The Pergola

If you haven’t noticed already, the pergola has been installed on the front, right lawn of the church! This is a very exciting addition to our church facility and a wonderful addendum to our Capital Campaign!

The majority of the prep work for the installation of the pergola was done by Rick Mockler. Consequently, the structure will be dedicated in memory of him and his wife Becky—both of whom served our church with such commitment and dedication.

It is important to note, however, the pergola itself is only Stage One of the vision for that front, right lawn. A landscape design is underway for that area as well that will include a patio area, seating, vines, bushes and no-maintenance ground cover. So keep an eye on this evolving project over the next weeks and months!

It should also be noted that the front lawn (with the sign) will also undergo rejuvenation. We are working with an organic lawn company (also something Rick had set up) to bring this area back to a grassy, inviting area. The front, left lawn will also see the addition of a bench that is currently under design by members of our church. It will further add a human element and invite people to our church grounds.

These changes are not only important as a means of sprucing up the church, but also as a way of saying that this is a church that invites people to a place of rest, beauty and contemplation. Above all, these changes are to encourage people to “a time apart”, a time to reflect and, with just a bit of intentionality, a time to encounter God.

Amid the rush and confusion of life, First Congregational Church is a respite, a sanctuary, an oasis that offers meaning, direction and purposeful living. This is our mission from the inside out and the outside in!

A special thanks to Jim Sugrue and all of those on the Capital Campaign Committee who are seeing this important work, no MINISTRY, to completion!

See you in church,

Rev. Dominic Taranowski
Lorine Timmermann (mother of Lori), Brian Johnson, Bob Hughes, Ray Luebbe (Betsy Garrett’s father), Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro’s daughters), Nyal Fuentes, Claire Griffin, Bill Copeland, Merle Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Anne Wing, Ella Boyle, Scott Chisholm.

SUNDAY SCHOOL:
High School class will be a Coaching Session: 
A faithful approach to coaching and working with others. This interactive unit will challenge our high school youth to focus on character development when working with others and will include hands-on application with our church's children.

Jeff Green is running this year's Boston Marathon, and is raising money for The Lazarus House in Lawrence.

Since opening its doors as an emergency homeless shelter in 1983, Lazarus House has been breaking the cycle of poverty in Lawrence and the Merrimack Valley region.

Lazarus House is a gospel-based ministry and welcomes all. They provide a continuum of care encompassing, but not limited to: food, shelter, clothing, advocacy, education, work preparation, a listening ear, a welcoming heart and the restoration of dignity and self-respect to people who are poor and in dire need.

Please consider a donation if you're able:  
https://www.crowdrise.com/LazarusHouseBoston2017/fundraiser/jeffersongreen

*Jeff will be in the narthex after the service Sunday for any questions

Refugee Immigration Ministry Thanks You!
On behalf of our clients, who are very relieved to have their rent paid, we thank all of you who made financial and in-kind donations. And we thank you collectively as a church for the annual RIM donation of $1000! A special thanks to Linda Fennell, who donated three much-appreciated lamps to the family....they need no more lamps but we are still looking for a queen-sized bed frame. We also have two gift cards for Market Basket for $25 each...if you would like to buy one to help them with their groceries, look for them in the narthex on Sunday. We still owe rent for our E. Boston client so keep those donations coming...and there's always the May rent, so keep those donations coming! It was great to see church people at the inspiring RIM concert last night. Thanks again!

LENTEN ADULT EDUCATION CLASS 
CHRISTIANITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS 
After worship Sunday

Join Rev. Dominic in the Library after worship for the last discussion based class that will look at world religions through the lens of our own faith tradition. While Christianity is the largest religion in the world today, there are billions of people who practice other faiths.
The Music Director Search Committee is happy to announce that it has selected three candidates to interview.

In the first 45 minutes of each interview, we are asking the candidates to perform some hymns and provide sample music instruction to those present.

We invite you to be part of this important element of the interviewing process. We ask that you participate only if you can attend ALL THREE interviews so that you’ll be able to provide feedback for all candidates.

The candidates are being interviewed:

- Saturday, May 6 at 2:00 pm
- Sunday, May 7 at 1:00 pm
- Sunday, May 7, at 3:00 pm

If you have any questions, please contact one of the committee members:

The following groups meet here regularly:
Boy Scouts – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement
Girl Scouts – Sundays, 3:00 to 5:00 PM
Al-Anon – weekdays at 12 noon, Sunday at 1 & 7 PM – Rm. 8
Blue of a Kind – Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Music Room
S.A.R.P. – Mondays 6:30 PM, Lounge
Tai Chi for Arthritis – Wednesdays at 10:00 AM, Room 8
A.A. – Mondays at 4:30 PM, & 7:00 PM (men), Tuesdays at 4:30 PM, Wednesdays at 4:30 PM & 7:30 PM, Thursdays at 4:30 PM and 7:00 PM, Fridays at 4:30 PM and 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 9:00 AM (men) and 3:00 PM – Rm. 8
Makam Music Group – Fridays 7:00-9:00 PM – Lounge and Rm. 1

Steps to De-Stress Program
Learn how to successfully relax through a stressful day. At some point, we’ve all dealt with stress, but having a constant feeling of being “stressed-out” can affect our health and wellness. Join Hallmark Health for this two-class program on Wednesdays April 26 and May 3 from 5:30 – 7 p.m. (please arrive 15 minutes early on April 26).

Learn about:
- Stress physiology
- Explore how stress affects your body
- Techniques for relaxation
- Easy tips to managing everyday stress

To register, please call 781-338-7561 or email CHE@hallmarkhealth.org
Registration and payment are required one week prior to class. Cost for two-class session: $30 per participant

Janet Perault
Program Development Coordinator
Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice, Inc.

EASTER FLOWERS

Easter Memorial Flowers - $15 per plant

Send your order form by April 7th to: Darby Drafts, 25 Adams St., Melrose MA 02176, (Last minute orders may be handed to Darby on Sunday, April 9th.)

Ordered by:
________________________________________
Phone #: _____________________

IN MEMORY OF:
______________________________________________

# of plants ordered __________  Amount enclosed $__________

Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church.