



MARKINGS

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A publication of
South Acton
Congregational
Church

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The Rev. Katrina Wuensch

Welcome to South Acton Congregational Church. The foundation of our beloved church rests on God's unconditional love and boundless grace. We seek to know God and follow the teachings of Jesus.

We welcome people of every race and culture who are young and old; single, married and divorced. We welcome people of every physical, mental and intellectual ability; sexual orientation and gender identity; every educational background and economic circumstance. We believe diversity enriches our faith community.

All people are made in God's image. You are

From Katrina...

My last Sunday with all of you is February 7, the last Sunday before Lent. A few days later you will celebrate Ash Wednesday, and enter that symbolic time of "being in the wilderness." It feels liturgically perfect that I leave you on February 7, Transfiguration Sunday, the day when the disciples climbed to the mountaintop with Jesus and witness the radiance of God. It feels perfect that we say goodbye on a Sunday of light and possibility. And it feels perfect that I do not enter Lent with you, but rather, leave you to make that new journey on your own, with the new guides that will join you.

So these next weeks feel very important to me: rich and full of weight. I want to speak to each one of you, to tell you how you have touched my life and for what in your radiant self I am grateful and amazed. I want to tell each one of you how re-

markable you are for having been through that loss or that change or that new thing, or how you contributed or spoke the truth or witnessed to God's hope. I want to be able to say "I'm sorry" to those of you whom I've let down or disappointed or offended in any way, and I want to say "Thank you" to all of you who have been supportive, patient, generous and forgiving. And those of you who are struggling or suffering right now I want to be sure to say goodbye with you wrapped in prayer and love and feeling fully held by the SACC family, trusting that you will receive excellent care from our Deacons and the next pastor.

I am looking forward to these conversations, even though they will, at times, be sad and difficult. But a good and complete goodbye is part of what I owe you. I owe you my full honesty and presence in

this time, my full courage in naming exactly what we are going through, even though that it is hard. To pretend that things will be the same or that I'll still see you is simply to be in denial about this loss, and to want it not to be. Together, we must simply name what is, and feel it, and be with one another. And all of us shall go on to good and bright tomorrows, with new people and ideas that will bring new challenge and change and growth. Such things are hard, but necessary.

So blessings to each one of you! I look forward to talking with you. I care about you all so deeply, and want only the best for everyone at SACC! Let us enter into this time of passage together, with open eyes and hearts, and see what God has in store for us.

Katrina



"The measure of intelligence is the ability to change."
— Albert Einstein

From the Diaconate

Happy New Year SACC friends. As we leave the Holiday Season behind and welcome the joys and challenges of 2016, I keep coming back to a favorite quote from Anne Lamott. "I do not understand the mystery of grace-only that it meets us where we are,

but does not leave us where it found us." I think these are words to remember as we face a new year that will certainly bring moments of joy and moments of despair. We will all be searching for grace in our lives and praying that we find it when we need

it the most. As 2016 unfolds, please remember that the Diaconate is here to help the SACC community, we look forward to hearing from you through out the new year.

Blessings To All,
Terry Martins
Diaconate Chair

Congregational Board

TRANSITION UPDATE FROM THE BOARD

The Board met on December 27 with Rev. Kelly Gallagher, UCC Associate Conference Minister, to discern our journey forward. Although the Board will be coordinating things to start, everyone can be involved in this transition time. We will surely need everyone to make the journey more meaningful.

The Board will be putting together an Interim Minister Profile in the next week or so. This will be given out to potential Interim Ministers who might be a good fit for our congregation. We will then conduct interviews and choose one. Interim Ministers are trained for this time in a church's life and will surely be a

great asset.

There may be two or three weeks in between having Katrina leave and when the Interim Minister starts. This few week buffer is intentional, to give us a short period to catch our breath. We are working on how to handle this short period. There are many options available to us, and we will let you know as soon as that is worked out.

On Katrina's last Sunday, February 7th (mark your calendars!), Rev. Kelly Gallagher will return to lead a "Liturgy of Farewell" to express gratitude, offer encouragement and release Katrina.

After securing an Interim Minister, the Board will be forming a Search Committee. The members of the committee

should reflect the diversity of the church, i.e., gender, age, long time members and newer members, as well as persons with involvement in varied aspects of church life. (We have already had some volunteers for babysitters for Search Committee members if needed.) We will let you know when the process for nomination to the Search Committee has begun.

In the meantime, let us enjoy this precious time we have with Katrina. And remember that it's okay to grieve, and at the same time, it's also okay to have hope for our church's new journey!

Patti Babcock
on behalf of the Congregational Board

Youth Group, Mission Trips Community Service

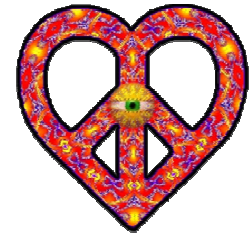


*"Never be afraid
to trust an
unknown future
to a known God."
— Corrie ten
Boom*

Pray for Peace

Please join us every Monday night, 7:30 - 8:30 pm in the church library for one hour of prayer or meditation - we'll pray for an end to gain violence. If you

can't be present, you can join in during that hour from wherever you are, sit quietly and join us for an hour of peaceful prayer. Led by Linsey Hurley.



Food Collection

Please bring in canned and nonperishable foods for our Second Sunday collection for the Community Supper Food

Pantry; the next collection is January 10. Soup, cereal, canned fruits & veggies, pasta & sauce, tuna, peanut butter, jelly

can be left in the green bin in the church lobby.



Florida for Vacation - \$\$ to SACC

A Win-Win!!

Enjoy one week in the lovely [Star Island Resort in Kissimmee, Florida](#) Sunday, February 14 - Sunday, February 21, 2016

Suite Amenities:

Flat screen TV in each room, wireless internet, cable TV, DVD player, in-room safe, full kitchen, King bed, sleeper sofa, Jacuzzi tub

This is a one bedroom, 1 bath villa that sleeps four people. The typical price for February is \$1400 per week. I am asking for \$1200 for the one week's stay. 50% of the amount received will go to SACC. If interested please contact Shelley Garrett at Shelley.garrett1@gmail.com.



Worship in January

- January 3: Celebrating Epiphany, Katrina preaching, Communion
 January 10: The Baptism of Christ - Budget Meeting
 January 17: All-ages Service for MLK Jr. Sunday, celebrating Love, and a Baptism
 January 24: Special Service on Goodbyes
 January 31: Katrina preaching
 February 7: Katrina's Last Sunday

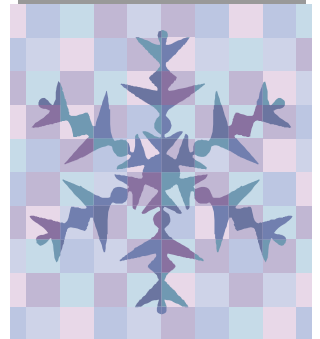
Drop-In Times with Katrina

Hard to believe, but my last Sunday with all of you will be February 7! (Although I'll be working, at church cleaning out my office, and available to meet with you and respond to pastoral needs until February 19.) If you'd like to speak with me to wrap up any loose ends, share any feelings or feedback or thoughts, you have lots of chances! Please drop into any of the times and places listed below. Stay for the whole time, or just a few minutes. You can also contact me via the church office (978-263-2332) or email (katrina2332@yahoo.com) to arrange a private time to talk.

- ◇ Wednesday, Jan 20, 7:00-8:30pm at the Red Raven
- ◇ Tuesday, Jan 26, 7:00-8:30pm at the Red Raven
- ◇ Sunday, Jan 31, 9:00-10:00am in the church library (with donuts!)
- ◇ Sunday, Jan 31, 12-1:00pm at new London Pizza in West Acton
- ◇ Wednesday, Feb 3, 2:00-4:00pm at the Boston Bean House
- ◇ And Thursday Coffees from January 7 through February 4!

Thursday Coffee with Katrina

Only five Thursday Coffees with Katrina left! Don't miss out on these wonderful occasions! (And chocolate muffins!) Join Katrina and other SACC folks **Thursday morning from 9:30am until 11:00am-ish** at the **Boston Bean House** in Maynard Center. **The last Coffee will be February 4!** (There are other opportunities to connect with Katrina before she leaves - see the list of "drop-in times", above and remember that you can always call or email to make an appointment!



*"None of us
 knows what
 might happen
 even the next
 minute, yet
 still we go
 forward.
 Because we
 trust. Because
 we have
 Faith."
 — Paulo
 Coelho*

The Peculiar Nature of Pastoral Goodbyes

On **Sunday, January 24**, Katrina will lead a special service about goodbyes, and the odd and bizarre way that saying goodbye to a pastor is different – and yet similar to – other goodbyes we have experienced. It can be confus-

ing and painful to think that Katrina has genuinely cared about and connected with all of us for so many years, and now must simply "disappear" from our lives. But that is what she is ethically obligated to do. Don't miss

this service when she'll explore, with simple examples, the pastoral relationship and why it's so important that a pastor really leave, when they stop serving a congregation.



Prayer Book

Thank you for all your patience as we transition to using a "Prayer Book" for our joys and concerns. We think that it has been working beautifully! The book is on a stand at the entrance to the sanctuary; you are

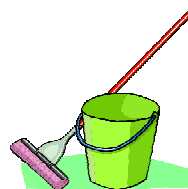
welcome to write your prayers into this book at any time. Katrina will read these brief prayers during the time for joys and concerns. We'll continue to provide a time for us to raise our hands and share if we did not

have a chance to write in the book. Please speak directly with Katrina or your Deacon if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions. Thank you!



Cleaning Teams for January

- 1/2 Marilyn Dow's Team
- 1/9 Pam Roger's Team
- 1/16 Tom Porcher's Team
- 1/23 Angela Aaronson's Team
- 1/30 Jane Epstein's Team



"Faith is not the belief that God will do what you want. It is the belief that God will do what is right."
— Max Lucado