

# Cross Currents



January 2017 • *Open Hearts & Open Minds & Open Doors*

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## From Pastor Chris

My Dear Sisters, Brothers, and Siblings,

I have been quite busy in the days since the October 16th Congregational Meeting where you voted to call me as your Acting Pastor! I have talked with many of you, met with our leadership, consulted colleagues in similar roles, read a bunch of books and articles, and prayerfully considered how best to navigate all that lies ahead of me personally and our congregation as a whole.

Times of transition call us to pause and step back for a moment to take a look at the larger picture, and so it seems fitting that this transition is happening at the start of the new year. I have never been one to make resolutions, but the newness of this season (much like Easter) inspires me to evaluate where I've been, where I am, and where I want to be going. Our pastoral leadership transition invites us to do the same thing.

I know that many of you have great ideas and observations, concerns to be addressed, and anxieties to be alleviated. There are many more conversations to be had, and I appreciate your patience and understanding as I now begin this role in earnest and determine the most effective way to hear all that you have to say. But through the conversations I've had so far, recurring themes and ideas have emerged. I am encouraged by this, as most of those confirm things that have been on my radar, which has led me to craft some proposals in response. I'm sharing a few of those with you now.

## Highlights

visit us online at: [haydenvillechurch.org](http://haydenvillechurch.org)

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## Widening Our Worship

Our Sunday morning worship service is at the heart of our Beloved Community. At its best, worship is where we can find nourishment and renewal, sanctuary and belonging, inspiration and a glimpse of peace, hope, joy, and love. We become deeply emotionally attached to rituals and music, look forward to seeing familiar faces, and soak in a warm embrace. The worship service is also our most “public face,” and so it is essential that our commitments to inclusion and welcome shine through in our worship leadership. Working with the Deacons and Jeff Olmsted, I’ll be calling together a rotating group of folks who have passion and creative ideas for worship. We’ll also be inviting guest preachers to share a message with us, and offering opportunities for members and friends of our church to take on some worship leadership. More details about this will be coming soon.

## Pastor Parish Relations Committee

In order for me to be the best pastor I can be in our ministry together, there needs to be a formal way for me to receive feedback and support. To this end, we will be forming a Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) in early 2017, which will be authorized by the Council. The PPRC is a unique group of four to five members who feel comfortable with candidness, conflict, and confidentiality while providing support to the pastor. But having a PPRC does not mean that is the only way to come to me with concerns! In fact, I greatly appreciate when folks can come to me directly. It does mean that there is a place where folks can turn if they do not feel they can come to me directly, and there’s a sounding board for me to address those concerns. You will hear more about this in February.

## Please Also Note...

In addition to opportunities for worship leadership, we will be re-forming a member-to-member spiritual care team akin to the Shepherds and Angel hearts. We will also be looking for folks to help with various administrative roles. We will keep you well informed as these things develop. Where do you see yourself in the future of our church?

My friends, I am excited. I am inspired. I am hopeful. I am nervous. I am confident. I am ready. I am here - - and so are you. Together, let’s do this!

Peace & Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Chris" with a flourish underneath.

## Staff and Leader Meetings

*Is your name on our Church Leadership list in the bulletin or newsletter? Heads up!*

During January and into February, I will be having one-on-one meetings with our staff and church leadership. My goal is to get a better understanding of how our congregation functions, seek out those areas we need to tweak, and hear how I might support our staff and leaders in my role as Acting Pastor.

Thank you for your leadership in the past, present, and future. I look forward to working together!

## **Pastor Andrea's Farewell Worship Service and "Good Goodbye" Luncheon** *Sunday, January 1st at 10:00 am*

On Sunday, January 1st, our Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayvazian will conclude her ministry at Haydenville Congregational Church. Please join with us in worship to hear Pastor Andrea's reflections on her 12 years of pastoral leadership, sharing together in Communion and a liturgy of farewell.

Following worship we will come together for a **"Good Goodbye" luncheon** where we honor Pastor Andrea and celebrate her time with us. We need your help to make this happen! We are expecting around 200 people to attend, and we need folks to prepare food and help in the kitchen. Please note that this is not a potluck, rather specific dishes are being requested. Between now and Christmas, you can find sign up sheets in the Dining Room listing the requested dishes to be prepared by a group of people. Please join a group and then collaborate with your group to prepare the food. Everything would have to be ready to serve on Sunday right after church. Hot dishes could be precooked and reheated, or cooked during the service, with someone from the group being responsible in the kitchen. Please do not prepare a dish that has not been requested.

Per Pastor Andrea's request, please consider donating to the cost of this celebration in lieu of gifts. Sign up in the Dining Room or contact Deacon Trish LaFreniere ([paintitblue@comcast.net](mailto:paintitblue@comcast.net) or 413-268-7254) for more information.

## **Transition Leadership Team Update**

Dear Church Family,

As the members of the Transition Leadership Team, we want to thank everyone who participated in some way last fall in planning Pastor Andrea's Good Goodbye celebration and in the thoughtful and prayerful selection of Chris Mereschuk as our Acting Pastor. A special thanks to Trish LaFreniere for heading up the party planning.

The Transition Leadership Team met with Pastor Chris several times in December to discuss his ideas about the Acting Pastor role. We had our last meeting with Chris as the transition team on December 11th. He will be presenting his ideas for worship, communication, and engagement with the congregation over the next few months.

We will return to our search for a settled pastor later this winter, early spring. At our Annual meeting, which takes place Sunday, February 12th, we will discuss with the congregation the next steps in our transition to a settled pastor. We will again be looking for the participation of everyone as we move ahead.

In prayer and peace,  
Lynn Fogg, Moderator  
Alice Barber, Head Trustee  
Pat James, Head Deacon  
Jo Cannon, Treasurer  
Jim Foudy, Human Resources Coordinator

## **Call to the Annual Meeting** **February 12th following Worship**

The Annual Meeting of the Haydenville Congregational Church, United Church of Christ will be held in the Sanctuary on **Sunday, February 12th following the worship service**. Please plan on staying to review the Annual Report and vote on many important issues. All members have a vote and are encouraged to attend. Non-members are welcome to attend and share their voice. Proposed bylaw changes will be presented for a vote, and will be available as bulletin inserts. **Annual reports** from all board and committee chairs are due on **January 16, 2017**. Please send them to [office@haydenvillechurch.org](mailto:office@haydenvillechurch.org). Thank you!

## “Restoration”

### *From the United Church of Christ's Stillspeaking Daily Devotionals*

*" . . . and I will bring my people Israel back from exile. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them." - Amos 9:14*

The last few times I've taken my malfunctioning cell phone back to the dealer, I've been informed that it's much cheaper and more convenient to get a new one.

And I remember the days when there was a tailor on the premises of most dry cleaning stores to restore the wearability of fine garments.

The modern push toward replacement instead of repair seems paramount.

Most sociologists predict that 40 to 50 percent of couples who marry in America will end in divorce due to an array of irreconcilable differences.

Since the mid-70's, stricter sentencing mandates, stark budget shortfalls and a widespread punitive philosophy of being 'tough on crime' has made today's prisons much less likely to rehabilitate their inmates.

And there is ample evidence that the fissures in our society between race, political party, class and income are becoming wider and deeper.

But the power of Advent is the hope of restoration.

It is the belief that failed relationships are not forever doomed.

It is the conviction that dry bones in valleys of demise can live again.

It is the promise that broken and abandoned human habitations can be rebuilt.

It is the confidence that God is still in this world—reconciling all that was lost and forsaken back to life and liberty.

### **Prayer**

Come Lord Jesus, and give us the perseverance we need to penetrate the darkness of despair and allow your power of restoration to work through us.

### **About the Author**

Kenneth L. Samuel is Pastor of Victory for the World Church, Stone Mountain, Georgia.



### **January Birthdays!**

- 2 Charles Arlo Hooper-Lindros
- 3 Wilson Molano  
Douglas Renick
- 7 Debra Edwards
- 9 Sue Carbin
- 10 Allen Warner
- 11 Diane Bushee
- 12 Eliza Warner  
Rev. Phillip Hall
- 14 Karin McGowan
- 16 Haley McElligott  
Laine Wilder
- 17 Emily Dines
- 19 Francesca Piantedosi
- 20 Julia Guiel
- 21 Nev Capron
- 22 Jose Newcomb-Gerken
- 23 Lynne Wallace
- 26 Shirley Warner  
MaryEllen McQueston
- 27 Bill Loomis  
Carol Boyer  
Mesfin Daniel McManamy  
Maureen Ricksgers
- 31 Adriana Piantedosi  
Aidan Chappuis

## This Month in Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries

- **January 1st:** No Children's Church
- **January 8th:** The Baptism of Jesus
- **January 15th:** Worship and Justice
- **January 22nd:** United in Christ
- **January 29th:** Children's Church Lessons, help with Cathedral in the Night food prep
- **"Today I Learned" Sheets** • Ever wonder what your child did in Children's Church beyond "had snack" and "I don't know?" Wonder no more! Each Sunday at the close of our lesson we hand out a "Today I Learned (TIL)" sheet that gives a brief summary of the day's lesson, along with some suggested questions and topics for further discussion. You can grab one when you pick up your child or ask a teacher or Pastor Lindsey for a copy.

### Update! We've Hired a Transitional Director of Children's Church!

It is with great enthusiasm (and tremendous relief!) that we share the news that Rev. Lindsey Peterson has agreed to join our staff as the Transitional Director of Children's Church!

Some of you have had the chance to meet Lindsey over the past couple of months as she has attended worship, and we hope that you will get to know her more in the coming days. Lindsey comes to us most recently from serving as the Pastor of Buckingham Congregational Church in Glastonbury, CT, having relocated to Northampton at the end of the summer. She is also a talented guitarist, pianist, and vocalist, and is eager to share her gifts with our children.

In her role as Transitional Director of Children's Church, Lindsey will focus exclusively on the programming and administration of our Sunday morning Children's Church ministry. Her responsibilities will include planning curriculum, recruiting teachers, and the occasional Children's Message, and other related administrative tasks. She will be a presence in the classrooms each Sunday.

Lindsey began her work on December 18th, collaborating with Pastor Chris to prepare for this leadership transition. Lindsey has agreed to serve in this 10-hour-per-week position for the next few months while the Children's and Family Ministries Committee prepares to search for a settled Director that will lead our full Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries.

So please give Rev. Lindsey Peterson a warm Haydenville welcome!

With gratitude,

The Children's and Family Ministries Committee: Andrew Geery, Chair, Jen Miller-Antill, Karen Guiel, and Pastor Chris



## General Announcements

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### **YOU Can Be a Worship Leader!**

Starting with our Worship Service on January 8th, Pastor Chris is inviting people to help “Widen Our Worship” by taking on Worship leadership roles. Such roles would include leading prayers, Invitation to the Offering, co-leading the Welcome, and sharing the News of the Community among other things. Pastor Chris will gladly collaborate with you and offer tips/training. Please contact Pastor Chris ([revcjm@gmail.com](mailto:revcjm@gmail.com) or (860) 966-8055) if you are interested, and thank you!

### **Newsletter News and Announcements Announcement!**

We are excited to announce that Hannah Karpman and Katie Hull will be taking on our monthly CrossCurrents Newsletter starting with our January issue. Continuing the great work of Richard Spencer, Katie and Hannah will work with Pastor Chris and other leaders to produce this essential source for inspiration, information, and education.

Along with this change, we have a new, clarified way for folks to submit announcements and articles for the newsletter, weekly email, website, and printed Sunday announcements. **Starting immediately, please email any and all submissions to [hccnews@haydenvillechurch.org](mailto:hccnews@haydenvillechurch.org).** Please note if your submission is for the newsletter, weekly email, website, printed Sunday announcements, or any combination of those. More details will be shared soon.

Please remember that our deadlines are Tuesday by 5:00 pm for the weekly email and printed Sunday announcements, and by 5:00 pm on the 15th of the prior month for the following month’s newsletter. Thank you!

### **Our Stewardship Campaign Continues**

Have you had the chance to pledge your financial support for our Beloved Community? The 2017 pledges are still coming in, and we need you to “Invest in Our Vision.” Every dollar truly makes a difference and helps us get closer to our \$150,00 goal. Please see Bob Varnon, Pastor Chris, or our Treasurer Jo Cannon for a pledge form. As we have said many times: We are not a wealthy church, but we are a generous church! Thank you for your generosity!

### **Women's Fellowship**

#### **Thursday, January 12th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm**

The next meeting of the new Women's Fellowship will be held at Mariel Addis’s home in Florence. All those who identify as women are warmly invited to attend. At each meeting we focus on bringing God's presence into our daily lives by enriching our prayer life, reading scripture, having discussions, etc. Bring your bible, your ideas, and the desire to know Jesus on a deeper level. Please no food or drink. Any questions? Please contact Laine Wilder or Susan Sachs.

### **"Refugee Kids: One Small School Takes on the World" Film and Discussion**

#### **Tuesday, January 31st from 7:00 to 9:00 pm Edwards Church Sanctuary in Northampton**

All are welcome to the screening of “Refugee Kids,” a short documentary that follows students at a New York City summer program for children seeking asylum from the world’s most volatile conflicts. Following the screening, there will be a question and answer discussion time with MA State Representative Aaron Vega from Holyoke who edited the documentary. This event is sponsored by The Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group, which includes Doug Renick and Francesca Piantedosi representing Haydenville Congregational Church. For more about the film, visit [www.refugeekidsfilm.com](http://www.refugeekidsfilm.com).

# Calendar for January

Please check the online church calendar to confirm meeting dates, times and locations.

Thank you "Daily Bread" for providing the coffee hour goodies during January.

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sun. Jan. 1	10:00 am	Worship Service with Communion	Sanctuary
	11:30 am	Andrea's Good Good-bye Potluck Lunch/Open House	Dining Room
Wed. Jan. 4	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. Jan. 5	5:30 pm	Diaconate Meeting	Dining Room
Sun. Jan. 8	10:00 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
	12:00 pm	Council Meeting	Sanctuary
Tues. Jan. 10	5:30 pm	Trustee Meeting	Dining Room
	7:00 pm	Men's Fellowship Meeting	Dining Room
Wed. Jan 11	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Sun. Jan. 15	10:00 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
Mon. Jan. 16		Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
	6:00 pm	Peace and Justice Meeting	TBD
Tues. Jan. 17	6:00 pm	Trans Writing Group	Dining Room
Wed. Jan. 18	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. Jan. 19	6:00 pm	Journey: Support Group	Dining Room
Sun. Jan. 22	10:00 am	Worship Service	Dining Room
Wed. Jan. 25	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Sun. Jan. 29	10:00 am	Worship Service, Blue Moon Sunday	Sanctuary
	5:00 pm	Cathedral in the Night Meal and Worship Service	First Churches Northampton

**January 11th is Human Trafficking Awareness Day** in the United States – a day to bring awareness to the world-wide crisis also known as modern day slavery. The 29th General Synod officially recognized the date and called on UCC congregations to be part of the education and advocacy efforts associated with Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

**January 29th - January 30th is Health and Human Service Day.** It is a special opportunity to create awareness of the health concerns of our communities and world, and to learn about the many and various health and human service ministries of the United Church of Christ. Find out more about the UCC's Council for Health and Human Service Ministries at [www.chhsm.org](http://www.chhsm.org).

## Church Leadership

**Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayvazian**  
Senior Pastor

**Rev. Chris Mereschuk**  
Acting Pastor

**Jeff Olmsted**  
Minister of Music

**Rev. Lindsey Peterson**  
Transitional Director  
of Children's Church

**Lynn Fogg**  
Church Moderator

**Sam Icklan**  
Church Vice Moderator

**Lisa Hall**  
Clerk

**Jo Cannon**  
Treasurer

**Pat James**  
Diaconate, *Chair*

**Alice Barber**  
Trustees, *Chair*

**Rev. Dr. Peter Ives**  
Theologian-  
in-Residence

**Rev. Yohah Ralph**  
Minister of Outreach,  
Advocacy and  
Pastoral Care

**Kathy O'Connor**  
Church Sexton

**Church Administrator**  
Ferdene Chin-Yee

**Jim Foudy**  
Human Resources  
Coordinator, Men's  
Fellowship, *Chair* &  
Church  
Communications

**Andrew Geery**  
Children's and  
Family Ministries  
Committee, *Chair*

**Jennifer Clarson**  
Angel Take-out,  
*Coordinator*

**Nancy Wwinner**  
Angel Wings,  
*Coordinator*

**Jackie Cloonan**  
Snow Angels, Green  
Angels, *Coordinator*

**Bev Orluske**  
**Nancy Wwinner**  
Angel Hearts

**Doug Renick**  
Peace and Justice  
Steering Committee,  
*Chair*

**Bob Varnon**  
Stewardship  
Committee, *Chair*

**Carolyn du Bois**  
Music Committee,  
*Chair*

**Sue Carbin**  
Building  
Maintenance, *Chair*  
& Church Scheduler  
[scarbin1973@aol.com](mailto:scarbin1973@aol.com)

**Linda Ziegenbein**  
Interfaith Cot Shelter  
Meal, *Coordinator*

**Anne Pratt**  
Scripture Reader  
*Coordinator*

**Laura Paul**  
Librarian

**Shirley Sicurello**  
Welcome Ministry,  
*Chair*

**Julie Salzman**  
**Cindy Dolgoff**  
Co-Head Ushers

**Laurie Priest**  
**Ann Loomis**  
Co-Head Greeters

**Laura Garcia**  
Webmaster

**Hannah Karpman**  
**Katie Hull**  
*CrossCurrents*

**Bev Orluske**  
**Nancy Wwinner**  
Keepers of the Keys

**Ross Bassett**  
**Jan Varnon**  
**Bob Varnon**  
Lay Delegates

**Rev. Dr. Peter Ives**  
**Pat James**  
Keepers  
of the Covenant

**Trustees (by Seniority)**  
Alice Barber  
Karin McGowan  
Laura Garcia  
Jo Cannon, *Treasurer*.  
Sylvia Fappiano, *LA Rep*.  
Carol Shaw

### Deacons *(by Seniority)*

Amy Andrew  
Pat James  
Paula Spencer  
Shirley Sicurello  
Carolyn du Bois  
Olivia Ilano Davis  
Tobias Davis  
Karen Browne-  
Courage  
Trish LaFreniere  
Cate Shaw  
Mariel Addis

### Church Council

Senior Pastor  
Moderator  
Vice Moderator  
Clerk  
Treasurer  
Trustees, *Chair*  
Diaconate, *Chair*  
Stewardship, *Chair*  
Music, *Chair*  
Peace & Justice, *Chair*  
Family Ministries,  
*Chair*

**Crosscurrent Submissions:** All items for publication should be sent to: [hcnews@haydenvillcongregationalchurch.org](mailto:hcnews@haydenvillcongregationalchurch.org) by the 15th of the month. Thanks to Karin McGowan and Paula Spencer for their editorial expertise.

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