Love and Responsibility

Another week and two more natural disasters to contend with! Hurricane Irma’s devastation and the catastrophic earthquake in Mexico. And this is on top of the continued need to provide help to Texas after Hurricane Harvey.

In this column and from the pulpit I have tried to offer a faith perspective (as well as a faithful response) to these kinds of events. I won’t reiterate things here except to add this fundamental piece to the puzzle: Things like this go to the core of Christ’s message to us.

Put simply, Jesus came into the world and ministered to disparate people as a way of saying that we all belong to God. If we all belong to God, then, consequently, we all belong to each other. More than that, we are responsible for one another because we are responsible to God; who created us all out of pure love.

It is that love and that responsibility that are the pillars of the Christian faith. We can rely on them and we can reinforce them in how we live.

In worship, we feel the renewing strength of God in our lives through Jesus Christ. We feel God’s assurance and compassion. We are replenished.

And we need to be replenished because we should arrive at worship depleted. I know no one wants to feel depleted, but from a Christian perspective, feeling depleted is a sign that you have shared the love and responsibility you have found in worship. It is okay to feel this way because there is always another Sunday coming when that replenishment is assured.

Natural disasters, social challenges, and personal hardship should always be viewed through this prism: God loves you. God loves everyone. We are responsible to God for that love and responsible to one another and the world because of it.

Living in this dynamic allows our own lives to be fulfilled and the world to be healed.

See you in church,
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 sljmtj@hotmail.com or Lisa Warner at mlwarner98@verizon.net.

Nursery Assistant Position
We're seeking someone for the Nursery Assistant role. If you have a great babysitter who's looking for a small, steady job, or anyone else who is great with kids and can commit to a couple hours every Sunday morning, please let Sherri Jackson know.

FELLOWSHIP REMINDER – LOOKING AHEAD TO SEPTEMBER 24th–
Be sure to put “SEPTEMBER 24th – 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)!

See the sign-up board in the narthex on Sunday! – Donna & Ron Miner

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE
The pergola project is complete! Look for word soon on a dedication of this wonderful memorial addition to our church. Also, the opposite side-lawn of the front of the church has also seen dramatic improvement to the landscaping with the addition of trees, widespread mulching under trees, new plantings and a circular bench around one of the central trees. A face lift is also being completed around the book box area. Many thanks to Jim Sugrue and Candy Brower for spearheading these efforts and devoting many hours over the summer to this work!

Additionally, we are currently at work identifying irrigation lines in order to allow watering on only the center lawn of the church (with the church sign). Once this is done, we will begin an organic re-fertilization of this lawn. This area is to remain grass.

Also, Capital Campaign improvements at the Parsonage were completed over the summer with the final installation of new, energy saving heating and cooling mini-split units.

As we enter the new program year, please make sure that your Capital Campaign pledge is up to date. Thank you!

Fall Bulb Sale
The Metro North cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry is again selling bulbs to support our continued effort to welcome those in need into our community. The bulbs are top quality from Holland and naturalize well. Bulbs will be sold through Sunday October 1st, and will be available for pick-up on Sunday October 8th in time for planting on the Columbus Day holiday! Order forms available in the narthex.
MAJOR SPONSORS:

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JOIN US FOR GOOD

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25th Annual WALK & RUN

Bread of Life
"Food for the body ... Nurture for the soul"

TO BENEFIT THE HUNGRY & HOMELESS
SUNDAY
OCT 1, 2017

RUNNERS $25
($30 DAY OF EVENT)

WALKERS RAISE PLEDGES

12PM AT PINE BANKS PARK,
MELROSE & MALDEN

REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.BREADOFLIFEMALDEN.ORG

ALL PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE FREE T-SHIRT & SNACKS
**Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice to Hold Kids and Grief Support**

Children react differently from adults regarding the death of a loved one. To assist in helping children process their loss, Hallmark Health Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice is sponsoring a Kids and Grief Support Group for children ages 6-12.

The next support group for children begins Wednesday, September 27, 2017 from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. and meets every other week for six sessions. A parents and caregivers support group meets at the same time.

According to Judy Seifert, Bereavement Coordinator at Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice, the Groups provide a safe place for children to not only express their feelings, but also to share memories, meet new friends, and learn how to process their grief. Registration is required to attend. For information and to register, call Judy Seifert at (781) 338-7861.

**Free Program on Managing Chronic Pain**

Is living with chronic pain affecting your life? Chronic pain may cause sleep loss, increased stress and loss of motivation around everyday activities. Learn to manage pain and continue living a fulfilling life through this FREE six-session program. Starting on Wednesdays, September 20th to October 25th, 2017 from 1:00-3:30 pm at Hallmark Health Medical Center (right off route 128) 30 Newcrossing Rd, Reading MA;

Sponsored by Hallmark Health. Registration is required **SPACE IS LIMITED.** Please call 781-338-7823 to register or for more info.