

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.

The Christ of Christ, UCC, Millis continues virtual programming in July – join us!

In this Issue:

- “Let’s Talk About White Privilege” 5-week class
- Dig Deeper into the Scriptures through Sunday Worship, Old Testament Study & Bible Studies
- Children & Youth Updates & Resources
- Flat Jesus is Back!
- Call for Volunteers – Match Your Talent and Interest to Our Need
- Messages from the Deacons, the Collector, and the Visitors’ Group
- Monday Morning Craft Group (M&M’s) Now Meeting on Zoom!
- Missions Committee Looking for Support for NewLife Furniture Bank’s Stuff-a-Truck
- And much more...



A Message from the Interim Pastor

Next steps. As a congregation we are moving forward with being the church during a pandemic and during a pastoral search. We are also moving forward along with the rest of society in growing to a greater understanding of systemic racism, how it affects us and what we can do to relieve the burden we have placed on our Black citizens.

Thank you for completing the Next Steps survey concerning in-person gatherings. The results of that survey and some next steps will be shared in the coming weeks.

Please make participation in the “Let’s Talk About White Privilege Program” a priority for July.

Let’s get started in the Pastoral Search process. Our first task is to create a Transition Team. The Transition Team will sponsor several large and small group gatherings and utilize a few survey tools to discuss a variety of topics. It is vital for as many people as possible to participate in this part of the process so the information gathered will most closely reflect the thoughts of the entire congregation.

From the gathered information, the transition team will create the Church’s profile. The next step will then be to set up a Pastoral Search Committee who will advertise the position, read pastoral profiles, conduct interviews and propose a candidate to the congregation.

Who do you think the 3-5 people should be for the Transition Team? These are open-minded folks with good organizational and listening skills. Please send nominations of yourself and/or others to the church office for consideration.

Alongside the work of the Transition Team the Diaconate will be reviewing and updating membership lists. You will probably receive a call from a Deacon or their designee for a brief chat sometime in the coming months.

I pray God brings many blessings to this congregation during this time of transition.

Grace,

Jennifer

Rev. Jennifer Geary

Using Technology to Our Benefit:

Please subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#).

We are trying to get up to 100 subscribers.

Please read the [Friday email](#).

This email comes out each week and contains all the announcements and links needed for upcoming gatherings.

“Let’s Talk About White Privilege”

Wednesdays 7-9PM

July 8, 15, 22, 29 & August 5

The United Church of Christ has a long history of working towards eradicating systemic and institutional racism. Current events demonstrate that we still have much work to do. Part of a non-Black person’s growth in understanding racism is to engage in study and reflection around the many facets of this issue. In an effort to help you with that process we are offering the program, “Let’s Talk About White Privilege.”

This is a 5-week on-line class where participants will study the concept of white privilege. The focus of the course is on personal awareness and understanding. Each week participants will read 5 short essays in preparation for class, engage in large & small group discussion in relationship to exercises, experiences and video clips and most importantly, write an autobiography through the lens of race.

Pre-registration is required for this free program. Participants will be directed to internet sites to download all materials. If a participant needs to have the resources printed out for them, there will be a charge to cover that cost.

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAtcO-pqTsuE9Yj3AXQ2OqzzBpJg9xp1iw3>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Share Your Flat Jesus Photos



God is with us always, no matter the time or space. Flat Jesus can be a tangible reminder that we are never alone. You are invited to take Flat Jesus with you wherever you go as a reminder of God’s love and grace in your fun, exciting times, in your scary, frightening times and in your bored, do nothing times. If you do not have a Flat Jesus from previous years, please download and print a new one. (See below for how to download a copy.) Occasionally take a picture of yourself with Flat Jesus and post it to one of the Church’s social media sites:

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

<https://twitter.com/millisucc?lang=en>

<https://www.instagram.com/millisucc/?hl=>

The Flat Jesus program was designed for summer months when members of the congregation travel and are not together. This year, even if you travel you can join us for worship using a computer or phone. In many ways we can be more connected this summer than in the past and sharing pictures of Flat Jesus engaging in activities with us will be part of the fun.

Copies of Flat Jesus are available on our website (millisucc.org) under the tab “About”; then from the drop down list, click “Forms”. After printing out, add your personal touch by decorating with crayons, markers, stickers, etc.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

Beginning in May with Jennifer's arrival as our Interim Minister, the Deacons have been assisting her in getting acclimated to the church and have had ongoing discussions regarding worship. In that regard, please complete the quick online "Next Steps" congregational survey to assist us in proceeding with how and where we will be worshipping over the next few months. The results of the survey will be shared with the Church Council to assist in the development of policies and procedures along with the guidance of the UCC leadership and government guidelines that need to be in place for health and safety. If you need a copy of the survey, contact the church office at (508) 376-5034, or millisucc@msn.com. Deadline to complete surveys is July 7, 2020.

The Upper Room devotionals have arrived for July/August. We have both small books and large print books. If you would like one, let us know in the above email and we will get one to you.

Over the past month the Deacons have participated in local marches and demonstrations calling for racial and social justice. On Friday June 19, Paul Rice, Sue Conte, and Wendy Schneider participated in the celebration of Juneteenth by joining other churches across the country in ringing the steeple bell at 8 pm for 8 minutes. Juneteenth or Freedom Day celebrates the end of slavery in the United States.

The last few months have been challenging in many ways. The Deacons Fund is available for any church member who finds themselves in a financial shortfall. Contact Rev. Geary at (774) 993-9407, or pastoruccmillis@gmail.com. All requests are kept in strict confidence.

Lastly, we would like to extend our best wishes to June Murphy and her family as they start their new adventures living on the Cape.

Blessings and be well,

Wendy Schneider and Sue Conte
Co-lead Deacons



Message from the Collector

Well, Coronavirus really put a damper on my carefully considered statement mailing plan! I have been updating Servant Keeper weekly now, but at first it was "not at all" due to Covid restrictions. It took some time to catch up. (Servant Keeper [SK] is our in-church accounting system used mainly for pledge and other donation tracking). Bottom line: first half statements will be coming out shortly after July 1st. Watch for yours in your mailbox. As usual, if you have questions or see any discrepancies, leave a voicemail on the church phone at (508) 376-5034, or e-mail me at bcorl2@comcast.net. Thanks to all for your steadfast support of the church!

Brooks Corl, *Collector*



The Revised Common Lectionary has four scripture passages set for each Sunday; one each from these sections of the Bible: the Old Testament, the Psalm, the Gospel and the Epistle. During July we will consider those four passages but not all during Sunday morning worship. The Old Testament story will be considered in a video lesson posted to the YouTube Channel. The Psalm will be considered each Wednesday at 11 AM during Bible Study. The Gospel and the Epistle lessons will be used as the basis for Sunday morning Worship. Consider adding more scripture to your summer reading program by reading each of the four lessons at some point during the week. The list of these lessons can be found in separate articles throughout the Spire.

July Worship

Join us live for Worship every Sunday at 10 AM via zoom. Everyone can participate via telephone or computer. The service will be recorded and posted to YouTube and Facebook on Monday.

July 5: Communion
Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
July 12: Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23
July 19: Romans 8:12-15; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
July 26: Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Zoom 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

Old Testament Study

At some point each week a video lesson focusing on the Old Testament reading for that week will be posted on the church's YouTube Channel. We do not have a set schedule at this time. I, Rev. Geary, thought these would be appropriate for children until I read the stories. I don't think these stories are appropriate for young children. I would suggest they are PG-13. The stories for each week will be based on these Scripture passages:

July 5: Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
Rebekah is chosen to be Isaac's wife
July 12: Genesis 25:19-34
Esau, Jacob and the birthright
July 19: Genesis 28:10-19a
Jacob and the ladder
July 26: Genesis 29:15-28
The trickster gets tricked

Bible Study

Each Wednesday at 11 AM 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=aGM2c2I2aGExMU1S0NHVHRycjVldz09>

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

Meeting ID: 876 4148 4473 Password: 02054

July 8: Psalm 65
July 15: Psalm 86
July 22: Psalm 119:129-136
July 29: Psalm 145 (8-9, 14-21)

Rev. Geary's Monday Office Hours on Zoom

Rev. Geary has committed to be at a computer and available to church members during specific office hours. For the month of July office hours will be on Mondays, 10am-Noon. You can call, text or email her at other times but might need to leave a message.

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

Or contact Rev. Geary at: (774) 993-9407 or pastoruccmillis@gmail.com.

Summer Socializing with the M&M's 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 10:00am.

By computer, click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2987904285?pwd=VENBMmRob2krQW83RFJhNGJQQjJUdz09>

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!

Congratulations to Our Graduates!

On Sunday, June 7th, we celebrated this year's graduates with a special worship service. Earlier in the week, graduates were presented with scarves by Deacon Sue Conte. The scarves were knitted by the M&M's group, and they will serve as a physical reminder that the Church of Christ, Millis will always be there for them as they journey through life.

We wish our graduates many blessings!

Abigail, Amelia, Colby, Paul & Zachary

Paul (right) and Amelia (below) with their scarves and their proud parents.



The Visitors' Group

The Visitors' Group will not be meeting in July and August. We are thinking of those we visit and hope that we will be able to visit again soon, once it is safe to do so. We pray that everyone is doing well during this difficult time. If we can help you in any way, please leave a message at the church office, (508) 376-5034. We hope that each of you has a healthy, restful and peaceful summer.

*"Don't be afraid for I am with you,
Don't be discouraged, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you.
I will hold you up with my victorious right hand!"*
(Isaiah 41:10 NLT)

The Visitors:

Judie Ackerman, Ellie Costa, Ginny Demery, Pam Johansson, Linda Jones, Judy Kosinski, Shirley Rowley, Pat Spearing, Kathy Stevens, and Rev. Jennifer Geary

Resources from SNEUCC

Southern New England UCC Conference

The United Church of Christ has lots of great resources for being church and being faithful during these unprecedented times. Click the link. It will show you some samples of different newsletters that might interest you. Scroll to the bottom of the page. Click on subscribe. It will ask for your email to see if you are already in the system. Next it will show you all the potential newsletters you can receive if you so choose.

<https://www.sneucc.org/#newsletters/>

Calling All Volunteers

Zoom Worship...It Takes a Village

It has been wonderful to gather together for worship on Zoom. Each week we learn a little more and get a little better at what we do. Having the service recorded and later broadcast on YouTube and Facebook has enabled many more people to participate.

We need your help to keep it going. Specifically, we need these people: could this be you?

Usher – This person or team manages the coming and going of people on the Zoom account. This person will let people in from the waiting room, monitor people's video and microphone and help folks get & stay connected.

Greeter – This person or team will greet people as they enter from the waiting room and manage the conversation prior to worship so it doesn't go galloping off in weird directions.

Logistics – This person or team will manage all the videos, screen shares and recording on Sunday morning.

Preproduction – This person or team will create the videos and music to be used in worship.

Postproduction – This person or team will take the preproduction videos and the recordings and merge them to create the finished product to be shared on YouTube and Facebook.

Innovation – This person or team will imagine all the different ways we can worship. This new format gives us great flexibility in how worship looks and feels. Where should the worship space be? What does it look like? How can we use illustrations? How do we include more music/singing? Etc.

These jobs sound like fun! Which one is right for you? If you are interested in volunteering, please communicate with Rev. Geary by email: pastoruccmillis@gmail.com, or phone: (774) 993-9407

Trustees Still Looking for Help

There are cleaning jobs at the church that need willing hands to tackle. These are general cleaning projects, not virus deep cleaning.

- walls and woodwork that have scuff marks
- kitchen needs straightening and cleaning
- stove cleaning
- refrigerator needs to be emptied out and cleaned
- pews need washing
- Fellowship Hall blinds/windows need to be dusted and washed

If you need an hour or two away from your house (and who doesn't?), please contact Kathy Stevens at (508) 376-8124 so she can schedule you in.



Assist the Deacons

- Would you like to be a reader at the Sunday service on Zoom?
- Lend your time and talents to be part of the Transition Team as we begin the work in preparation to calling a settled pastor?
- Assist in updating the church membership log?

If interested in helping out, leave a message for the Deacons, at the church office: (508) 376-5034 or millisucc@msn.com.

Children & Youth News



Pathfinders Update

As the pandemic continues to alter every aspect of our lives, many of our youth have lost their connection to the Church and opportunities for service. We are working on ways to safely offer chances for our youth to build up community service hours and reconnect to Church life.

There are some cleaning and organizing projects around the Church that can be accomplished safely. Some of these are inside and some of them are outside and weather-dependent.

We are also working on connecting Pathfinder's teenagers with some of the younger members of the Church virtually. These sessions could involve reading a book together, or working together on a project or craft.

If you or your child might be interested in these ideas contact Doug (dcb.joel@verizon.net) or Marguerite (tiariri@gmail.com).

Note Re: Cancelled Mission Trip to Chicago

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Youth Group leaders had to make the very hard decision to cancel the Chicago mission trip, which although it may not have been a shock, was still a huge disappointment for everyone involved, including our Chicago partners.

They are really hopeful that some sort of trip or mission project can be done in the future. Anyone who would like to have their donation returned, please contact Marguerite at tiariri@gmail.com.

Programming for Elementary-Aged Children

Calling all parents of our elementary-aged children! Does your child like getting mail? Would you be interested in getting activities sent periodically to them over the summer?

If so, please email the church at: millisucc@msn.com to get your child(ren) on the list. In your email, provide your name, your child(ren)'s name, and your address.

Sondra Manzano
Sunday School Superintendent

Summer Resources

Silver Lake At-Home Programs

Silver Lake is offering a variety of at-home programs and resources for children, youth, and their parents and guardians.

Click the link below to learn more about these offerings:

<https://www.silverlakeect.org/silver-lake-at-home>

Technology Tips

Using a computer to join a Zoom meeting:

If you have a camera, microphone and speakers:

1. Click on the provided link. If this is your first time, it will prompt you to download and run the zoom application. Do that. You do not need to buy anything. Once it is downloaded it should connect you to the meeting.
2. If it asks for the passcode, type it in.
3. When it asks if you want to use the computer audio, click yes.
4. For most meetings you will be put in the waiting room where you wait for the host to let you in.
5. Once you are in the meeting look to the lower left hand corner of your screen, you will see a microphone and video camera. If they have a red line on them you are muted and your video isn't showing. Click on either one or both of those icons to open your mic and turn on your video.
6. Look at the lower left corner of your picture. You will see a name. Is that the name you want people to see? If not, click on the 3 dots in the upper right corner of your picture, choose rename and type in the name you would like.

If your computer does not have a camera, microphone and speakers:

1. Before you log in, you will want to have the meeting call in telephone number, the meeting ID and passcode handy.
2. Click on the provided link. If this is your first time. It will prompt you to download and run the zoom application. Do that. You do not need to buy anything.
3. If it asks for the passcode, type it in.
4. Once it is downloaded it should connect you to the meeting. You will be able to see others but they won't be able to see or hear you.
5. When it asks if you want to use the computer audio, click no. Using your phone, call the phone number associated with this meeting. It will ask you for the meeting ID and passcode. Just follow the prompts. Once connected you will be able to hear and speak through the phone while watching on the computer.

If the link does not work:

1. You can search for zoom and download it or open your already downloaded application. It will ask for meeting ID# and passcode. Type those in. It will connect you to the meeting.

Using a telephone to join a Zoom meeting:

1. Have the **call-in number**, the **meeting ID #**, and the **passcode** ready as you will need all of them.
2. Dial the number.
3. At the prompt, type in the meeting ID followed by #
4. If it prompts you to enter your participant ID, just use #.
5. If it prompts you to enter the passcode, enter it, followed by #
6. You will be told you are in the meeting.
7. Announce yourself: "Terry Jones is on the call."
8. You will be able to hear everyone else on the call and they will be able to hear you.

Some Zoom etiquette while on a computer:

- Place your camera device on a stable surface at about the same height as your nose.
- Check what you can see behind you during the preview.
- Mute your microphone except when you are speaking to the group.
- Turn off your camera anytime you need to move around.
- Rename yourself by clicking on the three dots to the upper right corner of your picture.
- Consider using "speaker view" when one person is doing most of the talking.

Community News from the Missions Committee:

New Life Furniture Bank's Stuff-A-Truck Donation Event

While New Life has been fortunate enough to receive massive furniture donations from businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic, their inventory of household goods is running low. New Life will be accepting gently-used drinking glasses, dishes, pots and pans, kitchen utensils, coffee pots, bakeware, sheets, comforters, blankets, and towels. **No other items will be accepted for the Stuff-A-Truck**, but you can go to www.newlifefb.org to find out how to donate other items.



STUFF-A-TRUCK

GENTLY USED	BAKEWARE
DRINKING GLASSES	SHEETS
POTS & PANS	BLANKETS/COMFORTERS
KITCHEN UTENSILS	COMFORTERS
COFFEE MAKERS	TOWELS

JULY 8 | JULY 9
9-11 AM | 5-7 PM

**WALPOLE
ELM STREET
PARKING LOT**
OPPOSITE THE MBTA COMMUTER
RAIL STATION PARKING LOT

New Life
Furniture Bank of MA
Recycling furniture. Rebuilding lives.

1. Put the items in a box in your trunk or backseat labeled "New Life".
2. Arrive at any point within the given dates and times. Do not go to the New Life loading dock. We will be in the lot on the other side of the rail bridge.
3. Follow the one-way arrows around the lot. Stay in your vehicle and wear a mask.
4. A volunteer will ask for your email for contact tracing and town, and confirm we're accepting what you're donating.
5. When you reach our truck, volunteers will retrieve the items out of your vehicle and hand you a receipt.

New Life Furniture Bank of MA provides gently-used furniture to individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness. Learn more at www.newlifefb.org.

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We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.millisucc.org

Local Resources for Millis Residents

Millis Food Pantry
www.millisfoodpantry.com

Millis Fund
www.millisfund.com



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