

April, 2017

# FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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## A Word from Rev. Jackson

Greetings in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

As we enter into this new month and arrive at the end of our Lenten season, we are called to contemplate what we have learned or where we have changed over these past few weeks. What has God been showing us? Where could we do better in our service to Him? In what ways are we allowing Jesus's agenda to inform our own?

One of the most touching moments in the passion story is when Jesus is hanging on the cross between two thieves. One thief taunts, but the other one, after confessing his sin, states, "And he said to Jesus, 'Remember me, Jesus, when You come into Your Kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'" (Luke 23:42-43)

When Jesus gave this blessed assurance to the thief on the cross before he died, He gives a strong message to us as well. That in spite of our failures, sins, mistakes, and shortcomings, Jesus still welcomes us in a spirit of forgiveness into His Kingdom. In other words, if we truly repent of our sin and desire to be with Him, He wants to be with us. In spite of the taunting, negativity, and horror at the cross, a repentant believer comes to faith. Jesus had reason to give up on the human race, yet He receives this spark of life, when death was all around Him. The thief, in his humble plea, receives the promise of eternal life right then and there, on the spot.

This is the kind of God we serve. This is one more example of how extensive His love is. Through this Easter Season and in the post-Easter Season, let's make sure our love and inclusion models what Jesus did on the cross. May the sacrifice of Good Friday and the hope of Easter touch the lives that God will bring across our path.

See you in Church during Holy Week !

Because He lives,

Rev. Bob

**Please join us!**

**Palm Sunday, April 9, 10:00 a.m.**

**Maundy Thursday, April 13**

**(Soup Supper at 6:00 p.m., Service at 7:00 p.m.)**

**Good Friday, April 14, 7:00 p.m.**

**Easter Sunday, April 16, 10:00 a.m.**

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## FRIENDLY MESSENGER DEADLINE

**The *hard and fast cut-off* date for the May issue is Tuesday, May 16th. If your article isn't in by that date, we'll be happy to include it in our June, 2017 issue. Thank you!**

## **April Birthdays**

10 Kristin Olson  
16 Khyllie Richard  
22 Susan Cardin  
24 Wesley Dalbeck  
26 Judy Langlois  
27 Sis Prefontaine

## **April Anniversaries**

05 Dolores & Marie Trzcinski  
18 Heidi & Steve Hinson

## **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 !

## **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 \$10 !

## **From Nick, the Church Mouse !**

Happy spring everyone ! I sure am ready for the flowers and sunshine. Bring them on ! This month we celebrate Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. They're very special days in the life of our church. We're reminded of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, the passion of His death, and the glory of His resurrection. Joy dawned again on Easter Day. Alleluia, Alleluia ! Just because I'm a poor little church mouse, I still am in awe of Jesus Christ and what He did and continues to do for the world. It's a season of rejoicing. I also heard there's going to be an Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, so maybe I can find an egg or two before the children fill their baskets. I promise not to be too greedy ! I love spring, and I love our church. So join me and remember to, "Raise your joys and triumphs high, Al-le-lu-ia !" Christ is risen indeed. Easter blessings to all. Nick, your church mouse.

## **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.

## **Michael W. Smith Lyrics**

### **"Friends"**

Packing up the dreams God planted  
in the fertile soil of you,  
I can't believe the hopes He's granted  
means a chapter of your life is through.

But we'll keep you close as always;  
it won't even seem you've gone,  
'cause our hearts in big and small ways,  
will keep the love that keeps us strong.

And friends are friends forever  
if the Lord's the Lord of them,  
and a friend will not say "never,"  
'cause the welcome will not end.  
Though it's hard to let you go,  
in the Father's hands we know  
that a lifetime's not too long  
to live as friends.

And with the faith and love God's given,  
springing from the hope we know,  
we will pray the joy you live in  
is the strength that now you show.

We'll keep you close as always;  
it won't even seem you've gone,  
'cause our hearts in big and small ways,  
will keep the love that keeps us strong.

And friends are friends forever  
if the Lord's the Lord of them,  
and a friend will not say "never,"  
'cause the welcome will not end.  
Though it's hard to let you go,  
in the Father's hands we know  
that a lifetime's not too long  
to live as friends.

## **Easter Egg Hunt !**

The hunt is on ! On Palm Sunday, April 9th, we'll have an Easter Egg Hunt for our children. Bags will be provided, or you may bring your own basket from home, if you'd like. The hunt will be outside (weather permitting), or in the church sanctuary, shortly after Coffee Hour. Please join us for the fun !

## Coupon Clip-a-thon

Let's get real busy with the scissors and fill Sally's box in the Narthex - the one with the red poppy. These educational coupons are sent to Elon School for help with their programs. Keep your eyes wide open, as some of the coupons are very small !

## Laundry Love



Your March donations were put to quick use on Laundry Love Night at SudsUp. You donated 12 jugs of detergent, dryer sheets, four hand creams, 12 sanitizers, a large bag of assorted creams, lotions, and soaps, and \$3.25 in quarters for the machines.

While checking in with Rev. Ward, she was asked what was needed as the next season is upon us. Due to warmer weather and high sun for longer outdoor time, she's looking for sunscreen in any size. Individual/trial sizes or larger for moms to use on their families are welcome.

She's also very excited about being a distribution center for the Worcester State Nursing "Baby Box" program. You may have seen a recent article in the paper, and a picture about a similar hospital distribution. The student nurses visit Laundry Love to sign up expectant moms, deliver their baby bed box filled with basic items, and follow their progress for the first three months.

The program of a safe sleep area for newborns originated in Scandinavia and has been successful in helping to prevent SIDS. Rev. Ward is very pleased to be able to be a partner with Worcester State.

Our next laundry supply deadline is Sunday, April 9th, for delivery on Tuesday, April 11th. Please leave your donations UNDER the bubble display in the Narthex - and your quarters to Linda Ann. Remember the BOGOs in the grocery stores and the deals at the Dollar Store.

## Church Cluster Meeting

This meeting will take place on Thursday, April 6th, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Pakachoag Church, 203 Pakachoag Street, Auburn, MA. Please see Rev. Bob if you'd like to attend.

## 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 !

## 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 Anderson; Sue Carrow requests prayers for her son, John; Melissa Castle requests prayers for her mother, Margaret Castle, and for herself; and prayers are requested for members Erika Vecsey, Betty Dalbeck, Murdock Snair, and Sis Prefontaine (Coos County Nursing Home, PO Box 416, 364 Cates Hill Rd., Berlin, NH 03570).

## We're Doing It - Creating a New FCC Cookbook !

It's been a long time since we've published a cookbook, and people have been bringing in a lot of really good food to share. So, it's time! We're looking for the following types of recipes (including gluten-free):

- Soups & Salads
- Vegetables
- This 'n That
- Side Dishes
- Breads & Rolls
- Main Dishes
- Desserts

For the initial collection of recipes, we're asking that you only send in one or two of your favorites for each category. Please mark recipes as "gluten-free," if appropriate. Depending on how many we collect, we'll ask for additional recipes by category, as needed. Please contact the Growth Committee: Jane Boggs, Sue Cardin, Judy Nally, Ruth Nickerson, or Charlotte Perry. Thank you !

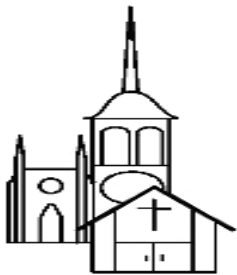
## Shepherds Needed

Do you like to warm peoples' hearts ? Talk 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](mailto: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



## History Room

"Another FIRST for First Church in Worcester."

That was the often-heard phrase used during 1998, as the long-awaited second steeple arrived from its manufacturer in California. This new steeple was built of

materials compared to that on the Stealth bomber, to house at least three radio antennae. It replicated the first steeple that had been there since the early 1970s, but with the added distinction of being the FIRST church in Worcester to have entered into this new technology.

Omni Point Communications, Inc. was pleased to find that we were the highest point in Tatnuck with an unobstructed availability for a broadcast radius of 1-1/2 to 2 miles. Technology was just bursting on the scene with personal and business cell needs, and our tower was their answer.

2017 finds the steeple standing tall; and the equipment and tower users are constantly updating their product to keep up with the times and demand. Check out the photos in the History Display Case of the raising of the steeple.

We were FIRST then - what do you think our next FIRST will be ?

## Fellowship News

Fellowship is fun, fantastic... how would you describe it? We welcome everyone to join us on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. We've grown very comfortable meeting in the Church Parlor during the colder months, so we've decided to continue meeting upstairs in the Parlor unless our program dictates that Fellowship Hall would be a better meeting place for that day. Here's what's planned for April (subject to change, as necessary).

April 2 Berg's Florist will be here. Join us in Fellowship Hall to make a spring arrangement. Everything you need will be provided. Please bring \$12 to cover supplies

April 11 Under Ann Scherdell's guidance, we'll be creating plates of cookies to give to our shut-ins and staff for the Easter Season. Please bring a dozen of your favorite homemade cookies to share (and maybe a few extra for our coffee time !).

April 18 Meet in the church parking lot at 10:30 a.m. to carpool to the American Antiquarian Society on Salisbury Street. The suggested donation is \$2 to \$3 for the tour. Then we'll have lunch at Joey's on Chandler Street and recognize our church workers: Sally, Beth, Holly, and Don, for all they contribute to the life of our church.

April 25 TBA. Got an idea ? Share it with us !

April ALL MONTH-LONG: Collecting clothes for Concordia's Closet.

Don't forget our bus trip to beautiful Lake Winnepesaukee on Tuesday, June 27th. We'll need to fill ten seats, so invite a friend along to join us ! We're a fun group to travel with ! \$89 per person. Information sheets are in the Narthex, or speak to Carolyn Jackson.

## Somers Lawn Care Service

Jake Somers, 25, is the son of Dawn and Matthew Ahaesy. Jake volunteered at FCC in the summer of 2016 and assisted Doug Perkins in keeping the grounds of the church well maintained. This has inspired Jake to start his own business. Jake's family has deep roots with FCC, and thus he would like to offer his services to the members of the congregation first. All work is fully insured. Jake can be reached at 774-312-3640.

## Thursday Community Luncheons

**April 6th:** Ham with carrots, scalloped potatoes, a muffin, and pie.

**April 13th: NO COMMUNITY LUNCH THIS WEEK**

**April 20th: NO COMMUNITY LUNCH THIS WEEK.**

**April 27th:** Chicken legs with mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, cranberry sauce, a dinner roll, and rhubarb crumble.

**Please remember to call the church office (508-752-4635) to make reservations.**

## Carty Cupboard

Thank you for your continued donations to Carty Cupboard. They're gratefully appreciated.

Food items requested at this time:

- Cereal (cold and hot; hot in variety packs); the more nutritious, the better
- Canned fruit packed in fruit juice only
- Jelly, in plastic
- Low-sodium vegetables
- Pasta
- Minute rices
- Low-sodium beans

They get plenty of tuna, canned chicken, and peanut butter from the State of Massachusetts, so they don't need those items at this time.

## Personal Care Products Needed:

- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Feminine products
- Diapers, sizes 1-6

## Concordia's Closet

This is the month to really purge your closets and drawers with all going to a good cause - Concordia's Free Closet. Fellowship is collecting items the ENTIRE month of April. Leave your donations at the back of the stage in the Fellowship Hall, to be delivered on Tuesday, May 2nd.

All gently-worn items - ALL sizes - ALL styles - ALL colors - Accessories - Shoes - Good bedding, and hangers are needed. They're always in need for clothes for church, interviews, and work wear. Please mark your bags and boxes with CONCORDIA'S CLOSET.

## Sharing Network

### Heifer International

The Pancake Breakfast Fund Raiser was a big success in March. The gift shop has been expanded with an even larger selection of items from Greater Gifts and more. It's open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

"Yoga with the Goats" - Call for class information and April dates (508-886-2221)

"Summer" and "April Vacation Camp" Registration is now open.

*April Sessions* - Monday through Friday, April 17-21, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. - ages 7-13. Choose a day or the whole week. Reserve places now at 508-886-2221.

*Summer Sessions* - Call for dates and registration information at 508-886-2221.



Our Annual Fellowship Bus Trip is here.

Yes, I would like to cruise aboard the M/S Mount Washington on New Hampshire's Lake Winnepesaukee. Please reserve my seat.

Sailing Tuesday, June 27, 2017

Leaving at 8:30 am from the First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant St, Worcester

The trip includes a buffet lunch onboard, a stop at Moulton Farm Market and all gratuities.

\$89 per person.

Checks are payable to : FCC Fellowship

Questions: Carolyn Jackson (508) 459-9085

[mrsrevrhj@charter.net](mailto:mrsrevrhj@charter.net)

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Return to: FCC Fellowship

1070 Pleasant St. Worcester, MA 01602

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

# April 2017 - FCC Worcester Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> April Fool's Day 9:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
<b>2</b> 9:15am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship 11:30am Trustees 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>3</b> 7:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>4</b> 10:00am Fellowship	<b>5</b> 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>6</b> 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:30pm AA 6:30pm Church Cluster Mtg	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 9:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
<b>9</b> Palm Sunday 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship 11:30am Deacons 5:00pm Church of God 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>10</b> 6:30pm Neighborhood Watch Mtg 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>11</b> 10:00am Fellowship 12:00pm Shepherd's 6:00pm Prayer Group	<b>12</b> 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>13</b> Maundy Thursday 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:00pm Soup Supper 6:30pm AA Meeting 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service	<b>14</b> Good Friday 7:00pm Good Friday Service	<b>15</b> Holy Saturday 9:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
<b>16</b> Easter Sunday 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>17</b> Tax Returns due 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>18</b> *Deadline for Submissions to the Friendly Messenger 10:30am Fellowship Trip 12:00pm Shepherd's	<b>19</b> 7:30am BNI 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>20</b> 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Earth Day 9:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
<b>23</b> 9:00am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship 11:30am Council 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>24</b> 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>25</b> 10:00am Fellowship 12:00pm Missions	<b>26</b> 7:30am BNI 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting	<b>27</b> 12:30pm Community Lunch 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm AA Meeting	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:00am Haitian Church 12:00pm Church of God
<b>30</b> 10:00am Worship-LOGOS 6:30pm AA Meeting						