

SEPTEMBER OUTLOOK 2021

Unity Hill United Church of Christ

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The Rev. Dr. M. Todd Shipley, Pastor
Robert Coulson, Moderator
Carol Dunn, Treasurer
Dawn Brezina, Church Clerk
Jeffrey Stokely, Music Coordinator
Dorothy W. Pickens, Soloist
Joanne Wickson, Office Administrator
Diana Builes, Bookkeeper
Calap Brown, Sexton



***“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here!”***



~ OCTOBER OUTLOOK DEADLINE ~

We welcome contributions to our monthly newsletter and invite you to share information, or even something more creative!

Please submit all articles, events or special announcements for the October 2021 Outlook by Monday, September 20. Thanks!

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND in your prayers or with
a note: Dorothy Barwick, Lucille Bayer, Dolores Colaiacomo,
Ilse Plitt and Katie Schneider.



PASTORAL CARE ~ VERY IMPORTANT!

If you, or someone you know, is hospitalized,
please call the church office to let us know.
Hospitals do not notify us when a parishioner is hospitalized.

“Let go of your complaints, forgive those who loved you poorly, step over your feelings of being rejected, and have the courage to trust that you won't fall into an abyss of nothingness but into the safe embrace of a God whose love will heal all your wounds.”

~ Henri Nouwen

Perhaps it was Hurricane Henri that reminded me of another Henri that is not so blustery. This Henri, Henri Nouwen, a Dutch priest, spent a long time in America. He even taught down the street at Yale Divinity School for a time. He has written several books on various subjects but there is a word that is central to all his writings:

Healing.

The quote above is found in his book entitled, ‘Here and Now.’ I recommend all of his work, but this book is applicable to the state of our world today. These words penned by Father Nouwen remind us that, although we can't change the world instantly with our faith, we can change something, or more to the point, someone. No surprise: that someone is you. Even *that* feels like a distant goal these days.

Nouwen reminds us again and again that God can fix the broken hope in your heart. God can give you back the gift of believing in transformed hearts and minds. And that hope is not powerful only because it allows you to anticipate a better future but creates a more joyous YOU right here and now.

There is something you can do right now that leads to freedom and joy: *Supplication.* That is humbly asking God to help you accomplish the ‘letting go’ mentioned by Nouwen above. Unfortunately, this quote doesn't indicate his firm belief that God can help you accomplish letting go. In a world that demands that we do something, do something, do something this you CAN do. So just sit for a moment and read his quote again. Think of specific instances that relate to his invitation:

What specific complaint should you let go?

Who should you forgive?

From where do your feelings of rejection come?

What depletes your courage in the face of your obstacles?

And in a simple prayer ask God to help you accomplish these things. Believe by acting, being led by the certainty that God can heal you.

Come to worship or tune in to our recorded worship as we explore some of the other themes in Nouwen's book, ‘Here and Now.’ AND if you really want to be courageous order the book! One of the many great things about his books is they are short! Short but powerful. I look forward to seeing you in worship or hearing from you on Facebook or YouTube.

CHURCH UPDATES

HAPPY LABOR DAY! Mon. Sept. 6. Our office will be closed to celebrate the holiday.

GEORGE'S HILL GROUP! ~ Thursday, September 9 ~ 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, including lunch. To register, please call the church office at 203-374-8822.

George's Hill is a Social Engagement Group for people who have been diagnosed with an illness affecting memory and cognition, and their caregivers, we meet on the 2nd Thursday of every month. Come join us! Our motto is: **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**



HARVEST FAIR ON OCTOBER 16 - Mark your calendars for the return of the Harvest Fair on Saturday, October 16th! More details to come later. Volunteers are needed to make this another successful event for 2021. Sign up sheets will be in Fellowship Hall.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY ~ **Jane Ellen (Foehrenbach) Bitzer**, age 75, of Shelton, passed away August 13, 2021 with her daughter and son-in-law by her side.

She is survived by her daughters Deborah Riess (Albert) and Pamela Harrison (Daniel); grandson Parker Riess; sister Carole Fanslow; her special Aunt Katie; many cousins; and a circle of dear friends. She was predeceased by her brother-in-law Allen Fanslow. Friends and family attended her service on August 21 at 11am.

Memorial contributions may be made to Unity Hill United Church of Christ.



PASTOR TODD'S VACATION ~ September 24 through October 10.

CONGRATULATIONS to Betty and Frank Heffelfinger, who will be celebrating their 60th Wedding Anniversary.



They were married on September 30, 1961, by the Rev. Harold C. Smith.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS! Phyllis Bachinski and Dave Panula were received into membership at Unity Hill UCC on Pentecost Sunday.

Many thanks to Patty Bowman for the flowers by the front doors of our church.

MESSAGE FROM CHURCH COUNCIL MODERATOR ~ Bob Coulson

I hope you all had a pleasant and satisfying summer. Autumn starts on September 22nd and will last for about 3 months until December 21st. *Prayer: Dear God, Thank you for listening to all the thoughts, desires, and joys of our hearts. Amen.*

MISSIONS COMMITTEE ~ By: Brenda Finizio, Chair

HAITIAN HELPING HANDS desperately needs your help for our friends in Haiti, after the devastating earthquake in Tibi. The church they just built was totally destroyed and

many people were injured or died. If you decide to give funds, please indicate **“Missions Haiti Aid Drive”** on the offering envelope.

HEALTHY FOOD DRIVE to support our local food pantries. Please see list of healthy foods to bring to church or you can also donate gift cards and money. If you decide to give funds, please indicate **“Missions Food Drive”** on the offering envelope.

HEALTHY FOOD LIST

- Fruits and Vegetables
- Low-sodium or water packed canned vegetables, including tomatoes or sauce
- Canned fruits in 100% juice or lite syrup
- 100% fruit and vegetable juices
- Shelf-stable dehydrated milk and canned evaporated milk.
- Dried fruits and vegetables with no added sugar or fat.
- Dried beans, peas and lentils
- Low-sodium/ water packed canned meats & seafood such as chicken, tuna, salmon
- Low-sodium canned beans and peas such as kidney, black, cannellini, black eyed, and chickpeas
- Low-sodium nuts and nut butters such as peanuts, almonds, and cashews
- 100% Whole Grains
- Whole-wheat pasta, barley, brown rice, and wild rice
- Whole-grain cereal and rolled oats with at least 3g of fiber.
- Low-sugar or unsweetened cereals and oats.

BOOK DRIVE ~ We are extending the book drive to support students and schools impacted by the natural disasters in the US this year. I will be ordering books from Usborne Books since I get a special discount for bulk orders. For donations, please indicate **“Missions Book Drive”** on the offering envelope.

Thank you for all your support.

DIACONATE COMMITTEE ~ Prayerfully by: Patricia Bowman, Chair

Holding Hands - a reflection on a song by Patty Bowman

Put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the water;

Put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea.

Take a look at yourself and you can look at others differently.

By putting your hand in the hand of the man from Galilee...

This lyric popped up in a reading recently and I recalled the catchy tune. The song was written by Gene MacLellan, first recorded by Canadian singer Anne Murray and then popularized by the band Ocean. In the US, it peaked at No. 2 for 1971 just behind “Joy

to the World” from Three Dog Night. Check out both on YouTube for a feel good moment.

Holding hands is one of many actions that can signify human closeness. It is less involved than a hug but more than a handshake. We can clasp our own hands in prayer or triumph. We can hold another’s hand to provide assistance or comfort.

So what would we feel if we held Jesus’ hand?

Hands are very important to human life as they are used to accomplish many tasks. Beyond being useful to hold, grasp or turn things we can also raise them to ask a question or when showing praise. Many cultures express approval by clapping hands together or patting someone on the back or head. And of course, one hand fits in another - both our own and with another person to form a connection. When we pray, we often clasp our own hands together, and at the end of each Council meeting (pre-covid) we would hold hands in a circle to connect us all before the closing prayer. It is this connection that is highlighted in the song as we are urged to put our hand in Jesus’ hand. Connect ourselves to him.

I am not sure if the disciples would walk hand in hand with each other or with Jesus. Did they join hands in a circle to pray? Certainly, they were close to Jesus and relied on his teachings to help them learn about God and how to follow Jesus’ way. (They were not the cream of the crop to start with.) The Bible has many, many references to Jesus putting HIS hands on people to bless or heal them. But who would have the courage to put their hand in the hand of the man from Galilee? Once connected, you would need to stay close or risk breaking that connection. You cannot hold hands from a distance, it is an up close and personal thing. I believe that is what we are encouraged to do in the words “follow Jesus”. Not just trail behind and watch what is done but be a part of it and connected to the leader.

In the Bible, hands often signify strength and direction, support and caring. In Jesus’ last moments he turns himself over to God’s hands with the words “Father into your hands I commit my spirit” (*Luke 23:46*), showing ultimate trust that all will be taken care of. It is hard for us humans to trust that strongly. We are not so ready to turn over our spirit. We tend to reach out when we need help, and then let the connection drop when things are going better. More like grasping a human hand that we use temporarily to help us get up a stair or when walking beside a friend or loved one. We can’t literally hold Jesus’ hand so how then can we be connected to him?

... Trust.

Relying on Jesus and God’s Word when we need guidance or support can build up trust. We may not always receive the answer we want but we can practice reaching out for the hand that is always there. As we become more trusting, it strengthens the connection. And we can feel the power of the one who “stilled the water” and “calmed

the sea” to help us deal with this human life. So put your hand in his hand and trust in the results. Not just when you need a helping hand but as you walk along in life. When we have a hand in Jesus’ hand, we can surely feel the love of God flowing back to us.

Ever present God and the Spirit that dwells among us, help us to trust enough to put our hand in Jesus’ throughout this life and feel the connection of love that you offer.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE ~ By: Sharon Brezina, Chair

Well, it's September already - how did that happen!! I can't wait to hear all the adventures the kids have had this summer. I am sure they were amazing!

BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY Sunday School with start up again on September 19th. This will give the children time to settle into their new norm at school.

I am very excited for them - so many have gone up a grade and into a new school. Let the fun times begin!

We will have a welcoming back party and make plans for some events during the new school year. So, make sure you contact me if there are any ideas floating around out there that could involve the children.



See ya on "Back to School Sunday" September 19th!

MESSAGES FROM OUR TREASURER ~ By: Carol Dunn

Tenure

The longest serving legislator in America, and the last World War II veteran to serve in a state legislature, resigned earlier this year after 64 years in public office. Fred Risser, 94, of Madison, Wisconsin, was first elected to the Wisconsin state assembly when he was 29, the fourth generation in his family to represent his district. Six years later he won a special election to the state senate. He served as its president for 26 years and was never defeated in an election. When he was first sworn in, back in 1956, Dwight Eisenhower was president, and Alaska and Hawaii were just U.S. territories. A new house could be had for well under \$20,000 and a new Ford for under \$2,000. A gallon of gas cost 22 cents, bakers charged 18 cents for a loaf of bread, and the total charge for tuition, room and board at Harvard was \$1,000.

Power Brokers Over Time

The last World War II veterans in Congress retired in 2014 and no one has come close to Navy pharmacist mate Risser’s record of tenure in Washington. There is worthy debate on the subject of term limits, but those with decades of experience have much perspective to offer, favors to trade, bonds and relationships to rely upon, and

powers to exercise. After nearly 49 years in the House, Don Young of Alaska, 88, is its longest serving current member. And, at nearly 47 years, Patrick Leahy, 81, and Chuck Grassley, 87, share the title on the Senate side. Last week, the two senators joined 67 of their colleagues to vote in favor of the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill, a measure designed to make sorely needed improvements in roads, bridges, and tunnels but one that may further fuel the inflation that is squeezing many Main Street voters. The median sale price of a home in the U.S. is now \$374,900. The cheapest new Ford on the lot in Madison, Wisconsin goes for \$25,226. A gallon of gas in Montpelier, Vermont costs \$3.05. A loaf of Wonder Bread at the Carrs-Safeway in Anchorage, Alaska costs \$4.79. Tuition, fees, room, and board at Harvard this fall amounts to \$74,528.

Market Conditions

Following a stronger-than-expected jobs report last week in which nonfarm payrolls rose 943,000 and the July jobless rate fell to 5.4%, some speculated that all it will take is one more robust report in September for the Fed to announce the dreaded start to tapering. The stock market closed out the week higher, with the S&P and Dow ending at record highs of 4,437 and at 35,209, respectively. The Nasdaq closed at 14,836 and the Russell 2000 at 2,246. Volatility as measured by the CBOE Volatility (Fear) Index fell 11.5% to 16.15. Crude oil prices dropped to \$67.89 a barrel and gold fell to \$1,763.5 an ounce but Bitcoin was up 4.3%.

Sum-Sum-Summertime

There has not been much of a summer lull in the markets – yet anyway. Parents are starting to see younger children off to their school buses already and settle the older ones into college dorm rooms. There is some but not much headline news giving direction to stock and bond traders. We have all somehow adapted to highly unusual, extraordinary conditions and interventions. The 24/7 news cycle often gives us more forward guidance than we need or want but, absent the occasional upset, most U.S. markets are naturally leaning toward rally mode. Passage of the so-called bipartisan infrastructure bill on the Senate side was assumed, as was the departure of the New York governor. There is a flood of cash that continues to pour into short-term markets, a stream of students and office workers returning to campuses and high rises that have been dusty for more than 16 months. Along with the rest of the nation and the world, Wall Street is carefully following the spikes in Delta variant cases and all the chatter about possible changes in policy, mandates, and consumer behavior that may ensue. Major concerns about the economic recovery seem to have lessened temporarily. More attention is being paid to the debt ceiling as consideration of the budget resolution released by Senate Democrats begins.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

FELLOWSHIP OF UNITY HILL ~ By: Dorothy Pickens, President

GOLDEN HILL COMMUNITY SUPPERS – Our turn at Golden Hill UMC, Bridgeport was on Wednesday, August 25. Dot Pickens and Marsha Piper prepared the meal on Saturday, August 22. A very special thank you to all of our volunteers.

Our next turn is on Wednesday, October 27. We will cook at 2:00pm and serve at 5:00 pm. Extra help is always needed & appreciated. We will cook before the dinner. Date to be announced. If anyone would like to help, please contact Dot Pickens.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP ~ By: Carole J. Fanslow, President

Women's Fellowship Executive Board will be meeting on Thursday, October 7 at 1:00 pm at Louise Evan's home. They hope to make plans for next year's programs.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND HAPPENINGS

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF GREATER BRIDGEPORT

New President and CEO of CCGB is The Rev. A. Iona Smith Nze, who has been a senior pastor at Bethel AME Church in Bridgeport since 2017.

Fall Delegates Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 14 on Zoom at 6:30 pm.

TRUMBULL INTERFAITH COUNCIL

Monthly Meeting will be at Unity Hill United Church of Christ on Wednesday, September 1 at 7:00 pm. Hopefully plans will be announced for the annual Thanksgiving service.

FAIRFIELD EAST ASSOCIATION

Fall Meeting will be on Wednesday, October 27 at Greenfield Hill Congregational.

47TH ANNUAL GREATER BRIDGEPORT CROP HUNGER WALK

CROP Rally is set for Sunday, September 19 at 2:00 pm at Unity Hill UCC.

New location for the CROP Walk on Sunday, October 17 is at United Congregational Church, 2200 North Ave. Bpt. Marsha Piper and Dot Pickens have all the info.

HEALTH CORNER ~ Hearing Loss: A Common Problem for Older Adults

Hearing loss is a common problem caused by noise, aging, disease, and heredity. People with hearing loss may find it hard to have conversations with friends and family. They may also have trouble understanding a doctor's advice, responding to

warnings, and hearing doorbells and alarms but, some people may not want to admit they have trouble hearing.

Older people who can't hear well may become [depressed](#), or they may withdraw from others because they feel frustrated or embarrassed about not understanding what is being said. Sometimes, older people are mistakenly thought to be confused, unresponsive, or uncooperative because they don't hear well. [Hearing problems](#) that are ignored or untreated can get worse. If you have a hearing problem, see your doctor. Hearing aids, special training, certain medicines, and surgery are some of the treatments that can help.

Hearing and Cognitive Health ~

Signs of Hearing Loss ~ Some people have a hearing problem and don't realize it. You should see your doctor if you:

- Have trouble hearing over the telephone
- Find it hard to follow conversations when two or more people are talking
- Often ask people to repeat what they are saying
- Need to turn up the TV volume so loud that others complain
- Have a problem hearing because of background noise
- Think that others seem to mumble
- Can't understand when women and children speak to you

Causes of Hearing Loss ~ [Loud noise is one of the most common causes of hearing loss](#). Noise from lawn mowers, snow blowers, or loud music can damage the inner ear, resulting in permanent hearing loss. Loud noise also contributes to tinnitus. ***You can prevent most noise-related hearing loss. Protect yourself by turning down the sound on your stereo, television, or headphones; moving away from loud noise; or using earplugs or other ear protection.***

Earwax or fluid buildup can block sounds that are carried from the eardrum to the inner ear. Your doctor may suggest mild treatments to soften earwax.

A punctured ear drum damaged by infection, pressure, or putting objects in the ear, including cotton-tipped swabs, can also cause hearing loss. See your doctor if you have pain or fluid draining from the ear.

Health conditions common in older people, such as [diabetes](#) or [high blood pressure](#), can contribute to hearing loss. Viruses and bacteria (including the ear infection otitis media), a [heart condition](#), [stroke](#), brain injury, or a tumor may also affect your hearing. Hearing loss can also result from taking certain medications. "Ototoxic" medications damage the inner ear, sometimes permanently. Some ototoxic drugs include medicines used to treat serious infections, [cancer](#), and [heart disease](#). Some antibiotics are ototoxic. Even aspirin at some dosages can cause problems. Check with your doctor if you notice a problem while taking a medication.

Heredity can cause hearing loss, as well. But not all inherited forms of hearing loss take place at birth. Some forms can show up later in life. For example, in [otosclerosis](#), which is thought to be a hereditary disease, an abnormal growth of bone prevents structures within the ear from working properly.

Coping with Hearing Loss ~ If you have trouble hearing, talk to your doctor and:

- Let people know you have a hearing problem.
- Ask people to face you and to speak more slowly and clearly. Also, ask them to speak louder without shouting.
- Pay attention to what is being said and to facial expressions or gestures.
- Let the person talking know if you do not understand what he or she said.
- Ask the person speaking to reword a sentence and try again.
- Find a good location to listen. Place yourself between the speaker and sources of noise and look for quieter places to talk.

The most important thing you can do if you think you have a hearing problem is to seek professional advice.

Tips: How to Talk with Someone with Hearing Loss:

- In a group, include people with hearing loss in the conversation.
- Find a quiet place to talk to help reduce background noise, especially in restaurants and at social gatherings.
- Stand in good lighting and use facial expressions or gestures to give clues.
- Face the person and speak clearly. Maintain eye contact.
- Speak a little more loudly than normal and at a reasonable speed, but don't shout.
- Do not hide your mouth, eat, or chew gum while speaking.
- Repeat yourself if necessary, using different words.
- Try to make sure only one person talks at a time.
- Be patient. Stay positive and relaxed. Ask how you can help.

Devices to Help with Hearing Loss ~ [Talk with your doctor](#) about what's right for you. **For More Information About Hearing Loss** [National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders](#) Call 800-241-1044 (toll-free) / 800-241-1055 (TTY/toll-free) / email nidcdinfo@nidcd.nih.gov / website www.nidcd.nih.gov

ANNIVERSARIES IN SEPTEMBER ~ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

September 13 ~ Shoran Piper and Jeff Baez

September 30 ~ Betty & Frank Heffelfinger



September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 2:00pm Middlebrook Farms Communion Service 7:00pm Trumbull Interfaith Council Meeting at Unity Hill UCC	2 1:00pm Women's Fellowship Executive Board Meeting	3	4
5 10:30am Worship Service	6 Labor Day Office closed	7	8 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	9 11am-1pm George's Hill Group	10	11
12 10:30am Worship Service	13	14	15	16	17 Info for October newsletter due by today	18
19 10:30am Worship Service 2:00pm CROP Rally at Unity Hill UCC	20	21	22	23	24 Pastor Todd vacation	25 Pastor Todd vacation
26 Pastor Todd vacation 10:30am Worship Service	27 Pastor Todd vacation	28 Pastor Todd vacation	29 Pastor Todd vacation	30 Pastor Todd vacation		

BIRTHDAYS IN SEPTEMBER ~ HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

6 Anneke Ruys	16 Ron Finizio	27 Marie Seavey
7 Izzy Rondon	18 Ken Ferrara	27 John Rossi
9 <u>Brianna Pickens</u>	18 Al Paolozzi, Jr.	30 Tyler Pickens
12 Sarah Buttress	25 Rev. Dr. Todd Shipley	



Unity Hill United Church of Christ's HARVEST FAIR

Saturday, October 16th - 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

at 364 White Plains Rd, Trumbull ~ Outside, Rain or Shine!

Our Harvest Fair will feature a farmer's market, crafts, raffle, bake table, Chinese Auction, food and other activities.

We're also having Junk-in-the-Trunk ~ \$15.00 per space and a Tag Sale ~ \$20 per space (or \$15 plus bring a baked good or raffle prize) or \$25 for a tent and 2 tables. Bring your own tables and tents.

Please join us in this fun event.

It's the perfect fair for families who want an alternative to big festivals and commercial mid-ways.

For more info or to reserve a space, call the church office at 203-374-8822 on Monday - Friday 9am - 3pm.



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