

ATHOL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

STEEPLE NEWS

MAY 2024

Dear Church Family,

Several folks have asked me about prayer lately, so I've been thinking (and praying) a lot around this topic.

Then, one week, I read a quote from Leonard Sweet, a former dean at Drew Seminary, that made me think even more about prayer. In his book "Faithquakes", he says that prayer is like a tuning fork. He writes, "Prayer tunes the mind, so that ultimately our whole being resonates with the living presence of God."

I love that!

God isn't a magic genie that grants our wishes from time to time, so talking to God isn't magic, but rather it's the delicate art of attunement. It's about tuning our souls to the frequency of the Holy Spirit, allowing our hearts to resonate with the cosmic symphony that reverberates through the very fabric of existence. This attunement is not a one-time event, but a continuous journey of deepening connection and intimacy with the Divine.

Simply put, prayer is not spiritual magic. It is synchronizing our heartbeat with the heartbeat of the Divine. If we learn through practice to attune our souls persistently to the frequency of the Holy Spirit, resonance occurs. When we do that something changes, usually us.

Journeying together in faith,

Rev. Candi Ashenden



Bruce Banks, Kathy Bennett (Cheryl L'Ecuyer's sister-in-law), Rita Bombard, Charles Brown, Roger Carter, Florence Copeland, Susan Gatautis, the family of Duncan Gordon, Greyson Johnson, Diane Myntti, Ann Phinney, Don Risatti, Sheila St. Laurent, Alice Woessner, Donald Ziminski and our sister church in Vichuquen. We also pray for Joe Badgley, Sean Spaulding, and others in the Armed Forces and in harm's way.

Remember our homebound friends with a card, and especially your prayers . .

Fran Britt - Baldwinville Nursing Home

Dear Church Family,

I was officiating at a funeral this past week, and I was fortunate enough to hear one of the most honest and authentic eulogies I have ever heard. A young man, now serving in the military, was offering his thoughts about his grandfather who was the deceased individual. Standing there so tall and proud in his uniform, he eloquently spoke to the awareness he was just now old enough to begin to have. You see, over the past couple of years he had just realized that at the heart of all of his grandpa's "lame" attempts to do things with his grandson that were of no interest to this young man was the simple desire to have a meaningful connection.

How many times have we missed opportunities for relationship and depth all because of something we deem "lame"? Through his tears there was clarity, and it was clear that his grandfather had taught him one final lesson...that life is short, that death is inevitable, and that presence matters.

As we near the end of the school year, and as many kids and grandkids head off to new lives or as our own lives are gradually transitioning to new stages, maybe we could all work harder at being present for those who matter in our lives rather than assuming they know we love them and putting in little effort. This includes our relationship with God. You know what God wants above all else? Our hearts, our time, our awareness of God's presence in our lives.

Maybe we can begin this Summer of Presence with great intention, and transform it from vacation time to Relationship Time, and relish as much as we can squeeze out of it!

Warmly,

Rev. Cindy

STEWARDSHIP LUNCH AND CONVERSATION

So many blessings, so much to be grateful for. Our Church is on solid footing once again. The foundation, our endowment, has been restored by the generosity of all of you inspired by some earthly angels among us. And the stock market recovery helped too... Now it is time to set a course that keeps our finances healthy so we can live our motto.

The 10% Challenge is one good way we can support our future on a sustained basis. Leaving 10% to the church can be easy. There are some simple ways like making ACC a 10% beneficiary on life insurance policies, wills and retirement accounts. There are other assets that can be set up to do the same, just not always so easy. That's why we have invited Bill Kessler and his associates to come teach us.

On Sunday May5 at 11:45, there will be a presentation and opportunity to ask questions that could help us get started. Please make a reservation by email to the church, signing up on the list at coffee hour, or telling Chuck. Lunch will be provided so we need an idea of attendance.

Come learn without obligation. Let the Spirit be your guide. Together, we serve the Lord.

Make your reservation by May 1st!!!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT- May 2024

Gnome Walk: Postponed due to weather

Christian Ed Team Meeting: Sunday, April 28th 11:00 am.

Off-Season Adult Craft Volunteers Needed:

An adult craft leader (or myself) have been recruited for non-holiday Sundays until October due to historically decreased attendance after Easter. We will start upstairs like Summer and come down after the Children's Message for a group activity until the end of Church service. Kid's breakfast has ended until Fall.

Dates to be filled: 5/12, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4, 8/18, 9/8, 9/22.

Holiday weekends will have no craft leader: May 26th, July 7th, September 1st and October 13th. Caprice will be away the following Sundays: June 16th, July 21st and August 25th

Sunday School/Youth Group kickoff October 20th.

Church Fair Crafts, Face Painting and Games Booth: Saturday, June 1st. Stop by and see us! VBS information will be available too.

Vacation Bible School: *Keepers of the Kingdom (Armor of God).*

VBS will be Monday, August 5th through Friday, August 9th.

Free supper for participating families and volunteers from 5:00-5:30 pm

VBS at 5:30-7:30 pm.

Bible Story class leaders are Taylor and Amanda Badgley.

Crafts will be led by Elizabeth Soucie

Games will be led by Jen Rieth

Music leader will possibly be Bonnie Benjamin

Crew leaders (guides that escort the children to their activities) so far are: Aly Bachelder, William Johnson, Samantha Cass and Carly Dickhaut.

Food crew is Tracy Johnson and Julie Barrett.

Looking for more crew leaders to escort the kids to their stations.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2024

Monday August 5 - Friday August 9

**5:00-5:30 PM-Free Supper for
Participating Families and Volunteers
VBS 5:30-7:30 PM**

**Bible Lesson, Crafts, Games, Music
and Fellowship. Festive Finale on Friday**

**Pre-K to 4th Grade
Pre-Register by July 31st with
Caprice Bachelder 508-331-7791
Or nikalv02@yahoo.com**

Mission Outreach

Community Meal - The meal for May will be Friday, May 3. Lisa has reported that Chicken Alfredo with broccoli, salad, bread and dessert will be on the menu! There will also be an alternative baked chicken, broccoli, noodles and salad and dessert as an alternative to alfredo sauce with lightly flavored noodles and dessert of course! Reserve your meal by Wed. May 1, by calling Sue 978-249-7921. Meals will return in September!

Thank you Lisa for all you have done as the Master Chef for this important ministry in our community! You and Matt were the “shining lights” that started this gift of food and community to so many! Thank you for teaching so many!

If you would like to be a part of the Community Meal team for calling, cooking, packing or serving, call Bonnie at 978-249-8296. No experience needed. We will find the perfect place for you! We have friends from other churches or no church that enjoy serving our community in this way!

We Remember.....

During May we will be encouraging community-wide donations to remember our Veterans and their families. Volunteers will be needed to help with the display on the common and names of Veterans that will be honored during the Memorial Day Service.

All funds collected will be used for the free November Breakfast in honor of Veterans and their families.

North Quabbin Food-a-thon May 21 will be the Annual Event to support the Food Pantries in Athol, Orange, and Wendell. There will be 12 hours of coverage on AOTV channel 13, WVAO radio 105.9 FM and live on aotv13.org Tune in when you can – you will recognize some hosts from our Church family! ACC is proud to support these pantries and help those in need of food support year around!

May Baskets for Food-a-thon There will be a GIANT Food-a-thon Collection spot in Fellowship Hall to remind us of those in our community with food insecurity in our community.

The Athol Corps Salvation Army and The Community Food Pantry at the Athol High School receive your generous donations throughout the year. During this month your financial donation will make a big difference to these pantries as well as the ++++ in Orange, Wendell Good Neighbors and Our Lady Immaculate Food Pantry.

Country Fair – 2024! June 1, 9-2. Yes, the Cake Walk will return!! We will need cakes!! Just bring them on the Fair Day -decorated, on a give-away plate and covered with clear wrap. At about 1:30 we will gather near the bandstand for Cake Walk! No limit on cakes. Maybe a friend would like to contribute a cake or cupcakes too! All are welcome!



Our church has a special ministry called Helping Hands. We have several people who are willing to cook and deliver meals to people in our church family who are in need for a short time, usually two weeks. Right now we need more cooks to help out. If you are interested in learning how this works or signing up, please contact Vicki Baker at 978-852-0442 or ybaker1018@yahoo.com.

Greetings!

Please collect Can Tabs for the Shriner's Hospitals in Springfield and Boston. Can tabs can be found on fruit cans, soups, V-8, and soda cans. Removing the can tab from soda cans does not affect the return price. Please drop them off at the Church Office during office hours or bring them to Church and place them in a large glass container on the table outside the sanctuary. The Shriners collect these and melt them down to get money to serve children who need their services free of charge to the family. We can do our small part in helping this mission. Many thanks.



Pat Darby



1	Janice Farnum	10	Alicia Wilcox	23	William Thiem
1	Mary Giles	13	Keegan Lutz	25	Marlene Chaisson
1	Isabella Harkness	14	Leo Gillis	25	Otter Soucie
1	Joseph Hart	14	Peter Niland, Jr.	26	Stephanie Benjamin
2	Jenna Sujdak	14	Owen Willhite	26	Geoffrey Billingham
3	Lisa Dewey	16	Theodore Johnson	26	Abigail Mercauto
4	James Meehan Jr	17	Russell Clark	26	John Morrow
5	Sarah Hicks	18	Francis Wheeler	26	Alicia Simpson
5	Klara Wheeler	19	Enzo Arce	27	Mariah Peters
5	Tania Novak	19	Fran Britt	29	Thomas O'Connor
6	Eric Shepardson	19	Benjamin Cooke	30	Nancy Bingham
8	Raymond Jack	21	Jakob LeBlanc	30	Ava Doody
8	Krystal Kilhart	22	Margaret Calcari	31	Janice Morrow
10	Oliver Heath	22	Karleigh Chase	31	Lucien Rolski
10	Anita Peters	23	Adelia Sampognaro	31	Jason Wilcox



5	Jacqueline & Arthur Hicks	33 years
6	Rebecca & Keith Badgley	29 years
23	JoAnn & Scott Tresback	38 years
30	Kay & Frank Magrone	37 years



COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE FOR May

May 5	Jan Noyes, Cindy Jack & Pamela Deane
May 12	Melinda Jack, Vera Breault & Rebecca King
May 19	Ruth Quinlan, Jen Rieth & Sherrill Modzeleski
May 26	Jan Doody, Joyce Phinney & Bonnie Hodgdon

At this time most Sundays have people assigned to them, however we are currently looking for volunteers to help on the third Sunday of each month.

If you are interested in helping with the coffee hour snacks on the third Sunday of each month and/or overseeing the program, please contact Cindy Jack at 508-517-2851 or speak with her after worship on Sunday



CHURCH INFORMATION:

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Church Telephone: 978-249-6202

Church E-mail address: accuccoffice@gmail.com

Rev. Dr. Candi Ashenden: revcandi@gmail.com

Rev. Candi's schedule: Tuesday and Wednesday in the office

Website: www.atholcongregationalucc.org

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES under Sermons on the website or

Find us on Facebook (Athol Congregational Videos)

for 10:00 am live streamed worship

& www.youtube.com (Athol Congregational Church for services)

Also, on Sunday mornings on AOTV channel 1301 at 10:00 AM (one week delay)

*Don't forget - **Newsletter Deadline** is the **15th** of the month.*

Articles submitted after the deadline may not be included.

Deacons are: Doc Arsenault, Vicki Baker, Chuck Berube, Susan Bowdrige, Vera Breault, Jan Doody, Tom Doody, Bonnie Hodgdon, Marjorie Holmes, Christine Phelps.

Women's Fellowship...

Women's Fellowship has resumed their meetings with Amanda Badgley as meeting leader, Susan O'Connor - devotionals, Taylor Badgley – secretary, Sharon Smith – treasurer and Debbie Phelps as refreshment coordinator

One of our goals is to promote our group and increase our membership. Our first couple of meetings have been spent reorganizing with plans to share Women's Fellowship news on the ACC Facebook page – with Marna Sampognaro as our group's page administrator.

Joy Risatti is also working on a new brochure for Women's Fellowship.

The ladies are busy preparing for their Craft Table at the Country Fair, so please be sure to stop by and visit us on June 1st! There will be many wonderful handcrafted items available...

Our Special Raffle will be an Outdoor Fire-Pit, along with all kinds of picnic supplies and goodies to enjoy!

Taylor and Amanda Badgley will be selling chances at our tent that day.

We also voted to donate an Italian Theme Basket for that table at the Country Fair.

Our next meeting will be on April 29th when Deb Phelps will be overseeing our ladies in making dog treats - and after that, on May 13th Marna will be teaching us to make catnip toys - all to sell at the Country Fair.



Walk-a-Thon

May 18, 11 a.m. at Pine Beach
Partridgeville Rd., Athol

***Support the valuable friendships fostered through
North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy!***

Bring something to share for the picnic - we'll provide the
hamburgers, hot dogs and buns!

For more information email: nqcitizenadvocacy@gmail.com

Prizes may be awarded

***THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS
SPONSORS, DONORS AND WALKERS!***



NORTH QUABBIN CITIZEN ADVOCACY WALK-A-THON PLEDGE SHEET

May 18, 2024 11 a.m. at Pine Beach, Partridgeville Rd., Athol, MA

SUGGESTED INDIVIDUAL PLEDGES \$5 \$10 \$20 \$25

Please record the name and address of the person pledging along with the amount of their pledge. Pledges can be brought to the Walk-a-thon or mailed directly to North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy, P.O. Box 362, Orange, MA 01364. Thank You.

WALKERS NAME _____

WALKERS PHONE # _____ E-MAIL _____

SPONSOR'S NAME	SPONSOR'S ADDRESS	AMOUNT OF PLEDGE
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Waiver: In consideration of pledges being accepted, I hereby for myself, my children, my heirs, executors and assignees, waive and release any and all claims for damages which I, and my minor children accompanying me, may have against North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy Walkathon, The North Quabbin Citizen Advocacy Program, representatives, successors or assigns for any and all injuries suffered by reason of my participation in this event.

Signature _____
Parent or guardian must sign for walker under 18



72nd Annual Country Fair
Saturday, June 1
9 am – 2 pm

Donations for the Emporium/Tag sale are now open! Please bring your items to the back hallway. Please no electronics and no clothing. We are also interested in donations of books, dvds, cds, etc; jewelry, puzzles, toys, and plants!

Donations for the Gift Card table are greatly appreciated! . Any denomination to any local business or chain store accepted. Theme baskets are always a big hit. Please speak to Dave Harris or Sue Bowdridge if you have an idea for a theme basket. The week before the fair we are hoping you will set aside time to bake and make candy for the Baked Goodies table. Always a popular booth! We also need cakes for the Cake Walk! Yum!

Thanks in advance to Bonnie & Al Benjamin who are lining up some excellent entertainment. Thanks to all the musicians who are sharing their time and talents.

Thanks to everybody who is chairing a booth and to everyone who is volunteering to help. If you have not yet been asked please step up and volunteer! Speak to Jan Doody or Jerry Noyes for suggestions on how to help. As always, we will need many hands to set the fair up on Friday afternoon, and Saturday morning and to dismantle everything on Saturday afternoon. Working together, we can make this the best fair ever!

Yours in Christ – Jan Doody

Steeple News Release
Theme Baskets

A Tisket A Tasket, Create A Theme Basket!

To all Ministry Teams, Committees, Families and Individuals:

- Seeking Baskets for the Theme Basket Booth at the Church Fair.
 - Baskets of any and all sizes, small, medium or large, accepted for this popular Booth.
 - Please clear wrap securely and provide the Theme and a List of Contents.
 - Please drop off in the Map/Youth room by May 14, 2024.
 - Thanks to all you creative folks.
- Susan Bowdridge:781-307-3356, David Harris:413-992-9744

Plant Booth

Now is the time to dip up plants and repot them. We also love house plants and gently used (or new) pretty garden accessories and flower pots.

Any questions call Debbie Phelps at 978-249-5506

Please label all plants



"Disney for the Young and Young at Heart"

April 21 4:30 pm

If you would like to sing a Disney song, please contact Pat Darby at patdarby6@yahoo.com. Information needed is the name of the song, and the accompaniment you will use – on tape or live and the name of your accompanist. You are welcome to sing several songs. Also looking for someone to put a picture on the screen about the song.

Reminisce Orchestra

May 19

A dance band with all of your favorites from the Swing Era. This will get your toes to tapping!!!

Ethan Bremner and a Soprano

June 23

Hear the stories of the famous Operas and catchy familiar melodies.

All concerts begin at 4 pm followed by dinner.

Adults: \$10 for Concert
\$12 for Dinner
\$20 for Concert and Dinner

Special price for children at the Disney Concert

Ages 5-11: \$5 for Concert
\$5 for Dinner

These Concerts are fundraisers for the Athol Congregational Church so please write down these dates and plan to join us for enjoyable times.

May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 11am – 12 pm Donuts with the Duo Bell 5:30 Choir 6:30	2 6:30-8:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 4:00 pm Teach Us - Gathering Room	3 Community Meal – 5:30 in house and 4:00-4:30 takeout/ delivery Call to reserve by Wednesday 978-249-7921	4
5 10 am – Worship 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm Rob Bell on Zoom	6 6:30 – Women’s Fellowship in Parlor 6:30 - Missions	7	8 Bell 5:30 Choir 6:30	9 6:30-8:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 4:00 pm Teach Us - Gathering Room	10	11 9:30 – 6:30 Women’s Retreat
12 10 am – Worship 11 am – Healing Service	13 6:30 – Mom’s Group 6:30 – Women’s Fellowship - Parlor	14 4:45 – Staff Meeting 6:30 - Deacons	15 11 am – 12 pm Donuts with the Duo Bell 5:30 Choir 6:30	16 6:30-8:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 4:00 pm Teach Us - Gathering Room	17	18
19 10 am – Worship 4 pm – Reminisce Orchastra	20 6:30 – Women’s Fellowship	21 6:00 - Leadership	22 Bell 5:30 Choir 6:30	23 6:30 – 8:00 Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 4:00 pm Teach Us - Gathering Room 7:00 pm – Building & Personnel	24	25
26 10 am – Worship 11 am – Christian Education	27 6:30 – Women’s Fellowship in Parlor	28	29 Bell 5:30 Choir 6:30	30 6:30 – 8:00 Boy Scouts	31	



North Quabbin
FOODATHON
Tuesday, May 21st
6:00 AM - 6:00 PM

To Donate

Online:
nqfoodathon.com

Checks payable to:
Wendell Good Neighbors
PO Box 222
Wendell, MA 01379

100% Benefits Six Local Food Pantries

- Athol Salvation Army
- Franklin Community Meals Program
- Wendell Good Neighbors Food Pantry
- St. Vincent de Paul @ St. Mary's Church
- Community Food Pantry at AHS
- Our Lady Immaculate Church

Tune in
AOTV Channel 1301
WVAO 105.9 FM
Stream at aotv13.org



**Athol American
Legion**

325 Pequig Ave



**APR27
AT 7PM**

MUSIC BINGO



- \$10 per person entrance fee
- Entrance fee includes one double sided card
- Prizes each round



To benefit  **The Jimmy Fund**

Team Feet of Strength





Southern New England Conference
United Church of Christ
Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – May 2024 (Year B)

Wed., May 1
Psalm 80
Isaiah 65:17-25
John 14:18-31

Thurs., May 2
Psalm 98
Isaiah 49:5-6
Acts 10:1-34

Fri., May 3
Psalm 98
Isaiah 42:5-9
Acts 10:34-43

Sat., May 4
Psalm 98
Deuteronomy 32:44-47
Mark 10:42-45

Sun., May 5
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 10:44-48
Psalm 98
1 John 5:1-6
John 15:9-17

Mon., May 6
Psalm 93
Deuteronomy 7:1-11
1 Timothy 6:11-12

Tues., May 7
Psalm 93
Deuteronomy 11:1-17
1 Timothy 6:13-16

Wed., May 8
Psalm 93
Deuteronomy 11:18-21
Mark 16:19-20

Thurs., May 9
Ascension Day
Acts 1:1-11
Psalm 47 or Psalm 93
Ephesians 1:15-23
Luke 24:44-53

Fri., May 10
Psalm 47
Exodus 24:15-18
Revelation 1:9-18

Sat., May 11
Psalm 47
Deuteronomy 34:1-7
John 16:4-11

Sun., May 12
Seventh Sunday of Easter
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26
Psalm 1
1 John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19

Mon., May 13
Psalm 115
Exodus 28:29-38
Philippians 1:3-11

Tues., May 14
Psalm 115
Numbers 8:5-22
Titus 1:1-9

Wed., May 15
Psalm 115
Ezra 9:5-15
John 16:16-24

Thurs., May 16
Psalm 33:12-22
Genesis 2:4b-7
1 Corinthians 15:42b-49

Fri., May 17
Psalm 33:12-22
Job 37:1-13
1 Corinthians 15:50-57

Sat., May 18
Psalm 33:12-22
Exodus 15:6-11
John 7:37-39

Sun., May 19
Pentecost Sunday
Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Mon., May 20
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Joel 2:18-29
1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Tues., May 21
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Genesis 11:1-9
1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Wed., May 22
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Ezekiel 37:1-14
John 20:19-23

Thurs., May 23
Psalm 29
Isaiah 1:1-4, 16-20
Romans 8:1-8

Fri., May 24
Psalm 29
Isaiah 2:1-5
Romans 8:9-11

Sat., May 25
Psalm 29
Isaiah 5:15-24
John 15:18-20, 26-27

Sun., May 26
Trinity Sunday/First Sunday after Pentecost
Isaiah 6:1-8
Psalm 29
Romans 8:12-17
John 3:1-17

Mon., May 27
Psalm 20
Numbers 9:15-23
Revelation 4:1-8

Tues., May 28
Psalm 20
Exodus 25:1-22
1 Corinthians 2:1-10

Wed., May 29
Psalm 20
Numbers 6:22-27
Mark 4:21-25

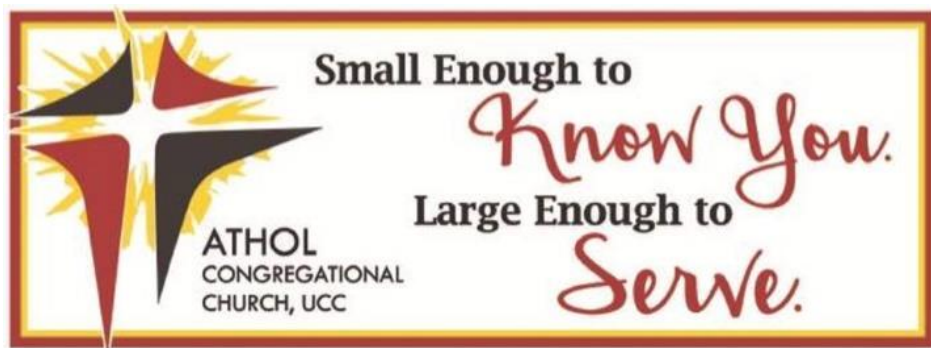
Thurs., May 30
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Samuel 1:1-18
Acts 25:1-12

Fri., May 31
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Samuel 1:19-27
Romans 8:31-39

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Athol Congregational Church, UCC
1225 Chestnut Street
Athol, MA 01331

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



STEEPLE NEWS

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a community of faith, gathered by God's grace, following and modeling the way of Christ, as we celebrate, serve, worship and grow.