



The Oasis

News from First Community United Methodist Church
Medford Massachusetts

October 2019

Dear First Community family,

On September 21, FCUMC had our annual Church Conference. It was a moment filled with joy that generates hope. To give a sense of the event, I would like to share some parts of my report with *Oasis* readers:

Report of The Pastor

... Before I began my leadership, it was my privilege to observe FCUMC's worship and leadership structures from a relatively objective perspective. After this period of observation, I have had opportunities to share what I learned with the congregations. The conversations were constructive and facilitated my ministerial journey with the congregation in a fruitful way. In this report, I will discuss the distinctive characteristics of FCUMC that I have experienced so far.

First, we have more people than we realize. During July and August, the average attendance in worship services was about eighteen people, including children. Each Sunday, I met long-time members I had not seen prior. It seems FCUMC has a meaningful number of members who attend Sunday morning worships on an irregular basis. In fact, on the Sunday we had a beach-themed service, August 25th, I met eight people I had never seen before.

Second, we have a large number of children, compared with attending adults. Six children regularly attend services. To maintain an environment of quality education, we hired a new children's ministry director, September 15th. In addition, we have planned events geared toward families, such as our apple picking activity in October. With the hope and joyful energy of our children and young families, we are celebrating a revitalization in our church.

...

I am grateful beyond words to be part of this beautiful community. It is where I have witnessed how a church can be a family in Christ, a place where I have been personally assured of that kinship. FCUMC surely has the willingness and vitality to extend the realm of God's kin-dom. As pastor, I have dedicated myself to lead with transformative love, reaching out to each and every member of the church, while extending our embrace to the local community and to all those who need our care.

Prayerfully submitted,
Suji Han

CREATION OF THE OPEN SPIRIT TASK FORCE

Stephanie Finley, *Lay Leader*

In February, 2019, months before The New England Annual Conference met in June, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) voted to maintain its traditional stance against same-sex marriage and non-celibate gay clergy.

In response to the conversations that must be had about this vote, The New England Annual Conference approved commissioning THE OPEN SPIRIT TASK FORCE "to examine whether and how United Methodists of New England might align with, create, or form a new church body in the Methodist tradition (independently or in collaboration with others)."



The Open Spirit Task Force (OSTF) has been tasked with trying to respond to questions about why, what and how this happened and what do we do now. Additionally, we will share the results of the process and possibilities with Annual Conference.

The Open Spirit Task Force is comprised of 36 individuals headed up by The Rev. Dr. Jay Williams, lead pastor at Union UMC in Boston, who serves as advisor. Dr. Williams also heads the [New England Delegation](#) to the 2020 General Conference and Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference.

Thirty-three members were selected by Leadership/Nominations and two were designated by Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar. Conference Lay Leader Rene Wilbur and Vermont District Superintendent Jill Colley Robinson will serve as advisors along with Dr. Williams.

The Task Force was broken into 5 working groups.

Theology/Spirituality Team

Focus: This team will help ground the work of the OSTF in a strong Wesleyan Theology (personal piety and social holiness) and develop a theological foundation that is grace-filled, inclusive and just, while sharing resources that inform and enhance our spiritual life as we move through this season of change.

Communication/Connection Team

Focus: Like the Town Hall Meeting, this team would craft a compelling narrative that explains what is happening in transparent and accessible terms, invites people to join in work that is happening, shares what we are doing in local churches and ministry settings, and captures how this is part of God's ongoing work of love.

Legal/ Ethical/ Structural Team

Focus: Given the scope of our conversation, this team would address the legal, ethical and structural issues in any systemic change with special attention to the work of anti-racism and justice in order to thoughtfully offer responses.

Continued on Page 3

CREATION OF THE OPEN SPIRIT TASK FORCE

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Options & Organization Team

Focus: History will get ahead of us here since there will be a lot of proposals heading to General Conference making the work of this team most timely and important. Keeping the dozen churches that are ready to disaffiliate in mind as well as the small group of leaders who are already doing some of this work in the Annual Conference, this team will share with the larger team their assessments of the organizational plans that have been created and shared throughout the denomination since GC 2019 (e.g., Bard Jones Plan, Regional Conference Plan, and others) and work toward making a recommendation on how the NEAC can move forward.

Finance Team

Focus: This team will help to identify possible financial challenges and resources for a new structure, attorney fees and assisting churches who choose to disaffiliate.

If you have any questions or want to learn more please reach out to the Task Force through their email: OpenSpiritNE@mail.com or visit their web site at ostfne.org

Editor's Note: Stephanie was selected to serve on this task force and is a member of the Communications Team. Thank you, Stephanie, for taking part in this important work.



OCTOBER MINI-MISSION

Our October mini-mission will be to collect money for Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) in Woburn. JFON is a ministry program of the United Methodist church, which provides services with “compassion, dignity, and love.”

Services provided include hospitality with a meal, activities for children who accompany their parents, and information for area social services.

We will take a second collection each week in September and leave a basket at the rear of the worship space.

Annual Dinner
JUSTICE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS
providing legal services, advocacy & education for immigrants



November 2 5:30-8:00pm

\$35 individual \$225 table of 8

Reservation Deadline: October 12

For reservations, contact Rev. Ruth Oduor at revruth14@verizon.net

INTERNATIONAL DINNER & SILENT AUCTION

ST. JOHN'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2600 Massachusetts Avenue . Lexington . MA



Good Bye
&
Thank you!

October 20 - following our worship service. **Farewell Reception for Sheila McCleery**, who will soon be a year-round resident of New Hampshire. We already miss you, Sheila, as you have started spending more time in NH. Thank you for all you've done for First Community through the years. All the best to you and George.

REMINDER

Pastor Suji's Office Hours

at the Parsonage
Tuesday and Thursday
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

You're invited to

Dinner at the Parsonage

Pastor Suji invites you & your family/friends to have dinner with her family.

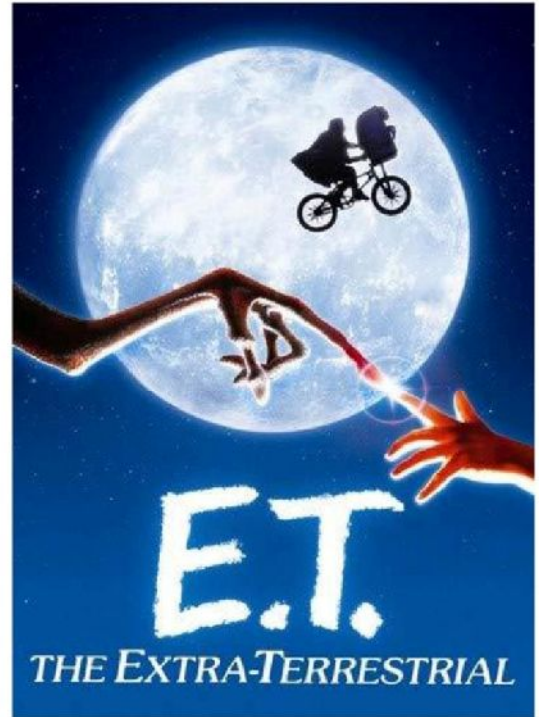
Because the parsonage cannot host the whole congregation at once, there have been multiple dates throughout September and October.

There is a sign-up sheet at her office, where you can pick a date that works for your schedule.

The remaining dates are Friday, October 18; and Thursday, October 24.

In Celebration of
**Ghoulies & Ghosties &
Things that Go Bump in the Night**,
please join us for a showing of

"ET"



Saturday, October 26TH
4pm

Supper & Sharing to Follow

COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

470 FULTON STREET, MEDFORD

www.communitybaptistmedford.org

EXPECT



WORSHIP LEADERS, GREETERS, & USHERS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
October 6	Suji Han	Donna Maguire	Stephanie Finley
October 13	Ben Killilea	Matt Kapolka	To Be Announced
October 20	Stephanie Finley	Sara Finley	To Be Announced
October 27	Jessica Killilea	Ben, Rowan, and Finn Killilea	To Be Announced

Dot Seamster (781-391-5154) is in charge of finding worship leaders, ushers and greeters.
If you would like to volunteer for a week, please contact her.



BIBLE STUDY

Our current Bible Study concludes on October 16.

After a two-week break, we will resume on November 6 and pick up where we left off - with Part 2 of our study of Luke's Gospel & the rest of The Shack by Wm. Paul Young.

VETERAN'S DAY DINNER

Saturday - November 9

Doors Open at 5:30 PM
Dinner will be served at 6:00 PM
FREE for Veterans.
\$5 for Kids under 10 - \$12 for Adults.
\$35 maximum for Families.

Prepared by Boy Scout Troop 416.

METRO BOSTON HOPE DISTRICT EVENTS

Bishop's Day on the District

WHEN

Sunday, November 10, from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

WHERE

Heritage UMC. Braintree, MA

Resource Day with Diana Butler Bass

WHO

Diana Butler Bass is an award-winning author and internationally known public speaker and thought leader on issues of spirituality, religion, culture, and politics.

WHEN

Saturday, November 16, from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM

WHERE

Weston United Methodist Church
377 North Ave.
Weston, MA 02493

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		Matthew Laskey & Geoffrey Laskey	Lauren Laskey & Richard Laskey	Charlotte Luscombe & Frank Casseterri	Donna & Joe Maguire	Bill Mason & Billy Mason
			7:00 PM Bible Study	7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
George & Sheila McCleery	Emily & Matthew McDonald	Samuel McDonald & Meaghan Morris	Connor Wilson & Chloey Wilson	Cayden Maleszyk & Neville Pottinger	Cheryl & Keeley Murphy	Nathaniel Murphy & Alexander Murphy
9:30 AM Adult Class 10:30 AM Worship & Sunday School WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY			7:00 PM Bible Study	7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Aarion Perez & Katelyn Perez	Jim Ryan & Kim Ryan	Joan Saniuk & Sharilyn Steketee	Dorothy Seamster & Frank Seamster	Kevin Seamster & Owen Seamster	Jennifer Tappendorf & Sean Tappendorf	Dylan Tappendorf & Genevieve Tappendorf
9:30 AM Adult Class 10:30 AM Worship & Sunday School	COLUMBUS DAY		7:00 PM Bible Study	7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
David Twiddy & Rebecca Stevenson	Lydia Twiddy & J.J. Twiddy	Miriam Twiddy & Luci Rexroad	Chris & Gina Votour	Ronald Votour & Daniel Votour	Anmole & Jennifer Wassan	Arjun Wassan & Diya Wassan
9:30 AM Adult Class 10:30 AM Worship & Sunday School NOON Farewell Reception for Sheila McCleery			No Bible Study	7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal		10:30 AM 1 st Community Singers at Courtyard Nursing Home 4:00 PM ET - film at Community Baptist Church
27	28	29	30	31		
Patrick Troy & Barbara Wood	Jessica Wood & Sarah Wood	Deanna & Greg Wright	Madison Wright & Benjamin Wright	Barbara Adams & Yola Aurelian		
9:30 AM Adult Class 10:30 AM Worship & Sunday School			No Bible Study	7:15 PM Choir Rehearsal		

Please pray for these friends on the designated day.