



THE BEACONLIGHT



Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

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NUMBER 03

Dear Congregation,

This month marks one year from the time that the entire world was called to shelter within their homes in order to allow a virus to pass over the land. We covered our faces, some buried ourselves in work, while others felt the weight of stress, felt isolated and pressured in ways that had never been anticipated. And yet here we are, an underground community of sorts, managing to work our way through this situation and attempting use the time to prepare ourselves for the eventuality of the time when we will indeed burst forth out of this situation, break through and go forth fully equipped and powerful enough to stand strong before whatever comes our way. The Spring has now come, and with it many new signs of hope. Just as I assure you the crocus will soon find their way to the earth's surface, regardless of the snow, it will soon be time for some of you to peek out into this strange new world and gain some perspective of your new surroundings, even if you are feeling trepidation at the thought of what lies just beyond your threshold.

There are surely others of you that are seeing these signals of resurgence with excitement, even daring to do too much too soon and in so doing risking that you may well do damage to yourself or your surroundings that could cause unnecessary challenges in your future. Then there are those who know themselves, who are able to rightly discern the times and move through their situation in God's timing, following His guidance as they put their trust in Jesus and patiently await the fruition of His promises in their lives.

How like seeds we are at times. All seeds start with an abundance of potential. Each seed is planted underground for a season. The success of the seed in developing into a thriving plant that reaches its full potential depends on many variants. Too deep and they are deprived of oxygen and the pressure hinders them, too shallow and they are left vulnerable. Those that are immersed just enough in this earth find the right amount of warmth, without becoming too cold or burning out. (The perfect temp is about 70 degrees).

Seeds need water, not so much that they become slugging and unable to move, but plenty enough to cause them to swell and burst out of their confines as they move boldly toward the direction of the sun. Overall, the light determines the temperature, absorption of water and nutrients as a new budding stem aims for the sun.

Even as new growth is exciting, onlookers may feel a need to pull back some of the soil and peek at the plant's progress or "help them out" by removing a layer so the small little stem will reach out sooner than would be natural, however there is a danger in exposing a seed too soon, before its time, in that when a plant is forced out too quickly, it can become scarred, get bent out of shape or may find itself too weak to stand up for very long in its surroundings and eventually crumble.

Perhaps you can relate to one of these seeds? If so, I encourage you to trust that God has a perfect process for the growth of all things, even you. One of the earliest things that God chose to share through His word in the first book of *Genesis* assures us that change is natural:

“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22).

From the age of 12 to the age of 30 there are very few words that describe the life of Jesus during that time. *“Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.” (Luke 2:52).* These were quiet years when Jesus seemed to be buried in studies and work, learning and growing within the comforting confines of family life. One may think that nothing spectacular or worth noting happened during these years, however they were clearly formative years that gave all that was planted within Jesus time to mature, time to shape His body, mind and Spirit in preparation for the mighty things planned in His future.

After nearly 2 decades, our Lord and Savior burst out onto the public scene, at just the right time, in just the right way, with amazing strength of body, mind and character, in full glory with all of the power which was stored within Him. Jesus’ body was 3 days in the tomb, in the encased, moist and dark environment before bursting out of the grave into spectacular life, with a new body, as He rose up to join His Father in heaven.

I truly believe in the promises of God. That even now, *“Indeed, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its produce” (Psalm 85:12),* I am confident that as we each dare to work our way out of this situation, as we push forward toward the things of Jesus we will eventually find ourselves standing tall and strong, rooted in Christ and ready to display His glory in the beauty of our individual testimonies.

There is still a bit more time for some of us to spend encased in our warm homes. If you are feeling a bit stir crazy, I assure you that is normal, and it is also a great signal that you are about ready to rise up out of your situation as you continue to reach for the Son. Until then, trust in the Lord and may His advice encourage you:

“Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you.(Hosea 10:12).

May you each find ways to truly appreciate and enjoy this Spring season. May you find renewal and may the Lord bless and keep you all ways.

Regards,
Pastor Meredith

March, 2021 is:

AMERICA FOR CHRIST OFFERING 2021

For the Purpose of Equipping Saints

EPHESIANS 4:11-13 (NIV)

Dear Mission Partner,

Thanks to your America for Christ (AFC) Offering contributions, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) supported communities distressed by the devastation of COVID-19 last year, as the pandemic swept our country and Puerto Rico. We helped families who lost homes to floods, wildfires and storms, along with children living on the edge because of poverty, and seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News. These are just a few of the ways we minister to those in need; there are many more.

We have been answering God's call to heal broken families and communities—as well as cultivate strong Christian leaders and equip passionate disciples— since 1832.

The world's needs today are as great as they were close to two centuries ago. By awarding grants to mission partners also doing the work of healing broken families and communities with the healing power of God's love, we increase the numbers of those in need who receive support across the United States and Puerto Rico, at the same time increasing the impact of your AFC gifts.

So, when you contribute to AFC, you increase our capacity to fulfill the biblical mandate in Ephesians 4:11-13: “Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service.”

Our America for Christ Offering 2021 campaign— “For the Purpose of Equipping Saints,” based on Ephesians 4:11-13—focuses on our discipleship and leadership empowerment ministries, which nurture the faithful followers who find their call and life's work as the hands and feet of Christ.

ABHMS' Discipleship Ministries sends more than 5,000 Discipleship and Christian Education Guides to regions, churches and individuals annually and provides 62 Church Life and Leadership workshops in English, Spanish, French and Karen, available for download at abhms.org. On average, more than 1,000 Bible studies—ranging in subjects from stewardship and eco-justice to children in poverty— are distributed each year, and, in 2019, several hundred

American Baptists attended discipleship workshops addressing the church's viability in these changing times.

Our Leadership Empowerment work in 2019 broadened a three-year Lilly Endowment grant focused on fostering clergy financial literacy, health and wholeness. More than 35 ministry partners and ABHMS staff were trained to integrate a related toolkit—adaptable for native populations, speakers of languages other than English and people living with disabilities—into a variety of congregational and community ministries.

Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling and Specialized Ministries developed a three-phase plan to strengthen connections of its ministry professionals as they combat denominational isolation.

And a two-year integrative program for missional entrepreneurs, Co-Creators Incubator, was launched last year. The inaugural cohort fostered a spirit of collegiality and collaboration among six entrepreneurs creating innovative ministries in the name of Jesus, while providing resources to enhance their ministries. Each received a \$3,000 seed grant, hands-on training at two summits in King of Prussia, Pa., mentorship from an interdisciplinary team and monthly virtual meetings with experts to help their ventures flourish and grow.

On behalf of American Baptist Home Mission Societies, thank you for your past generous support of our transformational mission. Our ministries, along with the ministries of our mission partners, are making a difference in the lives of so many individuals and families. With your help, we can bring God's healing touch to so many more.

May we count on your generosity once again?

With gratitude,



Dr. Jeffrey Haggray

Executive Director

American Baptist Home Mission Societies



Grotonwood Camp

VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE 2021

Our Virtual Open House events are the perfect opportunity to enjoy a 360° virtual tour of our facilities from the comfort of your home. Join us to learn more about who we are, what we do and why people's lives are being impacted positively here like nowhere else!

WHAT TO EXPECT

Our Virtual Open House events are scheduled to last one hour and fifteen minutes, and will cover the same content structure each time.

During the first part of the event we will discuss camp culture (values, beliefs, mission) as well as scheduling (rise & shine, bedtime routines, meal times, chapel time) and activities whilst virtually touring the facilities starting from our beach all the way to the Archery Range!

Next, we will dive into the specifics of your chosen program of interest, which could be Day Camp, Youth Overnight camps or camp for Adults with disabilities. We will address frequently asked questions including medication administration, counselor training, food, COVID-19 safety protocols, financial aid, camp and medical paperwork and other important things to consider.

Finally, there will be a 15 minutes Q&A session where we encourage you to ask questions!

WHEN?

To accommodate families fluctuating schedules, we are hosting six virtual Open House events; that is two per month, with a mid-week and a weekend option.

- Open House 3: Saturday March 20 - 10:00AM
- Open House 4: Wednesday March 24 - 6:00PM
- Open House 5: Wednesday April 21, 6:00PM
- Open House 6: Saturday April 24, 10:00AM

DATES DON'T WORK FOR YOU?

No problem. Select our "Private Virtual Tour" option to schedule a 1:1 meeting with a member of our leadership team at a date and time that suits you.

PRIVATE WALKING TOURS AVAILABLE PER REQUEST

Our private walking tours last approximately 60 minutes and are limited to the camper(s) interested in attending and a maximum of 2 caregivers. Please note that there will be COVID-19 screening upon arrival and all attendees must follow preventive measures such as hand washing, physical distancing and mask wearing at all times. We recommend wearing comfortable walking shoes and please ensure that you're dressed for cold weather in the winter months.

HOW TO REGISTER?

1. Select the calendar that better suits your need (Virtual Open House, Private Walking Tour or Virtual Private Tour)
2. Select the date you would like to register for.
3. Enter your contact information and select your program of interest.
4. Submit your registration.

After submitting your registration, a confirmation email will be sent with login details. Please add the event to your personal calendar to be reminded of the event closer to the time.

Visit our Website for links: www.grotonwood.org



Easter Flower Price List 2021



Easter Lilies

6" Pots	Single Plants, 5-7 Buds	\$9.95 each	_____
8" Pots	Double Plants, 10-14 Buds	\$19.95 each	_____
8.5" Pots	Triple Plants, 15-21 Buds	\$29.95 each	_____
10" Pots	Four Plants, 22-28 Buds	\$39.95 each	_____

Tulips

4" Pots*	Three Plants per Pot	\$3.95 each	_____
6" Pots*	Six Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____
8" Pots*	Eight Plants per Pot	\$12.95 each	_____

Daffodils

4" Pots	Three Plants per Pot	\$3.95 each	_____
6" Pots	Six Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____
8" Pots	Eight Plants per Pot	\$12.95 each	_____

Hyacinths

4" Pots*	One Plant per Pot	\$3.95 each	_____
6" Pots*	Three Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____

Oriental Lilies

6" Pots	One Plants per Pot	\$10.95 each	_____
7 1/2" Pots	Three Plants per Pot	\$19.95 each	_____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Total \$ _____

Please give orders to Debi Cross

Make checks payable to: First Baptist Church

No Later than March 21, 2021

Recipe of the Month

PEPPERMINT HOT COCOA BOMBS

Ingredients

1 cup milk chocolate chips or candy melts
2 envelopes (1.38 oz each) Swiss Miss Milk
Chocolate Hot Cocoa with Marshmallows
2 mini peppermint candy canes, crushed
1 tablespoon sprinkles
3 cups hot milk
Reddi-wip® Original Dairy Whipped
Topping



Preparation:

Place chocolate chips or candy melts in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 30 seconds, stir and continue microwaving in 15 seconds, stirring until chocolate is melted and smooth.

In a one half circle sphere mold add about 2 teaspoons of melted chocolate. Use the back of a spoon to draw chocolate up the sides until they are completely coated. Repeat for each half sphere. Freeze for no less than 20 minutes.

Right before removing the mold from the freezer, rewarm the left over chocolate. Pop out two of the frozen chocolate spheres. Fill one half with Swiss Miss®, candy cane, and sprinkles. Dip the other half in the warmed chocolate, gently press the two halves together, and seal any holes with a finger. Repeat for each hot cocoa bomb.

Use any additional warmed chocolate to drizzle over and decorate with sprinkles. Let hot cocoa bombs sit until chocolate is hardened. Wrap and give as gifts or indulge yourself! Place a hot cocoa bomb in the bottom of a mug, pour 1 cup hot milk into mug, stir well and top with Reddi-wip

Local News



Begins, Sunday, March 14, 2021

March 13, 2021- Turn clocks ahead tonight for Daylight Savings

March 14, 2021- Deacon's meeting

March 20, 2021- First day of Spring

March 21, 2021- Guest Musician Dan Kirouac

March 28, 2021- Palm Sunday

I heard a bird in the dark of December
A magical thing and sweet to remember
We are closer to spring than we were in September
I heard a bird in the dark of December

I heard this a long time ago
M. Carter

Careful Planning Makes a Difference

**ANTHONY V. FEROCI, JR.
ATTORNEY AT LAW**

114 Merriam Ave - Suite 204
Leominster, MA 01453
978-466-5011

Elder and Disability Law
Medicaid Planning
Estate Planning

The question was asked at one time or another, where do you keep your Bible? At your bed side or on your coffee table in the living room? We have a small kitchen cabinet where we keep ours, along with the Secret Place and the Upper Room devotionals. Handy to have and use daily. We feel if we keep these handy along with our Bible we will have a good start to our day.

It is nice to know that those who contribute to these devotionals, most often are fellow Christians, brothers and sisters from all over the world. Doesn't it make you feel less alone, and when someone in a land you'll probably never meet. In a country you'll probably never visit. Where our Christian brothers and sisters live, sharing the same holy word. Praise the Lord and God !!

Marilyn Carter



637 Lancaster Street (Route 117) - Leominster, MA 01453 - Phone: 978-227-5556
Email: restore@ncmhabitat.org

**DONATIONS NEEDED
FOR
NORTH STAR FAMILY SHELTER**

ITEMS NEEDED:

**FULL SIZE SHAMPOO
FULL SIZE CONDITIONER
FULL SIZE BODY WASH
FULL SIZE TOOTHPASTE
FULL SIZE DEODORANT
FULL SIZE SHAVING CREAM**

ITEMS NOT NEEDED:

**OFFICE SUPPLIES (HAVE A LOT)
TOOTH BRUSHES (HAVE A LOT)
BAR SOAP (NOT SANITARY TO SHARE)
TRAVEL OR SAMPLE SIZE ITEMS
NO USED OR HALF FULL ITEMS**



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP !!!
DONATIONS WILL BE DELIVERED
TO SHELTER WHEN BASKET IS FULL**



March Birthdays

- 02. Zuriel Waruhiu
- 07. Karen Simpson
- 07. Pascaline Labah
- 08. Diane Bigelow
- 10. Bob Simpson
- 11. Roberta Steward
- 12. Lynne Ruschioni
- 16. Chet Carter
- 25. Carl Rousell
- 31. Linda Hansen



March Anniversaries



- 27. Chet & Marilyn Carter



IF YOU'RE BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY IS NOT HERE, LET US KNOW AND WE'LL INCLUDE IT IN THE BEACONLIGHT! REMEMBER TO NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO YOUR ADDRESS OR TO OUR MONTHLY LISTING OF BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES
 CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE
 978-345-5622
 E-MAIL: FBCBEACONLIGHT@COMCAST.NET

PRAYER LIST

Anoura Rose Angelin
Annie De Martino
Bette Adams
Claire Budroe
John Mim
Cindy Beck
Susan Force (Bette Adams daughter)
Kathy Gosselin
Kathy Young (coworker of Diane Bigelow)
Kim & Katie (Bette Adams daughter & granddaughter)
Linda Gosselin
Mark & Diane Bigelow
Marsha – return of lung cancer
Nancy Peters
Roberta Poole
Ed Guerard
Tom and Karen Adams
Karen Simpson
Elaine Corzine
The Blake Family
Atera Mbunwe
Family of Connie Gariepy
Roger Abel
Family of John Kacmarcik
Steward family

Our Missionaries

Light A Candle Ministries
Rovaungha Richardson, William Seo
mission trip to Afganistan

Daniel Auguste and the Haitian
Missionary Team

Other Concerns

The Lutheran Church
1200 John Fitch Hwy, Fitchburg

Baptist Church of Grafton
First Baptist Church of Gardner

First Baptist Church of Gardner

For those under persecution for their
faith.

Prayers for those suffering from acts of
violence around the world



**IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST, PLEASE, LET US KNOW AND WE'LL INCLUDE IT IN
THE BEACONLIGHT!**

REMEMBER TO NOTIFY US WITH ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THESE LISTINGS.

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978-345-5622

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