

May, 2018

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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



A Word from Rev. Jackson

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

As I write this May newsletter to you, we have just had a day of high winds, cold sleet and ice, and horizontal rain. It has been a perfect winter day with May 1st arriving in 14 days! Spring time feels like a distant memory from the past. It's days like this that I am reminded of my grandparents (who were florists) warning me to never plant anything outside before May 15th.

It is this kind of weather that brings to life the words of Paul in II Cor: 4:16-18 *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

Too often we lose sight of what God is trying to do because we are so focused on the here and now. We miss the signs of springs in our life because we narrow our focus to the present and can only see snow and ice. Yet God is working things out in ways we could have never imagined. As Paul said earlier in the chapter: "II Cor 4:6" *"For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.'"*

Have you ever heard about the old man who was at the end of his life and said: I've worried about many things over the course of my life, and most of them never came to pass. Spring will arrive and God's light will always shine through the dark times in our lives. Let's keep this thought in mind whether we are talking about our life or our church's life. Threatening circumstances will always assail us but the bottom line is that God is always in charge. Whenever you feel threatened, worried or disappointed; reflect on the

words from the hymn "Be Still My Soul". (#77 Pilgrim Hymnal); "Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side; Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain; Leave to thy God to order and provide; in every change he faithful will remain. Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly friend through thorny ways leads to a joyful end. Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake to guide the future as he has the past. Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake; all now mysterious shall be bright at last. Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below. Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on when we shall be forever with the Lord, when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored. Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

May the spirit of Easter fill our soul with a resurrected spring time attitude. May the power of the Holy Spirit (celebrated on May 20th) fill the sail of our life and of our church.

See you in church! Because He lives!

Rev. Bob

FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEADLINE:

The *hard and fast cut-off* date for the June issue is Tuesday, May 29th. If your article(s) aren't in by that date, we'll be happy to include it (them) in our July-August, 2018 issue. Thank you!

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!

May Birthdays

07	Sally Day
07	Dawn Ahaesy
09	Steven Coy
13	Sally Hetfield
17	Robert Olson
21	Christina Dalbeck
24	Diana Day
24	Anthony Sullivan
25	Bev Bean
25	Heidi Hinson
25	Deborah Mirick
26	Philip Cardin
28	Sheila Ansley

Laundry Love



Never a quiet delivery when we show up at “Walking Together Ministries.” This month, the snowbanks were replaced by multiple pieces of fire equipment trying to make their way up South Main Street – but the doors opened at Walking Together and out came the many hands to unload your generous donations.

Delivery for April included: \$20 for the machines, 15 large jugs of detergent, 2 boxes of antiseptic creams, 1 box alcohol wipes, 6 hand sanitizers, 2 pocket hand creams, 64 assorted toiletries and three packages of children’s activities.

Please leave your May donations UNDER, not in, the Bubble Tub in the narthex. Final day for the next delivery is May 6th.

Thank you again.

From Hospitality

Anyone wishing to bring in treats for Sunday Coffee Hour through the end of 2018, please sign up in the Narthex or call the Office. Thank you !

Cluster Meeting.

June 5th 6:30pm -8:00pm.

All are invited to a U.C.C cluster meeting in our church parlor on Tuesday June 5th. A cluster meeting is a time when members of our church and representatives from surrounding churches gather to meet and share their church story with our associate conference minister Rev. Kelly Gallagher. Some of the questions will be: What is on mission? What kind of ministers do we sponsor? What do we hope to accomplish for our Lord over the next five years? How does our history inform our present and future outlook?.

We hope you will join us for this informative meeting with our neighbors and Rev. Kelly. Refreshment donations are always welcome. Hope you will join us for this informative meeting.

See you there!

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, and for Justin and Catherine; Sue Carrow requests prayers for her brother, Michael Curran; and prayers are requested for Dawn Ahaesy and Dawn Ahaesy’s father, Francis Lajoie; Bruce Kabasinsky; Sis Prefontaine; Ronald Taylor; Sally Day; Dawn Smiley; Rita Swett; Holly Mahlert, and Jean Andes; Paul, a friend of Brian MacInnesRev; Ray Bull. Marie Waskevich.

Concordia's Closet:

Only a few days left for you to make the hard choice to save or donate those gently worn items to our spring collection for Concordia's Closet. Please take a second look in your closets, under-bed storage boxes and drawers for items of ALL seasons, ALL sizes, ALL ages, and ALL colors

Bed linens, lightly worn shoes, belts, handbags and accessories along with hangers are most welcomed. Keep in mind those people that are looking for interview and work clothes, such as dresses, separates and suits for both men and women.

The stage in Fellowship Hall is the collection spot from now until delivery day May 8th. Be sure to keep your donations AWAY from the heaters on the back wall.

Again, final day for the spring collection is TUESDAY, May 8th. Delivery is made the same day.

"Jam the Van" and/or "Fill the Explorer"

THANKS REV. ROBERT BACHELDER

The Rev. Robert Bachelder will be our guest minister on Sunday, May 20. He will be retiring in August after 30 years as minister and president of WAMS, the Worcester Area Mission Society.

We hope you will join us as we say thank you to him for his service to our community.

To the Coupon Clippers – A Thank-You:

Sally Day has informed us that the Elon School is NO LONGER participating in the product coupon program for staple items used at their school.

Sally thanks everyone for the many years of clipping and watching for those small and varied coupons that you left in her "Poppy Box."

This outreach has been a part of our congregation for many years, with Sally being the "sender." We thank her for her time and dedication to this mission project.

SHARING NETWORK:

UPCOMING EVENTS – Mark your Calendar – Let's support our neighbors down the street.

Worcester Friends Market Day

Saturday, June 16th – 9am-3pm – 901 Pleasant Street

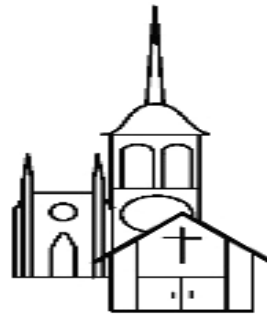
Homemade pies – Strawberry Rhubarb, Vendors, Books, Plants, Coffee, Hot Dogs, Donuts

Buddhas Over Worcester – Boundless Way Temple

The annual tradition continues this year in the Temple gardens at 1030 Pleasant Street. The exhibit opens May 6, 2018 – 2pm-5pm with an opening ceremony at 3pm

Enjoy a quiet stroll through the gardens until sunset each day to view the artistic displays on the meaning of "*Awake*."

History Room:



With all the sharing our church has done over the years, you will notice the history case's display – "*Love Goes Around*" – highlights many of the outreach programs we participate in during the year.

Years ago, major mission projects were in support of our foreign missionaries. Two such families are pictured in the case along with several articles from their service time in Japan and China. Added to that were decades of clothes and blanket sharing with the Sioux Nation in the Dakotas.

Presently, we have the opportunity to give to the major mission categories of the UCC: Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church and One Great Hour of Sharing.

More locally, we support the Worcester Areas Mission Society (WAMS) that gave us our start in Tatnuck and the Hope for Housing, by purchasing the gift cards of local retailers for our own use. Our monthly or seasonal outreaches include our "Hats and Mittens" drive, Christmas gifts for the MASPCC, the Community Lunch program, Laundry Love and

Concordia's Closet for the inner city and Carty Cupboard at Wesley Methodist Church.

There have been many others that we have participated in over the years, and there will be new ones along the way that you, our members, will bring to the church's attention that can use our help.

"Love (sharing) Goes Around" and our church family has always been happy to give, share and help when asked. Thank you for all the quarters, detergent, cereal, canned goods, children's holiday gifts, mittens, clothes and serving our neighbors lunch.

You and FCC Worcester are spreading that love **ALL** around!

Hope for Housing

We would also like to thank you for purchasing the Hope for Housing gift cards.

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 donate 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 after church if you would like to purchase some of these cards. While we don't ordinarily carry Hannaford cards, she will get them upon request.

Thursday Community Luncheons

There will be two luncheons in May. These are Thursday May 3rd and Thursday May 10th. These are the last luncheons scheduled for the foreseeable future.

May3

Beef Pot Pie

Blueberry Banana Muffins

Chocolate Pudding with whipped cream

May 10: Picnic Lunch

Egg Salad / Ham Salad / Tuna Salad sandwiches.

Potato Chips

Ice Cream Sundaes

Fellowship News

We have a full schedule of activities in May. We hope you can join us. Meetings begin at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday mornings in the church parlor unless otherwise noted. Bring a friend!

May 1st Church Clean-Up. There are lots of small projects to tackle around the building.

May 8th Sort the clothes collected for Concordia Closet. This is one of our service projects. Meet downstairs in Fellowship Hall.

May 13th Happy Mother's Day.

May 15th Come to lunch at the Skyline Bistro at the Worcester Technical High School. We will meet in the church parking lot at 10:00 a.m. and carpool to the school. Let Bev know if you will be joining us.

May 22th We will hold our annual Ten Penny Silent Auction.. Bring three "gently used" items.

Tickets are 10/\$1.00. You never know what "treasure" you will find. Lots of fun.

May 27th A Sunday. We will be hosting coffee hour this morning.

May 29th Our guest speaker will be Rev. Lee Atherton from the United Church of Clinton. She will be leading a two hour workshop called Five Wishes. Described as aging with dignity, a living will with a heart and soul. We will invite other churches to join us today. Light refreshments will be served. For this program we will meet in Fellowship Hall from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Mark this day on your calendar. You will not want to miss this.

Our final meeting for the year will be on June 5. Let's take time to share our successes and ideas for the future.

Two Upcoming Congregation Meetings

The Council has been busy over the past 4 months rewriting the FCC Constitution and By-Laws in an effort to simplify the structure of Boards and Committees.

With an active membership of 80 persons (where the term active is used in the Clerk's context of an individual who supports the church in any of a number of ways) and Boards and Committees requiring 54 names on the slate it was clear that the current structure is not compatible with a small, aging congregation. The concept of downsizing church structure is not new. Last year at Super Saturday attendees attended a how-to presentation and returned with ideas and several books on the subject. Additionally, Chaffin Church UCC in Holden accomplished something similar in 2016. They reduced their elected leadership requirements from 66 to 18.

The downsized structure which the Council will offer for the consideration of the Congregation on Sunday June 3rd will reduce our slate of elected positions from 54 names to 14 names. In downsizing the number of elected positions we've cut the size of the Boards and exchanged elected Committees for appointed, smaller, Committees which, in many cases, will be formed to accomplish a specific task during the church year. The goal is to encourage greater participation for brief periods rather than being asked to commit for a multi-year term.

The Boards will be slightly reduced in size and elected terms will be one year. Along with the smaller size the Boards are encouraged to bring matters of significance to the congregation as a whole rather than deliberating them over multiple Board meetings.

Because of this restructuring goal at the time of the 2017 Annual Meeting, there was no slate presented. Instead the Council asked all current members to continue in their elected positions until the new By-Laws could be completed and accepted. With the expectation that you, the congregation, will agree on the structure being presented, the Council proposes a second meeting of the congregation two weeks later for the purpose of electing the reduced slate. This

second meeting will be held June 17th. The new structure is proposed to take effect the following day, June 18th.

By the time you are reading this article, the proposed Constitution and By-Laws will be posted on the main page of the church's web site and on the church's Facebook page where they can be read and downloaded. The format of the file is called booklet or bookfold, depending on the tool. The file is meant to be printed just like the Sunday bulletin, two pages to each side of the paper. When printed and folded into a 5.5" by 8" booklet the pages will read in the correct order.

The office will print a small number of copies and for members who are unable to get to church, call the office and Bruna will put a copy in the mail.

Call for Two Special Congregational Meetings

May 1, 2018

To: The Members of the First Congregational Church in Worcester

Subject: Call for two Special Meetings, requested by the Council. The first to be held on Sunday, June 3, 2018 after the 10:00 am church service and the second to be held on Sunday June 17, 2018 after the 10:00 am church service.

Business:

[June 3, 2018] To approve a revision to the Constitution and By-Laws of The First Congregational Church for the purpose of restructuring the Boards and Committees of the Church. Upon approval, the new Constitution and By-Laws will take effect on June 18, 2018.

[Sunday June 17, 2018] To vote on the slate of nominees to populate the restructured organization.

Respectfully,

Don Ansley

Clerk

Spring Church Cleanup

Saturday, May 12, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Spring is in the air and are we all not cheering? With that joy it's time to spring into cleaning up our church grounds! **Save the Date!** Many hands make lite work.

Bring your rakes, pruners, shovels, and good will. If you can't make the date, consider taking on one of the items on the work list and doing it at a time which suits you; or, if there's a special project that you'd like to do, mention it to a trustee. I often think how nice our front entrance would look if we pulled the two shrubs and planted annuals for each season: tulips in the spring, geraniums in the summer, and chrysanthemums in the fall. Or, if yard work isn't your gift, consider making a donation of grass seed, line, mulch, or fertilizer. Any and all help is welcome.

Work List:

Garden by the side entry door

- 2 roses need to be shaped and trimmed
- Clean out dead debris
- Weed
- Edge
- Mulch
- Plant any Easter flowers in this garden that haven't been claimed

Garden by the elevator entrance

- Weed
- Clean out dead debris
- Trim shrubs
- Edge
- Mulch

Garden with bench and birdbath

- Weed
- Clean out dead debris
- Trim shrubs
- Mulch

Church sign garden

- Weed
- Clean out dead debris
- Edge
- Mulch

Front gardens

- Weed
- Trim shrubs
- Mulch

General yard work

- Pickup sticks in church yard and parking lot
- Pickup sticks in parsonage yard
- Rake children's play area
- Rake front yard
- Rake/pickup leaves by cell phone utility building and door beside utility building
- Use hedge trimmer to trim hedge in the garden on the left front area of the church, in back of sign
- Lime
- Fertilize
- Spread top soil in bare spots and low areas
- Seed
- As yard and garden areas are completed, blow sidewalks

Blow parking lot after sticks are picked up

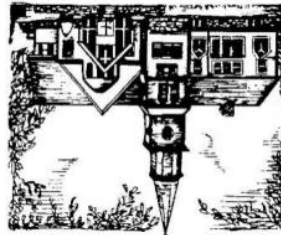
Celebration X

The UCC New England Women's Celebration X was held recently in Portland Maine. The theme for the weekend was "A Seat At The Table". Over 400 women gathered to sing, listen, share and eat together. We heard about a church in western MA that gathers for dinner as part of their worship. A church in NH has an amazing ministry to the deaf community. We were reminded that we must extended extravagant welcomes and practice extravagant hospitality to all who come to our churches and to all those who are outside our doors. It is the mission of the church to sure that everyone is welcome at our tables. We also learned in a workshop that is ok and necessary to take time to be still and listen to what God wants to say to us. We cannot receive the grace and peace of God if we are consumed by our own busyness. We ended with communion around many tables. As it says in Luke 14:17, "Come for all things are now ready." It will be four years until the next Celebration.

Sue Anderson and Carolyn Jackson

May 2018 - FCC Worcester Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm AA Mtg	2 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	3 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:30pm AA Meeting	4 4:00pm Girl Scouts	5 Cinco de Mayo 10:00am New Hope SDA 12:00pm Church of God
6 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am PRC Meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting	7 10:00am Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm AA Meeting	8 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm AA Mtg	9 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	10 Ascension 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:30pm AA Meeting 7:00pm Choir	11	12 7:30am Mother's Day Plant Sale 10:00am New Hope SDA 12:00pm Church of God
13 Mother's Day 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Trustees Meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting	14 10:00am Resurrection Ministries 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mtg 7:00pm AA Meeting	15 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm AA Mtg	16 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	17 6:30pm AA Meeting	18 4:00pm Girl Scouts	19 10:00am New Hope SDA 12:00pm Church of God
20 Pentecost 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Deacons meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting	21 10:00am Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	22 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm AA Mtg	23 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	24 6:30pm AA Meeting 7:00pm Choir	25	26 10:00am New Hope SDA 12:00pm Church of God
27 Trinity Sunday 10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries 11:30am Church Council Meeting 6:30pm AA Meeting	28 Memorial Day 10:00am Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	29 *Deadline for Submissions to the Friendly Messenger 10:00am Fellowship 7:00pm AA Mtg	30 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries 7:00pm AA Meeting	31 6:30pm AA Meeting		



The First Congregational Church in Worcester
1070 Pleasant Street
Worcester, MA 01602
www.fcc-worcester.org
Rev. Robert H. Jackson

Return Service Requested



Join Us!

Purpose Statement
It is our purpose to joyfully celebrate Christ's presence and God's grace in our lives; to respect one another in love, actively seeking and embracing those who wish to grow with us in faith, hope and love; to follow the example of Jesus, as we minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the community. Through service we flourish.

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