



THE SPIRE

THE SECOND CHURCH IN NEWTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sharing life's journey in Christian faith, love, and service.



60 Highland St. West Newton, MA • www.2ndchurch.org • (617) 244-2690

Calendar Highlights:

Worship and Church School each Sunday morning, 10 o'clock, followed by Coffee Hour

9/30 Saturday – Rachel Sheridan Memorial Service/Collation, 10:30 a.m.

10/1 Sunday – Intergenerational World Communion Sunday Worship,
New Members Received, Neighbors in Need Offering, 10 a.m.

10/1 Sunday – Family Independence Initiative Forum/Lunch, 11:30 a.m.

10/1 Sunday – Youth Group, 4 p.m.

10/4 Wednesday – Dinner Church Service, Room 111, 6 p.m.

10/9 Monday Holiday – Indigenous Peoples' Day

10/11 Wednesday – Dinner Church Service, Room 111, 6 p.m.

10/15 Sunday – Youth Group, 4 p.m.

10/18 Wednesday – Dinner Church Service, Room 111, 6 p.m.

10/22 Sunday – Youth Group, 4 p.m.

10/25 Wednesday – Dinner Church Service, Room 111, 6 p.m.

10/29 Sunday – Youth Group/Newton Crop Walk, Time TBA

Rev. Mark Seifried, Interim Minister

Barbara Cancellieri, Secretary

Andrus Madsen, Minister of Music

Mary Ayotte, Bookkeeper

Pat Bonnet and Alan Bubba Soho, Co-moderators

Susan Benes, Nursery School Director

Rev. Leah Rumsey, Director of Faith Formation

Molly Doris-Pierce, Youth Group and Sunday School Leader

Charlie and Henry Loftus and Victoria Joseph, Sunday Sextons

Frank Neal, Property Manager

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Next Spire Deadline: October 16, 10 a.m.

Next Spire Mailing: October 27, 9 a.m.

Stewardship of Mission

Reflections from Pastor Mark

"Stewardship is the process of saying, 'This is what I have, and this is how I'm going to use it in this world.'" ~ Rev. Emily C. Heath in "Glorify"

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Crossroads process a couple of years ago. Thanks to all who helped craft the church Vision Statement last year. (See masthead for the text.) And thanks to all whom, this summer, worked to reshape and refine the Purpose Statement we have been discerning for the last six months. This has been a lot of work, exasperating for some and inspiring for others.

Here is what the gathered faithful came up with for our Purpose Statement (also known as a Mission Statement, but confusing to some, which is why we are using the word "Purpose") and will take it to our next Congregational Meeting for a blessing:

The Second Church in Newton is an inclusive community of curious and creative spiritual seekers, committed to learning, teaching, social justice and embodying a progressive practice of Christianity through loving kindness, engagement and joyful worship.

I cannot tell you how proud I am of the congregation for your persistence and faithfulness in doing this work. In my mind, we cannot continue to be a "generalist" church. Rather, we must focus our efforts and resources around this mission. We need to shed those things that do not support the mission. We need to rework the organizational structure of the church to support this mission. And we need to screen applicants by their sense of call and their skill set for the settled Senior Minister position for the purpose of achieving this mission.

We are preparing to launch our Annual Stewardship appeal. In my mind, the Number One reason for giving to the church is your response to God: an expression of gratitude for all that you are and all that you have been given. The second reason one should give to any organization is because you believe in the mission. To me, our mission embodies potential for both spiritual and numeric growth, but also is faithful to the gospel and the values of the congregation.

I give (tithe) ten percent of my income to the church, but I split it between my home church, the congregation I serve, and the wider church – Massachusetts Conference of the UCC, the national setting of the UCC, and a variety of UCC ministries such as the Coalition for LGBT Concerns and Global Ministries. I give beyond this tithe to organizations that support my values.

I have discovered that the more I can give, the more joyful I become and the more fulfilling my life is. I feel as if God literally rewards my generosity with a greater sense of purpose. So, I am increasing my pledge to Second Church this year by six percent.

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As you pray about your charitable giving, I hope you will think about all the good we do in the church: elevating and challenging worship; Sunday School and youth group to ground young people in scripture, the historic Christian faith and contemporary practices of faith; fellowship for all ages; and missions that touch the lives of many people locally and millions nationally and internationally. Second Church is presently “firing on all cylinders” and staffed with some of the brightest and best professionals serving progressive churches nowadays.

Our ample facilities support a variety of organizations that support our values of healing, social progress, education, and social justice. We host several Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon groups; The Second Church Nursery School which helps set children up for success in academics and citizenry; the Clearway School who teaches and supports youth with learning disabilities so that they can achieve academic and personal success; and Congregation Dorshei Tzedek which is a Reconstructionist Jewish congregation committed to ministering to LGBT people, social justice, and liberal Jewish thought and living. Over the last two months, we have also been home to a Meals on Wheels program that serves over 150 people who need assistance with food preparation and nutrition.

I hope that you are as proud as I am of the work we have done the last 18 months, and I hope you will respond in the form of a generous pledge for the coming year as we prepare to welcome a new pastor and continue to refine the mission to which God has called us in this time and place.

Pastor Mark Seifried
MarkSeifried@icloud.com

Meet Our New Members Joining October 1

Rev. Leah Rumsey has been serving as the Director of Faith Formation at Second Church since July and will formally join the church on October 1. She received her M.Div. from Harvard Divinity School in 2014, after completing field education placements at the Outdoor Church of Cambridge, Suffolk University, and First Congregational Church in Braintree. Leah completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was ordained in the UCC in January 2015. She served as a college chaplain for three years before returning to Boston in 2017. In addition to her work at Second Church, Leah is a PhD student in religion at Harvard and is studying religious leadership and intellectual history in modern Egypt. She lives in Cambridge with her husband and their two pet birds.

Jack Holder is a master's student at Boston University School of Theology, specializing in church and the arts. He is studying the relationship between Christianity today and the art world, and how they can benefit from a resurgence in interaction. Jack comes to Second Church in the hopes of building a relationship with the community, and hopes that his love of God and the written word will be a welcome addition to the community at large.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be with you all.

Blessings,
Jack Holder

Faith Formation

2017-18 Faith Formation Offerings

Elementary School Children (Grades K-5)

Worship and Sunday School

Each week, children are invited to begin worship in the sanctuary with their families. The first part of each service is designed to be accessible to young children who are not yet able to read or sit still for long periods of time. After the passing of the peace, children who wish to attend Sunday School should follow their teachers out of the sanctuary. Sunday School classes include a brief opening ritual and a craft, activity, or story. Occasionally, children will remain in the sanctuary for an intentionally intergenerational worship service (check church and Constant Contact announcements for the dates of these services), at which they will have age-appropriate leadership roles.

Religious Literacy Camp

In summer 2018, look for this exciting update on vacation Bible school. This camp is a week-long summer experience in which students learn basic religious literacy, visit various faith communities, and learn skills for peacemaking, social justice, and positive social skills. Children of all faith backgrounds and no faith background who are beginning first through fifth grade are welcome.

Middle School and High School Students (Grades 6-12)

Worship

Middle and high school students are invited to join the congregation in the sanctuary during worship. They are invited to provide leadership as musicians, scripture readers, or in other ways. They are also invited (but not required) to use the provided reflection sheets to help connect the worship service with youth group gatherings. Students are encouraged to suggest ways in which they might like to engage worship or ways they might be leaders in the service. Students are also welcome to volunteer as Sunday school assistants. Students interested in doing this should contact Leah.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes are offered for students in grade 8 and above to prepare for full membership in the church. The confirmation program is offered during Lent (a total of six weeks) and requires a time commitment of one hour per week at the church and an additional hour of time for preparation and reflection. Confirmands will be received into the church at a special service during the season after Easter.

Youth Group

All students in grades 6-12 are invited to weekly youth group gatherings. Gatherings include “Dinner and Faith” discussions, interfaith or religious literacy events, service projects, and game nights.

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Faith Formation

Summer Service Trip

Students beginning grades 9-12 are invited to a week-long service learning experience during which they will learn about religion in America, undertake serious spiritual and personal reflection, and learn about contemporary social justice issues. While this trip will use Christian language and interact with Christian communities, students of all faith backgrounds and no faith background are invited to attend.

College Students

With a student's permission, Leah will schedule a Skype or Facetime chat once a semester (or more frequently if a student desires). Students who leave a mailing address can also expect to receive occasional notes of support and encouragement from their church family.

All Ages

Worship

People of all ages are invited to worship on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m.

Coffee Shop Office Hours

All are welcome for conversation and prayer at Leah's weekly office hours at the Newtonville Starbucks Tuesdays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. While all are welcome for a time of deep listening and reflection, youth and young adults are especially invited to take advantage of this opportunity. Leah has particular experience and expertise in ministry surrounding college and young adulthood, interreligious dialogue and relationships, and the relationship between faith and scholarship.

Dinner Church Service

All are welcome at this informal weekly service where we take communion to the next level by sharing a meal throughout the service. Jeans, wiggling kids, jokes, and deep questions are all welcome at this time of food, fun, and worship. Dinner church will happen each Wednesday at 6 p.m., from September 13 on and continuing through October. This is NOT A POTLUCK and THERE IS NO EXPECTATION THAT YOU BRING A DISH TO PASS. That said; if you have a famous dish, a dish you really want to see, or some food you've been longing for, feel to bring it.

Adult Education and Faith Formation Opportunities

Look for a variety of opportunities for adult faith formation, focusing on everything from activism to Biblical literacy. Racial justice training with an MAUCC trainer is scheduled for the fall and other opportunities will be shared at church announcements and through Constant Contact.

Rev. Leah Rumsey
Director of Faith Formation
leahrumsey@g.harvard.edu
517-449-8145

Youth Group participating in Newton CROP Walk

The Youth Group will participate in the CROP Walk on October 29. They invite you to sponsor their walk by donating online at:

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/newtonma/SecondChurchYouthGroup> or to join them at the walk. If you'd like to walk with the youth group, please write Leah at leahrumsey@g.harvard.edu to RSVP.

Leah's Schedule at Second Church

You can always contact Leah via email at leahrumsey@g.harvard.edu or by phone at 517-449-8145. You can also find her in person at the following times:

Sundays	Second Church Office	8:30 am – 5:30 pm
Tuesday	Second Church Office	1:00 pm – 6:30 pm
	Newtonville Starbucks	6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Wednesday	Second Church Office	4:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Death

Elizabeth Muirhead Garden (Betty) died April 14, 2017. The memorial service was in Center Sandwich, NH on June 10.

Birth

Dexter William Paine was born September 12, 2017 to Emily and Rusty Paine. Ced and Joy Paine are Dexter's grandparents and Brennan is his big brother.



Update from the Search Committee

The Search Committee has met several times as a group and has also met with the Transition Team and Wendy Vander Hart, Associate Conference Minister, to review our church profile. We are now finishing up the profile.

We will have a copy of the profile in the church office soon, if you would like to review it. Because it contains confidential information, the notebook must remain in the church building.

We expect the process of searching for and calling a new pastor to take six to eight months. Our next steps are to post the profile and solicit applications. Meanwhile we will discern selection criteria and a rating scale to evaluate the candidates' profiles as they come in. We will keep you updated on the process.

Please keep us in your prayers.
Your Search Committee

Super Saturday of Mass Conference of the UCC

When	Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 8:00 AM to 3:45 PM
Where	Keefe Regional Technical School 750 Winter Street, Framingham, MA 01702

Great Day, Great Price! Cost includes: morning worship, 2 workshops, an optional lunch activity, continental breakfast, buffet lunch, marketplace and closing worship.

Participants will be able to attend two 90-minute workshops related to various aspects of church life, mission and ministries, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In addition, participants have the option of attending a 30-minute table conversation or forum during one of the mid-day lunch periods. Register early, as spaces will fill.

If you wish to register: <https://macucc-reg.brtapp.com/SS-October2017> or contact Andrea Bellarosa bellarosaa@macucc.org 508-875-5233 x239. Second Church will cover the costs, so register, but do not pay. Alert Pastor Mark Seifried that you have registered and we will send a check for the entire group so we get the discounted rate. A booklet listing workshops and the lunch period table conversation/forum is available on the lobby literature rack.



From the Board of Mission and Advocacy

Moment for Mission

October 22: **Newton Food Pantry** – Hear about two young pantry volunteers, the work they do there and the rewards they have found in volunteering.

What does non-toxic charity look like? - Come find out at the Family Independence Initiative (FII) Forum and Luncheon on Sunday, October 1 at 11:30 am.

Our social welfare system has helped many families survive periods of crisis, but has done little to address the root causes of poverty and remove barriers to upward mobility. In fact, some services and resources may reinforce the perception that low-income families are powerless, broken, lazy and lacking in self-discipline. FII has been studying and working with families of low-income communities since 2001. Their approach is different.

From the FII website:

We trust and invest in low-income families as well as the solutions they discover on their own. We start with the knowledge that we have underestimated the potential and resourcefulness of low-income communities to improve their own financial and general well-being. We know there are systematic barriers that challenge families' ability to leverage their assets, strengths, and capacities. Our work is all about removing these barriers. We do away with the traditional top-down approach to fighting poverty by letting families themselves be the change agents.

FII brings families together so that they can learn from each other and from the accumulated experience of FII staff, many of whom come from low income communities. They track the progress of FII families and hold them to account for the promises they make. This approach has been empowering for families and FII has seen the results! Ashley Conners Sherwin, Vice-president of External Affairs, will be the presenter. Join us to learn more about their impressive and innovative work while enjoying a hot lunch.

Second Church Collecting Church World Service Clean-up Buckets/Ingredients

- One five-gallon bucket with re-sealable lid (If bucket has been used, clean well but do not use if it has held chemicals of any kind.)
- Four scouring pads
- Seven sponges, including one large
- One scrub brush
- Eighteen reusable cleaning towels (e.g. Easy Wipes)
- One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent
- One 16-28 oz. bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap
- One 12-16 oz. bottle of household cleaner that can be mixed with water (no spray bottles)
- One package of 48-50 clothespins
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- Five dust masks
- Two pairs non-surgical, non-latex gloves
- One pair work gloves, cotton with leather palm or all leather
- 24-28 heavy duty or contractor type 30-45 gallon trash bags on a roll and removed from carton
- One 6-9 oz. bottle of non-aerosol insect repellent
- \$3.00 PER BUCKET PROCESSING / SHIPPING

All cleaning items must be new – all liquid items must be capped and securely tightened.

IF PURCHASING ALL ITEMS FOR A BUCKET, PLEASE place all items into the bucket, making sure they are packed securely to avoid damage during shipment. Pastor Mark will deliver to the Acton UCC church for shipment. The donation time will be through October 15, and the Youth Group is going to help pack the buckets. Ingredient sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall.

The Second Church in Newton
60 Highland Street,
West Newton, MA 02465-2405

If you are wondering what goes on at Church Council and would like to learn more, the council minutes are kept in the church office and are available upon request from Mary Ann Donaldson or Barbara Cancellieri.

