

The Spire



The Newsletter of the Wollaston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Sabbatical Pastor's Page

Leanne S. Walt

My Dear Friends,

As I sit here and write this letter to you in shadows cast by the early morning sunlight, I am thankful for the long days of summer and for the reminder that our relationship with God is as constant and shifting as the earth's movement around its axis.

In my sermon this past Sunday I quite candidly admitted to taking the summers "off" from church when I was growing up. For us New Englanders this seems to be the obvious thing to do. We have emerged from the dark and cold days of winter, the burden of snow shoveling has been lifted from our shoulders. Our children are released of their school obligations, Children's Sunday has come and gone, we entertain offers of weekend vacations near the water and catching up with friends. Summer is a time when some of us are freed of our normal responsibilities and for others, the warmth and sunlight somehow make our normal responsibilities seem just a tad bit lighter. We take this time to do all the "re"s: *recharge, regroup, refresh, reflect, reevaluate.*

Whatever "re"s your summer might entail, I invite you to do your "re-ing" in light of God's presence in your life and in the world. Contemplate your leisurely summer reading in light of God's hand in creation. Ask your children about their relationship to God. Wonder about the meaning of Jesus as you stand where the ocean meets the shore.

There is a certain freedom to wonder about and wander from obligation that the summer brings. My prayer is that you journey to any place of worship this summer (in the woods, near the sea, or in a sanctuary with a cross) not in spite of but because of that freedom. Worship not because it is obligatory but because it is an opportunity to grow in God.

I leave you with a prayer by Walter Bruggemann to contemplate wherever the summer may find you:

That is how it is when we praise you. We join the angels in praise, and we keep our feet in time and place...awed to heaven, rooted in earth. We are daily stretched between communion with you and our bodied lives, spent but alive, summoned and cherished but stretched between. And we are reminded that before us there has been this One truly divine (at ease with the angels) truly human...dwellers in time and space. We are thankful for him, and glad to be in his missional company. Alleluia. Amen.

July 2010

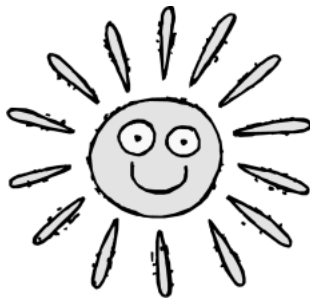


Christian Education News

Lisa Hellmuth

It is June 22nd as I write this (two days past the SPIRE deadline, and Peter is being very patient with me), and I am still thinking about June 13th's Children's Worship Service.

What a GREAT job done by the children. Everyone was enthusiastic about their role in the Worship Service, and seriously focused on



how to do the best job of whatever they were asked to do. I won't deny we also had fun while we were practicing for Children's Sunday.

Which brings me to a special moment I'd like to share with you. During one of our practice Sundays, we finished early and were waiting to return to the Sanctuary to participate in Communion. Turned out we needed to fill 15 minutes of unanticipated down time with about 20 children.

We played a trivia game and asked questions from what the children had learned in Sunday School beginning in September (Joseph and his multi-colored coat) through November (Moses' life and mission); and everything about Jesus from an infant until his death and resurrection.

They GOT IT! They listened, they read, they acted out plays, they made crafts, and they played games - and they learned! They may have confused Judas with Pontius Pilate or not

been able to name all of the disciples (even though they remembered Bartholomew because of Peter's song) ... but they got it, especially the bigger picture message ... that God is planning many great things for us just as He did for all of those important people the children learned about in Sunday School.

In the next SPIRE, we'll be able to share more about the curriculum for next year.

Can't wait!

-Lisa

Notes of Thanks

Dear Wollaston Church Family,

Thank you so much for awarding me the Elden and Norma Zuern Scholarship for 2010. This scholarship will be very helpful in purchasing books for school.

With love and thanks,

-Jessica Ketner



Dear Friends,

I'm writing with grateful thanks to you for awarding me the Phyllis Winslow Scholarship to assist me in my seminary studies! I appreciate your love and support.

-Peter Johnston

Haystack Award



On June 19, 2010, at the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ (MACUCC), Rev. Dr. Mary Louise Gifford received a Haystack Award for her work surrounding evangelism and congregational vitality. In receiving this award, Dr. Gifford was recognized for her ministry within and beyond Wollaston Congregational Church; namely her service on the MACUCC's Commission for Evangelism and Congregational Vitality, the publication of her book *The Turnaround Church: Inspiration and Tools for Life-Sustaining Change*, her course on Turnaround Ministry at Andover Newton Theological School, her work as a facilitator of a Clergy Community of Practice group for Turnaround Pastors, her commitment to field education, and her formation of the Pastoral Residency for Turnaround Ministry. Congratulations and blessings to Rev. MaryLou!

ISS Summer Ingathering

Every Thanksgiving we put out a call for non-perishable food items for Interfaith Social Services (ISS). While over the holidays and winter months food pantries receive much needed donations, during the summer those donations greatly decrease. Also, during the school year many underprivileged children receive meals at school but summer vacation often finds those same children going hungry.

Throughout the month of July we'll be collecting cereal for the food pantry at ISS. Our goal is to collect over 50 boxes of cereal. All donations can be left in the church narthex before or after Sunday morning worship.

**During the months of July and August,
we worship together at
9:00 a.m. on Sundays.**

Looking for a Babysitter??

**Erin McMillen, Red Cross and CPR Certified
Babysitter 8th grade AP student at Central
Middle School**

Available to babysit 617-472-7219



Family Summer Sundays!

Take a break from your summer vacation at WollyCong! Join us for two Family Summer Sundays. These Sundays will include 9:00 children and family centered worship with popsicles and lemonade to follow.

Sunday, July 18, 2010

Sunday, August 8, 2010

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Wollaston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
48 Winthrop Avenue

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**Sunday Worship at
9:00 a.m.
In July and August**

Sunday, July 4—Donna Collins, Preaching
"The Gospel is Alive in You!"

Sunday, July 11—Leanne Walt, Preaching
Sacrament of Holy Communion
"Marked by Discipleship"

Sunday, July 18—Leanne Walt, Preaching
Family Summer Sunday
*"Faithful Disconnect:
the Church and the World Outside of It"*

Sunday, July 25—Leanne Walt, Preaching
"An Exercise in Prayer"