



The United Congregational Church of Holyoke
 An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ
 300 Appleton Street, Holyoke, MA 01040
 Volume 29 Number 9



www.uccholyoke.org (413) 532-1483

SEPTEMBER, 2018



UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HOLYOKE
TOWERS
 N E W S L E T T E R



Harvest of Hope from Our Community Garden

Friends from Nuestras Raices and our own congregation have been watching our church community garden grow. As summer moves toward autumn, people have been harvesting carrots, tomatoes, lettuce, green beans, cucumbers — all offered for free to whomever wants them. Thanks to Associate Minister Lance Humphrey and all the volunteers who are bringing this to life.



CHURCH PARKING LOT OPENS

The “Franklin” lot on Maple Street was once the home of Holyoke’s YWCA. The church bought it many years ago, hoping to develop a parking lot. With Al Lehmann’s persistence, a vote last year to go ahead with the project has finally resulted in its completion in early September. Thanks, All!



DURING THE NEXT SIX WEEKS —

30 members and friends of the United Congregational Church of Holyoke will engage one another in a process called “New Beginnings.” It will help us clarify our church’s present situation, explore our many options, and create an informed vision for our future.

The program begins this Sunday, September 9th, with a box lunch in the parlors immediately following worship. Following that, an interactive process will invite learning, talking in small groups, watching videos and engaging an extensive study of our church and community.

If you filled out an interest card in August, you will be called prior to the September 9th kick-off. Three additional sessions will be scheduled, including the final luncheon after worship on October 14. Participation is free. It’s not too late to be included in the four sessions; please call the church office no later than Thursday, September 5th and ask Andrea to fill out a card for you.

When we have completed the New Beginnings phase of the process, we will begin to build our new future. Pray for the vitality of our church and community. The future is wide open to us!



LEFT: The New Beginnings planning group includes, “Dizzy” Desnoyers, Paula Thouin, Bobbie and Chuck Morkin, Alan Gilburg, Muriel Griffin, Myra Grammo, and Beth Veillette.



Meals and Picnics

ABOVE: Almost 4 dozen hungry people gathered for the August 10th Community Meal. Community meals are held the second Friday of each month, and are offered without charge. Many stay for the family film night which follows.

RIGHT: Joe Karnolisz and Chuck Morkin grilled burgers and hot dogs at the Appleton Street entrance.



PHOTO BY: Chuck Morkin



PHOTO BY: Bobbie Morkin

LEFT: Russ Smith hosted the annual choir picnic at his cottage in Becket. Food, friends, and board games made for a most relaxing afternoon. Thanks, Russ!

BELOW: Delegates to the 2018 Conference Annual Meeting in Springfield raised voting cards in approval of forming a new tri-conference with Rhode Island and Connecticut.

BELOW: The July 28th faithwaze feast filled Parlor B with music, food, friendship, faith and prayers. This is not a "membership" community. All who hunger are welcome.



PHOTO BY: Bobbie Morkin



PHOTO BY: Chuck Morkin

ABOVE: A record 28 applicants were awarded scholarships to attend the 2018 annual convention of the Organ Historical Society held in Rochester, NY this past summer.

The Biggs Scholarship Program of the Organ Historical Society

The 2018 Annual Convention of the Organ Historical Society (OHS) was held in and around Rochester, New York, home of the Eastman School of Music and a large number of noteworthy instruments. More than 400 people, some arriving from around the world, attended the convention.

This year, through its Biggs program (named after the late organist, E. Power Biggs), the OHS funded 28 scholars who come to interact with organists, organ builders, organ professors and others who share a love of the organ. They attend all recitals, learn about the society, and participate in a master class taught by some of the world's finest performers and organbuilders.

During the convention, Bobbie Morkin was appointed to chair the Biggs Scholarship committee. It's an important outreach to new generations interested in the world of the pipe organ.



ABOVE: A recently completed pipe organ built by Paul Fritts, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Rochester, NY.



LEFT: An 18th Century Italian Baroque pipe organ located in the Memorial Art Museum, also in Rochester.

Both of these instruments were heard at the OHS convention held in and around the Rochester area.

Soli Deo Gloria

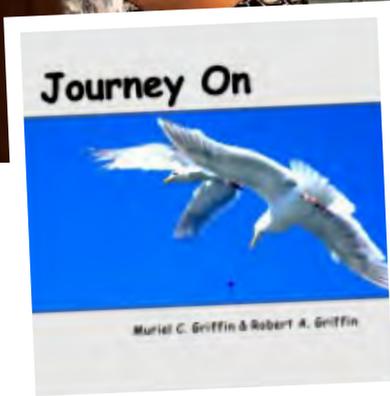
By Bobbie Morkin

We're starting up a little later than usual this year. Choirs will not begin rehearsals until the week following the final New Beginnings meeting on Sunday, October 14. Bell choir will start ringing on Tuesday, October 16. Rehearsals are 5:30-6:30pm. Check with Don Hooton for more information.

Chancel Choir will gather on Wednesdays at 5:30 for at least an hour and will stay until 7:00 occasionally. The first meeting will be on October 17 and we'll sing for the October 21st Sunday worship service. Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing joyful songs.

RIGHT: World-renowned silent film organist Peter Krasinski will return to UCCH for a performance on Sat., Nov. 3rd.





The Book is Launched!

Surrounded by their daughters, a granddaughter and lots of friends, Muriel and Bob launched “Journey On,” a book of stories and reflections from a lifetime of memories. Bobbie served as the MC, while selections were read by Bob, Muriel, their family, and members of the Enchanted Circle Theater group. Guests were treated to a reception following the event. The book is available from Muriel Griffin or from Amazon.com (make note of Bob and Muriel Griffin on Amazon).

The Sunday Morning Menu on September 2

Sunday worship on Sept. 2 offered “Brunch and Communion” in Parlor B (below). The room had been set up as a café with just enough room for everybody. A serving table was filled with melons and grapes, egg casserole, bagels and cream cheese, breads, beverages and more. Brunch transitioned into the service of communion, which was served by Deacons Russ Slocomb and Tim Damon. The service included prayer time, Bible readings, discussion at the tables, and a presentation by Myra Grammo about New Beginnings. Thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements!



Super Saturday

WHEN

Saturday, October 20, 2018

8:00 AM to 3:45 PM

WHERE

Keefe Regional Technical H. S.

750 Winter Street

Framingham, MA 01702



KEYNOTE: Dr. David M. Csinos

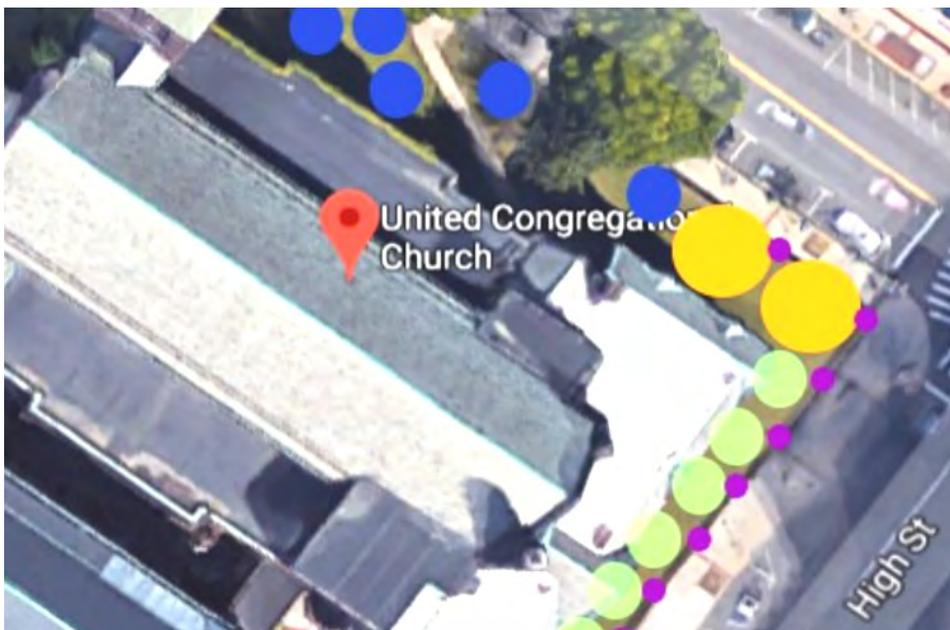
Dave writes widely about faith formation, children's ministry, youth ministry, and culture, and his books include *Children's Ministry that Fits*, *Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus* (with Ivy Beckwith), *Faith Forward* (with Melvin Bray) and *Faith Forward, Volume 2* (with Melvin Bray). Dave holds a PhD in practical theology from the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto, as well as degrees from Wilfrid Laurier University, McMaster University, and Union Presbyterian Seminary.

Dave is a regular speaker on topics such as children and youth, intergenerational ministry, faith formation, intercultural ministry, social justice, and ministry innovation. He has spoken at churches, conferences, camps, and universities throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

INTERESTED IN ATTENDING?

Please register online or in the church office. Please phone (413-532-1483).

If you need reimbursement for attending, please make the request before registering. Thanks.



Apples, Pears, Peaches and Grapes?

Felix Lufkin represents "Help Yourself Edibles" a valley organization that turns lawns into community orchards and gardens. He presented a plan (above) for planting fruit trees and grape vines around our building next spring. The plan also includes the E. B. Robinson Center location. The trees will beautify our property (imagine springtime blossoms) and provide access to free food for people in the neighborhood.

The "Help Yourself Edibles" organization helps care for the trees and will work in cooperation with our current community garden. The Church Leadership Council said "yes!"

NEW BEGINNINGS:

New Occasions Teach New Duties

By Chuck Morkin

A poem written by James Russell Lowell was set to the tune, EBENEZER and is found in many hymnals.

*New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her campfires. We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea.*

Lowell's words speak to our own changing times. Institutions everywhere are wrestling with societal change, asking how our "ancient good" can learn "new duties." We are fortunate to have access to the **NEW BEGINNINGS** program offered to us by the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC.

We have been asked to set aside our usual calendar of activities during the period of the meetings so that we can give full attention to **NEW BEGINNINGS**. Thus, the gatherings of our study and fellowship groups, the Church Leadership Council and its committees are cancelled until mid-October. Outreach programming such as Rebekah's Closet, the Community meals and Family films will continue as usual. Faithwaze and Sunday worship will continue. Choir rehearsals will begin in mid-October.

It is also asked that no new programming, and no major decisions be made until the congregation is ready to name its vision for moving forward.



The Lost in Our Midst

By Lance Humphrey

Over a month ago, the Town Commons of Greenfield became home to a community of folks who pitched their tents and began living full-time amidst the statue, park benches, and old canon that make up the small city park in the center of downtown. It seems that a little known ordinance made it legal for anyone who wished to pull up and camp out at the park as long as they wanted. Before long there were twenty tents and over thirty people living smack dab on the lawns of the downtown Greenfield park. I bring this up because it represented some serious complexities as well as opportunities for my other ministry, the Cathedral in the Light. And, as you can imagine it made for some interesting town meetings in Greenfield.



Homelessness itself is a deep and complex issue. Even after seven years of street ministry, I don't profess any expertise regarding this. The one thing I do know is that there seems to be as many reasons for homelessness as there are people living without homes. I get frustrated when we label people 'homeless.' First, it seems to simplify very complex situations by tying them to one term. Second when we label someone as homeless we imply permanence to a situation that is often dynamic in nature, and the term itself can become restrictive, both in how we view the person and in the way they view themselves. The preferred label, if one must be used, is "experiencing home-

lessness." This term is less permanent, implies hopefulness, and does not attach itself in the same way as the term, "homeless" may.

What came from the tent city in Greenfield was a heightened, deepened, and more urgent look at the social crisis within and about our neighborhoods. I call it a social crisis because I don't believe it is simply a problem of poverty, or that we simply do not have enough shelters, or homes. I believe it's a social crisis, because I know that even if we are able to solve the problems of housing and poverty, but we aren't able to solve our social ills, there will always be lost souls seeking shelter, nurturing, security, and love. Most of the social crisis' which result in transitional homelessness, permanent homelessness, or systematic homelessness resides hidden within the bowels of our socio-ecosystem in places where we don't see and in ways that we can easily ignore. Some may have noticed that occasionally we get people camping out or sleeping on our own grounds here at the UCCH. Even then, people mostly come after dark and leave at first light.



I don't believe these problems can be solved simply by building more houses, providing more shelters, or giving people more money. We must address our social ills by breaking down our entrenched, personally protective ways of staying safe and comfortable. To begin healing our social ills we must not wait until people come into our sanctuary, we must become willing to put ourselves out there to meet, and know, and understand who it is that need our help. We must begin to learn ways to build trust with our neighbors, and learn how we can offer nurturing, love, and support for those who are lost in our midst.

Just as we believe in the healing stories of Jesus, let us believe that it is possible that we may be the front line to healing the social ills of our community. Let us believe that the mending can begin with us here at the United Congregational Church of Holyoke, and that our efforts can make the difference. Let the comfort not come from our walls and fences, rather let our comfort come in following Christ's Way with all humanity.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
<p>2 COMMUNION SUNDAY 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Worship / Communion / 2nd Offering: Margaret's Pantry 11:00am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>3 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>4 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>5 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>6 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Rebekah's Closet 5:30pm A.A. Group</p> 	<p>7 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>8 7:30am A.A. 4:00pm Faithwaze - Doors Open @3pm Worship Service - Soup & Bread</p>  
<p>9 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Worship 11:15am New Beginnings Session 1 - All Groups Lunch Gathering NO COFFEE HOUR</p> 	<p>10 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>11 7:30am A.A. 11:00am Memorial Service for Martha May's mother, Laura May - Everyone Welcome</p>	<p>12 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>13 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Rebekah's Closet 5:30pm A.A. Group</p> 	<p>14 7:30am A.A. 5:00pm Community Meal 6:00pm Family Movie Night</p>  	<p>15 7:30am A.A. 4:00pm Faithwaze - Doors Open @3pm Worship Service - Soup & Bread</p>  
<p>16 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Worship / 2nd Offering: Rebekah's Closet 11:00am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>17 7:30am A.A. New Beginnings Session 2 - Group 1 @ 1pm - 3pm</p> 	<p>18 7:30am A.A. New Beginnings Session 2 - Group 2 @ 10am - Noon</p> 	<p>19 7:30am A.A. New Beginnings Session 2 - Group 3 @ 6pm - 8pm</p> 	<p>20 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Rebekah's Closet 5:30pm A.A. Group</p> 	<p>21 7:30am A.A. 6:00pm MCS Fall Dance</p> 	<p>22 7:30am A.A. New Beginnings Session 2 - Group 4 - @ 10am - Noon 4:00pm Faithwaze - Doors Open @3pm Worship Service - Soup & Bread</p>  
<p>23 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>24 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>25 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>26 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>27 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Rebekah's Closet 5:30pm A.A. Group</p> 	<p>28 7:30am A.A.</p>	<p>29 7:30am A.A. 4:00pm Faithwaze - Doors Open @3pm Worship Service - Soup & Bread</p>  
<p>30 7:30am A.A. 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee Hour</p>						

"The Towers" (U.S.P.S. 0618-180)

published monthly by

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke

300 Appleton St., Holyoke MA 01040

SECOND OFFERINGS

First Sunday Margaret's Pantry

Please bring non-perishable foods OR monetary donations for Holyoke's food pantry.

Third Sunday Rebekah's Closet

Please bring diapers, wipes, OR monetary donations to assist young Holyoke families.

Pastoral Team's Phone Numbers & Emails

Bobbie Morkin 413-313-6865

Chuck Morkin 413-207-2492

Assoc. Minister Lance Humphrey 413-246-8854

bobbiemorkin@comcast.net

chuckmorkin@gmail.com

lancehumphrey@mac.com

NEXT COMMUNITY MEAL & FAMILY MOVIE

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 14 5pm Meal
& 6pm Movie

FAITHWAZE

Faithwaze returns to its regular schedule every Saturday starting September 8. Doors open @ 3pm.

Worship begins @ 4pm followed by soup & bread.

SMALL GROUP TIMES FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

SESSION 1 All Groups: Sept. 9. (Sunday) Meet at church following worship and lunch. No coffee hour.

SESSION 2

Group 1:	Sept. 17 (Monday)	1-3 pm
Group 2:	Sept. 18 (Tuesday)	10-Noon
Group 3:	Sept. 19 (Wednesday)	6-8 pm
Group 4:	Sept. 22 (Saturday)	10-Noon

SESSION 3

Group 1:	Oct. 1 (Monday)	1-3 pm
Group 2:	Oct. 2 (Tuesday)	10-Noon
Group 3:	Oct. 3 (Wednesday)	6-8 pm
Group 4:	Oct. 6 (Saturday)	10-Noon

SESSION 4 All Groups: Oct. 14 (Sunday) Meet at church following worship and lunch. No coffee hour.

If you have filled out a card for New Beginnings, you will be contacted this week asking for first, second, and third meeting time preferences. If you have not yet filled out a card, please call the church office (532-1483); it is not too late to take part in this process.