

Old Steeple Community Church

United Church of Christ

OCTOBER 2025



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THE Steeple View NEWSLETTER

From our Pastor ...

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures,
especially through my lord Brother Sun,
who brings the day; and you give light through him.
And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor!
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which you give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom you light the night and he is beautiful
and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs...

Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks
and serve Him with great humility.

From 'Canticle of the Sun' by Francis of Assisi (ca. 1181-1226)



On October 4th, the church commemorates Saint Francis of Assisi (ca. 1181-1226). Francis was brought up in what today is Italy as a rich merchant's son. He lived a life of luxury and privilege. However, in his early twenties he began to question his purpose and the meaning of life. After a few years of discernment, he took a vow of poverty (much to the chagrin of his father, who eventually disowned him). In 1208, he felt called to proclaim the gospel. He traveled the countryside with a band of followers, who lived on alms as they preached to peasants in the vernacular – even though they neither had formal training nor

(continued)

POB 154 | 656 Main Road • Aquebogue, NY 11931 • office hours: Tu, W, Th 9-2
Rev. Kerstin Weidmann, Pastor • Keith Young, Moderator
Anyi Cai, Music Director • Gail Evans, Office Administrator

were commissioned by the church to do so. Francis attracted more and more followers and eventually founded the Franciscan brotherhood (some famous members of the Franciscan order are Martin Luther, and Pope Leo XIII).

Francis and his followers were known for their charity and compassion. Francis himself also felt a strong bond with everything created. His 'Canticle of the Sun', see above, is a testament to this. Francis experienced the presence of Christ in the natural world. It is said that he could talk with animals, and that he preached to the birds of the sky. He tenderly called God's works of creation 'brother' and 'sister'. He understood that everything is connected and interdependent, and that human beings are merely a part of God's intricate creation. Not surprisingly, he is the patron saint of animals, creation, and environmentalists in the Roman Catholic tradition. Churches around the world still offer a 'blessing of the animals' on or around the feast day of St. Francis (Old Steeple will do so on Saturday, October 11th at 10 a.m.).

In a society where we predominantly see nature as something to be exploited for human 'progress' (with the harrowing consequences of climate change and other manmade natural disasters), may we gain wisdom from Francis and his understanding of creation. It may be time for us to address everything created as tenderly as Francis did: brother rock, sister flower, sister bird, brother tree. It may be time for us to remember that ALL human beings are our siblings. It may be time to acknowledge that God created everything and everyone lovingly – 'and see, it was good' (Genesis 1). To be good stewards of all that God has made and entrusted to us, and to protect it as much as we can. To think about our ways of often mindless consumption, and to look for ways to reduce our footprint on this planet. To honor and praise God – not just with our lips, but through our loving and caring actions as well.

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann

Pastor's Vacation

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann will be on vacation October 13th through November 3rd. In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Rev. Sean Murray (First Congregational, Riverhead) at 917-930-1585 or sbmurray@optonline.net. Pastor Matthias Heuber from Hagen, Germany, will be leading worship on Sunday, October 19th. Rev. Lorraine De Armitt will be leading worship on October 26th and November 2nd.



Outreach



Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their

communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

This year's theme is "Carry Each Other's Burdens." The phrase comes from Galatians 6:2, a biblical passage that encourages believers to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ". This means actively supporting each other through struggles, which in turn fulfills the commandment to love one another, as demonstrated by Jesus Christ.

We will begin collecting this offering on October 5, which is World Communion Sunday. The collection will continue throughout the month of October.





Council Minutes



September 10, 2025

Moderator Keith started the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and Pastor Kerstin offered a prayer. Members present were Keith Young, Rick Reeve, Pastor Kerstin Weidmann, Edgar Goodale, Ann Priapi, Amy Cosgrove, Barbara Crowley, and Jean Lapinski. The minutes of the July 9th meeting were approved as published in the August newsletter, with a motion by Edgar and second by Amy. Note: there was no Council meeting in August.

Pastor's Report - Pastor Kerstin Weidmann

Pastor Kerstin highlighted several items from her written report. Tim and Ashley Young were married on August 23; and a baptism for the Mlodynia's second child is scheduled for November 9. Pastor Kerstin was invited by the NY Conference to become a facilitator for OWL (Our Whole Lives) for the Suffolk Association in Ithaca on October 2-4. Her expenses will be covered by the NY Conference. She mentioned several ideas for Old Steeple for the upcoming year, and Rev. Bonnie shared a similar list of ideas generated at a Ladies' Luncheon back in April. Pastor Kerstin said that the fall Suffolk Association meeting will be held on November 1 when she will be on vacation, so a delegate from Old Steeple is needed.

Treasurer's Report – Edgar Goodale

Edgar reviewed August's budget, along with the year-to-date budget, with the Council. The endowment fund did well again last month, increasing in value by \$30,000. We are on target with expected income, and expenses were also as expected, with the exception of "Repairs and Maintenance" which was higher because of the installation of the new ramp. Pledges and outreach contributions remain on target for the year.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Buildings and Grounds – Rick Reeve

Rick said that minor repairs were made, along with fixing the downstairs toilet. He reported that a former Old Steeple scholarship winner, Juliana Hise, is presently doing research and teaching at Stony Brook University and has been accepted into medical school next August! Her brother James, a 2024-25 Old Steeple scholarship winner, is attending Stony Brook and working part-time. Keith will speak with our sexton to reinforce the need for timely communication.

Worship – Ann Priapi

Chris Magyar will substitute for Anyi on September 14 when she will be away. Ann will be away on September 14 and 28 as well as a few weeks in October and/or November, and she will develop a list of Sunday worship activities that she routinely handles that can be shared with her substitutes. Gail will develop a flyer for the Blessing of the Animals service on October 11 and Ann and her team will distribute the flyers. There will be no Farmers' Services this fall, and Gail will put a note in the newsletter. Ann reminded us that cell phones should be silenced during worship.

Caring – Barbara Crowley

Barbara has made visits and calls to members who are homebound or limited in mobility.

Spiritual Formation

The Council sadly accepted Rev. Bonnie's resignation from Council, with much gratitude for all the initiatives that she has spearheaded throughout the years. She offered to advise members of both Spiritual Formation and Outreach, which presently do not have leaders. She will also continue to order groceries for the food pantry, which Nancy Goodale picks up and delivers each week.

A Sunday School Kick-Off will be on October 5, followed by a potluck picnic in Luce Hall; with Sunday School classes beginning October 12. Pastor Kerstin will ask Gail to compile a menu for attendees to sign up, and Ann will post the event on our sign. Classes will be held every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month, when children are invited to attend church with their parents. Council decided to hire a part-time teacher through the end of 2025 to take the lead each Sunday, while our volunteers will assist (per our Safe Church policy) as

needed. Gail will develop a flyer, which Ann will share with Suffolk Community College and Pastor Kerstin will share through Handshake. Ann said that curriculum and supplies are readily available for classes.

Outreach

September's outreach effort is Habitat for Humanity, October's is Neighbors in Need, November's is Maureen's Haven, and December's is the Christmas Fund and Angel Tree. Victoria Pace will plan for Maureen's Haven again this year and Edgar will speak with her about their needs.

Continuing and New Business

- Donna Doroszka shared the new quilters rent and agreement with Joy Regula and Nancy Raynor last spring, but they have continued to pay at the existing rate. Keith will follow up, reminding them that the rental rate will increase in January of 2026 and securing a signed agreement.
- Jessica Wells de Vera provided a schedule for this fall's nursery school and requested the use of the kitchen one day a week. Per Council's discussion, Keith will ask Jessica for clarification.
- Edgar reviewed his Proposed 2026 Budget Overview with the Council, explaining each item line by line and making the modifications agreed on by Council members. We are very grateful to Edgar for the thorough preparation that he does in advance to make the process clear and doable.
- A brief discussion of the January 2026 Council vacancies concluded the meeting. According to our by-laws, Council members cannot serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. This means that we'll need a new moderator, treasurer, buildings & grounds team leader and financial secretary. Currently these positions on the Council are vacant and also need to be filled; team leaders for welcoming, outreach and spiritual formation.

Blessing of the Animals

at
Old Steeple Community Church

Rain or Shine!

**Saturday,
October 11, 2025
10 am**

A free-will donation will be taken to benefit the North Fork Animal Welfare League.

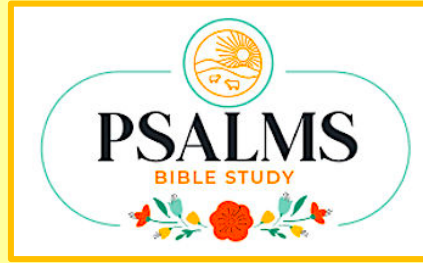
**Animal friends must be leashed or crated.
Music, scripture and blessings to honor our friends.**

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The next Council meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2025, at 5:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.
Respectfully submitted, Jean Lapinski





Our **Bible Study** group will resume again on Friday, October 3, 1 p.m, at my home, 21 Victor Street, Riverhead. All are welcome to join us, whether on occasion or every week.

For our first week, we will finish up our work on the Parables. Then, we will turn our attention to studying the Book of Psalms. A comprehensive study guide is provided each week. It is surprising how much there is to learn, even when you are familiar with scripture!

For more information, feel free to call me at 631-779-2560. Would love to have you join us!
(Rev.) Bonnie

Sunday, October 5th Sunday School Kickoff!

10 a.m. Worship service for all ages in the sanctuary, followed by a Picnic-style Potluck Luncheon and a Program for All Ages in Luce Hall.



Old Steeple Stitches

Our October gathering will be on the 15th (third Wednesday) at 7 pm in the coffee hour area. If you know of someone in need of a prayer shawl, please let us know either at the worship service or by contacting the church office.

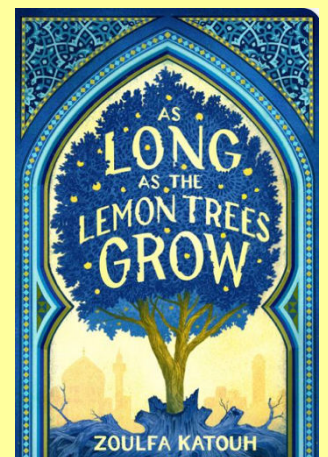
Book Discussion Group

We will be completing the discussion of the book ***Babylon's Ark*** by Lawrence Anthony. This book is about the rescue of the animals in the Baghdad Zoo led by Lawrence Anthony during the Iraqi war.

The next book we will be discussing is a novel - ***As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow*** by Zoulfa Katouh. It is set in Syria during the war and the New York Times calls it "a searing story of war, loss, family, and love, of seeking grace in madness and hope in tragedy ..."

We will be meeting on the second and fourth Fridays (10/10 and 10/24) at 11:00 a.m. in the coffee hour area.

All are welcome to join.



There will be no 'Conversations Over Coffee' in October,
and there will be no Farmers Services this Fall.

• OCTOBER 2025 •

Outreach is **Neighbors in Need**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1 La Mision Church hall rental 8 pm	2	3 Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Bible Study 1 pm AA 6 pm	4
5 10 am Worship, Communion followed by a picnic style pot-luck luncheon and activities for all, to honor the beginning of Sunday School LaMision Church hall rental 6-8 pm	6 AA 7 pm	7 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm	8 Council mtg. 5:30 pm LaMision Church hall rental 8 pm	9	10 Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Book Club 11 am Bible Study 1 pm AA 6 pm	11 Blessing of the Animals 10 am
12 10 am Worship and Sunday School LaMision Church hall rental 6-8 pm	13 AA 7 pm	14 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm	15 Old Steeple Stitchers 7 pm LaMision Church hall rental 8 pm	16	17 Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Bible Study 1 pm AA 6 pm	18
19 10 am Worship and Sunday School LaMision Church hall rental 6-8 pm	20 AA 7 pm	21 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm	22 LaMision Church hall rental 8 pm	23 SV articles due	24 Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Book Club 11 am Bible Study 1 pm AA 6 pm	25 ELIQ renting hall 9-4
26 10 am Worship and Sunday School LaMision Church hall rental 6-8 pm	27 AA 7 pm	28 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm	29 LaMision Church hall rental 8 pm	30	31 Happy Halloween! Choir Rehearsal 9:45 am Bible Study 1 pm AA 6 pm	1

