



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!’”

“April Showers Bring May Flowers”

I remember well picking May flowers with my mother on the banks of the Androscoggin River near the Errol Dam. I remember the plant having tiny blue or bluish-purple petals. (In my day we did not have fancy names for colors. Crayola 64 had red, blue, green, yellow, purple, yellow-green, light purple, dark purple, reddish-purple, bluish-purple, etc.) They were tiny flowers. Perfect for a small child’s hands. As we picked the flowers my mom would croon, “April showers bring May flowers.”

Now rainy April days meant no outside recess at Errol Consolidated School. Even if it wasn’t raining, we kids were not allowed on the grass. I think for fear we would sink in the mud like quicksand. Rather, we had to play on the pavement, which for the boys meant throwing various balls and trying not to hit the girls playing jump rope.

I think most of us would take some April showers at this point. As long as the showers are rain and not snow. Cabbage, the dog, however, loves snow and hates rain. He loves to roll in snow, but tries to avoid walking in the rain.

After 13 years in South Dakota it is taking me time to get used to the rain and clouds in New England. I thought of this the other day, the first sunny day in a long time, when I dug around in the console of the van looking for my sunglasses. I had not needed sunglasses in months. In South Dakota rain almost never lasted all day. Most rain came in the form of thunderstorms that passed in a few hours. Even in the winter the sun could be blindingly bright.

In South Dakota the rains (and snows) of April were priced for preparing the ground to raise a new crop and getting the pastures working early on new grass. In Massachusetts, with our many creeks, brooks, rivers and lakes, we can take water for granted, even think of rain as a nuisance.

I think of the April showers as delayed gratification. We put up with cold and clouds in the hope that soon the sun and warmth will overwhelm the darkness and chill winds. Someone said maturity is just learning to delay gratification. We work so we will have money to have fun. To be an adult is to put off having a little thing now, so we can have a better thing later.

Dear God, please let it be sunny and warm soon. I have been good.

Pastor Brian

SERMON TITLES FOR APRIL

4/7 “Christians Are Weird”

4/14 Emeritus Sun.: Rev. Ken Knox - “Whose Church Is It?”

4/21 “Some Will Not Hear the Message”

4/28 “The Church Turns”

Children’s Time:

4/7 “Praise God!”

4/14 Emeritus Sunday

4/21 “Why Do We Eat with Friends?”

4/28 “Taught to Be Quiet”

The Auburn Historical Society is doing *Images of America "Auburn" Book*. We are in need of pre 1960 photographs of people, places and events (especially parades and civic events). If you have any pictures, please contact Sonja Carr at 508-892-0125 or bring them to the Museum, 41 South Street, on any Tuesday or Saturday 9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

We need them by May 1st.

In addition, any small monetary donation to defray overall expenses would be appreciated — THANK YOU!

Members of the Auburn Historical Society



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, National Counseling Awareness Month, National Donate Life Month, Stress Prevention Month, and National Humor Month. It takes less energy to smile than to frown and laughter is good.

April 1-7 is National Public Health Week, April 11 is National Alcohol Screening Day, April 20-27 is National Infant Immunization Week, and April 29-May 3 is Air Quality Awareness Week.

I have a few commodes in the closet and a wheelchair. If anyone has walkers, shower chairs, bed rails, etc. that are in good condition, if you want to donate them to the closet, please do. Please make sure they are in good condition. If you are donating packages of adult briefs, please only unopened packages unless you speak with me. I have to throw a lot of things in the dumpster. Thank you.

Happy Spring!
Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse

SPAGHETTI SUPPER FUNDRAISER

As many of you already know, Cassie Stockhaus has been selected, interviewed and accepted to participate in the People to People Student Ambassador program and will be traveling to France, England, Wales and Ireland for three weeks this July. The People to People Program was founded by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956. He believed that if people from different cultures could come together in peace and friendship, eventually so would countries.



The program tuition is \$7,500 which includes all transportation, accommodations, meals, educational activities and insurance. To help offset the cost, we are having a spaghetti supper fundraiser on May 11th here at the First Congregational Church in Auburn starting at 5:00 p.m. The tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 12 and under.

Following the dinner several items will be raffled (item donations to the raffle would be greatly appreciated).

Please contact Lori Stockhaus at (508) 865-6439, if you plan to attend, so we can get a head count.

If you aren't able to attend, but would still like to make a donation, please make checks payable to "People to People" and give to Lori. Thanks in advance for your support.



Donald W. "Red" Aker, 81, of Auburn, died Friday, March 29, 2013 in St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester. He leaves his loving partner, Carol Mangiacotti of Leominster; and his children: Kevin Aker, Bonnie Courtemanche, Beverly Tatro, Mitchell Aker, Linda-Marie Pickard, Lori-Ann Stockhaus, Karen Costa, and Thomas Burns. He is also survived by 17 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife, Florence E. (Pearson) Aker.

Donald was born in Worcester, son of the late Charles H. and Isabella F. (Chapman) Aker and lived in Auburn for over 40 years. He graduated from Leicester High School in 1951 and proudly served his country with the U.S. Navy during the Korean War.

Donald had worked as a dispatcher for Roadway Express, and was later employed in the Electrical Department at Spag's in Shrewsbury before he retired.

He was a member of the First Congregational Church in Auburn where he served as a Deacon, choir member and key member of the bowling league. Don volunteered for the "Meals on Wheels" program for several years and enjoyed life at camp.

Funeral services for Donald will be held on Wednesday, April 3, 2013 at 1 PM in the First Congregational Church, 128 Central St., Auburn. Burial with military honors will be in Hillside Cemetery, Auburn. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter #4, 570 Mill St., Worcester, MA 01602 or the First Congregational Church Memorial Fund, 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501.

Don will be missed by all who were blessed to have known him. Please keep Don's loved ones in your prayers during this difficult time.

Happy Birthday to:

Ernie Smith - April 9th

Haydn McPherson - April 10th

Bob MacLeod - April 27th



Happy Anniversary to:

Don & Marion Woodcock who will be married 62 years as of April 8th and to Don & Jen Temple who are celebrating their special day on April 15th.

Coffee Hour Hosts

4/7	~ Trustees
4/14, 4/21	~ Prudential Committee
4/28, 5/5	~ Historian, Memorial, Scholarship & Nominating

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Applications are available in Fellowship Hall, and in the church office for anyone interested in applying for a scholarship. **Don't forget, applications are due by April 15th.**

The Rotary Club of Auburn will hold its **Annual Scholarship Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, April 7th, from 8 a.m. till noon** in the Auburn High School cafeteria. Since 1963, this annual event (sponsored by the Rotary Club of Auburn) has funded over \$335,000 in scholarships for Auburn students. Tickets cost \$5 for adults and children over 8 years; \$1 for children 7 and younger, and may be purchased at the door. All proceeds will be given in scholarships to Auburn High School seniors. Scholarship presentations will be in June 2013.

BOOK YOUR PORTRAIT SITTING TODAY!

We have begun booking portrait sittings for our new Church photo directory. Sittings will be here at First Congregational Church between 2 and 9 p.m. on May 3rd, 14th, and 15th and between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 4th. We are very pleased with the response we have received thus far, but **our directory won't be complete without YOU — the members and friends of First Congregational Church! So, don't delay - book your appointment today!** It's easy. You may book your sitting through a link on our church website: auburnfirststucc.org, by calling the church office at 508-832-2845, or during designated coffee hours.



Look for the *Library Tidings* to return next month. In the meantime, perhaps the following quotes will inspire you to visit our Church Libraries.

“We read to know that we are not alone.” — William Nicholson

“I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.” — Groucho Marx

“It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it.” — Oscar Wilde

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.” — Dr. Seuss, *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*

A DRIVE FOR A DRIVEWAY

Due to its deteriorated and unsafe condition, it has been voted by the church to replace the driveway and parking lot. This is a project that is long overdue. It was voted by the congregation to use invested funds to get this project underway, but the reality of the situation is, it is never good to permanently use these funds. Invested funds are used to generate income for the church on a yearly basis, and to use the principal portion of these funds for capital expenditures is not in the best interest of the church's future.

So, we have decided to initiate a campaign to replace those funds. The goal is \$35,000. We are looking for long term as well as individual commitments to reach our goal.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Your Board of Trustees

CRADLE ROLL ROTATION

4/7 Cindy Dube	4/14 Sue Campbell
4/21 Marion Woodcock	4/28 Tori Stockhaus

SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

4/7-4/28 Good Samaritan Unit

Art: Janice Green	Science: Karen Facticeau
Games: Caitlin Gardner	Music: Lilly McPherson

We need volunteers for May. Remember, this is only a 3 week commitment. Please see Jean McPherson if you're able to lend a hand. Thank you!

First Congregational Church in Auburn 12th Annual Golf Tournament

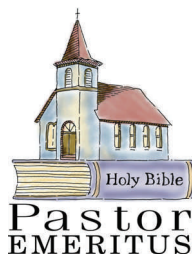
Saturday, August 3rd, 2013

**At Pine Ridge Country Club, Oxford, MA
12:30 p.m. Registration 1:30 p.m. tee-off**

Please look for additional information in future newsletters and church bulletins.

Save the Date

The Greater Auburn Community Chorus will present "Masters of Broadway" on Saturday, April 6th, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 7th, at 2:30 p.m. Pam Tentor, Marge Zimmerman, Barbara Allaire, Lillian and Jean McPherson are all participants in this concert. Tickets are \$12 and are available from Pam or Jean, or at the door.



EMERITUS SUNDAY

Mark your calendars for Sunday, April 14th, as Rev. Ken Knox returns to the pulpit for Emeritus Sunday.

From **Here We Grow** Preschool

Welcome spring and its warm sunny days; HA, HA, we're patiently waiting. Throughout the month of March, we were very busy at **Here We Grow** Preschool. New faces were seen in the classrooms with all the family volunteers. The children had moms, dads and some grandparents who helped out for a day and a few brave parents that did science experiments and many enjoyed reading a story at the end of the day. The staff and children say "THANK YOU".

Neal Primeaux finally made it to school after two snow day cancellations and spent time taking class and individual pictures of the children. Thank you to the Board of Christian Ed for allowing us the use of a Sunday school room for the individual pictures to be taken in.

We held our Open House on March 6th with many visitors. All were very impressed with *Here We Grow*, the church and the use of space allowed to the preschool. At this time, we are filled in the morning 4's and 3's classrooms with openings in the afternoon classes. If you know of anyone looking for a preschool, please send them our way.

Our final fundraiser will be beautiful hanging plants. We will be selling them during the month of April with a planned delivery for the week before Mother's Day. Look for posters hanging up if you are interested in ordering.

Visitors in March: Amber Dombroski, a past **Here We Grow** student and future veterinarian, came to school and shared her knowledge about animals with our four year olds. The Auburn Children's Librarian visited and read to the children. Members from the Massachusetts State Police, Auburn Police, and the Amber Alert Team did fingerprinting of all 4 year olds who will be going on to kindergarten in the fall. Information will be stored on a flash drive (donated by Mike Lavallee) which will be sent home with the children.

Easter parties were held on March 28th and 29th with a visit from the Easter bunny.

We will be on vacation April 15-19, hopefully enjoying warm, sunny weather.

Until next month, hope all is well —

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

JOIN US!

We continue to hold scheduled potluck suppers (a combination of potluck and book/movie discussions) in the vestry/old kitchen. The next get together will be on **Tues., April 2nd at 6 p.m.**, when we will discuss the book, *The Gift of the Jews*.

On **Tues., Apr. 30th**, we will be viewing the movie, "The Miracle Worker," and the supper will begin at **5:30 p.m.** Remember, EVERYONE is invited to join us for any or all parts of the evening.

Please call the church office, 508-832-2845, if you have any questions.

Our next **Community Supper** is planned for

Saturday, April 20th
at 5:00 p.m.

On the menu:

Roast Beef Dinner

Adults \$10 Children \$5

Servers: Music Committee &
volunteers needed



THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

Sunday, May 5th (time to be determined)

The First Congregational Church of Harvard

5 Still River Road Harvard, MA 01451 978-456-8788

We are having a U2charist!

A catered dinner will follow the U2charist and business meeting.

Dear Friends,

Eleven years ago I ended an 18 year long journey with the New Ark United Church of Christ. After saying farewell to that community I drove the 302 miles from Newark, Delaware to Springfield, Massachusetts to begin a new journey as an Associate Conference Minister. When I began I would have never guessed that 11 years later I would have driven the equivalent of 20 times around the earth or a trip to the moon and back.

Time doesn't allow a complete travel log, but to paraphrase Springfield native Dr. Seuss, oh the places I have gone over those 500,000 miles. I have been to the endings and beginnings of ministries, discernment processes, ordinations, search committees forming, search committees successfully completing their calling, meetings of committees on ministry - Board of Directors - Executive Committees, successful new initiatives, new initiatives that didn't succeed, leadership academies, boundary trainings, the Unified Fitness Review Committee, breakfasts with Synod delegates, meetings with pastors, visions of red and black banners proclaiming God is Still Speaking (new news to some), work with five associations and over 170 congregations, justice fairs, work on resolutions, supporting the work of justice task forces and so much more.

Now 11 years, and all those miles later, my time with you will be coming to a conclusion. At the end of August I will be leaving the conference and beginning the journey of "retirement." I put quotes around the word retirement because, along with collecting social security, I do plan to continue to be engaged in ministry. Over the next few months there will be ample time to express my thanks to many of you personally. For now I will offer a general but heartfelt word of gratitude for the countless ways you have blessed my life. Quoting the UCC Liturgy of Farewell, I thank you for, "The love, kindness, and support shown me these last 11 years. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here."

Shalom,

The Rev. Dr. Peter A. Wells

Associate Conference Minister, Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ

Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ
214th ANNUAL MEETING ~ June 14 & 15, 2013
 Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center

The Keynote Speaker will be The Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, a tenured professor in the Philosophy Department at Oklahoma City University, an author, a syndicated columnist, and an award winning commentator for National Public Radio. Since 1985, Dr. Meyers has been the Senior Minister of Mayflower Congregational Church of Oklahoma City. Dr. Meyers is the author of 6 books. His latest, *The Underground Church*, proposes that the faithful recapture the spirit of the early church with its emphasis on what Christians *do* rather than what they *believe*. Register for the meeting online at macucc.org.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Praise God for all your blessings! By now I pray the snow is over. I am writing this during yet ANOTHER snow day from school! I am thankful for the snow and the water it will bring to the reservoir and lakes. Remember these cold days when we hit the height of summer and humidity is 100%. Sometimes when we are in the middle of an experience we cannot find the blessings until we have moved on. Let's try and find blessings in something we do every day.

The Youth group and 3 brave adults spent a weekend up at Monadnock Bible Conference March 22-24. I want to thank Shannon Hartmann, Alex Brownell and Rich McPherson for taking on the challenge. I am sure they all had an amazing experience. Next up is CityReach, April 12-13. For those who have gone before, you know what an amazing experience it is. As someone who has worked for the homeless for over 7 years, I believe that an experience such as the one provided by the CityReach staff will shine a light and change attitudes of many young people and adults alike. Previous teens have said it has made a life altering change in their lives. A wish list is included below. Please look for a designated box in fellowship hall for collections, and I thank you in advance for your assistance.

The Confirmation class will be meeting with the Deacons in April to finalize preparation for Confirmation Sunday on May 19.

Sunday school has two units left and we are in need of three teachers for our last unit on Friendship. What a gift you could give the children as they begin the summer, teaching them about friendship and how we always have a friend in Jesus. Please speak to me if you would like to help out. Thank you to all who have helped in the past.



With His guidance we serve,

Jean McPherson.
Director of Religious Education

CITYREACH WISH LIST:

Food donations: fillings for sandwiches such as - peanut butter, jelly, fluff, cold cuts, tuna fish, egg salad and cheese. Snacks such as: cookies, brownies, granola bars or other individually packaged snacks/desserts. Hard boiled eggs and fruit that is easy to chew (oranges, bananas, grapes), juice boxes, and caffeine-free soda.

Clothing donations: should be about 80% men's/unisex and include: new white socks, new underwear, gently used clothing including: warm coats, hats, waterproof gloves, sweat shirts (hooded especially), sweat pants, sweaters, t-shirts, long-sleeve shirts (XL, XXL and XXXL are in demand, but all sizes are needed) jeans, khakis, casual pants, belts, waterproof boots, and walking shoes/sneakers and plastic/paper shopping bags to carry away the clothes they receive.

Miscellaneous items include: sleeping bags/blankets (clean and in good condition), all kinds of carrying cases such as backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels (used and in good condition), travel-size toiletries: soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotions, lip balm, toothpaste and toothbrushes, small cans of shaving cream (please no aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol) disposable razors and tampons (in small quantities for the 20% or so women) and small pieces of felt, buttons and other banner-making supplies.

THANK YOU!

HAITI BOUND

Randy and I will return to Haiti as part of another medical mission team this fall (9/30 to 10/9). We will be venturing out of Port-Au-Prince to some more remote areas for the clinics. This year's trip is \$1,700 per person. The funds include food, travel, lodging as well as some of the medical supplies we will be taking with us and purchasing in Haiti. The Outreach Committee has generously supported us by paying our \$500 deposit, but we still need your help. If you would like to help, please speak to Randy or me, or you can give your donations directly to Lori Stockhaus.

As we get closer to departure, look for info on a list of over-the-counter medicines we'll be collecting for the trip.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support, your love, and your prayers for the people of Haiti and especially the children.

In His Service,
Jennifer & Randy Bohn

Thank-you to:

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!



Laura Koopman wishes to thank Debbie Pranaitis, our Parish Nurse, for all her help.

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

April 2013

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OR CURRENT RESIDENT