



First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Messenger

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VOLUME 101

September 7, 2018

Number 1

Welcome Back!

This coming Sunday we begin a new program year at our church and I could not be more excited!

Apart from advanced planning by staff and lay leadership, along with a well-attended pizza party earlier this month (thanks Tom and Becky!), it has been a summer of quiet, communal rejuvenation and we are ready to hit the ground running!

And boy do we need to! Setting aside how nice it is in September to reconnect with friends old and new, this world needs the presence and voice of First Congregational Church now more than ever!

In these times, there is a certain imperativeness to the progressive church. It is crucial that our unique understanding of the inclusive, empowering ministry of Christ be amplified. Why? Well, among other things, nationalism, racism, homophobia and generalized hatred in public discourse has not abated over these recent weeks. Quite the opposite, in fact. Additionally, we face a certain "guilt by association" in the eyes of the un-churched who look upon the widening Roman Catholic sex scandal as belonging to all churches. God's creation remains threatened by climate change and its deniers. And, as ever, loneliness and poor self-esteem surround the hearts of too many.

Interesting times indeed!

Some may call them "depressing" times or even "desperate" times. But I think they are exciting times because they give us the opportunity to let our faith shine! They make it easier to spot the contrast between the ways of the world and the ways of God's Kingdom which Jesus proclaimed. We hold the brimming watering can of hope that is so longed-for by a world parched with fatalism and despair! What a wonderful position to be in!

So I welcome you to this program year where we will discover and rediscover God's Holy Spirit and the power of community. We will plunge our fears and pain into the reservoir of God's healing and renewal even as

we reach well beyond the walls of our church to reveal the new world of joy and restoration that the resurrection has already brought about.

Needless to say, I am glad you are on board! I look forward to greeting you on Welcome Back Sunday as together we remember that we belong to a God of validation and confidence revealed to us in Christ our companion on the Way.

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

Sunday, September 9, 2018

Welcome Back Sunday

Communion Sunday

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

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour

11:00 – 3:00 – Melrose Victorian Fair downtown

DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday, September 11

5:00 PM – Circle 4 Pot Luck, narthex

5:30-6:30 PM – Treblemakers Rehearsal, Music Room

7:00 PM – Deacons, Library

No Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

Sunday, September 16

10:00 AM Worship and Sunday School

Sunday School Registration continues

Sunday, September 23

Welcome Back Cookout

Sunday, September 30

12:00 PM - Racial Justice Ministry book discussion

Sunday, October 7

26th annual Walk for Bread and 5K Run

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

Our Sunday School program relies upon the entire congregation for support, and we would love to have everyone help out in our classes as a 2nd adult this year. No preparation is needed...just be there to assist the teacher and children as needed. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex! Thank you!



and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Merle Copeland, Bob Pierce.

Phyllis Lanni, Trish Faro, Jackson Foltz –infant relative of Beth Grzegorzewski, Bud Burnham, Emelie Burnham, Marilyn McComas, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata

Congratulations!

Rev. Dominic had the honor of officiating the wedding of Diane Astle and Andy Strait who we joined in marriage during a Boston harbor cruise on Saturday, August 18th! We all wish them well as they begin their new life together.

A note from Trish:

'A very heart-felt thank you for all of you who "created" my caring quilt this summer when I was being treated for cancer. You have contributed squares to this "caring quilt" by sending prayers and good thoughts from afar, given me rides to Boston for treatments, brought our family delicious food, or sent me cards, books, gifts, chocolates or plants/flowers. This beautiful "caring quilt" has wrapped me in your loving support and enabled me to go through these treatments with much strength. I shall never forget all that each of you have done for me and for my family.'

Trish Faro



Circle 4 will meet on **Tuesday, September 11th at 5:00 PM in the Narthex** for our Pot Luck Supper.



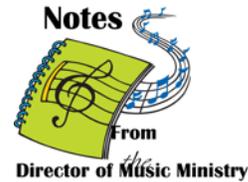
THE ANNUAL "WELCOME BACK COOKOUT" IS ON SEPTEMBER 23rd!

Since we're having our first day back to church on September 9th, the "Welcome Back Cookout" is going to be only two weeks later, on September 23rd. We know that our congregation can put together a fantastic menu of cookout foods in two weeks just by signing up in the Narthex!

In the Narthex right now is the big signup sheet where you can indicate how many will be in your party and what you'd like to bring to share. There are a fair number of categories to choose from - and don't forget, hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers and cold drinks are provided for everyone by the church.

So, plan to be part of the fun of this tradition at First Congregational Church on September 23rd!

Donna & Ron Miner, Fellowship Deacons



Music Rehearsal Schedules for the fall:

Treblemakers or Junior Choir [5:30-6:30](#) pm on Tuesdays
 September: 11, 18, 25
 October: 2, 16, 23, 30
 November: 13, 20, 27
 December: 4, 11 (party/performance)

Youth Duos ([11:15-11:45](#)) and Youth ensemble/praise band ([11:45-12:30](#)) on Sundays
 September: 30
 October: 7, 21,
 November: 4, 18, 25
 December: 2

Morning Star Voices on Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm and Sunday (before the service they are assigned to) 9:00 am
 No rehearsal during Deacons Meeting.



We are excited to welcome the children and youth back to their Sunday School classes! We have some fun and different activities planned and look forward to sharing these with the kids!

Speaking of which, who loves Legos and science? If you do, you really should be a part of our teaching team this year! Let Lisa and Sherri know if you'd like to join us (sltjmtj@hotmail.com).

And, speaking of Legos, do you have any Legos or colorful wooden blocks lying around the house that the kids aren't using anymore? We'll gladly accept them as a donation for our Christian Education program. Just bring them to Lisa or Sherri any Sunday, or let us know if you'd like us to pick them up.

Be sure to stop by the registration table this month! We need to make sure we have accurate contact information, photo releases, and allergy information for every child in the program!

Is your child in 3rd grade this year? **Bible Sunday** is planned for October 21, so please see us or your child's teacher this week!

On **Family Worship** Sundays, there will be no Sunday School classes, and children are invited to remain in worship with their families. The Family Worship Sundays for the fall are October 7, November 11, November 25, December 23, and December 30.

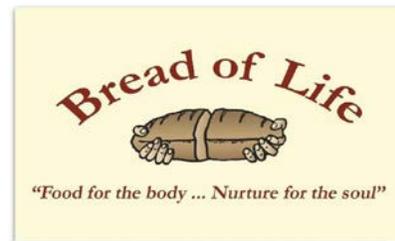
The Kindness Garden

Girl Scout troop 66270 started a Kindness Garden in front of the church. Please help to keep our garden full and share some kindness. You can paint a rock and write an inspiring message on it or just paint something nice. It is best if the rocks are decoupled after so the paint does not wash off.

The theme as the sign says is "Take one, Share One, Leave One" "One message at just the right time can change your entire day, outlook, life"

We will hope to add this as a Sunday School activity so start gathering your rocks.

Thank you
Heidi Buser and Troop 66270



Bread of Life

Sunday, October 7, 2018 – Bread of life 5K Walk and Run at Pine Banks 12pm

See the bread of life website for more information

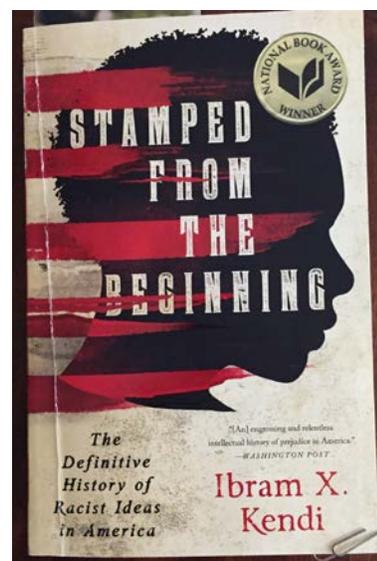
www.breadoflifemalden.org

Thanks from Refugee Immigration Ministry!
Thanks to the many friends and members of FCC who helped to make our Annual Walk for Refugees on June 24th a success by walking or pledging. At our August meeting, the director announced that the Metro North cluster was responsible for **\$4,009.56** of the total \$9,000 raised by all clusters combined! A large part of cluster funds go to helping clients pay rent. Thank you for continuing to support RIM's programs and fundraisers to help asylum seekers make a new life in a safe community.

We recently learned that our bulb supplier, Messelaar, is going out of business, leaving too short notice to find a replacement of the same high quality bulbs and advantageous pricing. We greatly appreciate the many years that Messelaar has supported RIM. Unfortunately, we will **not** be having a **bulb sale** this fall.

Our cluster is currently working to develop a **host home** program as a way to support clients with a place to live. This can be especially important if housing is needed on short notice. A RIM client would typically stay in a host home for six months. But there is also a need for host homes on an emergency basis, where a client could stay for a week or two. We are working out details on identifying hosts, offering information and training on what being a host home involves, and how the cluster will support clients in host homes.

If you are interested in exploring the idea of offering a host home or learning more about RIM activities, contact Debbie Anderson. (781-665-8801 / dwanderson63@gmail.com)



Racial Justice Ministry book discussion: Stamped from the Beginning

On September 30 after the worship service, the Racial Justice Ministry will be hosting a book discussion on *Stamped From the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi. As the book is long, you may choose one section to read and discuss. The book has six sections of about 100 pages, each focusing on a particular period in racial history. Please also read the Prologue and Epilogue (25 pages total) as they give an overview of the themes in the book. There are several copies of the book in the library system and it is available from Amazon (including e-book and audio) and other booksellers. We are looking forward to discussing this book with you. Winner of the 2016 National Book Award, it is a fascinating exploration of how racist ideas developed in our country. We will provide snacks and you are welcome to bring a bag lunch. Please contact Betsy Garrett at betsy.luebbe.garrett@gmail.com for more information.

FREE Health Fair for Seniors

Free Health Fair is being held on Thursday, September 13th from 10-12:00pm at Reading Pleasant Street Center, 49 Pleasant Street, in Reading. Free health screenings, health resource information, and give-a-ways. Sponsored by Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice and the Town of Reading Elder Services. Flu clinic will also take place at the same time sponsored by Reading Public Health Department. Flu shots are free with a Medicare Card. For more information call 781-338-7902.

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF HOSPICE

Hospice volunteers make all the difference. They offer a supportive presence to patients and their families at a challenging time by providing companionship, veteran to veteran visits, pet therapy and respite to caregivers... and so much more. Do you or someone you may know have a few hours a week to sit with a patient; or a friendly dog that would make a great therapy pet; or have served our wonderful nation and can share some stories with a fellow veteran on Hospice?? COME MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

Our next Hospice Volunteer Training will take place at our Malden office starting this September.

To set up an interview, contact Allison Manheim Caplin, Volunteer Coordinator acaplin@hallmarkhealth.org or (781) 338-7863.



READING PARTNERS serve as volunteer tutors who make a four hour weekly commitment to help elementary schools students improve their literacy skills in Everett, Malden, Medford, Reading, Stoneham, and Waltham. If you like to read with children and want to support them in becoming stronger readers, please contact Linda Cornell, Literacy Coordinator, 781-388-4839 or email: lcornell@mves.org