Vestry News

JUNE 2026

Porchfest 2026

Mexican Food Truck • Live Music

SUNDAY, JUNE 7TH 2026

Food Truck 11:00 AM • Music 11:30 AM

United Church of Christ's Porch and Lawn (across from Town Hall). Please join us as musicians from the wider church community share their talents. *Please bring a lawn chair or blanket* (limited seating provided).

As you enjoy this festive musical community event, learn more about food-centered initiatives United Church of Christ, Boxborough (UCCB) supports to Care for the World, including:

World Central Kitchen
Little Free Pantry
Free Bee Market
Rise Against Hunger

OPEN AND AFFIRMING
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Pastor's Message

Happy June! This month is a wonderful transition into the months of summer. Our scheduled rigor of committees; obligations; school schedules; and community activities begin to slow down. For July and August, the world of obligations takes a pause, not always completely, but hopefully enough to allow us to take a breath and take some time for fun and family.

For the next six Sundays, we will be changing up our Sunday worship just a little bit. We will be using a liturgy series provided by Worship Design Studio. The liturgy is called "Drawn In" and it is focused on Creativity! We will have 6 focus points: Dream, Hover, Risk, Listen, Re-Integration, Resting.

I am looking forward to using the resources and scripture lessons provided to have fun during these six weeks. The series creator, Marcia McFee describes the series with these words:

> *We spend too much time being "driven" rather than "drawn in." We focus on what we "should" do rather than what we feel excited and compelled to do in our lives, in this world. During this series, we will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being human, giving us renewed energy for passionate work, delightful play, and creative problem solving to make this world a better place for all.*

What a wonderful opportunity during this time of transitioning to summer. An opportunity to step away from the hustle and bustle to be drawn In by God; to be drawn in to our own hearts of creativity; to be drawn in to community, fellowship, and purpose. May love flow freely as we explore creativity together. The possibilities are endless!

Blessings!
Pastor Fran

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=VIgwZUtYL05JeVU2WklHWGtUWExGdz09

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/UCh1ayswOH7Ta7LYVK-BcAyA).

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

Strawberry Shortcake at Fifer's Day

You are invited to enjoy delicious Strawberry Shortcake at the Church Tent on Fifer's Day, Saturday, June 20th at Flerra Field on Stow Road in Boxborough. For just $5, you get a heaping bowl of pound cake, strawberries, and whipped cream.

Join us in sharing this wonderful dessert with the community by volunteering to be a server or cashier for a one-hour shift between 11:30 AM and 4:00 PM. We also need help with set-up Friday night, starting at 5 PM at the Church, and with clean-up on Saturday afternoon, starting at 4 PM at the Tent at Flerra Field.

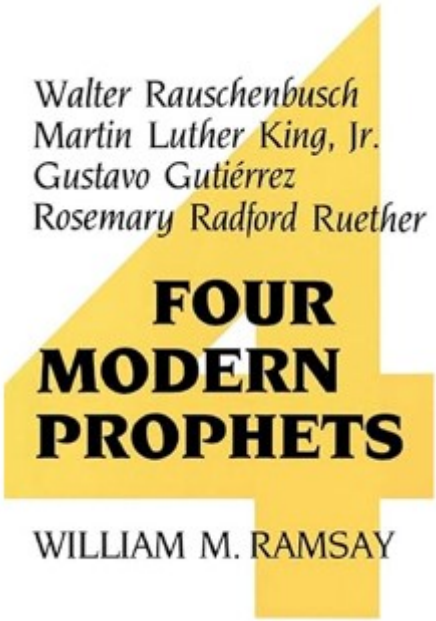
There is a sign-up poster available at church during the Coffee Hour, or you can contact Mary Anne Vogel directly (978-852-9637 or voglfmly@gmail.com) to volunteer to help us share some sweet hospitality on Fifer's Day!

Summer Book Study - *Four Modern Prophets*

Have you ever wondered, how our faith can lead us in social and political questions? Have you wondered how faith can comfort and stir people all at once? There are many different perspectives on these questions. In our summer book study we will consider one perspective, Liberation Theology.

"Four Modern Prophets" provides a high level understanding of the theology and lives of four influential faith leaders in the 20th century, the strings that connected them and how they differentiated themselves. Come join us for this conversation every 3 weeks. The reading assignment is not heavy. Each session will be independent, so no worries if you are going to miss one. Books are available in the church lobby.

We will meet at 6:30pm on the following Tuesday evenings: June 16th; July 7th; July 28th; and August 11th.



Fran's Installation Day-May 17th

Community Choir—This consisted of members of UCCB and First Parish Church of Berlin, and Congregational Church of Harvard. There was beautiful music.

A glorious afternoon! Rev. Sean Witty from Congregational Church of Harvard gave the sermon. Susan Appleton wrote and recited the Charge to the pastor and Rev. Karen Hodges offered the charge to the church. Afterwards, we had a wonderful reception-thank you fellowship Ministry.

Fran with her granddaughter

Rev. Carol Steinbrecher (Area Conference Minister of North Central Region SNEUCC), Rev. Fran Graveson and Virginia Bove (member of the Central Mass Association Board of Directors) complete the Installation process with the liturgy of covenant.

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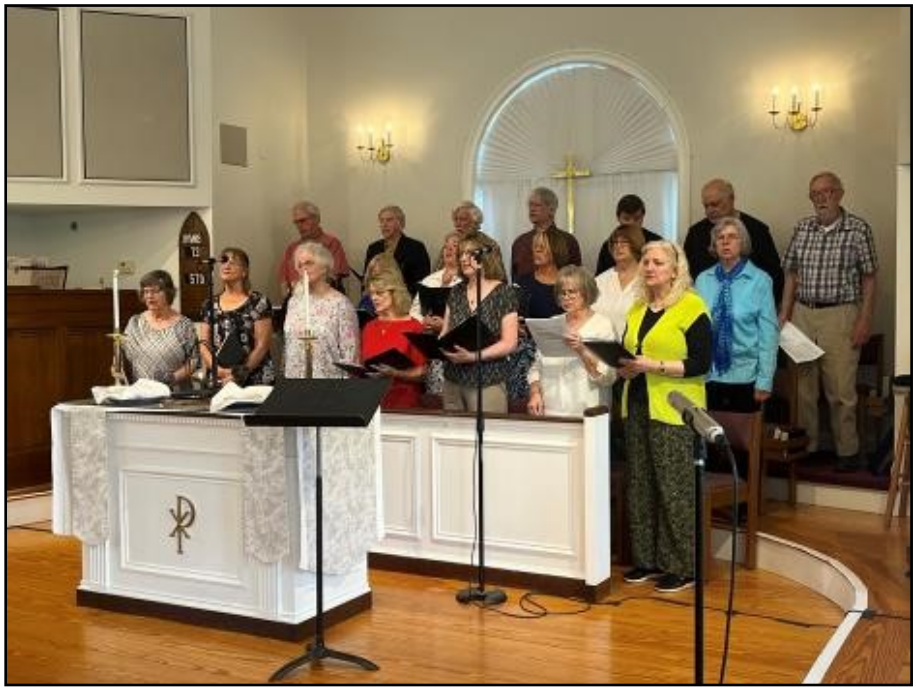
Continued from page 4– Fran's Installation Day

Nancy presents Fran with a stole from the deacons. Actually, there were 4 stoles intended for wearing outside the church, one for each season.

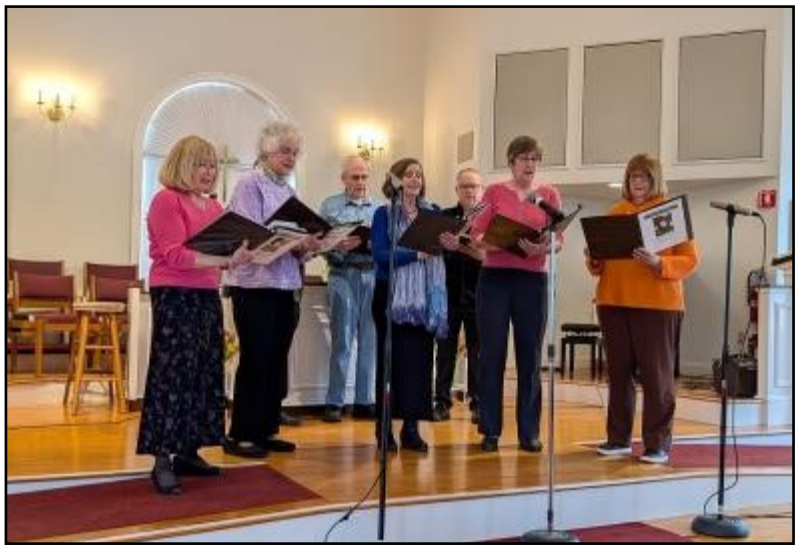
Sunday Photos



The choir from the First Parish of Berlin joined us for a Sunday in May.

Prayers from the congregation

Music Sunday 2026



Sounds of Peace sing *Give Me Birds at the Dawning*

Our organist's talented son on the cello

Dave and Suzanne sing *Ripple*

Barbara plays *Irelandalse* on the oboe

Folks from the church in Harvard sing *Be Thou My Vision* with a very large recorder as accompaniment

Maricel and Jeff singing *Blackbird* and *Cry on My Shoulder.*

Continued from page 6-Music Sunday

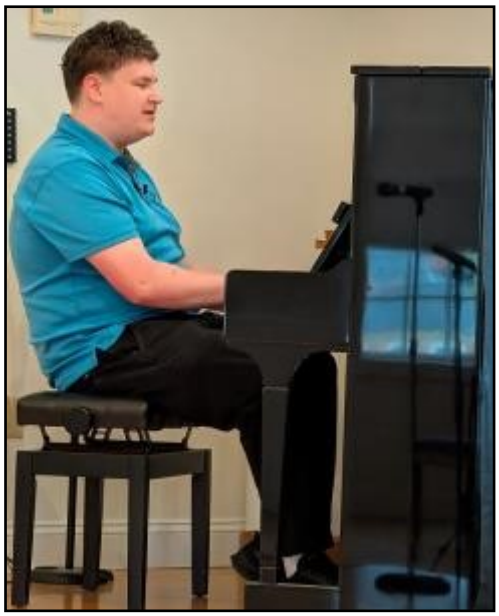
Above: The men sing "There is Nothing like a Dame"

So many piano players!!

Sister and brother play Lavender Blue and Bonfire respectively.

Chris D. (left) plays a number from Chopin

Damon (bottom left)- performing a song by Tom Petty



Blanchard's finest does a score by Sweeney

Coming soon-Church Mission Trip with Habitat for Humanity

UCCB provided lunch to a Mary Washington University Habitat Team at the Acton site on May 14th. It was wonderful to see such a motivated and energized group! This is the same site, 416 Great Road in Acton, where our UCCB Mission group will be working July 16th thru 18th. When finished, the building, formerly a restaurant, will have 3 apartments, two single bedroom apartments on the ground floor and a larger two bedroom unit on the second.

Our UCCB July Mission Trip, will kick off with a breakfast Thursday July 16th at the Church. This will be followed by work and lunch at the site daily, and a potluck celebration on the evening of July 18 for volunteers, families, and friends to gather and share the experience together.

We are looking for volunteers of all skills and abilities. We welcome people who can only work one day. If you are not comfortable doing the construction work, we need volunteers for the breakfast, meals and the celebration potluck. This opportunity is open not only to UCCB folks but to friends and neighbors in the wider community—so feel free to spread the word! If you are interested, click the link to sign up here!! We'd love to have you join us!

Project Linus

Many thanks to all who contributed to our annual blanket collection. They were duly delivered to Project Linus, and will be distributed to children and youth in need.

Meal Train Volunteers Needed: Help Nourish Our Community

A simple meal can make a difficult season feel a little easier. The Meal Train program is a church ministry that coordinates home-cooked meals for members facing temporary challenges such as illness, recovery from surgery, the arrival of a new baby, family emergencies, or other life transitions.

Meal Train makes it easy for members to support one another in a meaningful and practical way. Through an organized online schedule, volunteers can sign up to provide a meal on a specific date, helping ensure recipients receive consistent support without overwhelming any one volunteer.

For families experiencing stress or hardship, knowing that dinner is taken care of can offer comfort, reduce daily pressure, and create a sense of connection during an uncertain time. For volunteers, Meal Train offers a simple opportunity to make a direct and lasting difference in someone's life.

We are currently seeking new volunteers to join the Meal Train program. Participation is flexible. Volunteers choose when they are available and how often they would like to contribute. Meals can be homemade, store-bought, or delivered from a local restaurant, depending on what works best for each volunteer.

Whether you enjoy cooking, want to support a neighbor in need, or are looking for a meaningful way to give back, Meal Train is an easy and rewarding way to help.

If you are interested in becoming a Meal Train volunteer or would like more information about how the program works, please contact Darcy Sidwell darcysidwell@gmail.com. Every meal shared is a reminder that no one has to face life's challenges alone.

Pentecost

The Little Free Pantry at UCCB turns 5!

On June 6, 2021, we blessed the opening of the Little Free Pantry on the grounds of UCCB. Many thanks to Guy Marchmont for designing and constructing this pantry for our community and caring for its structure over the years!

Since then, we have had continuous days of…

Sharing of **abundance**, with blessed beans, cereals, and soups

Hope, with provisions ebbing and flowing with the surplus and needs of all in our community

Peace, blessing our differences, providing an open invitation to all

Joy, blessing our Open Doors and nourishment

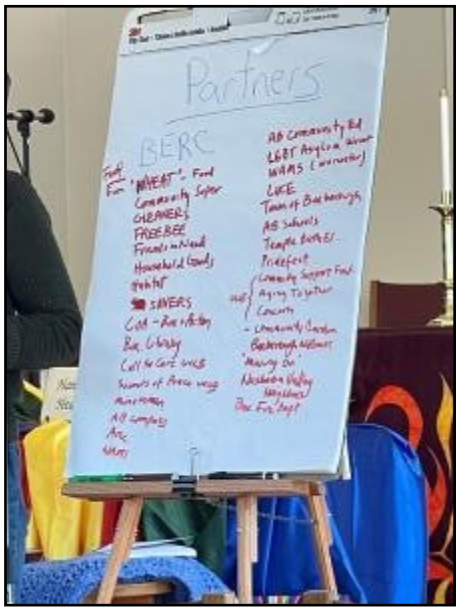
Love, neighbors caring for neighbors

This Little Free Pantry serves as a visible and practical sign of The Way in this corner of the world.
A huge thank you to the groups, families and individuals who have signed up to steward the Little Free Pantry over the years. We simply could not have done it without this generous and thoughtful community!

Would you like to become the coordinator for the Little Free Pantry? Contact Kellie Senghas (ktsenghas@gmail.com).

Visioning Meeting —May 31

Approximately 30 parishioners gathered, plus the people on Zoom, after worship to share ideas. We split into groups of 10. We focused on problems we see in the community, and groups we could partner with. Everything was recorded and a summary should be available in a future Vestry News.



Celebration

Esther, our organist, had published a Korean Cookbook back in 2025. However, she recently had it translated to English and presented it on May 31. The book is titled Esther's Korean Baking at Home. Available on Amazon. So talented!

Acton-Westford Pridefest 2026 at NARA Park

Saturday June 27th, 12-3PM

The first year that Jeff, Nancy S., and I hosted the UCCB table at Pridefest, the biggest surprise was how much joy I felt. After weeks of obsessing over what was the right activity, what should we give away, etc., I arrived to find that none of that mattered as much as being present and sharing our love. Music, Pride, and celebration swirled around us, and the joy just sort of found me and lifted me up for three hours.

Hmm, you may be thinking, *why wasn't I part of this uplifting community experience?* Well, we were competing with Fifer's Day for all three years. But not this year! This year, Pridefest is on Saturday June 27, which means strawberry shortcake will just be a happy memory, and we hope to have more people from UCCB both visiting and volunteering at NARA park.

What do we do there? We invite people visiting our tent to help build rainbow gardens and to help themselves to stickers, affirmation cards, buttons, church information, and free homemade cookies. We may share conversation or information or just smiles. This year we are considering a photo opportunity as well. Stay tuned to hear more. We would love to have people volunteer for an hour shift at the booth (between 12 and 3), and/or to help with set up and clean up, and it would be great to have more cookie bakers! Whether or not you are volunteering, feel free to stop by, say hello, and have a cookie. Please contact Tineke at TCVan@me.com if you would be willing to help. Questions? Rev. Fran, Nancy S, and Tineke are all happy to talk to you.

Generosity

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 as we **plant seeds of hope - together.**

Through you and with you, we can live out our mission to Welcome All, Care for the World, and Grow in the Spirit.

Financial contributions toward our mission come in many forms:

Annual pledging ("Run the church"): Funds that are pledged and provided in a way that helps us plan and operate with confidence. For the 2026 year, we received 55 pledges totaling nearly $190,000.

Special Gifts ("Improve the church"): Gifts that are responsive to specific needs that may take the form of money or a gift of a specific item (e.g., shelving, audio/visual equipment, windows).

Planned Giving ("Sustain the church"): Over $300,000 in financial gifts have been provided to the church over the years to form our endowment. An endowment that continues to grow and generate significant income to support the church now and into the future.

If you would like to learn more about financial stewardship at UCCB, please review the Giving page on our website (https://boxboroughucc.org/giving/)
or ask a member of the Generosity Ministry Team.

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

Yours in faith,
Your Generosity Ministry Team: Griet Dehandschutter, Rev. Fran Graveson, and Kellie Senghas

Vestry News News

This summer there will be a **July/August** publication. We will send out a notice when articles are due which will be sometime in mid July.

June 2026

www.boxboroughucc.org
978-263-7387
boxborochurch@verizon.net

Vestry News articles are due starting the 24th of each month. Please submit your article or pictures to hmatthew25@verizon.net and boxborochurch@verizon.net

Feeding Young by Ginny Harris