



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.

October 2025

Pastor's Report, October 2025

One of the verses of Psalm 37 says: “Let go of anger and leave rage behind! Don't get upset — it will only lead to evil.” I agree with this. But have you ever had an angry person listen to you when you said: “Don't be upset!”? Did they say, “Well — you know — you're right. I'm going to cheer myself up right now. Thanks for the advice — I don't know what got into me.” Or have you ever had a person out of control with rage obey you when you said, “Now settle down. Be calm. You don't need to be so upset.”? It's like telling a drug addict to just say “no” to drugs — or whatever the addiction is. “Just say no!” It's crazy to think that anyone in a fit of anger or rage will listen to us if we tell them not to be angry. So this Psalm makes much more sense if we realize that the Psalmist doesn't expect us to take him seriously here. He's trying to make us laugh. He's joking. If we can read the Bible as comedy, it will make more sense.

Finally I realize this, after all these years, that the key to understanding the Bible is realizing that it's a collection of writings that were intended to make people laugh. The Bible is a lot of comedy. I wish they'd have told me this in seminary. People there took everything so seriously. We studied Hebrew and Greek and different histories of the ancient world and church history — when we should have been studying the art of comedy! Because — read it for yourself — the Bible is a funny book! And what we really need to understand the Bible is a sense of humor. Yes. We need to be able to read these sacred words and loao (laugh our a ___ _ off). Like Jesus' advice, when someone hits us in the face to let them hit us in the face again and then say, “Wow — you got a strong punch there! And I forgive you! No — wait! I love you!” Ha ha ha!!!! Jesus brought the house down with that joke. Another joke that never failed — when Jesus said, “Happy are you when people hate you, and when they despise and call you evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.” People roared with that one — they bent over they laughed so hard.

Humor is the key to understanding passages that have puzzled scholars for millennia. Even the gospel-writer Luke made mistakes because he took things too seriously. Luke said when Jesus gave his first sermon in Nazareth (4:29), the congregation got so angry at him they tried to push him off a cliff. That's not what happened. When Jesus told his Jewish congregation that God loves foreigners as much as them — and that many foreigners and sinners would go to heaven before the good Jewish people — the congregation was overcome with laughter! They weren't angry — they were cracking up so hard, they were slapping Jesus on the back, saying things like, "Oh Christ! You're too much!! Good joke! Jesus Christ, you kill me!" People slapped him so hard he almost fell off a cliff. That's what really happened. Come on Luke — lighten up!

Jesus had many titles, like Christ, Messiah, Lord, Son of God, Son of Man, Savior, Rabbi, King of Kings — do you realize there are over a hundred titles in the gospels for Jesus? But one is missing, because along with all these, Jesus was foremost the Comedian of God. He did stand-up comedy. Like Lenny Bruce, George Carlin, Robin Williams, Bill Maher, and Jimmy Kimmel — they're all modern prophets, hilarious truth-tellers, like Jesus. Only the Pharisees, Scribes, and other leaders didn't think Jesus was funny. So eventually Jesus had his show cancelled. They took him off the air — literally! I hope you'll plan to join us for worship and laughter some time soon. Come and hear the actual words of Jesus, the Comedian of God. I think it was Jesus who said, "Know the truth, and the truth will crack you up!!!"

With love, grief, tears, laughter — deeply grateful for you,

George

Contact Pastor George @

Phone: (203) 287-8106 or

revonweb@sbcglobal.net

DUNBAR'S FRIENDSGIVING DAY IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9!

Join us for a Friendsgiving Brunch to be served After Worship Service on Sunday, November 9! Please invite whomever you would like to enjoy this brunch with us! Thanksgiving recipes, some new vegetable medleys, special desserts and more! If you would like to contribute a special recipe of any type, we would more than welcome it! As always, help cleaning up is always appreciated!

Debbie

Women's Fellowship

Apple Festival is collecting for Grandma's Attic, the Jewelry Table, and the Book Sale! Books need to be in good condition, no encyclopedias or condensed books. Please donate your better than Goodwill items such as small appliances, glassware, dishes, knick knacks, toys, puzzles, tools, jewelry, weird stuff and more!

If your feeling crafty, make something for our 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!

We will be working the week of the festival on Wednesday morning 9a.m., Thursday (long day) 9a.m. and Friday 9a.m. Volunteers are also needed for fair break down at 1pm festival day.

Save those Target bags, we need them for frozen pies and Grandma's Attic.

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:

George and Janet Braen
Charlotte and John Sroka
Steve and Sandy Hurd

Bob and Karen Corona
John and Lois Kasarauskas
Heather Sibley

This month we are donating to the Hamden Food Bank. The Food Bank is planning a free fall farmstand day at the Keefe Center as well as gearing up for the upcoming holidays.

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

Attention All Bakers

We are asking again for your delicious home baked goods for the Bake Sale at the Apple Festival on Oct. 18.

We want to have the specific items that sell so well.

These are:

Bars and squares, brownies, cookies, small loaves, muffins, fudge, and small pies of any kind except apple.

We will package and bag them.

You can drop them off on Fri., Oct. 17 between 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM or Sat. morning the day of the festival.

If any questions, please call Jennifer Johnson at 203-605-7234.

As always, you make the festival a success and we thank you so much.

Board of Missions and Concerns

Hi Everyone,

Missions will be donating to FreeTown-New Haven Sister Cities Committee to help pay for shipping to Sierra Leone (they have the preschool equipment already to outfit a Head Start room). Also we are donating \$140 to LeSEA GLOBAL FEED THE HUNGRY which will equal \$980 of food to feed 100 people for a week. Church partners will deliver the food to refugees fleeing and those in Ukraine. We also gave a gift card to a member of our church community.

Donna

Trustees

The Trustees met on 9/21. We reviewed finances, including income and expenditures. All categories are in line with expectations.

Kathy Straka provided a report on progress with website redesign. We are working on text content and should be engaging with the redesign service for website look and functionality.

John reported that Peter Bonadies has assisted with the creation of a proposed scope of work for rehabilitation of the Parish House-- a first phase focused on roof replacement, window replacement and siding. John and Peter have met with a contractor that comes highly recommended and we are waiting for a cost estimate. We hope to begin work this fall season.

Respectfully submitted,
John Donohue

Deacons

The deacons continue to work to support members of the congregation in need. Please remember there are those that are alone. If there is anyone that you are concerned about, or you think would like a visit please let us know.

Respectfully submitted,
Kitty Donohue

Christian Education

The kids of CE will be helping at the table of handmade items at Apple Festival. We'll also be making some items that will be offered for sale. Stop by and see us there.

Janet Manukas

Stewardship Committee Report

Just a reminder that our annual pledge drive will begin next month. Our pledges - how much we plan to give to the church through our offerings in the coming year - are used to formulate a budget which includes salaries, supplies, utilities, insurance, outreach and improvements.

Look for a pledge letter and pledge card coming soon.

Sincerely,
Tom Parlapiano, Chair





Join Us!

56th Annual Apple Festival

Dunbar United Church of Christ
767 Benham St. Hamden 06514
(corner of Dunbar Hill Road)



**Saturday
October 18th**

9 am – 1 pm

Rain or Shine

10" Apple Pies @ \$12

Our famous pie table will be offering 10" Deep Dish Apple Pies, both frozen and fresh baked, for only \$12 and mini apple pies for only \$6!
First come, first served!

To-Go Apple Festival Café:

Apple Crisp

Apple Pancakes

Aebleskivers

Cider, Coffee, Tea



Grandma's Attic Tag Sale

Jams and Jellies

Bazaar Table

Jewelry Table

Bake Sale

Used Book Sale

Large Basket Raffle

Proceeds go to outreach programs in the community.

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.”