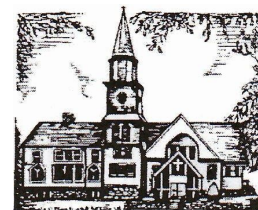


FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
www.fcc-worcester.org · Office: 508-752-4635 · Parsonage: 508-459-9085

March 2020



A Word From Rev Jackson



Greetings in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ:

As we round the corner into the season of Spring, we see God's handy-work in creation coming to life all around us. Psalm 84 speaks to the season of spring....consider vss. 1-4: *"How lovely is your dwelling place, LORD Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar LORD Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you."* The season of Lent is a good time to examine our faith and what changes we might make for the better. The first four verses of Psalm 84 offer some direction in that regard. First: Where do we dwell? The Psalmist longs for the courts of the Lord, so deeply the he could faint. Imagine having an attitude that is so enthused to be in church? I have met some fellow Christians over the years who are bedridden and the thing they miss the most is being present in church with their church family. Imagine having that kind of dedication and desire to be in the house of the Lord. The Psalmist heart sings for joy to be dwelling in God's courts. How would our faith commitment change for the better if this Psalm guided our priorities in regards to church?

Verses three and four describe the swallows and the sparrow finding a nest where they can care for their young. It is a beautiful Spring like description of what it is like to be at home in God's house. As the young birds are safe, nourished and secure in their mother's nest, so should be our desire to be present in the church of Jesus Christ. "Blessed are those who live in your house...." states verse four. This begs the question: if we are unhappy, when is the last time we lived in God's house? If our church home and family can convey a spirit of happiness then we are living out our calling. Church should be a place to recharge our spiritual batteries so we can weather the storms of daily living.

There's a lot we can learn from the birds of spring. May our church nest (home) bring us joy and give us a spirit of happiness.

See you in church!

Because He lives!

Rev. Bob

FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEADLINE:



The **due date** for the April issue is **Tuesday, March 24, 2020**. If your article(s) aren't in by that date, we'll be happy to include it (them) in our May 2020 issue. *Thank you!*



March

03	Norman Anderson	11	Melissa Castle
06	Charlotte Perry	18	Annalise McGrail
11	Susan Anderson	28	Ellen Dalbeck

April

10	Kristin Olson	22	Susan Cardin
16	Khyllie Richard	26	Judy Langlois
19	Marilyn Poske		



April

05	Dolores & Marie Trzcinski	18	Steve & Heidi Hinson
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Hampton Bagdasarian requests prayers for Jane Kemp; Sue Cardin requests prayers for David Siam; Susan Anderson requests prayers for her daughter, Melanie, her son, Danny, her sister, Loretta Carpenter and her brother-in-law, Peter Adams; Sue Carow requests prayers for her brother, Michael Curran; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; The Deacons request prayers for Paul Scherdell & Rev. Natalie Maynard, former interim minister at our church; prayers for Melissa Castle as she is recovering from surgery; prayers for Sally Day; prayers for Marilyn Mildish; Beth Robinson requests prayers for her nephew, Jack Maino, who is studying in Spain this semester and the Maino Family for peace in his absence; prayers for Bev Bean on the passing of her sister, Patricia Dale, this past week; prayers for Josephine Morrow who is in the hospital. Josephine is the late Helen Wronski's sister. Her address is 366 Camino De Estrella Apt 112 San Clememte, CA 92672

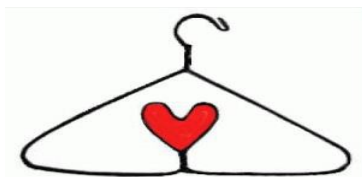
Special Note



We received a thank you note from the Tatnuck Magnet School saying:

*To All who help at the First Congregational Church,
Thank you so much for everything you do to help out the students & staff of
Tatnuck Magnet! We appreciate all the mittens and hats that keep our
students warm in the winter and of course for all the supplies that help us all
year long!
Thank you!
Tatnuck Magnet*

Concordia's Closet



Only 2 months and counting before we fill the Ford Edge again for Concordia's Closet. Place all your gently worn clothing on the left side of the stage, by the signs the whole month of April, to be delivered May 5th.

Laundry Love



A good variety of items were donated for Laundry Love this past month, and be assured, they are being put to good use. Delivered were: 3 large jugs of detergent, 2 quarts of Clorox bleach, 1 package of color-safe sheets, 2 boxes of dryer sheets, 1 large bottle of sanitizer, 4 pocket-size hand sanitizers, 3 Blistex chap sticks, 2 multi-packs of tissues, and for the younger set – a box of colored pencils, a calculator and a pen/pad set, PLUS \$40 for the machines.

Rev. Meredyth Ward shared some exciting news about what will be happening on Maundy Thursday at Laundry Love. I have spoken about their prayer circle that ends each night, but on Maundy Thursday they are offering communion and participating in the 'Washing of the Feet.' The team working with Rev. Ward are very excited about offering these very meaningful ceremonies to all that wish to participate. They have a very strong connection to the people that come for Laundry Love.

Here is where we come in Due to the high interest in this event, they will need a washcloth and towel for each person. Would you be so kind to donate the washcloths and hand towels? They can be extras from your home or purchase the multi-packs offered by stores like Wal-Mart, Dollar Store or Ocean State Job Lot. You would not only be providing the materials, but would be a real part of someone having a renewal of their faith, or even a first-time experience and closeness to God. That might even be in your mind as we come together at church for our candles, music and the Word.

On Sunday, March 8th, I will be collecting the usual items and quarters that are still needed for the month's delivery – but also the washcloths and towels to be sure there will be enough for Maundy Thursday.

Again, Collection Day is Sunday, March 8th to be delivered that week. Thank you for your continued support to this inner-city mission.





Window Project

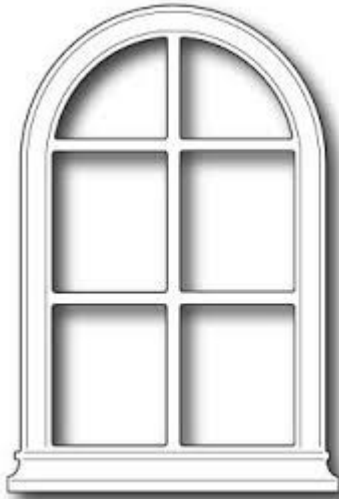
The First Congregational Church was incorporated in 1965—after the First Church Old South and the Tatnuck Congregational Church merged. At that time the building was remodeled and renovations included the installation of new windows. Now, half a century later, 95% of those same windows remain intact, although they are in urgent need of repair. In order to address this need, the FCC Board of Trustees have restarted the *Window Project* in order to raise funds specifically for restoring the windows: re-glazing, repairing rotted or damaged sills, and repainting the trim and sills.

As you know, the First Congregational Church is a building of historical significance, which serves many members of the Worcester community. In addition to the primary purpose of the church—for members to congregate for Sunday services, worship, fellowship, meetings, events, administration, and more—it also serves as a vital gathering space for another 10 organizations, who rent and use the building on a regular basis--our building accommodates and serves approximately 300 people weekly.

In order to continue our responsible stewardship of this important place of assembly and worship, we frequently review facility needs in order to identify and prioritize the needs of the physical structure. Attending to these window renovations is currently our most pressing structural need. If these repairs are not addressed in a timely manner, the windows will continue to deteriorate further leading to more extensive and expensive repairs.

Our goal for the *Window Project* is to raise \$5,500 (based on a previous estimate provided) with the anticipation of having work scheduled and completed by the end of this summer, 2020. Approximately \$2,000 toward the fundraising goal has been raised to date.

We are reaching out to our church members, as well as members of the broader, local community, asking for participation in this effort. With your help and God's provision, we can address these needs. Please consider making a contribution at any level – every gift is significant, appreciated, and helps us meet our goal. We encourage you to make a gift in honor or in memory of loved ones, as we will be creating a display in the building to publicly thank all donors of this project, with appreciation plaques to include any honorarium and memorial names and language. The Board of Trustees of the First Congregational Church believes that this kind of recognition is an appropriate way to thank supporters and to share our community efforts with generations to come. We hope that you agree and we welcome your involvement!



Mission Project ~ One Dime at a Time

Our congregation is wonderful at helping our church when they see a need. Seeing that the Trustees have restarted the Window Project, we have discussed a way we could help them at our recent Missions Committee meeting. Ruth Nickerson presented us with an easy, fun, yet productive way to help raise money for this project. She said that one 20 oz water bottle will hold about \$100 when it's filled with dimes. As you may have read, the cost of painting and refurbishing the windows will be roughly \$5,500. There has been about \$2,000 raised so far, leaving \$3,500 to go. Will YOU help us to achieve this goal? WE will provide the bottles if YOU provide the dimes! You'll be surprised at how quickly they add up! When your bottle is full, you can give it to Ruth, who will see that it gets to the Trustees.



If we all join hands, we can get this job done!

Missions Matters ~ Carty Cupboard



Many thanks to those who have continued donating to Carty Cupboard. Your contributions are gratefully appreciated and most welcome.

Food items requested at this time:

- **March** – Pancake Mix & Syrup
- **April** – Jelly

Personal Care Products are always needed such as:

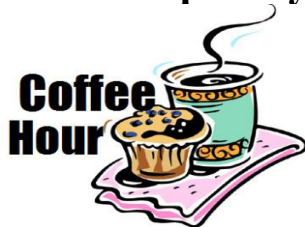
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Feminine products
- Diapers sizes 1-6

Anything you are able to donate, whether goods or money is very graciously accepted. Please remember to **check the expiration dates** on your donations as **they do not accept outdated food**.

Thank you for your generosity.

The Missions Committee

From Hospitality



Anyone wishing to bring in treats for Sunday Coffee Hour through the end of 2020, please sign up in the Narthex. Thank you!

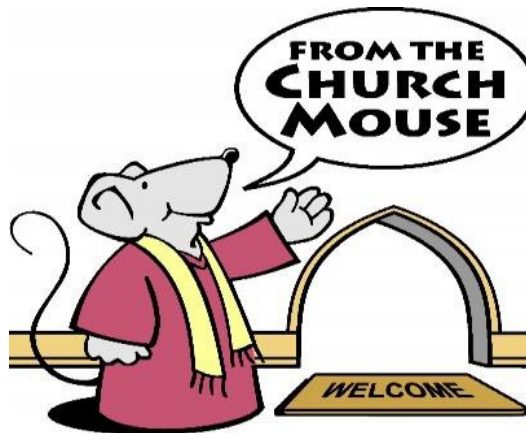
Mar 1 Several members of the congregation

Mar 8 Carolyn Jackson

Mar 15 _____

Mar 22 _____

Mar 29 _____



Greetings everyone,

It's March. March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, or maybe like a little mouse! The earth will be waking up from its long winter's nap on the 20th as Spring begins. Even the Bible reminds us about the glorious return of Spring. "For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers have already appeared in the land, the time has arrived for pruning the vines, and the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land." Song of Solomon 2: 11-12. God sure takes care of everything. It is an amazing time of year as color returns to our landscapes. I am in awe of the changes that happen and in awe of the power of God. Also in March, we celebrate St. Patrick's Day on the 17th. It's a fun day to wear your green. Why green? It was thought that wearing green made you invisible to leprechauns. They couldn't pinch you if they couldn't see you! St. Patrick was a man of God who converted the Irish to Christianity. He died on March 17, 461. Have a happy March. Let's talk next month.

Your faithful church mouse,

Nick



The Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Inc. (CMAA)



The Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Inc. (CMAA): will be relocating to a new location in Worcester, MA effective March 1, 2020.

Our new address will be:

330 Southwest Cutoff, Suite 203, Worcester, MA 01604.

During this time of transition the Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Inc., will continue to serve our consumers without any service interruptions. This also includes no changes to our office's main telephone number (508-852-5539). The new location allows us to serve you better, with more accessibility and opportunities to expand our partnerships throughout the Central Massachusetts Region.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to our continued service as the leader in Central Massachusetts in providing information and resources to older adults & their caregivers.

Sincerely,

The CMAA Staff and Board of Directors

Prayer, Bible & Book Group



We have a wonderful group of people who meet every two weeks or so for prayer and discussion. As we learn about prayer, we also learn about ourselves and those around us. God is ALWAYS there for us. HE listens intently to our prayers and ALWAYS answers them. They may not be answered in the way WE want them to be or in the time in which we'd like them to be answered but they ARE answered in HIS time and in HIS way. As we grow in spirit, we realize more and more that HE really does know what is best for us. We need only to talk to

HIM as we pray for HIS guidance and patiently await HIS answers.

Besides praying for those who need prayers, we read and discuss a book that we've chosen. We read it during our time together, discussing and digesting it as we go, never rushing. We may get through just a few pages or a full chapter at a time but we've had some very interesting and fulfilling discussions.

Of course the Bible is always referenced, discussed and explained as we go along. We leave no stones unturned and always leave our meetings refreshed and renewed. We are pretty flexible so the evenings that we meet are planned around our schedules. We meet from 6:00-7:00 p.m. on a weeknight. Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, March 10th**. If you would like to join us at any time, check the weekly bulletin, ask Katy in the office, or ask Rev. Bob when our next meeting will be. We'd love to have you!



Our schedule will be a little fluid for this coming month. We might make some changes as we go along, but rest assured we will meet each Tuesday at 10 am. We always put on the coffeepot and have hot water for those of you who are tea drinkers to start our meetings. WPD officer Mike Higgins was not able to be with us in February so we are hoping to reschedule a time for him to come and let us know what's been happening (or not!) in the Tatnuck neighborhood and around the city.

The Lenten season has begun and we would like to spend some time in Bible study as we prepare for Easter. Thus, our schedule for March, as we begin the month, is subject to change.

- March 3 Lenten program
- March 10 Bible study or speaker
- March 17 Bible study or movie
- March 24 Bible study
- March 31 meet at church to carpool to the Skyline Bistro at the Worcester Technical High School for lunch together. Time TBA. Let us know if you will be coming so we can make a reservation.

Webster defines "***fellowship***" as, friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests. The word "***koinonia***" is Greek in origin and means Christian fellowship or communion, with God or, more commonly, with fellow Christians. Please join us to share in the spirit of fellowship and koinonia.

One Great Hour of Sharing March 22, 2020



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes or people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery. Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Remember...



Sunday, March 8, 2020



FCC Worcester Calendar

March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	2 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	3 Election Day - VOTE!!! 10:00am Fellowship-Lenten Program 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima	4 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	5 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	6 5:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	7 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
8 Daylight Saving Time begins 9:00am Hall Reserved 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Trustees Meeting 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	9 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mtg-Parlor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	10 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima	11 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	12 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir	13 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	14 8:45am Super Saturday 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
15 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Deacons Meeting 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	16 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	17 Happy St. Patrick's Day 7:30am B.S.A. - Hall 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima	18 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	19 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	20 First Day of Spring 5:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	21 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
22 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Church Council 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	23 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	24 Deadline for Newsletter submitting 10:00am Fellowship 11:30am Missions Meeting 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima	25 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	26 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir	27 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor	28 10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall
29 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall	30 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall	31 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima				