

*SUMMER  
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*  
*Maureen Willis, Sunday School Administrative Assistant*

OFFICE 781-665-2111 - FAX 781-665-8824

E-MAIL [info@fccmelrose.org](mailto:info@fccmelrose.org) Website [www.fccmelrose.org](http://www.fccmelrose.org)  
Rev. Dominic's Cell phone: 781-526-3428

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### The Next Right Thing

Welcome to the "Summer Messenger"! Regular, weekly distribution of our newsletter will resume in late August. With this edition, I typically share some thoughts about maintaining one's faith during a period of rest and rejuvenation as our congregation takes a bit of a break over the next weeks.

Unfortunately, given what happened recently in Orlando, Florida, I feel the need to once again offer a faith perspective on yet another mass shooting.

As an Open and Affirming Church, this tragedy is not only devastating but profoundly important. Our church has made it clear that we accept gay and lesbian people into the full life and ministry of the church and do so without hesitation. What happened in Orlando is a reminder that this kind of openness and validation is not shared by everyone.

The tangled reasons for this evil act (ISIS and apparently the shooter's own confusion over his sexual identity and hatred of gay people) highlight the fact that though great strides have been made by the LGBTQ community in recent years, it is still dangerous to be gay.

This event is sad and angering on many levels. That people enjoying what is a long-overdue "new normal" (simply having a good time at a gay nightclub) could be gunned down simply for their sexual orientation, is abominable. It is also sad that while this makes the need for greater gun control laws obvious, that seems unlikely. If the execution of over two dozen first graders in Newtown can't bring that about, it is hard to see how this will.

It is also sad to see some Christian communities not just silent about this, but implying that this is to be expected if homosexuality continues to become acceptable.

So what is to be done? The next right thing. Really, that is what discipleship and life in general call us to; the next right thing. For some that will mean advocating for greater gun control, for others it will mean



**Sunday, June 26, 2016**

8:45 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal  
10:00 AM – OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE  
Rain or shine (narthex in case of rain)  
11:15 AM – End of Year Cook-Out, Playground

legislative action in favor of equal marriage (it is hard to believe that this is still the object of debate in many states). For me the next right thing means making sure this church stands as a beacon of anti-hatred, of inclusion and celebration of diversity. Only you can decide what the next right thing is for you.

The bottom line is that we can't go on like this. We really can't. Things need to improve not deteriorate and it feels very much like we stand at the crossroads of just that kind of choice. We need to be part of the improvement.

Gun violence has to change and we need to do everything we can to proclaim that being gay is not a crime punishable by death. That such a basic truth needs to be proclaimed at all is perhaps the saddest thing of all.

But the good news? We're better than this. We *can* improve things. We can, by making more noise about the kind of church that we are, be part of the answer; part of the antidote to hatred and fear.

We may not turn the tide overnight, but we can do the next right thing. We can take our anger and our sadness and mix it with love and begin painting the kind of world we want to live in; a world Jesus called the kingdom of God.

See you in church,

*Rev. Dominic*

### A Celebration of Duncan's Ministry

Please join us on Sunday, June 26th, as we not only conclude our program year, but also celebrate the conclusion of Duncan Vinson's time with us as Music Director. Duncan will be recognized both during the worship service and afterward at our cookout. This will also be a great opportunity for you to offer your own greetings to him as well.





Mary Sakata, Matthew Larzelere,  
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

It has been a wonderful Church School year! Thank you all for your support of our program: our teachers who share their time and talents with our children, and all the parents who continue the lessons at home. Children in Pre K through grade 5 are reminded to "live fruity" and use their journals over the summer! See you in the fall!

**Invitation to Join our Sunday School Program:** Have you ever thought about teaching? Our new curriculum model provides everything you need: the lesson, with memory verse, prayers and crafts! We are looking for a few more adults to round out our teaching teams. The commitment is one Sunday a month! For more information, contact our CE Deacons Lisa Warner and Sherri Towle-Jackson or the CE Admin Maureen Willis.

### DURING THE COMING WEEKS

#### Sunday, July 10

10:00 AM – Union Service at First United Methodist Church

#### Monday, July 11

8:00 AM - Bread of Life Annual Golf Tournament,  
Mt Hood Golf Club, Melrose

#### Tuesday, July 12

7:00 PM – RIM Meeting, library

#### Sunday, July 17

10:00 AM – Union Service at Green Street Baptist

#### Thursday, July 21

3:45 PM – Bread of Life Dinner, American Legion, 368  
Pleasant St., Malden

#### Sunday, July 24

10:00 AM – Union Service at First Congregational Church

#### Sunday, July 31

10:00 AM – Union Service at Congregational Church

#### Friday to Sunday, August 5-8

Umunara Conference at First Congregational

#### Saturday, August 13

3:00 PM - Boy Scout Court of Honor, sanctuary

#### Thursday, August 18

3:45 PM – Bread of Life Dinner, American Legion, 368  
Pleasant St., Malden

#### Friday, September 2

Deadline for items to go in first Fall Messenger

#### Wednesday, September 7

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal begins again

#### Friday, September 9

3:00 PM – Staff Meeting

#### Sunday, September 11

Welcome Back Sunday

#### Tuesday, September 13

5:00 PM – Circle 4 Pot Luck, narthex

**PLEASE NOTE – Most but not all of these groups continue to meet during the summer months.**

**The following groups meet here regularly:**

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

**Girl Scouts** – Sundays, 3:00 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 and 7:00 PM, Fridays at 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 9:00 AM (men) and 3:00 PM – Rm. 8



## Summer Union Services Update

The Melrose Clergy Association has elected to curtail the Melrose Summer Union Services. Each participating church will now host one service and each clergy person will lead one service. All services will take place in the month of July following the Fourth of July weekend. There are two reasons for this change. One is the recognition of dwindling attendance at the summer services and, secondly, each church (including ours) has experienced difficulty in recruiting volunteers during the summer to assure that there are ushers, tellers, coffee hour servers, and child care. This was also a compromise decision that allowed some participating churches to remain as part of the rotation of summer worship services.



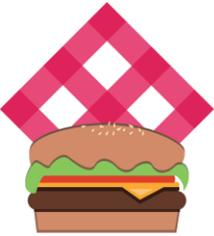
<b>Date</b>	<b>Host Church</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
July 10	First United Methodist	Rev. Beth Horne
July 17	Green Street Baptist	Rev. Stacey Lanier
July 24	First Congregational	Rev. Dr. George Sinclair
July 31	Highlands Cong.	Rev. Dominic Taranowski



## Outdoor Worship Sunday, June 26

10:00 AM

Rain or Shine (Narthex in case of rain)



## End of Year Cookout

### ON JUNE 26TH!

The end of June will see a very popular event at First Congregational - the End-of-Year Cookout!

For those who haven't been at church for this yet - this cookout is a celebration of all of us together as a church, at the end of our program year.

The cookout takes place right after our outdoor worship service, and it is a potluck lunch that is always spectacular! Hamburgers, hot dogs, and veggie burgers, and rolls and condiments are provided, as are ice water and lemonade.

The cookout is also a great time to meet new friends, catch up with "old" friends, and maybe talk about vacation plans. There will be a signup board in the Narthex - please take a moment to sign up and indicate what kind of contribution you'd like to make to the buffet. There are lots of categories, something for everyone.

See you there! Donna and Ron Miner



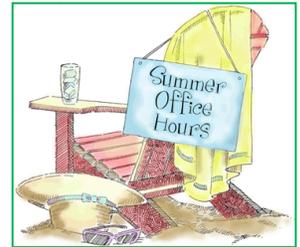
### The Sally Frank Farmers Market in Melrose

is now open for the season! Join us in Bowden Park every Thursday afternoon from 3-6 p.m., where our vendors will be providing fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, fish, bread and baked

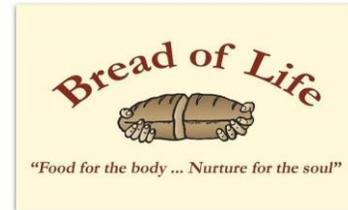
goods, and other food grown and produced in Massachusetts.

All vendors accept SNAP benefits on SNAP Eligible items, and we double SNAP benefits up to \$10 each week. Both of our fruit and vegetable farms also accept WIC and Senior Farmer's Market Coupons.

Summer church office hours for July 1 to Labor Day are:  
Wednesday and Thursday  
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM



Phone messages and emails will be monitored so feel free to leave a message if you need to reach the office at other times.



## BREAD OF LIFE – a chance to FEED YOUR SOUL!

If your schedule is a little more relaxed in the summer, please consider marking the **Third Thursdays** of the month to help out at Bread of Life! Our team from First Congregational Church volunteers from 4pm – 7pm on the Third Thursday of every month. We cook, serve, and clean up – it's a fabulous opportunity to help feed the hungry and your soul at the same time! The new location for the meals is:

### The American Legion Post 69, 368 Pleasant Street, in Malden

– one block from the Malden MBTA station, near the intersection of Rt. 60 and Pleasant Street. (There is a parking lot!!!) The dates this summer that we are serving are:

### July 21 and August 18.

If you can't make it to the dinner but would still like to help, we can always use donations of dessert or large bottles of salad dressing!! If you have questions about this mission of our church, please speak with Sallie Klemm [shklemm@verizon.net](mailto:shklemm@verizon.net) or 781-665-0159.



**By Lighting our Church Steeple** in memory or in honor of loved ones, you can help our church financially. Contact the church office (781-665-2111 or [info@fccmelrose.org](mailto:info@fccmelrose.org)) to sign up for a week beginning on a Sunday. Your gift will be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and "The Messenger". A \$25.00 per week contribution is suggested.

**LOOKING FOR A WAY TO BE "GREEN,"  
EXERCISE, ENJOY THE COMPANY OF  
FELLOW PARISHIONERS, AND HELP  
BEAUTIFY THE CHURCH GROUNDS?**



Then please consider donating 1-2 hours of your time once a week, whenever your schedule permits, to do some **weeding** at church. The beds around the church are in desperate need of weed

removal, and we can't move forward with plans to re-plant and beautify those beds until we eradicate the weeds.

Join us at 8am on Monday mornings this summer for communal weeding. No experience is necessary! You may not think you know a weed from a perennial, but our weeds are easy to spot, and training is available ☺. We'd love to have you join us. We'll start an email conversation to confirm each week's timing, depending on the weather. Just think, you'll be able enjoy great company, have a huge sense of satisfaction in seeing those weeds disappear, and you can skip the gym! (and if Monday mornings don't work for your schedule, feel free to come down anytime and pull a few weeds with your friends and family)

Any questions, contact Candy Brower or Donna Miner.

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

**These are some more of the profiles of them:**

**Lora Crouss**



Lora grew up in the Highlands Congregational Church, where her parents were married. She met her future husband, Harry, at Highlands, where he had come for confirmation, since he found the Baptist church where he had grown up to be much too strict. According to Lora, Baptists in those days were not allowed to dance or play cards, and boys were not allowed to touch a girl (even to take her elbow to cross the

street) until they were married. While Harry found the Congregational church to be much more liberal, by today's standards it sounds quite restrictive. Lora recalls that boys and girls attended separate classes for Sunday school, confirmation, and youth groups all the way through high school. In wasn't

until the post-high school youth group that boys and girls were allowed to meet together, and that's when Lora and Harry started dating. Lora joined our church in 1951, making her a 65-year member, although she joined her first Congregational church several decades before that.

Lora's professional career was as a teacher. When Lora was married and starting out, she had to settle for low-paying private school teaching positions, because according to Lora, young married women were excluded from public school positions because it was felt they would just get pregnant and leave the job. Many "graduates" of the Mother's Group that met in our church remember Lora fondly as their teacher, a role she filled after retiring from public school teaching.

Lora has always had an international outlook in her activities. After college she did settlement work in Boston in what is now the South End, working with immigrants of all ethnicities in settlement houses, teaching them English, running a nursery school for their children, and preparing them for citizenship. Harry and Lora started the Christmas International Program 60 years ago. The program provided housing and activities for foreign college students who lived too far away to go home during the Christmas break when the dorms were closed. Lora has "adopted" dozens of students through this program, many of whom she keeps in touch with and was able to visit when she traveled abroad.

Lora was active on our church's outreach commission for many years, including serving as chair. She was president of the Women's Guild before the trend for women to work outside the home led to its demise since working women could no longer meet as a Guild during the daytime, and she was a member of the Circle 18 "Modern Matrons" which has since disbanded.

Lora is particularly proud of the fact that when our church was rebuilt after the fire it became the first handicapped-accessible church in Melrose, and the first church in Melrose to house a day care center. Her only regret about the new church is that her advice that the roof should have more of a pitch was ignored. ☺ She is also proud to have served as a delegate to the national Synod meeting when the momentous decision was made to merge three denominations into our United Church of Christ. She served on the Synod committee that wrote the UCC Statement of Faith (which you can read in the back of the red hymnal) that combined the basic beliefs of the three denominations and made the merger possible.

Last August Lora turned 100 years old. Before the church year ended in June, the church held a celebration to honor Lora's special birthday.

**Sally Pollack**

Sally first attended church in Greenwood and joined First Congregational Church on February 7, 1960. She has two daughters, a son, ten grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. Needless to say, her house is brimming with pictures of family, each one special to her for the story it holds. In addition to working for twenty years at the Harvard Faculty Club, she had many busy years caring for her children



and grandchildren. Sally lived in Trinidad for a period of time, and her love of travel has taken her to Hawaii, London, and Scotland where she and family members were looking for relatives.

Unlike FCC's current schedule, Sally's children attended Sunday School classes before the worship service and received their Bibles in fourth grade. The youth groups at the time were very active, and one of her daughters served as the youth leader of the High School group and traveled to North Carolina to do mission work.

Sally loved the old church, especially the steeple, and remembers many of our ministers including the Reverends Fuller, Wells, White, Tirabassi, and Evans. She likes the tradition of walking babies around the sanctuary during baptisms, and she has particularly fond memories of the day Reverend Wells baptized her twin grandchildren.

Sally was a member of Circle 18 and enjoyed the many friends she made there. She served as the leader for a few years, keeping the group together as it became smaller, and now has disbanded. The women traveled to each other's houses for meetings or met at restaurants. Over the years, Sally's circle was actively involved in a myriad of activities in the church. Everyone worked on the church fairs and special events that came up like Reverend Fuller's retirement reception. There were many fellowship events at the time, and Sally remembers that church china was frequently used instead of paper products. Sally also regularly helped out with Sunday morning coffee after church, volunteered at the Kappa shop, and taught Sunday School with Cynthia Henry.

Behind the scenes, Sally was involved with visiting sick and homebound parishioners. She and Lora Couss, another member of Circle 18, were office volunteers who helped weekly to get the Messenger out during January and February. Our church secretary, Sue Bowdridge, is very grateful for this help as those are the most difficult months for recruiting volunteer help. Sally's volunteering and love of family must be what has kept her so young.

After much coaxing Sally joined Circle 4 at the age of 92. Circle 4 has loved having her as a member, and Sally at age 95 still works at the Christmas Fair. How lucky we are to have such dedicated long-term members of our church.

### **Bob and Claire Griffin**



Bob and Claire are one of a number of couples who met and married at First Congregational Church. Bob was baptized and received his Bible at the church, but then left the church for a few years to sing in the

Trinity Church boys' choir and to attend the Universalist Church. He returned in his early 20's and joined the post-college young people's group, GKW (God Knows What!) where he met Claire. Claire had moved to Melrose from NJ after college and became active in GKW, serving as president for some time. They recall the progression of groups that

church members moved through, all the way from children's groups like Christian Endeavor, youth groups, GKW for post-college youth, Couples Club for young marrieds, and a post-40 group for older married couples. Couples Club was primarily a social group, and Bob and Claire served as president as well as enjoying the activities and fellowship it offered. For women, there were circles and the Women's Guild, and for men the Bridge Builders. Claire has been a long-term member of Circle 4, while Bob enjoyed the fellowship of over 200 men in the heyday of the Bridge Builders.

Both Bob and Claire sang in the choir from the time that they first became active in the church. They recall earlier years in choir when there were several dozen choir members and the choir would sing for special functions like the Strawberry Festival. They fondly remember dressing up in Civil War attire to join the Burrells in a quartet in the "150 Years of Music" production. Bob and Claire each served several times as chair of the Music Committee, which was responsible for all things musical in the church.

Bob also served as chair of the Deacons when the church structure was made up of a Board of Deacons and a Standing Committee. Bob chuckles that the all-male Deacons were responsible for "thinking deep thoughts" and doing good deeds, while the Deaconesses were responsible for washing the communion cups ☺ The Standing Committee was responsible for more of the nuts and bolts of running the church, and sub-committees like the flower committee and the music committee reported to it.

Bob and Claire point to the fire as one of the defining moments of our church's history. So much time and money had been spent expanding and upgrading the old church building before the fire, and all of that was destroyed. Claire served as the secretary of the committee responsible for planning the rebuilding, and she recalls this as a very rewarding experience. It was a large committee of about 20 people, and its work went on for 2-3 years, but what an outstanding result!

Both Bob and Claire served on the most recent Search Committee, the one that brought us Reverend Dominic, another achievement they should be very proud of. One of the volunteer jobs Claire did for many years and found very satisfying was scheduling the memorial flowers for the Sunday worship service each week. It gave her an opportunity to touch base with a wide range of parishioners every year when she called to confirm their requests for special flowers.

Bob did similar behind-the-scenes, unheralded but vital volunteer work. Bob kept our church furniture from falling apart, making ingenious repairs to keep broken pieces in service. He shared his excellent cabinetry skills with us, having built the storage cabinets in Room 1 that house the bells and Mother's Group play equipment, and crafted the beautiful storage cabinets for the pew cushions in the narthex. He also restored and refinished the memorial book stand in the narthex. Bob and Claire are happy that all their children were baptized and confirmed in the church, their daughter was married in the church, and all their children continue to be active in their own churches as adults. We miss seeing Claire and Bob as often since their move to Brooksby Village and were delighted to see them at the recent 50+ Member Celebration.

What a lifetime of service this couple has given to our church!



**Sunday, June 26 – 10:00 AM**



**1) Refugee Immigration Ministry Walk 2016**

Thank you to everyone who walked or made a donation to the 4th Annual RIM Walk. Because of your support, our Metro North cluster raised over \$3,300 that will go directly to help clients in need. Special thanks to Naomi and Yvane who got this year's walk off to an inspiring start by talking about RIM's important work. It was a great day!

**2) RIM Meeting - All Welcome**

The next meeting of the Metro North Cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM) will be held on **Tuesday, July 12 at 7 pm in the library**. We welcome anyone who is interested in learning more about this important work to join us. We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month, but the July meeting was changed to the second Tuesday because of the 4th of July

holiday. Please contact Nancy Toney, Bill Chetwynd, or Debbie Anderson if you have questions about RIM.



**3) RIM Fall Bulb Sale - Planning Ahead**

As you're enjoying your yard this summer, think about where you would like to add some beautiful flowers. We hope to begin selling bulbs in mid-September which is earlier than we have done in the past as some folks would like to begin planting over the long weekend in October. Buying our excellent quality bulbs is another way to support our RIM clients. Watch for details in the fall!

**Bread of Life Annual Golf Tournament,  
Monday, July 11, 2016,  
8 am registration and breakfast, 9 am Tee Off,  
Mount Hood Golf Club, Melrose, MA.**

The tournament will be followed by a great 19th Hole Dinner Event at Montvale Plaza in Stoneham, featuring prizes, gift certificates, and raffles to benefit the



less fortunate in our local communities. The cost is \$135 per golfer, which includes golf, cart, awards and the lunch banquet. Those who cannot participate in the tournament can still attend the 19th Hole Dinner Event which begins at 2 pm at Montvale Plaza, at a cost of only \$25, including dinner, prizes & raffles. Tournament sponsorships provide an advertising opportunity for businesses and help the hungry at the same time. To register for tournament or 19th Hole Dinner Event or become a Sponsor, please call Gabriella at 781-475-9060 or click the link below to go to our website.