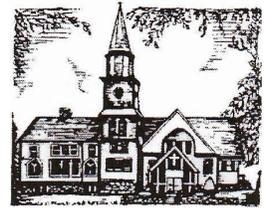


FRIENDLY MESSENGER

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



A Word From Rev Jackson



Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Welcome to June and the summer season! We rejoice that the plague of COVID seems to be finally going away. I would ask each of us a question. What have we learned since March of 2020? How have we grown or not grown spiritually since this crisis began? Have we read any scriptures that spoke to us during this time? What has God communicated to us in our prayer life over this period?

One of the spiritual practices that I have been using is examining the meaning behind the verses of our favorite hymns. The one I would share with you is, "What A Friend We Have In Jesus". Consider the third verse. "Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge - Take it to the Lord in prayer; Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer; In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there". The verse starts out by offering a solution to our "load of care". It recognizes that we are weak and the cares pile up. It reminds us that He is still the ultimate peace and refuge. The verse directs us to the best place to bring our "load of care"...Jesus.

If you have ever had a "friend" despise or forsake you, then you can relate to this next verse. This verse reminds me of what Jesus said in John 15:18-21. *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me."* It hurts a lot when a friend betrays us and then turns around and hates us as well. But, it does happen even in the church, which is what makes it even worse. However, the verse from the hymn gives us the solution: "Take it to the Lord in prayer. In His arms He'll take and shield thee, thou wilt find a solace there." We are called to give it to the Lord in prayer and know that we are

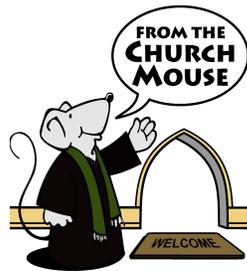
shielded and protected by Jesus. In this place we will find solace, or peace, or trust that will never let us down. In this world of shaky friendships, it is comforting to know our one true friend.

When Joseph Scriven wrote this prayer of comfort for his mother in Ireland, I am sure he encountered some of the examples he wrote about in the Plymouth Brethren Church. He experienced "loads of care" as his two fiancées died tragically, one by drowning and the second from pneumonia. When he was asked about the poem, he said that "he and God wrote it".

What are some of your favorite hymns? What are the verses that really speak to you? Please let me know.

See you in the church yard!

Because He Lives,
Rev. Bob Jackson



The church mouse has gone on vacation but he sent along this message to his church family.

"Happy summer. Everyone stay safe and healthy! See you next month."

Love and blessings to all,
Nick, your faithful church mouse



WELCOME



Outdoor Worship Service

*Our outdoor Sunday worship services were so well received last summer, that we will begin them again starting **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 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** but will wear **masks at our own discretion**, as we are following CDC and Massachusetts guidelines. 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 problem...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 will continue to record the services for those who would like to hear them, but aren't able to attend. Scott puts them on the church website for us and also posts the weekly bulletin along with them. We're working on trying to record services on Zoom, which would be a nice alternative.



Save the date – **Wednesday, June 9th at 11:00 am.** We've made reservations at Eller's Restaurant on Rt 9, shortly after the Leicester line. Since it's so close, we'll meet there.

If you'd like to join us, you can call Bev Bean at 508-799-7035 or Sue Anderson at 774-253-0715.

We're looking forward to gathering and catching up with everyone!



A Star in Our Midst!

Beautiful, friendly, and amazingly talented Khloe Kapinos was spotlighted in the Telegram & Gazette on May 12th. Here are the pictures of her in motion. She's quite the skater!



Khloe Kapinos, 11, of Worcester practices figure skating during class time at the Center Skating Academy Wednesday. The skating school operates in the New England Sports Center in Marlboro. *Rick Cinclair/Telegram & Gazette*



Coach Carol Cotter instructs skater Khloe Kapinos, 11, of Worcester during class time at the Center Skating Academy Wednesday. The skating school operates in the New England Sports Center in Marlboro. *Rick Cinclair/Telegram & Gazette*

Congratulations, Khloe! Keep up the good work!



Congratulations



- ★ *To Erin McGrail, daughter of Bill and MaryKay McGrail. Erin Graduated from the University of Connecticut with a Doctor of Audiology PhD.*
- ★ *To Annalise McGrail, also the daughter of Bill and MaryKay McGrail. She earned her Masters Degree at Worcester State University.*
- ★ *To Megan Chestna, granddaughter of Norman and Susan Anderson and daughter of Pete and Cindy Chestna. Megan graduated from Framingham State University Summa Cum Laude with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology.*
- ★ *To Russel Souffrant, son of Marc and Marie Souffrant. Russel earned his Associates Degree in Engineering from The New England Institute of Technology.*
- ★ *To Dylan Brown, grandson of Ruth Nickerson and son of Lisa Brown. Dylan graduated with honors from Worcester Technical High School, where he excelled in Auto Mechanics. He will be attending Assumption University to major in Electrical Engineering in the fall.*

We are so proud of these young people as well as their parents who stood by them, encouraging them to work hard to achieve their goals.



If you have something you would like to see in our newsletter, please email it to me at deegram@charter.net, call or text me at 774-253-0715. I will continue to do the publishing until we have a secretary.

*Thank you!
Sue Anderson*





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 |

July

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Carolyn Jackson | 18 Paul Scherdell |
| 10 Brittany Hinson | 19 Nancy Dalbeck |
| 11 Judith Nally | 28 Richard Trzcinski |
| 11 Cody Hill Johnston | 29 Rev. Bob Jackson |
| 13 Erika Vecsey | |



June

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

July

- 29 Matt & Dawn Ahaesy



Dates to Remember in June

01 Tuesday – All Day – National Say Something Nice Day



09 Wednesday – 11:00 am – Fellowship brunch at Eller's Restaurant



10 Thursday – All Day – For all of our tea drinkers, today is National Iced Tea Day

13 Sunday – 11:00 am – Trustees Meeting

14 Monday – All Day –



20 Sunday – All Day – Father's Day

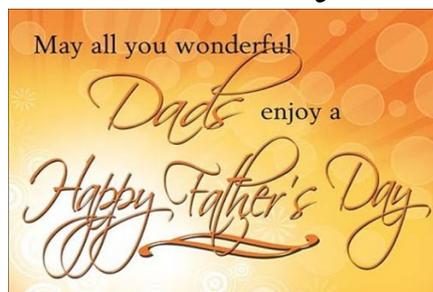


20 Sunday – 11:00 am – Deacons Committee Meeting

27 Sunday – 11:00 am – Council Meeting



Father's Day



How wonderful it is to be celebrating this special day at church. Instead of **having** to worship outside, we have the **choice** this year. We've chosen to worship outside in the fresh air again, under the beautiful trees, blue skies and sunshine. Who do we have to thank, but our all loving, all caring, Father, God. God also placed all of our precious fathers here to love us, teach us, guide us and take care of us. As with our mothers, our fathers may be here with us or up above, watching over us. We can be sure that whether our birth father, adoptive father, uncle, brother or friend who we looked up to as a father figure, we were...and are

all loved by them.

Remembering Norman's father, in parting, he always said, "Remember God loves you, and so do I." He also quoted Psalm 118:24 "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." He was a very special man indeed.

Have a wonderful Father's Day!

Sue Anderson

