



# Under the Dome

**Dunbar United Church of Christ  
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***An Open & Affirming Congregation***

## **Weekly Services**

**Sunday Mornings @ 10:00 A.M.**

**Saturday Evenings @ 5:00 P.M.**

# June 2025

## Pastor's Report, June 2025

Recently I saw a love-story on Amazon Prime called Battle For Sevastopol. It's a Russian-Ukrainian film from 2014 with English sub-titles. It's about the life of a woman, Lyudmila Pavlichenko, who killed more than 309 Nazi soldiers with her sniper rifle in less than two years, before her 27th birthday. Her score of 309 confirmed kills makes her one of the top five snipers of all time. The story is mesmerizing. It's like reading the Bible — a mix of Judges and the Gospel of John.

Lyudmila's country — Ukraine/Russia — was attacked by Hitler's army. She wanted to be a history professor, not a soldier. But when she entered a shooting contest and with five bullets almost hit five bullseyes — the Red Army was notified and she was told she needed to go to six months of sniper school and then when the Nazis attacked, she went to the front lines and began her rise as one of the world's greatest snipers. Her nickname was "Lady Death."

She survived the war, though most of her colleagues were killed. So why is this as a love story? Because Lyudmila was always in love! She fell in love with three men, all soldiers, one a doctor and two who at different times were her partners. Each of them died, she survived. She married the second of her sniper partners, Alexei Kitsenko, but he was killed right after the ceremony. In the short time she was active as a sniper, less than two years, she was shot, blown up, buried while unconscious, and her body was covered with shrapnel wounds. She suffered multiple concussions as well as heartbreak each time she saw or heard of the death of the ones she loved. And she was only 26!

After being seriously wounded for maybe the 10th time, her senior officers decided — since she was by this time a national hero — to send her to the United States to speak and raise money and convince the United States to enter the war and help defeat Hitler. At one speaking engagement in Chicago, she told the crowd of mostly men, "Gentlemen, I am 26 years old and I have killed 309 fascist invaders by now. Don't you think, gentlemen, that you have been hiding behind my back for too long?" The crowd stood up and gave her a

long and loud ovation.

Lyudmila became friends with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who invited her to stay in the White House, and Lyudmila accepted the invitation, and wore the dress the First Lady gave her (though the communist official who was managing her made her take it off and put her uniform back on). When she returned to Russia, having made friends in America and Canada, she finished her education at Kiev University and taught history, and raised her son (from her first marriage, before the war). After the war she led a mostly quiet, uneventful life as a mother, a teacher and a hero of Russia. She died when she was 58 of a stroke.

I don't know if Lyudmila Pavlichenko believed in God, or Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. But I saw a strong presence of God and the Holy Spirit that was with her from her youth to the time of her death. I saw this presence in her devotion to and love for her friends and her country — and even the enemy she fought. Once a bomb had blown both her and a Nazi soldier into a crater next to each other — and each had a gun — but Lyudmila saw that the soldier had a bad injury on his leg and she applied a tourniquet to it so he was able to walk. Both walked away. And the crowds in America and Canada were inspired by her courage and respect and kindness that she showed to others. Most impressive was her willingness to sacrifice her life for the wellbeing of others. Jesus said, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.” That's why I see this as, mainly, a love story.

Jesus promised the disciples, before he ascended, that he would send them the spirit of love — which he called the Holy Spirit. And this is still his promise, now to us. It is here, present, in our lives — Jesus' spirit of love that connects us to each other and the whole creation. “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything,” Jesus said. Good. Let's listen — class is in session...

Love,  
  
George

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***Contact Pastor George @  
Phone: (203) 287-8106 or  
revonweb@sbcglobal.net***

## **Women's Fellowship**

### **Apple Festival**

It's not too early to think of our upcoming Apple Festival! Please donate your better than Goodwill items such as small appliances, kitchen utensils, pots and pans, dishes, glassware, knick knacks, books, toys, puzzles, tools, jewelry, weird stuff and more!

If you're feeling crafty, make something for the bazaar table! Test recipes out for something great for our bake sale! Donate new items for our raffle baskets! Jams and Jellies is always looking for new ideas! Think about how you would like to volunteer this year! We need everyone's participation to have another great Apple Festival!

Pie making starts September 10 at 9:30 a.m.

Apple Festival is Saturday, October 18, 9a.m. to 1 p.m.

Any questions, please call.

Debbie

203 281-3241

### **POT LUCK SALAD SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR JUNE 8!**

Please join us for a pot luck salad coffee hour on Sunday, June 8! Anyone who would like to make ANY kind of salad is welcome to do so! Salads can be meat (ham, tuna chicken, etc), fruits, mixed veggies, greens, macaroni, potato. Dessert-ish, three bean, or whatever you can create!

Looking forward to the variety! All welcome to attend! (You do not need to make a salad to partake! You know we always have plenty to go around!)

Any questions, please call.

Debbie

203 281-3241

## H.O.P.E.

H.O.P.E. would like to thank those that have donated this past month:

Bob and Karen Corona

George and Janet Braen

Heather Sibley

John and Lois Kasarauskas

Charlotte and John Sroka

This month we donated to Hopeville Church in Waterbury to assist them with their many food missions. Hopeville is a UCC church and was brought to our attention by Kathy Straka who had learned of the need from our Area Conference Minister. Hopeville is currently running a food pantry, a soup kitchen, supplies meals to a local elementary school and is teaching cooking.

If you would like to make a donation you can do so by visiting our website or send a check to Dunbar UCC with Hope in the memo.

Thank you,  
Debbie Laffin



## Deacons

Spring greetings!

We are looking for additional choir members. Please consider joining this important musical ministry. Our choir meets every Tuesday at 7 pm.

The deacons continue to work to support members of the congregation in need. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Respectfully yours,  
Kitty Donohue



## Trustees

The Trustees met on May 18.

We reviewed and approved the Treasurer's report, noting income and expenditures in line with the budget.

All aspects of the parking expansion have been completed and we continue to explore ways to enhance our online presence and hope to have some concrete ideas of related costs soon.

There is no new information regarding our discussion with the Hamden Land Trust.

We noted that the wooden playground has reached the end of its life and will explore possible replacement.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Donohue



## **Board of Missions and Concerns**

Hi Everyone, Missions will be donating to Guide Dogs of America -Tender Loving Canines.

They breed, raise and train guide dogs for the blind/visually impaired, service dogs for Veterans and to children with Autism at no cost.

Also we will be donating to the NF Tumor Foundation.

We will continue to help where needed

Take care,

Donna and the Missions Committee

## **Christian Education**

As CE wraps up another school year, we'd like to thank the adults who get their kids, and grandkids, to church for Sunday School. In addition, thank you to the many helping hands with lessons, Advent Workshop, and Lent projects. But mostly, thank you to the children who listened to the stories, created artwork, and share Gods love everywhere they go.

Our last Sunday School is on June 9th and then we resume in September. We're wishing families a great summer.

Janet Manukas



Sunday Service 10am every Sunday is also available online via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

Saturday Service every Saturday at 5pm  
In person only

Bible Study every Wednesday via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

You can donate online by scanning this QR code.

Donations are accepted through a secure site by Vanco.





## **Dunbar UCC Open & Affirming Statement**

We, the members of Dunbar United Church of Christ, want Jesus to be the center of our lives. Our mission is to practice the New Commandment that Jesus gave us: to love one another as he has loved us (John 13:34). We seek to follow God's will by loving our neighbors, friends and enemies alike. We seek justice for all.

We celebrate the image of God in every person. As an Open and Affirming Church, we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of our church, and affirm that the grace of God, known especially through Jesus, is a gift meant for people of every race, color, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation. Worship, leadership, ministry, and employment are open to all.

We are on a journey of faith and invite all people to join us. No matter the church or community where your journey began, you are welcome here.

### **Mission Statement**

“We believe that Jesus calls us to love each other, serve our neighbor, and nurture God's spirit within us.”