

September/October Newsletter

Waterford Congregational UCC

Letter from the Pulpit

Gratitude. It is what I feel in these days of ministry as pastor of the Waterford Congregational Church. Deep Gratitude. The warm welcome I have received over these first months together, the opportunity to witness the faith and commitment to serve that defines our church, the willingness to reach outside comfort zones to grow and to learn, the blessings of community grounded in love and support for one another. These are what shape the thankfulness of heart within me and bring inspiration for what we can do together in the days before us.

The brilliant colors of turning foliage that paint a glorious scene across the hills reminds me of the tapestry of beauty that weaves us together as a church. The threads of our individual lives creating beauty and strength. We celebrate the new faces that have come to join in worship with us, the new voices that unite with those who have been here all along, the new visions that inspire us to more fully become the church we want to be in our community and in our world.

In the days ahead lie wonderful opportunities to be involved in the life of our church through fellowship, service, music, giving, conversation and prayer, including our precious time of worship together. There are many ways to be involved and all are always welcome. And if you don't see something that meets your needs, you are encouraged to share your thoughts and ideas.

While others address programs and events throughout this newsletter that are coming up, I am eager to share an initiative that is near and dear to my heart - Climate Conversations: What Can WE Do? I grew up spending more time outdoors than inside. When given the choice on Saturdays to help Mom clean the house or rake leaves with Dad, I shot outside as quickly as I could! The camping trips and hikes we took as a family connected me to nature in ways I will always be grateful for. There was never any doubt that God's presence was profound when looking out over a vista or digging through the dirt in the garden. That's where I learned more fully that stewardship of Earth was a significant part of faith, intertwined as one. We are compelled to use Earth responsibly today and so the legacy we leave for future generations is one of health and wholeness. When we say that we love God, others and ourselves, included in that love is care for all of creation because our actions impact all. So then, it becomes an ethical question and a faith response to examine our actions and commit to do what we can to not only make a difference but be the difference.

Climate Conversations: What Can WE Do? is a year-long series of monthly conversations that will include professional presentations, group conversations and action plans around related issues so that we can be better informed and responsible stewards. At our first session on Tuesday, October 8th 6:30-8 at the Wilkins House, Dr. Tom Hammett, Virginia Tech Professor, will share from his experience the state of the world's air, water and land and the impact on global warming. On Tuesday, November 5th, we will explore together what our traditions, our values and our faith tell us about our role in the care of Earth.

Waterford Congregational Church is the sponsor of these conversations, however all throughout the community are invited. This proves to be an exciting opportunity for us to share and grow with one another. Watch for more information on upcoming conversations in our bulletins and newsletters throughout the year.

With eager anticipation and joy of all good things to come,

Doretta

Moderators Note

September 11, 2019

Good Morning,

Well, it has been quite the summer. The weather has been incredible, the gardens produce abundant, the sailing fantastic (you knew I would sneak that in) and the sermons each Sunday inspiring and thoughtful.

We started June off with the "Sharps on the Flat" local music extravaganza which brought in a tidy sum for the Good Neighbor budget line.

The July 4th parade saw a new float- The little church with the big heart. Taking Doretta's idea and making it happen. Thanks to everyone who helped make it real.

We had great music through July while Jane took a well-earned rest, decompressing as she started her retirement.

The Wilkins House breakfasts drew good crowds, continuing the wonderful opportunity for community building and good food consumption. Yumm.

And there we were into July and an incredible string of great summer weather days. Sundays saw the return of many old friends here to enjoy the lake renew old acquaintances and make new ones. Then before we knew it, it was time for Music Sunday! How did that happen? The service was well attended from Harrison, North Waterford and Sweden. What a great way to end the month. Ahh, but the weather just ramped up a notch and August was FANTASTIC.

Doretta continued to attract new people here for the summer or moving in permanently. We put out the word that if you wanted to join our congregation that you could find out about it and consider being part of this wonderful church. This was the first time I can recall that an overt invitation was made to the community. The meetings have been fruitful and new members will be joining us in a September service.

Yes, all too soon it was September. Labor Day was wet, but the weekend leading up to it was perfect. . . for picnics, parties and (sigh) putting away summer toys in preparation for the next season. The Church Council is coming back into session this month and will be starting the budget development process for next year. There is good energy in the church congregation, and this may be a good time to revisit our visioning of where we want to go getting Doretta's input along with anyone else's ideas.

This will be the first newsletter Ginny didn't honcho. Thanks, Pam, for agreeing to get it organized this time. Hopefully, we will have a more permanent solution for the winter edition.

Take care, enjoy the brisk nights and warm days. Look forward to the French Toast Sunday when we turn the clocks back.

See you all in church!

Al Struck
Moderator

Trustees Report

The painting of the steeple, the front of the Church and the Trim on the Wilkins House was completed in September. Our plan is to paint one side of the church each year. In 2020 our plan is to paint the side facing the Wilkins house.

The furnaces in both buildings will be serviced in October.

We are planning to add receptacles in the choir area and additional lighting for the choir during the month of October.

We will be replacing the toilet in the Wilkins House in the next few weeks.

If you have any concerns relating to the two buildings, please let one of us know and we will address the issue.

For the Trustees,

John



Deacons News

On August 4 we witnessed the baptism of Gabriel Holm Johnson with cake and applause from the little guy himself.

In mid-August we invited anyone interested in exploring what's involved in formally joining the church to meet for several sessions. From those sessions we welcomed two new associate members: Del and Irene Angers into membership on September 15.

Coming events include World Communion Sunday, on October 13. (The service will be shortened to accommodate the annual race.) Myra will provide her famous international array of breads for the occasion, and if you have treasured artifacts from your international travels, you are invited to bring them to decorate our altar.

A new activity will come on November 6 at 7 pm in the Wilkins House, when we will offer a discussion group open to anyone who wants to explore his/her faith journey. Led by Doretta, this discussion will invite us to share our experiences of faith which have led us to our current standing. "Mapping Our Faith" will help us analyze history, readings, events, and memories that have shaped our beliefs as Christians. And we will explore how we would like our faith to grow.

After more than two years, Kaz Grigg has stepped down from publishing the bulletin each Sunday. We thank him for his service. Great job, Kaz! Jane Morse has volunteered to complete the bulletin every Sunday and we thank her.

Thank you to everyone who generously volunteers to provide snacks for coffee hour and flowers for the altar. We all are in your debt!

Sally Holm, for the Diaconate

Mission Memo

We had a good meeting on September 24th hosted by Doretta. We reviewed our 5 for 5 Special Mission Offering through the United Church of Christ, National Conference. Again this year we will reach our goal of being 5 for 5 church. For more information please go to ucc.org/ocwm_special-support.

Neighbors in Need offering will be taken throughout the month of October. Neighbors in Need supports Ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the Council for American Indian Ministries.

The Mission Committee will focus our Special Mission offering on Heifer International for the remainder of 2019 and 2020. We will start with holding a "Living Gift Market" for Christmas. People will be able to buy shares of animals or whole animals in Honor or Memory of someone as Christmas Gifts. Watch for additional information on this fun project.

Nancy will be working with the Town Office this fall to reach out to families in need of Fuel Assistance. They are predicting a long cold winter season again this year. What a blessing to be able to serve the Waterford Community in this way.

In Peace from the Mission Committee,
Pamela Williams

Stewardship News

Your Stewardship Committee met September 23rd to review our past year and prepare for this year's Stewardship campaign—it's that time of year again! We had active participation by the congregation this year in our Stewardship campaign. We also had slightly higher costs to cover as a church. Given that the finance committee has managed our funds well we will likely end the year with a balanced budget, and we will be close to making our pledge goal.

Our hope, as we enter this year's campaign, is that we will do a couple of things. First, we will increase the number of pledges. As you know, pledges (versus Sunday offerings) give us a chance to predict income and plan effectively to ensure that we manage our operating budget. Second, given our slightly higher predicted expenses, we would like to see higher pledges from each person, which means we will be better able to meet expenses and implement our Church vision.

Looking at our expenses, we know they will increase because we're back to having both a full-time minister and an organist. Expenses are projected to be a little higher this next year, moving from \$1338/week to about \$1400/week. That is why we're hoping individual pledges will increase as well. Please think of that when you respond to our pledge request.

The 2020 Stewardship Campaign will kick off November 3rd with Stewardship Sunday. Pledge letters will be in the mail on November 1st . Thank you in advance for all you do for our "little church with the big heart."

Your Stewardship Committee

Kerry Johnson, Dodi Wait, Ralph MacKinnon, Barbara Allen, and Jean Struck

Music Notes

Since the last newsletter, we have had Make a Joyful Noise Sunday, the last Sunday in July and also held our fifth Sharps on the Flat Concert with Sebago Long Lake Music Festival on August 7th. We had to hold the concert without power, but it was still light enough outside and between camping lanterns and candles, there was plenty of light and a nice ambiance! We enjoyed some wonderful classical music. Our little church proved to everyone, including the director of the Sebago Long Lake group, how wonderful the sound is in our church. We are so lucky to have such a gem for concerts. Look forward to other concerts coming after the holidays.

Our organist, Mary Huhn, has conquered the organ! She is now playing the organ on Sundays when Kay Leslie is available to accompany the choir. When Kay is not in church and Mary has to accompany the choir, she will play only the piano, rather than walk back and forth.

Choir has been sounding fabulous lately! We have been singing some new selections and also bringing out old favorites. Soon we will be rehearsing for the Advent and Christmas season! Remember - anyone is welcome to sing in the choir, so if you would like to join, come at 8:30AM on Sunday mornings for rehearsal. All are welcome.

Yours in music,
Jane Morse

NEWS FROM THE CAC

The Church Activities Committee will be meeting soon to plan some future activities .On November 3, Myra is again planning her Time Change French Toast Breakfast before church. Mark your calendars and plan to attend that extra hour with church friends.

We shall be looking into a field trip to the Coastal NE Botanical Gardens in Boothbay to view Gardens Aglow.If you haven't been before, this is like a magical wonderland of thousands of lights. We would plan to attend the first showing, probably in November,and then stop for dinner nearby. We plan to carpool. Please let me know if you think you might be interested so we can see if we have a big enough group. Admission for 10 or more is \$13 each.

Nancy Engdah

