



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:

Thanksgiving

This is going to be a tough Thanksgiving, not only because it is hard to be thankful for things in a year of disease, protests, isolation, unemployment, and businesses closing. It will also be hard for those families that are used to big gatherings and will now have to have smaller and fewer feasts.

This Thanksgiving there will be fewer chances to interrogate the romantic partners of our kids and grandkids. There will be fewer aunts and uncles to interrogate new family members. There will be fewer chances for boyfriends and girlfriends to be dismayed at how their beloved's family "does" Thanksgiving.

New babies will be held by fewer family members than they would in other years. The presence of many people will be missed. The turkeys will be smaller, the pies fewer. Many people will find they DO miss the cacophony of many children running and screaming. Maybe you will

miss all the hollering at the football game. But a smaller Thanksgiving means having 30 minutes to talk to "Uncle Joe" rather than a quick "How you doin?" as you walk by for more green bean casserole. Fewer people will mean we are stretched less, so we can spend more time with fewer people. We can spread out and be more comfortable when fewer people are at the table.

I pray that as we make plans for Thanksgiving that we can still invite the lonely. I pray that during Thanksgiving we can be thankful that many of the worst predictions in March did not come true.

This, too, will pass and I am sure someone will say, "Remember how we did Thanksgiving in 2020? That was nice."

God bless you, and Happy Thanksgiving.

Pastor Brian



NOVEMBER SERMON TITLES

- 11/1 "Faith Without Works"
- 11/8 "Why Do You Want That?"
- 11/15 "The Prophet Deborah"
- 11/22 "God's Sheep or Goats"
- 11/29 (First Sunday of Advent)
"In a Rush"

If you're interested in learning more about **church membership**, please speak with Pastor Brian or one of the Deacons. You may also call Pastor Brian at the church office, 508-832-2845.

A "Timely" Reminder

Remember to turn your clocks back before retiring for the evening on October 31st. Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 a.m. on November 1st.

Happy Birthday wishes to:

Rich McPherson ~ Nov. 6th
 Nick Stockhaus ~ Nov. 7th
 Victoria Stockhaus ~ Nov. 14th
 Suzanne Kress ~ Nov. 22nd

**Happy Anniversary to**

Skip and Paula Bigelow who will
 be celebrating their special day
 on November 29th.

Neighbors In Need

Neighbors in Need is the UCC's annual offering to support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States, including the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), justice and advocacy efforts, and direct service projects funded by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries office which offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network, Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, MN. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

You'll find an offering envelope enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Please return it to the church, and thank you for your help.

Jane L. (Milley) Esposito Standing, 69, longtime Auburn resident, passed away at home on Thursday, October 22, 2020, surrounded by her loving family. She made the journey into the arms of God...she will join her loving husband, Paul F. Standing, who died in 2006, and her beloved son, Dameon R. Esposito, who died in 2017.

Jane leaves her loving daughter, Elizabeth L. Allain and her husband, Jeffrey; her five grandchildren: Vincent P. Esposito, Victoria L. Esposito, Varissa L. Esposito, Paris L. Esposito, and Connor P. Allain; her mother, Lillian L. (Lindgren) Milley; her siblings: Carol Armstrong and her husband, Tom, John Milley and his wife, Debbie, Nancy Milley, and Gary Milley. She leaves several nieces and nephews, her best friend, Gay Gardener, and her daughter-in-law, Michelle L. Esposito. Along with her husband and son, Jane was predeceased by her father, Richard C. Milley, in 2004.

The most important, special time was spent with her children and grandchildren, who filled her heart with love and joy. They were her gifts from God.

Born in Worcester, Jane was raised in Shrewsbury and graduated from Shrewsbury High School. She worked for over 15 years at Central One Federal Credit Union where she worked as a loan officer until becoming ill.

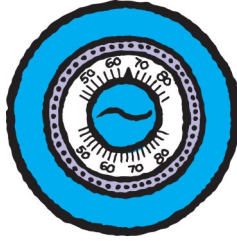
She was an active member of Rainbow Girls in Worcester, Assembly #9, where she earned her majority. Jane loved taking part in all of her children's activities, especially Cub Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. She was a Camp Fire co-leader for 12 years – "Wohelo!"

Jane was a former member of Fairlawn Methodist Church in Shrewsbury before transferring to the First Congregational Church of Auburn. She served on many committees, taught Sunday School, and most of all, Jane enjoyed being active in the women's group. Her faith in God never wavered and she cherished her spiritual time spent reading the Bible.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Jane's family between 5:00 and 7:00 PM on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 at the Britton-Wallace Funeral Home, 91 Central Street, Auburn, MA. A funeral service will be held at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at First Congregational Church of Auburn, 128 Central Street. Burial will follow at Hillside Cemetery, where she will be laid to rest beside her beloved Paul. Masks and social distancing will be required at the funeral home, church, and cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made payable to our church noting "for YOM, in memory of Jane Standing."





Capital Fund Drive for HEAT

As you already know, the steam boiler for heat in the sanctuary and vestry no longer exists. It had to be shut down in March due to its deteriorated and unsafe condition. The hot water boiler is also old and the Trustees have decided to replace both with new high efficiency hot water boilers. The congregation voted on September 13th to use invested funds to get this project started as soon as possible.

The Trustees have decided to initiate a capital campaign to help replace the invested funds that are being used. We will be looking to get pledges through the end of this year. This will be a 3 year capital campaign running from 2021 through 2023. Below is a pledge form. Please prayerfully consider giving to this long overdue and much needed project for us to have heat in our church. Please return your pledge form by December 31, 2020.

If you would like to pledge from your personal invested funds, please speak with Bob Luther or Connie Whitehead Hanks (co-chairs of the Prudential Committee) for help in doing so.

Thank you in advance for your generosity,
Your Board of Trustees

Please respond by Dec. 31, 2020

I answer the Trustees' call to support financially the New Boiler Project. As part of my response, I will give \$_____ as my (circle one)

Weekly / Monthly / Quarterly / Annual contribution

for a total of \$_____ during 2021 through 2023.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please return to: First Congregational Church, 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501

FROM THE BOARD OF DEACONS:

It was wonderful to open wide our “In-Church” sanctuary doors last month. In addition, having Pastor Brian’s electronic communications available for Sunday Service has helped to maintain safety and assist with our limited seating (which, to date, has been adequate).

The following information was posted in our September *Tidings* and bears repeating as a reminder of our “In-Church” protocol. This information has been reviewed and adapted for the purpose of safely gathering; as well as adhering to the state Covid-19 MA Public Safety Standards.

Only one outside entrance will be available for access and will display the Covid-19 rules of entry. Entrance will only be through the front sanctuary door or, if needed, the “sanctuary” elevator. ALL other FCC doors should remain locked. Signage will be posted not to enter at the locked doors (per MA Safety Standards).

IMPORTANT: Guidelines require open fresh air circulation for gathering (unfortunately losing heat); and with that comes the cold weather through our partially open windows. PLEASE DRESS WARMLY, even when we have heat back in the sanctuary. [Per Trustees: The heat will be functional in Fellowship Hall first and there’s a chance our worship service may be in that room (for a short time - with open windows)...before heat is working again in the sanctuary.]

Sanitizer dispensers are located for entry and exit purposes.

Masks - Per the MA Safety Standards: "All attendees and staff must wear face coverings or masks in accordance with COVID-19 Order No. 31 and the Department of Public Health's Guidance while inside and while entering and exiting places of worship or otherwise participating in in-person services, except where a person is unable to wear a face covering or mask because of a medical or disabling condition." (Masks will be available if not brought.)

Collection plates are located at the entrance in the sanctuary (instead of being passed among the pews during service).

Bulletins have been placed in the open seating areas of the church and also sent electronically via FCC Facebook and email.

Once inside the building, attendees are asked to go directly to a pew and not gather to socialize. Bulletins and Bibles will help mark the available ‘open’ pews for seating. Non-seating areas are blocked by ribbons. Because no singing is allowed, there will be no hymnals. Music will be offered by our organist and, at times, special accompaniments.

Notification for any prayer requests may be submitted to the church office prior to the Sunday Service. Prayer slips will not be collected during the service at this time.

Exiting the sanctuary should be direct, using the same outside route as was the entry inside (toward sanctuary doors/elevator). Per Mandatory Safety Standards, coffee hour at this time is not allowed. Note: there is access to the restrooms; however, not throughout the building.

On Communion Sundays, “sealed” communion cups are available upon entrance into the sanctuary; as well as, “packaged” communion bread.

If a case of Covid-19 is reported by someone to the church office or church nurse, then notification (per HIPPA rules) will be addressed accordingly per the church and state procedures.

COVID-19 PUBLIC INFORMATION – POSTED AT SANCTUARY ENTRY DOOR:

Return of anyone after having COVID:

You must quarantine for 14 days and be symptom free for 3 days.

If you have any of the following, we ask that you do not attend church:

Fever (100.4 Fahrenheit or higher), chills or shaking chills

Cough (not due to other known causes, such as chronic cough)

Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Continued . . .

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If you have any of the following (or symptoms listed on bottom of pg. 4), we ask that you do not attend church:

New loss of taste or smell

Sore throat

Headache, when in combination with other symptoms

Muscle aches or body aches

Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms

Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies), when in combination with other symptoms

Respectfully reported,

Deacons: Sue MacPhee, Lynn Largesse, Cindy Ryan, Andy Sharr, Randy Bohn, Cherolyn Cariglio, Linda Hardy, and Ray Rieder

ATTENTION ALL COMMITTEES & BOARDS

The Trustees are requesting that all boards and committees submit their budget requests by their next meeting scheduled for November 19th.

NOMINATION OPENINGS for Church Members in 2021

Annually, our Congregational members come together to fill boards and committees. It's due to this faithful service that, in a big part, determines the welfare of our church. Whether in the past you were part of this commitment, are currently serving, or considering a new nomination, let us ALL praise you with thanksgiving.

The heart that beats strong within our House of God is due to the solidarity of every faithful servant. Alone, for some, it takes courage to join; but serving together, increases the benefits to our church's history, its active and current needs, and the continuity for its future.

New terms for 2021 nominees will begin in January 2021 upon installation. The open position for Clerk Officer can be expedited upon the earliest Council meeting vote. All other openings (Board of Ed, Stewardship, Deacons, and Trustees) have been posted in the church bulletins, along with their terms.

NOMINATING CONTACT INFORMATION AS FOLLOWS:

Sue MacPhee — House: (508) 832-9347, Text/Cell (508) 864-2454, susiemac2002@gmail.com

Judi Taft — Text/Cell: (508) 341-4530, jtaft01527@aol.com

Sheila Skog — Text/Cell: (978) 387-7705, sheilaskog@gmail.com

NOMINATING VOLUNTEER SLIP - All vacancies are open to FCC "MEMBERS."

I'm interested in: _____ Committee/Board

My name is: _____ My Contact number is: _____

Best time to call is: _____

Please turn the slip into the church or contact the Nominating Committee as quickly as possible. Thank you!



Here We Grow Preschool

Welcome everyone to the third month of the school year. While this year has been unlike any we have ever seen before, I have to say the children and staff have kept up a fantastic attitude and are great about going with the flow. We always say, "It's preschool, you never know what's going to happen at preschool." The weather is starting to get cooler, but we are still going outside as much as we can. It is great for everyone to get fresh air and to be able to remove their masks.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Bemis Farm scarecrow fundraiser; we hope you had a good time. Our current fundraiser entails selling masks with the **Here We Grow** name on them; they are available in children and adult sizes and are \$6 each or 2/\$10. For those who enjoy our greeting card fundraiser, we will again be selling cards from Nov. 16- Dec 1. For \$30 you get a beautiful box of 30 cards; there will be an order form available in the church office.

We are doing our best to keep as many of our regular traditions as we can. Our Halloween celebrations looked a bit different this year, but we were able to have small parades and allow the children to wear costumes to school.

In keeping with our positive attitudes, the children and staff are busy planning and preparing for Thanksgiving and the winter holidays. During the month of November, the students of **Here We Grow** will be learning about: Healthy Foods, Manners, What We Are Thankful For, and The First Thanksgiving. Our feast days are November 24th and 25th. Our feast day tradition began over 29 years ago when Fawn Robidoux, **Here We Grow's** first Director, began this wonderful experience.

It is our intention to have the children and families of HWG participate, once again, in The Giving Basket; provided we are still in school. All foods collected will be given to Pastor Brian to distribute to families in need during the season of Thanksgiving. We hope to continue with the tremendous amount of support from the **Here We Grow** families. The need for help grows each year.

We are taking this year one day at a time, and are grateful for every-day that we are here for in-person learning.

Until next month, Happy Thanksgiving and stay healthy —

Cristi Corey, Director, **Here We Grow** Preschool



This Generation of Generosity

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in Consecration Sunday or returned a pledge card. Your participation is critical to our success.

If you have not yet returned your pledge card, please do so (whether you're making a pledge or not) so that we can plan the budget for 2021. Knowing who has responded also helps us reduce follow-up letters.

The Deacons or the church office can help you if you don't have a pledge card. No pledge is too small, and if your situation changes your pledge can be changed at any time.

In His love,

Your Stewardship Committee

Michelle Bigelow, Nan Johnson, Ron Klaucke, Ellie Lowell, Debbie Mahlert, Linda Mahlert

Generations remember the past, create the present, inspire the future. — Anonymous

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever. Psalm 107:1

As we continue to adjust to this “new normal,” let us be mindful of all the blessings we are given on a daily basis.

The kids and I had another “Sunday school lawn party” at the start of October. Those of you who attended church in person were greeted by beautiful chalk drawings from the kids as you exited the sanctuary; we hope it helped brighten your day.

On November 1, we again will hold a “Sunday school lawn party” for the kids. We will be having an **All Saints Day/Harvest Festival**. The Board of Ed and I will set up a socially distant obstacle course for them to participate in and then pass out goody bags at the end. We will also have a **trunk or treat** for anyone that would care to participate. How this works is anyone interested will park and open their “trunk” and the kids will parade around and you can pass out treats to them. If you are interested, just show up to the parking lot by 10:30 and we will begin once service is over. I am sure we can all recollect fun times we had trick or treating when we were younger or with our own children. Please keep this tradition and memories going for OUR little church family members.



We continue to come up with opportunities for the kids to get together and socialize in a safe manner. As the weather gets colder, this will become more difficult since outside events won't always be available. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we (the Board of Ed) endeavor to share the love of Jesus and friendship of our church family to all the children. If you have any ideas of socially distant appropriate activities for the children, please contact me.

May this Thanksgiving bring you wonderful memories of years past and a safe and blessed day filled with family in whatever way you can be “together.”

Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.” Leo Buscaglia.

Jean McPherson, Director of Religious Education



Happy Fall! I hope everyone is staying safe. November is American Diabetes Month, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) Awareness Month, Diabetic Eye Disease Month, Lung Cancer Awareness Month, and National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month.

People with diabetes and lung diseases are more susceptible to Covid -19. Everyone should still be taking precautions, but with an underlying disease, you need to be more careful. This is a trying time for all of us.

If anyone needs any equipment (walkers, wheelchairs, tub seats) please let me know. They are in the closet at the church and they are safe to take.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse
cell: 508-612-4521

2020 Christmas Poinsettia Order

We are, again, offering the opportunity to purchase poinsettias at great prices. In the past we've decorated the sanctuary with these beautiful plants. At the close of the Christmas Eve service, members are able to claim their plants and continue to enjoy them at home, or give them as gifts. You may dedicate your poinsettia in memory of a loved one, or in celebration of a special occasion. Dedications will be included as an insert in our Christmas bulletins. Please complete the order form below and include payment of cash or check with your order.



ORDER YOUR
Poinsettias



Poinsettia Given By: **PLEASE PRINT**

Name(s): _____

Include above name(s) in dedication? Yes _____ No _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

In Memory of _____

or _____

In Celebration of _____

We have decided to limit the color choice this year to one color (**red**) and only 2 sizes. Hopefully, this will reduce the amount of handling required when it's time to take plants home.

Sizes: **Single Plant Pot \$8.00** _____

Double Plant Pot \$16.00 _____

_____ check here if you will **NOT** be taking your poinsettia home. If you have any questions, call Michele Schillinger, cell # 508-259-2239.

ORDERS DUE BY SUNDAY, DEC. 6TH

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

**First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ**

128 Central St., Auburn MA 01501

Phone: (508) 832-2845

Office Hours: Mon.-Fri. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Email: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org

or PastorBrian@auburnfirstucc.org

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

Web: auburnfirstucc.org



BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Non-Profit Org.
Permit No. 6
Auburn, Mass

November 2020

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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29	30					

OR CURRENT RESIDENT