

News from the Pews

First Congregational Church/UCC
Ashfield, MA 01330

JUNE 2017



Into the Interim!

With the last sermon and “Service of Release” on May 21, releasing our beloved Rev. Kate Stevens from her covenant to pastor our congregation, we entered the interim time—the period of our “transition time” between one settled pastor and a new settled pastor. We’re there!... wondering, wandering, crying, releasing, and celebrating all that Kate has given us.

We have the loving presence of God, our congregation, and each other to support us through this time between pastors. We will be hiring an interim pastor, who we expect will serve our congregation until a new settled pastor is called by us and God to lead us. We have some wonderful candidates for that position, and the deacons are in the process of reviewing their profiles and setting up interviews. We hope to have an interim pastor selected by the end of June. In the mean- time, the deacons will be accompanying the congregation through the interim-before-the-interim minister arrives. But you may have some questions about how all of this transitioning is going to work.

Who are the deacons? Bruce Bennett is our head deacon, and Bruce makes sure that our worship needs are filled every Sunday. Caroline Mack, who worked for many years as a hospice chaplain, leads our pastoral care team. Wendy Pree, who has many years of experience as our congregation’s clerk and as a deacon, keeps our calendar and makes sure we get our tasks accomplished. Deacons Alice Barrett, Richard Clarity, Sherrill Hogen, Judy Haupt, and Carolyn Smith who will also watch over us. And I will continue to lead the interim committee and process. I am a college chaplain who was trained at Andover Newton Theological Seminary and Hartford Seminary as a congregational pastor, able to assist with any pastoral and worship needs that arise during this time.

Who will be looking after people who are sick, bereaved, or going through a crisis? Caroline Mack will be leading our pastoral care team. Call her at 625-9696 if you know of any visitation needs, hospitalizations, or for other pastoral care. And if there is an emergency, crisis, or death in the congregation, we will make sure to be there and offer any services needed.

Who will be leading Sunday worship services until an interim pastor arrives? We’ve got that covered too. Rev. Leslie Fraser and Alice Barrett will lead worship on June 11. Rev. Sarah Pirtle will lead worship on June 18. Rev. Loren McGrail, the UCC’s missionary to Israel and Palestine, will lead worship on June 25. Nancy Hoff will lead the Lakeside Service on July 2. Sanderson alumnus and brother of Shirley Scott, Bob Bates, will offer a sermon during the July 9 Sanderson Reunion service. Rev. Kelly Gallagher, associate conference minister, will come back to lead the August 9 worship. And many others have volunteered for services throughout the summer—Rev. Ann Hallstein, who once served as our interim minister, Rev. Nancy Sykes, Rev. Melody Foti, who offered a sermon for us a few months ago, Keith Obert, and Amy Roberts Crawford are all on board to lead worship before an interim minister begins.

Who’s our minister now? All of us! And if you are still wondering what comes next or who to talk to, call me (home 624-3238, cell 508-224-8281) or email lesliefraser33@gmail.com.

Walking with you all the way, in love and spirit, Leslie

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ABOUT OUR CHURCH

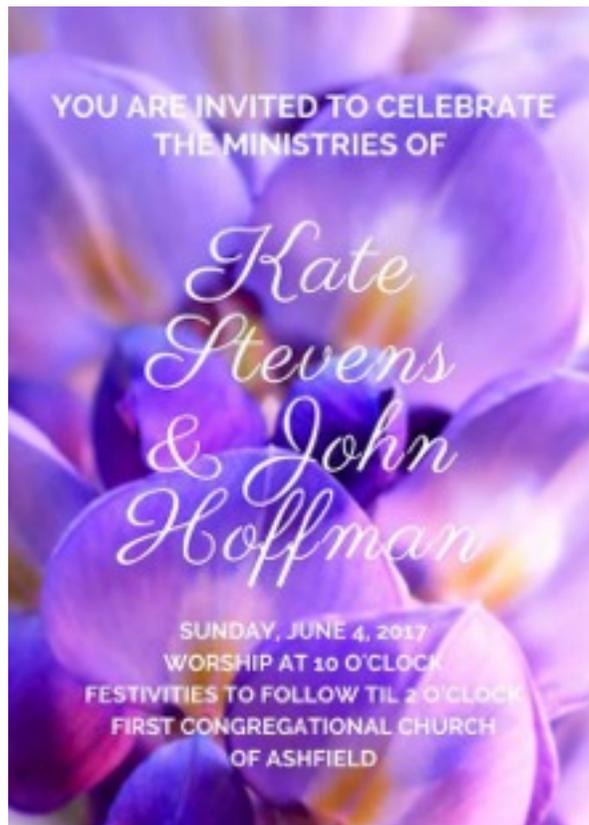
Pastor: All of us!
church 628-4470, home 625-6967.
Sunday morning Worship is at
10:00am. Children and Sunday
School are concurrent with Worship.
The governing body of the church is
its members, who traditionally gather
the second Sunday of March, June,
September and December at 11:30
am for the Monthly Congregational
Meeting. Call or email the church
clerk, Wendy Pree (628-3875),
rpree@verizon.net; or the church
moderator, Keith Obert (625-0022),
obert@aol.com) with any issues/
concerns you wish to include on the
agenda by the Wednesday
preceding the meeting.
FRIENDS AND MEMBERS ARE
WARMLY WELCOMED!
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be emailed to the editor,
Victoria Nelson at
nelsonvictoria173@gmail.com

COUNCIL ON AGING JUNE 1 11:30 - 12:30 Lunch at Elmer's

Dear church family,

Below is an open invitation to our wider community to attend our June 4 Celebration Sunday and Interfaith Service, 10 a.m. Rev. Kate will lead the service and St. John's will attend, plus several people from the community will participate in this Interfaith service. Afterwards, we will gather on the front lawn for a sharing of the bread, followed by a potluck (please bring foods that require minimal utensils to eat) and an open mic, to allow a time of sharing, blessings, and reflections.

It is also Pentecost Sunday, so wear RED if you're so inclined.



With deep gratitude for our beloved church family
and wider community,
Wendy Prée, clerk

CANCER WALK: THE RELAY FOR LIFE
Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield, MA
anytime between
6 p.m. June 9 until 3 p.m. June 10

*A **FREE** way to support a mission our church has had for many years
and a way to remember or honor someone who has been touched by cancer
(and there are many in our congregation!!)*

Come to a potluck supper at the Relay on Friday at 5:45

Bring a dish to share and a chair if you wish to sit.

We will be at site D-11 by the Grandstand.

**Come cheer on survivors from our church and many other survivors when
they walk, run or ride in the Survivors Lap at 6 p.m. on Friday.**

Then walk a lap or more anytime from then on until Saturday at 3 p.m.

Currently the team members are:

Stein Feick, Wayne Wickland, Honey Boyden, Andy Helgerson & Amanda Knox

Please contact any of us if you do wish to make a financial contribution to the American
Cancer Society

Stein Feick is the team captain and will be at the Relay from 4:30 until about 11 p.m. on
Friday, June 9. If you have any questions, please call or email me.

The Relay does continue through the night and into the next day though, so stop by the
Fairgrounds to participate at any time.

There are many fun activities for all ages!

This year's theme is Disney movies. Dig out or create your own Mousekateers
hats for the Kids "Mickey Mouse Club" Lap at 7 p.m.

An amazing and moving sea of luminaries line the track and will be lit at 9 p.m.

Hilltown Folk Rock Dance

a program of new dances
at the Ashfield Town Hall

Sunday June 11 at 1:00 in the afternoon.

The performance features local dancers Shanti Archer, Nina Coler, Phyllis Jeswald, Amy Klippenstein,
Amy Murray, and Nancy Parland.

All choreography by Christina Gabriel honoring black lives everywhere and celebrating the music of black
artists, including Miles Davis, Ray Charles, Keb' Mo', Corey Harris & Henry Butler, Trombone Shorty, and
the Soul Rebels.

This one-hour program will culminate in more great music and an open dance floor for the audience.

Admission is free, donations welcome.

More information to come Save The Date!

Christina Gabriel

Reflections from the Choir of the Ashfield Congregational Church on Choir Sunday, May 14th, 2017



Today is Choir Sunday and what follows are the Choir's responses as to what our church music has meant to us.

-Music is like a dance, in that it requires a partner to do it well. Kate has been a fantastic partner for our choir. We give and she receives and it is in that transaction, that the magic happens. Music is a form of worship and Kate provided a fertile ground for us to participate in our form of worship.

-It is clear that Kate loves music, hears music as a spiritual language, and that she is fluent in that language. It is also clear to me that she listens to the choir, and to the congregation, as we "speak" in that language, often adding her strong, clear voice to ours. It is an honor to sing for each service, and it is always an honor to sing for (and with) Kate. Our choir has grown in numbers, singing more challenging and exciting music every season. We thank Margery for her adept direction and for her confidence in us. We are moved and inspired by Amy's preludes and postludes, encouraged smile from the "gal" in the front row.

-Before you, Kate, Finlandia used to rattle my cage. Now I can't sing it without welling up: when you sing it I see in your joyfulness, hear in you equanimity, and as I try to match your bold voice I falter, humbled and reverent. Nice work! I miss you already.

-I love this choir. I love singing beautiful music with other people. I appreciate how Margery chooses music that is appropriate for the occasion, gorgeous, and (usually) something that we can pull off. I love how much Kate appreciates our gift of music to the church. I will miss her saying "You just hit that out of the park!" I will miss her clapping and saying "Wow!" I will miss her tears when we finish a particularly moving piece.

-Speaking for myself I have been singing since the nuns discovered me in second grade. Since then I have sung in many small and large choirs but singing in this church has been the most meaningful for me. My soul has soared under Margery's choral direction along with Amy as the talented accompanist and I will always treasure the music we have shared here.

-Kate, your love of song and your enthusiastic appreciation of the choir inspires and emboldens us. We love and will miss you Kate.

-And finally, many visitors to our church have commented on the excellence of the music heard during the service! How is it that a small country parish can offer music that can be ranked right up there with what one expects only in large town churches? There are several good reasons that quickly come to mind. First, there is the ministry of the principal musicians: their respective choral and keyboard experience, knowledge of serious sacred music repertoire, ability to draw the best out of a group of singers, their high standards, persistence, patience and love of what they do!

Secondly, there is our minister Kate: her love of music; her recognition of the importance of music in the life of the church; and her constant and enthusiastic support of the efforts of the music program. Then we have the choir members and instrumentalists: dedicated people who also love music, and strive to be the best they can be. Finally, we have the worshippers who, like Kate, offer their enthusiastic support of what the music program does to enrich their spiritual lives. This is what we have experienced, especially over the last 12 1/2 years!

June Choir News

Sunday, June 4th, Adult and Youth Choirs will rehearse at 9:00 a.m. for the 10:00 service. All are welcome - no previous rehearsal is necessary. Come and Sing! After this, Choir is off duty until Sanderson **Sunday, June 9th**.

The Choir's annual summer potluck and rehearsal will take place at the home of Shirley Scott and Joe Giard on **Wednesday evening, July 5th**.

For more information, please call Margery Heins, Choir Director, at 625-8461

Broadway Review Concert
Sat., June 17th 7:30 pm
\$10 suggested donation to benefit
Capital Campaign

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CELEBRATION SUNDAY JUNE 4

In June the Capital Campaign Executive Committee will complete the ongoing work of the past five months. This group of about twenty-five has met almost every Sunday since the Annual Meeting in January, and will meet on June 4 and as well as on June 25, when Campaign Consultant Jennifer Williams will lead the group in a wrap-up session. Since it is still a three-year capital campaign, work will continue behind the scenes. On Celebration Sunday, June 4, up-to-date results of the campaign will be announced, and our many volunteers will be gratefully acknowledged.

Margery Heins

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN MONTHLY NEWS

JUNE 2017

'Make a Joyful Noise'

Remarks from Jennifer Williams, the consultant for "Make a Joyful Noise." She made these remarks at the Kick-off Brunch on May 7.

With all of the busy-ness of the recent weeks – and the campaign committee's intense focus on accomplishing so much in a short time (brochure and letter printing, planning a kick-off brunch, developing mailing lists, creating databases, beginning & completing a campaign video) – it may be easy to lose sight of the enormity of what you are on the brink of accomplishing.

Your efforts, and those of church friends and family, will literally revitalize First Congregational Church of Ashfield. You will have the funds to make your sanctuary open and inviting; you will have funds for the organ restoration; and you will have the funds to support those in need in your community. These are no longer thoughts or dreams.

But, here we are – and I, for one, would like to ask you to pause and take a moment to let this settle in. You are about to accomplish one of the largest undertakings in this church's history.

When (not if), when you are successful (and I believe you will be) for many of you this will probably be one of the most significant gifts you have made in terms of the immediate impact it has. Many of us have charities that are close to our hearts, and most of us are generous in all types of giving. Yet, dollar for dollar, the impact of your gift to this capital campaign will probably be unlike any other you have made.

This capital campaign offers each of you a unique opportunity to make a big difference. Every dollar matters. Your collective dollars will literally change the church – and each gift is a big part of that change. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and one that must be given deep consideration. And all gifts, of ALL sizes, are welcomed and celebrated. All gifts are welcomed and celebrated.

The campaign rests squarely on your shoulders now. After today, volunteers, "visitors" will be contacting you for a visit. Please say "Yes." The visits themselves are fun, and will provide opportunities for you to get to know your church family. These visitors will come to you, talk about the church, and ask you to "prayerfully consider" your pledge. So, I ask that when they do, you pause, you think, you pray as you consider this as one of the most powerful moments in your life, AND in the life of this church.

I wanted to just take this opportunity to say "thank you" to you. The joy, the "Wow!", the excitement of the Kick-Off Brunch is a special moment. I feel honored to be able to celebrate this hard work with you all. Thank you!

Jennifer Williams, Williams Consulting Services
Consultant to "Make a Joyful Noise"



Photo: William F. Czelusniak, Margery Heins, Amy Roberts-Crawford, Ted Murray, Liz Van Guilder, Helen Boyle (great, great granddaughter of Geo. W. Reed,) Malcolm Bosma, and Charles Page (OHS members.)

The Organ Historical Society

The Organ Historical Society was founded during the summer of 1956, when a small band of devotees – organists, organbuilders, and students alike – set out on a short road trip, sustained by picnics, to locate and document old tracker organs surviving abundantly, if also rather anonymously taken for granted, in so many country churches. Remember that this was a time when the new idea of electronic organs was rising in popularity, and historic artifacts were threatened with loss by modernization. (Unfortunately, maybe things have not changed that much in 60 years' time.) The OHS incorporated in the following year, and since has grown to a membership of approximately 2500 – a wide cross-section of people who share a passion for the real pipe organ, its sounds, and its music. Today, the Society's keystone lies in its peerless Library and Archives collections which, along with OHS operations, are poised to move this fall into new headquarters in the Stoneleigh mansion at Villanova, Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, the OHS continues a myriad of programs and publications to carry out its stated mission, to celebrate, preserve, and study the pipe organ in America, in all its historic styles, through research, education, advocacy, and music. The mission work of the Organ Historical Society today is just as pressing as ever, as the survival of pipe organs in general, old or new, large or small, historic or mundane, continues to be threatened by contemporary forces – changes in cultural focus, dwindling church attendance, stressful and frugal

...continued on page 6

The Organ Historical Society, continued...

economy, and still the threat of electronic substitutes too. Yet the pipe organ is a cultural artifact that has been part of the fabric and history of this country for well over 200 years – in churches of course, but also in concert halls, theaters, civic celebrations, and industry.

Yet the pipe organ is a cultural artifact that has been part of the fabric and history of this country for well over 200 years – in churches of course, but also in concert halls, theaters, civic celebrations, and industry. A pipe organ is a feat of engineering, a product of pervasive craftsmanship, a work of art in its appearance and its sound, and ultimately a vehicle that transports our voices, our moods, our minds, and our souls. There is no other musical instrument like it; and, there are virtually no two alike. It is no wonder then that so many people rally to preserve the masterpieces of this genre. For this celebration today, it is a pleasure to welcome several OHS members, as well as the descendants of the organbuilder, who traveled some distance to be in attendance.

To support the preservation process, the Organ Historical Society has offered, since 1975, public recognition of the outstanding quality and value of noteworthy pipe organs by issuing citations entrusted to the Owners of these instruments, so long as they shall be maintained in original and historic condition. The application process for an OHS Historic Organ Award is itself a rigorous one, taking many hours to gather details, photographs, and technical documentation. Once submitted, these applications undergo a fastidious review by a Committee composed of five organists, organbuilders, or academicians. An OHS award issued in due course is a serious and exciting honor. Likewise, we should congratulate this congregation on their commitment to restore the Geo. W. Reed opus, a project that is multi-disciplinary, labor intensive, and costly.

In this context, it is my distinct pleasure to be with you today to present formally to the Trustees of the First Congregational Church of Ashfield, Massachusetts, the Owners of the 1903 George W. Reed tracker pipe organ, this Historic Organ Award, number 418 granted in December 2016 by the Organ Historical Society.

William F Czelusniak

Ben has posted the Capital Campaign video onto YouTube. You (and others) can find it here:

<https://youtu.be/HDdMEty7wm8>

Ben

Thank you God for all blessings: the church we share, the friends we love, the music we sing. Let our instruments of string, voice, and organ lift our prayers of joy to Your ears in this time of transition. Amen

Alice Barrett

THE “KICK-OFF BRUNCH”

On Sunday afternoon, May 7 we held a wonderful celebration and spectacular brunch! Taking place in Gloria Pacosa's barn, and organized by Brenda McGovern and Krissy Schreiber with lots of volunteer help from all of you, (thank you!!) this event attracted close to one hundred in attendance. A blessing was given by Kate Stevens, and presentations by Jennifer Williams, our Capital Campaign consultant, by the Advanced Gifts Co-chairs, and by our “Tri-chairs” were included. The program was MC'd by Nancy ‘Satch’ Hoff, who also unveiled the lawn sign she and Brady had masterminded, complete with a genuine eight-foot organ pipe! A stunned and cheering audience found out for the first time how much had been raised to date toward the campaign goal. We watched the première showing of a video about our George W. Reed organ created by Susannah Lee, Ben Murray, and Tobias LaMontagne, who did a great job, as did those who starred in the film! There was singing with Sarah Pirtle, as well as exuberant dancing to 60s pop music provided by DJ Peter Wildermuth. The rain even held off until the end of the party!

Margery Heins



\$\$\$ To be updated on June 4th!

Corrections and Additions to the 2017 Church Directory:

Linsey Hindley email:

starshinedahlia@gmail.com

Bev LaBelle and Janet Rogers

243 Graves Road

PO Box 282

Ashfield, 01330

FIRST EVER FRANKLIN COUNTY PRIDE WALK, SATURDAY, JUNE 24th!

Yes, you heard it right. Here at HOME in FRANKLIN County, in Greenfield, (not AWAY in Northampton).

The walk starts at 1:00pm but they asked us to come at 12:30pm to be all ready.

We are to assemble at the Greenfield Middle School, 195 Federal St, opposite the Bank of America branch office. We are asked NOT to park on the school grounds.

We will walk, ON THE SIDEWALK, NOT THE STREET, to the Greenfield Energy Park, at 50 Miles St., which is off Main St, and down beyond the Mesa Verde Restaurant. At the Energy Park, a rally will take place from 2:00pm to 3:00pm. We might choose to stay for the rally or go home right after the walk, We might possibly carpool, if we plan ahead.

The organizers will be handing out free rainbow beads, and small rainbow flags, for marchers. Tee shirts will be sold at this event for \$20 each. Rev. Sheehan says "be one of the first to own this historical piece of memorabilia of the first Franklin County Pride." She goes on to say, "You know you want one, I know I do!"

We are urged to "Show everyone our LGBTIQA PRIDE...Bring those rainbow flags, wear your flashiest outfits, glue on some glitter and feel free to carry signs and noise makers, bells, drums, horns."

There will be a wide variety of groups represented. Rev. Marguerite Sheehan, Pastor of Trinity Church, Shelburne Falls, is organizing a lot of County UCC and partnering churches (such as St. Johns of Ashfield. I already said our church would send a contingent, so we're committed. It's thankfully not on Town Meeting Day, and, if we get a reasonable showing, we might consider establishing a tradition of going there, with or without our annual early May trip to Northampton.

Wondering what people think about rethinking our tradition? Are we in favor of switching to Greenfield every year? Or, are we in favor of adding Greenfield to our traditional Northampton march?

Maybe we will have a survey, or at least a poll...hmmm Let's see about that.

Meanwhile, contact Bruce Bennett (bennettb1792@gmail.com or 628-4523) if you are interested or even just curious about the new Franklin County PRIDE event in Greenfield, Saturday, June 24th, starting at Greenfield Middle School, 195 Federal St., 12:30 to 3:00pm (or 1 to 2pm if you are just watching the Walk and skipping the Rally. Stay tuned to Wendy Pree's weekly emails and weekly bulletin announcements for more details. LET'S DO THIS!!

Bruce Bennett

June odds and ends from the clerk:

Our **June 4 worship service** (10 a.m.) will again be packed with people and emotion. In addition to Rev. Kate Stevens leading her last service with us, this will be a Celebration of the completion of the Capital Campaign. (While this signifies the end of actively asking for pledges/gifts, we will encourage ongoing donations throughout the 3 yr. campaign). Our beloved neighbors, St. John's, will be worshipping with us as well as other guests, including Robert Jonas, Arianna Collins, Cindy (Delta) Carney, and Mariel Kinsey, making this an Interfaith Service. Following the service we will gather on the front lawn with a potluck (finger-foods, please) and an open mic. Several of our local pastors will be joining in this time of community-wide sharing and celebration of Kate's and John's ministry. The Double Edge Spectacle begins in the afternoon, so our celebration will meld in to an amazing town-wide event. (This is also Pentecost Sunday, an important day in the church calendar. If you're so inclined, wear RED, the traditional color honoring this birthday of the church.)

There will be a **Fall Festival** planning meeting at the Pree's **Wed., June 7, 7 p.m.** The goal is to have all Captains/Co-captains in place by mid-June so those folks can begin to recruit members for their Teams. We're hoping this team model will include the Soup Kitchen, Sweet Shop, the Upstairs, Tag Sale, venues along the Driveway, and Books. We're also developing a Buildings and Grounds Team, to help oversee/plan/implement our church offerings at Fall Festival. So, this is what we're working on. A few folks have been meeting since last fall, and we will share our thoughts at the June 11 Quarterly Mtg.

In particular, we're looking for help with planning what is offered along the driveway. We're looking at the idea of having a Team who plans/sets up/orchestrates all our church offerings along this well traveled path down to the Soup Kitchen/Green Room and Tag Sale. We currently have pumpkin painting, popcorn, farmer's market, Al's benches, Heifer Project. What do we want to keep? What do we want to change? How can we realistically make this happen?

Our **Quarterly Congregational Mtg.** is **Sun. June 11** following worship. Agenda to include updates/discussion about: Interim Minister (No chosen candidate yet but info. to share), Stewardship Committee (We will be setting up a separate committee. Can you help?), Fall Festival planning (Bring your ideas. See above info.), MA UCC Conf. delegates (Bruce and I have signed up but need formal approval to represent the church), Trustee opening (to fill in John's slot), Worship plans for the near future, etc. What would you like to discuss?

Hetty Startup and Lori Wyman are working on a **church website**, with hopes of having it up and running fairly shortly! Talk with them re: ideas, offers of help, words of encouragement...

Wendy Pree

First Congregational Church/UCC
 Box 519
 Ashfield, MA 01330



JUNE 2017

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1 COA lunch at Elmers	2	3
4 Celebration Sunday 10 WORSHIP	5	6 3-6 Food Pantry 7 -Deacons Mtg 7 -Trustees Mtg	7 7 - Fall Festival Planning Meeting at the Pree's	8 6 Mission Social Justice Pot Luck 7 - Meeting	9 RELAY FOR LIFE 5:45 PotLuck	10 12 noon CCC
11 10 WORSHIP Quarterly Mtg to follow	12	13	14 	15	16 UCC Regional Conference Hartford	17 Broadway Review Concert 7:30 p.m.
18 10 WORSHIP Father's Day	19	20 3-6 Food Pantry 7 - Bubble Up	21  summer	22	23	24 Franklin County Pride Parade Grfd Middle Sch 1pm
25 10 WORSHIP Capital Campaign Executive Committee 11:45 am	26	27	28	29	30	

A REPLY TO CANCER: RELAY FOR LIFE, JUNE 9-10