

UNITED CHURCH OF CLINTON

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We have ADVENTUROUS Youth!

Celebrating Dudley



WINDOWS TO THE WORLD

BY PASTOR LEE ATHERTON

I am writing to you today from my home office where the wall in front of me is mostly windows. Windows to the World! I am hearing the sounds of lawns being mowed, dogs barking, children playing; I'm seeing the cloudy sky spattered with glimpses of blue that are far too few for my liking. I know the rain will be here soon. I'm ever so thankful for the chill in the air – a blessed relief from those days in the 90s with humidity so thick I felt I was trudging through muck! I realize summer is winding down.

I've been reflecting on my summer and what it means to "Grab Some R's!" I often think of summer as a time to Rest, Relax, and Rejuvenate.

I remember a time when my children were little. I was a single mom working full time and trying to hang on to the joy in life. It was a crazy and hectic time. My mentor invited me for a day-long hike in the woods. My heart and soul jumped at the opportunity; but I had so much to do! He kept pushing and I finally said, "Ok – I'll go!" I got an earful from others. "How could you be so selfish!?" "Why would you do that without bringing the kids – that's mean!" "You expect me to work watching them so you can go off and waste the day?!" But I stuck to my guns.

I can't begin to tell you what that day meant!! Sure, I carried some guilt after listening to the naysayers; but when I came back, I was tremendously relaxed, rested from the hurry sickness I was feeling, and rejuvenated to the point that I was feeling that joy again. I was much more patient with my children, much less harried at work, and laughter had returned. I vowed to take a day each month to "Grab some R's!"

I know of so many faithful pastors and church members who work tirelessly for their faith despite their own deteriorating health– there is just so much need and good work to be done that carving out time for rest seems selfish and counter-productive. That is our human thinking– but what does the Bible have to say about rest and self-care? Much like a well run dry can't quench our thirst; so to can we not care for others if we don't fill our well with rest, relaxation and rejuvenation

The Bible strongly encourages rest and relaxation. Merriam-Webster defines "rest" as "to cease work or movement in order to relax, refresh oneself, or recover strength. It also defines "relaxation" as "the state of being free from tension and anxiety." God spent 6 pretty busy days creating the heavens and the earth and all that is. And then on the 7th day, the Sabbath, God rested. Even God needed a chance to catch God's breath. God later commands us to "Honor the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy." In the Gospels we hear Jesus time and again going away to pray, to rest, to be away from the crowds.

God is serious about rest and relaxation. Rest doesn't come naturally to us, which is why we are reminded so many times in the Scriptures of the necessity of laying down our work. When we are overworked we are more vulnerable and sensitive to things around us; we become too weary to praise the simple things in the world around us; we become angry, frustrated and easily riled. And "Rest" applies to our spirits as well. God longs to refresh our spirits and renew our strength. Even Jesus went away to pray and rest; to get away from the crowds; to reconnect with his Abba.

This summer I'm adding another R – Rejoice! A favorite song of mine says, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! Again I say rejoice!" I rejoice in those days this summer that I mowed (yep – I love mowing!). I rejoice in my weekend away with my family when the to-do list wasn't right there bugging me. I rejoice in the morning cups of coffee as I sit in my deck swing with Shadow begging me to rub his belly – again! I rejoice in the little tiny blue flowers I discovered yesterday as I wandered through the garden. And right now I am rejoicing at seeing my neighbor – who suffers from many physical ailments – able to mow her lawn; and the 102 year old neighbor who just watered her hanging plant and is sitting in her rocking chair outside. Rejoice in the small and the big things. So many things I would have missed if I hadn't taken time to "Grab some R's!"

How will you get your R's in the weeks and months ahead?

OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE EFFORTS - FEED MY SHEEP

Submitted with Peace and blessings by Gloria Parkinson on behalf of your Social Justice Committee members:

Chrissy Dobeck, Heather McNamara, Madeline McTague, Gloria Parkinson, Gloria Popp, and Pastor Lee (ex officio)



OUR THIRD DAY GARDEN: SUCCESS!

The plants in the expanded area of our Third Day Garden, located beside the growing boxes, have taken off this year. So too has the crab grass that sprang up around it, another result of rain-soaked, late summer days. More importantly, we have had lots of pollinators on plants selected to attract butterflies, bees, and other insects.

OUR BUDDY BENCH—FOR THE COMMUNITY

Our red buddy bench, beneath the shade of a tree, is our invitation to the community to rest awhile. Now it's time to let our church's friends and neighbors know they're invited.

YOUTH PROJECTS

See elsewhere in this newsletter you'll see the projects our youth are engaged in.

Be advised: As the fall season progresses our Third Day Garden will be left to change with the season. Plants will remain as a seed source for birds as other natural sources of avian food diminish. "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed ...' And it was so...." (Genesis 1)

SPARE CHANGE JARS: THE ITEM APPEAL

Our Spare Change collection during the summer months has been for the Item Appeal, a registered nonprofit that assists those in need in Clinton and surrounding communities. This collection will end September 9.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

A spaghetti supper & raffle will be held on October 6, 5-6:30 pm in Marquardt Hall sponsored by the Vitality Team & Servants in Faith. The proceeds of this event will support a program "Churches Alive" a program from October through spring of self-discovery, discipline and community involvement.

GROWING FOR OTHERS 2018: HARVEST!

Throughout July and August produce from our four growing boxes has been harvested and delivered to the WHEAT Community Cupboard in Clinton. Although the wet weather has taken a toll on some of our vegetables, our harvest has been reasonable compared to previous years. Our Growing for Others flag beside our growing boxes has attracted considerable notice. I've seen several passersby stop and take cell phone pictures.

WHEAT COMMUNITY CAFÉ (ONGOING)

As the seasons change, we'll continue to deliver a meal of pizza, salad, and ice cream on the fourth Monday of each month. In the past, we've had a place setting in the Sanctuary on Communion Sunday, the first Sunday of the month, for donations toward the cost of our Café meal, which averages \$147.00 a month. Your Social Justice Committee is embarking on an updated approach to promoting this very import project. More to come on that!

TAKING STOCK

As a church, we've been involved in several long-standing projects Over the coming months your Social Justice Committee will be reviewing some of these to discern if we should be making any changes that would better reflect our values and meet the needs of project recipients. More to come on that!



!Weather permitting, we'll hold worship outdoors on September 23rd. Pastor Lee will preach on the theme of peace. Bring your blankets, chairs or anything else to be comfy - just like Easter Sunrise (except warmer and less windy I hope!).



LET'S CONFIRM IT!! ALL 8TH AND 9TH GRADERS INVITED TO THIS YEAR'S CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

This year's Confirmation Program has lots of changes. After lots of conversations with successful Confirmation leaders and kids who've been confirmed in the last several years, I spent lots of time recreating what I hope to be an interesting program for you. And since everyone has so much to do with sports, gymnastics, music and everything else you're involved in, I've added some self-directed work that you can do at home and when it's convenient.

Along with learning about God and church stuff, we'll go on field trips, explore what difference our faith makes when we're in middle and high school, and beyond, and have some guest speakers. Will you join us? Let Pastor Lee know. Our first meeting will be September 16th where you'll get all the information about the program. Parents should come to this meeting as well. September 30th will be Transformation Sunday – you definitely DON'T want to miss this one!

MAKING A JOYFUL SOUND! OUR CHURCH'S MUSIC MINISTRY



JOIN THE ENSEMBLE?

Some churches have a choir; some have a chamber orchestra; some have a praise band. In our church we have something related to all these approaches to music ministry while also being somewhat different. We call it "The Ensemble." What is The Ensemble and how might you become involved?

The Ensemble contributes to our Sunday worship in several ways—by leading us when we sing our hymns, by playing at other moments during worship, and by supporting the idea that spirituality may be expressed through music. An explanation of how this works: The instrumental composition of The Ensemble is diverse. Yes, one instrument is the human voice, but there are other instruments involved from time to time. Within our church family we have folks who play guitars, bell chimes, clarinets, drums, mandolin, and soon ukuleles. I've also heard whispers of more possibilities!

Please don't be shy. All it takes to become a member of The Ensemble is to tell me and to agree to spend some time practicing with others. You may be able to commit to most Sundays or you may be able to commit on an intermittent basis only. Either degree of commitment is fine.

Let me know if you're interested in joining The Ensemble. Together we can explore how you might become involved in this aspect of church life in a way that works for you.

Peace.
Gloria Parkinson
Music Ministry Coordinator

SERVANTS IN FAITH GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET

Our busy time of year is here. We have most of our Vendors signed up already, and we have most of our regular vendors returning, plus we have some new vendors with new products on the list. We have not had a woodworker join us for several years, and we do this year. We will have many different wood products from trivets to clocks!

We are also planning to have a couple of classes offered, so visitors can make their own boxwood decorations for Christmas, and also make jewelry for loved ones or for themselves. Our food will be the same as we had last year.

If you remember, we tried some new cookies, kept some old ones, and also have the gluten free items we offered last year. Besides the cookies we will have the old standbys of stolen, gingerbread, bratwursts and of course our own sauerkraut. Of course, we will be offering our very popular German teas. We must not forget for the younger visitors we will also have hotdogs and chips.



In the next few weeks we will be having a planning meeting. We also will be putting up sign up sheets for people to sign up for shifts working in the kitchen, working on the grill, working in the booths, and being greeters and helpers to make sure our visitors get to see all the vendors in the different areas, both upstairs and down.

Unfortunately, we have not found a replacement for our Sunday Concert, but are still working on this. Keep this activity in your prayers,

I would like to offer a couple of crafting nights (or afternoons) for making some simple Christmas ornaments that we can sell. Please let me know if you are interested so we can set something up.

With everyone's help, we will have another GREAT Christmas Market.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Sivert
Chairperson

MISSING DUDLEY MOSES

We miss Dudley. As well as his soaring tenor voice that was so much a part of our Sunday worship, Dudley was a wonderful man, who had a strong faith and strong opinions on a lot of other topics too! We remember his passionate discussions.

His Celebration of Life service in our packed-to-capacity Sanctuary contained a lot of music. Indeed, the last piece we heard was a remarkable recording of a teenage Dudley singing as only he could sing. How then, with mere words and no music, can I capture all that Dudley meant to our church family? The answer is, I can't. Let me therefore invite you to read the lyrics of the Leonard Cohen song If It Be Thy Will.

Turning to Leonard Cohen at this time is not as strange as it might seem. During our Monday evening drives to and from Stow where Dudley and I went to sing in a community chorus, he and I would debate nonstop about anything and everything, including Leonard Cohen. Dudley considered Cohen a poet. With love for my dear friend Dud, I share the lyrics of If It Be Thy Will in this newsletter. I've highlighted the verses that for me embody Dud's faith and spirit. If possible, please listen to the song on Youtube. Just click on the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TR1m98xn15c> and think of Dud. Glo (as Dud always called me)

goodbye..?
oh no, please. Can't
we go back to page one
and do it all over
again?

-Winnie The Pooh



IF IT BE YOUR WILL IN CELEBRATION OF DUDLEY MOSES

Leonard Cohen described what he wrote as a “murmured prayer” Listen at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TR1m98xn15c>

Wf it be your will
That I speak no more
And my voice be still
As it was before

Auduadi1
I will speak no more
I shall abide until
I am spoken for
If it be your will
If it be your will
That a voice be true
From this broken hill
I will sing to you
From this broken hill
All your praises they shall ring
If it be your will
To let me sing

From this broken hill
All your praises they shall ring
If it be your will
To let me sing

If it be your will
If there is a choice
Let the rivers fill
Let the hills rejoice

Let your mercy spill
On all these burning hearts in hell
If it be your will
To make us well

And to draw us near
And bind us tight
All your children here
In their rags of light

In our rags of light
All dressed to kill
And end this night
If it be your will

If it be your will

Songwriters: Leonard Cohen / Patrick
Leonard
If It Be Your Will lyrics © Kobalt Music
Publishing Ltd., Sony/ATV Music Publishing
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Sunday School Starts on Rally Sunday!

Sunday's beginning September 9th, through mid June we will have classes offered to children from pre-school age through grade eight. Classes are held during the worship service, after the Children's Message. We are using a curriculum called Dig In which will lead us through stories of the Bible, while providing a hands-on learning adventure. On the first Sunday of each month, we will join the congregation for Communion.

Look for our upcoming youth mission work including purchasing and delivering Thanksgiving Turkeys!



We will see YOU on Rally Sunday, September 9th!

Some of our youth got together this summer for a "boundless adventure"! Our summer youth group meeting was a blast—look for upcoming youth group opportunities on the bulletin board and website. Confirmation letters have been mailed, if interested in Confirmation Classes please contact the church office. Youth council will meet on September 30th at 9:15, we have some great volunteering opportunities—come and check out this committee!

INTRODUCING YOUR VITALITY TEAM

Pastor Lee Atherton, Moderator Bob Lidstone, Mary Ellen Matthew, Gloria Parkinson, Wendy Preston, Janet Lamy and Katie Gil have formed a Vitality Team to explore how our church can be more alive and more engaged with both our members and our community.

We have met every 2 or 3 weeks since April to keep our momentum up. One of our first meetings was with Don Remick from the Massachusetts United Church of Christ. Don talked about the importance of finding our Why. Our Why refers to why this church matters, why we do what we do, and why our church should continue to exist.

Don also introduced us to a UCC program called "Churches Alive". It is a structured October to Spring process guiding participating churches to revitalize themselves through self-discovery, discipleship, and community engagement.

The team felt that while "Churches Alive" is not cheap, it was a needed investment in our church's future. We feel we need a professional process led by experienced professionals with tested and proven materials and techniques. Thankfully the Council agreed and we will be participating this October. To help the church pay for this we are joining the Servants in Faith in sponsoring another Spaghetti Supper on October 6. Please join us.

While we are still in the early part of defining who we are and who our community is we have made it easier to introduce ourselves by designing a new brochure for the church. To start the story telling needed to understand who we are and what we have to offer our community we are generating and soliciting emails containing anything people feel is inspiring. Look for these and let us know if they touch you.

Please pray for our efforts to revitalize the United Church of Clinton

Let's all Shake, Rattle, and Roll



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Do you know the names of everyone at worship? Or at events at Church? How about just the person in front of or behind you? Please wear your name tags! I don't know about you, but I had asking people to remind me of their names. OK – and even a little 'fessing up here... I'm not the best at remembering names myself.

When you do wear yours, it makes it so much easier for me to connect the names I read and hear with the people I greet and talk to each week. And if that's how I feel after being here several months, imagine how our newer folks feel? Or our visitors who are hearing bunches of names all at once!

HOW THINGS WORK AROUND HERE

Are you new to our church? Have you been here a while, but just never asked? Are you a long-time member who wonders what's changed? Beyond Sunday morning worship, there is much that goes on behind the scenes and we want to be sure your questions are answered.



All are invited to our Bereavement Group led by Pastor Lee. We meet each month on the first Tuesday at 7-8:30pm.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU MORE!

We all have our moments in life when having our pastor by our side to make a difference in how well we celebrate, or how smooth the road of challenge we travel may be.

In my role as hospice chaplain, I am always grateful when a family or patient welcomes me into their life and home right when we begin to serve them. I love the conversations and stories we share! The hopes and dreams, wishes and prayers that are a part of every person's life.

When the end is drawing near, I am so much more familiar with the unique personalities and needs of each person in the room. I am able to minister to them much more deeply and fully. I can't begin to tell you what an honor it is for me to walk these journeys with people!

In the same way – well, no, I'm not hoping for hospice for you!

But in the same way, I can only be my best self, offering grace, love, peace, hope and comfort to you and your family as you celebrate or struggle through life's ups and downs when I know you well. Over the next few months, I would love to have an opportunity to get to know you; and for you to know me too. We could meet at your home, place of work or play, or at the church. Give me a call at 508-308-7116 to schedule a time to visit. We could go for a coffee, have lunch together, or watch one of your kids' ball games together

United Church of Clinton

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The United Church of Clinton

Pass It On
September 2018