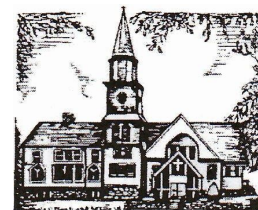


FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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May 2021



A Word From Rev Jackson



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Spring is fully here and God's creation is proclaiming new life in all its beauty and blossoms. Last month we celebrated a great Easter service and proclaimed the good news of the resurrection. Fifty-five of us gathered with forty -five Easter flowers and sang our Easter hymns with hope in our hearts.

Now, in this new month of May, we will complete Eastertide on the day of Pentecost on May 23rd. When the Holy Spirit touched the disciples with tongues of fire, they were filled with courage and hope as they moved out to proclaim salvation through the resurrected Christ. Their excitement could not be contained. As Paul told the Thessalonian church, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you are doing. Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit."

I Thessalonians 5: 9-11 & 16-19. "9For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. 11Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."...."16Rejoice always, 17pray continually, 18give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19Do not quench the Spirit." Isn't it interesting that he highlighted the phrase, "Do not quench the Spirit." For too long the church has become an expert at quenching the spirit. When we give in to fear, abandon faith and say no to any new ideas or discourage newcomers, we quench the spirit. Too often we are obsessed with the word "no" or "it can't be done" when it comes to doing church.

God planted His church through Jesus Christ and grows it through the work of the Holy Spirit! Consider this: What if a gardener came to our house and planted a beautiful garden for free. Then when every flower and plant was growing and blooming, we went out and pulled everything up and killed it. This is what it means to quench the spirit in church. "Do not quench the spirit" has its own verse because it is so important that we

don't commit this heinous sin, ...ever. The only ones who are pleased about the destruction of a church garden are the devil and his disciples. Let's make sure we never unknowingly help this agenda.

Instead, as sisters and brothers of Christ in God's garden, we are called to "Therefore encourage one another and build up one another..." I Thessalonians 5:11. Paul told this church to "... admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone." I Thessalonians 5:14. Finally, "...always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people." I Thessalonians 5:15.

My friends, this is what it means to care for God's garden. We are called to do what helps the flowers and plants to grow. Pull out and remove the weeds and thorns so God's people are encouraged by the light and have the freedom to grow. We are called to water the garden and feed the soil with God's word and then to cover the garden with faith and prayer. This is what pleases God. This is love in action that does not quench the spirit.

This Pentecost, let's encourage the Holy Spirit to flow through each of us. Let's affirm each other's gifts and talents. May the Holy Spirit touch each of us and cause us to be excited about sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus! Oh, by the way, don't forget to wear something red on Sunday, May 23, to symbolize the tongues of fire that landed on the heads of the disciples. We have good news to share. Let's spread the gospel of Jesus in words and deeds. See you in church!

Because He Lives,
Rev. Bob Jackson



Sunday Worship

We continue to hold Sunday worship services inside the church at 10:00 am and have been recording them. Scott puts them on the church website for those who would like to listen to them. He also posts the weekly bulletin along with it. We're working on trying to record services on Zoom, which would be a nice alternative for those who are still reluctant to attend in person or who just can't be in church for any reason.





I think of two things when I think about May. First is nature with all the plants and trees blooming in their rich colors. Second are mothers because we will celebrate Mother's Day on May 9. So first I'll share part of a poem called "In May" by William Henry Davies (1871-1940)

Yes, I will spend the livelong day
With Nature in this month of May
And sit beneath the trees and share
My bread with birds whose homes are there...

It is really beginning to look pretty around Tatnuck with all the trees budding, the daffodils blooming and the birds chirping. Once again, God has used His big paintbrush to bring the spring colors into our lives. On these warm days I am outside basking in the sunshine. Secondly, in 1870, Julia Howe wrote the first Mother's Day proclamation asking women everywhere to join for world peace. Wow, 151 years later, we are still waiting for peace to take over the world! I hope it comes soon. I want to wish all the women of the church: moms, grandmas, great grandmas, daughters, sisters, aunts and cousins a Happy and Blessed Mother's Day. Moms make the world go 'round. Even Jesus took care of His mother by asking His beloved disciple to look after Mary. Wishing you all a special May Day to start the month and a blessed Memorial Day to remember your loved ones at month's end. Hope to see and hear you all around the church.

Your faithful church mouse,
Nick



Attend Worship to Boost Your Mental Health

Ericka Andersen Guest columnist for the Telegram & Gazette

As Holy Week dawns and we edge closer to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, research shows one thing for certain: The faster people get back to church, the better it will be for them, and for the country as a whole.

A recent Gallup survey found that those who have prioritized weekly attendance at worship services throughout the pandemic have emerged — not merely unscathed — but mentally improved. Weekly worshipers reported a 4-percentage point increase in their mental health. Every other sub-group went negative.

Regardless of race, age, political affiliation, gender or income, only those who consistently attended religious services each week (online or in person) are happier today than they were a year ago when COVID-19 began to capsize the globe.

This lines up with historical research on mental health and church attendance. Broad-based evidence demonstrates that attendance at worship services is indispensable to a happy, generous and flourishing society.

Pew Research found that actively religious adults are more likely to be happy, volunteer time to good causes and be more civically involved than nonreligious or non-practicing religious folks.

Other studies, like one from the National Library of Medicine, provide evidence that regular churchgoers live longer, happier lives.

Many perks accompany engaging with members of a congregation.

They include better support systems, personal encouragement, group prayer, access to financial help, and a reminder that there is a hope far greater than our tired and discouraged selves.

Indianapolis-based psychotherapist Priscilla Johnson, who considers herself “spiritual but not religious” and does not attend church regularly, counsels her patients dealing with depression to consider seeking out a faith community to help them.

“I’ve witnessed firsthand the value of faith community in mental health treatment with my patients,” Johnson said. “It can address some of the basic human needs, like belongingness, purpose and sense of security.”

Yet, not surprisingly, the number of people who attended worship services in 2020 declined. In-person church restrictions have obviously taken their toll on downsizing attendance. It took nearly a year for the Supreme Court to rule that California churches had to be allowed to resume in-person services.

After streaming sermons from the couch (or forgoing them all together) for so long, will Golden State residents actually return to sanctuaries? How eager has the rest of the country been to file back into the pews as churches ticked open nationwide? Not very. All but 3% of churches in the United States closed their physical doors when the

pandemic began last March. As of late 2020, four out of five churches had returned to in-person services, with attendance levels hovering around 36% of normal capacity. Despite the option of in-person attendance, most people still opt out. In large part, that is because of the continued danger of COVID-19, but if habit is any measure, pre-COVID attendance levels may take awhile to resume in a fully vaccinated world. Barna, a Christian research firm that has done extensive analysis on church trends amid COVID, found that 79% of practicing Christians went to church weekly before COVID, but that number has dropped to 51% during the pandemic. Another survey found that one in three practicing Christians nationwide had stopped attending church online or in person. When even the “church people” are skipping church, it’s bad. America didn’t need help generating church dropouts, but COVID certainly assisted. The double whammy of personal disaster and spiritual decline means harmful long-term outcomes for our nation’s well-being.

Given the data on the comprehensive good that attending religious services brings to society, pre-COVID worshipers must re-prioritize faith and urge others to join them if we hope to swiftly revitalize a public oppressed by collective trauma.

As Americans make plans for a post-COVID world, putting church back on the agenda should not be overlooked as a healthy step forward.

Ericka Andersen is writing a book about the importance of church attendance in the lives of women.



Spring has sprung! The trees are all in bloom, flowers are blossoming, birds are singing and everything is awakening once again, back from its long winter’s nap. To keep our church grounds looking beautiful, we’re having a **Clean-up Day on Saturday, May 1st**. Many hands make light work, so if you could help us out we would greatly appreciate it.

Just show up at the church at about 8:30 – 9:00 am with any gardening tools and gloves that you might have and we’ll be in great shape in no time at all. Thank you!





May

07 Sally Day	25 Beverly Bean
07 Dawn Ahaesy	25 Heidi Hinson
09 Steven Coy	25 Deborah Mirick
17 Robert Olson	26 Phillip Cardin
21 Christina Dalbeck	28 Sheila Ansley

June

03 Jane Boggs	11 Erin McGrail
05 Daniel Ames	13 Joyce Thienel
10 Steven Hinson	17 Linda Ann Coy
11 Cassandra Olson	19 Eileen Miles



June

01 Mac & Connie MacInnes	08 Bob & Luz Smith
21 Richard & Renee Mason	



Happy Mother's Day!

As Mother's Day approaches, I'd like to say a few words. Some of us are mothers while others are not, but we all have a mother. She may be here with us or watching over us from above. She may be your birth mother or an adoptive mother, a step-mother or someone you have loved as a mother figure. One thing I know for sure...wherever they are, whoever they are...they will never leave us. We carry them in our hearts, holding tightly to all that they have instilled in us. Mothers can't last forever but the memories that we've made or are making with them will be with us until we meet again. They will sustain us throughout our lives. Mother's Day to me is a joyful day, looking back at the little things that meant so much to me; the special times we shared; the sacrifices she made; she lived her life for her family. My mother's love was endless and unconditional. I thank God for blessing my life with her and trust in Him to bring us back together in His time. Until then, I will rejoice every Mother's Day because without her, I wouldn't be here. I love you with all my heart, Mom!

Sue Anderson



We're getting there! With so many people being vaccinated, and if we continue to follow safety regulations, I think I can see a ray of sunshine. Faith along with hope, mixed with our prayers will bring us back to the church hall, meeting together again at long last. Even if we don't meet this spring, my vision is on the fall. Keep on Keeping on and continue your prayers for one another. Before we know it, we'll be back together once again.

★ ★ ★ WINDOW FUND ★ ★ ★



As you can see, our Window Fund is continuing to grow! Don't forget to dig deep into your pockets because every little bit helps! We've collected another \$79.53 this month. We're getting ready to start this project! Hooray for our church!

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!



Heavenly Father, we stand before you as we remember those brave soldiers, so many of whom fought for our lives but lost their own, much in the way Your Son did for us. We pray that you watch over all of those brave men and women who continue to fight for our country. Hold them safely in Your loving arms and return them home unscathed, to be with their loving families. We ask you Lord, to also keep their families strong in faith and peace as You fill their hearts as only You can do.

This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen



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 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.



Dates to Remember in May

01 8:30 am – Church Clean Up Day

02 11:00 am – Search Committee Meeting

09 All Day – Happy Mother's Day!



09 11:00 am – Trustees Meeting

16 11:00 am – Deacons Committee Meeting

23 11:00 am – Council Meeting

31 All Day – Memorial Day



31 All Day – National Smile Day!



Special Thanks

Special thanks goes out to the Trustees on arranging to have the garage painted. It looks like a new building!



COMING SOON



Outdoor Worship Service

*Join us on **Sundays beginning June 6th**, when we will be bringing our worship services back outside. We can enjoy the fresh air and sunshine as we worship. Scott Yonker will set up the sound system for Rev. Bob and will also bring his electric keyboard so we'll be able to hear well and sing. I bet we'll even have a bird or two chirping along with us! Of course we'll continue our safe distancing and wearing masks. All you have to do is bring your favorite lawn chair, maybe don a hat and your sunglasses and you'll be all set. No lawn chair? No worries...we have metal folding chairs that we can bring out for you. There's plenty of sun as well as shade, whichever you prefer.*

We will continue holding our services outside until September 5th and if the weather cooperates, maybe even longer. If we have a rainy day, we'll worship inside the church, which Doug keeps clean and disinfected for us.

*We had **25** people in church on Maundy Thursday and as noted above, **55** people in church on Easter Sunday! How wonderful! Everyone followed the COVID protocol and nobody got sick. We're cautiously optimistic!*



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 will continue to do the publishing until we have a secretary.

Thank you!

Sue Anderson