



The Spire

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
35 Conant Street, Beverly MA 01915

Rev. Lisa Stedman, Pastor & Transitional Minister

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September 2022

DISCERNING OUR FUTURE

SECOND
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH
UCC
BEVERLY MA

*A SCC Transitional
Session*

*“Facing Our
Congregation’s Mortality”
presented by the SCC
Central Board*

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022

Live and on zoom...

Psalm 90

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.

...

So teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

...

Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP

Sunday, Sept. 4 – Communion and Baptism in the Sanctuary (and on zoom)



Preaching & Prayers: Rev. Lisa Stedman

Rev. Wendy Linares is on vacation!

Music: tbd

Fellowship in the Main
Sanctuary Entryway



Sunday, Sept. 11 – *A New Sunday One!* in the Sanctuary (and on zoom)

Preaching & Prayers: Rev. Lisa Stedman

Rev. Wendy Linares is on vacation!

Music: tba

Immediately Following Worship -
Transitional Gathering – Please gather in
person in the sanctuary or on zoom using
the worship link! (see separate article)

Sunday, Sept. 18 – Worship in the Sanc- tuary (and on zoom)

**A Service of Lament, Repentance and
Action** – Joining a grassroots movement
Against Gun Violence with Christians from
across the country.



Preaching: Rev. Lisa Stedman

Prayers: Rev. Wendy Linares

Music: tba

Fellowship in the Main Sanctuary Entry-
way

Sunday, Sept. 25 – Worship in the Sanc- tuary (and on zoom)

Preaching: Rev. Wendy Linares

Prayers: Rev. Lisa Stedman

Music: tba

Fellowship in the Main Sanctuary
Entryway



Light of the World

During the month of September, the Church
Spire will be illuminated *In Loving Memory*
of Christy Nichols & Grampy Hal, by their
family.

Tree of life

Welcome into God's Family *Chase*
Matthew Eline, son to Vanessa Lightvown
& Matthew Christopher Eline, who was
baptized on August 14.

God's Blessings upon the Marriage of
Erin & Kyle Johnson on August 4.

Christian Love and Sympathy is extend-
ed to family and friends of *Elizabeth*
E. Murray, who died July 10.

A Warm Welcome to *Ameena Nanette*
Mabrouk, daughter to Heather (Ramsey)
and Nawful Mabrouk, born on July 21st.
(mailing address: 101 Pleasant Street,
Manchester MA 01944)

Neighbors in Need Offering

October 2

Behold!

Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you...James 5:4



The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 2, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice & Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects; continuing its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. One-third of the NIN offering also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC.

Offering envelopes will be available at October 2nd worship. You are welcome to send your NIN gift along to the church office; please note: NIN offering.

Behold! With your assistance, we together can help our Neighbors in Need. Please give generously.

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Friends,

Many of you know that I visited my father on my recent vacation... At 98 years old, he is still living quite independently in his condo on the campus of a big retirement community. It was, as always, wonderful just to spend time with him and talk about what we are reading and play a round on the 'putt-putt golf course' he has set up in his apartment. During this visit, he asked me about my plans – for work and retirement and beyond. I found myself explaining that I did not have all that figured out, but that I was working on it.

Then he asked about church, wondering what the status of “this church is at the 18 month point in my transitional ministry.” I realized that the answer is almost exactly the same – “We do not have the next steps for this church all figured out yet, but we are working on it!”

At every stage in our lives, we are always working on ‘what’s next.’ The same is true whether we are beginning school or working on estate plans and wills. In the church, there are also stages in a life cycle and corresponding planning that needs to happen. Second Church is most assuredly at an important point in its life cycle. Like many churches in New England (and beyond), Second Church is now an ‘elder church.’ The days of many children running through the halls have passed, and now most of our members walk a bit slowly and carefully in the same halls.

Like individuals who are aging, Second Church is coming to grips with the reality of its elder status and is working to make clear and intentional plans for the rest of its life and beyond. Because churches, like individuals, are mortal. In the same way that we would not leave our personal retirement or estate planning untended, the church is attending to what its wishes to see happen in the later phases of its life. This is what we mean when we talk about “facing our mortality.” In the words of the Monty Python character, ‘we are not dead yet!’ But, we are aware that plans need to be made with intention, so that our community is not left with a crumbling and neglected building where a once vital church stood. In every moment of our lives, and our church’s life, we are meant to serve God and God’s people faithfully and intentionally in love. How are we to do that now as Second Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Beverly?

This is the topic which you have been exploring in many ways over the past 6-12 years at SCC, and in a very intentional way in these past 18 months.

The next step in our process will begin as the new program year begins - on **Sunday One, Sept. 11th**. All SCC members and friends are strongly encouraged to attend the transitional gathering following worship (and a brief fellowship/coffee break) that morning. This information session led by our Central Board will be followed by small group sharing opportunities scheduled for Weds., Sept. 14 at 11 am, Sun., Sept. 18 following worship and Mon., Sept. 19 at 7 pm. Folks are asked to attend any one of these small group meetings.

As always, if you have questions or wish to talk about these thoughts or the process, I am here and happy to offer my support/assistance.

May God’s blessings be with you!

Lisa

Pastor & Transitional Minister



or

Message from Chaplain: Wendy Linares

Greetings Everyone! Yikes! It will be September when you read this. Didn't Summer just begin?! Well, no, but here we are.

I've had many people ask, "What's going to happen to the church?!" Well, one of the points I recently made in a message I delivered in August was that we need to remember that WE are the church. Each one of us. Not the building or the pews or the walls.

I happen to believe that we carry church in us even when we aren't a group as in a congregation. As in a bunch of us sitting together on Sunday morning. You are the church when you step outside your door each day. You are the church when you go to work. You are the church when you enter the supermarket. You are the church while you're in traffic.

How you and I act, how we treat friends, family, and strangers says a lot about how we love. How we show up as people of faith. I don't know how all of this will turn out, but I do trust that each of us has a heart of kindness, mercy, and justice. Each choice we make says volumes about us as people of God.

Last week I was driving around the rotary by the Vittori- Rocci post. I was going around the circle and I saw another car approaching, but he had two yield signs on either side of him. I figured he would slow down. But no, he almost rammed into me, even though I had the right of way. So next thing I know, he screaming the you-know-what word at me, and as I looked in my rear-view mirror, I saw him showing me his long fingers. And he wasn't being kind about it.

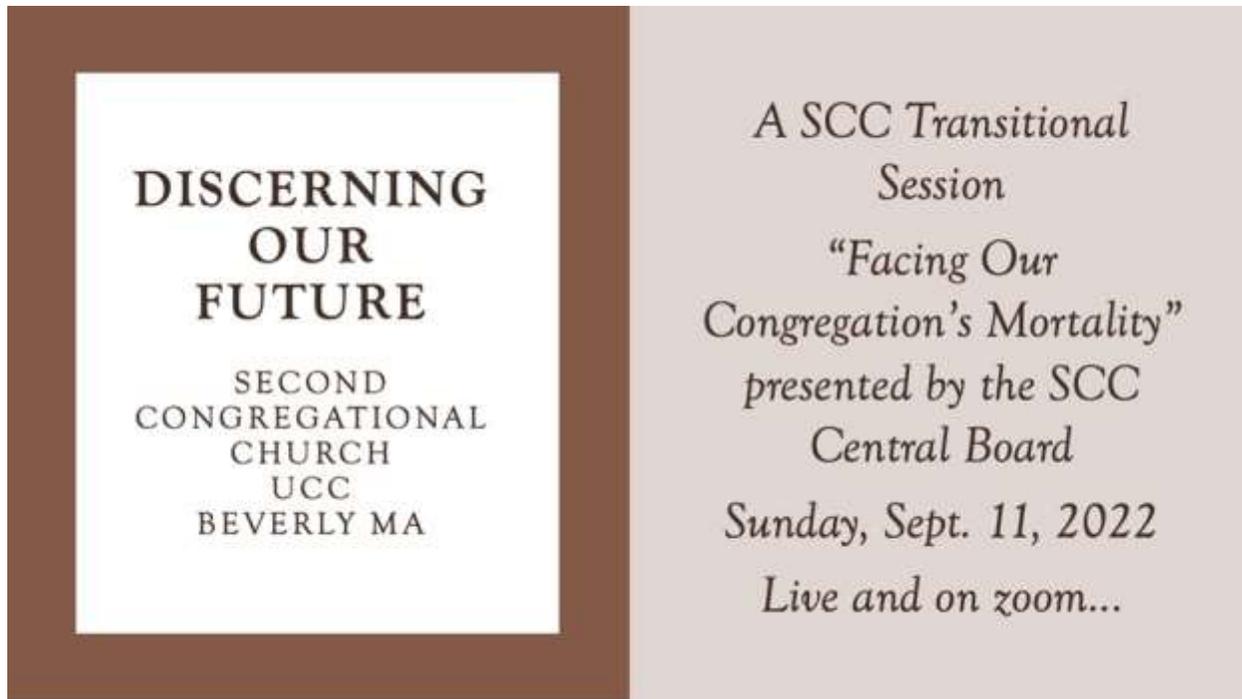
Seriously, it ruined at least a bit of my day. He didn't know me at all. He had no clue about me, about my life, about the power of his temper over me, about the power of one person's action in affecting the world. I share this because it points out the truth that as individuals, we have the power to do good or do harm. Yeah, we all mess up. But just a little awareness, a little caring, does a lot more for the world than being a jerk.

I'm pretty sure I have done my share of jerky things. I am quite sure actually. But just remember, that each of us, in each moment, has a choice to be a love spreader or a love snatcher. Be a spreader as often as possible. And not just on Sunday.



Warmly, Wendy 508-451-7585 wendylinares60@gmail.com

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SCC in The Transitional Process?



The SCC Central Board invites and encourages everyone to attend a special transitional gathering on Sunday, September 11, following worship. At that time, we will gather to engage the material in “Facing Our Congregation’s Mortality.”

Everyone has previously been encouraged to read the material on their own, it is posted on the homepage of our website at www.secondchurch.org. The event on Sept. 11th will be a group review, led by our own Central Board. We will gather live in the sanctuary and on zoom, following worship. We will also record the presentation.

Following this session, all SCC members & friends will be invited to sign up for one small group conversation during the 10 days that follow. If you’d like to put a date on your calendar now, those groups will be offered at SCC on: Wednesday, Sept. 14th at 11:00 am, Sunday, Sept. 18th following worship, and Monday, Sept. 19th at 7:00 pm. Please plan to attend only ONE small group.

It is the intention and hope of the Transition Team and Central Board that these gatherings will help bring us more congregational clarity and consensus about our purpose and specific plans for moving forward. Please be an active participant in these important next steps!

Welcoming Family Promise North Shore Boston to New Offices at SCC!!



Beginning in September, SCC will welcome Family Promise North Shore Boston (“FPNSB” or simply “FP”) as a new tenant to our building!

Following months of discussions and negotiation, the Central Board, Financial and Mission Teams have agreed to welcome FPNSB to office space in Rooms 107 & 109 (formerly the CE Office and “Youth Room”) in the lower hallway beneath the sanctuary. They will also share some storage space in Room 101 with us. For SCC volunteers have been hard at work to clear out these spaces over the summer, and we are almost there!!

FPNSB has not had usable office space in recent years, as they prioritized spending for actual housing for families, during the pandemic. Their current housing rental will come to an end in early 2023, when the structure is demolished by the developers who now own it. In preparation for the transition this will bring for FP, they will be utilizing office space at SCC.

In order to maintain appropriate space and safety boundaries for all our tenants, both FP and SCC will begin using the Cabot Street door (#641) as our primary entrance during school hours. An additional video door-bell and key fob system will be installed at the Cabot St. entrance to ease this upgraded use. (The approximate address of that door is #641 Cabot St., but users are asked to park in our lot and walk down the front sidewalk and around the corner to enter.)

Questions? Please contact Property Team Chair, Jack Terrill or SCC Church Administrator, Mary Jane Clark.



Welcoming Rev. Wendy to Her New Office – Room 105!!

In conjunction with the reworking of office and storage space in our lower hallway, Rev. Wendy’s office is moving from Room 101 to Room 105 (formerly the Music Directors’ office). When she returns from vacation, Wendy will be relocating and making the space ‘her own’! Please look for her there!

(PS – All the music resources & instruments are now in our very own Music Room #106, which we no longer are sharing with the school!)

NEWS & Articles From the Wider Church – The UCC & Beyond

Good Reads

Some months, I try to share a few of the many articles that cross my desk/desktop.



This month, one set of three articles and another stand-alone article seem particularly pertinent for SCC. I sincerely hope you will follow the links, read these pieces and pray about how you feel they apply to our church in this time! (We will also have hard copies available at church or to mail, if you request one from Mary Jane in the office.)

“BUILDING A LEGACY: Learning, Discerning, and Leaning In”

This is a very helpful series of 3 articles, all written by Charlie Kuchenbrod, the Legacy Church Specialist for the Southern New England Conference. Mr. Kuchenbrod was the creator of the original presentation “Facing Our Congregation’s Mortality” which will be presented for SCC in our after worship session on Sunday, September 11th.

Part 1: Who is this series for? When should churches start thinking about legacies?

[https://www.sneucc.org/!](https://www.sneucc.org/)

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Part 2: Completing Ministries Faithfully and Well

[https://www.sneucc.org/!zARHc02Z5kH9no1TFB-](https://www.sneucc.org/!zARHc02Z5kH9no1TFB-QO0fq2pp1O+JZPRcj0clShVzRWq2odl3xP9-YBhjO87GPhcK9Yc6wuatqR2FhiP2aU-9mnrpNuqzv9Wm0z5X1ePN)

[QO0fq2pp1O+JZPRcj0clShVzRWq2odl3xP9-YBhjO87GPhcK9Yc6wuatqR2FhiP2aU-9mnrpNuqzv9Wm0z5X1ePN](https://www.sneucc.org/!zARHc02Z5kH9no1TFB-QO0fq2pp1O+JZPRcj0clShVzRWq2odl3xP9-YBhjO87GPhcK9Yc6wuatqR2FhiP2aU-9mnrpNuqzv9Wm0z5X1ePN)

Part 3: **Affirmation of faith.** Does God ever yearn for a church to complete its ministry?

[https://www.sneucc.org/!](https://www.sneucc.org/!zARHc02Z5kH9no1TFB-QO0fq2pp1O+JZPRcj0clShVzRWq2odl3xP9-YBhjO87GPhcK9Yc6wuatqR2FhiP2aU-9mnrpNuqzv9Wm0z5X1ePN)

[GPFH2mAXWd9rrSYkC5sWpCK9SBMjOt2wm1ErLTA728fvUEPra3lwjleWEb6Wl-KeGVqcMh78b9pCcNRQSQNzsWxEJwZS1jdYYEu4UZbNMFyT](https://www.sneucc.org/!zARHc02Z5kH9no1TFB-QO0fq2pp1O+JZPRcj0clShVzRWq2odl3xP9-YBhjO87GPhcK9Yc6wuatqR2FhiP2aU-9mnrpNuqzv9Wm0z5X1ePN)

“CHURCHES LET GO OF BUILDINGS... and find ways to keep on worshipping, witnessing, working”

<https://www.ucc.org/churches-let-go-of-buildings-and-find-ways-to-keep-on-worshipping-witnessing-working/>

Holiday Fair



November 12, 9 am to 2 pm

Invitations have been sent to vendors inviting them to rent tables at our craft fair this fall. In addition, we church people will run the Silent Auction, Snack Bar, and food, books, knitting & crafts tables.

We are in need of volunteers to help with the following:

- ◆ "Friday night with set up
- ◆ Saturday workers and Saturday clean up.
- ◆ If anyone would be interested in creating a "Santa Workshop" space, for children's crafts, we would love to have one.
- ◆ Donation of items for food, books, knitting and craft tables
- ◆ We will be having a silent Auction once again. please consider donating items, making a theme basket, or soliciting donations from local merchants.
- ◆ Details on a pie making night are coming

Please consider signing up to help in one or more of these areas.

Organizers:

Gail Goodell: gailgoodell@comcast.net Peg Round: peg_round@yahoo.com



Spirited Women will meet on Sunday Sept 18 in the parlor after worship. Program to be announced. Spirited Women is open to all women. We'd love to have you join us!

Update from the Music Search Team

Since July, the Music Search Team has been hard at work on the process of finding our next Music Director. The committee members, as approved at the July 19th Central Board meeting are David Boynton, Jake Jacobson, Peggie Morris, Jeanie Murray, and Rev. Lisa Stedman, with Kathy Taylor as our CB liaison.



Our weekly meetings have been very productive, and on Aug. 24th we finalized the job description and a job advertisement. Both of these are now being widely shared with our network. One earlier step was to 'map' this network, identifying contacts, and learning from area schools how to advertise for candidates. Our materials are now being shared with the schools, as well as being posted with the UCC, and distributed to many other contacts we identified. We have set an application deadline of September 21st. If you have an idea for where we might share this posting, please email the team via Peggie at plkmorris@gmail.com

We are aware that the timeline means we will not begin the program year with a new Music Director in place. We are in the process of hiring guest musicians to help until we have hired a Music Director. Please help by welcoming these guests and by extending your support and prayers to the search team, who have worked so very diligently through the summer.

Central Board News and Notes:

Second Congregational Central Board

-August 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes



MEETING MINUTES

The Central Board spent a bit of time talking about our **Transition Process**, and how to help our communication on this subject come through more clearly. Our attempts to get volunteers for the Transition Team has had mixed results, with only 1-2 people responding. We believe we need more SCC people beyond the 5 person CB to provide input and help with discerning the future of Second Church. Please plan to attend the **Sept 11 meeting after church**, in addition to signing up to participate in a Small Group discussions:

9/14 Wednesday - 11am at church

9/18 Sunday - after church

9/19 Monday 7pm at church

The Central Board also discussed the summer project cleaning out the ground floor offices and rooms, which is almost complete. As our mission with **Family Promise** changes (in concert with their model change to static site housing vs in-church rotational housing), we are in conversation to perhaps allow FPNSB staff to use the Youth Office and the former CE Director's office, share some of the storage area in Room 101, and use Room 103 Meeting Room when available to help as they transition out of their 8 Rantoul St static site later this year. The CB voted to offer this mostly unused space at a very low rental rate (basically just offsetting expenses) if the Family Promise Board and Staff determine the option works for them, at least in the short term. The CB voted after hearing from both the Finance Team and the Mission Team, and feels this is a great opportunity to extend our support to one of Second Church's key missions and also give Family Promise a chance to tryout the space.

Security/Security Cameras – The Central Board has acquired 3 bids for adding security cameras and a cloud-based system to store data. We began the discussion after May's security incident when Beverly Police inquired if we had a system, and formally asked for bids after our sexton informed the CB that he no longer wanted to come back to Second Church at 10pm to do the in-person security walk through and lockup. Alarmex in Topsfield was selected, and we hope to proceed with installation shortly. The CB also approved updates to the Handicap Access Door, the NSCS Conant St Door and the Cabot St Door to improve functionality and get software updates to a more current operating system (it was Windows 7-based). Special thanks to Jack Terrill for his tireless efforts in working with the contractors to understand our needs and get a fair price on behalf of Second Church.

There will be a **Special CB meeting at 6:30 on Tuesday September 6** as we prepare for the Transition Discussion the following Sunday, as well as the next **regular CB meeting September 20 also at 6:30**.

Notes from the Finance Team

The Finance Team met on June 14 and then August 9 after taking a summer break in July.

In June, Treasurer David Varga asked for approval to move the budget balancer amount (\$99,270) to its usual place in the income section of the Treasurer's report so that it shows as available funds to transfer as needed to pay bills. In the approved budget, the amount was shown at the end as a deficit, the difference between expected income and expenses rather than as part of income. The motion was approved. Pledges received are close to budget at this point and the congregation is thanked for their steadfast support.

Roger Moulton joined the June meeting to discuss the rebalancing of the investment portfolio. He advised that the model and the holdings in the portfolio are still good in his opinion and recommended following our normal annual process of rebalancing to match the percentages in the model. The Finance Team approved the proposal and David has made the needed trades to rebalance the portfolio. Roger was thanked for his continuing guidance.

Other items before the Finance Team include getting estimates for a new appraisal of the building. The current appraisal is out of date and can no longer be updated annually. After reviewing three proposals for a system of security cameras, the Finance Team recommended to the Central Board that we accept the quote from Alarmex. This project will be paid from the Major Maintenance budget and was approved by the Central Board the following week. Repairs and upgrades to the main entrance doors are also among projects this month. Our thanks to Property Team Chair Jack Terrill for his ongoing work on all these projects.

Other recent activities have included cleaning out of unused space (former CE office and Youth Room) in preparation for offering an agreement to Family Promise for their use of the office space (see more information in other Spire articles). They are expected to be with us starting in September. Another important update is a new contract with Comcast to provide the capabilities needed by the church – the newer equipment and service upgrade will make a significant difference for our staff and for all our internet usage such as the live streaming of services.

Next up, the Finance Team will be starting work on the 2023 church budget and our fall Stewardship Campaign. The year ahead will challenge us all as we contemplate what the future holds and begin to make our plans. The sharing of our time, talents and treasures will continue to be important gifts.

And please note, the Finance Team continues to look for one or two new members to join us – please speak with any member if you would like to help in this way – you do not need to be a bookkeeper or accountant, just someone who enjoys working with numbers.





Second Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
35 Conant Street
Beverly MA 01915

Pastoral Care & Vacations -
Rev. Lisa Stedman is BACK &
Rev. Wendy Linares is AWAY



Rev. Wendy Linares is on Vacation from Friday, Aug. 26th through Saturday, Sept. 10th. If you have a pastoral need or a prayer concern, please be in touch with Rev. Lisa Stedman, via phone, text or email. Lisa is eager to be of support and service!

Lisa's Cell phone: (978) 314-4265, Email: Revelsucc@gmail.com. As always, Mary Jane Clarke is also available for church support. Her summer office hours are 8-noon, Tuesday – Friday.