

Herald of Good TIDINGS



2
0
2
5

"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

Beloved church family,
Here we are, finally in the glories of the Easter season and Spring's fullness! I have already made multiple pilgrimages to the five acre Field of Daffodils at the New England Botanical Garden, the true sign of spring's arrival. Acres of every golden and bright hue of daffodil! There is nothing better than grabbing a bench, a good friend and a tea, and hanging for a while as the daffodils offer their healing colors. My favorite sign of spring so far was at the sunrise service, where we were surrounded by an orchestra of birds around us, it was especially striking after a long winter to hear their return. Birder friends informed me that cemeteries at dawn are the best time to see and hear a diversity of birds, a protected space where birds can make their homes safely, returning from a long winter again and again. So, here we are, returning to new life again. So, take a moment and listen, smell, hear, marvel.

We are still in the season of Easter, and have a new set of aspirations: finding the living Christ in our midst and celebrating that love. Our scriptures over the upcoming Sundays will feature Jesus in resurrected form, returning to his followers unexpectedly and often unrecognized, and the challenges of actually seeing Jesus and believing in his promise. Where do we see the living Christ around us? How are we allowing new life to blossom?

Certainly, we are coming to life as a church this spring – Outreach is truly reaching out, with a flurry of service projects: feeding the hungry, serving at Worcester Fellowship,



volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, and more. We are living our faith. Our Bible study is wrapping up a passionate conversation around Mary Magdalene, and beginning new studies on controversial characters in the Old Testament. Children's Sunday is on June 1st, a big favorite, with kids running the worship and a grand celebration to follow.

Yes, we have a few favorites for Spring on the calendar, like the annual yard sale and plant sale and the recently resurrected Saturday Supper. You will also notice new events for the warmer weather, outdoor movies on our lawn (thank you to Bette Parker for purchasing a huge inflatable movie screen for us!) and outdoor worships.

Let's continue growing our church family and all of God's goodness together this spring. There is so much vibrancy.

Yes, I know there are changes in our church culture and adjustments in how we do things. Please know that my door is open to you – feel free to email or call to set up a time. I want to hear from you!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Julie



From "The Book of Time," by Mary Oliver

I rose this morning early as usual, and went to my desk.
 But it's spring,
 and the thrush is in the woods,
 somewhere in the twirled branches, and he is singing.
 And so, now, I am standing by the open door.
 And now I am stepping down onto the grass.
 I am touching a few leaves.
 I am noticing the way the yellow butterflies
 move together, in a twinkling cloud, over the field.
 And I am thinking: maybe just looking and listening
 is the real work.
 Maybe the world, without us,
 is the real poem.

Photographers!

We have many beautiful pictures of our church in Autumn, but do not have any saved to the office computer of our building in its Spring glory!
 Please get out and start getting the flowering bushes and trees framing our beautiful building, and send them to the office.

New Members

Interested in becoming an official member of our vibrant congregation?

Let Pastor Julie know! We will be welcoming in new members on May 18th, and would love to welcome you.



First Congregational Church in Auburn, UCC
 128 Central Street
 Auburn, MA 01501
 (508) 832-2845

God's church in Auburn Center
 Doing Christ's work in the world

The Rev. Dr. Julie Cedrone, Pastor

Email: Pastor@auburnfirstucc.org

Office Administrator: Cindy Mower

Email: Secretary@auburnfirstucc.org

Save the Date!

Ladies, please mark your
calendars for the next
**Women's Fellowship meeting on
Saturday, May 10th, 9-11 a.m. in
Fellowship Hall.**

**Children's Sunday -
June 1st**

**Saturday Supper -
Saturday, June 7th, 5-7 p.m.
BBQ!!**

**Church Yard and
Plant Sale -
Saturday, June 14th**

**May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month, Multiple
Sclerosis Awareness Month, and Bike Safety Month.**

May 4-10 is Hospice Week

May 5-9 is Burns Awareness Week

May 25-June 1 is Child Protection Week

May 5 is World Hand Hygiene Day

May 17 is World Hypertension Day

May 28 is Women's Health Day



These dates also serve as a reminder of health issues that you might need to look into for yourself and your family. The sun is getting stronger, so sunscreen should be applied especially if you're spending time outdoors. Bike safety is a big issue to be aware of with motorcycles and bicycles. Helmets should always be worn.

Also, please remember the closet with DME, Durable Medical Equipment. If you or anyone you know, needs anything and it's there, please help yourself. There's no sign out needed! If you have old medication in your closet, please take it to the Auburn Police Dept. They have a bin in the lobby. They don't take needles or liquids. If you want, I am happy to take them for you.

Please have a safe month! God Bless! Debbie Pranaitis Parish Nurse

2025 ANNUAL CHURCH YARD SALE

Once again, we will be holding our annual yard sale on Saturday June 14, 2025 from 8 am to 1 pm. Our "plant ladies" will be in full swing with their plant sale, and we will also be having a church table hosted by Cindy Dube and friends. The trustees will again be cooking up hot dogs and hamburgers etc. under the "big top", and the ladies of women's fellowship will be hosting a coffee and bake sale table.

The cost for the event is the same. \$25 per space (\$20 for church members) and \$5 to rent a table, as long as they last (we have a limited amount of long tables). Reservations may be made with Cindy in the church office, who will also take payment due in full by June 7th!!

The process is the same. Vendors need to check in anytime after 6 a.m., unload their vehicles, and move them to the town hall parking lot by 7:45 a.m., as we will be blocking off the parking lots.

Parking is only allowed on the sidewalk side of church street and central street, the town hall parking lot, and there will be 2 handicap spaces available across from the plant ladies.



How may I help you ask? There will be a clipboard in fellowship hall with a yard sale cover sheet that holds various sign-up sheets for volunteers. We will need help on Friday 6/13 at 6:00 p.m. to carry out the tables and set up, and we hope to have the muscles from the scout troop to assist us. There is also a sign-up sheet for breaking down on 6/14 beginning at 1 p.m., hopefully with those able-bodied scouts to assist. Another sign-up sheet will be to assist the ladies at the coffee and bake sale table, and still another for all you bakers out there (guidelines are on the sign-up sheet).

This is one of our major fundraising events and we hope we will have plenty of participation by the members of the church so we can be as successful as we have been in the past! Hope to see you there!!

Thank you! Paula Bigelow



It is never too early to think Plants! As you survey your yard, think what you can dig up, divide, or start for the sale. Again, Christine at **Johnson Greenhouse**, 71 Whittemore St, Leicester, is donating many, many plants.

If you need anything before the sale, please stop by **Johnson Greenhouse**.

Thank you,
The Plant Ladies



CHURCH TABLE RETURNS TO YARD SALE!!! DONATIONS NEEDED

We are bringing back the church's own yard sale table. All proceeds from this table will be added to the grand total for the day. What we need from you is your good "stuff" that you no longer need or use. Household goods, linens, outgrown kids soccer shoes and other sports items, tools and garden tools, books and puzzles, baby items (no clothing), small appliances such as mixers, hair dryers and clocks or whatever else you think might interest someone. We just ask that everything be clean and in good working order. We will also accept wood furniture, small tables, chairs etc. If you have any doubts about what will accept give me a call or text me. You can even send me a photo. **Please don't bring anything you would not buy yourself due to its condition or appearance.**

DO NOT donate any TVs, monitors, oversized microwaves, stuffed furniture, clothing or VCR tapes.



It would be helpful if you could drop off your donations the day before, especially if donating a bigger sized item – deliver it Friday after noon, and up until 6:30 Friday night. It can be left on the grass near the staff parking spaces. If need be, you may begin dropping off your donations the day after Children's Sunday. Leave them in the first classroom on the right when you go down the stairs. This can be done during church office hours.

As long as the weather cooperates, we will begin unboxing items as they arrive on Friday afternoon and would love to have some helping hands. If you care to help staff this table the day of the yard sale that would be warmly welcomed as well.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions about donating an item, you would be surprised as to what might sell, as long it is clean and works!

Thanks in advance for all your help with our Church Table.
Cindy Dube chairperson for this table (only)
774-238-0260

WHERE ARE THE SIGN-UP SHEETS???

In order to try to move people into Fellowship Hall in an easier manner, I have moved the sign-up sheets to the first round table inside the door. You will find **Altar Flowers, Greeters, Readers, and other sign-ups there.** I'll also have paper copies of the weekly emails for those who do not get them digitally. I am asking people to check the church directory at my table as well so that we know that you're getting all of the information you want and need from the church. **Visit me at my table! -Cindy Mower**

Social Calendar

COFFEE HOUR 2025

May 4	Personnel Committee
May 11	Stewardship Committee
May 18	Board of Deacons
May 25	Trustees & Prudential Committee
June 1	Board of Christian Ed (BOCE)

Charlotte Steffen will be
98 amazing years young on
Friday, May 9th.

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

May 1st - Fran Mower
May 9th - Charlotte Steffen
May 21st - Cindy Mower

May 4th - Carole & Bob Murray
May 10th - Paul & Diane Moore



Altar Flowers, Greeters, & Readers

Please see Cindy Mower during coffee hour to sign up to donate altar flowers for Sundays this Spring. Cindy will also have sign-up sheets for greeters and readers as well as a copy of our current directory so people can verify that they are on it.

Birthdays and Anniversaries for the TIDINGS

Cindy will also have a sheet for people to sign up to have their birthdays and anniversaries listed in the TIDINGS each month so we can lift everyone up in celebration.

From around the church

From the Director of Religious Ed.

What a blessed Easter season we celebrated this year. I felt as if the blooms showed up exactly on “Resurrection Day!” When you think about the Lenten Season and it’s 40 days of commitment and thought, do you think about how much can change in 40 days? My focus tends to lean toward the weather, probably because I love to garden and become very eager to get my early spring vegetables in the ground. We started the season off with quite a chill. Freezing temperatures, wind, snow and ice. UGH! Dead grass, dead trees, the roads were covered in salt and dirty old snow. Everywhere I turned, I saw darkness. But since Easter Day the trees and flowers began to bloom, the street cleaners are out, the grass is turning a bright shade of green, and I enjoy the warm sun on my face. Such an extreme change in 40 days!!! I am grateful for the change in seasons, they represent our lives and the seasons we experience personally, and as a community, over time.

I think change is a positive thing. I know that change is scary. I know that as one “season” comes to end, there is sadness. I also know that the beginning of the next season can be tricky and overwhelming, until you get into your new groove! Lastly about change, I will add that change for change’s sake is not always positive. But sometimes, we do not know that until we try it!

We have had a few changes with reference to our children this year. Our students start in church every Sunday, as opposed to once a month. This is a positive change, and I love it! On the back end, it certainly forces our SS teachers to be more creative with less time for our Sunday Lesson. That was a little tricky at first, but almost 9 months into the school year, I think we have done a wonderful job teaching our children about Jesus in the short time we have. Our children have the opportunity for both worship and prayer in the sanctuary as well as lessons and prayer in their classroom. We are showing them and teaching them about the blessings that surround them!

Children’s Sunday will be held on Sunday, June 1st. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. Please sign up as soon as you can. We are planning a wonderful celebration, both in church during our worship and outside with food!!!

Please practice, “Jesus Loves Me” at home. We may have a chance to sing in church!!!
May 18th all Sunday School students will be painting rocks, so be sure to dress your student accordingly!

Thank you to BOCE for helping fill eggs. Thank you to Michele and Stephanie for all your help on Palm Sunday. Thank you to our YOM students who also helped with our Palm Sunday celebration.

May the month of May be filled with miracles and marvelous milestones!!!

Love,
Shannon

From around the church

A Word From Outreach

Karen Ludington, Executive Director for WAMS was our guest speaker at the annual Palm Sunday breakfast and really opened our eyes to what their role in the Worcester area is. We as a committee hope to someday take a “field trip” to their headquarters to learn more of what they do and how we may be of help.

At our April meeting, we voted to allocate \$250 to Abby’s House, a wonderful organization providing shelter, housing and advocacy services to homeless, battered and low-income women with or without children. To learn more go to WWW.ABBYSHOUSE.ORG

We also voted to send \$500 to the Altadena Community Church which burned to the ground in the California wild fires last January. To us it seems like that horrific scene played out some time ago. But to those living through it, it will be years before they can get reestablished. We are challenging our congregation to collectively match our \$500. We will keep you updated as to how much we receive from all of you throughout the month of May, and will send our donation in early June. You may put your donation in the collection plate in an envelope marked ALTADENA. If writing a check, make it out to the church with Altadena on the memo line.

Coming up quickly on May 4th at 11:45 a.m., there is a great opportunity to join our fellow churches and community members over at the Bethel Lutheran Church to assemble 18,000 meal kits. That’s correct, 18,000! Join us as we stand side by side in an assembly line to reach this goal in just a few short hours. Call or email Pastor Julie to be added to the list of volunteers.

There will be other opportunities to get “your boots on the ground” as we spend a day working at The Restore, a Habitat for Humanity re-sale store; Worcester Fellowship outdoor worship in August, and at their Thursday Cafe coming up in October.

We are the committee who you trust will distribute the funds we have been appropriated to good causes, but you are the ones we turn to when we need those extra hands - or boots - to get some of the work done. You’ll be surprised how gratifying it can be! And as always, we would love your insight and suggestions in directing our church’s benevolent funds. So, if you have a cause that is near and dear to you let us know, we just might be able to help them out!

Blessings and many thanks,
The Outreach Committee

From around the church

From the Organist and Choir Director

Psalm 100: "Cry out with joy to the Lord...Come before God, singing for joy!"

We do just that as church musicians—we cry out to God—in joy and yes, in sorrow too—and we sing, play, and ring! We've done a lot of each, especially during Lent, Holy Week, Easter.

A huge THANK YOU to the choirs for their dedication and commitment to rehearsals and Sunday services. Their generosity is a great gift to the church community.

So again, Thank you!

We welcomed Leslie Penny back to the choir after a time away, and Kaylyn Violette who is graduating from nursing school in May --Congratulations Kaylyn! Alyssa Gervasi and my daughter Beth sang with us during Lent.

Also new to the bell choir is Bruce Hopper who played bells years ago as a youngster. Welcome!

Rehearsals continue through the month of May as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus!

Our musical life continues....

With deep gratitude,
Paulette



Celebrating Life

James D Walker

CHARLTON - James D. Walker, 78, of Worcester, passed away peacefully surrounded by family in his Charlton home March 19, 2025. Born on September 7, 1946, he was the son of the late Harrison T. Walker and Helen (Carlsen) Walker. He was also predeceased by his brother, Robert Walker.



James was devoted to his family, which was the heart of his life. He is survived by his loving wife, Teresa Walker, and their three daughters: Bethany Ziegler, Darlene Mortell, and Allison Walker. He also leaves behind four grandchildren and many nieces and nephews who will miss him dearly.

A highly skilled electrician, James dedicated 55 years to his work with the International Brotherhood of Electricians, Local Union 96. He was also one of the first detectives on the Auburn Police Force, where he served with honor. Later in his career, James co-owned his own business, J&J's Electric Co., and a ceramic shop in Oxford, MA.

James had a deep love for the outdoors, especially fishing. He earned his master's captain's license and spent many years deep-sea fishing. In his retirement, he found peace and joy at the cabin he built by Moosehead Lake in Maine, where he spent countless summers.

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, March 27, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn, MA, with a celebration of his life immediately following at 3:00 p.m. Family and friends are invited to join in remembering James and sharing stories of his life and legacy.

Celebrating Life



Sonja (Baker) Carr, 87, lifelong Auburn resident, passed away peacefully in the early hours of Thursday, March 27, 2025 at the Jewish Healthcare Center in Worcester. She was predeceased by her beloved husband of 41 years, Peter C. Carr, who passed in May of 1998.

She leaves her devoted children: Kathy Carr-Davis and her husband Phillip, of Saco, ME, Julie Carroll and her husband John, of Spencer, Susan Smith, of North Hampton, NH, Curt Carr and his wife Kelly, of Charlton, and Amy Briggs and her husband Michael, of Fiskdale; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and her brother, Rex Baker and his wife Janeen, of Princeton.

Sonja was born in Worcester, daughter of the late Warren and Elsa (Carlson) Baker. She was raised and educated in Auburn, and graduated from Auburn High School.

She met and married her beloved Pete, beginning their life together. Sonja was a dedicated homemaker to her husband and children, and was so proud to have raised her five children. Once her children were school-aged, she entered the work force and began working as a Teacher's Aide in the Auburn School System, where she worked until she retired.

She was a longtime member of the First Congregational Church of Auburn. After retirement, Sonja enjoyed running her antiques and collectibles business for many years, and was very active in the Auburn Historical Society.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for the nurses and staff of the Jewish Healthcare Center and Hospice, for their compassionate care for Sonja and her family.

Flowers are welcome, and if you would prefer a memorial donation, her family asks that you consider donating to the Jewish Healthcare Center (<https://www.jhccenter.org/make-a-donation/>). Relatives and friends are invited to gather for Sonja's memorial service, which will be held at 1:00 PM on Sunday, April 6, 2025 at First Congregational Church of Auburn, 128 Central Street, Auburn. Burial will be held privately for her immediate family.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).



Celebrating Life

Debra Lee Nordberg
July 26, 1948 – April 21, 2025
Auburn

DEBRA L. NORDBERG

Debra L. Nordberg, of Auburn, passed away peacefully at home on Monday, April 21, 2025. Her death came at the end of a valiant, 5-year-long, battle against a rare cancer, intimal sarcoma.

Debbie was born in Worcester. She was raised in Auburn and lived almost her entire life in Town. She was the daughter of Robert and Ruth (Wahlstrom) Norwood. She is survived by her loving husband of 59 years, Paul. She is also survived by her daughters, Susan A. Kochling and her husband Edmund, of Charlton, and Amy R. Foss, of Ogunquit, Maine. She leaves her sister Nancy Pope, of Brooklin, Maine and her husband Al, and her brother, Robert Norwood of Framingham and his wife, Sue. She leaves three grandchildren, Christopher Kochling, of Houston, Texas, Michael Foss, of Washington, D.C., and Kyra Foss, of Boston. She also leaves numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents and, in 2008, by her only son, Kevin.

The great joy of Debbie's life was her family. The times she spent with them, and the trips they shared, were the highlights of her life. For decades she hosted the Christmas Eve Dinner for her close relatives, and her extended family.

Debbie was an elementary school educator for 32 years in the Auburn Public Schools. She had a wonderful gift in the field of helping young people adjust to, and flourish in, their early years of schooling. The great destination in Debbie's life was her second home, in Ogunquit, Maine. Time spent in Ogunquit, and especially on its beautiful beach, was always a wonderful experience for Debbie.

Services for Debbie will be held on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at The First Congregational Church in Auburn. A visitation time will be held from 9:30 A.M. until 11:00 A.M., followed by a celebration of Debbie's life at 11 A.M. Interment will be held, immediately after the services, at Auburn's Hillside Cemetery, where Debbie will be buried beside her son, Kevin.

In lieu of flowers, gifts in Debbie's memory may be made to the Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center in support of Dr. Edwin Choy's sarcoma research. Gifts may be made on-line at <https://giving.massgeneral.org/donate>, or mailed to the MGH Development Office; Attention Keith Erickson; Suite 640; 125 Nashua Street; Boston, MA 02114. Checks may be made payable to Massachusetts General Hospital with the notation: "Tribute to Debbie Nordberg," on the memo line.

The family has entrusted Debbie's funeral arrangements to the Mercadante Funeral Home and Chapel.

To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of Debra Lee Nordberg, please visit our [flower store](#).

MAY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
10:00 a.m.: Worship 4	4:30-6:30 p.m.: Girl Scouts 5:30-7:30 p.m.: Boy Scouts 6:30 p.m.: HWG Board 5	9:00 a.m.: ACB 12:30 p.m.: Bible Study 6-8 p.m.: Floral Class 6	6:00 p.m.: Choir 6:30 p.m.: Cub Scouts 7	9:00 a.m.: ACB 7:00 p.m.: Boy Scouts 1	4:30-6:00 p.m.: Girl Scouts 2	10:00 a.m.: Bell Choir 3
10:00 a.m.: Worship Mother's Day 11	5:45-7:15 p.m.: Brownies <i>Pastor Julie at Preaching Conference</i> 12	9:00 a.m.: ACB <i>Pastor Julie at Preaching Conference</i> 13	6:00 p.m.: BOCE 6:00 p.m.: Choir 6:30 p.m.: Cub Scouts <i>Pastor Julie at Preaching Conference</i> 14	9:00 a.m.: ACB 7:00 p.m.: Trustees 7:00 p.m.: Boy Scouts 15	4:30-6:00 p.m.: Girl Scouts 16	9-11:00 a.m.: Women's Fellowship 10
10:00 a.m.: Worship Welcoming New Members 11:30 a.m.: Music Committee 18	4:30-6:30 p.m.: Girl Scouts 19	9:00 a.m.: ACB 10:30 a.m.: Outreach 12:30 p.m.: Bible Study 6-8 p.m.: P.D. Fighters 20	6:00 p.m.: Choir 6:30 p.m.: Cub Scouts 21	9:00 a.m.: ACB 5-6:30 p.m.: Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m.: Church Council 7:00 p.m.: Boy Scouts 22	10:00 a.m.: Bell Choir 23	8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.: NYLT Staff Training 10:00 a.m.: Bell Choir 17
10:00 a.m.: Worship 25	MEMORIAL DAY - OFFICE CLOSED 26	9:00 a.m.: ACB 12:30 p.m.: Bible Study 27	6:00 p.m.: Choir 6:30 p.m.: Cub Scouts 28	9:00 a.m.: ACB 7:00 p.m.: Boy Scouts 29	10:00 a.m.: Bell Choir 30	10:00 a.m.: Bell Choir 31

First Congregational Church
128 Central St
Auburn, MA 01501

SUNDAY WORSHIP & SUNDAY SCHOOL – 10 A.M.
Office Hours – Sun 9-12, Mon-Fri 9:30-2:30
508-832-2845

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1V9nr7Psg7/>

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS: 5/4 – Personnel; 5/11 – Stewardship; 5/18 – Deacons; 5/25 – Trustees & Prudential; 6/1 – Board of Ed (BOCE)