



THE VISITOR

TOWNSEND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

🌱 *At the Heart of the Community - With the Community in Our Hearts* 🌱



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Summer Calendar

- 6/29 Band Concert Lawn Party
- 8/14 Council Meeting
- 8/21 September Newsletter Deadline

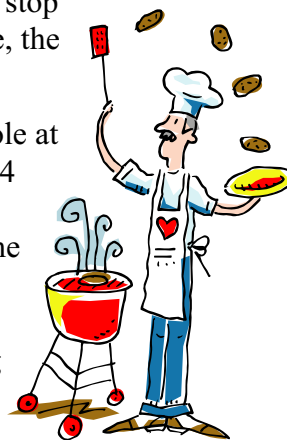
IT'S NOT TOO LATE...

If we don't get rained out (seems to be a theme this year!), TCC will be holding the lawn party at the June 29 band concert on the town common. As of Sunday morning, Carole announced that we still need help in the grilled foods and games areas. Help is always needed at set-up (6 pm) and take-down (9:30 pm).

You can bring baked goods and pre-cut-up mixed fruit!

Please email or call Carole Gustafson to let her know you would like to help. If you find that you are unexpectedly free that evening, just stop by - the more, the merrier!

Contact Carole at 978-597-6364 (leave a message if she doesn't pick up); email: carolegus@gmail.com



Search Committee Update

Your search committee is happy to report that we completed our mock interview and have been cleared to

"go live". This means the TCC profile is now posted on the opportunities website and we will wait for any interested applicants to contact us.

Bill Coalter, Kathy Duckett, Cindy Miller, Pam Snaith, David Wilson



Our worship schedule will not change this summer; we will continue to start at 10 am, although the duration of our services tend to be shorter in the summer.

Our Sunday school leader (Amanda) is trying a new thing and offering Sunday school on select Sundays. If you have not heard from her directly, contact the church office.

We hope you will join us in worship this summer!





July & August 2023

Volume 46 No. 7

Pastor: Rev. Gregory Schmidt
Pastor's Line at TCC:
978-597-0157

TCC Administrative Asst.:
Judy Karkane
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**Village Common Children's
Center Line:** 978-597-0834

Editor: Cathy Hill

TOWNSEND
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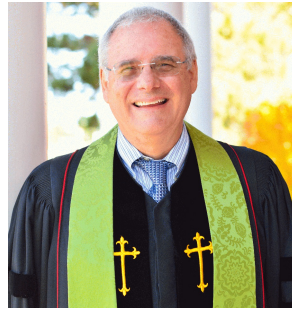
**Village Common Children's
Center:** vccc@tccucc.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
Monday-Friday: 8 am - 1 pm

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:
Mon-Wed 9-1, or by
appointment.

**Visit our web page at
www.tccucc.org and visit
us on Facebook**

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
SUNDAY, AUGUST 20**



Pastor's Letter

In his book, *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer*, Richard Rohr writes: We cannot attain the presence of God because we're already in the presence of God. What's absent is awareness. Little do we realize that God's love is maintaining us in existence with every breath we take. As we take another, it means that God is choosing us now and now and now. We have nothing to attain or even learn. We do, however, need to unlearn some things.

To become aware of God's loving presence in our lives, we have to accept that human culture is in a mass hypnotic trance. We're sleep-walkers. All great religious teachers have recognized that we human beings do not naturally see; we have to be taught how to see. Jesus says further, "If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light" (Luke 11:34). Religion is meant to teach us how to see and be present to reality. That's why the Buddha and Jesus say with one voice, "Be awake." Jesus talks about "staying watchful" (Matthew 25:13, Luke 12:37, Mark 13:33-37), and

"Buddha" means "I am awake" in Sanskrit.

Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a stance. It's a way of living in the Presence, living in awareness of the Presence, and even of enjoying the Presence. The contemplative is not just aware of God's Loving Presence, but trusts, allows, and delights in it.

As we spend time resting, relaxing, doing whatever it is we will do during these summer months, I encourage you to be watchful, to be awake, to be aware and take notice of the movement, the actions, the presence of God all around you. Don't just look for it and see it, but delight in it, be a part of it and allow it to fill your soul with life

and love and joy. If you see evil or trouble, try to fix it. If you see love, share in it. Allow the Holy Spirit to move you to joy.



Remember that God is still

speaking, the Holy Spirit is still active and Jesus is still our guide even in the quiet times of the summer. I hope you will continue to join us in person, or on Facebook, as we go about our lives as the body of Christ here at Townsend Congregational Church.

Peace,

Greg



We love our church!

Maintenance Update

We are so thankful for everyone who was able to contribute to our ongoing maintenance fund. The new heating/cooling units have been installed and look great!

We did fall about \$9,000 short of our goal, and, according to Wanda, our Minister for Property we have another aging system that will need to be replaced soon. It is never too late to make a contribution to support our beautiful old building.

All donations need to be labeled "Maintenance Fund-raiser". They can be mailed to:

Townsend Congregational Church
PO Box 487
Townsend, MA 01469

Donations can also be electronically made on our web site, dropped off at the church office, or placed in the Sunday offering plate.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Cathy Hill, editor

for Wanda Wilson, Minister for Property



Children's Ministry News

A Message from our Sunday School Superintendent

Dear Sunday school families and congregation membership; I am so blessed to have our beautiful children in our Sunday school each week, and I want to thank you.

Each Sunday I am blessed with the insight and privilege to help your children and mine enjoy our faith. Faith and confidence is what will build wonderful shepherds in the future. I plan on continuing our education on speaking about God, and with God for the next Sunday school year. Each one of these beautiful souls has developed a very confident sense of self and faith this year, and I am so proud of them; from our youngest member to our returning older members, they have all learned how to share their faith. There will be Sunday school this summer, as I think it's important for us to continue to develop our faith, and Jesus does not take summers off. Thank you for each and every moment you have given me with your beautiful children. I look forward to many, many more.

Thank you,

*Amanda Caprigno
Sunday School Superintendent*

Altar Flowers!

Thanks to Michelle Enright for overseeing the TCC altar flower ministry. If you would like to dedicate flowers for any Sunday, Michelle has sign-up sheets at church, or you can email Michelle at

michellenright25@comcast.net and let her know what Sunday you'd like to sponsor and what dedication you would like to have printed in the weekly bulletin; Michelle can let you know what Sundays are available.

The flower arrangements are provided by The Bronze Bell and cost only \$30 for both arrangements; they will bill you after the flowers are delivered to the church.

Thanks for helping to brighten up our worship experience.



The Birthday Fund

This is a fun way to contribute above and beyond your regular giving to the church to something above and beyond our normal operating budget. We appreciate those who have participated so far. Simply make a donation on (or around) your birthday in the amount of your age (Memo: Birthday Fund)! Participate and watch our gifts grow!



3-Kaily Urato;
5-Debby Coalter
and Rosie Snaith;
6-Glenda Profit and
Wanda Wilson; 8-
Kim Emerson;

9-Laura Gustafson; 13-Ivy Johnson;
24-Gary Hatch and Benjamin
Hersey; 25-Megan Bruns and Chris
Genoter; 26-Kristina Cormier;
28-Holly Lyn Beauchesne and
Hayden Urato; 31- Carole
Gustafson

2-Amanda
Rochette; 3-Alan
Beauchesne;
4-Charlie Duckett;
7-Tammy
Blackburn;
8-Michael Cloutier; 11-Lyn
Bennett; 15-Summer Goyette;
20-Naomi Carney; 24-Myahliya
Carney; 26-Cathy Hill and Robert
Nicoll; 27-Lisa Burnham; 28-Ryan
Benson



Get an Early Start on Holiday Fair Preparations!

The membership voted
once again to hold a
holiday fair in
November.

The summer is a great
time to plan (and even
start) a gift basket for the
ever popular the gift basket raffle!
If you would like to do one this
year, and are looking for ideas, let
me know (chill01469@gmail.com)
and I will send you our ideas sheet.

If you are crafty (unlike me!), the
summer is also a great time for

making fun things that we can sell
at our TCC crafts table!

Thanks for your continued support.

Cathy Hill



Our "Good Shepherd" Stained Glass Window

Last month, someone told me how
they had seen "our" Good Shepherd
stained glass window at another
church and it got me to thinking
that I basically knew nothing about
our window.

When I started asking questions, I
discovered that most people don't
really know the details of this
beautiful addition to our sanctuary.
I was able to discover that it was
installed in 1945 in memory of two
sons who perished in the war,

although the window was not
dedicated until ten years later, in
1955.

If any of you are still in touch with
past members who might have been
around at that time, please ask them
if they remember anything about
this major contribution to our
church. Barbara Goodwin is
searching the church archives for
anything that contains more details,
but so far has not found anything. It
would be a shame to lose this piece
of our history and I hope someone
out there can shed some light.

Cathy Hill, Editor



Pull Tabs!!

For many years, someone in our
church has overseen the collection
of pull tabs to support the Shriners
Hospital charitable programs.
Currently, Lee McTighe is the one
overseeing this collection. Lee
recently made a very nice
announcement about this collection
on Sunday morning and shared
details that I never knew. I thought
it would be pertinent to share the
details of this program, and
encourage everyone to start saving
their pull tabs.

What is the Pull-Tab Program?

The pull-tab program at Aleppo
Shriners in Wilmington,

Massachusetts was founded several years ago as a way for the public to help raise funds for the humanitarian and life-saving services provided by Shriners Hospitals for Children. In Eastern Massachusetts, tabs are collected by many different organizations and collected at the Shrine Center in Wilmington, Massachusetts. The tabs are redeemed at a recycling center and the proceeds benefit the Aleppo Shriners Children's Transportation Fund. Donations range from small baggies and jars to 40 lb. bags.

What is the Children's Transportation Fund?

Funds generated in the pull-tab program are used to transport children and their parent or guardian, free of charge to a Shriners Hospital for Children. Volunteers from local shrine organizations use specialized vans, small buses and automobiles and give freely countless hours of their time providing transportation to and from doctor's visits. One very important mode of transportation this fund pays for are the life-saving med-flights transporting children from all over the world to a Shriners Hospital when their life is in the balance. These specialized med-flights cost tens of thousands of dollars, but when a child's life hangs in the balance, money is no object. Parents of injured children admitted to a Shriners Hospital for Children do not see a single bill for transportation provided through this fund.

Interesting Facts!

- ❖ It takes more than 1,600 tabs to equal one (1) pound.

- ❖ The Aleppo Shrine Center has processed over 10 TONS of pull-tabs collected from throughout Eastern Massachusetts.
- ❖ Each year, the Aleppo Shriners of Wilmington, MA, spend over \$300,000 supplying transportation, housing and food for children and their families.

As a final note - encourage your non-church friends to save their pull-tabs; I have had complete strangers stop by the public library, where I work, and drop off bags of tabs!

Cathy Hill, Editor

**Have you remembered
TCC, UCC in your will?**



OUR BLESSINGS:

We give thanks for the gifts of sunshine and rain that help our gardens grow.

We give thanks for our church family.

Carol Swenor is joyful and thankful for her many friends that fill her life every day.

Wedding Anniversaries:

Paul and Heather Nixon,
15 years on July 26
Lee and Kathy Duckett,
35 years on August 6
Charlie and Rebecca Hersey,
33 years on August 11
Niles and Michele Busler,
54 years on August 24
David and Wanda Wilson,
50 years on August 25

OUR CONCERNS:

We offer prayers of condolence for the family and friends of Kerry Thrasher who passed away on May 29.

We also offer prayers of condolence for the family and friends of Mary West who passed away on June 13; just a couple weeks shy of her 101st birthday.

Carol Swenor is asking for prayers for a successful surgery for her friend, Matt.

Chris Clish is asking for prayers for a friend who received bad news concerning some health tests.

We pray for all who are suffering in mind, body, or spirit.

We pray for all those who are unemployed or underemployed.

We pray for the people of the world who are oppressed, assaulted, or afflicted by man-made or natural disasters.

We offer prayers of healing and hope for all those in our immediate and extended families who are in the midst of battling cancer, and for all those who care for and support them.





LECTIONARY, JULY AND AUGUST 2023

July 2, 2023 -

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Zechariah 9:9-12; Psalm 145:8-14

Second reading: Romans 7:15-25a
Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 9, 2023 -

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Isaiah 55:10-13; Psalm 65:(1-8), 9-13

Second reading: Romans 8:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 16, 2023 -

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 or Isaiah 44:6-8; Psalm 86:11-17

Second reading: Romans 8:12-25
Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 23, 2023 -

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128

Alternate First reading and Psalm: 1 Kings 3:5-12; Psalm 119:129-136

Second reading: Romans 8:26-39
Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

July 30, 2023 -

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

Second reading: Romans 9:1-5
Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

August 6, 2023 -

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b

Alternate First reading and Psalm: 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13

Second reading: Romans 10:5-15
Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

August 13, 2023 -

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67

Second reading: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32

Gospel: Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

August 20, 2023 -

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Isaiah 51:1-6; Psalm 138

Second reading: Romans 12:1-8
Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

August 27, 2023 -

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First reading and Psalm: Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b

Alternate First reading and Psalm: Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8

Second reading: Romans 12:9-21
Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28



COMMUNITY NEWS



Events at the Townsend Public Library

Looking for something to do with the kids, or just for yourself? Check out what's happening at your local library! The state-wide summer reading program **for all ages** kicked off on June 20 at the Townsend Public Library, and their calendar of events can be found at townsendlibrary.org.



Townsend Military Band 2023 Summer Concerts

The Townsend Military Band has opened its 2023 Thursday evening concert series on the Townsend Common. Weather permitting, the band will play a concert on the

Common each Thursday between 7:30 and 9:30 pm through at least August 17th. The Townsend Military Band is managed by Betty Mae Tenney of Townsend and conducted by Thomas Souza of Chelmsford. Mr. Souza is the Brandeis University Wind Ensemble Director and the Band Director at the Fairgrounds Middle School in Nashua, New Hampshire. Mr. Souza plans to feature well-known show tunes, marches, patriotic music, and children's music in these concerts.

The concerts are funded by the Town of Townsend. Lawn parties hosted by local organizations, which always feature food and often include activities for children and other assorted tables, are held in conjunction with these concerts. Area residents of all ages are encouraged to bring their lawn chairs or blankets so they may sit and enjoy the good music and the company of friends and neighbors, as well as the variety of food and beverages.

William James College INTERFACE Referral Service



INTERFACE is a mental health referral service that is available for all residents in Townsend, Pepperell, and Ashby. Just call 888-244-6843 during normal business hours (M-F, 9-5) and you will be able to speak with a licensed mental health professional, or an advanced level graduate student, who will discuss the situation with you, and then call you back with a referral which meets your therapeutic needs, insurance, schedule availability and immediate openings. This service is

funded by the North Middlesex Regional School District. Check out the web site for the WJC INTERFACE Referral Service at interface.williamjames.edu.

Submitted by Pam Snaith



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWS

Here is one of the UCC's daily devotionals that I thought was especially interesting to consider.

--Cathy

10 Things Jesus Never Said

March 13, 2023; Matt Laney

You must observe everything that I teach you; do not add to it or take anything from it. – Deuteronomy 12:32 (NRSV)

According to the above verse, let's be mindful of some long-held, fake "Christian" ideas Jesus never taught:

Jesus never said: "You must accept me as your personal Lord and savior." He did say: "Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of God." (Matthew 7:21)

Jesus never said: "Non-Christians will go to hell." He did say: "Anyone who verbally abuses another is in danger of hell." (Matthew 5:22)

Jesus never said: "God never gives you more trouble than you can handle." He did say: "In this world you will have trouble, but fear not, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Jesus never said: "Love the sinner, hate the sin." He did say ...

actually, Jesus talked about being hated. He never urged hating. (Luke 6:22)

Jesus never said: "All lives matter." He did (essentially) say: "Samaritan lives—and other marginalized lives—matter." (John 4:7 and many other places)

Jesus never said: "People get what they deserve." He did say: "The sun rises on the evil and the good. The rain falls on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:45)

Jesus never said: "Blessed are those with superior firepower." He did say: "Blessed are the peacemakers and the meek." (Matthew 5: 5&9)

Jesus never said: "I won't help you lest you become a lazy, dependent freeloader." He did say: "Come to me all you who are weary and heavily burdened." (Matthew 11:28)

Jesus never said: "Wealth is a sign of God's favor!" He did say: "Woe to you who are rich." (Luke 6:24)

Jesus never said: "I am God." He did say: "I am one with God." (John 10:30)

Prayer

Christ Almighty: Save us from the desire to twist your words into the mold of our values. Instead, shape our hearts into the form of yours.



Matt Laney is the Senior Pastor of Virginia Highland Church UCC in Atlanta, GA and the author of *Pride Wars*, a fantasy series published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

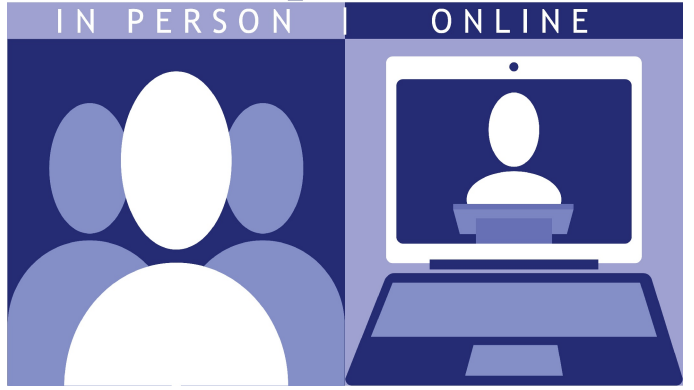
for Young Readers. The first two books, *The Spinner Prince* and *The Four Guardians* are available now.

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Townsend Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
3 Brookline St., PO Box 487
Townsend MA 01469-0487

Sunday Worship at 10 am

Worship With Us



SHARING OUR SPACE WITH THE COMMUNITY AND FRIENDS

Weddings, Child Dedications, Holiday Parties, Baby and Wedding Showers, Family Reunions, Organization Meetings



We are blessed with a beautiful sanctuary and great space within our building for use that we are able to share with others. If you or someone you know is

looking for a location for an event, contact our church secretary at 978-597-8925. This use of our building helps support the maintenance of our facility.



OUR COMMON PURPOSE STATEMENT

Being in an intimate relationship with God in the present, we are an ever-learning, action-oriented, justice-seeking, community-caring church. Our purpose is to use our gifts to make God's love real and alive for everyone.

We are committed to ministering through the use of our gifts, learning to live the Christian way of life, and being together in Christ by seeking to fulfill these three commandments of Christ:

- ❖ *To love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30)*
- ❖ *To love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31)*
- ❖ *To love one another as Christ has loved us (John 13:34)*

