

THE SPIRE

October 2024

We seek to be a Christian community by worshipping God through prayer, music, and the proclaimed Word. Following Christ's example, we enthusiastically reach out to everyone with compassion, respect, and love so that we may grow in faith and commitment together.

Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC

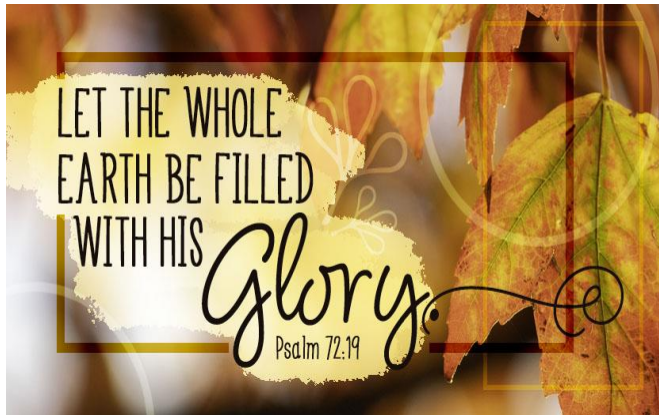
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An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



Friends,

How are you? As we embrace the fall months, notice how the air grows crisper and the leaves transform into shades of orange and red. This season invites us to wear cozy sweaters, savor warm drinks, and truly appreciate nature's beauty as it readies for winter. Let's acknowledge this transition and engage with the world around us, fostering a deeper understanding and connection with the environment and each other.

I write to you having recently returned from attending the Open & Affirming National Gathering in Cincinnati, OH. The conference, led by the ONA Coalition, was three full days of workshops and insightful speakers, including the President of the UCC, Karen Georgia Thompson. She is the first woman and the first Black woman

to serve as General Minister & President of our denomination.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the ONA Gathering as one of six special speakers. On Friday Sept. 20th, I gave a presentation entitled "Divine Disobedience: Defying Empire with the Power of Drag," which, yes, I delivered in drag! Some queens can dance. Some queens can lip sync. And some queens (like me) give professional presentations at conferences. Every good artist knows you have to play to your strengths.

My presentation emphasized the courageous history of individuals who have resisted injustice, aligning with the gathering's theme, "Resistance and Persistence: Hope Reigns." I highlighted the work of activists like Sylvia Rivera and Bayard Rustin, and delved into the ancient tale of the midwives Shiphrah and Puah from the Book of Exodus—the oldest known story of civil disobedience. They remind us that standing up against injustice is not just a historical duty but a continuous call to action interwoven in our faith.

I met a number of interesting people from throughout the UCC, including Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh, the Executive Director of the ONA

Coalition and her partner the Rev. Tana Roseboro-Marsh. I met the Rev. Blessya Hartz, a drag pastor from California, who led a workshop on drag as a liberating spiritual practice. I also met Rev. Dr. Monica Maher, who is the pastor of the only open & affirming church in Ecuador. She led a workshop on coalition building that I found helpful in terms of visioning the types of partnerships we can have as a congregation.

While I was thrilled to attend the conference, I am also glad to be back, brimming with excitement for what is next for our church. We have at least one community outreach event planned every month through June, 2025. I hope you will join us, not only in representing the church, but as people who can share the love of God with our neighbors and the wider community.

Growing a church is not easy. There is much work to be done. But let us not forget to have fun. Someone at the conference posed the question, "Are we on diets for the wrong things?" This question is relevant for us too. We have been a church of work, work, work, and more work. Even before I arrived, many of you had been facing volunteer burnout. Let us be intentional in finding the joy in ministry. I very much look forward to the Open Mic Night, Trunk or Treat, & Jolly Holly Fair planned for the rest of the year, which are sure to be a good time for all ages.

My call to action for you is this: prioritize fun in your life. Make it a point to prioritize something good for yourself that brings you joy and fulfillment. Many of us have answered the call to ministry in some form or another, whether it's through formal roles in the church or serving our communities in everyday acts of kindness. It's important to remember that you don't have to attend seminary or divinity school to do the meaningful work of God. But let us not overlook the necessity of also filling our own cup. Engaging in activities that inspire us, bring us joy, or simply allow us to relax and recharge is crucial; these are the things that can set our souls free and enhance our ability to serve others. So take time for laughter, adventure, and self-care, as these experiences can deepen our connection to God and empower us to fulfill our purpose with renewed energy and passion.

The good news is that you don't have to look very far for these opportunities. Many of them are right here at the church! Please take some time to look through this edition of The Spire and take note of what we have going on & save the dates. Thank you all for your dedication and service.

Rev. James





Photo of Rev. Marge (Rev. James) at Cincinnati conference with Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh and Rev. Tana Roseboro-Marsh



Hello from your Deacons, We have upcoming worship dates that we ask you to take note of:

October Sundays

Join us at 10am for multi-generational worships with Rev. James.

NOVEMBER 3rd, 2024

Join us at 10am on Nov. 3, for a breakfast service with an All Saints remembrance afterwards. All Saints is when we remember those who are not with us anymore and show appreciation for their importance to our Church. If you have someone you would like to remember, or can bring something to share, there will be a

signup sheet in fellowship hall, or contact a Deacon.

As we continue to move forward we will have opportunities to create our own services as a congregation.

Please contact any Deacon with ideas you may have.

Blessings,

Doug, Kathy, Katie, Allen, Kelly and Keith



A family favorite community outreach activity perfect for fall! Whether you are a seasoned pro, or new to trunk or treats, we are happy to have you! Come and park your vehicle in our lot, open your trunk (don't forget to turn off interior lights or your battery can drain) and decorate your trunkspace in whatever spooky, fun or entertaining theme you can think up! Costumes are encouraged! Don't forget to bring treats for our trunk-or-treaters. (Peanut-free please.)





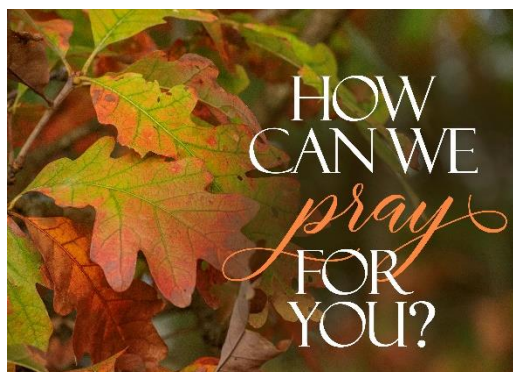
It's Chutney Time!!!

Kathy's annual Cranberry Chutney sale starts Nov. 3-17th.

Jars will be \$6.50 this year.
Cash only please, payable
upon delivery.

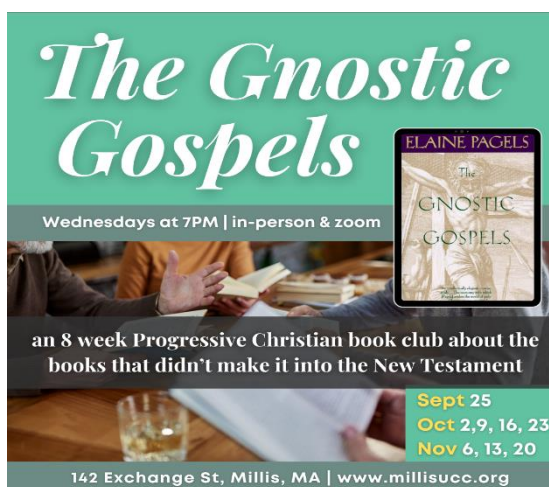
Place your orders with Kathy so
she knows how much to make
and she will have it ready and
delivered in time for
Thanksgiving.

(Remember this is a fresh
product and should remain
refridgerated until use. NOT a
shelf-stabile product)



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, please

Contact Mary Jensen.



Wednesdays @ 7PM
Parlor or ZOOM

Same night, same time! Join us
for our hybrid Bible Study! Our
new topic is *The Gnostic*
Gospels by Elaine Pagels.
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87832179786?pwd=L1lrMjNRWjEzNGxzZnRpdmc5RmlWZz09>

Meeting ID: 878 3217 9786

Passcode: 181480





Friendly Reminder! Spire Articles are due each month by the 20th.

Corn Hole Success!

Our First annual Corn Hole Tournament was a success! We had several teams competing in a fun-filled afternoon of this classic lawn game. A huge THANK YOU goes out to Paul Rice who planned and coordinated the event! A fun time was had by all.



Thank you to everyone involved with our First Annual Corn Hole Tournament!

Thanks also to Gail and Art DiGioia from Berry Hill Farm for a great first year of our church's Farmer's Market!

Thank you to Kathy for the delicious jams that helped to raise funds for our church.

Thank you to Sue, Jan, Judy, Marsha and all those who have volunteered to staff our Church table at the market this season.

Thank you to Joe Healy for hosting our first Open Mic Night, and to Pastor James for all their efforts to add such a vibrant event to our community activities.





Holiday Baking!

If you are planning on baking for Jolly Holly Fair, it is not too early to get started! Kathy suggests baking when you can, then packaging and freezing your items to free up time closer to our big event. Ingredient List forms will be available shortly from Kathy.

How it started vs. How it's going



Klinger Sales, our new sexton, powerwashing the North side of the Church.



Before



After!!!

As we bid farewell to Abby, and wish her well on her new job, we welcome Klinger Sales from Sparkle Service LLC. If you see him around, say hi, introduce yourself and let's make him feel that warm welcome that we are known for.

If you find yourself with any powerwashing needs, email Klinger at sparklecleaning@email.com





The first in our Open Mic Night series was a overwhelming success! Hosted by local comedy talent, Joe Healy, the event featured 6 performers and a supportive audience of over 40 people. A great time was had as evidenced by many of our talent having already reserved their spots in our November Open Mic Night. Hope to see you all at our next event!



Joe Healy, host / stand-up comedian and his daughter Willa: comedian (not pictured here)



Karen: Comedian



George Figueredo: Musician
60's folk & original Christian Songs



Mark Belanger: singer/songwriter
Instagram/Tiktok: @rcp.mbglobal



Albert Del Rio: solo acoustic musician
You can listen to a selection of Albert's songs at www.albertdelrio.com

Upcoming Events!



**Church of Christ
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We're on the Web!

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