



THE BEACONLIGHT



Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

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Dear Congregation,

It's daylight savings time. This time each year New Englanders rush ahead to spring forth their clocks an hour in order to spend a little more time with the sun and help bring forth a good crop by the harvest. We move the time ahead, yet sometimes it is difficult to push ourselves into motion and get busy with the chores that inevitably come with the season. The buds are visible, the birds are back, and all the signs are here, yet cold winds and grey days can make it difficult to come out of our winter slumber and find the motivation to embrace the day and get digging into our work.

This is true spiritually as well. Christians have been waiting for almost 2000 years for Christ to fulfil His promise to return. We see signs that His Word is still true, we reflect on the prophecies yet unfulfilled and it is clear that even now, there is still much to be done if we are to be ready for the coming harvest of souls and return of our King. Even so, some grow weary from turbulent winds and can develop a bleak outlook of the future that God has for us. Sometimes it is hard to hold onto the hope that springs eternal.

Thankfully, we serve a God who understands. He encourages us in His Word that even when we feel unwilling, or even ready to roll over and give up, we can, through the strength of His spirit, march forward boldly in strength through the help of His Spirit, remembering that we,

“are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. ⁶ So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober” (1 Thessalonians 5:5-6).

How do we find our get up and go to share the message of the Gospel and labor for Christ? The answer is in savings time. If we will spend some extra time with the Son, Jesus, and remember we are blessed in the light of His presence, He will renew our strength (*Isaiah 40:31*) and enliven us. His Word is healing to our body (*Proverbs 3:9*), and a light unto the path ahead (*Psalms 119:105*) that God has for us.

With God's help, we have accomplished many things this past year in His name and for His glory. There are still many who do not know the Lord, nor have they experienced His love for them. The signs are there, His Spirit is moving and all signs point to this being a time to sow seeds of love and gratitude and beautify our homes and neighborhood with the sweet fragrance of our faith, so I invite you to find some work gear and join me in digging into your Bibles and reading at least one verse a day through this Lenten season, and see if those seeds grow into wonderful fruit in your lives, fruit that you can share with others, for His glory, for He is sure to one day come and see how we have stewarded our gardens. It's time to push ahead, together.

Regards, Pastor Meredith

America for CHRIST OFFERING 2020

“You shall
LOVE your
NEIGHBOR
as **YOURSELF.**”
MATTHEW 22:39



Dear Mission Partner,

Thanks to your America for Christ (AFC) Offering contributions, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) ministers to families who have lost homes to floods, to children living lives of limitation in poverty, to seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News, and 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. We are extending our ministry by awarding grants to mission partners across the United States and Puerto Rico—partners who are also doing the work of empowering Christian leaders, nurturing disciples and intercultural awareness, and transforming congregations and communities with the healing power of God’s love. By contributing to the AFC Offering, you increase our capacity to fulfill the biblical mandate in Matthew 22:39: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

In 2019, ABHMS awarded more than \$300,000 to ministries carried out by our mission partners. These are just a few examples of the impact our partners are making across our mission field:

In the Cultivating Leaders and Discipleship categories, \$8,400 was awarded to the Los Angeles-based Innovative Space for Asian American Christianity (ISAAC) to help fund its “Imagining A More Equal Pulpit” initiative, including a Gender Summit that addressed the challenges faced by women of color in ministry.

In the Healing and Transforming Communities category, \$115,000 included support to Heart Reach Neighborhood Ministries, Campbell, Ohio, for the purchase of mattresses above and beyond the 104 already delivered to prevent children and teens from sleeping on the floors, couches and piles of clothing in its three housing developments.

In the Intercultural Ministries category, \$15,300 included support to Iglesia Bautista Betesda, Indianapolis, Ind., and its “Walking With the Immigrant” project, which has helped 60 families, including a family that senior pastor the Rev. Jaime Flores and a church brother accompanied to immigration court in Miami, Fla.

On behalf of ABHMS, 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, ABHMS

The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts

Rev. Dr. Mary Day Miller, Executive Minister

Rev. Gary Ludwig, President

Dear TABCOM family,

I am writing to share an important update for our TABCOM churches, leaders, members and friends. We are facing an urgent situation regarding our Oceanwood camp. Oceanwood is facing a critical financial shortfall. In the last 2-3 years the deficit in Oceanwood's finances has increased to a concerning degree.

Factors in this deficit include: lower summer camp registrations, the need to for costly capital improvements, the increased costs of offering our capstone Equestrian program, and the need to maximize a facility that is run on a year-round basis.

In response, I have called together an "Oceanwood Action Team" (OAT), which includes Region and camp staff, business professionals, and pastors who are all committed to Oceanwood's future. Our goal is to deal with the current cash flow crisis and to develop a sustainable model for Oceanwood's future.

Let me say up front: closing Oceanwood or selling off portions of the camp are not options that are on the table at this time.

That having been said, I will tell you that many options ARE on the table. We are seeking to "think outside the box" and move proactively. Our challenge is to deal with the present shortfall and to move Oceanwood into the future with a plan for ministry that will be faithful to our mission and provide a sustainable business model.

I know that many of you love Oceanwood and have had your own faith life shaped by its ministries. I want to suggest ways that you can help this process:

- **Send campers to Oceanwood.** Increased camp attendance not only helps the camp flourish, it blesses those who attend in eternal ways! Cast a wide net in your church, your family, and your community for new campers, remembering that we have good availability of camp scholarships for those with need. Learn about 2020 Oceanwood camp opportunities here: <http://oceanwood.org/2020-programs/>
- **Utilize Oceanwood for retreats and conferences.** Our camp facilities are a wonderful resource for your church and community organization. Oceanwood offers acres of wooded trails, a short walk to the beach, and spaces for small and large group opportunities. Our retreat link is <http://oceanwood.org/retreats/>
- **Give.** You knew this one was coming, but it's important. Recent generous gifts have helped Oceanwood undertake some urgent capital improvements that are necessary for Oceanwood to flourish. I know that TABCOM is a generous family and we welcome your special gifts to support Oceanwood's present and future ministry. You can click here to give:

<http://oceanwood.org/get-involved/> To give by mail, checks designated for Oceanwood may be sent to the Region office (address below) where they will be processed, credited to the mission giving of your church, and used to help Oceanwood in this difficult time. Also, if you prefer to include your support on your mission remittance form, show the amount under "Region offering" and write "Oceanwood Support" in the explanation box. Either way, you will receive a receipt and a whole lot of gratitude.

- **Listen.** We will be sharing opportunities to participate in camp workdays and other events to support Oceanwood. Please be sure that key persons in your church receive TABCOM Notes. To add them to the list, simply email tabcom@tabcom.org.
- **Pray.** I believe in the power of prayer to change our situations, as well as human hearts and minds.

Camping has played such an important role in my faith life, and I know so many who have been powerfully impacted by camp experiences. Join me in bringing those blessings to future generations through our ministry at Oceanwood.

Serving Christ,

Rev. Mary D. Miller

Preview:

- Keynote speakers Donald Ng and Jean Wright
- Music coordinator Bernard Smith
- Ten + compelling workshop choices
- Dinner celebration for the ministry of the Massachusetts Baptist Charitable Society
- Spotlight on Samuel Stillman Association
- Expanded youth program
- And MUCH MORE! Come be blessed!



Easter Flower Price List 2020



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	\$3.75 each	_____
6" Pots*	Six Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____
8" Pots*	Eight Plants per Pot	\$10.55 each	_____

Daffodils

4" Pots	Three Plants per Pot	\$3.75 each	_____
6" Pots	Six Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____
8" Pots	Eight Plants per Pot	\$10.95 each	_____

Hyacinths

4" Pots*	One Plant per Pot	\$3.75 each	_____
6" Pots*	Three Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____

Oriental Lilies

6" Pots	One Plants per Pot	\$8.95 each	_____
7112" Pots	Three Plants per Pot	\$16.95 each	_____

Hydrangeas

	(Pink)		
	(Blue, Pink & White)	*Limited numbers of pink and white.	
7112" Pots	4-5 Blossoms per Pot	\$16.95 each	_____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Total \$ _____

*Please make checks payable to: **First Baptist Church***

*No Later than **March 29, 2020***

Deacons Meeting, Sunday, February 8, 2020 Notes

The Deacon Board is recommending to the church for membership:

- Eric Mbunwe
- Billie Keese
- Irfan Rafiq
- Rebeca Irfan
- Joshua Irfan
- Erica Irfan

Section 12: Pastoral Relations Committee

The purpose of this committee is to foster constructive communication between the congregation and its pastoral leadership, and to implement the congregation's responsibility for the Pastor's professional and personal well-being.

A. This committee shall consist of three or more members chosen by the Pastor and appointed by the Board of Deacons. It shall meet at least quarterly, and shall maintain confidentiality when requested to do so.

B. This committee shall be responsible for—

1. Undertaking an annual review of the church's ministry, and the Pastor's functioning within that ministry.
2. Being a channel through which the Pastor and congregation may responsibly exchange ideas, reactions, and comments.
3. Reviewing annually the church's responsibility for the Pastor's financial compensation and make recommendations concerning it to the Stewardship Committee.
4. Counseling with the Pastor regarding a program of the Pastor's continuing education

The following members of the church have agreed to serve on this committee and were approved by the Deacon Board:

- Humphrey Mutindwa
- Linda Gosselin
- Debi Cross
- Phil Goff
- Mark Bigelow

Please bring any concerns you may have to any member of this committee.

Betty Giordano was approved by the Deacon Board to be Assistant Church Clerk.

Local News

Sunday, March 1, 2020:

Church Service moved back into Sanctuary
Baby dedication of Phoebe Mbunwe

Sunday, March 8, 2020:

Daylight Savings Time Starts Push your clocks ahead 1
Hour Saturday Night

Deacon Board Meeting after Coffee Time

Saturday, March 14, 2020:

Lady's Circle Meeting 930 A. M.

Sunday, March 15, 2016:

Birthday celebration for Zuriel Waruhiu

Sunday, March 29, 2020

Service of Believer's Baptism

Kids in Church

*I just love it when kids talk about
Jesus. Their faith is so pure, full of
imagination, and often humorous.*

A Sunday school teacher asked her children
as they were on the way to church service,

"And why is it necessary to be quiet in
church?"

One bright little girl replied,
"Because people are sleeping."



Troop 65127

Meets 1st and 3rd

Wednesday @ 5:30 P.M.

For more information call Stacey Phillips-Year @ 978-413-0372

*Let May Goff know your favorite hymn
We will sing one a week as long as they last*

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



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

Recipe of the Month

Easy Blueberry Cobbler



Ingredients:

1 box yellow cake mix
6 cups blueberries
1-2 tablespoons sugar
1 stick of butter
1 ¼ cup water

Preparation:

In the bottom of a 9×13 baking dish, pour one box of yellow cake mix.

Spread the blueberries over the top of the cake mix.

Sprinkle on 1-2 tablespoons of sugar (depending upon how sweet they are)

Pour 1 ¼ cup of water over the top of the berries and cake mix. Gently toss the berries and cake mix to allow the water to settle towards the bottom of the pan. (Sometime I give it a little shake too) If the berries aren't very juicy, add just a little more water. If they are plump, a little less.

Cut a stick of butter into 8 pieces and spread out over the top.

Bake at 350 for 45-50



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



Happy Anniversary

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
Connie & Will Gariepy
Daniel Bascomb
Susan Force (Bette Adams daughter)
Kathy Gosselin
Kathy Young (coworker of Diane Bigelow)
Kim & Katie (Bette Adams daughter & granddaughter)
Linda Gosselin
Lorraine (friend of Pam Chapman)
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
The Steward Family
Roger Abell
Pastor Becky*

Our Missionaries

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

*Daniel Auguste and the Haitian
Missionary Team*

Other Concerns

*Baptist Church of Grafton
First Baptist Church of Gardner*

*For those under persecution for their
faith.*

*For our civic leaders- local and
national*

*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.

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE

978-345-5622

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