



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

“And a Child Will Lead Them”

This month we start Lent with our normal service on Ash Wednesday, March 6, at 7PM. We will also be having our Lenten series on Jesus using the film *The Miracle Maker*. We will watch parts of the movie following a meal of soup and sandwiches. The Lenten series begins at 6 and ends by 7.

This year we will be viewing a stop motion animated film on the life of Jesus. I consider this the most accurate, to the Bible, film on the life of Jesus I have seen. I especially like how the film presents the parables.

Many of you know I like cartoons. I think good programming for children can get to the core of a story better than programs aimed only at adults. When telling a story to a child, a lot of the tricks used to hide a bad story from adults can't be used. Children aren't impressed by the same things adults are impressed by.

Too often children's programs are horrible because they assume their audience are idiots. (I think that is also true of many adult programs.) But a good children's program can be quite powerful.

Jesus had a special love for children.

*¹³ Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; ¹⁴ but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” ¹⁵ And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.**

And . . .

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ² He called a child, whom he put among them, ³ and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.***

So it is important that we adults be open to the spirit of a child. I hope watching and talking about a Jesus movie meant for kids will give us all a new insight into the ministry of Jesus.

God Bless you,
Pastor Brian

*Matthew 19; **Matthew 18

THIS MONTH'S SERMON TOPICS:

- 3/3 “The Seven Deadly Sins”
- 3/10 “Sloth”
- 3/17 “Wrath”
- 3/24 “Gluttony Is a Hard One”
- 3/31 “Lust Becomes Murder”

The Sunday school children will be taking an offering from March through the end of May to send to Heifer International; they are trying to buy an animal to send overseas.

We read a story called “Beatrice's Goat.” The story talks about everything the girl and her family received due to this one gift of a goat given to her family from people she will never meet. We also talked about ways the kids could earn their offering by doing chores around the house.

We will keep you posted with our progress. Thank you for your partnership with this program.

Coffee Hour Hosts

March 3	Personnel Committee
March 10	Board of Deacons
March 17	Prudential Committee
March 24	Board of Trustees
March 31	Music Comm. & Historian

Happy Birthday to:

MARCH
BIRTHDAYS

3/9	- Paula Bigelow
3/16	- MacKenzie Young
3/26	- Jean McPherson
3/28	- Ryan Minor
3/29	- Everett Webb

SAVE THE DATE:

The Auburn Faith Walk for Hunger is scheduled for Sunday, October 27th, at 1:00. The Publick House in Sturbridge has scheduled a barbecue feast under the tent on Monday, September 23rd to benefit the hunger walk. Look for more information to follow in September. Please contact Sue Campbell, 508-799-2718, with any questions.

YOU'RE INVITED . . . Join us at our monthly potluck suppers (a combination of potluck supper and a book/movie discussion). The next get-together will be on March 19th at 5:30 p.m. when we will view and discuss the 2nd half of the movie *The Red Tent*. *The Red Tent* is a tale that takes place during Old Testament times as told through the eyes of Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob. All are welcome. Looking ahead to April, we'll be discussing the book "VOX" by Christina Dalcher.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 15TH

Scholarship applications are available on the table in Fellowship Hall. We have several scholarships we would like to award to church members seeking to continue their education. Please complete the application form and return it to the Memorial/Scholarship Committee.

COMMUNITY ROAST PORK SUPPER

Saturday, March 23rd, at 5p.m.

Adults - \$10 Children - free

SERVERS: NO GROUP HAS VOLUNTEERED TO HELP THIS MONTH. PLEASE CONSIDER LENDING A HAND WITH THE SUPPER.

JOIN US ON MARCH 6TH BEGINNING AT 7 P.M. FOR OUR ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE. ALL ARE WELCOME.

Please support our Cub Scouts' **PANCAKE BREAKFAST** fundraiser from 7 to 9 a.m. on Sunday, March 17th, in fellowship hall.

One Great Hour of Sharing is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHs also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. This year's theme is "More than We Can Imagine," based on Ephesians 3:20.

Offering envelopes are enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Please place in the offering plate on Sunday or mail to: First Congregational Church, 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501. Thank you!

LENTEN SERIES

We hope you'll join us on Wednesday nights during Lent as we meet over soup and sandwiches beginning at 6 p.m. This year the discussion time will focus on the retelling of the life of Christ in the movie *The Miracle Maker*. As in the past, boards and committees were asked to sign-up at the All Committee meeting to provide the soup and sandwiches for the Lenten series. The supper schedule is as follows:

Mar. 13	Outreach & Music Committees	April 3	Board of Ed (BOCE)
Mar. 20	Board of Deacons	April 10	Stewardship Committee
Mar. 27	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED		



March is Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, National Cheerleader Safety Month, National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, National Endometriosis Awareness Month, and National Kidney Month. It is also National Nutrition Month, Problem Gambling Awareness Month, Save Your Vision Month, Trisomy Awareness Month, and Workplace Eye Wellness Month.

- March 4-8 National School Breakfast Week
- March 10-16 Patient Safety Awareness Week
- March 10 National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- March 11-17 Brain Awareness Week
- March 11-17 National Sleep Awareness Week
- March 14 National Kidney Day
- March 18-24 National Poison Prevention Week
- March 24 World Tuberculosis Day
- March 26 American Diabetes Alert Day

I have received a copy of the bulletin for Nancy MacLeod's Memorial Service that was held at the Cape. If anyone would like to see it, please see me. Denise made copies and placed them in the narthex.

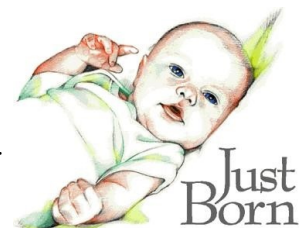
I have a box in Fellowship Hall to collect items for a care package for Thomas Bigelow, son of Skip and Paula Bigelow, who is deployed to Afghanistan. He's been there since January and is scheduled to come back in July. Things that would be appreciated are: powdered drink mix, cocoa, coffee and tea bags, snacks in small, hard containers to protect in shipment, toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss, cotton swabs, small tissue packages, hand wipes, shaving lotion, disposable razors, medicated foot powder, shampoo, notepaper, envelopes, pens and pencils, playing cards, puzzle books. Homemade cookies are also appreciated in protective cases.

I'm planning on shipping the box/ boxes the first week of April, so if you're planning on baked goodies, please wait till the end. Thank you.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse, 508-612-4521

We are pleased to announce the newest addition to the Murray clan — Avery Jay Leszau was born February 9th, weighing 9 lbs. and measuring 21½ inches. She's the daughter of Lauren and Danny Leszau of New Jersey. Proud great-grandparents are Bob and Carole Murray.



Here We Grow Preschool



I have heard rumors that spring is coming soon; let's hope they are correct. We are looking forward to getting outside again.

Our prize calendar fundraiser has gone home; we ran it for the entire month of February, giving parents the vacation week to seek out all their family and friends. Did you grab one from Denise? We have some great prizes available donated by local businesses and direct sales people. The children will start pulling names March 1st and we will post the winners in the HWG entryway. We will also be selling boxes of cards through Usborne Books in the near future; for \$30 you get a box of beautiful greeting cards. See us at HWG to grab a box or two. They make great gifts.

The children and staff celebrated Valentines Day with parties on the 13th and 14th. They all got to play mail carrier while passing out valentines to classmates. They loved it! This was followed up with a week off for winter vacation. We used the time off to make sure everything was cleaned. Hopefully this will help cut down on some of the illnesses we have been seeing.

Our Open House is Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 9-11 AM. We are hoping to have another great turnout this year. If you have a friend or family member looking for a preschool for their little one, let them know about the Open House; we would love to meet them. Remember, children can start at 2 years 9 months and do not have to be potty trained. I have been doing tours on a regular basis for the last month, and we still have spots available for next year.

Ever wonder what happens during the day down here? Come on down and see. The children love to have extra attention from visitors in the classroom and they are always willing to show off what they know.

Until next month, keep warm and let's hope that the groundhog is right about spring being around the corner.

Cristi Corey, *Here We Grow* Director

Please join us for
Here We Grow's Open House
 Tuesday, March 5th, from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.

ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR JOB POSTING

The Music Search Committee is actively seeking to fill the position of Organist/Choir Director. The job of the organist/choir director serves to support and enhance the worship services and music program within our Church.

Skills and Qualifications: Ability to play proficiently various styles of music on organ and piano; ability to recruit, direct, and motivate volunteer adult and junior church choirs; ability to select music for purchase and presentation. Ability to work as a team leader/team member and communicate well with co-workers, choirs, and congregation. A degree or certificate from a certified music education program is preferred; basic knowledge of congregational worship is preferred.

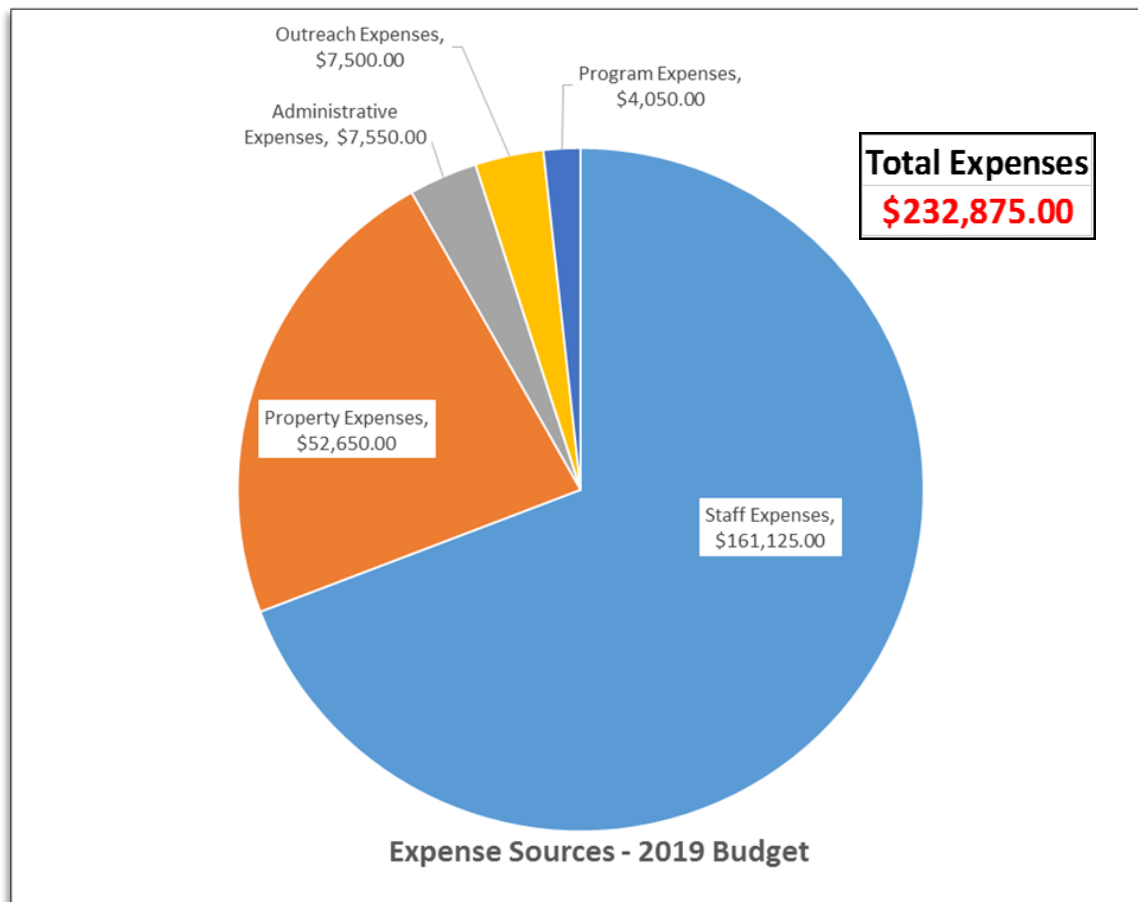
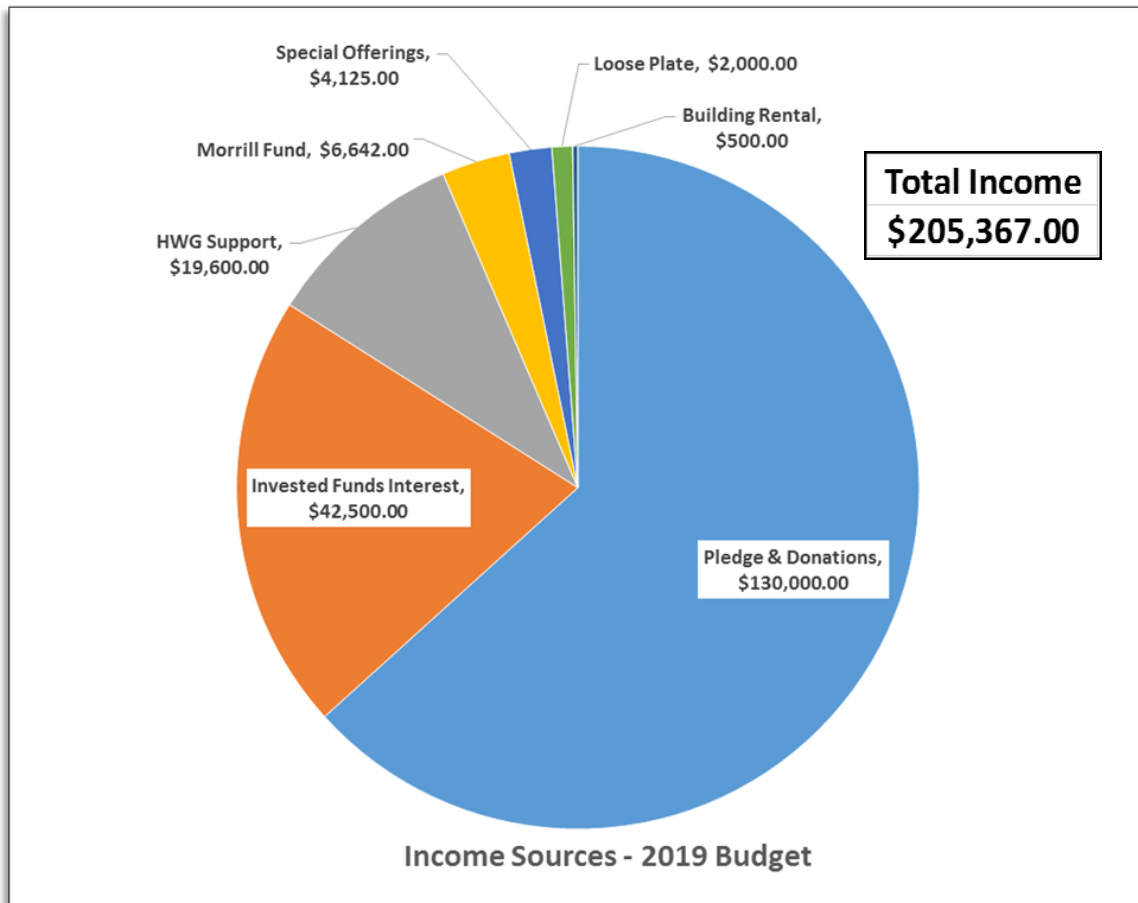
Responsibilities: Provide organ or piano musical solos or accompaniment before, during, and following regular Sunday morning services and for other special services, e.g. Christmas Eve, Easter, Lenten, Ecumenical. Conduct weekly choir rehearsals, and prepare the choir(s) for special services. Coordinate with the minister to plan worship services. Work with the Music Committee on annual music budget, annual report, and instrument maintenance. Play for weddings and funerals held at the church. (Personal schedule will be considered.) Communicate with church secretary on anthems for publication in the weekly program and for copying as needed. Maintain music library/collection in an accessible and orderly format. Coordinate/communicate with the Director of Religious Education and parents on rehearsals and monthly/special performances of the Jr. Choir. Comply with our Child Protection Policy.

Additional Information: Hours include Sundays, church holidays, and selected afternoons/evenings for rehearsals and worship. Compensation is commensurate with a part-time position based on qualifications and experience. Additional compensation for funeral and wedding services will be paid by those requesting the service.

A complete job description is posted on bulletin boards in fellowship hall and in the church office.

Applicants should email a cover letter and resume to Lori-Ann Stockhaus at musicsearch@auburnfirstucc.org

Our thanks to Church Treasurer, Nick Stockhaus, for providing us with the charts below depicting the 2019 budget.



Please keep the following families in your prayers.

Richard E. “Dick” Steelman, 88, longtime Auburn resident, died Thursday, January 31, 2019 in his home surrounded by his loving family.

Dick was born in Worcester and raised in Auburn, son of the late Phillip E. Steelman and Mabel (Cedar) Steelman. He graduated from Auburn High School and then entered into the United States Navy where he served his country proudly during the Korean War aboard the USS Stephen Potter as a radar technician.

Dick worked for the New England Telephone Company as an installer for many years before he retired.

He was a member of the First Congregational Church in Auburn; the Joel H. Prouty Masonic Lodge; the Auburn Lodge of Elks; the National Association of the Tin Can Sailors and he was a car enthusiast. Dick also enjoyed being a part of the Auburn Historical Society and spent many hours woodworking, making several birdhouses and other crafts.

Dick was predeceased by his beloved wife Frances L. (Earley) Steelman. He is survived by his children, Linda Kusy and her husband Ted, David Steelman and his wife Debbie, and Steven Steelman; he also leaves six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Besides his wife, he was predeceased by a sister Dorothy Giddings.

On Thursday, February 7, 2019, a funeral service was held here at First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn. Burial with military honors took place in Hillside Cemetery, Auburn.

Marjorie M (Werme) Averka passed suddenly on Wednesday, February 6, 2019 at St. Vincent Hospital. She was 84 years old. She was born on May 18, 1934 to J. Arvid Werme and Ruth Carolina (Carlstrom) in Worcester. Marjorie was preceded in death by her late husband, C. David Averka. They were married for 58 years, having lived in Alabama, Georgia, Texas, Arizona and Massachusetts.

She is survived by her devoted companion and best friend, David Sampson Sr. of Auburn, and leaves her loving children, daughter Debra Erickson and her husband Robert, son Steven Averka and his wife Carol, son Bradley Averka and his wife Kathleen, six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren, her brother Donald Werme and his wife Charmain, sister-in-law Jacqueline Norman and her husband Robert, cousins, nieces and nephews, and many wonderful friends.

Marjorie worked as Administrator of the Department of Pharmacology at UMass Medical School in Worcester. Upon retirement she traveled extensively with her late husband and loved being with family and friends.

Marjorie was an active member of the YMCA for over 40 years. She enjoyed swimming, yoga and weight training, served as past president of The Auburn Woman’s Club and Auburn Rotary Ann’s and she was a member of First Congregational Church, Auburn. The last three years brought her newfound happiness after meeting David at church. They traveled, enjoying each other’s company. She had an incredible joy for life, elegance, and a genuinely loving heart.

A funeral service was held here on Friday, February 22, 2019. Burial will be held in private.

Shirley F. (Booker) Barcroft, a longtime Auburn resident, died peacefully on the morning of Thursday, February 14, 2019 at the age of 96. She was predeceased by her husband Elwood K. Barcroft with whom she shared 49 wonderful years in marriage.

Born in New Bedford, one of six children of William N. and Anna M. (Taber) Booker, Shirley graduated from the Greater New Bedford Regional Technical High School. Elwood and Shirley first met at Lincoln Park while Elwood was enlisted in the United States Army. The couple were married in 1943 and began their family. It was in 1972 that Shirley and Elwood settled in Auburn. During the 47 years they resided in Auburn, Shirley and Elwood were devout members of the First Congregational Church of Auburn, where they made many friends over those years. Shirley took great pride in being able to stay at home to oversee to family needs. She loved keeping the house for her husband and children and time spent with them was always cherished time for her.

In addition to providing for her family and devoting much time to her church, Shirley enjoyed crossword puzzles and was an avid reader.

Shirley is survived by her children Joyce E. Almeida and her husband Leonard, Cheryl L. Bragg and her husband John, Gail A. Gibbs and her husband, the late Bradford, Roberta J. Pratt and her husband Timothy, Cindy Hiser and her husband Andrew; 10 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, 5 great-great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her siblings Mary, Ralph, Marion, William, and Raymond.

A Funeral service was held on Monday, February 25, 2019 at Britton-Wallace Funeral Home in Auburn. Burial followed at Hillside Cemetery.

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

Easter Plant Order Form

Once again we will be accepting orders for Easter plants. On Easter Sunday there will be a special insert in the bulletin noting who the plant is in honor of and who it's from. This is a wonderful way to pay tribute to a loved one, while also decorating our Church Sanctuary. Just complete the order form below and drop it in the offering plate when it's passed or mail to the church, 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501. Please submit your order form with payment **by Sunday, April 7th.**

Lilies (1 stem) \$10.00 _____

Lilies (2 stems) \$20.00 _____

Lilies (3 stems) \$30.00 _____

Tulips 6" \$10.00 _____ **8" \$18.00** _____

Color Choice: Yellow _____ Pink _____

Red _____ White _____ Purple _____

6" Hyacinths \$10.00 _____

Color Choice: blue _____ pink _____

8" Hydrangeas \$28.00 _____

Color Choice: blue _____ pink _____

6" Pansies (mixed colors) \$7.00 _____

6" Martha Washington Geraniums

\$13.00 _____

Color Choice: white _____ pink _____

lavender _____ purple _____

**PLEASE COMPLETE DEDICATION IN
SPACE PROVIDED ON BACK.**

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Happy spring everyone! I must say that spring is my favorite of all seasons. With all the grass and flowers beginning to grow, and the smell of rain and hydrangeas in the air, I just have a brighter outlook on the day. I pray this spring will give you a revived sense of happiness and energy.

Speaking of energy, we survived another weekend at Monadnock Bible Ministries! On the weekend of February 8-10 Shannon Hartmann, Fred Comeau, 11 teens and I took the trek up to MBC. The weekend's message was PAUSE. The speaker talked about our need to have "DP," Daily Pause in our life so we can rejuvenate and recharge our spiritual batteries. I think the message applies to us as all. In this world of technology, we seldom take a pause to reflect and give thanks to our Heavenly Father and for all the blessings He's bestowed upon us. In the upcoming weeks and months, we plan to "pause" and see what our youth group's purpose and goals are. Please pray that these discussions will be fruitful and, in the end, we become a stronger, more unified group.

The confirmation class will visit CityReach this month. For those of you who do not know about CityReach, it is a program working with the homeless population of Boston by donating clothes and food as well as participating in night street ministry. Each year I am amazed how the kids step up and come out of their comfort zone to assist the guests during this weekend. I am always proud of the job they do.

(PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE,
508-832-2845, TO HAVE A CITYREACH
DONATION LIST EMAILED TO YOU.**)**

We are on the last season of Sunday school. The kids are doing an amazing job learning about Jesus and how to walk in His word.

I pray that this season of rebirth will bring you much happiness, and don't forget to pause and smell the roses.

Jean McPherson, Director of Religious Education

YOM FUNDRAISER

Youth On a Mission will be selling those delicious butter braids and fruit crisps again this year - just in time for Easter!

Sale dates are March 10th through March 24th with pick up following the Palm Sunday worship service!

As always, thank you for your support!

**Easter Flower Dedication
(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)**

Suggestion: Dedications may be In Memory of / In Celebration of/ for a special event, etc.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR DEDICATION **EXACTLY** AS YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO APPEAR IN THE BULLETIN **INCLUDING WHO IT'S FROM.**

Name: (for contact purposes only) _____
Day Time Contact (phone and email): _____

If you have questions, please call Michele Schillingner at 508-259-2239 or the church office at 508-832-2845.

**BULK RATE
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Auburn, Mass**

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 Email: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org
 or PastorBrian@auburnfirstucc.org



*God's church in Auburn Center
doing Christ's work in the world.
Web: auburnfirstucc.org*

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

March 2019						
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
31						