

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

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*Rev. Dominic Taranowski, Pastor*  
*Duncan Vinson, Music Director*  
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### **Transgender Restroom Use**

There has been much made in the news recently about transgender use of restrooms in businesses and schools in particular. For those who may need a definition, transgender people are those who identify and live as persons whose gender is different than that which they were born with.

The underlying question is this: Should people be allowed to use a restroom based on how they self-identify? There are surprisingly strong feelings on this question.

I thought it would be helpful to know where our United Church of Christ stands on this issue. The following is a statement issued by our denomination in response to President Obama's initiatives to protect the rights of transgender youth in public schools:

*"Grounded in the belief that every person is endowed by God with worth and dignity that human judgement cannot set aside and with the strong witness within our own communion of a deepening hospitality and the enriching of our church's life and mission through the ministries of transgender members, we, leaders of the United Church of Christ, stand in solidarity with the joint letter of "significant guidance" from the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ) and Education (DOE) on Title IX obligations regarding transgender students.*

*We strongly agree that schools should "treat a student's gender identity as the student's sex" and "that a school must not treat a transgender student differently from the way it treats other students of the same gender identity." We applaud the DOJ and DOE for affirming a core tenet of civil rights: that you cannot allow the discomfort of some to "justify a policy that singles out and disadvantages a particular class of students." We support the person-centered approach that protects the privacy of student records and gives agency to students regarding their gender identity and decisions about disclosure.*

*We commit to giving ongoing leadership in advocating for the human and civil rights of transgender*

## **Sunday, May 29, 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, June 1**

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal

#### **Sunday, June 5**

Graduation Sunday

#### **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

*people. Our pledge as citizens is to "liberty and justice for all" and a primary commitment of our faith is to love without condition. As we continue our journey, we invite others to join us in learning about the realities of gender identity and expression through the stories and witness of people who are transgender."*

Fear is never a good starting place for either public policy or religious belief. As with many things like this, much of the apprehension around this issue is rooted in a lack of exposure to the people involved. I am confident that as our society progresses, this will become less and less of an issue.

In the meantime, it is important that fear and discrimination not hold sway and that we continue to proclaim a God of love and inclusion.

See you in church,

*Rev. Dominic*



Ilia Grzegorzewski, Herb Gray,  
Herb Schurian, Ella Boyle, Flo Hall,  
Ralph Revesz, Bill Albright,  
Barbara Wellington, Becky Faro,  
Bill Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot  
Allen, Bob Pierce, Anne Wing.



### SUNDAY SCHOOL

This week, our K-5 classes will have an Open Classroom activity in Room 8. Middle School and High School youth are invited to remain in Worship.

**We Need CHANGE!**  
**It's time for Change! We need CHANGE NOW!**

To be more precise, we need YOUR CHANGE, from your sofa cushions, that jar in your bedroom, the one in the laundry room, the little tray in your car, the coins that seem to weigh down your pockets and purse.

We will be collecting change in the Narthex every Sunday in June to raise money to send our youth and chaperones to the UCC National Youth event in July.

Won't it feel great to finally put that old coin collection to good use?

### Changes at Bread of Life

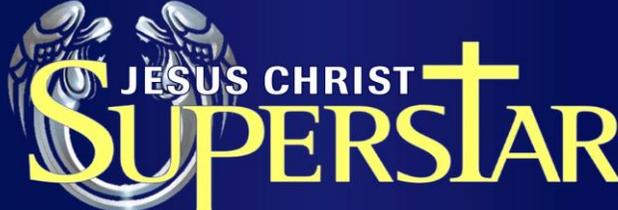
Bread of Life is moving their Evening Meals program to a new location. They will be distributing take-out meals from the Bread of Life food pantry on Tuesdays. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, the meals will be served at the American Legion Post 69 at 368 Pleasant Street (Rt. 60) in Malden. The site is handicap-accessible and has onsite parking. Friday meals will continue to be served at the First Baptist Church in Malden.

We at First Congregational Church will continue to provide volunteers to cook and serve one meal each month, but **our day is changing to the THIRD THURSDAY of the month.** So the next three dates we serve will be **June 16, July 21, and August 18.** We are hoping that perhaps the change of date will enable a few more people from our church to join the team of volunteers. If you are interested in being a part of this mission or want more information, contact Sallie Klemm at [shklemm@verizon.net](mailto:shklemm@verizon.net)

*Do you have a family member graduating from college this spring? Please let the church office know, so that we can share in congratulating them with their church family.*



*April Drafts-Johnson graduated from the University of South Carolina on May 6th. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and will be working as a medical/surgical nurse at Palmetto Health Hospital in Columbia, SC.*



# JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

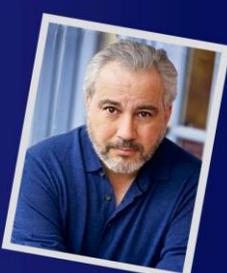
*presented by*  
**POLYMNIA CHORAL SOCIETY**  
MURRAY KIDD, Music Director

*with full orchestra and Broadway star  
Danny Zolli as Jesus*

**FRIDAY, JUNE 3**  
**7:30 PM**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 4**  
**7:30 PM**

**MEMORIAL HALL**  
590 Main Street, Melrose



**Get tickets online at [www.polymnia.org](http://www.polymnia.org)**  
or at Miter Biter Frame Co., 479 Main Street, Melrose

Adults, \$25 • Students & Seniors, \$20 • Children 12 and under, \$5



**Or see Rick Mockler for tickets.**

**On May 22<sup>nd</sup> we celebrated with our 50+ year members.**

**We are still profiling some of them in the Messenger over the next few weeks.**

**Marilyn McComas**



Marilyn McComas has been a member of First Congregational Church for fifty-four years. She was involved with Sunday School here, as well as Pilgrim Fellowship during her junior high school years and Christian Endeavor during high school.

Marilyn has fond memories of Amy Spollett bringing her to church and giving her hugs. Marilyn and Martha Williams were confirmed on Christmas Eve in 1962, and both graduated from Melrose High School in 1966.

Marilyn has helped out at our annual church fairs for many years and still loves being involved in them. At different times during her church membership, she was a Sunday School teacher and served on the Education Commission. She was also a member of the Library Committee. Marilyn served on the search committee that called Tom Evans. She also has been an usher, a nursery volunteer, and a Caspar volunteer. Marilyn has worn many hats here!

Marilyn has been a member of Circle 12 for thirty plus years and loves to attend circle activities whenever she can. She enjoys being around all her circle sisters as they laugh, cry and share their lives.

**Some photos of the 50+ Year Member Brunch, May 22**



**Linda and Bob Camberlain**

Linda grew up as a member of the Hillcrest Congregational Church. She was baptized, attended Sunday School, and was married in that church. When the Hillcrest and the First Congregational Churches merged, she eagerly threw herself into the life of her “new” church. For several years she served on the Diaconate. She fondly remembers, while a member of the Fellowship Commission, baking cookies in the church kitchen for the youngsters to decorate. What fun !! Linda also taught Sunday School.

Linda and Bob, accompanied by Dottie Fiandaca and David, a seminarian, chaperoned a group of our youth on a weekend trip to Martha’s Vineyard where they stayed in a hostel. She recalls hiking, biking, communing with nature and lot and lots of laughing. It’s easy to see Linda loves being around kids.

Linda was also a member of the interpretative dance group with Janet Runge and others. She says the dancing enriched her worship service experience. She and Bob have served dinner at Bread of Life in Malden. First a member of Circle 6, she is now an active member of Circle 4 working each year on the yard sale and the Winter Wonderland Fair.

We are lucky to have Linda as a member of our church because where there is Linda, there is always laughter!



## **HALLMARK HEALTH**

### **Effective Communication Strategies Program**

Communication is more than just talking and listening – it's also about sending and receiving messages through attitude, tone of voice, facial expressions and body language. As people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias progress in their journey and the ability to use words is lost, families need new ways to connect. Join us to explore how communication takes place when someone has Alzheimer's, learn to decode the verbal and behavioral messages delivered by someone with dementia, and identify strategies to help you connect and communicate at each stage of the disease. This program will be held on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am to 1pm at Lawrence Memorial Hospital, (Gallagher Room), 170 Governors Avenue, in Medford. Please register by calling 781-338-7823. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association; sponsored by Hallmark Health System, Inc.

### **Understanding and responding to dementia-related behaviors**

Behavior is a powerful form of communication and is one of the primary ways for people with dementia to communicate their needs and feelings as the ability to use language is lost. However, some behaviors can present real challenges for caregivers to manage. Join us to learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common behavior triggers, and learn strategies to help intervene with some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease. This program will be held on Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 4-6pm at the Lawrence Memorial Hospital, (Gallagher Room), 170 Governors Avenue in Medford. Registration required please call 781-338-7823. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association; sponsored by Hallmark Health System, Inc.