

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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

Pastor T • Drop-in Pastor's Office Hours: By Appointment

Email: pastorT@fcc-worcester.org • After Hours and Emergency Calls or Texts
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Website • www.fcc-worcester.org

December 2025



The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5

Beloved Church!

As we enter the season of Advent, I am reminded once again that this is not merely a countdown to Christmas – but a season of holy nearness... an invitation to pause, to breathe, to remember that God draws close to us not only in the manger at Bethlehem, but in the quiet corners of our ordinary lives.

Each week, as we light candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, we proclaim the truth that God's light is stronger than any darkness around us or within us. Hope burns its small flame long before the world is ready to believe it. Peace stretches out its gentle hand in the middle of conflict. Joy rises up, sometimes softly, even in seasons of sorrow. And Love – God's deep, self-giving love – meets us right where we are.

Advent reminds us to watch for God's imprint – often hidden in obscure ways – to notice how God is bringing about something new. Not just something different or refurbished, but something brand new... original! God is not finished with us, with our families, or with His church. Christ is coming, still and always, to bring about a new heaven and a new earth!

Make room, beloved Church...room for silence and mystery...for Scripture and God's surprising grace. In every candle lit, every prayer whispered, every hymn sung, may you feel the steady heartbeat of Emmanuel – God with us.

In the hope and peace of Christ, Your Pastor T

Hospitality Bring Your Special Touch!



Come and share your favorite snacks with us at Coffee Hour, which is held in the parlor every Sunday after our worship service! We make the coffee and other beverages and we supply the paper goods. All you have to do is bring some goodies. There's always a sign-up sheet on the table and two or more people can sign up together. We'd really appreciate your help!

"Gathering over coffee brings us closer in faith and fellowship."



The most wonderful time of year is here...Christmas! I love all the hustle and bustle as everyone scurries around, decorating their homes, putting up trees and decorating them so beautifully, of course shopping, and my most favorite of all is taking out and setting up the nativity. The wonder of the Christ Child never ceases to amaze me! The way God sent Him to us...we are truly blessed.
I heard that this Christmas is gonna be extra special. Pastor T and Dr. Christopher are making sure of that! I'm not quite sure exactly WHAT they have up their sleeves but I sure don't wanna miss it! I can hardly wait.

Our church looks amazing too! The pew candles; the advent wreath, all of the wreaths and garland and well...everything just seems to come to life so much more at this time of year and did you notice? MaryKay made brand new bows to spruce things up even more. Aren't they beautiful?! The nativity looks great on Christopher's organ; The beautiful tree in the sanctuary is up, and so is the Hat, Mitten & Scarf tree! People bring in hats, mittens and scarves for the school children across the street. Some even go to other kids who would like them. People are so loving and giving at this time of year. I hope they stay that way all year 'round!

A very Merry Christmas and happy and healthy New Year one and all!

Faithfully - Your friendly church mouse,

Nick



Gathering Our Thoughts in Prayer For



Marsha's friend's husband, **Theodore** and his family. Theodore's cancer has spread to his bones and he is going into Boston for treatment; **Kim**, who Debbi requests prayers for as she recovers from a traumatic leg injury; Ellen's nephew, **Tyler** and his family. Tyler is undergoing treatment for cancer; Connie's husband, **Mac** as he recovers, and also for her niece **Linda**; Speedy healing of **Sue's** shoulder, the healing of her daughter, **Melanie's** broken toe, her sister, **Lee**, and her brother, **Danny**; Members **Hampton, Dolores, Paul, Erika, Jane, Carol, Joyce & her husband, Armand**; Kristin's friend, **Mitch**; **World Peace**.

If you would like to add a prayer concern or update our list, please email the church office at office@fcc-worcester.org or call the office at 508-752-4635.

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7)



Fantastic Fellowship Festivities

🔔 Join us on Wednesdays! ❄️

On December 3rd
Pastor T will be
conducting an
Advent Program



On December 17th
it's party time!
Bring a \$10 - \$15 grab
and join in the fun
at our Yankee Swap!



Watch the calendar for more Fun with Fellowship~
Better yet, come and join us!



CHRISTMAS DAY IS ALMOST HERE!
Thank you for brightening the lives of so many children!



(Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) ~ As we do every year, the Missions Committee requested the ages, gender and desires of 15 children in this program and once again our church has come through. Please remember to return your gift, **wrapped and with the tag for the child on it**, to church by December 14th.

May God richly bless you for your participation and generosity!



Hat & Mitten Tree

Every year, our Fellowship group collects hats, mittens and scarves and donates them to Tatnuck Magnet School. Don't forget to bring yours in and put them on the tree in the narthex!



**Because of Your Generous Donations,
We are now equipped to create an amazing bell choir!**



How exciting it is that your donations enabled Dr. Christopher Grills to not only purchase a set of handbells in time for this Christmas Season, but he will also be providing us with more special music! He and Pastor T. are making this Christmas an especially joyous one for us!

"As the bells ring, let our hearts sing in praise."

Children's Bell Choir



Operation Christmas Child



Spreading Joy!

Operation Christmas Child delivers great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world through gift-filled shoeboxes.

Each box packed full of quality toys, school supplies, and personal care items becomes a tangible expression of God's immense love for the child. For many, it is their first gift ever! Delivered by our local church partners, shoebox gifts provide an opportunity to present the Gospel to boys and girls in a clear, child-friendly way. Along with Pastor Ellis Quinones' and Pastor Ketelie Altena's congregations, we filled nearly 100 boxes! How wonderful to know that we're all doing our part in helping those in need, especially at this blessed time of year!



On The First Sunday of Every Month Deacons Fund

The Deacons Fund is a financial resource provided by churches to assist individuals and congregations in need during times of crisis. It typically offers temporary support for basic needs such as rent, utilities, and emergency expenses, emphasizing mutual care within the community. Thank you for your support!

"Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others." ~ Danny Thomas

Carty Cupboard
Every Sunday

THANK YOU



FOR YOUR HELP!

Thank you for making a difference in so many lives! We had THREE WAGONS and TWO BASKETS FULL and even some bags that didn't fit anywhere! Pastor T. brought them all to Carty Cupboard, then another wagon was filled on the second week. We're forging ahead fantastically!

Snacks like squeeze-up applesauce are fun and nutritious. Pudding, fruit, and Jello cups are good snacks, too. Granola bars provide a good source of energy and are quick to grab. Things like tuna fish, mac & cheese, beans, instant potatoes, hearty soup, shelf-safe milk, juice boxes, and condiments are some of the foods people can use. Besides food, they can also use personal care items and/or baby items. If they have pets, they'd be happy to get food or treats for them, as well or kitty litter for cats.



"A meal shared is a heart that cares – your food donation can change a life today."



December

01 Carlo DiBonaventura 05 Kenneth Sawyer 11 Sienna Rucinski
16 Barbara Chad 18 John Dalbec 26 Marie Trzcinski
28 Jim Mirick 29 Lynn Kapinos 30 Pastor T

January

10 Jackson McGrail 13 Melanie Anderson 25 John Hakkila



"Celebrate the blessings of today, and the hope of tomorrow."



December
08 Deb & Ken Holmes
January
23 Phillip & Lorna Cardin

"A happy marriage is the tranquil beauty of a lovely sunset."



Early Music Ensemble Concert

Dr. Christopher was the accompanist on both harpsichord and organ, at the Early Music Ensemble Concert on November 19th at UMass Lowell.

In Pastor T's words, it was a "Brilliant performance"!



Do you have something you'd like to see in our newsletter?



If you have some **news**, an **article**, or an **announcement** that you would like included in the newsletter, please leave it in the office with Sue Anderson or email her at deegram@charter.net or office@fcc-worcester.org by the **23rd of each month**.

See it here first!

If you would like a copy of the newsletter sent to you via email, please email the office and we'll add you to our list. There are also copies in the narthex that you can pick up. If you don't have an email address or can't get to church, send us your address and we'll be happy to send you a hard copy every month. You don't want to miss out!

Our Daily Bread

Pick up your copy from the bookcase in the narthex. There are no large print issues this month. Available right now is the December – January – February issue.

ZOOM

Although we have no Zoom right now, you can see some of our past services on YouTube until Zoom is up and running once again.

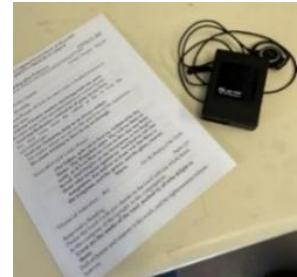


<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDQmijukLaC24hwdyayupdg> or by searching "First Church, Worcester" on YouTube.



Accessibility Items Available for Worship!

Did you know that we offer large print bulletins? They are available in the narthex as you enter the sanctuary. If you don't see any there, just ask and we'll be happy to provide them. We also have hearing assistance devices that make hearing what is said at the pulpit much easier! They are in a basket on the table in the narthex.



Notice of Church Office Closure

Please note that the church office will be closed for the first two weeks in December while I recover from my surgery. During this time, you can still reach us! Feel free to leave a message on our phone at 508-752-4635 or send an email to office@fcc-worcester.org. They will be checked periodically.

Pastor T will still be available by email at pastorT@fcc-worcester.org. After Hours and Emergency Calls or Texts can be sent to 336-410-4107.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Blessings,

Sue Anderson, Administrative Assistant



Order your Poinsettias for Christmas!

Our Sanctuary will be decorated with Poinsettias on Wednesday, December 24th. If you would like to help with our holiday beautification, please indicate on the form below. Return the form to the office with your check or cash by December 19th.

I would like to give _____ poinsettias at \$10.00 each.*

_____ In memory of _____

_____ In honor of _____

_____ In celebration of the season!

My name _____

Please Print Clearly

My phone and/or e-mail contact _____

Please Print Clearly

My post-Christmas distribution preference:

Leave _____ plants for a person who is ill or shut-in

Pick up _____ plants after the Christmas Eve service

* Recognition will be forthcoming.



Wednesday

03 10:00 am Fellowship ~ Advent Program with Pastor T

Sunday

07 10:00 am Second Sunday in Advent ~ Worship Service (*Sanctuary*)

Communion Sunday with gluten-free bread and non-alcoholic grape juice; Deacons Fund Collection; Carty Cupboard donations gratefully welcomed

Wednesday

10 10:00 am Fellowship

Friday

11 1:00 pm Trustee's Meeting (*Conference Room*)

Sunday

14 10:00 am Third Sunday in Advent ~ Worship Service

Wednesday

17 10:00 am Fellowship (*parlor*) Christmas Party!

Sunday First Day of Winter

21 10:00 am Fourth Sunday in Advent ~ Worship Service

11:30 am Deacons Meeting (*Conference Room*)

Wednesday

24 10:00 am No Fellowship

7:00 pm *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols*

Thursday Merry Christmas!

25

Sunday

28 10:00 am The First Sunday After Christmas Day ~ Worship Service

10:30 am Council Meeting (*Conference Room*)

Wednesday Happy New Year!

31 10:00 am No Fellowship





The First Congregational Church in Worcester
1070 Pleasant Street
Worcester, MA 01602
www.fcc-worcester.org
Rev. Joshua Fitterling

Return Service Requested

Purpose Statement

It is our purpose to joyfully celebrate Christ's presence and God's grace in our lives; to respect one another in love, actively seeking and embracing those who wish to grow with us in faith, hope and love; to follow the example of Jesus, as we minister to the spiritual and physical needs of the community. Through service we flourish.

Join Us!
