

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
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A Word from Rev. Jackson

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

As we enter into the month of April and the heart of spring, we see the hand of our Lord bringing His creation to life. Our spiritual journey through Lent culminates in the upcoming Holy Week. Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day invite us to walk with Jesus as His purpose is fulfilled. What are we learning from our Lenten sacrifices and abstinences? How has Jesus been speaking to us over these past 40 days? What will the Monday after Easter look like for us in a spiritual sense?

When Jesus shared His last supper with His disciples, He used the event to teach them the importance of humility and service. After they shared the bread and wine, He took a towel and washed their feet. He taught His disciples the importance of serving one another in humility. The cleansing of one's feet was usually a task reserved for those who were servants and slaves. Yet here we see Jesus, the Son of God, cleaning the feet of some very fallible humans. (John 13) Jesus washed all His disciples' feet, even Judas, so His disciples would learn from His example. He took on the role of a servant at the last supper and He commanded them and us to do the same.

Every time, we serve those who are in need, we are fulfilling our Lord's command. One of the greatest lessons we could learn during the Lenten season is the value of service to others. Of all the events that occurred during Holy Week, this act speaks volumes as to what we are called to do on this side of heaven.

On Easter Monday, may we recommit ourselves to honoring Jesus by imitating His example in service. As our Lord said in John 13:17 *"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.* Let us move ahead as a resurrected people – committed to walking the extra mile and bringing a cup of water to those who need it the most. *Blessings to each of you as we DO our faith!*

See you in church! Because He lives!

Rev. Bob

Bulletin Cover Donations

If you'd be interested in donating a Sunday bulletin cover for a special occasion, please stop in the office to pick one out from one of the many flyers we have available. The cost is only \$12!

April Birthdays

- 10 Kristin Olson
- 16 Khylie Richard
- 22 Susan Cardin
- 24 Wesley Dalbeck
- 26 Judy Langlois
- 27 Sis Prefontaine

April Anniversaries

- 05 Dolores & Marie Trzcinski
- 18 Heidi & Steve Hinson

Laundry Love



A hint of warmer days ahead will mean extra washings for all of us, as we rid our homes of the cold season and prepare for Spring. Our friends at Laundry Love are preparing for bigger wash loads and are also grateful for all your help.

This past month: 6 large jugs of detergent, 6 pocket size sanitizers, 2 large packages of alcohol wipes, 2 tubes of antiseptic cream, and 2 large boxes of assorted Band-Aids were delivered to Walking Together Ministries. Also, a fleece lined blanket that there was immediate need for.

Quarters for the machines, detergent, sanitizers, creams, and socks are on top of their needs list for our next collection, which will be Sunday, April 7, 2019 for that week's delivery.

You can leave your donations UNDER the bubble tub in the Narthex ANY time you are in church. Any cash to Linda Ann please.

Thank you for your loyal support!

From Hospitality

Anyone wishing to bring in treats for Sunday Coffee Hour through the end of 2019, please sign up in the Narthex or call the Office. All dates in April are available. Thank you!

April 7 Church Council

April 14 _____

April 21 _____

April 28 Missions

Prayer Requests

Hampton Bagdasarian requests prayers for June Kemp; Sue Cardin requests prayers for David Siam; Helen Wronski requests prayers for Josephine Morrow and Elaine Wronski; Susan Anderson requests prayers for her daughter, Melanie; Sue Carrow requests prayers for her brother, Michael Curran; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; The Deacons request prayers for Sis Prefontaine, Paul Scherdell; Mary Lou McCreight who is at the Holden Rehabilitation Home on 32 Mayo Drive, Holden, MA 01520; prayers for Joyce Thienel; prayers for Bruce Kabasinsky for continued recovery after having knee surgery; prayers for Mac (Milton) MacInnes who is recovering from knee surgery

Concordia's Closet

It is TIME! Collection time for Concordia's Closet the WHOLE month of April. Please place your donations on the stage in the Fellowship hall, near the signs for Concordia's Closet. There are also 2 boxes to drop your bags in on the side of the stage near the kitchen steps.

So...spring clean and sort at your home and then get your friends and neighbors involved by giving them a place to send gently used clothing to be put to good use.

Remember...ALL sizes, ALL seasons, ALL colors, and ALL ages, including accessories. Business attire is needed for those entering the work force or to wear on interviews.

Final collection day is Sunday, May 5, 2019

Speaker Series

Our Speaker Series concludes in April. We will welcome Chris Wychorski and Molly Pietrantonio, from Habitat for Humanity on Tuesday, April 2, 2019. Fr. Tim Burger will be our speaker on Tuesday, April 9, 2019. See you at Fellowship for coffee at 10am and our guest speakers at 10:30am.

Missions Corner - Carty Cupboard

Thank you for your donations to Carty Cupboard every month. Thanks to your generosity, in March we delivered 10 bags of groceries, along with some monetary donations, for which they were most grateful. **Requested items for April include healthy snacks for kids on school vacation. Granola bars, crackers, fruit cups in fruit juice or similar items would be great! Our monthly collection will be Sunday, April 7, 2019.**

Thank you for your continued support of this important outreach in Worcester. Just a reminder to check the expiration or best by dates on your donations. Our congregation is generous.

Matthew 25:35 "reminds us that when we feed those who are hungry, we are also serving Jesus."

Thank you once again.

The Missions Committee

Christion Education Committee

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Our Christion Education teachers have been doing a wonderful job with our children but this will be their last year teaching. We need someone to take over for them in September. There is a wonderful new curriculum that they've been working with. If you're interested, they will be happy to help you with the transition. We are also in need of more Safe Church people. Won't **YOU** help us out?

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Anderson, The Christian Education Committee & Teachers

Fellowship News

We have a full schedule for April. We hope you will be able to join us as you are able. We meet each Tuesday at 10am in the church parlor, unless otherwise noted. Join us for coffee and treats before we begin our program of the day.

- April 2 Chris Wychorski and Molly Pietrantonio will talk about Habitat for Humanity, the ReStore, and other volunteer opportunities.
- April 9 We welcome Fr. Timothy Burger from St. Luke's to share with us.
- April 16 Come and make spring arrangements with Berg Florist. The cost is \$12. We will also be preparing cookie trays for our staff and shut-ins. Please bring homemade cookies to share.
- April 18 Maundy Thursday. Soup supper at 6pm. Service at 7pm.
- April 19 Good Friday. Service at 7pm.
- April 21 Celebrate Easter. Christ has risen indeed! Join us Sunday morning at 10am.
- April 23 Spring cleaning day. We will do some small projects around the church.
- April 30 Join us when we take Beth and Katy to lunch at 308 Lakeside in East Brookfield to celebrate Administrative Professional's Day. It is our way to say thank you for all they do for our church.

We will also be collecting gently worn clothing throughout this month for Concordia Closet. Please leave your donations on the stage in Fellowship Hall.

Hope for Housing

Hope for housing is a non-profit program developed by the Interfaith Coalition to Prevent Family Homelessness with assistance from the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance. The project raises awareness about homelessness in our community and utilizes the collective buying power of congregations to raise money for the prevention of family homelessness. Currently 30 congregations are participating in the program.



The fastest growing homeless population is children. It has been demonstrated that children who are homeless experience deflated self-worth, diminished school achievement and related health and emotional issues.

Gift cards for local retailers, including Big Y, CVS, Dunkin' Donuts, Hannaford, Panera, Shaws, and Stop & Shop, are purchased in bulk, which in turn are sold to members of participating congregations at their places of worship. The retailers donates 2-10% of all sales to the Hope for Housing program to assist families at risk of homelessness. By purchasing gift cards for local retailers, you can help to stabilize families and keep them in their homes.

Please see Sue Cardin to purchase your gift cards.

WHAT ARE UCC FELLOWSHIP DUES?

Fellowship dues have been paid by the churches of the Massachusetts Conference to support common ministries since the 1840's. Fellowship dues consist of two parts: Association dues - cover the cost of our Central Association programs and services. Each Association sets its own dues. Conference dues - contribute to the cost of Conference services and programs, including regionally deployed ministers and staff. Fellowship dues accounts for approximately 1/2 of the total financial support for the MA Conference. The Conference portion of the fellowship dues is set by the annual meeting of the Conference. For 2019, the Fellowship dues are \$21.65 per person. As a church, we ask each member to pay their own dues. Envelopes will be available in the narthex. We would ask that you put your check in the collection plate or mail it to the church office. Please note "2019 UCC dues" on the memo line. Thank you.

The Church Mouse

Happy Spring everyone. Glad to be back home from my winter trip. Looks like there was quite a wind that blew through Tatnuck and did some damage to the church. I've heard the church trustees are hard at work making sure all the repairs get done. I was very

thankful to hear that no one was hurt when that huge front window blew out. God was watching over His house, that's for sure. Easter is just around the corner. It is such a special time of year when we remember what Jesus did for you and me so that we will live forever in the kingdom of God. What an awesome gift. Thank you Jesus. Easter blessings to my church family.

Love you all, Nick, your faithful church mouse

FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEADLINE:

The *hard and fast cut-off* date for the May issue is Tuesday, April 23, 2019. If your article(s) aren't in by that date, we'll be happy to include it (them) in our June 2019 issue. Thank you!

Announcements

We had a rededication service on Sunday, March 17, 2019 for Connor and Cody Hill Johnston.

Ada Grant passed away on February 22, 2019. Shirley Avery's husband, Richard, passed away on February 28, 2019.

Easter Flowers

Attached please see the order form for Easter flowers for the beautification of our Church on Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019. Service is at 10am. Thank you!



Easter Sunday Flowers



Our Sanctuary will be decorated with tulips and lilies on Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019. If you would like to help with the beautification and order tulips or lilies, please indicate on the form below.

I would like to provide ___ tulip plant(s) at \$9.00 each

I would like to provide ___ lily plant(s) at \$9.00 each

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In celebration of _____

From _____

***** Recognition(s) will be in the Easter Service Bulletin *****

Please return this completed form in an envelope with a check or cash. Place the envelope with payment in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. **Return the form and payment by Sunday, April 9, 2019. Indicate on the envelope: Easter Flowers.**

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

**Please check one: ___ I will leave my plant for a person who is sick or shut-in
___ I will pick up my plant after the Easter Service**



FCC Worcester Calendar

April 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm Boy Scouts-Hall 7:00pm AA Meeting-Parlor	2 10:00am Fellowship	3 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	4 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	5 4:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	6 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
7 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	8 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 6:00pm Quinsigamond District Round-table-Sanctuary 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mtg-Parlor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	9 10:00am Fellowship	10 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	11 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir	12 4:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	13 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
14 Palm Sunday 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Trustees Meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	15 Tax Returns due 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	16 10:00am Fellowship	17 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	18 Maundy Thursday 6:00pm Soup Supper 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Service	19 Good Friday 4:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 7:00pm Service 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	20 Holy Saturday 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
21 Easter Sunday 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Deacons meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	22 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	23 Deadline for Newsletter submitting 10:00am Fellowship	24 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	25 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir	26 4:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	27 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
28 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Church Council Meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	29 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	30 10:00am Fellowship				

