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# *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

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## FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR:

It’s just been one thing after another all week, all last week, all month... have you ever had a time like that? I’ve hardly had time to think, much less do the laundry.

The books tell us Lent is a time to slow down. Experience tells me that everything speeds up at this time of the year, even without Lent. My lawn guy wants to know if I want him to come and clear the winter’s yield of branches off the grass. My heavy coat stares at me from the rack and wants to know if it isn’t time to put it away and bring out the lighter weight clothing. The upholstery on the couch needs to be cleaned. . .

And Denise is – ever so gently – asking me to get this finished so she can get the newsletter out.

There’s nothing like a rush like this to bring me up sharp and remind me that the idea of Lent as

a time to think, to do less, is just as important as it is difficult. God did not make us to rush around non-stop now and always. Lent reminds us that, even if we can’t do it for long, even if all we can manage is five quiet minutes in the car before we start it up and take off for the next thing... we need to take the time to do that.

We need to give ourselves time and space to let our brain coast, even if it is only for a few minutes. In Lent, we have the opportunity to read our devotional and let those thoughts live in our hearts for the day, bringing us a change of pace.

And thank God for people like Denise, who, when I was overwhelmed last week, gave me space – and at the same time, made sure I got this done!

Blessings, Virginia



**Palm Sunday Service** at 10 a.m. on March 24.

**Maundy Thursday Service** will be held March 28th at 7 p.m.

**Good Friday** is March 29th ~ The church sanctuary will be open from noon until 3 p.m. for one’s own personal time of prayer and reflection.

**Easter Sunday** is March 31st ~ with our Sunrise Service at 6 a.m. at Hillside Cemetery and our church worship service at 10 a.m.

**ALL ARE WELCOME.**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE PALM SUNDAY EVENTS:



**ON PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>**, we'll start the day with our annual **BREAKFAST** beginning at 8:30 a.m. There is no cost for the breakfast but a free-will offering will be accepted. Thank you to our chefs:

## Join Us For Breakfast

Jennifer and Randy Bohn and  
Ron and Connie Hanks!

Kids, join us for our annual

## EASTER EGG HUNT

held after worship on Palm Sunday!

**Please see the sign-up sheets** for both of these events located on the table in fellowship hall or call the church office, 508-832-2845, to have your name added to the list(s).

JOIN US FOR:

## HERE WE GROW PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 9-11 A.M.

### MARCH COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

- Mar. 3 Board of Christian Education (BOCE)
- Mar. 10 **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**
- Mar. 17 Personnel Committee
- Mar. 24 Mem'l/Scholarship, Nominating & Library
- Mar. 31 Easter - no coffee hour



March  
BIRTHDAYS

## Happy Birthday to:

3/9 - Paula Bigelow

3/16 - MacKenzie Young

3/26 - Jean McPherson

3/28 - Ryan Minor

3/29 - Everett Webb

### FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH'S SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

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 contact Denise in the church office at 508-832-2845 or email [secretary@auburnfirstucc.org](mailto:secretary@auburnfirstucc.org) to request an application.

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>.**

## Here We Grow Preschool



We are just over halfway through our school year, and the children are ready to start getting outside again. I am hopeful that the groundhog was correct last month and spring will be here soon.

Our Prize Calendar Fundraiser will begin March 1. Once again, we have some fantastic prizes available, thank you to all who donated. Denise has some available in the office and Carrie Grimshaw will have them available after church if you would like to purchase any. The children will start pulling names April 1<sup>st</sup>, and we will post the winners in the HWG entryway as well as the church office.

If you have a friend or family member looking for a preschool for their little one, we would love to meet them. We will be hosting an **Open House on Thursday, March 21, from 9-11 am**. If they are unable to attend, please have them call or email the school to schedule a visit.

We offer tours during the school day, which gives families a better sense of what Here We Grow has to offer, but I am always willing to come up in the evening or on the weekend if that works better for families. Remember, children can start at 2 years, 9 months and do not have to be potty trained or residents of Auburn to attend. Our Pre-K classes are filling up, but we do have plenty of availability in our 2 day classes for 3-year-olds.

Thank you to Stu and the trustees for fixing the broken lock on one of our classroom doors; we greatly appreciate your help.

Thank you to all who have been participating in our Papa Gino's fundraisers; we appreciate your support. Our next one is March 21.

Have a fantastic month.

Cristi Corey, Director, Here We Grow Preschool

### OUR LENTEN BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES ON WEDNESDAYS, 6-7 P.M.

THEME: WHAT MAKES US A CHURCH?



Mar. 6 Knowing Your Why

Mar. 13 A Sermon from the Rev. Lillian Daniel, Michigan Conference Minister

Mar. 20 The Church Game

The study will include soup and sandwiches provided by the boards/committees listed below.

3/6 Board of Trustees      3/13 Board of Christian Ed. (BOCE)      3/20 Music Committee

Dear Church members,

Please consider the following committee vacancies (# required by Bylaws):

**Board of Deacons**—4 vacancies

**Board of Ed**—1 vacancy

**Stewardship**—2 vacancies

**Trustees**—1 vacancy

**Nominating**—2 vacancies

If you have an interest in any of these openings, please reach out to Michele Schillinger of the Nominating Committee, 508-259-2239 or email: chel061759@gmail.com. Thank you.

### **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.

You'll find offering envelopes enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Checks should be payable to the church with OGHS noted in the memo. Please drop the envelopes in the offering plate on Sunday or mail to: First Congregational Church, 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501. Thank you!

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

We now have allergen-free, individually wrapped communion wafers available. They are gluten, dairy, egg, nut, soy and corn free. They will be placed on the communion trays beginning March 3rd.

### **WHITE SOCKS**

We are collecting WHITE socks for Worcester Fellowship. Please look for a designated box in fellowship hall and thank you for your support!

### **ANNUAL PLANT SALE ~ SATURDAY JUNE 8th**

Thank you, Diane Moore, for contacting Christine about donations of plants for this year's sale. The 8th is the date that works best for her. So, please mark your calendars now! As in the past, we will be accepting donations of perennials from your gardens. So, as you daydream about working in your gardens, think about what can be divided and donated.

### **YARD SALE JUNE 8th?**

I have made the decision that I can no longer coordinate the Yard Sale. I would be more than happy to work alongside someone willing to take it over. It is one of the easiest events to organize, no overhead and usually generates, with the plant sale and lunch, about \$3,000. dollars for the church. Contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Cindy Dube, cell# 774-238-0260

### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP GATHERING**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 9th at 9:30 a.m.**

Let's come together for fellowship and discussion on ideas of what we wish for this resurrected group. We will be brainstorming about what our mission is, what we would like to get from this group and activities we might want to get involved in. Come with your ideas, we'll supply the coffee and snacks.

### **POTLUCK & TRIVIA FUN NIGHT**

Please join the BOCE (Board of Christian Education) on SATURDAY, March 16, for a potluck and trivia night! The potluck starts at 5pm with the trivia fun starting at 6. Please sign up in fellowship hall or call the church office, 508-832-2845, to add your name to the list. We hope to see you there!



## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I hope this message finds everyone in good health and good spirits during this season of Lent. How are you doing with your personal Lent commitments? Did you give something up? Did you add more time with your Bible or connecting to Jesus? Or, did you commit to helping those in need? More than any of these traditions, my hope and prayer for you is that you have taken a moment (or a few) to reflect on this past year. Acknowledge the mistakes you have made and ask forgiveness. On March 31<sup>st</sup> of this year, we will all be celebrating the resurrection of Jesus and forgiveness of sins. While today we may feel burdened, soon we will delight in freedom.

As we continue to go through the season of Lent, I am reminded of my experience last year at the Easter service in my hometown, Calvary Lutheran Church, lead by Reverend Zachary Dean. His children's sermon was inspired by Bob Marley's famous song, "Three Little Birds." I am honored to have this opportunity to share and hopefully inspire you as well.

"Three Little Birds" is a very simple song, in terms of its lyrics. "Don't worry about a thing" is repeated approximately 10 times. That line is followed by "cause every little thing is gonna be alright." These verses are sung by three little birds, perched outside the window. The author describes the sound of the songbirds as "pure and true." He continues to say that their message is for "You-u-u." What if.... The three birds represent the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? The Holy Trinity of God, Jesus and the Spirit? The song they sing together makes them one entity. The message they are singing is to stop worrying!! It will all be ok!! The Bible tells us 365 times to not be afraid or do not fear. Are we receiving this message? I will leave you with a few Bible verses below to read at your own leisure, that state the second part of this chorus. God tells us, it is going to be not just ok, but good!

We have reviewed the meaning of Lent in all classes up to this point. In my older classes, our focus has been on the Ash Wednesday phrase of "from dust we were made, to dust we shall return" (as stated in Genesis). The Bible connects us all, not only to each other, but also to the earth. Humans from all walks of life are connected through God and connected to the earth, despite the differences our society wants us to focus on. (Genesis 2:7) God took the earth and breathed life into it. Over the next few weeks leading up to Easter, we will be studying the life of Jesus.

Thank you to all the parents and guardians that bring your child to church on Sundays and Tuesday nights. As a mother myself, I understand that life gets us crazy. I see you making the effort to be here. Thank you to the BOCE for always supporting the needs of our youth programs. Thank you to Lilly, Michele and Michael for showing up consistently to make a difference in the life of a child. Thank you to our entire congregation for always showing your love and support to me and all things involving our youth!

May the Lord light up the path on your journey. May you rest in the knowledge that . . . "Every little thing is gonna be alright!"

Shannon Hartmann

\*\*\* Just to name a few \*\*\*

**Isaiah 41:10** "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

**Jeremiah 29:11** "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

**1 Peter 5:7** "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you."

**Psalms 118:6-9** "With the LORD on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me? The LORD is on my side to help me; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to put confidence in princes."

**Matthew 6:25** "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

**Psalms 34:4** "I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears."





March is Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month, Myeloma Action Month, National Development Disabilities Awareness Month, National Kidney Month, and National Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month. It is also National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, National Endometriosis Awareness Month, and National Nutrition Month.

March 9 is World Kidney Day.

March 10-16 is National Pulmonary Rehabilitation Week.

March 10-16 is National Sleep Awareness Week.

March 11-17 is Brain Awareness Week.

March 18-24 is National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week.

As I am writing this, I am hearing about several cases of the norovirus. As with all the illnesses, handwashing is the best way to avoid getting sick. I haven't heard about as many cases of Covid or RSV. Please be careful and stay safe.

God Bless!

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

Please continue to pray for the Bigelow Family due to the recent passing of Win Bigelow.

**Windsor H. "Win" Bigelow, Jr.**, of Charlton (formerly of Webster, Auburn and Worcester), MA, passed away February 2, 2024, at the age of 93. He was born in Worcester to the late Windsor H. Bigelow, Sr. and Ethel (Nelson) Bigelow. Mr. Bigelow was predeceased by his first wife of 43 years, and mother of his three children, Nancy (Smith) Bigelow, his sister Dorothy, wife of Nelson B. Craver, and his stepdaughter Daryl (Kilgore) Cahill.



Mr. Bigelow is survived by his present wife of 25 years, Jacquelyn (Kilgore) Bigelow; two sons and their wives – Windsor "Skip", III and Paula; Scott and Nancy; and a daughter Susan "Sue", and her husband Dave White; a stepson Joshua Kilgore, as well as several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. He very much enjoyed his earlier years boating and sailing with his entire family most of his life while summering and finally living on Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg in Webster, prior to moving to Charlton.

Mr. Bigelow attended schools in Worcester and graduated from Worcester Academy and Tufts University in Medford. He was a principal of Bigelow Electrical Co., Inc. and Warren and Bigelow Electric Co., Inc. of Worcester for decades prior to retirement. Mr. Bigelow served in the United States Navy during the Korean Conflict, and finally attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander, prior to retiring from the Navy. He was a member of our Church and very active on the troop committee of Troop 101, Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Bigelow was a member of the Legion of Honor, a holder of the degree of Chevalier, and a Past Master Councilor of Worcester Chapter, Order of DeMolay in Massachusetts. He was a 33<sup>rd</sup> degree Scottish Rite Mason and recipient of the Meritorious Service Award, a member of the Valley of Worcester Scottish Rite and Past Thrice Potent Master of Worcester Lodge of Perfection, a member of the Massachusetts Consistory, and a member of Aleppo Shrine AAOONS. Mr. Bigelow was also a recipient of the Joseph Warren Meritorious Service Medal, a member of Rose of Sharon Lodge, AF&AM, a member of Joel H. Prouty Lodge AF&AM, and a member of Morning Star Lodge, AF&AM.

A memorial service was held here at the church on Saturday, February 24th. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in Hope Cemetery, Worcester.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Massachusetts DeMolay, Worcester Scottish Rite, or the charity of one's choice.

# Papa Gino's

PIZZERIA



## Here We Grow Preschool

will earn 20% of all qualifying sales  
from orders placed on March 21<sup>st</sup>.



Thursday, March 21, 2024

4:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Auburn • 459 Southbridge Street • 508-832-6583

- **Walk-in or phone orders:** Mention this fundraiser when you place your order for the organization to get credit for your order.
- **Online orders:** Enter code **19** at the payment screen and then click redeem.
- **Fundraiser orders** are only valid with regular priced menu items and cannot be paired with coupons or deals. Fundraisers are not valid on third party orders.



Valid for all Dine-In, Carry Out,  
Online & Delivery orders!

View menu & place online orders @ [papaginos.com](http://papaginos.com)

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 Sunday offering plate or mail to the church, 128 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501. Make checks payable to the church noting Easter flowers in the memo.

**PLEASE NOTE**

**Lily orders are due by March 17<sup>th</sup>. All other plant orders due by March 24<sup>th</sup>.** Every effort will be made to provide your 1st choice of colors but, depending on supply, substitutions may be necessary. **Please indicate 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> color choices.**

**PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU WILL NOT BE PICKING UP YOUR PLANT.**

**LILY ORDERS DUE MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>**

- Lilies (1 stem) \$14.00** \_\_\_\_\_
- Lilies (2 stems) \$26.00** \_\_\_\_\_
- Lilies (3 stems) \$38.00** \_\_\_\_\_
- Tulips 6" \$14.00** \_\_\_\_\_

Colors: yellow \_\_\_\_\_ pink \_\_\_\_\_

purple \_\_\_\_\_ white \_\_\_\_\_ red \_\_\_\_\_

**Tulips 8" \$21.00** \_\_\_\_\_

Colors: yellow \_\_\_\_\_ pink \_\_\_\_\_

purple \_\_\_\_\_ white \_\_\_\_\_ red \_\_\_\_\_

**6" Pansies (mixed colors) \$8.00** \_\_\_\_\_

**6.5" Martha Washington Geraniums \$14.00** \_\_\_\_\_

Colors: white \_\_\_\_\_ pink \_\_\_\_\_ lavender \_\_\_\_\_ purple \_\_\_\_\_

**Given By:** Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Include above name(s) in dedication?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory or Celebration of (PLEASE PRINT)** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Questions? Please call Michele Schillinger at 508-259-2239.**

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

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

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

Web: auburnfirstucc.org



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March 2024						
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**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**