



Community Church of Durham, UCC
An Open and Affirming Congregation

The Chronicle

Volume 52 No. 6

July-August 2024

GOSPEL SEEDS

Friends and siblings,

As June turns toward July, I find myself thinking back on a year of ministry, worship, spiritual growth and witness. It's been a difficult year on many fronts, with war unleashed in the Middle East, a number of heartbreaking losses here, and a changing landscape of religious life. But through all of this, our community chooses again and again to shine with love and to draw deeply from the wells of grace that surround us always.

A couple of notes, then, as I think back a bit and anticipate new possibilities in the year to come:

1. We continue to welcome **new friends and new members** into our expanding circle of life and ministry. These friends come from a thrilling variety of backgrounds and places, and they bring to us extraordinary gifts, new insights, and more than a few challenging suggestions. They are finding us in all kinds of ways: through the 10 am service in the Sanctuary, through the noontime service at the Table and sometimes through a small group experience or ministry team. We can do so much more to get our story/stories out into the community; but somehow, somehow, folks are hearing about what's happening at the Community Church. They're coming and they're connecting.
2. And that leads me to this: Both Sunday services serve a common purpose, and contribute to our ministry goals and servant vision. In different styles, perhaps, and with different practices, both services reach neighbors eager to test new ideas, hopeful of finding loving community and delighted to serve. We seem them joining Open and Affirming teams, and Immigration teams. We see them contributing to Koinonia groups and women's book groups. In my experience, every Sunday, I find that **our two services compliment one another wonderfully...** neither detracting from the other...but both gatherings full of spirit and loving resolve! The Body of Christ is capable of such diversity and growth, and we are committed to it!
3. As I've thought about Pride this month, and our Open & Affirming Covenant in particular, I've been reminded of all the good work and hard conversation that churches have invested in



that movement over the past 30+ years. It strikes me now that we can draw on that experience, and that good work, as we take on other challenges and painful realities. We've seen this year that talking about war and violence, talking about racism and apartheid, can be every bit as difficult and every bit as challenging. **But talk, wrestle and act we must...if we are to be the servant church of the nonviolent Christ...**the same Christ who turned from violence toward mercy again and again and again. Faithfulness requires trust, respect and a willingness to lovingly disagree...even as we discern our path and our message and our witness in a world where guns and weapons are revered and nonviolence cheapened by cynicism and rage. (By the way, forget not the powerful impact of "The Armed Man" in March...and the many ways music and the arts inspire gentle hearts and recharge depleted spirits and offer our wider community hope for the future!)

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I'll be taking the month of August to frolic with family, rest deeply in the shade of tall trees, read books I've saved for vacation, and enjoy cool dips in a Maine lake. I'll give thanks for the loving, prayerful community that gathers in Durham, that grows in you and among you. And I'll eagerly look forward to our work and witnessing together in the fall.

May God's blessing shine in your lives as well!

Dave Grishaw-Jones, Pastor

WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL LIFE:

SUMMER WORSHIP PLANS

In July and August, we shift to our summer worship schedule—which includes a single Sunday service at 9 am each week. Our two-service schedule resumes Labor Day Weeknd, on Sunday, September 1. Note that we'll include two services this summer (July 14 and 21) after the style of our experimental "Table" format—both in the Fellowship Hall at the 9 am hour.

JULY AND AUGUST WORSHIP/GATHERINGS IN SPIRIT

Sunday, July 7

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary (Rachel Burlock, preaching)

Sunday, July 14

9 am + Worship at the Table in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, July 21

9 am + Worship at the Table in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, July 28

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary

Sunday, August 4

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary (Dean Pratt, preaching)

Sunday, August 11

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary (Judy Brandon, preaching)

Sunday, August 18

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary (Melissa Whaley, preaching)

Sunday, August 25

9 am + Worship in the Sanctuary (Eunice Dai, preaching)

FRIENDSHIP HOSTS & COORDINATORS NEEDED

Your help is needed now through next Spring! We are looking for volunteers to help host Friendship Coffee Hour! Consider signing up NOW to host during this special time of conversation and community. Please contact Jamie at jtwillett@comcast.net if you have an interest in helping. You can also sign up for a specific date at this [LINK](#).

We are also looking for volunteers to help coordinate Friendship Coffee Hour. It doesn't take a lot of time to coordinate hosts and your help would be appreciated. Please contact Jamie at jtwillett@comcast.net if you want to learn more about this important opportunity.

LITURGISTS NEEDED: YOU CAN LEAD US!

Every Sunday worship is enhanced by the voices and spirits of liturgists—members and friends who step forward to volunteer their time as leaders and readers. We're always eager to hear from new friends interested in stepping up! If you'd like to participate as a liturgist/reader at the 10 am service, be in touch with Pastor Dave at DavidGJ@CCDurham.org.

CONNECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

MEMORIALS AND THANKSGIVING

SUMMERTIME SCHEDULE:

Memorial Services are church-wide celebrations of God’s grace and resurrecting promise. All are welcome and encouraged to remember dear friends in our community; join us in praising God for their lives and loves! The church gathers in spirit, hope and care.

+ For Charlie Dingle: Saturday, July 13 at 1:30 pm

+ For Mary Merkley: Friday, September 20 at 2 pm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

We often host receptions for family and friends following funerals or memorial services. These receptions are planned in conjunction with the family therefore the requested food donations and need for volunteers will vary. We are creating a Sign Up Genius to involve a greater number of volunteers. If you would like to be part of this important ministry, please contact Carla Wilson at carlaw82244@gmail.com. Your name will be added to a data base, and you will receive an email from Sign Up Genius notifying you of ways you can participate. For those individuals uncomfortable with

SIGN UP GENIUS: ORGANIZING MADE EASY

For the past several years, Sign Up Genius, software to simplify volunteer management and event planning, has been utilized at Community Church. This program has eased the administrative demands on those organizing church events, aided in volunteer recruitment and expanded our sense of community. For those potential volunteers new to this program or not comfortable with computers, these step-by-step instructions should be helpful.

<p>1. Contact the individual setting up a particular Sign Up, i.e. Receptions. This information can usually be found in the Chronicle or the Sunday Bulletin. Provide your email address to this individual.</p>	<p>2. Your email address will be added to the group of potential volunteers. When volunteers are needed, you will receive an invitation to sign up.</p>	<p>3. Open the email. Scan the listed volunteer needs. If you are able to fill a volunteer request, for example for a food donation, click on the box that says "Sign Up".</p>	<p>4. Go to the bottom of the page and click on the box that says "Save and Continue".</p>
<p>5. This will take you to a second page title "Sign Me Up" where you will be asked to provide your name and email address. Providing a comment is optional.</p>	<p>6. Go to the bottom of the page and click on "Sign Up Now". Your name will appear on the previous page next to the box where you clicked "Sign Up".</p>	<p>7. Just before the event you will receive an automated message reminding you of your volunteer commitment. If you find you cannot keep your commitment, the software provides a way to opt out.</p>	<p>Please feel free to contact Brenda Sargent if you need further clarification!</p>

LOVE & JUSTICE: OUR SHARED WITNESS TO A WORLD BELOVED

OPEN AND AFFIRMING SERVICE TEAM

Around this Spring's Pride Celebration, two dozen church friends gathered to think about our "open and affirming" commitment and the kind of witness we might offer here on the Seacoast. We're delighted to announce that Pam Monroe has volunteered to pull together a newly revived "OPEN & AFFIRMING SERVICE TEAM" at the Community Church! We imagine festive, fun gatherings; classes and conversations on topics of interest; and a vibrant witness at Pride and other regional celebrations. Be in touch with Pam Monroe if you too would like to be part of this important and timely effort.



GUNS TO GARDENS SERVICE TEAM

After two successful events in Concord, the national "Guns to Gardens" program seeks to expand to other parts of New Hampshire. Thanks to a small service team, formed this Spring, we're considering hosting a Saturday event of our own this fall or next spring. "Guns to Gardens" invites neighbors with unwanted guns or rifles to bring these, unloaded and safely, on a Saturday morning. Safely and carefully, the weapons are retrieved from the trunks of cars or trucks and then cut into pieces by special equipment. These now-unlethal pieces are given to artisans who make farm equipment, gardening tools or jewelry: making "Guns to Gardens" a "swords into plowshares" project for our own time! Judy Brandon is heading up this service team and invites your participation! See Judy for more!



CORNUCOPIA

Waysmeet welcomes a new director, Tom Young, who has been both a Cornucopia volunteer and a Waysmeet board member. We were sorry to see Alissa leave, but are happy to have Tom. Tom will be working fulltime so it should be easy to reach him at Waysmeet. We also have a new student intern, Shyanne, for the summer. We are especially in need of some substitutes for the summer. Regular food rescuers and pantry workers go on vacation so we are often could use a volunteer for one or two days only. If this would something you would be willing to, please call Tom or email him at Waysmeet (Thomas Young: thom-aselliottyoung@gmail.com) and get on the substitute list. As always, thanks for the many food donations left outside the church office and your monetary support.

Submitted by Mary Jane Tyler: marytyler@comcast.net

DOVER FRIENDLY KITCHEN

Dover Friendly Kitchen had another successful evening serving enchiladas, rice and beans to our friends on May 30th. Many of our volunteers were from our 7th grade youth group as they continue to express their interest in serving others. We were able to provide approximately 88 meals to in-person guests and take-out orders. We are so blessed to have so many volunteers to help us provide this meal and send our heartfelt gratitude to those who continue to support this ministry at our church. Any questions, please email Amy VanCamp at amyb.vancamp@gmail.com or angie.pelaggi@gmail.com

SPRING WRITING WORKSHOP AT THE STRAFFORD COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

These are taken from the first two sessions our last day on May 28th. All workshops began at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays—first with the women in the Therapeutic Community Program, and then with the men, at noon. The theme, appropriate for the summer, was “What was, or would be, your favorite vacation?”. I hope to resume the workshops later in August.

(Men’s Group) D. G.: My favorite vacation was when my wife and I went to Florida for a week. We went to Melbourne and St. Augustine. We stayed in two different hotels. We went out to eat at a fancy restaurant in St. Augustine. We had a great time, and I wish we could have stayed longer.

(Men’s Group) Z. C.: My favorite vacation is me and my wife spending days in Franconia Notch in the summer, visiting my family eight hours away in Maine, driving back roads there, and having fun at the basin.

(Men’s Group) R. T.: My favorite vacation is when I left prison for the first time.

(Women’s Group) N. B.: Some of my best memories have been made on good ole family vacations. When I was younger, it started with age-appropriate theme parks like Santa’s Village and Storyland. Then as we got older, it was Funtown Splashtown and Aguaboggin.

As my sister and I grew older, we had family vacations with our kids and went to Six Flags New England and Disneyland. Each vacation was awesome in its own way, from the traveling and hotel stays, to the roller coaster rides and the gift shops, to, well thankfully, each resort had a nice bar set up to end each long and eventful day with an ice-cold beverage of your choice.

All of these vacations fall into my ‘favorite’ category. But if I must pick one, I will have to choose my family camping trips. To plan a 7-10-day camping trip with kids and the whole other half of your family means you are downright crazy. I would make a thousand lists of necessities and supplies, and still always manage to forget something.

Once you make it to camp, it’s time to unload all your precious cargo (including the children). The kids are going crazy because they have been cooped up for two-and-a-half hours in the truck, but it was all worth it once you smell the neighboring campfires and barbecuing lingering in the air.

The first day at camp is always the most chaotic, but it all pays off once the sun goes down. After unpacking and setting up camp, and trying to keep the kids occupied at the same time, it is finally sun-down and time to relax in front of the campfire, which is everyone’s most anticipated time because everyone has been waiting patiently for smores.

At sunrise you make yourself a cup of coffee while everyone is still asleep and sneak off to the head of the lake alone. The beauty of a lake is mesmerizing first thing in the morning when it looks like a smooth sheet of glass reflecting its border with a warm morning glow. This is the moment when you take a deep breath and smile, because today is only day two of your vacation. And by the time your cup of coffee is done, the chaos of yesterday will be beginning all over again with laughter, love, and a ton of memories being made.

My advice is go camping at least once a year. It is a beautiful mess to experience, and is my ultimate favorite vacation.

Submitted by Dennis Drogseth

BOMBAS GIVING PARTNER PROGRAM

The #1 requested items in shelters are socks. Many homeless people walk miles per day in order to survive, leaving their socks threadbare and damp. Enter Bombas, the sock company. For every pair purchased, a pair is donated for those in need.

But the socks Bombas make for those in need are different from those sold on the website. Those to be donated are black, thicker, and feature reinforced seams, to make them more durable. They are also antimicrobial to deter odor and fungus and make them last longer between washes, since many homeless people don't have easy access to a washing machine.

I found out about the Bombas "Giving Partner Program" on their website. Two years ago I applied on behalf of The Dover Friendly Kitchen. After a few months went by, I had forgotten that I had even submitted an application when I received an email saying that DFK would be one of the 3,500 partners across the U.S.! Then, I was even more surprised (and grateful) that we were to receive 3,000 pairs--12 boxes were arriving!!!

I reapplied for 2024 and due to the generosity of the Bombas team, we have again received 3,000 pairs of socks to be distributed at DFK over the course of the year.

We are thankful to Bombas for this wonderful outreach program!

SING WITH ONE OF OUR CHURCH CHOIRS:

Sing with Our Chancel Choir! All are welcome to enjoy the musical ministries of the church...and participate in bringing joy and glory to God and one another! You're invited to join the Chancel Choir this fall! The Choir is directed by David Ervin, rehearses on Wednesday evenings and again before worship Sunday morning. See David after worship or give him a ring at 603-534-4145. You'll be glad you did!

Children's Choirs! Based on current family preferences, we are revising the rehearsal times for the children's choirs. The older group (Alleluia Choir), which has children in grades 3-6, will meet on Thursdays from 4:15 to 5:15. During the second half of that time-slot, they will be joined by younger children (Rejoice Choir) from 4:45 to 5:15. The younger group starts at about age 4. This revised schedule should allow all children to participate in games, and enable the older group to mentor the younger. Each choir sings at the 10 o'clock service approximately once a month. However, we aim to be very flexible!!! Many children join for different parts of the year depending on other extra-curricular activities or family schedules. If you have any questions or would like to sign up your child please contact Lorna Ellis (LornaEllisNH@gmail.com, 603-969-7962) or Kristin Forselius.

FROM THE STEWARDS:

The Stewards need your help! Two tasks: Catching up and Looking Forward.

The Stewardship Ministry is asking members and friends to assist on two important tasks: An inventory of the physical contents of the Church and renewing Community Church's Safety and Security Plan.

A Current Inventory

A current Inventory of the Church's movable property (physical contents or assets) is "one of the Church's best ways to obtain better value from our insurance coverage." An annual inventory, which is required by the Church's Constitution and By-laws and by the Church's Insurance underwriters has not been undertaken recently.

The Stewards are forming a team of six to eight members and friends to conduct the Inventory later this summer or early Fall. The work will require several days to identify items in each room, cabinet, and closet, briefly describe, photograph, and catalog the contents including our treasured books, historical records, artwork, artifacts, furnishings, and equipment. This task is expected to take 3-4 team sessions working at the church later this summer and early Fall gathering the information and preparing the inventory.

Safety and Security Plan and Grant:**Applying for the grant to upgrade equipment to facilitate that plan.**

Doug Bencks and Dina Gosselin asked John and Sandy Eller to attend on Saturday May 11 a three-hour Nonprofit Security Grant, Emergency Preparedness Seminar and Tabletop Training session for NH Faith Based Organizations and Municipalities. It was held at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Manchester. John and Sandy provided a summary of information with recommendations to Church leadership.

This very professional and insightful seminar was presented by staff from the NH Department of Safety, Homeland Security, and Emergency Management and the US Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. It included retired State Troopers and Emergency personnel and offered very helpful basic steps to aid each congregation's work as "the shepherds of their flock."

Presenters outlined a number of no-cost steps one of which was supplementing a church's weekly welcome to worship announcements with a simple description of the location of restrooms, exits and initial protocols in the event of a medical or weather event, fire, or threat. They also provided detailed instructions on how to prepare a thorough assessment and Strategic Plan which are necessary to apply to the New Hampshire Nonprofit Security Grant Program in early 2025.

The Nonprofit Security Grant Program's Grant round will be held next spring. It will offer timely applications to help churches fund any security upgrades from emergency kits, improved locks, internal notification, and communication systems, to lighting and camera systems and other eligible features.

The Stewards are forming an ad hoc team to undertake the safety assessment of Community Church and help the Stewards, Pam Monroe, and Doug Bencks and Gretchen Smith of the Capital Campaign prepare a solid grant application to the NH Nonprofit Security Grant Program in early 2025.

This team will meet monthly beginning in early August to review what we are already doing. We will schedule a meeting at the church with Mr. Joseph Villers, a retired NH State Trooper now with Region I of US Homeland Security. Additionally, the team will meet with local law enforcement, fire department, emergency services, related services and several Community Church members who are first responders and medical personnel. The team will prepare both the necessary assessment and the grant application for submission in early spring 2025.

If you are interested in more information and helping with either the Inventory or Community Church's Safety and Security Plan team, please contact Heather Curran at HeatherC@CCDurham.org or 603-868-1230 or John Eller at jandseller@tds.net or 603-748-3055.

MEET OUR NEW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR, IZZY!

Hi friends! My name is Izzy Phoenix, I use she/her and they/them pronouns, and I started here as your Office Administrator in mid-June.

I'm originally from Michigan, spent a few years in upstate New York, and now live on the North Shore of Massachusetts. I'm also a double-PK, which is to say that both of my parents are pastors. In fact, my mother (now Rev. Peggy Garrigues) attended Community Church of Durham back in the '80s while working a 2-year position with the UNH Campus Ministry!

I've got a Bachelor's Degree in music from Oakland University in Michigan, and a Master of Divinity from Drew Theological School in New Jersey. I've worked in churches in all kinds of roles, including administrator, conductor, preacher, singer, and most recently as a local church pastor. After taking some time away from church work, mostly to care for myself after coming out as trans, I'm so excited to have the chance to use my gifts and skills to support your inclusive ministry!

I live in the North Shore of Massachusetts with my wife, Beth, and our two cats, Pitter and Patter. Drop by the office (Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00a-3:00p) sometime—I'd love to meet you!



Community Church of Durham
United Church of Christ

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❖ Extravagant Welcome & Daring Discipleship Worship ❖

We gather each Sunday morning at **10 am** in a brightly lit sanctuary that welcomes all God's people—from all walks of life—in a community and courage! And we've added a second service to the mix: "The Table" each Sunday at **12 noon**. If the 10 am service draws on the great progressive tradition of the UCC, the latter service offers an improvisational take on the very same spirit.

Staff at Community Church of Durham:

The Reverend David Grishaw-Jones
Kristin Forselius, Education and Faith Formation Director
David Ervin, Music Director
Catherine York, Organist
Heather Curran, Business Administrator
Izzy Phoenix, Office Administrator
John Belcher, Building and Grounds Manager

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday 9am—3pm

ECHO Thrift Shop Hours

Monday—Friday 10am—4pm