

Cross Currents



May 2015 • Open Hearts & Open Minds & Open Doors

From Pastor Andrea

At our Visioning Lunch Meeting on April 12th with facilitators Ian Tosh and Heather May, I heard this concern about life in our Church expressed in these words, "We are too busy, we expect people to be too involved in too many things, and people are exhausted."

I think that is a real concern.

And it made me remember this story.

As a young man, the poet David Whyte felt so tired and listless, he asked a friend for advice. Fortunately, his friend happened to be Benedictine monk David Steindl-Rast.

"Tell me about exhaustion," the poet said.

The monk answered in words that were half question, half assertion: "You know that the antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest?"

Puzzled, the poet asked, "What is it, then?"

"The antidote to exhaustion," replied the monk, "is wholeheartedness."

I have been pondering Brother David's response since hearing one of our church members speak about people's exhaustion at the Visioning Lunch. I do think people are tired. I think the woman who made that point is right. But I also think that Brother David is right...the antidote is not necessarily rest.

The antidote to exhaustion is wholeheartedness. If you are doing something, anything, with your whole heart, you do not grow weary. Think about it.

I am most tired, complain of burnout, and carry on about being exhausted when I am dragging myself through the motions and not really present or doing what I am doing with my full heart. When I am totally present and have my

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heart in what I am doing, I am filled with energy and zest. You cannot keep me down. I can run on less sleep and still be a ball of fire. It is all about wholeheartedness.

If you are feeling exhausted by your work for or with the Church you should quit whatever you are doing with or for us, and hunt around until you can find something you can do wholeheartedly.

If Church work is leaving you depleted, switch up what you are doing. Church work should be challenging and use your gifts and talents. But it should not exhaust you. There is a difference. If your work with the Church is exhausting you, something is wrong.

The antidote for exhaustion is not rest.

The antidote is wholeheartedness.

If we are wholehearted in our love for God, we find that our burdens are lighter, our load is not too heavy.

If we are wholehearted in our love for God, we can find ways to serve God with our whole hearts, and not be drained but energized.

As soon as I heard a Church member say, during the Visioning Lunch with Ian and Heather, that too many parishioners were "exhausted," I knew she was right and I knew we had to address this problem.

The problem is real. And the antidote is not necessarily rest.

It is wholeheartedness.

And so I am posing these questions for us to ponder:

To what in your life do you bring your whole heart?

Are we finding enough ways as a faith community to nurture and express our wholehearted love for God?

Are there jobs or tasks within our faith community that you could do with a joyful wholeheartedness?

What comes back when you give your whole heart away?

I am praying on these questions, and I hope you will as well. Take an inventory of where and when you feel most alive, and when and to what you give your whole heart.

And strive to embrace wholeheartedness in what you tackle at our Church. I encourage you, when it comes to your work for and with the Church, say YES only to those tasks to which you can bring your whole heart!

With love to each one of you,



Instant Sermon's Gonna Get You

"Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence."

- 1 Peter 3:15b-16, New Revised Standard Version

I feel that it is important to be able to articulate, even just a little, why I believe what I do and how those beliefs influence my daily life. Funny enough, I find I often stumble on this when I'm simply asked outright about my beliefs as opposed to when I'm engaged in a conversation about faith. But I should be able to share a basic outline of my faith quite easily - it's kind of essential to my job, and also to my calling as a disciple. But I need practice, and I need the opportunity. And I find I am most able to express my own faith when I am responding to others' questions.

That is why I love the idea of an "Instant Sermon." What's an "Instant Sermon," you ask? Well, when I preach on **Sunday, May 17th**, I will arrive fully prepared for worship without having written my usual sermon. I will not write anything. Not a single word. I will not spend 15-20 hours the week before researching and writing. I will read and pray. And get plenty of sleep.

What will I preach about? Here's where you come in! Tucked inside everyone's bulletin that day will be a blank index card. Early on in the worship, you will be invited to write down a question. The cards will be collected, I'll disappear for a few minutes, shuffle through them, pick out several, and return to the sanctuary - presumably shaking and covered in flop sweat. When it comes time for the sermon, I will reflect on the questions I have selected, and - - voilá! - - an Instant Sermon!

You don't have to wait until the worship service that morning to write down your questions - that's why I'm giving you this "heads up" in the newsletter. Take some time to think and select a question or two. Just don't give it to me before then - where's the fun in that?!

This is not an interview of me and my beliefs, necessarily. This is an opportunity for you to ask faith-related questions that you've had on your mind. So, what questions do you have?

Now, we average 120-140 people in worship each Sunday. Clearly, if even just half of you submitted a question, there would not be time to get to them all. So I will look for repeats and themes when selecting questions for my response. As for the remaining questions, perhaps these will give us opportunities for future discussions and

forums, or maybe a nice chat over a cup of coffee sometime (my treat) if you sign your name.

I like experiments. And like so many other experiments, this will either be a complete train wreck or will be spectacular - - ok, maybe not spectacular, but at least informative. In any case, it will be entertaining! I hope you can be there for this adventure on May 19th, and I look forward to your questions!

Peace & Blessings,



A2A Reading “Any Body, Everybody, Christ’s Body”

The A2A Committee will be reading and discussing *“Any Body, Everybody, Christ’s Body: A Congregational Guide for Becoming Accessible to ALL”* over the course of our next two monthly meetings. May 5th - “Everybody” and June 2nd - “Christ’s Body.” All are welcome even if you have not done the reading. Come strive with us to make Accessibility part of our Church’s future vision. Our meetings run from 5:30-7:00 pm in the Dining Room. The Guide was compiled by the UCC Disabilities Ministries and can be downloaded from its site, www.uccdm.org.

In the following excerpt from *“The Low Road,”* poet Marge Piercy describes the process of becoming more inclusive (and empowered!) this way:

*It goes on one at a time,
it starts when you care
to act, it starts when you do
it again after they said no,
it starts when you say We
and know who you mean, and each
day you mean one more.*

Any Body, Everybody, Christ’s Body: A Congregational Guide for Becoming Accessible to ALL, written and compiled by Rev. Jo Clare Hartsig - UCC Disabilities Ministries

No Hands But Our Hands

Several years ago, Leonard Bernstein conducted his final concert at Tanglewood in the Berkshires. Unfortunately, he was very frail that summer. Lung cancer was reeking havoc on his body. In fact, members of his family were worried about this concert. They didn’t think he had the stamina to do it. But Leonard insisted he would conduct Beethoven’s 7th Symphony with the Boston Symphony Orchestra that evening. So, out he came into the Shed with a large standing room only audience. And with the flip of his baton, the orchestra began to play. And all went well for a while.

But as the orchestra entered the final movement, Bernstein began to cough, and he couldn’t stop coughing. It was a wretched cough that he couldn’t bring under control because of the cancer in his lungs. He tried to stop the cough, but he just couldn’t. So he took out his handkerchief, and put it over his mouth; that was all he could do, nothing more but hold his handkerchief over his mouth with both hands. No longer could he use his hands. No longer could he direct with his arms. All he could do was just stand at the podium. All he could do was to be present.

And everyone in the orchestra could see what was happening to him. All those who were playing violin, cello, bass, flute, clarinet, oboe, trumpet, French horn, drums and percussion understood what was happening at this moment. So they just pressed on, they just pressed on, each one of them with their own instruments, each one of them with their own gifts, skills and abilities, pressed on. They continued to play their part. They continued playing together in full harmony. They continued working together with complete unity. They continued while all Bernstein could do was to be a presence in their midst. And when they came to the conclusion of Beethoven’s 7th and the final note was played, everyone in the audience spontaneously rose to their feet and gave them a thunderous ovation. Of course, it was a standing ovation for Leonard Bernstein. Of course!!! But it was also a standing ovation for every member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra who each played their part as best as they could and pressed on to the very end, even when Leonard Bernstein was unable to use his hands and his arms to conduct them. They just pressed on. They did all that they could do when all he could do was to be a presence.

On Pentecost Sunday, which we celebrate this month, all the disciples came together in Jerusalem to press on with the work of Jesus’ ministry without the earthly Jesus with them. He was no longer with them in flesh and blood. He

no longer could use his hands. He could no longer use his arms. But the disciples and apostles still experienced his presence in their very midst. And they pressed on without him and became the Church to continue the work of ministry he taught them. They pressed on and continued to play their parts that they knew he wanted them to play if his ministry was to continue. They knew now that Jesus had no hands but their hands to do his work each day; no feet but their feet, to lead people in his way; no tongue but their tongue to tell people how he died, no arms but their arms to carry others to his side. And still present in our world and a PRESENCE in our midst, he needs us too.

- Peter Ives, Theologian-in-Residence

The 10th Circle of Hell

I can't help it. I went to a liberal arts college in Maine which had a fabulous, two-year curriculum designed to make us literate and conversant with Western culture. So, of course, we spent some time puddling about in Dante's "Inferno," and the other two volumes whose names momentarily escape me because Western Civilization doesn't care about diminishing memory.

Recently as I spent far more time on the internet than is humanly possible, it struck me that we have reached a dangerous place, or at least I have reached a dangerous place. Which is—we think we are accomplishing the works of mercy and being an activist for social change when we sign petitions, click on "like" and share posts which express our views. I do it all the time; I am the most guilty of persons.

I realize I will probably not be hanging out with Satan stuck in the 9th circle of hell, frozen tears clinking to the ice as they slide down his three faces. I will inhabit a new circle in hell, one that we need to develop for this technological age where simply SAYING you are doing something is in no way the same as DOING something, despite our cozy feelings.

I don't like messy charity. It is bad for my fingernails. I have to wear old clothes. My hair might frizz from being near the steam tables in the Soup Kitchen. My skin might wrinkle from being immersed in water. I might smell less than fabulous scents in that very same place. I might have to talk to people I DON'T KNOW! And smile as if I meant it!

But somehow, the faithless ease of clicking on buttons, sharing posts, and coming across as a woman of faith and action has just fallen into pieces, rather like Satan's frozen tears. (I wonder how that ice got there? Is Satan wearing any clothes or is he naked?) I imagine meeting God at the end of my life, and as He/She looks at me, I shall extend my hands in the universal gesture of "What? I tried."

It's not good enough. I have to do better. I am making a list, which in itself is another way of avoiding the hard work of messy charity. I put at the top: 1/ Volunteer at Cathedral in the Night and help make food. Do this more than one token time. 2/ Continue to buy diapers for the Survival Center, because poor women need these desperately. 3/ Buy a slice of pizza for a street person and give it to them. Don't worry about whether they like pepperoni or not.

I am stopping here. Because I know myself and my scaggy will, which lights up at the thought of doing good but so often fails at putting good intentions into practice. I am hopeful that the God of Mercy—as opposed to the God of judgment who seems to be one and the same except on a bad hair day with gas—will see my attempts to do more than keyboard charity; that She will support me in reaching out to the margins and erase the pathetic excuses I use to do less than I am called to do.

Maybe the Soup Kitchen has chocolate? Or decent coffee? Could it be?

- Annie Turner

May Birthdays!

- 1 Mary Vaughan
Dr. John Warner
- 3 Vicki Hicks
- 4 Jessica Morgan
Karla Hathaway
- 6 Alice Pannoni
- 11 Jane Hall
Ann Vanderburgh
- 12 Eleanor Warnock
Katie Hull
- 14 Richard Loomis
Chip Roughton
- 15 Susan Molano
Kayla Gilman-Solomon
Alexander Bertuch-Wallace
Andrew Geery
- 19 Mary Gerkin-Newcomb
Patricia James
Jennifer Miller-Antill
- 25 Pete Solis
Coni Gilman-Solomon
- 28 Gina Ayvazian
- 29 Velma Garcia
- 30 Tina Marini
- 31 Micaela Newcomb-Gerken



Faith

My faith is a bit seasonal.
All winter I suspected the raised beds
were under the curves of snow,
but by March, as snow persists, I wonder if they will ever
emerge,
if there will ever be a garden.
I know the buds fisted against sub-zero days will become
apples,
Still I despair with the lengthening days that the pale
ground will ever open to my garden spade, that there will
ever be fruit.

Since November my dog has known the exact spot
where his ball froze into the ground.
Storm after storm as it was buried deeper, deeper,
he nosed that exact spot, pawed at the feet of snow and
ice though it resisted his daily excavations.
Even so, he looked at me, paws prancing, tail stirring the
latest blizzard, as if to say,
See, it's still there! It's still mine! We will play! We will
play!

Dogs have always taught us faith, or brought us up short.
Today I choose to believe his sermon in the snow
and excavate my own frozen faith.
We will pray! We will play!

- Pat James

Children and Youth Ministries Listening Session

Sunday, June 14th following Worship • On June 1st,
Pastor Chris will begin working with the Children and
Family Ministry Committee, teachers, and (especially) our
children and youth to provide faith formation for the
youngest members of our congregation. Transitions are an
excellent opportunity to explore and evaluate programs
and practices, and so we would like to hear your feedback
and ideas for our ministry with young people! Bring your
Coffee Hour goodies and join us upstairs in Children's
Church for this 90-minute listening session hosted by the
Committee and Pastor Chris. Children are invited and
encouraged to attend along with their adults. Parents of
children or youth not currently active in the program, and
those who have volunteered with either the children's or
youth programs are encourage to join us. For more
information, please contact Pastor Chris.

Offertory

Imagine this
That with
our collection
we could re-make the world
if only a little...or much
provide food to those without
offer homes to the homeless
hope to the hopeless
cheer to the downcast
Imagine that your dollars
and cents have Wings attached
and perch in trees
and that the wind would
scatter them
only onto fertile ground.
May our hand-holding ushers please come forward - say
their names
Today's offering will be gathered up
Most Gracious God: Cause our Hearts to Hope & our
imagination to soar
towards where this offering will most matter
- Carole Bull

Spring Cleaning?

Ladies Aid is having a tag sale in early June. Donations can
be brought any Sunday after church and as we get closer
we will have weekday drop offs. Please make sure items
are in good condition. Any questions contact Cindy Drake.

Church Safety Quiz

It's always a good time to remind ourselves about the
Church safety features. How many of the following
questions can you answer correctly?
1) Where are the First Aid box and defibrillator located?
2) How many fire extinguishers are there?
3) Where are they?
4) Where is the emergency shutoff switch for the oil burner?
5) Where is there a carbon monoxide detector?
6) Where are the circuit breakers?
7) Where is the list of emergency phone numbers?
- Answers page 11

Womb Fruit

When I was a child, my Roman Catholic grandmother taught me to pray the rosary. The *Our Father* was boring but the *Hail Mary* was intriguing and compelling. It went like this:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God

Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

The idea that God had a mom was powerfully comforting. Seeking more comfort, I set about memorizing the prayer curled up in bed by the light of a Jesus night-light. The first change I made was to drop the last line. I didn't consider myself a sinner and it was a little early for me to worry about the hour of my death.

Much later in life I practiced tantric meditation. One of my practices involved visualizing a deity. I chose Mary. When I had gotten a clear picture of her I shrunk her down so she was small. Then I inhaled her. Then I let her increase in size inside me until I became her. Naturally I began to identify with her, and these words came to me: "Blessed am I among women, and blessed is the fruit of my womb, Katie." Like Mary, I brought a child of God into this world, and besides, saying the word "Katie" always makes me happy.

Questions came. What was it like to be the parent of Jesus? Did Mary talk to Jesus about the Roman occupation? Did she encourage his rejection of cleanliness laws? Did Jesus have a bedtime? Maybe she was sort of like me.

This year for Christmas my mother gave me an icon of Mary, the mother of Jesus, with Jesus carried in her belly.

I put the icon on my altar and sat down. Peace.

Hail Mary, full of Grace,

Holy Mary, mother of God,

Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus.

Blessed am I among women and blessed is the fruit of my womb, Katie.

This is the version of Hail Mary I'd been working with for about a month. Then I had a disagreement with someone I'll call "George." In order to start to transform my anger, I decided to include George in my prayer. *Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, George.* I put George into Mary's care with the awareness

that she cared for George as much as I cared for Katie. I was still irritated but a little less self-righteous. I had to soften around someone's child. As I worked with this prayer funny things started to happen. I started to switch whose child was whose. Blessed is the fruit of your womb Katie and blessed is the fruit of my womb George. I entrusted my daughter into Mary's care and was moved to care for her son. I shuffled the relationships. Sometimes saying Jesus, sometimes Katie, sometimes George. I imagined the 5 of us sitting together, Mary, Jesus, Katie, George and me. And it struck me. Blessed am I *among* women. **Among:** *surrounded by; in the company of*, which is so much better than **among:** being a member or members (of a larger set).

The prayer didn't say that Mary was blessed *over* other women. It said that she was blessed *in their company*. The words "blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb" were spoken to Mary by Elizabeth. Mary and Elizabeth were both pregnant. Elizabeth had been in seclusion for 5 months when Mary came to visit. I imagine it must have been a huge relief for Elizabeth to finally have some company. Maybe Elizabeth laughed for the first time in five months. The baby moved. Elizabeth may have thought her baby moved at the sound of Mary's voice. I think he moved because Mary and Elizabeth were together. I think baby John moved at the sound of his own mother being happy. Praying to Mary feels more to me like being with a friend than petitioning a parent. I sit in front of the icon and immediately feel better just because I'm in her presence. *Blessed am I among women.*

I repeated the words, *fruit of your womb*, I visually scrolled through Jesus, Katie, George, sometimes deliberately choosing names, sometimes letting them come. I began to add the names of people I love, always coming back to George, to include him in my circle of love. As the minutes and days went by I began to develop a genuine feeling of compassion and good will toward George. His image took on a smile and I started to feel love.

- Amy Andrew

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

- Anne Frank

Thank you "Bread and Blessings" for providing the coffee hour goodies during May.

Calendar for May

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

Date	Time	Event	Location
Fri. May 1	5:00 pm	Emerging Leaders Potluck Supper <i>for Seminarians and those heading to Seminary</i>	Dining Room
Sat. May 2	11:30 am	Northampton Pride March - meet in the parking lot across from Northampton Brewery	Northampton
Sun. May 3	8:45 am	Adult Faith Formation	Dining Room
	10:00 am	Worship Service with Communion	Sanctuary
	12:00 noon	Liturgist Workshop, <i>see page 11 for details</i>	Sanctuary
	After Worship	Exploring Membership Class #3	Pastor Andrea's Office
Mon. May 4	6:00 pm	Diaconate Meeting	Dining Room
Tues. May 5	5:30 pm	A2A Meeting	Dining Room
Wed. May 6	12:45 pm	Church Book Group	Forbes Library
	6:30 pm	Walk for Children Celebration, <i>see page 9</i>	Dining Room
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 7	9:30 am	Café Hours @ Sunrise Over Florence	Florence
Fri. May 8	6:00 pm	Youth Group Lock-in	Dining Room
Sat. May 9	10:00 am	Living the Questions 2	Dining Room
Sun. May 10	10:00 am	Mother's Day Worship Service	Sanctuary
Tues. May 12	7:00 pm	Men's Fellowship Meeting	Dining Room
Wed. May 13	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 14	9:30 am	Café Hours @ Sunrise Over Florence	Florence
	2:30 pm	Haydenville Church Writers' Group	Dining Room
	5:30 pm	Trustees' Meeting	Dining Room
Fri. May 15	5:30 pm	"Good Good-byes" Potluck Supper to Thank and Honor Dawn and Joanne	Dining Room
Sat. May 16	9:00 - 4:30 pm	Church Visioning Day, <i>see page 10</i>	Dining Room
Sun. May 17	8:45 am	Adult Faith Formation	Dining Room
	10:00 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
	12:00 noon	Council Meeting	Sanctuary
	After Worship	Exploring Membership Class #4	Pastor Andrea's Office

Date	Time	Event	Location
Mon. May 18	5:30 pm	Peace and Justice Meeting	Dining Room
Wed. May 20	6:00 pm	Shepherds' Meeting	Children's Church
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 21	9:30 am	Café Hours @ Sunrise Over Florence	Florence
	1:00 pm	Ladies Aid	Dining Room
	5:30 pm	Soup Salad Peace and Justice Dinner w/Common Ground	First Churches
Sun. May 24	10:00 am	Pentecost Worship Service	Sanctuary
Wed. May 27	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 28	9:30 am	Café Hours @ Sunrise Over Florence	Florence
	2:30 pm	Haydenville Church Writers' Group	Dining Room
Sun. May 31	10:00 am	Children's Sunday Worship Service	Sanctuary
	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Church Gala! <i>See invitation below</i>	Northampton

You are invited to celebrate the renewal of the Haydenville Congregational Church and Andrea Ayvazian's Ten-Year Anniversary as Pastor



Sunday, May 31, 2015 • 5:00 to 7:00 pm
 R. Michelson Gallery • 132 Main Street, Northampton
 Delicious Hors d'oeuvres and Desserts ~
 Wonderful Music ~ Sparkling Conversation ~
 Celebratory Toasts

The Gala is a celebration and a fundraiser for the Haydenville Children's Church Program

We ask for your support



Ticket price: \$0 and up... Please give what you can
 \$100... for those who are able

Tickets available online at www.haydenvillechurch.org
 or at the door

Wheelchair Accessible

Cathedral in the Night is Our New Special Mission!

Cathedral in the Night – an outdoor, ecumenical service held on the streets of Northampton – is the new special mission of Haydenville Congregational Church. The mission of this organization is to make God's love and community as accessible as possible to everyone. It also serves the only community dinner in Northampton on Sundays, making it a physical as well as spiritual lifeline to the community.

Haydenville Congregational Church already has a long relationship with Cathedral in the Night. Clergy and members of our church participated in the very first Cathedral in the Night service and, since then, we have continued to participate in Cathedral by worshipping with the community and serving dinner on Blue Moon Sundays. Stephanie Smith, the Pastor and Director of Cathedral in the Night, regularly attends Sunday services here at Haydenville with us.

Please take the time to give a special welcome to Pastor Stephanie the next time you see her. We look forward to a long relationship with this very important organization.

- Linda Ziegenbein

Walk for Massachusetts Children

You are invited to join the "Walk" on Wednesday evening, May 6th, 6:30-8:30, in the church dining room. Dessert and coffee/tea will be served. The Peace and Justice Committee and the Youth Group will host the walkers. Here's a news report about the 2014 walk:

A group of volunteers walked across the Bay State, starting in Boston and ending in Pittsfield. The ten-day trek was meant to encourage others to support a child in need. The Walk for Massachusetts Children raised \$6,500, and Thursday, organizers Sue and Tim Crane gave that money to five local nonprofits to continue supporting the needs of children. Sue Crane told 22News, "Children deserve all of the attention, the kindness, that adults have to give. As a retired social worker, that was my career, and my husband is a retired teacher, that was his career, supporting children. So we're delighted to be able to give back." The walk was so successful they're already planning another for next year.

At the end of the day of walking, there is a celebration to raise awareness about children's organizations in Massachusetts. The walkers and representatives of children's agencies gather to celebrate and meet each other. They represent a dozen United Way groups from across the State. Peter Kocot will be attending.

Please come and share this inspiring time with walkers deeply committed to the children of Massachusetts.

- Doug Renick

**JESUS WAS A RADICAL
NONVIOLENT
REVOLUTIONARY WHO
HUNG AROUND WITH LEPERS
HOOKERS AND CROOKS;
WASN'T AMERICAN AND
NEVER SPOKE ENGLISH;
WAS ANTI-WEALTH ANTI-
DEATH PENALTY ANTI-
PUBLIC PRAYER; BUT WAS
NEVER ANTI-GAY, NEVER
MENTIONED ABORTION OR
BIRTH CONTROL, NEVER
CALLED THE POOR LAZY,
NEVER JUSTIFIED TORTURE,
NEVER FOUGHT FOR TAX
CUTS FOR THE WEALTHIEST
NAZARENES, NEVER ASKED A
LEPER FOR A COPAY; AND
WAS A LONG-HAIRED
BROWN-SKINNED HOMELESS
COMMUNITY-ORGANIZING
MIDDLE EASTERN JEW.**

Northampton Pride Parade Spectacular

Saturday, May 2nd • Mark your calendars now to march with us! Our Church always has a big contingent of 100+ marchers and this year will be no different! But what makes this year "spectacular?" We're marching with a band! Your in-house band Prone to Mischief, expands for this event and turns into The Brass Republic, a larger enhanced group for parades. With a New Orleans "Second Line" feel, we'll need banner carriers, parasol twirlers (we need 6!), flag wavers (B.Y.O.F.). Wear your I AM THE CHURCH t-shirts and meet in the parking lot across from the Northampton Brewery at 11:30 am. Look for the purple balloons - - that's an easy way to find our group!

Filtergate

Some faithful kitchen users are not cleaning the filter in the dishwasher and it is getting clogged and yucky. We love that our church kitchen is heavily used. And we love that so many folks fill and run the dishwasher. But cleaning that filter each time it is used is critical to keeping everything running well. If you are not clear on how to clean the filter please please please ask a kitchen regular (!!!!) to show you how. This is actually really important. AND there are written CoffeeKlatch instructions hanging in the kitchen. Thank you one and all for attending to this.

- Board of Trustees.

May Climate Actions of the Month

Last month, I admit that I splurged on a vacation in California, by plane no less. Despite my awareness of the heavy toll this leaves on my carbon footprint, I got some sobering perspectives on climate change from the experience. I witnessed some direct effects of climate change including the extreme drought; starving sea lion pups whose mothers had to abandon them to hunt fish that moved far north due to warming ocean temperatures; and a complete absence of sea stars due to a virus which may be exacerbated by warm ocean temperatures. Glimpsing climate change from a California perspective has sobered and re-committed me to do what I can to stem the worst effects of our climate crisis. These suggestions are brought to you by Molly Hale of the Climate Action Group of the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence.

Personal: Do you have air conditioning and/or electric heat? If so you should look into replacing these with an air source heat pump, an alternative that is far more efficient and much cheaper over the long run. This month is the time to act because May 31 is the expiration date for a \$750 rebate from the Clean Energy Center. In addition you can get a \$500 rebate from MassSave (no current expiration date). Most local heating and cooling companies can install this innovative technology and can discuss the options and rebates with you.

Community: Come to the next monthly general meeting of Climate Action Now/350MA on Monday May 25, 7 pm at the Unitarian Society of Amherst. This is a dynamic and multi-pronged Pioneer Valley grassroots climate organization. Meetings are efficiently run, action-oriented and inspiring. Current campaigns include statewide fossil fuel divestment, the Kinder Morgan gas pipeline, carbon fee and rebate in MA, and a climate action plan for Springfield. CAN/350MA meetings happen every 4th Monday of the month and generally alternate between Amherst and Northampton. Check the calendar at <http://climateactionnowma.org/> for up to date info.

State/National/Global: Contact your federal legislators to ask them to take leadership roles regarding opposition to the Kinder-Morgan and other proposed gas pipelines carrying fracked gas. Our U.S. Senator Markey is taking a lead on natural gas-related legislation; he and Senator Warren need to hear our concerns about this pipeline. Reps. Neal (MA – 1st Dist.) and McGovern (MA 2nd Dist.) are also key potential allies, given their voting records on energy issues. Some actions you can request they take: 1)

Strengthen environmental and safety regulations of the natural gas industry – [read here about how methane leaks negate benefits of natural gas](#) 2) Amend the [Natural Gas Act](#), which makes it so easy for gas companies to take our land, even if it is protected under state and local law (the gas industry wants to [streamline the permitting process!](#)) 3) Maintain/expand incentives for energy conservation and for solar and wind power.

Inform Yourself: Learn more about the proposed Kinder-Morgan pipeline by watching this 1-hour [video](#) on “An Introduction to Massachusetts Gas Pipeline Issues” produced by No Fracked Gas in Mass. Or go to the nofrackedgasinmass.org website for other resources to learn about this hot issue.

Strategic Visioning Day, May 16

The Transition Committee invites all church leaders (and anyone who wants to be a church leader) to our Strategic Visioning Day on Saturday, May 16, from 9 to 4:30. At 9, coffee and bagels will be provided, and lunch at noon. Ian Tosh and Heather May from First Somerville Congregational will be facilitating. In the morning we will be reviewing the visioning we did on March 7th, finding priorities and exploring them. After lunch we will take those priorities and work on how to put them into action. Everyone should plan to attend all day because the morning’s work will build into the afternoon. This is an exciting opportunity to shape the growth of our beloved church in the next 1 - 3 -10 years.

- Lisa Hall

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**Please Note our
Publication Deadlines:**

- Weekly Sunday announcements are due to Pastor Chris revcjm@gmail.com by Tuesday at 5:00 pm.
- Weekly e-newsletter announcements are due to our Office Administrator, Margie Serkin office@haydenvillechurch.org, by Tuesday at 5:00 pm.
- Contributions to *CrossCurrents* are due to Richard Spencer spencer-richard@comcast.net by the 15th of the month.

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“Love My Church” Day

The Trustees are “sponsoring” a SPRING WORK DAY... here are some details:

- June 20 from 9 am to 2 pm
- Outdoor jobs are under Jackie Cloonan’s supervision with however many people she needs
- Interior cleaning projects are under Kathy’s supervision and some painting and easy repairs will be coordinated by Jim Foudy, Chip Roughton and Richard Spencer.
- The Church will provide refreshments and materials
- Volunteer to help for as short or as long as you want.

Evensong is Returning!

For those who love the beauty of a quiet meditative service, Evensong will take place on Thursday, June 4th at 7 pm in the Church Sanctuary. Come join us for a communal service of quiet music, hymns and readings with intervals of silence for healing, respite and spiritual renewal. If you are interested in helping to create an Evensong service, contact Susan Farrell @ 268-9298 or Farrellsings@comcast.net

Safety Quiz Answers

1) The First Aid kit and defibrillator are located in the Kitchen, on the counter below the phone. 2) There are a total of eleven fire extinguishers. 3) The fire extinguishers are located in the High Street hallway between the door to the Kitchen and the Dining Room, two extinguishers are in the Kitchen one beside each door into the Dining Room, one is beside the exit to the parking lot, one is at the front of the choir loft on the High Street side, two are in the sanctuary beside the side doors into the Narthex, one is at the top of the stairs to the balcony on the High Street side, one is hung at the base of the stairs into the cellar below the Sanctuary and another at the base of the stairs below the Dining Room, and the last is beside Andrea’s office door. 4) The emergency shutoff to the oil burner is located in the High Street hallway beside the door to the Kitchen. 5) There are two carbon monoxide detectors, one in the stairway to the Annex basement and a second in the stairway to the Sanctuary basement. 6) The electrical boxes are found at the north end of the basement below the Sanctuary, all switches are labeled. 7) The list of emergency numbers is in the Kitchen hanging beside the phone.

Interfaith Cot Shelter Wraps Up Another Successful Season!

April is the month the Interfaith Cot Shelter in Northampton closes for the season. Members of Haydenville Congregational Church served over one hundred meals from November through March and will be serving one final meal at the end of April. The Interfaith Cot Shelter is a winter shelter that only operates during the coldest months of the year. In the past, Haydenville provided meals on alternating months but this year we were given the opportunity to serve every month. We rose to the challenge spectacularly!

A typical meal service at the shelter consists of a lot of chatting, serving dinner (food is prepared beforehand and kept warm), eating dinner with the shelter guests, more chatting, dish washing, and finally last-minute chatting before heading home. It is a wonderful way to get to know the people in our church better (although non members have also volunteered with us!), members of the community, and a fulfilling way to spend a couple of hours.

Special thanks to those who helped prepare and/or serve dinner this season: Angelique Baker, Melissa Brown, Mars Cardenas, Jo Cannon, Jackie Cloonan, Christine and Jim Foudy, Rachel Greenwood, Gloria Lampron, Mary Walker and Dylan, and Janet and Bob Varnon. Your generosity helps support this very important mission. We are still looking for people to help serve and/or prepare meals today, April 26 (contact Linda lziegenbein@yahoo.com). If you can’t help this month, consider joining us next year!

- Linda Ziegenbein

Want to read Scripture during worship or lead the Invitation to the Offering?

Sunday, May 3rd, 11:45 - 12:30 pm in the Sanctuary. Pastor Chris and Chip Roughton (our Scripture Reader coordinator) will be leading a brief introductory workshop on how to be a liturgist (fancy word for reader) in our worship service. No experience necessary! We want *you* to join our Worship Leader team! Questions? Contact Pastor Chris or Chip.

CrossCurrent Submissions: All items for publication should be sent to: spencer-richard@comcast.net by the 15th of the month. Thanks to Karin McGowan and Paula Spencer for their editorial expertise and to Beth Howland for labeling & mailing our newsletter.

Church Leadership

Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayvazian
Senior Pastor

Rev. Chris Mereschuk
Associate Pastor

Jan Varnon
Moderator

Lynn Fogg
Vice Moderator

Ann Loomis
Clerk

Jo Cannon
Treasurer

Margie Serkin
Bookkeeper/Office
Administrator

Karen Guiel
Diaconate, Chair

Rick Turner
Trustees, Chair

Dawn Orluske
Director of
Children's Church

Joanne Morgan
Youth Leader

Rev. Dr. Peter Ives
Theologian-
in-Residence

Rev. Susannah Crolius
Minister of
Creative Arts

Rev. Chris Mereschuk
Shepherds, Chair
860 966-8055

Jeff Olmsted
Minister of Music

Kathy O'Connor
Church Sexton

Jackie Cloonan
Ladies Aid, President

Andrew Geery
Youth & Family
Ministries, Chair

Jennifer Clarson
Angel Take-out

Sarah Bellows Meister
Angel Wings
Coordinator and
Church Intern

Vicki Hicks
Angel Hands,
Coordinator

Jackie Cloonan
Snow Angels, Green
Angels, Coordinator

Doug Renick
Peace and Justice
Steering Committee,
Chair

Maggie Solis
Bob Varnon
Stewardship
Committee, Co-chairs

Carolyn DuBois
Music Committee,
Chair

Sue Carbin
Church Scheduler
scarbin1973@aol.com

Linda Zeigenbein
Interfaith Cot Shelter,
Meal Coordinator

Chip Roughton
Scripture Reader,
Coordinator

Laura Paul
Librarian

Shirley Sicurello
Welcome Ministry,
Chair

Sharon Grace
Julie Salzman
Head Ushers

Susan Sachs
Head Greeter

Laura Garcia
Webmaster

Richard Spencer
CrossCurrents

Velma Garcia
Laine Wilder
Accessible to All
(A2A) Co-chairs

**Jeff Olmsted &
Darren Gardner**
Men's Fellowship,
Co-chairs

Mary Gerken-Newcomb
Haydenville Church
Writers' Group,
Facilitator

Lay Delegates
Ross Bassett
Jan Varnon
Bob Varnon

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

Deacons (by Seniority)
Karen Guiel
Mary Sheehan
Maureen Bourbeau
Karla Hathaway
Jen Matias
Amy Andrew
Pat James
Paula Spencer
Shirley Sicurello
Carolyn DuBois
Fred Goodhue
Tobias Davis

Shepherds
Ross Bassett
Robert Davis
Susan Farrell
Pat James
Tina Marini
Rev. Chris Mereschuk
Mary Sheehan
Ellen Tobiassen

Church Council
Senior Pastor
Moderator
Vice Moderator
Clerk
Treasurer
Trustees, Chair
Diaconate, Chair
Stewardship, Chair
Music, Chair
Peace & Justice, Chair
Family Ministries,
Chair
A2A, Chair

