



# 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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October 2025

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Lately the weather has had a definite fall feel to it. Cooler mornings and relatively hot afternoons. It seems like the leaves are dropping earlier. The red maple swamps have turned red and are about to shed their leaves. A recent storm brought much wind and rain to our area, enough to add about four inches of water to my backyard pond which had been dry nearly all summer.

As I write this, I'm looking forward to two major church events. Tomorrow we'll have our Fall Harvest Festival. Claudia Gere has done a fantastic job organizing this event. I've heard we have 15 "vendors" who will set up tables to sell "flea market" merchandise while the church will sell baked goods and raffle items contributed by members. Proceeds will go to the Community Network for Children. The CNC serves families in need in Leverett and surrounding communities by providing various resources to facilitate their children's health and well-being, including clothing and other items. The weather looks to be great so I'm sure we'll have a good turnout. And a special shoutout to Gillian Budine for her work with the families.

The other church event is our Lakeside Service at our lot on Leverett pond. We'll have a short service led by Rev. Julie Olmsted followed by a congregational picnic.

*(Council News Continued on page 3)*



Charlie Paulin guards the potluck lunch at the lakeside service September 28

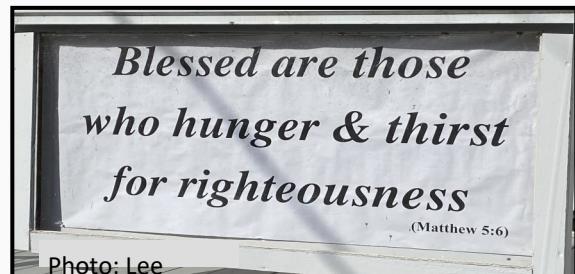


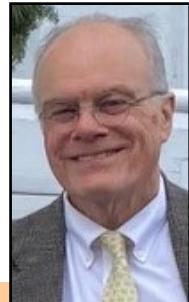
Photo: Lee



## *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***

### ***Message from Rev. Julie Olmsted***

Dear Friends,

What a peaceful and glorious time I had with you on Sunday! The weather was perfection, the surroundings gorgeous, and the food superb!!

Best part was the service with readings from members and personal sharing of individuals' "church history" as it relates to your wonderful church family. I appreciated being a part of it.

I was asked to contribute here what I shared as my "reflection" and I am happy to do so. Below is a section from my forthcoming memoir, "Cornbread in Heaven," *Coping, Forgiving, Celebrating*

Blessings on your week and your autumn days, and of course, on your beloved pastor!

Thanks again to all who attended, prepared, cooked and brought food, cleaned up and, and, and...

Julie

#### **Starry Sky**

#### **What I Believe was My Call to Ministry**

**Rev. Julie G. Olmsted**

One night while sleeping, I felt a tug from somewhere that woke me up. In Kansas City where we lived (at University of MO, KC), the house we were renting was close to

*(Julie Olmsted Continued on page 4)*

*(Council News: Continued from page 1)*

Normally we have this service as the last service in July before our August break, but the weather didn't cooperate. Rather than have an indoor picnic in July, we decided to wait until September 28 for the lakeside service and picnic. The weather also looks good for Sunday for another successful service.

Everyone should know that our minister Lee Barstow is recovering from recent surgery. The operation was a success, and he now faces a four-month recovery period. He plans to be back with us in January. We miss him and wish him a speedy recovery. In the interim, the Council has found several ministers to fill his void for both services and pastoral care (as needed). In September, we have had Rev. Julie Olmsted conduct services and provide pastoral care. If you need spiritual, emotional, and other guidance, please contact Julie at [jgolmsted.86@gmail.com](mailto:jgolmsted.86@gmail.com), 937-409-1375, in September and October, and then the other ministers serving in November and December. On September 7, we had visiting minister Rev. Nathan Patti, a recently ordained minister who serves as a chaplain at the Yale New Haven Hospital. He'll be back again with us on October 12. In November, we are pleased to have Rev. Marguerite Sheehan ([msheehan222@gmail.com](mailto:msheehan222@gmail.com)) conduct services and provide pastoral care except November 24 when she'll be away. Rev. Alice Goodwin Brown ([goodbrow@comcast.net](mailto:goodbrow@comcast.net)) will take over beginning with the Thanksgiving service and continue for the first two weeks in December. For the last two weeks in December, we will have Rev. Randall Hyvonen ([rhyv@yahoo.com](mailto:rhyv@yahoo.com)) conduct services including the Candlelight Service. In January we expect Lee to rejoin us.

### **Other news.**

**Yard work** We're still looking into contracting outdoor services for maintaining the Emerson Garden and to do brush removal along the edges of the King Lot and the southside of the church. If anyone has recommendations, please contact me at [ralph.tiner83@gmail.com](mailto:ralph.tiner83@gmail.com).

**Stored boats at the lake lot** We posted notices on LeverettConnects about removal of watercraft. Nancy Paulin and Barbara Tiner did a check, and there were no boats on the lot as of September 1. We are removing the dock which is in bad shape, and we'll not be replacing it.

**Dixon House phone** Charlie Paulin will be ordering a new phone system for the Dixon House. There have been issues with our current set up and he feels that there are better systems available.

**Congratulations to Tracey Field.** Tracey has reserved the church for September 13, 2026 for her wedding to Tom Gottweis.

Submitted on behalf of the Church Council,  
Ralph Tiner, Co-chair

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*(Julie Olmsted Continued from page 2)*

campus and the Westport area of cool restaurants and clubs, the stars were visible, bright and close around the house we were renting that last year. There were steps leading to a side door we seldom used (my roommate Carol and I) and as I threw on something for protection from the possible night chill, headed for those steps. I didn't know what I was doing; I just followed the prompts of the spirit that opened my eyes and nudged me outdoors. There I sat looking up, looking up, looking up. The stars, like the sea, I thought, held one's attention endlessly, though there's seldom new patterns or movement or out of the ordinary fragments of things to behold. Still, there's endless looking that somehow fills a hole inside of me, I thought. It fills me in. Gives me drink. Fills me up. Fills my cup. It flows in and out. I'm all but disappearing, I thought. Into the night I go. I go. I go. And then, the tears came.



Rev. Julie Olmsted

The tears of years, it seemed. Gladness, joy, pain and longing, beauty and sadness, all of it. All of it. All of it. I was gone now, and no one was there, but the fullness of life, the shining into darkness, the undulating waves of lives and centuries and tiny moments, ancestors and mountains, planets and galaxies, mother and father and child. I hugged my knees and rocked. So much love was washing over me, and I could not stop returning that love. "I love you, I love you, I love you," I whispered again and again. I was held in the most beautiful light I had never imagined before. Then stillness overtook us. The world and I, hanging in space, quiet and glowing, peaceful and undisturbed. I lifted my head once again, smiled up at the night that held me and loved me, and went back to bed, to some kind of blissful slumber.

Rev. Julie Olmstead



*Lakeside lineup. Smiling folks who already ate their potluck lunch. Rev. Julie in red top* Photo N. Paulin

## MISSIONS NEWS

### CNC Children's Closet October Schedule

For the month of October, the CNC Children's Closet will be open Thursdays, from 8 a.m. – Noon and by appointment if you're unable to make Thursday mornings.

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](mailto:cnccoord@erving.com).

### Franklin County CROP Hunger Walk

This year's Franklin County CROP Hunger Walk is Sunday, October 5, at 2 p.m., hosted by Trinitarian Congregational Church of Northfield. Registration begins at 1 p.m.

The CROP Hunger Walk and the funds we raise will feed the hungry through Church World Service both locally and worldwide. When you join the CROP Hunger Walk by donating and raising funds, you provide life-saving support like emergency food, water, and medicine. You fund life sustaining programs worldwide by providing the seeds, tools and programs that help families feed themselves in the future.

Please join us or walk with us through your contributions.

Shortcut to make an online contribution and sign up to walk: use upper and lowercase: <http://tiny.cc/LCCcrop> Full URL: <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/leverett-congregational-church>

You can also put checks in the collection plate made out to CWS/CROP or hand your donations to your mission committee members (Claudia Gere and Tracey Field)

Contact Claudia Gere, [Claudia@ClaudiaGere.com](mailto:Claudia@ClaudiaGere.com) 413-359-0003 with any questions.

#### Details for the hunger walk

Sunday, October 5, 2025

Registration opens 1 p.m., walk begins at 2 pm  
Trinitarian Congregational Church of Northfield  
147 Main St, Northfield, MA 01360

## ***Community Harvest Festival reaps rewards for CNC***

Tables lining Putney Road by the church for the Harvest Festival created a lively Saturday, September 27, event for our community. People who had never heard of the Community Network for Children, as well as long-time advocates bought, sold, and joined in community. The homemade baked goods sold out and the raffle brought joy to the winners.



People signed up for the Clarion as well as the CNC newsletter and many newcomers took a moment to stroll through the church. In total we raised an amazing \$508 that will go a long way to assisting the CNC doing what it does so well, helping families with young children! Thank you to everyone who made this such a success!

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## ***Invitation to two lectures presented by Ninette Rothmüller***

You are invited to two lectures that I will present at Greenfield Community College (GCC). Both lectures are part of GCC's Community Engagement Program. Both lectures focus on humanitarian themes that are close to my heart.

I hope that you will be able to join us. Please, spread the word and bring friends and neighbors.

Lale will co-present the first lecture and you will meet her alter ego Gerry the Juggler and yes, you will get to see Gerry juggle. This first lecture takes place at the GCC campus. If you need help with organizing a ride to GCC please reach out to me at 413-404-8556. The second lecture will take place online.

Here is the information about the lectures:

*Humanitarian Clowning* – with Gerry the Juggler and Ninette Rothmüller, Monday November 17, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

*What is Human Trafficking?* – with Ninette Rothmüller, Thursday December 4, 6-7:30 p.m. ONLINE

You need to register for the lectures online. The link for the *Humanitarian Clowning* lecture is not online yet.

To register for the *What is Human Trafficking* lecture, please use this link:

<https://engage.gcc.mass.edu/workshops/what-is-human-trafficking/>

## ***Hike for Hunger – Support “Team Mountain Goats”***

There are some statistics where you don't want to lead the pack. Food insecurity is one of them. And yet we in Franklin and Hampshire counties do lead. Food insecurity varies greatly across Massachusetts. However, Western Massachusetts demonstrates the highest rates of food insecurity in the state. In 2023, 41% of all households in Western Massachusetts experienced food insecurity. And 43% of all households with children, experience child-level food insecurity. **Say that number out loud - 43%!**

In almost every second household with children, the children might be hungry, or have no access to nutritious and healthy food, or might not know when they will get their next meal. What does it mean to grow up not knowing when you can have your next meal? I hope that you know what's for dinner tonight. I hope that you can choose what you will eat today, tomorrow, and the day after. Spread this opportunity to others, make it a given for children to know that there will be another meal and another and another.

How can you help? October is hunger awareness month. As we did last year, our family, Lale, Ninette, and Brett, will participate in *Hike for Hunger*, a month-long event organized by the Amherst Survival Center. During this month, we will hike, and with you supporting our hiking team, we hope to raise funds that make a difference. This year, we are calling our team 'Mountain Goats', trusting that this name will help us hike gracefully and energetically throughout the month of October. We will document our hiking progress once a week on our *Hike for Hunger* blog, which you can find here: <https://www.pledgereg.com/5631/ninetterothmueller>

### **Why are we hiking and what does your support mean?**

The Amherst Survival Center is struggling to keep its shelves stocked. Their food pantry is now serving 61% more people than during the highest peaks of the pandemic, and more than double the number of people they served in 2019.

If you can, please consider making a donation of any amount through our team's *Hike for Hunger* blog <https://www.pledgereg.com/5631/ninetterothmueller>

Your donation will go directly to the Amherst Survival Center to help ensure that all families have access to food. All donations are tax-deductible and you'll receive an email receipt immediately after you donate.

Please spread the word about this effort.

You can also use the QR code included here to make your donation.

Feel free to chat with Lale and me (Ninette) at church or give us a call at 413-404-8556 if you have any questions about this. Thank you and Danke!

*Ninette Rothmüller*



**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

**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*

**Stephen Kealy**, brother of Mary Kealy and John 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

*(Prayer notes, Continued on page 9)*

(**Prayer notes**, continued from page 8)

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

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

**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 October 2025 lectionary can be found here — [tinyurl.com/25d965s5](https://tinyurl.com/25d965s5)

**October Celebrations**

	Brian & Carrie Burke	October 6	A	Jimmy Burke	October 19	B	
	Marg Kruse	October 8	B	Dorothy Spadola	October 20	B	
	Mary Hankinson	October 13	B	Nancy Paulin	October 25	B	
	Brendan Burke	October 19	B	Ralph Tiner	October 25	B	
	Katie Burke	October 19	B	Lou & Mary Raboin	October 27	A	
	Kelly Burke	October 19	B	Rich Connelly	October 30	B	



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



#### *Calendar*

**Oct 5 Communion; Rev. Julie Olmsted**  
**Oct 12 Rev. Nathan Patti**  
**Oct 19 Rev. Julia Olmsted**  
**Oct 26 Rev. Julia Olmstead**

October 2025

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

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Sundays following worship, by  
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