

HILLTOP HERALD JULY 2026

Rev. Andrew Harris
Pastor

Mark Omobono
Moderator

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Hello church family,

Last week we lifted up prayers for rain. Today, it is raining. Did God answer our prayers? Or are we simply experiencing run of the mill weather variation? Or is God ultimately responsible for weather variation?

I often get questions about the nature of prayer, the effectiveness of prayer, and the usefulness of it. Why does God answer our prayer for rain, for example, but not our prayers for healing for a loved one who is sick? We learn quickly that we are not given exactly what we ask for in prayer every time. There are times when it feels as if God ignores or refuses our requests; times when we wonder if God listens to us at all.

Faithful people have been praying for peace for as long as people and prayers have existed, and yet we still find ourselves in a world torn apart by violence. One person might look at this and see evidence that God doesn't exist, or is refusing our requests, or perhaps is incapable or unwilling to answer these prayers by bringing about an end to violence.

When I pray for peace – even in the face of ongoing war, violence and strife – I know that God is with me. God is not distant, or removed, or apathetic to the suffering of the world. God experienced it first hand and is present with us in our anguish. God answers our prayers by instilling us with a spirit of courage and hope to continue striving for a world of peace and love.

In prayer, God hears us. In prayer, God is with us. God will not always keep your heart from breaking, but God will be there to put it back together into something new.

In our faith story of death and resurrection, we see our prayers unanswered, our hopes dashed, our savior dead on the cross. But the story does not end there, because after death, through death, comes resurrection. What comes back to us is not identical to what came before. Such is the nature of death. What *was* gives way to what *will be*. What is repaired is never identical to what came before, but transformed into something new.

Prayer is a pathway to transformation. To allow God into our hearts and spirits, and to allow God to work the miraculous power of resurrection. Through prayer, we are changed. Perhaps not in the ways we always want or expect, but if we trust in God, we find that we are transformed in ways that are deeply powerful and affirming.

What are you praying for now? How is God's Spirit moving within you, working the power of transformation, leading you into the spirit of resurrection? As we set out on our summer adventures, let us always be united in the spirit of prayer, remembering that God is with us and God hears us no matter what happens; no matter where we are.

Peace,
Andrew



SUMMER WORSHIP SERIES

Drawn In: Living Out the Creative Life with God

We spend too much time being “driven” rather than “drawn in.” We focus on what we “should” do rather than what we feel excited and compelled to do in our lives, in this world. During this series, we will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being human, giving us renewed energy for passionate work, delightful play, and creative problem solving to make this world a better place for all.

MUSINGS FROM THE MUSIC CORNER

Aline and I want to thank the church for the opportunity to serve you through the gift of music. It has been a pleasure to work with all of the talented musicians and Andrew over the past year. I also would like to acknowledge the contribution of Deb and Elayne Glancy. Although they are no longer members of the choir, they were a lovely and loyal addition and we thank them for their service.

Since the band and choir will be taking a break for the summer, I invite anyone who wants to sing or play a musical instrument to step forward and share their talents. I will be reaching out to all musicians to schedule times to perform and I thank you in advance for your service.

Many of you may be away on the holiday weekend, but if you are not, please consider coming to church and welcoming Sarah Del Dotto, our new Director of Music Ministries as July 5 will be her first Sunday with us.

In conclusion, I am grateful that I had the opportunity to serve you in such a meaningful way and I look forward to taking my seat back in the choir. Happy Summer, everyone.

Sincerely,
Debbie Claar



WELCOME OUR DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

Welcome Sarah Del Dotto as she will begin as Director of Music Ministries effective July 1, 2026. Sarah brings extensive experience in music education and performance. She holds a Master of Music Degree in Piano Performance from the Longy School of Music (2010) and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. For over ten years, she has served as the Middle School and Upper School Music Director at Dana Hall School in Wellesley. Her previous roles include: Youth Choral Director and Festival Youth Choir Director at Old North Church in Marblehead, a Teaching Artist with the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and a Piano Instructor and Lead Teacher for the Boston Yamaha Music School.

Sarah was selected unanimously by the search committee for her passion for sacred music, demonstrated ability to work effectively with both children and adults, and commitment to learning the organ. During her interview with the choir, she demonstrated exceptional musicianship and collaborative leadership.

We are very excited to have her as part of our church family!



We are pleased to welcome Sarah Del Dotto as our new Director of Music Ministries. She will begin on July 1st!

Our church has been busy in the month of June! The New England Tenors performed a wonderful concert on May 24. Children's Sunday on June 7 recognized our Christian Education program and the efforts of its director Deb Raymond and all the children and teachers involved. Our traditional ice cream social was again a highlight of the day.

Our church participated in Leo's Pride Day on the Common on Saturday June 13.

June 21, we celebrated both Father's Day and Music Sunday! We honored fathers and father figures and handed out homemade cookies. Music Sunday gave the church the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of all those who support our music ministry including the choir, musicians, soloists, and band members. At this time Debbie Claar was honored for her work as Interim Director of Music Ministries and Aline Beck for her efforts as pianist and organist. In addition, the church celebrated the 10-year contributions of Jan McSheffrey who is stepping down as chairperson but still supporting her Call to Care work. Also, on this day we joyfully celebrated the baptism of Margot Harvie Isaac, daughter of Jenn Irving and David Isaac.

On July 23 our church building will be 294 years old! Read further information on our planned celebratory potluck picnic after the church service on July 19th.

Just as last year, we will join our summer Sunday services at 10:30 with the congregation of The Presbyterian Church. In July we will worship here and host the Presbyterians, then the first four Sundays in August we will travel to their church at 335 Cambridge Street, Burlington. August 30th return to UCC.

Happy 294th Birthday!!!



This Ole Meeting House is 294 years old. It was raised on July 23, 1732. Yes, that is the same year George Washington was born, in case you ever wondered.

Our church, the UCC Congregational, Burlington, has gone through many changes in the last 294 years, beginning as The Meeting House of the Second Parish in Woburn. It has served the Burlington Community well and we want to celebrate it.

On July 19th, we are having a "Potluck" Picnic on the front lawn, immediately following our 10:30 worship service and all are invited. Please bring a dish or other food to share. We will provide beverages and paper goods. You are welcome and encouraged to bring your own reusable plates from home. There will be a signup sheet available at Coffee Hour or in the church office. Any questions may be directed to a member of the Board of Deacons.

Bring a Friend!

We hope to see you there!!



MISSIONS UPDATE!

RED WAGON

The Burlington Pantry is in need of the following items:

Jelly
Juice Boxes
Individually wrapped snacks
Easy Mac Cups
Canned cat food

Bring to worship on July 26

CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE

C4C meets every Thursday at 1pm. If the weather is nice we will meet outside under the trees at the picnic tables. Feel free to join us for knitting/crocheting prayer squares, shawls, baptism blankets or just come and chat. All are welcome!



PRIDE DAY

Missions want to thank all who supported our table at Pride Day this year. Whether you came, talked to people who stopped at the table or shared some of the swag we had, your presence showed support for the Pride community.

MESSAGE FROM THE LBQT ASYLUM TASK FORCE

Thank you for your vital support of the LGBT Asylum Task Force ministry at Hadwen Park Congregational Church, UCC! It is only through your help that we can support the new beginnings of scores of LGBTQ asylum seekers.

MISSIONS FINANCIAL REPORT - JUNE 2026

In June \$1000 was paid to three Benevolences:

Habitat for Humanity, LGBT Asylum, and Reach Beyond Domestic Violence.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WRAP UP



What a fabulous Church Service the Sunday School provided! All participated with a flair, even the closing Hymn. Thank you readers Amelia and James. Thank you Cooper, Holy, Maddy, Nemaniah and Thomas for passing out the friendship pads, morning offering and passing out the craft for all to do during worship. The craft was a success as we sent out over 30 cards. Thank you all for bringing a smile to others.

Upcoming Sunday School Events

WELCOME BACK SUNDAY 9/13/2026

Sunday School: Please read the fun and informative book *The Secret of the Hidden Scrolls, Race to the Ark*

NURSERY SCHOOL

Nursery School will be back September 13, 2026.

There could be volunteers on Sunday during the summer, it will be hit or miss.

YOUTH GROUP

The group will be for people 7th – 12th grade.

The program for the 2026 – 2027 will be determined over the summer.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Bobbie's godson Chris McCarthy	Andrew's friend Lorenzo
Skip Glancy	Bill Hitchcock
Dan Shea	Shirley Fong's Mom Mary
Donna DeSiome's sister Brenda, brother-in-law Rick and granddaughter Brooke	Julie Lewis' cousin Alicia
Molly Kyokunda's sister	Shirley Garside's daughter Lynn
Bobbie and Tom Killilea	Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce
Tonia Egan, her mom and dad	Kelly Sievert
Joe Stoddard's family member Jada	Ginger Mungillo, daughter, Cindy, son Jim
Cindy Phillip's friend's husband pancreatic cancer	Barbara Garland
Bill Livezey	Barbara Naddaff's grandson, friend Mary
Kay Shute	Sally Willard's sister Vicky
Roberta Low	Anna Karwan's sister as caregiver for mom
Debbie Claar's dear friends Victor, Bob	Rev. Cheryl Kerr's son Gabe
Jan Blandino, her grandson Toby	Auri Musselman, her sister-in-law's family
David Knowles	Woody Knowles
Ted Brierley	

BABY NEWS!

Congratulations to Sonja and Matt Tierson on the birth of baby Henry born April 29th. We are so very excited for your family. Bless you all!

Baptized on June 21 was Margot Issac, daughter of Jenn Irving and David Issac. God Bless!

CONDOLENCES

Our deepest sympathy to Shirley and Geoff Fong on the passing of our dear friend Conrad. He leaves behind a hole felt by many. Such a kind and caring man. Heaven gained an angel! We are keeping you in our thoughts and prayers.

Our deepest sympathy to Mike and Deana Tredeau on the passing of Mike's cousin Charlotte Taddei.

Former UCC Pastor, Rev. Roy Nyren passed away this June. He served our church for 10 years.

CONGRATULATIONS

Here's to Chris Cahoon on his retirement in early June.

Welcome our new Director of Music Ministries, Sarah Del Dotto! We are so excited!

- 1 Anna Karwan
- 4 Eric Duran
- 8 Brian Stahlinski
- 9 Walter Landin
- 10 Bill Beyer
- 13 Jean Williamson
- 14 Peggy Derick
- 14 Jerad Stahlinski
- 14 Nancy Todd
- 15 Elaine Glancy



- 21 Sam McNeil
- 21 Dick Butler
- 23 Alana Shirley
- 25 Billy Martin
- 29 Amelia Lewis
- 29 Bill Livezey

WORSHIP PARTICIPATION SCHEUDLE

July 5 Communion Worship

With the Presbyterians 10:30am

Communion Prep: Marge Zamanian
 Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
 Organist: Sarah Del Dotto
 Lay Leader: Debbie Claar
 Head Usher: Dave McNeil
 Usher:
 Greeter: Marcia Rich
 Flowers:
 Collector: Marcia Rich
 Nursery: Volunteer
 Coffee Host:
 Baker/Snacks: Marcia Rich

July 19 Worship with the Presbyterians

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
 Organist: Sarah Del Dotto
 Lay Leader: Chris Stahlinski
 Head Usher:
 Usher:
 Greeter:
 Flowers: Fong Family
 Collector: Lucy Damiani
 Nursery: Volunteer
 Coffee Host:
 Baker/Snacks:

July 12 Worship-Love Offering

With the Presbyterians 10:30am

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
 Organist: Sarah Del Dotto
 Lay Leader: Marcia Rich
 Head Usher:
 Usher:
 Greeter:
 Flowers: Chris Stahlinski
 Collector: Deb Raymond
 Nursery: Volunteer
 Coffee Host:
 Baker/Snacks:

July 26 Worship-Red Wagon

With the Presbyterians

Pastor: Rev. Andrew Harris
 Organist: Sarah Del Dotto
 Lay Leader:
 Head Usher:
 Usher:
 Greeter:
 Flowers: Marcia Rich
 Collector: Marge Zamanian
 Nursery: Volunteer
 Coffee Host:
 Baker/Snacks:

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you can volunteer to be *Lay Leader, Head Usher, Usher, Greeter, Nursery help, Coffee Host or Bakers/Snack.*

Here is the link:

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

SUMMER WORSHIP

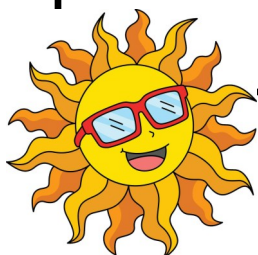
July we will host the Presbyterians here at our church for Sunday worship. On August 2, 9, 16, and 23 we will worship at 10:30am over at the Presbyterian Church, 335 Cambridge Street, Burlington. August 30th we will return here for worship.

July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	9-3p Office Open	9-3p Office Open	1 Office Closed 2p Bible Study	2 9-3p Office Open 1p C4C	3 Office Closed	4 
5 10:30a Communion w/ Presbyterians 1-2:30 Mike Fay	6 6p AA 7p Trustees	7 9-3p Office Open 5:30-7p Mike Fay	8 2p Bible Study	9 9-3p Office Open 1p C4C	10	11
12 10:30a Worship- Love Offering w/ Presbyterians 1-2:30 Mike Fay	13 6p AA	14 9-3p Office Open 5:30-7p Mike Fay	15 2p Bible Study	16 9-3p Office Open 1p C4C	17 6:30p Little Mermaid	18 2p and 6pm Little Mermaid
19 10:30a Worship w/ Presbyterians CHURCH PICNIC 2pm Little Mermaid	20 6p AA	21 9-3p Office Open	22 2p Bible Study	23 9-3p Office Open 1p C4C	24	25
26 10:30a Worship-Red Wagon w/ Presbyterians	27 6p AA	28 9-3p Office Open	29 2p Bible Study	30 9-3p Office Open 1p C4C		August worship will be held AT the Presbyterian Church 10:30a NO Worship HERE!

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

TO:



JULY 2026 HILLTOP HERALD NEWSLETTER