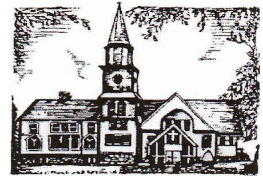


FRIENDLY MESSENGER

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
www.fcc-worcester.org · Office: 508-752-4635 · office@fcc-worcester.org

MAY ♥ 2022



“After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.” – Acts 1:3

More than a Month of Easter!

The resurrection joys of Easter morning were certainly not a one-day affair for the very first disciples. In fact, we are told in the book of Acts, which continues from the gospel of Luke, that Jesus was around with his disciples for 40 days after he rose again! For 40 days, they got to witness the joy of Jesus! For 40 days, they got to celebrate the power of love as they physically looked upon Jesus again! For more than a month, they got to celebrate Easter and wrap their heads around the wonders of that empty tomb.

In the church today, we continue to celebrate for more than a month. And the way in which our Easter season falls this year, the entire month of May is Easter! What will we do to celebrate? I’m not talking about having more Easter ham or another basket full of candy, but how will we celebrate the restorative power of God’s love as we live as people of faith and as we also serve together as First Church? Is there a mission which needs some resurrection? How about a relationship which needs revival? Is there a place where we need to show a little more love to lift someone up? Do we need to bear witness in new or renewed ways to how love can heal and hope?

Whatever your answers may be, in this month filled with Easter, let us show in our living that Jesus is alive and that love has won!

In Eastertide Joy,

Rev. Josh Fitterling





Hello Everyone!

What an exciting time of year this is! Besides continuing our Easter Celebration, we're celebrating Mother's Day on May 8th and boy, do we ever celebrate at our house! Did you know that mouse moms can have up to 14 pups at a time?!? AND up to 10 times a year?!?! Good thing those babies scamper off on their own quickly or our nest would be REALLY crowded!!! My mom is the greatest! She takes such good care of us and loves us unconditionally. She always feeds us first and shows us just how and where to live. She said that church people are real nice and that's why I chose to live here. Thank you for your wonderful hospitality! She taught me that if I'm good and stay out of your way, you'd be good to me. Was she ever right!! Mom told me all about Mary...Jesus' mom. She sure was amazing! And He was the best son in the world!! No-one before Him or after Him could ever even come close! That's why we celebrate Easter for 40 whole days. We could never, ever celebrate Him enough. I bet He's having a wonderful Mother's Day party up there in heaven with Mary and ALL of our precious mom's and mother figures who are up there! When I think of Jesus and His mom, I always think of the song by Mark Lowry, "Mary Did You Know?" How blessed she was to be chosen to be the mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Happy Mother's Day to Mary and to all mothers and mother figures everywhere, whether here or in heaven. God sure knew what He was doing when he created them!

May God richly bless you this Mother's Day, always and in all ways!

Nick – your faithful church mouse

"Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.'" Proverbs 31:28–29



On Sunday, May 15th, Pastor Josh and Mason will be participating in the 37th Annual WALK for the Homeless at Elm Park on behalf of First Church! This yearly fundraising effort seeks to raise \$125,000 to support homeless individuals and families throughout our local and surrounding communities. Our Mission Committee is sponsoring Pastor Josh and Mason with \$100 from our church's mission budget. If you would also like to contribute, you can:

- 1) Make a secure donation online at <https://give.classy.org/fccworchester>
- 2) Give cash or check, made out to "2022 WALK for the Homeless", to Pastor Josh or Mason.

Would you like to walk too? You can also register to walk at the link above and raise funds too!



Worship available via Zoom



Sunday services continue to be available via Zoom! If you are at home and would like to join us virtually on Sunday mornings at 10am, you can do so by following this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83102423294?pwd=RjhHZGNDZDJyODNHWFabnRVZ2Vldz09>

Meeting ID: 831 0242 3294

Passcode: 11824



First Church is now on YouTube!



Did you miss Sunday's service and would still like to see it? Now you can!

Just go over to our new YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDQmijukLaC24hwdyayupdg> or search "First Church, Worcester" in YouTube.

Each Sunday, our services will be recorded and uploaded by Monday morning at the latest. Share services with your friends too!



"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Mother's Day – Sunday, May 8th



Join us for worship on Mother's Day as we bless the mothers and mothering-figures in our congregation and in our lives! Carnations and a small gift will be shared with our mothers and mothering-figures. Coffee hour will be hosted by the men of First Church as a thank you!



On **Wednesday, May 4th** we're meeting in the church parking lot at 10:30 am to have lunch at Worcester Technical High School located at 1 Officer Manny Familia Way, Worcester, MA 01605. If you would like to meet us there, you're more than welcome to. We have reservations for 11:00 am. If you'd like to join us, please call Ruth Nickerson @ 508-799-5314 or Bev Bean @ 508-799-7035 and they'd be happy to add you.



May

07 Dawn Ahaesy
17 Robert Olson
25 Beverly Bean

25 Deborah Mirick
25 Heidi Hinson
26 Phillip Cardin

June

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



JUNE

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



We would like to keep Hampton Bagdasarian in our prayers and he also requests prayers for June Kemp; Connie MacInnes requests prayers for her niece Linda; Judy Mitchell requests prayers for her granddaughter, Ellanora; Donna Spaulding requests prayers for the safety of her son, who is serving in the Marine Corp; Sue & Norman Anderson request prayers for their daughter, Melanie Anderson, Sue's brother, Danny Waskevich and their friend, Roger Waite. The Deacons request prayers for Betty Dalbeck, Dr. Richard Hunter, Dolores Trzcinski, Jeanne Fassett, Paul Scherdell and Joyce & Armand Thienel.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

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



Please try to have any articles or notices for our Friendly Messenger in by **Wednesday, May 25th** to get them into the June newsletter. You can **bring** them to the office, **email** them to the church office at office@fcc-worcester.org, or **call** the office at 508-752-4635. You can also contact me (Sue Anderson), by email at deegram@charter.net, call or text me at 774-253-0715. **Thank you!**



Church Office Hours

Shelly will be in the office Tuesday – Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

→ PASTOR JOSH'S OFFICE HOURS ←

You are likely to find Josh in his office or around the church throughout the week during the times when the church office is open (NEW CHURCH OFFICE HOURS are Tuesday – Thursday from 9am to 1pm). If you wish to schedule a time to chat to ensure he is in the office, reach out to him directly. Josh can be reached by email at pastor@fcc-worcester.org or by cell phone at (610)-750-2688.

→ PASTOR JOSH'S DAYS OFF ←

Josh will generally hold Friday and Saturday as days' off for rest and renewal. On Friday, his email will not be checked. If there is a pastoral emergency, Josh can always be reached on his cell phone at (610)-750-2688.



MISSIONS AT WORK

The Missions Committee is always busy behind the scenes, helping those in need. Most recently we met on April 26th. We'd like you to know how our church helps others through your generosity. Besides Carty Cupboard, we have pledged \$500 to Southern New England Conference United Church of Christ who guide us through our faith in all that we do. The following is an excerpt from their Vision Statement:

"In union with the entire United Church of Christ, we respond to Jesus' call and strive to live our faith by:

God's Vision:

United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

The Church's Mission:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.

Our Purpose:

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

Our United Covenant:

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus"

In addition to the SNEUCC, we have pledged \$100 to the Walk for the Homeless that Rev. Josh and Mason will be participating in on Sunday, May 15th. We pray that, through your generosity, your sponsorship will make our contribution even greater!

As the year goes by, we will be helping other causes and will keep you updated as to where our budgeted money is going. With the pandemic winding down and our lives getting back in order, we pray that these financially difficult times will soon be behind us. Praise God, we've done well and we're confident that through Him, we will only continue to do better as time goes by. Finding new ways to help those in need is indeed a challenge but we will forge ahead with confidence and determination.

Confident in Christ,

The Missions Committee



Come and visit our new "Kids Corner" in the narthex where kids can choose a book to read or an activity to do. They can then bring them into the sanctuary and do them as they sit with their parents or whoever they came with. There are even chairs in the narthex for them to sit on before or after the service as they look at what they've chosen.

If you would like to help with funding for this great project, please give your donations to Cindy MacLaurin, Connie MacInnis or Sue Anderson. It would be greatly appreciated! Thank you!



Carpet Fund



Our New Carpeting Fund continues to grow! Please continue to add whatever you can spare to the Teddy Bear jar in the narthex. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

May God Richly bless you for your generosity!

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. ~ 2 Corinthians 9:11



Carty Cupboard

On the first Sunday of each month, FCC gathers non-perishable food items for the Carty Cupboard Food Pantry at Wesley United Methodist Church in Worcester. Items are collected in the baskets in the front of the church. They can use just about anything that has a good shelf life. Please **check the expiration dates** before donating. They have an abundance of peanut-butter right now, but would appreciate jelly in plastic jars to go with it. They can also use personal items such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, diapers, etc. If you would like to support the effort with a financial contribution, please make checks payable to Wesley United Methodist Church – Carty Cupboard. The Missions Committee delivers everything to Carty Cupboard. In April we delivered 8 bags which were greatly appreciated!

Thank you in advance for your generous support!

TEN PENNY AUCTION

Fellowship will be hosting a Ten Penny Auction on **June 5th** along with Coffee Hour.

WHAT IS A TEN PENNY AUCTION? It is an auction where we all bring in small items that we no longer want or need. If you'd like to donate items to be auctioned off, they would be most welcome but no large items please. Usually it's nick-knacks, puzzles, good books or things of that nature. Please don't bring any more than three items. You can drop off them off at Fellowship on Tuesday, May 31st, or bring them to church on Sunday, May 29th or June 5th, before the service. Either leave them on the stage in the hall or give them to Sue Anderson or Ruth Nickerson.

WHAT DOES IT COST? We sell tickets - 10 for \$1.00. Once you buy your tickets, you can put them into any of the cups that are by each item. Once all of the tickets are in, someone selects one ticket from each cup to draw the winner of that item.

WHO DO THE PROCEEDS BENEFIT? This is a fundraiser for Fellowship.

WHERE? Both Coffee Hour and the auction will be downstairs in the church hall.

COME AND JOIN THE FUN!



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

Matthew & Dawn Ahaesy – *In memory of The Ahaesy & Gibbs and LaJoie families*

Norman & Susan Anderson – *In memory of our parents
In memory of Sue's brother & sister, Albin (Skip) and Marie
Waskevich
In celebration of Jesus*

Bev Bean – *In celebration of my family*

George & Jane Boggs – *In memory of Mrs. Priscilla Killian
In celebration of Easter*

Carlo and Jillian DiBonaventura – *In memory of Judith Maxted-Rice, beloved mother and
grandmother*

Rev. Josh Fitterling & Mason Giguere – *In celebration of Christ's Resurrection and the
ministry of First Church*

John Hakkila – *In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Levi Hakkila*

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

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

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

Ruth Nickerson – *In memory of family members who have passed*

Bob Robertson – *In memory of his wife, Donna Robertson and his mother, Florence Prescott*

Ann Scherdell & Family – *In memory of Ray and Jeffrey Scherdell
In honor of Paul Scherdell*

Donna Spaulding – *In memory of Roy and Catherine Spangenberg*

Scott Yonker & Bill Condon – *In memory of our parents and grandparents*



Lord, May You bless the families and friends of those in the military who have given their lives for our freedom. Please wrap Your loving arms around all who serve in our Armed Forces and keep them safe. Lord, please also bless their families. We pray to You for strength, comfort and guidance.

Let us also remember all of the lives lost, people injured and people with no homes to return to through the devastating war the Ukrainians are deep in the midst of. They have lost at least 46K lives and have at least 12K non-fatal injuries. At least 400 people are missing; 13M are displaced; at least 2K buildings have been destroyed and their property damage has risen to \$565B.

Lord hear our fervent prayers and protect Ukraine from further destruction.

This we pray in Your name. Amen

Dates to Remember in May

01 10:00 am Church Service ~ Communion Sunday ~

We have both regular and gluten free communion ~

~ Early Cupboard food collection ~

11:30 am Deacons Meeting

04 10:30 am Fellowship - meet at the church to go to lunch at

Worcester Technical High School - Note that this is

a **WEDNESDAY**! No Fellowship on Tuesday this week!

08 10:00 am Church Service - Mother's Day



11:30 am Trustees Meeting

10 10:00 am Fellowship

15 10:00 am Church Service

1:00pm Registration-Walk for the Homeless

2:00pm Walk for the Homeless Begins



17 10:00 am Fellowship

22 10:00 am Church Service

11:30 am Council Meeting

24 10:00 am Fellowship

11:00 am Missions Meeting

29 10:00 am Church Service



30 All Day -

Memorial Day

31 10:00 am Fellowship

"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style." -

Maya Angelou