

Spire

Barre Congregational Church, UCC

Welcoming & Serving the Quabbin Area

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September 2015

~Pastor's Pondering~

"Pray without ceasing."
(I Thessalonians 5:17)

Prayer: the original wireless connection.

Perhaps you've seen this on a church signboard or as a devotional thought. I'm not sure when I first saw it but I smiled thinking of how dependent upon technology our world has become. I became powerfully aware of this truth recently when my computer began acting strangely.

I went through the usual grieving over such an inconvenience. At first, I was in denial – it was being affected by the weather, the stars, low battery, anything but something I really needed to attend to. Then I got irritated with the darned machine, not really angry but annoyed enough that I muttered and sputtered hoping that some inanimate spirit within the circuitry might respond (I must confess that when I think like that, I fear my behavior is awfully close to idol worship – some inanimate spirit?!)

So when I returned to my right mind as Paul cautions throughout his letter to the Thessalonians, I bargained with the foolish computer. Yes, more talking to the machine which I suppose is our human way of trying to sort out our thoughts. But then, yup, you guessed it, I got a bit depressed about having to take time to trundle my laptop to someone who could identify and eradicate the problem. That thought really brought me down because I had to face my own inadequacies with computers and with technology in general. Sigh.

However, none of the time spent going through these thoughts and feelings solved the problem of the computer that was moving at the speed of molasses. Good grief. I had thoughts of having to write up my Spire material on my iPhone or on a tablet or a borrowed computer or, (Wendy, forgive me for even thinking this) writing it long hand or dictating it!

So I came to terms with my reality and took myself, wounded pride and all, to Best Buy where a knowledgeable young man behind the Geek Squad desk smiled at me with that indulgent look of someone in their early 20's who knows this grandmotherly-type is desperate. "How can I help you?" he asked solicitously but barely concealing a smirk, keeping an eye-roll under control as I described the symptoms.

He couldn't help himself. He smacked his hand against his forehead and with a big grin announced, "You fell for the malware ad!"

Ok. I know what malware is but how would I know not to open something that looked so official, even Mac-like?

He waved me off because he was already pointing and clicking and opening windows and nodding sagaciously; then he began

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typing, occasionally looking up at me, twice asking a question

that required one or two word answers from me. I stood there mystified, totally in awe of this wunderkind who was going to save my essential communication device. With an appropriate flourish, he spun my laptop around to face me as if he were a Hollywood hair stylist revealing his finished creation. "Done!" he pronounced with genuine satisfaction. "You're all set."

"But I don't understand a thing you did," I said with genuine bewilderment. That almost smug smile again crossed his face. "No need," he said cordially. "That's why we're here when you need us, 24/7/365." He pointed to the small orange and white sandwich board sign on the counter.

Convenient advertising, I thought to myself as my eyebrow involuntarily raised. "Is there something I can do if this happens again?"

"It's not likely to, but if you have further problems, just bring it back here. We're happy to help." He sounded sincere, and he had solved my problem. So I thought.

The next morning I discovered a few glitches that after a several moments of prayer, I was able to solve myself! However, the molasses effect was back.

I took a deep breath and pondered my options. Call my son-in-law, brother, or any number of church members who are computer savvy? Fiddle around with the machine myself hoping I'll stumble onto a solution? Feel sorry for myself or impulsively head to the store to purchase a new laptop?

In the end, I did nothing. Well, that's not accurate. I let go and let God.

In a conversation with my son-in-law later that day I learned that was probably the right thing to do; the slow-down was probably just a series of upgrades and adjustments the computer was making after it had been purged of demons. And sure enough, by the next day, all was right with the world! Speed and accuracy had returned and several new programs were installed ensuring me of security and peace of mind (until the next time my laptop slows down because those programs have become obsolete).

In the midst of my angst over an ailing computer, the thought crossed my mind that God is so much more powerful than a hard drive, so much more reliable than software, so much more readily available than even the Geek Squad, and that God isn't smug when we pour out our grief, our fear, or our questions. Our God made known in Jesus Christ understands how easily we succumb to panic when routine is disrupted, when what we take for granted isn't available, and knows that we are likely to turn either to ourselves or other worldly solutions for our problems. Yet our God continues to reach out to us and to forgive us when we forget the eternal connectedness available through the Holy Spirit who may well have inspired the whole computer phenomenon and who is gracious enough not to remind us our limitations.

As the season changes and we begin in-depth conversations about our church's future, there is always the possibility of feeling grief, loss, frustration, confusion, maybe anger or the desire to do nothing. Through the Apostle Paul, our God bids us to pray without ceasing, to stay in touch with Jesus, talking to and listening for the loving communications that restore our life (if not our computers).

May the new school year bring wondrous learning, opportunities to explore God's amazing world, ideas that stimulate curiosity, and the deep knowing that comes from practice that God's abiding presence is only a prayer away no matter where we are or what we're doing.

With love,

Pastor Deborah

Some Quick Prayers

Sorry

Help

Amen – so let it be

Love you, Jesus

Love You God

Love you, Spirit.

Thanks! or Thank you!

Pray when you get up in the morning and before going to sleep, in the shower, before meals, driving to work or whenever you're in the car especially for pedestrians, cyclists, and those who share the road with you; pray for co-workers and for those who maintain your work places, cafeteria workers and delivery people, for leaders, administrators, teachers, support staff, for folks in sales and customer service jobs, for technologically-savvy people, for researchers and scientists, as well as for those who are un-employed or under-employed and for the working poor. Pray for those who grieve and those awaiting healing miracles. Pray for elected and world leaders and for peace. Pray for our church, for each other, for our resource personnel at the MA Conference United Church of Christ (MACUCC).

If prayer seems elusive or difficult, know that when we're open to it, the Holy Spirit will intervene for us with sighs too deep for human words. (Romans 8:26) Pray without ceasing to know the will of God for you and for us as Christ's beloved community. (I Thessalonians 5:18)

From the Deacons & Pastor Deborah

Visitations - If you or a member of your family would like the Pastor or a Deacon or other member to visit, please contact the office, 978-355-4041 with preferable dates and times. Please remember that when someone is in the hospital, the power of prayer can ease anxiety, aid in the healing process, and provide a source of comfort giving assurance that they are not alone. Please keep us informed so we can surround you with love and hope.

Like to Visit? – Please tell Pastor Deborah if you would like to accompany her and/ or a deacon to visit folks who are home-bound or in nursing homes. She will be happy to arrange transportation and/or go with you.

Inquirer's Group/New Member Class – Would you like more information about joining Barre congregational Church, UCC? Several people have expressed an interest in joining s Pastor Deborah and the deacons will be organizing a new member group for October. Please get a message to Pastor Deborah or leave message on the church's answering machine if you would like to participate. An overview letter will go out by the middle of September with details about the format of the Inquirer's Group.

Confirmation Class in 2015/16?

Confirming one's faith in Jesus Christ requires serious thought, time, and the involvement of others who will offer support and care during the process.

I'm wondering whether to offer a confirmation class during the 2015/16 school year.

I'd like to hear from students in 9th grade through age 20 or their parents to determine whether we have at least 3 people with whom to form a class that would begin in November .

OR, are there adults of any age who either did not confirm their faith as teenagers or who would like to form an adult confirmation class to explore how their faith has changed over time?

Please contact Pastor Deborah at rev.deborah.loomis.lafond@gmail.com, leave a message at [978-257-8362](tel:978-257-8362) or in the church office, or speak with her.



Sunday School Begins

Homecoming Sunday & Sunday School Sign-Sign-ups - Sunday, September 13, 2015

Sunday School Begins— Sunday, September 20th

The Christian Education Committee is looking for teachers and nursery coverage. A full commitment is not necessary you may “job share.” If you would like to know more about the Sunday school program please contact Erica Skerry at nekh@net.zero or 978-355-4882 or call the church office and leave a message.

Choir News

The Time for Singing Has Come

Choir Rehearsal begins at 7:00 pm on Tuesday evenings in the church. Plan on having fun!

Bell Choir

Our season begins on Sunday, October 4th at 11:00 am in the Upper Room. It's multi-generational; ages 10 (grade 4) and up are welcome to attend. The year will be divided up into sections to make commitments easier. Bell choir will be playing on November 22nd. Questions? Talk to Toni Brown or Deb Page.

Outside Perspective

This year, I've given myself a challenge to attend committee meetings that are open to anyone. I have found this to be very enlightening and has added a new understanding as to what happens to help make the church family here at Barre Congregational Church, what it is. I would encourage you to take the time and check the church calendar for meetings. It's one thing to read about it, it's another thing to actually experience it. Just sit and listen. The only committee one cannot attend is Pastor Parish Relations (PPRC). Go ahead! Give it a try! Support your committee members. *Deb Page*

Barre Food Pantry News

The September Distribution will be **Wednesday, October from 10:00 am—noon** with preparation the day and evening before on Tuesday the 8th.

For our upcoming October 14th distribution, we have need of additional:

Peanut Butter Macaroni & cheese

Canned green beans baked beans

Canned pasta Beef stew

Rice and rice mixes juice of any kind

Volunteers are welcome!!! If you would like to volunteer please call

Sonja, 978-355-6921 or Chuck 978-355-6463.

Community Friendship Suppers

The next Community Friendship Suppers are from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. On the third Thursday of each month. Come for good food, for god fellowship, for goodness sake! Bring friends or make new ones. Everyone needs a break from cooking once in a while! Suppers are free and open to the public. Free will offerings are added to our Missions income to help those in need close to home and far away. All are welcome!!!

Super Saturday

October 17, 2015

Keefe Technical Regional High School

Framingham, Ma

8:00 AM—3:45 PM

Super Saturday is always an amazing day of learning & worshipping with members of the UCC churches from MA, ME, RI, and CT. This fall's keynote speaker is Dr. Marcia McFee, an author, worship designer, leader, professor, preacher, and artist. Her engaging and interactive style has been called, 'refreshing,' 'inspiring,' and 'unforgettable.'"

Between morning and afternoon sessions, there will be 45 seminars available on a variety of topics designed to help in practically every aspect of church life.

Registration deadline is October 5; the cost is \$54 per person or \$44/person when groups of 5 register at one time. Please see or call Pastor Deborah.

Barre Community Day

Sponsored by Barre Congregational Church, UCC

When: Saturday, September 12, 2015 10 am - 4pm

Where: Felton Field Barre
115 Coldbrook Rd,
Barre MA

Why: To celebrate all that the community of Barre
has to offer.

Fund, Food, Games, Music, Raffles, Vendors
Motorcycle Run Kickstands up at 10:30am

Come for an hour or stay for the day!

Chicken BBQ at 3:30 \$15

Proceeds in part to directly benefit a variety of human service organizations
and missions throughout the town of Barre including:

Barre Food Pantry

Project Purple

Felton Field Commission

Barre Youth Sports

Please contact communitydav@gmail.com to register a motorcycle or vendor table.

And see us on FaceBook.

Collector's Monthly Report

July-August 23

Loose Offering	278.00
Missions	738.00
Current pledges	13,388.00
PIF	200.00
Grapevine/AA	65.00
Water Bottle/Music Fund	94.50
Church repairs (backdoor)	2,400.00
Maplewins	470.00
Community Day	330.00
Friendship Dinner	57.00
<u>N/A</u>	<u>60.00</u>

Total for July/August
\$18,080.50

<u>July Attendance</u>		<u>August Attendance</u>	
5	22 Adults 2 Children 24	2	23 Adults 2 Children 25
12	23 Adults 2 Children 25	9	26 Adults 2 Children 28
19	22 Adults 2 Children 24	16	25 Adults 2 Children 27
26	15 Adults 0 Children 15	26	20 Adults 1 Children 21
		30	28 Adults 7 Children 35

Baptism

Pastor Deborah baptized Aubrey May Lawson. Daughter of Amanda May (Cooley) and Johnny Mack Lawson on Sunday, August 9, 2015. Aubrey's grandparents are the late Denise Cooley and Earl Cooley, Jr., & Dovie Holloway and the late Artie Mack Lawson. Great grandparents Janet Parnes & Lois & Earl Cooley Sr.

Treasurers Report

Expenses: 1/1/15-8/31/15

Payroll	\$65,645.00
Office Supplies	3,339.00
Telephone & Internet	1,971.00
Equipment Maintenance	845.00
General Maintenance	1,701.00
Christian Education	287.00
Cleaning Supplies	205.00
Misc	875.00
Flowers	324.00
Water & Sewer	628.00
Heat & Gas	5,920.00
Electricity	2,498.00
Insurance	8,613.00
Snow Removal	1,535.00
Piano / Organ	260.00
Alarm	480.00
TOTAL	\$95,135.00

Income

Loose	3,008.00
Pledges	49,789.00
Other	6,726.00
Investment interest	17,687.00
	77,210.00

Transferred from savings for ordinary expenses: **\$23,827.00**

(Balance in checking account on 1/1/15) :
\$2,236.41

Operating Deficit: \$17,925.00

September 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Wendy off 7:00 choir Pot Luck Dinner	2 9-1 Wendy's hours 6-8 Maplewinds 6:30 Church Committee	3 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 AA	4	5 9-12 Farmer's Market 7:00 AA
6 9:30 Service	7 Labor Day	8 9-1 Wendy's hours 9:00 Food Pantry set-up 6:00 Food Pantry set-up 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 Choir Pastor Deborah off	9 9-1 Wendy's hours 10-12 Food Pantry 6-8 Maplewinds 6 QRDRUG Ruggles Lane "Peer Pressure" Pastor Deborah off	10 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 AA	11 Set-up Com- munity Day	12 9-12 Farmer's Market 10-4 Com- munity Day Felton Field 3:30 Chick- en Barbecue Town wide Yard Sale 7:00 AA
13 9:30 Service/ Communion/ Homecoming Sunday school sign up	14	15 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 Choir	16 9-1 Wendy's hours 6-8 Maplewinds	17 9-1 Wendy's hours 5:30 Commu- nity Friend- ship Supper 7:00 AA	18	19 9-12 Farmer's Market 2:00 School House #4 Open House 7:00 AA
20 9:30 Service Sunday school begins	21	22 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 Choir	23 9-1 Wendy's hours 6-8 Maplewinds 6 QRDRUG Ruggles Lane with Officer Peter Beck	24 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 AA	25	26 9-12 Farmer's Market 7 AA
27 9:30 Service/Rev. Kelly Gallagher preaching 11:00 Special Church Meeting	28 6:30 Diaco- nate	29 9-1 Wendy's hours 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 Choir	30 9-1 Wendy's hours 6-8 Maplewinds			

Daily Lectionary Scripture References

September 2015 (Year B)

Tues., Sept. 1

Psalm 144:9-15
Song of Solomon 5:2—6:3
1 Peter 2:19-25

Wed., Sept. 2

Psalm 144:9-15
Song of Solomon 8:5-7
Mark 7:9-23

Thurs., Sept. 3

Psalm 125
Proverbs 1:1-19
Romans 2:1-11

Fri., Sept. 4

Psalm 125
Proverbs 4:10-27
Romans 2:12-16

Sat., Sept. 5

Psalm 125
Proverbs 8:1-31
Matthew 15:21-31

Sun., Sept. 6

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23
Psalm 125
James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17
Mark 7:24-37

Mon., Sept. 7

Psalm 73:21-28
Proverbs 8:32—9:6
Hebrews 11:29—12:2

Tues., Sept. 8

Psalm 73:21-28
Proverbs 11:1-31
Hebrews 12:3-13

Wed., Sept. 9

Psalm 73:1-20
Proverbs 14:1-9
Matthew 17:14-21

Thurs., Sept. 10

Psalm 19
Proverbs 15:1-17
Hebrews 11:17-22

Fri., Sept. 11

Psalm 19
Proverbs 19:24-29
James 2:17-26

Sat., Sept. 12

Psalm 19
Proverbs 21:1-17
Matthew 21:23-32

Sun., Sept. 13

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Proverbs 1:20-33
Psalm 19 or Wisdom 7:26—8:1
James 3:1-12
Mark 8:27-38

Mon., Sept. 14

Psalm 73:21-28
Proverbs 22:1-21
Romans 3:9-20

Tues., Sept. 15

Psalm 73:21-28
Proverbs 25:1-28
Colossians 3:1-11

Wed., Sept. 16

Psalm 73:21-28
Proverbs 29:1-27
John 7:25-36

Thurs., Sept. 17

Psalm 1
Proverbs 30:1-10
1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Fri., Sept. 18

Psalm 1
Proverbs 30:18-33
Romans 11:25-32

Sat., Sept. 19

Psalm 1
Ecclesiastes 1:1-18
Matthew 23:29-39

Sun., Sept. 20

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Proverbs 31:10-31
Psalm 1
James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a
Mark 9:30-37

Mon., Sept. 21

Psalm 128
Proverbs 27:1-27
James 4:8-17

Tues., Sept. 22

Psalm 128
Ecclesiastes 4:9-16
James 5:1-6

Wed., Sept. 23

Psalm 128
Ecclesiastes 5:1-20
John 8:21-38

Thurs., Sept. 24

Psalm 124
Esther 1:1-21
Acts 4:13-31

Fri., Sept. 25

Psalm 124
Esther 2:1-23
Acts 12:20-25

Sat., Sept. 26

Psalm 124
Esther 3:1-15
Matthew 5:13-20

Sun., Sept. 27

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22
Psalm 124
James 5:13-20
Mark 9:38-50

Mon., Sept. 28

Psalm 140
Esther 4:1-17
1 Peter 1:3-9

Tues., Sept. 29

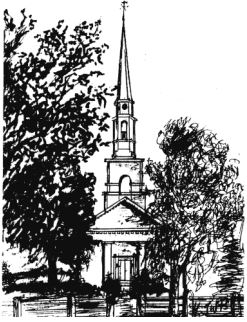
Psalm 140
Esther 5:1-14
1 John 2:18-25

Wed., Sept. 30

Psalm 140
Esther 8:1-17
Matthew 18:6-9



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Barre Congregational Church

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*The world needs the distinct values, vision
and voice of the United Church of Christ–
Continuing Testament.*

Extravagant Welcome. Changing Lives.