



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

Everything Is Relative

I just grilled out for the first time this year. The weatherman said the high temperature was 48°F. I thought it was lovely weather. The sun was shining; there was a breeze, so I wore a hoodie. Rewind 6 months and I was putting away the grill because the high was only 48°F. I was looking for a new parka and preparing for more cold weather. Later, I was standing outside with one of our snowbirds and some people who had been here all winter. The snow bird was shivering and commenting on the cold while the rest of us said how nice and warm it was.

So is 48 degrees cold or warm? It is all relative. The answer is how we feel, and how we feel is not totally in our control. Those who feel warm are out and about, dethatching lawns, raking leaves and debris, walking dogs. Those who feel it is cold are inside with layers on shivering.

Crime is down. Down from the levels of the 70’s and 80’s when I was growing up. It was dangerous to be a kid in the 70’s, but I felt safe and explored my world with great independence. Now crime is rare. Do we feel safer? Objective stats say we are safer from crime than at anytime in my life. Yet children today do not have the freedom I had to meander around the town and into the woods. It is too dangerous for kids to be out and about. We might feel fear ourselves to be out in public. Why don’t we feel safer? Is it that places that once seemed safe, like malls and schools now look like targets? Are kids safer now or then? It is all relative.

The answer is how we feel and how we feel is not totally in our control. We can say we are safer all the time, but if we do not FEEL safer than we will not act like we are safe. We will be less trusting, more standoffish, less neighborly.

What we do is relative to how we feel. Do you feel God’s love? Do you feel part of God’s family? Do you feel blessed? If so, how does that change what you do? If you don’t feel God’s love, if you do not feel a part of God’s family, it does not mean you do not have it. It means for some reason right now you are not feeling it.

I pray you feel blessed. I pray you feel loved. I pray if you do not feel blessed and loved those feelings will come upon you soon.

God bless and love you.

Pastor Brian

SERMON TITLES FOR MAY

5/4 “Known in the Breaking of Bread”

5/11 “M-O-O-O-M!?! What Concern Is that to You & Me?”

5/18 “The Father & the Son”

5/25 “Hunger, Disease’s Best Friend”

Children’s Time:

5/4 “Sheep Get Lost”

5/11 “Cooking & Cleaning Never Get Enough Appreciation”

5/18 “Healing on the Sabbath”

5/25 “The Party Cost More than the Coin Was Worth”



SERMON TITLES

Coffee Hour Hosts

- 5/4 Historian, Memorial/Scholarship & Nominating Committees
- 5/11 Music Committee
- 5/18 Board of Trustees
- 5/25 Board of Christian Education
- 6/1 Historian, Memorial/Scholarship & Nominating Committees

Carole & Bob Murray will be celebrating their special day on May 4th.



Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 8th**, and plan to join us as we celebrate our children on **Children’s Sunday**.

Following our service that day we will be having our annual picnic which will include hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the Board of Christian Education.

We will be looking for donations of desserts and salads, so please look for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall as the date approaches.



We will be starting a new **CONFIRMATION CLASS** on September 7 for youth 8th grade and up. We will have an informational meeting after worship on **June 1**. If that time does not work for you, please call the church office (508) 832-2845 to arrange another time to meet.

We continue to hold scheduled potluck suppers (a combination of the “Spirit Suppers” and a book/movie club - “Dinner and Discussion”) in the vestry. The next get together will be on **Tuesday, May 20th at 6:00 p.m.** when we will discuss the Gospel of John.

EVERYONE is invited to join us for any or all parts of the evening.

Looking ahead to our June 17th potluck supper, plan to join us at 6:00 p.m. as we continue our discussion of the Gospel of John.

DRIVE FOR A DRIVEWAY UPDATE

The remaining balance on the driveway loan stands at \$13,275. While some of this money has been pledged for the coming year, we are still short on pledges by approximately \$5,000. If you are able, please consider contributing to the driveway project so that we may retire this debt as soon as possible.

Thank you,
The Board of Trustees

During coffee hour on April 6th we honored Pastor Brian with a cake in celebration of the 15th anniversary of his ordination. Below is his response:

Thank you for all the well wishes on the 15th anniversary of my ordination.



*Thank you —
Pastor Brian*

Church World Service - Blankets+

Blankets+ (formerly called Tools & Blankets) provides funds to help people in need around the world, including the U.S. Donations provide the means to transform lives and communities when they are faced with an emergency or simply struggling to put food on the table. For over 60 years, Church World Service has worked in partnership with local communities providing blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster; tools and seeds for refugees returning home to replant their fields; wells for families living in drought prone areas to provide clean, safe water to drink and to irrigate crops and gardens; and literacy training and microcredit for women struggling to realize their potential. Church World Service Blankets+ . . . It’s about blankets and so much more!

You will find offering envelopes in the church pews. Please make checks out to the church noting “Blankets+” in the memo section and place in the offering plate on Sunday, or mail a check directly to the church:
128 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501.
Thank you!



May is Arthritis Awareness Month, Better Hearing and Speech Month, Global Employee Health and Fitness Month, and Youth Traffic Safety Month. It is also Healthy Vision Month, Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month, National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month, National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, and Ultraviolet Awareness Month.

May 4-10 is Children's Mental Health Awareness Week and North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

May 5 is Hand Hygiene Day

May 11-17 is Food Allergy Awareness Week

May 12 is Women's Checkup Day

May 23 is Heat Safety and Awareness Day

May 28 is National Senior Health and Fitness Day

May 31 is World No Tobacco Day

Information is available on the table in Fellowship Hall. Please remember to check the closet for any health care items you might need. Things come and go, so if the item you need isn't there, check again in a few days. Be careful, now that the sun is getting warmer, use sunscreens, be safe.

Debbie Pranaitis
Parish Nurse

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the YOM butter braid fundraiser; we raised \$237.00.

The Easter egg hunt and Palm Sunday breakfast, as always, was well received.

Next on the calendar is Children's Sunday. This year we will hold Children's Sunday on June 8th. Any child entering 4th grade will receive a bible as a gift from the congregation. Please be sure to check with me that your name is on the list. The children will be greeters and readers during the service so please join us. As has become tradition, the Board of Ed will host the annual Church picnic, providing the drinks, burgers, and condiments. We ask that the congregation bring a salad or dessert to share. Let's see who will win the tug-of-war this year! Please come and enjoy our celebration; it is always a good time.



FYI for parents - we conduct an offering in Sunday school each week. I have offering envelopes available downstairs so the kids can put their names on the envelope and place it in the offering plate when passed. Beginning next year we will pick an organization each season that the children will vote on to send our offering to. This will help the children see that we, as God's children, help others not just our church. If you have any questions please see me.

The D.U.C.K.S. team (Dedicated United Christian Kindred Spirits) will be having a cupcake sale during coffee hour on Mother's Day. Please support this Relay for Life fundraiser so together we can work to "quack" out cancer!

Let's all enjoy the wonderful weather before we start to complain about the heat.

With His guidance we serve,
Jean McPherson
Director of Religious Education

Please be in prayer for the following church families who have suffered the loss of loved ones recently.

Peggy Hayes, 59, of Auburn, passed away quietly in her sleep at home on Sunday, March 23, 2014. Peggy was the daughter of the late James D. and Margaret M. (McKie) Hayes. She is survived by her brother, James D. Hayes, II of Auburn.

Peggy was born in Marlboro and moved with her family to Auburn. In September of 1961 Peggy was a member of the first class of eleven students to attend the newly opened Our Lady of Mercy School for Exceptional Children in Worcester. This began what was to become an uninterrupted involvement between Peggy and the institution, now known as Mercy Centre, which lasted for over 50 years. In June of 2011 Peggy was recognized at the 50 Year Anniversary Celebration of Mercy Centre with the Certificate of Excellence for her 50 years of "Service and Dedication" to Mercy Centre. In March of 2003 Peggy was honored by the Emerald Club of Worcester County at their annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner when she was named the recipient of the Special Service Award for her work ethic and dedication. In addition, on March 31, 2003 Peggy was given the Key to the City of Worcester by then Mayor Timothy Murray, for her commitment to Mercy Centre and for exemplifying "the heart and spirit of Worcester."



Deaths in Our
Church Family

Active in the off-site job program at Mercy Centre, Peggy could be seen working at local businesses including: Wrightline, Anna Maria College, The Food Pantry of Worcester and Sposato's Florists to name a few. Peggy was a familiar face within the disabled community of Greater Worcester through her involvement in activities such as the Special Olympics, bowling and basketball leagues, square dances, and other social events and activities.

Peggy was a member of our Church and was laid to rest beside her beloved parents in a private service at Hillside Cemetery in Auburn.

Donald R. Temple, 62, of Jefferson, died peacefully at home on Tuesday, March 25, 2014, under the loving care of his family. Born in Clinton on February 22, 1952, Don was the son of Raymond F. and Janet (Elliott) Temple and lived in Sterling before he and his wife moved to Jefferson in 1978.

Don graduated from Wachusett Regional High School in 1970 and enlisted in the United States Army in 1972 where he proudly served his country during the Vietnam Era. Don worked at Harrington Richardson in Gardner, as a meat cutter at the Appletown Market, and continued his career later at St. Gobain where he worked for 25 years. He was an active member of the Hiram O. Taylor American Legion Post #189 in Sterling where he served several terms as Commander. He was also a Past Commander of District Four, Worcester County Council and Past Vice Commander and Sergeant at Arms of the Department of Massachusetts American Legion, and a member of the 40/8. He loved his hometown of Sterling where he continued the family's tradition of organizing and participating in the annual Memorial Day and Veterans' Day Parades, serving as Parade Marshall for many years. Don also enjoyed baseball and was a coach and umpire for Sterling Little League.

Besides his beloved wife of 35 years, Jeanette (Woodcock) Temple, Don leaves his two daughters, Margaret Temple and Gretchen Temple; two granddaughters, Carrina and Camrynn Carnrike; three brothers, Robert, Earl, and James Temple; three sisters, Barbara DeStefano, Marjorie Johnson and Beverly Temple; and several nieces and nephews. Don will be remembered for his quiet and unassuming nature and as a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

A funeral service was held here at our Church on March 31. A private burial service was held at Oakhill Cemetery in Sterling.

**"I am the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live,
even though he dies." John 11:25**



On March 30th we celebrated the baptisms of 3 1/2 year old Ryan Jacob and 22 month old Evan Robert Mothershed. The brothers are sons of Kristen and Christopher Mothershed.

We pray God's continued blessing upon Ryan and Evan and their family.



From **Here We Grow** Preschool

Welcome to the month of May and all the changes it brings. With the nice weather here we will also be "welcoming" the little black bugs, YUK! With that being said, we are beginning to prepare for the end of our school year. The 4-year-old classes will be visiting Mary D. Stone School on May 28th for a tour of the kindergarten classrooms. Our goal is to help them be at ease with the upcoming transition into kindergarten.

We have been fortunate that the Auburn Police, Massachusetts State Police, and Members of the Amber Alert team will be here on May 14th to fingerprint all our 4-year-olds. All information will be stored on a thumb drive purchased through a financial gift from the Phillips Fund of Auburn. Other visitors this year were the Auburn Fire Department, a veterinarian and the Auburn children's librarian. Thank you to all community groups for their continued support.

With the nice weather upon us, we have been able to spend more time in the outdoor playground, although we did have to dig in the snow for our Easter treats left by the Easter Bunny.

This year the 2-day classes will be visiting Stowe Farm in Millbury for their end-of-year field trip. The 3-day and 5-day classes will be visiting the YMCA in Shrewsbury and will be traveling by bus provided by AA Transportation.

Closing out the school year will be the 3-year-olds' program, the 4-year-olds' graduations and Spree Day for all. This is our busiest time of the year, but a very rewarding time of year. Some families will be leaving HWG for good, some for the summer and some with a year or two off until the younger siblings are of age to come back. Yes, I have already started a wait list for the year '15/'16. Whatever each family is doing, it is a time for goodbyes. We will miss each one of them.

Once again some of the staff will be returning for the last three weeks of June to work the summer program. Themes this year are: "Around the World in 5 Days," "Hiking through the Rainforest," and "Beach Bums." At this time we are full for all three weeks. HWG will close on July 3rd for the summer and will return late in August.

At this time the majority of the present staff will be returning next year, but are anxiously awaiting a much needed summer break.

Until next month, enjoy the weather and the beauty that comes along with spring.

Dawn Murphy, Director, **Here We Grow** Preschool

Calling All Graduates . . .

If you are aware of any students with ties to First Congregational who will be graduating this spring, please email Denise at: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org or call the Church office, (508) 832-2845. Please include where/when they're graduating, details of their future plans and list of family members (parents/grandparents) who are known within the church.

We would like to acknowledge our graduates in next month's *Tidings* and future bulletins.



The **Fall Fair Extravaganza** is beginning to take shape. Thank you to all who have already signed up and expressed an interest in the fair. That being said, we still need MANY MORE volunteers!

With the foot traffic that is generated by the annual pumpkin patch, we anticipate that a **Fall Fair on Oct. 11th** has the potential to be a huge fundraiser for our church! All we need is YOU and your ideas to ensure its success! Please call Cindy Ryan at 508-832-3416 and let her know you'd like to help.

On May 3rd I will be walking with my dad and my sister in the 2014 Central MA Heart Walk. It is a 5K walk to raise funds and awareness to support research on heart disease. No one has to look far to see someone you know who suffers from or has been affected by heart disease or stroke. My father and I have both had open heart valve replacement surgery. If you would like to make a donation you can complete the form below and give it to me or mail it directly to the American Heart Association or make a donation online on the American Heart Association website. Thank you for your support. <3

Jennifer Bohn

**Support me as I participate in the
Heart Walk 2013-2014 Central MA.**

Participant's Name: Jennifer Bohn
Team Name: Sister Act
Group Name: Community Teams

Yes! I will make a contribution to help the American Heart Association.

Teach more than 2,500 children how to avoid obesity and live longer. (\$500+) _

Save lives by helping to distribute 15 innovative CPR Anytime kits to the community. (\$250+) _

Empower 1,000 people to improve their heart health by taking the My Life Check. (\$100+) _

Plant the seeds for research funding and the next medical breakthrough. (\$25+) _

Other \$ _____ (Enter your own lifesaving amount here)

Please Make Your Checks Payable to the American Heart Association

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

Country _____

Donor Phone _____

Email _____

Thank You So Much For Your Contribution!
Mail this form and your check to:

American Heart Association
Attn: Central MA Heart Walk
300 5th Avenue, Suite 6
Waltham, MA 02451-8750

**First Congregational Church Fundraiser
October 20th at the Publick House in Sturbridge**

Save the Date

SAVE THE DATE of October 20th for the supper at the Publick House to benefit the Church. A turkey dinner with all the fixings will be served with two seatings (4:30-6:15 and 6:30-7:30). The total cost of the all-you-can-eat buffet is \$13 with \$4 out of every ticket going to our Church (and another \$4 going to another charity).

It is a delicious dinner with dessert, beverage, etc., and we are hoping that MANY people will participate. So mark your calendar today!

The Memorial Committee wishes to thank Dave Sampson for all his help in obtaining our beautiful, new plant stands. Your efforts are much appreciated, Dave!

Sincerely,
The Memorial Committee

THANK-YOU

We want to thank Ron and Connie Hanks for, once again, organizing the Easter flower orders. This is no small task as they coordinate the details with the florist, prepare spreadsheets of the orders, pick up the plants at the greenhouse in Oxford, label each plant, and deliver and arrange them in the Sanctuary. We just want to take this opportunity to express our warm appreciation for all they do! A special thank you as well to the Campbells and the MacPhees for lending a hand with transporting and displaying the flowers.

"SURPRISING GIFTS"

This year the Stewardship Committee is kicking off its campaign early. Our chosen theme is "Surprising Gifts" and it is time to begin sowing the seed! Hopefully everyone was able to take home a plant after church on April 27th and have begun to see it come to life. Just as there are seasons in the calendar year, so are there seasons in the church year, times that color and shape our experience of God. Please remember that all seasons are God's seasons. May God ever and always surprise you with gifts of comfort and strength.

-Your Stewardship Committee

LIBRARY TIDINGS

To mention one of the newest gifts to the church library is to speak of Russell Hardy. For those of you who do not remember enthusiastic scout, Russ, he's the son of Phyllis, brother of Linda and Debbie, and a successful cancer doctor in California. One of his patients, Maryly Turner, has a dog that contracted cancer and in turn, as though the dog is the author, she has written an outstanding book, *Quinn, the Rottweiler*, that soon will be on our library table. Look for it.

On April 5th Cub Scout Pack 101 held their Arrow of Light Crossover event here at FCC. At the event the pack honored 3 Webelos Scouts who have earned the highest award a cub scout can receive — the Arrow of Light. Nicholas Comeau was one of the cub scouts recognized that night. He and the 2 other cub scouts will be crossing over from the cub scout pack to Boy Scout Troop 101. Congratulations, Nicholas!



COMMUNITY YARD SALE---PLANT SALE---CHICKEN BBQ SATURDAY JUNE 21ST

NEW THIS YEAR A CHURCH FAMILY TABLE Do you have a few good items you no longer need? We will be accepting up to 6 items from each family that are clean and in good working order. All monies collected from the sale of these items will go into the church's fundraising account. Items need to be delivered to the church the week of the yard sale, from Saturday, June 14th to Thursday, June 19th. If you have questions about this new opportunity you may call Cindy Dube at 508-832-6646.

Spaces are still available, but we have a limited number of tables available for rent; so don't delay.



Also, now is a great time to begin dividing perennials. Won't you please remember to pot some and set them aside for our plant sale table?

We will be needing lots of help as the yard sale approaches so please pencil this event into your calendars now. Sign-up sheets will be available in June. Please see or call Cindy Dube, 508-832-6646, if you have any questions or would like to volunteer in advance to help.

First Congregational Church of Auburn 13th Annual Golf Tournament

Saturday August 2nd, 2014

Pine Ridge Country Club in Oxford, MA

12:30 p.m. Registration - 1:30 p.m. Tee-off

\$100 per player - includes golf, cart and dinner!

Non-golfers welcome to join us for dinner - \$35 per person



-----detach here-----

Players:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

Sponsor a Hole - \$100.00

In Honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

or Business name: _____

Make checks payable to: First Congregational Church (write "GOLF" in memo)

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



BULK RATE
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Auburn, Mass

May 2014

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT