

A weekly collection of news, reflections and announcements from the
Congregational Church of West Medford
an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



PASTORAL REFLECTION

And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. —Hebrews 11:32—34

Stop and Wonder

The steadfast faithfulness that the author of Hebrews writes about in chapters 11 and 12 is as awe-inspiring as the parting of the Red Sea, the collapsing walls of Jericho, or the deliverance of the land of Canaan into the hands of the Israelites. This kind of faith is indeed a wonder. When you stop and think about the things that happened to the “Great Cloud of Witnesses” that Hebrews acknowledges—not to mention the stories of the ‘saints’ in our churches and in our lives—you have to stop and say WOW!

Seriously, when you actually stop and think about it, you cannot help but be amazed at what men and women can accomplish, can endure, and can turn to triumph, when they live by faith and not by sight! Of course the operative phrase here it, “When you stop and think about it.” It takes time and attention to be attentive to wonder. It takes a bit of effort to clear a path so that we can be amazed.

It is easy to allow the increasing cynicism of our culture and demystifying “scientism” erode our sense of wonder. Our ancestors used to go out to do what they called “marveling” in the world. They would go “marveling” and come back with evidence of their wonder. They would go “marveling” and come back with four-leaf clovers or unique butterflies or shimmering seashells. In fact, they would put the triumphs of their “marvelings” in “wonder cabinets”, display shelves of curiosities that served as momentary museums to the miraculous, giving their owners the chance for a daily dose of wonderment and marveling.

Of course, children (and elders) teach us a lot about wondering. They are always stopping and picking up wonder-full stuff like rocks and bugs and leaves and flowers. And some of us grown-ups are also inclined to be attentive to the miraculous in the ordinary. Usually these are people who are spiritually



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In Our Prayers



Concerns: We pray for Peggy B. and her niece Susan at a time of transition as Peggy moves to a nursing home in Connecticut; for Diane P's friend Joe who has been diagnosed with an additional cancer site; for Gail A.'s friend's son in Afghanistan; Shirley's friend's 54 year old daughter dying of cancer; Rev Judy and Joe B. recovering from double knee replacements; Mary B's broken leg; continue to pray for the Hanson family and all who loved her, at the death of Helen H.; for a loved one connected to our community who are struggling with mental illness and for all who struggle emotionally; Kathy W. prays for her sister Annette struggling to recover from an injury due to a workplace incident; Dick S continues to pray for his friend Ed with Lou Gehrig's disease and his father Paul as caretaker; continue to pray for energy and healing for Reverend Wendy as she returns to work.

Celebrations: We celebrate all of the students returning to school and all of the teachers who are preparing for the new school year; Jeff S. celebrates a block party and attending a different church; Robin B. celebrates Kylie's Spanish exam scholarship; we celebrate the Pleasant St Church's bequest of \$10,000 to our church for food ministry and the arrival of the insurance from the embezzlement. We continue to celebrate the wonderful experience of our volunteers who attended the Pine Ridge Reservation Trip; travelling mercies for the Briggs family travelling through Labor Day' the wonderful news article about Kerry and Patti's twins.

We continue to pray for Lorna S dealing with her leg brace; Mary B. recovering from broken leg in rehab; Eva W. recovering at home, for Thelma T. and June L., and a renewed spirit for Peggy B.

We remember fallen soldiers and Veterans and those serving in our military. We lift up all of the children of our congregation and those we bless in Bright Stars.

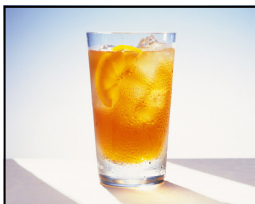
Please send prayer requests to office@medfordchurch.org by noon each Wednesday

OUR CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Care Concerns: "Deacon of the Month" of August is Kathy Williams.. Please let us know if there is someone who could use a visit, phone call, or card, or we should keep in our prayers.

Church Clerk Needed: The Clerk is responsible for reporting our statistics to the UCC and with the help of technology and the life long care of Mrs. Wescott, maintaining information about membership, births, deaths, and confirmations. Might you step up and find a place at the leadership table this summer? Pray about it and ask the Holy Spirit if you might be called to be the next Clerk of CCWM!! Or suggest someone who would might be appropriate, please let Paul Roberts, Moderator know.





Fellowship Café: During the summer, our **Fellowship Café** will simplify . This simple affair, has snacks provided by the church, but needs some volunteers to bring some cold drinks and set things out/clean up afterward. If you haven't had a turn in a while, please call and/or email the office at office@medfordchurch.org and let us know if you could participate. Thanks in advance.

Volunteers Always Welcome: Worship Leaders/Readers, Ushers, Greeters, Fellowship Café—sign up in the book on the table in Barnes Chapel (or see a deacon).

Happy August Birthdays

Shealyn Maloney	August 7
Herman Weiss	August 7
Laura Williams	August 8
Rebecca Roberts	August 16
Irving McDowell	August 19
Beverly Roche	August 21
Albert Howell	August 29
Camille Mary Kromm	August 31



Altar flowers needed for August: You can even use flowers from your garden. Please contact the Deacon for August, Kathy Williams, at office@medfordchurch.org



Empty your Pockets in the Pennies from Heaven Jar: The "Pennies from Heaven Jar" will be in the Narthex for you to empty your pockets of the loose change you may have. This jar is just one way to help support the church in a very easy way. The jar easily takes coins and paper money.

Spiritual Life Committee: We are in need of volunteers to participate in worship. Readers for the Call to Worship/Scripture (adult or youth) during August and September. Please contact Robin Baker @ robinb12@verizon.net or call 781-799-7580 with any particular week available. Our church works better when we all pitch in and participate! Your help is appreciated.

All Church Picnic at the Parsonage:

Saturday, August 24 (3:00 pm--7:00 pm)

Blue Ribbon Barbeque will be served, you are invited to bring appetizers, drinks or desserts.

The Crossroads Schedule has been set.

Please see the detailed announcement in the Worship bulletin.





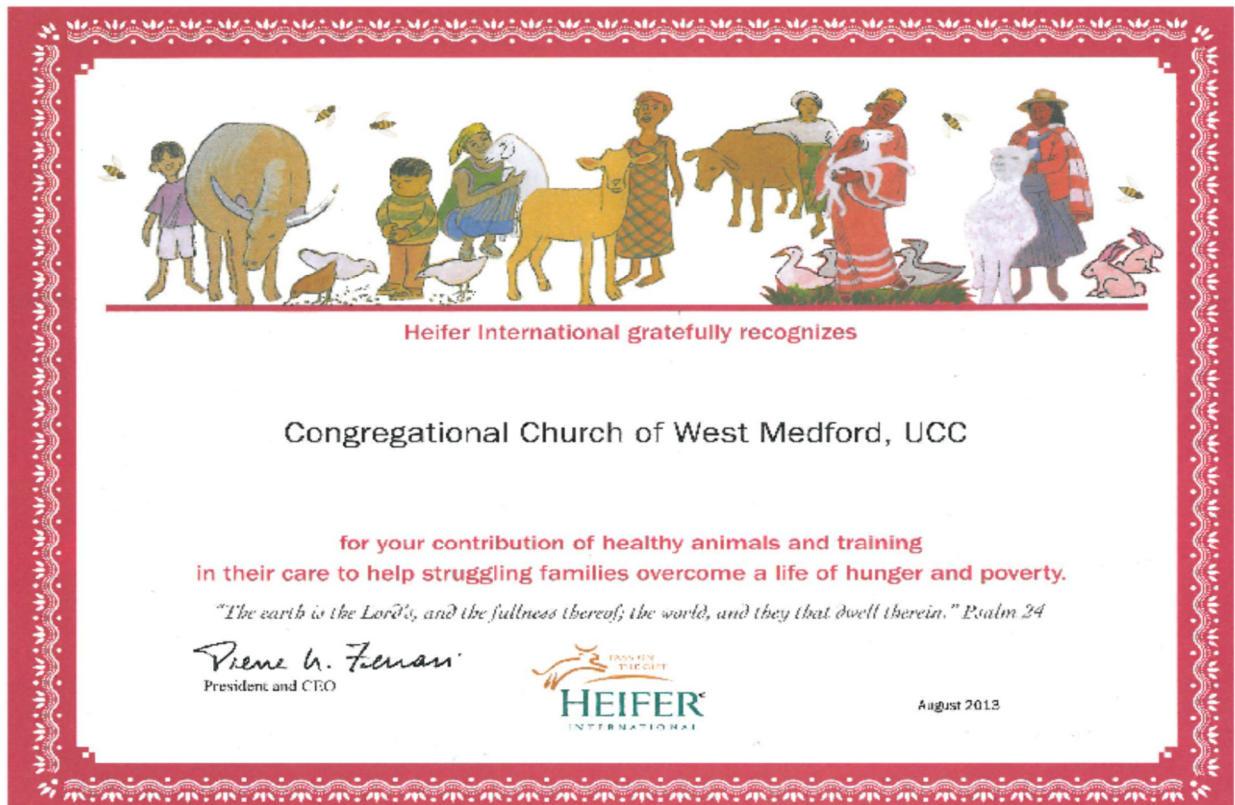
CCWM Confirmation Program News

Rev. Wendy is planning an exciting Confirmation Program for 13-16 year olds using a fabulous, progressive curriculum entitled Re-Form which includes 40 hilarious animated short films that frame the theological questions that youth really ask and an Anti-Workbook that's chock full of individual and group activities. You can see a bit about the curriculum here: <http://reform.wearesparkhouse.org/>. We hope to do some shared mission and worship experiences with kids from the UU Medford church. If you have neighbors or friends in this age group, who you think might be interested in discovering their faith—please let Rev. Wendy know so that she might send an invitation. Watch for more info,

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

CE and Outreach Celebrate your gifts to Heifer Project International.



FROM OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice to Hold Kids and Grief Support

Children react differently from adults regarding the death of a loved one. To assist in helping children process their loss, Hallmark Health Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice is sponsoring a Kids and Grief Support Group for children ages 6-12 at the Immaculate Conception Church, 600 Pleasant Street in Malden. The next support group for children begins Wednesday, September 25, 2013 and meets for six sessions: October 9 & 23; November 6 & 20; and December 4. The group takes place from 4:30 to 6:00pm. A parents and caregivers support group meets at the same time. According to Judy Seifert, Bereavement Coordinator at Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice, the Groups provide a safe place for children to not only express their feelings, but also to share memories, meet new friends, and learn how to process their grief. Registration is required to attend the first meeting. For information and to register, call Judy Seifert at (781) 338-7861.

Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice in Malden is looking for volunteers who may be interested in participating in a Hospice Volunteer Training Program during the months of September and October. The training will be held on 9 Mondays from 6:00–8:30pm. Volunteers are needed to work with patients and families, as well as to assist with office-related duties such as mailings and special events. Contact Allison Caplin, Hallmark Health Hospice Volunteer Coordinator for more information at acaplin@hallmarkhealth.org or 781-338-7863.

Hallmark Health System and Greater Lynn Senior Services are sponsoring a Free Program on Chronic Pain Self-Management for six sessions on Wednesdays, beginning September 4, through October 9, from 9:30 am - noon at Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice, 178 Savin Street, 3rd Floor, Malden. The Program is a "must attend" for those who want to learn how to manage their chronic pain, leading to a more satisfying and fulfilling life. Open to adults of all ages who have a primary diagnosis of pain or care for someone who does. This program is free, however registration is required as space is limited. To register or for more information, call (781) 338-7823.

Girl Scouts of America: Leaders and Volunteers Needed September 28, 2013

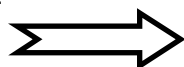
Leader Recruiting Meeting 10 am—2 pm

The Congregational Church of W Medford

Contact Evalyn O'Rourke through the office@medfordchurch.org

FREE Outdoor Movie Night

Please join us August 21 for an outdoor movie night fundraiser. We will have lots of festivities for the kids and we will be showing the movie "The Croods". All proceeds go to Sabrina's Foundation.



**Medford
Public
Library**



Children's Origami Lesson Andrew Anselmo brings his unique style to the Medford Public Library on July 9 and Aug 20 at 11AM. where he will teach children (15 per class) the art of Origami (the Japanese word for paperfolding), a combination of art, mathematics and engineering. Beginning on June 3 you will have a chance to register for one of the two classes for this fun experience. You must be 7+years old (No Exceptions). First Come First Serve

NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE UCC

Super Saturday Save the Date! The Next Super Saturday Event is October 26, 2013. Come spend the day! Enjoy a variety of workshop offerings, marketplace and networking. Tri-County Regional Vocational High School, 147 Pond Street, Franklin, MA. Keynote Speaker: The Rev. James Moos, Nominee for Election as Executive Minister of Wider Church Ministries, UCC and Senior Pastor of Bismark (ND) UCC.

Calling all Youth: "Sabbath in a Modern Age: A 24 Hour Christian Spiritual Formation Retreat" for youth and youth groups: Nov. 1-2 at Grotonwood Retreat Center (<http://macucc.org/events/detail/1211>) or April 4-5 at Craigville Retreat Center (<http://macucc.org/events/detail/1212>). Helping youth: reconnect to God, others and themselves; think about the meaning of Sabbath and how that might be a spiritual practice; and meet and grow spiritually with youth from around the UCC. Come to worship, sing, building community and reflect. Come to explore, come to deepen, come to expand, come to open. For more details see links: Led by Rev. Matt Carriker and other Confirmation retreat leaders from the MACUCC. Register asap—the leaders are very popular and these retreats fill up quickly.

Pastor's Reflection, Continued from page one

grounded and are looking for God in the world. You know people like this! I have noticed that after a thunderstorm I discover multiple celebratory photos of rainbows with the requisite notation of amazement posted by friends on facebook. And perhaps because of the ease of posting to that venue, there seems to be an increasing collection of photos of my friends' awe inspiring trips to the beach, lake, mountains; their breathtaking experiences of brilliant sunrises and glorious sunsets; their wonder at the delicate grace of butterflies and colorful pop of flowers in their gardens; and the heart pumping thrill of glittering, thundering fireworks. I love seeing their photos, I love that they are stopping to record it and I love the sense of wonder inherent in it all.

The truth is, we can all develop a genuine sense of wonder when we cultivate an openness to all that cannot be understood, all which can scarcely be believed. Bernal Diaz, who accompanied Cortés on the conquest of Mexico and subsequently recorded the adventure in his *The Conquest of New Spain*, at one point similarly recalls the Spaniards' first spellbound vision of the Aztec capital: "Gazing on such wonderful sights, we did not know what to say, or whether what appeared before us was real" (Lawrence Weschler, *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder* [New York: Pantheon, 1995], 80-81).

Genuine wonder stops your heart, sucks away your breath, robs you of your speech, freezes you in your tracks. Genuine wonder strikes your psyche without warning and flattens your cool consciousness with a sucker punch.

You might say that to have the kind of faithfulness that the author of Hebrews wrote about is really to have a sense of wonder—for isn't faithfulness also about being open to that which cannot be understood, that which cannot be seen, that which can scarcely be seen? Stop and think about this text from Hebrews—to have faith and to wonder:

- is to have courage and stamina in the face of persecution.
- is to stand up for God when all the powers around you insist that you sit down.
- is to discover the experience of pain and deprivation less real than "the assurance of things hoped for" and "the conviction of things not seen" (11:1).
- is to realize that generations past, like a "great cloud of witnesses," surround us at all times with the testimony of their faithfulness.



Beloved, there is wonder in the air all around us and wonder in the cloud of witnesses that has gone before us on this spiritual journey. I wonder, when is the last time you went marveling? What is in your wonder cabinet? By faith, let us look for the beauty and power of it all. By faith, let your mind be blown by God's beauty. By faith, let yourself be blown away by God's bounty. By faith, let yourself be Wow-ed by God's bevy of blessings.

Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade

THIS WEEK AT YOUR CHURCH

August 18-24, 2013

August 18, 2013 Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Worship Service-10 am with Holy Communion

Goodland Church-5:30 pm

Goodland Church Fellowship Hall—2:30-5:00 pm

Monday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am--6:15 am;

8:15 am--9:00 am; 5:30 pm--6:15 pm

Yoga- 6:30 pm

Mothers Club-7:30 pm

Tuesday

Zumba- 6:30 pm

Gamblers Anonymous- 7:00 pm

Wednesday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am— 6:15 am;

8:15 am--9:00 am; 5:30 pm--6:15 pm

Zumba- 6:30 pm

Thursday

Food Addicts- 6 pm

Friday

(3) Boot Camp Sessions: 5:45 am--6:15 am;

8:15 am-- 9:00 am, 5:30--6:15 pm

Saturday

Alanon - 9 am

Yoga- 9am

Boot Camp- 12:15 pm

August 25, 2013 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Service-10 am

Goodland Church Worship--5:30—7:30 pm

Weekdays

(M—F) **Bright Stars Afterschool Enrichment Program**, www.BrightStarsKids.org

((M-F) **Gentle Dragon Co-op Preschool**, www.GentleDragonPreschool.org

(M-F) **English at Large** (ESOL/ESL Programs), www.englishatlarge.org

The Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ

Ministers: All of us!

Pastor and Teacher: Reverend Wendy Miller Olapade

Organist and Choir Director: Dr. Herman Weiss

Church Administrator: Diane Petrelis

Moderator: Paul Roberts

Treasurer: Beverly Roche

Deacon of the Month: Kathy Williams

Clerk: Clarisse Coughlin

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