

# The Parish News

JUNE 2025

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LITTLETON, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dear Friends,

I am just back from an amazing preaching conference. It was such a gift to be filled with empowering preaching, heart-moving prayers and *the singing*. If you ever get the chance to be in a huge sanctuary with a pipe organ blasting and the voices of over one thousand clergy singing a full-throated version of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," I highly recommend it! This change of scenery helped me get re-energized for ministry.

There are moments in our spiritual lives when we feel stuck—caught in routine, burdened by sameness, or simply weary. At these times, one of the most healing things we can do is to step away, to change our scenery, and to allow fresh surroundings to stir something new within us. Jesus often withdrew to the mountains or the sea to pray and reflect. We are also called to appreciate the restoring power of a change to renew our hearts and deepen our connection with God.

A change of scenery doesn't have to mean traveling to a preaching conference or a major life upheaval. It

can be as simple as walking a different route through the neighborhood, spending a quiet morning in a new coffee shop, or even rearranging a room in your home to open up space—literally and spiritually. These small shifts remind us that God's presence isn't confined to the familiar. In unfamiliar places, our senses awaken, our perspectives widen, and we often hear God's voice in surprising ways.

This month, I invite you to consider how a change of scenery might be part of your spiritual practice. Whether it's visiting a local park with intention, or just moving your prayer time outside, trust that the Spirit moves powerfully when we step out of our comfort zones. Change is not just something to endure—it's an opportunity for transformation.

May each change of view be a glimpse of the holy for you.

With you on the Journey,

*Rev. Jen*

## Memorial Day Moments





CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF LITTLETON  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

330 King Street  
Littleton, MA 01460  
978.486.3245 | ccol.org

Rev. Jennifer Munroe-Nathans  
Senior Pastor  
Rev.Jen@ccol.org  
508.868.4927

Michelle Rawlinson  
Christian Education Director  
CEDirector@ccol.org

Poliana Yee  
Office Assistant  
Office@ccol.org

Peter Scantlebury  
Sexton  
scant2@verizon.net

Amber LaSante  
Digital Media Coordinator  
aclasante@gmail.com

Sandy Clyde  
Financial Administrator  
SClyde@ccol.org

Church Office Hours  
Tuesday, Wednesday  
and Thursday: 10—3 pm

You can attend worship in  
the following ways:

"LIVE" via YouTube  
[live-youtube.ccol.org](http://live-youtube.ccol.org)

"LIVE" via Facebook  
[live-facebook.ccol.org](http://live-facebook.ccol.org)

And of course ... In person  
every Sunday at 10 am in  
our sanctuary

We recommend YouTube as  
it has the best audio, fewer  
glitches and people can chat  
with one another during the  
service.

Closed-captioning is also  
available on YouTube after  
the Sunday 10 am service,  
usually later in the day.

**Have you moved?**

We strive to keep our directory  
and mailing lists up to date.  
Please email the church office:  
office@ccol.org with all the  
information and updates to  
be included.  
We don't want you to miss any  
happenings at CCoL!

# The ART of Storytelling



## Sabbatical Theme: Live a Good Story

From the tale of Noah's ark, to the narrative of the nativity, to the many parables of Jesus, our Bible is full of stories. The idea that, "God created humans because God loves a good story" is often attributed to Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Prize-winning writer and Holocaust survivor.

Wiesel believed deeply in the power of stories, both as a means of preserving memory and to understand the human condition. We can see life itself as a narrative, filled with struggles, triumphs, and moral lessons.

As we look ahead, our theme for this summer at CCoL is, "*Live a Good Story*" reflecting Rev. Jen's theme for her time away. The plans Rev. Jen has for her summer sabbatical include traveling, collecting stories and attending writing programs. Her love of a good story (especially punctuated with humor) that illustrates our Christian faith is the guiding focus.

To that end: **Mark your calendars**—something special is coming to the Congregational Church of Littleton! On **Friday, September 6th at 7:00 PM**, we're hosting our first-ever *Storytelling Night*, an evening dedicated to the art of sharing true, heartfelt, and meaningful stories from our lives. Whether your story is funny, tender, surprising, or inspiring, we want to hear it—and we want to hear *you*. The theme is: "What an Adventure!"

Each storyteller will have **five minutes** to share a personal story—no notes, no pressure, just a room full of friendly faces and open hearts. You don't have to be a performer or a public speaker—just someone with a story to tell. Maybe it's about a lesson you learned the hard way, a moment that changed you, or a memory that still makes you laugh out loud. If you can connect it to the theme, it matters, and it belongs in the circle.

Look for brochures in July and August with tips for storytelling. Whether you plan to tell a story or simply come to listen, you'll be part of something deeply human and joyfully connective. Stories remind us that we're not alone—that grace, growth, and laughter live in every life. Come be a part of this evening of community and connection. Who knows? You might leave inspired to tell your own story next time.







We want to extend a heartfelt **thank you to everyone who helped make our church flea market a success!** Whether you donated items, volunteered your time, or came out to shop, your support made a big difference.

Thanks to our amazing community, we raised around **\$1,300**, which will go directly toward the church budget. We couldn't have done it without each and every one of you.

*It was a joyful day filled with fellowship, fun, and generosity!*

*Marilyn, Deb & Murph*



1 Anthony Fiato  
1 Angel Maldonado  
2 Connie Turner  
5 Connor MacNeil  
7 Noralie Sarver  
15 Holly Bell

16 Jeanne Hickox  
22 Mark Hickox  
29 Emma Hamilton  
29 Lee Ogilvie  
30 Brad Hamilton

**Do we have your birthday?**

Please email the church office: [office@ccol.org](mailto:office@ccol.org) so we can celebrate with you!



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## Growing Together: The Youth Garden Project

Our youth are launching a long-term project to create a vibrant **Youth Group Flower Garden** along the tree-lined strip between the church and Hager Homestead. Starting at the



top of the hill and working their way down over the coming years, they'll be planting **low-maintenance perennials** and crafting a colorful **painted rock border** to bring the space to life.

We welcome donations of hardy, easy-care plants to help this garden thrive. We're especially looking for **hostas** and **creeping thyme**, but all contributions are appreciated!



## Celebrating a Joyful Year of Faith & Fellowship

We will wrap up our Sunday School and Youth Group programming on **June 8th** with a special **Children and Youth Worship Service**. Our young people will take center stage, leading and participating in worship in meaningful ways.

Following the service, we invite everyone to join us outside the church for a festive **Ice Cream Social**—a sweet way to celebrate a wonderful year together!

Please note: **Sunday School and Youth Group will pause for the summer** and resume in the fall.



## Worship Through a Child's Eyes

This summer, we're excited to introduce a **Pray Ground** in the sanctuary—an intentional, welcoming space where children can engage in worship through age-appropriate materials and quiet activities. After **Children's Time**, kids are invited to the Pray Ground, where Michelle or a Youth Group member will be present to supervise and support them.

The Pray Ground helps children feel included in worship while allowing them to experience God's presence in ways that are meaningful to them.

## Vacation Bible School at CCoL

**August 11-15**

Time: 9am-12pm

Grades: PreK-5<sup>th</sup>

Cost: \$30

*(Space is limited)*



**Questions?** Please contact Michelle Rawlinson at [cedirector@ccol.org](mailto:cedirector@ccol.org)



## We Need You!

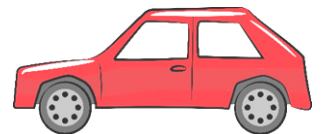
**Join us in guiding travelers in discovering how God is with us wherever we go!**

If you like having fun and working with children, we are looking for you!

We are in need of volunteers to lead stations at Vacation Bible School (craft, science, music, snack & recreation), crew leaders and a photographer as well as decorators to assist beforehand.

### Questions?

Please contact the CE Director Michelle Rawlinson at [cedirector@ccol.org](mailto:cedirector@ccol.org).



**CAN'T COMMIT FOR THE WEEK?**  
You can volunteer for only a day or two



## Give the Gift of a Second Chance

At the April Church Council meeting, one of the key topics discussed was the overall safety of our church community. A significant outcome of that discussion was the decision to pursue the purchase of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for our church building, along with the necessary training for its use.

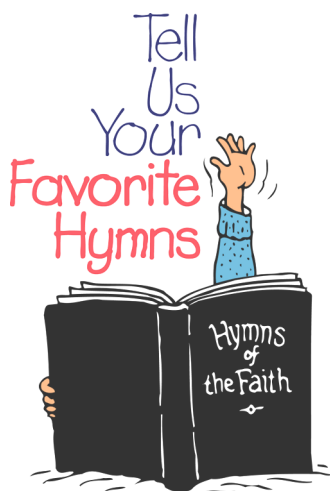
An AED is a portable medical device designed to help people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest—a condition where the heart unexpectedly stops beating. The device analyzes the heart's rhythm and, if needed, delivers an electric shock to help restore a normal heart-beat. According to the American Heart Association, sudden cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death in the U.S., contributing to approximately 1,000 deaths each day.

Our church building is not only a place of worship but also a hub for community gatherings, including events hosted by the Neighborhood Supper, the Littleton Historical Society, and other groups—many of which serve older adults. Having an AED on-site could be life-saving in an emergency.

To fund this important initiative, we are seeking support from external sources such as the Rotary Club and grant programs offered by AED manufacturers. In addition, several church members and groups have already pledged their support.

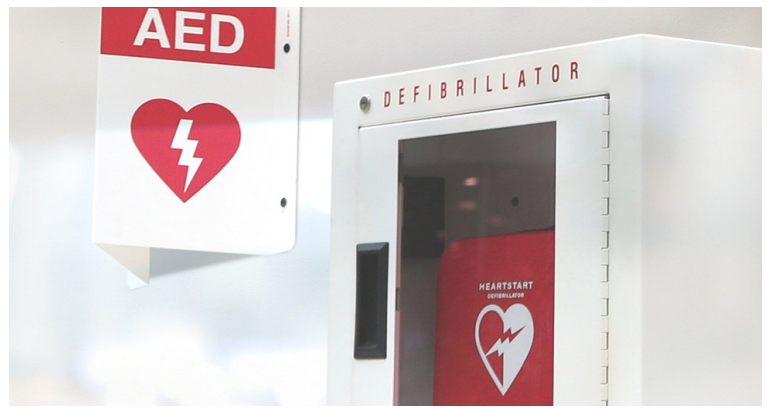
If you would like to contribute to this life-saving effort, please send or drop off a check to Sandy Clyde with "AED" written in the memo line. Your support is deeply appreciated and could make a critical difference in an emergency.

Thank you for helping us make our church a safer place for everyone.



### What's your favorite hymn?

The CCoL music committee wants to know! The Sunday, July 13th service will be a **HYMN SING!** Tell us your favorite hymns and, if you would like, you can even include a sentence to tell us why. Please email your requests to Charlotte: [ccr6273@verizon.net](mailto:ccr6273@verizon.net) by June 22nd.



## The Garden at Church Meadows

*Our first delivery to Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry was made recently—fresh herbs and rhubarb totaling 7.9 pounds. We are on our way!*

*Once the rain stops, we will be finishing laying fabric mulch and plant everything by early June. Many hands make for light work. If you can help us at the Garden during this very busy time, please get in touch with Deb Rosson ([rosson100@verizon.net](mailto:rosson100@verizon.net)) or Sue Cummings ([sustev@comcast.net](mailto:sustev@comcast.net)). This mission of love is more important than ever as food insecurity affects too many people in our area. The clients at Loaves and Fishes are very grateful. Thank you.*

*Deb and Sue, co-chairs*



## Caregiver Support Group

CCoL offers a monthly support group for caregivers on the second Wednesday of every month. The next meeting will take place on:

**June 11<sup>th</sup> 7:00 - 8:30 pm.**

This is a support group for people of all ages who have the responsibility for the welfare of a family member or friend. It is a safe space in which to share needs and resources. This is open to all in the Littleton community and nearby towns and is NOT limited to CCoL members. Please invite friends, family and anyone who may benefit from this program. Refreshments will be offered.





## Kindness is Simple

CCoL started an effort to connect members and friends who **NEED** help with members and friends who can **PROVIDE** help. If you have some "giving time" available, check out the Sign-Up sheet in the Parish Hall and we will attempt to match you up with someone in need. Please list the particular type of help you can provide, such as running errands, providing a ride or a meal.

We are also looking for people who can help with simple handyman tasks, such as hanging pictures, changing light bulbs or adjusting a stuck door or window.

Questions? Call the CCoL Office at 978.486.3245 or email the KIS network at: [KISNetwork@ccol.org](mailto:KISNetwork@ccol.org).

### EVERY TUESDAY

#### Neighborhood Supper 5:30-6:30PM

The Congregational Church has been the host site for Neighborhood Suppers for more than 30 years. Cooks and the tasks rotate each week among four Littleton churches.

All churches have a crew and select the menu. There is no charge for this — donations are gratefully appreciated.

### EVERY FRIDAY

#### AL-ANON 10AM

Al-Anon is a mutual support group to recover from the effects of the disease of alcoholism.

Al-Anon meetings are walk-in and meets in the Conant Room on Fridays.

### EVERY WEDNESDAY

**SEWING GROUP—10AM**  
Sewing people meet every Wednesday from 10-Noon. They are currently creating items for those in need. Don't sew? Share your craft, feel free to bring knitting, crochet or handcraft projects of your interest. If you plan to sew, bring your machine.

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

**Church Council**  
Second Thursday, 7:30PM  
**Welcoming Committee**  
First Thursday, 7pm  
**Property**  
First Thursday, 7:30pm  
**Christian Education**  
First Tuesday, (Zoom)  
**Caregivers Support Group**  
Second Wednesday, 7pm  
**Mission Outreach**  
First Sunday, 11am  
**Deacons**  
First Monday, 7pm  
**Digital Media Committee**

## SAVE THE DATES!

Friday June 6, 5-7pm

LGBTQ+ folks and friends are invited to kick-off Pride Month with **Pride Karaoke** at Fay Park. In case of rain, the singing moves to First Church Unitarian on Foster Street in Littleton.



### WooSox Game

Sunday July 20, 1:05pm

The UCC Central MA Association has reserved a section of the Triple Decker Garden of Polar Park in Worcester for a WooSox game against Scranton. All are welcome.

\$35 per ticket will include:

- Tickets to a private stanchioned section of the Hanover Deck
- 2-hr buffet of burgers, hot dogs, mac & cheese, potato salad & other ballpark favorites.
- Central MA Association, SNEUCC, featured on our right-center field videoboard during the game
- 5% Team Store discount to use on merchandise
- Additional pregame or in-game group experiences!

Email: [treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com](mailto:treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com) to reserve tickets.. Please include your name, contact information and number of tickets. You will receive a confirmation email with payment information. On the date of the game, tickets will be held at Will Call in your name. **Questions? Please reach out to Bob Kersting at [treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com](mailto:treasurercentralmaassn@gmail.com) or 774-452-0137.**

**Final count & Payment due July 3**

**Parking details:** <https://www.milb.com/worcester/ballpark/parking>



## JUNETEENTH

In celebration of Juneteenth, the CCoL Office will be closed Thursday, June 19th.



# Council Update May 8, 2025

Rev. Jen opened the meeting of the Council with a prayer.

The bulk of the meeting was a lengthy discussion led by the Property Committee concerning plans for repairing the church steeple. A quote was received for repair at \$78,000 to do all that needs to be done. To remove the spire and replace it with a cap was quoted at \$30,000. Property and Finance will try to find other contractors to gather more quotes. It was agreed that something must be done now as we cannot leave the present hole to let in weather and possibly creatures. The decision was made to employ a contractor to plug the hole as soon as possible, giving the church the time needed to make decisions regarding funding for a complete steeple repair.

Other Property focuses included the weathervane complete refurbishment, men's room repairs, and the installation of a Ring doorbell to make it safer for staff to screen those who would like to enter the building. A lawnmower has been donated to the church. As a result

of a fire safety inspection, the hood over the stove needs cleaning and the Exit signs need battery backup.

Kathy Keenan announced that the pledging is going smoothly. The Easter offering missed the goal by \$1500, but the church received another \$500 for the contractor's use of the parking lot. During these uncertain times the church invested funds show a net loss of \$68,648.

Rev. Jen reminded the Council that there will be an All-Committee night on June 2. All committee members are expected to come. Worship coverage has been arranged for Rev. Jen's sabbatical. Rev. Jen is planning to bring a storyteller to the church to encourage members of the congregation to learn how to write and tell their stories.

Holly Magnier closed the meeting with prayer.

Give NOW



Despite torrential downpours the **Ceilidh concert** was well attended and enjoyed by all. **Cynthia MacLeod** and **Gordon Belsher** had the audience clapping hands and tapping toes and adding to the singing at various times. Local special guest performer **Eamon Sefton** added another dimension to the evening's musical offerings and was well received.



## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LITTLETON

330 King Street, Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

978-486-3245 | office@ccol.org



### Warrant for the Special Business Meeting of the Congregational Church of Littleton Massachusetts on June 1, 2025

The Members of the Congregational Church of Littleton are hereby notified to gather in meeting at 11 am, following our 10 am service, on Sunday, June 1, 2025 to act on the following articles:

- Article I To approve to consolidate restricted funds and use them to support the missions of CCoL.
- Article II To conduct any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

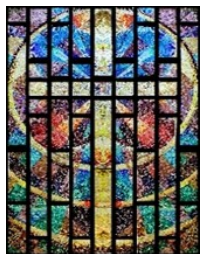
Respectfully Submitted,

*Lori McElroy*  
Lori McElroy, Clerk

## June 2 ~ All-Committee Night

All committee members should attend. Discuss plans for the next program year. We will schedule activities and discuss the health and vitality of our congregation. Pizza will be served.





## *The Congregational Church of Littleton*

*United Church of Christ*

330 King Street  
Littleton, MA 01460

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**AT THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LITTLETON  
ALL ARE WELCOME, AND ALL MEANS ALL.**

## **CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LITTLETON, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**



### *You Are Welcome Here*

*No matter who you are or where you are on  
life's journey, you are welcome here.*

*We affirm each person as a child of God  
and worthy of God's love.*

### *This includes YOU:*

Whether you are tall or short, whether you wear denim or silk, whether you were raised in a church or have never been in one before, whether you are a family of one or many, whether you can bound up the stairs or need to use the elevator, whether you were born yesterday or are working on your second century; Whatever the color of your skin, your sexual orientation, your gender identity, your politics, your income, your education, your mental or physical health, or anything else that distinguishes you, we want you to feel included.

Our mosaic is made more beautiful with every additional shape, size and color.

*At this church, all are welcome,  
and ALL means ALL*