

The Bell Tower

Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Hatfield, UCC

2019

September

No. 8

Homecoming

50 years ago this past July, Apollo 11 landed on the moon. 50 years ago this past August, about 400,000 people gathered at Woodstock. What a summer of extremes that was. 50 years ago the Vietnam War was drafting a generation of men to fight, and the same war was instigating huge protests against the war. Again, what a summer of extremes.



We're still living amidst social extremes. We witness regularly in our nation the divisions based on race, immigration, gun control, wealth and poverty, politics, the environment, religion and more. As citizens we are enduring a time of fractured relationship. What can we learn from 50 years ago?

The landing on the moon united us as humans. People around the globe were excited by the achievement of human footsteps for the first time off our planet. We were drawn together by the heroics of something greater than our divisions. Neil Armstrong wasn't only an American. It was "one giant leap for mankind." The idea of our shared neighbourhood on this insignificant planet circling an insignificant star, circling in an insignificant galaxy, brought us closer together. How do we reinvigorate that sense of our shared humanity again?

I watched a PBS documentary on Woodstock recently. The whole idea of the scarcity of toilets and food, of three days of being surrounded by sweaty people, and then the rain and mud, I would have probably hated the whole experience, but I was impressed by the message that these masses of young people came together amid all these deprivations and were peaceful and considerate. I loved the fact that the rather conservative town's people raided

their own pantries and refrigerators to rescue these kids who were so different than they. One farmer commented that he had a nineteen-year-old and that all of those "hippies" at Woodstock were somebody's son or daughter too.

There's that message again of connection stretching over and under and around all our differences, and somehow, thankfully, stitching us together. In the documentary, I heard the voices of 70-year-olds remembering that experience of peace, love and community, and they said that it changed them for a lifetime. Like I said, I couldn't have done Woodstock, but what a powerful message it remains for those who were there of what life could be. How do we go about creating those kinds of experiences?

I grew up across the street from Westfield State College and I remember the protestors. I remember riding my bike as probably a ten-year-old at the back of their marches just to see what was going on. I also remember a neighbour across the street who came home with I think a Bronze Star from Vietnam.

I watched a bit of another PBS documentary, *10 That Changed America*, and one of the topics was the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. The man who spearheaded the effort spoke about separating the warrior from the war. The war was and is not popular, but the ones who were drafted to fight have received their due honour. Peace activists and soldiers have healed their wounds and their separation. They came to see the person through the haze of that time of stringent divisions, and again community was restored.

How does church help us to see the person and our shared humanity in spite of divisions? It begins by making sure our church is welcoming. It begins by going back to Jesus and seeing among His disciples all these different kinds of people who came together because of Jesus. It goes back to the earliest church treating men and women, slave and free, Jew and Gentile as equal before God. This month we celebrate Homecoming and New Member Sunday. Let's make it more than a formality repeated each year. Let's make it a goal throughout the year that we welcome any and all so that we can be a place and a people of community in spite of division.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Tue. 3 rd	New members' meeting in the church parlor at 6:30pm.
Sun. 8 th	Home Coming Sunday / New Member Sunday. Lunch follows in the church hall. Hampshire Association Youth Group gathering in Southampton at 5:30pm.
Mon. 9 th	Volunteer opportunity at the Food Bank from 1 – 4:00pm. Board of Deacons meets at 5:00pm.
Wed. 11 th	Board of Trustees meets at 7:00pm.
Thur. 12 th	Rev. Randy attends Hampshire Association Clergy Committee of Practice meeting in Hadley at noon. Rev. Randy participates in the Hampshire Association Church and Ministry Committee meeting at 5:30pm.
Sun. 15 th	Rev. Barbara Turner Delisle will serve as our Substitute Minister today. Church Council meeting at 11:00am in the church parlor.
Mon. 16 th	Explore the Bible study group meets in the church parlor from 7 – 8:00pm.
Tue. 17 th	HEADS Up meeting at the Elementary School from 6 – 8:00pm.
Sat. 21 st	Wood Fire Chicken BBQ from 5 – 7:00pm, take out only.
Sun. 22 nd	Congregational meeting at 11:00am to vote on goal budget.
Mon. 30 th	Explore the Bible study group meets in the church parlor from 7 – 8:00pm.

REGULAR GATHERINGS

Sundays: Worship Service begins at **10:00am**. Sunday School at 10:15 am. Chat and Coffee at 11:00am.

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.

Thursdays: Choir rehearses in the sanctuary at 6:30pm.

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

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. This gathering will take place on Tuesday, September 3rd at 6:30pm.

HOME COMING / NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

The full choir returns to add their gift of musical voice to our Services on September 1st. On the 8th, we will welcome new members into our congregation's family and we will also celebrate Home Coming Sunday for those who already belong. After the church Service, a Baked Lasagna Luncheon will be held in the church  hall. This will give us additional time to connect with old friends and new acquaintances. There is no set price for the luncheon, but we do ask for a freewill offering to offset the cost of the meal. We do hope that you will choose to join us on this special Sunday.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Massachusetts Bible Society's Executive Director Rev. Anne Robertson has authored a three-volume text called *Exploring the Bible*. It begins with an introduction to the Bible that offers an overview of the text itself, a discussion of the different perspectives on the authority of the Bible, and even the archaeological witness. Volume Two takes us through the books of the Old Testament, and Volume Three introduces us to the New Testament.

If you have ever wanted to know more about the Bible in general, this study group may be what you are looking for. We will meet on alternate weeks, which will give us plenty of time to read the text and the Bible. This will allow us to come together and discuss what we have read.

The *Exploring the Bible* books may be purchased in advance, online for about \$40. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Randy. This group is open to anyone interested in learning more about the Bible.

CHICKEN BBQ

The annual Wood Fired Chicken Barbeque will be held on Saturday, September 21st, on the church grounds. Take Out only from 5-7pm. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for children 10 and under. Tickets will be available

at door or may be reserved in advance. Please contact Linda at 247-5604 for tickets and of course to volunteer to help. The meal includes: half chicken, baked potato, squash, coleslaw, roll/butter and dessert. Thanks for your support of this church fundraiser, and don't forget to take a few tickets to sell for this delicious meal.

CROP HUNGER WALK

CROP Hunger Walks help support the overall work of Church World Service, particularly grassroots development efforts around the world.

Hunger Walk will return 25% of fighting programs in our local



In addition, our local CROP the funds it raises to hunger-communities. A Recruitment

Rally was held at the Sunderland Congregational Church on August 15th where we picked-up fundraising packets and advertising materials. Anyone who would like to be a part of our team can now head out and collect donations for this worthy cause. The Walk is in Sunderland on Sunday, October 13th, at 1PM.

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 help our neighbours who struggle to feed their families. Please speak with Linda about this.

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.

SUPER SATURDAY REGISTRATION

Super Saturday will take place on Saturday, October 5th in Framingham, MA. The worship is uplifting, and the community is strengthening. The registration fee is \$59 (after September 21, 2019, ALL registrations will be \$69). Register a group of 5 or more paying registrants from the same church, at the same time and we will receive a \$49 per person rate. If you're interested, please let me know, and sooner is better than later. To attend is good for the soul, and when we come back it's also good for the congregation. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Rev. Randy

REQUESTS

- 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. We appreciate your attentiveness to the needs of others.
- Also, the church purchased a pop-up tent to use at outdoor functions. It cannot be found. If you may know where it is, please let us know. Thanks.
- The annual Craft Fair will take place on December 7th. That's a long way away, but if you have collectibles, handmade crafts, jewelry or books that you would like to donate, please start to set them aside for us.
- A little closer on the calendar, we are planning a church clean-up and clean-out work party for Saturday, October 5th starting at 9:00am. The more hands on site the easier the work. I hope you can share some of your Saturday with us.

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/FCATMedia/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.

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 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.



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



facebook.com/Hatfield350th

CONTACT INFO: HATFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Website: www.hatfieldchurch.org

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

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Committee Chairpersons:

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Music Minister, Anthony Tracia 781 738-6284
Real Folks Society, Martha Zigmont 413 247-5453
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