

FRIENDLY MESSENGER

February 2025

First Congregational Church, 1070 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602
www.fcc-worcester.org · Office: 508-752-4635 · office@fcc-worcester.org
Office hours are Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.



Everything Has Its Time - Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:

*a time to be born and a time to die;
a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill and a time to heal;
a time to break down and a time to build up;
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek and a time to lose;
a time to keep and a time to throw away;
a time to tear and a time to sew;
a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
a time to love and a time to hate;
a time for war and a time for peace.*

With one of my favorite passages of scripture, it's time for me to announce my plan to retire from FCC-Worcester at the end of June.

I moved to Worcester in 1997, a person wounded by the Church. The church I had served for several years had let me go because I was in a relationship with Bill, who, as you all know, became my husband. I felt a deep desire/call to serve the church and was not sure where that would lead me. I heard that FCC was looking for a musician so I came on a summer Sunday morning to see what the service and church were like. I sat behind a long-time member, Eva Engle, who could not wait to speak with me at the end of the service. I was interviewed that morning and played for the worship service a couple of weeks later as my audition. I began my ministry in 1997 at choir rehearsal, September 17th. Our first worship service together was September 21st.

While ministry here at FCC has not always been easy, I have always felt welcomed and supported here. You have allowed me to take risks and explore new experiences in worship through music. I'm grateful for your patience when my experiments were not successful or well received. Together, we have celebrated weddings, funerals, ordinations, installations and special worship services like Music Sundays, Christmas Carol Services and Lessons and Carols. Along the way, I served with five settled pastors, two interim pastors and several other staff members.

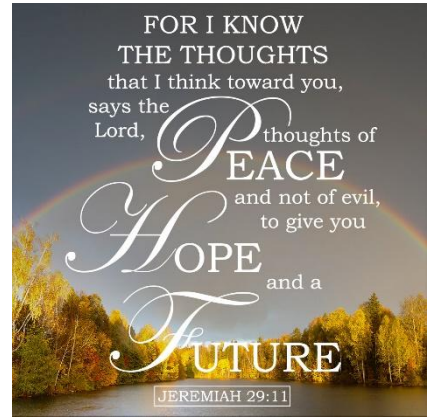
The pandemic was difficult on us all as we had to re-imagine worship. With an updated format for worship and a continued outlook to possibilities in the future, we came through this challenge.

I have been extremely blessed by our ministry together here at FCC. Your support, prayers, grace and love have sustained me more than you can ever know. God has certainly been good to us over these many years. I look forward to the coming years of retirement, spending time traveling and exploring new hobbies. I celebrate the ministry we have shared. I give you all my deepest gratitude and love for the time we have been able to share together.

*Blessings and Peace,
Scott*

Annual Meeting

Please note that our Annual Meeting will be held on February 9, 2025, at the end of the service. We hope to see you there. A copy of the Annual Report can be found in the narthex. If you would like to take one home to review, please be sure to bring it back with you for the meeting. Thank you!



Deacons Fund & Offering Envelopes



\$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____
Name _____



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
1070 Pleasant Street ~ Worcester, Massachusetts 01602

"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another as good stewards of God's grace." 1 Peter 4:10

FEB 2 2025 DEACONS FUND 0

If you do not have 2025 offering envelopes but would like them, please ask Sue Anderson on a Sunday morning, call her or email her and she'll be happy to give them to you.

On the first Sunday of every month, we take up a collection that is used to provide one-time, emergency assistance to a neighbor in need.

Please note that the 2025 envelopes include a specially marked envelope for the Deacons Fund (on the first Sunday of every month). This eliminates the need to include them with the bulletin on that day, then fumbling to get the offering you would like

to put in them. I hope this makes it easier for everyone. The envelope directly under it, is for your offering. It has the same date, but is not marked Deacons Fund.

Office: 508-752-4635

Email: office@fcc-worcester.org

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." ~ 2 Corinthians 9:7



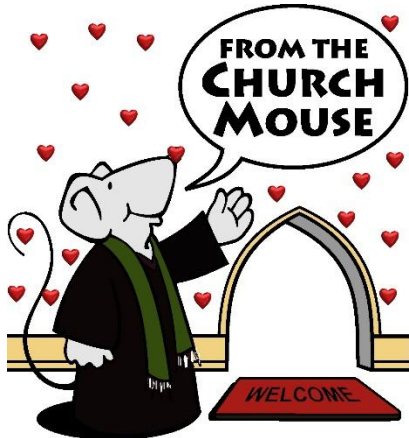
Fellowship

While we weren't able to get a speaker for January, we did enjoy playing 🍏 Apples to Apples 🍏. We also enjoyed eating out at Livia's Dish. The meals were delicious and the company was fabulous! This month, Ruth has planned a delightful craft for us. She will also attempt to get a speaker from the

police department for us. 🚔🚔🚔 In addition, we'll be gathering for our monthly luncheon

outing at a place to be determined.

Please feel free to join us on Wednesday's at 10:00 am, unless otherwise specified. We also welcome your friends and families!



Brrrrr!!! Wasn't it a cold January?! They...whoever "they" are...talk about March winds blowing but boy oh boy, I guess January didn't know that cuz it was WIN-dy! At least I thought so. Thanks for keeping the church nice and warm for me! Coffee, tea and hot chocolate also helped. (Wellll, mostly the hot chocolate, especially with marshmallows. Mmm, mmm, good!

Oh, but now it's February and love is in the air! If you had a choice, what do you like best, candy or flowers? Staying in or going out? I love it ALL. Cuddling up with a nice warm afghan, a good book or a romantic Hallmark movie...aahhh...what could be better?! They can all be enjoyed alone, with friends, with spouses or with kids. Sometimes we like to go out for dinner and maybe take in a movie but it can feel so rushed and crowded that I'm more apt to stay home. We can go out another day when it's quieter and enjoy it more. Whatever you do, ENJOY!

Since there's still plenty of snow in the forecast, sledding and skating are definitely in my plans. Do you like gloves or mittens best? I like mittens cuz I think they're warmer. And if it's a little breezy, skating is so much fun. The wind just pushes me along and I gracefully glide across the ice. Wheeee! Oh, but going in the other direction...yep....that can be a problem but it's worth it and I love to keep doing it over and over again, then either going to sit by a nice campfire to warm up with a nice hot cup of cocoa from my thermos or going home to a nice, warm house and having hot cocoa there, it's supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!!!!

Happy Valentine's Day!

As always, your friendly church mouse,

Nick



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 **20th 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.



ZOOM OR YOUTUBE



Although it seems to be hit or miss lately, we do try to broadcast our Sunday services via Zoom and afterwards on YouTube. Zoom seems to be acting up on us, not recording some Sundays. Hopefully, this problem will be resolved promptly. In the meantime, if you are at home and would like to join us virtually on

Sunday mornings at 10 am, you can try doing so by following this link:

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



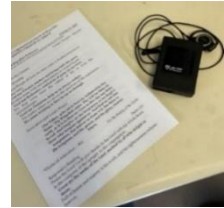
Sunday's service is usually uploaded to YouTube on Monday. You can see it here, and can also find our latest services here when we can record them:

<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.



INCLEMENT WEATHER
If more than 6 inches of snow falls on a Saturday night into Sunday, church service will be canceled.



Hospitality



Please join us in the parlor for coffee and goodies every Sunday after worship. If you are able to host a coffee hour, there is a sign-up sheet on the table. If you bring the goodies, we supply the beverages and paper goods. You don't even have to bake, store-bought is A-OK. It doesn't have to be fancy either. Fruit is always good and so are crackers and cheese. Also, two or more people can sign up together. Most importantly though, is for you to join us in fellowship. Hope to see you there!

"The greatest hospitality one can offer is a welcoming heart." Unknown



The First Sunday of Every Month

Carty Cupboard

Many thanks for your Carty Cupboard donations once again. In January, we only donated **7 bags of groceries**. I hope February will be better. After school snacks and quick and easy but nutritious breakfast foods as well as lunches would be great. Those in need truly appreciate whatever you can give. Snacks like fruit cups, pudding cups and granola bars are always welcome. Jelly in plastic jars, mac and cheese and cereal – hot or cold are great for this time of



year, too. Donating not only non-perishable food, but also personal care items and/or baby items, are always welcome.

**Your contributions mean the world to those in need.
Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.**



Ellen D. requests prayers for her nephew, Tyler M. and his family. Tyler is undergoing treatment for cancer. Connie M. requests prayers for her niece Linda; Sue & Norman A. request prayers for their daughter, Melanie A. and Sue's brother, Danny W. They would also appreciate prayers for their doctor, Phillip F., who's battling cancer. The Deacons request prayers for Ann S., Dolores T., Paul S., and Joyce & Armand T. Kristin O. requests prayers for Mitch B. We ask for continued prayers for Erika V., as well as for Jane B. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and families of the devastating American Airlines/Black Hawk helicopter midair collision.



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.

"Prayer is the link that connects us with God." A.B. Simpson



- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| | <u>February</u> | |
| 04 Richard Mason | 12 Nancy Taylor | 20 Scott Yonker |
| 21 Laura Waters | 22 William McGrail | 23 Doug Perkins, Sr. |
| | 27 Connie MacInnes | |
| | <u>March</u> | |
| 02 Elianna Miles | 03 Norman Anderson | 11 Susan Anderson |
| 18 Mason Martin | 18 Annalise McGrail | 20 Molly Martin |
| 29 Myles Martin | 28 Ellen Dalbeck | 29 Greg Waters |

The best birthdays of all are those that haven't arrived yet. ~ Robert Orben



- | |
|---------------------------|
| <u>February</u> |
| 15 Rob & Kristen Olson |
| <u>March</u> |
| 24 Bill & MaryKay McGrail |

"May every memory that you share of dreams you've seen come true, help make this special anniversary day a happy one, for the two of you." John Walter Bratton



Sunday

02 10:00 FCC Worship Service (Sanctuary) Fourth Sunday After Epiphany ~ Communion Sunday ~ Gluten free communion and non-alcoholic grape juice are used.

Today is also the day we collect non-perishable items for Carty Cupboard; We also collect an offering for our Deacon's Fund today.

Annual Reports are available in the narthex. If you take one home to read, please remember to bring it with you next Sunday for our meeting.

11:30 am Search Committee Meeting (*Conference Room*)

Monday

03 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Wednesday

05 10:00 am Fellowship ~ Join us in making a simple craft with Ruth

Thursday

06 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Friday

07 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Sunday

09 10:00 am Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

Annual Meeting in the Sanctuary, immediately following the service.

Monday

10 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Wednesday

12 10:00 am Fellowship ~ Maybe a speaker from the Police Department

Thursday

13 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Friday

14 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

1:00 pm Trustees Meeting

Sunday

16 10:00 am Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

Monday

10 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Wednesday

19 10:00 am Fellowship - Lunch Out

6:00 pm Deacons Meeting (*Conference Room*)

Thursday

20 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Friday

21 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Sunday

23 10:00 am FCC Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

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

Monday

24 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Wednesday

26 10:00 am Fellowship ~ Baby Picture Mystery

Thursday

27 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open

Friday

28 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Church Office Open



*“Surely as cometh the Winter, I know. There are Spring violets under the snow.”
– Robert Henry Newell*