

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
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April 2021



A Word From Rev Jackson



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

As we arrive in this post Easter season, we share a renewed hope from the resurrection event. Christ is risen! ... He has risen indeed! Jesus' victory over the grave proclaims the good news of eternal life and the promise of a home in heaven. As Paul told the church in I Corinthians 15:54-58, "When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain".

So what are we called to do after the resurrection? The scripture says, "...be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord..." Steadfast means resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering. We are called to be unwavering in our faith. Because death has been vanquished through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and His resurrection, we have the promise and good news of eternal life. Our faith in Jesus Christ should be as solid as the rock of Gibraltar. Steadfast in our faith means we will make it through any storm, any doubts or any attacks. As a post Easter church, we are called to act in a secure faith, no matter what lies ahead.

Secondly, we are called to be immovable, not able to be moved. Other defining words would be: firm, fixed, stable, unmoved. We are called to be unshaken in our Christian hopes and in our faith in the gospel. In an ever-changing and unstable world, an Easter faith rooted in Christ is unshakable. A church family with this kind of faith is not threatened or fearful of the crashing waves all around it. Picture the most secure lighthouse in the world in the midst of a raging storm and you get the image.

Finally, "...always excelling in the work of the Lord,...". This means whatever we do for the Lord should be of the highest quality because it is for the Lord. I served a church which had four wooden collection boxes made in the 1700s. The handles were as secure as the day they were made. The corners were tightly interlocked together. The construction made it crystal clear that the boxes were built with the goal of "excelling in the work of the Lord". Whoever built the offering boxes was a superior craftsman who wanted his work to be "excellent" as it was to be used in God's house. In a world where shoddy workmanship is common, we are called to be different and stand out from the rest. And what is the reason for all this? "...because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain". As we labor and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, our work is not in vain because it has eternal consequences. One day we will all pass from this world. Our time here is indeed temporary. But, the work of sharing

the good news of salvation through our resurrected Lord is eternal. We are called to follow and serve Jesus Christ now and into the future. The eternal part of this is that we invite others to join us in this holy journey. This is what it means to witness for Jesus Christ.

This post Easter message is captured best by the last two verses of "Onward Christian Soldiers".

Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane,
but the Church of Jesus constant will remain;
Gates of Hell can never 'gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, And that cannot fail.

Onward, then, ye people! Join our happy throng;
blend with ours your voices in the triumph song:
'Glory, laud and honor unto Christ the King!'
This through countless ages we with angels sing.

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus going on before!

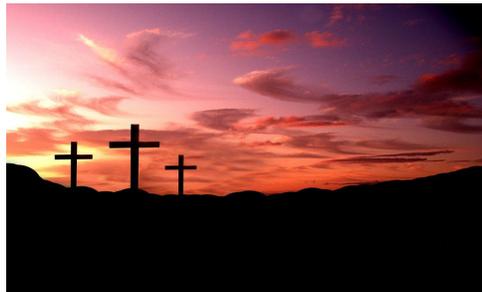
May the spirit of Easter and the power of the resurrection continue to live on through each of us. See you in church!

Because He Lives, so do we!

Rev. Bob Jackson

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Before the Sunset



I don't know who wrote this but it is well worth reading, especially now:

*Barely the day started and... it's already six in the evening.
Barely arrived on Monday and it's already Friday.
... and the month is already over.
... and the year is almost over.
... and already 40, 50 or 60 years of our lives have passed.*

... and we realize that we lost our parents, friends.
and we realize it's too late to go back...
So... Let's try, despite everything, to enjoy the remaining time...
Let's keep looking for activities that we like...
Let's put some color in our gray...
Let's smile at the little things in life that put balm in our hearts.
And despite everything, we must continue to enjoy with serenity this time we have left.
Let's try to eliminate the afters...
I'm doing it after...
I'll say it after...
I'll think about it after...
We leave everything for later like " after " is ours.
Because what we don't understand is that:
Afterwards, the coffee gets cold...
afterwards, priorities change...
Afterwards, the charm is broken...
afterwards, health passes...
Afterwards, the kids grow up...
Afterwards parents get old...
Afterwards, promises are forgotten...
afterwards, the day becomes the night...
afterwards life ends...
And then it's often too late....
So... Let's leave nothing for later...
Because still waiting...
see you later, we can lose the best moments,
the best experiences,
best friends,
the best family...
The day is today...
The moment is now...

We are no longer at the age where we can afford to postpone what needs to be done right away.

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April

- 10 Kristin Olson
- 16 Khylie Richard
- 19 Marilyn Poske

- 22 Susan Cardin
- 26 Judy Langlois

May

- 07 Sally Day
- 07 Dawn Ahaesy
- 09 Steven Coy
- 17 Robert Olson
- 21 Christina Dalbeck

- 25 Beverly Bean
- 25 Heidi Hinson
- 25 Deborah Mirick
- 26 Phillip Cardin
- 28 Sheila Ansley



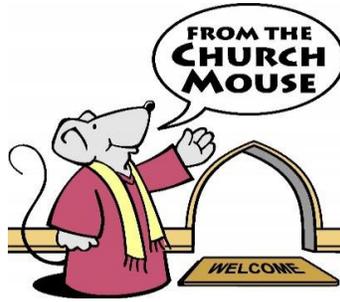
April

05 Dolores & Marie Trzcinski

18 Steve & Heidi Hinson

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Hi everyone. Nick here, the FCC church mouse. The sanctuary was looking very beautiful for Easter services all decked out with Easter lilies and tulips. Did I see any daffodils or jonquils? I am not sure what the difference is between them. In any case, it was nice to see fresh springtime flowers. Welcome to spring and the glorious Easter season! I am excited to be celebrating the Easter season with my church family. What a miracle it was when Jesus rose from the grave! Awesome! And because we are all believers in Jesus Christ, we are all family. That would include the brown bunnies in the church yard and the flocks of robins that have reappeared, for they are part of God's wonderful creation.

I know all of you have been concerned about the awful COVID-19 virus that has been around for more than a year now. I pray that it won't be long before we can bid it adieu. That is my favorite French word. It means farewell. Literally it means "I command you to God". Pretty neat word, huh? Well, I shall continue to keep all of my church family and friends in prayer that you will stay safe and healthy. I really do miss seeing you around the church and hearing your voices. But soon, soon I hope the world will get back to some kind of normal. That would be so wonderful and we would all be so thankful!

Have a happy April. After all, April showers will bring May flowers. And what do May flowers bring you ask? Why Pilgrims, of course! oh dear, my poor attempt at humor!

May God bless you and keep you in His care during this Easter season.

Your faithful church mouse,
Nick



WINDOW FUND



Matt is adding yet another bag of change to our Window Fund Jar. It was given to us by a friend of Connie MacInnes and also of our church. She has joined our Fellowship Group from time to time. She also had enjoyed our Thursday luncheons in the past. How nice of her to show her support! Thank you, Shirley!

We count the money in the Window Fund Jar from time to time and put it in the bank for safe keeping. The contributions on March 22nd totaled \$56.28! Added to the other contributions, our total comes to \$4,225! That just goes to show you that every little bit helps – it all adds up. We're getting close to being able to start this project! Three cheers for the First Congregational Church in Worcester!

Sincere thanks to everyone helping us out. Large or small, it all adds up! Keep up the good work!

A big thank you to Matt, who brings the Jar out every week and makes sure it is put away at the end of the service; to Carolyn, who rolls and counts what's in the jar; and to Bev for tallying and depositing it for us.

God bless them as well as everyone making this project come to fruition! Great teamwork!



They say that no news, is good news however, when it comes to Fellowship News, I wish I could say that we're gathering again but alas, we're not. With so many being vaccinated for COVID-19 though, there IS hope. Hang in there and continue your prayers for one another. Before we know it, we'll be back together once again.

Self-Portrait by an Open Window in June



Molly Andes

There is a lovely, talented young woman in our midst. She's beautiful both inside and out. A quiet, thoughtful person she's been through a lot in her young life. Through her pain...her trials and tribulations, she discovered that writing helped her cope. Chronic illness is difficult enough but when you're young, it's even harder. Writing helped her to fight her way through a painful, difficult time in her life. I wish that she never had to be so troubled....felt such pain....but if she hadn't, she may never have discovered the talent inside of her, just waiting to get out. Putting her words to paper brought her feelings to a place to vent. They seem to have opened her eyes to a world where she felt safe and comfortable, where she could breathe freely again. I like the young woman she's become and I'm confident that she will soar high...higher than she ever thought possible. Her name is *Molly Andes* and she's amazing. Molly wrote a book of poetry that is both heart-wrenching and heartwarming. It leaves the reader deep in thought about what was and what could be and paints a portrait of darkness, ever so slowly, turned into light.

“Self-Portrait by an Open Window in June offers an intimate look at how life is changed by chronic illness. Andes invites the reader into her starkest moments in the hopes they may feel less alone in theirs. The result is a vulnerable collection that grapples with wellness, a body that betrays, and real peace in the midst of it all.” *Amazon*

I recently bought her book on Amazon and thought that you may like to, also. Here is the Amazon link. [Self-Portrait by an Open Window in June](#)

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Friendly Messenger Articles



Newsletter

With an end to the pandemic in sight, there may be news or articles you'd like to submit to our newsletter. If so, please email them to me at deegram@charter.net, as I'll continue to do the publishing until we have a secretary.

Thank you!

Sue Anderson

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Prayer Requests

Prayers worldwide, as we thank our Lord for the COVID-19 Vaccine after this very long year; We would like to keep Hampton Bagdasarian in our prayers and he also requests prayers for June Kemp; Sue Cardin requests prayers for David Siam; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; Judy Mitchell requests prayers for her granddaughter, Ellanora; The Deacons request prayers for Heidi Hinson who lost her mother, Virginia Lambert Enola on March 5, 2021; Our prayers are also with Ashley Hinson Rucinski and Brittany Hinson on the loss of their grandmother; We also continue to hold Paul Scherdell, Melanie Anderson, Sally Day and Marilyn Mildish in prayer.

If you have a prayer request or would like us to remove someone from our prayer list, please let us know.





Our sincere thanks to everyone who ordered the beautiful flowers for our sanctuary this Easter!

Matthew & Dawn Ahaesy – In memory of The Ahaesy & Gibbs Family

*Norman & Susan Anderson – In memory of our parents
In memory of my brother & sister, Albin (Skip) and Marie Waskevich*

Bev Bean – In celebration of my great-grandchildren

Mr. & Mrs. George A. Boggs – In memory of Mrs. Priscilla Killian

Sally Day & Family – In memory of Warren Day and Clifford Day

Danielle Elkins – In memory of my grandmother, Betty DePrimo

*Heidi & Steve Hinson – In memory of Virginia & John Enola
In memory of Marie & Linwood Hinson*

*Kim Holstrom – In honor of Salvatore DePrimo
In celebration of Danielle Elkins*

Rev. Bob and Carolyn Jackson – In memory of Harold and Marilyn Jackson

Leanne & James Jezerski – In memory of William & Pauline Greene, Clifford & Marjorie Greene, Andrew & Catherine Campsie

Mac & Connie MacInnes – In memory of Linwood, Alice & Lenny Hodgkins, Dan & Katherine MacInnes & Alan MacInnes

Jaime Moehring – In memory of Devon Peet and Ryan Hamblin

*Ann Scherdell – In memory of all my loved ones who are in heaven
In honor of Paul Scherdell*

Donna Spaulding – In memory of Catherine and Roy Spangenberg

The Vecsey Family – In memory of Joseph Vecsey