

Herald of Good TIDINGS

“Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”
Isaiah 40:9



FROM THE PASTOR

March, one of the first things you learn to do in the Army, also the third month of the year. March is named for a Roman pagan god, Mars, the god of war and planting. After the crops were planted the farmers marched off to war.

March, a time of transition. Whether the groundhog saw his shadow, so we have 6 more weeks of winter, or did not see his shadow, so we have a month and a half of winter, we will go from winter to spring during March.

This year March also marks the beginning of Lent. Lent is 40 days, not counting Sundays, to prepare for Easter. Traditionally that was done with fasting, meatless Fridays, or a discipline like extra prayer. But either way, the point was to move. Move with our eyes open and our brain and spirit fully engaged into the holy week. In Lent we are marching to see the Christ on a cross. Christ, there for our sins. Then with open and contrite hearts we move to see a risen Lord and ourselves washed clean in Jesus' saving blood.

In March let us move with purpose. Let us take a hike in lock step with our fellows. Let us start a journey to meet Jesus at the tomb.

Pastor Brian



Lenten Wednesday Night Suppers

As part of the Lenten Series (Wednesdays, 3/8-4/5) we will again have Wednesday night soup and sandwich meals. (See page 3 for more menu details.) This year will feature a hymn sing and a discussion time based on questions you might have. Note your question(s) on the red slips of paper provided in the church pews and place in the offering plate when it's passed (or you can email, or post on Facebook, your questions) and we can discuss them after a hearty meal in March and early April.

We are in need of a group/individuals to supply soup and/or sandwiches on March 22nd. Please see the Lenten sign-up sheet on the Sunday school bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

- March 8 Question — The Lost Gospel(s)?
- March 15 Patriotic Hymn Sing in honor of George Washington ending peaceably the Newburgh Conspiracy by his officers to overthrow the government and place Washington in command of the government
- March 22 Hymn Sing
- March 29 Hymn Sing
- April 5 Questions

Coffee Hour Hosts

- March 5 Personnel Committee
- March 12 Board of Deacons
- March 19 Prudential Committee
- March 26 Board of Trustees
- April 2 & 9 Music Committee

SAVE THE DATE:

Mark your calendars for our **annual Palm Sunday breakfast** which will be held on **April 9th** this year. Look for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall as the date approaches.



Happy Birthday to:

- 3/16 - MacKenzie Young
- 3/26 - Jean McPherson
- 3/29 - Everett Webb turns 2!

COMMUNITY SUPPER
Featuring Chicken Piccata

Saturday, March 18th, at 5p.m.

Adults - \$10 Children - **free**

Servers: Board of Deacons
 (additional volunteers are always appreciated)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

Scholarship applications are now available on the table in Fellowship Hall. We have several scholarships we would like to award to church members seeking to continue their education. Specifically, there are two scholarships dedicated to those studying within the medical field, and one scholarship gives preference to those who are musically inclined and, of course, we have several unrestricted scholarships as well. Please complete the application form and return it to the Memorial/Scholarship Committee by April 15th.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS MARCH 12TH

Remember to set your clock ahead one hour when retiring on Saturday evening, March 11th.

We would love to feature your special occasion in an upcoming *Tidings* newsletter. Please complete the form below and turn it into the church office on Sunday or mail it to: First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

I give First Congregational Church permission to put my family member's birthday or anniversary in the monthly newsletter the *Tidings*.

Name

Occasion

Date

Signature (adult only please)

Please return to Church office.

LENTEN SERIES BEGINS MARCH 8TH

We hope you'll join us on Wednesday nights during Lent (3/8-4/5) when we will meet over soup and sandwiches beginning at 6 p.m. This year the series will feature a hymn sing-along led by Jackie Knox and Herb Mower. The discussions will focus on your questions. You'll find red slips in the church pews. We ask that you write out any questions you have and place them in the weekly offering plate. Questions may also be emailed to Pastor Brian at pastorbrian@auburnfirstucc.org or post your questions on Facebook.

As in the past, Committees/Boards were asked to sign-up at the All Committee meeting to provide the soup/sandwiches for the Lenten series.

At this time, the supper schedule is as follows:

- Mar 8 Stewardship Committee — menu to be determined
- Mar 15 Board of Christian Ed. (B.O.C.E.) — chili and grilled cheese
- Mar 22 **Committee/Board, individuals, family volunteers needed**
- Mar 29 Board of Deacons — chili, corn chowder and grinders
- Apr 5 Music and Memorial/Scholarship Committees — menu to be determined



March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, National Kidney Month, National Nutrition Month, and Save Your Vision Month.

March 6-13 is National Sleep Awareness Week

March 6-10 is National School Breakfast Week

March 9 is World Kidney Day

March 12-18 is Patient Safety Awareness Week

March 19-25 is National Poison Prevention Week

March 22 is American Diabetes Alert Day

Please help yourselves to any information on the health table in Fellowship Hall.

God Bless!
Debbie Pranaitis
Parish Nurse
cell: 508-612-4521



Here We Grow Preschool

I cannot believe we are already in March! We have a lot going on. Our final fundraiser, the "Prize Calendar," has gone out. We ran it for the entire month of February, giving parents the vacation week to seek out all family members. The children will start pulling names on March 1st. We will post the winners in the outside hallway. There are great prizes and parents have been wonderful.

The children and staff celebrated Valentine's Day with parties on the 14th and 15th. They had a great time. The parents provided snacks which consisted of marshmallows, teddy grahams, M&M's and yogurt raisins. We had a wonderful Valentine's week filled with friendship and passing out of valentines. The children loved it! We also had our pajama day, where even the teachers wore their PJ's.

We have been busy with tours for next year and getting ready for the rest of this year.

We will be having our picture days on March 2nd and 3rd; Neal Primeaux will be doing them again. The children love his great personality.

Our Open House is March 7th from 9 to 11 a.m. Please pass the word if you know of anyone who is looking for a preschool.

We will be having the "Reptile Man" coming in for the 4-year-olds, and a special puppeteer for the 3-year-olds.

The children have started talking about Easter already. We will be coloring, eating and searching for eggs.

Until next month, stay healthy and safe —

Gina Basili, *Here We Grow* Director

Please join us for
Here We Grow's Open House
 Tuesday, March 7th, from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.

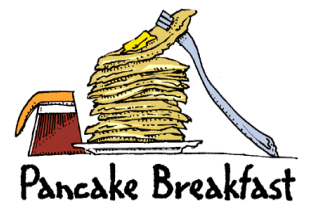
PANCAKES AT THE FARM

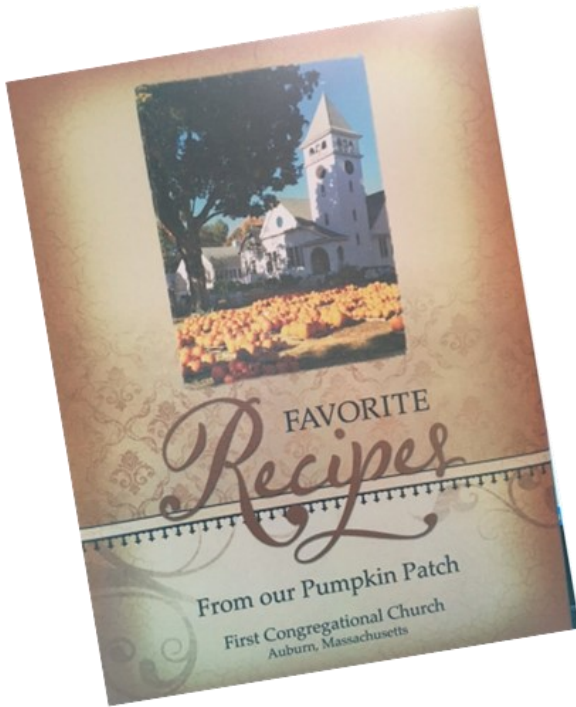
March 4, 5, 11 & 12 8:30 am - 1 pm

HEIFER FARM 216 Wachusett Street Rutland, MA

Reserve a seat for Heifer Farm's annual "Pancakes at the Farm" the first two weekends in March. The meal includes pancakes covered in Heifer Farm's maple syrup and pork sausage with coffee and juice. After breakfast, tour the farm to view the maple sugaring operation, meet the newly born lambs, and explore Heifer's Global Village.

Reservations are required for this popular breakfast feast. The meal is \$14.00 per adult, \$7.00 per child (ages 3-10) and free for children 2 and under. Call 508-886-2221 for reservations.





“From our Pumpkin Patch” Cookbooks have arrived!!

Each cookbook, containing over 200 recipes, features a washable, hard cover in a 3-ring binder format and also has an added envelope in the back for storing any of your favorite recipes not found inside! It also contains kitchen and household hints on the back side of each divider (excluding the custom “Our Favorite Pumpkin Recipes” divider) and as separate colorful pages found in the back of the book.

At \$15 apiece, they will make a great addition to your own kitchen library as well as a wonderful gift for any occasion - a birthday, anniversary or bridal shower gift or a holiday gift for Easter, Mother’s Day or Christmas...

If you would like to purchase a cookbook, please contact Michele Schillinger at 508-259-2239 and leave a brief message along with your name and phone # and she’ll be sure to call you back. You may also email her at library@auburnfirstucc.org. Please include “cookbook” in the subject line of your email.

Please note: if the cookbook will be shipped, there will be a flat rate shipping charge of \$7.20 per USPS priority envelope. The envelopes can accommodate up to 2 cookbooks.

Also, cookbooks will be available to purchase during coffee hours on Sunday.

Happy Cooking!!

FROM WORCESTER FELLOWSHIP

Our Thursday cafe warming center (providing sleeping space, a warm meal and supplies) is going strong and we are currently seeing at least 60 guests per week. We have been blessed with a lot of clothing and white socks this winter, and are looking for the following noted items.

men's boxers (all sizes), men's undershirts (size large), feminine pads/tampons, shampoo, deodorant, razors (pre-packed), twin size wool blankets

Look for a designated box in Fellowship Hall and thank you for your help!

**Please join us for our
Ash Wednesday Service
March 1st at 7 p.m.**

~ All Are Welcome ~





Please keep the Brothers-Mahlert Family in your thoughts and prayers.

Edward C. "Ed" Brothers, 84, passed away on February 1, 2017 in Auburn Life Care surrounded by his loving family. He leaves his wife of 63 years, Jean E. (Marvin) Brothers; his two daughters, Linda J. Mahlert and her husband Gordon and Deborah L. Mahlert and her husband Mark; eight grandchildren and several great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his son, Douglas E. Brothers; and a granddaughter, Katelyn Louise Mahlert.

Edward was born and raised in Worcester, son of the late H. Clifford and Evelina (Williams) Brothers. He graduated from Commerce High School and later was called to active duty with the 10th Marine Signal Company out of Worcester when the Korean War started in July of 1950. Ed worked at Universal Braiding Mills in Worcester for his father, and then worked for over 20 years for Iandoli's Markets as a meat cutter before he retired. He had lived in Auburn for 29 years before moving to Brookfield and then returning to Shrewsbury in 1994. Ed and Jean spent their winter months in California and Florida. He enjoyed spending time with his entire family, playing cards and a round of golf. He was a member of our Church for 62 years and was a Boy Scout Leader for several years.

A funeral service was held here at First Congregational Church on February 6, 2017. Burial with military honors was in Hillside Cemetery, Auburn. Memorial donations may be made to the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn or to the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, 230 E. Ohio Street, Suite 500, Chicago, Illinois, 60611.

"I am the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."

John 11:25

Dear Church Family,

The Brothers/Mahlert family would like to say "Thank-you!!" for all the love, visits, cards, calls and most of all, prayers. Thank-you to the choir and everyone who had a part in the funeral and collation. Thanks, Pastor Brian, for just being a phone call away, and your many visits. We truly have a wonderful church family. My dad truly loved this church.

Jean, Linda & Debbie

CONSIDER YOURSELF INVITED . . .



We continue to hold scheduled potluck suppers (a combination of potluck supper and a book/movie club with discussion time). The next get-together will be on March 21st when we will discuss the book, *The Shack*, in preparation for the movie's release in theaters. We hope to view the movie as a group at a local theater in April.

EVERYONE is invited to join us for any or all parts of these get-togethers.

ESTATE PLANNING?

Have you included the church in your will or estate planning? Please prayerfully consider if the Lord would have you remember your church when completing your will.

"One of the greatest missing teachings in the American church today is the reminder to men and women that nothing we have belongs to us."

Gordon MacDonald, American Pastor & Teacher

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Happy Spring! Unlike a lot of people, I am sad to see the snow go but I am excited for the new beginnings that spring offers us. I feel a renewed sense of hope and joy as we see the crocuses pop up out of the earth. May you all find some renewed energy and joy this season.

YOM wants to thank everyone who participated in our Valentine's Day candy/cookie sale. To date we have raised over \$200.00 and we are waiting on a few more deposits. We are planning a sleepover at church March 17-18 to discuss upcoming events and possible local mission trips.

Now on to butter braids and cookie dough. Starting on March 5 and ending on March 12 we will be selling the butter braids and cookie dough that we sold last year. The delivery date will be April 9th after church. These will be just in time for your Palm Sunday or Easter celebrations. Please see a YOM member after church on either Sunday or you can call me (508) 832-5677 with your order if you miss the kids.



Our CityReach experience was amazing! The young ladies did a wonderful job of representing our church in the way they treated the guests and staff of the program. I also want to thank Carole Murray for getting us in touch with the Busy Bee program at Webster United Federated Church. They supplied us with so many handmade sleeping bags that Brian had to take the seats out of his van and drive to Boston alone (or it could have been the alternative which was to drive with three teenage girls during rush hour traffic!). St. Paul's church has done an amazing renovation and if you have not been there since completion of the renovations, you must take a trip in. The church is so bright and welcoming as opposed to the dark and run down church they previously had. We welcomed over 200 guests on Saturday, February 11th.

Sunday school is busy as always. Please take some time on your way out the back stairs to take a peek in the rooms and look at all the art work the children are creating as they grow closer to their love and understanding of God. As always, EVERYONE is invited to come and spend a Sunday downstairs with us, even if you don't have children in Sunday school.

As we begin Lent this month, let us reflect on everything that means to us as a church and as a Christian.

FAITH is not believing that God can, it is knowing that He will.

Jean McPherson, Director of Religious Education

One Great Hour of Sharing — OGHS

One Great Hour of Sharing is administered by the Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ and provides support to people in over 80 countries. When you make a gift to the offering you become a partner in the refugee, disaster relief, and community development efforts of the UCC in the United States and internationally. Through this fund lives are changed, and sharing brings joy!

You'll find offering envelopes enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Please drop it in the offering plate on Sunday or mail to: First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501.

Thank you!



YARD SALE to be held JUNE 17TH

Please save the date.

We will be needing your help for a short time on Friday the 16th at 6pm and again on Saturday the 17th at 1:30 to carry tables out and back into the church. Spaces are available to rent for only \$15 (\$20 for non-Church members).

If you have questions or to rent a space, call me, Cindy Dube, at 508-832-6646.



Easter Sunday will be here before we know it!!

...which means it will soon be time to be thinking about ordering Easter flowers to beautify our Sanctuary for Easter Sunday. This is a wonderful way to remember or celebrate your loved ones.

Please watch for the next *Tidings* for the order form if you wish to order Easter flowers!

Order forms will also be available in the bulletin each week starting the 2nd week of March.

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

**First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
128 Central St., Auburn MA 01501**

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or PastorBrian@auburnfirstucc.org

*God's church in Auburn Center
doing Christ's work in the world.*

Web: auburnfirstucc.org



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March 2017

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT