***Summer 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)

**“The Bible is not some abstraction, nor some book gathering dust.**

**It’s a living, breathing entity…an on-going narrative…”**

***Walking the Bible* by Bruce Feiler**

**REV. MARTHA’S MESSAGE**

Watching the PBS series ***Walking the Bible*** in our Thursday afternoon study group has proved to me once again the timelessness of the stories contained in our sacred texts. Situations people found themselves in a few thousand years ago are the same ones we find ourselves in today: love affairs, relationship troubles, family strife, war, peace – and encounters with God.

It has also made clear to me something I already knew: we cannot keep our faith tradition alive without **engaging with the world** in the manner of our ancestors – with boldness, courage and a firm faith that God will be with us no matter what happens.

****The time is at hand for our church to engage with the world in a new way. **There is no more waiting, hoping and dreaming** of the resurrection of the old way of being. We are not the same church that our parents and grandparents attended. We are facing enormous challenges they never dreamed of.

It is time for us to imagine that we are a church that matters to the people of Saugus. It is time for us to **think boldly, courageously** and with a great deal of faith in God that we will be pointed in the right direction.

That is why our **summer visioning project** is critical to our future. If you have not posted your ministry idea on our vision board, we will miss having your bright idea to inspire us.

So, read the Bible stories in Genesis and Exodus. Get excited about what a small band of people can do to change the world. Listen for God’s voice urging you to take that bold, creative step God’s been waiting for. Help lead us as we step into a new phase of our life together as a church. Be part of the **on-going narrative** of walking in faith together.

Blessings on The Way,

Rev. Martha Leahy

P.S. We were able to watch *Walking the Bible* in my office on our newly-installed flat screen TV, courtesy of **Scott and Daren Davis** of DDA Systems. Thanks so much to both of them.

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**MUSIC NOTES**

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Summer is upon us and hot weather as well. We’ll try to stay cool in the Sanctuary with all the fans we can muster! Still, we’ll sing with gusto and spirit! On the second Sunday of the month, we’ll hold a **hymn sing** as our Prelude, so be sure to come early. Who knows, we might just pick your favorites!

During Rev. Martha’s sabbatical, we’ll have **special musical guests** join us, including Rich Stroshane, Steve Rich, John Gilmore, and Cheryl Panico. We look forward to including them in our worship.

This summer, I hope to find a new home for many of our **Pilgrim Hymnals**. Many of them are in good condition but will be passed on to a needy church. Others are so tattered and torn that they are no longer usable. Feel free to claim the hymnals that have special dedications to individuals in our church.

On **Friday, July 21st at 7:00 p.m**. we’ll hold a **Midsummer Music Night**! It’ll be an Open Mike (with ice cream and goodies!) and no auditions are necessary. Our last Open Mike was great fun, and your participation will make it even more special. Don’t be surprised if Mae tracks you down for your talent – we know who you are.

If you are new to our church, you’re welcome to join in the fun. Who knows, there might be a special guest or two as well. To sign up, please see Mae after Coffee Hour or contact her at stroshanemae@gmail.com

Enjoy your summer, and we hope to see you often!

Mae Stroshane, Music Minister

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****HEALING CIRCLE**

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

Our Healing Circle meditation group is thriving. Many people from the community are coming through our sanctuary doors looking for spiritual rest, reflection & renewal. We are creating a new community of seekers. Curious? Speak to Cindy Turco or Rev. Martha.

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

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

Note: A change in the date of the 2nd August Circle: it will be 8/23 instead of 8/16.

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**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

We have been keeping track of the monetary value of our Outreach collections, including the Heifer Project and prayer shawls, as well as food, diapers, and street survival supplies for the homeless. This month we collected $300 worth of donations with a year to date total of **$2,975**.

I know the school year just ended, but I am seeing ads for school supplies now.  **We will be collecting school supplies for Saugus schools in July and August.**   Your help with this project is greatly appreciated.  St. Johns' will also partner with us.  Terri and Jessie will gladly take monetary donations, if you would like to help out, and we will shop for you.    Best stores for back to school supplies are Staples, Wal-Mart, Walgreen’s, and the Dollar Store.  Thank you in

advance for your help.

We will be having a **Craft Fair on October 21, 2017**. The church will have raffles, baked goods, and a craft table. The money we make will be shared with the Church Operating Fund and the Pumpkin Patch.

Again thanks for all the help everyone gives.

Peace be with you.

Your Community Outreach Team

Jessie, Lilly, and Terri

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**SUMMER PREACHERS**

While Rev. Martha is on sabbatical (7/8-8/20) we will welcome several guest preachers: our own church members as well as ordained UCC clergy.

Here is a calendar of worship leaders:

July 2 Rev. Martha

July 9 Mike Mascovitz

July 16 Mae Stroshane

July 23 & 30 Rev. Skip Walker

Aug. 6 Rev. Jenn Macy

Aug. 13 Terri Leander

Aug. 20 Rev. Judy Proctor

Aug. 27 Rev. Martha

We also have a list of seasoned clergy who can lead funeral services should the need arise. Cindy Turco (781-910-5704) will be handling phone & email messages & directing questions to whoever can answer them. Carolyn Davis (781-307-7620) will be the funeral coordinator. Mae Stroshane (617-990-7656) will be editing the worship program. Contact Deacon Chair Barbara Davis (781-844-4276) or see her at church with any issues or concerns.

### BUILDING RENOVATION WORK CONTINUES

### Did you think the work needed on our building was finished? You know how it is when you renovate one part of your home – you realize how much other work is needed on the rest of it! Our emergency roofing and office renovation project was completed, but other repairs were noted that need attention as well.

### The Trustees presented a request at a Special Congregational Meeting on Sun., 6/25, for permission to spend funds on additional renovations to our building. This request was unanimously approved. Included in the work to be done this summer: new siding and windows on the southern exterior wall of the narthex/sanctuary; new siding on the peak of the western exterior wall; and new windows on the northern wall of the sanctuary. Work will begin this summer.

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**KEEP THOSE SUMMER PLEDGES COMING**

**What happens to the church when her members go on vacation?** Does worship cease? Does Mae stop playing her piano? Do the lights go out and our renters close up shop? Absolutely not! Our

church continues to hum with all kinds of activity in the summertime, so we need all pledgers to remember us even when we’re far away. When you send all those postcards to your friends, pop a note in the mail with your pledge to us. That way, we all will meet up again in September, ready to bring the Good News to the good people of Saugus!

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### 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.

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

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

**Saturday Sept. 30**: Pumpkins Arrive 9 a.m.

 Unload Truck

 Everyone’s Help Needed

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

 Unload Truck

 Everyone’s Help Needed!!

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!

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| **July 2017** |
|  | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
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| 2 Worship & Communion 10AMw/Rev. Martha Leahy | **3**N.A. 7PM | **4**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **5**Office Open 1-5PMHealing Circle 7PM | **6**Office Open 10-51PMBible study2PM Deacons  | **7**  | 8Rev. Martha sabbatical begins now thru 8/23 |
| 9 Worship10AMw/Mike Mascovitz | **10**N.A. 7PM | **11**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **12**Divorce Support 7-10 | **13** | **14** | 15 |
| 16 Worship 10AMw/Mae Stroshane | **17**N.A. 7PM | **18**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **19**Healing Circle 7PM | **20** | **21**Midsummer Music Night & Ice Cream Social 7PM | **22** |
| 23 Worship 10AMw/Rev. Skip Walker  | **24**N.A. 7PM | **25**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **26**Divorce Support 7-10 | **27** | **28** | **29** |
| 30Worship 10AMw/Rev. Skip Walker  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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|  **August 2017** |
|  | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday** |
| **Rev. Martha on sabbatical 7/9-8/23** |  | **1**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **2**Healing Circle 7PM | **3** | **4** | 5 |
| 6Worship & Communion 10AMw/Rev Jenn Macy  | **7**N.A. 7PM | **8**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **9**Divorce Support 7-10 | **10** | **11**  | 12Hall rental |
| 13 Worship10AMw/Terri Leander | **14**N.A. 7PM | **15**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **16**Healing Circle (moved to 8/23) | **17** | **18** | 19 |
| 20 Worship 10AMw/Rev Judy Proctor | **21**N.A. 7PM | **22**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **23**Rev. Martha backOffice Open 10-5Divorce Support 7-10Healing Circle 7PM | **24**Office Open 10-3 | **25** | **26** |
| 27 Worship 10AMw/Rev. Martha Leahy | **28**N.A. 7PMTrustees 5:45??? | **29**Chair Yoga 9:30AMYoga 6:30PM | **30**Office Open 10-5 | **31**Office Open 10-3 |  |  |