



First Churches Northampton

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



July/August 2014

Pastor's Page

Important Dates

July 13th- Rev. Sarah

Buteux preaching

July 26th- Summer

cleaning Dumpster project

August 24th - Worship at

Laurel Park

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I'm writing this mid-summer greeting as I leave for vacation, hoping that you are finding time to enjoy the long mornings and evenings as the sun is high in the sky. The church calendar takes a breath in the summer, and we need this time after a very full year. Just as kids take a pause from the classroom, we pause for the summer projects that need warm weather. Our church staff is using this time to prepare for fall and take care of things which get pushed to the back burner during busy times. Smoke detectors need installing, the website is getting a major tune-up, classrooms need painting, and we are welcoming Rev. Sarah Buteux as she moves into a new office as our Associate Pastor.

The next two months will be a time a planning and gathering our resources for the Fall Program Year. We anticipate welcoming new people through our Common Ground worship service, and through our efforts to have an excellent Children's Ministry. Most committees have new members who are bringing fresh eyes and energy. Our attention is shifting from building renovations and financial matters, the important infrastructure of ministry; to the mission we can do together.

I hope you all enjoy the lighter summer season, but let's stay connected too. We will send you weekly emails so you know the office hours which pastor is available during the week. Stop in and see us! Also, check our website and see the new changes that are developing there to improve our communication. We will still be hosting soulful worship every Sunday. So enjoy these long days as we prepare for what God's Spirit has in store for us in the very near future.



WELCOME REVEREND SARAH BUTEUX

Hello First Churches! I am here and still pinching myself occasionally to make sure this isn't all a dream. People keep asking me what I'm doing now and I take such joy in telling them about my new church; this incredible group of people who heard about my vision for Common Ground and have brought me on to their staff and into their community to bring that vision to life. I have told them all about my plans and dreams for our Children's Church and I think my excitement is contagious. I wouldn't be surprised if you see a lot of new little faces peeking up at you from over pews come September.

But most of all, I have marveled at your courage and openness. In a time when many churches are slowing down and cutting back, you have made a bold decision to step forward, to move in a new way, to believe that your best days may yet lie ahead of you rather than behind. I am honored to walk amongst you as we make this journey forward.

For those of you just tuning in, my name is Sarah Buteux. I am the new Associate Pastor of *Growth and Family Ministries*. As such I will be overseeing our Sunday School Ministry and hosting Common Ground, a farm-to-table dinner church, here in Lyman Hall on the first and third Thursday of every month at 5:30.

I have been in parish ministry serving as a solo pastor for the last 12 years. I am very excited, especially at this stage of my life, to be working as part of a pastoral team. Todd and I have every confidence that our gifts for ministry will be a compliment to each other.

As you can see from Vanessa's interview (pg 8), I was born in New York. I came to Northampton 19 years ago to attend Smith College where I majored in English and minored in Medieval

Studies. Although I went on to Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge and spent some time working at Westover School in Connecticut while my husband finished his Doctorate at Yale, we were both very happy to return to the Pioneer Valley when Andrew was offered a position in the Religion Department at Amherst College. We bought a home in Amherst, settled in, and we are now blessed to be the parents of George (age 7) and Genevieve (age 4). When I'm not running after the kids or writing sermons, you will most likely find me cooking, reading, singing, or watching something fun on Netflix.

But that's enough about me. What I'm really looking forward to is meeting all of you. I know we are deep in the midst of summer and I'm probably away in Maine even as you are reading this, but as the summer winds down please stop in to say, "hello." Toward the end of August I'll be hard at work setting up the classrooms for our Sunday School and (you knew this was coming) I'll be looking for teachers to help.

The Christian Education Board has worked with me to purchase a fantastic new curriculum that I think everyone will enjoy and I hope, whether you've taught before or not, you will at least consider the possibility of volunteering to help educate our children. I hope to make the experience as enriching for teachers as I trust it will be for all the kids who will come.

Thank you again for such a gracious welcome. I look forward to all the good we will do together.

Peace and love,

Pastor Sarah

Taq Rumial Junajpu and First Churches

Taq Rumial Junajpu is an organized group of indigenous single mothers who live in the tiny town of Santa Maria de Jesus, Guatemala. Their village, which is about forty minutes from the beautiful colonial tourist town of Antigua, Guatemala, is primarily native American and Kaqchikel Maya speaking. Taq Rumial formed about two and a half years ago. The ambition of the mothers of Taq Rumial is to be able to send their children to school, and to increase their income through small business projects. Public school is not free in Guatemala, and children have to wear uniforms which their parents buy, and also provide their own school supplies. For this reason, literacy among poor Guatemalans is low, and only forty percent of children graduate from elementary school.

I know of Taq Rumial because I studied Kaquikel Maya in Antigua a few years ago, and the founder of Taq Rumial is my Kaquikel teacher Irlanda Cuma Chavez. Here she is handing out some school supplies for the children of Taq Rumial Junajpu.



Some members of a recent meeting

Irlanda is an educated Mayan, from a higher socioeconomic class than most of the women of Taq Rumial, but she is also a native of Santa Maria de Jesus, and her parents still live there.

Not many people want to study Kaqchikel, and so when she is not teaching she works as a community organizer and promoter with Taq Rumial.

The first project Taq Rumial developed was a chicken farm. Initially they rented a lot, built a chicken coop and raised specially bred meat birds. Although they had some success with this project, the profits were low because the hybrid birds required a lot of special feed (think Purina), and their landlord charged rent.



Now they have moved the chicken house to a more rural setting where they don't have to pay rent, and will begin raising local native chickens, which do not require special feed. These "creole chickens" are more popular with local consumers, too.

First Churches Mission Committee has kindly donated \$200 towards Taq Rumial's chicken project for 2014/2015. The ladies are very grateful, and so am I. I hope to send the ladies some photos of the Mission Committee, First Churches families, and our church building. Irlanda is able to borrow a lap top from a friend, so can show emailed pictures. (Continued)

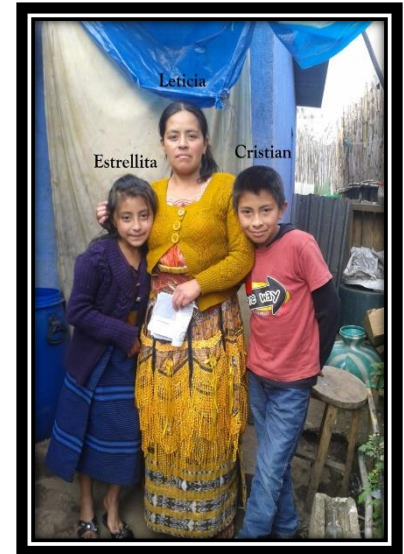


Last year's construction project

The \$200 donation from first churches is going to buy barbed wire fencing to protect the new batch of chickens from the predators at the new rural lot, which is rent free. The new lot: Taq Rumial Junajpu would love further help from first churches, and it is one of my dreams that we have an ongoing partnership. I would love to see a team from First Churches travel to Guatemala to help Taq Rumial with a construction project in Santa Maria de Jesus. I would also love to see direct sponsorship type relationships between first churches families and Taq Rumial families. With the internet, we can easily connect directly with our brothers and sisters in Guatemala, give help where help is needed, and see the results. Here are photos of two of the families of Taq Rumial.



Anybody who is interested in this project, please contact me – oonaghcdoherty@hotmail.com or just grab me at coffee hour! And again, many many thanks to The Missions Committee and to the church community as a whole for the help you have offered to Taq Rumial Junajpu.



Cathedral in the Night

Another feast was prepared for 60 hungry people on the front steps of our church on June 22, following the weekly Cathedral in the Night service. It was amazing to recognize how all of the different people from First Churches worked together and made this meal an outstanding success; eleven people participated who had never done so before, including 4 people from Common Ground. There were a total of 14 people on hand that evening, bringing far greater ease to the jobs of ferrying food and beverages in and out of the kitchen, serving the food, overseeing the coffee station, delivering the food courier style without spilling it, and washing up the dishes afterwards. All went relatively smoothly thanks to the many people who helped.

If you haven't had an opportunity to get excited about a local mission project supported by First Churches that aims to serve the hungry and homeless, please consider volunteering for this extraordinary event the next time we prepare the meal. (September 21st) Thanks to everyone who cooked, carried, served, and helped clean up!



IT'S TIME:

TIME TO: Think about fair time

WHEN: Bag Day—Sat, Nov. 22, 2014

WHY: Our big annual fund raiser

WHO: Everyone, Children to Adults

YOU CAN HELP: Needed:

- ✂ Luncheon Co-Chair
- ✂ Crafters
- ✂ Apple pies; bakers and workers
- ✂ Raffle ticket Sellers
- ✂ Greeters
- ✂ Mission Supporters

CONTACT:

- Barbara Parsons, 413-584-4944
- Peg Whitham, pncwhitham@comcast.net
- Celeste Ortega, iortega14@comcast.net
- Ginny Wahl, vwahl5512@charter.net
- Church Office, admin@firstchurches.org

SAVE THE DATE!!

Birthdays

- 🕒 July 8 Jonathan Kushin
- 🕒 July 11 Erica Martin
Abigail Stone
Celeste Ortega
- 🕒 July 24 Ginny Wahl
- 🕒 July 26 Camilla Corsello
Peggy Anderson
- 🕒 July 29 Andre Barnes
- 🕒 Aug 3 Andrew Stone
Chloe Felton Emrick
- 🕒 Aug 4 Janice Francis
- 🕒 **Aug 6 Suzanne Massey**
- 🕒 Aug 8 Stacey Martin
- 🕒 Aug 9 Manny Pintado
- 🕒 Aug 27 **Jeff Bubar's
75th!!!**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Children's Church Needs painters & sprucer-uppers!

If you're good with a paintbrush, or would be willing to help organize & clean our children's rooms in the basements this month - we'd love the help! Teams will be organized early July - work in a group or on your own, weekends, weeknights - whatever works! Supplies will be provided. Our goal is to be done with wall painting & cleaning by July 31st so mural painting can be completed in August. Contact Judy Sherman at jhs12@comcast.net or to sign up.



Summer Cleaning!!

First Churches finally has a dumpster coming! On July 26th we will be cleaning out all the junk in the basement that has been cluttering up our church lives. Wouldn't it be wonderful to come back in September to a shiny new-looking church?? If anyone is interested in donating an hour or two to the cause, it would be greatly appreciated. There will be bending and lifting involved (possibly heavy items). Please contact the church office if you are interested in helping, 413-584-9392



Calling All Drivers

First Churches now has a few resident members at the Rockridge Retirement Community. We are looking for a few willing drivers to shuttle members to church and back. We would love to be able to get them to church one Sunday per month if possible.

Please call the Church office if you have a car, license, clean driving record (just kidding), and a willingness to help others join in worship.



ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The First Churches' 1936 Skinner & Son Opus 507 (the organ), is scheduled to be honored at the 60th Annual Convention of the Organ Historical Society. The convention will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Springfield, MA (6/28/15-7/3/15). Groups will travel all over the Pioneer Valley and surrounding areas to see and hear historical pipe organs. In addition to The First Churches' organ, the oldest surviving Casavant Opus 74 in the US will be on the list. *For more information on the convention, visit www.organsociety.org/2015*

Trivia Question: Which area church is home to the Casavant Opus 74 of 1896?

Call or email the church office with your guess. First correct response gets a coffee or tea (iced or hot) from Vanessa. Good Luck!

FIRST CHURCHES OF NORTHAMPTON, ABC & UCC
Boards and Committees for July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

Bold indicates persons elected at the Annual Meeting held June 1, 2014

Bold italic indicates persons re-elected elected at the Annual Meeting held June 1, 2014

Bold* indicates persons who volunteered to serve who have not yet joined the church

Moderator: *Donna O'Meally*

Clerk: *Elaine Wert*

Treasurer: **Kathy Felton**

Assistant Treasurers: *Bill Ames* & *Mari-Jon Adams-Pullan*

Financial Secretaries: ABC Congregation: **Sue Stone** UCC Congregation: **Peg Whitham.**

Council Members at Large: **Bill Ames, Carolyn Benson**

Deacons: Peggy Anderson, Pauline Bassett, Marilyn Giles, Denise Karuth, **Gabe Kushin, Stacey Martin, Elaine Wert,** _____, _____, _____, _____, _____ (twelve members)

Trustees: **Manuel Eduardo**, Marcia Kennick, Ned Judd, **Bill McGhee**, Leslie Skanz-Hodgson, Margie Riddle, **Gregory Wilson, Kathy Felton** (ex officio) (no less than five and the treasurer)

Christian Education: Janice Francis, **Gabe Kushin**, Angie Montalvo-Greene, Judy Sherman, **Lisa Thwing, Marion Van Arsdell,** _____ (seven members)

Missions: **Oonagh Doherty***, **Joanne Graves**, Denise Karuth, Carol Murphy, Isabel Ortega, Barbara Parsons, Dana Pasquale (six members) (*not yet a member of the church)

Personnel: Bill Ames, Marti Catuogno, Sandy Hoover, Merrilyn Holcomb, _____ (five)

Nominating: Carolyn Benson, Sandy Hoover, Denise Karuth, Priscilla Pike, _____ (five)

Pastoral Advisory: Sandy Hoover, Donna O'Meally, David Entin, Laura Judd, Sue Stone.

Memorial: Ted Addis, Carol Murphy, Barbara Parsons (no more than four)

Investment: Mari-Jon Adams-Pullan, Bill Ames, **Kathy Felton**, Marcia Kennick, Susan Stone, Merle Taylor, Peg Whitham.

Peace and Justice: Bill Ames, Manuel Eduardo, David Entin, Joanne Graves,

Sharon Moulton, Isabel Ortega, Marion VanArsdell, Harriet Wilson.

UCC Hampshire Association: **Denise Karuth, Yohah Ralph.**

ABC Pioneer Valley Association: Carol Murphy, Judy Sherman.

UCC Massachusetts Conference: Denise Karuth, Yohah Ralph.

Church Growth Task Force: Merrilyn Holcomb, Ann McKinnon, Ann Rasmussen, Patti Richmond, Ginny Wahl

Getting to Know Pastor Sarah

Having Sarah in the office this past week has been wonderful. I am super excited to be working with her. I realized that what Pastor Sarah would probably write for the Messenger would largely discuss her role as a Pastor and plans for the upcoming year. I thought it may be nice to ask some fun questions, maybe some talking points for future conversations. Thank you for sharing Sarah.

Where were you born?

I was born in Suffern NY, about 45 minutes North of NYC. I lived there for the first 19 years of my life before transferring to Smith and coming to Northampton.

If you could be an animal, what animal would you be?

A deer. I actually think the deer is my totem animal. The day my parents brought me home from the hospital as a baby, my Dad also found a fawn stranded on the side of a highway. He brought the baby deer home and she was bottle fed alongside me for a week before my parents found a home for her at the Bear Mountain Zoo.

What is your favorite thing about being a Pastor?

I love being at that place in life where God and people intersect, such that I can help people to hear what God is saying, encourage them in their journey, and assure them that God is with them in the midst of it all.

What is the last book you read?

"The Vinedresser's Notebook Spiritual Lessons in Pruning, Waiting, Harvesting & Abundance" by Judith Suter. Right now I'm reading "Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus" by Christopher Smith and John Pattison, and "Outlander" by Diana Gabaldon

In a few words, what would your children want us to know about you?

That on the whole, I'd rather be home tucking them into bed than going to too many evening meetings. That I'm never too busy to stop what I'm doing to talk with anyone, but especially little ones, about God the Universe and Everything.

What is one item from your bucket list that you have completed?

This Summer I will stay for two nights on the Island of Monhegan off the coast of Maine.

One left to complete?

I walked one week of The Camino with the Rev. Andrea Ayvazian and hope someday to return and finish the route.

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

Walking. I love to walk and pray and open my heart up to the beauty of creation.

Vanessa Keillor-Church Administrator

JULY/AUGUST 2014

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night						
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil		5:00 Common Ground		
13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				
20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.
10:00 Worship & 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				Dumpster Project
27.	28.	29.	30.	31.	1.	2.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				
3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				
10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				
17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil	September Messenger Items Due			
24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.
10:00 Worship @ Laurel Park 5:00 Cathedral in the Night		12:00 Peace Vigil				
31.						
10:00 Worship 5:00 Cathedral in the Night						