

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
— Stockbridge, Massachusetts —

PO Box 825 Stockbridge MA 01262

October 2022

Pastor: The Rev. Brent Damrow - bdamrow@stockbridgeucc.org
Minister of Music: Peter Frost - music@stockbridgeucc.org
Administrator/Sexton: Will Garrison – office@stockbridgeucc.org
Financial Secretary: Marion Pomeroy - finance@stockbridgeucc.org

(413) 298-3137 | www.stockbridgeucc.org

www.facebook.com/stockbridgeucc

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday: Morning Prayer, 8:00 a.m. *Online*

Wednesday: Bible Study, 1:00 p.m. *Online*

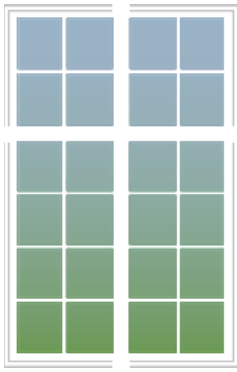
Office hours: 9:00-2:00, Monday - Friday



October 2022

The First Congregational Church, UCC, Stockbridge

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Livestream worship at stockbridgeucc.org						1 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
2 Worship 10:00 a.m. World Communion Sunday SFC rehearsal 1:00pm	3	4 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i>	5 Morning Prayer 8 am Bible Study 1:00pm Intro Psalms 12:05pm Council 7:00pm	6 Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	7 Brent's Sabbath Day Service League 10:00am	8 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
9 Worship 10:00 a.m. <i>Intergenerational Sunday</i> <i>Stewardship Kick-off</i> SFC rehearsal 1:00pm	10 Indigenous Peoples Day <i>Office Closed</i>	11 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i>	12 Morning Prayer 8 am Bible Study 1:00pm Intro Psalms 12:05pm Diving Deeper 7:00pm	13 Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	14 Brent's Sabbath Day Service League 10:00am	15 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
16 Worship 10:00 a.m. <i>Gathered & online</i> SFC rehearsal 1:00pm	17	18 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i>	19 Morning Prayer 8 am Bible Study 1:00pm Intro Psalms 12:05pm Meetings of the Boards 5:00pm – 9:00pm	20 Newsletter deadline Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	21 Brent's Sabbath Day Service League 10:00am	22 <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
23 Worship 10:00 a.m. <i>Gathered & online</i> SFC rehearsal 1:00pm	24	25 <i>Al-Anon 7:00pm</i>	26 Morning Prayer 8 am Intro Psalms 12:05pm Bible Study 1:00pm Diving Deeper 7:00pm	27 Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	28 Brent's Sabbath Day Service League 10:00am	29 Work Day 10:00am <i>Al-Anon 5:00pm</i>
30 Worship 10:00 a.m. All Saints Sunday <i>Gathered & online</i> SFC rehearsal 1:00pm	31					



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

October 2022 Newsletter

Dear Church Family,

I love seasons. I love the seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter because they invite us to notice particular gifts of each. They draw our attention to blessings and gifts that make up the whole of life and that might go otherwise unnoticed. Those gifts also invite a response in the way we live both in the moment and in our discernment of what really matters.

So too, I love the seasons in the church year and I love them for the same reasons.

This October we will observe two special Sundays of the church year - World Communion Sunday and All Saints Sunday. In between those critical times, we will engage in a time of gratitude and giving. Through it all, I pray our hearts might be drawn to blessings and gifts that might otherwise go unnoticed. Through it all, I pray we find even deeper ways to live in faith, hope, and love.

We begin the month on October 2 focused squarely on unity and connection. Since its introduction at the Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA in 1933, World Communion Sunday has sought to draw our attention to what unites us around the table of Christ rather than anything that divides us. Through the history of this event are two concepts that are at the heart of our own denomination – details we sometimes forget or take for granted. The first is that Jesus is the head of the church and the second is that we are all

called to be one. As we gather this year drawing our attention outward to the church universal, I wonder how greater attention to those two truths of our tradition might evoke a response in how we live as a church here in Stockbridge.

We end the month on October 30 focused likewise on unity and connection. Through special worship, music, and fellowship we will bring our hearts and minds to focus on the great cloud of witnesses that surround us on All Saints Sunday. Like World Communion Sunday, All Saints holds an element dear to our understanding of faith. The day draws our attention to our forebears, our love for them, what we learned



from them, and what we cherish about them. But it does so in a way that reminds us that we are running our own race. That they give us the courage, hope, and perseverance to do so in our own time. I wonder how holding both those things in our hearts might evoke a response in how we live as a church here in Stockbridge.

Finally, between those two bookends, we will be launching our annual stewardship program – a chance to support the lifeblood and ministries of this church. Our theme this year, “From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving,” bridges how we begin and end the month. I pray this month a time of blessing and connection. I pray that we notice those little and big things in our shared life that we might take for granted. I pray that through it all how we live might as a church will blossom and deepen. Come and see.

Pastor Brent



Music ~ Peter Frost

We are off to a great start with the Adult Choir. The schedule going forward will have the Adult Choir singing on the first and third Sundays of the month, the Children's Choir on the second (Intergenerational Sunday), and the Bell Choir on the fourth Sunday. The Bells will begin rehearsals in October.

We are still recruiting for the Adult Choir. We rehearse Thursday evenings from 7-8:30 pm. We begin rehearsals on Sunday mornings at 8:55. Wearing a mask in choir is optional, but if you do not wear one, we ask you to take a rapid test on Sunday morning before you come.

Please contact me if you are interested in joining us or have any questions about the music at our church, at music@stockbridgeucc.org.

Board of Deacons

For those who have been keeping up with Deacon news, you might recall that we have been experimenting with an “inverted agenda” for our meeting, which allows the meatier questions that were usually at the bottom of the agenda (and inevitably shortchanged from lack of time) to rise to the top, while the “business” items now fall at the end. We again used this “inverted agenda” at our last meeting to allow time for a second “prayerstorming”—a discussion and brainstorm around the role of prayer in our worship.

In our prayerstorming we discussed everything from the importance of communal prayer opportunities, to different forms of prayer that we might wish to incorporate into services. One



question we held was how to keep being “jostled” by the prayers we regularly say, such as the Lord’s Prayer, so that we continue to hear and reflect on these words in new ways. Another question we held is how to make prayer moments welcoming and inclusive of

everyone, whether by striving to make sure there is inclusive language, experimenting with new entry points to prayer, or creating more accessible ways for people to share personal prayers. Brent, Sarah, and Anna will continue to meet as a

prayer task force to consider how some of the Deacons ideas about prayers might be implemented in upcoming worship services. Please reach out to one of us if you’d like to share any thoughts or ideas about prayer in our worship life.

Board Growth & Fellowship

Save the Date!

Our church will celebrate the **All Saints Day** service on October 30. It will be a day of remembrance and fellowship, when we can learn more about one another through our connections to our saints.

Growth & Fellowship invites you to remember your departed loved ones through sharing. We imagine the JE Room filled with objects that tell



stories of the people who made us who we are, accompanied by a brief description of what makes these items

and memories special to us.

The Fellowship hour will continue the celebration of remembrance, and you will have the option to bring a food item to share with members of the congregation. If there is a special dish or dessert that you learned from someone dear who is no longer with you, we'd love to know the story behind it and have the opportunity to taste it!

For example, do you have an old cookie jar that your mother used to fill with delicious treats? Or, does the smell of a peppermint remind you of your grandmother's "pocket book"? The possibilities are many, and we anticipate a very special morning of memories, love and laughter!

Look for the opportunity to sign up online (link in weekly E-News), or use the sign-up sheet in the JE Room, so we're sure to have table space for you! And, if bringing food, please share only sweet or savory baked goods that do not need refrigeration or prep that day. For questions, call Holland Eaton or Charlotte Rodgers.

Food, Fire, and Song



The Deacons are grateful to all of the people who have helped put on and join in the Food, Fire, and Song evenings in August and September, including our very own music director, Peter Frost, who led us through many favorites. These

have been an opportunity to relax and enjoy fellowship and sing along to familiar songs around the fire as the evening draws to a close. An added treat in September was the "marshmallow station" that Ted provided, and which seemed to attract all ages to the fine art of the perfectly toasted marshmallow. Both events also featured a rousing attempt at singing all of the lyrics of Rise and Shine (The Arky Arky Song).

Join us in October: We are looking forward to one more month of Food, Fire, and Song before it becomes too cold. This is tentatively planned for mid-October (stay tuned for final date confirmation). The fire will be lit at 5:00pm and singing will start at 5:30pm. We hope you can join us!



HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

October 2 Michael Lynch
October 3 Madonna Meagher
October 6 Nellie Rustick
October 11 Betsy Wise
October 13 John Tracy
October 19 Tristan Osgood
October 23 Starbuck Smith
October 27 Sarah Boyd
October 31 Anna Smith
Xiaobing Qian



Malina Jackson staffs the nursery each Sunday during worship service.

From the Service League

At our last meeting, we were finally able to tally the results of the Summer Fair. We netted \$1433, which included \$308 in credit and debit card sales. Thanks to Patty Strauch for helping us join the digital age, which we hope will make things more convenient for shoppers. We also reviewed our successes and "not-so-much" results and talked about how to focus our energies on the most popular areas. One of those is always Grandma's Attic, and I frequently get inquiries about if/when we are taking donations. The answer is always yes, we welcome donations year round. Friday mornings while we're meeting and working is ideal, but they can be dropped off anytime the church office is open (please check in with Will first). If transporting items is a problem in any way, we're happy to arrange a pick-up. Without those contributions of all the nifty things you no longer use or need or have space for, there would be no Grandma's Attic! Think of us as your partners in downsizing, decluttering, and reorganizing. We're here for you!

We're also here for you when you're planning your Thanksgiving menu and think a home-made pumpkin or apple pie would be just the thing to top off your feast. Get your orders in by Friday, November 18th, and we'll have your pie ready for pick-up on Wednesday, November 23rd. And while you're marking your calendar with all these important dates, in case I haven't mentioned it,



Saturday, December 3 is (drumroll, please!) the Holly Fair.

And from the "You Had to be There"

Department: I don't know about you, but when I was little and my Mom was mildly annoyed, she would threaten to lash us with a wet noodle. Somehow Helen McCormick got the reputation as a tough taskmaster, and to live up to her billing, she came in armed with a cat-o-nine-tails made of cooked spaghetti. If you don't believe me, check out the photo. And now I hope all your questions about what the Service League does have been answered!

Margaret Hornick, for the Service League



Stewardship

For many, communion is a special time. On the first Sunday of the month, worship attendance swells as people set aside the time to gather around the table of Christ and remember his gift to us. The simple act of sharing a meal in remembrance is at the heart of being the church.

This year our Stewardship theme brings us to the table and then invites us to respond in joy, service, gratitude, and giving. Through worship rooted in familiar Bible stories, through stories shared by members of our church family, and through prayer, singing, and reflection we will all be invited to focus on the gift of communion and respond through our commitment to sharing our own gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

Here are some key dates:

Monday, October 3 – First Mailing goes out to the congregation.

Sundays October 9, 16, & 23 – Worship brings stewardship into focus.

Monday, October 24 - Second Mailing and Pledge card goes out to the congregation.

Saturday, October 29 – Outdoor Church Work Day 10:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 6 – Consecration Sunday (pledges received and blessed)

Saturday, November 12 – Indoor Church Work Day 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Questions? Please contact the Stewardship Committee (Don Rodgers, Chair, Ron Hanft, Marion Pomeroy, Cris Raymond, Christine Rasmussen, and Pastor Brent)

Did you know... ?

...Stewardship is an annual tradition for members and friends to make pledges to support the operating budget and the ministries of First Congregational Church, UCC, Stockbridge.

Mission & Action

Habitat for Humanity Work Day

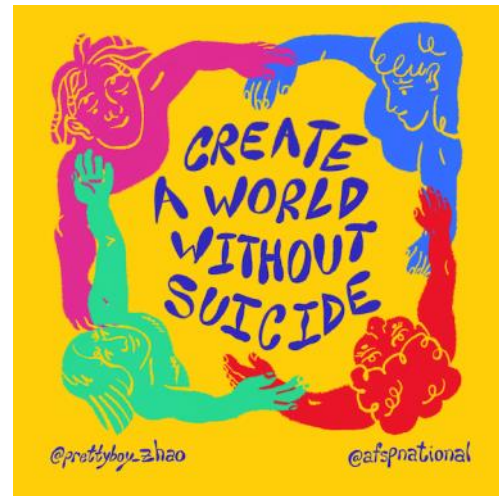
SIGN UP NOW! October 15, 9-3

Help Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity work on their first house in Great Barrington! If you would like to take part, look for a sign up sheet in the JE Room, or call Martha Floyd 413.445.5704.

The People's Pantry, World Communion Sunday, October 2

Mission & Action reminds you to bring shelf stable food items, paper products and toiletries to church October 2, World Communion Sunday, as part of our Active Prayer of

Thanksgiving following communion to support Great Barrington People's Pantry. The number of individuals served by the Pantry has quadrupled over the past few years, and the need is great. And/or you are encouraged make a financial contribution, with checks payable to First Congregational Church, with notation "People's Pantry." Thank you for your donations of food and money. It takes a community to feed a community. For a short video about the Pantry, go to their website, thepeoplespantrygb.org.



Mission & Action Fundraiser Challenges:

CONSTRUCT

and

WALK OUT OF DARKNESS (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)

We encourage everyone to make donations to one or both of these important organizations during the month of October. As an incentive, Mission & Action is offering matching funds for donations, up to \$500.00 for each organization. Please make your check out to First Congregational Church, with notation "Construct" or "AFSP" on memo line, and put in offering plate or give to our Financial Secretary Marion Pomeroy.

Construct is the leading nonprofit provider of affordable housing and supportive services in the Southern Berkshires. Construct exists to help people in- and out- of crisis. Their mission is to provide neighbors of low and moderate incomes with affordable housing solutions through rental assistance and related support services.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention funds research, education, advocacy and support for those affected by suicide. Out of the Darkness Community Walks nationwide support AFSP's mission to save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide. More information is available at afsp.org. Jill Fleming will participate in the Pittsfield Walk on October 1.



The Ballot Box-Your Vote Counts

As we prepare for the midterm elections in November, the UCC is asking that we encourage three friends to vote on or before Election Day. Because of the changing rules and wave of voter suppression laws passed at the state level, it is more important than ever that we know our voting rights and that we plan to vote.

Once you have made a plan to have your own vote counted, check in with friends and family. Are they registered? Are they planning to vote in-person or by mail? Do they know their polling location? Do they know what they need to have their vote counted? Commit today to making sure that you, and three others, have your vote counted in November.

Visit Massachusetts' election website for lots of good information. Search for the [Secretary of the Commonwealth office](#).

Voter registration deadlines in Massachusetts

- **Online and in person registration deadline:** Saturday, October 29, 2022
- **Register by mail deadline:** Must be postmarked by Saturday, October 29, 2022



Jewish Family Services of Western Mass (JFSWM)

See below for an Urgent Appeal from Gabriela Sheehan at JFSWM's Pittsfield office, for help in resettling 2 new families from Guatemala in the Berkshires. JFSWM is the sponsoring agency for the Hussaini Family that we are hosting in partnership with the UU Meeting in Housatonic.

Urgently, we need a Host Family for each family. This request is for someone to open their home for any amount of time they choose while we search for housing and set up the apartment. Ideally, this would be in Pittsfield, Lenox, Dalton, or Lanesboro. Even giving a week buys us time to reach out to landlords and wait for changes to leases to free up apartments. Alternatively, if someone is willing to share their rental/second home rent free or for reduced rent, it would be very appreciated.

If you or anyone you know can open their home for a little while, we'd be so grateful. Our first family arrived September 8th, a husband and wife, a 19 year old son and 17 year old daughter. On September 13, we welcomed a family of 6 (Husband, wife, 15 year old son, 8 year old son, 6 year old daughter, and 8 month baby boy.)

In addition to apartments, we are looking for basic supplies to stock these apartments. Many items can be gently used, but some must be new. If you'd be willing to drop off items, you can do so at the JFS office at 67 East St., Pittsfield. [Our list for the family of 4 is here.](#)

If you prefer to click and send, I have created an [Amazon Wishlist](#). All items will be sent directly to our office, and we will use them immediately for these families.

Lastly, we are accepting dishware, pots and pans, and small appliances. We are also in great need of baby clothes, size 6 months to 24 months, outerwear for children, all sizes...boots, mittens, hats, warm coats and rainwear and in good condition please.

Thank you, as always, for your community support and help in welcoming the stranger and protecting the refugee.

Rally Day: the Grill Team of Growth & Fellowship provided hotdogs and hamburgers.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED ANNUAL OFFERING

If someone ever asks you, Is your church 5 for 5? You can say YES! What is 5 for 5, you say? Well, our congregation is one of nearly 1,600 UCC churches that are 5 for 5. This means that we fully support the United Church of Christ's program called "Our Church's Wider Mission," along with all four of our denomination's special mission offerings which occur at different times of the year. Through your financial pledges to this church, the Mission & Action Board is able to give \$500 each to "Our Church's Wider Mission" and to the four special offerings.

On October 2, World Communion Sunday, we are highlighting the offering called Neighbors in Need, which supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including support for the Council for American Indian Ministry, and a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

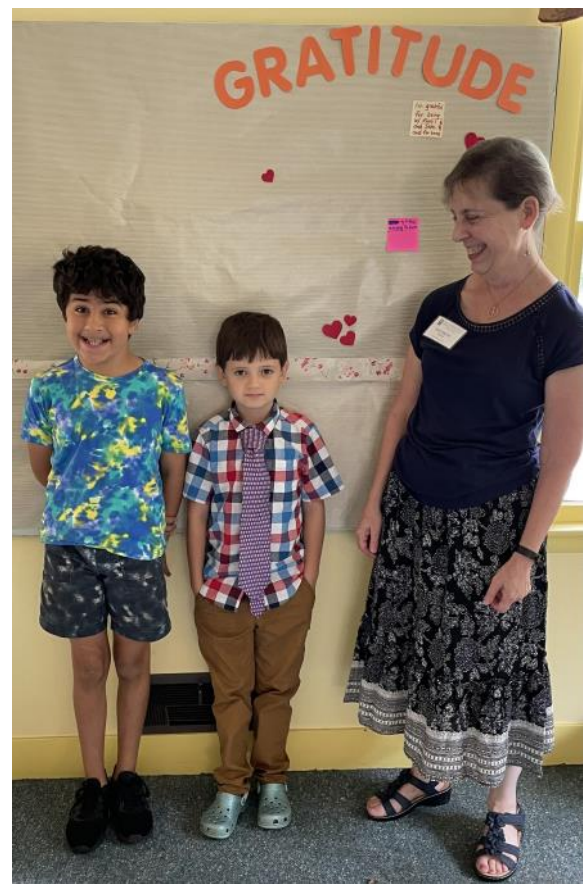
In the past, our church would take up a special offering from the congregation for Neighbors in Need. For the past few years, we have instead put part of your annual pledge money into the Mission & Action operating budget, and we have given \$500 from that budget to Neighbors in Need each year. That is what we're doing this year as well. While we are not asking for contributions to the offering this year, Mission & Action wanted to let you know about this important ministry that your pledge dollars are helping to support.

This year's Neighbors in Need offering focuses on economic justice. One-third of the offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry, which is the voice for American Indian people in the UCC. CAIM provides Christian ministry and witness to American Indians and to the wider church. Two-thirds of the offering is used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to support UCC churches and organizations in doing justice, seeking peace, and building vibrant faith communities that are welcoming to all.

Through this offering we express our deep commitment to reaching out and touching our neighbors with justice and compassion. This allows us to speak prophetically to those in power and to advocate for a society where all people have a voice in decisions that affect their lives. In the spirit of Christ, we seek to confront evil in the



world and to alleviate suffering. We do this through direct service as well as advocacy.



Rally Day: The Sunday School program year is off to a great start!

Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans Community Members

Stockbridge-Munsee Connection

The fourth and final workshop leader in the Trustees of Reservations series regarding Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans life and traditions will be at the Mission House

garden on Saturday, October 9 and Sunday, October 10, both at 11:00 am. JoAnn Schedler will give “A Tribute to Survival, Remembering, and Celebrating.” Previous presentations have been lively, informative and very well received. It’s a great opportunity to learn about the original residents of our region from their direct descendants.

Stockbridge Festival Chorus Announces Rehearsal Schedule for Christmas Concert

The Stockbridge Festival Chorus, based at First Congregational Church of Stockbridge on Main Street, will begin rehearsals on Sunday, October 2 to prepare for its annual Christmas concert, scheduled for Saturday, December 10. Rehearsals will run weekly in the sanctuary on Sundays from 1 to 3 pm. Any interested singer is invited to attend; enrollment will be accepted through October 16. Dues are \$40 to cover the cost of the music which will be made available at the first rehearsal attended. Scholarships are available and dues will be waived for new tenors and basses.

Music selections will be compositions by beloved composers including John Rutter, Herbert Howells, William Mathias, Philip Stopford; and a collection of English carols by Jonathan Willcocks. The Festival Chorus is celebrating its 35th anniversary with this concert season. It is comprised of approximately 40 singers from the community and no audition is required. All are welcome. The Festival Chorus is conducted by Tracy Wilson; Bob Logan is the rehearsal pianist.

COVID policies will be observed. All singers must be fully vaccinated with one booster, masks must be worn entering and exiting the sanctuary but masks do not need to be worn when singing; seating will be spaced apart, and a section in the back of the sanctuary for those needing more space will be reserved. Windows will be open. The church is handicap accessible.

For more information, call Tracy Wilson at 413-822-8688.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION AT 375: HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS AND CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

Created upon the request of the English Parliament by “learned, godly, and judicious Divines” convened at Westminster Abbey, the Westminster Confession of Faith has had a remarkable influence within Protestantism over the 375 years since its adoption. In commemoration of this important anniversary, the Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, and Dr Williams’s Library, London, are bringing leading scholars and theologians together to talk about the significance of the Westminster Confession: past, present, and future.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022
3-5 PM (BOSTON/EDT) • 8-10 PM (LONDON/BST)

This live, virtual event is free to all, but registration is required at congregationallibrary.org/events/westminster375



Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn, Westminster Theological Seminary
“The Westminster Assembly in Historical Context”

Dr. Baird Tipson, Former President, Washington College
“The Impact of the Westminster Confession During New England’s First Century”



Rev. Dr. Richard L. Floyd, Pastor Emeritus, First Church of Christ, Congregational, Pittsfield, MA
“Reflections on the Legacy of the Westminster Confession of Faith”

Dr. Isabel Rivers, Queen Mary University of London
Program Moderator



PROGRAM SPONSORED BY
CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES, BOSTON, AND DR WILLIAMS’S LIBRARY, LONDON
PLEASE EMAIL QUESTIONS TO INFO@14BEACON.ORG



RADIO THEATER IS BACK!

Our church council fundraiser is back! We are happy to announce the return of the **Lake Mahkeenac Radio Theater** on Saturday, November 5th at 6 pm. This “live radio” show is loosely based upon radio variety shows of the past. It features comedy skits, beautiful singing, and dramatic monologues in a family-friendly format, and as always, the show features a guarantee of *no political humor*. This year, the show brings back the Lake Mahkeenac Radio Players, improv stars Christopher Brophy and Rikke Borge, Berkshire-based and Nashville veteran folksinger JoAnne Redding, and the Double Divas, sopranos Nellie Rustick and Erin Nafziger. Our own Tracy Wilson will be at the piano. The show is written and hosted by David Anderegg.

This year, the event also brings back the beloved pro-am pie contest. Pies donated by local professional bakers and ambitious amateurs will be judged by a panel of celebrity judges at intermission, and slices will be available for purchase after the show.

The show will be live and in person at the church at 4 Main Street in Stockbridge. Suggested donation is \$25 per adult; children under 12 may attend for free. (Church members who would like to attend for a reduced donation may, of course, do so.) It will also be live streamed at the church’s website, stockbridgeucc.org. For further information, please contact David Anderegg at danderegg@gmail.com.

Save the Date(s)

Work Days

The Board of Trustees is organizing two work days to spiff up the church building and grounds:

October 29: outdoor projects

November 12: indoor projects

Watch for details in the weekly emails and on the JE Room bulletin board.

There will be pizza!



Get out your best pie recipes, there’s a contest coming! Saturday, November 5th, in conjunction with the Lake Mahkeenac Radio Theater, we will be hosting a Pro-Am pie contest, where your pie could be the star of the show. Interested in competing or donating pie? Call Don or Holland Eaton, or email office@stockbridgeucc.org.