



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

Fear

Last month I talked about the fear of parents that keeps children inside. When in my childhood, kids were expected to show a lot of independence. As I thought about this, I have realized that fear has a large place in our country and our culture. I think the last campaign was about fear. Each candidate for President told us to fear the other candidate. Democrats are to fear the evil Republicans and Republicans fear the Democrats. We are to fear criminal immigrants they say. Fear evil corporations others say. Fear all foreigners. No, Americans are so violent! Fear your neighbor. There are terrorists who only want to cause terror, extreme fear. FEAR! FEAR!! FEAR!!!

The TV news exists to spread fear. Who hasn't heard the ad, "Tonight at 11: there is a hidden poison in your house. We reveal the killer tonight along with weather and sports." Of course, the news story is hogwash. The killer found in your house is something anybody should know is poison, like drain cleaner. Or they are talking about something like gluten, poisonous to only a few people with rare diseases. But if the news did not spread fear, no one would watch. All they have to sell is fear.

America calls itself in song, "The home of the Brave." In order to be brave, there must be fear. Bravery is defeating fear, overcoming it to do what needs to be done. If you have no fear, then you are not brave. When the angels appear they all say, "Fear not!" Because, it seems, angels are terrifying. A lot of the things God calls us to do are scary. Helping people in need is scary. Being open to the Spirit means opening our armor and the possibility to be hurt.

I will tell you another thing our culture tells us to fear: the church! Church people are scary. They protest outside of funerals and abortion clinics; there are stories of pastors going to jail. The news is full of stories talking of the danger of the church. So if someone goes as far as coming in our door, can you go so far as to greet them?

I know, talking to a stranger — SCARY! But, you at least know someone else in church; they may not know anyone. And as they say, a stranger is just a friend I haven't met. We can tell people not to fear, but our feelings are often the thing we have the least control over. It is ok to be afraid. Telling someone there is no need to be afraid seldom helps. What does help? Acting like we are brave. Putting ourselves out there. Fear is isolating. Bravery can make us friends.

Pastor Brian

SERMON TITLES

6/4 "Oh, that All Could Prophecy"

6/11 "St. Barnabas"

6/18 "Sarah Laughed"

6/25 "The Jewish-Muslim Conflict in One Story"

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no July or August Tidings. Look for our next issue in September and have a great summer!

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I would like to introduce you to our church family's newest members — Paris Esposito, Rebecca McPherson and Caitlin Morrison. I am very proud of all three of these young ladies. Back in September, when confirmation classes started, I wasn't sure we were going to make it. The first couple of lessons they were all so quiet I didn't think we would be able to get through all we needed in order to bring them to the point where they were ready to meet with the Deacons and become members of the church. Slowly the volume and discussions began and I was so proud of how they attacked each and every challenge that was given to them. If you have not had a chance to congratulate them, please do; they have worked very hard and I know they are ready to assist the church in many ways.

JUNE 4th CHILDREN'S SUNDAY

Once again the Board of Ed will provide burgers and we ask the congregation to contribute a salad or dessert to round out the meal. Please consider staying after service, even for a little while, and enjoy the nice weather. (I already put in my order for sunshine and warm weather.) So, come, watch the kids and some adults in tug-of-war and three-legged races. All are welcome. Look for the sign-up sheet in fellowship hall on the Sunday school bulletin board near the doors leading to the office wing.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We are already planning our 2017-18 Sunday school classes. Please contact me or Mike Schillinger if you have any interest in helping out. We are also making a rotation for Cradle Roll. Please see Shannon Hartmann or me for that list.

YOUTH ON A MISSION

On May 7, about 12 of us went candlepin bowling in Spencer. Fun was had by all. Maybe we could make the next visit a church-wide event? We also have plans to attend Sky Zone, an indoor trampoline park. YOM assisted in the May supper. They plan to possibly have a fundraiser during an upcoming supper, so stay tuned.

As many of our family travel during the summer months I would like to wish you all a fun-filled and safe summer. Maybe while on vacation you could visit a new church. Remember sunscreen and to drink water. We want everyone back healthy in the fall.

Prayer isn't to remind God what our problems are, it is to remind our problems who God is.

Jean McPherson
Director of Religious Education

Get Your "From our Pumpkin Patch" Cookbook Here!

Our cookbook contains over 200 recipes! In addition to "Our Favorite Pumpkin Recipes" section, we have Appetizers & Beverages, Soups & Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candy, and "This & That" (miscellaneous recipes that don't quite fit into the other categories).

At \$15 apiece, they will make a great addition to your own kitchen library as well as a wonderful gift for any occasion - a birthday, anniversary, bridal shower or housewarming gift or a holiday gift for Christmas...

Need additional incentive? This is a church fundraiser; a portion of each cookbook sold goes to the church's general fund. Cookbooks are available to purchase during coffee hours or call Michele at 508-259-2239.

You may also email her at library@auburnfirstucc.org. Please include "cookbook" in the subject line.

Please note: if the cookbook will be shipped, there will be a flat rate shipping charge of \$7.20 per USPS priority envelope. The envelopes can accommodate up to 2 cookbooks. — Happy Cooking!!

Coffee Hour Hosts

6/4 & 11 Board of Ed 6/18 & 25 Prudential Committee

Please note: committees/boards will **not** be hosting coffee hours during July and August. Look for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall for any individuals/families who would like to host a coffee hour.



FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

June 1st-July 4th is Fireworks Safety Month. June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month, Cataract Awareness Month, Men's Health Month, and National Safety Awareness Month. It is also National Scleroderma Awareness Month.

4-10 Rip Current Awareness Week

4 National Cancer Survivors Day

12-18 Men's Health Week

18-24 National Lightning Safety Awareness Week

July is Cord Blood Awareness Month and Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month

July 28 is World Hepatitis Day

August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month, National Breastfeeding Month and National Immunization Awareness Month.

1-7 World Breastfeeding Week

7-13 National Health Center Week

Have a safe and healthy summer. Use your sunscreen and wear sunglasses.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse

Cell: 508-612-4521

Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 4th**, and plan to join us as we celebrate our children on

Children's Sunday.



Following our service that day we will be having our annual picnic. We will be looking for donations of desserts and salads, so please look for a sign-up sheet on the Sunday school bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

There will be a "Celebration of Life" memorial service for Florence LaPlante here at the church on Wednesday, June 14th, at 11:30 a.m. with a collation to follow in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to help, we are looking for members to provide side salads and desserts. **Thank you!**

NEW MEMBER CLASSES

Will be held after worship on June 18th and 25th with a 3rd class if need be.

If you're interested in becoming a Church member, please speak with Pastor Brian or a Deacon for more info.



Abigail Leahy, daughter of Heather and Paul Leahy, and granddaughter of Wayne and Joyce Prouty, will be graduating from Shepherd Hill Regional High School on June 4th and has been accepted into the Physical Therapy Program at Becker College. Abby received a scholarship from the Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund. (Fun factoid: Abby is a graduate of **Here We Grow** Preschool!)

Debra Minor recently received her second Masters Degree. In addition to an MBA she earned previously, on May 6th she received her Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Nichols College.

Mac Rice, son of Stephanie and Thomas Rice, and grandson of Steve and Shirley Hill, graduated from Holy Name Central Catholic High School on May 25th. Mac plans to attend Worcester State University in the fall.

Kaitlyn and Shannon Roach, twin granddaughters of Sheila Skog, will be graduating from Sutton Memorial High School on June 1st. Kaitlyn will be attending the University of Maine to study nursing. Shannon will be attending Bridgewater State to pursue a degree in teaching.

Cassandra Stockhaus is the daughter of Nick and Lori Stockhaus. Her grandparents are Bob Burns and Charlotte Stockhaus and the late Don and Flo Aker and Dick Stockhaus. Cassie will be graduating with honors from Millbury Jr. Sr. High School on June 2nd. She will be attending Westfield State University where she has been accepted into the Honors Program with a double major of biology and psychology. Cassie received a scholarship derived from the Callan James Guilford Scholarship Fund and the Craig Whitcher Scholarship Fund.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

THE PUMPKIN PATCH FAIR

I wanted to get something into the *Tidings* before the summer regarding the church fair. We WILL have the fair again this year...on October 14th. That is the Saturday AFTER Columbus Day weekend, as we did last year. It will only be the one day again as well.

All the details are not worked out, but we are trying to concentrate on the most popular areas. Baked goods, food, and luncheon (and maybe breakfast??) will be stepped up. That was our second biggest seller. We have been approached about serving some kind of breakfast from a fairgoer (is that a word?). WE'LL SEE. That's a lot to think about, but definitely worth the thought.

Our other big area of concentration is the Silent Auction – which was our top money maker last year. I want to step it up even more this year. PLEASE, PLEASE, begin thinking of items, services, etc. now. It is never too early. I am trying to lessen the frenzy in the last two weeks. We are all another year older!

We probably won't be having craft nights this year. Rather, we will be asking folks to do crafts on their own. That is not to say we can't get together to craft. It just won't be as scheduled as it has been.

Gayle Farley WILL be doing the jewelry table again (thank you, Gayle!). I will let her convey her wishes to you all.

One of the biggest changes is that I am going to have vendors this year. I know that the table/spot rental to the vendors won't bring in as much money, but they will bring some. More importantly, I believe they will bring in a new crowd of people to see our fair. It is a test for sure.

That's it for now. Feel free to call me at 508-832-3416 or 508-769-2740. If not, be assured that I will find you!!

God Bless,
Cindy Ryan



Here We Grow Preschool June Tidings

Here We Grow will be graduating on June 7th, 8th. Spree Day will be on June 5th. If you have a little one and would like to join us for Pumpnickel Puppets Show, please stop in. He starts at 10:45. It is a very busy time of the year for everyone associated with **Here We Grow**. With graduation fast approaching, we go forward with many mixed emotions. We will be saying good-bye to some families we have known for a few years. But with that, it is also a time when we will be bringing in a group of new families. At this time, we all would like to say thanks for the support and memories that we have all been part of these last few years.

On May 8th and the 15th, the 3-day and 5-day program classes visited the YMCA of Westborough for their end-of-year field trip. The weather was great; the children, parents and staff had a great time. It was nice to see the children running and having fun, and the teachers, too. On May 18th, the 2-day program classes visited Giguere Gymnastics. The children enjoyed an obstacle course, some free play time and some organized games.

At the closing of this school year our enrollment for 2017-18 school year has a few openings in all our classes. If you know of anyone looking for a 3 or 4-year-old spot, please send them our way.

Our two weeks of summer program are not full yet. Week 1, "Welcome to the Jungle" (June 19-23) and week 2, "The Aloha" (June 26-30). The teachers working our summer program are Helen Ethier, Diana Mancini, Courtney Tomaszewicz, Sharon Stein and Cristi Corey (craft room). Our helper is Megan Corey.

We had a great time at Papa Gino's and our flower sale was a success. We will do both fundraisers again next spring.

In closing, I would first like to say thank you to the church members, board members and parents for all your support and help the last two years; also, I'd like to wish all church members and their families a safe and fun-filled summer.

Gina Basili, **Here We Grow** Director

POTLUCK REMINDER

Our monthly potluck supper and discussion group will wrap up for the summer with our meeting on **Tuesday, June 20th, beginning at 5:30 p.m.** as we gather to view the movie, Monty Python's *Life of Brian*. This comedy satire depicts the life of Brian Cohen, an average young Jewish man, who through a series of ridiculous events gains a reputation as the Messiah. When he's not dodging his followers, the hapless Brian has to contend with the pompous Pontius Pilate and obsessed members of a separatist movement. With Monty Python's signature absurdity, the tale finds Brian's life paralleling Biblical lore, albeit with many more laughs.

SAVE THE DATE

THE PUMPKINS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE DELIVERED ON SEPTEMBER 30th!

JOIN US

FOR CHOIR APPRECIATION ON SUNDAY, JUNE 11TH, AT 10 A.M.

We'd like to acknowledge our newest church members who were received into membership on Confirmation Sunday, May 21st.

Paris Esposito

Rebecca McPherson

Caitlin Morrison



We pray God's continued blessing and guidance in their lives.

YARD SALE HELP NEEDED - Below are tasks listed in order of urgency.

- 1:30pm Sat. 6/17 Take down tables and chairs and return them to building. Help with clean-up. Approximately 90 minute time commitment.
- 6pm Fri. 6/16 Carry tables and chairs out to lawn. Approximately 60 minute time commitment.
- 3pm Thurs. 6/15 Prepare strawberries. Approximately 2 hour time commitment.
- 8am Thurs. 6/15 Pick strawberries. Approximately 3 hour time commitment.
- At home tasks: Biscuit bakers needed, make at home and drop off on Friday (the 16th) to the church office or early Saturday (the 17th) morning.
Plants needed: please pot and label for our plant sale.
- 8am-2pm Come to the yard sale, shop, eat and show your support. Bring your friends and family.
Sat. 6/17 You may also work the strawberry booth or help out with the lunch table.



As you can see, none of these important tasks will demand too much of your time - a pretty easy way to help in raising funds for OUR church. You may call me at 508-832-6646 and let me know how you can help, or just sign-up in Fellowship Hall.

And finally, spaces are still available if you wish to participate in that way! Spots are \$15 for members and \$20 for non-church members. Tables are available for \$5 each.

Thank you in advance and God Bless,
Cindy Dube

GOD'S GIFTS, MY GIFTS

What does it mean to be a "Christian Steward"?

God has invited us to be responsible for our lives and resources. It is not God taking something from us, it is His method of bestowing His richest gifts upon His people. Christian giving is a responsive act. It represents gratitude to God. Giving is not a once-for-all event but a regular part of life. It is a spiritual discipline that reminds us who we are and whose we are. — Herb Mather, United Methodist Church Discipleship, umcdiscipleship.org

The Stewardship committee is pleased to announce that our theme for this year is "God's Gifts, My Gifts." As we reflect upon the many gifts, in all forms, that God has given us, we are inspired to share those gifts with others. This year, we will explore together opportunities for expressing gratitude to God and sharing our gifts.

Romans 12: 6-8

We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. — The Holy Bible, New International Version

Summer Birthdays include:

- Alyse Bukoski - June 16th
- Lisa Rockwood - July 21st
- Pat Bukoski - Aug. 5th
- Alice Carlson - Aug. 23rd

Happy Birthday to all!



On April 30th we celebrated the baptism of then 5½-month-old Carly Mae Boehnke. Carly's parents are Shannon Premo and Justin Boehnke. Carly's big sister is Kaitlyn.

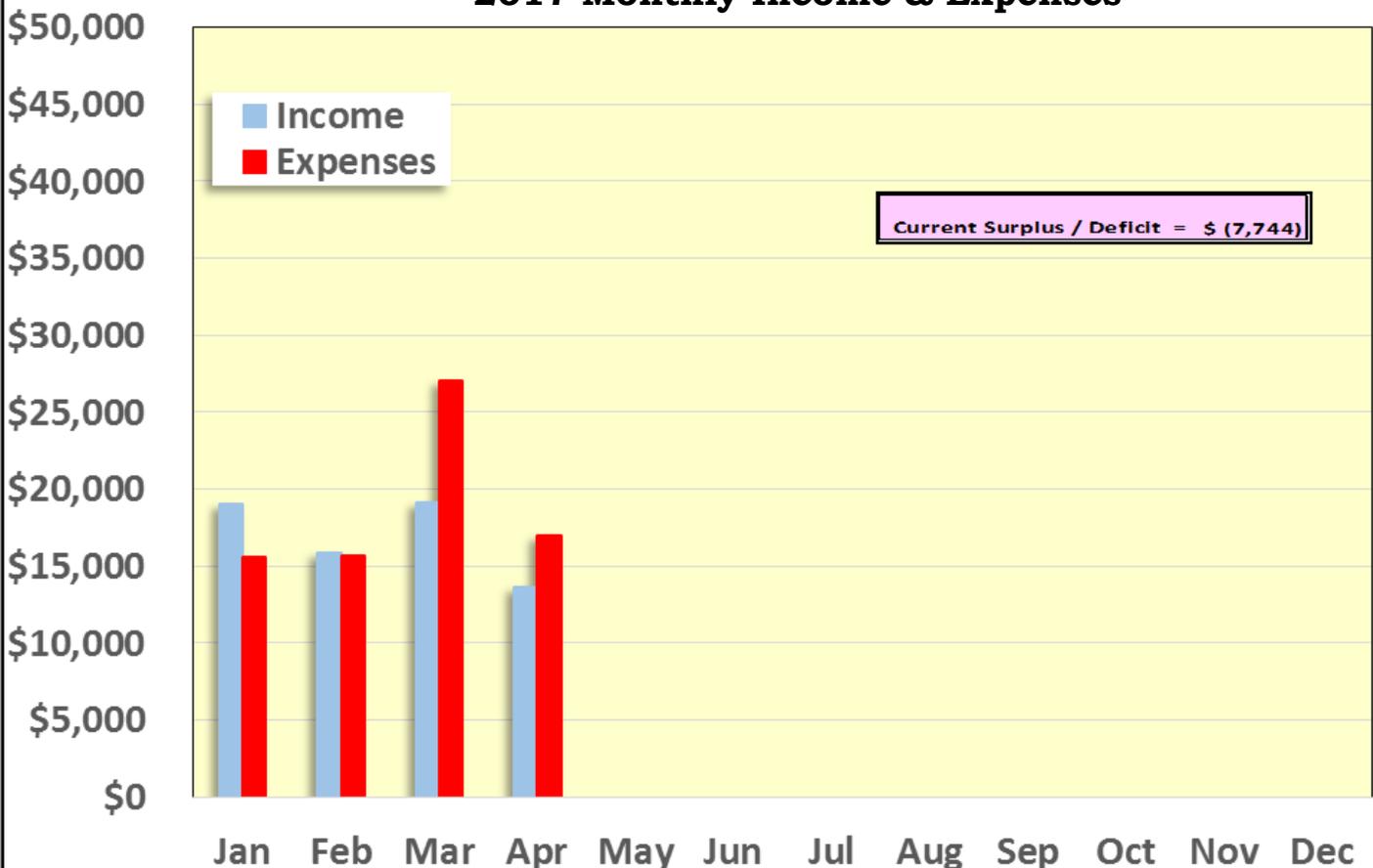
Proud family members also include grandparents Lisa and Craig Premo and Aunts Amber and Jennifer Premo. We pray the Lord's continued blessing upon Carly and her loved ones.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"You have the ability to do anything God has assigned to you." - unknown

(Our thanks to Mark Jordan for bringing this inspirational quote to our attention.)

**First Congregational Church
2017 Monthly Income & Expenses**



COMMUNITY YARD SALE---PLANT SALE---COOKOUT

SATURDAY, JUNE 17th, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Spring cleaning? Don't throw that good "stuff" away. Recycle it by selling it to someone who needs it! Do you have an accumulation of things that are just too good to throw away, but you no longer need? Don't have enough to hold your own yard sale?



**Join us on the church lawn for our
COMMUNITY YARD SALE!**

Spaces are \$15 for church members, \$20 for non-members. Use of a table is \$5 per table. Please contact Cindy Dube at 508-832-6646 or Denise in the church office at 508-832-2845 to secure your spot.

RETURNING THIS YEAR . . . We will have a church table. Donated items (**clean and in good working order**) may be dropped off to the church after June 4th. We are also accepting books.

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

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