

**“God
Is Still
Speaking”**



New England Congregational
Church-UCC
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A Caring Church for Thinking People

Visit us on the web
at
www.newenglandchurch.org

OUR STAFF & CHURCH OFFICERS

Senior Minister: *Brandon Perrine*
Office Administrator: *Shelley Lund*
Director of Children’s Ministries: *Desiree Guzman*
Director of Youth Ministries: *Becky Y’israel*
Chancel Choir Director: *Paul Laprade*
Organist: *Marsha Foxgrover*
Assistant Organist: *Marilyn Parolini*
Handbell Director: *Cathy Canfield-Jepson*
Director of Community Life: *Kimberly Adams*
Wedding Coordinator: *Nancy Richmond*
Nursery Attendants: *Charlotte Adams,
Thaise Rodriguez, Josely Hernandez*
Custodian: *John Hett*
Building Maintenance: *Todd Jones*

Moderator: *Josh Ream*
Moderator-elect: *Heather Azem*
Treasurer: *Andy Sprau*
Clerk: *Ida Dunham*

New England
Congregational Church
UCC
Aurora, Illinois



TIDINGS

Volume 94, Number 10

October 1, 2023

MUSINGS



Dear Friends,

It is now October, the first hints of color have hit the maples, and I can deny it no longer, fall is upon us. I LOVE fall in the Midwest. There are places that do spring better, summer better, even winter better, but no other place outdoes fall in the Midwest. But, I’m just not quite ready this year: not ready to bid the impatiens farewell, to clear the garden and wait 10 months for the next truly delicious tomato, to go back to the requisite shoes and socks that I fiercely shun as soon as the weather turns nice enough to wear sandals (except at church!). I’m not quite ready for the big change that culminates in cold weather, bare trees, brown grass, and a sleeping earth. As if predicting my thoughts, Maya Angelou once wrote:

Only lovers
see the fall
a signal end to endings
a gruffish gesture alerting
those who will not be alarmed
that we begin to stop
in order to begin
again.

She’s right, isn’t she? Of course, she is! The coming of fall, the coloring of leaves, the crisping of air – these simply signal change. It’s not an ending but the beginning of a new beginning. Change happens all the time. But a blazing maple, a crisp breeze, the scent of a bonfire, these almost function as panic triggers screaming: “Change is coming!” We know, though, that change is always coming – is never not coming. These things just remind us of what we so often choose to ignore.

It’s not so different with church. A new hymn on a Sunday morning, a different way of distributing communion, an unusual piece of artwork, a multi-cultural celebration, an unrecognized face in worship – these signal change, much like the leaves do, and sometimes illicit a panic response. But really, these serve as a reminder of a reality that’s as certain as the sunrise and as inescapable as gravity: change is always coming. Let’s start by acknowledging that. Not fighting it, but naming it as an inescapable current of reality, one that can sweep us right along with it. Then, let’s consider the possibility that change can be constructive, and life-giving, and good.

As we begin to embody our church’s new vision and live into our new action plan, I know that we’ll start seeing some of those “signals of change” in our midst. If we can acknowledge that change is always coming and open ourselves to the possibility that change can be good, I believe we’ll experience this season in New England’s life as one in which, as Angelou wrote, “we begin to stop in order to begin again.” After all, there’s nothing more natural than change.

Whether you’re ready for what comes after it or not, may all the beauty, wonder, and release of fall be yours. The Midwest really does do this one the best!

Blessings and peace,

Brandon

Brandon Perrine, Senior Minister

POP-UP CHOIR



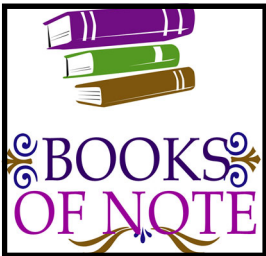
Everyone is invited to join us to sing on Sunday, October 22 at 9:15 am. NECC's Chancel Choir introduced the idea of a "Pop-Up Choir" last year, and it was a success. What is a "Pop-Up Choir"? A Pop-Up Choir happens when members of the congregation who do not normally sing with the choir come to church a bit early to sing with members of our Chancel Choir. What would you need to do to participate? Come dressed in regular church clothes, arrive a little earlier (9:15 am) for a brief rehearsal, and have fun! There is no need to think twice about whether or not you are a 'singer'--if you have sung in the shower or with the car radio, this is the moment God is calling you to use those special abilities in worship. This new tradition brought many new people to join in song last year. This year, we invite you to join them on Sunday, October 22. (Remember the Zimbabwean Proverb: "If you can dance, you can sing.") Your music director, Paul

Blessing of the Animals

Blessing of the Animals- All creatures great and small are invited to join us on October 1 at 3:00 pm for a "Blessing of the Animals" service, held in New England's lovely garden on Downer Place. Refreshments for humans and pets will follow and all species are welcome!



Books of Note



The Books of Note book discussion group is open to all. New members welcome at any time. Attend via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month from 7:00- 8:00 pm. Read one book or all. It's up to you! Books are suggested by participants and voted on twice a year. Contact Sue Reimer to obtain a book and the Zoom link. October 17 - Murder in the News by Robert H. Jordan Junior. Sue Reimer to lead.

Chicago TV news anchor draws from forty-seven years of news experiences to provide an eye-opening look at how news programs decide which murders to cover and which ones to ignore. Split-second decisions are made on where to send limited resources when dozens of shootings and several murders are occurring on a daily basis. Learn why will one story get "breaking news" banners and be placed at the top of the broadcast while others may not make the air at all or may be given casual mention in later segments. We also examine how the explosion of social media platforms has changed the dynamic of reporting the news and why murders are the perfect stories for television, as news organizations struggle to survive.



OCTOBER, 2023

YOUTH CALENDAR

- OCT. 1ST Intergenerational Service/Joy Ringers Youth Bell Choir/ Blessing of the Animals
- OCT. 8TH Youth Group @ 10:00
- OCT. 13TH Outdoor Family Movie Night with Aurora Township Youth- The Curse of Bridge Hollow 6PM
- OCT. 15TH Youth Group @ 10:00
- OCT. 22ND Youth Group @ 10:00
- OCT. 22ND Confirmation Evening Gatherings (6th & 7th grade)
- OCT. 29TH Wear Costumes to Church/All Grades Halloween Party @ 10:00/ Trunk-or-Treat

Confirmation Evening Gatherings Oct. 22nd:

Join us for Confirmation on Sunday Oct 22nd and on the 1st Sunday of each following month until May 2024. This opportunity is for 6th and 7th graders to discover their faith and deepen their understanding. With the guidance of supportive leadership youth are encouraged to participate in various outings, service opportunities, and opportunities to build relationships with peers and mentors. Would you like more information on how to join, please contact Becky becky@newenglandchurch.org

YOUTH GROUP SUNDAYS @ 10:0AM

Thanks for the warm welcome Youth of NECC. We have already gotten off to a get start of exploring what we want to branch out into something new and defining what we want to leave behind. Allowing old things to fall of and encouraging new things to grow can be one of the most challenging obstacles in life. That's why we create space during Youth Ministries to have conversations around our Faith as it relates to our Future. No pressure, just support. We would love to openly welcome your contribution to the space. We could use adult volunteers for help support. If you are interested, please contact Becky becky@newenglandchurch.org



All-Grades Halloween Party Sunday Oct. 29th:

WEAR YOUR COSTUMES TO CHURCH! On Sunday Oct. 29th we will have an All-Grades Halloween Party during the 10:00 service. Students will divide into teams of mixed ages and compete against each other in fun and silly Halloween games to win prizes. Kids PK-5th grade will start in the sanctuary as usual and be dismissed to join our youth group students after Children's Time. Don't miss this week for kids of all ages to enjoy some silly, spooky fun! Stick around after the party for Trunk-or-Treat in the parking lot following the service. THIS IS A GREAT WEEK TO INVITE FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!

Outdoor Family Movie Night Friday Oct. 13th:

Join us on Friday the 13th for a spooky, outdoor family movie: Netflix's The Curse of Bridge Hollow. Enjoy a campfire with s'mores, popcorn, snacks, hot cocoa, and some outdoor games. (Best suited for older elementary school and up. Some language and some comedic violence that might not be suited for young children.) Please bring your own blankets or lawn chairs. This event is a partnership with Aurora Township Youth Services. New England Church is hosting, and we want to make sure we have as many New England families present as possible to welcome and get to know our guests. We could really use some help with set-up, snack station management, and clean-up. If you are available and are willing to help, please contact Desiree desiree@newenglandchurch.org

Trunk-or-Treat Sunday Oct. 29th:

Join us after the 10:00 service on Sunday Oct. 29th for our third annual "Trunk-or-Treat." Kids of all ages can stroll through the festive atmosphere of the New England parking lot enjoying creatively decorated car trunks and collecting candy. Kids can also vote for the best decorated car and the winner will receive a prize in church the following week. To make this event fun for our kids and inviting for visitors and guests, we need lots of people to volunteer to decorate their cars and hand out candy. Sign-up after church, online, or email Desiree if you'd like to participate desiree@newenglandchurch.org

There was bouncy fun!



And, super tattoos to get.



NECC AAIFP Volunteer Days



Help support the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry!

Volunteers are needed to re-stock the shelves.

NECC Volunteer Days are:

The 1st and 3rd
Monday of each month.

From 3:00-4:00pm

No Sign-up required- Please arrive at 1110 Jericho Rd.
Aurora.

Burial Plots Available

New England was given two burial plots and a bronze headstone in the River Hills Memorial Park in Batavia. River Hills has told us that the value of each burial site is \$1,050 and the bronze headstone's value is \$2,300, for a combined value of \$4,400. We continue to offer these items to members and friends of New England and we will accept any reasonable offer for the plots and headstone.

If you have an interest or know someone who might, please contact Shelley in the church office.



The Travelers Group Meeting



Are you interested in traveling with New England Church?

We're meeting on Sunday, October 15 at 3:00 pm to discuss a 2025 European Viking cruise.

Everyone is invited to explore the possibilities.

Contact Gary McCann with questions at 630.643.4925.





WOMEN’S CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



Secret Codes in Pre-Civil War Quilts. Come hear the true, daring stories of enslaved people making their way to freedom using quilts to communicate safety or danger. **Connie Martin** tracks her own ancestors and illustrates with her family’s quilts. This program is for men, women and children middle school and older and includes a sweet snack. October 14, 9:30 am in Friendship Hall. Sponsored by Women’s Circle of Friends and The Students of the Beloved Community Committee. Signup in the Marketplace or online.

The Students of the Beloved Community

This year our committee will be asking members of the congregation how best to serve the NECC family. In the news, TV ads, movies, billboards, everywhere we look, we are made aware of the stories of Black and Brown people. Until recent years those faces and stories were absent from our everyday vision.



It is all a big change. How does it make you think, make you feel? In a church that values everyone thinking for themselves, there are likely many different reactions. No one has answers. We all have questions. What are yours? The committee is busy exploring ways to get to the heart of New England’s take on the subject of race and social justice. We know that sometimes you are excited about learning more, and sometimes it is all too much. Help us find that sweet spot between ignorance and sign-me-up-for-change. Check out the notice for Connie Martin’s October 14 presentation in this Tidings. It should be a feel-good event. Meanwhile, let us know if you have a nativity set from any BIPOC culture to display in the narthex in December. BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, People of Color.

Friday Night at the Movies

October 13 at 7:00 pm: *Fences* (2016)
A sanitation worker in 1950s Pittsburgh deals with the glory of his baseball past, missed opportunities and the difficult realities of his present life. With Denzel Washington and Viola Davis.
Presenter: Maureen McKane



There were scarecrows to make!



And, fancy balloon art made by Pastor Brandon.



Tiny Tidings

OCTOBER, 2023



CHURCH SCHOOL CALENDAR

- Oct. 1st Intergenerational Service with Joy Ringers Youth Bell Choir/ Blessing of the Animals
- Oct. 8th Lesson: Indigenous People's Day/ Creation Care
- Oct. 13th Outdoor Family Movie Night with Aurora Township Youth- The Curse of Bridge Hollow 6PM
- Oct. 15th Lesson: The Fiery Furnace (You Are Not Alone)
- Oct. 22nd Lesson: Daniel & the Lion's Den
- Oct. 29th Wear Costumes to Church/ All Grades Halloween Party @ 10:00/ Trunk-or-Treat after the service

TRUNK-OR-TREAT SUNDAY OCT. 29TH:

Join us after the 10:00 service on Sunday Oct. 29th for our third annual "Trunk-or-Treat." Kids of all ages can stroll through the festive atmosphere of the New England parking lot enjoying creatively decorated car trunks and collecting treats. Kids can also vote for the best decorated car and the winner will receive a prize in church the following Sunday. To make this event fun for our kids and for visitors and guests, we need lots of people to volunteer to decorate their cars and hand out candy. Sign-up after church, online, or email Desiree if you'd like to participate desiree@newenglandchurch.org

MULTI-CULTURAL PARENT/CHILD PLAY GROUP:

Parents or caregivers with children ages 0-5 are invited to join us Fridays from 9:30-11:00 in the KIDS' ZONE room for a multi-cultural playgroup. Stories. Music. Art. Friendship and play. This group is a partnership between New England Church, World Relief, & SPARK (Strong. Prepared. And Ready for Kindergarten.) This is a great opportunity for New England Church families to connect with other Aurora families who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. If you are interested, contact Desiree desiree@newenglandchurch.org

OUTDOOR FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT FRIDAY OCT. 13TH:

Join us on Friday the 13th for a spooky, outdoor family movie: Netflix's The Curse of Bridge Hollow. Enjoy a campfire with s'mores, popcorn, snacks, hot cocoa, and some outdoor games. (Best suited for older elementary school and up. Some mild language and some comedic violence that might not be suited for young children.) Please bring your own blankets or lawn chairs. This event is a partnership with Aurora Township Youth Services. New England Church is hosting, and we want to make sure we have as many New England families present as possible to welcome and get to know our guests. We could also really use some help with set-up, snack station management, and clean-up. If you are available and are willing to help, please contact Desiree desiree@newenglandchurch.org

ALL-GRADES HALLOWEEN PARTY SUNDAY OCT. 29TH:

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NURSERY NEWS & VOLUNTEER NEEDS:

We are happy to announce that Thaise Rodriguez and Josely Hernandez have joined our staff as nursery attendants during the 10:00 service. Charlotte Adams has done a great job training our new hires and she will continue to fill in on an as-needed basis. Please welcome and introduce yourself to Thaise & Josely when you see them in the nursery. Also, to comply with our Safe Church Policy, every week we need a second adult or older high school student to volunteer alongside our nursery attendants. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more, please contact Desiree desiree@newenglandchurch.org

VOLUNTEER VORTEX

Sponsored by the Board of Community Outreach

We, at NECC who desire to make the world a better place, continue to post volunteer opportunities in this section of the Tidings every month. This fall, the Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry, one of our strategic partners, has some exciting events coming up in October. These are in addition to our on-going volunteer efforts re-stocking the shelves on the 1st and 3rd Monday at 3:00 pm every month. See the new activities are described below:

Are you looking for new and exciting volunteer opportunities? Check out what the Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry has to offer - there's something for almost any day of the week! The mission of the AAIFP is to help end local hunger by ensuring everyone has enough access to enough nourishing food, thereby helping our overall community stay healthy and productive. They accomplish this through food distribution programs, where those in need select foods from the pantry or the pantry brings food to those who cannot come in person. There are opportunities to volunteer at the pantry or at off-site locations, called mobile pantries, or pop-up shops. Volunteers must be 14+.



Marcy Robles
Volunteer Coordinator
1110 Jericho Road, Aurora IL 60506
(630) 692-3056



****Monday Tuesday, & Thursday 8 am- 2 pm Food Distribution Days-** During this distribution, we have a need for volunteers to work in the market, warehouse, and outside. Our volunteers will be in position throughout the market directing our neighbors through their shopping journey. Volunteers will also be stocking grocery items from the refrigerator, freezer, and warehouse into the market area. Finally, there will be a team of volunteers working with traffic control and helping our neighbors load their groceries.

Free event at Splash Country Water Park on Barnes Road on Friday, October 20 from 4:00-6:00 pm. Event is drive-thru, all are welcome to attend! If you would like to join us as a trunk, please contact Becky Dunnigan at rdunnigan@aurorafoodpantry.org.

See you on COURT!

We're playing volleyball for personal shopping carts. We want to purchase the carts for our neighbors, who use public transportation to get to and from the pantry. The carts will really help our neighbors carry their groceries. Eddie Galvan, the pantry's Program Director, is the driving force behind this idea. The local event will be held on October 28. We need co-ed teams of 6-8 team members. Please contact Eddie for more information at egalvan@aurorafoodpantry.org

