
FISHERS ISLAND UNION CHAPEL

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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“No matter who you are or where you are
on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”



CHAPEL HAPPENINGS FALL 2021



Communion Table “Jesus is the Bread of Life”
FIUC Worship Under the Tent in August



A Message from The Reverend Vollinger

Dear Friends in Christ,

Summer of 2021 on beautiful Fishers Island is quickly coming to an end. Cool, crisp air of autumn is creeping in amidst the heat and humidity that has been present so much of the days and nights this summer. FI Union Chapel has enjoyed the usual blessings of being a part of Fishers Island during the summer with all the beauty of the season and its many activities. The Chapel has also experienced unexpected blessings during this summer with its combination of challenges; Candy’s resignation,

the issues of the Chapel floor and foundation making the building unusable for the summer, as well as the issues of Covid. The Chapel leadership has approached these challenges as opportunities in the confidence that God is faithful and they have been prayerfully flexible, adaptable, and creative as well as very busy. As you read through this newsletter you will discover the things our dedicated leadership has done with the help of God to keep Union Chapel faithful in its various ministries. A very big thank you to all the leaders and workers in these various ministries that are shared in the newsletter.

Since summer is a very busy time on Fishers and with all that the leadership is dealing with, it was felt that having pastor(s) who are familiar with the ways of Fishers Island and the Chapel would be beneficial for the leadership and members while an interim search is done. Seeking to maintain its commitment to have regular weekly worship and a pastoral presence during the week, the leadership asked Reverend SaraJane Munshower, myself, and Reverend Krysia Burnham to provide coverage for worship leadership and a pastoral presence during the week from June - September. The three of us have brought our love for and experience of Fishers Island and experience with people and churches who are grieving or in transition to prayerfully help support Union Chapel in the beginning stages of its pastoral transition. It is a joy for me to be able to serve Christ here again as well as work collaboratively with SaraJane and Krysia. On the one Sunday none of us was available, Rev. Marcus Corey, another familiar minister to Union Chapel was able to provide worship leadership.

Regular 10am Sunday worship as been offered every Sunday. Weather permitting (and almost all Sundays it has been-thankfully!) worship has been in person and held underneath the tent in the courtyard with the option to Zoom in so that all who want to worship with us can be together. When weather has not permitted, worship is held in the parsonage, and when it was not possible to gather in person we worshiped by Zoom. Now that is flexibility and adaptability! We are able to do this because of the dedication of Tim Patterson who sets up all the chairs and everything that is needed then puts it all away again afterwards. John Klimczak who is responsible for everything technical involving a computer which includes Zoom and pre-recorded music. Music has graciously been pre-recorded by Diane Dexter and John Klimczak. A very big thank you to Tim, John, and Diane!

A special thank you to Krysia, Tim, and John for their adaptability and flexibility of going from Plan A to Plan B to Plan C for worship as the weather forecast changed from a possibility of a tropical storm to a hurricane warning. Even a hurricane did not stop Union Chapel from worshipping together as a community!

We are grateful for Ellen Parker for providing the beautiful fresh flower arrangements for our 10am worship services.

One of the joys of gathering in person again is being able to enjoy a time of fellowship and refreshment after worship. A big thank you to the following for maintaining the ministry of hospitality after worship:

Anita Fritz, Susie Renna, Fran Roethgen, and Eliana Spinola.

Due to the many requests that leadership received for Beach Church this summer, Beach Church was held (weather permitting) on Sunday mornings at Dock Beach at

8:00am from August 1 - September 5th. This thirty minute informal worship service included prayer, silence, a time for nature, a brief reflection, a blessing and the beauty of nature experienced by all our senses.

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the welcoming and comfortable parsonage where I and my husband have been staying while I worked here. A very big thank you to all involved in cleaning the parsonage and making sure it is comfortably furnished for the pastor that is providing coverage! Thank you to SaraJane for making sure there is beauty in the parsonage and a stocked refrigerator and shelves when I arrived.

A big thank you to Sarah Porter for taking care of all the behind the scene logistics of having different pastors covering for the summer and fall.

A big thank you to Diane Dexter for adapting to have the church office in her home while recuperating from surgery!

We are grateful for Debbie Vinick, professional harpist, who enriched both our Sunday morning services on August 8th with her gift and talent for playing the harp!

As the summer transitions into fall, I hope the leadership and members and friends of Union Chapel will pause and reflect on the summer and all its experiences and make note of what you have learned about yourself, God, and the ministries of Union Chapel.

In Christ's Love and Service,
Pam
(Reverend Pamela Rose Vollinger)



Church Under the Tent Summer 2021



Beach Church August 8th





A Message from The Reverend Munshower

Dear Union Chapel,

"Always we begin" again is a mantra that has been written on my heart for some time now. It reflects the Benedictine way of living, but it is also a truth for all of humanity. It is especially true for all of you at this juncture in your life as a Christian congregation.

I feel blessed to be able to "begin again" to walk with you on this journey for the four weeks after Labor Day. I am looking forward to hearing about your summer experiences, as well as your hopes and intentions going into the fall. My hope is that we will be able to have a few community conversations. The parsonage "office door" will be open most afternoons.

The chaplain of our PA retirement community loaned me a book recently. I would suggest reading together if I were with you for a longer time. Perhaps it's one that your potential interims are aware of. The title is Living into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us (by Christine D. Pohl). I have only read the following four chapter headings:

1. Embracing Gratitude as a Way of Life
2. Making and Keeping Promises
3. Living Truthfully
4. Practicing Hospitality and Beyond

I have a hunch each of us could write a paragraph or two with these "prompts." Hopefully, you will take time to ponder how these practices relate to your personal and Chapel experiences. If you are present on Sunday mornings, or watching on Zoom, you may hear a reference to one or two in my meditations, but I promise not to enter into the actual work of your next interim.

Maybe you have even seen evidence of these themes in the above few lines from me. 😊

Autumn blessings, SaraJane
(The Reverend SaraJane Munshower)



BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE



Renewing Our Building

What started
in the spring

with removing asbestos flooring, blossomed this summer into a major renovation project. Working with architect Sam Fitzgerald at BD Design and the team at BD Remodeling and Restoration, Union Chapel's Building Committee planned a Phase One focused on urgent priorities and a Phase Two on making the building more welcoming and better able to serve the community.

After we removed the floor tile to eliminate asbestos, we could see in some of the classrooms that the concrete slab beneath was sinking. When BD drilled exploratory holes through the slab, they found a problem straight out of the Bible. The good news was that the sanctuary and fellowship hall were built on rock (i.e. the slab was poured on gravel), but in the classroom wing the slab was poured on sand, which had eroded enough to leave a significant gap beneath the concrete. In August, BD drilled holes in the concrete and injected "flowable fill" to close the gap and shore up the classroom wing.

The final steps of Phase One were to level the floor, put down new, environmentally friendly "Marmoleum" tile, and paint the sanctuary. Our goal is

to be back in the sanctuary right after Labor Day and BD has us on track to do just that.



To date we have been able to fund Phase One from our operating reserves. For Phase Two, we will need to rely on the generosity of the Island community to achieve our goals for the building. This will include creating a welcoming entrance vestibule with glass doors that make the Ferguson window visible from the courtyard; installing a new kitchen; adding windows to the fellowship hall; and upgrading both our HVAC and audio/visual systems. Union Chapel is both a place of worship and a very accessible community gathering place and the Phase Two work intends to enhance both functions.



For more information about the project and to offer suggestions or support, please contact any member of the Building Committee: Louise Burnham Packard (Chair), Anita Fritze, Susie Brinckerhoff, David Burnham and Tim Patterson.



A MESSAGE FROM THE REVEREND BURNHAM

What is a chaplain? As the name suggests, a chaplain tends to the chapel, or holy worship space. The term comes from the French *chapelain* which comes from the Latin *capellina* or “little cape.” Legend has it that Martin of Tours, a French soldier for Rome in the fourth century A.D., came upon a beggar wearing only rags in the depth of winter. Martin took out his sword, cut off half his military cloak, and clothed the poor man with it. He later had a dream that the man was Jesus himself, resulting in Martin’s conversion to Christianity and eventual sainthood. Chaplains were early spiritual leaders who tended to this sacred relic of the half cape in house churches; later the smaller holy places inside churches followed suit, and the early chapels multiplied.

I like this story because it helps me understand on a deeper level what the call to chaplaincy really means. In the pandemic, my own call to this ministry of sharing God’s unfailing love was truly tested. All around me were those in poverty of body, mind, and soul—in a country and a world of grief and loss. Those who were sick or had a loved one who was gravely ill during this time suffered complicated grief. They were facing the loss of the life they once knew while also living in a world of global, widespread loss—through COVID 19, job transitions, pivoting to a remote lifestyle, isolation, and many other types of change. And for those in a caregiver role of any kind, it was suddenly essential to find new reserves of patience, hope, and resiliency.

Well, my supplies ran thin last spring after a year of working “in the trenches.” I was tired. I needed a longer break than company policy would allow. My spiritual well was running low.

I can’t quite pinpoint when my own personal and professional pivot began. Was it the caring shared with family, friends, and colleagues? Or perhaps the regular affirmation from patients and their caregivers? I think one turning point might have been the day when two people, both adult daughters of an ill parent at the end of life from two different families, told me: “when I visit with you, I become myself.” This was a God moment for me. My showing up in

God’s name was enough. I just needed to keep doing it, authentically, despite my battle fatigue and seasons of doubt. Radical acts of love never get old. And I knew from that day on that being an instrument of that Love, and that Peace, is what we are all called to do. Even when we feel a little cold with only half of what we had before.

As a good Protestant, the idea of sainthood doesn’t mean all that much to me. But I can imagine saints are a bit like the giants of our own church community on whose shoulders we stand: partners in ministry who share their wisdom, love, and faith with those of us still-seeking God’s voice, ever discerning God’s call on our lives. There are so many St. Martins (and St. Martinas) among us. We have many in our Chapel community who cut off half their cloaks every day for the good of those in need. So, saints of Union Chapel Fishers Island, take it from me. Keep on doing the good work of sharing your time, talents, and treasure with the world. And along that path of charity towards others, don’t forget to keep “half a cloak” of Love for yourselves.

With Blessing, Krysia

(The Reverend Krysia Bereday Burnham)



2021 Union Chapel Appeal Update

Many thanks to all who have donated funds to date to keep our church in operation through these challenging times! Your continuing help allows us to continue to be responsive to the needs of the Island Community, and our budget needs include continued operating expenses and building upgrades. If you wish to support our mission, we thank you. Please make checks payable to:

Fishers Island Union Chapel
P.O. Box 192 Fishers Island, NY 06390

Please also partner with us in prayer for the safety and health of our Island, our behind-the-scenes workers, and for God's love to be a real presence through our church and all the churches of Fishers Island.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

“Some people, in order to find God, will read a book. But there is a great book, the book of created nature. Look carefully at it top and bottom observe it, read it. God did not make letters of ink for you to recognize him in; he set before your eyes all these things he as made. Why look for a louder voice?”

—Augustine of Hippo

“God is revealed in the book of nature for God is its author. Yet we only comprehend this book if we have the necessary spiritual insight.

Without reverence and perception we go astray...The whole of creation moves toward completion, and if we see it with the eyes of God moving toward the perfect world without fault or blemish, then we can only bow humbly before our creator and exclaim, “It is good.”

—Sadhu Sundar Singh, **Wisdom of the Sadhu (Plough, 2014)**, 57-58.

As you contemplate with all your senses God's creation where ever you happen to be, what feelings are evoked? What lessons about God or humanity come to mind?

What invitations from God?

BLESSING

Deep peace
of the running
wave to you.

Deep peace
of the flowing
air to you.

Deep peace
of the quiet earth to you.

Deep peace of the shining stars to you.

Deep peace of Jesus Christ,
Prince of Peace to you.



Thoughts on Forgiveness that were
shared for reflection on August 29th.

“lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:1-3

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us...” Ephesians 4:32, 5:1-2

Forgiveness is the answer to the child's dream of a miracle by which what is broken is made whole again, what is soiled is made clean again.

— Dag Hammarskjold.

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

— Mahatma Gandhi

“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love.”

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

If we really want to love
we must learn how to forgive

— Mother Teresa

The age-old discovery—

Forgiveness, forgiveness, forgiveness—
Is the only way to real happiness.

Forgiveness means
transformation of a human
heart into a divine life.

— Sri Chinmoy



UNION CHAPEL CONTACTS

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Administrative Assistant: Diane Dexter

Trustee Chairperson: Louisa Evans

CHURCH BUSINESS HOURS

Monday, Thursday, Friday: 10 – 1 pm

Tuesday 10-noon

Closed on Wednesday

LIGHT THE STEEPLE MINISTRY

A soft light has been installed inside our “steeple” to be lit from sunset to midnight. The Trustees invite you to “Light the Steeple” in honor of or in memory of a loved one by donating \$25 to Union Chapel. Just submit the form below, and we will light the steeple on the appropriate week and print this remembrance in our newsletter.

LIGHT THE STEEPLE FORM

In Honor of or In Memory of (circle one)

Given by

For the week of

Make check payable to and mail this form to:

Fishers Island Union Chapel,
P.O. Box 192, Fishers Island, NY 06390



WORSHIP

WITH US

THIS FALL!

As of this publication we are planning in September to meet in person as well as on Zoom at 10 am. We are putting safety first so if necessary we will go to just zoom.

We want to make sure our zoom worship invitation list is up to date.

If you have not received a zoom invitation during this summer of transition, please let us know you want to be added to our email list for the Zoom link and please email the office (fichapel1@gmail.com).

We look forward to having you join us!



LOOKING FOR GOOD USED GOLF BALLS?

Come to the Union Thrift Stop and check out our supply!

STAY CONNECTED! GO GREEN!

Please send us your email address if you would like to receive Chapel Happenings electronically, and help us with environmental stewardship. Let Diane know by emailing her at fichapel1@gmail.com, or phone the church at 631/788-7898. Thank you!



THANK YOU FROM ISLANDERS FOR ISLANDERS

On behalf of the four churches of Fishers Island, heartfelt thanks to those who generously contributed to the Islanders for Islanders fund this season. This program is focused on helping sustain our year-round community. Your donations of any amount make a difference in people's lives. Please consider making a donation as we go into a new season of colder weather and uncertainty of the further impacts of COVID 19 on people's lives.



The Union Chapel Thrift Shop

has been open
for the
Summer of 2021!

Louisa Evans and Susie Renna with the help of Susie Ferguson have kept this ministry of Union Chapel going for another summer. Thank you!! Their commitment and dedication to this ministry is deeply appreciated. Throughout the week, one or more of

these ladies are found sorting, organizing, and displaying the many wonderful donations making the Thrift Stop a destination to shop on Saturday mornings.

This ministry of Union Chapel is shaped by: The Ministry of Stewardship- taking care of our earth resources by reusing good items instead of throwing them away; The Ministry of Hospitality -creating a welcoming affordable place to shop for the whole island community; and The Ministries of Outreach and Fellowship - people gathering to find that special treasure they have been needing or wanting while having fun seeing friends from the island. This important ministry of Union Chapel which has been part of the life of the church and the Fishers Island community for many years would not be possible without the generous donations from the people who donate their gently used items. Thank you!

A very big thank you to the Beach Plum and the Gold and Silver Shop for their generous donations this summer! Thank you to all our shoppers for making this another successful season for the Thrift Shop. All monies received at the store are used to support the presence and ministries of Fishers Island Union Chapel.





FALL

PREACHING

SCHEDULE

Sept. 12 Rev. SaraJane Munshower
Sept. 19 Rev. SaraJane Munshower
Sept. 26 Rev. SaraJane Munshower

Oct. 3 Rev. SaraJane Munshower
Oct. 10 Rev. Dr. Roseanna Anderson
Oct. 17 Rev. David Horst

INTERIM PASTOR SEARCH

The leadership has started the process of searching for an Interim Pastor. They are working with the Southern New England Conference U.C.C. The search is in its early stages but as fall approaches more significant progress is expected.



**IT'S TIME TO "FALL BACK!"
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME
REMINDER!**

Sunday, November 7, 2021 Daylight Savings Time ends when we "fall back" to Eastern Standard Time. Set your clocks back one hour before you go to sleep on Saturday night so you gain back the hour that was lost in the spring.



WORSHIP

FOCUS

**SEPTEMBER 12th - OCTOBER 3
WITH REVEREND MUNSHOWER**

**Wisdom's Invitation
to
Practice Community**

September 12 - *Pulling Together*
James 3:1-12, Mark 8:27-38

September 19 - *Wisdom Waits*
James 3:13-4:3, Mark 9:30-37

September 26 - *Four Truths*
Psalm 19, James 5:13-20

October 3 - *Being Hospitality*
Psalm 8, Job 1, 2:1-10

Disclaimer: There may or may not be obvious connections between these titles and the sermons.

To help deepen your worship experience you are invited to read and reflect upon the above scriptures prior to attending worship service.