

The Seekonk Congregational Church  
United Church Of Christ

# The Caller

*Gathered 1885*



BE COOL AS YOU COME TO WORSHIP THIS SUMMER  
IN 'AIR-CONDITIONED' COMFORT  
AND DISCOVER THE WARMTH OF GOD'S LOVE!

One Service at 9:30AM



Come welcome one another & join all ages in community!

**WE ARE ALL CALLED TO BE 'WITNESSES'!!**

So...Invite family, friends, and neighbors looking for a church home to come worship with us...

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.*

Seekonk Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
600 Fall River Avenue  
Seekonk, MA 02771  
508-336-9355 Fax: 508-336-3296  
Church Office Email: [seekonkucc@gmail.com](mailto:seekonkucc@gmail.com)  
Web Site: [www.scc-ucc.com](http://www.scc-ucc.com)

TO BELIEVE IS TO CARE-----

-----TO CARE IS TO DO !!

## JULY AND AUGUST 2025

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Ruth E. Shaver  
Minister Emerita: Rev. Joy C. Utter  
Director of Faith Formation: Kristin Putney  
Director of Music: Susan Barrow  
Office Administrator: Maria Tavares  
Treasurer: Donna Euell



Assistant for Operations: Louanne Jennings-Abelson  
Senior Deacon: Lori Ferreira  
Moderator: Stacy Inman  
Parish Nurse: Addie Heelan  
Trustee Chair: Linda Sable  
The Congregation Ministers

# From the Interim Pastor



I'm always delighted when I can share words of wisdom from our denominational leaders. This article by our Conference Minister, Rev. Darrell Goodwin, is addressed to clergy but really applies to all of us as we seek to widen our welcome to all of God's children who seek to be in relationship with others who are openhearted, Bible-centered, and justice-focused. Have a blessed summer and don't be a stranger...we're here every week!

—Pastor Ruth

To my fellow pastors and ministry leaders:

Each week, whether in person or online, people walk through the doors of our churches carrying invisible burdens, quiet hopes, and deep questions. Some come out of curiosity, others out of desperation. Many are searching for belonging before they're ready for a faith connection.

In this moment when community is more fragile and more necessary than ever, how we welcome newcomers matters deeply. Not just the handshake or the coffee, but the culture we cultivate the way our spaces speak love before we do.

Here are a few gentle reminders as we shape our worshiping communities into places of radical welcome:

1. Start with sincere hospitality. Not just “sign of peace” but notice who’s on the margins. Assign hospitality as ministry, not just logistics. Train greeters to see people, not just manage bulletins.
2. Avoid insider language. Churchy words, unexplained rituals, and assumptions of shared belief can feel like locked doors. Offer gentle context without diluting your message. At my local church for a while I put little explanations in the bulletin that explained what things were, Thia helped the folks in the pews and visitors.
3. Honor the visitor’s vulnerability. They’ve already done something brave by showing up. Avoid singling them out. Instead, create an environment where no one feels like a guest only like a friend you hadn’t met yet.
4. Follow up with care, not pressure. A kind message or note of gratitude can go a long way. But don’t overwhelm new folks with too much too soon. Let your community be the invitation. Our excitement when a new person comes can be overwhelming to them so we must find a healthy balance.
5. Empower your congregation to welcome. Hospitality isn’t the job of a team it’s the culture of a church. Teach your people how to listen, include, and make room.
6. Be clear about who you are. In a time when many fear rejection from churches, be clear about your welcome especially across lines of identity, belief, or background. People shouldn’t have to guess if they’ll be safe. In the Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ we have started the [www.findhopenow.org](http://www.findhopenow.org) campaign. Visit the website and use the marketing templates.

Above all, let’s remember: The gospel was never meant to be gated. We are not gatekeepers we are hosts of a feast of grace. Let’s set a table so wide and so full that no one ever questions whether there’s room for them.

Let us welcome as we have been welcomed.

Rev. Darrell Goodwin  
Executive Conference Minister



# THE DEACONS BENCH



At the time of this writing Summer officially started one day ago (June 20, 2025). It has already been a very hot end of spring, and the forecasts predict more hot stuff. A very heartwarming thanks to the Trustees for the new fans in the sanctuary, because now our hearts will not get too warm this summer.

We Deacons would like to thank all of you for your attendance at our Sunday services so far this spring. Typically, we see a sizeable drop in attendance during this time of the year, which is logical as people are doing more vacation travelling.

We thank Kristin Putney for keeping our children spiritually engaged this summer with a week of Vacation Bible School in August.

We also thank all of you who attended our Annual Meeting this year. It is important to have so many people involved in this meeting because it sets the direction we take for the next fiscal year as well as years to come.

**DEACONS:** Tony DeJesus & Lori Ferreira (Senior Deacons)

Dawn Houle	Cindy Pearson	Jim Siegfried	Bonnie DeBlois
Mark Johnson	Linda Mace	Brian Burns	Lesley Daigle
Christina Greene	Tom Heelan		

Louanne Jennings-Abelson (Deacon Emerita) Evelyn Watkins (Deacon Emerita)  
Jonathan Ryder (ad hoc) Donna Euell (ad hoc) Russ Noble (ad hoc)

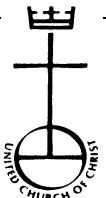
*Submitted By: David Graham (Deacon Emeritus)*

**The Deacon's Fund** goes to help those in our faith community in need of emergency help or those who have special needs! For those who give via paper envelopes, the envelopes are GREEN and in the offering envelope box for the first Sunday of each month. OR if you give on-line, go to [www.scc-ucc.com](http://www.scc-ucc.com) and click on the online giving button at the top right hand corner and fill out the online giving form. We thank all who give faithfully and encourage others to consider a small gift for this fund each month.

## COME CELEBRATE IN COMMUNITY WITH YOUR CREATOR!

**MAKE YOUR SUNDAYS MEANINGFUL WITH 4 HOURS OF WORSHIP  
in Community and Service**

*(One hour each week to worship God...  
...one hundred sixty-seven hours to play, work, serve, etc.)*



## COLUMBARIUM NEWS...

The Columbarium is available to all church members and their families. Use of the Columbarium Includes the inurnment spot, the container, the plaque, and the actual inurnment. Funeral and cremation costs are not included. We encourage anyone who would like more information on the Columbarium to contact Shelley Alves or Linda Sable

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS**  
**DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION**



**SUMMER CHURCH SCHOOL 9:30AM**  
**Preschool – 6th Grade...Lower Hall**

**Fill out FALL Registrations for 2025-2026**  
**Church School & Confirmation Class**

Our excellent and all-encompassing program of CONFIRMATION will begin in September for NINTH GRADERS AND OTHER HIGH SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS.

**Please register as soon as possible!**

*\* (Registration forms must be filled out for Fall Classes to update yearly church records) \**



**VBS 2025**  
**GOD'S WONDER LAB**

*Smash, Freeze, Explode, Ooze, Splat...*  
*Fun Science and Concrete Evidence of God's Creativity!*  
*Moonbounce, Snacks & Games Too!*

Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC

**AUG 4 - 8 (M- F) 8:45 AM - 12:15 PM**

**Preschool- 6th grade**

**FEE \$30 for 5 mornings**

**Registration Required by July 28**

Contact Kristin 774-991-1555

or Maria at the Church Office 508-336-9355



**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

A huge shout-out to all those who participated in the Epic Soundtrack Show. Thanks to those who came to watch and bid on some delicious desserts. What an amazing evening. We raised over \$1100 to support the Music program and help offset the rising costs of Music. The Video of the evening is available on YouTube for those who missed it.

Anyone interested in joining the Handbell Choir, Senior, or Guitar Choir in September, please see Susan Barrow or email at [sueb8962@gmail.com](mailto:sueb8962@gmail.com)

# PEOPLE AND PASSAGES

## WEDDINGS

*May 23, 2025*

*Jessica Leech and Robert Labossierre*



*May 25, 2025*

*Maura Matonis Letourneau and Ibrahim Carew*

## *New Members Joined on June 22, 2025*

*Abilyn Silvia, Michelle Darling, Eric Williams, Jennifer Williams,  
Michele Graf, David Graf, Linda McClune*



Dear Church Family,

I would like to thank everyone for their generosity with the gifts I received on June 8th, Children's Sunday. The gifts, accolades and acknowledgements of my many years of volunteering and involvement with the Board of Christian Education was both humbling and overwhelming. Thank you for allowing me to be involved with your children and grandchildren thru the years, it has truly been a joy. Faithfully yours, LoriAnn Mowry

## 2025 Graduates



**Paige Troiano**

*St. Raphael Academy*

*She will continue her studies at CCRI*

*Granddaughter of Susan Boucher and Cindy Pearson*



**Tess Oberg**

*U. R. I.*

*Masters Degree*

**Gabriella Heelan**

*State of University of Texas*

*Masters Degree*

*Exercise sport science concentration in health and rehabilitation*

*Future Plans: Work on a college level athletic program*

*Granddaughter of Addie & Tom Heelan*



**Alisha Rebello**

*East Providence High School*

*Future Plans: University of New Hampshire*

# FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



As you have noticed, we now have ceiling fans in the Sanctuary that will provide cooling and the circulation of air which will defray the cost of using the air conditioning system. The air conditioning in the Memorial Room has been replaced and is now in working order. The handicapped toilet for the Gardner Building bathroom is being purchased and will soon be installed. Thanks again to Shelley Alves for her generous donation for these repairs.

The kitchen drawers in the Gardner kitchen have been rebuilt and will soon be replaced. All the thermostats have been reset for the upcoming summer weather.

The County Street parking lot pot holes has once again been repaired, however there is still hope that we can raise enough funds to replace the entire parking lot.

The mission group Incredible Days has renewed their contract with us and will be here again July 27-30. Because they have had a wonderful experience with the use of our Gardner building and Sanctuary, they have also told other mission groups which will increase our rental income.

Inspections to both buildings for fire alarms, extinguishers, sprinkler systems and kitchen range hood continue in the next few months.

We are both thankful and saddened that our Co-Chair, Craig Mace is going off the Board. Craig has been and incredible source of information, leadership and has always been at the church when emergencies have risen. Jason Langille is also going off the Board and has done an incredible job in keeping up the grounds including mowing, raking, painting, the list goes on. Jason has also agreed to continue to mow the grass until the Fall, well beyond the time he leaves the Board.

However, despite the loss of Craig and Jason, coming on the Board is David Graham and Brian Bujold...welcome!! Thank you all for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Trustees: Brian Bujold (June,2025), Brian Burns, David Graham (June, 2025), Kim Johnson, Ron Ruper, Linda Sable (Co-Chair), Pat Smith, Tony Sousa

## **All who serve on a Church Board or Committee that meet on a regular basis!**

*Boards of Christian Education, Deacons, Mission & Social Action, Trustees  
and Stewardship Committee plus Church Council*



**September Meetings will be held at ONE time only...  
Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:00pm in Hall**

**Note\* We will cover several important areas of church life and leadership  
altogether and then each Committee will hold its monthly meeting that night.**  
*(Regular monthly/bi-monthly meeting times will resume in October)*



# STEWARDSHIP NEWS

## PLEDGE GIVING (2025 – 2026) “IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE.”

*Thanks to all who have returned their pledge cards  
(If anyone would like to make pledge or receive envelopes,  
please call Maria at the office so we are aware of your intentions and update our records)*  
You can update your electronic pledge by calling Maria at the office  
or going on the church web site [www.scc-ucc.com](http://www.scc-ucc.com)

As of June 8, 2025, our Church members have returned 108 pledges totaling \$189,428 for our upcoming 2025/2026 Budget. This represents 63.14% of our \$300,000 budget goal. We THANK EVERYONE who has pledged. Your generous gifts are the foundation for our Church to thrive and deliver on our mission and goals.

We are so thankful for so many people who have responded to our request. Your generosity helps sustain the vital and life-changing work we do.

As we prepare for our next minister, we must also face a challenge: our financial structure is not as strong as our community life.

We operate in a costly region, have limited endowment resources, and many of our members—especially families and retirees—face financial constraints. These factors make it hard to balance our budget, even as our current staffing and programs are what make our church thrive.

We never ask anyone to give beyond their means. If your situation changes, you can always adjust. By letting us know your plans now will help us shape a faithful and realistic future.

*Your Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC Stewardship Committee*



HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?  
FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL THANK YOU!

**Thanks to all who contribute to the  
Mortgage Debt Reduction!**  
The Blue envelopes in your box help us meet the monthly expenses.

Please wear your **name tags** every Sunday, if you need one, just let Donna Euell know or call the church office. As you leave each Sunday please place them back on the rack as you walk up the ramp.

**Flower Committee...**Reminds everyone there is a sign-up sheet in Gardiner Building for flowers to be given in memory or in honor of a loved one.

**CRAFT /KNITTING GROUP...** Our group meets on Tuesday from 11 am to 1 pm in Room1. Come and join us for some lively conversation and craft work. Maybe you knit or crochet or do bead work, coloring or painting. We like to share and have some laughs. Bring a snack or lunch if you like. Contact Mary Silvia at 774-644-5387 with any questions. See you on Tuesday! Mary

## BOARD OF MISSION & SOCIAL ACTION



First, we are reading "Finding Me" by Viola Davis. This is her autobiography. The audio book won a Grammy for the best Audio book, narration, and storytelling. This is her story from a crumbling apartment in Central Falls to the stage in N.Y., and beyond. She wrote this book for anyone running through life untethered, desperate, and clawing their way through murky memories, trying to get some form of self-love. This is for anyone who needs reminding that a life worth living can only be born from radical honesty and courage. We will discuss this book in August at a time to be announced. Please let Bonnie Deblois or Betty Graham know if you are interested in reading and discussing this book. We will be serving a hot meal on July 20 for Feed the Homeless RI.

**THE CLOTHING SHED** is in place at the end of the County Street parking lot, and we have been collecting many bags! Thank you to all who have been dropping off clothing and other textiles - Please keep them coming! Drop off your clothing, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, curtains, pillowcases or stuffed animal donations in a tied-up bag.

**CANS & BOTTLES** MA deposit Only: Save the environment and people!! Bring donations to the green bins - lift lid - drop in clean bottles and cans.

**FOOD PANTRY** thanks to all who have been donating. Our need right now is for items that do not need to be heated, such as granola/cereal bars, cereal (especially Cheerios), food in pouches that doesn't need heating, or peanut butter.

Our \*\*\***ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY** project will once again begin in April! Please check in with the office or Mission Committee if you are willing to help out with the "highway" clean-up. We have all the supplies. You can do it on your own time - just let the office know you are going out, **you need to fill out a mandatory release form for Mass DOT**. Our route is 114A, from the church, across route 44, to the state line at the bus turn-around (the end of Ledge Road). *Please leave filled bags on the route, just let the church or Mission Committee know where the bags are and Mass DOT will pick them up.*

We are so excited to announce that Seekonk Congregational Church Food Pantry has been selected again as a nonprofit partner in the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program.

This time, your organization will receive \$1 for each specially marked \$11.99 Bloomin' 4 Good bouquet sold during the month of August 2025 at:

125 Highland Avenue, Seekonk MA

**Zumba Classes...**The Zumba instructor, Dawn Marshall is offering a free first class to all Seekonk Congregational Church members. You just have to let Dawn know that you are a Seekonk church member. Zumba classes are held on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30PM in the Hall



## ***SAVE THE DATES***

### **SCC-UCC Fundraising Committee News for the FALL 2025!**

**Please save these dates on your calendars  
and invite your friends to join us!**



**Saturday, September 27, 2025 - SOCK HOP - Dancing, Music and games!** - starting at 5:00 PM. You are invited to attend this FUN event for all ages - children, youth and adults! Mark Johnson will share music from the 1950's/1960's/1970's so that we can sing and dance along! There will be fun contests to identify some of the special moments from this time in history! Join us for hot dogs, pizza, chicken tenders, Ice Cream Sundaes and ROOT BEER FLOATS! This will be fun for everyone in your family and your friends! More details to come!

#### **Saturday, October 18, 2025 - YARD SALE!!!**

This is a great time of the year to clean out closets, attics, basements and garages to find treasures to donate for our Fall 2025 Yard Sale. You will either be able to reserve a table for \$35.00 each to sell your own items or donate your items to the Church for sale at the "Church" section of the Yard Sale. Please check out Donna's emails and listen for more information during our Church announcements as we get closer to Fall. If you have items, please put them aside so that you can bring them to the Church the week before the Yard Sale. If you have questions, please contact Evelyn Watkins at 401-680-2490.

Note: We usually have a size limit of "smaller than a breadbasket but if you have larger items we may have a section for them.. Please call Evelyn to confirm.

Have a wonderful Summer sorting and saving for this year's Yard Sale!

#### **Saturday, November 1, 2025 - HARVEST DINNER**

Join us for our traditional Harvest Dinner on Saturday, November 2nd. We will have take-out and eat in options. More details to come!

#### **Saturday, December 6, 2025 - CHRISTMAS BAZAAR NEW THIS YEAR - BASKETS of JOY!!!**

Please put this date on your calendar - it is a wonderful Seekonk Congregational Church tradition. We have beautiful wreaths and centerpieces, ham and beans and amazing baked goods, Grandma's Attic with all sorts of Christmas items, a table of knitted items, great lunch options, pictures with Santa and SO MUCH more!

We also look forward to the new Baskets of JOY project to add to our Drawing Table!

Thank you very much for supporting our Church Fundraising events and for inviting your neighbors and friends to join us also!





## **DONATIONS for our CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**

The annual Christmas Bazaar will be here before we know it and the Drawing Table could use your help!

If you or a friend has a business and would like to donate a gift basket or gift card to the Drawing Table, please let us know!

If you or a friend have a skill and would like to share that skill with someone, donate your time (1 hour or 2 hours). Please email Maria Tavares at the Church Office - [seekonkucc@gmail.com](mailto:seekonkucc@gmail.com) with the name of the person or business, what they are donating, and the value of the item.

Donation letters can be provided for tax purposes. If you are going to a business, please check in with Evelyn Watkins at 401-680-2490 or [evelynwtkns@gmail.com](mailto:evelynwtkns@gmail.com) to be sure we are not duplicating.

Donations & items should be turned in by October 20. Email Evelyn Watkins if you have any questions.

Thank you VERY MUCH!

Your SCCUCC Fundraising Committee

## **SUMMER UPDATE ON “BASKETS of JOY “ PROJECT**



We hope you and your family are enjoying the summer! We just wanted to provide you with an update concerning the Baskets of Joy project.

The committee is continuing to spread the word about the project to our church members, as well to area communities. We are planning to reach out to local publications and media.

We encourage everyone's participation either individually or creating a group of friends to share a basket! At our initial meeting, the committee generated a list of some suggested themes for the baskets: car washing kit, house cleaning, charcuterie board & appetizers, family movie night, teen's & children's baskets, yoga, pet care, sewing, knitting, gardening, baking, & Italian dinner night. We certainly invite you to come up with more creative ideas.

We also discussed that if someone is not interested in putting together a basket, that donations or gift cards toward basket materials would be greatly appreciated, too!

The committee will meet again in September to plan an assembly workshop and will keep you updated. If anyone has any questions or would like further information about Baskets of Joy please feel free to contact:

Bev DelRosso ( [bkdelrosso@aol.com](mailto:bkdelrosso@aol.com)) or  
Peg Bouchard( [pegbouchard@comcast.net](mailto:pegbouchard@comcast.net)).

Thank you for your support!



## **EARNEST WORKERS**

### **EARNEST WORKERS - Looking ahead to Fall 2025!**

The Earnest Workers finished our 2024/2025 year of activities with a wonderful Luncheon at Betty McVay's home in Riverside on June 18th. We are so thankful to Betty and her lovely family for welcoming us to share this wonderful time together to celebrate our year of activities and our wonderful friendships. Thank you VERY MUCH!

### **Earnest Worker September Getting Back Together Meeting. - Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 17th. (Note this is the 3rd Wednesday in September)**

We will begin meeting again in the Fall on Wednesday, September 17th at 10:00 in the Hall of the Gardiner Building. We will make Cookie Walk Containers and May Baskets (ahead of our May event) and share news of the fun we have had with family and friends throughout the Summer.

### **Earnest Worker Trip to 4 Town Farm with a Tractor Tour of the Fields led by Lynne and Steve Clegg! - Wednesday, OCTOBER 8th (note this is the 2nd Weds. in October)**

We will meet at 10:00 at 4 Town Farm in Seekonk to meet with Lynne and Steve Clegg. Please bring a bagged lunch because we will have a picnic lunch under the Picnic Roof after our tour of 4 Town Farm. Dessert and Beverages will be provided.

### **EARNEST WORKER COOKIE WALK - Sunday, October 27th during Coffee Hour after Church! More details to come!**

### **Earnest Worker November Meeting - Travelogue with Ellen Bensusan - Traveling to Scotland Wednesday, NOVEMBER 5th**

Ellen Bensusan has shared many stories about her amazing trips. This year she will share stories and photos about her trip to Scotland. More details to follow..

### **Earnest Worker ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON AND YANKEE SWAP at Davenport's Restaurant - Wednesday, December 10th. More details to follow!**

We all hope you have a wonderful Summer enjoying many activities with Family and Friends!

Please contact Cheryl Gherardini, Evelyn Watkins, Joyce Greene, Diane Burbank or Mary Silvia if you have any questions about the Seekonk Congregational Church, UCC Earnest Workers.



**2025-2026 Church School & Confirmation Class Registration Form**  
**Seekonk Congregational Church**  
United Church of Christ  
600 Fall River Avenue, Seekonk, MA 02771

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ BAPTIZED: \_\_YES \_\_NO (DATE of BAPTISM): \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS' NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT'S EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_



**Like us on Facebook...** We are now posting our amazing church activities and events on social media. Please indicate to the office if you need to opt out of having you or your child's pictures posted. (508-336-9355) [seekonkucc@gmail.com](mailto:seekonkucc@gmail.com)

**CHURCH SCHOOL SESSION**

Entering in **SEPTEMBER 2025** (circle one): Nursery (Birth to 3YR) Preschool 3YR / 4YR Kindergarten

(circle one): 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Confirmation class (9<sup>th</sup>) 10<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>

**Confirmation Class (9<sup>th</sup> grade or above) 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>**

EMAIL OF CONFIRMAND \_\_\_\_\_

Medication/Allergies/Special Needs (please notify us) \_\_\_\_\_  
*If additional space is need please use back of this form)*

Church Activity/Interests (Please check any that your child would participate in)

_____ Sacred Dance	_____ Play Musical Instrument
_____ Bells/Tone Chimes	_____ Drama
_____ Children's Choir (K-5)	_____ Acolyte
_____ Youth Choir (6-7-8)	_____ Other _____

*If you have additional concerns or helpful information, please use back*

**TO BETTER UPDATE THE CHURCH RECORDS**

**~ THIS FORM NEEDS TO BE FILLED OUT EACH YEAR ~**