

**The United Church of Christ, Congregational
Burlington, MA**

**WELCOME SUNDAY
NEW MEMBER SUNDAY**

"We gather for worship, study, planning and mission to celebrate the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ which frees us to love boldly and to serve gladly as God would want us to do."

September 13, 2026

10:30am



We believe God calls us to love unconditionally, following the example of Jesus Christ.

Recognizing that all people are equal in the sight of God, we seek to be an inclusive and respectful community for persons of every color, age, sexual orientation, gender, ability and economic means.

In our calling to express the love and welcome of Christ, we affirm the dignity and worth of every person, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation.

We strive to respond to the needs of our town and world with practical deeds of love.

We welcome individuals and families of every configuration into the full life and ministry of this church, and invite you to join us on our faith journey!

***Please rise in body or spirit.**

Gathering....

Musical Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

***Morning Psalm - Adapted from Psalm 133**

One: How very good it is

All: How very good it is

One: When people live together in unity!

All: When people live together in unity!

One: It is like precious oil on the head.

All: It is like precious oil on the head.

One: It is like the dew that falls on the mountains.

All: It is like the dew that falls on the mountains.

One: How very good it is

All: How very good it is

One: When people live together in unity!

All: When people live together in unity!

***Opening Hymn - We Are One in the Spirit**

We are One in The Spirit,

We are One in The Lord.

We are One in The Spirit,

We are One in The Lord.

And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

Chorus

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,

Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other,

We will work side by side.

We will work with each other,

We will work side by side.

And we'll guard each one's dignity

And save each one's pride.

Chorus

**We will walk with each other,
We will walk hand in hand.
We will walk with each other,
We will walk hand in hand.
And together we'll spread the News
that God is in our land.**

Chorus

WELCOME AND RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Welcome and Introduction of Candidates

Address and Questions of the Candidates

Deacon: However it is that you have come today, we rejoice that you are here and have chosen to become a member of Burlington United Church of Christ, Congregational.

We are an inclusive, caring, justice-seeking, joyful community of faith that is called to embody God's love through worship, study, fellowship, and service. We believe that all people are included in God's unconditional love and grace.

Therefore, will you covenant with us to attend worship, invite and welcome others, and move forward on your spiritual journey with us?

New Members: I will, with the help of God.

Pastor: Will you covenant with us to seek daily to live and act in ways that help make Jesus' example of God's love for all people real, and to support this church and its ministries by giving as you are able of your time, talent, and financial resources?

New Members: I will, with the help of God.

Deacon: Will you covenant with us to further God's work and reflect the teachings of Jesus by standing with those who suffer and serving all humanity?

New Members: I will, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you then, as persons who have affirmed these covenants, seek to become one in spirit with the members of Burlington United Church of Christ, Congregational?

New Members: I do.

Pastor: And now, members and friends of Burlington United Church of Christ, let us affirm our mutual ministry in Christ with these new members.

Do you, Burlington United Church of Christ, Congregational, promise your continuing love, support, and care, as well as your friendship and prayers, as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ?

All: We promise, with the help of God.

Pastor: Members of the family of God, I commend to you these persons. Do all in your power to affirm their faith journey, strengthen their hope, and embrace them in love.

Congregation: We give thanks for the faith God has worked within you. We

welcome you wherever you are on your faith journey with our love, acceptance, and respect. We pledge to work together as a community of faith to provide opportunities for worship, study, fellowship, celebration, and service. We promise to give spiritual and emotional care and support in times of need; and to be faithful as fellow stewards of God's grace. Together we will work for peace and social, economic and ecological justice and strive to bring about the world that we believe God intends. Amen.

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

***Devotional Hymn**

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant

NCH #539

Reflecting...

Scripture Readings

Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God."

So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one

of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Our Sermon

Life Together

Rev. Andrew Harris

Anthem

Here I Am Lord

Praying...

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Offering...

Invitation of Offering/Love Offering

Offertory

***Doxology**

Lyrics adapted by William Abernethy; tune *NCH* #780

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done; Creator,

Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Sending...

***Closing Hymn** Traveling Mercies

Chorus:

**Traveling mercies
Love the journey
God is with us on every road
Traveling mercies
Love the journey
God is with us all the way home**

**A simple blessing that's often spoken
When it is time to take to the road
A benediction to send us forward
Trusting the Spirit will lead us home**

Chorus

**Sometimes our feet take two good steps forward
Only to fall back ten steps behind
God's walking with us, we're being guided
Grace often writes straight with crooked lines**

Chorus

***Benediction**

Postlude

Rev. Andrew Harris, Pastor
Sarah Del Dotto, Director of Music Ministries
Deb Raymond, Director of Christian Education
Bobbie Killilea, Administrative Assistant
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CHURCH VISION STATEMENT

Adopted February 2017:

At the UCC Burlington, we cultivate a thriving environment, which empowers us to embody the beloved, diverse community that Jesus modeled for us, proclaiming that ***all are welcome, all are loved***. We celebrate our colonial roots as we change, adapt and grow into who God is calling us to be. We respect the sanctity of each person's spiritual journey and we are blessed by the gifts that each person brings to the life of the church. We join together in faithful service and advocacy with the ongoing hope that we can make the world a better, more just, and peaceful place for everyone.

Nancy Davis donated today's altar flowers to celebrate everyone on this wonderful Welcome Sunday.

Worship Participation

Pastor:	Rev. Andrew Harris
Organist:	Sarah Del Dotto
Lay Leader:	Sarah Clark
Head Usher:	
Usher:	
Greeter:	Chris Stahlinski
Flowers:	
Collector	Joan Zink
Nursery:	Kanika Agarwala
Sunday School:	Deb Raymond
Deacons:	Welcome Brunch

Join us following worship for our Welcome Brunch next door in Sewall Hall.
All are welcome!

Welcome our new members: Elliott and Christa Brown, Joyce Cushman, Joe Greco, Judi Mack, and Laura Rexer. Be sure to say hi to all at brunch this morning!

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Jaime and Tom Pike
Passing of Tom Killilea's brother Jim
Kari Lynch's brother-in-law Tom
Anna Karwan's brother Steve
Shirley Garside and daughter Lynn
Bobbie Killilea's godson Chris
Dan Shea
Shirley and Geoff Fong,
 Uncle hospitalized
Nancy Davis
Skip Glancy
Donna DeSiome's sister
Brenda, brother-in-law Rick
Tonia Egan, her mom and dad
Joe Stoddard's family member Jada
Cindy Phillip's friend's
 husband pancreatic cancer
Barbara Naddaff's grandson and
 friend Mary
Sally Willard's sister Vicky
Anna Karwan's sister as caregiver
 for mom
Rev. Cheryl Kerr's son Gabe
Auri Musselman's sister-in-law's family

Woody Knowles
Joyce Carpenter
Bill Livezey
Kay Shute
Roberta Low
Debbie Claar's dear friends Victor
 and Bob
Jan Blandino, her grandson Toby
David Knowles
Ted Brierley
Andrew's friend Lorenzo
Bill Hitchcock
Shirley Fong's Mom Mary
Julie Lewis' cousin Alicia
Jessy McNeil's sisters Grace and Joyce
Kelly Sievert
Ginger Mungillo, daughter Cindy,
 son Jim
Barbara Garland

Middle East
Our Country
The World
Mother Earth

THE LOVE OFFERING/DEACON'S FUND

The Deacon's Fund, supported by your generous Love Offering contributions, provides assistance to individuals and families facing financial hardship. The need for this support remains great. We have a special LOVE OFFERING COLLECTION the second Sunday of the month.

Thank you for your continued generosity. Donations may be made at any time using the envelopes in the pews or through our online giving platform (<https://uccburlington.org/giving>). We encourage you to consider supporting this important ministry as we assist families in need.

BIBLE STUDY-Every Wednesday 2-3pm in the Conference Room & on Zoom

Women of the Bible

There are so many stories centered on women in the Bible and yet throughout church history they have often been overshadowed and sidelined. In this Bible study session, we will explore these stories and discuss the ways women have always played an essential role in God's creation, in the church, and in the story of our faith. Come join us and learn about Hannah, Tabitha, Rahab, Deborah and more amazing women in God's continuing story.

September 16 - Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11-12, Proverbs 31)

September 23 - Rahab (Joshua 2:1-21)

September 30 - The Wisdom Woman (Proverbs 8)

CHOIR REHEARSAL BEGINS

Rehearsals will be on **Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** and again on **Sunday mornings at 9:30.** Our first Sunday singing will be on Sunday, September 20. The choir will be singing in the service about twice a month.

Everyone is welcome to join us! Whether you've been a singer in a choir for years, sang when you were younger, or have never sung in a choir before, I'd love to have you be a part of it. There are no auditions-just come as you are! If you're curious but not quite ready to commit, come try a rehearsal and see what you think.

We'll sing a variety of music throughout the year, and my hope is that the choir will become a welcoming, joyful community where we can make music, workshop, and grow together. I hope that you'll consider joining us or invite someone you know who might enjoy singing with us.

Also, I'm always going to be looking for soloists and instrumentalists, so do not hesitate to contact me about participating and worshiping in that capacity.

If you have any questions about the choir or music at church, please feel free to contact me at my new email address: **sdeldotto@uccburlington.org**. And if you see me after worship, please come and say hello!

Christian Ed welcomes everyone back to Sunday School.

Youth Group is for ages 6th grade - high school.

This will be held in conjunction with at least 5 other churches from the Northeast region of the UCC. Meeting other youth will be a new fun experience.

September 27. This is our 1st meeting so there will be ice breaker games to open the meeting. Our give back project is packing meal baskets for *My Brothers Table Soup Kitchen* in Lynn. **We will meet at 1 pm at First Congregational Church in Reading, 25 Woburn St. Reading MA.** Carpooling can be discussed.

Questions talk with Deb Raymond

Christmas Trees Sales & Mistletoe Market Planning Meeting September 20th in the conference room following worship

All those interested in helping us plan our Christmas Tree Sale this year;
we need you.

For the Mistletoe Market, **we need event planners to get Vendors and plan the day.**

Please join us and support this wonderful effort of fundraising and fellowship.
If you can't make the meeting but want to help, please reach out to Pastor Andrew or Deana Tredeau.

FRIDAY CRAFT SOCIALS IN SEWALL HALL ALL WELCOME

Join us on September 18 at 5:30pm to work on Silk Florals

Come with ideas or projects you have been meaning to work on. There will be several large boxes of silk flowers, wreaths, floral wire and glue gun. We do need a few supplies to share which are:
pliers, glue gun/sticks, if you have any please bring them along.

We can all work on items for the Mistletoe Market held in November!