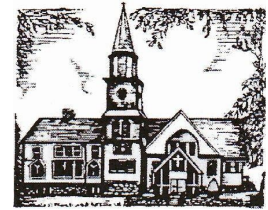


FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
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October 2021



A Word From Rev Jackson



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

As I write this final newsletter to you, I am inspired by all the blessings God has bestowed upon our mutual ministry. The First Congregational Church in Worcester is a mission that is still actively doing the work of Jesus in spite of the challenges we have faced over the years. Although we are smaller in numbers, we are a much healthier congregation in attitude and spirit. As closed cliques and negativity have disappeared, they have been replaced with kindness, gentleness and a more welcoming and inclusive behavior. Many have recently shared that our church is a much friendlier and happier place than it was years ago.

On my first official Sunday here, we were told at the annual meeting, that the church would most likely close within five years because we were using up our financial resources very quickly. During the coffee hour that morning there was internal conflict and confusion. Someone fainted and the fire department across the street responded to assist. Welcome to Worcester!

I am happy to share that thanks in part to three other congregations sharing our space, two cell towers and National Grid, we are in a much better financial condition. The regular attendees are outgoing and kind and our spiritual growth is being put into practice every week. Our church family doesn't just talk about Christianity, we live it! As I leave you on October 24th and retire from active ministry to Wells, Maine, I leave you with a few parting thoughts and observations.

1. Remember John 14:6. "Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." Serving and putting Jesus first in all matters is your most important calling. Never lose sight of this or be distracted by other lesser matters.
2. Always stay biblically rooted and Christ-centered. Always ask "What would Jesus do?" in all of your decisions.
3. Your current committee members and officers have a good and positive attitude. Many churches would love to have such a group of individuals. Never put someone on a committee just because they have a pulse. Make sure their gifts match the need. Remember the most important spiritual gift is love.
4. God has blessed you with a wonderful church building. Never allow it to stand idle.

Always be willing to share it with the community. It is a church not a museum.

5. There is a remarkable history here, but do not allow that history to replace your mission.

6. Be open to new and creative types of worship. If you truly want to attract young families and their children, you need to be open to the kinds of worship that speak to them in a meaningful way.

7. Just because there are not many children in the church family right now, that does not mean you won't have more in the future.

8. You have good church employees. Take care of them and they will take care of you. Scott, Doug and Shelly are blessings to this congregation. Never allow anyone to mistreat them.

9. Never let your missions slide to a secondary calling. The churches that God blesses the most are those who put their missions first!

10. Be kind to your future minister and remember that they are a human forgiven sinner who will bleed if you cut them.

Finally, I thank you all for your kindness and understanding towards me despite my shortcomings and mistakes. I especially appreciate your Christian charity and loving understanding through my recent health issues. The mercy you show to others will be the mercy shown to you. You have indeed been merciful and the Lord will bless you for your loving kindness. Carolyn and I are most grateful for all you have done for us. I look forward to seeing you in church as we celebrate my ministry on October 24th.

See you in the kingdom!

Because He Lives so do we all,

Rev. Bob Jackson



“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

~ Philippians 1:3-6

“I know what I am planning for you,’ says the Lord. ‘I have plans to give you hope and a good future.’”

~ Jeremiah 29:11





Happy October everyone. Fall has arrived. It just might be my favorite season of the year. The Harvest moon was brilliant in the evening sky and the leaves are beginning to put on their show for us. As that famous song says, "To everything turn, turn, turn. There is a season, turn, turn, turn. And a time for every purpose under heaven." Those words are based on the verses in Ecclesiastes 3, "for God has made everything appropriate in its time."

Lots of activity around the meetinghouse. Welcome to Shelly, the new church secretary. We are glad you have joined us.

The Tuesday Fellowship group is meeting again. I am so encouraged to hear voices in the church. You have all been missed. Is it possible that this COVID thing is finally going to wind down? Please be safe and stay healthy everyone. Get your vaccine and wear your mask when it is appropriate to do so. That is most important for all of our church family, including me, your church mouse!

I am going to miss you Rev. Bob. I understand you are retiring on October 24 and will be moving away to Maine. What can I say but, God bless you and enjoy your retirement. After 39+ years as a minister, you have earned some R&R time for yourself. Enjoy! You have been a faithful follower of Jesus for your whole life. Keep it up. Here's some words from Proverbs to send you on your way. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. How blessed is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding."

I enjoy hearing worship services again. It is encouraging to have our church family together. I love my church family and God sure loves you too! Have a wonderful, colorful fall.

Your faithful church mouse, Nick





Please join us for Fellowship on Tuesdays at 10:00 am. There will be coffee, tea, goodies and great company, so come and meet us in the Church Parlor. Bring along some ideas for what you would like to do as we get back into the swing of things.

We will plan outings every so often, such as the one we have scheduled for October 12th. We will be meeting in the church parking lot at 10:30 am to take a trip to the Brookfield Orchards. It will be a fun day to have lunch, an apple dumpling, cider or whatever you're in the mood for outside at the picnic tables. Of course, those who would like to, can also purchase apples. They have an interesting little store to browse, with a bit of this 'n that.

We hope you'll join us!



Let us extend a warm welcome to our new Secretary, Shelly Hoyle. She will be in the office weekly each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. If you have a chance, stop by the office and introduce yourself. She's truly a ray of sunshine and would be happy to meet you.



Please try to have any articles or notices for our Friendly Messenger in by **Wednesday, October 27th**. You can **bring** them **to the office**, **email** them to the church office at office@fcc-worcester.org , or **call** the office at 508-752-4635.

Thank you!





October

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|----|----------------------|
| 04 | Jean Andes | 19 | Ann Scherdell |
| 04 | Matthew Andes, Sr. | 19 | Armand Thienel |
| 11 | Benjamin Day | 23 | Bob Smith |
| 15 | Hampton Bagdasarian | 23 | Robert Anthony Olson |

November

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|------------------|
| 08 | Lorna Cardin | 19 | Michelle Collins |
| 12 | Betty Dalbeck | 27 | Matthew Ahaesy |
| 13 | Renee Mason | 30 | Ruth Nickerson |
| 17 | Ashley Rucinski | 30 | Andrew Sullivan |



October

14 George & Jane Boggs

17

*Happy 50th Anniversary
Joyce & Armand!*

November

09 Greg Waters & Cindy MacLaurin



"Dear God, can you please reboot 2020... the one you sent had a virus."



We would like to keep Hampton Bagdasarian in our prayers and he also requests prayers for June Kemp; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; Judy Mitchell requests prayers for her granddaughter, Ellanora; Sue Anderson requests prayers for her sister Loretta Carpenter and also for Roger Waite. The Deacons request prayers for the family of Marilyn Mildish, who went home to be with our Lord on September 12th. May she rest peacefully in His loving arms, until they meet again. The Deacons also ask that we hold Betty Dalbeck, Dr. Richard Hunter, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell, Melanie Anderson, Sally Day and Joyce & Armand Thienel in our prayers.

If you have a prayer request or would like us to remove someone from our prayer list, please let us know.



Window Fund



Our Windows Project has been completed because of your generosity. They look wonderful! Thank you for your generous contributions, making this project a reality.

Please continue to save your loose change to add to the Teddy bear bank in the narthex. We are in dire need of new carpeting, so that will be our next church project.

Sincere thanks to everyone!

Your continued donations will help with the beautification of our church.

May God's blessings surround you!



"An open mind is like an open window. It lets the fresh air in."

Mike Hernacki



Our Search Committee continues to work on its mission to find a new pastor for our church. As we continue our search, we rely heavily on our Lord's guidance and trust that He will bless us with His choice. We appreciate your prayers and support.



Dates to Remember in October

01 Friday – All Day – World Smile Day



- 03 Sunday – 10:00 am – Church Service
- 03 Sunday – 11:00 am – Trustees Meeting
- 05 Tuesday – 10:00 am – Fellowship
- 10 Sunday – 10:00 am – Church Service

11 Monday – All Day –



- 12 Tuesday – 10:30 am – Fellowship trip to Brookfield Orchards
- 17 Sunday – 10:00 am – Church Service
- 17 Sunday – 11:00 am – Deacons Meeting
- 19 Tuesday – 10:00 am – Fellowship–Speaker from the Pleasant St. Fire Station
- 24 Sunday – 10:00 am – Church Service
- 24 Sunday – 11:00 am – Rev. Bob's Retiring
- 26 Tuesday – 10:00 am – Fellowship
- 31 Sunday – 10:00 am – Church Service
- 31 Sunday – 11:00 am – Council Meeting



31 Sunday – All Day – Reformation Sunday



31 Sunday – All Day – Halloween





The truth written here is a sweeter treat than Halloween candy! On October 31st, 1517, pastor and professor Martin Luther nailed a list of 95 arguments on a church door in Germany. Back then that's how you stated a discussion. Luther's arguments gained wide acceptance and were sent throughout Europe via the newly invented printing press. Central to his concern was that the Roman Catholic Church had deviated from the Bible's simple teaching that you and I can be made right with God only by faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ.



SAVE THE DATE

October 24th will be Rev. Bob's last service with us. I hope you are able to join us for this very special day.



Rev. Bob and Carolyn

May God bless you and keep you safe as you move to Maine, on to a new and exciting adventure. We know that you will love it there but don't ever forget your church family and friends who hold you so dear to their hearts. Keep in touch – we will miss you tremendously!



Love & Blessings from All of us at FCC

