

First Congregational Church, U.C.C.  
102 Middle Street  
Hadley, Massachusetts 01035-9429



## *July - August*

### **CHURCH STAFF**

Minister – The Reverend Dr. William Wright  
Organist & Choir Director – Toni S. Wilcox  
Christian Education Director – Jean Baxter  
Deacon of the Month – Shari Parsons  
Church Administrator – Cathy Samson  
Custodian – Bryan Harper

### **WORSHIP SERVICES**

Sunday Morning – 10:00 a.m.  
also live virtual service and recorded  
services on YouTube and Facebook

### **CHURCH SCHOOL**

Sunday Morning – 10:00 a.m.  
also via Email and on Facebook

Telephone: 413-584-4117

Website: [www.firstchurchhadley.org](http://www.firstchurchhadley.org)

Facebook.com/FirstChurchHadley

Follow us on Twitter @ <https://twitter.com/FCCHadley>



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# The Rooster Crows

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July-August, 2021

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## *The Chanticleer Canticle: Can You Hear Summer Calling?*

By Pastor Bill

*For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has--not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, "The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little."*

-Second Corinthians 8:13-15

Summer gives most of us some extra leisure time, which is a great opportunity to reevaluate your priorities (while staring languidly at the advancing waves, or dallying about your garden, or biking aimlessly around your neighborhood, like I did on my youthful summers off). This summer presents you with even a better opportunity to reevaluate, because we're coming off a long covid stagnation. Hopefully, like me, you survived it without too much loss or hardship—thank God!

What I want to prompt you to reevaluate is your level of activity with the church, much like Paul is asking the Corinthians (whom I just can't stop talking about) to do. Actually, Paul is talking about sending a gift of money to support the original church in Jerusalem. But our church is doing ok there. You all have continued to be generous through the tumultuous pandemic times. That means your church is sound and healthy and will be ready to get back to business (and fun) come fall.

What we need more than money is service. The pandemic has been stressful for our deacons especially, who also took the lead on running the Pastoral Search Committee. Christian Education has scrambled, thanks to Jean's leadership, to provide accessible activities for our scattered youth; but CE will be re-launching a refreshed Sunday School come the fall. Missions has been stymied from many usual activities and is anxious to get back to active service. And Church Council has done a lot of work to negotiate the shut down and reopening; they also are anxious to start working on a Communications Covenant.

A "fair balance," Paul is calling for. Not that "there should be relief for others and pressure on you." I think he's trying not to guilt anyone. Yes, our leadership could use some "relief." But like Paul, I don't believe in applying "pressure." Really it all comes down to whether "the eagerness is there." Are you ready and *eager* to try getting more involved? To return to being more involved? The best service the church will receive from its members never comes from people being pressured ("Somebody has to sign up as a deacon..."). It comes from *eagerness*. It comes from the often-subtle calling of God, from an abundance of joy and gift that you are feeling right now—maybe no one else knows it but you. Why not turn that eagerness and abundance into a gift of service that will build up the church as we get set to return to (near-)normal in the fall?

By now, you've probably had a chance to see what I'm like as a minister. Maybe my approach to ministry appeals to you. Great! Come to the Strategic Planning Retreat on July 31! And if you like where I'm going as a minister, why not step up and help do the work of the church? I have learned to accept that no minister appeals to everyone. I have a distinctive approach, which means it won't appeal equally to everybody. So there will inevitably be some folks who think this is a time to scale back or take a break. That's completely normal and healthy. But I bet there will also be some of you who hear God saying (perhaps in the delightful whooshing crash of the waves), "Hey, now's the time to volunteer at church!"

You don't have to jump into joining a Board. Come to a meeting and explore what they need help with. The deacons will need people to train to be "Called to Care Ministers"—or "Shepherds," I like to call them—people who can help visit and keep tabs on our members, as a way to continue our commitment to pastoral care under a half-time pastor. Christian Ed and I are rethinking our approach to Sunday School and youth ministry—come check out our conversation! I have started exploring projects with Properties: greening the church (if you care about the environment); and exploring a redecoration of the parlor or small vestry (for you interior decorators). Find something that makes you *eager*—and take it on! Well, it's ok if you wait until after a nice summer vacation...

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT**

**Strategic Planning Retreat on Saturday, July 31!** This in-church retreat, organized by Pastor Bill, is open to anyone interested in and passionate about discussing what we can do together over the next five years. You will bring your experience and dedication to the church, what you enjoy about our church, as well as your thoughts about what you'd like to see change. I will bring my experience as a pastor and theologian, including some extensive research I've done on the general decline of mainline churches over the past 50 years. I'll present some of that research. There will be plenty of opportunity for discussion, so that I can adjust and tailor where I am coming from to fit your insights and values. Help me craft a ministry at Hadley that fits and works. Just email me ([wawrigh@gmail.com](mailto:wawrigh@gmail.com)—no 't' in my name) if you are interested in attending the retreat. Food included!

## **SUMMER WITH PASTOR BILL**

Pastor Bill invites anyone who wishes to come chat with me this summer! We can have a brown-bag lunch at the church, or just a chat in my office, or I can meet you at home or another location. Having time off from preaching leaves me some extra time, and I'd love to fill it getting to know you better. Look for a sign-up list on Sunday, June 27, or email me ([wawrigh@gmail.com](mailto:wawrigh@gmail.com)) to set up a time. I'll keep my regular office hours, but I'll be on vacation for some chunks of July. Let's look especially at July 8, 14, 15, 28, and 29. Hope to see you!

Pastor Bill and Christian Education are reevaluating our approach to Sunday School. If you have thoughts and suggestions for the future of Sunday School, please contact Pastor Bill about setting up a time to talk. Your insights are very important to renewing our program!

Pastor Bill's upcoming vacations:

- July 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup>
- July 17 to 24
- September 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> (Labor Day Weekend)

Please contact a deacon if there are any pastoral emergencies during these times.

## CHURCH COUNCIL NOTES



Church Council Meeting on June 9, 2021

This council meeting marked a return to in person gathering. The group met in the fellowship hall, socially distanced around a square of tables.

The first item of new business was a presentation by moderator Adam Woodrow regarding plans to reopen the church office to pre-pandemic office hours. He met with Cathy, our office administrator, and discussed a goal of having the church office open 9 am to 1 pm, Monday through Friday by July 1, 2021.

Another goal is to start working on updating the church website. Photos and content are needed so if any board or group in the church has information they want included, please send to Cathy via the church email. Adam will also contact the Media & Communication committee to get this project flowing.

Requests for use of the building are also to be handled by the church administrator, so she will be provided with a flowchart to direct requests to correct person within the church, usually Board of Properties initially. All boards and groups are also requested to mark their meeting and event dates on the calendar in the hallway and notify Cathy, so she is aware of what is happening as well.

Bob Anderson, representing the Board of Deacons, presented a notice they drafted to send out to the congregation on a policy regarding worship service changes to move us to pre-covid normalcy. Starting Baccalaureate Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, the deacons plan to resume distributing bulletins and offering plates, Avery Stone will be honored and cake and cold drinks will be offered in the fellowship hall. Masks will still be required except when eating and drinking. Sunday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, these policies will continue. On Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, masks will be optional if fully vaccinated, but requested to be used during singing as there is still a concern of this being a way to spread the virus and children have not been vaccinated yet. The Adams' have requested to be baptized, so this will happen during this service as well. Fellowship will be offered after the service as well. The services will still be offered over Zoom live, radio station live 107.5 FM and posting of taped service on YouTube later in the week.

The third item on the new business agenda involved the use of the kitchen by both church and outside groups based on current State guidance. Lila West informed us that all state restrictions have been lifted so Cathy can let groups know that use of the kitchen is back to normal.

The fourth piece of new business was a discussion regarding the re-start of the development of our Community Communication Covenant. This is one of the goals stated on the contract with Pastor Bill that we agreed to work on as a congregation. The council members were provided with two drafts of covenants from other churches that had been researched several years ago by the Woods. Council members are asked to take these drafts back to their respective groups within the church community and discuss the wording that they feel best expresses how we want to communicate with one another. Also, there needs to be a section regarding what form action would take if a conflict does arise. Adam suggested asking someone from the UCC to come in to help us with this process with a goal of having a draft covenant ready by the end of November.

Reports from the minister and boards were presented.

We will not meet as a council during July. Next meeting will be in August.

Respectfully submitted, Debbie Ward, clerk

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS



July Worship Services will be held at the North Hadley Congregational Church 243 River Drive at 10:00 a.m.

August Worship Services at First Church 10:00 a.m.

August 1 – Communion will be served. The worship service will be held in the dining room.

August 8 – The annual “Blessing of the Animals Worship Service” will be held on the back lawn. All are welcome to bring pets to be blessed.

August 15 – Our annual Outdoor Worship Service will be held in Ken & Judy Parkers' yard at 118 Mt. Warner Road, please park off Hawley Road. We will hold potluck brunch or if you prefer you can bring your own picnic lunch.

August 22 – The worship service will be held in the dining room.

August 29 – The worship service will be held in the dining room.

Shari Parsons will be Deacon of the Month for July and August. Bill will be away July 2-6, and July 17-24. Anyone with concerns can contact Shari during this time.

Anyone interested in serving as a Deacon is invited to speak to any member of the board for information about serving.

Donna Brewer 413-364-6463  
Bob Andersen 413-687-3121  
Jonathan Morel 413-549-3958  
Ken Parker 413-549-3530  
Shari Parsons 413-584-8251  
Lisa West 413-586-1812

## CHRISTIAN ED AND SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



**IT'S BEEN GREAT BEING BACK IN CHURCH TOGETHER.**

### **SUMMER BRAINSTORMING** with Pastor Bill

The Board of Christian Ed and Pastor Bill will be brainstorming this summer with families and any interested church folks about Christian Ed in our church. We don't want to miss you -- let us know if you'd like to be especially included.

### **BLUE SOX -- YAY !**

35 Adults and kids had a great time at the Blue Sox game on June 20<sup>th</sup>. The Ciaglo's made us a happy church family under their corporate tent, and we cheered the team to an exciting win in the bottom of the ninth.

### **ROCK YOUR SUMMER !**

Is our summer theme by email and on Facebook, each week featuring a Christian Rock Band. Listen along wherever you find yourself.

### **SUMMER MOVIES**

Any kid who wants to come along is welcome (and adults, too.)

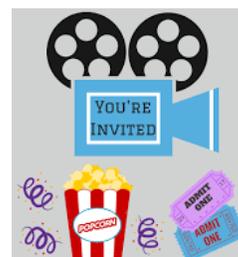
-- Our Treat -- !! at Hampshire Mall Cinemark

*~sponsored by Board of Christian Ed~*

Meet at the ticket window around 9:15 a.m.

#### **Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.**

- 7/7 Lego Movie 2: The Second Part
- 7/14 Angry Birds Movie 2
- 7/21 Dora and the Lost City of Gold
- 7/28 Minions
- 8/4 Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs



### **AUGUST SUNDAY SCHOOL (8/1-9/5)**

All ages will be in worship -- ALL TOGETHER -- in the Sanctuary until next fall.

We have Children's Bibles and books and activity clipboards for anyone wanting an extra "something to do in the pew." Online Sunday School will also continue by Facebook and by email.

Questions? call, text, or email: [jeanbbaxter@gmail.com](mailto:jeanbbaxter@gmail.com) 413-575-4299

### **HOMECOMING SUNDAY – September 12<sup>th</sup>**

We'll begin our new Sunday School plans with a BIG celebration!

**Online Sunday School** will also continue into the future, bringing Bible stories and activities to families by Facebook and by email.

Please **SHARE** the Sunday School Facebook posts to everyone and anyone. Forward our worship service, too. We know traditional church isn't for everyone – and this is a way to keep church in our lives and widen the community we can share our message with.

Christian Ed Director – Jean Baxter

Board of Christian Ed – Diana West, Mary Wholley, Lila West, Terri Smith, Emma Dragon

## MUSIC NOTES



It is HOT, Hot, hot – a good time for vacation.

When August rolls around, we will have a pick-up choir on Sunday mornings, NO Thursday rehearsals. If you would like to participate, come to the church [at 9:00 a.m. Sunday morning](#). We will sing together, no masks if you are vaccinated, in a cool spot, everything will be ready. All are welcome, please join us.

Toni

## PROPERTIES

You may have noticed that the steeple clock faces are no longer showing the correct time, and the hands aren't moving at all. The main works of the clock have been removed and are currently being restored at a clockworks shop in Rhode Island. At the most recent Hadley Town Meeting, our request for Community Preservation Act funds was approved by Hadley voters. Give it a few weeks, then keep an eye on the steeple to see when the clock starts working again.



New air conditioners were purchased for the church offices and installed just in time for the arrival of hot weather.

A dead maple tree in our back yard was taken down by Bryan Harper with assistance from other Board of Properties members.

While we are working on a few minor projects around the church right now, we are also looking ahead to getting quotes on interior repairs and painting of several areas in the building that are in serious need of improvement. We hope to have proposals to bring forward by the fall.





## MISSION NEWS

As we take a little time for summer activities, please take note that we are looking to collect items for school kits! We will be collecting these on August 15th at the service at the Parker residence!

The items needed per kit are: (for Church World Service kits)

One pair of blunt scissors (round tip)

Three 70-count bound notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no loose-leaf or filler paper)

One 30-centimeter 12 inch ruler

One hand-held pencil sharpener (removed from the package)

One large eraser (no pencil cap erasers)

Six new, unsharpened pencils with erasers (removed from the package)

One box of 24 crayons (only 24)

One 12"x14" to 14"x17" finished size cotton or lightweight, solid colored canvas bag with cloth handles (no logos and no reusable shopping bags or backpacks)

You can choose to donate all items for one bag, or choose to purchase several of a few items as they will be on sale at this time of the year. In the past, we have had a few seamstresses make the bags, and we can get the pattern for you if that's a possibility.

Thank you for your help with this project!

Mission Committee



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## JULY CALENDAR

2	Friday	4:00 p.m.	Take and Eat preparation
3	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Take and Eat
4	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP at North Hadley
7	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
10	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Buckhout Memorial Service
11	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP at North Hadley
14	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
18	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP at North Hadley
21	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
25	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP at North Hadley
28	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
31	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

Events listed in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS are church-related events.



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## AUGUST CALENDAR

1	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	PICK-UP CHOIR
1	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL
4	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
6	Friday	4:00 p.m.	Take and Eat preparation
7	Saturday	8:00 a.m.	Take and Eat
8	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	PICK-UP CHOIR
8	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP – BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS
11	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
11	Wednesday	7:00 p.m.	CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
15	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	PICK-UP CHOIR
15	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP – PARKERS’ OUTDOOR SERVICE
18	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
22	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	PICK-UP CHOIR
22	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL
25	Wednesday	6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
29	Sunday	9:00 a.m.	PICK-UP CHOIR
29	Sunday	10:00 a.m.	WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL

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