

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.
www.medfordchurch.org
www.FormingFaith.NET



PASTORAL REFLECTION



Hello-Goodbye-Hello

There is something poignant about the fact that our final days after 110 years in our beautiful, solid as a Gothic rock, 1904 structure, come to pass in the midst of the glory that we all know as autumn in New England. It is a glory that is about to come to a close. It is a glory that will lie dormant for a bit. And it is a glory that will burst forth in new life—resurrection. I suppose because it is the start of a new school year, but maybe it is also because of the inevitable life that is stored in the dying leaves of autumn that this time of year always expresses hope and possibility for me.

I am sitting in my new office writing on a temporary desk, surrounded by unpacked boxes and new sounds—the rhythm of train wheels rolling on tracks and the clang-clang-clang of the warning bell; the clunky sound of restaurant garbage being rolled past the back of our retail space; fire engines screaming by as close as...well, the front door; car engines starting and doors in the parking lot slamming shut; and conversations of every sort and language (delighted greetings, angry phone calls, whispers of love)! These are new sounds for me to

hear from the pastor's office but they are not unwelcomed. There is a new kind of quiet too—when I pay attention the noise of the city square dies down and that is when I hear the best sound—the rustling of the trees and the tumbling of autumn leaves across the macadam and up against the back door. It sounds like a party—God celebrating the new thing that is happening in West Medford Square.

Our final days in the big building are marked by new beginnings in the little storefront. Our relief from the responsibilities of that property is offset by the anxiety we have over whether we can make a go of this new thing. Our 140-year-old identity of ourselves as the Congregational Church of West Medford (CCWM) is being replaced with our one-week-old identity of Sanctuary, UCC. We think we knew what it meant to be CCWM and we are still figuring out what it means to be Sanctuary. We had confidence that people gave us some standing in the community because we were CCWM and we are sheepishly wondering what they will think of us selling the building and moving to a flower shop. It is a hard thing to hold these dichotomies and the complexity of all of these experiences.

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I have spoken of this many times. We are holding deep grief and celebrative joy in the same two hands and it is stressful to try to feel, carry and express both emotions. You don't know which one to feel when and the emotions bat you around from one extreme to the other, sometimes in the same breath. Yet, this is as natural and as much a part of life as the seasons of the year. The story of gain and loss, of joy and sorrow, of life and death, of union and separation, these stories are inside each one of us. The cycle begins at birth, when we were broken loose from our mother's womb. Our forward movement gathered momentum until we pushed farewell and, with a throbbing burst of new life, cried hello again to a vastly different world. And this cycle continues throughout our lives. Hello – Goodbye – Hello.

Hello-Goodbye-Hellos are a part of every single day. Sometimes we choose them and sometimes they choose us. Usually they are small—not so significant gains and losses—that do not bring strong emotions. But at times they are deep, powerful, wounding experiences that trail around our hearts and pain inside of us for years or they are wild, wonderful, glorious greetings of newness and celebration that fill us with the kind of joy that changes everything.

This weekend we will say goodbye to a building which is a symbol of our past and our identity. For some the symbolism is more significant than for others. But do not be fooled into thinking that it is not a significant thing for you. We will all experience some grief and we will all be changed by this transition, by this leave-taking, by the loss of this symbol. In her seminal work entitled, *"Praying Our Goodbyes"*, Joyce Rupp asks the question: "Do we ever get used to saying goodbye? Or should we? I think not," she says. "Saying goodbye helps us to experience the depths of our human condition. It leads us to a much deeper understanding of what it means to live life in its mystery and its wholeness. We ought not to be afraid of the partings that life asks of us. Nor ought we to hold back in giving ourselves fully to love, to the wonderful growth opportunities of investing ourselves in people and events." She goes on to say that "We may be harshly bruised by life's farewells, but it is possible to be healed. We can become whole again. I believe that if we are willing to move inside the heart of the experience, to live patiently through the process even as we acknowledge the difficult, painful emotions, that we can experience the wonder of spiritual growth and the marvel of new depths of faith in our relationship with God and with others."

Next weekend, we will say hello to a new thing—a beautiful, gracious, right-sized ministry center in the city square designed to allow us to offer hospitality and be sanctuary to all. We will form new memories and new ministries and new ways of making a difference in people's lives. We will be a place of refuge and restoration and renewal and re-engagement and new people will come along with us to form faith and community. And the truth is, that everything we



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become and every thing we do will be informed by and grounded in everything that we have been in the past. That's just the way that it is—and we thank God! It is exactly what God created—spring, summer, autumn and winter; birth, life, death and rebirth; hello-goodbye-hello.

I pray that you will be attentive to this experience for yourself. Don't just walk away because it is too hard to feel it. Don't pretend it does not matter to you because it is easier than acknowledging the importance of it. Be deliberate in praying goodbye to what has been. Be engaged in the skittery energy of starting a new church. Join us for worship to do so, call me and have a conversation about your emotions, meet with a counselor or friend or, or do it for yourself, but please, do it. Pray this goodbye. Pray this hello. Engage your very-whole-self in the messy process and God will carry you and we through.

With blessing and prayer,

Rev. Wendy (revwdmiller@comcast.net/617.592.5853)

**The Congregational Church of West Medford, United Church of Christ
is please to announce that at a congregational meeting
held on September 14, 2014
unanimously voted to do business as**

sanctuary

United Church of Christ



www.sanctuaryucc.org

There was wonderful discussion about the meaning of this name,
how it is both informed by and will inform our sense of call, and the power of
the additional words we will use in our public relations and in the telling of our story.

We expressed a strong awareness of both being called to create a place of hospitality and refuge
AND being a place that seeks justice for all and engenders faithful action.

We acknowledged the circular nature of faith formation: "We experience the Holy and we are changed/
renewed and our relationships get better and connections more important and we are moved to make a
difference/take action and we experience the Holy and we..."

The words we will use as a tag line remain in discussion
but the intention and calling are coming into focus.

Could it be:

Refuge, Restoration, Renewal, Response, Reengagement

We will see...

NOTE FROM KIM GRUBB

Dear Friends,

I just wanted to take this time to express my feelings about our church. I was born in this church, baptized and confirmed here. I was married here and buried my grandparents, my father and my brother. I attended Sunday school and youth group here. I did the nursery from the age of 13 until 18 then I began my Sunday school teaching that has spanned about 38 years. I have been on committees for those same 38 years. This building and church holds so many memories for me I feel truly blessed. These memories include: at the age of almost 2 participating in a fashion show held by circle members. I still have 8mm film of me walking across the stage in Fellowship Hall; participating in many heifer projects; a drama group and performing two plays with many members both young and old side by side; helping to paint the old youth room (the former Headstart classroom) black and transforming it into a drop in for neighborhood teens; youth group along with North Street and Marion St. churches; taking a trip to Wounded Knee back in the early 70's; playing hide and seek in the building with the youth group; Church fairs; being a waitress for many church dinners and so many more memories that it is difficult to put them all down.

The most important memory is all the wonderful beautiful people that I have met and grown up with. One of the most precious things for me is that, the same people I grew up with in this church, my children got to grow up with and get to know. My children have great memories of Bill Slagle, George Gilch, Peggy Bennett, Mary and Max Beal and so many more. My son, Jamie and Peggy share the same birthday. When he was 4 years old he told me he wanted to have lunch and bring Peggy flowers for her birthday. So he picked the lilacs that grew in our yard and we went over to her house and he gave her the flowers and they had a birthday lunch celebration for the two of them. My young daughters Heather and Meghan were dubbed the "little dippers" because they could frequently be seen dipping the snacks at coffee hour. My children were in Sunday School from the time they were about 2 weeks old until confirmation.

For me this process, like for a lot of you has been difficult. I chose not to participate in Crossroads because I knew my heart would overrule my head and I would not be able to contribute positively to the process. Being on committees for 38 years I know in my head that these are the decisions we have to make and they are the right ones. My heart tells me differently. Although the building is just that, a building, it still holds many memories for me. I do have memories of every corner in the building, but like I said it is the people who also made it special. I have met and maintained friendships with so many people over the years, and they have all enriched my life greatly. Due to recent circumstances with my mother I have not been able to attend church, but the church and the people in it are always in my thoughts.

As we approach the final days at our church, I have a heavy heart. I do know we will move on to other ways of worshipping and doing God's work. I will cherish all my memories and all the friendships who have helped me through all my joys and hardships. I want to take this time to thank each and everyone who have walked through our church doors and through my life. You have all made me a better person and a shared love of our church.

Kim Grubb

Happy September Birthday

4	Brenda Briggs	21	Jenna Nackel
5	Diane Petrelis	23	Rev Wendy Miller Olapade
9	Patty Hutchinson	25	Patrick Coughlin
19	Holly Maloney	29	Joy Roberts
20	Kerry Hutchinson	30	Joe Luongo



Have you signed up for our first gathering?

The first monthly service project is scheduled for next Sat, Sept 27.

Everything is online, but to pique your interest, here is what this project entails.

Everyone is invited to join the Feast!!

To celebrate September's theme of hospitality, FormingFaith.NET will hold a feast prepared by families* in our community. To participate, just follow the steps below:

Sign up for the part of the meal your family would like to make.

As a family, use [Pinterest](#) to find a dish that looks like it'd be healthy, delicious, and fun to make.

Go to the store together to buy the ingredients. Or, better yet, check out what straight-from-the-ground veggies are available at the [Plough & Stars Project](#), a farm co-op right here in Medford.

You can pick the veggies up on the morning of the 27th and meet other folks from the neighborhood. Have fun making the dish with your family.

Take your time and chat while you cook ([click here for some hospitality-related conversation starters](#)).

At 5 p.m., bring your family and your home-cooked dish to North Prospect Union UCC ([map here](#)).

Once we've gathered, each family will be given a chance to tell the story of their dish. A member from each family will help serve their dish at a buffet line. We feast!

* We welcome families of all different shapes and sizes. A family may consist of just you or maybe you and your significant other or maybe you and your (grand)child(ren). All people and all combinations of people are welcome to participate.

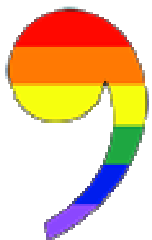
If you are already on our list, you are receiving the weekly email that is designed to encourage participation and highlight the week's faithspirations (activities).

Each activity will engage you and your family in faith conversation and spiritual practices designed to form faith offer growth in the spiritual practice of the week.

If you are not already on the list—go to the web site and sign up

You do not want to miss this very cool curricula designed to resource your family to form faith at home, engage your life through our culture as a person of faith.

November 8, 2014 Never Turning Back: Celebrating 30 Years of ONA



ONA began with a 1984 MACUCC resolution (via Church of the Covenant in Boston) which was brought to the UCC's general synod the following year. Since the first ONA listing published in 1987, there have been nearly 1200 ONA churches.

Save the date for this celebration with speakers The Rev. Ann B. Day (National Coordinator of the ONA Program from 1987-2007) and Felix Carrion (the former Director of the UCC's Still Speaking Ministry). Watch for more: www.macucc.org/lgbt

FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Affordable Housing Lottery Lumiere

3780 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford, MA

Three Studios @ \$1,048*, eight 1BRs @ \$1,174*, Five 2BRs @ \$1,292*

**Rents subject to change in 2015. Utilities not included. Tenants will pay own Gas Heat, Gas Hot Water, Electricity (including cooking), Water and Sewer*

Lumiere is a 163 unit rental apartment community located in Medford at 3780 Mystic Valley Parkway. 16 of these apartments will be made available through this application process. Unit features include fully applianced stainless kitchens, 36" designer kitchen cabinetry, solid surface counter and island tops, bathroom ceramic tile flooring and bath surround, in unit washers and dryers, and include one parking spot. The property abuts the Mystic River Reservation, a 300 acre public park along the scenic Mystic River, Location offers convenient pedestrian and MBTA bus service to Wellington MBTA train station and submarket shopping and entertainment. Please see www.LiveLumiere.com for more details on the development and the units.

MAXIMUM Household Income Limits: \$47,450 (1 person), \$54,200 (2 people), \$61,000 (3 people), \$67,750 (4 people)

A Public Info Session will be held on Oct 8th, 2014 at 6:00 pm at Medford City Hall
(85 George P. Hassett Drive in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor)

Completed Applications and Required Income Documentation must be received, not postmarked, by 2 pm on November 12th, 2014. The Lottery will be held on December 3rd at 6 pm.

For Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.s-e-b.com/lottery or call (617) 782-6900 (x1 then x7) and leave a message.

Applications and Information also available at the Medford Public Library on 11 High St
Library Hours (M-Th 9-9, Fri 9-6, Sat 9-5)



Last Call!! Registration for Super Saturday—October 25, 2014

(Last Spring the event sold out with over 650 participants—Register Now!!)

New Location!! Keefe Regional Technical High School, 750 Winter Street, Framingham MA. Presented by the The Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences of the United Church of Christ. Join hundreds of pastors and lay leaders from across two Conferences for worship, workshops, forums, networking and a marketplace!

Featuring The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Director of the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries—Jaramillo is responsible for the church's work on human rights and social, racial and economic justice. She is a former president and vice-president of the Council for Hispanic Ministries and former co-convenor of the Council of Racial and Ethnic Ministries. She will give the message during morning worship and also offer a lunchtime forum.

48 Workshops with a chance for two workshops and lunchtime dialogues; a marketplace with SERRVE, books, mission partners and more. Go to the conference home page to register and see a description of all the workshop topics: www.macucc.org

Here are a few titles to pique your interest: A Creative Worship Journey ~ Advent through Pentecost ; Be The Change - The Nonviolent Response ; Going Up River: Working for Systemic Change ; Healthy Communication in Churches and Life ; Honest Encounters with the "Spiritual but Not Religious" ; I Was In Prison and You Visited Me ; I've Answered the Call of Church Leadership—Now What? ; Joyful Noise: Celebrating and Reinvigorating Your ONA Ministry ; Leave No Parishioner Behind! ; The Myths and Realities of the Latino/a/Hispanic-American: A Challenge and Opportunity for the UCC ; Talking About Faith and Money: Preaching and Testimony ; The Ethical Edges of Baptism ; We Can Do All Things Through Christ: Becoming an Innovative Church: Part 1

And these are just some of the morning sessions—you really need to be at this event.

Let's get a large group of people attending and learn from lay and clergy alike.

**Andover Newton
Theological School**

**Please join us
for the Presidential
Inauguration of The
Rev. Martin B. Copenhagen**



**Oct. 5, 2014, 3:00 pm
Reception to Follow**

**Old South Church
645 Boylston Street
Boston**

*RSVP by Sept 1, Marjorie Bell
617.831.2411 or mbell@ants.edu*

MISSION/MINISTRY WITH PINE RIDGE

Thanks for the New School Clothes: What a wonderful response you garnered for H'uya and Mink'a, who needed some new school clothes. Joy Harris reports that you gathered 7 bags of new school clothes for these children who are so dear to us. God and the children are smiling! Here are two photos of the kids on the first day of school. In the photo on the left are Raven and Mink'a—Mink'a is decked out in a new dress, leggings, headband and Gap hoodie. It's so great to see her smiling!! H'uya is on the right looking pretty cool in black jeans and V-neck T!



***Holiday Cookie Walk to benefit our
ministry with Pine Ridge and ReMember
December 2014 (date TBD)***

Save Your Cans!!

The ministry team for Pine Ridge is planning a cookie walk in December.

Please save coffee and other cans for use for the cookie walk and dust off your cookie recipes so we can raise funds! We hope to hold the event Saturday on High St. and Sunday at NPU. Questions: Joy Harris



**Oct 25/26
Pine Ridge/Re-Member
Feather II Capital Campaign
with Founder Rev. Keith Titus**

Sat, Oct 25: 6:30 Reception, 7:00 pm program about Feather II project
at the Danvers Maple Street UCC with Winchester and CCWM/Sanctuaryucc.
RSVP Shawn Berry rgberfam@verizon.net. Please reply by Oct. 18th.

**Sun, Oct 26—11 am Joint Worship
at North Prospect Union w/Rev. Titus preaching.**
We will not worship at 458 High St. that day!