



The Beacon

First Congregational Church of Millbury, United Church of Christ

Our Mission: To welcome and inspire ALL through faith, love,
and fellowship according to Christ's example.

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From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

For many of us, summer is a time to travel. With lighter work schedules and children out of school, we can pack the car or book the flight that will bring us to a different place for a welcome change of scenery. I've always enjoyed travel. I love to hear about other people's travels. These days I sometimes lament that each of us seems to be living more and more in a "bubble," a set of familiar places and experiences beyond which we don't venture. In these consumer-centered times, even without our awareness, the lives we live are often driven by our own preferences. We stay with what's familiar.

Last month, while listening to a story from the podcast *Invisibilia*, I heard about a young man who came up with a way to expose himself to different experiences, outside that "bubble" each of us inhabits. The young man was named Max Hawkins. Although he was very successful at his job at Google, Max felt something was missing. He says, "I just started thinking about these loops we get into. And about how the structure of your life...completely determines what happens in it."*

Being a software developer, Max turned to technology to design a way out of his bubble. He created an app, or computer application, that would randomly find things for him to do. His app used a Facebook search function for public events, to find events near him. Then the app would randomly choose which event he attended.

That's how Max got to attend a community pancake breakfast, and discovered an acroyoga (as in, acrobatics + yoga) class. One night, he got to drink white Russians with some Russians. Before he designed the app, Max would never have thought to try these things. The app was helping him broaden his horizons.

At first, Max was nervous: what if people wouldn't welcome him? But he found that once he explained how and why he arrived at these events, his host was usually happy to include him. For two years, Max let the app expand his travels even further. It led him to a socialists' rally in Berlin and a meetup for bloggers in central Iowa. The app sent him to Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates, India, and Germany. The app helped him move beyond his bubble and enter other people's bubbles. It helped change how he sees the world.

When I was a young woman, I didn't have a computer and I would have been clueless about designing an app. (I'm still clueless about that.) But I wanted to travel everywhere, to expand my horizons and discover places I had never been. These days it seems to me that we're more cautious about discovering new places. That caution leads us to remain in our "bubbles," with familiar people and in familiar places, never open to different ways of seeing the world.

This summer, would you consider trying Max's idea? Maybe not with an app, but just with a desire to move beyond the familiar, to expand the bubble that has been shaped by your preferences? Would you consider moving out to see wonders you never imagined? Remember, God has promised to be with us always, and God would be with you. God wants us to explore all the glorious world, to get to know all kinds of people. Wherever we go, God's guiding, loving presence is with us.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Elva

*Micaela Rodriguez, *Invisibilia*, npr.org



July Birthdays

6th Justin Murphy
 6th Linda Pollisack
 15th Marc Lachance
 16th Jared Fortin
 16th Natalie Richards
 29th Damase Olsson

A Lighter Fare

For the summer months the Deacons have decided to serve a lighter fare at fellowship time after our church service on Sunday. We will be serving cold drinks and cookies and fruit.



This way everyone can get out and enjoy the beautiful warm summer weather a little sooner each week. Thank you all for understanding.



Need Help
 Are you or someone you know in the community experiencing a financial or other emergency? Please see a deacon about whether the First Church Deacons Fund might be able to help.

Congregation Continues Open and Affirming Discussion

On Sunday, June 9, at the Church Council meeting, members of our congregation had a discussion about moving forward with becoming an Open and Affirming church. Open and Affirming churches actively welcome full participation in church life by all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The discussion will continue over the summer in smaller groups. Please watch the weekly bulletin for further information.

With you on the journey,
 Pastor Elva

Prayers & Concerns

- † Our Community
- † Our Country
- † Our World
- † All Military Men and Women
- † All First Responders
- † Our Church and our Ministry in Millbury and beyond
- † Amy Peterson's great grandson Emmett
- † Karen Bickford's cousin Elaine
- † Linda Polissack, recovering from surgery



Mission Corner

During July and August the Knitting and Crocheting Mission Group will be meeting on the **1st and 3rd MONDAY** of each month.

We have plenty of yarn, knitting and crochet needles available for anyone interested in learning to make hats, mittens or scarfs. Some people enjoy learning how to use a knitting loom.

Everyone is welcome to join us , bring along your own craft project if you like or join us just for some Summertime Socializing.



We meet in the Classroom or Kitchen at 6:30. This is a great way to stay in touch over the Summer when so many people travel during the weekends.

Millbury Brownie Troop Shares Food with the Community

The Brownie Troop # 64669, that meets at our church on Thursday nights, has worked hard to install an exciting project on the front lawn of the church. Their leader, Shanna Gilberg, and her family have helped the girls create a Community Garden. Local Businesses made generous donations to this Girl Scout project. Ray's True Value donated the vegetable seeds, C & S Lumber donated the lumber for the raised beds, Mike Lynch Enterprises donated the loam, and Whittier Farms donated the compost! The girl scout troop also received a free Rain Barrel through the Aquarion Water Co. that was donated by the Great American Rain Barrel Company.

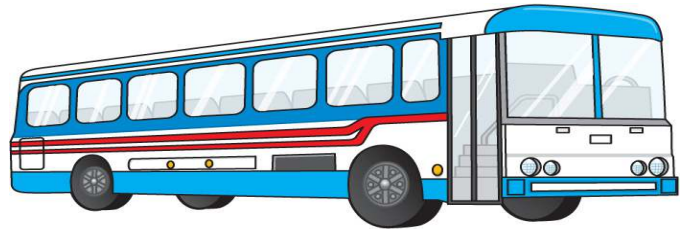


The Troop leader, Shanna Gilberg, also applied for a grant from the Pollination Project and just received an award of \$420 to expand her original garden project!

Members of the church will enjoy watching the girls derive success from their hard work, and they have already started to deliver produce from their garden to the Millbury Senior Center Food Bank.

BUS TOUR DAY TRIPS

Trinity Lutheran Church of Worcester has extended an invitation to members and friends of Millbury First Congregational Church to join their Trinity Travel Club. All tours depart from Trinity Lutheran Church, Harvard Street side. A list of the trips has been posted in Fellowship Hall along with flyers for upcoming trips. Contact information for the tour guides will be on the flyers and you may speak with Janice Fortin for more information.



Fall Flea Market September 21st

Our church will be holding the Fall Flea Market on Saturday, September 21st from 9 am to 2 pm. Please gather your treasures and rent one of our inside tables for \$20. Call Jeri Stead to reserve a table. You can prepare your inside table on Friday night from 6pm to 8 pm. If you want to chance the weather, the outside reservation is \$10 and you will need to provide a table.

Refreshments will be on sale for you to enjoy. We will have a variety of muffins available and Ron's delicious Hot Dogs will be on the grill. There will also be a Church Flea Market Table and Bakery Table.

While gathering items for Flea Market Table, please keep in mind that we are unable to accept any T.V.'s, electronics, or clothes, and please set aside your favorite recipes for September's Bakery Table.



**First Congregational Church
of Millbury, UCC**

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Millbury, MA 01527**

Address Correction Requested



**Worship and Church School: 10:00 a.m.
Church Phone: 508-865-9737
Email: Millbury1stChurch@gmail.com
Web: <http://millburyfirstchurch.com>**



**Resolve to
make a
difference
in someone's life!**



To add an event, please
email
Millbury1stchurch@gmail.com

Remember to check us out
on Facebook. See all the
photos. It's a great way to
introduce your friends to our
Friendly Church on the Hill.

The Beacon

Deadline for August
newsletter is July 21st. The
BEACON is distributed by
email or first class mail. It can
also be downloaded from the
church website. Copies are
available at the back of the
sanctuary.

