



The Haydenville Congregational Church

Open Hearts • Open Minds • Open Doors

Rev. Chris Mereschuk, *Acting Pastor*
Jeff Olmsted, *Minister of Music*

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*As you prepare for worship, you are invited to
light a prayer candle or write down a Joy or
Concern. Please silence your cell phone.*

September 17, 2017 • 10:00 am

Prelude Jeff Olmsted

Welcome Kai Imperial-Jewett and Pastor Chris

Gathering Hymn* *"Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race"* Chalice Hymnal #485

Responsive Reading Bob Varnon
"A Litany for the World" Chalice Hymnal #664

Anthem *"Wanderer, Worshiper"* By Rumi, translated by Coleman Barks; Music by Zuleikha

Offering Carole Bull
Circle Song^ *"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"* Chalice Hymnal #50 (Music #49)
Doxology* Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose
power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Children's Message Blessing of the Backpacks
Singing the Children to Children's Church^ *"The Lord is my light: Whom shall I fear? Whom shall I fear?"*

Scripture Reading Laine Wilder
Romans 14:1-12 **One Voice:** *For the word of God in Scripture, for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us,*
All Voices: *Thanks be to God.*

Song of Preparation *"Let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your
sight, O Lord."*

Sermon *"Convictions of Conscience"* Pastor Chris
Sermon Response Time
Musical Response

Prayers of the People Pastor Chris
Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer (*please use the version of the Lord's Prayer you are most comfortable with*) *Our Mother/Father/Creator God who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

Sung Response *"Lord in your mercy hear our prayer."*

News of the Community

Sending Hymn* *"Weave"* Chalice Hymnal #495

Benediction* Pastor Chris

Postlude Jeff Olmsted

Our Worship Is Over - Now Our Service Begins

** Please rise if you are comfortable doing so.*

Romans 14:1-12

Welcome with open arms fellow believers who don't see things the way you do. And don't jump all over them every time they do or say something you don't agree with—even when it seems that they are strong on opinions but weak in the faith department. Remember, they have their own history to deal with. Treat them gently.

For instance, a person who has been around for a while might well be convinced that they can eat anything on the table, while another, with a different background, might assume they should only be a vegetarian and eat accordingly. But since both are guests at Christ's table, wouldn't it be terribly rude if they fell to criticizing what the other ate or didn't eat? God, after all, invited them both to the table. Do you have any business crossing people off the guest list or interfering with God's welcome? If there are corrections to be made or manners to be learned, God can handle that without your help.

Or, say, one person thinks that some days should be set aside as holy and another thinks that each day is pretty much like any other. There are good reasons either way. So, each person is free to follow the convictions of conscience.

What's important in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for *God's* sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you're a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for broccoli. None of us are permitted to insist on our own way in these matters. It's *God* we are answerable to—all the way from life to death and everything in between—not each other. That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that he could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other.

So where does that leave you when you criticize a brother? And where does that leave you when you condescend to a sister? I'd say it leaves you looking pretty silly—or worse. Eventually, we're all going to end up kneeling side by side in the place of judgment, facing God. Your critical and condescending ways aren't going to improve your position there one bit. Read it for yourself in Scripture:

“As I live and breathe,” God says,
“every knee will bow before me;

Every tongue will tell the honest truth
that I and only I am God.”

So tend to your knitting. You've got your hands full just taking care of your own life before God.

~ The Message Translation

Today's Worship Service Leaders

Deacons of the Month: Trish LaFreniere and Philip Maurer

Trustee of the Month: Laura Garcia

Ushers: Laurie Priest and Cindy Drake

Greeters: Shirley Sicurello, Barbara Dryer, and Laurie Priest

Children's Church Leaders: Andrew Geery, Jen Miller-Antill, and Karen Guiel

Baby/Toddler Church: Mary Meg Elias-Gillette

Welcome Visitors! • We are so glad you chose to worship with us this morning! Please take a moment to fill out the visitor slip found in your bulletin. These can be placed in the Offering plate or handed to Pastor Chris on our Hug and Handshake Line at the close of worship. We love to know who is in worship, and we'd love to connect. Then stick around today for some refreshments in the Dining Room!

Church Leadership: Ministers *All of us* • Rev. Chris Mereschuk *Acting Pastor* • Jeff Olmsted *Minister of Music* • Kathy O'Connor *Sexton* • Linda Babcock *Office Administrator, Church Scheduler* • Rev. Yohah Ralph *Minister of Outreach, Advocacy, and Pastoral Care* • Carole Bull *Member-in-Discernment* • Rev. Dr. Peter Ives *Theologian-in-Residence* • Sam Icklan *Church Moderator* • Toby Davis *Church Vice Moderator* • Jo Cannon *Treasurer* • Nancy Winner *Clerk* • Jim Foudy *Human Resources Coordinator* • Carolyn du Bois and Shirley Sicurello *Co-Chairs, Diaconate* • Karin McGowan *Chair, Trustees* • Laurie Priest and Ann Loomis *Co-Head Greeters* • Cindy Dolgoff *Head Usher* • Sue Carbin *Chair, Building Committee* • Andrew Geery *Chair, Children's and Family Ministries* • Doug Renick *Chair, Peace and Justice Steering Committee* • Jim Foudy *Human Resources Coordinator* • Amy Andrew *Librarian* • Jackie Cloonan *Coordinator, Snow Angels* • Susan Farrell *Coordinator, Green Angels* • Nancy Winner *Coordinator, Angel Wings* • Linda Ziegenbein *Coordinator, Interfaith Cot Shelter Meal* • Shirley Sicurello *Chair, Welcome Ministry* • Laura Garcia *Webmaster* • Carla Imperial *Cross Currents*



Haydenville Congregational Church

September 17, 2017

FYI: Some Things For You to Know About Our Church •

Our **all-gender restrooms** are located through the doors at the front of the Sanctuary. Our accessible bathroom with a diaper changing station is located in the Dining Room. The door by the piano is the closest, and leads to a ramp. Feel free to go in-and-out of the worship service as needed.

For your comfort, **blankets, shawls, and hand fans** are available in baskets at the front and rear of the Sanctuary.

Children and babies are always welcome to remain in worship. If needed, there is a play space in the Narthex (Route 9 entrance). Nursery care and Summer Playgroup are also available.

In our effort to be more welcoming to folks with allergies, we are a **"Fragrance-Reduced"** community. We thank you for refraining from wearing perfumes and colognes.

An **AED and First Aid Kit** are located in the **kitchen**. Several members are trained and/or work in the medical field.

Announcements

1. Pastoral Search Moves Forward • On Sunday, September 10th, the Church Council took two important steps in our search for a new settled pastor. The Council accepted the recommendation of the Transition Leadership Team for a seven-member Search Committee. It also adopted the Church Profile, which will be used by the Search Committee to guide its work. Members of the Search Committee are: Cate Shaw, Toby Davis, Susan Farrell, Tina Marini, Richard Spencer, Ellen Tobiassen and Nancy Winner.

The Search Committee's first meeting will be Monday, September 18th. They will meet with Rev. Jill Graham, our area conference minister, to discuss the Search Process. If Acting Pastor Chris Mereschuk applies for the position, his candidacy will be considered first by the Search Committee.

The Council expressed its thanks to the members of the Profile Committee for the many hours they put in writing a document that so completely captures who we are as a spiritual community and who we want to become. A copy of the profile is available in a binder in the church library and can be found on our website under News and Events.

2. September Coffee Hour Hosts • Our world famous Coffee Klatches begin hosting Coffee Hour again starting September 10th. Many thanks to **The Hilltown Hosts** led by Jan and Bob Varnon for hosting in September! See the new draft of the Coffee Klatch calendar to find your month. Contact Julie Salzman if you'd like to join a Klatch.

3. Name Tags! Name Tags! Name Tags! • Help us to be warmly welcoming by consistently wearing your name tag. You can make a reusable name tag or grab a name tag sticker in the Dining Room or narthex.

4. Haydenville UCC on Social Media • Tweet! Post! Check In! • Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at @haydenvilleucc and check out posts and pics from our Beloved Community. Tag #haydenvilleucc in your posts.

5. Park Safely and Legally • Note the new "No Parking" signs on the church side of High Street! If you park on the other side, be sure to park a few car lengths up High Street away from the intersection with Route 9. Cars parked too closely to the intersection create a hazard.

6. Are you our next Scripture Reader Coordinator? • We currently have a robust list of willing scripture readers, and now we need someone to schedule them for our worship services. Contact Pastor Chris for more info. Many, many thanks to Anne Pratt for her work as our Scripture Reader Coordinator over the past couple of years!

7. Note the Change: Need to Schedule Something at the Church? • If you need to reserve a meeting date and space for your group, please contact our Office Administrator **Linda Babcock** at office@haydenvillechurch.org. Many, many thanks to Sue Carbin for her countless years of handling the schedule, and to Laura Garcia for logging events on our website calendar!

8. Open Food Pantry • Help yourself to items from our Open Pantry shelves in the Dining Room. There are bags available in the kitchen. Take home what you need! We are also in need of food donations, especially breakfast foods, pasta and sauce, and canned fruit. Thank you all for your generosity!

Events

1. Special Offering for United Church of Christ Disaster Recovery Ministries • TODAY • The most effective response to the Hurricane Harvey recovery we can have at this time is to donate funds to the United Church of Christ Disaster Recovery Ministries. You are invited to donate to this mission today. This ministry has established local connections and expertise, and is also supported through our annual giving, with a very high percentage of the donations going directly to recovery work. For more information or to donate at a later time, visit ucc.org/disaster_hurricane_harvey.

2. Journey: a social and support group for people of all ages who identify as trans, gender queer, or two spirit will meet on the third Thursday of the month, 6:00-7:30 pm; **September 21st**, October 19th, November 16th, and December 21st, 2017 at the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence (USNF) 220 Main St., Northampton. Allies, significant others, family, and friends are welcome too. Use the side entrance, and doorbell if needed to be let in. We meet in a conference room downstairs. The group is free. Journey is an outreach ministry of the Haydenville Congregational Church, UCC. For more info email: journeynorthampton@gmail.com

3. Exploring Membership Class Forming • Have you been attending our church and want to learn more about what it means to be a member? Are you ready to formalize your commitment to our Beloved Community? Pastor Chris will be leading a 3-session class on exploring membership following worship on **October 1st, 8th, and 15th**. Each session lasts about 1 hour, and childcare will be provided by request. Please **RSVP with Pastor Chris by September 24th** to get in on the fun!

4. Neighbors in Need Special Missions Offering • Sunday, October 1st • Neighbors in Need is the United Church of Christ's annual offering to support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the Council for American Indian Ministries, justice advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Checks can be made payable to the Haydenville Congregational Church, and our Church will send one big donation. Envelopes to receive this special mission offering will be tucked in your bulletins.

5. Blessing of the Animals • Saturday, October 7th at 10:00 am • Church Front Lawn • Embark with us as we paws to show some love to our animal companions. Please have your pets leashed, crated, and in your control to avoid any catastrophe. There will be animal fellowship time at the tail end. Safety Note: If your furry friend does not interact well with other animals, strangers, or kids, please leave your pet at home and come get a Blessing-To-Go. Thank you!

6. Exploring Worship Leadership Workshop • Sunday, October 22nd following Worship • Sanctuary • It takes many voices to craft and offer our worship liturgy every Sunday, and your voice is needed! Each worship service provides several opportunities to share creative reflections, welcome the congregation, inspire generosity, join in ritual, pray, and proclaim scripture. Pastor Chris will share tips for writing your own liturgy and public speaking as well as the logistics of our worship. Everyone is invited to be a worship leader in this encouraging and grace-filled setting: "Pro-participation; Anti-perfection." If you have any iota of interest in being a worship leader, then sign up with Pastor Chris by Sunday, October 15th to learn about how you can help "Widen Our Worship!"

Worship Response Space