



## First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

# Messenger

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## Look at the Unknown

During these weeks of Lent, I am offering here an invitation to an ancient spiritual practice called "Lectio Divina". It is a practice of contemplatively reading scripture in order to still one's mind and connect to God. Below are the steps to this week's exercise.

What is unique about the text for this week is that it does not come from the canonical bible. This is intentional so as to remind everyone that sacredness is not confined to the bible. A myriad of texts can be used with Lectio Divina.

This text is taken from The Round Dance of the Cross which is a section of the Acts of John; and early Christian writing. You may remember that in the gospel accounts of the Last Supper, the evening ends with Jesus and the disciples leaving the table and "going out" to sing a hymn. The Acts of John elaborates on this scene as the disciples form a circle around Jesus and dance as they respond to Jesus' who is singing the words below:

*"I am a mirror to you who know me...this human passion which I am about to suffer is your own."*

**Lectio:** Read this scripture passage aloud, slowly. Release any interpretation or opinion you may have about this passage as you read it.

**Meditatio:** Let the passage "sink in" for two minutes. Sit with the passage. Hold it lightly--don't force any attempt to interpret it.

**Repeat "lectio" and "meditatio" three more times.**

**Oratio:** Pray aloud: "May I receive from the scripture what my soul needs for today."

**Contemplatio:** For the next 20 minutes enter into a time of mindfulness prayer. Focus on your thoughts. What are their colors, textures, tones, and qualities? Which ones are "sticky" and which ones pass

quickly? What form do they take? Are they voices? Are they images? What emotions are associated with them? Try not to judge, just observe.

Mathematician George Polya took a contemplative approach to solving mathematical problems by repeating the mantra "Look at the unknown". That is, instead of looking that the problem or worry or thought that is plaguing you, focus on what is yet to be known about it. It is a subtle difference but it can lead to release and solutions.

I will be providing additional texts here to practice this ancient spiritual discipline to aid in our shared journey toward the crucifixion and the resurrection.

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

## Sunday, March 11, 2018 Bible Sunday

**9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal**

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

**11:15 AM – Coffee Hour**

**11:30 AM – Lenten Adult Education Class—  
Living our Reformation Heritage**

### Saturday, March 10

Daylight Savings begins – Remember to set your clocks **AHEAD** one hour tonight.

#### **DURING THE WEEK**

### Tuesday, March 13

6:00 PM – HS/MS Bake Desserts for Bread of Life, Kitchen

7:00 PM – Deacons Meeting, Library

### Wednesday, March 14

7:00 PM - Community Candlelight Peace Vigil,

Lawn of First Baptist Church, 561 Main Street, Melrose

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

### Thursday, March 15

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

### Sunday, March 18 – Baptism Sunday

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

11:30 AM – Lenten Adult Education Class—

Living our Reformation Heritage

### 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





Ryan Chisholm, Marilyn McCommas, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Claire Griffin, Merle Copeland, Bob Pierce.



*Everyone is invited to gather for a  
**Community Candlelight Peace Vigil**  
to remember the victims of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Parkland, Florida Shooting and to be Proponents of Peace for our Country.  
Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.  
Lawn of First Baptist Church  
561 Main Street, Melrose  
For more information, please call their church office at 781.665.4470*

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

**PreK-5th grade** will be talking about Jesus and the story of the Good Samaritan, focusing on how Jesus wants our compassion to lead to action.

We will read the Bible story, and make care packages for people who are homeless.

**Thank you all for the donations that made this lesson possible! Donations will still be accepted before service on March 11.**

**If you have hotel-size toiletries, or any other items listed below that you'd like to contribute, please be sure to bring them to church before service on March 11.**

We will be assembling the bags during Sunday School classes on that day.

- Socks, Band-Aids
- Anti-bacterial wipes (not sanitizer as it has alcohol in it)
- Small soaps, Small shampoo (from your hotel stays)
- Wash cloths, Toothbrush, Toothpaste
- Combs, Shaving cream, Deodorant
- Gallon size zip lock bags
- Packets of crackers (no peanut butter)
- Granola or breakfast bars
- Individual packets of trail mix

**Middle School** will continue learning about Using God's Money and how we value and prioritize money and the concept of stewardship.

**High School** will continue learning about environmental issues and discuss what role our faith has in honoring God's creation.

**THANK YOU, EVERYONE!**



Chili Chefs, Cornbread Chefs, and Kid Chefs... Bean Counters and Fellowship Committee... and of course, Reverend Dominic and the Congregation!

We want to thank all of you for helping to make this year's Chili Cook-Off and Cornbread Contest the best ever! With a huge, enthusiastic crowd, and many new faces signing up to make chili and cornbread – not to mention the amazing crop of Kid-Chefs we have here at First Congregational Church – the event brought out lots of smiles and it really was good fun for everyone.

Ron and Donna Miner,  
Fellowship Deacons

**HS & MS YOUTH:  
Bread of Life Service Opportunity!**

Tuesday March 13th 6-7pm @ Church Kitchen Baking Desserts for Bread of Life

**AND/OR:**

Thursday March 15th 3:45pm-5:45pm OR 4:45-6:45pm serve at Bread of Life in Malden. Youth can meet at the church at 3:45 p m or can come later to BOL in Malden. It would be best to know numbers ahead of time so we can make sure to spread out our resources. (Please contact Catherine at [Catherine.dhingra@gmail.com](mailto:Catherine.dhingra@gmail.com) or text [617-306-6508](tel:617-306-6508).)

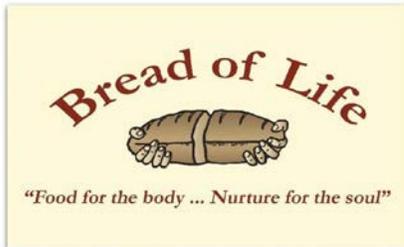
# 500<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary OF THE REFORMATION

**Lenten Adult Education Class—  
Living our Reformation Heritage  
Continues after worship on Sunday, March 18  
Led by Rev. Dominic**

In a lively, engaging, discussion-based way, this class will explore where we come from and some of the basics of what makes us who we are as Protestant people. Topics will include:

Guess what? You're a Priest!  
Got Bible? Which do you like? An angry God or a cheap gospel?  
Predestination  
Luther's Sins--and Ours  
Fundamental Protestant principles

Come own your often over-looked heritage as we clear the dust off of 500 years of history and make our Reformation identity relevant for today! Classes will be held after worship on Sunday March 18th, and 25th. All are welcome and child care is available upon request.



## **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:

**March 15**

## **Melrose Recycling Committee Sponsors “BYOBAG” Poster Contest**

As part of an effort to help the City of Melrose implement a new ordinance restricting the use of thin-film plastic bags, the Melrose Recycling Committee is inviting high school-age students to submit designs for a “Bring Your Own” Bag poster contest.

The Recycling Committee needs a poster to remind residents to “BYO” Bag when they shop. Melrose has a new law, effective July 1, that is designed to encourage residents to switch to reusable shopping bags by limiting the availability of plastic checkout bags. While most residents have reusable bags already, they need to develop the habit of bringing their own bags when they shop.

Entries will be judged on:

1. How effectively the design reminds/persuades people to bring reusable shopping bags.
2. How well the design reflects the local community

Prize: First prize will receive \$100.

Eligibility: Students in Grades 9-12 who either reside in Melrose or are enrolled in Melrose High School.

Timeline: The deadline to submit entries is April 1, 2018. The winner will be announced April 15, 2018.

To learn more, visit:

<https://melrecyclingcommittee.wordpress.com/2018/02/27/melrose-recycling-committee-sponsors-byobag-poster-contest/>

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***Easter Memorial Flowers - \$15 per plant***

Send your order form by March 23<sup>rd</sup> to: Darby Drafts, 25 Adams St., Melrose MA 02176, (Last minute orders may be handed to Darby on Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, Palm Sunday.)

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF:

\_\_\_\_\_

# of plants ordered \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church.

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**EASTER FLOWERS**