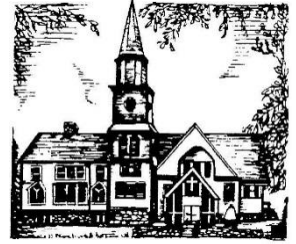


June, 2017

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
Website: www.fcc-worcester.org · E-Mail: office@fcc-worcester.org
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A Word from Rev. Jackson

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ: It's hard to believe we are already half-way through the year 2017. Tempest fugit - "Time Flies" in Latin. In the midst of this season of confirmations, graduations, and weddings, we are reminded that life is always changing around us... often at a very fast pace. Sometimes we long for comfort in something that does not change. This is where our faith comes in.

The reality is that all we have is on loan to us from God. Family, friends, and material goods are gifts to us, and we are called to be good and faithful stewards of these blessings. Because these gifts are "on loan" to us from God, sometimes the loan is called in, and God blesses us in new and wonderful ways. Our calling is to be flexible and willing to be used by Jesus Christ. It is only by deepening our relationship with Jesus Christ that we become less attached to the temporal things of this life. The tide of time and change daily remind us that our home is not on this earth but in Heaven. Becoming too attached to our "things" is a daily battle which begs the question: What is really important to us, and what false gods are nudging out our one true Savior?

Sometimes the best we can do is go up to the mountains, figuratively and physically, and spend some time with God to deepen our faith.

Some of you have heard that I'll be taking some time off from July 1st to November 1st. Three months of sabbatical time and one month of vacation. The bottom line goal of this journey is to come apart from day-to-day activities and set aside some Sabbath time with God to be replenished by the Holy Spirit. Dale Wolynick

wrote an enlightening article entitled "Sabbaticals for Ministers: The Benefits for Pastor and Congregations." The church is about people and their spiritual wellbeing. Pastors also need time to develop greater intimacy with God and rediscover that ministry is about grace, not just works.

A sabbatical, like the Sabbath, establishes breathing room from their busy lives so God can speak... There comes a recognition that our dependency is on God and not on ourselves.

The full article will be available in the Narthex over the next few weeks. Mr. Russell Goliger, a student at Andover-Newton, will be providing coverage while I'm away. His contact information will be in the July/August "Friendly Messenger." On June 25th, I'll be preaching about what a sabbatical is, what it is not, and a few details on my plans.

Finally, I would like to thank the congregation for the privilege of taking a sabbatical. My prayers will be with you, and I appreciate your prayers for me. Meanwhile, I look forward to ministering with you in June. See you in church !

Rev. Bob

FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEAD-LINE: The hard and fast cut-off date for the July/August issue is Tuesday, June 20th. If your article isn't in by that date, we'll be happy to include it in our September, 2017 issue. Thank you!



Sunday School

We're so excited to have children filling our Sunday School once again! They're delightful! They're curious and enthusiastic about Jesus! Their little minds are like sponges, eager to soak in all they can about God! Who is He? Where is He? How do we know that there will never be another ginormous flood like in Noah's Ark?

Bob Smith is head of our Sunday School and is doing a wonderful job organizing lessons, giving his time and talents, and making sure there's someone here to teach our children when he can't be here. Mason Martin is also excellent with the children when he can be here, but with a new baby in the family and a busy schedule, he can't always make it. Additionally, we have some wonderful volunteers who are willing to spend time in the classroom from time to time as aides to these fantastic teachers.

It's with great sadness that we have to announce that Bob Smith will be leaving us in July. He's moving too far away to commute back and forth to Worcester every week, so we need someone who'd like to hop on board and take over for him.

Won't you follow the steps of Jesus and help teach our wonderfully inquisitive children about God and Jesus? Actually, they'll be teaching YOU as well! You can contact me at 774-253-0715, or speak to Bob Smith or Rev. Bob.

Jesus said, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these."* (Matthew 19:14)

Joyful blessings,
Susan Anderson
Christian Education/Youth Advisory Committee

Bulletin Cover Donations

If you'd be interested in donating a Sunday bulletin cover for a special occasion, please stop by the office to pick one out from one of the many we have available. The cost is only \$10!

June Birthdays

01 Karl Marble
03 Jane Boggs
05 Daniel Ames
10 Steven Hinson
11 Cassandra Olson
11 Erin McGrail
13 Joyce Thienel
14 Danny Marble
17 Linda Ann Coy
19 Eileen Miles
28 Kevin Blondin

June Anniversaries

01 Mac & Connie MacInnes
08 Bob & Luz Smith
21 Richard & Renee Mason

From Hospitality

Anyone wishing to bring in treats for Sunday Coffee Hour through the end of 2017, please sign up in the Narthex. Thank you!

Prayer Group Still Active!

Don't forget that our Prayer Group is still active and meeting. If you have an interest in becoming part of our group, please let Rev. Bob know. Our meetings are set based on the schedules of those participating, so we're very flexible. Hope you'll join us!

Book Study Group

Is there a book of the Bible or a Christian book you'd like to study as a group? Simply let Rev. Bob or the office know, and we'll set it up based on your schedule.

New Member Class

If you're interested in becoming a member of our church, please speak to Rev. Jackson. The new members' class is scheduled for June 4th.

A Note of Thanks

Mac and I would like to thank everyone for all the prayers for Alan MacInnes (Mac's brother). He passed on Saturday, April 29th, and he is at peace now.

Mac & Connie MacInnes

Prayer Requests

Hampton Bagdasarian requests prayers for June Kemp; Sue Cardin requests prayers for Helga Siam and 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 son, John; Melissa Castle requests prayers for her mother, Margaret, and for herself; Renee Mason requests prayers for her mother, Melika Piligian, Sally Hetfield requests prayers for Mercedes Vezina; and the Deacons request prayers for Erika Vecsey, Murdock Snair, Mac MacInnes on the loss of his brother, Allan, Diana and Jeff Allen, Sally Day's daughter-in-law, Raja Day, MaryKay McGrail's mother-in-law, Clair McGrail, and Sis Prefontaine.

Praise Banners



Do you like our church banners? Would you care to help us purchase new ones? These can be dedicated to loved ones as a memorial, or you can join with someone to share a banner purchase. We do our best to order them when they're on sale (they're approximately \$149 to \$200 each). We need a total of four new

banners: three appropriate for mid-winter, and one for Christmas.

Please see Sue Anderson, Don Ansley, Sue Cardin, Scott Yonker, or Rev. Bob for more information. Thank you!

Shepherds Needed

Do you like to warm peoples' hearts? Speak on the phone? Send cards or notes? Keep in touch with your church family? If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions, maybe you'd like to become a Shepherd. We can really use your help!

We're a group who strive to keep our hearts open to everyone, as we show our concern for them. We let them know that we're there for them by talking to them and sending them cards throughout the year, especially for special occasions. If they need help, we do what we can and point them in the right direction to find the help they seek. Love is what

makes a family grow together. This holds true for our church family as well.

If you're interested in becoming a Shepherd, please let Sue Anderson know by calling her at 774-253-0715 or 508-753-6437 or e-mailing her at deegram@charter.net. Thank you!

Jesus said, *"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep."* John 10:11

Laundry Love



Many hands helped unload your May donations to Walking Together Ministries / Laundry Love. You generously gave 11 large jugs of liquid detergent, \$14.25 in quarters for the machines, 4 tubes of kid's sunscreen, and a bag of

assorted children's activities from the 300th Celebration's 1700s dinner.

A reminder with the heat on its way, there are the summer requests of juice boxes, small waters, small bubble jars, pocket-size sunscreen, along with the detergent and dryer sheets.

This outreach is on-going all 12 months, and they are grateful for your continual support during the summer. Leave your donations under the "Bubble Tub" in the Narthex, to be delivered the second Thursday of each month.

Coupons Needed

The Educational Coupons found on soup cans, plastic wrappers, box sides, and tops are needed for our outreach ministry to the Elon School. Sally Day welcomes your envelopes and baggies in the collection box with the red poppy on the Narthex table.

Concordia's Closet

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to the Concordia Closet outreach on May 2nd. The wagon was filled from back to front and to the roof! Many blessings were sent back to everyone.

Pastoral Relations Committee

This year's Pastoral Relations Committee will be meet-ing with Pastor Bob again on Wednesday, June 7th.

Our goals will be those set down by the UCC to develop a constructive, caring, and communicative atmosphere and the promotion of mutual ministry between the pastor and the congregation.

Our request, in order to develop this openness, is that we will need your help in letting us know what you would like included on each meeting's agenda: your suggestions, your concerns, and your questions. They will be held in confidence within the committee and be used in a way to meet the collective goal of the committee: "What is best for the church."

Look for the locked mailbox in the Narthex to leave us your thoughts and suggestions.

Leave us a note, call, or speak to us anytime - your voice will be heard.

Save the Dates:

Your Pastoral Relations Committee is pleased to inform you of two very important sermons the Pastor will give concerning his Sabbatical. Many requests have reached us asking to explain what a sabbatical is, and what he will be doing while away, as well as what effect does this have on our congregation.

Mark your calendars for:

Sunday, June 25th: "Sabbatical Plans"

Sunday, November 12th: "How the Sabbatical Furthers The Pastor's Ministry at FCC"

Sheila Ansley, Chair; Theresa Andes, Ashley Hinson, Linda Ann Coy

Sharing Network

Heifer International

Summer Camp Sessions: June 26-30 (first session) to August 14-18 (last session). Download the registration form from the website: www.heifer.org/farm.

Birthday Barnyard Parties - Year-Round: Invite 18 of your family and friends for a hands-on farm activity part. Trained party host to help with all your needs. Cost: \$275 for 18 guests. Call or e-mail the farm at heifer.farm@heifer.org.

Remember the Farm Café and Gift Shop:

Daily, 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Fair Trade gifts, produce, food, and drinks. Farm fresh hot soup daily!

Boundless Way: Daily practice sessions:

Buddhas Over Worcester: Open daily until dusk, through Saturday, June 24th. Visit the beautiful, tranquil gardens at Boundless Way and view the art and sculptures of 20 visiting artists. Take some quiet time for yourself while visiting this beautiful spot.

Worcester Friends:

Summer Market Day: Saturday, June 10th, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at 901 Pleasant Street. Vendors, food, plants, books, and their famous fresh strawberry rhubarb pies!

History Room



The Celebration Team is happy to announce the creation of our 300th Celebration DVD, produced by Judy Langlois. The DVD is a combination of the events that took place over the nearly three years of our celebration.

Scenes that were shown at our Anniversary Banquet form the basis of this disc, along with images from the Blessings Forward Service and the Veteran's Day Bible Service this past November have been included. The disc will be offered for PRE-SALE until Sunday, June 18th, in the Conference Room during Coffee Hour. You'll be able to preview it as you sign up for your copy.

Each disk will be \$3.00 for the limited editions. A team member will take your presale order (\$3/disk) on Sunday, June 4th, Sunday, June 11th, and Sunday, June 18th.

Also available on sale will be the note cards and magnets of the church's history.

Christian Education Committee Children's Cookout

The Christian Education Committee is planning a Children's Cookout on June 11th, Music Sunday, at 11:15 a.m. on the side lawn, with a rain plan of downstairs in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome! Anyone wishing to make a contribution please sign up in the Narthex or contact Bob Smith, Sue Anderson, or Rev. Bob. Salads, sides, and desserts are welcomed. What's your signature dish?

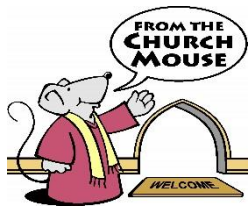
Fellowship News

Can you believe it's June? We have one last regular meeting, and then our bus trip, before we recess for the summer.

Tuesday, June 6th, at 10:00 a.m., we'll gather in the Parlor for coffee and goodies. Then let's take some time to reflect on this past year: what we liked, and what we could do better. Please come and share your ideas for what we can do to improve our group and enhance our time of fellowship together. Our new program year will begin in September.

Last call for our bus trip to Lake Winnepesaukee on Tuesday, June 27th. We'll gather at 8:15 a.m., so we can head out at 8:30 a.m. for a wonderful day trip, which includes a cruise on the lake, a buffet lunch, and a stop at a farmers' market. \$89/person. Call Carolyn Jackson at 508-459-9085, if you'd like to join us. We still have a few seats available.

From Nick, the Church Mouse!



Happy June, everyone! There's been a lot of activity here at the church, both inside and out. Did you know there's a family of brown rabbits that live in the church yard? The other night one of them got scared by the lawnmower. He ended up on Rev. Bob's front porch. Poor little guy! But all is well, I told him not to worry, no one would run him over.

The Sunday School children are getting ready for their big day, and that means a cookout after church on Sunday, June 11th. Yum!

I haven't met Pastor Alfred yet, but I'm looking forward to hearing the music and worship from his congregation. God's people sure are busy around here!

Have a happy summer. Don't forget to wear your sunscreen and keep hydrated... that's what my mother always told me. Good advice for us all. 'Til next time, Nick

Hospitality

Basket raffle winners were Wes Dalbeck, Jane Boggs, and Missy Castle. A big Thank You to Linda Ann Coy and Sue Cardin for donating such beautiful baskets, and Sheila Ansley and Linda Ann for helping with ticket sales. We had a wonderful, successful event.

Church Fundraisers

Please support our church fundraisers in June.

Fundraiser at Barnes & Noble Bookstore on Lincoln St.: Saturday, June 3rd and Sunday, June 4th; please use our flyer with Coupon Code Voucher Numbers. The flyer will be available in the Narthex, as well as included herein. You may copy this flyer or take extras to give to friends and family. It's simple to support our church: just shop at Barnes & Noble on Lincoln Street in Worcester or on-line using our coupon code voucher numbers. This includes the restaurant also!

Strengthen the Church

Strengthen the Church (STC) is a special mission offering to re-imagine and build the future of the UCC. Shared at the conference and national levels, STC largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. This offering will be received on Pentecost Sunday, June 4th.

Happy Happy Graduation !

Erin McGrail graduated on May 13th from University of Massachusetts/Amherst, with a degree in Communication Disorders. She's looking forward to attending graduate classes at the University of Connecticut in the fall. Erin will be studying for her Doctorate in Audiology.

At : Barnes and Noble Bookstore on Lincoln Street

You may also order online June 4th-June 7th

Voucher Number must be used when making purchases

Barnes & Noble Bookfair

Supporting

First Congregational Church UCC

Saturday, June 03, 2017-

Sunday, June 04, 2017

Worcester

541 D Lincoln Street

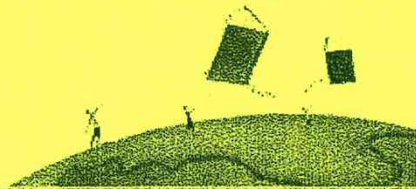
Please present this voucher
prior to making your purchase.

A percentage of the net sale
will be contributed to your
organization.*



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*The purchase of gift cards, Barnes & Noble memberships, textbooks, magazine subscriptions, video games, purchases made at Cafés owned and operated by Starbucks, and other items Barnes & Noble may exclude from time to time in its sole discretion are not eligible for bookfair sales. Institutional discounts may not be applied. See BN.COM/bookfairs for more details and to shop online.



Barnes & Noble Bookfair

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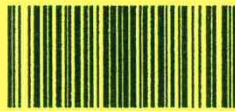
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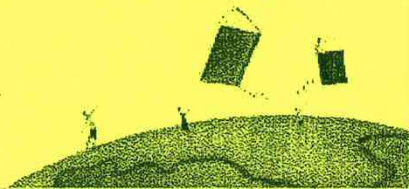
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June 2017 - FCC Worcester Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30pm AA Mtg	2	3 10:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
4 Pentecost 9:15am Choir 10:00am Worship-New Members 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 6:30pm AA Mtg	5 7:00pm Boy Scouts Council Mtg 7:00pm AA Mtg	6 11:00am Shepherds Mtg 7:30pm CE/YA Mtg	7 7:30am BNI 7:00pm AA Mtg	8 6:00pm Prayer Group 6:30pm AA Mtg	9	10 10:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
11 Trinity Sunday 9:00am Choir 10:00am Worship-Music Sunday & Children's Cookout 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Trustees Mtg 6:30pm AA Meeting	12 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mtg 7:00pm AA Mtg	13	14 Flag Day 7:30am BNI 7:00pm AA Mtg	15 6:30pm AA Mtg	16	17 10:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
18 Father's Day 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Deacons Mtg 6:30pm AA Mtg	19 7:00pm AA Mtg	20 *Deadline for Submissions to the Friendly Messenger 7:00pm City Democratic Committee - Fellowship Hall	21 Summer Solstice 7:30am BNI 6:15pm Sharing Network 7:00pm AA Mtg	22 6:30pm AA Mtg	23	24 10:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
25 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Council Mtg 6:30pm AA Mtg	26 8:15am Life Line Screening 7:00pm AA Mtg	27 Fellowship Trip - Office Closed	28 7:30am BNI 7:00pm AA Mtg	29 6:30pm AA Mtg	30	