

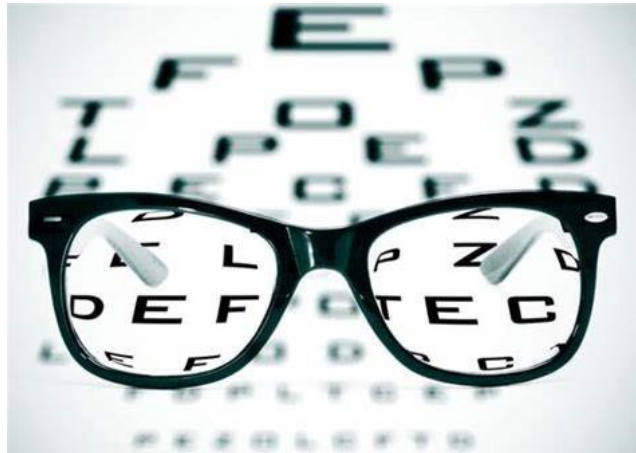


# Vestry News

MAY 2025

## Hold the Date! Annual Visioning Meeting

May 18, 2025, Immediately after Sunday Worship



Please join us for the Annual Visioning Meeting, to be held immediately after church on Sunday, May 18. Keep your eyes open for details in future Bulletins and Weekly Flashes. If you are interested in participating and have childcare needs, please let us know. ALL are welcome! See you there!

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During a windy Easter sunrise service, worshippers were invited to flower the cross. It was brought over to the sanctuary and flowers were added at the 9:30 Easter service.

## Pastor's Letter

It is not often that I am without words. And yet, as I sit down to write a reflection for May, there are just so many things bouncing around in my head. I am having a difficult time focusing on one message for this newsletter.

This last month has been filled with special moments of Lent and Easter. It has been filled with learning moments as I meet with teams, congregants, and Boxborough leaders. And it has been filled with blessings, many blessings. As April ends, I am looking forward to events we are planning for May and June: Mother's Day Walk for Peace, the children's choir singing, our annual visioning meeting, and Pentecost. I can't wait to attend my first Free Bee Market, Fifers' Day, and Acton Pride Day. It is wonderful to have a year of firsts in front of me.



In this busy Spring season, with everything happening around us in the world, it can be difficult to stop and reflect. Maybe it's not as important to find the right words, as it is to simply stop and breathe. I find on busy days when I am feeling overwhelmed, I can simply stop and ask God to fill in the words.

So, in this busy time and season, I pray that you find a small corner of your day to stop, reflect, and talk to God. You don't have to find something special to say. God will fill in the words. God may even fill your lungs with a bit more oxygen; lower your heart rate; and bring a smile to your face. May it be so.

Some days, we can just be and that is exactly what the world needs from us.

Blessings,  
Pastor Fran



## May Worship Schedule

May 4<sup>th</sup> – Joint Worship with First Parish of Berlin, joyful music of both choirs! Celebrating communion.

May 11<sup>th</sup> – Mother's Day Celebration with Children's Choir and blessing of Walk for Peace team.

May 18<sup>th</sup> – Worship Service of Love

May 25<sup>th</sup> – Worship Prayer for Peace





## OUR SERVICES ARE SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30 IN PERSON OR ON ZOOM

### To worship via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88306753408?pwd=VlgwZUc0YjY0YU2WklHWGtUWExGdz09>

Meeting ID: 883 0675 3408

Passcode: 7387

Please note: our worship services are streamed live via Zoom, and recorded for posting on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChIayswOH7Ta7LYVK-BcAyA>).

Zoom offers closed captioning subtitles for those who find that helpful.



## Bible Study

Join us for bible study on Tuesday mornings at 10 am.

Zoom opens at 10:00 am for chatting and connecting. See Flash for details.

The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81402428901>

Meeting ID: 814 0142 8901

Passcode: 7387

## Why is the Pollinator Garden So Messy?

Spring is finally here! As I write this on a rainy Saturday morning, everything is greening up and my garden beds at home are starting to look like something. So why is the pollinator garden at UCCB such a mess?

The mess is intentional. Some pollinators (solitary bees, and many moths and beetles) use hollow stems as nesting sites. Cutting back the stems in the fall or early spring can be a death sentence for beneficial insects. So we wait a little longer to give those insects the crucial time they need to complete their life cycles. We'll be tidying up the pollinator garden in a couple of weeks' time. In the meantime, look for early spring blooms from the low-bush blueberry and creeping phlox. The summer glory of cardinal flowers and butterfly weed can't be far behind!

Glynis Hamel



Butterfly weed on June 20, 2024



## UCCB's 4th Annual Porchfest

**Sunday, June 1, 11 AM on the church lawn (across from the Boxborough Town Hall).**

Please join us as members of our wider church community share their musical talents.

Please bring a lawn chair or blanket (no seating provided).

Do you have a song you'd like to share? If so, reach out Steve Griffin ([saturdaysmusic@tutanota.com](mailto:saturdaysmusic@tutanota.com)) for details.

## FreeBee Market Opening on May 17!

FreeBee is back, with our first community market on May 17. This year there will be no weekly Saturday food rescues until late June, when the harvest/produce begins to pick up regionally. Along with being a volunteer at the May market either gleaning, setting up, or helping sort and pass out food, we'd love to continue the UCCB generosity with a table and some giveaways to the community! Look for more details in upcoming Flashes. If you would like to help, please contact Mary Pavlik at [mary.j.pavlik@gmail.com](mailto:mary.j.pavlik@gmail.com) or see her at church! Meanwhile, save the date!!





## Walking Together for Peace

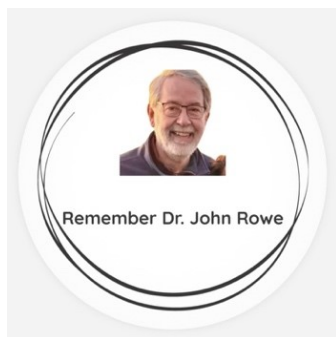


In December of 1993, as I celebrated the birth of my first child, another mother was mourning the loss of hers. Louis D. Brown, a 15-year old peacemaker in Dorchester, was killed in the crossfire of a shootout while on his way to a Christmas Party for his anti-violence group. His family left the hospital bereft and without any formal support systems. Out of this tragedy his mother Clementina Chéry co-founded the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, a multi-faceted organization that not only supports the bereaved and traumatized families but also the families of those incarcerated for murder.

Unlike many responses to violence, the LDBPI takes a systemic approach. In addition to comforting grief and processing trauma, they teach peace to young people, train professionals in how to respond, and support citizens

returning from prison. In their words, they are *Cultivating Cycles of Peace*. While they started in Dorchester, LDBPI has helped people in towns and cities all over Massachusetts, including Acton. They support survivors regardless of circumstance, focusing on healing and building peace.

This Mother's Day, a team of us from Church will be walking to fundraise for this wonderful organization and walk in solidarity with families and friends of homicide victims. Our team will be honoring Betsy Waters' brother, John Rowe, a beloved father, brother, grandfather, and physician who was murdered in January of 2025. We are sending out our love and prayers to John's entire family and the families of all who are bereaved in this traumatic way.



**Please join us in supporting the work of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute and lifting up all survivors through donations and by walking with us in body or spirit.**

**To support the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute through our UCCB**

**Team:** You can donate on this page:

<https://www.mothersdaywalk4peace.org/UCCBoxborough> or by check to UCCB, noting *Mother's Day Walk*.

**There's still time for people to join our walking team!** You can sign up here: <https://www.mothersdaywalk4peace.org/Account/Register> and sign up for the UCC Boxborough team.

The 3.1-mile Mother's Day walk starts and ends at Town Field Park, 1565 Dorchester Ave. Dorchester, MA. Parking and public transit are nearby. *We will also be carpooling from UCC Boxborough, leaving at 7 a.m. on May 11.* Contact Tineke at [TCVan@me.com](mailto:TCVan@me.com) if you would like to walk or carpool.

*Tineke Vandegrift*

## Habitat Calls for Volunteers

Summer is a great time to exercise your volunteer muscles, and North Central Mass Habitat for Humanity (NCM Habitat) could use your help. UCCB has a long history of partnership with NCM Habitat. Last spring we renewed our covenant with Habitat, pledging to support the organization with funds and spreading the word about its mission. In November we dedicated 10% of the proceeds from the Merrie Christmas Fair to NCM Habitat. And Curt Logee, president of the NCM Habitat Board of Directors, has spoken at UCCB on multiple occasions as part of the Faith in Action focus topic series.

It would be great to provide Habitat with some volunteer hours to complement the other ways we support the organization. Right now Habitat is looking for help at their build sites in Ayer and Leominster. Multiple volunteer opportunities (everything from customer assistance to product repair) are available at the ReStore in Leominster and office help (data entry and filing) is needed at the Habitat office. If you would like more information about these and other volunteer opportunities at NCM Habitat, visit their [volunteer page](#). And if you're interested in putting together a team from UCCB to participate in a build day, please speak to any member of the Faith in Action team: Susan Appleton, Lee Biegel, Joe Camara, Janet Glidden, Glynis Hamel, Kellie Senghas, and Linda Spear. Thank you!



## Generosity 2025



**Thank you** for all of the ways in which you generously bring your ideas, hearts, hands, and financial resources to the UCCB community and the broader world. Through you and with you, we can live out our mission to Welcome All, Care for the World, and Grow in the Spirit.

The spiritual practice of generosity arises from imagining all that God calls us to do as a community. Our financial donations to our congregation make it possible to turn what we imagine into a reality. Through our annual commitments to our congregation, we **imagine together** all that we can do. Whether you are someone who has pledged annually in the past or are new to this practice, we invite you to consider how you may contribute financially to UCC Boxborough to keep our lights on in this corner of the world and continue to invest in our community.

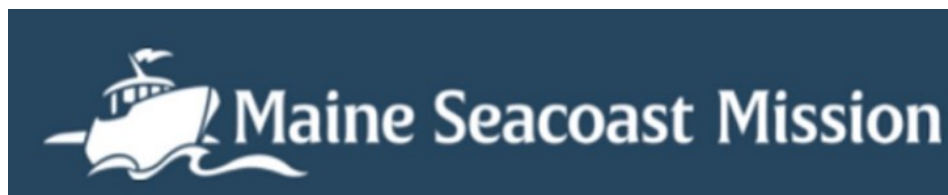
For those who have been considering a pledge, it is never too late to join this practice. Don't hesitate to reach to a member of the generosity team with any questions. You are welcome to submit your pledge at any time by following this [link](#) for access to a confidential pledge form.

Your commitment to this congregation and community helps fuel all we can imagine and accomplish together. **Thank you!**

Yours in faith,

Generosity Ministry Team: Kellie Senghas, Pastor Fran Graveson

## Adult Mission Trip to Cherryfield, Maine July 13-18, 2025



For several years, a team from UCCB has been working with Maine Seacoast Mission (MSM) in their Housing Rehabilitation Program for a week each July. UCCB and MSM have developed a close relationship.

Planning is underway for our 2025 trip! We've reserved ten spaces for our group. To join us you only need to be 18 or older. While this has been called a "hammer and nails" experience, we also spend time painting, gardening, and listening. All are welcome, regardless of physical ability or expertise.

Please contact Peter or Kellie Senghas if you are interested in joining us or if you wish more information ([psenghas@yahoo.com](mailto:psenghas@yahoo.com); [ktsenghas@gmail.com](mailto:ktsenghas@gmail.com); or 978-263-5508), even if you are just curious!

More about Maine Seacoast Mission:

Maine Seacoast Mission was started in 1905 by two brothers, both pastors, who realized that the spiritual needs of the island residents of far Downeast Maine were not being met. Today Maine Seacoast Mission's focus includes rural education and healthcare issues. While they provide a wide array of support services, they only utilize mission trip volunteers in their Housing Rehabilitation Program. Downeast Maine has an old and decaying housing stock and the need for repairs and weatherization on these homes is constant. With the support of volunteers, Maine Seacoast Mission is able to help their most vulnerable neighbors.

[www.seacoastmission.org](http://www.seacoastmission.org)



## 5 for 5

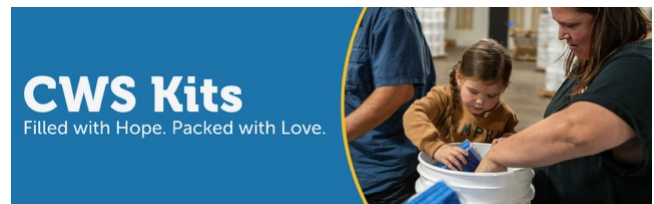
Did you know that UCCB is and has been a “5 for 5” church for many years? Being 5 for 5 means that our church is a leader, giving to [Our Church’s Wider Mission \(OCWM\) Basic Support](#) and the four [Special Mission Offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen The Church, Neighbors In Need and The Christmas Fund](#).

Whether providing emergency assistance to retired clergy through the Christmas Fund, disaster relief after a hurricane through One Great Hour of Sharing, or supporting regional camps through OCWM Basic Support, our gifts change lives.

During our worship service on June 8th, we will have our special offering for [One Great Hour of Sharing](#). This offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ. One organization supported through this offering is Church World Services (CWS). In recognition of their work, we will be assembling hygiene kits to be sent to CWS and distributed to our neighbors in the US and the world during disasters. One important way to show our **love of neighbor**.

### Here's what you'll need:

- 1-gallon resealable plastic bag
- Washcloth
- Toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Fingernail or toenail clipper (packaging removed)
- Bath-size bar of soap (in original packaging)
- Travel-size deodorant (3.4 oz. or less, non-aerosol)
- Travel-size lotion (3.4 oz. or less, fragrance-free, NEW only)
- Travel-size shampoo (3.4 oz. or less, NEW only)
- Travel-size toothpaste (3.4 oz. or less, expiration date of 1 year)
- [Sturdy wide-tooth comb](#) (6" minimum teeth, packaging removed)



All items need to fit inside a one-gallon Ziploc type bag. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal before boxing.

**Value:** \$15.00

**Support the Shipping and Processing Fund:** \$2.00 per kit

## Scholarships

Every year UCCB offers two scholarships in memory of former parishioners. Anyone within the broader church family, including extended family and friends of the church, are invited to apply. Eligible applicants can apply for one or both awards.

This year we ask that you **go the link below, provide the pertinent information in an email, and send it to [boxborochurch@verizon.net](mailto:boxborochurch@verizon.net) by May 18, 2025** More details are listed in this application.

<https://boxboroughucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/scholarship-application-UCCB-2025.pdf>





## Caring for the World

On April 27<sup>th</sup> after worship, a group of ten from UCCB joined together for a bit of fun, faithful action to care for our local environment! After beautiful and warm fellowship, with gloves, bags and some fancy tools to pick up debris (thanks, Elizabeth!), we formed groups to fan out and pick up litter that has accumulated on the roadside over the winter months. We are happy to report that the roads were in relatively good shape, showing that many in midst take great care.

One small, simple, and important way to come together to **Care for our World** in fellowship and joy. Thank you!



## Project Linus

The basket for the collection of blankets for Project Linus will be in the Church lobby for the next few weeks. Any questions please contact Ann Marchmont at [marchmont922@gmail.com](mailto:marchmont922@gmail.com).

Thank you,  
Ann



# May 2025

[www.boxboroughucc.org](http://www.boxboroughucc.org)

978-263-7387

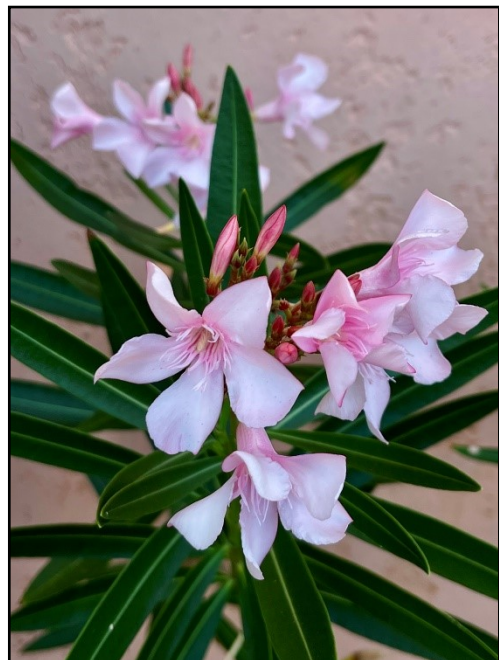
[boxborochurch@verizon.net](mailto:boxborochurch@verizon.net)

Vestry News articles, ideas and submissions are welcome and due the 24th of each month. The Vestry News is published prior to the first Sunday of each month.

**Please submit to:**  
[hmatthew25@verizon.net](mailto:hmatthew25@verizon.net)



Easter Rose



Oleander

*Both photos by Ginny Harris*