

The Bell Tower

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Hatfield, UCC

2019

July & August

No. 7

Summer-Time

Summer is not my favourite season, but it is one of many gifts. One is time. I can hear the farmers laughing. But summer for many is the time of vacations and patios. The days are still 24 hours long, but all that extra sun makes it seem like we have some time to spare. I know Sharon enjoys the summer opportunity to take a longer walk with our dog after she gets home from work, a possibility that just is not there in the darkness of Standard Time. I know that church life slows down for the summer. Monthly meetings are consolidated, the choir takes a rest, we even have a bi-monthly newsletter because there is less to report. Slowing down makes me feel guilty, but that's my peccadillo. I smile because it makes me think of my grandfather who thought all clergy were lazy, but he had his reasons.

But the gift of summer-time is one that we can use and still enjoy. I am thinking specifically of the summer-time gift of picking



up a book and reading. It is a shame that books are maybe less appreciated nowadays. They may seem old-fashioned now that any-

thing and everything is on a screen, but there remains something about a book that is special to me. I am of the age where "The Cloud" still seems ephemeral, but a book can collect dust on my shelf for decades. They will be a chore that I pass on to my wife or children to deal with as I smile down – hopefully down.

A long-ago teacher of mine would go on his vacation to the beach laden with scholarly books on biblical studies. Now he was exceptional. He loved to read in his chosen field. Beach and book may have been his definition of the perfect use of summer-time. I am not as dedicated. I love my *Boston Globe* on the beach, even if the wind does play havoc with the attempt.

But back to summer-time reading. As we finished our Bible study of Mark's Gospel this Spring, we batted around the idea of book club discussion. As I write this article, the 32nd General Synod of the UCC is being held in Milwaukee. The keynote speaker is

Matthew Desmond, the author of *Evicted*. The church is encouraging an "All Church Read" based on this work. If you would, please take a look at this link:

https://live.eventtia.com/en/uccsynod2019/Synod-Keynote-Speaker?fbclid=IwAR21cC_zrH72bgeGw4di5N3veHF_fXYL-GhXNbac5jD9Y4K-SN_XFuJei22U

Mention is made of another book I read recently on a recommendation of a friend: *Nickle and Dimed*. *Evicted* can be purchased for \$15 as a book and for \$3 as a download. *Nickle and Dimed* is available for free as a downloadable PDF or again for \$15 as a book. Maybe we could spend some of our summer-time reading one of these books and then gathering for a book club discussion in the Fall.

I also throw out *The First Paul* by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. Maybe this would be more interesting to a group. The subtitle of the book is "Reclaiming the radical visionary behind the church's conservative icon." Plagiarists stole Paul's name and wrote revisionist Epistles that reversed Paul's original Christian egalitarianism. It is a great read and ties in more specifically with Bible study.

Similarly, I am much impressed by Bruce Bawer's *Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity*. Bawer does with Jesus what Borg and Crossan do with Paul. This would be a very interesting read.

For a later time, we may consider the series *Exploring the Bible* that is published by the Massachusetts Bible Society. It consists of three books: *What is the Bible?*, *Introducing the Old Testament*, and *Introducing the New Testament*. I am looking forward to reading these during some of my summer-time.

Please think about these options and get back to me if you are interested. I hope that there will be enough of us to start an exciting book club discussion when things ramp up in September or October. And just in case people do not read this article, I think I may talk about this in one of my July sermons.

Remember we are the denomination that gave rise to Harvard and Yale. Learning and knowledge, critical thought, creative thinking and inquiry are valued traits in so much of society. Why would we dare imagine that they are not when thinking about God and us as Christians? Reading – what a great way to use this gift of summer-time.

JULY & AUGUST EVENTS

JULY

Mon. 8th

Volunteer opportunity at the Food Bank from 1 – 4:00pm.

Sun. 21st

Rev. Sherril Willis will be the substitute Minister at this morning's Service.

AUGUST

Sat. 3rd

Lobster Dinner take out from 5 – 7:00pm.

Mon. 12th

Volunteer opportunity at the Food Bank from 1 – 4:00pm.

Wed. 14th

Monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:00pm.

Sun. 18th

Church Council meeting at 10:30am.

Mon. 19th

Board of Deacons meeting at 5:00pm.

REGULAR GATHERINGS

Sundays: Worship Service begins at 9:30am. Sunday School at 9:45 am. Chat and Coffee at 10:30am.

Tuesdays: Yoga classes are offered every Tuesday in the church parlor at 5:30pm.

Wednesdays: Hatha Yoga classes take place every Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Saturdays: AA meets at the church every Saturday at noon.



SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

During the months of July and August, our summer Sunday Services will begin at 9:30am rather than the usual 10:00am. We live with the hope that the half hour will be much cooler in the church and that it will give you that much more time to enjoy your summer Sundays after enjoying your time with us in worship.

FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers from our church gather with Linda Milewski at the Western Mass Food Bank on the second Monday of the month to help this worthwhile organization. If you can share three hours of your time or even an hour or two, it will benefit those of our neighbours who do not have the ability to put enough food on their tables. Please speak with Linda if you can help.



PASTOR'S VACATION

I will be away on vacation from July 19th through the 22nd. On Sunday, the 21st, Rev. Sherril Willis will be our guest Minister. She was here last summer too and is back by popular demand. While you are in church in Hatfield, Sharon and I will be attending Sunday worship at the York Congregational Church in Maine.

TIME WITH CHILDREN VOLUNTEERS?

Every Sunday during our worship Service we have a few moments with our children and youth before they leave for Sunday School. If you have a brief activity or lesson you would like to share with them at that time, we would invite you to do so. If you have some thoughts, please don't hesitate to reach out to Rev. Randy.

BULLETIN COVERS

A sign-up sheet is available in church. Special bulletin covers are used several times a year. If you would like to donate a set for any given occasion, it will be acknowledged in church. The cost is \$10.

SANCTUARY CLOCK

In the 1860's, the Real Folks group donated an E. Howard Gallery Clock to the church. It is currently in the queue at *The British Clock Maker* in Newfane, Vermont waiting to be repaired and refurbished. Ray and Richard Bates are a father and son team who have been in the high-end clock repair business for over half a century. Their work is in such high demand that it may take up to 9 months for them to be able to start their work on our timepiece. This clock is an heirloom that the congregation should be proud of. Accordingly, we are budgeting the funds to restore this clock to its original condition as part of our congregation's 350th anniversary. The estimated cost is \$2,500 - \$2,800. Real Folks has made a generous pledge toward this cost. We are also asking our members to consider a donation. If you would like to help in this way, your generosity will be much appreciated.

HATFIELD'S 350TH

The town's 350th Committee is looking for old photos of town buildings, people, farms, even dogs and horses. They will be copied and returned to you. The Committee is hoping to print an anniversary book. Please contact Cher Nicholas at CherNicholas@comcast.net.

The Committee is already taking reservations for a walking tour of historic homes of Hatfield. It will take place on April 25, 2020 and is limited to 35 participants. They are sure this will be filled. I've already signed-up. If you would like to participate, please contact Cher Nicholas at the email above.

LOBSTERFEST DINNER

Our 23rd Annual Lobster-Fest will be held on Saturday, August 3rd. This meal is take-out only. Orders may be picked-up at 5:00, 5:30, 6:00 or 6:30pm. Reservations are required by July 31st. Please call Marty Zigmont at 247-5453 or Jeannie Belden at 247-5905. The menu consists of steamed lobster with drawn butter, baked potato, corn on the cob, coleslaw, rolls with butter, and fudge brownie dessert. The ticket price for this delicious summertime treat is only \$22.00



REQUEST

Some of our members have breathing problems that are aggravated by perfumes and other scents. Please keep this in mind when getting ready for church, and we appreciate your attentiveness to the needs of others.

CONSIDER MEMBERSHIP AT HATFIELD CONGREGATIONAL

If you may like to be a formal member of this church, it begins with an informal meeting with Rev. Calvo and members of the Board of Deacons. We talk about the church, its organization, how things work, and our core values and covenants. Please contact Rev. Calvo if you are interested.

VIEW CHURCH SERVICES ON-LINE AND ON TV

We air our Services twice a month on public access television. They take place on alternate Sundays. This allows people to see what happens inside our church building and it also reaches into the homes of people who are unable to be with us in church. The recorded Services air on Hatfield Community Television on Saturdays and Sundays at 8 am and 4 pm. All of our taped Services may also be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/FCAT-Media/videos> or at <https://www.youtube.com/user/HatfieldCommunityTV>. We could use the help of a few more volunteers to operate the camera on a rotating basis during the Services. If you could help, please speak to Rev. Randy.

FYI

Come September, we have Home Coming Sunday and New Member Sunday on the 8th, our wood-grilled chicken BBQ on Saturday the 21st, and we will need to register for the Super Saturday gathering in Framingham, which will be on Saturday, October 5th. The next newsletter will come out at the end of August.

CONTACT INFO: HATFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Website: www.hatfieldchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/First-Congregational-Church-of-Hatfield-UCC

Pastor: Rev. Randy Calvo 413-824-1630 randyc1897@gmail.com

Committee Chairpersons:

Christian Education, Anita Wilson 413 247-5229

Music, Anthony Tracia 781 738-6284

Real Folks Society, Martha Zigmont 413 247-5453

Benevolence, Amy Novak 413 210-3965

Deacons, Mark Gelotte 413-247-9624

Trustees, Jonathan Bardwell 413-530-6262

Church Moderator, Glenda Flynn 413 247-5891

CROP HUNGER WALK

CROP Hunger Walks help to support the overall work of Church World Service, particularly grassroots development efforts around the world. In addition, our local CROP Hunger Walk will return 25% of the funds it raises to hunger-fighting programs in our own community.

CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools to wells and water systems, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs - something CWS has learned through 70 years of working in partnership around the world.

A Recruitment Rally will be held at the Sunderland Congregational Church on August 15th at 6PM. This is where team organizers pick-up fundraising packets and advertising materials. Then the team member head out and collect donations for this worthy cause. The actual Walk will take place in Sunderland on Sunday, October 13th, starting at 1PM.

INTERESTED???

If you are, please let Rev. Randy know and we can start forming our team.



350TH ANNIVERSARY
1670 - 2020

Save the Dates!

Below is the current list of scheduled events for the Hatfield 350th Anniversary. Follow us on Facebook for the latest updates!

December 31, 2019	<i>New Year's Eve Gala</i>
April 25, 2020	<i>Historic Homes Tour</i>
May 16, 2020	<i>Farm 5K Run/Walk</i>
May 24, 2020	<i>A Day in the Life: Hatfield 1670 Presentation</i>
May 31, 2020	<i>Incorporation Day</i>
June 13, 2020	<i>350th Parade</i>
June 20, 2020	<i>Strawberry Festival(w/ Hatfield PTA)</i>
August 22, 2020	<i>Summer Celebration</i>
September 12, 2020	<i>Barn Mural Wagon Tour</i>
October 3, 2020	<i>Tractor Parade</i>
October 4, 2020	<i>150 Years of Working Tobacco Presentation</i>
October 11, 2020	<i>Wagon Ride Tours</i>
October 17, 2020	<i>Hatfield Cemetery Tours</i>
November 19, 2020	<i>350 Years of History Presentation</i>
December 19, 2020	<i>Luminarium/Fireworks</i>

...AND MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

www.hatfield350.com

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