



First Congregational Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Melrose

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Messenger

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VOLUME 101

November 8, 2018

Number 9

“The Enormity of the World’s Grief”

The following is a Pastoral Letter to the churches of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ from Rev. Don Remick, our Transitional Interim Conference Minister. I commend it to you as a source of solace and inspiration during these challenging days.

See you in church,

--Rev. Dominic

To the Churches of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC:

The news kept coming.

11 people killed in a mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

Two African Americans shot at a Kroger’s by a man who had just tried to break into a predominantly black membership church.

Pipe bombs mailed to politicians, media and celebrities.

And while a ballot question on transgender rights is posed in Massachusetts the current administration nationally pondered a policy to narrowly define gender.

“The enormity of the world’s grief”, so strongly and poignantly felt when violence is done, in word and deed, because of

Religion; targeting Jewish worshippers at a Synagogue, an expression of a growing dangerous trend toward anti-Semitism and hate based on religious identity.

Race; targeting random African American shoppers, an expression of growing violence against people of color.

Political ideology; targeting outspoken critics of the behavior and policies of the current administration; an expression of a spreading incivility that spills over into hurtful and hateful behavior.

Gender orientation; targeting anyone outside of the heterosexual male/female binary ‘norm’. This is an expression of a frightening oppression of people for who they are.

“Do not be daunted” came the words in the echo chambers of social media. Good and wise words in this time of perpetual grief. Do not be daunted. Do not let the constant flow numb or overwhelm you. We are a people of faith whose hearts rise to the need.

In a world of enormous and overwhelming grief we are called to be people and churches of civility and safety. Not a refuge to escape from the world, but the proverbial yeast that can leaven the whole loaf. We are called to hear, learn from, and magnify the voices and experiences of those targeted for pain.

So, let us be people and churches who are about God’s work.

First, Pray. Prayer has been bantered about a lot of late. Too many people have seen prayer as a mask for inaction that perpetuates status quo. Prayer is not about handing over our concerns to God, so we can go about our daily business. It is not about putting a band-aid on a festering, infected wound. At its deepest, prayer is about a transformational relationship which always begins with the one who prays. It calls us individually and collectively to do the deep soul-searching work, before our God, of examining our contribution to the problem. Prayer is not about illusions of hope or fear, though God always welcomes those cries from the heart. Yet, beyond that, it is about surrendering and opening to the presence of God that can change a human heart, beginning with yours, which in turn can change the world. So...Pray.

Then Vote. This is not about voting for a particular political party. It is about choosing wisely and faithfully those candidates who can bring safety and civility into the world. Put your faith into action and vote.

And then, Act. Political polarization in our churches can be paralyzing. And we wonder how to get past that. Keep wondering. What are you and your church called to do in your community, your places of work and your homes? How can you connect with, stand with and learn from communities within your community who are most impacted by these words and deeds? How can you be a presence and a voice for safety and civility; a presence and voice that condemns violence in all its forms? What public action or activity can you create or participate in to fully exemplify your faith? What are you already doing well that you can share as a resource for others?

Because I believe that Living the Love and Justice of Jesus can transform our people, parishes and planet I commend to you these words:

“We are not sent into this world mainly to enjoy the loveliness therein,

nor to sit down in passive ease;

no, we were sent here for action.

The soul that seeks to do the will of God with a pure heart, fervently,

does not yield to the lethargy of ease.”

~Dorothea Dix

Rev. Don Remick

Transitional Interim Conference Minister

Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ

Sunday, November 11, 2018

9:30 AM – **Morning Star Voices Rehearsal**
10:00 AM – **Worship & Sunday School**
Veteran's Day commemoration
11:15 AM – **Coffee Hour**

During the Week

Tuesday, November 6

2:00 PM **Circle 4 Meeting, Lounge**
5:30 PM **Treblemakers/Junior Choir Rehearsal**
6:30 PM **Morning Star Voices Rehearsal**
7:00 PM **RIM Meeting, Library**

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



Michael Watt, 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 and Becky Faro (Trish

Faro's daughters), Merle Copeland, Bob Pierce.

Exciting RIM News

Good News from the Metro North Cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry (RIM)! We have taken on the support of two new clients, a woman from Uganda (former teacher), and a woman from El Salvador who has been detained at the border in Texas, but will hopefully be released to come here soon. When the cluster takes on a client, we commit to providing housing, food, transportation and community support. The biggest challenge is housing.

Our congregation has shown through many years that we care about our immigrant neighbors through donations of both funds and time. Maybe you want to do more. The Metro North Cluster invites you to consider becoming a host home for an asylum seeker, either short term or a longer term of six months. If you want to learn more about being a host home, contact Debbie Anderson (dwanderson63@gmail.com).

Eight Annual Thanksgiving Dinner is November 18th!

It's hard to believe, but our annual Thanksgiving Dinner is not far away – less than three weeks, in fact!

Our church's annual feast celebration happens each year on the Sunday before the Thanksgiving holiday. With tables set up banquet style, everyone sits together and enjoys a delicious

potluck Thanksgiving meal prepared by – the congregation! And it seems that every year the food is even better! The time together is a great opportunity to visit with friends from church and make new friends as well!

As part of this tradition there will also be copies of graces on the tables, many we have had before and many new ones from various countries and traditions. (And there will be copies to take if you wish at the end of the festivities.)

All you need to do to be part of this wonderful gathering is sign up to bring something to contribute to the potluck – and that ranges from cranberry sauce to a roasted turkey breast! What is needed is listed on the sign-up board in the Narthex. Indicate what you'd like to bring, and how many people might come with you, too (just so we can plan for enough of everything!)

We have always had a great turnout for this event, and there's a reason – we have a church that loves to celebrate – and we have a lot to celebrate and be thankful for. Please plan to join us on November 18th!

- Donna Miner, Fellowship Deacon

Bread of Life

Thursday, November 15, is our evening to cook, serve, and clean up at Bread of Life in Malden. Our volunteers are there from 4:00 until about 7:00, and you are welcome to join us for all or part of the time! We need the most help between 5:15 and 6:45. If you can't make it but want to help with this very important mission of the church, consider providing a dessert, large bottles of salad dressing, or some bottles of juice. For more information, contact Sallie Klemm shklemm@verizon.net

Site information:

Salvation Army
213 Main St.
Malden, MA.

Park on Main St. or side streets (both available during serving hours)

Main phone: 781-324-1970

Contact: Capt. Debora Coolidge, Pastor

Mentoring Program Seeking Volunteer Mentors

MAAV's Community Mentoring Program provides guidance and support to middle school students in both a group setting and one-to-one basis. We are currently seeking mentors aged 21 and older for a group that will begin in early 2019. The commitment is roughly 4 hours per month. Activities include game nights, photography projects, community service outings and guest speakers. Training and supervision are provided and group meetings are facilitated by a licensed social worker. To learn more or apply to be a mentor, please email Mentoring@maav.org, visit our website at www.maav.org or call Alison Bryer, Program Coordinator at 781-662-2010

**Winter Wonderland Fair
November 30th, 6-8pm
December 1st, 9am-2pm**

The week leading up to the fair requires volunteers to complete the final preparations. Many hands make light work. Please mark your calendars now!

- **Decorate the Church:** Friday Nov. 23rd, 9am-noon
- **Raffle Baskets Assembled:** week of Nov.25th-29th
- **Set up:** week of November 25th
- **Gingerbread House Assembly:** Tuesday, Nov. 27th and/or Wed. Nov. 28th, 6:30-8:30
- **Break down and Clean up:** Saturday December 1st, 2pm

Before the holiday season begins an assessment of your “stuff” can be a healthy sorting exercise. Call it downsizing, weeding out, or sharing treasures your contributions to the Fair Tables are invaluable. As you sort, please keep in mind:

Table..... Organizer

- *Toys Kara Lazalere
- *Books looking for an organizer
- Christmas Decorations ... Janet Runge
- Collectibles..... David Gauvreau
- Jewelry Lois Gauvreau and Phyllis Lanni
- Baked Goods Circle 4
- Silent Auction Jim and Lisa Oosterman
- Themed Raffle Baskets..... Martha Williams

*please wait until church fair week to contribute

Children’s Room (organizer: Sallie Klemm) contains gingerbread houses and holiday crafts that are ready-to-decorate. These draw from families from the wider community.

Please sign up now to help support these opportunities!

**An Easy Way to Help Out on Sunday Morning -
Be a Volunteer Teller!**



We are currently looking for volunteer Tellers immediately following the Sunday Service. If you are looking for a way to volunteer but don’t have a lot of spare time this would be perfect for you.

Tellers are volunteers who collect, count, record donations received at a church service. Tellers perform their duties immediately following church service. You receive training and direction from the finance deacons. It usually takes approximately 20-30 minutes to perform and you will be with other tellers.

You can volunteer for the same Sunday each month i.e., 1- 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or you can volunteer to fill in as needed. Any help would be most appreciated.

If you are interested, please contact me at 781-710-2978 or email tobrien@enesystems.com.

Thank you! --Terrie O'Brien

Sessions on anxiety and depression in children, teens, and young adults

Lynn Lyons, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, provides sessions on dealing with anxiety/depression in children, teens, and young adults. Provided in an easy to listen to and entertaining manner, she gives helpful tips for parents in helping their youth deal with anxiety.

Interested parents can consider:

- October 24th, 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Lynnfield Middle School, 505 Main Street, Lynnfield for parents and teens on “Interrupting the worry cycle.” (free)
- A webinar “Teens, Anxiety, and Depression: Active Strategies to Move Teens Forward.” This is a six hour online training (to watch whenever you choose) and costs \$157.

More information can be found at: www.lynnlyonsnh.com



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.

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.



By Lighting our Church Steeple in memory or in honor of loved ones, you help our church financially. Your gift will be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and “*The Messenger*”. A \$25.00 per week contribution is suggested.



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

Refugee Immigration Ministry



**32nd
International**

**Anniversary
Dinner**

**November 18, 2018
5:30-8:30**

**Armenian Cultural and Education Center
47 Nichols Ave., Watertown, MA**



Sharing the Gifts of Our Diverse Cultures

_____ I will buy _____ tickets at \$40 each _____ I will buy a table for 10 (\$300)
_____ I will buy 2 tickets for RIM Clients (\$70)

For more information contact: Refugee Immigration Ministry, 6 Pleasant St., Suite 612, Malden, MA 02148, Phone: 781-322-1011. Web-site: www.r-i-m.net.

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