



Crossroads

*News from South Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

*45 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01105
(413) 732-0117 www.sococh.org*

*We are an inclusive community of faith; courageously following Christ;
serving our neighbors in love.*

July 2021



Our time of separation and isolation is coming to an end! On Sunday, July 18, we begin indoor worship in the Parish Hall at 10 a.m., with Zoom accessibility for those who wish to remain remote.

From the Moderator

Leadership Circle is holding space during each meeting for “curiosity-led conversations”

Why are we doing this?

As South Church, we have many practices and programs. We have habits and ways of doing things. About some of these programs and practices we have clarity about why we do them and how, and others we do just because well *that’s how we’ve always done it*.

Rev. Lindsey is our Designated Term Minister. Her contract with us centers around this core commitment:

“During this designated time, our congregation will commit to actively work with you (Rev. Lindsey) **as we mutually and faithfully discern the viability, mission and future** of South Congregational Church.”

Mutually and faithfully discerning the viability, mission and future of South - that’s the charge.

“I know South has had several outside consultants come and work with you to discern your future; in recent memory there is Beverly Prestwood-Taylor and prior to that was the New Beginnings program. No doubt increased self and congregational understanding and some energy for some people emerged out of these experiences. At the same time, I have a sense that things haven’t really stuck, that the changes, for example, *committed to* in the New Beginnings vision didn’t hold up. There are lots of reasons for this. One dynamic though, is the gap between what we might want to be and what we actually are. Unless the vision of what we decide we *want* to be is fully supported with personnel, resources and a story that celebrates it, it will flounder without the significant energy needed to start and sustain something new.” - Rev. Lindsey

Instead of starting with a brainstorming session imagining a future of South, imagining all the things we *could* do and be, **these curiosity-led conversations are about starting where we are, listening in for where the energy is (and is not), and emerging what our motivating why/s actually is/are.**



We can then let that energy and emerged clarity lead us in **mutually and faithfully discerning the viability, mission and future** of South Congregational Church.

“We could come up with a vision of something really different from what we are currently doing - like convert the bulk of the building to affordable housing, for example - but it will be more likely to succeed if the new vision emerges from some values and practices already present, already actively motivating South. We could say, for example, *we learned through engaging in curiosity-led conversations that providing material and spiritual sanctuary to people in need is energizing for South Church members, and that we have a long and current history of doing this. So, building on this core motivating mission, we are going to focus our energy on partnering with organizations working on housing in Springfield, and figure out how to offer our building for affordable quality housing in the neighborhood.* See how that vision emerges from a sense of already present energy and leans into the future?” - Rev. Lindsey

What exactly are curiosity-led conversations?

Well, to start with, they are a “practice”. And as such, take intention, learning and sometimes, reminding each other how to have them.

They are conversations around programs and practices of South that start from the premise of seeking the stories in each thing. In curiosity-led conversation, we approach each topic with **curiosity instead of criticism; with appreciation instead of judgement; and with an interest in learning and sharing the stories inside and behind them.**

We listen wondering: *What do you learn about South? Any themes show up? Where was there energy?*

In our last Leadership meeting we had a fun and engaging conversation around the South Church Cook’s program. I, personally, had no idea how important the faith and energy of Caroline Murphy was in ensuring the success of South Church Cooks. Clearly her legacy continues on in how we continue to serve our neighbors.

Can folks who are not on Leadership get involved?

Absolutely! If you are interested in participating in one or more of these conversations, talk with me (Kim).

What we do ask of folks not already on Leadership is that you come into the space with the same commitment Leadership has made: to be curious, not critical; appreciative, not judgmental; and to seek to learn and share the stories inside and behind the programs and practices of South.

Sincerely,
Kim Figueroa
South Church Moderator



New Members: Interested in becoming a member of South, or curious what membership is/means? Rev. Lindsey and the Deacons will be hosting a gathering over the summer for folks who are interested, or who recently joined. Current members, you are welcome to join, too! Express your interest to Rev. Lindsey or Elliott Stratton.

Please Pray for

Bruce Wright, Karen Kress, Peter and Margie Nelson, Raj Ramaswamy, Stella Boulware, Sue Wood’s friends, Jodi Clements and her mom, Beth J., Kastle and Cynthia, Sue Wood’s cousin, Diane O’Hara, Bert Montagna, Dan Myers, John Burris, Shirley McCready, Betty Eaton, Jean Steup, her family and her grandmother, Ruth Kilcoyne, Rev. Lindsey’s father, Bob Peterson, Karen Buske, Merle Olson, Ginny Robbins, Gordon Dodge, Winfield Moore, Marjorie Munroe, Leila Cohen, Timmy Miller, Priscilla Price, Deborah Price, Silvia Walker, Julius Dixon, Jan McDonald, Mike Wright, Rev. Louis Mitchell, Jeff Johnson, Jane Closson, Ruben Reyes, Bob Stack, Beverly Lynch, Silvio Vasquez and his family in Venezuela, Renee Silva, Pastor Clemmons, Anthony Wysocki, Roland Fenton, Irene Rappa, the Pharo Family, Simone Normand, Joanne Henry, all those suffering with Covid-19.

If you would like to be added or removed from the Prayer List, please reach out to Jackie at: secretary@sococh.org or call/text her at: 413-654-8086

Director of Music

At long last. After a year of positioning a video camera in front of the organ or the piano, or one of our singers, we finally get to share our musical offerings with you live and in person again. The Steinway grand piano that currently sits in the Guild Room will be tuned and cleaned off for our Parish Hall worship services. You'll hear one of our singers every Sunday, although, for the immediate future, we will not be singing together as a congregation. And, if you prefer to stay safe at home, you will still be able to call in or log on with Zoom and listen in.

Okay, I won't lie – there was something to like about getting up on Sunday morning this past year and keeping my slippers on while I sat in the comfort of my home for the worship service. Learning to make audio and video recordings of myself and the singers was challenging, especially at the beginning, but I learned some cool new technology when I put together the Halloween and Christmas concerts using movie software. Working mostly at home made for a simpler, calmer life for me, one that I had not experienced for most of my adult life. My dog and cat got very accustomed to having me around to do their bidding.



There is excitement now, however, because, in a sense, we get to start over. We get to try new things and find out what will help us be a church that future new worshippers will find to be transforming for their lives. Best of all, we'll be together again.

But, back to technology. I'm on vacation the week of July 5 through 11, not to travel or do something recreational, but to participate in the 2021 National Conference of the United Church of Christ Musician's Association. I think I've spoken about this before, and two years ago I wrote about experiencing the same conference in Madison, Wisconsin. This time, it was to have taken place in Glastonbury, Connecticut, and I was asked to be on the planning committee, which I agreed to, and became the recording secretary. At a meeting back in January, we had to make the difficult decision to have the conference entirely online, mainly because we had no idea what the status of the pandemic would be by now. Now we find that we have as many registrants signed up as we have had in the past, partly because some are attending who otherwise could not have afforded the trip to Connecticut from other parts of the country. We had titled the conference "Brave New World," and it is proving to be true.



Final subject – I had hoped to have plans confirmed for a local road trip to experience some labyrinths for those interested. There are two nearby, one at Baystate Medical Center and one at Mount Marie in Holyoke. I would still like to do this soon and my hoped-for date is July 18, after our first Parish Hall service at the church. We would travel to both locations, hopefully in the space of a couple of hours, and if there is interest, we can stop for lunch in between. I will

be in contact with those of you who have already expressed an interest in this and it will also be in the weekly eblast.

See you in the flesh on the 18th! - **Larry**

From the Property Manager

Greetings from 45 Maple Street!

While the doors remain closed, the day to day needs of the grand old building remain. These last 6 months have been eye opening for me and as we approach a return to in-person services I'd like to share some of the projects I've been working on.

As you all know the beautiful renovation project has almost reached completion and I've been working with Tom Fields and Kelley Building to tie up loose ends.

The planned labyrinth in the sanctuary is proceeding and along with Larry and Pastor Lindsey, I cleared out the back of the sanctuary to make room. I used this opportunity to also clear out some of the detritus that has accumulated in the balcony and basement over the years.

Unfortunately, the fire detection sensors in the sanctuary are in need of replacing and I've been working on getting them replaced. As they are 45 feet up it's a bit of production.

These projects, combined with my regular responsibilities, have filled my days during the pandemic and I am thankful to have been able to keep busy.

Seeing so many of you this past month was wonderful and I look forward to seeing more of you soon.

- *Jared*

JULY WORSHIP SCHEDULE (See instructions below for joining Zoom worship services)

July 4 (Communion): Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

July 11: Zoom worship at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson

July 18: WORSHIP IN THE PARISH HALL at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson. Service will be accessible via Zoom.

July 25: Worship in the Parish Hall at 10 a.m. with Rev. Lindsey Peterson. Service will be accessible via Zoom.

To access the 10 a.m. Sunday Zoom worship: from your phone, dial **1-929-205-6099**. At the prompt, enter access code 975 811 240 followed by the # key. Then enter the password: 041663 and the # key again. From your computer, tablet or smart phone, log on to **zoom.us**. Click on "join a meeting" and enter the access code and password.

Zoom Bible Studies!

Join us for Tuesday night Bible studies at 7 p.m. Use the Sunday worship access code and password. Here is the schedule:

- July 6 – Mark 6:14-29 (led by Larry Picard)
- July 13 – Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 (led by Betty Jack)
- July 20 – John 6:1-21 (led by Elliott Stratton)
- July 27 – John 6:24-35 (led by Polly Soutworth)

A Condensed June Calendar

- Sunday, July 4 & 11 at 10 a.m. – Zoom worship (see worship schedule for login information)
- Sunday, July 18 & 25 at 10 a.m. – In-person worship in the Parish Hall, also accessible via Zoom.
- Mondays at 10 a.m. – Prayer Shawl in the Guild Room (beginning July 12)
- Tuesdays at 7 p.m. – Zoom Bible Study (use the Sunday worship login)
- Wednesday, July 7 & 21 at 7 p.m. – Leadership Circle
- July 9 & 27 at 10:30 a.m. – South Church Cooks
- Every day except Wednesday – Loaves & Fishes at noon & 5 p.m.

New Prayer and Conversation Groups Forming

We will be forming 4 or 5 new conversation and prayer groups in mid-July. If you expressed interest in the 2021 Information Update, or have already let me know your interest, great, I've gotcha. Otherwise, let me know by **July 9!** - Rev. Lindsey

What are South's Prayer and Conversation Groups?

soco.org/prayergroups They are a low-key way for you to meet some new folks in the South Church community and share in conversation and prayer weekly or however often you all decide works for you. The groups are usually about 3-4 people. Each week, there will be a "conversation prompt" offered during Sunday worship which your group can choose to use to prompt conversation among you. The prompt will also be included in the Thursday email. You can meet/communicate however much or little works for you all, with some hope that you'll be in touch weekly. Periodically we'll invite folks from prayer groups to share - if you'd like - about conversations that you've been having or the encouragement that you've found through the group.

Opportunities to Connect and Serve

South Church Cooks

What: Help prepare meals for the Loaves and Fishes guests

When: Second Friday and last Tuesday of the month, 10am

Where: In the kitchen at 45 Maple St.

Who to contact: Jill Hartnett, 413-348-9178 / hartnettj@gmail.com

Church Without Walls

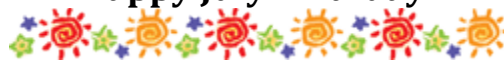
What: Make sandwiches and prepare lunch for the Church Without Walls guests. Then you are welcome to join for the CWW worship at Court Square at noon.

When: 4th Sunday each month before worship, at 8:30

Where: In the kitchen at 45 Maple St.

Who to Contact: Elliott Stratton, 413-374-8121 / ecstratton@aol.com

Happy July Birthday!



2 Mark Welch
8 Gordon Dodge
9 Rick Drummond

16 Deborah Price
21 Nicholas Lentino
25 Shirley McCready

Hymn texts for July 4 & 11:

July 4 - HOW BEAUTIFUL, OUR SPACIOUS SKIES

(Note: the second and third verses were written by Miriam Therese Winter. They are particularly relevant to societal issues we face and struggle with today)

How beautiful, our spacious skies, our amber waves of grain,
Our purple mountains as they rise above the fruitful plain.
America! America! God's gracious gifts abound,
And more and more we're grateful for life's bounty all around.

Indigenous and immigrant, our daughters and our sons:
O may we never rest content till all are truly one.
America! America! God grant that we may be
A sisterhood and brotherhood from sea to shining sea.

How beautiful, sincere lament the wisdom born of tears,
The courage called for to repent the bloodshed through the years.
America! America! God grant that we may be
A nation blessed with none oppressed, true land of liberty.

July 11 - ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL

*Refrain: All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.*

Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors, and made their tiny wings. *Refrain*

The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,
The sunset and the morning that brightens up the sky. *Refrain*

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden, God made them everyone. *Refrain*

Worship the King
with YSET Academy and
Greater Love Ministries
Free Cookout & Raffle
Tv's Bike's Cash Gift Card's

57 School St Springfield Ma
Date: July 17th Time: 2 pm to 5 pm

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**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
45 MAPLE STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01105**

Rev. Lindsey Peterson

Designated Term Minister

Larry Picard

Director of Music Ministries

Jacqueline Fredenburgh

Office Administrator

Jared Spencer

Custodian and Property Manager

Cynthia Lage

Bookkeeper

Polly Southworth

Sunday School Superintendent

Crossroads is the newsletter of South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Stories and items of Church interest are welcome and are due by the 20th of the month for the next month's issue. Submissions should be sent to Larry Picard at lpicard@sococh.org or by post to his attention at the church address.

South Congregational Church UCC www.sococh.org

A Jesus-centered, Open & Affirming Community

**God is still
speaking,**

