***September 2017 Newsletter***

**First Congregational Church**

**An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ**

**300 Central Street, Saugus, MA 01906**

**781-233-3028**

**Rev. Martha Leahy, Pastor**

**Mae Siu-Wai Stroshane, Music Minister Carolyn Davis, Church Secretary**

[**https://www.Facebook.com/uccsaugus**](https://www.Facebook.com/uccsaugus)

**“It’s good to touch the green, green grass of home.”**

**Claude Putnam, Jr.**

**REV. MARTHA’S MESSAGE**

I traveled many a mile this summer to discover the spiritual riches abundant in the great state of Maine. **My sabbatical search was rewarded** by hearing the wisdom of holy people of many traditions: Buddhist, Hindu, Celtic, Shamanic, and Christian. My heart and mind are full with the lessons they taught me, and I hope to share with you, as we journey together this year, some stories that may be insightful for our own faith community. But it certainly is good to touch the green, green grass of home.

In our Healing Circle we learned about the seven energy centers (chakras) of our bodies; one center is the heart. Emerald is the green, green color of the heart chakra. Green is also the color of God’s good earth. **The natural world is sacred in all traditions**, as most of them teach us to honor Nature as we honor our God, and to honor ourselves and each other as sacred beings, too.

I re-kindled my love of God’s great outdoors during my sabbatical time, helped along generously by the natural, rugged beauty of Maine. My prayer this year is that all of us **find the places on the Earth that make us so happy** that we fall to our knees in grateful thanks to the God that created it all. It is there we will find our true, true home.

**NOTES FROM THE MUSIC MINISTER**

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It’s a new program year, after an eventful summer. While Reverend Martha was on sabbatical, we hosted three **guest preachers** in our worship services. We had **guest singers** in worship from our congregation as well: Steve Rich, Scott Davis, and John Gilmore. Rich Stroshane came up from Brighton to share his talents too.

In July, we invited our church community to join us for a good old-fashioned **ice cream social**, complete with an excellent barbershop quartet, **The Inside Track Singers**. They were great entertainers, and we had a good crowd to hear them.

Last year, the congregation really enjoyed hearing guest singers and instrumentalists. We’ll invite more musicians to join us this year as well, so stay tuned! **As always I welcome anyone from the congregation who wants to share his or her talents.** If interested, please speak with me at Coffee Hour or call me at 617-254-1481. You can also contact me at musicladymae@gmail.com.

Looking ahead to an exciting, musical year!

Mae Stroshane

**Important Dates:**

*December 17th: Our annual Christmas Pageant, with a few surprises in store.*

*December 17th: Our Festival Choir will sing an Offertory during worship.*

*Christmas Eve Service at 4:00 p.m.*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS 9/17**

**with a BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS**

It’s back-to-school time, and that means back-to-Sunday-School, too. Our kick-off Sunday is **September 17** and we are asking kids to **bring their school backpacks to church** for a special blessing to begin their new year. The first day of school is always exciting and sometimes scary, but we are here to assure your child that God is always with them, no matter what.

Our teachers, **Lawren Turco and Karen Defeo**, will be back, with additional assistance from Stephanie Ranno. As always, **Susan Lima** will be the RE Committee Chair who keeps the schedule going, along with **Denise Cann and Stephanie Ranno**.

Let your friends and neighbors know that our church is open, welcoming and friendly. Our children learn about a loving God who cares for them and our planet. Their questions will always be answered with enthusiasm and love. And the best part is that their questions teach us something, too.

**For registration forms**, see a teacher or look on our website [www.1stchurchsaugus.org](http://www.1stchurchsaugus.org).

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**COLLECTION FOR BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES A SUCCESS!**



Thanks to Jessie Allison and the Community Outreach Team for collecting containers full of supplies for Saugus students in need. These will be delivered to the School Superintendent’s Office on 9/6**,** just in time for the opening of the new school year. Thanks to one and all for contributing!!!!

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**THE HEALING CIRCLE**

**1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 7-8PM**

***“The Root of Healing is in the Power of the Circle”***

[www.facebook.com/healingcirclesaugus](http://www.facebook.com/healingcirclesaugus)

**Below is the schedule for the next (8) Healing Circle meetings:**

**“7 Days to Relieve Stress and Anxiety”** is from Deepak Chopra’s and Oprah Winfrey’s combined efforts to bring the peace of meditation out to all who are looking for a way to heal themselves. This series will include guided meditations given by Deepak, himself, and others from the Chopra Center. It will also include activities to use along with the meditations, in discovering what it is that is really preventing you from the peace you so much want. Come and join our Sacred Circle and experience the peace that follows.

**September 6, 2017:**

Welcome to 7 Days to Relieve Stress and Anxiety

Day 1 - The First Front for Stress and Anxiety Relief

**September 20, 2017:**

Day 2 – Stress and Anxiety: What You Should Know

**October 4, 2017**:

Day 3 – How to Heal in the Present Moment

**October 18, 2017**:

Day 4 – A Mind/Body Path to Total Relief

**November 1, 2017**:

Day 5 – Long – Term Healing: Retraining the Brain

**November 15, 2017**:

Day 6 – The Path to Harmony and Balance

**December 6, 2017**:

Day 7 – Becoming Whole: Healing the Divided Self

Special Bonus Content from Deepak: How to Handle Stressful People.

**December 20, 2017**:

We will celebrate the Winter Solstice.

Curious about the Circle? Email Cindy Turco at cynturco@aol.com or speak to Rev. Martha.

***GUESS WHAT’S COMING IN SEPTEMBER?***

**Our Famous Pumpkin Patch!!!!**

**Come on down for the fun**

**Saturday, Sept. 30 and Sat. Oct. 14 at 9 a.m!**

Adults and school-age kids are needed to help us **unload our two tractor trailer loads** of beautiful pumpkins and gourds from New Mexico. This is such a great family event! Students can receive credit for community service hours by helping out at the Patch.

Many people like to **pose their kids for photos** (and even their pets) among the bright orange pumpkins. We also like them to send us the pix so we can post on Facebook (no tagging allowed).

Proceeds from the Patch help fund a yearly **$500 scholarship** for any graduating Saugus senior high student who is continuing on to further education. Applications are available from the church office.

Did you know our pumpkins come all the way from the **Navajo Reservation in New Mexico**? So we are not only helping local Saugus causes, we are also helping the Navajos run their self-sustaining farms. It’s a win-win for all of us! Come on down!

**SEPTEMBER PPATCH WEEKEND SCHEDULE:**

**Saturday September 30: *Pumpkins Arrive 9 a.m. Unload Truck - Everyone’s Help Needed!!***

***Breakfast served to helpers***

**Saturday October 7: *Holiday weekend, Masons Open House***

**Saturday October 14: *Pumpkins Arrive 9 a.m.***

***Unload Truck - Everyone’s Help Needed!!***

**Saturday October 21: *Craft Fair 9 a.m.to 3 p.m.***

**Saturday October 28: *Pie Social 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.***

**Pumpkins available every week day and weekends 9 a.m. to closing. Customers welcome to search for that special pumpkin.**

**FROM THE DEACONS**

I think we can all agree Rev. Martha was a welcome sight this past week. **On behalf of the Deacons I would like to thank everybody who helped to keep things running smoothly** while she was away. From the people who helped with scripture reading, being greeters and ushers and hosting coffee hour. Those who took the awesome responsibility of preaching, Mae Stroshane, Terri Leander and Mike Mascovitz. Thanks to all of you.

At our last Deacons meeting we voted to use $200 of the Deacons Fund to send to the victims of **Hurricane Harvey**. We also will be having a special collection during worship service on Sept.10th and 17th for those who wish to donate to the cause. We will make sure it gets to the appropriate agencies.

Starting this month we will be trying something new for Communion. You will now have the choice to receive **Communion by intinction** or the individual cups of juice the way we used to serve. In either case you will come to the altar to receive Communion. Let us know what you think, we welcome your feedback.

Lastly, we are happy to welcome **Sue Dunn** as our newest deacon. Sue is a long time member of the church and an experienced Deacon. We are lucky to have her on board.

From your deacons: Barbara Davis, Terri Leander, Mike Mascovitz, Sue Dunn, Rick Florentino



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### THE SAUGUS COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY is open to all Saugus residents every Friday 9:30-11:30AM at Cliftondale Congregational Church, 50 Essex St., Saugus. Our church collects non-perishables for them every first Sunday (Communion Sunday). Please help us fill at least 2 baskets of food every month. Most needed items are: canned soups, canned tuna, canned chicken, spam-type of meats, peanut butter, jelly, American cheese(sliced), 32-oz apple or orange juice, spaghetti sauce, pasta, shelf stable milk (boxed or canned, not refrigerated), mac & cheese, cereal. There is a drop-off location at the office of Century 21, 442 Lincoln Ave, too. If you can make a monetary donation, mail it c/o Cliftondale Congregational. Hungry people are counting on us! If you know anyone in need of food, please let them know about the pantry. If they don’t have a way to get there, they can designate a person to pick up for them.

### The Pantry also needs Volunteers to serve clients, as there have been many retirements from their staff. So, if you can make a consistent and long term commitment, here’s what’s needed:Food Pick UpTuesdays or WedsPick up at Walmart and maybe other stores as neededNeed an SUV or pick up truckCommitment is a couple of hours Friday Set Up and Distribution8 AM to 11 AMFriday Home Deliveries There are some clients that are housebound and have no relatives or friends they can send down Friday to gather their food.Volunteer would gather their food distribution at 9-9:45 and then deliver to client at their residence All potential volunteers contact Dennis Gould at 617-257-4847 or e mail jdgould1969@aol.com.\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

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**OUT AND ABOUT IN SAUGUS**

Rev. Martha will be delivering the opening prayer at **Veterans Appreciation Day** at World Series Park, Sat., 9/16 at 11 a.m. She will also be leading a Litany of the Four Directions at the **Round Hill Dedication Ceremony**, Tues., 9/19 at 10 a.m. With her will be Ricky Simaratana, a Wampanoag healer, who will do a special blessing.

The Saugus Faith Community is collecting donations for **relief efforts for victims of Hurricane Harvey in Texas**. We will pool our collections and send in one large donation. Watch for our church’s special collection offering 9/10 & 9/17.

**The First Baptist Church of Saugus will be holding their annual Christmas Concert on Sat., 12/16 at 4 p.m. in our church sanctuary.** Please plan on attending and celebrating the Christmas story with our friends at FBC!

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**UCC SUPER SATURDAY**

**Sat., 10/21 in Framingham, Mass.**

**9AM-3PM**

Rev. Martha and our UCC delegates, Terri Leander and Jon Autiello, will be attending a day-long gathering of the UCC, during which they will choose from **51 workshops** on subjects including spirituality, stewardship, ONA, church vitality, worship, environmental and justice issues. The UCC’s got it all! See Rev. Martha for registration forms or log on to macucc.org.

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| **September 2017** |
| **Sunday** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
|   |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  | **1** | **2** |
| 3 Worship & Communion10AM  | **4**Labor DayN.A. 7PM | **5**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **6**Office Open 12-5PMRE 5:30PMHealing Circle 7PM | **7**Office Open 10-3Bible Study 1PMStaff 2PM | **8** | 9Founder’s Day  |
| 10 Worship10AM Stewardship 11:15Church Council 11:30 | **11**N.A. 7PM | **12**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **13**Office Open 10-3Divorce Support 7-10 | **14**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PMRainbow 6-9PM | **15** | 16Yoga 9-10Masons 12Vets Day @World Series Park 11 am |
| 17 Worship 10AM1st Day of Sunday School & Blessing of the Backpacks | **18**N.A. 7PM | **19**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PMRound Hill Dedication 10am | **20**Office Open 12-5PMSaugus Faith 12 hereHealing Circle 7PM | **21**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PMMasons Night | **22** | **23**Yoga 9-10 |
| 24 Worship 10AMSunday School  | **25**N.A. 7PM | **26**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **27**Office Open 10-3PMDivorce Support 7PM | **28**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMDeacons 2PMRainbow 6-9PM | **29** | **30**Yoga 9-10**Pumpkins Arrive 9AM** |

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| **Pumpkin Patch October 2017 Open Daily 9am-8pm** |
|  | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
|   |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 Worship & Communion 10AMSunday SchoolNative American Sunday | **2**Trustees 5:45PMN.A. 7PM | **3**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **4**Office Open 12-5PMHealing Circle 7PM | **5**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PM | **6**  | 7Yoga 9-10Masons Open House |
| 8 Worship10AMSunday School Church Council  | **9**Native Peoples DayN.A. 7PM | **10**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **11**Saugus Faith noonOffice Open 2-5PMDivorce Support 7-10 | **12**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PMRainbow 6-9PM | **13** | 14Yoga 9-10**Pumpkins Arrive 9AM** |
| 15 Worship 10AMSunday SchoolAccess & Disabilities Sunday | **16**N.A. 7PM | **17**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **18**Office Open 12-5PMHealing Circle 7PM | **19**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PMMasons Night  | **20** | 21Yoga 9-10**Craft Fair 9-3**UCC Super Saturday 9-3 |
| 22Worship 10AM Sunday School | **23**N.A. 7PM | **24**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **25**Office Open 10-3PMDivorce Support 7PM | **26**Office Open 10-3Staff 10AMBible Study 1PMRainbow 6-9PM | **27** | **28**Yoga 9-10Pie Social 3-7 |
| 29Worship 10amSunday School | **30**N.A. 7PM | **31**HalloweenPPatch Ends |  |  |  |  |