

A. Upcoming Activities and Dates

Jun 21	9a-4p	SNEUCC Annual Meeting UMASS Amherst
Jun 21	12 - 2p	Memorial service Dee and Denny Morrisette
Jul 7	9a	Summer Worship begins at 9am at First with East
Jul 22 3p	Jul 26 9a	Pastor away at silent retreat at Spencer Abbey
Aug 4	9a	Summer Worship at 9am at East

B. Ministry Update

1. Faith Formation

Bible Study is off for the summer and will resume in September. The group is changing its name to focus more on the conversational nature.

East has invited us and our families to participate in their VBS program in July.

2. Faith In Action

Doing Justice

Interfaith Conversations and working toward Justice

In May Ginny, Bruce S. and Pastor Kevin attended an interfaith conversation among Windham County faith communities. The conversation and presentation was focused on community organizing as a way to build leaders, engage community, work toward justice, and grow our congregations. The premise being that to be the church, the body of Christ, we are called to walk on two feet – one related to compassion and the other related to addressing the systemic injustices in our world that bring about the need for compassionate services to the marginalized and the poor. A second conversation was held at Storrs UCC, Ginny and Pastor Kevin were able to attend. Importantly the process and the approach is focused on relational conversations, getting to know the stories and challenges of people in our congregation and community one on one. Conversations will continue through the summer with training likely in the fall. The next meeting is Jul 16 at 5:30p at Temple Bnai Israel in Willimantic.

The community conversation approach fits in nicely with much of what we heard at the June 9 retreat.

NAACP Annual Luncheon June 15

The Congregation is a sponsor of this year's NAACP luncheon June 15. We have an advertisement in their program.

Loving Our Neighbors

In the community

Ministry Update Report June 2024

Pastor Kevin offered the invocation at the rededication of the Woodstock Academy building May 17th and offered the invocation and benediction at the Town's Memorial Day ceremony May 27th

Covent Soup Kitchen

June 1, ten or so members of the congregation prepared and served meals at Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic. The event was initiated by Charles, and everyone who participated expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve in this way and for Charles' leadership in initiating the activity.

John Eliot Commemoration

The Eliot Library continues to be the location for conversations related to planning a commemoration of John Eliot's visit. To date the planning team has included representatives from area churches, the Center for Woodstock History as well as Bruce L., Donna D., Leslie S., and Pastor Kevin. Through Donna's connections we met in early June with a representative and elder from the Nipmuc nation. The elders are happy that we have invited them into the conversation and will be working with us to plan the events.

Though planning continues, we are looking at possible events Sept 15 in the afternoon on the South Common and at the Baptist Church, an event Sept 16 at pulpit rock to engage the schools and mark the date of the visit at the marker, and community conversations led by peoples from the Nipmuc Nation. Next planning meeting is in early July in the library (date and time tbd).

3. Care Ministry and the Deacons

The deacons continue to meet regularly, respond to prayers, and remain at the ready to support members of our congregation and community should they need support, transportation, etc.

4. Worship

Summer Worship

A Summer Worship folder has been created in the Worship Planning Shared drive. A link has been created and shared with the deacons at East and the preachers. Draft Orders of Worship have been created with additional notes in red to indicate the source of the content and who leads; a deacon, GB member, or guest preacher. In addition the bulletin covers, images for the weekly email, and images for the weekly recording have been created.

In July, deacons will offer the welcome and prayers of the people, and Governing Board members (if available) will introduce the offering. Other parts for leadership are possible depending on the guest preacher's preference.

Preachers or Deacons from East will populate the Orders of Worship and the Bulletins will be created from the Orders of Worship.

Deacons from East are coordinating with July Preachers

Ministry Update Report June 2024

July 7 & 14 Pam Vollinger
July 21 Johnathan Scott
July 28 John Shaw
Aug 4, 11, & 18 Kevin Downer
Aug 25 Noah Gourlie
Sept 1 Kevin Downer

Gretchen is coordinating music for July.

Communion July 7 by intinction.

Blessing of the backpacks date tbd (either July 28 or Aug 4)

The Music Ministry is holding a potluck at Donna's June 23. And the Worship Team is setting a date for an Autumn planning retreat (lunch or dinner).

C. Other Updates

I will take time for a silent retreat at the Spencer Abbey July 22 to 26.

I will also take some time off midweek in mid-August the week of August 15, and the last week of August sometime between Aug 19 and the 30, likely the 25 – 29.