



MARKINGS

The Newsletter of South Acton Congregational Church

OCTOBER 2018

Worship With Us!

Sundays at 10:30am

Child care is available and Sunday School is provided during the service. Our church is handicapped-accessible.

October 7
World Communion Sunday
Intergenerational Sunday

October 14
Second Sunday Food Collection
What is abundance?

October 21
Stewardship

October 28
All-Saints Sunday
Stewardship

Second Sunday Food Collection

Please bring in canned and nonperishable foods for our Second Sunday collection for the Community Supper Food Pantry on **October 14**. Soup, cereal, canned fruits & veggies, pasta & sauce, tuna, peanut butter and jelly can be left in the green bin. Reusable shopping bags will be available for you to borrow and fill with donations.

From Amy

Every morning as I drive towards South Acton, my soul is filled as I gawk at the already beautiful leaves. The yellows, oranges and reds fill my soul with much needed color. I love autumn. Inevitably we, the L-Whs, can be found walking up and down the long rows of apple trees, eating apples as we will our bag. We collect mountains of leaves on evening walks and drink mugs filled with hot cider so that it doesn't sting quite as much when we realize the darkness is creeping into hours that were daylight only a breath or two earlier. Where I lived in Texas, we didn't really have autumn so I gorge myself every year. After all, I am making up for lost time. I am drinking in the colors and the golden light and allowing them to warm my soul as a chill fills the air.

The other day, I was scrolling through playlists on Amazon Music and it recommended a Playlist titled, "Songs for a Winter's Day". My curiosity was peaked and I began to look through the songs on that particular playlist. Without even realizing it, I found myself longing for a snow covered earth and long nights and the stillness of winter. "What are you doing!?!?!?" I asked myself. "Winter? Seriously, Amy!" I can easily jump ahead to the next thing and long for tomorrow's bright and shiny treasure. I do not mean to, it just happens. There is a shininess to the idea of tomorrow.

In Psalm 90, the Psalmist says, Teach us to number our days so that we may

gain a wise heart. The idea of numbering or counting my days always reminds me of the red and green Christmas chains my sister and I would make to countdown the days until Christmas. But, what if numbering our days isn't as much about counting down as just counting. What if it is about recording, remembering, acknowledging every day for what it has been for us. What if the Psalmist is reminding us about the Spiritual Practice of presence. Some call this the practice of the now. Others call it mindfulness. Whatever name we choose to use, there is a reminder to be awake today. I've always liked the way Annie Dillard says it, "The way we spend our days is the way we spend our lives."

So, I will ask you the two questions I have been thinking about recently.

Every morning I am trying to ask myself: "How will you spend your day?"

Every evening I am trying to ask myself: "Where did I meet God today?"

Some days the answers come quickly and other days they do not. But, as I mentioned a few Sundays ago, I do not think it is as much about the answer as it is about staying awake, paying attention, and asking the questions.

♥ Rev. Amy

From the Diaconate

On Sunday September 23rd at 3:00pm we celebrated a very special service at which Reverend Amy was officially installed as our settled pastor by the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ. Even though the Congregation approved the Search Committee's recommendation of Amy as our new pastor last fall, and we signed a contract with her and she has been with us since February; she was not fully considered our settled pastor until this service. Administrative technicalities aside, it was a wonderful service with over 50 members of the church in attendance, as well as a dozen or more clergy from the Mass UCC.

One purpose of such a service is to celebrate the promises made between the Congregation and the Pastor and the wider church. And as was made clear by those who

spoke at the service, all sides of this relationship have deep and important responsibilities to each other. Reverend Amy is responsible for providing us with guidance and leadership in our services and on our spiritual journey as a congregation, as well as to provide pastoral care and support for those in need of it. And we are responsible for being honest and upfront with her in all our dealings with her, and to support her in all the work she does here.

After the formalities of the service were over we all joined together to enjoy a really great pot-luck event with plenty of good and interesting food and warm fellowship with one another. So, in closing for this month, I would like to say thank you to all the deacons who really worked hard to get things ready for the service and pot luck, to all the other folks who helped out with cleaning

before and after the event (especially the Cleaning Team for all their work), to the many people who brought all the wonderful food and beverages, to everyone who attended the service to show Reverend Amy how appreciative we are that she has joined us at SACC, and to Reverend Amy for all the work she put into making sure this service went off smoothly..

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Babcock
Diaconate Chair

Deacon	Last Names
Amber Klauer	A & B
Martha Rounds	C & E
Bob Van Meter	D, F & G
Judy Hodge	H thru K
Laurie Thibodeau	L thru N
Angela Aaronson	O thru S
Tom Porcher	T thru Z

Congregational Board News

We are embarking on Stewardship Season shortly. Stewardship is a time to reflect on what you can give to the church so we can plan our annual budget accordingly. We all love this church, people and building. Taking care of our church is all of our responsibility and when everyone pitches in, we keep our building and church life healthy. We encourage you to pray about it and then figure out what works best for you. I come up with a weekly amount that we are comfortable with and then I set up my online banking to send a check every two weeks all year long so I never have to think about it again and the church gets a consistent flow of money. It's great! If you would like to ask me about this, please reach out at any time. Enjoy this crazy Autumn weather we are having!

Pam Rogers
Chair
Congregational Board

Update from the Treasurer

In the Spring I promised to provide updates on our financial health on a regular basis. While I have missed the “regular” part of the promise, we have been busy monitoring our financials throughout the year and would like to provide you with a summary of where we are at the moment. The data discussed below is as of 20 September, 2018. I realize that this is not the end of the quarter but in order to provide this report in time to have it included in *Markings* I must do it today!

The overall situation is still positive. Our Income is up 5% vs. the budget and expenses are down 8%. Income was helped by the efforts of the SACC Movers who have generated \$6,110 for the year whereas anticipated income from the Movers was \$2,500. Pledges and Loose Collections are slightly up, 5%, for the year.

Expenses are generally on track to meet the budget with the exception of Administrative Expenses that are running at 56% of budget, \$10,114 vs. a planned \$17,900. Karen is doing a good job of keeping our spending here in line. All other expenses are pretty much in line with what was planned.

As I indicated in my spring report, we were expecting a \$19,000 bill for painting the church. That final part of that bill finally came through in mid-September. This was an extraordinary expense, that is non-recurring, that required us to draw down from our investment fund to cover. That bill and low collections in the summer required us to withdraw a total of \$27,000 from the investment fund in order to maintain a reasonable cash position. That was planned for and is no cause for alarm. In fact, we were planning on having to withdraw up to \$44,000 from the fund for the year. That does not seem likely to occur based on current income and expenses. However, we are not through the year just yet so don't back off in your contributions or pledges as we will need them to finish off the year in a positive financial position.

Also be advised that we have begun to assemble the 2019 budget so please give some thought as to what value you place in SACC and at what level you can support our church going forward. We will be asking for your commitment in early fall.

Jim Willis- Treasurer

More Light, Less Carbon

With financial support from our electric utility, we've replaced most of the lights at SACC with super-efficient LED lights, drastically reducing energy usage, carbon footprint and lighting cost.

Electric utilities support a program by MassSave to replace old-technology lights with newer, more efficient LED lights. For some homes and businesses, MassSave provides the new lights for free, depending on the number and types of existing lights and the number of hours per month the lights are used. The lights aren't free for SACC because the building is unoccupied for much of the time. Nonetheless, the subsidy from the utility is substantial.

When we analyzed the details for SACC, we found that the payback on the investment will be less than 3 years. The project replaced about 100 bulbs and fixtures, reducing our lighting energy by more than 60% and cutting our lighting expense from about \$1,200 to about \$450 per year.

On top of all that good news, the new lights are dimmable! That will require additional dimming switches and wiring, which aren't free. But they aren't expensive or hard to install and, if we decide to do that, will give nice mood options for the Sanctuary and the downstairs Community Room.

Your properties geek,
Steve Hadden

Missions & Outreach

The meeting on Sept. 30 focused on this fall's efforts. The Rosh Hashanah dinner at St Matthew's Methodist Church was a big step toward joining with other local faith communities to start conversations around our own biases that interfere with acceptance of diversity. The series on White Privilege (Tuesdays at 7 pm, 10.9, 23, 30; 11/ 13, 27, and 12/4) will help us continue to explore, identify, and own our biases in an effort to address racism and ethnic prejudices that can get in the way of respecting and honoring each person.

SACC created a scarecrow for the Stand Up to Stigma

scarecrow contest/exhibit at Cucurbit Farm on Parker St, to support the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Our scarecrow highlighted SACC movers, welcoming people to their new homes and to our church home.

The anti gun violence vigils have continued on the second Wednesday, with the next one set for October 10 from 5 to 6. Maybe we could highlight shareholder votes to research and produce safer guns.

At the West Acton Octoberfest on Sept 29, SACC members and friends extended outreach to the community at

large with balloons and bean-bag toss games, coordinated by Heather Morton.

Days for Girls resumes work parties on Sunday, Oct. 14, 2:30 to 4:30.

Curt Logee continues to organize efforts to help with the Habitat for Humanity renovation project at 43 and 45 School Street, right next door.

Discussion continues on how to disburse funds for missions outside our church. Advocate for your own special causes, both with in kind and financial donations.

SACC Work Party: October 13th

On Saturday **October 13** we'll have a work day at SACC to reduce the Community Room flooding in hard rains. Come and help for an hour or the day! We'll have coffee in the morning and whatever lunch we all vote for (pizza? subs?). It'll be fun and we'll do something wonderful for SACC!

We don't know where ALL the water comes from that floods the Community Room floor when it rains hard. But we do know that SOME of it comes off the roof, lands on the ground beside the foundation, and simply flows through the ground and the foundation stones onto the floor.

We can prevent that water from doing that by changing the shape of the ground where the rain water lands when it falls off the roof. We did this 30 years ago and it worked. We had a dry floor for 10 years. But, over time, people planted plants and the dirt moved around. And now the rain water puddles and sinks into the ground instead of flowing promptly away from the foundation. We can fix this; you can help!

We'll need shovels and rakes and leather gloves, and a wheel barrow or two. And it'll be good if some of us know about the plants and what they need as we move them and re-arrange the dirt they're in.

At the same time, there are other projects we can work on inside and out. So come and join the party and we'll make it a great day!

Hope to see you then,

Steve Hadden

Rummage / Bake Sale News

Our fall Rummage and Bake Sale will be held on **October 27** from 8:00am until 2:00 pm. This is one of our major fundraisers and it's a SACC mission. Let's all be involved to make it a big success!

Here are some of the ways you can participate: Donate goods, bake something, help set up tables on Monday, **October 22** at 6:00pm, sign up to help unload goods during the week, work on day of sale, join the clean-up crew and take leftovers to Goodwill in Concord, Savers, and other recycling places before the dump runs.

Come and buy, eat lunch, take home a frozen entree and have a fun day with friends and neighbors.

Great Things to Bring

Seasonal Clothing
Seasonal Shoes/Footwear
Jewelry
Household Goods
Sports Equipment
Linens
Small Furniture
Things you think are treasure
Puzzles, Games, and Books
Tools

Please DO NOT Bring

Computer Equipment
Large Exercise Equipment
Electric Toys
Stuffed Animals
VHS Tapes
Smelly Books
Encyclopedias
Textbooks
Underwear
Cell Phones

Any Rummage questions contact Angela Aaronson ajaaro@verizon.net or Patti Babcock pmkbabcock@gmail.com . Any Bake sale questions contact Becky Hadden bhadden@hadlorgroup.com or Michele Abroff mnigh@yahoo.com .

Days for Girls

Days for Girls is a nonprofit organization with regional chapters in Massachusetts and elsewhere. Its mission is to provide colorful menstrual care kits for girls in disadvantaged areas around the world. It taps volunteer sewers to produce the kits and then the Days for Girls organization delivers them to specific locations.

Girls in these disadvantaged areas stay home from school during their monthly cycles, disrupting their education and impacting their future. These kits and the information that is provided along with them enable girls to stay in school, providing hope for a brighter future. For more information about this organization, visit daysforgirls.org.

Last spring, we began a sewing group here at SACC and one of the leaders of the local chapter came to help us get started. Our second sewing session will be Sunday, **October 14**, from 2:30 – 4:30. If you are interested in participating, please let us know so we can arrange to have enough equipment available. Please call or email Judy McKendry (978-987-9541 or jdmckendry@verizon.net) or Michele Abroff (978-263-5424 or mnigh@yahoo.com).

SACC Notes

Bystander Training Session

A bystander is a witness – someone who sees a harmful situation and has a choice to make: Do I do something? If so, what? Training Active Bystanders helps participants recognize when they are bystanders, analyze the situation, and develop strategies to safely interrupt harm and generate positive actions. This training takes place on Sunday, **November 4**, from noon – 2pm at the UCC Boxborough Community Center.

Let's Talk About White Privilege

Join us for a 6 week course as we seek to learn about White Privilege while engaging in brave, meaningful and bold conversations about race. We are proud to be joining with the members from West Acton Baptist Church, UCC Boxborough and St. Matthew's Methodist. We will meet on Tuesday nights at 7p throughout the fall. Join us on 10/9 and 10/23 at UCC Boxborough, 10/30 and 11/13 at SACC, and 11/27 and 12/4 at St. Matthew's UMC.

Neighbors In Need

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. SACC will collect our NIN offering on World Communion Sunday, which is **October 7th**.

Vigils Against Gun Violence

The effort to raise our voices against gun violence continues, with monthly vigils at the intersection of School and Main Streets on the second Wednesday of each month. The next vigil will take place on **October 10** from 5 to 6 pm. Wear your Peace Love Justice tee-shirts!

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text

Gather with us as we continue to read Harry Potter, consider some of life's biggest questions, and learn about a Spiritual Practice...or two. We are reading Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone together! We continue our discussion on **October 7** and **21** and **November 4** and **18** at 3pm in the library. All ages and ideas are welcome!

The Lord's Prayer Experience

The Lord's Prayer Experience is a "transformance:" not a performance but a musical prayer service featuring a contemporary interpretation of the Hebrew text of the Lord's Prayer (in English and Hebrew), set to Jewish music. The songs are offered by a core group of singers and instrumentalists, but involving the whole congregation. It is an opportunity for shared prayer and openness to God's wisdom for people of Jews and Christians, as well as those with other or no religious tradition. The service will be followed by an appetizer potluck. The event is free of charge (though donations will be accepted) and open to the public. The Lord's Prayer experience is Sunday **October 28** at 5 p.m. at St. Matthew's United Methodist, 435 Central St., Acton.

A Note of Thanks...

Gram (Becky),

I've been meaning to write you a thank you card for the shawl. That hasn't happened so I'll email. Thank you! It's so special. Please tell Judy thank you as well. It means a lot to me that people in your church prayed for me. I will definitely be snuggling up in it this fall and winter, and I'll refer to the blessing/prayer. I really appreciate your support through all this.

Love,
Mandy

Cleaning Teams for October

- October 6: Marilyn Dow's Team
- October 13: Pam Rogers's Team
- October 20: Tom Porcher's Team
- October 27: Angela Aaronson's Team

October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 8:15 Visit with Amy 3:45 Meditation Walk 7:00 NA Bridge to Recovery	3 6:45 Mindfulness Workshop 7:45 Choir Rehearsal	4 10:00 Stitch and a Prayer 7:00 Metro-West Boston Divorce Support Group	5 3:00 Violin Lessons	6 8:30 Therapeutic Yoga
7 10:30 Worship 12:00 Jr. Choir 3:00 Harry Potter Group 5:00 Traditional Indian Dance	8 6:00 Cong. Board Meeting	9 8:15 Visit with Amy 3:45 Meditation Walk 7:00 White Privilege Series 7:00 NA Bridge to Recovery	10 5:00 Vigil Against Gun Violence 6:45 Mindfulness Workshop 7:45 Choir Rehearsal	11 10:00 Stitch and a Prayer 7:00 Metro-West Boston Divorce Support Group	12 3:00 Violin Lessons	13 SACC Work Party 8:30 Therapeutic Yoga 9:00 Scrapbook Class
14 10:30 Worship 2nd Sunday Food Collection 12:00 Jr. Choir Rehearsal 12:00 Deacons Meeting 2:30 Days for Girls 5:00 Indian Dance	15 10:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry	16 8:15 Visit with Amy 3:45 Meditation Walk 7:00 NA Bridge to Recovery	17 6:45 Mindfulness Workshop 7:45 Choir Rehearsal	18 10:00 Stitch and a Prayer 7:00 FOGES 7:00 Metro-West Boston Divorce Support Group	19 3:00 Violin Lessons	20 Markings Deadline 8:30 Therapeutic Yoga
21 10:30 Worship 12:00 Jr. Choir 3:00 Harry Potter Group 5:00 Traditional Indian Dance	22	23 8:15 Visit with Amy 3:45 Meditation Walk 7:00 White Privilege Series 7:00 NA Bridge to Recovery	24 6:45 Mindfulness Workshop	25 10:00 Stitch and a Prayer 7:00 Metro-West Boston Divorce Support Group	26 3:00 Violin Lessons	27 Fall Rummage/Bake Sale 8:30 Therapeutic Yoga
28 10:30 Worship 12:00 Jr. Choir 5:00 Indian Dance	29	30 8:15 Visit with Amy 3:45 Meditation Walk 7:00 White Privilege Series 7:00 NA Bridge to Recovery	31 6:45 Mindfulness Workshop 7:45 Choir Rehearsal			



South Acton Congregational Church

35 School Street · Acton, Massachusetts 01720



South Acton Congregational Church

where you are loved and valued just as you are

Reverend Amy Lunde-Whitler, *Pastor*

ADDRESS 35 School St, Acton, MA 01720

TELEPHONE 978-263-2332

WEBSITE www.southactoncc.org

EMAIL info@southactoncc.org

FOLLOW US! twitter.com/SACC_Church

www.facebook.com/SACC.Church

OFFICE HOURS Monday, Wednesday & Thursday, 9am-1pm

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.

CONTACTING REV. AMY

Rev. Amy is reachable by phone: 281-744-3429 or by email: pastor@southactoncc.org Sunday–Thursday and on Fridays and Saturdays for emergencies.