



First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Messenger

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Lead us not into Temptation

There is one prayer in our faith that unites all Christians. Any guesses? That's right! The Lord's Prayer (or sometimes called the "Our Father" after the first two words of the prayer).

It is a wonderful prayer because it can be traced back to Jesus himself and was his response to being asked how one should pray.

That is why I found it interesting that a few weeks ago there were headlines about a strong desire on the part of the Pope (no less) to change the wording of this prayer.

Now, this would not be the first time wording has been changed. There is an eternal debate among us Protestants as to whether the prayer should read "Forgive us our trespasses" or "Forgive us our debts" or "Forgive us our sins". Our church uses "trespasses" (the previous church I served used "debts").

Some believe "Deliver us from evil" should be "Save us from the time of trial".

These debates are rooted, of course, in the fact that Jesus didn't speak English. The biblical origins of the prayer are written in Greek. Consequently, how we choose to translate from Greek into English is a bit up for grabs. What keeps the prayer relatively consistent is one thing, really: Tradition.

The change that Pope Frances is proposing is something new. The line he is concerned about is: "Lead us not into temptation". Theologically, he says, this paints a troubling picture of God. Would God ever lead us into temptation? Why would God ever do such a thing?

Consequently, "Do not let us fall into temptation" is the proposed, alternative language. Three things about this:

First, I actually agree with the Pope on this! (Mark your calendars because I can't promise when or if this will ever happen again!). Our God would never "lead" us in a direction that would harm us. The only one "leading us into temptation" is ourselves. This is why our faith in God is so

important; it bolsters our ability to make positive, healthy choices.

Second, despite my agreement I don't think the prayer should be changed. That's because the prayer has become greater than the words that compose it. Because it has been said for millennia, it has become more of a mantra that connects us to our faith. The predictability of the words brings great comfort to people and that comfort would be hobbled by monkeying with the language; however theologically sound the reason.

Third, be assured that the Pope has no authority to change anything in our church (I hope that goes without saying). With the stroke of a pen he may be able to alter the language in every Catholic parish, but that would have no bearing on us. If such a change were to be adopted at First Congregational Church, it would need to sift its way through our democratic structure to assure that everyone supports the change. Right now, I have not heard any desire to consider any such changes to the language we use in the Lord's Prayer at FCC.

When it comes to the Lord's Prayer, I believe the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Still, as always, these headlines were interesting food for thought!

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

Sunday, January 14, 2018

9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour

11:30 AM – Inquirer's Class, Library

THE STEEPLE is lit this week in loving memory of Ted Cinella through a gift given by his wife, Susan and family.

Wednesday, January 10

7:00 PM – The Pitches, Harvard Radcliffe Acapella Group, Sanctuary, by donation

DURING THE WEEK

Monday, January 15 MLK, Jr. Day – office closed

5:00 PM-8:00 PM – Martin Luther King, Jr. Potluck Dinner and Program, narthex

Tuesday, January 16

7:00 PM – Deacons Meeting, Library

Wednesday, January 17

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Thursday, January 18

4:00 PM – Bread of Life Dinner, American Legion, 368 Pleasant St., Malden

Sunday, January 21

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

11:15 AM - Coffee hour

1:00 PM - Bible Study at Panera Bread, Saugus

(arrive by 12:30 so that you can order and receive your lunch before we begin)

The following groups meet here regularly:

Boy Scouts – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement
Girl Scouts – Sundays, 3:00 to 5:00 PM
Makam Music Group – Sundays 4:45-6:30 PM – Lounge
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. – Sundays 5:30 PM, Library, Mondays 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), 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



SUNDAY SCHOOL:

This week the PreK - 8th: Will be making posters - "Soup for Soul for Souper Bowl"

To assist with the open classroom activity on Sunday, each PreK to 8 family is asked to bring a few magazines for the children to create the Souper Bowl posters.

The High School class will begin a unit on Dismantling Racism this week, led by Beth Hampson. During this important 4 week unit, the students will discuss Exploring Systemic Racism, Understanding White Privilege, Ways to Respond When You Hear or See Racism, and Steps We Can Take to Dismantle Racism.

If you'd like to be added to the list of volunteers to help out in Sunday School classes as a 2nd adult, please let one of us know at church, or email Sherri Jackson at sltjmtj@hotmail.com.



Barbara Krol-Sinclair, Emelie Burnham, Marilyn McCommas, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Nyal Fuentes, Claire Griffin, Bill Copeland, Merle Copeland, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Michael Connelly, Francoise.

**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Monday, January 15th, 2018**

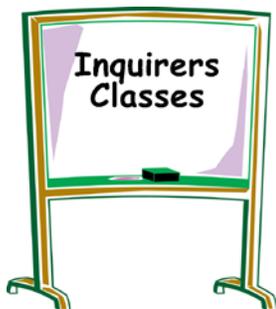


**MARTIN
LUTHER
KING JR.
DAY**

Pot-Luck Dinner 5:00 - 6:00 at the First Congregational Church, 121 West Foster Street, followed by MLK Day Program from 6:00 - 8:00, with speaker Aba Taylor, Executive Director of the Winchester Multicultural Network, music, MLK Essay Winners, and recitation of the "I Have A Dream" speech. See you there!

New Member/Inquirer Classes

If you are interested in membership at First Congregational Church or would just like to find out more about our church and the wider United Church of Christ, please join Rev. Dominic after church on Sunday, January 14th after worship in the Library. We will be welcoming new members on Sunday, January 28th during worship.

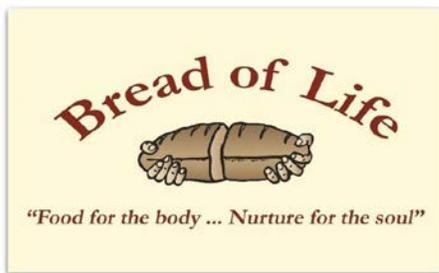


**Bible Study at Panera Bread
Sunday, January 21st at 1:00 p.m.**

Join Rev. Dominic and Bill Albright at Panera Bread in Saugus (next to Marshalls and across from Target on the Fellsway) for lunch and a bible study class! Rev. Dominic will lead things off with a consideration of the question: "Why is the bible relevant today?" Bill will then follow with a consideration of a particular text. As always, your valued input is anticipated as we live and grow in our faith by means of sharing with one another.

Please arrive by 12:30 so that you can order and receive your lunch before we begin. We have reserved the room within the dining area and hope to have everyone settled and ready to participate by 1:00 p.m.

Hope to see you there!



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

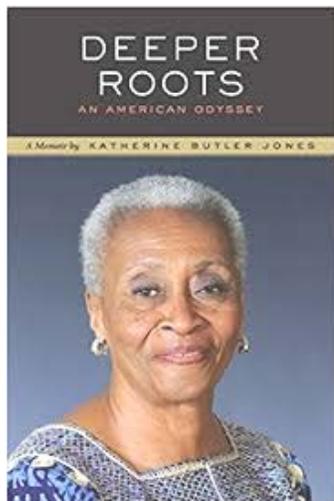
Our team from First Congregational Church volunteers from 4pm – 7pm on the Third Thursday of every month (volunteers are welcome for all or part of the time). We cook, serve, and clean up – it’s a fabulous opportunity to help feed the hungry and your soul at the same time! The location for the meals is:

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

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

January 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 or 781-665-0159.



**Racial Justice Ministry
book discussion Jan
28**

The Racial Justice Ministry will have a discussion on Sunday January 28 after the worship service on the book *Deeper Roots: An American Odyssey* by Katherine Butler Jones. Jones has been active in racial justice work in the Boston area and helped start the METCO

program in Newton. The book is a memoir of her childhood in New York City and her quest to find out more about her family’s past. There is one copy of the book on the Social Justice Ministry book rack in the Narthex to the right of the kitchen. If you would like that copy, please put a donation in the slot to sustain the book ministry. You can also order the book from Amazon.com .

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Garrett at betsy.luebbe.garrett@gmail.com

**February 9 at 7:30 pm –
Heidi Breyer Debut Album Concert
to Benefit the Refugee Immigration Ministry
program of Greater Boston**

The net proceeds of this debut performance of Heidi Breyer’s new album "Moonlight in Empty Rooms", will benefit the Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM). Tickets are tax deductible: adults \$25; children under 18, \$15. Tickets can be purchased at <http://moonlightalbum.com/event/first-congregational-church/>

In a surprisingly private corner of the very public worlds of music and art, you will find the eminent Russian realist Alexander Volkov and his wife, award winning pianist-composer Heidi Breyer in their respective studios, working alone on their inextricably connected art forms. They have pushed the boundaries of collaboration beyond synergy to synonymity through sharing their lives, their observations of the world, and their love of art as a nourishing life ingredient. Alexander and Heidi have arrived at “Moonlight In Empty Rooms” an art and musical immersion that speaks to anyone looking for an opportunity for deep contemplation.

The collection of 12 piano and violin pieces were written specifically in response to Alexander’s paintings of the same name. In this event, the two artists collaborate in live performance. Alexander speaks philosophically about art and life and Heidi plays solo or ensemble and pitches in with lighter comment as if steering at the helm of the ship. It is a rare and unique thing.



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