



**MESSENGER**  
of the  
**First Congregational  
Church**  
**United Church of Christ**  
121 W. Foster St.  
Melrose, Massachusetts

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

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**Don't Underestimate Yourself**

Rev. William Sloane Coffin once said: "Lacking the vigor to deal with big problems, we allow ourselves to become mesmerized by little ones."

There are big problems in this world: Climate change, terrorism, racism, homophobia, war, economic inequality...the list goes on.

Who wants to look at those for any length of time? It's depressing. Far better, then, to focus on why the line at the grocery store is moving so slow or how to endure another visit from the in-laws.

The main reason we don't like focusing on the big problems for very long is because we feel we can't make a difference in solving them. Many people were impressed by Rev. Jim Antal's recent sermon on Earth Festival Sunday in which he catalogued his civil disobedience actions that helped lay the groundwork for progress around climate change.

Someone said afterward: "Those are the kind of people who make an impact. I wish I could. I'm just too focused on getting my kids where they need to be and making sure the fridge is stocked."

While it is easier to be "mesmerized" by the little problems—the just getting through the day kind of stuff—I want to offer a reminder that you make more of a difference than you realize.

First, the question is less about big problems and small problems and more about darkness and light. As a person of faith, you are a "child of the light", as Jesus said, so right there you have made a difference. You are light in a world of darkness. When you project goodness, compassion, justice and love in your day to day demeanor, it is no small thing. Mother Theresa said that the best approach to life is to "do small things with great love". To her, this would have the greatest impact in the world.

Secondly, don't underestimate the ripples your life causes. Thoreau read Wordsworth. John Muir read Thoreau. Teddy Roosevelt read John Muir. And the result was America's national parks. Wordsworth, however, could not have foreseen his part in making such

**Sunday, April 17, 2016**

**8:45 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal**

**9:30 AM – Treblemakers, Room 1**

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

**11:15 AM – Coffee Hour**

**11:15 AM – Praise Band Rehearsal**

**DURING THE COMING WEEK**

**Wednesday, April 20**

7:00 PM – WPCR, library

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal

**Thursday, April 21**

7:00 to 8:30 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

**The following groups meet here regularly:**

**Boy Scouts** – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement

**Girl Scouts** – Sundays, 2:00 to 4:15

**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 and Tuesdays at 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, Rm. 1), Tuesdays at

4:30 PM, Wednesdays at 4:30 PM, & 7:30 PM, Thursdays at 4:30

PM, Fridays at 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 9:00 AM (men) and 3:00

PM – Rm. 8

a difference. Your life makes more of an impact than you give yourself credit for.

The bottom line is trust. Live the best life you can and trust God to nurture the seeds you sow and harness the light you reflect in order to redeem creation for a better tomorrow.

You *are* called to take big actions in the face of big problems. But that doesn't mean that you should (and God doesn't) dismiss the little actions you take in living out your faith day to day.

See you in church,

*Rev. Dominic*



**Reflect and Respond**

Rev. Dominic will be hosting a Reflect and Respond session after worship on Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup>. This will be held in the Library and will be a time to discuss the themes of the worship experience. All are welcome to ask questions, share, and benefit from the reflections of others. Please let Rev. Dominic know if you would like child care. It can be easily provided if needed.



Steve Anderson, Flo Hall, Ralph Revesz, Bill Albright, Barbara Wellington, Becky Faro, Bill Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Anne Wing.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

This Sunday our Kindergarten through Grade 5 classes meet together in Room 8 for an Open Classroom activity.

Our Middle School and High School youth are invited to remain in Worship.

High School youth and families are reminded to "Save the Date" for Graduation Sunday, June 5, 2016. Invitations will be mailed soon!



**Middle School and High School Youth:**

Register to join the FCC Melrose Team at this year's Walk for Hunger on Sunday, May 1st! The FCC Melrose Youth Group page can be found using this link: [http://support.projectbread.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team\\_id=78285&pg=team&fr\\_id=1310](http://support.projectbread.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team_id=78285&pg=team&fr_id=1310)

Contact Catherine Dhingra with any questions: [Catherine.dhingra@gmail.com](mailto:Catherine.dhingra@gmail.com), 617-306-6508 (call or text)

**Yard Sale Request**

When you begin to see signs of spring you know the famous (or is it infamous) Yard Sale of the First Congregation Church is about to happen. A couple of items we always request early are collectibles and jewelry. It is helpful to have these donations early as it takes time to get them ready for sale. If you decide it is time to part with any or all of your collections, they can be brought to the church office anytime now or if you need a pick-up, call 781-665-2247. **Please note**, this request is just for collectibles and jewelry.



**HELP WANTED! PART TIME - TEMPORARY**

We're looking for 2-3 individuals who are interested in being Yard Sale Coordinators who will lead a team of experienced volunteers into the joys of

organizing, pricing, and selling the junk that our Church members donate to the Yard Sale.

The hours are flexible during the set up week (May 2nd-May 6th) prior to the actual Yard Sale on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Ideal candidates should be interested in bossing volunteers around, making lots of money while also having fun. Interested applicants should contact Lisa or Jim Oosterman for details and training. [oosterman.lisa@gmail.com](mailto:oosterman.lisa@gmail.com) or 781-662-7445.

Benefits include: 50% discount on the item of your choice, 1 free baked good, and all the free yard sale leftovers you want!

Those looking for a short-term easy job in our church with flexible hours, should consider applying.



## The Fourth Annual **RIM Refugee Walk**

Saturday May 21, 2016  
at 10 AM  
*rain or shine!*

Lake Quannapowitt in  
Wakefield, MA

Funds raised will help to pay for basic living expenses for asylum seekers in eastern Massachusetts who have no alternatives for survival, aside from relying on the generosity of others.



Building a Human Chain of Hope  
[www.r-i-m.net](http://www.r-i-m.net)

