



First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Messenger

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The News Cycle

It is amazing how quickly the news cycle moves on. Major events happen and are front and center for a few days (at best) and then fade quickly into the background.

What do you know about the aftermath of the worst wildfire season in California history? Probably not much. Once the fires are contained, reporters leave.

How about Russia's invasion of Ukraine or Puerto Rico's recovery from Hurricane Maria? These events are still on-going but you have to dig to find an updated word.

The event that weighs heaviest on my heart is the on-going separation of immigrant refugee families at our southern border. This was headline news last spring and it sparked widespread, understandable, outrage. When a court order stopped the practice and required the reunification of these children with their families, the story dropped from the news. Well, not surprisingly, this abomination is not over.

Progress has been made in reversing this tragedy. Originally, over 2,500 children (from infants to teenagers) were forcibly separated from their families as they entered the immigration process. Parents were jailed separately from their children. Today, over 400 still remain separated (or, as some would say, "legally kidnapped").

Why the delay? Many parents were deported without their children and cannot be located. Other parents, some 200, were coerced by border officials into signing papers that categorized them as having "a desire against reunification". Some children were relocated into state custody in other parts of the country. Some children turned 18 and were simply released with nowhere to go.

The fact that such things as birthdays have been missed is nothing compared to the unimaginable stress that both parents and children have been and are undergoing. Some children are medicated without parental consent in order to manage their anxiety. Some

have been abused by other children and some by those charged with caring for them. The inhumanity of this situation is beyond belief. The trauma will last for generations.

But the news cycle is over, so it is out of the public eye. How many other events—some never reported in the first place—are just as horrific?

If there is anything positive to note, it is that where you find tragedy, you will also very likely find the compassionate presence of the United Church of Christ. A number of our churches in the Southwest are sanctuary churches which provide shelter and aid regardless of immigration status. Attorneys within our denomination are helping those trying to recover their children. Our members stand in protest.

And most importantly, in this situation and any other hardship, Christ himself walks among those most hurt with love and healing and hope.

That is the case, no matter how brief the news cycle.

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

Sunday, September 30, 2018

9:15 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

10:00 AM – Worship and Sunday School

Sunday School Registration continues

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour

11:10 – 11:40 AM – Youth voices rehearsal

11:40 – 12:00 PM – Eden rehearsal

12:00 – 1:00 PM – Praise Band rehearsal

11:30 PM - Racial Justice Ministry book discussion, lounge

DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday, October 2

2:00 PM – Circle 4, lounge

5:30-6:30 PM – Treblemakers/Junior Choir Rehearsal

6:30-7:30 PM – Treblemakers/Junior Choir Rehearsal

7:00 PM – RIM Meeting, library

Wednesday, October 3

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Sunday, October 7 – Food Pantry Sunday

Family Worship Service, no Sunday School

9:10 AM - Treblemakers/Junior Choir Rehearsal

9:30 AM - Treblemakers/Junior Choir Rehearsal

12:00 PM - 26th annual Walk for Bread and 5K Run

Tuesday, October 9

7:00 PM – Deacons, library

Wednesday, October 10

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Saturday October 13

6:00 PM – Praise Band Rehearsal

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



Wouldn't you like to get to know our kindergarten, first and second graders better? We're looking for one more teacher to add to the rotation for this class! The commitment is just one Sunday a month, and we provide you with fun, interactive curriculum! The kids threw a praise party this last Sunday in their classes and had a great time while also learning more about our faith. Please let Sherri know if you'd like more information about teaching this class at sltjmtj@hotmail.com or 781-799-1512.



Phyllis Lanni, Jackson Foltz – infant relative of Beth Grzegorzewski, Bud Burnham, Emelie Burnham, Marilyn McComas, Bill Albright, Anne Wing, Bob Hughes, Mary Sakata and Becky Faro (Trish Faro's daughters), Merle Copeland, Bob Pierce.



Circle 4 will meet at the Church on Tuesday, October 2nd at 2:00 PM.

MESSENGER HIATUS

Due to changes in our office staff, we will be taking a one week break from publishing the Messenger. This will allow us to better organize and orient volunteers during an interim period. We hope to resume publication of the Messenger during the week of October 8th. Thank you for your patience!

Thank you to everyone who filled out a volunteer form at church on Sunday! If you missed us, please see us any time to talk about how you can help our Sunday School program!

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.

Last call for 3rd Graders! 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.

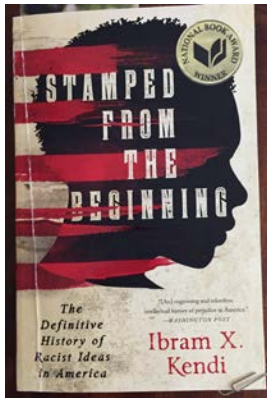


Walk for Bread and 5K Run

The 26th annual Walk for Bread and 5K Run will be held on Sunday, October 7th at Pine Banks Park in Melrose, MA. Major Sponsors are Tufts Health Plan and Melrose Bank Foundation. Be sure to not miss out on what is our biggest fundraiser of the year! You can become a sponsor, or register online to walk or run at www.breadoflifemalden.org/events/.



By Lighting our Church Steeple in memory or in honor of loved ones, you can help our church financially. Contact the church office (781-665-2111 or info@fccmelrose.org) to sign up for a week beginning on a Sunday. Your gift will be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and "The Messenger". A \$25.00 per week contribution is suggested.



**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.



Music Rehearsal Schedules for October:

9/30 Sunday

9:15-9:45 Morning Star Voices
11:10-11:40 Youth voices
11:40-12:00 Eden
12:00-1:00 praise band

10/2 Tuesday

5:30-6:30 Treblemakers/Junior Choir
6:30-7:30 Morning Star Voices

10/7 Sunday - Treblemakers/Junior Choir

9:10 Treblemakers/Junior Choir
9:30 Morning Star Voices

10/9

No practice

10/13 Saturday

6:00 Praise Band

10/14 Sunday -Praise Band

9:00 Praise Band
11:30 - Chamber Trio rehearsal

10/16

5:30-6:30 Treblemakers/Junior Choir
6:30-7:30 Morning Star Voices

10/21 Sunday- Chamber Trio

9:00 Chamber Trio
9:30 Morning Star Voices

10/23 Tuesday

5:30-6:30 Treblemakers/Junior Choir
6:30-7:30 Morning Star Voices

10/28 Sunday

9:15 Morning Star Voices

10/30 Tuesday

5:30-6:30 Treblemakers/Junior Choir
6:30-7:30 Morning Star Voices