



The Congregational Church of Topsfield InSpire Weekly News & Updates

July 10, 2025 / Issue 234

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Sunday Morning

Join us for
worship online
and in person.

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Service [here](#)
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"Some mid-week thoughts from Dave"

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:
Yes, I am the new pastor serving with the people of Christ at The Congregational Church of Topsfield. I have been asked to provide "Bridge Ministry" following the retirement of your pastor.

I will be serving initially 20 hours per week, with time in town and in the church office and writing and preparation time in our apartment in N. Andover. Over these next few weeks, I will seek to connect with the congregation during the weekly notes in the "InSpire" and share a story or two. I am most interested in your feedback and thoughts along the way.

I am providing my cell phone as a major contact number and feel free to call or text with pastoral needs or a potential emergency. We have heard this story before, but I would like to add a slight twist.

As a man was passing the elephants, he suddenly stopped, confused by the fact that these huge creatures were being held by only a small rope tied to their front leg. There were no chains, no cages restraining the elephants. It was obvious that the elephants could, at any time, break away from their bonds but for some reason, they did not. He saw a trainer nearby and asked why these animals just stood there and made no attempt to get away. "Well," trainer said, "when they are very young and much smaller we use the same size rope to tie them and, at that age, it's enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free." The man was amazed. These animals could at any time break free from their bonds but because they believed they couldn't, they were stuck where they were.

Like the elephants, how many of us go through life hanging onto a belief that we cannot do something, simply because we failed at it once before? Yes, how many of us have heard a different word that opens us to something new in life? Are there things we have heard in recent days

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 27: Sandy Whelan and Cathy Imboden

August 17: Jane and Bruce Jones

August 24: Susan and Joe Gibbons

Many thanks,
Members of the Board of Community and Communications



The Upper Room July/August Magazine Is Now Available!

The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide is devoted to connecting people around the world through encouraging stories of God's love and faithfulness.

that open new doors ... and we want to try, but we are so hesitant? Maybe in the life of the Congregational Church of Topsfield, something has never been tried, or maybe it was tried once, but the assumption is it would not work. Why not give it a try? Part of learning in life is to risk failure, and find a whole new direction for living. Go for it! This is your week to move forward.

Maybe over these next few weeks at the CCoT we will try a few new things, or we will share in a new experience as a church family. I cannot wait! And let's be the strong people of God on the Common in Topsfield. Smile a lot, laugh often.

See you in church and know you are dearly loved! Join us for worship online and in person. Use the Zoom link for the Sunday Service in this InSpire.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Dr. Dave VanArsdale ("Dave")
Bridge Pastor
Dave's cell, call or text:
623-258-7592
dave@topsfieldchurch.org



Sunday School Classes Will Resume in September

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



Emerson Center Office Update

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

Each issue of this devotional contains daily meditations written by readers—people who experience the challenges and triumphs of daily life.

Several copies are now available in the narthex/lobby of the Meetinghouse.



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
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Td.flicks on Instagram

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

Thank you!

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

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