA/edit?usp=sharing>

2016-2017 YOUTH GROUP SURVEY

High school students are busy! I recognize how much you've got going on with school, homework, music lessons, sports, and friends and that Sunday evening Youth Group doesn't always fit your needs. Because church and the community we build is important, I am hoping to help make that community more available to you.



Even if you've never attended a youth group meeting, please take this survey. Perhaps Sunday night youth group isn't appealing to you, but you'd love a space to do homework together. Maybe you'd like a youth group that uses movies (Netflix? In the theater?) to start talking about your faith. Maybe running is your spiritual practice and you want a group that finds a 5K to do together every other month. These are ideas. Maybe you have more and better ideas!

Please take the ongoing survey so that we know what it is you want out of church! The survey can be found on the CE and Youth Bulletin Board and is available to print at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iv-DFw13fic3G0reLkkulmjrMN13ZaQm72PSxNwLMYY/edit?usp=sharing>

Youth News

@ the Congregational Church of Needham
Maddie Downer, CE & Youth Director

May 2016

CLUB 3-4-5

Club 3-4-5 is open to students in grades 3-5 and meets on most second and fourth Thursdays.

May	
Thursday, May 12 6:30 - 7:30 PM Stevenson Hall Please RSVP by Sunday, May 8	Thursday, May 26 6:30 - 7:30 PM Stevenson Hall Please RSVP by Sunday, May 22

AUGUST VBS

Animal Academy

August 22 - 26
8:30 AM - Noon



Come and learn about the furry, feathery, and creepy-crawly members of God's family! Come sing songs, play games, learn about animals in our science workshops, do arts and craft projects, and participate in animal activities! A traveling petting zoo will come to visit. An animal shelter will show us the ways we can help homeless animals. And we'll have lots of fun learning to love all of Creation the way that God loves us!

Please note, children will be in supervised contact with farm animals and puppies.

\$30 per day per student for first child, \$20 per day for each child after. Due by June 30. Ages 3 - 10. Please note, students must be potty-trained. Sign-ups begin on May 15 - June 30 (or until VBS is full.) at needhamucc.org/VBS

Registration is on a first come, first served basis. Once we reach the max per age group for each day, students will be put on a waiting list.

Lunch Bunch: Noon - 1 PM, \$5 per student. Our snacks and lunches are entirely peanut and tree-nut free. Typical lunches: chicken nuggets, sandwiches, pizza.

Scholarships are available!

Please don't let financial circumstances prevent your family from participating in VBS or Lunch Bunch! We can offer partial or full need-based scholarships so that your children can experience the joy of VBS: Animal Academy. Please reach out to us at youth@needhamucc.org if you are interested in a scholarship application.