



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.*

June 2019



Catch the fire! Pentecost Sunday is June 16, which celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit to the people of God. In June we also celebrate our own power to share the Spirit on Stewardship Sunday, when we pledge our time, talents and treasure to the service of God.

From the Pastor

1 Corinthians 12 ¹⁴Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many . . . ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you . . . ²⁷Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.'

I love Paul's metaphor that compares the church to a human body. I love it for a lot of reasons. I love it because it describes the church as being alive and breathing and moving. For me the church is not a static institution. It is a living organism. Another reason for my appreciation of the metaphor is that it lifts up the importance of all the parts. Where would the church be without those who can sing, or teach, or balance check books, or preach, or cook, or serve, or organize events, or serve the community, or visit the sick, or clean or simply come to worship. We need all of the parts.

I love the metaphor but I also know there is at least one important difference between a human body and a congregation. While it is absurd to think of an eye saying to the hand, "I have no need of you." It is not absurd to think of one member the church saying to another, "I have no need of you." It is not absurd because it happens. It is kind of silly to think of a conversation where the head tells the feet, "I have no need of you." It is not silly to think of such a conversation between church members. It is not silly because it happens, often with harmful and tragic results.

Most of the time, unless illness intervenes, the parts of a body function without thinking. But that is not true of the church. The reality is that members of the body of Christ sometimes don't always play well together in the sandbox. Like children on a playground, church members often, for any number of reasons, take their ball and go home. A church cannot function in healthy ways without being intentional in our relationships with each other. Mindful of what we say and do.

This is why vital congregations often develop behavioral or relational covenants. These covenants are mutually developed "rules" that we agree to live by and hold each other accountable to. Now, I know there are some people who don't think that such covenants are necessary. But I believe they are. Paying attention to them - intentionally remembering them - helps the body of Christ live together in peace and work together to build the realm of God.

- *Rev. Peter Wells*



JUNE WORSHIP SCHEDULE (All services are at 10 a.m.)

June 2 (Communion)	Rev. Peter Wells
June 9 (Pentecost)	Rev. Peter Wells
June 16 (Trinity Sunday)	Rev. Peter Wells
June 23	Rev. Peter Wells
June 30 (Stewardship Sunday)	Rev. Peter Wells

Please Pray For... Bob Dowd, Jeff Johnson, Jane Closson, Rubin Reyes, Bob Stack, Beverly Lynch, Silvio Vasquez and his family in Venezuela, Peter Nelson, Renee Silva, Thomas Wright, Pastor Clemmons, Anthony Wysocki, Karen Buske, Sue Wood, Ginny McCray, Don Russell, Roland Fenton, Bert Montagna, Deborah Price, Dan Myers, Irene Rappa, Jeff Weed, Dot Strebel, Stella Boulware, Shirley McCready, Beryl Kress, Ginny Robbins, John Burris, Jan McDonald and her friend, Cathy Wesson, Rev. Bart and Valerie Cochran.



Stewardship Sunday, June 30th What will you bring?

Happy June Birthday!



1 Dawn Ferrari
3 Ann Southworth
5 Ellen Gallagher
12 Margie Nelson
12 Jamie Wainwright

14 Larry Picard
19 Jamie Buske
19 Merle Olson
25 Linda Johnson
26 Susan Rice

Director of Music

We sing a lot of different kinds of music in worship these days. Traditional hymns, spirituals, songs from other countries, jazz, pop and rock – it takes a lot of versatility to stand up and sing a song in church lately. I believe some of you are overwhelmed by the range of styles you are asked to sing. If you're older and grew up in a Congregational or a mainline Protestant church of any sort you are probably comfortable with a lot of the "old-time" hymns, but less so if you are asked to sing a Christian song that might be accompanied by a rock band. If you're a younger adult you may not have any experience at all with traditional worship services and the ancient hymns that have been sung throughout our history. Whoever you are, your options are to try your best to join in the singing or just give up and listen. My impression over 32 years of playing in churches that many opt to do the latter, and I don't think the South congregation is an exception.

However, rather than use this space to scold you for not trying harder, I'm actually led to think about church choirs and the advantages they have over the congregation when it comes to singing. For one thing, our choir gets to rehearse, which means I get to teach them a new song before they have to sing it in worship. Here at South Church the choir also has the unique advantage of having so many professional musicians who have enough training that they can read the music well and learn quickly. Also, they sit close together in a group and everyone can hear everyone else. They feel supported having so many voices around them singing at the same time.

Well, I don't get much time to rehearse with you as a congregation, and many of you are not professional musicians, but wait, did I just suggest that the people in the congregation could sit closer together in a group and feel supported by having so many others close by who are also singing? No, I couldn't possibly have said that. I don't want to have to look for another job at my advanced age. Because of my advanced age, however, I've got enough experience in this profession to know that it is a time-honored tradition that if forty people are in a church space that seats 500 or more, at least fifteen to twenty of them will sit way off to the side or in the back or in far corners away from everyone else. It's no wonder you don't want to sing if it feels like you're singing a solo.

Turns out, though, that this article isn't really about singing in church. It's more about how our singing habits can reflect how we are with each other as a collection of God's people who made a choice to be part of this worshipping body we call South Church. Is it me, or does it feel like we are losing our ability to be with each other anymore? Are we so reluctant to fully engage with each other that we totally miss endless opportunities to bring the Good News to the world? Could it be that if we came out of our far corners and stood together singing with all our hearts that others could not help but want to find out who we are and what we believe and then want to become part of our community?

I'm going to be so bold as to say that these are really important questions for South Church to be addressing right now. We are searching for the pastor who will guide us into the future, but that person won't want to do all the singing for us. That person will want to hear our true voices and then feel confident that we are willing to have them guide us in living out God's will here in Springfield and in the world. When we come together and make some noise the world will know that God is with us and there is hope!

Is it simple as just standing together singing as one? There's only one way to find out...



- *Larry*

May Musical Events



The Matsiko World Orphan Choir performed at South Church on Wednesday, May 15. The group is part of the International Children's Network and gives opportunities to children from many countries.



The Suzuki Talented Educational Project presented their Spring Concert here at South on May 11. The group was led by instructor Lani Bortfeld.

The Humor in Pledging...



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June 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 10:00 AM Sunday School (PH)(N) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (PH) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 12:00 PM Little Rock* (CH)	3 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 6:00 PM Deacons (GR) 6:30 PM NA* (PH) 7:00 PM Leadership (ML)	4 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 4:00 PM Quilting Group (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM AA* (PH)	5 8:45 AM Breakfast Prep* (Kitchen) 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl (GR) 4:30 PM STEP* (GR)	6 11:45 AM Brief Communion Svc (CH) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 2:30 PM STEP* (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves/Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM Spanish AA* (GR)	7 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	1/8 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
9 10:00 AM Sunday School (PH)(N) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (PH) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 12:00 PM Little Rock* (CH)	10 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	11 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 4:00 PM Quilting Group (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM AA* (PH)	12 8:45 AM Breakfast Prep* (Kitchen) 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl (GR) 4:30 PM STEP* (PH)	13 11:45 AM Brief Communion Svc (CH) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 2:30 PM STEP* (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves/Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM Spanish AA* (GR)	14 10:30 AM South Church Cooks (K)(PH) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	15 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
16 10:00 AM Sunday School (PH)(N) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (PH) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 12:00 PM Little Rock* (CH)	17 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	18 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 4:00 PM Quilting Group (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM AA* (PH)	19 8:45 AM Breakfast Prep* (Kitchen) 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl (GR)	20 11:45 AM Brief Communion Svc (CH) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 2:30 PM STEP* (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves/Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM Spanish AA* (GR)	21 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	22 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)
23/30 10:00 AM Sunday School (PH)(N) 10:00 AM Sunday Service (PH) 11:00 AM Coffee Hour (PH) 12:00 PM Little Rock* (CH) 4:00 PM Imperial Court* (GR 6/30) 5:00 PM PVP (PH 6/30)	24 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 6:00 PM Deacon's Meeting (GR) 6:00 PM PVP (ML)	25 10:30 AM South Church Cooks (K) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 4:00 PM Quilting Group (ML) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM AA* (PH)	26 8:45 AM Breakfast Prep* (Kitchen) 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl (GR)	27 11:45 AM Brief Communion Svc (CH) 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 7:00 PM Spanish AA* (GR)	28 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)	29 12:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH) 5:00 PM Loaves & Fishes* (PH)

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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

