

July 2019



Wednesday Worship
in July
No Sunday Service
See Page 3

THE BEACON



*First Church Congregational
United Church of Christ*

*26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844-3199
Telephone: (978) 687-1240*

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“GETTING PARSONAL” *Rev. William D. Ingraham*

Today dawned with a slight fog settled across the Merrimack Valley, enveloping everything for miles around in a moist coolness that felt almost cold for an early, summer day. I had an errand to make to a nearby town, something I could accomplish and return to Methuen with plenty of time for my second cup of coffee at my kitchen table.

Two hours later, sitting in my office, writing, I see the sun breaking through the scattering clouds, shining first like a spotlight on the dogwood tree in our front lawn before spreading to the memorial garden, front drive, and across the street. The deep blue sky feels insistent today, resolutely determined to make a stand against the several-days-running cloudiness and rain we have had. The sunshine and warmth are welcome. Happily, forecasters predict warmth and sunshine for several days coming. Perhaps the seemingly reluctant summer of 2019 has finally arrived in northern Massachusetts, as it has already done in points south and west of us.

I've not always welcomed the warmth. Having grown up in a very hot place, I longed to live in a cooler climate. I gladly take winter's cold and snow in balance against endless summer heat. Not everyone agrees with me in this. In a previous church, located in a warmer place, at the end of a long string of hot, summer days, I once had a parishioner argue against the use of air conditioning. It was not an easy sell! "Hot days are a gift," she asserted. "They force us to slow down, sit still, and wait for

the wind to stir. When summer's in full swing, we're not meant to make any more effort than to turn the page of a book, or get up to fetch more ice for our tea."

It took me several years to learn to slow down in the summer. Or, rather — to learn to take time to smell the roses (and the ocean, and the mountains, and the forest). Living in a place with longer winters made me realize the necessity of savoring the longer, warmer days. I schedule time each week to enjoy our New England home and encourage you to do the same.

At First Church Congregational we're intentional about slowing down a bit in summer — but not too much! Our slow down only really happens in the month of July. That's when committees, ministry teams and the Board take the month off. We move worship to Wednesday nights, freeing up the weekends. The choir is on break for the summer, and this year, Sunday school is taking a break, too. Chapel School is closed for the summer, so office hours are limited to Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Our building, usually filled day by day with lots of activities and sounds, grows quiet and still.

But come August, we'll be back at it! Monthly meetings resume. The annual MAN Back to School Project will be completed, from finalizing organizational work, set-up day on August 16th and "Mall Day" on August 17th, when everything gets distributed to kids from our neighborhood. We'll set plans in motion for "Welcome Sunday" and our annual cookout on September 15th. In August, the Board, committees, ministry teams and staff will each set goals for the coming program year. Additionally, the Board hopes for a new staff member for Christian Education to be hired (the search committee is hard at work!), filling the newly created "Designated Term Minister for Family and Community Life" position. Chapel School will move toward their opening day on Thursday, September 5th. Monday through Friday office hours will resume after Labor Day.

Enjoy your summer! I'll look forward to seeing you on Wednesdays in July, and on Sundays in August. And come September, get ready! We're going to have a remarkable fall this year!

See you in church!
- *Bill*



Wednesday Worship in July!

For July, we will gather for dinner and worship on Wednesday evenings instead of worshipping Sunday morning.



MARK YOU CALENDARS!

Congregational Dinner at 6:00 PM; Worship at 6:45 PM

- **Wednesday, July 3rd** – Potluck*
- **Wednesday, July 10th** (no worship on Sunday, July 7th) – Pizza & Salad*
 - **Wednesday, July 17th** (no worship on Sunday, July 14th) – Potluck*
 - **Wednesday, July 24th** (no worship on Sunday, July 21st) – Sandwich & Salad*
- **Wednesday, July 31st** (no worship on Sunday, July 28th) – Potluck*

**Dinners are subject to change.*

Sunday worship resumes on August 4th!

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The Church Office

Summer Hours



The Church & Chapel School Office will be open on Tuesday & Thursday from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Roberta will be checking emails and phone messages regularly.

Rev. Ingraham will also be in the office Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Friday and Saturday are his days off. If you need to reach him, please feel free to call him (978-701-447) if he is not at the church.

Do not hesitate to use the answering service to leave a message. They send both Roberta & Rev. Ingraham your message via email. They are excellent and will locate Rev. Ingraham if there is a pastoral emergency.



*Commissioning of the Mission Trip to NYC
June 28 – 30, 2019*

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Prayer and Visit Requests

If you, or someone you know, is need of prayer or a visit, please contact Rev. Ingraham at pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.



To have someone included on the bulletin prayer list, please let Roberta in the Church Office know at firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com or 978-687-1240. No request is too big or too small!

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Planning a Meeting?



Please help keep the church calendar current. Be sure to let Roberta know of any and all items (meetings, dinners, etc.) that will need to go on the Church calendar. This is the only way the calendar can be kept current and up-to-date. Roberta can be reached at 978-687-1240 or firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Breakfast with Bill



"Breakfast with Bill" (dutch treat!), is an informal time for friendship and conversation on any topic. We will next gather on **Wednesday, July 10th at 8:00 AM**, at **Irish Cottage**, 17 Branch Street, Methuen.



June's Breakfast with Bill Group at Sammy J's Cafe

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Burger with Bill

Due to our Wednesday Worship, there will be **NO Burger with Bill** in July. Our next gathering will be at on **Wednesday, August 28th at 6:00 PM** – location TBD. Hope you can come join us for good food, cold beer and warm friendship.



June's Burger with Bill Group at Fireside Restaurant

What's the REACH Ministry?



Do you know of someone facing surgery, recovering from surgery or living with a long-term illness? Do you know someone who has recently lost their job or could use financial support? Do you know someone who suffers from depression or is often down in the dumps around the holidays?

Maybe this person is you?

If so, we can help. Our new REACH Ministry wants to make sure that members of our community have a place to turn for support in their time of need. The term REACH stands for -- Reliable, Engaging, Able, Caring and Heartfelt support.

Contact Judi Boyko or Pat King for more information.

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Need Financial Help?

If you, or another member of First Church you know, is need of some temporary financial assistance, please contact Rev. Ingraham at pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

Due to the generosity of Thomas Longworth, through his estate plan, there are some funds available for short term financial assistance of our members.

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Would you like to make an electronic donation to the church?



Use your smart phone or tablet by scanning this QR code!

Or visit our website at www.firstchurchmethuen.com and click the "Ways to Donate" page.

Thank you for your support.

Stories of the Cross

A source of healing

We often pray for the obvious: people who are in pain, sadness, need, yearning, and strife. We use our faith in prayer to give strength, comfort, and support to all of those in our lives. However, we sometimes forget to pray for the caregivers.

Not these church members. A couple were in a doctor's office recently, discussing and scheduling a very scary medical procedure. They were looking at months of recovery, with only the mere promise of a full recovery. Mixed into the impersonal clinical terminology were a lot of emotions that cannot be described but can only be felt. One of the couple was holding a small comfort cross during the discussion, praying for their spouse. Afterwards, after all questions were asked & answered, they gave the doctor the cross. "This is for you," they said. "We all pray that you'll do your best."

The day of the surgery came. The church member was in the gurney, fully prepped for what may come. The doctor came in, greeted both of them, and was ready to transport them into the operating room. "Oh... by the way..." the doctor said, reaching into his pocket. He pulled out the same cross given to him at the office. "We're all in good hands!"

...and the patient is well on their way to a complete recovery.



These stories of the cross are documented from true experiences related to a mission of First Church Congregational. We invite you to make your own experience through the simple act of sharing part of our faith through the cross. If you find a moment where they have made an impact on yourself or others, we invite you to share it with us anonymously. Please contact Josh Ferry for more information.

From the Stewardship Ministry Team...

As we roll into summer the Stewardship Committee will be busy discerning the ways our members and friends can use their gifts and talents to fulfill our Church's mission of Seeking God, Caring for Each Other and Improving our Community. While we are off to a great start with the responses and results from the Interests and Talents Surveys, we will be busy working and praying as we plan for and embrace "Stewardship", not only in the fall with the weeks leading up to our Stewardship Campaign in November, but throughout the entire calendar year.

We have had a full year to let our mission statement "settle in" and become a part of who we are as a church, as members and friends, as a community of givers, and as visionaries for what our future can become – for us as individuals, as a community and for the world near and far.

We have already made a difference in *Seeking God* as we worship and sing together each week and develop a deeper faith through Bible Studies, Baptisms, Confirmations and personal commitments while accepting the Sacrament of Communion.

We have already made a difference in *Caring for Each Other* as we make and deliver meals, distribute comfort crosses to those in need, share stories during a sewing group meeting, walk with each other, baby sit for each other, or share meals together.

We have already made a difference in *Improving our Community* through our commitments to ending hunger, bringing an awareness to and supporting those suffering from mental illness, providing back to school resources for children and supporting those serving in our military both near and far.

But is this enough? Is it ever enough? There are still people wanting to talk and learn and pray together. There are still people who go to bed hungry at night or question their place in this world. There are still people who need a hug or a friend to talk to. Each of us has the power to make real and lasting change even if it's one person at a time. If we rally together, use our resources together, whether it's monetary or our passions and talents, we can continue to fulfill our mission throughout this coming year.

We hope you will join us this year as we look to support the various ministries of our church. The Stewardship Team is excited to get to work as we continue the journey of making your passions and missions a reality. It will be exciting to watch them come alive as we live out our Mission Statement together with all of you.

The Stewardship Ministry Team:

*Pastor Bill Ingraham, Ken Peck, Marilyn Peck, Robyn Sliney, Glenn Sprague
Kim Valcourt, Team Leader*



MAN Back to School Project

Saturday, August 17th

The partnership between Methuen Arlington Neighborhood, Inc. (MAN, Inc.) and First Church Congregational, Methuen (FCC) will continue for its **9th consecutive year** in 2019. The Project provides backpacks, school supplies, new back-to-school outfits and shoes for 75 children and youth from one of Methuen's poorest neighborhoods.

Dedicated and generous members of First Church help make this project a reality each and every year. **Volunteers from our church are at the heart of this important project.** Further support comes from local businesses, individual donations, and generous discounts on clothing and shoes from local stores. Additionally, the Methuen Exchange Club and the John Hancock Masonic Lodge provide both funds and volunteer hours.

Volunteer sign-up sheets are posted in the Parish Hall. Here are the activities for which you can sign-up. Please note the dates for helping size the children's clothing are **July 9th** and **July 11th**. The other activities have August dates.

- **Sizing Dates:** Tuesday, July 9th from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Thursday, July 11th, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM, at MAN, Inc., 141 Tenney Street, Methuen
- **Organization Night:** Week of August 4th – TBD – at First Church Congregational.
- **Mall Day Set Up:** Friday, August 16th, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, at First Church Congregational.
- **Mall Day:** Saturday, August 17th, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at First Church Congregational.

If you have questions or would like more information, please call Lisa Yarid Ferry at 978-376-9891 or Lisa at lisa4methuen@gmail.com.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Now Every Wednesday!



The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets year-round and always welcomes anyone who wishes to be part of this ministry. Knitting or crocheting experience is not a prerequisite to becoming a member. Come for the fellowship and someone will be glad to help you if needed.

We invite you to join us on **Wednesdays from 1:30 - 3:30 PM**. We meet in the parlor.

Please contact or Anne Benedix at 978-682-3496 (annerayben@comcast.net) or Carol Gray at 603-898-0934 (cagg14@comcast.net) for more information.



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Greetings from North Carolina!

We have some good news to share. Our first grandchild was born this afternoon to our son Derek and his wife, Tara (Michaels). She was born at 1:23 PM, weighing 5lbs. 11 oz. She was not due until June 23, but mother and baby both appear to be doing well. She was born in CT, and we will be in New England for the month of August to meet her, and to connect friends and family in the NH/MA area. We are over the moon excited!! Thank goodness for Facetime!

Hope all is well at FCC.

Susan and Frank Michaels





Have a Happy and Safe
4th of July!!

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Original Artwork by Emily Jurovich

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Methuen Fireworks Celebration

Wednesday, July 3rd

at The Loop Methuen (90 Pleasant Valley Street)

Arrive early and enjoy a great family event! Entertainment starts at 7:00 PM.

Fireworks Display @ 9:30 PM

Best viewing location: The Loop Methuen parking lot between TGIF and Aspen Dental.

Rain date is Friday, July 5th

Save the Date



Welcome Sunday Sunday, September 15th

After worship, we will have an all church picnic. Sign-up sheets will be posted on the bulletin board at the crossroads, in August, for those who would like to bring a salad or dessert, as well as helping out.

Hope to see everyone there.



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NOTE: We will be sending an **August Beacon** this year. If you have inputs you would like included, please send them to the Church Office (firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com) by **Wednesday, July 17th**. Thank you.

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***Congratulations to Sarah Lindtveit on receiving
scholarships from...***



Methuen Festival of Trees

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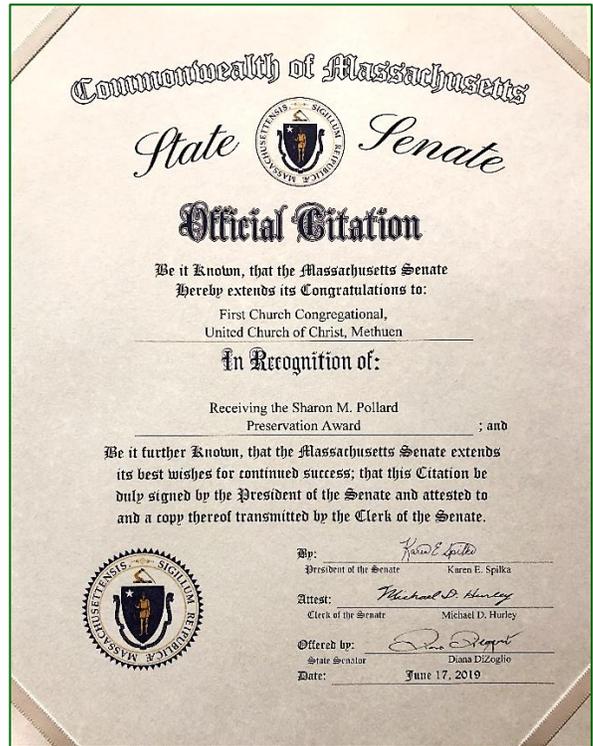


Methuen Exchange Club

Sarah will attend UMASS Lowell for Physics in the Fall.

Good Luck!!

*First Church Congregational
received the
Sharon Pollard Award
for Historical Preservation
from the Methuen Festival of Trees
on June 17th.*



**First Church celebrated Lori Bennett, as she retires,
after 17 years as our Christian Education Director!
Sunday, June 23rd**



The Chapel School



The Chapel school year ended with a grand Ice Cream Sundae Buffet. The choices were many. We had vanilla ice cream and many topping choices. Sprinkles, sauces, gummy bears, crushed Oreos, banana slices, whipped cream and even a cherry on top. Watermelon slush was another option for the children that couldn't have milk.

The children came dressed up in their Sunday best. It was a party and they were dressed for all the fun. We danced, blew bubbles, played games and giggled a lot. It was a teary good bye for the children moving on to Kindergarten. The returning children will be back in September for more fun. The parents made our last week of school less stressful by offering their help in the classrooms and with the Ice Cream party. Many hands make light work.

Everyone is ready for Summer and less hectic days to enjoy the warm weather, outdoor activities and not waking up so early. Enjoy it!!!!

Enrollment will continue over the Summer months and we have many more openings for all of our programs here at Chapel to fill. The office will be open Tuesday and Thursday mornings and as needed to give tours to new families. We are only a phone call or email away. Our website and Facebook presence are high and many have commented on all the pictures and updates we provide to families and friends.

Our Chapel Wrap Up Survey gave us lots of positive comments and kind words for all we do to make Chapel a great first school for young children. We hope to share those comments with you in future Beacon newsletters.

Enjoy the Summer, the flowers, the fresh air, longer days of sunshine, fresh vegetables from the garden, the beach/pool, family get togethers, cookouts and so much more. We are so lucky to have four seasons to look forward to. Keep that bucket list going.

Cindy Mazella
Director



Methuen Tuesday Evening Food Pantry Outreach Mission Update

Since the end of February 2019 all of the Neighbors-In-Need Food Pantries have been experiencing a steady increase in the number of families being served each week. The Tuesday Evening Food Pantry has had an 85% growth during this same period. The Tuesday Evening Food Pantry is currently serving the largest number of families weekly in the Neighbors in Need system. We have gone from serving 75 families each week in February 2019 to 138 families at the end of May 2019.

We have achieved this with the help of all the volunteers that help out through the month and the congregation that has consistently donated food so that we have been able to provide supplemental food weekly for our clients. Our Clients consistently thank us for helping them feed their families.

Early this year the Milk Cooler the Methuen School Department was letting us use stopped working and the cost of repairing it was cost prohibitive due to the age of the unit. That left us with having to use an 18-cu ft standup refrigerator similar to the ones many of us have in our homes. Not an ideal situation when we receive food from the NIN warehouse around 11 to noon on Tuesday and don't start distributing to our clients until sometime after 5pm. That's a long time to have food that needs to be refrigerated sitting out on a counter. The cost to replace the Milk Cooler was roughly \$3000.00.



We met with Pastor Bill, Board Chair Steve Boyko, and the Outreach Committee and agreed to use approximately \$1,000.00 from the Outreach Budget. Pastor Bill met with the Methuen Exchange Club and they agreed to donate a total of \$2,000.00 to us enabling the purchase a new Milk Cooler for the pantry.

We, the Tuesday Evening Food Pantry Outreach Team, Neighbors-In-Need, and all of the Neighbors-in- Need Clients of the Tuesday Evening Food Panty want to thank the Methuen Exchange Club and First Church Congregational, U.C.C., for caring enough about this ministry to support it so that our clients can count on receiving good quality food for their families each week.

Ken and Marilyn Peck
NIN Tuesday Evening Food Pantry Coordinators

Comments from two of our clients...

Thank you so very much for all you do for my family. I often work late and can't get to the food pantry before it closes at 6:30. I know that you always prepare a bag of food for me and if I can't get there in time one of the volunteers delivers it to my home.

~ From L.

You guys are the best. Because of my living situation and medical problems there is not a lot I can eat; however, I don't know how you do it but you always have some stuff I can eat each week. Thank you!

~ From F.

Daily Lectionary Scripture References July 2019 (Year C)

Mon., July 1

Psalm 75
2 Kings 2:15-22
1 John 2:7-11

Tues., July 2

Psalm 75
2 Kings 3:4-20
Ephesians 5:6-20

Wed., July 3

Psalm 75
2 Kings 4:1-7
Matthew 10:16-25

Thurs., July 4

Psalm 30
2 Kings 4:8-17
Romans 7:14-25

Fri., July 5

Psalm 30
2 Kings 4:18-31
2 Corinthians 8:1-7

Sat., July 6

Psalm 30
2 Kings 4:32-37
Luke 9:1-6

Sun., July 7

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
2 Kings 5:1-14
Psalm 30
Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Mon., July 8

Psalm 6
2 Kings 5:15-19a
Acts 19:21-27

Tues., July 9

Psalm 6
2 Kings 5:19b-27
Acts 19:28-41

Wed., July 10

Psalm 6
2 Kings 6:1-7
Luke 10:13-16

Thurs., July 11

Psalm 82
Amos 1:1-2:3
James 2:14-26

Fri., July 12

Psalm 82
Amos 2:4-11
Acts 7:9-16

Sat., July 13

Psalm 82
Amos 2:12-3:8
John 3:16-21

Sun., July 14

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Amos 7:7-17
Psalm 82
Colossians 1:1-14
Luke 10:25-37

Mon., July 15

Psalm 7
Amos 3:9-4:5
James 2:1-7

Tues., July 16

Psalm 7
Amos 4:6-13
1 John 3:11-17

Wed., July 17

Psalm 7
Amos 5:1-9
Matthew 25:31-46

Thurs., July 18

Psalm 52
Amos 5:10-17
Hebrews 5:1-6

Fri., July 19

Psalm 52
Amos 5:18-27
Ephesians 3:14-21

Sat., July 20

Psalm 52
Amos 6:1-14
Luke 8:4-10

Sun., July 21

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Amos 8:1-12
Psalm 52
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

Mon., July 22

Psalm 119:17-32
Amos 7:1-6
Colossians 1:27-2:7

Tues., July 23

Psalm 119:17-32
Amos 8:13-9:4
1 John 2:1-6

Wed., July 24

Psalm 119:17-32
Amos 9:5-15
John 6:41-51

Thurs., July 25

Psalm 85
Hosea 4:1-19
Acts 1:15-20

Fri., July 26

Psalm 85
Hosea 5:1-15
Acts 2:22-36

Sat., July 27

Psalm 85
Hosea 1:11-2:15
Luke 8:22-25

Sun., July 28

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Hosea 1:2-10
Psalm 85
Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]
Luke 11:1-13

Mon., July 29

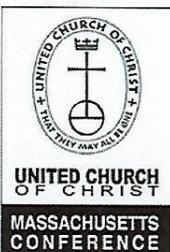
Psalm 44
Hosea 2:14-3:5
Colossians 2:16-3:1

Tues., July 30

Psalm 44
Hosea 6:1-10
Romans 9:30-10:4

Wed., July 31

Psalm 44
Hosea 6:11-7:16
Matthew 5:43-48



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Happy Birthday!

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 01 Kristen Bateson
- 06 Jill Suarez
- 08 Margaret Najarian
- 10 Jonathan Bennett
- 12 Marilyn Peck
- 13 Thomas Abbott, Billy Bennett
- 14 Charlotte Pye, Kelly Shaffer
- 18 Rebecca Wright
- 19 Sarah Dockham
- 21 Gary Dockham, Lorraine Smith
- 23 Victoria Casey
- 26 Sherry Patrakis
- 28 David Kimball, Susan Michaels
- 30 Judi Boyko, Henry Sanborn
- 31 Estella Adams, Carole Silva



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 04 Scott Sanborn
- 05 William Bennett
- 06 Melissa Hodgkins

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JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 7/1 | Mary & George Simonian | Married 57 years |
| 7/2 | Neil & Cindy Bateson | Married 31 years |
| 7/4 | Frank & Susan Michaels | Married 38 years |
| 7/18 | Richard & Glenda Schubert | Married 49 years |
| 7/24 | Gary & Cathy Gable | Married 26 years |

AUGUST ANNIVERSARY

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|------------------|
| 8/4 | Ken & Marilyn Peck | Married 29 years |
|-----|--------------------|------------------|

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Address Service Requested