



The Branchline

"I am the vine, you are the branches."

Published Monthly
Yearly mail
subscription \$12

February 2020

Wilbraham United Church
500 Main St.
Wilbraham, MA 01095
www.WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org

A note from Pastor Chip...

Dear Church Family:

Last summer, the church office received an email purporting to be from me, asking the administrator to send gift cards out in the mail. It was signed, luckily, Pastor Wallace, which sent up enough red flags that the request was never processed. More recently, a parishioner received a text message also pretending to be from me. Because the number – and again, Pastor Wallace – didn't match up, the message was ignored. Finally, last month, I received an email from the Southern New England Conference of the UCC, informing me that many churches in the area, and even Conference offices, have received similar emails and texts over the last year.

In both instances involving our congregation, the scam never got very far, mostly because I use a nickname rather than my given one. However, I want everyone to be aware that I will never ask you – by phone or by email – to buy, send, or sell anything. If you ever receive a message or email along those lines, please contact the office before you proceed. If you have already gotten requests that sound like what was detailed above, I invite you to write down the interaction or pass along the email to me so that we can learn more about what's happening.

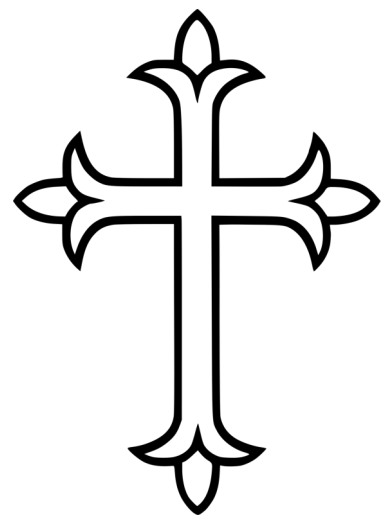
It's obviously discouraging to hear that churches are being preyed upon like this: that our trust in one another and our generosity toward one another are being taken advantage of. It is obviously sad to learn that we have to second guess ourselves and even question the reality of what our eyes are telling us. I do not want anyone to become fearful, or untrusting, or to lose faith in what we stand for and what we deliver as a community of faithful disciples. That said, we must be careful with how we communicate some of our work in this world. To that end, I remind you all: I will never send an individual member or friend of the community such a request by email or text, and if you have any questions, concerns or doubts, reach out to me or the office.

We are a generous community. We give of our time, our talent, and our treasure. We are generous in our welcome and our hospitality, and we choose to share our love and our trust freely. We are generous in our spirit, and we choose to believe that our fellow members and friends have the best intentions. We should not let events like these change that outlook. We cannot allow ourselves to close off our generosity or doubt our hospitality. Our openness to those in need is a fundamental and necessary part of our congregation's mission and ministry. I hope that we will continue to operate and live as generously and extravagantly as we can, even as we take appropriate steps to ensure that we are also doing so responsibly.

Blessings,

Chip

Called to Serve



**WUC welcomes Paul Nesbit as
our new Associate Pastor.**



**Above, the quilts are ready to
go to Baystate Hospital
Pediatric ER.**

Celebrations and Souper Bowl



Dear Friends,

At the end of January 2015, I began what I thought was a six-to-eight month stint as Interim Director of Christian Education. I thought that maybe they'd have someone by the fall and I could help them to transition into the position. I am now at the start of sixth year in service to this community. In one the top five surprises of my life, I have found myself called to serve as the Associate Pastor at Wilbraham United Church!

This call allows all of us the opportunity to continue the work we have begun to offer Extravagant Welcome to everyone who enters our church. We have been able to extend hospitality to people of all ages and walks of life who seek a place to worship with us; some have chosen to join us as official members. We are beginning to buck the trend of churches that see their membership decline. I have been asked to recognize my own leadership in some of these efforts, but it is the work of the entire church community has started to bring this to fruition.

As we all prepare for a church-wide celebration of ordination, I would like to share with you some words on "Understanding Ordination in the United Church of Christ." This will help us to understand how the work of ministry belongs to everyone.

"The United Church of Christ believes that God calls *every Christian* to be a servant of God, a minister, living and serving in Christ's name. This call is celebrated sacramentally in Baptism as persons are claimed for Christ by the Holy Spirit and the church. All who are baptized spend the rest of their lives responding to God's call and claim, as God's love is shown in word and deed. Christians are members of the Body of Christ, the church, under the sole headship of Jesus Christ. As written in 1 Cor 12, this is a living body – called, formed and sent into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit..."

How are we asked to live out our claim and call as Christians? I invite all of us to take some reflection time as seek to answer this question.

The best part of my week is spent in service to the community of Wilbraham United Church!

Peace and love,

Paul

Paul B. Nesbit
Associate Pastor

News from the Choir Room



United Music

Junior Choir Saturday mornings at 10:00

Singing, bell playing, drumming, games, snacks and Wilber the chicken

Band Wednesday evenings at 7:00

Do you play an instrument? We'd love to have you join us.

Choir Thursday evenings at 7:45

If you can carry a tune and wish to raise your voice for the glory of God, consider yourself invited.

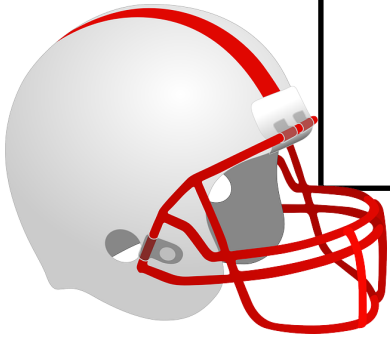
Drum Gathering Sunday evenings at 6:00

Whether you want to play in church or not come join us for the experience. It's only about 40 minutes but it's time well spent!

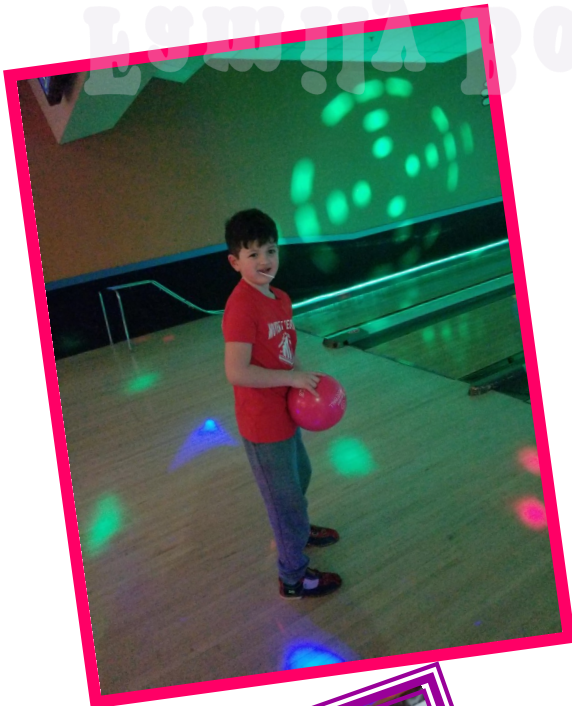


Education Commission

Souper Bowl Touchdown!
We had a great response and
collected many cans of soup.
Thanks to all!
Donations were sent to the
Community Survival
Center.



Family Bowling Night



**What did the
bowling ball
say to the
pins ?.....**



**Don't stop me
I'm on a roll !**



Family Bowling Night

February 2020

VISIT US ONLINE wilbrahamunitedchurch.org

Mother-Son Dance



SOLD OUT

**Wilbraham United Church
presents the 4th annual**

***Saturday, February 8, 2020
Fellowship Hall--Wilbraham United Church
7:00-9:00pm
(open at 6:30 for photos only)***

**\$15 per each Mom/Son or \$20 per family
\$5 per each extra adult**

All Sons and Moms (or those who are like a Mom to you) are welcome!

**DJ
Photo Booth
Snacks/Drinks
Games**

Please visit www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org before February 8 to purchase tickets.
Contact Paul Nesbit, Director of Family Ministries
Christianed@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org or 413-596-2511, ext. 105

Women's Evening Fellowship Welcomes Christine White

On Tuesday February 25 at 7:00 PM in the Zeckhausen Room, Women's Evening Fellowship will host an evening with Christine White, free-lance writer for *The Springfield Republican*.

Christine will share selections from her new book *Are We There Yet?: Essays from my Life*. According to the book jacket, "From tender family portraits to observations while walking around her neighbourhood, columnist Christine Z. White sheds light on our humanity in a series of heartfelt, straight-talking vignettes culled from nearly two decades of sharing her wisdom with newspaper readers."

Christine will bring books for sale. There will be time for fellowship, and delicious refreshments will be served. Please plan to join us for what promises to be a delightful evening.



There are a few openings for Altar flowers in February and March. Please feel free to sign up in the Narthex or email admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org

The Thrift Shop

At Wilbraham United Church

Have you visited the Thrift Shop lately? We have lots of repurposed treasures on the tables and shelves. Every week there is new merchandise available both Friday and Saturday from 9:30 -12:30. On Thursday and Friday evening a video is posted on our Wilbraham United Church Thrift Shop Facebook page. This has been a positive addition for our customers. Take a minute and check it out!

As you look around your house, garage and basement are there items that need a new home? We can always use more donations. Items can be placed on the table outside the Thrift Shop in the basement. Thank you for your continuous support of this mission.

#NeverPayRetail

Donna and Nancy



Shopping Card Program

We are grateful to so many of you who have made the weekly commitment of buying gift cards. At the Annual Meeting we have been made aware that our church will be operating at a several thousand dollar deficit in 2020. We should all be thinking of ways of how we can bridge that gap. Our team proposes to you, now that many of you are in the weekly grocery card buying habit, to think what other purchases you make on a regular basis (gas, prescriptions, eating out, coffee, home repair/improvements, pets...) and buy cards to pay for those items. There are always the physical cards available on Sundays, but also check out www.shopwithscrip.com to explore online and mobile phone options. Online/mobile phone orders can take place whenever you need the scrip, 24/7. This is a huge convenience to you, and convenience leads to more participation, which in turn helps our church!

**Connie Stiefel, Lisa Fallon, Wendy O'Rourke, Candy Dearborn,
Kathy and Tim Timpson**



Outreach

How Donations from United Church Are Making a Difference

Wilbraham United Church generously donated \$4,000 to the Mental Health Association (MHA) in 2019 and this pioneering nonprofit organization is pleased to share with us some of the ways this donation is at work. Since the donation was made, Dave Havens, Program Director of Homeless Services for MHA, and his team have successfully moved six people who were living on the street or in shelter into permanent housing. These are folks who had been long term chronically homeless.

The story of “Timothy” was published in the December 2019 Branchline. The second example of people who are being helped by the WUC donation to MHA is printed below. Their names have been changed, but their story is real.

Terry and Joseph

“Terry and Joseph” are two people who had been living together in Springfield in a vehicle (properly registered) for 3 years and 5 months. In the largely commercial neighborhood where they were staying, the vendors and shopkeepers have mostly showed them a level of tolerance, allowing them to park overnight without a hassle.

“The small businesspeople in the area have also been a source of information for us when we’re looking for Terry and Joseph,” said Dave Havens, Program Director of Homeless Services for MHA. “It’s nice to see some kindness. The combination of being left alone and people also watching out for them was good. Someone would usually step in if there was a need, and Joseph had both mental health and chronic medical issues he was desperately trying to manage.”

At one point, someone did go after Terry and Joseph, resulting in their vehicle getting towed. “Eventually they managed to pick up a night time delivery job, which was helpful because it kept their vehicle out of parking lots overnight,” Dave explained. “We reached out to them and in time they agreed to let us help. We found them a two bedroom apartment they could move into and now they’re doing pretty well. Things are always easier when you’re living inside. Instead of focusing on just trying to survive, they’re now able to focus on Joseph’s health.”

To learn more or do more, please contact Kim Lee at 413-233-5343 or klee@mhainc.org



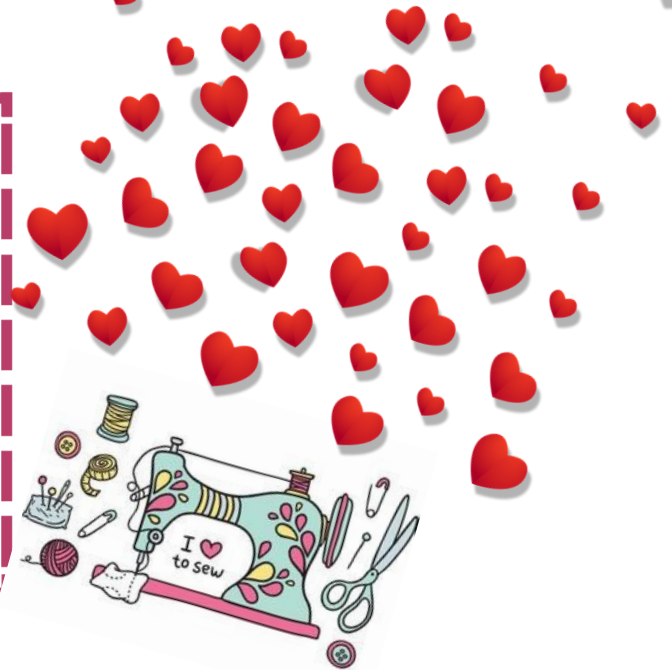
Richard Labine	2/1
Natalie True	2/2
Beverly Sawyer	2/24

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

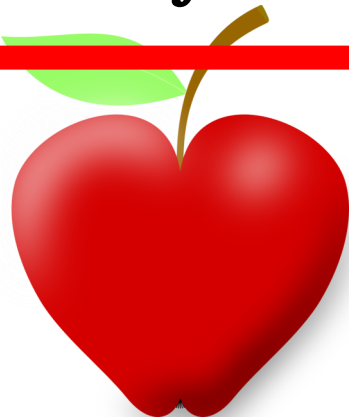
**Piecemakers
Will be meeting**

February 10th and 24th

**From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
in the Bliss Room**



**Community Survival Center
February Ideas**



- **Stew**
- **Canned vegetables or fruit**
- **Sale items**

PANCAKE SUPPER

Sunday February 23, 2020

4:30 —7:30 PM

Sponsored by Wilbraham United Players

Wilbraham United Church

500 Main Street

Wilbraham, MA



\$10 per plate; \$5 for children under 12

Purchase* tickets in advance—

www.wilbrahamunitedplayers.org

Or call (413)271-7291 to reserve & pay at door

***a service fee will be added to credit card purchases online**

Wilbraham United Church			February 2020			
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
10 am - Worship 11 am - Annual Mtg. 1 pm - WUP - FH 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6 pm - Drumming Circle	10:30 am - Yoga with Michelle - YR 7 pm - WUP - FH	6:30 pm - WEF - Ladies Night Out 7 pm - WUP - FH	3:30 pm - Girl Scouts - Howard 4:15 pm Girl Scouts - Classroom 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6:30 pm - Cub Scouts - HR/CR 7 pm Band 7 pm - WUP - FH	6:30 pm - AI Anon-YR 7 pm - Bell Choir 7:45 pm - Adult Choir	9:30 am - Thrift Shop	9:30 am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Junior Choir 1 pm - WUP - FH
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10 am - Worship 1 pm - WUP - FH 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6 pm - Drumming Circle	10:30 am - Yoga with Michelle - YR 7 pm - WUP - FH	5 pm - Girl Scouts - SM - Howard Room/CR	3:30 pm - Girl Scouts - Howard 4:15 pm Girl Scouts - Classroom 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6:30 pm - Cub Scouts - HR/CR 7 pm Band 7 pm - Technology Com - Library	6:30 pm - AI Anon-YR 7 pm - Bell Choir 7:45 pm - Adult Choir	9:30 am - Thrift Shop	9:30 am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Junior Choir
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
10 am - Worship 1 pm - WUP - FH 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6 pm - Drumming Circle	10 am - Piecemakers - Bliss Room 10:30 am - Yoga with Michelle - YR 6 pm - Phys-Ops - ZR 7 pm - WUP - FH	WUP - FH - All Day	WUP - FH - All Day 3:30 pm - Girl Scouts - Howard 4:15 pm - Girl Scouts - Classroom 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6:30 pm - Cub Scout -HR/CR 7 pm - Band 7 pm - Governing Board- ZH	6:30 pm - AI Anon-YR 7 pm - Bell Choir 7:45 pm - Adult Choir	9:30 am - Thrift Shop	9 am - WUP - FH 9:30 am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Junior Choir
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
10 am - Worship 1 pm - WUP - FH 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6 pm - Drumming Circle	7 pm - Finance Comm - Lib 7 pm - WUP - FH	7 pm - WUP - FH	3:30 pm - Girl Scouts - Howard 4:15 pm - Girl Scouts - Classroom 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6:30 pm - Cub Scout -HR/CR 7 pm - Band 7 pm - WUP - FH	11 am - Loaves and Fishes 6:30 pm - AI Anon-YR 7 pm - Bell Choir 7:45 pm - Adult Choir	9:30am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Springfield Garden Club - FH	9 am - Pinewood Derby 9:30am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Junior Choir 1pm - WUP - FH
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
10 am - Worship 1 pm - WUP - FH 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6 pm - Drumming Circle	10 am - Piecemakers - Bliss Room 10:30 am - Yoga with Michelle - YR	7 pm - WEF - ZR	3:30 pm - Girl Scouts - Howard 4:15 pm - Girl Scouts - Classroom 6 pm - AI Anon @ YR 6:30 pm - Cub Scout -HR/CR 7 pm - Band	6:30 pm - AI Anon -YR 7 pm - Bell Choir 7:45 pm - Adult Choir	9:30am - Thrift Shop	9 am - WUP - FH 9:30am - Thrift Shop 10 am - Junior Choir

Daily Lectionary Scripture References

February 2020 (Year A)

Sat., Feb. 1

Psalm 15
Micah 3:1-4
John 13:31-35

Sun., Feb. 2

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12

Mon., Feb. 3

Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 1:1-18
Philemon 1-25

Tues., Feb. 4

Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 2:1-16
James 5:1-6

Wed., Feb. 5

Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 3:1-13; 4:13-22
Luke 6:17-26

Thurs., Feb. 6

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Deuteronomy 4:1-14
1 John 5:1-5

Fri., Feb. 7

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Isaiah 29:1-12
James 3:13-18

Sat., Feb. 8

Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Isaiah 29:13-16
Mark 7:1-8

Sun., Feb. 9

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]
Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]
Matthew 5:13-20

Mon., Feb. 10

Psalm 119:105-112
2 Kings 22:3-20
Romans 11:2-10

Tues., Feb. 11

Psalm 119:105-112
2 Kings 23:1-8, 21-25
2 Corinthians 4:1-12

Wed., Feb. 12

Psalm 119:105-112
Proverbs 6:6-23
John 8:12-30

Thurs., Feb. 13

Psalm 119:1-8
Genesis 26:1-5
James 1:12-16

Fri., Feb. 14

Psalm 119:1-8
Leviticus 26:34-46
1 John 2:7-17

Sat., Feb. 15

Psalm 119:1-8
Deuteronomy 30:1-9a
Matthew 15:1-9

Sun., Feb. 16

Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 or Sirach 15:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

Mon., Feb. 17

Psalm 119:9-16
Exodus 20:1-21
James 1:2-8

Tues., Feb. 18

Psalm 119:9-16
Deuteronomy 23:21-24:4, 10-15
James 2:1-13

Wed., Feb. 19

Psalm 119:9-16
Proverbs 2:1-15
Matthew 19:1-12

Thurs., Feb. 20

Psalm 2
Exodus 6:2-9
Hebrews 8:1-7

Fri., Feb. 21

Psalm 2
Exodus 19:9b-25
Hebrews 11:23-28

Sat., Feb. 22

Psalm 2
1 Kings 21:20-29
Mark 9:9-13

Sun., Feb. 23

Transfiguration of the Lord

Exodus 24:12-18 Psalm 2
or Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-91

Mon., Feb. 24

Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55
Exodus 33:7-23
Acts 7:30-34

Tues., Feb. 25

Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55
1 Kings 19:9-18
Romans 11:1-6

Wed., Feb. 26

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Thurs., Feb. 27

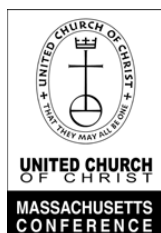
Psalm 51
Jonah 3:1-10
Romans 1:1-7

Fri., Feb. 28

Psalm 51
Jonah 4:1-11
Romans 1:8-17

Sat., Feb. 29

Psalm 51
Isaiah 58:1-12
Matthew 18:1-7



Used by permission. This resource may be reproduced by congregations for their own worship and educational activities. Provided by the Southern New England Conference, UCC

Church Staff

Rev. Wallace A Hurd IV, Pastor
Pastor@WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org
Ext. 103

Mark Jacobson, Director of Music Ministries
markjacobson104@gmail.com

Paul Nesbit, Associate Pastor
ChristianEd@WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org
Ext. 105

Eric True, Custodian
WUCBuilding@WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org
Ext. 107

Betsy Johnsen, Bookkeeper
BookKeeper@WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org
Ext. 100

Aimee Walat, Administrative Assistant
Admin@WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org
Ext. 100

Wilbraham United Church Nursery School
www.wucns.org
Church Ext. 108