



# *The Rooster Crows*

September, 2018



*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Matthew 25:35-36*

*“Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”*  
Romans 15:7

Dear Friends,

One June afternoon, as I sat at my desk looking out over the backyard, I saw a robin lying on the ground. It was so still my heart sank. Surely, it must be dead. I kept watching and hoping and praying it would move. It did not. I left my office to make lunch and quickly returned to continue my robin vigil. To my surprise, the robin had resurrected. It was peacefully looking around and preening its feathers. It moved slowly, as if it had just woken from a nap. Wait! That is exactly what happened. The robin had taken a nap—lying down on the ground! What bird does that? Don't robins sleep in trees so the neighborhood cat won't harass them?

The robin lazily lingered for a long while, but it took flight eventually. I ventured outside and noticed it had made a little hollow in the dirt to snuggle and rest. I marveled. How welcome and safe it must have felt! Our churches can be like that too—a haven from the daily grind where world-weary people can come to feel welcomed, embraced, and safe. That is exactly how I felt when I returned to church some 20 years ago. As soon as I walked over the threshold I met God in the smiles of those who made me feel like I had come home.

As a community full of welcoming hearts, you are that church. Those who wander through our doors for the first time *long* to feel the warmth and outpouring of Christ's love through each of you. God counts on you to show the kind of welcome Jesus did when he walked this earth. There is no limit to the holy hospitality God wants to offer through you. As you make your way back to church this fall, may you fervently be God's church and offer an extravagant welcome to all—especially to those who are visiting for the first time.

As we say in the United Church of Christ, whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. Let that be our mantra, so that we might live fully into being a welcoming and inclusive church where everyone feels embraced, safe, and at home.

In gratitude for your welcoming spirit,  
Rev. Christina

## **UPCOMING WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER**

*Worship begins at 10 a.m. followed by coffee and conversation in Fellowship Hall.*

**September 2:** Come and join us for this lay-lead worship downstairs in Fellowship Hall. Our worship leaders will be Donna Brewer and Jean Baxter.

### **September 9: Homecoming Sunday with Communion.**

Welcome back from your summer adventures! We will gather for worship again in the sanctuary with our choir. Rev. Christina will preach about Jesus being caught in an unguarded moment. Maybe he was in a grouchy mood that day. Mark 7:24-37.

### **September 16: Just Peace Sunday**

Wisdom cries out! Wisdom was present at Creation as God's helper, but her delights were the people. Therefore, the purpose of Proverbs is to bring Wisdom and understanding to humanity so they may live happily, peacefully, and justly together. Rev. Christina will be preaching on Proverbs 1:20-33.

### **September 23: Holy Profits and Gains**

Rev. Christina will continue preaching from the Gospel of Mark. Mark 8:27-38.

### **September 30: Mission Sunday!**

Join us for breakfast, a short worship service, and then mission work in the community and around the church. We will prepare and serve a meal at Cathedral in the Light in Greenfield. Missions and other committees have some other fun activities planned. Please stay tuned for updates in the weekly email news.

## **MUG & MUFFIN RESUMES SEPTEMBER 14**

On Friday mornings, starting Sept. 14 you'll find Rev. Christina from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters on Route 9 in Hadley.

## **BIBLE BOOT CAMP – Starts October 14 After Worship**

It's hard to get a panoramic view of the Bible when we only read bits and pieces here and there. Maybe you have had good intentions of reading the whole Bible, starting with Genesis, only to find yourself petering out by the time you got to Leviticus.

This year you are invited to join **Bible Boot Camp**, a yearlong Bible study using *The Daily Message: Through the Bible in One Year*. Bible Boot Camp will help you to dig deeper into the people, the places, the times, and God's message as told through the many writers of the Bible. This Bible study will allow you to grow in disciplined Bible reading and reflect on what you have read with other people instead of trying to go it alone. Bible Boot Camp will help you develop a big-picture view of God, and lead you into a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God.

Bible Boot Camp's introductory session will be after worship on Sunday, Oct. 14 at 11:30. If you would like to sign up, please contact Rev. Christina at either [pastorchristina2846@gmail.com](mailto:pastorchristina2846@gmail.com) or 978-821-3149. Look for the sign-up sheet in September during coffee hour. If you would like to join Bible Boot Camp, but may not be able to make the physical meeting, we will be using technology so that you can join the meeting online.

### **WIDENING OUR WELCOME – Jam Donations**

Starting this fall, the Welcome and Inclusiveness Committee is working on widening our welcome to new people who visit our church. We are putting together welcome bags filled with a jar of jelly, a beautiful wooden jam spoon, donated by Jonathan Morel, and a welcome card. If you would like to help in some way, we are looking for donations of jam. Jonathan has already received a donation of some lovely wood to make more jam spoons.

If you have a donation you can drop it off at the church with Delores or Rev. Christina.

Thank you,  
Jonathan and Donna

### **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

In this issue of the Rooster you will find a flyer from the Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity that gives an update on the three building sites off Glendale Road in Northampton and how much the Interfaith coalition has raised to date.

To help with this project, our church pledged to:

- Donate \$1,000 through fundraising efforts
- Offer 100 hours of time
- Take and Eat will deliver meals to the onsite crews on the first Saturday of the month.

We have already been brainstorming some fundraising ideas, which include doing a Taco Tuesday community dinner and/or doing a joint tag sale with other churches. If you have any fun and creative fundraising ideas, please contact Rev. Christina at [pastorchristina2846@gmail.com](mailto:pastorchristina2846@gmail.com). If you would like to make a donation to this Habitat project, please make a check out to the First Congregational Church of Hadley, with Habitat in the memo line.



## COUNCIL NOTES

August 15, 2018 Meeting

Rev Christina reported that the new church website is ready to accept new content and photos. The committee will be asking all groups within the church to send in submissions for posting. We will have a very secure updated certificate going forward to protect our site.

The new church Baptism policy was accepted by council as amended by our pastor and the Deacons.

The Board of Properties has been very busy on many important projects this summer. The new flooring on the second floor is installed and looks beautiful! Come and see. A round of applause especially for Kurt Betchick for organizing all the work parties necessary to move room contents back and forth, paint two rooms, repair and stain wood and many, many other small and large tasks too numerous to count. The chimney on the church needs immediate attention so the council voted to direct the Properties committee to appropriate necessary funds from their budget to hire a mason to make the repair in the next two weeks.

The Board of Properties asks that anyone asking to borrow church table and chairs please talk to Delores Harper in the office so these items can be reserved on the calendar and conflicts can be avoided. Also anyone using the kitchen is asked to clean up their trash and put it in the dumpster right away and not leave it in the kitchen.

Rev Christina reported that there will be a Blessing of the future build site for Habitat for Humanity on Glendale Rd. in Northampton on Sept 30<sup>th</sup>. Fundraising will begin in September to fulfill our pledge in support of this project.

The church council will kick-off our annual Stewardship campaign on Sunday Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> and we will bless the pledges on Sunday Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mary Thayer reported that the Deacons had met the night before. They are still feeling the pinch from being short two members on their board. They are planning the outdoor worship service at the Parkers home later this month as well as a very full worship schedule for the coming program year.

Lila West reported from the Board of Christian Education that the summer youth mission trip went very well. The youth will be sharing their adventures with us at the service at the Parkers. Our Sunday School director, Jean Baxter is planning a science theme for the older kids, reading the book "A Wrinkle in Time" and asking the music committee to help with teaching songs as well.

Rev Christina is planning a Bible Boot Camp study this coming year. Details to follow. The council will be reviewing a template for completing our Safe Church Policy in the coming months.

At the conclusion of the council meeting, Randy Izer announced his intention to step down from his position of Church moderator, a post he has held for 10 years. The council will be seeking a replacement as soon as possible. We appreciate your service Mr. Izer. God bless you!  
Next meeting: Wednesday Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Debbie Ward, clerk

### **MISSION NEWS**

As summer fades into autumn we again think of helping those in need! This year we will be focusing our attention on Habitat of Pioneer Valley as they are building several homes in Northampton and asking churches to help. We will be having opportunities for fund raising as well as hands on work at the home sites in coming months.

We are again serving meals for Lucio Perez at Amherst First Church the week of September 10<sup>th</sup>. There will be a sign up sheet for this or talk to Judy Stone ([jstone9074@aol.com](mailto:jstone9074@aol.com)). On Tuesday and Friday he needs a meal for two and on Monday and Thursday its for five as his children are there.

Mission Sunday will be September 30<sup>th</sup> and we are signed up to help at Cathedral in the Light in Greenfield again. Please look for a signup sheet to help with this worthwhile event. We will also have other activities at church after our Mission Sunday breakfast and service. There will be a Habitat fund raising calendar available on September 2<sup>nd</sup> which will be collected on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

There is still a need for donations of food or money to the Food Pantry at Most Holy Redeemer Church. They also need volunteers from 12-1PM every Sunday. If you can help with this please call Sharon Andres at 401-258-2120.

We are going to miss Caryn Perley as she has resigned from the committee due to moving from Hadley! She has been an incredible force on our committee and we wish her well! We welcome Barbara Andersen to our committee as we get underway this fall!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We've got **BIG** things planned this year.

In fall Sunday School, we'll start diving into "**Hands-On Faith -- Science Bible Lessons**" with science experiments. (*sounds messy doesn't it.*)

### **But wait -- there's more!!**

One Sunday each month -- there will be a special-different-type of Sunday School. We're planning "**Kids Music!**" Sunday School -- one Sunday each month, and a special "**Teen Sundays!**" (gr. 6-9) -- one Sunday each month. We'll be using "A Wrinkle in Time" to focus on self, joy, good & evil, and love & faith -- and build a tesseract machine, too.

### **and YET MORE!!**

We're planning a **big bash night out at PINZ on Friday, Sept. 14th, 6-9pm** -- and Diana West will send you more info about that.

Stay tuned and fasten your seat belts!!

Jean



## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Do you knit or crochet? Would you like to learn? The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet Monday, September 10, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the church. Join us for a fun and relaxing evening. Judy Parker will be providing refreshments.

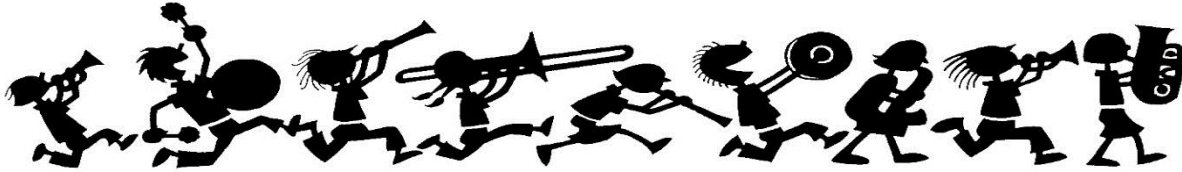
## **THE BOARD OF PROPERTIES**

The annex flooring project was completed in July as planned and went smoothly. New vinyl tile and stair treads were installed in the hallways, rest room, and smaller rooms, while the carpeting was re-installed in the nursery and large classroom. The bell practice room, music office, rest room, and hallway were all repainted. Many thanks to all who helped remove and replace all the contents and furniture of the rooms.

The bricks in the chimney at the back of the main building have been spalling (chipping or crumbling), indicating that the chimney needs attention. We received a quote of \$12,500 to do the repairs, and there will be some discussion soon as to how we can address this situation.

If you are wondering what the small, black box outside the door to the parking lot is, here is the answer. It is called a Knox Box, and it will house a key to the building, allowing the Fire Dept. quick access to the building in the event of an emergency.

Due to a recent misunderstanding, a church family who had requested to borrow tables and chairs for an event at their home found no tables here when they came to get them. Sincerest apologies to that family for the mix-up and subsequent inconvenience. To all church members who wish to borrow tables or chairs from the church, please make future arrangements with our church secretary, Delores Harper.



## MUSIC NOTES

Fall is here, and it's time for Choir rehearsal to resume on Thursday nights at 7PM in the upstairs meeting room. We usually sing through music for three or four weeks ahead, learning our parts, getting the songs in our ears, working on tricky rhythms. Nothing too stressful... You don't need to be able to "read" the music, really. Reading the words is most important, the rest comes through repeated practicing. If you would like to be part of the music on Sunday mornings during worship, give Choir a try for a few weeks. It might be just what you need to become more involved with our church family. Hope to see you on Thursday, September 6 – I might bring a treat...Toni

Bell choir rehearsals will begin on Tuesday, September 11, at 7 p.m. in the bell room (upstairs, across from the choir robes). We usually practice for about an hour.

We'd love to have more people join us. It's a team effort, so the more the merrier. Reading music is not required; you just have to know your right hand from your left, and be able to count to four. The first few weeks we'll be reviewing our basics and getting back in the groove. We have a lot of fun together and we laugh a lot.

Ruth





1	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	TAKE AND EAT
2	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY SCHOOL
3	Monday	5:45 p.m.	Ryan's Group
5	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA
6	Thursday	7:00 p.m.	CHOIR REHEARSAL
9	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY SCHOOL
10	Monday	5:45 p.m.	Ryan's Group
		6:00 p.m.	Hope Grange
		7:00 p.m.	PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY
11	Tuesday	4:30 p.m.	Hampshire Exe. Committee
		7:00 p.m.	BELLS
12	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA
13	Thursday	7:00 p.m.	CHOIR REHEARSAL
16	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY SCHOOL
		11:15 a.m.	STAFF MEETING
17	Monday	5:45 p.m.	Ryan's Group
18	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	BELLS
19	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA
20	Thursday	7:00 p.m.	CHOIR REHEARSAL
22	Saturday	9:00 a.m.	New England Women Leaders
23	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY SCHOOL
24	Monday	5:45 p.m.	Ryan's Group
25	Tuesday	7.00 p.m.	BELLS
26	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA
27	Thursday	7.00 p.m.	CHOIR REHEARSAL
30	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY SCHOOL