

Cross Currents



May 2016 • *Open Hearts & Open Minds & Open Doors*

From Pastor Andrea

About five years ago, a church leader told me he was leaving the church. I was stunned and saddened, and asked why. "The church has some big problems," he told me. I knew, of course, he was right. But I hated to have him leave us. "Okay," I told him, "you can leave the church. I will be very sad. But of course you can go. But I ask you this: please just meet me for coffee so you can tell me the list of problems that you feel are pushing you out of the church."

He agreed to meet me for coffee.

About a week later, we met in a downtown Northampton coffee shop and the church leader listed what he thought were the four biggest problems facing the church. And he said he just could not deal with them any longer.

Immediately I knew that he really had his finger on the pulse. The four problems he named that he felt we were facing in the church were actually the top four in my mind also. He nailed it.

"Okay," I said looking at him in all seriousness and being totally direct. "You have named what I would also consider the biggest problems facing the church. In my mind, you got them right. Big problems that you no longer want to deal with."

I continued, "So why don't you visit First Churches or Edwards Church. You might like their problems more than ours."

He was quiet.

I went on.

"If you are looking for the perfect church that does not have problems," I told him, "then you will look until your dying day."

"But if you want to switch up the problems, and think you might like another church's problems more, check out First Churches and Edwards Church. I know those churches and their top problems are different from ours. You might like their problems more."

Highlights

visit us online at: haydenvillechurch.org

"Waste Not" Follow Up

"Perhaps I need to atone for my wastefulness not only by changing what I purchase, but also by donating food...."

Page 2

Jesus and Leviticus

"So can any of us doubt how Jesus would respond to all the other people today who are still regarded as unclean...."

Page 3

Tongues of Flame

"How DO we experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Is it like tongues of flame?"

Page 4

Tears of Joy for HCC

"HCC is a place like no other -- I have truly landed where I was meant to be. I hope that I can give back even just a little...."

Page 5

May Birthdays • 3

Calendar • 7

From the Deacons' Bench • 9

This Month In Children's, Youth & Family Ministries • 10

Church Leadership • 12

I write this now because our church has problems. And some of you are feeling very aware of our problems. But every church has problems. You may not like our problems, but there is no church on the face of the earth that does not have problems. The problems differ, but every church has their own list.

So I am writing now to say: you could name the top problems you feel are present in our church today. You are smart, engaged, and insightful. The view from the pews is not all that different from the view from the pulpit. We all know the church has problems, and our lists would probably be very much the same.

But my plea, as we move through Eastertide and continue to celebrate the Risen Christ, is that you invest in our church, our mission, our church family, our vision for the future, our hopes and our dreams and you do not just name the problems facing the church, you help solve them. We are the body of Christ, and if we all pull together, we can tackle the church's problems and move forward strengthened by our unity and creativity.

We can all be critics and armchair quarterbacks. We can all name what is not going so well in our church today. But what our church community needs is people who believe in the church despite our failings and work to improve our common life together....people who are problem solvers not just problem namers....people who say "That is not going so well, I have an idea about how we might do better."

We are doing something that is long, hard and requires patience, vision, and prayer: we are creating the kingdom of God—one worship service, one Children's Church game night, one service project, one casserole at a time.

I know things at the church aren't perfect. And that may be because none of us are perfect. But I also know that when we keep God at the center of our work as a church, we are guided, held and propelled forward to solve, not just name, problems.

And by the way, the church leader who said he was leaving the church....he didn't. He decided he liked our problems more than the problems at some of our sister churches.

Many blessings and love,



“Waste Not” Follow Up

In my March newsletter article, I shared with you one of my Lenten practices: keeping track of my food waste. I thought you might like an update on just how wasteful I was! By the numbers, I estimate that my 2 person household wasted approximately \$120 worth of food in the period between Ash Wednesday and Easter. That's about 1.5 week's grocery shopping expenses in the trash and compost pile. Some of the food was spoiled or was partially consumed or both. Some of the food was leftovers while some was simply not used in time.

Now, I tend to buy somewhat expensive food when it comes to meats, so my waste total might be skewed. However, this would still be an embarrassing amount of waste (financially speaking) even if I went by lower prices. So now the task is to examine my buying habits even further, to analyze my food waste tracking chart and look for patterns. Perhaps I need to atone for my wastefulness not only by changing what I purchase, but also by donating food to our Open Pantry equivalent to that amount!

What's in your fridge and in your cupboards? What's in your shopping cart? What's on your menu? And what's going to end up in your trashcan?

Peace & Blessings,



Church Picnic

Sunday, June 26th after church
at Velma and Laura Garcia's house
80 South Street, Williamsburg
More details to come

Save the date!

Jesus and Leviticus

Jesus knew his Scripture. He would have been very familiar with the Book of Leviticus. He would have known its importance for understanding the Law and Commandments. He would have known that it contained the other Great Commandment: “you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But he also knew that the Book of Leviticus contained harsh purity codes. The Purity codes defined in Ancient Israel what it meant to be pure and impure. The Pure were clean, holy and righteous. They could enter the Temple. They could worship in the Temple. They were members of the household of God, and they were the social, economic and political elite.

Those who were the Impure lived a very hard life. They were branded as the outcast, the unclean, and the untouchables. They were not holy. They could not go into the Temple. They did not have any connections, or any of the social benefits that come with being members of the household of God. For example, shepherds were regarded as impure because they lived and slept with animals in the fields, giving us a new perspective on those shepherds invited by God to come to the manger. Those who herded pigs were impure, for it was an abomination not only to eat pork, but to touch the skin of a dead pig. Biblical literalists should take note on Superbowl Sunday, for taken literally it would still be an abomination for a pigskin football to be thrown up and down a field while you watched it on television eating hot dogs and barbecued spare ribs.

And there were other impurities. Women were regarded as impure during their periods and following childbirth according to the book of Leviticus. If we observed this literally today it would be almost impossible to run a Sunday School program at our church, not to mention Coffee Hour. And men also could be impure. A man could not round off the hair on his head or near his temples, or mar the edges of his beard without being impure. And it was an abomination for a man to lie with another man as with a woman. And anyone who had a handicap was considered unclean, anyone who was blind or lame, or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or who had crushed testicles was unclean. Or anyone with a defect in their eye sight was unclean, eliminating all of us with eyeglasses from the household of God. And, of course, all Gentiles were unclean.

It is essential to remember that this was the social context of Jesus’s ministry and that Jesus interprets and reinterprets the Book of Leviticus for his own time, and our time. He

says to the people around him: “You have heard it said in Scripture, but I now say to you that all these people need to be made members of the household of God and made a vital part of my ministry. A woman with a flow of blood for 12 years reaches out and touches Jesus, and he touches her and heals her as a child of God. A leper with a terrible skin disease cries out to be healed and Jesus touches him and makes him a member of the household of God.” And a black Ethiopian eunuch with crushed testicles asks Philip: “What prevents me from being baptized and a member of the household of God?” and Philip baptizes him despite what the book of Leviticus says because he knows it is what Jesus would have him do.

So can any of us doubt how Jesus would respond to all the other people today who are still regarded as “unclean” by the Book of Leviticus? Can anyone doubt that he would still be saying: “Whoever you are, wherever you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!”

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

May Birthdays!

- 1 Dr. John Warner
- 4 Jessica Morgan
Karla Hathaway
- 11 Jane Hall
Ann Vanderburgh
- 12 Eleanor Warnock
Katie Hull
- 14 Richard Loomis
Chip Roughton
- 15 Susan Molano
Kayla Gilman-Solomon
Andrew Geery
- 19 Mary Gerken-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



July Worship Leadership:

You can help! Pastor Chris will be leading 3 worship services during the month of July. We will offer an Outdoor Worship service on Sunday, July 10th, and we will return to our usual worship in the Sanctuary for July 24th and 31st. Pastor Chris needs your help! If you would like to co-create one of these worship services, offer a reading, or have another idea please contact Pastor Chris (revcjm@gmail.com). Exact details and themes are forthcoming, but all help and/or ideas are welcome at this point. Thanks!

Tongues of Flame

Several years ago my family and I took a trip to the southwest so I could do some research for a book I was writing for Scholastic's "Dear America" series. While in Tucson we visited the astounding church "The Dove of the Desert," which has some of the liveliest, most colorful folk art I've yet seen.

One of the paintings on the wall was of the disciples and their companions in the Upper Room receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The tongues of flame which rested merrily on the heads of the assembled crowd rather resembled roses-- flaming red roses.

This gave me furiously to think, as Hercule Poirot would say. How DO we experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Is it like tongues of flame? Like red roses flung at our heads? Here's how the initial experience appears in Acts 2:1:

And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. (The New American Bible)

Then they went outside, speaking many different languages, so that the people who heard them were either "astounded and bewildered" or thought them drunk. I thought this would be a good passage to pray on through *Lectio Divina*, (a way of reading Scripture, meditating on it, and praying yourself into the scene pictured), and this is how I imagined it if I had been there.

I am still mourning Rabboni's death, though I do believe the Resurrection wipes away that grief. But, as one of the women who follow Jesus, my heart is sore from his loss. I still wish to see him in the flesh and hear his words which healed my wounds instantaneously. I am here in the house with all of my companions, waiting for something I know not what. I am still fearful, though I wish I were not. I had hoped for comfort in being together, but so many bodies pressed close to me chafe, as if I were wearing a hot, rough garment.

A sudden noise outside makes me look up. "Is it the wind?" I ask a woman next to me. She shakes her head, eyes wide. The noise continues like a storm, the kind of storm which brings rain after heavy heat and drought. It rushes into our room, and suddenly each person there stands straighter, as if courage were being poured into

them. I see flickers of fire about the room—now on that one's head, now on Mary the mother of Rabboni's head, and then the fire is on me. It burns and refreshes at the same time. How can something be both hot and cool as water?

In that moment, all my doubts are washed away. The fear in my heart collapses like an empty wine skin and my heart is filled with love and belief. I want to run outside and tell the whole world what we know to be true, so I join the others pouring out into the streets, speaking in different languages. Words rise inside and flow out of my mouth, words I didn't know I had. It is some other language but I understand it; the language of my heart says; "Everything I told you is true. I was dead yet now am alive. The works of power I did, now you can do. Don't be afraid. Go out into the world and preach my words."

I fell to my knees when I stopped speaking, but the strength in my heart remained. I was ready to rush off into the streets, proclaiming the truth, but some older members of our community cautioned us saying, "It is still dangerous for the disciples. Be careful."

Some of the women and I looked at one another. We knew how to be careful, but we also knew how to raise a child, one word at a time, one lesson at a time, one thread of discipline at a time. We were uniquely prepared to preach the Word, and no one would think us dangerous, because we were women.

So I am left, in the present at the end of this *Lectio Divina* with a wider and braver heart. It is time for me to proclaim the word as well. I, too, am uniquely suited to share the message; I just have to believe that the right words will be there within, as they were for the disciples so long ago.

- Annie Turner

Summer Playgroup Needs You!

Children's Church ends for the school year following Children's Sunday June 12th. We will have a supervised playgroup from June 19th through September 4th. We need two adults each Sunday to sign up to play with the children, do crafts, and/or have fun on the playground outside. The sign-up will be in the Church Dining Room. Please consider signing up for a Sunday this summer. A satisfactory CORi check is required to volunteer with our programs. If you have any questions email Pastor Chris (revcjm@gmail.com), and thanks!

Series on Understanding Islam and Supporting Muslims Continues

The Haydenville Congregational Church series on Understanding Islam continues in May and June with these events.

Saturday, May 14 • 10:00 am to noon

The Roots and Nature of Islamophobia, a discussion led by Karen Pfeifer, professor emerita of economics at Smith College, whose focus is economic development and social change in the Middle East.

Saturday, June 4 • 10:00 am to noon

Being Allies: Combating Anti-Muslim Rhetoric and Violence. What Can Be Done?

The programs are all open to the public and will be held at the Church.

A copy of the Koran and a collection of books and reference materials on Islam are on a table in the Church Library area. More information and links to web sites are on haydenvillechurch.org.

Northampton Pride Parade

May 7th at 11:30 am • Come march with your Church family! A joyous experience, not to be missed! Our HUGE church contingent will gather at the "staging area" on Hampton Ave in Northampton (across from the Brewery) at 11:30 am. Look for our purple balloons and you will find us. We are usually the largest group marching in the Pride parade so come be part of history. Kids, tricycles, strollers, parasols, I AM THE CHURCH t-shirts, signs, and rainbow flags all welcome. Our church in-house brass band, "Prone to Mischief" will lead us as we march, dance, blow kisses and misbehave our way through town. Never marched before? Come and join us, it is a day/experience/high you will never forget!

My actions are
my only true belongings.

- Thich Nhat Hanh

Tears of Joy for HCC

Back in January, when I had just started the very initial steps in my journey from male to female, my therapist expressed a great deal of concern about me transitioning. I had the support of some friends and family, but I lacked the support of my wife and two college-aged sons (none of them talk to me) and my 84 year old father (with whom I currently live) who cannot understand what I am doing or why I'm doing it. My therapist pretty much thought I was going to make my journey alone.

Then I came to Haydenville Congregational Church at the suggestion of a friend. From day one, quite by surprise, I started creating a network of support and caring that I really lacked. I kept my therapist abreast of what was happening at church. After a few weeks of coming to church, I had built a large circle of great friends/supports. My therapist was amazed at how I had turned things around for myself in such a short amount of time. Now, she wholly supports me in my journey and I thank all of you so much for that.

When it came to joining the church, the decision was simple. I knew that I wanted to be part of this wonderful family. (I am actually in tears now as I type this thinking of how incredible and accepting you all are of me.) HCC is a place like no other -- I have truly landed where I was meant to be. I hope that I can give back even just a little of what you have given me.

Love to all of you,

- A very, very, teary Mariel Addis

Sweep of the Bible

Bible Study for those who want an overview of what the Bible covers from Genesis to Revelation. Think of this as Bible 101. You will learn the who/where/how/when of the Bible and have fun in the process. Interesting! Painless! 5:00 to 6:15 pm on May 4, 11, and 18 (the first two classes on April 20, 27 already happened but you can still come!). Teacher: Pastor Andrea. **Please pre-register for this class:** revandrea@comcast.net

Easter Sunday



New Children's Church Art on the Sanctuary Walls

Take a minute to look at the art created by our Children's Church! On April 3rd, Pastor Yohah Ralph urged our kids to contemplate connectedness and Creation, guiding them in a Creation-based rewriting of the Beatitudes. You'll see a diagram of the web that strings humanity and Creation together next to the Beatitudes by the plaque honoring Hattie Rice. Further down that same wall, you'll find the art inspired by these connections. Thank you, Pastor Yohah! And thank you to the kids and teachers in Children's Church that Sunday for gifting us with such beautiful new art!

July at Haydenville UCC

Please note that Pastor Andrea will be out of the office for the entire month of July. She will not be reachable by phone or email. Pastor Chris will be working throughout the month, and will gladly be available for your pastoral needs.

For the first 3 Sundays in July (July 3rd, 10th, and 17th) we will not hold worship at the Church. There will be an Outdoor Worship offered on July 10th, with more information to follow in the June newsletter.

We will return to Sunday worship in the Sanctuary for July 24th and 31st (Blue Moon Sunday), with Pastor Chris leading worship. See the announcement about these worship services if you would like to help with leadership.

"Valley Gives Day" Fundraiser for Cathedral in the Night

Tuesday, May 3 is Valley Gives Day. Local Burger in downtown Northampton and Local Burgy in Williamsburg are donating 10% of their profits on May 3rd to the ministry of Cathedral in the Night.

Cathedral in the Night is an outdoor Christian community in downtown Northampton, which seeks to create a safe place for all people: the homeless, the housed, the churchless, the churchd, the student and the resident to explore, question and live out their spiritual beliefs; to gather for a meal and to empower one another to engage in issues of social justice by working to fight the causes of inequality and homelessness.

Both locations will have staff and/or volunteers from Cathedral in the Night on hand to answer questions and talk about Cathedral's exciting programs. The Williamsburg location will have family-friendly games, face painting and a photo booth- come have an evening a fun and great food and support a wonderful ministry!

- Northampton Local Burger hours: 11:30 am-10:00 pm
- Williamsburg Local Burgy hours: 11:00 am-8:00 pm

Justice is what love looks like in public
- Cornel West

Calendar for May

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

Thank you "Movable Feasts" for providing the coffee hour goodies during May.

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sun. May 1	10:00 am	Worship Service with Communion; Honoring the LGBTQ Community	Sanctuary
	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Youth Fellowship	Children's Church
Wed. May 4		Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day	
	12:45 - 2:30 pm	Book Study Group with Peter Ives	Dining Room
	5:00 pm	Bible Study with Pastor Andrea, <i>see page 5 for details</i>	Dining Room
	6:00 pm	Investment Group Meeting	Children's Church
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 5	9:30 am	Café Office Hours @ Pine Street Café	Florence
	6:30 pm	Diaconate Meeting	Dining Room
Sat. May 7	11:30 am	Pride Parade, <i>see page 5 for details</i>	Northampton
Sun. May 8	10:00 am	Worship Service (Mother's Day)	Sanctuary
Tues. May 10	7:00 pm	Men's Fellowship Meeting	Dining Room
Wed. May 11	5:00 pm	Bible Study with Pastor Andrea	Dining Room
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 12	9:30 am	Café Office Hours @ Pine Street Café	Florence
	5:30 pm	Trustee Meeting	Dining Room
	6:00 pm	Family Ministry Meeting	Children's Church
Fri. May 13	4:00 pm	HCC Writing Group	Dining Room
Sat. May 14	10:00 am	"Combating Islamophobia" Series	Dining Room
Sun. May 15	10:00 am	Pentecost Sunday, Dawn Orluske preaching; Special UCC Mission Offering "Strengthen the Church"	Sanctuary
	12:00 noon	Council Meeting	Sanctuary
	6:00 pm	Youth Fellowship	Children's Church
Wed. May 18	5:00 pm	Bible Study with Pastor Andrea	Dining Room
	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary

Date	Time	Event	Location
Thurs. May 19	9:30 am	Café Office Hours @ Pine Street Café	Florence
	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Journey Support Group	Children's Church
Sat. May 21	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Family Game Night, <i>see page 10 for details</i>	Dining Room
Sun. May 22	10:00 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
Wed. May 25	7:00 pm	Choir Practice	Sanctuary
Thurs. May 26	9:30 am	Café Office Hours @ Pine Street Café	Florence
Fri. May 27	4:00 pm	HCC Writers' Group	Children's Church
Sun. May 29	10:00 am	Worship Service, Blue Moon Sunday, Community Service Projects, no Coffee Hour	Sanctuary
	12:30 - 4:00 pm	Deacons' Retreat following worship service	

Skinner Mountain Family Hike

Sunday, May 15th after Worship • Let's go for hike after church! Families and children of all ages are invited to join our Church, First Churches Northampton, and St. John's Episcopal Church for a lovely hike up to the Summit House on Skinner Mountain.

Bring a bag lunch and a filled water bottle. We'll stop at Barstow's Dairy on the way home for ice cream. Kids under age 11 should be accompanied by a parent, and Pastor Chris is happy to oversee any youth who want to hike with us on their own. We will carpool from the Church parking lot and meet the other groups at Skinner Mountain.

In the event of inclement weather, this event will not be held. Contact Pastor Chris by May 8th to RSVP and arrange for a ride.

"The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

—Harper Lee

• *Doug Renick gave the following speech on April 15th at the Representation Day Rally on the City Hall steps.*

Representation Day Rally

In thinking about this rally focused on getting big money and dark money out of politics I rummaged around in the foundations of my faith and what I found were questions that moderators can ask in campaign debates. I found these in my Judeo/Christian traditions but I'm sure I could have found similar ones in the Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Atheist traditions as well.

So, listen up presidential debaters!

The prophet Micah sums up what God requires of us, namely, "to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God." We will not address the need for humility today.

Question: Please spell out how you would "do justice and love kindness" in your policy toward immigrants. Dr. King drew on this same Jewish prophetic tradition when he said "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."

Question: Name three critical policies you would fight for that would keep us awash in "justice and righteousness." Jesus boiled the law and prophets down to two commandments:

“Love God with heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.” Since our time is short we’ll focus on the neighbor part of these two commandments.

Question: How would you “love your neighbor”—your neighbor who is one out of every 5 children living in poverty in this the richest nation of the world?

Question: How would you “love your neighbor”—your neighbor whose home has been destroyed by wildfires, by tornadoes or by a pipeline leak?

Question: How would you “love your neighbor”—your neighbor whose child has acute asthma because the family lives next to a pollution-belching coal plant?

Many of these questions and issues will not be addressed because billionaire elites and corporations do not want them addressed. Addressing them will negatively affect their profits. Upwards of 3-5 billion dollars will be spent on the presidential campaigns, not to mention the 3+ billion spent on lobbying. Wouldn’t that money be better spent on... (your response to each of these will be a resounding “YES!”)

Wouldn’t that money be better spent on what the people really want and need:

- Raising the minimum wage to a living wage
- Providing decent housing for everyone
- Providing nutritious food for everyone
- Creating a health care system for all
- Fully funding all our public schools
- Creating alternatives to prisons
- Welcoming immigrants
- Investing in solar and wind energy
- Converting our military to peacetime activities (Yes) and definitely
- Over turning Citizens United

We are awash in money sloshing around in campaign coffers and in the bank accounts of our Congress critters. Enough!

Here’s my line: Take back the money!

Here’s your line: Take back the country!

Take back the money!

Take back the country!

From the Deacons’ Bench

I have recently become a Deacon again. I am one of those “Saints” Andrea has told you about. This is my family’s church. When our church started to grow again, nearly eleven years ago, we all gladly pitched in to clean up, refresh, and polish it up for the new people who came through our wide open doors. One project was to reupholster the footstools that huddle in every pew. The following is what came to me then, during that honeymoon time. I think it still holds true.

Footstools This week I have been working on footstools. It is a humble and humbling job. What I hold in my hand—a simple thing, a place to put your feet—is also a small piece of the history of my church. Once the tattered, worn upholstery came off, I discovered there is still beauty and strength underneath. These were carefully and very well built by my ancestors’ hands.

Through the march of time, many feet have rested here on Sunday mornings. Farmers’ worn, leather shoes scraped clean of the good brown earth. Soldier’s boots shined for war. Nurses’ whites, “go to meeting” red high heels, untied sneakers, black leather Mary Janes with frilly white socks, or worn and misshapen shoes on tired, old feet. They mark life—brides and baptism. They mark death—tears and triumph.

We don’t fall on our knees in this church. We seek Divine support within these echoing walls, and we place our faithful feet firmly on these old footstools. Their nicks and scrapes mark the time.

But their joints don’t wobble.

Now, many would want to paint them over or recover them and make them look shiny and new. Not me. I hold their history in my hands. I sand and smooth, maybe fill in a few holes. I match paint to the original colors—or don’t paint them at all because the life in the piece is too precious. I varnish it to protect.

I am the caretaker.

Our church is like this. An old lady, tattered and tired, brought back to life by a new dress, new love, new friends. The instinct is to have a total facelift, and become someone different. I love our new church family, new friends, and new life. It is good to find a place to rest, where you can be just who you need to be. It is good to embrace the present, and look ahead to a better future.

But still, as I hold a simple old footstool in my hand, I rejoice in the past: a firm foundation, scarred and worn, on which to place my feet and pray.

- Trish LaFreniere, Deacon

This Month In Children's, Youth & Family Ministries

This month in Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries

May 1: Joint lesson on refugees led by Peace & Justice; Youth Fellowship at 6:00 pm

May 8: Post-Resurrection Stories

May 15: Pentecost Olympics; Youth Fellowship at 6:00 pm

May 21: Family Game Night from 5:00-7:00 pm at Church

May 22: Post-Resurrection Stories

May 29: Help with Cathedral in the Night Food Prep; Youth Fellowship at Cathedral in the Night at 5:00 pm

Youth Fellowship meets on the **1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 pm** at the Church. All youth in 6th through 12th grade are invited to attend. Regular sessions will be held through the end of May. Please also join us for Cathedral in the Night in front of First Churches Northampton on **May 29th at 5:00 pm** to help serve the meal.

Pentecost Olympics Sunday, May 15th during

Children's Church • Come one, come all to our Second Annual Pentecost Olympics! We'll learn about Pentecost through goofy games and team-building challenges.

Weather permitting, we will hold this activity outside, so please wear closed-toed shoes and clothes that can get a little messy.

Summer Camp at Silver Lake Conference Center! • It's not too early to make plans for the summer! Silver Lake

has all sorts of weeklong, overnight conferences for young people entering 4th through 12th grade, in addition to half-week family and off-site mission work camps. Whether you are the artsy or musical type, like sports and games, want to challenge the high ropes course or take a dip in the lake, Silver Lake has a conference for you!

Nestled in the Northwest Hills of Sharon, CT, Silver Lake is the year-round Outdoor Ministry site owned and operated by the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. **Registration is going on now!** To register and for more information, visit silverlakeect.org. Financial assistance ("Camperships") are available through Silver Lake and the Massachusetts UCC, and are always confidential. See Pastor Chris (a long time Silver Laker!) for more information.

New Children's Church Art on the Sanctuary Walls

Take a minute to look at the art created by our Children's Church! On April 3rd, Pastor Yohah Ralph urged our kids to contemplate connectedness and Creation, guiding them in a Creation-based rewriting of the Beatitudes. You'll see a diagram of the web that strings humanity and Creation together next to the Beatitudes by the plaque honoring Hattie Rice. Further down that same wall, you'll find the art inspired by these connections. Thank you, Pastor Yohah! And thank you to the kids and teachers in Children's Church that Sunday for gifting us with such beautiful new art!

Rev. Chris Mereschuk, *Associate Pastor and Director of Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries*
Andrew Geery, *Chair of the Children's and Family Ministries Committee*

Family Game Night!

Saturday, May 21st from 5:00-7:00 pm in the Church

Dining Room • Join us for Family Game Night! Pizza and beverages will be provided, and please bring a salad or dessert along with a favorite board game if you can. This event is open to families of all configurations and individuals of all ages. Contact Pastor Chris for more information.

Instant Choir

Want to join the choir for one morning? Come to practice at 9:00 am on **May 8** and sing with us in worship at 10:00. No experience necessary! No commitment required!

- Jeff Olmsted, *Minister of Music*

HCC Activities are Sometimes Photographed

Worship services, church events, and HCC activities in the community are sometimes photographed and videotaped to document the vibrant life of our church. If you do not wish to be included, or do not wish to have your photo appearing in church publications or on our web site, please tell one of the pastors.

As a part of annual registration for children and youth programs, parents and guardians are asked to sign a photo release for their children. These releases are held by the Director of Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries, who will communicate any photo release restrictions to the webmaster and publications editor. Your permission for photo releases can be modified or revoked at any time by contacting one of the pastors.

Children's Church Needs You!

We are *always* looking for new folks to join our Children's Church teacher roster or to volunteer their time, talents, or treasures in other ways. Teachers can work with our younger or older children as a Head Teacher or Support Teacher, committing to a couple of Sundays or an entire multi-week rotation. All volunteers are required to sign our Safe Church policy and have a satisfactory CORI check. Please contact Pastor Chris for more information!

The 2016 Robert H. Life Scholarship Awarded

William Hathaway, Anna McElligott, and Dawn Orluske are this year's recipients of the Robert H. Life Scholarship.

Rev. Robert H. Life was the pastor of the Haydenville Congregational Church from 1904-1934. He was a man of firm faith and was an inspiration to his congregation. In his will he set up a trust fund to assist the members of his beloved church. The income from this trust fund is used to provide scholarships for any Williamsburg/Haydenville resident who is furthering their education and is an active member or child of an active member.

Supporting Refugees Coming to Western Mass: Kits & Knits

The Peace and Justice Steering Committee has begun our project to collect items for Welcome Kits for new families arriving in Western Mass. Pick up a flyer in the Dining Room or see the list of needed items here, and start collecting! Please bring an item to "Understanding Islam" events on May 7th and June 4th, or collect items, store them at home, and bring everything you've collected to the Narthex on Sunday, June 5th or June 12th. We'll have a Kit Assembly Party on June 12th after church.

Kitchen Kit:

8 forks, knives & spoons, 8 plates & bowls, 8 mugs or teacups, pots, pans & baking dish, mixing/serving bowls, manual can opener, kitchen knife & utensils, cutting board, kitchen towels and dish cloths or sponges

Household Kit:

8 bath and 8 hand towels, light bulbs, clock (with alarm), 8 pillows & pillow cases, bed linens: sets of sheets (twin & queen) and blankets: twin & queen

Cleaning Kit:

Bottle of dish detergent, all-purpose cleaner, 2 waste baskets, 2 boxes of tall trash bags, sponges or cleaning cloths, paper towels, broom and laundry detergent

Child & Baby Supply Kit:

Backpack, pens, pencils, erasers, sharpener, crayons & coloring book and diapers & wet wipes

Bathroom Kit:

8 rolls of toilet paper, 4 bottles of shampoo, 8 bars of soap, 2 tubes of toothpaste, deodorant (men's & women's), box of feminine products, hand/body lotion, Band-Aids, shaving cream & disposable razors and hairbrush/comb

Attention Knitters:

We'd also like to start making hats, mittens, and scarves for infants, children and adults to give to refugees with notes of welcome. Knitters and crocheters, please help! We'll work on these over the summer and collect them in the fall. If you need a simple pattern contact Lisa Hall.

Church Leadership

Rev. Dr. Andrea Ayvazian
Senior Pastor

Rev. Chris Mereschuk
Associate Pastor;
Director of Children's,
Youth, and Family
Ministries

Jeff Olmsted
Minister of Music

Lynn Fogg
Moderator

Sam Icklan
Vice Moderator

Lisa Hall
Clerk

Jo Cannon
Treasurer

Pat James
Jen Matias
Diaconate, *Co-Chairs*

Alice Barber
Trustees, *Chair*

Rev. Dr. Peter Ives
Theologian-
in-Residence

Yohah Ralph
Minister of
Outreach, Advocacy
and Pastoral Care

Kathy O'Connor
Church Sexton

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

Jennifer Clarson
Angel Take-out,
Coordinator

Nancy Winninger
Angel Wings,
Coordinator

Jackie Cloonan
Snow Angels, Green
Angels, *Coordinator*

Bev Orluske
Nancy Winninger
Angel Hearts

Doug Renick
Peace and Justice
Steering Committee,
Chair

Maggie Solis
Stewardship
Committee, *Chair*

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

Jennifer Miller-Antill
Laurie Priest
Head Greeters

Laura Garcia
Webmaster

Richard Spencer
CrossCurrents

Jim Foudy
Men's Fellowship,
Chair & Church
Communications

Bev Orluske
Nancy Winninger
Keepers of the Keys

**Mary Gerken-
Newcomb**
Haydenville Church
Writers' Group,
Facilitator

Ross Bassett
Jan Varnon
Bob Varnon
Lay Delegates

Rev. Dr. Peter Ives
Pat James
Raquel Manzanares
Jen Matias
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*)

Jen Matias
Amy Andrew
Pat James
Paula Spencer
Shirley Sicurello
Carolyn DuBois
Olivia Ilano Davis
Tobias Davis
Karen Browne-
Courage
Trish LaFreniere
Cate Shaw
Christine Foudy

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: 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.