

JULY 2025 HILLTOP NEWSLETTER

Rev. Andrew Harris
 Pastor

Mark Omobono
 Moderator

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Luke 10:25-29

An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Sisters, brothers, and siblings in Christ,

For the past month or so I've joined a group of people protesting outside the ICE facility at 1000 District Ave. right here in Burlington.

What I've seen and heard has shocked me. The ICE facility in Burlington is the main point of ICE operations in New England. Masked agents constantly depart and return to the facility with people they've apprehended on raids. In this nondescript office building, people are detained in inhumane conditions and denied access to their constitutionally guaranteed rights. What's even worse, from a Christian point of view, is that our neighbors are treated without mercy, without compassion, without kindness, and without dignity. There is no peace, no mercy, and no love to be found within the desolating temple of contempt at 1000 District Ave.

ICE agents record the protestors on their phones. They laugh at us, swear at us. In stark contrast to my faith in humanity, they have revealed an insidious cruelty that is bearing itself out on our neighbors.

I've seen lawyers denied entry to the building for hours. I've seen family members denied the ability to deliver clothes or medication to their loved ones. I've spoken with people in tears because their spouse was transported to a detention facility in Ohio without any notice. I've heard stories of callous cruelty being perpetrated against our neighbors by hard-hearted ICE agents. I didn't want to believe they were true, and yet everything I've seen thus far only lends credibility to the horrific reports coming out of this ICE facility in our own community.

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Please be warned, some of these stories are difficult to hear.

A 29-year-old woman with two kids, married to a US citizen, begged to be released from Burlington ICE after spending 10 days there. When she appeared before a judge, her face was swollen, her hair was falling out. Moved with pity, the judge granted her request to be transferred to a (hopefully more humane) facility in Vermont.

A mother of three children was imprisoned in Burlington. During her imprisonment she had her period and was denied any menstrual products. She bled through her pants. The ICE agents gave her a bottle of water to pour on herself.

An immigrant imprisoned in Burlington asked an ICE agent for a sweatshirt, because her teeth were chattering painfully while trying to sleep on the cold concrete floor. An ICE agent went to the office, printed a photo of her face, taped the photo up on the cell wall with a note that she should not be given anything because "she had already been asking for too much."

A 25-year old woman who was three months pregnant was imprisoned in Burlington. Even though they knew she was pregnant, ICE agents crammed her in a cell with 10 other women and gave her a couple of spoonfuls of mac and cheese for dinner, which was so rotten she could not eat it. She slept on a concrete floor, received no medical care, and was denied access to a lawyer.

This is what we've heard from people who have been inside, people who have been released, and lawyers who are working for justice for their clients. I cannot verify the truth of these stories. but from what I have witnessed, the truth of these claims would not surprise me.

I tell you all this so that we do not look away from the evil taking place in our community. The Burlington ICE facility is quickly developing a reputation as one of the worst detention centers in the US. These are prison conditions we would expect to see from the most cruel, violent, despotic governments, not something we would ever expect to witness in the United States, let alone our hometown of Burlington.

Come and see for yourself some time. We gather every Wednesday from 11am-1pm. I've found hope in this group of people standing in solidarity with our neighbors who are being persecuted by our government. Jesus calls us to stand with the poor and the oppressed, the immigrant and the refugee, the persecuted and the prisoner. May God have mercy on our town and our country. May God soften Pharaoh's heart and once again liberate God's children from bondage. May God grant us the courage to share the good news of peace, love, and justice with all people, so that we might repent from the ways of evil and walk in the ways of righteousness which God has set before us. God have mercy. Hear our prayer.

With love and peace,
Rev. Andrew Harris

**BIBLE STUDY - LUKE'S PARABLES
IN PERSON AND ON ZOOM**

Click here to join on Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84363847241>

July 2 - Parable of the Wicked Tenants (Luke 20:1-19) 2-3pm

PUB THEOLOGY

**STAY TUNED FOR DATES AND
TIMES FOR GATHERINGS
WITH ANDREW THIS
SUMMER!**

Summer Worship at UCC Burlington
I've Been Meaning to Ask:
A Series for Courage, Curiosity, and Connection



Some of the best conversations start with good questions—questions we've been meaning to ask, questions that keep us curious, and questions that lead us deeper into courage and connection. Our upcoming worship series from @sanctifiedart centers around four guiding questions: "I've been meaning to ask... Where are you from?... Where does it hurt?... What do you need?... Where do we go from here?" As you can see, these questions aren't surface level; they invite us to tell our stories, share our pain, care for one another, and dream about a new way forward together. Through vulnerability and authenticity, may our courageous conversations lead us to glimpse hope, joy, and beauty—and to become the community God created us to be.

This summer, we will partner with our friends at Burlington Presbyterian Church (BPC) to explore these questions as we sing, pray, and talk together in worship. In July, BPC will join us in our sanctuary. In August, we will travel down the road to their church at 335 Cambridge St. We hope that you will join us on this journey of deepening relationship, building fellowship, and drawing closer to God.



People liked the format of Service/Service Sunday and thought it was better planned and organized than last year. For next year, project ideas will be considered in January and Missions will be consulted.

The Pride Day table was well received, with many people dropping by and a few email addresses collected. Andrew will follow up on these.

Five young people joined the church on Confirmation Sunday; there was discussion on how to keep them involved going forward.

Summer worship will remain at 10:30. The Presbyterians will join us for the entire month of July and we will join them for the first four Sundays in August; August 31 is undecided. Andrew and Rev. Trina are working on a sermon series entitled 'I've been meaning to ask—.' Each church will provide its own lay leaders.

The Deacons will not meet in July; their next meeting is August 7 .

FROM FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

We will be starting our 2026 fall campaign on Sunday October 12th running until Sunday November 16th, 2025. As part of our campaign we would like some members of the congregation to speak briefly during service about their relationship with our church. These "Voices From The Congregation" will share the meaning of their faith and relationship with our church. In the past, people have spoken about their sense of calm, after a hectic week, while listening to the music. Or they've spoken about the fellowship they've found from socializing at coffee hour. Maybe even the fulfillment one gets when volunteering to help at the Thanksgiving In Gathering. The reason why you keep coming back to church. What is it that draws you to the church?. If you are interested in speaking (only a few minutes) please let one of the committee members know.

Respectfully,

Laura Nowell, Sally Willard, Lucy Damiani, David Issac, Julie Lewis

MISSIONS UPDATE!

RED WAGON

Pantry requests:

The Pantry will be feeding the children who are home for the summers. These children would normally receive lunch at school. The items listed below are needed all summer and many are needed to meet the needs of the families. You can leave off your donations any day from 7AM to 7PM at the Pantry 21 Murray Ave., Burlington.

Individually wrapped kids' snacks
Granola bars
Fruit cups
Chips
Crackers



CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE

C4C will continue to meet weekly on Thursday 1 to 3 in the air-conditioned conference room. Weather permitting we may meet outside in front of the Church.

THANK YOU NOTE FROM

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

We want to thank you for your \$1000 donation that UCC Congregational made on 6/6/25. Every act of generosity helps us further our mission to build affordable homes for families in need. Your faith organization is helping to make that happen and we couldn't do it without you, so thank you!

Sheilagh Carlisle "Thank you so much!"

Kate Maslowski "We are so grateful!"

MISSIONS TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JUNE

After much deliberation, Missions has decided on the 10 benevolences we will support in 2025. This month \$1000 was donated to 4 of the 10: the Burlington DAV (Disabled American Veterans), Habitat for Humanity, Wee Care, and HELPIS. Missions set aside \$1000 in support of Pride Day; reimbursements totaling \$510.38 have been made so far. \$4068, half of the Christmas offering, was paid to the UCC Disaster Relief fund, specifically to aid with Hurricane Relief. In addition \$2450, half of the Easter offering, was paid to the UCC Disaster Relief fund, specifically to support the fires in Los Angeles. Contributions to OGHs totaled \$405; payment was forwarded to the National UCC, helping to make us a 5 for 5 church. A \$400 scholarship was awarded to Adric Tredeau, who graduated from high school this year.

THANK YOU NOTE FROM THE LGBTQ ASYLUM TASK FORCE

June 4, 2025

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your vital support of the LGBTQ Asylum Task Force ministry at Hadwen Park Congregational Church, UCC, in the amount of \$1000 on May 25, 2025! It is only through your help that we can support the new beginnings of scores of LGBTQ asylum seekers. If you have any questions about this statement or would prefer to receive one annual statement with all of your giving instead of individual statements, please do not hesitate to contact us at donate@lgbtasylum.org.

Thank you again for your vital support.

Sincerely,

Al Green

Ministry Director

MISSION NEWS

Missions will not meet in July. Meetings will resume in late August. Activities for the fall will include:

Special offering - Neighbors in Need – October 5
Pumpkin Patch – October 2 and 9
Pajama drive – mid November
Wish tree – December
Toiletry drive – Cambridge Street closet
Missions Sunday – possible dates:
LBGTQ Asylum or Science with a Mission

The Blanket and Tool offering has received \$~~XXX~~. You may continue to give to this offering through the end of June. Send your donation into the office and mark the memo line of the check with tool/blankets. You may also give digitally. Information about this is found on the Church website.



**COMMUNITY DINNER AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WEDNESDAY JULY 30, 2025 DINNER AT 5:30**

UCC BURLINGTON WILL PROVIDE THE DINNER!

Can you help please?

Arrive at 4:30 to setup tables and food.

The menu is grilled hot dog in roll, 3 bean salad, potato salad and dessert. There is no fund for this at UCC. It is through donations.

- Could you make or purchase potato salad for 10?
- Could you make or purchase 3 bean salad for 10?
- Could you make or purchase a fun summer dessert for 10 that does not require forks?
- Could you make a small financial donation?
- Help cleanup after the dinner.

Please see the signup sheet at coffee hour or contact Deb Raymond C: 857-373-9156 or by
Email: angelfoods@msn.com

Thank you to all that have already donated!

FROM THE GREEN TEAM

Are you looking for an easy and inspiring summer read? The Green team would like to recommend "The Serviceberry" by Robin Walls Kimmerer. We will have a book discussion on this book September 28 after worship and again on Wednesday, October 1. We hope you will be able to join us for one of these discussions.



HONORING PAUL RAYMOND

The Town of Burlington has placed a bench outside the Town Annex Building where Paul has spent many years serving on the Planning Board. There to celebrate with Paul were members of our Congregation. We thank Paul for his dedication to our Town!

SUNDAY SCHOOL WRAP-UP

What a great Sunday School year we had!
June 1 was a moving celebratory recognition of our 2025
Confirmands during the Service.

Congratulation to Lindsay, Keira, Peter, Precious and Ali.
Welcome as members of UCC Burlington!



June 8 Celebration of all things Sunday School - honoring our Volunteers, Kids going from nursery to Sunday School, and our Graduates.

- Alexa & Rhiannon being awarded their Bibles going from 2nd to 3rd grade (missing from picture Holy)
- Adric graduating High School. Best Wishes on your future plans! Not pictured is Julia Lynch graduating from Tufts University with a Masters Degree!
- Thank you Kate for being our Sunday School attendant! Our little ones love you!
- The Sunday School class of 2025!

SUMMER SUNDAY KIDS/YOUTH ACTIVITY ON JULY 13TH!

All kids and youth will participate in an outdoor activity during church from 10:30-11:30am, weather permitting. Please dress for outdoors: hats, sunglasses, suntan lotion, etc. If inclement weather it will be held inside.

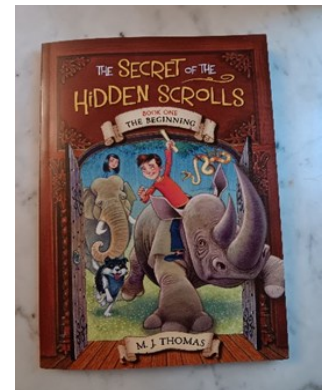
NURSERY SCHOOL

No Nursery from Children's Sunday June 8 - Welcome back Sunday September 7.

SUMMER BOOK READ!

The Sunday School kids and youth were given a book to read over the summer, *The Secret of the Hidden Scrolls*. Read it as a family, older kids can read to younger kids, or read it on your own. Youth, it is an easy read, but will be fun to discuss with the group.

We will hold a book group with activities about the book on Welcome Sunday, September 7. If you were not in church on June 8 you will receive a book in July.



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Lee Tirrell	Skip Glancy and sister Dorothy
Bill Livezey	Karen Butler's brother-in-law Lenny
Claire Simas	Barbara Naddaff's friend Mary
Kay Shute	Tonia Egan's Mom and Dad
Roberta Low	Shirley Fong's Mom Mary
Laura Nowell's cousin Nigel, and friend Mary	Julie Lewis' cousin Alicia
Jan Blandino, her grandson Toby, daughter	Brian Gionet's Dad
Brenda, son-in-law Rick	Shirley Garside's daughter Lynn
David Knowles	Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce
Elaine Glancy	Marilyn Langley's brother Bill
Susan Damiani's friend Linda	Kelly Sievert
Ted Brierley	Ginger Mungillo and daughter Cindy, son Jim
Karen Ciardi's mom Dottie	Barbara Garland
Andrew's friend Lorenzo	
Ally's cousin Lia	Our Country
Deana Tredeau's brother-in-law Jim	Mother Earth
Bill Hitchcock's girlfriend Denise	
Donna DeSimone's Brother-in-law Rick	
Anna Karwan's mom Irene and gratitude for her sister as caretaker	

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Julia Lynch received her Master's Degree in Environmental Policy and Planning from Tufts University.
Way to Go Julia!

Adric Tredeau is our high school graduate who received a Tool Kit to help him find the right tools in his life experiences and the recipient of the Service Award. Congrats Adric!

1	Anna Karwan	15	Nancy Todd
4	Eric Duran	15	Elaine Glancy
8	Brian Stahlinski	21	Sam McNeil
9	Walter Landin	21	Dick Butler
10	Bill Beyer	25	Billy Martin
13	Jean Williamson	29	Amelia Lewis
14	Peggy Derick	29	Bill Livezey
14	Jerad Stahlinski		



WORSHIP PARTICIPATION

July 6 Communion

Communion Marge Zamanian
Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:
Lay Leader: Debbie Claar
Head Usher: Dave McNeil
Usher: Sally Willard
Greeter: Marcia Rich
Flowers: Deana Tredeau
Collector: Joan Zink
Coffee Host: Jan McSheffrey
Baker:

July 20 Worship

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Rev. Trina Portillo
Organist: Aline Beck
Lay Leader:
Head Usher:
Usher:
Greeter:
Flowers:
Collector: Marcia Rich
Coffee Host:
Baker:

July 13 Worship-Love Offering

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Rev. Trina Portillo
Organist: Aline Beck
Lay Leader: Laura Nowell
Head Usher: Chris Stahlinski
Usher: Sally Willard
Greeter: Cindy Phillips
Flowers: Chris Stahlinski
Collector: Lucy Damiani
Coffee Host: Cindy Phillips
Baker: Cindy Phillips

July 27 Worship-Red Wagon

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
Rev. Trina Portillo
Organist: Aline Beck
Lay Leader:
Head Usher:
Usher:
Greeter:
Flowers:
Collector: Marge Zamanian
Coffee Host:
Baker:

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

In the month of July the folks from the Presbyterian Church will join us here at 10:30am


On August 3, 10, 17 and 24 we will worship AT the Presbyterian Church, 335 Cambridge Street, Burlington also at 10:30am.

All are welcome!

Here is the link to sign up for worship:

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/567269842043/false?popup=true#/invitation>

July 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div>Church Office will be open most Tuesdays and Thursdays during July and August!</div>		1 9-3p Church Office	2 9-3p Church Office 2p Bible Study	3 9-3p Church Office 1p C4C	4 	5
6 10:30a Communion w/ Presbyterians	7 6:30p AA	8 9-3p Church Office	9	10 9-3p Church Office 1p C4C	11	12
13 10:30a Worship w/Presbyterians	14 6:30p AA	15 9-3p Church Office	16	17 9-3p Church Office 1p C4C 8p Pub Theology	18	19 Hanif Rental Open 4p Rent 5-10p
20 10:30a Worship w/Presbyterians	21 6:30p AA	22 9-3p Church Office	23 August Hilltop Articles Are due!	24 9-3p Church Office 1p C4C	25	26
27 10:30a Worship w/Presbyterians Red Wagon	28 6:30p AA	29 9-3p Church Office	30	31 9-3p Church Office 1 C4C	<div>August 3, 10, 17, 24 we will worship AT THE Presbyterian Church 10:30am at 335 Cambridge St, Burlington</div>	

UCC Congregational
6 Lexington Street
Burlington, MA 01803
Address Service Requested

TO:



JULY NEWSLETTER 2025