



FOCUS

November 2016 | Vol. 39 Issue 9

A Message from Rev. Jim Mitulski

This is an update about our first set of **Let's Talk Let's Listen** meetings in October to engage our individual and collective feelings about conflict over the last several years that culminated visibly in the departures of the youth director, music director and senior minister in 2015, and which had other impacts in the past and even into the present.



We had two talk sessions, one in the chapel, one in the living room of the office building attended by 28 different people. Everyone agreed to abide by simple ground rules- confidentiality, everyone

speaks once before anyone speaks a second time- and we opened with prayer. We had an introductory go around because in each instance most people didn't really know at least a third of the others. In this case we shared first and last names, the name and location of our high school, and when we started coming to church. Then I asked people to talk from their own experience how they were feeling about what happened in the past, or how they were feeling about it in the present, or what it would take to be on one page with others moving forward. One person helpfully clarified they hoped it wouldn't mean we would have to all be one mind- though we might agree to move forward together even with our differences. Many opinions were expressed, many feelings shared. Some anger, some sadness, lots of tears, though it was by no means a depressing experience. Both times people stayed afterward just to talk. We also prayed together at the end.

Some observations:

- Some people had positive experiences with the previous minister. Those things really happened. Some people had negative experiences. Those

things really happened. Some people even had both. Nobody has to surrender their memory. We may have to be willing to believe that in the course of a long tenure people had different experiences.

- All of the conflicts that erupted in 2015 are not about the minister. One reason I am embedded with you for these two years is to help you identify the systems at work that make it hard for you to process conflict as it arises and to find new ways to transform conflict, and we will.
- People love this church deeply. We can and will find ways over the next period of time to renew the bonds of community through prayer, social activities, common tasks inside and outside the church. If we show up like people did this month, this will work!

We have to continue to engage the events of the past until we no longer react to them. We aren't there yet. We also had a great prayer meeting on the last Wednesday night in October. 11 of us gathered in the chapel and sang, chanted, read scripture, lit candles, shared communion, shared personally, meditated in silence, all in an hour. We'll be doing more of that in the New Year on a regular basis. I want to thank the deacons in particular for stepping up on attending to the spiritual needs of the church in the last few months. They are a remarkable group of people.

Are we done? No. I am going to offer more opportunities in the next two months to focus on what happened, and in the new year offer some new strategies as well. In the meantime, come make an appointment- you talk, I'll listen, we'll pray. Come to church regularly, pray everyday, even a little, this simple prayer, "open my heart, open my heart, open my heart, open my heart, open my heart...."

FRIENDLY SOCIETY NEWS

EVERYONE IS WELCOME! Join us for Friendly Society's Christmas service project, led by Betty Peterson and her elf Eileen Thomson, to make and fill Christmas stockings full of small toys for City Mission kids. We meet on **Nov. 3, 1:30** (set up after soup), 1180 GPA for work and fellowship.

Friendly's traditional Christmas celebration will be on **Dec 7, 11:30, Linden Hall**. Come for a delicious

luncheon prepared by Patty and her team, followed by a musical program by Pam and Bruce Goody, long-time friends of the church. Tickets (\$15/person) will be available during coffee hour on Nov 20 and 27. Patty Stewart will take phone reservations for those who can't pick up tickets (339-222-2784; Pattys-place@hotmail.com). For further information contact Doris Cook (781-444-5591; DorisCook2@aol.com). **COME ONE AND ALL!**



Music Ministry News by Valerie Becker, Director of Music

This has always been a very special time of year for me. I love spending time with family and friends, eating wonderful food and listening to and performing the music that makes the holiday season so special. Christmas time is also a time for celebration. Come celebrate with the Chancel Choir and The Friendly Chimers as we perform new arrangements of timeless pieces such as "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen", "Veni, Veni Emanuel" and a carol medley featuring "What Child is This," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," "Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella," and "Angels We Have Heard on High." I hope to see you at our Holiday Fest on Sunday, December 4th at 4pm.

Happy holidays!
Valerie



SOME EXCITING NEWS!

In the fall of 2017, the Guatemala Partnership is planning a celebration to recognize the 30th anniversary of our church's relationship with the village of Santa María Tzejá. A simple handshake in 1987 between representatives from our church and leaders in Santa María Tzejá brought our two communities together with passion and promise. It's nearly 30 years later and a party is called for! We would love your ideas in planning an inclusive event that will be fun and memorable for one and all. This is a wonderful opportunity to be part of something really special. Please contact Jane Clayton-Matthews to volunteer your ideas or your time toward planning this event: janeclaytonmatthews@yahoo.com

JOIN OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS:

The monthly Guatemala Ministry Team meetings are open to all, and we invite and need greater participation. Please join us in the Church Library for our Sunday, November 6th meeting at 7:00 pm or our Sunday, December 4th meeting at 11:30 am. If you would like to be on the E-mail list to receive invitations to the meetings (along with meeting agendas and minutes), please advise Brenda Metzler: bmetzler7@verizon.net

FEBRUARY 2017 DELEGATION:

The church's February 2017 delegation to SMT has been formed. Travelers to date include co-leaders Fred Moder and Brenda Metzler; Theresa Garrett, Angela Kyn, Joan Evans, Jerry Durbin, along with founders of the partnership Clark and Kay Taylor - a special treat!

FOCUS

Focus is published monthly. Contributions are welcome. Please submit materials by e-mail to office@needhamucc.org.

December issue deadline:
Monday, November 21

Rev. Jim Mitulski
Interim Senior Minister
revjim@needhamucc.org

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revheike@needhamucc.org

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Valerie Becker
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office2@needhamucc.org

Rev. Dr. Paul Clayton,
Pastor Emeritus

Upcoming Worship

Thanksgiving and Stewardship Month

November 6 - The Feast of All Saints & Communion Sunday - Rev. Heike is preaching. You are invited to bring pictures of loved ones for the altar. Stewardship Pledge Campaign Begins.

November 13 - The Gift of Love - Rev. Jim will preach on Isaiah 65:17-25 and 1 Corinthians 13

November 20 Thanksgiving Sunday
Ingathering and Blessing of Pledges- Service of Gratitude. Rev. Jim will preach on Deuteronomy

261-11

Advent theme: Holy Family, Holy Families: ALL Families are Holy

November 27 - The First Sunday of Advent
Rev. Jim will preach on Adrienne Rich's poem "The Spirit of Place" and Matthew 24:36-44 "Wait without Sadness and with Grave Impatience"

Thursday Dec 1st - World AIDS Day
6:00 pm see the PBS film "Wilhemina's War" on HIV/AIDS today in South Carolina
7:00 pm Interfaith Service with First Baptist Church and First Parish Unitarian Universalist in our chapel

Thank You by Rev. Heike Werder, Associate Minister

I love this time of year. The weather, the smells, the upcoming holiday celebrations – it's all good. The month of November is filled with all kinds of holidays – starting is All Saints Day (11/2), All Souls Day (11/2), Veterans Day (11/11), and then the big one - Thanksgiving (11/24). And before we know it we are in Advent and preparing for Christmas.

But the focus in November lies on Thanksgiving, the biggest national holiday. It is probably the oldest holiday celebrated in the States and the only one without a manufactured agenda. All this holiday calls for is getting together with family and friends to eat good food and watch football.

And even though it is a secular holiday for me and, I think, for many others, it is a deeply religious and thoughtful holiday season. It is a time to give thanks – to God for the many blessings in our lives.



While some might say that the blessings are few and far between in their lives, looking at the big picture in regards to what is going on in the world, we are blessed, deeply blessed in fact.

And I believe, this season of Thanksgiving also gives us a chance to say thank you to people. We can express our gratitude to those in our lives for whom we are grateful and who sometimes don't get to hear this from us very much. Why not tell them?

The Apostle Paul modeled this kind of thanksgiving for us. On several occasions he not only thanks God

for his churches, but also he tells them of it. Consider Paul's letter to the Thessalonians Christians, for example, we read:

"We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly." (1:2)

"How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you?" (3:9)

Imagine how you'd feel to hear this from someone important in your life. My guess is you'd feel honored, happy, maybe a bit embarrassed, and even thankful. It's a wonderful thing to hear that someone is truly thankful for you. In fact, it's one of the best feelings in life.

Thanksgiving provides an opportunity for saying thanks, both to the God from whom all blessings flow and to those who are conduits of divine blessings in our lives. It's a time to stop what we're doing and say "Thank you" to the people in our lives who deserve to hear this from us.

Thank you, members and friends of the Congregational Church! Thank you for worshipping, serving, caring and loving your church and the people that sit next to you in the pew! Thank you for doing the hard work of reconciliation after a tough time! Thank you for continuing the ministry of Christ in a world that needs a lot of love!

Thank you,
Heike

ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRIES TEAM NEWS

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

"The people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." - Matthew 4:16

Join us in an Advent book discussion Wednesday, Nov 30th at 7pm in the Chapel:

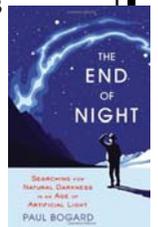
The End of Night: searching for natural darkness in an age of artificial light --- by Paul Bogard

Light pollution: another dry technical topic?? NOT when it's written by a "creative nonfiction" genre professor whose undergraduate degree is in Religion!

With dialing back the clocks an hour early November, we begin winding our way to the darkest time of the year and toward the Christmas story, which recounts a bright star in the East, the birth of a

savior bringing hope and light to the world. We will decorate with candles and tiny lights that look like stars and prepare us for this holy gift.

Sponsored by your Environmental Ministries Team (EMT), Reverends Jim and Heike will be leading the discussion. 2014 Nautilus Award Silver Winner author Paul Bogard takes us on a journey around the world to the brightest (Times Square, London, Paris) to the darkest (desert and dark sky reserves) places on the planet, investigating all aspects of light: cultural and technological histories, artistic, impacts on nature, human safety and...spirituality!



Chapter titles to entice you: From a starry night to a streetlight -- Tales from two cities -- Light that blinds, fear that enlightens -- Body, sleep, and dreams -- The ecology of darkness -- Know darkness -- Come together -- The maps of possibility -- The darkest places.

continued on page 5

FROM THE DEACONS

Although it has been a few months since we have provided a FOCUS update, rest assured that we have been very busy! We returned from our summer activities with enthusiasm and excitement for the future and possibilities that lie ahead, and also a renewed focus on the spiritual elements of our role as your Deacons.

During the summer months we welcomed Reverend Jim to our Congregation, and we have spent our early time together helping Jim integrate into our church and come up to speed. What has been helpful in this regard is the feedback collected during the Start-Stop-Continue effort that was conducted last spring. At the time we collected over 300 suggestions covering all aspects of our church life. Not only has this feedback fostered good discussion and action in many areas, but it has provided perspective to Jim as he develops plans for our time together.

In our Deacon meetings we have discussed how we can work together to enhance our members experiences and strengthen our spiritual connections - with the church, with each other and with God. You have seen some changes and new things added to the worship service, and we continue to talk about other enhancements that could be done in the future. We view our time with Reverend Jim as an opportunity to learn more about ourselves as a congregation and to explore and experiment in a manner that will inform our thinking about our desires for the future.

One area of particular attention is prayer. We have talked a lot about prayer and its benefits and healing power, and ways it can be a more central part of our church life and experience. The Deacons have embraced this and are excited to explore this area together with all in the coming months.

We have been active in other areas as well. In our bylaws one Deacon responsibility is to be accountable to the Board in performing an annual evaluation of the ministers. A Deacon team (Pastoral Review) was formed earlier in the year to devise a formal process

for ministerial review. The team consulted with various resources, including the UCC Massachusetts Conference, and the resulting process is now starting to be implemented.

While we are currently in an interim transition, we believe that it is important for us to develop processes and practices that are needed in the future. The process being rolled out may not be perfect, but it will be improved as it is implemented in the next year and will become a routine that is part of the ongoing management of the church. The intent is to maintain transparent communication with the congregation throughout the process, which covers both the Senior and Associate Ministers.

The process starts with a goal setting exercise that is conducted jointly by the Pastoral Review Team and the Ministers ideally in September, although this year being the first it has extended slightly beyond. The intent is to identify areas of focus for the coming church year and generate goals consistent with the Church's objectives of growth in spirit, membership, community presence and stewardship.

The feedback process will occur the following spring. The Team will lead the assessment, which will involve feedback from members of the congregation. The exact process and mechanisms for soliciting that feedback are still being devised, but all members will have the opportunity to be heard. It is the goal of the Team to conduct the evaluations in June of each year. You will be hearing more about the process as we work through this together.

We will do our best to keep everyone updated on the exiting things we are working on in the coming months, and look forward to growing in spirit as we continue our journey of transition together. As always, we are interested in your thoughts. If you would like to provide feedback to the church, but are not sure of where to send it, you are invited to send us a note at feedback@needhamucc.org. We will make sure your input gets to the right place and is given due consideration.

Blessings,
The Deacons

Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Sunday, November 20th

On Sunday, 11/20, 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.

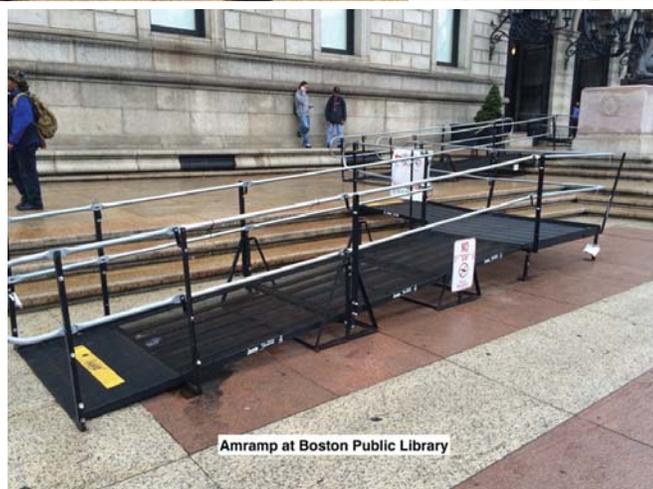
Contact: John Baldwin (jsbaldwin@comcast.net) or Rob Dunlavey (rob@robd.com) for more information.

Board Update

Fellow Congregants,
Here is a brief summary of the Board's October activities.

Wheelchair Ramp

We received approval of the plans for our wheelchair ramp from the town just days before this article was written. We are currently working with the contractor to finalize the design and an installation schedule. The first picture below shows a view of the front of the sanctuary with tape outlines to the location of the ramp. We will need to add some new sidewalk around the bottom of the ramp. The second picture shows a very similar "Amramp" at the Boston Public Library.



Amramp at Boston Public Library

Nominations

In accordance with the Bylaws, all church officers – Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Collector – plus approximately 1/3 of the members of the Board, Deacons, and the Christian Education, Youth, and Outreach Committees are elected at each annual meeting. The Nominating Committee is actively soliciting nominations for these open positions. Self-nominations are welcome! If you have questions or want more information, please contact Sunu Yeh at dormouse99@gmail.com.

Additional Committees and Teams

The Church has additional teams and committees beyond the five created by the bylaws. These teams and committees provide many opportunities for members to contribute their specific talents to the life of the Church. There are not formal elections for these teams, and most welcome new members at any time. You can find a description of each team and a contact point on the "Lay Leadership" page on the church web site (click on "Contact Us" in the upper right of the Church's home page, then on "Lay Leadership")

All-Church Financial Forum

The forum was held as scheduled on October 16. Copies of the presentation are available in the church office. Because of the sensitive nature of the information, copies will not be posted on line or distributed electronically.

Maintenance Projects

Repairs to the roof of the solarium at the rear of 1180 Great Plain Ave were recently completed. A leak developed in the flat roof of the main part of 1180. The Board authorized repairs, which were scheduled for the week of October 24.

Yours in Christ,
The Board

Continued from pg3 EMT News "The End of Night"

If you ever went north or west as a child or teen and were struck with awe by the multitude of nighttime celestial bodies, this book and discussion are for you! Prof. Bogard spent his summers in northern Minnesota (for native New Englanders, think Maine), where impressions of the Milky Way touched his heart and soul for life. Today, very sadly, you have to go to very remote places to see anything other than a handful of stars.

The hopeful news is that light pollution can be solved with a little resolve and knowledge. We even have an example on our own church property!

Purchase a book today at the shelves next to the Chapel, or borrow one of the twenty copies available from the Minuteman Library Network. Come to the discussion ready to read your favorite passage, sharing why you chose it.

Lastly, thank you to Maggie Furtak, our chancel choir Alto section leader, for bringing this amazing book to our attention!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Anne Hayek at 781.449.2052 or annehayek@gmail.com

Youth News

@ the Congregational Church of Needham

Maddie Downer, CE & Youth Director

Nov. 2016

Christmas Pageant



Join us for our annual Christmas pageant! If you would like to participate as an actor, sign ups will begin on Sunday, November 13. Cast will be announced on Sunday, December 4. You must be able to make rehearsal on Sunday, December 11 and 18 from 12-2 as well as both the rehearsal

and service on Christmas Eve. Adults and children alike are invited to participate!

In addition to actors, we will also need a stage crew to help set up, tear down, and to run lights, etc during the last rehearsal and the performance. And adults who would like to assist in costumes or other areas or preparation, please reach out to Maddie at youth@needhamucc.org

Please note, a parent or guardian will need to stay in rehearsal with their children. Lunch will be served at rehearsals.

VILLAGE FAIR:

Santa's Workshop!

Santa is visiting the Village Fair this year! Children have the chance to take a photo with Santa, bring home some Reindeer Food, and create fun Christmas crafts in Santa's workshop!



Visit us in the chapel during the Village Fair! \$5 per child includes crafts and a digital photo with Santa emailed to parents after the fair!

Giving Tree



THE GIVING TREE

Our Giving Tree is a beloved tradition where members are invited to "adopt" a child or parent. Ornaments will decorate the tree with gift requests on them. Please sign out your ornament on the clipboard found next to the tree. Unwrapped gifts need to be returned by the 10 AM service on Sunday,

December 4.

CARE PACKAGES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

After Thanksgiving break, our college students head right into finals! This year our Junior High youth group will be offering care packages to help our church alumni successfully complete papers, tests, and group projects.

Care packages will contain candy and snacks, school supplies, and fun toys to lighten up the stressful days of finals.

If you would like a care package to be sent to your college student, please send your student's name and school mailing address to youth@needhamucc.org by November 12.



Youth News

Nov. 2016

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



SUNDAY NOV. 20TH @ 5PM

Members of the youth group and their family and friends are invited to join in a potluck meal on **Sunday, November 20 at 5 pm**. Families are asked to bring a side dish to share. Turkey, beverages, and dessert will be provided.

Youth Ministries

Date	Jr High	Sr High
Thurs. Nov. 3	No Junior High Programming	6:00-8:00pm Holy Homework in Youth Group room Dinner will be served.
Sun. Nov. 6	5:00-6:30pm Join in as we work on some projects to foster community with our wider church. We play fun games, get crafty, and talk about our faith. Snacks are served.	No Senior High Programming
Sun. Nov. 13	5:00-6:30pm Join in as we work on some projects to foster community with our wider church. We play fun games, get crafty, and talk about our faith. Snacks are served.	No Senior High Programming
Thurs. Nov. 17	No Junior High Programming	6:00-8:00pm Holy Homework in Youth Group room Dinner will be served.

save THE DATE!

THE VILLAGE FAIR! NOV. 12TH & 13TH

THE FAIR IS COMING... THE FAIR IS COMING...



This year we have our favorite tables: **Garden Fence** with lots of holiday decorations; **Attic Treasures** with collectables and “must haves”; **Vintage Jewelry** for those seasonal dress-up occasions; **Rustic Chic** where we find retro items made new again; **Used Books** that will find a new owner for the cold, dark days of winter and our **Knit/Handcraft** table with all the traditional warm hats with some added items such as festive potholders, dog coats and handmade jewelry.



For those of us with a sweet tooth, our Fair offers a **Sweet Shop** and a **Baked Goods** table loaded with delicious treats for the whole family. This table will also feature our very own **Famous Pies** made by the prize-winning members of our own congregation. Another highlight will be our **Country Store** selling country items to please the palate.

Our annual **Auction** takes center stage. We are so fortunate to have such outstanding and creative donations and so grateful to have these Auction workers as these people work long after the Fair has ended collecting their revenue.



After a visit to each of these tables you will need to stop for lunch. How lucky we are... Rev Heike and her crew will be making lunch for us. These ladies come with a reputation for making the most delicious meal choices. Come and choose from a variety of items on the menu board.

This year we will have a special guest for the children. We will be hosting **Santa's Workshop**. Santa said he would come if he could bring a guest. Santa will bring a shy little fellow, **Leo, the lion**. Leo may be hiding in Fellowship Hall and we hope the children can help us find him. Because he is only little he may climb up high where he can watch the festivities. Anyone that finds him will be eligible to enter a drawing to win Leo AND a special prize.

We hope to see everyone on Nov. 12th from 9:30 to 3:00 for a day of fun and fellowship.

Attention all children; come to the Fair,
For Leo, the Lion, is sure to be there!

He's a small stuffed animal with a little red hat;
He is frightened and quiet – just think of that.

He is cute; he is cuddly; only ten inches tall,
And he will be hiding in Fellowship Hall.

Although he can't roar or make any noise,
He likes to be hugged by both girls and boys.

As you hunt for Leo, who wants to be found,
Walk quietly and don't make even a sound.

So come and find out what you need to do
To win Leo, the Lion, to take home with you.

Courtesy of Doris Cook



ONA News



OPEN AND AFFIRMING
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BEING YOU: A CONVERSATION ON GENDER IDENTITY - A GREAT SUCCESS

Being You: A Conversation on Gender Identity was

held on Sunday, October 23 and was attended and enjoyed by about 30 people. Panelists shared varying stories of how they came to awareness about their true gender identities. A public school teacher with experience in supporting trans youth and working with staff, told the group how basic and simple it is to do the right things for trans youth and that the solutions are common sense, safe and humane for all youth. Earlier during the worship service, the congregation got an introduction to the program when Brandon Adams told some of his story of discovering his true identity, and how he has been loved and supported by his family. The Rev. Sarah Carpenter-Vascik, also a panelist and a trans UCC minister, read the scripture lesson during worship. Conversations on gender identity and gender expression are new to many in the church, but there are quite a few people with experience themselves or with people they know. The ONA Ministry Team has written materials, including short booklets, on gender identity and we are eager to share them.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The annual Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) memorializes individuals who have died throughout the world in the previous year because of anti-transgender hatred. Each November, the worldwide transgender community turns its attention to family, friends and loved ones lost to violence and prejudice. A tradition inspired by the Allston, MA, vigil for Rita Hester, a trans woman murdered in 1998, this day has become the worldwide rallying point for a community long under siege. Nearly all victims are trans women of color.

The 2016 Boston Transgender Day of Remembrance:
Where: Cathedral Church of St. Paul, 138 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02111

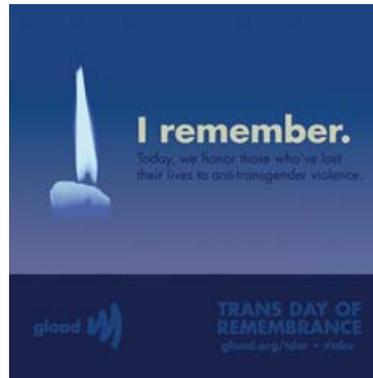
When: November 20, 2016 6pm – 8pm

What to expect:

- brief service in the cathedral, with members of the community speaking about the importance of the day, and remembering those who have been

taken from us due to transphobia and violence

- weather permitting, a short walk across the street to Boston Common for a candle light vigil, and reading the names of those who are no longer with us



- potluck meal at the cathedral (bring a dish)

This service is a moving and inspiring experience.

<http://www.masstpc.org/community-events/tdor/2016-boston-trans-day-of-remembrance/>.

If you are interested in attending or have questions, please email

Kathie Carpenter at kacarp@comcast.net.

WORLD AIDS DAY - GETTING TO ZERO

Every 9 1/2 minutes someone in the United States is newly infected with HIV.

Although its official observance is on December 1st, we must remember that everyday there is a person in the world living with AIDS is a World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day is an important occasion for building awareness and stepping-up our responses to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in our own communities and around the world.



United Church of Christ HIV & AIDS Network

The importance of the whole church engaging in HIV response has never been more critical. As never before, there is a path to ending the epidemic in our lifetime. The implementation of the 27th General Synod's resolution, "Calling for Comprehensive HIV Prevention in Church and Community," is the road map for the UCC, inviting the whole church to be faithful to do all it can.

Getting to ZERO

Zero new infections

Zero AIDS-related deaths

Zero stigma and discrimination

...from the United Church of Christ website http://www.ucc.org/ucan_world-aids-day

NOVEMBER 2016						
Sunday	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thursday	Fri.	Sat.
		1 Community Dinner	2	3 Faith Circle Book Group Lunch with Heike	4	5
6 Worship - Communion, Stewardship Kick-Off New Member Orientation	7 Cancer Support Group	8 Election Day	9	10 Faith Circle Book Group	11 Veterans Day Office Closed	12 The Village Fair
13 Worship *The Village Fair for Church members and friends 11:30am-12:30pm	14 Cancer Support Group	15	16	17 Faith Circle Book Group Just Mercy Book Discussion	18	19 Stewardship Dinner & Dessert
20 Mens Breakfast Worship Interfaith Thanksgiving Svc.	21 Cancer Support Group	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Church office closed	25	26
27 Worship	28 Cancer Support Group	29	30 End of Night Book Discussion			

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION
11:30am, Sunday, Nov. 6

Are you interested in finding out more about the church and maybe interested in joining our church community? You are welcome to join Rev. Jim and Rev. Heike for an informal luncheon meeting in the library, starting at 11:30 am. Please rsvp to Rev. Heike at revheike@needhamucc.org and please let her know if you need childcare. We are planning to receive new members into our church on Nov. 20, 2016. If you would like to meet with a minister about joining the church, you can also contact them directly and set up an appointment.

THE GIFT OF LOVE STEWARDSHIP DINNERS!
6:00pm Saturday Nov. 19

Calling all LOVERS - Lovers of food, of cats, of books ... Join a group of folks who share your passion at a "themed" dinner to be held on Saturday evening, November 19, at 6 PM. We'll be gathering by shared interest in small groups at people's homes for an intimate evening of yummy food and good conversation, as we celebrate the welcoming community that is the Congregational Church of Needham. Childcare will be provided at the church, where we'll all meet up after dinner to enjoy dessert

together and learn (briefly) about the church's plans and financial needs for 2017. Sign up for the theme of your choice at church on November 6 or 13 or by e-mailing Dianne Rees at diannerees123@gmail.com or by contacting Danielle Jurdan at office@needhamucc.org.

COMMUNITY DINNERS
6-7pm, Nov. 1 & Dec. 6
Linden Hall

Dinners coincide with monthly Baby Basics distribution. Volunteers are welcome to join in our effort to provide a healthy dinner for our guests and members of the church.

Volunteers are welcome to help with setting up, serving, visiting and eating with our Baby Basics families, and clean up. Please contact Rev. Heike or Diana Conroy if you are interested in helping out.

THURSDAY LUNCH WITH REV. HEIKE
Noon-1pm, Nov. 3 & Dec. 1,8,15 & 22
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!

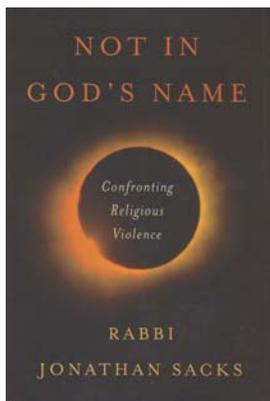
Beginning in December we will meet weekly for the season of Advent Lunches on December 1, 8, 15, and 22.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

**9:00am, Mondays - November 7, 14, 21 & 28
1154 Great Plain Ave.**

Our Cancer Support Group will start up on September 12, 2016 at 9 am in the Reception Room. This group will meet every Monday morning, except on holiday Mondays or school vacations.

Come, if you need an extra hug or prayer said for yourself or a family member.



**FAITH CIRCLE BOOK CLUB
- NOT IN GOD'S NAME:
CONFRONTING RELIGIOUS
VIOLENCE BY RABBI SACKS
Thursdays, 10:30am-noon,
November 3, 10, 17, December 1**

You are invited to join our Fall Faith Circles book discussion group. We will be meeting Thursdays this Fall from 10:30-12:00 to discuss the book, Not in God's Name: Confronting

Religious Violence.

We think it will be a great book for discussion and will foster some interesting conversations.

The group starts Thursday, October 6 and ends Dec. 1.

Please let Christine Weitzel or the office know if you are planning on attending for the duration or for only a few sessions, either is fine.

The syllabus is:

- Nov. 3 - Chap. 8: Role Reversal & Chapter 9: The Rejection of Rejection pp. [144-173]
- Nov. 10 - Chap. 10: The Stranger & Chap. 11: The Universality of Justice, the Particularity of Love [pp.177-206]
- Nov. 17 - Chap. 12: Hard Texts & Chap. 13: Relinquishing Power pp. 207-237
- Nov. 24 - NO GROUP Happy Thanksgiving!
- Dec. 1 - Chapter 14: Letting Go of Hate & Chapter 15: The Will to Power of the Will to Life [pp.238--267]

READ AND DISCUSS - "JUST MERCY: A STORY OF JUSTICE AND REDEMPTION" by Bryan Stevenson

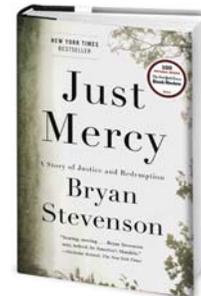
7:00pm, November 17, 1180 GPA



Rev. Jim and Rev. Darin

You are invited to join people from our church and from First Baptist Church who are coming together to read Bryan Stevenson's memoir "Just Mercy".

We are meeting on Thursday, November 17 in the



Living Room at 1180 Great Plain Ave. This is a highly readable book that focuses initially on attorney Stevenson's efforts to help spare a high profile defendant in a capital punishment case that begins in Monroeville, Ala, (remember Harper Lee's To Kill A Mockingbird?). Many other stories are included; Stevenson's law practice is largely concerned with defending children on death row.

It is a moving book of about race and racism and incarceration, and will evoke from us a lively discussion, even as Massachusetts currently is preparing to execute a young man on death row,

Come share your ideas, and meet your friends from down the street at First Baptist. Check out the book's website <http://bryanstevenson.com/>. Here's an interview with the author about the book <https://youtu.be/CF4Gkr0LrwA>. Here's a review of the book <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/19/books/review/just-mercy-by-bryan-stevenson.html>

Hope to see you at the discussion!

Books are available for purchase in the book store shelves next to the Chapel.

TOWN-WIDE THANKSGIVING SERVICE

4:00pm, Sunday, November 20

The Needham Clergy Association cordially invites all churches and their members to the annual town-wide Thanksgiving Service on November 20, 2016 at 4 pm. We will gather for worship at the First Baptist Church. The theme of this year celebration is: **A Time of Thanksgiving and Reconciliation.**

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

On the twitter
[@needhamucc](https://twitter.com/needhamucc)

 Like us on
Facebook
Congregational Church
of Needham UCC

THE GIFT OF LOVE STEWARDSHIP DINNERS!

Calling all LOVERS - Lovers of food, of cats, of books ... Join a group of folks who share your passion at a "themed" dinner to be held on Saturday evening, November 19, at 6 PM. We'll be gathering by shared interest in small groups at people's homes for an intimate evening of yummy food and good conversation, as we celebrate the welcoming community that is the Congregational Church of Needham. Childcare will be provided at the church, where we'll all meet up after dinner to enjoy dessert together and learn (briefly) about the church's plans and financial needs for 2017. Sign up for the theme of your choice at church on November 6 or 13 or by e-mailing Dianne Rees at diannerees123@gmail.com or by contacting Danielle Jurdan at office@needhamucc.org.

Themes so far:

- Lovers of Arts and Crafts - bring any art or craft you've made (or that's in progress!) to share
- Lovers of Cats - bring pictures!
- Red Wine for Carnivores
- Vegetarian Lovers ;)
- Lovers of Haitian Culture and Food
- Lovers of Dogs - bring pictures!
- Lovers of German Food, oh ja!
- Transplants to Massachusetts
- Lovers of Cats - bring pictures!
- Lovers of Books - bring a favorite!



More themes to come, so please let us know if there's a particular interest group you'd like!

address

stamp

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

STEWARDSHIP 2017

THE GIFT OF LOVE

Now is the time of year for planning next year's church programs (very exciting!) and figuring out what the cost will be to provide them (somewhat sobering). That means it's also the time for our annual Stewardship drive, when we reflect on what this church means to us and make the financial commitment - our Gift of Love - that keeps the church healthy and growing.

WHAT ARE THE WAYS THIS CHURCH COMMUNITY HAS OFFERED YOU THE GIFT OF LOVE?

Perhaps it's been through the:

- Inspiring worship that uplifts, guides, and challenges;
- Loving care that's provided to our children through the church's many programs, such as Bible Village and youth fellowships;
- Joyful music, made together, that gives our spirits voice;
- Abundant fellowship, enjoyed in over 30 different groups, teams, and committees, ranging from the Men's Breakfast Group to the Friendly Society to the Cancer Support Group;
- Meaningful opportunities to live out our faith by promoting justice and peace throughout the world.

WHAT GIFT OF LOVE WILL YOU OFFER IN RETURN?

Every pledge matters; every amount matters. As a guide for giving, please consider some percentage of your income, so that all can contribute at a level that is compatible with their means. The chart below can help you calculate what that might be for you.

To facilitate planning for 2017, we ask that you submit your pledge information by November 20. Pledges can be submitted in multiple ways, by:

- Bringing or mailing your pledge sheet to church;
- Filling out the pledge form on-line at the church web site; or
- Contacting Danielle Jurdan in the church office at 781-444-2510 or office@needhamucc.org.

We also strongly encourage you to enroll in automatic giving, with your contributions spread evenly across the year, which benefits your budget and helps the church meet its year round obligations. Automatic giving can be set up through your own bank or credit card, as well as through the church by contacting Danielle in the church office or filling out a convenient on-line form at the church website.

STEWARDSHIP GIVING GUIDE										
Annual Income	Annual Contribution									
	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%
\$ 20,000	\$ 200	\$ 400	\$ 600	\$ 800	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,800	\$ 2,000
\$ 40,000	\$ 400	\$ 800	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,600	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,800	\$ 3,200	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,000
\$ 60,000	\$ 600	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,800	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,800	\$ 5,400	\$ 6,000
\$ 80,000	\$ 800	\$ 1,600	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,200	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,800	\$ 5,600	\$ 6,400	\$ 7,200	\$ 8,000
\$ 100,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 10,000
\$ 120,000	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,600	\$ 4,800	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 8,400	\$ 9,600	\$ 10,800	\$ 12,000
\$ 140,000	\$ 1,400	\$ 2,800	\$ 4,200	\$ 5,600	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,400	\$ 9,800	\$ 11,200	\$ 12,600	\$ 14,000
\$ 160,000	\$ 1,600	\$ 3,200	\$ 4,800	\$ 6,400	\$ 8,000	\$ 9,600	\$ 11,200	\$ 12,800	\$ 14,400	\$ 16,000
\$ 180,000	\$ 1,800	\$ 3,600	\$ 5,400	\$ 7,200	\$ 9,000	\$ 10,800	\$ 12,600	\$ 14,400	\$ 16,200	\$ 18,000
\$ 200,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 20,000
\$ 250,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 12,500	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 20,000	\$ 22,500	\$ 25,000
\$ 300,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 30,000

Congregational Church of Needham

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



***2017 Stewardship
Campaign***
*Help us build
our church community
...with the Gift of Love*

Name

Address

City, State Zip

E-mail

Phone

I would like to pledge the annual amount of : _____

I would like weekly giving envelopes: Please:

Yes No

Contact me to sign me up for electronic giving.

Please update my electronic giving account.

Have a Minister contact me at _____

You can submit your pledge form in multiple ways:

- ◆ Bring or mail your pledge sheet to church;
- ◆ Fill out the pledge form on-line at the church web site at <http://needhamucc.org/serve/stewardship-pledge-form/> ; or
- ◆ Contact Danielle Jurdan in the church office at 781-444-2510 or office@needhamucc.org with your pledge.

You can make automatic contributions in multiple ways:

- ◆ Set up recurring payments through your checking account or credit card; or
- ◆ Sign up for electronic giving through the church's donation portal. Go to <http://needhamucc.org> and click on the Pledge/Donate Electronically button on the right side of the page. If you are already signed up for electronic giving, all changes and updates can be done through the church office. Just check off the "Please update my electronic giving" box above.

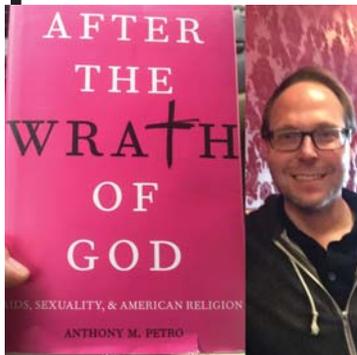
Thank you.

World AIDS Day

Remember Prayer Action

MEMORIAL PANELS FROM THE AIDS QUILT WILL BE ON DISPLAY ALL WEEK.

All events at the Congregational Church
1154 Great Plain Ave in Needham.
All events are free and open to the public.



INAUGURAL EVENT - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH

11:30 a.m.

Lecture and Discussion with Dr. Anthony Petro, Assistant Professor of Religion at Boston University

Author of *The Wrath of God: AIDS, Sexuality and American Religion* (Oxford University, 2015) *The Christian Response to AIDS*.

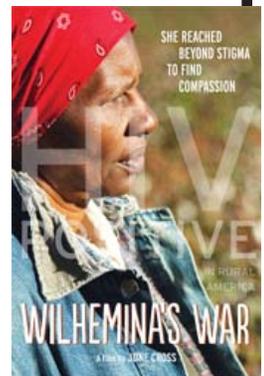
Petro is Assistant Professor of Religion at Boston Professor and he will be the kickoff speaker for activities for World AIDS Day on December 1st. He will talk to us about how religion and politics joined forces to ensure that a disease went unchecked for nearly a decade in the 1980's until a group of activists joined forces to overcome prejudice and stigma with compassion. That stigma lingers today in public policy and in health care, and among church people.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1ST

Join First Baptist Church of Needham, First Parish Unitarian Universalist Needham, and the Congregational Church of Needham UCC in a Celebration of Remembrance.

6:00 pm

We will be showing the Film "Wilhemina's War". Director June Cross tells the story of Wilhemina Dixon who is a caregiver to her daughter and granddaughter in South Carolina, where HIV continues to be a leading cause of death for black women in the south.



7:00 pm discussion and refreshments

7:30 p.m.

Candlelight service of Singing, Prayer, sharing of memories, Reflection and Commitment. People with HIV are especially encouraged to attend.