



Leverett Church Clarion

Monthly Newsletter

First Congregational Church of Leverett, Massachusetts

An Open & Affirming member of the United Church of Christ

www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org

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July/August 2025

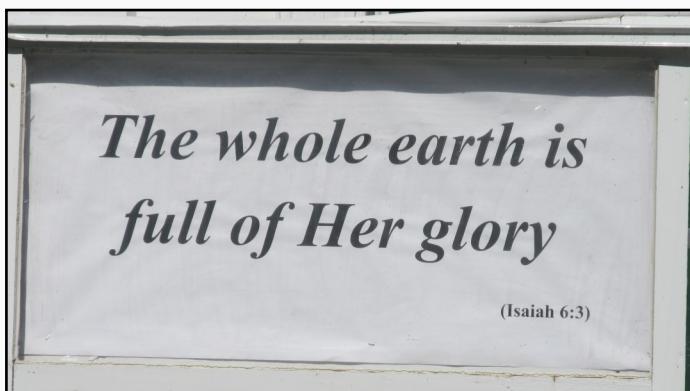
News from the Church Council

Greetings from the Church Council. We have a number of maintenance issues that need to be addressed: patching up the chimney, removal of the dead tree in front of the church, maintaining the Emerson Garden, and hydroraking of aquatic plants at our lakeside lot as part of a pondwide initiative that includes removal of "nuisant" plants along the shoreline and continuing efforts to manage invasive species like Eurasian milfoil in Leverett Pond. We'll have to get the chimney done by winter – Charlie Paulin has a potential source for the use of a lift to access points that can't be reached by ladder. I'll contact the town tree warden about removing the tree, while John Kealy and Tracey Field are in contact with GrassRoots about garden maintenance.

Hydroraking was completed at the end of June. We paid for an hour's worth of time for opening up our pond shore. A large pile of dead aquatic plants now lies on a tarp on the property. We'll have to get rid of that before we hold our lakeside service at the end of July.

This year we reached out to young people in our congregation to let them know we have funds available to provide partial support for attending a Christian summer camp. Although we had no takers for that type of camp, we did support Lale, who wanted to attend a camp to be certified as a medical clown so she can entertain hospitalized

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Letter from Lee

Pastor

July/August 2025



Dear LCC Community,

As so many of us are, I am increasingly concerned about the state of our society... about the pain being inflicted, the disregard for human need, and the lack of respect for what's sacred, which is to say *all* that sustains life.

I look to my imagination and others' writings for ideas about how I can possibly help, and how we as a congregation might help even more than the great good we already do through our Missions effort. I have heard from others the same yearning for more direction.

Following are two offerings from friends of mine which I hope can help. First, an excerpt from a blog post by Eve Marko in which she tells about her horror over the plight of Gazans in their suffering, and the shame that appeared, for the actions of the leader of Israel, where she was born, in league with the president of the U.S., where she has lived nearly all her life.

"I don't need shame," she writes, "I need imagination to envisage peace, which for many people can only be found in fantasy land: *It can't happen, human beings are human beings, conditioned to fight, struggle, kill, blah blah.* Yes, there's that conditioning, and there's the conditioning to take care of each other, to stop at turtle crossings, to wave at passengers in passing trains, to help a stranger stuck in a closing subway car, even, as some have done, to jump down to the tracks to save someone from the path of an oncoming train.

"I need imagination to see, re-see, and explore that vision over and over, especially in the face of social media indignation and the panic spread by newspaper headlines. Especially in the face of cynicism, pessimism, and misanthropy."

And here is a story sent to me by a friend who is a teacher of the art of compassion.

"I have a friend in his early 20's who would absolutely be described as marginalized. He's a big goofy goof. He takes showers when he feels like it as opposed to when the rest of us think he should. He eats only enough to keep from passing out and his frame reflects that. He is in dire need of some personal grooming. His keen intellect puts him in an orbit far from most of ours. He's also an honest to goodness Christian. Which is why he often goes on mission trips to places that some

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(Lee, Continued from page 2)

of us might call "God forsaken" except that he, more than most of us, knows they're perhaps the exact opposite.

"So maybe last month or earlier this month he finds himself in Ecuador. He finds himself sitting on the steps of a market talking to his group's tour guide when an obviously struggling gentlemen comes up. The man is toothless, tattered, likely mentally ill, and speaking barely intelligible Spanish (my friend speaks virtually no Spanish). The man is holding his hand out for some change, and my friend decides to give him \$20 while at the same time giving the man a gentle hand on the arm gesture. My friend's social anxiety is such that making physical contact with others is quite difficult. So this gesture is not the easiest for him to make. The man receiving my friend's gifts is clearly undone. He can't quite fathom what is going on so he simply sits down next to my friend. And they begin to interact as best they can given the various constraints they both face in this regard....

"Soon my friend has to leave with the group but he leaves with this very simple takeaway. The takeaway was the way that he introduced this story to me the other day: "I gave Jesus \$20 in Ecuador."

May we turn to our imaginations and open our hearts to the still small voice of our souls, giving us possibilities for how we can give to our brothers and sisters who need us.

Peace and blessings,

Lee

See page 5 for detailed information about our lakeside service and picnic on July 27.



(Council News: Continued from page 1)

children suffering mainly from cancer. With this acquired skill, she plans to entertain children in area hospitals through this program. We granted a partial scholarship for this.

On Sunday June 22, we celebrated another outstanding year of song from our choir under the direction of Michele Smith after service in Town Hall. Michele passed out special notes to each choir member and she also posted in the Sunday bulletin some thoughtful quotations about choirs from a number of sources. For example, one came Paul McCartney, lead singer of the Beatles and another from a famous bass-baritone, actor, and professional football player – Paul Robeson, who also came from my hometown of Somerville, NJ. I repeat them hear (pun) below.

“I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity, to see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that.” Paul McCartney

“Yes, I heard my people singing! – in the glow of parlor coal-stove and on summer porches sweet with lilac air, from choir loft and Sunday morning pews and my soul was filled their harmonies.” Paul Robeson

Later this month, on July 27, we will have our annual lakeside service which we always look forward to. While it kicks off our summer recess, it is also a time for our congregation to share some good summer barbecue and celebrate Nature at our pondside lot along Leverett Pond. So please join us for fellowship before taking the month of August off. We will resume services on September 7, so please mark that date on your calendar.

Meanwhile, Tracey is working on plans to organize some type of potluck as one way to seek community engagement. If anyone has suggestions for other forms of outreach, please let us know...simply send an email to me at ralphiner83@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully for the Council,

Ralph Tiner, Council Co-chair



Sunday, July 27 – Rain or Shine

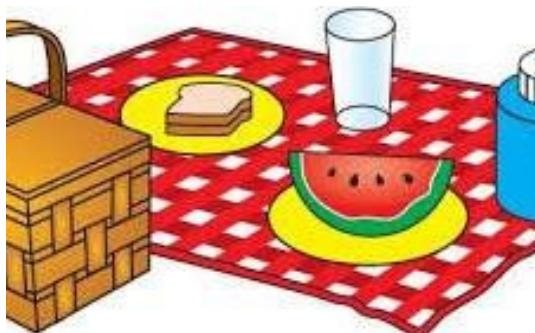
Lakeside service -- 11 a.m.

Readings and music, lakeside. Say yes if Lee asks you to read. Or offer to read a favorite piece. Our lakeside service and picnic are always a favorite gathering, with something special this July 27. The service will include poems and other readings as in the past, and this year will also feature an LCC band, which will play and sing a Carrie Newcomer song or two. Members so far include our Zoom guru Zane Provost, who plays guitar with area bands, Susan Altabet, Stephen Dydo, and Nick Grabbe. If you play an instrument and would like to join in, please contact Susan.



Bring a favorite lawn chair and a light sweater. (It can be cool at first.) Park near the Dixon House and walk down Putney Road to the open gate on the left. Shuttle available for the unsteady. (*In case of rain, we picnic in the town hall.*)

Potluck picnic – following worship



Church brings – Chef, who serves up BBQ burgers, dogs plus fixings. Also supplied: beverages, chips

You bring – Your favorite side or dessert. Salad? Veggie dish? Brownies or cookies? Bring a serving implement, if needed for your dish.



Missions Report for July-August

Community Fall Festival

A Fall Festival to benefit the Community Network for Children will be held on September 27 (rain or shine), 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All from our local communities are invited to sell their wares: Tag Sales, Bake Sales, Crafts. Individuals will be responsible for their own setup, selling, and cleanup. Let your friends and neighbors know.

Our church will host raffles and sell baked goods. We will be calling for our church community's high quality raffle items; baked goods, preserves, and confections; and farmers market type produce.

The link to reserve your space will be live on August 1: <http://tiny.cc/LCCfestival>. Contact Claudia Gere, Claudia@ClaudiaGere.com, 413-359-0003, with any questions or to volunteer to help.



Community Network for Children (CNC)

The Closet will be **OPEN** on the following Thursdays: **July 10, 17, 24 and August 7, 14** from 8 a.m. to noon (drop-in/no appointment needed) and by appointment as needed on other days for families who

cannot make a Thursday morning. The Closet will be **CLOSED** **July 31 and August 21 and 28.**

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



Fun on parade
Left: Lee Barstow and Steve Woodard carry our church banner during the June 22, 2025 Pride Parade in Amherst.

Right below, Leverett's 250th parade, July 2024. Steve driving and Lee waving, plus Betty Wilson, not quite visible next to Steve, and the Paulin family arising from the back. Those banners get around.



The LCC Team — Pride and joy march along in the parade

Remember our collection plate

You can mail your offering to

Leverett Congregational Church, PO Box 324, Leverett MA 01054

Or give online at leverettcongregationalchurch.org

Or find collection plates in-person at the rear of the sanctuary

As to milfoil (see also Ralph Tiner's report on page 1) —

This past Monday the shoreline near the church dock was hydroraked and the weed pile was deposited just to the south (left) of the 'pondering log'. Note: the piles are BIG this year but I believe less pond floor sediment was removed. That should make for easier lifting and moving once the pile has dried out later this summer.

For some reason the area near the church dock was highly infested with milfoil this year. Removing it, as was done last Monday, is of considerable benefit to pond ecology.

— Reported by Tom Hankinson



Prayer notes

Bill Anderson, friend of Lee Barstow

The family and friends of Bob Baldocchi, who died in October, including his brother-in-law John Kealy and sisters-in-law Mary Kealy and Sally Kealy



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

The family and loved ones of Bernard Field, a Field cousin

Alice Field

John Field

Ben Forbes, friend of John Root

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

The family and loved ones of Bradley Gage

Barbara Goodhind

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

Mary Hankinson

Joshua Kaley, husband of Betty Wilson's granddaughter Selilah Kaley

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

Stephen Kealy, brother of Mary Kealy and John Kealy

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

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

Alice Oram, friend of Lee Barstow

Marijke van Parijs, sister of Elsje Sturtevant

(Prayer notes, Continued on page 9)

(Prayer notes, continued from page 8)



Esther Poldvee, friend of Tracey Field

The family and loved ones of Hal Ricker who died in June 2024

Flip Rosenberry, friend of Lee Barstow

Roxana, friend of Mary Kealy

Michèle Smith

Cat White, Mary Hankinson's niece

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; Judy Ricker, judyricker@aol.com; or Sarah Roys, royssarah2@gmail.com

UPCOMING WORSHIP

July 6	Communion; Lee will preach
July 13	Lee will read another's sermon
July 20	Lee will preach
July 27	Lakeside service and picnic at 11

July & August Celebrations

Tracey Field	July 1	B
John & Sally Kealy	Aug 11	A
John Lewis	Aug 12	B
John Field	Aug 13	B
Jeff Field	Aug 23	B
Brian Burke	Aug 25	B

A=Anniversary B=Birthday



**Tell us YOUR
birthday and/or
anniversary!
We don't want to miss
anyone**

**(No, we won't reveal your age
... or mine)**



**The summer 2025 lectionaries can
be found here —**

July lectionary: tinyurl.com/2xlcta8v

August lectionary: tinyurl.com/28uxg799



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



Calendar

July 20 – Council meeting; Lee away;
Rev. Hyvonen preaches
July 27 – Lakeside service
August – Church on break; no services
September 7 – Church resumes from break

July/August 2025

Lee Barstow, Pastor

Office Hours (Dixon House):
Sundays following worship, by
Appointment, in ordinary times
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www.LeverettCongregationalChurch.org

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