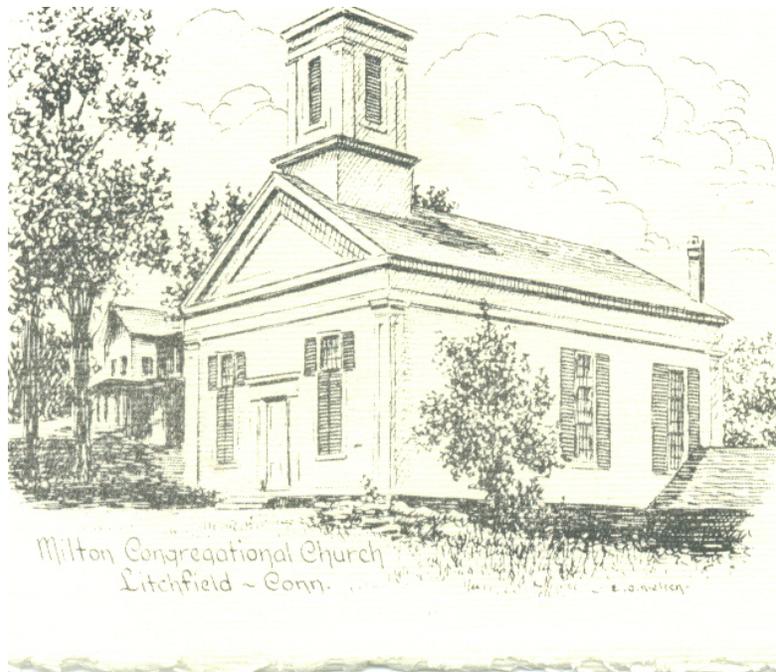


Milton Congregational Church

LITCHFIELD, CT 06759

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 13



For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope for the future.

Jeremiah 29:11

2019 Newsletter. Vol. 13, Issue 2
September 9, 2019

PASTOR PEGGY'S PAGE:

In June, I returned from my sabbatical time. I learned a lot and experienced a lot during my months away from Milton. In my focus on what makes small churches vibrant and vital, I found that the biggest predictor was a strong focus on their identity as a very specifically *Christian* community. This focus was lived out in a variety of ways, but what the vital churches did in their life as a community, they did because they were followers of Jesus. Not every member of these communities was yet fully formed as a Christian. Some members were fairly committed doubters but they were surely welcome.

Thirty years ago, the Search Institute was asked by a consortium of denominations, including our own United Church of Christ, to determine the nature of a mature Christian faith. After studying Christians in over 500 churches, the Search Institute produced a report that suggested eight markers of a mature faith, and also six markers of churches that were effective at helping their members mature in their faith. A mature Christian, as described by the Search Institute, will:

1. Trust in God's saving grace and have a firm belief in both the humanity and the divinity of Jesus
2. Experience a sense of personal well-being, security, and peace
3. Integrate faith and life, seeing work, family, social relationships and political choices as part of one's religious life
4. Seek spiritual growth through study, reflection, prayer and discussion with others
5. Seek to be part of a community of believers in which people give witness to their faith and support one another
6. Hold life-affirming values, including a commitment to racial and gender equality, affirmation of cultural and religious diversity, and a personal sense of responsibility for the welfare of others
7. Advocate social and global change to bring about greater social justice
8. Serve humanity, consistently and passionately, through acts of love and justice

Churches that help their members develop a mature faith, according to the Search Institute, will have the following characteristics:

1. A climate of warmth
2. People feel cared for
3. A climate of challenge
4. Worship that touches the heart as well as the mind
5. Lay and pastoral leaders who are people of mature faith
6. A strong and vibrant educational ministry

It may be that few or none of us fulfill all of the Search Institute's markers of a mature faith. It is surely true that Milton is still working on the markers of a church that best encourages a mature faith. But we are all on the path, we are all on the journey, individually and as a community.

In hope that we might continue to grow in our vitality and our faith,
Rev. Peggy

Church Calendar:

October 13 – Lay led worship with Susan Jordan preaching, Rev. Peggy on vacation

October 20 – Lunch and Learning after worship, bring a dish to share.

November 3 – All Saints Sunday. We will remember and celebrate the lives of those who have passed into the arms of God.

November 24 – Thanksgiving Sunday with special music.

December 8 – Lunch and Learning after worship, bring a dish to share.

December 22 – Christmas Sunday Worship in a Stable at Spindlebrook Farm, followed by all-church lunch and carol sing.

December 24 – Christmas Eve worship at 5:30 PM.

December 29 – Lessons and Carols returns to Milton!

Are you a quilter or a sewer? A group is forming to create banners to enhance our worship space and our worship. If you are interested, talk with Susan Jordan or Vonnie Richard.

Activities and Events:

Newsletter:

This newsletter is now available electronically in the .pdf format. More people are signing up for this version. If you would like to receive future MCC Newsletters in its electronic format, please indicate so by responding to the following address: MiltonCC@optonline.net and we will add you to our e-subscription list. It is also available from our web site: Miltoncongregational.org.

Tag Sale:

The tag sale will not be taking place this year due to accessibility. The Milton Road bridge next to the church is being replaced, and will be out for several months.

Council Meetings:

The Council has decided to hold its meetings Sunday mornings after worship and fellowship hour.

October 20

November 17

December 15

Quarterly Report Meeting:

The following items were reported to the members of Milton Congregational Church at the quarterly meeting of the congregation on July 21th.

Minister's Report:

There were three parts to Reverend Peggy's sabbatical. They were:

1. Spiritual, a three-day silent retreat,
2. Planning and visiting vital small churches in NE, not just a visit but talked with members of the congregation and the clergy,
3. Study, reading books addressing small churches.

She appreciated her sabbatical saying it was much appreciated and needed and she looked forward to returning to the pulpit.

Deacon for the Day:

In the absence of a Diaconate Coordinator, Bill Dunn, **Council Chair**, gave the deacon report. He welcomed Rev. Peggy back from her sabbatical and thanked her for her spiritual leadership and challenging us this past year and for the preparation prior to her sabbatical. We appreciate all she has

done. He thanked all who supported Ellen Willert during her time with us. He thanked all the council members who have fulfilled the duties of deacon of the day. He thanked all who volunteered to assist with services during the year, readers, bell ringers, greeters, and flowers. He thanked all who furnished goodies for fellowship hour. He thanked Alice, Susan, Lynette, and Margaret for leading Lay Sunday worship on several occasions. He thanked Joyce for leading the food service portion of the Lunch & Learning programs and Ken for sharing his audio-visual expertise.

Treasurer update: For the fiscal fourth quarter, income exceeded expenses by about \$8,000. The proposed fiscal year 2019/2020 budget estimates a deficit of about \$10,000, due to no tag sale. There is no update for the septic/well project, as we are hoping to do a capital campaign. Lynette would like to form a fund-raising committee. Anyone who is interested, please contact Lynette Kyasky.

Trustee update: *Septic and well issue:*

During the past few weeks I have met with two professional engineering firms that design septic systems. Hrica Associates and Berkshire Engineering, both from Litchfield. Each firm expressed interest in working with us and will develop concept schemes for the well location and design of the septic system. They are both aware of the need to coordinate with the bridge replacement contractor for the river crossing. I expect to hear back from them about the end of August.

Outreach update: Jay Youngling reported that our monthly donations are going to Helping Hands in Torrington and the Soup Kitchen in Torrington. We have also responded to other specific needs. He thanked Bill Dunn for mentoring him. He wished everyone could experience how appreciative people are of our donations. He hoped we could find a storage barn for our tag sale donations so we could capitalize on the beauty of our Fellowship Room. Bill Dunn added to Jay's report by giving numbers to the donations. Helping Hands' donations for the first half of 2019 was 32 pounds/month compared to 23 pounds/month for 2018. Torrington Soup was for the first half of 2019 was 33 pounds/month compared to 6 pounds/month for 2018. He pointed out that other outreach activities are New Beginnings, Facebook, the Website, and the Newsletter. Sarah Haberern and David Boisvert will be doing the newsletter.

Other Updates: Alice Carolan has worked to describe the tasks associated to each of the council members. An individual council member may handle more than one task. Work is being done behind the scenes focusing on an eventual capital campaign to include handicapped access provisions, in addition to the well and septic systems. Carol Powers is pursuing possible funding sources.



Volunteer Opportunities:

Since the **Diaconate Coordinator** position on the council is vacant, we will operate with **Deacon for the Day** volunteers. In addition, we continue to **seek volunteers** for greeters, bell ringers, ushers, lay readers, and donations for hospitality refreshments and flowers, to assist with the service and fellowship in the coming weeks and months. If there is a special date in your life or the life of a family member, consider that an opportunity to honor that person with flowers in the sanctuary. Please add your name to the sign-up roster in the Fellowship Room or see Laura Dunn to volunteer. We greatly appreciate those who have volunteered to fulfill these duties each week.



Worship Team: Lynette Kyasky, and Susan Jordan

The Worship Team is responsible for selecting and supplying our worship music and printing the bulletin. Any requests for special music are welcome. Please contact one of the members of the worship team. They are: Lynette Kyasky (860 567-4077), and Susan Jordan (860 567-2093)

Christian Education, Outreach, and Publicity:



Prayer Ministry: Prayer Chain:

The Prayer Chain consists of following as members:

- Rev. Peggy Allen 203 272-3654 revpeg@cox.net
- Jack Wilcox 860 482-9081 jocko945@yahoo.com
- Elizabeth Fischer 860 361-9194
- Joanne Bligh 860 491-5781 joannebligh@hotmail.com

To activate the Prayer Chain at any time, call any one of the members.

Publicity:

The Milton Congregational Church website address is www.miltoncongregational.org. Among the many features, Newsletters can also be accessed from there.

MCC is also on **Facebook**. If you are on Facebook, 'like' the Milton Congregational Church page and stay up to date on worship plans, activities, and sudden outreach program requests.



Milestones:

August, September, & October Birthdays:

- 08 Linda Gardner
- 10/09 David Boisvert
- 10/15 Thomas Kyasky
- 10/23 David Wilson

Concerns:

- The Milton Congregational Church grieves with Jack Wilcox and Claudia Palmer whose brother Richard died on August 19th after a long illness. A memorial service will be held at the Milton Congregational Church at 11:00 AM on Saturday, September 7.
- We also grieve with Susan Jordan and Jay Youngling. Susan's mother died in Florida on August 21.
- Finally, we mourn with Skip and Joanne Bligh. Skip's brother Frank was murdered in Arizona in mid-April. The body has yet to be found. In addition to their sadness, they have been following the attempts to catch the alleged killers who were found traveling through upstate New York, but then escaped in Utah as they were being extradited back to Arizona. As of now, they have not been located.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

With thanksgiving for our past and hope for our future
THE MILTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Understands our mission to be:

Celebrating God's love through worship
Sharing God's love through education and deed
Showing God's love through action

Following the Way of Jesus Christ,
We affirm the uniqueness of each individual
And welcome all people of Christian faith into our community
Sunday Service: 10:00 am

Telephone Numbers

Rev. Peggy Allen: Home (203) 272-3654
Milton Congregational Church: (860) 567-8540
Web site: miltoncongregational.org
e-mail: MiltonCC@optonline.net

Church Staff

Minister:

The Rev. Peggy Allen

Organists: Loren Evarts & Linnea Amodio

Officers

Council Chair: Alice Carolan

Vice Chair: Bill Dunn

Diaconate Coordinator: Susan Jordan

Treasurer: Lynette Kyasky

Clerk: Jeanne Carlsen

Trustee Coordinator: Roger Kane

Outreach Coordinator: Jay Youngling

The deadline for the next seasonal newsletter is October 27, 2019.

Please submit news or articles to
David Boisvert or Sarah Haberern.