

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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

Greetings and Happy New Year in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

A new year has arrived, coupled with a brand new decade! What are our plans and goals for ourselves, our family, or our church? What are the mountains we want to climb or the pitfalls we want to avoid? How does the passage of time in the 2020s make a difference for us?

Now, more than ever, is a good time to talk about where we want to go from here. The Book of James gives us the best direction about planning for the future when he states in James 4:13-17: *Boasting About Tomorrow* “Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.” There’s never anything wrong with making plans. But we need to circle them with prayer before we seek to put them into practice.

Consider some of the things we have accomplished this past year:

1. We welcomed a new church into our worship space. As Iglesia De Dios La Ultima Reserva now meets at our church, we helped a congregation who was struggling with a limited worship space. Our church once again is fulfilling the dreams of its founders: that Christ would be worshiped in the space they built. The language is not important...the worship is!

2. Our Deacon’s fund has been very active this past year meeting the needs of families in our congregation. We thank those who support it.
3. Our congregation does a great job of supporting Carty Cupboard, Hope for Housing, and the Concordia’s Closet...to name a few.
4. We provided shelter for our communities children through the Worcester City Recreation Dept. when it rained or there was unbearable heat.
5. We provided hats and gloves to needy children at the school across the street at Christmas time.
6. We provided Christmas gifts for 50 needy families and a little extra this year for their parents.
7. We are a 5 for 5 church as we support all 5 mission collections of the United Church of Christ.
8. Our Easter offering was used to support the victims of the Tsunami in Southeast Asia.

A few things were planned and some were not. But all of them were surrounded by prayer. There were multiple other ministries that our church helps throughout the year.

So back to the original question: What are the things we want to do differently? Are there new directions we wish to prayerfully pursue in this New Year? Our mission shines brightly. What could we do to add to its glow?

Please consider things you would support with your time, talent or treasure and bring to council or our annual meeting. Let’s make sure 2020 is a year where we witness brightly for our Lord Jesus Christ.

See you in Church - Because He Lives,

Rev. Bob

P.S. Quote for the year: "Those who leave everything in God's hands will eventually see God's hand in everything."

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 9, 2020 at the conclusion of the church service.

U.C.C. Information



For 2020 the Southern New England U.C.C. Conference is no longer collecting dues from members. They will begin asking for "contributions". Contributions can be placed in the collections trays. Please make sure the contributions are labeled as "UCC Conference".

Thank you

FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEADLINE:

The due date for the February issue is Friday, January 24th. If your article(s) are not in by that date, we'll be happy to include them in our March 2020 issue. Thank you!

January Birthdays

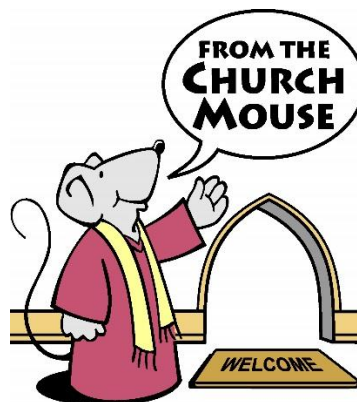
- 10 Jackson McGrail
- 13 Melanie Anderson
- 17 Josephine Morrow
- 25 John Hakkila

January Anniversaries

- 23 Phillip & Lorna Cardin

From Hospitality

Anyone wishing to bring in treats for Sunday Coffee Hour through 2020, please sign up in the Narthex. Thank you! Currently ALL Sundays are available for January 2020.



A Message from the Church Mouse

Greetings! Happy New Year! Bonn Ane! Feliz Ano Nuevo! Afishapa! There is so much happening each week in our church building. We have welcomed several other churches to share our space. It is wonderful to be in fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. I am hearing lots of different music and styles of worship but it all brings glory and honor to Jesus Christ. I say "Praise God!"

I am thinking that this winter I may just stick around and experience all the blessings that God will bring our way. I will be sure though to stay out of everyone's way. That's what a church mouse does, and I really love being the church mouse here. So, stay warm, beware of slippery surfaces and be careful if you have to shovel. Spring will come again. It always does!

Your faithful church mouse, Nick

Bulletin Cover Donations

If you'd be interested in donating a Sunday bulletin cover for a special occasion. The cost is only \$12!

Laundry Love



Even with all that is going on this month, you included our outreach to the Main South neighborhood, in your giving.

Thanks to you - 2 large jugs of detergent, \$42.35 in cash for the machines, 5 pairs of handmade mittens, and a 60 count box of prepackaged Nabisco cookies.

The long winter has set in so the need for flu preventives and warmth is high on the list of needs. Included are pocket size hand sanitizers, hand creams, first aid items for the zip bags, hats, mittens, and white socks, along with the staple detergents, dryer sheets and cash for the machines.

Your support for the "Team" and those receiving the help are greatly appreciated.

The next Sunday collection day is Sunday, January 5, 2020, for delivery that week.

Prayer Requests

Hampton Bagdasarian requests prayers for June Kemp; Sue Cardin requests prayers for David Siam; Susan Anderson requests prayers for her daughter, Melanie and her son, Danny; Sue Carrow requests prayers for her brother, Michael Curran; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; The Deacons request prayers for Paul Scherdell; prayers for Melissa Castle as she is recovering from surgery; prayers for Sally Day; prayers for Marilyn Mildish; prayers for Danny Ames; Maryann Wronski asks for prayers for her aunt Josephine Morrow

Fellowship News



Just a reminder, we will NOT be meeting in January. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 in the church parlor. We look forward to gathering then.

We were only able to meet once in December due to the early winter weather, but we still managed to do a lot of activities. We met the representatives from MSPCC in Worcester who told us about the programs they offer for young children and their parents. They appreciated the fifty gifts that were purchased for the children, as well as fifty coffee mugs filled with cocoa, tea and chocolates for the parents. A small group met to fill the cookie tins for our staff and shut-ins. Thank you to all who were able to contribute to that effort. We also sponsored the annual collection of hats, mittens and scarves for the children at Tatnuck Magnet School. Our church family is so giving and we thank you for supporting the drive. We collected 24 hats, 45 pairs of gloves and mittens, 3 scarves and 1 pair of socks! We are happy to partner with the school for this outreach.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who purchased Poinsettia plants to decorate our sanctuary this Christmas.

Stewardship Reminder

It's not too late to return your Pledge Form for 2020. You may place it in the offering plate or mail it in to the office. If you don't care to pledge but would like giving envelopes, please contact Matt Ahaesy or the church office. Thank you!



2020

FCC Worcester Calendar

January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			<p>New Year's Day Office Closed 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall</p>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<p>10:00am Worship - Epiphany Sunday 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>Epiphany 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>10:00am No Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima</p>	<p>6:00pm Christian Ed Meeting 7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>5:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall</p>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>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</p>	<p>10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mitg-Parlor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>10:00am No Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima</p>	<p>7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall</p>
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>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</p>	<p>Martin Luther King Day 10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>7:30am B.S.A. - Hall 10:00am No Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima</p>	<p>7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>Deadline date for Newsletter submitting 5:00pm Girl Scouts-Hall 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>10:00am New Hope SDA-sanctuary & parlor 12:00pm Church of God-Hall</p>
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<p>10:00am Worship 10:30am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 11:30am Church Council Meeting 2:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>10:00am Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor 7:00pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>10:00am No Fellowship 7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima</p>	<p>7:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	<p>6:30pm AA Meeting-Hall</p>	<p>7:00pm Iglesia De Dios La Ultima 9:00pm Resurrection Ministries-3rd floor</p>	

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