

THE CLOCK

A publication of

OXFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Pastor Barry Judd

October 2019

“Grow in Christ...Share Our Faith”

Dear Beloved Family,

The Secret and the Superpower

If you have not been able to attend Church much through the Season of Kingdomtide, you may not be familiar with our discussions about the Secret and the Superpower. As we have been expositing Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we have noticed that he speaks about a mystery. I am convinced that said “mystery” is no mystery at all. The concept which was “hidden in times past” is the worst kept secret in the history of the Universe. That is, God's unconditional love for everyone. This idea was far from hidden in the Word of God even in the Old Testament. In our study of Deuteronomy, we clearly noted how God had chosen Israel to be a light to the Gentiles. God would demonstrate His character of faithfulness through the example of His interaction with Israel. This example of faithful and unconditional love would draw people from all the peoples of the world.

I find it interesting that Paul refers to this as a mystery. I think he is lacing his argument with sarcasm because the only reason the universal and unconditional love of God appears to be a mystery is because we typically do not accept it. Many of the Jews determined that they were chosen because God loved them more than He did the Gentiles...probably because of their faithful adherence to the law. However, God made it clear that He did not work that way. Israel had not been chosen because they were so spiritually strong, but because they were very weak. God would demonstrate His power by working through a people who were downtrodden.

Jesus points out the secret in a most unpopular way. In Luke 4, Jesus declares that God is always on the side of the oppressed, not the oppressor. In the same sermon at the synagogue in Capernaum, He declares that Israel had become the oppressor of the Gentiles because they were spiritually isolating the Gentiles from the things of God. Ouch! In their zeal to be God's favorite they had actually abandoned the purpose for which God had chosen them in the first place.

Being the example of this “secret” is now the responsibility of the Church. Through an equal emphasis upon truth and love the Church is able to engage its superpower. Again, Ephesians explains that we as members of the Church have the awesome ability to make God look good in front of the heavenly realms. Not only does our love for one another demonstrate to the world that we are disciples of Jesus, but our unity shows the spiritual powers in the unseen realms that God knows what He is doing. God can point to the saints who remain united through love and show us as an example that truth and love motivate people in a stronger way than lies and fear. If we overemphasize love against truth, we no longer demonstrate God's justice. If we overemphasize truth against love, we no longer demonstrate God's mercy.

Since unity is our spiritual superpower, we must consider how we are to be united in faith. I have already been asked if I think that unity equals conformity. I do not. Conformity means that all the members of a group agree to think or perform in a way that is prescribed by the group dynamic. Perhaps the leader decides for everyone. Perhaps established tradition determines present practice. Those are all examples of conformity. There is no room for growth or ingenuity within conformity. Unity, however, is motivated by unconditional love. Unconditional love is patient and kind. It is demonstrated through the bond of peace. Space is granted to allow for the Holy Spirit to convince us all how He is leading. No one is left behind. No one is forgotten. When we are more consumed by our love for others than having our rights protected; when we are more motivated by what will edify a brother or sister than getting our own way we are engaging our superpower. We are showing the universe that God is working in us. Because these are not human responses...they are divine responses within humans.

In the Love of Christ,

Pastor Judd

OCTOBER SCRIPTURE READINGS

October 6	Lamentations 1:1-6 Psalm 137 Ephesians 4:17-32 Matthew 23:25-28	Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 13	Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 Psalm 66:1-12 Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16 Luke 12:32-40	Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 20	Jeremiah 31:27-34 Psalm 119:97-104 Ephesians 5:1-20 Matthew 25:1-13	Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 27	Jeremiah 8:18-9:1 Psalm 113 Ephesians 5:21-6:9 Matthew 18:	Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Please Pray:



Please pray for the sick or injured, those caring for the sick, those in recovery, shut-ins and those in mourning. Please pray for healing, recovery, comfort, peace & grace for:

Church members, friends and family who are shut-ins and their caregivers, including: Harriet Brunnett, Bob Hatfield, Sally Johnson, Hazel Prouty & Carlton Thomas.

Please pray for Margaret Heidi, Janet Pilling, Christine Judd [Pastor's Mother], and Rose Pilling.

Pray for our church, our conference, our nation and the world.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



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World Communion Sunday, October 6, 2019, is the celebration of Christian unity when churches around the world join in communion.

October is our month to provide volunteers to help at the Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf, in the Oxford Community Center on Maple Street. Please support this very necessary program by donating your time on Thursdays from 5:15-7:15 PM.

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

On November 3rd, we will be celebrating All Saints' Sunday. During the service, the names of Saints - church members, family members and friends, who have departed this world to be with our Lord during the last year will be read and their memories honored with the ringing of a chime, the lighting of a candle and the presentation of a white cloth rose. If you wish to have a person who passed after October of 2018 remembered in this way, please provide the name to the office.

Teen Ministry is in need of Donations

If you would like to support the teen ministry group but aren't sure how, we could use snacks (cookies, cheese and crackers, etc), caffeine free drinks, and snack size candy for the teen gatherings. All gatherings start at 6:00pm. You can drop off your donation or we can pick it up if needed. For more information or questions contact Christine Kilmonis at dck3b1@gmail.com or send a text to (508)887-5990.

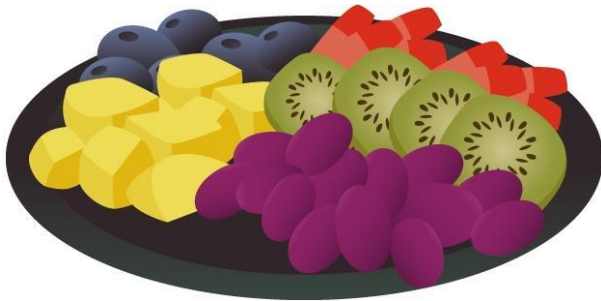
Saturday, October 5th - Teen Gathering - from 6-8pm

Saturday, October 19th - Teen **Pumpkin Carving** - from 6-8pm

We will be carving pumpkins and are in need of pumpkins and carving tools. If you enjoy carving and would like to spend time with the teens you are more than welcome.

Saturday, November 2nd - Teen **Potluck dinner** - from 6-8pm

If you have a favorite dish you would like to prepare for the teen group we would love to have it. We would like to invite you to sit down and eat a meal with us.



Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf

This program helps keep people of Oxford from going hungry.
For the month of October, the Food Shelf is asking OUMC to donate the following: Canned Soup

On October 5th please place food items in the collection basket at the front of the church when you come forward to receive Communion.

For the rest of the month, donations can be put in the basket in the narthex (next to the office door).

In November we will be looking for: canned green beans

Many families coming to us have members with "diabetes" and "gluten allergies".

Low sugar, sugar free, and gluten free items are always in need.

<http://www.oxfordfoodshelf.org>

Thank you for your generosity!

Do you have a favorite hymn?

Write it down and give it to our organist, Ed LaLiberty, a choir member or a member of the Worship Committee, (Melissa Scales, Pam Marshalkowski, Bob Shedd and Cindy Denson).

STEWARDSHIP

Below is part of the letter from Sudarsharna Devadar, Bishop of the New England Conference. The letter is a **must read** as we move into another pledging season. In this letter, the Bishop is reflecting on things he indicated “touched him deeply” after returning from a recent spiritual renewal trip.

“One of them was an invitation to lunch with a couple and their daughter, who is in her forties. During our conversation, the daughter, whose husband has a lucrative business, shared that once they started tithing, they not only found contentment in their hearts and minds, their business started flourishing!

Another guest at the table immediately challenged her, asking why she would tithe when the money might be misused by church leaders.

She responded: “We give to God and for God’s ministry ... it is not my place to make judgment. Everyone is accountable to God, including church leaders.”

I was deeply touched by this response. This whole conversation has stayed with me. Is it not true that when we give God our tithes and resources we do it out of joy and cheer? St. Paul said it very clearly, “... God loves a cheerful giver.” ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)).

When I asked if I could share her witness, she emailed me this powerful statement:

I completely agree with you that God loves a cheerful giver. I am touched by some of the verses from the Bible which talk about tithing – [Proverbs 3:9-10](#), [Malachi 3:10-12](#), and [Luke 6:38](#)."

Now coming to our personal experience as a family, I can go on and on as to how God has been faithful to us all these years.

Though both of us were born and brought up in a Christian family attending church regularly, we never thought too much about tithing in our initial years of marriage. Yes, we did put our offering [in the plate] every Sunday, but it was never 1/10th as we are supposed to do. I remember those days we were always struggling to meet both ends, be it our business or our personal expenses month after month. And one Sunday when our pastor spoke about tithing, I knew in my heart what I had to do. I started keeping aside the tithes as soon as I got my salary though the devil was scaring me [by asking how I would] manage to last till the end of the month. But I had made up my mind and encouraged my spouse to do the same, and to our surprise, till today we can only see abundance in every area of our lives, be it personal or business. God just took us to another level which we hadn't even dreamt about. We have not lacked anything from the time we have been faithfully tithing. There is only abundance, and we could even help many needy people. There was a time when we thought we had to close down our business, but God just turned the tables and now our business has grown in manifolds. When I look back and see, I can just close my eyes and say, ‘God, only you could do this.’ The bottom line is, when we honour God, He never lets us down. All glory and honour to our Almighty God. I would like to encourage others through my testimony and to be blessed.

Then she added a testimony from her spouse, who had the following words to offer:

The business grew lucrative when we gave to God without expecting. It is my personal experience we should give without expecting. God does not want our money, but He sees our hearts. He gives us sometimes 10-fold, sometimes 100-fold ... if we keep an account with God ... God keeps an account of us...the Bible says to give cheerfully ... so when we had nothing, we gave cheerfully without expecting and in a few years, we could see we have grown beyond our expectations. We honour our almighty God for whatever we are today. Its's only because of His grace and mercy we are what we are today.

As I continue to reflect on my own experience and that of this sister in Christ, the questions that continue to nudge me are:

- What if every one of us took this testimony as a personal challenge and started tithing? What might happen to us on our Christian journeys and what blessings might come about?
- If you are already a tither, what if you were to share your testimony joyfully and boldly with others?

It is my hope and prayer that God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, makes us open to reflect upon the testimony of this couple so that we too may share the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ with others”.

In Christ's love, Bishop Sudarsharna Devadar



**Oxford United Methodist Church
465 Main Street**

TURKEY DINNER WITH ALL THE FIX'INS

**Saturday, October 26, 2019
5:00 – 6:30**

Take-out available beginning @ 4:30

Adults: \$12.00

Kids: \$5.00

Family Cap: \$30.00



**Bakers needed for the Missions Committee BAKE SALE to raise funds for the purchase of hats, scarves, gloves and mittens for Worcester Fellowship.
Please call Cindy Denson: 508-987-5241.**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Donald Strader	10/1
Linda Guinee	10/5
Sarah Naim	10/9
Donald Johnson	10/15
Sheri Abrahamson	10/17
Rod Lee	10/18
Isaias Perez	10/20
Erin Canty	10/21
Tara Flynn	10/21
Donald Latham	10/23
Cindy Denson	10/26
Sophia Naim	10/29

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Steve & Brenda Gabel 10/9

WHAT'S THE "PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND"?

The PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND is an account used exclusively by the Pastor for the purpose of helping someone with a pressing financial emergency. It is set aside from our regular giving and funded solely from our additional designated gifts. Due to an increase in recent requests, the fund has been greatly depleted.



In October, we will return to celebrating Communion two Sundays each month. The first Sunday will be at the rail, and the third Sunday by intinction. To help replenish the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, we will have plates set out to receive donations on the third Sunday. Please consider supporting this fund each month. (Please make checks out to OUMC with "Pastor's Discretionary" in the notation).

Baskets to receive donations of food for the Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf will be at the front of the sanctuary on the first Sunday.

Your gift, small or large, will be appreciated!

OUMC MISSIONS

Thank you for your generosity.

During September, the members and friends of Oxford UMC donated the items needed to make 24 complete UMCOR Hygiene kits. These were brought to Pastor Wanda at Charlton City UMC and she delivered them to Trinity UMC in Springfield. From there, they will be brought to the nearest UMCOR center for distribution to people who have been displaced or who have suffered because of severe weather or disasters created by people.

Through-out the month of September, the Missions Committee has been accepting new donations for the assembly of UMCOR Cleaning Kits. Our goal is 6 complete kits. UMCOR delivers these kits to victims of floods, earthquakes, fires, etcetera, so they can clean their homes and help to make them habitable again.

To date, we have most of what we need to complete 3 buckets. There will be an insert in the bulletin on September 29th stating what is still needed.

Please study the list, then consult the sign-up board outside the sanctuary and write your name next to the item(s) you will be donating. Please also indicate how many of each item we can expect.

Next Sunday, October 6th, will be the final day for this mission project. I hope to be able to announce by October 13th that all 6 Cleaning Kits have been completed.



October Lay Readers

- October 6 Sue Stone
- October 13 Steve Gabel
- October 20 Brue Denson
- October 27 Iver Peterson

If you cannot make it to church, you can join us on YouTube.!!!
 Go to YouTube and type in: "Oxford Massachusettts United Methodist Church"
 You can watch and send us messages by typing right on the site; you can send your prayer request to us to be read in church with the other prayers. Yes, you do have to mistype Massachusettts.

October Altar Flowers

- October 6 Brennan and Dupuis
- October 13 Baril
- October 20 Dupuis
- October 27 Denson



Please know that if there is a week when you would like to have flowers on the altar, but there is already a name there, a second bouquet can be added.

The cost is \$18. per bouquet. And yes, you do take the flowers home with you after the service.



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

The next edition of The Clock, the OUMC newsletter, will be for November 2019. The **deadline** for submitting articles for this edition is 7:00 PM on **Monday, October 28th.**

Please send any items for The Clock to: c.l.denson54@gmail.com **Thank you.**

Oxford United Methodist Church

Sunday Morning Schedule

- 8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
- 9:15 AM Sunday School Classes
- 9:00 AM Morning Worship Service
- (child-care available during Sunday activities and service)

Serving the Church

- Ministers All members of the congregation
- Pastor Barry Judd
- Organist/Choir Director Ed LaLiberty
- Nursery Care Denise Stewart & Alyssa Franks
- Church Secretary Sue Stone
- Church Custodian Don Parker

The church office is usually open on Wednesdays & Thursdays, 9:00am to Noon, and Pastor Judd's Office Hours are usually Wednesdays, 9:00 AM to Noon or by appointment.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<h1>OCTOBER 2019</h1>							
		1	2	3	4	5	
			Office Hours & Pastor's Hours 9:00-12:00 Bible Study 10AM Finance 7 PM Trustees 7 PM	Office Hours 9:00 – 12:00 OEC Food Shelf 5-7 Spiritual Formation 7 – 8 PM		TEEN GATHERING 6-8pm	
Choir 8:15 WORSHIP 9:00 Sunday School 9:15 ACCEPTING FOOD SHELF DONATIONS DURING COMMUNION Fellowship Following Worship	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			Office Hours & Pastor's Hours 9:00-12:00 Bible Study 10AM Renewal Team/Worship Committee 7 PM	Office Hours 9:00 – 12:00 OEC Food Shelf 5-7 Spiritual Formation 7 – 8 PM			
Choir 8:15 WORSHIP 9:00 Sunday School 9:15 Fellowship with coffee and donuts Following Worship	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		 Canadian Thanksgiving Pastor Away	Office Hours 9:00-12:00 Ad Counsel Meeting 7 PM	Office Hours 9:00 – 12:00 OEC Food Shelf 5-7		TEEN GATHERING 6-8pm	
Choir 8:15 STEWARDSHIP WORSHIP 9:00 Sunday School 9:15 ACCEPTING DISCRETIONARY FUND DONATIONS DURING COMMUNION Fellowship Following Worship	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
			Office Hours & Pastor's Hours 9:00-12:00 Bible Study 10AM	Office Hours 9:00 – 12:00 OEC Food Shelf 5:15-7:15 Spiritual Formation 7 – 8 PM	 Turkey Dinner & All the Fix'ins 5:00 – 6:30 PM		
Choir 8:15 WORSHIP 9:00 Sunday School 9:15 Fellowship with coffee and donuts Following Worship Sandwich Making for Worcester Fellowship	27	28	29	30	31	SAVE THE DATE: The Oxford United Methodist Charge Conference will be Sunday December 1st at 2:30 PM.	
	CLOCK DEADLINE 6:00 PM		Office Hours & Pastor's Hours 9:00-12:00 Bible Study 10AM	Office Hours 9:00 – 12:00 OEC Food Shelf 5-7 Spiritual Formation 7 – 8 PM			

The CLOCK has been sent... mostly by email. If you think someone new would like to receive The Clock either by email or through the post office, please have them contact the Editor, Cindy, at: (c.l.denson54@gmail.com). The most recent issue will also be available for pick-up in the Narthex. If you do not wish to receive the OUMC Newsletter, reply to this e-mail with "unsubscribe" in the subject line or speak with Cindy (508) 987-5241.