

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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To Sit or Stand

When I first heard about the San Francisco 49ers Quarterback Colin Kaepernick's decision to sit during our national anthem, I thought this would be a one-time thing. It wasn't. Not only has he continued this form of protest against racism in America, other athletes have joined in.

Kaepernick has taken a lot of heat for his actions, particularly among sports fans. The criticism comes in the form of "sports and politics shouldn't mix" and "the national anthem is sacrosanct and it is flat out disrespectful to not stand up when it is sung or played." It has even reached the point where Kaepernick says that he has received death threats because of his Rosa Parks-ish form of protest.

I can understand why the actions of Kaepernick and other athletes are coming as a shock to many people. That is why they are doing it. The issue of racism is obviously important to these athletes and the shock-value of sitting or kneeling during the anthem is part of the point.

The irony is that the national anthem is a celebration of a country that gives Kaepernick the very right to do what he is doing. Democracy and free speech are not necessarily easy things. True freedom does not mean that everyone is on the same page. In fact, it is really only made real when there is respectful disagreement and descent (and given the values of our founders, I find nothing disrespectful about what these athletes are doing).

This form of protest is an invitation to a conversation and we should have conversations about the parts of our nation that are broken. We should strive always to be improving and moving forward. And we should be humbled by our countrymen and women who are brave enough to stand (or sit) to express their convictions.

If history is anything to go by, our country only advances when we choose to force issues. We move forward when we say that the status quo isn't good

Sunday, October 2 2016



**Food
Pantry Sunday**

9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal
10:00 AM – WORSHIP and Sunday School
11:15 AM – Coffee Hour
Noon – 1:00 PM – Bread of Life Walk/Run, Pine Banks
Noon Registration, 1:00 PM Start

*THE STEEPLE is lit this week in memory of my husband,
Bill, given by Rae Hayward.*

DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday, October 4

2:00 PM – Circle 4, Lounge
7:00 to 8:00 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal
7:00 PM – RIM Meeting, Library

Wednesday, October 5

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Sunday, October 9

10:00 AM - Worship

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, Women's AWOL 7:30 PM, Wednesdays at 4:30 PM, & 7:30 PM, Thursdays at 4:30 PM and 7:00 PM, Fridays at 4:30 PM & 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 9:00 AM (men) and 3:00 PM – Rm. 8

enough. We make a statement when, if the expectation is that we stand, we instead sit.

Is it un-American? Hardly, Thomas Jefferson counted on what he called "the loyal opposition" to keep the country honest. I have no doubt that he would stand up for Kaepernick's right to sit down during the anthem.

Racism *is* a problem in our country and Kaepernick and others are using their notoriety and national stage to draw attention to it so that we can craft solutions. It is hard to see that as a bad thing.

The real question should not be: Is it right or wrong to sit or kneel during the anthem? The real question should be: What am I doing to address this very real problem in American society today?

See you in church,

Rev. Dominic



Nyal Fuentes, Keith Williams, Bryan Mc Allister-Grande, Bob and Claire Griffin, Herb Gray, Bill Albright, Barbara Wellington, Becky Faro, Bill Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Anne Wing.

† **Our prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of Gladys Foster, who passed away on Friday, September 23rd. Gladys was a member of our church for 69 years. No services are scheduled.**



Circle 4 will meet in the Church Lounge on **Tuesday, October 4th at 2:00 pm.**



SUNDAY SCHOOL:

This Sunday our Toddler through grade 5 classes will be learning the lesson of "Esau Forgives". We will be painting "forgiveness rocks" in class with words of how we feel when we forgive or when others forgive us.

Middle School and High School youth will be working on a project to send care packages to our college freshmen. All students will meet in the Spollett Youth Room.

A Message to All Families:

We still need a few more pictures to round out our bulletin board! We invite everyone to dig out any "old" pictures you have of yourself and/or your family to add to our collage. Your picture will be scanned or copied to protect the original from loss or damage. Thank you for your support!



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RIM'S FALL BULB SALE!



Planning for Spring

Refugee Immigration Ministry's bulb sale will begin on Welcome Back Sunday, so please seek out our table in

the Narthex and ponder how beautiful your yard will look in the spring if you plant bulbs now!

We are helping a wonderful new family of four from Egypt who have two school-age children and are living in Wakefield. Funds raised from the bulb sale will help pay their rent.

Last day for placing orders will be Sunday, October 2.

Bulb orders will be available for pick-up on Sunday, October 9. If you aren't available on October 9th, arrangements will be made for pick-up or delivery. If you have questions, contact Debbie Anderson, RIM Volunteer, Metro North Cluster (781.665.8801). Thank you for supporting RIM's important work.



Are you interested in joining the Band of Praise?

If you are interested, we will be meeting after church on Sunday, October 16th for an informal meeting and rehearsal in the chapel. Anyone in middle school, high school, or anyone older is invited to attend. We are especially looking for those who play drums, guitar, or keyboard and would like to sing and play in the praise band in church. We hope to see you there.

Bob and Lisa Jamison



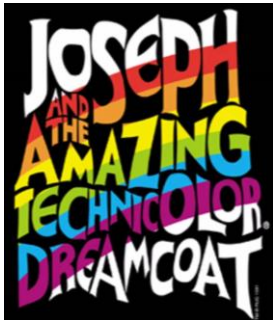
Ushers needed!

If you would like to usher, either on a regular basis (one Sunday a month) or occasionally, please send an email to Betsy Garrett at betsy.luebbe.garrett@gmail.com. Thank you!

Join us at the 24rd Annual Bread of Life Walk for Bread & 5K Run

Course: 5K for walkers and runners (= 3.1 miles).
at Pine Banks Park, Main Street, Melrose & Malden
[Click here to see a map of the Run/Walk course.](#)

CALLING ALL YOUTH and The Treblemakers!



This Sunday, October 2, after church, all youth and all Treblemakers are invited to come to the music room and meet the interim music director, Mariko Matsumura.

The purpose of this meeting is to start to prepare to sing Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat", of "Jacob and Sons" and "Joseph's Coat" for a special presentation during the October 16th worship service. Another rehearsal will be right after worship on October 9.

Date: Sunday, October 2, 2016

Time: The Walk/Run will start at 1 PM.

Please come at noon for registration & entertainment.

Parking: Parking is available when coming in the park entrance (next to the superintendent's office) at 1087 Main Street, Malden MA.

This event benefits Bread of Life, a local nonprofit that in 2014 provided about 1,032,000 meals through grocery delivery to senior citizens, food delivery to homeless families sheltered in local motels, evening meals Tuesday-Friday, and food pantries for residents of Malden, Everett, Medford, Melrose, Saugus, Stoneham, Wakefield, Winchester, Reading and North Reading.

The Walk/Run circles scenic [Pine Banks Park](#), starting in the pavilion area. It will include family fun, entertainment and refreshments. Music will be provided by a local DJ. Bring your kids, bring the dog, come enjoy the day!

Live Band Snacks

Activities for Kids Henna tattoos

Registration: Registration on the Walk/Run day will be held at the tot-lot/pond/pavilion area inside the wooded area of Pine Banks beginning at noon. Fill out a pledge sheet and mail it in, or return it, with funds raised, on the day of the Walk/Run.

For more information [about Bread of Life, click here.](#) For info on [our programs, click here.](#)

Bread of Life began in 1980 and is a faith-based, nonprofit, volunteer organization of 37 churches, synagogues, schools and civic groups. Bread of Life is funded primarily by individuals, businesses, and community support, not government sponsorship. The Walk for Bread is Bread of Life's single largest fundraiser. Please come meet your neighbors, enjoy the day and support Bread of Life!

Bread of Life: 54 Eastern Avenue, Malden, MA 02148
Phone: 781-397-0404
info@breadoflifemalden.org

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Have you ever considered giving flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one? There is a silk bouquet in the sanctuary at all times that can be "given" in memory. You can make a donation to the Flower Fund of \$15 and those flowers can be in memory /honor of your loved one for a given Sunday. If you prefer, fresh flowers can be ordered for you. The cost for fresh flowers is \$50 to \$75 depending on the size you would like. After the service, fresh flowers can be taken by the donor, or if they prefer, they can be distributed to someone in the congregation that is sick or in need of an uplifting gift. If you would be interested in donating either type of flowers, please call or email Susan in the church office. 781-665-2111 or info@fccmelrose.org.



Flowers
in Memory of...

MAAV's
ANNUAL WALK & CANDLELIGHT VIGIL
Sunday, October 16, 2016



*The Women's Guild of the Most Blessed
Sacrament Church in Wakefield
Cordially Invites you to a*

FALL INTERFAITH LUNCHEON

Thursday, October 13, 2016

**12:15 PM Sandwiches and Desserts
1:15 PM Musical Program**

*at Most Blessed Sacrament Church Parish Center
1155 Main Street, Wakefield, MA*

**R.S.V.P. Necessary! By Friday, Sept. 30 to
Rosemary Catterson @ 781-662-1814**



**Walk Teams
Forming Now!**

Interested in forming a team for this year's MAAV Walk? Teams can be as big or as

small as you'd like, and can be made up of friends, co-workers, or anyone who simply wants to walk together! Contact Liane Cassavoy (lcassavoy@maav.org) for more information.

MAAV's 21st Annual Walk & Candlelight Vigil will be held on Sunday, October 16 beginning at 4pm at Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School. The event begins with a Candlelight Vigil, followed by a 2-mile walk around Ell Pond. Refreshments are served after the Walk in the Middle School Cafeteria.

We're so grateful to the teams and individuals already on board and raising funds for MAAV! Check out some of their fundraising pages on [FirstGiving.com!](http://FirstGiving.com)