



The Congregational Church of Topsfield InSpire Weekly News & Updates

July 3, 2025 / Issue 233

Join Our Mailing List

Visit our website



Sunday Morning

Join us for worship online and in person.

View the Zoom link for the Sunday Service [here](#)
Sunday's bulletin [here](#)



(Picture of Martin's shawl above)



Sunday School Classes Have Ended and will Resume in September

Please contact the Church office if you would like to learn more about our Sunday School program.
office@topsfieldchurch.org

Prayer Shawl Ministry Update

This church has had a Prayer Shawl Ministry for the past 23 years with the vision of combining the care and love of knitting into a prayerful ministry that reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace. Knitters meet regularly on Wednesday at 1 p.m. in the Emerson Center Parlor. All interested knitters are welcome!

Several knitters have made beautiful shawls for Rev. Martin, his wife Christa, and son MJ, as departing gifts. Barbara Merriman made a shawl for MJ; Conny Griesshammer made



Emerson Center Office Update

The Emerson Center office will be closed on Fridays for the summer, beginning Friday, June 20th through Friday, August 29th.

The summer office hours will be:
Monday–Thursday, 10am–1pm.

Thank you!



Last week we said goodbye to our Settled Pastor of twelve years, Rev. Martin Riekert. He, himself, offered a final sermon with the message may God watch over each and all of us during the times we are not together. A simple and comforting thought, but also one that has much broader implications.

For the first time in twelve years, we are a church without a settled pastor to lead us but not without a direction. With the help of staff, lay leadership, an active search committee with a process in place and, finally, God's watchful plan to welcome a "bridge" minister, we will be fine and will move forward.

I once again, want to thank Martin for his leadership during this transition and to all those who helped with the events that brought closure to his ministry with us. It was with mixed feelings that we said goodbye, sad to see Martin leave us but wishing him health and Godspeed in this next phase of his life. We must also wish him the space and time to allow him to feel a separation or independence from what he has done for forty years, minister to those in need.

While we allow Martin this space, we will also be moving forward in welcoming Reverend Dr. David VanArsdale as our bridge minister on

one for Christa; and Sheryl Knutsen made one for Rev. Martin. They have each created a unique pattern for their shawls and you can rest in the fact that there are none like them in the known world.

We pray that these shawls will be warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing them in good times as well as difficult ones, reminding them of the love and appreciation of the CCoT for the many years of ministry to us.

~The CCoT Prayer Shawl Ministry



Community Garden Calling all Gardeners!

The garden season is upon us. Jim Barnes, John Szymanski, Steve Whelan and Werner Griesshammer were busy in April working compost into the soil. Essex Coop generously donated 14 large bags of compost. All the plants and the seeds are in the ground and we hope for a good growing season.

Please follow this [link](#) to sign up for watering, weeding, harvesting and/or delivering to 'Haven From Hunger' in Peabody. Every task takes about one hour. I'm usually available to show you around if you have not helped in the past.

Thank you!
Conny Griesshammer



Lemonade on the Lawn "LOL"

July 13: Ellie Losee

July 27: Sandy Whelan and Cathy Imboden

August 10: Jane and Bruce Jones

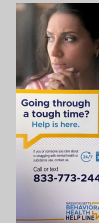
August 24: Susan and Joe Gibbons

Many thanks,
Members of the Board of Community

July 13, 2025. Rev. VanArsdale has 41 years of ministry beginning with a UCC church in Framingham, MA and concluding with a Pastorship at Faith Presbyterian Church in Sun City, Arizona. Reverend VanArsdale will be with us as we complete the search process and will provide that necessary period when we process the space of separation from one minister to the welcoming of our next minister.

During this time of transition, we will rely on and invoke Martin's last message: May God be watching over all of us while we journey through this period. And may His wisdom help the Congregational Church of Topsfield continue to demonstrate Christ's teachings and compassion to all. In peace,
Steve Whelan, Moderator

and Communications



The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line

Learn more [here](#)

Parish Care Ministry

View the Prayer Listing [page](#) and July birthday [page](#)



SNEUCC–
Southern New England
Conference–UCC [page](#)



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all

UCC
Newsletter
[page](#)



The Congregational Church of Topsfield | 9 East Common Street | Topsfield, MA 01983 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!