



# First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

## Messenger

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### Who is in Charge?

The direct hit that Houston took from hurricane Harvey is truly devastating. By the numbers:

- 35: The number of lives lost to date
- 51.88: The number of inches of rain that fell at a gauge in Cedar Bayou, Texas.
- 34,575: The number of people currently housed in shelters.
- 506: The number of highways and roads closed.
- 40,000: The number of homes destroyed.

Shocking is the only appropriate word. Our response? Maybe your place of work is sponsoring a donation drive of items to be sent to Texas or is accepting contributions. If so, I strongly encourage you to donate to such efforts. The Red Cross is also a safe and secure way to make a contribution toward relief.

Our denomination, the United Church of Christ, is of course active in the area and accepting donations at our national United Church of Christ national website at [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

In tandem with these practical ways of responding, the people of that region need our prayers. Prayers for those who have lost loved ones. Prayers for those who are now jobless and homeless. Prayers for those who are not in a position to rebuild their lives.

Taken together with the other events of this summer (the rise and violence of neo-Nazism, the growing nuclear fears surrounding North Korea, and terrorist attacks in Spain), one might rightly ask: Who is in charge?

Anxiety levels are elevated because our reflex is to trust that our government is in charge or is at least able to manage things in a way that will ultimately result in stability. Such trust is, unfortunately but understandably, at an all-time low these days.

As people of faith, we believe that, ultimately, God is in charge. I truly believe this. At the same time, I can fully understand those who would say: "Well, yeah

that sounds great but doesn't "being in charge" mean preventing things, fixing things or mitigating what goes wrong?"

The answer, as hard as it might be to hear or comprehend, is no. That is not what it means to say that God is in charge. God didn't alter the course of Hurricane Harvey any more than God saves every child from poverty and disease. If you are banking on God stepping in to prevent every catastrophe from happening, you will be sorely disappointed.

It is important to be reminded in times like these that God does not promise us protection *from* hardship but rather companionship *in* hardship. The primary reason Christ went to the cross was to declare that God knows our human pain and shares in our suffering.

God is in charge not because devastation and evil are banished from this realm, but because no matter how bad things get, no matter how frustrating things get, resurrection is always coming. Easter is always coming. A new beginning is always assured.

We live in a post-resurrection world. That cannot be erased by calamities or backward thinking and acting.

This doesn't mean that we don't have work to do. Houston and the surrounding area need our help. Race relations need to evolve forward. Terrorism needs to be confronted. Acting on these things is being the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

But as we do this work, it is critical to remember that Houston *will* recover, non-white people are very often treated equally and fairly by white people, and terrorist acts are regularly prevented.

Hope does abound and God is in charge—even in the most challenging of times.

See you in church,

### Sunday, September 10

#### Holy Communion

**9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal**

**10:00 AM – WORSHIP and Sunday School**

**11:15 AM – Coffee Hour and Sunday School Registration**



Emelie Burnham, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Lorine Timmermann (mother of Lori), Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Nyal Fuentes, Claire Griffin, Bill Copeland, Merle Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Scott Chisholm, Michael Connelly, Francois.

🔔 **Congratulations to** Evan Iwerks and Corinne Glennie who were married in a ceremony officiated by Rev. Dominic in Bath, Maine on July, 29th! We wish them all the very best!

✝ **Our prayers and sympathy to**

- Marilyn McComas on the death of her mother, Olive Liebermann on July 12<sup>th</sup>, in Dennisport. Olive lived in Melrose prior to moving to the cape.
- Ron Miner on the sudden passing of his brother, Robert Miner on July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Betsy Garrett on the death of her father, Ray Luebbe on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.



Circle 4 will meet on **Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM in the Narthex** for our Pot Luck Supper.

**DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS**

**Tuesday, September 5**

- 7:00 PM – RIM Meeting, Library
- 7:00 PM – Teacher Orientation
- 7:15 PM to 8:15 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

**Sunday, September 10**

- Welcome Back Sunday
- 10:00 AM Worship and Sunday School
- Sunday School Registration
- 11:00 – 4:00 – Victorian Fair

**Tuesday, September 12**

- 5:00 PM – Circle 4 Pot Luck, narthex
- 7:15 PM to 8:15 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

**Friday, September 14**

- 3:00 PM – Staff Meeting

**Sunday, September 17**

- 10:00 AM Worship and Sunday School
- Sunday School Registration

**Tuesday, September 19**

- 7:00 PM – Deacons, Library

**Thursday, September 21**

- 4:00 PM – Bread of Life Dinner, American Legion, 368 Pleasant St., Malden

**Sunday, September 24**

- 10:00 AM Worship and Sunday School
- Sunday School Registration
- Welcome Back Cookout

**Tuesday, September 26**

- 7:15 PM to 8:15 PM - Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

**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 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



**SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

**Teachers needed!**

Looking to get more involved with the church? Curious about what the children of our church are learning? Want to get to know a fabulous group of kids? Then we have a spot in our Sunday School program for you! We have a few spots to fill in the teaching line-up for the elementary grades and would LOVE to have you join us! All curriculum materials are provided, and we form teaching teams so that teaching is just a once-per-month commitment. Please reach out to one of our Christian Ed Deacons for more information. Sherri Jackson [sltjmtj@hotmail.com](mailto:sltjmtj@hotmail.com) or Lisa Warner at [mlwarner98@verizon.net](mailto:mlwarner98@verizon.net).



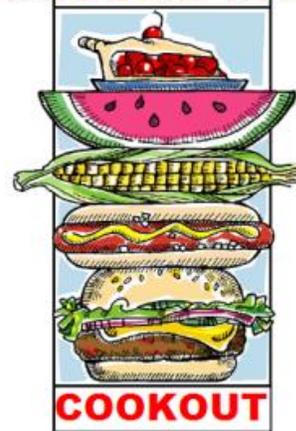
**Teacher Meeting**

Mark your calendars...we will have a teacher orientation meeting to talk about our upcoming church year and distribute curriculum on Tuesday September 5 at 7 pm at church.

**High School Students...**

Be sure to come to class on our first Sunday back, September 10, to talk about plans for the church year!

**WELCOME BACK**



**FELLOWSHIP REMINDER –  
LOOKING AHEAD TO SEPTEMBER 24<sup>th</sup>–**

Be sure to put “SEPTEMBER 24<sup>th</sup> – ANNUAL WELCOME BACK COOKOUT!” on your calendar. This gathering is a great time to catch up with church friends, compare notes about fall activities, and as always, enjoy the fantastic food that we always have (thanks to everyone)!

More information to follow! And we wish everyone a great summer! – Donna & Ron Miner

# 5K

25th Annual WALK & RUN

MAJOR SPONSORS:



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Health Plan



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**ANONYMOUS**

Bread of Life  


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TO BENEFIT THE HUNGRY  
& HOMELESS  
**SUNDAY**  
**OCT 1, 2017**

12PM AT PINE BANKS PARK,  
MELROSE & MALDEN

REGISTER ONLINE AT  
[WWW.BREADOFLIFEMALDEN.ORG](http://WWW.BREADOFLIFEMALDEN.ORG)

**RUNNERS \$25**  
**(\$30 DAY OF EVENT)**

**WALKERS RAISE**  
**PLEDGES**

**ALL PARTICIPANTS**  
**RECEIVE**  
**FREE**  
**T-SHIRT & SNACKS**



## Free Family-Friendly Outdoor Concert & Fireworks with the Melrose Symphony!

**Saturday, September 9, 2017 -- Gates open at 5:30 pm, Concert starts at 7 pm**  
**Morelli Baseball Field, Melrose ([Google Maps](#))**  
**Free & Open to the Public**

The Melrose Symphony Orchestra is celebrating its 100th Anniversary with a free outdoor pops concert and fireworks display on **Saturday, September 9th** in Melrose.

The 1,500 square foot stage will be erected on home plate at Morelli Baseball Field (350 Lynn Fells Parkway, Melrose). Thousands of audience members are invited to bring blankets and lawn chairs on the field. The football field and bleachers will also be open for additional seating.

At 7 pm, the Symphony will perform crowd-pleasing favorites including music from *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, a tribute to Henry Mancini, and concluding with Tchaikovsky's iconic *1812 Overture* and a fireworks grand finale.

Gates will open at 5:30 pm for audiences of all ages to try out the instruments of the orchestra in the musical instrument "petting zoo." A fleet of food trucks will also be on hand, but audience members are also welcome to bring outside food and beverages as well.

Complete information available at [www.mso100.org](http://www.mso100.org)