



The Oasis

News from First Community United Methodist Church
Medford Massachusetts

September 2021

In this Issue...

- Pastor's Letter
- Our September Return to Church
- September's Guest Contributor
- Announcements
- Outreach Ministries
- Kids, Sounds & Colors
- Children's Activity
- Advertisers
- September Calendar
- Daily Prayer List
- Upcoming Meetings
- Upcoming Events

Flowers and Love in September

Dear Friends & Family,

September promises to be a good month weather-wise. It marks the end of the summer and beginning of autumn in the northern hemisphere and the end of cold weather and the beginning of spring in the southern hemisphere. As the ninth month of the year, September is also the beginning of a new school year in this country and school supplies seem to dominate every visible space at stores and serve as the inspiration for community mission work to local congregations as we return to church.

An interesting celebration during this month is Grandparent's Day observed on the first Sunday after Labor Day. This is very particular to the United States and is a great time to give thanks for the wisdom and patience grandparents have and share with present and future generations. It is at these uncertain times, as we reach for wisdom, patience and resilience, that the text from Joel 2:28 comes to mind as we think of Grandparents.

"Then it will come about at a later time that I will pour out my Spirit on every person. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your elderly people will dream dreams, and your young people will see visions." (International Standard Version)

(Pastor's letter continued next page.)

Church Media & Contacts

Website: www.FirstCommunityMedford.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/firstcommunityumc

To join us for 10:30 a.m. for Sunday Worship via Facebook Live, follow the above link.

Pastor De La Rosa Email: pastor@firstcommunitymedford.org

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In-Office Hours: Mon, Thurs & Fri 9:30am-12:30pm

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Newsletter Submission: The deadline for submissions is the 23rd of each month.

Questions and submission can be made to Kathy at office@firstcommunitymedford.org.



In September, new cycles of teaching and learning begin within our United States educational institutions where the hopes and dreams of previous generations, present and future generations dwell. In the text from Joel, the combination of prophesy, dreams, and visions across generations, point to transformational radical change like the one produced by a key historical event of this month. On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation which announced the end of slavery. This proclamation was signed into law January 1, 1863. This signature forever changed the social fabric of this nation.



Photo by E.Buchholz @unsplash.com

Our aspirations continue in this transitional month of September as we continue our struggle to adapt and learn to live in times of COVID when the Spirit of God on every person is too necessary.

We look forward to a new time of transformation when healing and justice is so evident in the love of God shared by every person. I find hope in the flowers at this time of year, particularly those that survive the heat of summer and share the beauty of life in different and beautiful colors. I learned that “September has three birth flowers: the forget-me-not, the morning glory, and the aster. Forget-me-nots represent love and memories, asters serve for love as well, and the morning glory represents unrequited love.” <https://www.liveabout.com/september-fun-facts-3456089>

May September be a great month of transition when we recognize the resilience and wisdom of our grandparents. May we find ways to dream and hear the prophets across generations, take the time to see and smell the flowers, and may you feel and know the grace and love of God for each of us and the rest of creation.

Pastor De La Rosa, September 2021

AN END TO SUMMER...OUR SEPTEMBER RETURN TO CHURCH

It was a wonderful experience to end our summer programs, internships and special services with a worship through music organized by Luci, our Music Director. She did an amazing coordination effort that produced a beautiful experience Sunday August 29, 2021.

We had beautiful piano music performed over the summer by our music intern Pie-Yeh Tsai, traditional music in Spanish from Latin America by BU student from Colombia Laura Montoya, praise music by BU student from Mexico Sandra Barrios, and a powerful classical piece performed by our own Brandon Morris on an electric keyboard and on the organ by Josué Israel Suárez García from Mexico. We also had an impromptus congregational choir singing two anthems.

I must say that this was a fantastic celebration of music and talent giving thanks to God! We hope to do this again, or something similar, every fifth Sunday of the month. So, if you would like to participate and contribute your talent, please let Luci know.

As we close the summer, we are now getting ready for a return to church celebration scheduled for Sunday, September 12th. Additionally, we are welcoming our returning seminary students, Sandra Barrios and Ebiye Seimode, from BU who will be assisting with Children’s ministries and music. We hope you will join us as we plan to have a children’s message and class, an outdoor potluck, and the welcoming of new seminarians who will be part of the parsonage ministry this year. We look forward to yet another time of celebration together!

SEPTEMBER'S GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Student Stories: What ministry is calling you? Our work is our ministry. Some of us are spiritual leaders, while others are called to be architects, teachers, musicians, glassblowers or business managers. Later in life, our ministries may change or we may have more than one...as we become parents, caretakers of our parents, community volunteers and church leaders.

Each month, we ask a seminary student to contribute to the newsletter. Each student is asked to share his/her calling and key memories that formed the path to becoming a spiritual leader in the church.

This month's contributor is Ebiye Seimode. Since March 2021, Ebiye has joined us each Sunday and, in that time, has discovered a passion for music and singing where she is often featured as a soloist for many of our services. In June of this year, Ebiye became a member of our congregation.

My name is Ebiye Tamaraebiemi Seimode. I was born and raised in Nigeria in a conservative Christian household. Although it was a Christian home, I did not know what being a Christian meant. My Christianity was just a routine, go to church, go home, and stay away from sin.

I was opportune to get a full scholarship to study in the United States for my bachelor's degree, that alone was a testament of God's faithfulness at a time when my family was struggling financially, and none of us could have ever dreamt of leaving Nigeria. I left my parents and six siblings at the age of seventeen to navigate life on my own. Adjusting to this new life in a new country was hard, but I was grateful for the opportunity.

I had what I thought I needed but still felt like something was missing. I did not deviate from my faith or lose my Christian values, but my life was just mundane. I loved my school, friends and church community, but it all felt like a routine again. I had an identity crisis, questions like: Who am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose in life? circled through my mind daily. I knew that I was meant to do something more, but I did not know what it was. It was like a burning desire inside me that shaped the conversations I had with my family, friends, and even strangers.

After years of frustration, I started seeking God fervently, and I cultivated a personal relationship with Him. My walk with God grew stronger, and I was able to hear God speak to me, and He revealed to me what my calling was. I believe I am called by God into Ministry. Unlike the saints in the Bible, I did not hear an audible voice or see a bush burning, but that does not make my experience any less special. The Lord spoke to me during my quiet time on April 29, 2019, saying, "I have called you to reach many with my word. I will equip and strengthen you for the task. Do not be afraid my child." Along with scriptural references like Isaiah 41:9-10 & Isaiah 41:15-16 as well as different confirmations from people around me.

On March 21, 2020, I heard during my quiet time, "I want you to go to ministry school; I will provide." Just like before, I had multiple confirmations and I felt like this was what I needed to do. Although my family is opposed to my decision of applying to Boston University School of Theology for my master's in divinity degree and would rather have me doing a master's in engineering. I feel like I made the right choice, and I am exactly where I need to be in this season of my life.

In seminary, I have been blessed with a great community and mentors. I am grateful for the love, care, and support that I have received since being a member of First Community UMC, and I will continue to serve the church with the gifts God has given me. -Ebiye Seimode



Photo of and provided by Ebiye Seimode

SEPTEMBER NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- In June, we announced Pastor De La Rosa would continue in her role as pastor for First Community through June 2022. In the past year, she has also continued to serve as a faculty member at Boston University School of Theology. In August, Pastor De La Rosa was named Associate Dean for Students and Community Life. We would like to congratulate Pastor De La Rosa on her new appointment at Boston University School of Theology. She will continue her work here at First Community as well.
- Would you like to receive newsletters, bulletins for Sunday Worship or other church news via email? Email office@firstcommunitymedford.org and we will add you to our email list.
- **Upcoming Meetings:** Please ✓ your calendar.
 - May 9 at 7pm: Leadership Team
 - May 12 at 1pm: Trustees
 - May 20 at 7:30pm: Staff/Parish Relations Committee
- ***UPCOMING* COVID-19 Building Guidelines:** To date, we have invited the following organizations back to use the church: Merry-Go-Round Preschool, Evangelical Haitian Congregation, Boston Portuguese SDA Congregation and Boy Scout Troop 416. We are currently reviewing our guidelines and creating a formal building policy for scheduling space, physical distancing between groups and COVID-19 protocols, so we can begin to invite the remaining groups to return and provide advise about self-monitoring and encourage safe meeting practices. Our plan is to begin inviting and scheduling the return of 12-Step groups, Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts in September.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

“Welcome Back” & Potluck

Join us at 10:30AM for this special service.
Potluck will follow service.

(If weather permits, the potluck will be held outside and will follow COVID protocols for serving food.)

This month of September is...

Hispanic Heritage Month

A segment of our service will be dedicated on Sunday, 9/19 & Sunday, 9/26 to honor and celebrate this month.



Wednesday Bible Study - Online

Studies on Social Issues

Wednesdays, September 15, 22 & 29 | 7pm to 8pm

Pastor De La Rosa will be facilitating a new series and will be joined by students from Boston University School of Theology. Each week, one social issue will be presented by a student who has researched the topic.

All are welcome! To join, click [Bible Study Link](#)

Photo by Sixteen Miles Out @unsplash.com

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

MINI-MISSIONS UPDATES & FOOD SECURITY IN MEDFORD

School Supplies: I recently took four bags of school supplies, which we had collected during July and August, to Medford's Community Cupboard Food Pantry, to be distributed to local families. Here are the statistics: that's 18 packages of pencils, 17 Notebooks, 16 boxes of crayons, 10 packages of glue-sticks, 9 boxes of colored pencils, and 14 pairs of scissors! Thank you, everyone who donated items!



Hand Sanitizers: We collected a bag of small bottles of hand sanitizers to be given to social workers with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

Micro Food Pantries: You may have noticed some tiny turquoise wooden “houses” (there are 14 altogether) around Medford. Those are micro food pantries. According to the Micro Pantry Facebook group, one out of every nine of our Medford neighbors struggles with food insecurity - forced to choose between purchasing food and paying for other essentials such as rent, bills, and medication. The closest Micro Pantry to First Community is at Haines Square, in the parking lot behind Dunkin' Donuts. Some people adopt a specific pantry, which they monitor periodically during the week and fill with more food when supplies run out. Others drive around the city with bags of non-perishable food items, looking for a micro food pantry that could use “a little love,” as people on the Micro Pantry Facebook page say. If you're in a position to help out, I urge you to give this a try as a mini-mission for September, whichever method matches your personality. Items most in demand include cereal, cans of tuna fish, peanut butter & jelly, and pasta & sauce. The photo that accompanies this article is the pantry at Community Baptist Church at 470 Fulton Street, which may be the only three-shelf pantry in the city.



Photos by L. Rexroad

by Luci Rexroad, Outreach Coordinator

As friends and members of First Community UMC, volunteerism and outreach are woven into the fabric of who we are as we devote time and energy to serve, support and in many cases, provide meeting space for our neighbors and community programs. In addition to our current mini-missions, we support...

- Boy Scouts of America Troop 416
- Cub Scout Pack 416
- Several Girl Scout Troops
- Several 12-Step groups
- Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON)
- Christmas gifts for Medford families in-need
- “Sox for Socks”, Boston Health Care for Homeless Program
- Local food pantries

For more information about our Outreach Ministries, visit www.firstcommunitymedford.org/ministries/

KIDS, SOUNDS & COLORS

MY BIKE



I learned to ride a bike when I was approximately 7 years old. I went to the house of a friend and she had a big parking lot, so I had the chance to practice with my friend's bike until I was able to control it. After that, I didn't spend much time riding my bike. I remember that I got one when I was 12, but it was stolen and we all found out one month after the robbery. A few years ago, during the recovery of a knee injury, I realized that I would not be able run and it was my favorite activity at the time but activity could hurt my knee. I was so sad, but the doctor said that I could ride my bike and that was the only outdoor exercise that could help with my knee. I have to say that I didn't take the doctor's advice the first months but once I had the need to use my bike to go to work, everything changed. Even though I don't ride my bike as a professional would do, it has allowed me to explore Medford.

This week I saw a pair of turtles enjoying the sun on a floating log in Mystic River, I saw the swans swimming and ducks flying in v shape. I also saw a pair of ducks hanging out on the shore. I've hear the multiple sounds of nature while riding my bike and I have to say that it is so refreshing! Some would say that they could enjoy the same experiences by walking but I have to say that you have the chance to explore more and, in less time, while riding a bike, and you get to do some exercise also!

By Sandra Barrios

Resources:

<https://youtu.be/OmvPHMQQ06k>

<https://youtu.be/B4ERaoZM9RE>

<https://youtu.be/kRKXWwzgojo>

Sandra Barrios is a student at Boston University School of Theology. If her name seems familiar to you, Sandra prepares a video each week for the Children's Moment segment of our Sunday Worship Service.



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September 2021

First Community United Methodist Church, Medford MA

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Neville & Egaline Pottinger	2 Luci Rexroad	3 Ana Maria Rodriguez & Dan Hauge CHURCH BUILDING CLOSED FOR ELECTRICAL UPGRADES	4 Jim & Kim Ryan
5 Joan Saniuk & Sharilyn Steketee <i>Communion Sunday</i> 10:30 AM Worship In-person & via Facebook	6 Dorothy & Frank Seamster Labor Day Staff Holiday	7 Kevin Seamster & Owen Seamster	8 Ebiye Seimode	9 Jennifer & Sean Tappendorf 7PM Church Leadership Team Team Meeting Link	10 Dylan Tappendorf & Genevieve Tappendorf	11 David Twiddy & Rebecca Stevenson
12 Lydia Twiddy & J.J. Twiddy 10:30 AM Worship In-person & via Facebook <i>"Welcome Back!"</i> 1PM Trustees Meeting Trustees Meeting Link	13 Miriam Twiddy	14 Chris & Gina Votour	15 Ronald Votour & Daniel Votour 7:00PM Bible Study Bible Study Link	16 Anmole & Jennifer Wassan 7PM Bishop's Day for Clergy Aldersgate UMC -N.Reading	17 Arjun Wassan & Diya Wassan	18 Barbara Wood & Jessica Wood
19 Sarah Wood & Benjamin Wright 10:30 AM Worship In-person & via Facebook <i>Hispanic Heritage</i>	20 Deanna Wright & Madison Wright 7:30PM SPRC Meeting SPRC Meeting Link	21 Barbara Adams	22 Deb & Steve Alibrandi 7:00 PM Bible Study Bible Study Link	23 Fred & Kathy Aluia	24 Sam Aluia & Nino Aluia	25 Uchenna Awa
26 Yola Aurelian 10:30 AM Worship In-person & via Facebook <i>Hispanic Heritage</i>	27 Kali Baker	28 Sandra Barrios	29 Valerie Becker- Nogueira & Walace Nogueira 7:00 PM Bible Study Bible Study Link	30 James Nogueira		

Reminder Checklist:

- Please pray for our friends daily on the designated day.
- September is Hispanic Heritage Month.