

2023

September

Parish Visitor

Friends,

How did it get to be September already?! Could it really be time for college football and assessing the Patriots Super Bowl chances? It is not quite time to give up on World Series hopes for the Red Sox. It's not like the old days, when they adjourned to the cellar for the remainder of the season, once the All-Star Game was over. True Red Sox fans recall: the '04 Red Sox entered the playoffs as a wild card, made history by roaring back, three games down, to beat the Yankees in the Pennant race. The curse of the Bambino was broken that night.

I can't tell you how many people I have heard remark on how quickly the summer seems to have passed. I feel it too. Perhaps summer seems so short to us because, in this part of the world, winter is so long. I think our surprise at the passage of time has to do with the way we spend so much time rushing around, that we never fully experience where we are at any given moment.

In his book *Slowness*, Czech novelist Milan Kundera observed, after a good, enjoyable experience we tend to leave it slowly, savoring and remembering it. When we have a bad experience, we are inclined to rush away to get to the next thing and forget the last. Slowness is for remembering. Rushing is about forgetting, according to Kundera.

The Psalmist wrote, "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) The creation narrative in Genesis tells us that the necessity of pausing and reflecting is woven into the very fabric of the universe. Even God rested after six days of creation. I have heard God referred to as the Supreme *Being*. Have you ever heard of a Supreme *Doing*? We are human *beings*, not human *doings*.

Sunday is the day that we, as Christians, set aside to *be*. On Sunday we can be together as a congregation, warmed by fellowship, recharged by prayer, and music inspired and informed by the Word of God. On Sunday mornings we offer our presence to God and one another, as we sit still together and come to know God.

Time is sacred and a gift of God. In church, we mark the passing of the seasons of one another's lives. We mark the seasons of the year, and we mark time with liturgical seasons: Advent, Lent, Eastertide, Christmas, and Epiphany. We are currently in a season some traditions call "Ordinary Time." Others refer to it as the season "after Pentecost."

No time is ordinary and every minute presents new gifts, challenges, and opportunities. I look forward to the time we will spend together as we gather again in the sanctuary and all around. I hope your summer was not too quick. I look forward to savoring the year ahead with all of you.

In Christ,
Richard Malmberg

A letter from Zimbabwe:

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN ZIMBABWE
(FORMERLY AMERICAN BOARD MISSION)
CHIREDDI CHURCH

1268 NJONJOLINJO ROAD
TSHONANI TOWNSHIP
CHIREDDI

Tel: +263312316662: email address: chiredziuccz@gmail.com
Minister's Contact: +263774043501. Email rdirikwe@gmail.com
Deacons Contact number: +263775 947 625

9 August 2023

Tille Walpole Missions Committee: Peg
Winnen the Minister In-charge: Rev R E.
Malmberg All Brothers and Sisters
Walpole UCC, P.O Box 393
Walpole, 03608 USA

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Season's greetings to you all in the mighty name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ-
Amen! I hope and trust this letter finds you in the best of health and spirits.

This letter serves as a response to the letters and photos we received from you a couple of weeks ago. We were so glad to know all the activities you are doing for the Walpole UCC and the community at large. We were also happy to discover that Rev. Richard Malmberg was one of the members who attended and participated at the June 1996 New Hampshire Conference Annual Meeting when Ukama partnership was well established. So far, we really appreciate the relationship between Chiredzi UCCZ and First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC. It is our prayer and wish that our Ukama will be tremendously developed to a greater level. Thank you for hosting our UCCZ President Rev John and Mrs. Matiza when they came as Zimbabwean delegation to New Hampshire and Synod Event. They testified clearly that you gave them a warm welcome. We just hope we will resume our Church visits between Chiredzi and Walpole UCC soon after a long battle with Covid 19.

After reading the letter from Mission Desk through Peg Winnen who requests us to list a few things we wish to receive from you through the Container, we have managed to prioritize the items as follows:

- a) Laptop and printer for office administration
- b) Projector and whiteboard for teachings
- c) Reading glasses and clothing
- d) Guitar and Microphone for church music
- e) Stationery (pen, pencils, bond paper, envelopes, highlighters, markers etc).

We are flexible to receive any items you may have which are not mentioned above.

As Chiredzi UCCZ, we are doing so well. This year we have called and welcomed our new Pastor Rev. Rebean Dirikwe who is married to Norah Dirikwe. They are blessed with one daughter Princess and two sons: Prince and Progress. Our current Deacon is Mr Edmore

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Sigauke. Our membership is growing well both spiritually and numerically, which involves different age groups and status: elderly, middle-aged couples, young couples, youths, Junior Sunday school, widows, singles and orphans. Twenty percent of our members are formally employed, and eighty percent are either non-formal or unemployed, which makes it difficult to meet their church obligations. Most of them are living in object poverty, struggling to feed their families and some are serving as traders in the markets. Thank you for always supporting us spiritually, financially, and morally.

We are now in the summer season though it's still cold during the morning and at night. We continue to pray for your well-being through the greatness of God. May He continue to bless you and answer your prayers.

Regards to all the congregants and elderly members at the First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCC.



Mrs Precious Simango
Ukama Partnership
Chairperson
Chiredzi UCCZ
+263 773 387 442

Rev Rebean Dirikwe Minister In-charge

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
IN ZIMBABWE
1268 NJONJOLINJO ROAD
TSHOVANI • CHIREDDI

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From Zimbabwe

Dear: Peg Winnen, Reverend Richard, and the Saints at Walpole UCC

Fraternal greetings in the mighty name of Jesus Amen! I hope this letter finds you well.

May you please find the attached document of the response letter and few photos from Chiredzi UCCZ Minister and the entire Congregation. You may share with all our friends at the First Congregational Church of Walpole, UCCZ. You may also check me on my Facebook page as Rebean Dirikwe (Rev) where we can chat and view our Church activities.

Thank you.

Regards

Rev Rebean Dirikwe for Chiredzi UCCZ



OUR GIFTS TO ZIMBABWE

We have packed up 16 boxes to go to Zimbabwe. 10 boxes to Chiredzi, 2 boxes each to Shelter of Hope, Sheltering Arms, and Vocational Training Center. Thank you for your generosity. Bonnie and Dale delivered the boxes to be loaded directly onto a shipping container and then it went off to Zimbabwe. The boxes were delivered to Spalding High School, where students helped load the packages into the container.

From Our Council

I hope this finds us all somewhat refreshed after some well-earned relaxation, change of scene and pace that summer allows us.

We approach this coming church year with a spirit of optimism. We are very heartened by the pledge response that continues to come in. We have enjoyed a more casual approach to Sunday service with very consistent attendance in Fellowship Hall the last few months, but now look forward to returning to the sanctuary and hearing our organ again in September.

At the July Council Meeting we welcomed Richard back and said thanks that he had a good outcome from his surgery and an uneventful recovery. We also had a few new members; welcomed Paul back as head trustee, and Judy Foley, who stood in for the Pastor-Parish committee.

We had a productive meeting with good attendance. We continue to optimize our financial status by taking advantage of current CD rates at the local banks and keeping our loan funds available if needed. In addition, some initiatives were discussed:

- Deacons proposed a pot-luck picnic in the place of our outdoor service in September. The other churches as well as the community will be invited with the deacons providing hamburgers and hotdogs. We hope to attract more members in the community and elevate our profile in the community. More details to follow. The date has been set for Sept. 24.
- Women's Fellowship is proposing a return to Mistletoe Mart, though a scaled-down version. They have been meeting this summer, in small groups, and continued to discuss this. There will be a White Elephant downstairs, and several other tables upstairs, but the luncheon will

- extend into Fellowship Hall, so there will be less space for other things. We are in the process of identifying these other areas. More to follow.
- A Driver's List is now available in the office. If anyone in the congregation finds themselves in need of a ride to a medical appointment, they can call Jane and find out who might be available. In addition, she has the number for the CTVC (Community Volunteer Transportation Company) rides. We currently have five people who have volunteered, and your name can be added to the list at any time. This is a great service and there is a definite need in our church.

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, led by Peg Winnen, we hosted a successful concert of the Northeast Men's Summer Chorus in August. We served them a meal, then they performed a concert of popular songs enjoyed by about 60 people. It was a nice event.

Pie sales were very successful; we were able to hold 5 as planned despite having two in a row rained out. We made over \$2000. Thanks to all who worked on them and all the pie-makers. The community really looks forward to these sales, and we want them to continue.

Another busy year approaches, but we are confident that with God's love and guidance, we will continue to "come back". The signs are all there, so let's make it happen!!

Sue Krebs

The Crew August 26, 2023
Happy Retirement, Chuck Shaw!





Ellie and Chuck, Jan and Bruce
(Taken at Chuck's retirement party)

Audrey Farnum

There may be a few people from our church or from our church or from Walpole that remember the Farnums when Norm was our pastor in the 50s. I lived with them when I went to business school in Northampton MA. They served a church in Holyoke, and I have kept in touch with them over the years. Audrey passed away in June at 97 years old. Her family is planning a celebration of her life on Sunday, September 10 at 2 pm at the Second Congregational Church in Greenfield, MA. They asked that I tell you that all are welcome. Thank you – Betty Prentiss

Pastor Parish Committee

Hello from your newly reorganized Pastor-Parish Committee.

Let us know what is on your mind.

Pastor Richard always welcomes your input and suggestions.

Please always feel comfortable coming to us with any church-related questions, comments, hopes, or ideas.

Committee members: Paul Looney and Jan Martin;
Co-chairs; Judy Foley and Minna Good.

Trustee Report

With the new year we have elected a new chair (Paul Looney) and a new vice chair (Don Sellarole).

We want to thank Dale Woodward for the amazing job he has done with the steeple project. I hope Dale knows how much we appreciate him and all the projects and plans he has headed up here. We are still lucky to have Dale as a trustee and we want to say a big thank you to him. Please let him know how much you appreciate him.

In July-August, we looked at the past painting projects to estimate going-forward costs. We are meeting with a contractor to discuss alternatives.

We had 4 more trees removed from the back property line. The Trustees got together to clean up all the brush along the property line. We had a great team effort. We had the area seeded with grass.

The steeple repair is scheduled for mid-September. This is to repair the top of the steeple where we had wind damage. We will also replace the broken louver.

We are in the process of inspecting the elevator.

That's all folks.... Paul Looney



Mistletoe Mart!!

Plans are in motion now for the 2023 Mistletoe Mart which will be held on Saturday, November 18th, opening at 9:00 am and closing at 2:00 pm. Because of the loss of church members, we are going to depend on having some outside help. Please be prepared to ask your family members, relatives, and friends to be available to help make this “mini” fair a success.

We need table chairpersons! Peg Winnen has signed on to take charge of the luncheon with plans to use some added available space in the larger part of Fellowship Hall to accommodate more diners. Also needed are chairpersons for pet lovers’ table, gifts, food, candy, coffee and donuts, white elephants, and possibly plants. If you have a few winter-keeping vegetables to spare I think they would be saleable especially just before Thanksgiving. Also, if you can; pickling items, and jellies and jams, would go well also. We lost a sizeable donation of these items when Curt and Betsey moved to Missouri.

Advertising will be important, and I need someone to take charge of this soon!

If you are interested in doing anything to help with this Mistletoe “mini” Mart, please contact me soon! Call me sooner if you would be willing to be “The Chairperson”!

Gwen Yardley

gyardley@myfairpoint.net 603-756-3677
(home) 603-209-3598 (cell)

Old-Fashioned Town Picnic

On Sunday, September 24th at 11:30 am there will be an old-fashioned town picnic on the common in Walpole! Everyone is welcome to come gather with old friends and new ones. The picnic will be co-hosted by the churches in Walpole and in the event of rain, we will gather in Fellowship Hall in the Congregational church.

Each family should bring their own quilt* (blanket) and food and drink. The deacons of the church will provide hot dogs and hamburgers to go with your potato salad, watermelon, switchel, pie and ?? Prizes will be given to “the Best Picnic Spread”, “the Best Old-Time Costume” and more.

Children should load their teddy bears into their wagons and come join a parade. Dress them up in old-time costumes, too! Each child with a wagon will receive a gift certificate for a free ice cream cone. They will also get a chance to climb upstairs in the church and ring the Revere bell!

Please join us in your straw hats, gingham overalls, etc. Invite Huck Finn and Becky Thatcher if you see them.

Let’s bring back the Sunday after-church tradition of the town picnic!

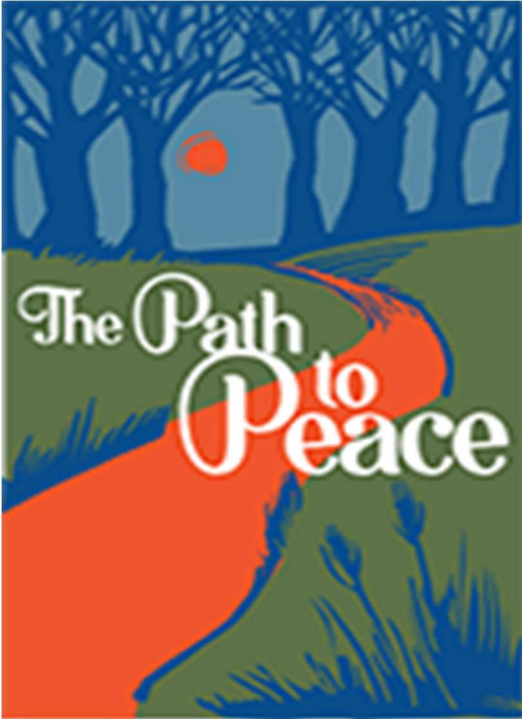
Posters will be up around town as the day gets closer. Be sure to invite your new neighbors.

Families are encouraged to attend a service at the Church of their choice at 10:00 am at the Congregational, Episcopal and Unitarian Churches in the village. Or at 8:30 am at St. Peter’s Church in N. Walpole before the picnic. Call Becky Pearson at 603-860-0221 with questions or ideas.

(*We will have some picnic tables set up for folks with mobility issues).

Church Calendar for September 2023

Sunday, September 3	Communion Worship service live and on Zoom	10:00am
Wednesday, September 6	Bible Study resumes on Zoom	4-5pm
Sunday, September 10	Worship service live and on Zoom In the sanctuary!	10:00am
Wednesday, September 13	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Saturday, September 16	Council Meeting in Fellowship Hall	8:30am
Sunday, September 17	Worship service live and on Zoom	10:00am
Wednesday, September 20	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Sunday, September 24	Worship service live and on Zoom	10:00am
Sunday, September 24	Old Fashioned Town Picnic immediately following worship service	
Wednesday, September 27	Bible Study on Zoom	4-5pm
Monday, September 25	Parish Visitor Deadline	
Church Office Hours:	9 am to 12 noon, T-F	
	The office is closed on Mondays.	



First Congregational Church, UCC
PO Box 393
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