



First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Messenger

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Not Broken, Just Incomplete

I am always struck by what people hear in sermons. After worship someone will remark about something in the sermon that may not even have been the point I was trying to make.

There was a turn of phrase that I used in a sermon a while back that was like that. It wasn't the point of the sermon but people seemed to remember it (I'm not even sure the *main* point got across—but that's okay!).

It was Lent and I was talking about abandoning the notion that we are bound to sin through the fall from the Garden of Eden. As I was unpacking that, I said: "We need to make a shift from thinking of ourselves as broken to thinking of ourselves as incomplete because there is a difference." For many people, it seems the sermon ended there!

I'm good with that because this is a terribly important concept that not only re-orient's our theology, but provides comfort and hope for our daily living: You are not broken. God doesn't make mistakes. *You* make mistakes (sometimes called sins) and you are called to learn from them, but you are not broken. You are put here to evolve and God through Christ stands ready to walk with you on that path to become all that God created you to be—imperfections and all.

The point is that you are not a miserable, worthless creature who stands in need of saving. It is not the case that, if you are lucky, God may just spare you eternal punishment (which you completely deserve, by the way) and give you one more chance. But don't blow it because if you do, well, let's just say it is a quick trip down from there. I have every confidence that things don't work this way!

This kind of thinking is alive and well in the world, however, and it tries to scare people into loving God and accepting Christ. Trouble is, love and fear don't go together. It is next to impossible to love someone you are afraid of; at least in the way we typically think of love.

Instead, I hope you always remember that you are just the way you are supposed to be. In this moment, right now, you needn't be more than you are. God's love for you is complete. When you are ready, Christ, in joy (not rage!), invites you through the door to your next stage of being; whatever that may be. This happens again and again on our faith journey.

The only thing that hampers this progression is the idea that at your core you are a disobedient, sin-filled wretch and that God has God's hand on the trap door beneath you just waiting for you to say or do the wrong thing.

So I invite you again to sit with this truth: You are not broken, you are simply incomplete.

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

Sunday, April 22, 2018

9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour

11:30 AM - Reflect and Respond, Library

DURING THE WEEK

Monday, April 23

7:00 to 9:00 PM – Common Threads at Lisa Oosterman's

Tuesday, April 24

7:15 to 8:15 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

Wednesday, April 25

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Saturday, April 28

9:00 AM to Noon – Spring Church Cleanup

Sunday, April 29

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

11:30 AM – PASTA PARTY, Narthex

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 McComas, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Merle Copeland, Bob Pierce.

Our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of Marion Ewell, who passed away on April 13. Marion was a long-time active member of Circle 4. Funeral Service held at Robinson Funeral Home Wednesday April 18 at 10:00 AM.

Upcoming Adult Education Opportunities

Please join us after worship in the Library on the following Sundays for stimulating conversation on relevant topics of faith formation.



Sunday, April 22--Reflect and Respond--What was intriguing to you about the worship service?

Sunday, May 6--Communion--Commemoration or Connection?

Sunday, June 10--Reflect and Respond--What was intriguing to you about the worship service?

All classes are hosted by Rev. Dominic. Please let him know if you would like child care. All are welcome!



Reminder: May 6 we will host a Church School brunch before worship at 9am. All who want to find out more about our program, or help out with the planning of Church School Sunday are welcome to attend. Please RSVP to Lisa via text at 617-794-2641 by April 29 so we can plan for enough food.

SUNDAY SCHOOL THIS WEEK:

We are very excited to bring this new series to all the children on mindfulness, meditation and yoga. In the elementary grades we will be studying Jesus' prayer to God for us, found in John 17: 20 to 26. We will be focusing on God's love for us and in us. We will be making bracelets to remind us of God's love.

Both the Middle and High School classes will be doing an Intro to Mindfulness (Part 2) (don't worry if you missed part 1!). Come and enjoy an assortment of activities including mindfulness drawing, prayer, meditation, and a Life Bucket Activity.

Youth are encouraged to sign up to volunteer at our church yard sale on May 5!

Mark your calendars:

Graduation Sunday will be June 6!



PASTA PARTY APRIL 29TH BE SURE TO SIGN UP THIS SUNDAY!

Did you know that pasta did not originate in Italy? Food historians have determined that pasta almost certainly had its start in central Asia as noodles and eventually spread across the continent, and to Italy, which is the place that many associate with pasta.

On Sunday, April 29th Fellowship will host the first-ever Pasta Party for all the church, right after the worship service, in the Narthex. The menu includes pasta and sauce with meatballs, garlic bread, and tossed salad and cookies brought by the parishioners. (To see whether you need to bring salad or cookies, see the signup board.)

This is our Spring Fellowship get-together and a great opportunity to have lunch made for you at church and have time to chat with fellow members and friends. Take advantage of it and sign up on Sunday!

Your Fellowship Deacons



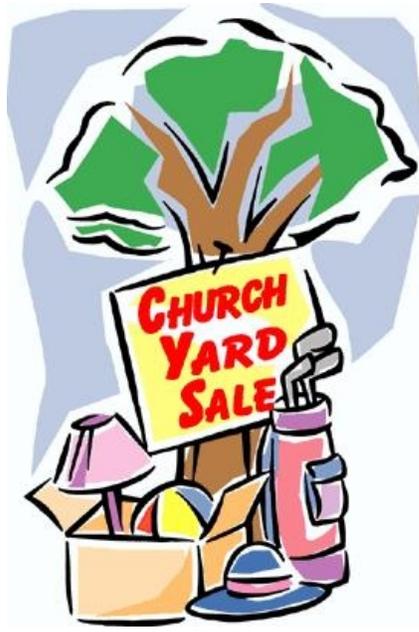
Spring Cleanup Day
Saturday April 28
9 AM to noon

We'll be cleaning/organizing both the outside and inside of the church.

Annual Reports are now due.

The Spring Congregational meeting is May 20 this year. Annual Reports from Staff members and Deacons are due in to the office by April 30, in order to be compiled and printed for distribution on May 13. Thank you.





YARD SALE

All-Church Yard Sale and Bake Sale

May 5, 9am – 1pm
Mark your calendars!!!

May 5 is right around the corner! There is a sign up in the Narthex. Please sign up to bake and help out during the week leading up to, as well as at the Yard Sale! We are also looking forward to accepting your donations of beautiful treasures beginning April 29th after church.

Questions? Contact Lisa -Oosterman at 781-662-7445 or at oosterman.lisa@gmail.com

CALLING ALL BAKERS!!!

We are once again having a Bake Sale at the Yard Sale on May 5! We'll be offering cookies, bars, muffins and scones. Gluten-free options are welcome! Please bag cookies and bars 4/bag, and muffins and scones 2/bag. Also please label, and mark if there are nuts or no nuts. You can bring them to the church Friday May 4 or before 8:30 am on Saturday May 5. Questions? Contact Sallie Klemm shklemm@verizon.net or 781-665-0159.



Welcome Spring
It's Been a Long
Winter and
RIM's Flower Sale is
Here!

Proceeds go to
Refugee Immigration Ministry
Client Aid Fund

Orders accepted through May 13th
Pickup date is May 20th

Refugee Immigration Ministry is a non-profit, interfaith organization which provides community-based services to asylum seekers and asylees. Programs include community based clusters, ESL tutoring, chaplaincy services and case management. Contact Debbie Anderson if you would like an electronic copy of the order form or have questions about the flower sale.



Fitch Home Annual Spring Tea
75 Lake Avenue
Melrose
781-665-0521

May 6, 2018
1:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Please join us in visiting our beautiful retirement home. Our residents look forward to this special occasion to greet you and your guests. Enjoy dessert with a cup of tea or coffee. You are also invited to tour our home.

Sponsored by The Fitch Home Association and Kappa Delta Psi

