



# Leverett Church Clarion

Monthly Newsletter

First Congregational Church of Leverett, Massachusetts

*An Open & Affirming member of the United Church of Christ*

[www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org](http://www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org)

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November 2025

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## ***News from the Church Council —***



Emerson Garden  
*J Wobst photo*

Here are some of the things Council is dealing with right now.

***Outdoor maintenance*** — We are looking for someone, maybe a local firm, to maintain the lovely Emerson Garden up on the hill. Think weeding, mulching and other seasonal upkeep. Mary Hankinson has been doing that for years, but she moved to Vermont.

We will be conducting a professional survey of church properties. Based on the survey we will be able to install or reinstall pins at the King Lot, upon which the Emerson Garden sits, across Putney Road from the church.

We completed re-pointing the church chimney.

We have removed the rotting dock at the lakefront (see picture on page 4).

We will clear brush at the south/downhill side of the church and some places elsewhere.

Meanwhile, we thank Rev. Julie Olmsted, Rev. Nathaniel Patti, Rev. Marguerite Sheehan, Rev. Alice Goodwin Brown, and Rev. Randy Hyvonen for stepping in while Lee is away.

— Tracey Field, Church Council Co-Chair

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***Give thanks to the  
Lord whose love  
endures forever***

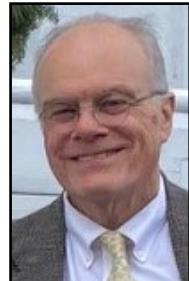
Psalms 106:1



## Letter from Lee

Pastor

October 2025



Dear Lee —



**This message is for you, Lee — we of the Leverett Congregational Church community wish you well as you continue your recovery.**

**— From all of us**

### **Meet Rev. Marguerite Sheehan, leading us in November**

Reverend Marguerite Sheehan is a retired UCC minister who lives with her wife Dorrie and their standard poodle Penny in Amherst. Marguerite's last settled ministry was 10 years with Trinity Church, an ecumenical church in Shelburne Falls. After retiring, Marguerite served as a Bridge Pastor for Edwards Church in Northampton and South Church Amherst. She is a member of the Hampshire Association Executive Committee and she leads a clergy support group. She loves retirement and also loves "filling the" when needed.



Dear Faithful Friends in Leverett,

Thank you so much for the invitation to preach and lead worship with you in the first four weeks of November. I can already see that you are doing a remarkable job keeping your church stable and vital while your pastor is recovering from surgery. Since being asked to join the roster of fall and winter preachers I have been praying for all of you. That you will keep "showing up" in this time of transition and that you will stay open to what a season of change might bring.



Rev. Marguerite Sheehan

November is the last month in the church year which starts up again in Advent. November is a time to prepare for winter while enjoying the last days of autumn. It is a time when many of us count our blessings, and we are acutely aware of our mortality. November 2 is All Saints Sunday when, along with celebrating communion, we give thanks for the saints in our lives — those who died in the past year or longer. The saints who are gone from our sight but not from our hearts. I am grateful that this will be the first time that I get to meet most of you

*(Marguerite Sheehan Continued on page 3)*

*(Marguerite Sheehan Continued from page 2)*

because I will not only be meeting you, and you meeting me, but we will also tenderly be remembering our dear friends and family and neighbors.

I am a newly retired (three years this month!) ordained UCC pastor who is finding in retirement a lovely gift of space to attend to family and dear friends, swim outdoors, read lots of novels and be responsive to the needs of local churches such as yours. I served twice in these last years as a Bridge Pastor (first in Northampton and then in South Amherst.)

My wife Dorrie and I enjoy walking with our dog in the many conservation areas in our area. I also love reading poetry so don't be surprised if nature and poetry creep their way into my Sunday messages. Here is one of my many favorite poems by Mary Oliver. It is called *Making the House Ready for the Lord*.

In peace and in anticipation of our meeting.

—Marguerite

### ***Making the House Ready for the Lord***

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but still nothing is as shining as it should be for you. Under the sink, for example, is an uproar of mice — it is the season of their many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves and through the walls the squirrels have gnawed their ragged entrances — but it is the season when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow; what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox, the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know that really I am speaking to you whenever I say, as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

+ Mary Oliver

*All Saints Sunday is celebrated this year on November 2nd. You are invited to bring photographs on that Sunday of friends, neighbors, family or church members who died since last November. These are some of the "saints" that we remember and hold dear in our hearts. As a community of remembrance we will lift up their names and pray for them and for those of us who miss them.*



*Church Council news this month comes from Tracey Field, Co-Chair of the Church Council. Ralph Tiner is away. Tracy is busy enough herself, lining up three months of guest preachers, singing in our choir, singing in a Worcester choir, working, and planning her own wedding.*



### ***Rotting dock removed***

Bill Paulin removed and dismantled the church's lakefront dock earlier in October after Church Council decided its removal was a maintenance priority. You may have seen the dock during our September lakeside service.

Tom Hankinson who lives across Leverett Pond from the dock site says he will cart the pieces away, noting that the headline should read "Bill Paulin cleans up church, cleans up Leverett Pond, cleans up Leverett."

Photo: Charlie Paulin

### ***Team Mountain Goats is at it again***

It is November and team Mountain Goats is still out and about hiking. We want to thank you all for spreading the word, for thinking about our team, and for your donations. Because of you, hope grows. With your help, our team has surpassed its overall team goal and we have **so far raised \$1,135 for the Amherst Survival Center**. And as of 10/23 the Amherst Survival Center has surpassed its overall goal of \$35,000. **THANK YOU ALL.**

During the last weeks we hiked near and far. Like every year during the *Hike For Hunger* month, we climbed Mt. Greylock. We also hiked in Massachusetts' only National Park (do you know it?), explored rivers and lakes nearby (including Kestrel's Bright Water Bog) and we did some inclusive art hikes in the Berkshires at Turn Park and in NY at Storm King.

Lale wears a step counter and is diligent about counting her steps and adding more each day.

Again, thank you and have a wonderful November,  
Lale, Ninette, Brett (Team Mountain Goats)



## MISSIONS NEWS—November

### CROP Hunger Walk—THANK YOU!

With food insecurity as one of our most urgent current needs both locally and worldwide, your donations of \$465 to the CROP Hunger Walk in October will go a long way locally as well as worldwide to provide much needed food sources and healthy drinking water. Thank you for your support of our Franklin County walk on such a lovely day in Northfield! See photo, right.



### Community Network for Children

With the \$500 raised by your generous support of the Harvest Festival in September, the CNC immediately bought much needed snow pants and waterproof mittens to assist as families prepare for cold weather. More snow pants, gently used or new, are needed for 3 to 6 years, as well as boots for toddlers and preschoolers, and waterproof mittens for all children's sizes.

### Food Cards for Thanksgiving and Christmas

Throughout the coming two months, we will again be collecting food cards or money to purchase them for the Community Network for Children (CNC) to distribute to families in need. You can purchase cards for \$25, \$30, or \$50 from Stop & Shop, Big Y, or ALDI. In the past, our contributions were meant to bring joy to families on tight budgets, so they could enjoy more festive holiday meals. This season, we'll be providing assistance for families to meet basic needs. Your support will go a long way, bringing greater peace of mind to many struggling families in our neighborhoods.

### CNC Closet Schedule

The CNC Closet provides FREE clothing for young children, newborn through elementary age.

CNC Children's Closet schedule for the coming Thursdays, from 8:00am - Noon and by appointment if unable to make this time:

- November 6, 13, 20 OPEN
- December 4, 11,18 OPEN

The Franklin Hampshire area **Diaper Bank** continues to supply us with disposable diapers we can offer to families for free. You can also find information about other resources available. We are located at the Dixon House, 4 Montague Road, Leverett. Call/Text or email Gillian Budine, CNC Program Coordinator (978) 935-4909 or

*(Missions Committee Continued from page 5)*

[cnccoord@erving.com](mailto:cnccoord@erving.com).

Visit the CNC website for more information about the services we provide in our community to families with young children <https://sites.google.com/erving.com/cncprogram/home>.

### **UCC Offering for Neighbors in Need**

Our local newspapers remind us almost daily how much our neighbors are in need of shelter and food, the basics of life. We can help bring greater food security to those in need through the UCC Neighbors in Need mission offering.

Gifts to Neighbors in Need support the United Church of Christ's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM).

The other two-thirds of the offering support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, direct service projects, and grants. Neighbors in Need grants are annually awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities.

In 2025 the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. Even the smallest of donations collectively can have great impact in 2026.

### **How to Donate**

You can choose to donate the easiest way for you: by mailing your check made out to Leverett Congregational Church (write "CNC" or "NIN" in the memo line), PO Box 324, Leverett MA 01054 OR donate online at <https://www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/donate>. Choose any of the three categories, but click on the "Write us a comment" box and let us know where you would like your contribution to go, CNC or NIN. If you're attending church you can put money in an envelop for CNC or Neighbors in Need and place it in the collection plate.

— Claudia Gere for the Missions Committee



#### **Leverett Pond**

The church's lakeside property is site of its annual lakeside worship service, fishing rarely included. See page 4 for photo of church's dock demolition. Some of the church's frontage was hydroraked this year. Rakings now need pickup.  
Photo: M. Mulholland

## **Lakeside Service Reading September 28, 2025**

**by Ralph Tiner**

*Ralph Tiner volunteered to read at the September 28, 28, 2025 lakeside service. Here is his composition. Lucky people at the service heard the original. Everyone else can enjoy it here. The service couldn't be held on Zoom. Ralph is a wetlands expert, still helping others to learn.*



*Ralph Tiner >*



I looked long and hard to find an uplifting reading for this Fall gathering but couldn't find one to stand alone. So I've written a few words and will follow it with some quotes about water since we are at the lakeside, and end with a poem about autumn from Carl Sandburg, Pulitzer-prize winning American poet and noted biographer of Abraham Lincoln.

If it was Spring, there are plenty of odes about the rebirth and reawakening...the April rains that brings back plants to life, the return of birds from overwintering grounds, the chorusing of breeding wood frogs and spring peepers, and the awakening of local bears from their dens.

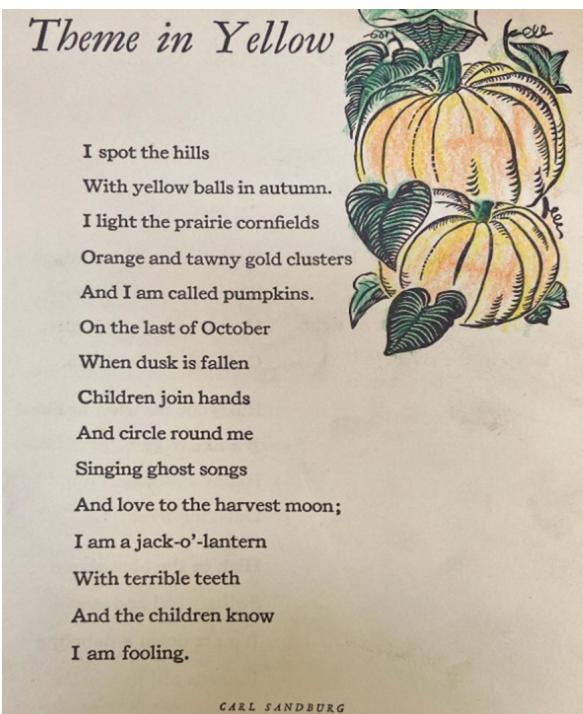
If it was Summer, readings would celebrate the warmth, the blossoms of all kinds of plants, wildlife raising their young, and the fullness of life.

The Fall is a time when plants are going to rest after working hard all summer to produce oxygen, seeds, fruits, nuts, and berries in hopes to continue the survival of the species and to provide food for animals that remain here, while most birds migrate south to warmer lands to spend the winter. In forestlands like ours, it is the most colorful of the seasons, for all the deciduous trees provide us with various hues of red, yellow, orange, and purple. Maybe these colors serve as a warning that colder weather is on the horizon, so that we should prepare ourselves for harsher conditions. For a hydrologist (one who studies the flow of water on the Earth), October represents the beginning of the water year as cooler temperatures and the shedding of leaves from trees and dieback of other plants have reduced water loss, so water now moistens the summer-scorched soil, leading to a rise in local water tables and river flows. This is a time for many plants to strengthen their root system.

So, what do you love about the Fall? Perhaps it is the colorful foliage or is it the combination of cool nights and warm days...a time for evening bonfires. Or maybe it is the hue of afternoon sunlight as the sun begins to set earlier. Whatever your preference, Fall is unmistakably a wonderful season and it makes one happy to be alive. I always look forward to the Fall.

*(Tiner reading Continued on page 8)*

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*(Tiner reading Continued from page 7)*

measure of how we live on the land." - Luna Leopold, renowned hydrologist and son of the famous ecologist Aldo Leopold

"The earth, the air, the land, and the water are not an inheritance from our forefathers but on loan from our children. So, we have to handover to them at least as it was handed over to us." - Gandhi



Ralph Tiner reads about water at the September 28 lakeside service

Now time for some quotes about water since we're along the shore of Leverett Pond, followed by Carl Sandburg's poem: Theme in Yellow.

Isaiah 58:11 The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

"Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children's lifetime. The health of our waters is the principal

"Thousands have lived without love, not one without water." - W. H. Auden, English poet

"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water." - Loren Eiseley, American anthropologist

"Water is life and clean water means health." - Audrey Hepburn, American movie star

"When the well is dry, we'll know the worth of water." - Benjamin Franklin

"Water is the driver of nature." - Leonardo da Vinci

"So let the mind flow like water. Face life with a calm and quiet mind and everything in life will be calm and quiet." - Thich Thien-An, American teacher and Buddhist monk



**Amherst Survival Center**

P.O. Box 9629  
138 Sunderland Rd.  
North Amherst, MA 01059  
[amherstsurvival.org](http://amherstsurvival.org)



## **Many ways to give locally — Here are three**



***The Hospice Shop of the Fisher Home***

**6 University Drive (Newmarket Center)**

**Amherst, MA**

**(413)549-8800**

The Hospice Shop of the Fisher Home is a second hand store, with all proceeds going to benefit hospice services for the [Fisher Home](#) in Amherst, MA. Our store is entirely stocked with generously contributed donated items and staffed by a dedicated group of volunteers. Here you can find clothing for all people, jewelry, art, books, household linens, kitchen supplies, as well as collectibles and brand-name and vintage clothing.



***Craig's Doors Congregate Overnight Shelter***

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**

**867 N Pleasant St**

**Amherst, MA 01002**

**413-256-0704 Ext. 2**

**Open 24/7**

Established in 2011, Craig's Doors is a human services organization that provides vulnerable and unhoused members of our community with emergency shelter, food, and safety, as



well as access to the resources they need to achieve physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

**Prayer notes**

**Bill Anderson**, friend of Lee Barstow

**Lee Barstow**

**Andrew Botieri**, friend of Claudia Gere

**Bill Brower**, Judy Ricker's brother-in-law

**Chris Chicoine**, brother-in-law of Lee's friend Kaleigh Won

**Joan E.**, friend of Mary Hankinson

**Alice Field**

**John Field**

*The family and loved ones of Mary Franks, friend of the congregation, who died in January*

**Barbara Goodhind**

*The family and loved ones of Frankie Hankinson who died October 7*

**Mary Hankinson** now living with family in Vermont

**Joshua Klev**, husband of Betty Wilson's granddaughter Selilah Klev

**Stasi Kanyuck**, daughter of Marg and Jack Kruse, granddaughter of Betty Wilson

**Karen**, Mary Kealy's godchild

*The family and loved ones of Michael Katz who died in the Fall of 2024*

**Kieran Kealy**, brother of John Kealy & Mary Kealy

*Church neighbor Roy Kimmel, husband of Cynthia Thomas Kimmel, died in August*

**Nancy Lane** Patti Lane's sister in Idaho, daughter of the late Russell Lane

**Jean Larouche**, friend of Lee Barstow

**Hilda Nachman**, aunt of Aida Markiw

**Martha Napierski**, niece of Alice Field, as well as Martha's husband Edward

*Family and loved ones of Hugh O'Brien, friend of John and Sally Kealy*

**Julia O'Kelly**, Mary Ryan's niece

*The family and loved ones of Jack O'Kelly, Mary Ryan's nephew*

**Alice Oram**, friend of Lee Barstow

**Marijke van Parijs**, sister of Elsje Sturtevant

**Dan Perkins**, son of Jim Perkins and father of Alise Perkins



**(Prayer notes, continued from page 10)**



**Charlie Paulin**

**Esther Poldvee, friend of Tracey Field**

**Flip Rosenberry.** friend of Lee Barstow

**Roxana, friend of Mary Kealy**

*The family and loved ones of **Erika Schütz**, including her niece **Ninette Rothmüller**, her great niece **Lale Rothmüller**, and **Erika's husband Herrmann Schütz***

**Michèle Smith**

**Cat White, Mary Hankinson's niece**

*The family and loved ones of **Betty Wilson** who died July 6, 2025. She was the wife of Rev. Fred Wilson, our pastor 1994-2004.*

*Victims of injustice & violence against each other and our earth*

**Prayer updates:** If you would like to add a person here, please leave a message on the church phone, 413-548-9199, or contact Lee Barstow, [leebarstow@gmail.com](mailto:leebarstow@gmail.com); Judy Ricker, [judyricker@aol.com](mailto:judyricker@aol.com); or Sarah Roys, [royssarah2@gmail.com](mailto:royssarah2@gmail.com)

The November 2025 lectionary can be found here —

<https://tinyurl.com/ucclect>

**Remember our lonely  
collection plate**

**You can mail** your offering to  
Leverett Congregational Church  
PO Box 324, Leverett MA 01054

- **Or give online at**

[www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/](http://www.leverettcongregationalchurch.org/)  
donate

**OR** find collection plates at the rear of the  
sanctuary when you attend in person

UPCOMING WORSHIP	
Nov 2	Rev. Sheehan—Communion, All Saints Sunday
Nov 9	Rev. Sheehan
Nov 16	Rev. Sheehan
Nov 23	Rev. Sheehan
Nov 30	Rev. Olmsted

**November Celebrations**

Mike Mathers	November 2	B
Dave Rice	November 5	B





**First Congregational Church  
of Leverett**  
United Church of Christ  
4 Montague Road  
PO Box 324  
Leverett, MA 01054



#### **Calendar**

Nov 2—Communion, All Saints Sunday  
Nov 9—Think Veterans Day  
Nov 16  
Nov 23—Think Thanksgiving  
Nov 30—Advent begins

November 2025

#### **Lee Barstow, Pastor**

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Sundays following worship, by  
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