

THE SPIRE

NOVEMBER 2020

Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC

142 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054

www.millisucc.org • (508) 376-5034 • millisucc@msn.com



An Open and Affirming Congregation

Church of Christ Vision Statement:

Worship God, Serve our neighbors, Share God's love.

From the Interim Pastor

Dear Members and Friends,

The hymn, "We Gather Together" was originally written to celebrate the Netherlands' victory over Spain thus gaining independence. It has been translated many ways with a variety of verses added. Most of you are familiar with this verse: We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing. God chastens and hastens His will to make known. The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing sing praises to God's name, He forgets not his own. (The war imagery shows through clearly.) I found many other versions as I looked through my array of hymnals. I share these words with you today:

We gather together to ask for God's blessing, to live in community, seeking God's will. We come now as sisters and brothers, confessing the sins that divide and the wrong in us still. Beside us, forgiving, enabling, sustaining, you call, us O Savior, to life that is new. You draw us away from self-centered complaining. You lead us and guide us in ways that are true. (A bit clumsy in spots fitting the tune but it is the sentiment, I'm sharing.)

I have heard many laments about what we can't do during this pandemic. As the season of traditional gatherings approaches this loss will become more apparent. My family has already decided that we will not be gathering for Thanksgiving. Zoom, facetime and phone calls will have to do. For some, it might feel like a relief to not have to participate in these obligatory gatherings.

~ continued on page 2 ~



Pledge Sunday is November 15th

The 2021 Pledge campaign is underway, so you should receive your mailing shortly. If you do not get your pledge mailing soon, please call the church office at (508) 376-5034 or send an email to: millisucc@msn.com.

See page 2 for a special Stewardship message. As always, we are so grateful for your continued financial support, as it allows us to fulfill our mission to our church, our neighbors, our community, and our world.

Our Sanctuary Will Be Open for Prayer on Tuesday, November 3 from 11:00am to 5:00pm

You are welcome to come for prayer and quiet reflection. Masks will be required at all times. Enter through the front doors of the church. Signs will be posted at the church with additional safety protocols.



Jolly Holly Online Marketplace

**November 15 at Noon
through December 4 at Noon**

Silent Auction, Handcrafted Gifts and Vendors

See page 3 for more information.

From the Interim Pastor - continued

I've also been thinking about the "doing" that you might not be doing and wondering how you are filling the space. If you regularly supplied coffee hour or attended Men's Fellowship or other functions at church, what are you doing with that time? Perhaps this pandemic, which has taken away so much, has also provided some blessings. Perhaps we can fill that not-gathering time with making contact on a deeper level. Are there people with whom you haven't spoken or communicated for months? Maybe give them a call or send a note or an email. Is there a person or family with whom you are estranged? Now, when life feels a bit more precarious, might be the time to reach out to cross the divide. And, how are we praying for each other?

As we gather in spirit, let us ask for God's blessing on our friends and our foes. Let us seek God's will and rely on God's strength to help us heal past hurts and reconnect. God has not forgotten us and this perceived oppression will someday cease from distressing, so let us praise God. Happy Thanksgiving.

Grace,

Rev. Jennifer Geary

***Please Note:***

*Rev. Geary will be on vacation
from November 9 through
November 15.*

The Power of the Prayer Chain:

If you would like to be added to the prayer chain, or if you or someone you know wants to receive prayers for a specific situation, send an email to Mary Jensen at: mejensen7@verizon.net.

***Stewardship Message***

Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC has been an anchor in Millis for over 300 years. Through the centuries, church members have given of their time, talent and treasure to ensure the gift of God's grace, and a ministry of caring, continued in this area.

Now is our opportunity to be part of such a great cloud of witnesses. At the beginning of November, you will receive a letter from the Prudential Committee asking you to complete a pledge card. Pledging is a faith commitment. It asks us to believe in the future that God has planned and to participate in the coming of the God-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Our community, and the world, need the hope for which we stand. Our spire points toward heaven to remind all who pass that God is great and greatly to be praised.

When the pledge card arrives please prayerfully consider what portion of your income you can share with the world through the church. God, through the church has blessed your life. What can you give to ensure others will also know that blessing?

Please return your completed pledge card to the Church office by November 15th. You can mail it in, or you can place it in an envelope addressed to Church of Christ and drop it through the mail slot on the side door of the church building. On November 15th, we will have a special worship service to share gratitude and to consecrate our commitments. Thank you for being God's hands and feet here in this place.





Jolly Holly Online Marketplace

*Presented by Millis
Church of Christ, UCC*

November 15-December 4

*Shop from local vendors and
browse our silent auction!*

*Visit millisucc.org to view our
vendors and shop.*



Millis UCC



@millisucc



@millisucc

A Message from the Deacons

November brings shortened hours of daylight, colder days with thoughts and plans for the upcoming holiday season. We know that this year our traditional gatherings will most likely be different than we are used to. Different can be fun, be a start of a new tradition or going back to ones we had forgotten. Gatherings may be online that may include those you don't usually connect with during the busy season. As we begin our plans, let us look for the moments we are grateful for.

Sunday, November 15th, the Deacons will be leading an alternative online worship service with the focus on gratitude and thankfulness. To prepare for this service, we invite you to make and fill a Gratitude Jar for yourself or with your family. We will share our thoughts during the worship service. You can start your jar at the beginning of the month or for the week of November 9-15th.

Here's how to make and use a gratitude jar:

1. Start with an empty plastic jar. A peanut butter or mayonnaise jar work well, but you can also go with something larger if you have it.
2. Anything goes for decoration - tissue paper, paint, markers, glitter
3. Don't forget the lid.
4. Place the jar in a prominent place along with slips of paper, pencils, crayons etc.
5. Kick it off together by discussing what is gratitude - simply gratitude is about focusing on what's good in our lives and being thankful for the things we have. It is pausing to notice and appreciate the things that we often take for granted, like having a place to live, food, clean water, friends, family, pets, even access to technology.
6. Encourage each family member to help fill the jar, be it with words or drawings and add a slip to the jar each day.
7. Designate a time each week to gather together to look through the slips. Point out ideas that are especially thoughtful or creative.



We hope to see many families and children at the online service on November 15th to share your thoughts.

The Deacons are continuing to work on updating our church membership list and assisting Rev. Geary with worship. A special thank you to members of the congregation who have offered their assistance with online worship.

A reminder that the Deacons Fund is available for church members who find themselves in need. Please contact Rev. Geary.

Blessings, Sue Conte and Wendy Schneider Co-Lead Deacons



College Care Package Meeting

Date: Friday, November 6

Time: 5:30-6:30 PM

We will meet inside (regulations permitting) fellowship hall to decorate and put together care packages for former members of the group who are now in college.

What do you need to do?:

Bring any small items you would like to add to the packages, and wear a mask to the gathering. Donations not required to attend. Please contact Doug at dbriggs498@gmail.com with any questions.



More gatherings and events will be announced soon, so watch for emails.

The Youth Group is open to youth grades 7-12. If you are interested in joining or finding out more about the group, contact Doug at dbriggs498@gmail.com.



Transition Team

The transition team is pleased to announce that the transition process is underway!

Our work will involve exploring three goals:

As a church...

WHO ARE WE?

WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBORS?

WHAT IS OUR MISSION?

Thank you to all who attended our first group gathering to start the process of WHO ARE WE? which included our 300+ year history.

We will keep you informed all through the process and hope you will actively participate in the coming months.

If you have any concerns, please let us know.

The Transition Team ~
Becky Abalutzk, Jan Krohn, Art Payne



Children's Ministry

Check the church website for children's activity pages that tie into the Sunday worship services. We plan to post new material weekly.

Also, keep checking the weekly Friday email for additional information on children's activities, as we are currently discussing ideas for future programming. If you have ideas or wish to organize an activity for our Elementary age children and younger, please contact Rev. Geary.

Church Check-Ins

Live on Facebook

Wednesdays at 7pm

Join us for our weekly check-in where you'll hear the latest news and announcements from the church.

You don't need a Facebook account to access the Church Check-In. Just click the link below to get to our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/MillisUCCChurch/>



M&M's Handiwork to be featured at the Jolly Holly Online Marketplace!

The M & M's Needlework Group has been busy collecting, organizing, and photographing over 100 items to be sold at the Jolly Holly Online Marketplace. Items offered include knit toys, hats, scarves, American Girl clothes, kitchen towels, handmade note cards, and more! Be sure to watch for the November 15th launch of the Marketplace!

Socializing with the M&M's Mondays on Zoom!

The M & M's Monday Morning Needlework Group is now gathering virtually on Zoom! Join the Zoom meeting on Monday mornings, anytime after 10am.

By computer, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2987904285?pwd=VENBMmRob2krQW83RFJhNGJQJjUdz09>

If using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656.

Meeting ID: 298 790 4285

Password: 866156



All are welcome – even if you're not working on a needlework project, join in for the socializing!

Rev. Geary's Monday Office Hours on Zoom

Rev. Geary will be available to church members on-line via Zoom, from 10am-Noon on Mondays.

Please Note: No Office Hours on November 9.

To connect via Zoom from your computer, click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81936525328>

If using a phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656.

Meeting ID: 819 3652 5328

You can call, text or email Rev. Geary at other times but might need to leave a message.

Phone: (774) 993-9407

Email: pastoruccmillis@gmail.com.

A Little Hymn History

These two hymns are ones that we will be using this fall. While we really can't raise our voices in song, I thought that it might be interesting to know about the composers and lyricists of the hymns we sing.

"O Jesus I Have Promised" was written on the occasion of the confirmation of his own two sons and daughter at Castle Camps in 1869. The hymn tune was written in 1881 by Arthur H Mann, who at one period in his life served as organist and choirmaster at King's College, Cambridge, famous for its superb choral music. Tune: Angel's Story A.H. Mann 1883

"This Is the Day of New Beginnings" 1978 words – **Music Carlton Young 1987 Music: Brian Wren**
Brian Wren (b. Romford, Essex, England, 1936) is a major British figure in the revival of contemporary hymn writing. He studied French literature at New College and theology at Mansfield College in Oxford, England. Ordained in 1965, he was pastor of the Congregational Church (now United Reformed) in Hockley and Hawkwell, Essex, from 1965 to 1970. He worked for the British Council of Churches and several other organizations involved in fighting poverty and promoting peace and justice. This work resulted in his writing of *Education for Justice* (1977) and *Patriotism and Peace* (1983). With a ministry throughout the English-speaking world, Wren now resides in the United States where he is active as a freelance lecturer, preacher, and full-time hymn writer. He has also produced *What Language Shall I Borrow?* (1989), a discussion guide to inclusive language in Christian worship.





**Remember to
change
your clocks
November 1st**

Schedule of Sunday Worship Services in November

Worship Services are at 10:00am. All services will be available on Zoom. Services will also be recorded and posted on Youtube.

To join by Zoom, click on this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87562091923?pwd=MVpJT21NelpRck9wM1UyaUtBalZsZz09>

If using phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656 US (NY)

Meeting ID: 875 6209 1923 **Password:** 02054

Scriptures for November

November 1 - All Saints Day; Reformation; Communion; Change clocks back one hour

Isaiah 25; Revelation 7:9-17; Matthew 5:1-12

On this day we remember the saints who have passed from this life to the next over the past year. During the service we will light candles in their honor. If you have someone you wish to remember, please have a candle with you. Also, please have bread and drink with you to participate in Holy Communion.

November 8

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:14-30

November 15 - Gratitude Sunday; Pledge Sunday

Deuteronomy 8:7-18; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15;
Luke 17:11-19

November 22 – Reign of Christ Sunday

Ephesians 1:11-23; Matthew 25:31-46

This Sunday is the close of the Christian Year. We celebrate Christ as ruler of our hearts.

November 29 – Christian New Year; First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

On-line Bible Study

Each Wednesday at 11:00am, a group gathers on Zoom to listen to and discuss the Psalm of the week. Each gathering is a stand-alone event.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87641484473?pwd=aGM2c2I2aGExMU1ISONHVHRycjVldz09>

If using phone, dial: 1-646-558-8656 US (NY)

Meeting ID: 876 4148 4473

Password: 02054

November 4	Psalm 90:1-8(9-11) 12
November 11	Psalm 65
November 18	Psalm 95:1-7a
November 25	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

IMPORTANT COVID SAFETY REMINDERS

Because of Covid, we have to be especially conscious of the need to avoid the space that has been designated for our tenants.

Currently, even when there are people in the building, the exterior doors are to be kept locked as a Covid safety measure.

If work needs to be done in an area used by any of our tenants, please schedule it through the office (millisucc@msn.com or 508-376-5034) or through the pastor (pastoruccmillis@gmail.com or 774-993-9407), so that we can coordinate it with the tenants.

If you are at the church property:

- Observe posted signs and safety protocols (copies of the church's protocols are posted on our website and the office door)
- Wear a mask
- Use hand sanitizer & wipe down surfaces
- Sign the contact tracing sheet

Thank you for helping us function in a safe environment!



In Memorium

Doug Morse

October 28, 1955
to October 24, 2020



A Message from the Visitors' Group

The Visitors' Group will not meet in November. The visitors are thinking of each of you and hoping that everyone is doing well.

Please call the church at 508-376-5034 if you have any questions or need any assistance. We wish everyone a Blessed, Safe, and Happy Thanksgiving.

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you, he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; or be discouraged."

~ Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV)

The Visitors: Judie Ackerman, Ellie Costa, Ginny Demery, Pam Johansson, Linda Jones, Judy Kosinski, Shirley Rowley, Pat Spearing, Kathy Stevens, Reverend Jennifer Geary



Cranberry Chutney

If you are interested in cranberry chutney for your Thanksgiving dinner, please call Kathy Stevens at (508) 376-8124 by Tuesday, Nov. 17th. The price for chutney is \$5 per pint; proceeds go to support the activities of the Women's Fellowship.

HOLIDAY HELPER PROGRAM

Due to Covid, this year the food pantry won't be able to hold its traditional Holiday Helper program with gift tags. Instead, they will be distributing gift cards to help families in Millis.



If you would like to donate a gift card or cards, here is the information you'll need:

- For gift card purchases greater than \$25, please purchase multiple cards in smaller denominations. [Example: If you wanted to donate a total of \$50 worth of gift cards, you could purchase (2) separate \$25 gift cards.]
- Please purchase from one of the following merchants: CVS, Market Basket, Marshalls, Roche Brothers, Target, or Walmart.
- Drop off your gift card(s) to the food pantry on any Saturday between 10am-Noon, or mail it to: Elizabeth Derwin, Millis Food Pantry, 142 Exchange St., Millis, MA 02054.
- If you have questions, call the food pantry at (508) 376-5034.

Gratitude Corner

Thank you to Steve Howie for taking care of the church grounds, making sure they look beautiful and well cared for, and to Andy Bolton for always being willing to help out with various maintenance issues around the church. We are grateful that they are so generous with their time and expertise.

Thank you to Lauren Briggs for sharing her creative talents and social media savvy to help us spread the word about our church and all our activities.

If you would like to express your gratitude to others, either anonymously or with your name attached, please email the church office at millisucc@msn.com



Church of Christ
142 Exchange St
Millis, MA 02054

Phone:
508-376-5034

E-Mail:
millisucc@msn.com



We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.millisucc.org

Church of Christ, Congregational
142 Exchange Street
Millis, MA 02054

