



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

The news likes to use the words historic, unprecedented, and other BIG words. I tend to think they are overselling the story, and then Covid happened. Humanity has survived many plagues. Before the 20th century, plagues and epidemics have been regular occurrences. Medicine and biology, we thought, ended infectious disease. So we thought.

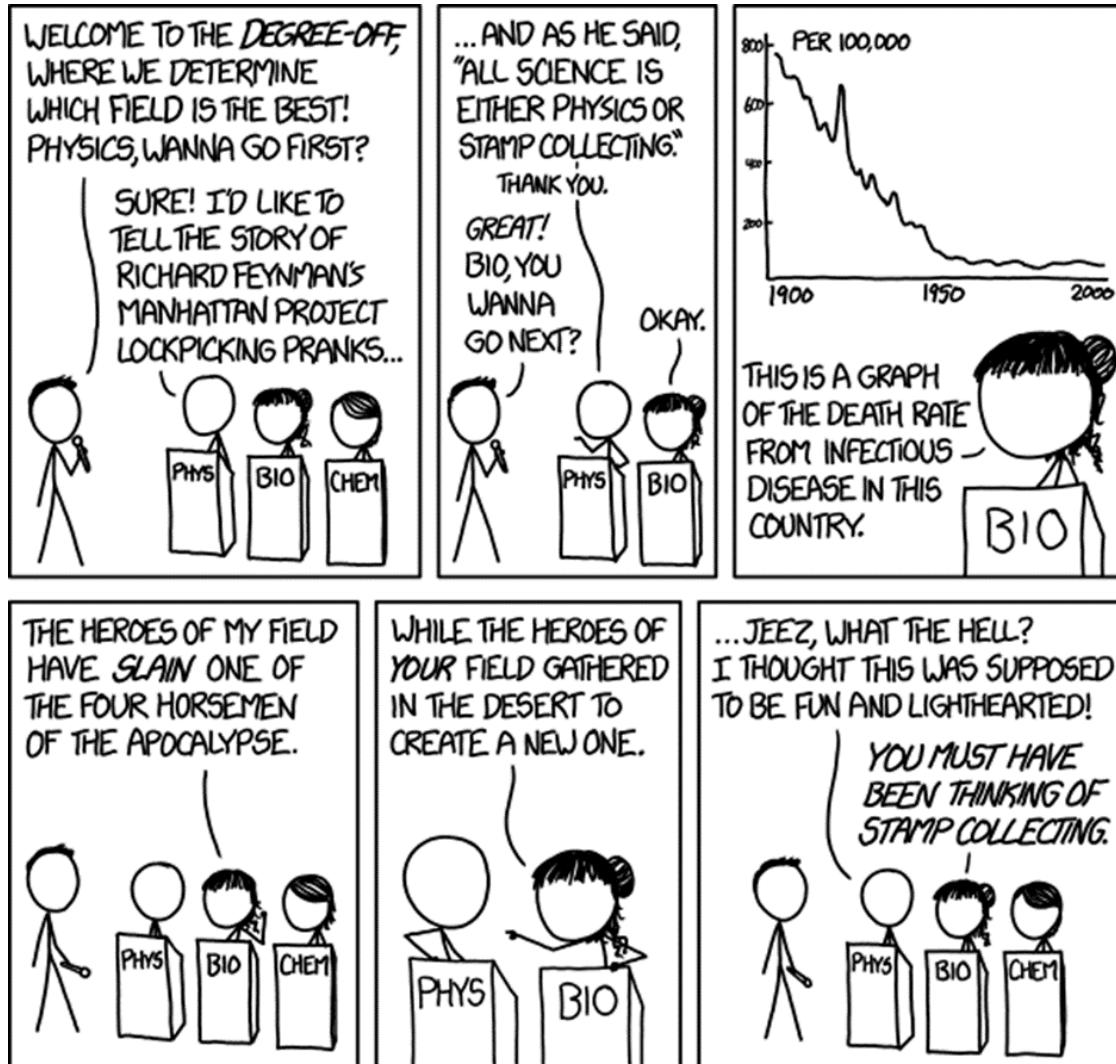
I wonder if people 100 years ago knew better how to measure the risk of disease, or was life just cheaper then? Small pox, tuberculosis, cholera, measles, and other diseases were contagious and deadly. But, due

to vaccines and antibiotics, they are only minor problems, not killers of thousands. We thought disease was a thing of the past. We forgot the advances that have come to make life more secure and healthy.

Even now I hear over and over, "Soon we will have a vaccine and this will all be over." We have great confidence in our life science people, with good reason. Doctors and biologists have done God's work. Thanks be to God.

The comic below is from XKCD.

Pastor Brian





Phyllis M. (Stone) Hardy, 91, passed away peacefully at her home on May 12, 2020, surrounded by her loving family. She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Frederick I. Hardy, Jr.

SYMPATHY

Born in Worcester, raised in Auburn, Phyllis was one of five children born to the late Clifton C. and Mary E. (Freeland) Stone. Upon graduating from Auburn High School, she earned her nursing degree at New England Baptist Hospital in Boston. Phyllis worked as a private duty nurse for many years. Later, she worked for plastic surgeons Dr. J. Roy Smith and Dr. A. Bom.

Phyllis enjoyed camping, traveling, and bowling. She and her late husband, Frederick, were life-long members of our Church, as well as being longtime members of the Auburn Grange #60.

Phyllis is survived by her children, Deborah Pranaitis and her husband, Joseph, of Charlton, Linda Hardy of Auburn, and Dr. Russell Hardy and his wife, Joan, of Ukiah, CA; 7 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren; her brother, Roy Stone of Milford, NH; and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents and her husband, Phyllis was predeceased by her children, Marjorie Dumas, Nancy Hardy, and David Hardy, and her siblings, Chester Stone, Marjorie Tucker, and Howard Stone.

Services for Phyllis will be held publicly at a later date, when it is deemed safe to gather. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made payable to our church and mailed to: 128 Central St., Auburn, MA 01501.

Please continue in prayer for all of Phyllis' loved ones.

Also, please remember Mike and Michele Schillinger and their family in your prayers due to the recent passing of Michele's mom, Mary, who lived in Florida.

Alyse Bukoski - June 16th



Pat Bukoski - Aug. 5th

Lisa Rockwood - July 21st

Skip Bigelow - Aug. 10th

Reanna Largesse - July 26th

Alice Carlson - Aug. 23rd

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

I give First Congregational Church permission to put my family member's birthday or anniversary in the monthly newsletter the *Tidings*.

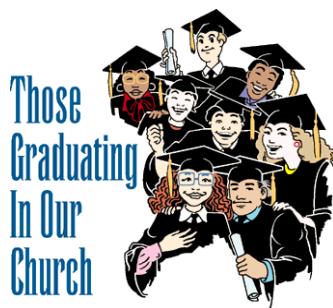
Name

Occasion

Date

Signature (adult only please)

PLEASE RETURN TO CHURCH OFFICE.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES & SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Paris Esposito, daughter of Elizabeth and Jeffrey Allain and granddaughter of Jane Standring, will be graduating from Auburn High School. A graduation ceremony is planned for July 31st. Paris is planning to attend Framingham State University in the fall where she'll major in Psychology. Paris will be receiving a scholarship from the Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund.

Addison MacPhee, daughter of Emilee Brown and Brian and Christy MacPhee and granddaughter of Stan and Sue MacPhee, graduated from Beaufort High School at age 15. Graduating 3 years early, she will attend the College of Charleston to double major in Computer Science and Psychology. Addison is a member of the National Honor Society, the National Dance Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, and the Interact Club.

Jacob McPherson, the son of Rich and Jean McPherson, graduated from the University of Maine Farmington with a Bachelors Degree in Rehabilitation Services. Jacob plans to work at Summit Camp in Honesdale, PA with special needs kids ages 8-19.

Caitlin Morrison, the daughter of Troy and Michelle Morrison, is graduating from Leicester High School on August 1st. A member of the National Honor Society and an Academic Excellence Award recipient, Caitlin plans to attend the University of New Hampshire in the fall to pursue a Degree in Social Work. Caitlin will be receiving a scholarship from the Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund.

Avery Pellegrino is the daughter of Paul and Donna Pellegrino and the granddaughter of Paul and Debbie Pellegrino. Avery will be graduating from Auburn High School. She's a member of the National Honor Society and is planning to attend the University of San Diego to pursue a Degree in Medicine. Avery will be receiving a scholarship derived from the Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund.

Emma Sullivan is the daughter of John and Amy Sullivan and is Cindy and Mike Dube's granddaughter. Emma will be graduating from Monomoy Regional High School on June 23 and is planning to attend Bridgewater State University to pursue a Degree in Occupational Therapy. Emma will be receiving a scholarship derived from the Jay E. Murray Scholarship Fund.

TO OPEN OR NOT TO OPEN ...

As you may have heard, the governor has given guidance on reopening houses of worship. The checklist will take the church a while to put in place and practice, so we do not miss a safety measure. We need masks and cleaning supplies, and other things to safely open. So, we will not be reopening in the immediate future, most likely not until the fall.

The Church Council and committees will be talking about this many times, as this is new to everyone. Worship will not be the same. Singing is more able to spread the virus than talking. Communion will need to be done in a way that limits contact. (Churches started doing communion in little individual cups due to cholera epidemics; disease changed communion before.) For some, safe will mean remaining at home and not being exposed to people, even with masks.

Pastor Brian will continue to email links to weekly posts of his sermon and music, and Sunday prayer times at 11 a.m. via Zoom. If you would like to be added to these e-mailings, please contact the church office, 508-832-2845, or email: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org.

The church office is currently open by appointment; call Denise to schedule a time, and please wear a mask.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

We made it! The school year is over and what a year it was! I hope during this time you were able to reconnect with your family and friends, either with a phone call, video call, or a drive-by waving. Through this whole ordeal, I start each day with the phrase, "I will trust the Lord has a handle on this," and go about my day with the knowledge that we are always in His sight.

We were able to have a drive-thru Children's Sunday on June 7. It was so nice to see the kids again; I feel like it has been forever since we were in class. I had a little treat for those who attended, and then I passed out an envelope that included pre-addressed envelopes and color pages for them to send along to various church members. Inside the pre-addressed envelope I placed a little bookmark so the recipient could then color the bookmark and send it back to the child. I am hoping this will brighten everyone's day, and then in the fall the "pen pals" could meet at church.

The butter braid fundraiser that was supposed to be ready for Easter will now be ready in September when we return for services. I apologize for the delay and inconvenience to everyone.

Youth On a Mission has decided to wait until the fall to reconvene. We should have a group of almost 14 teens this year. Just think of all the help with the pumpkins! It is exciting to see how far YOM has come from when it was just Lillian, Tori, Cassie, and Jacob. I am very thankful for all the help through the years, with parents and church members volunteering to help out. We will once again need volunteers, especially with this large group. I thank you in advance for your enthusiasm and willingness to help make this a strong and meaningful group for the youth.

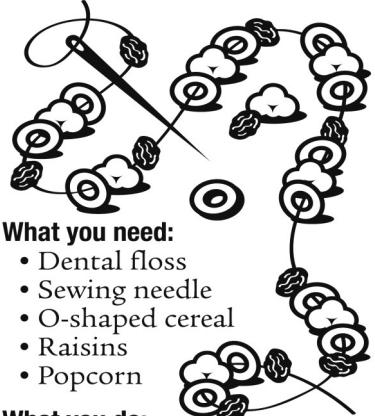
I want to thank Shannon Hartmann, Michael Schillinger, and Lillian McPherson for teaching this past year. Many thanks to all the volunteers who were "floaters," cradle roll helpers, and YOM chaperones and fundraising coordinators. I would also like to recognize Fred Comeau and Lillian for their help with Youth On a Mission. Without each of you, our program would not be possible; so thank you from the bottom of my heart.

May you all have a summer filled with family, friends, and love.

Jean McPherson

ROAD TRIP TREAT!

Make this snack necklace to enjoy during summer travels.



What you need:

- Dental floss
- Sewing needle
- O-shaped cereal
- Raisins
- Popcorn

What you do:

1. Carefully thread a yard of floss through the needle.
2. String a pattern of cereal, raisins and popcorn on the floss until only 4 inches remain on either end. Tie the two ends together.
3. Repeat to make necklaces for your whole family.
4. When you're ready to eat, simply bite off each "bead." Experiment with other non-perishable foods.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE KIDS

STORIES FROM FOCUS ON THE FAMILY:

Adventures in Odyssey, go to the link and choose a story to be read to your child/ren.

www.oneplace.com.

For the older kids with a Bible (or the younger kids with Mom/Dad to help):

Look up Matthew 13:53-58. When you have read these verses, please go to the bottom of the page and do the "Live It!" section in green.

Read Matthew 10:24-25. Then again at the bottom, in green, do the "Live It!" activity.

Please let me know how it goes.



Here We Grow Preschool June *Tidings*

This has always been a very busy time of the year for everyone associated with **Here We Grow**. This year we go forward with many mixed emotions; we did not get to do any of our traditional end-of-the-year activities. The end of this year has been so hard on, not only our students, but our teachers as well. Our students become family to us, and we do not like that we had to say good-bye, to some families we have known for years, remotely. We all feel let down by our ending.

We are still hoping that at some point we will be able to do some type of gathering later in the summer. At this time, we all would like to say thank you for the support and memories that we have all been a part of this year.

We know that changes will be coming this fall, and there are schools/childcare facilities in our area closing due to these changes. We at **Here We Grow** are keeping a positive attitude that we will be returning to school in September as strong a program as ever. At the closing of this school year, our enrollment for the 2020-21 school year has openings in our 3-year-old morning and afternoon classes and our 4-year-old afternoon classes. If you know of anyone looking for a great school, please send them our way.

In closing, I would first like to say thank you to the church members, board members, and parents for another great year. I look forward to the fall and continuing the success of this program.

Wishing you all a safe and fun-filled summer.

Cristi Corey, **Here We Grow** Director

The Outreach Committee recently met and has decided to give to three local needs.

We've allocated \$250 to the Auburn school lunch program and will be contacting Sally D'Arcangelo of Auburn Youth & Family Services, who oversees the school lunch program. The school lunch program ends in June so these funds will be donated to help families once the public school program ends.

We also decided to donate \$250 to the Worcester County Food Bank. The Worcester County Food Bank (WCFB) partners with others (food and fund donors, volunteers, business and community leaders) to provide donated food to neighbors who need it. Last year, they, and their network of 115 local pantries and community meal programs, helped to distribute nearly 6.1 million lbs. of donated food (enough for 5.1 million meals!) to 75,000 people from all 60 cities and towns in Worcester County.

Lastly, at this meeting, we decided to designate \$250 for the "GirlPad - Grab & Go Free Period Products" program. Sometimes, as Outreach members, we become aware of needs we aren't always in tune with due to our abundance. This is one such example.

Many girls rely on school nurses or after-school programs for their feminine hygiene supplies. "When families need to choose between buying food or buying period products, girls have to improvise on their hygiene. Recognizing this problem, Girls Inc. of Worcester came up with an immediate solution. Until school resumes and girls have access to free products through school nurses, Girls Inc. of Worcester has stepped up to help fill this need. 'GirlPad - Grab & Go Free Period Products' was created to distribute products discreetly and safely." — Victoria Waterman, CEO, Girls, Inc. of Worcester

GirlPad Grab & Go events take place weekly at Girls, Inc. of Worcester. Please go to: <https://www.girlsincworchester.org> or email info@girlsincworchester.org to learn more about this program.

Your Outreach Committee:

Pat Bukoski, Cindy Dube, Shannon Hartmann, Joyce Ringgard, Kay Shapter, and Marion Woodcock

From the Stewardship Committee

This year's Stewardship theme is:

GENERATIONS OF GENEROSITY

We enjoy our wonderful church and its traditions because of the hard work and generosity of our ancestors. Generation after generation of parents taught their children of the importance of God, the church, and helping our spiritual family. The elders of this church have taught us, and we in turn teach our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. The multi-generational families in our church inspire us all, and everyone has a part to play.

We are called to generosity, both to honor those before us, who built and sustained this church, and to set a good example for those coming after us. And so, the circle of giving and caring continues unbroken.

- Can you remember the first time, as a child, you put your offering in the plate -- maybe a nickel or a dime?
- As a parent, how did you explain to your kids the importance of their offering?

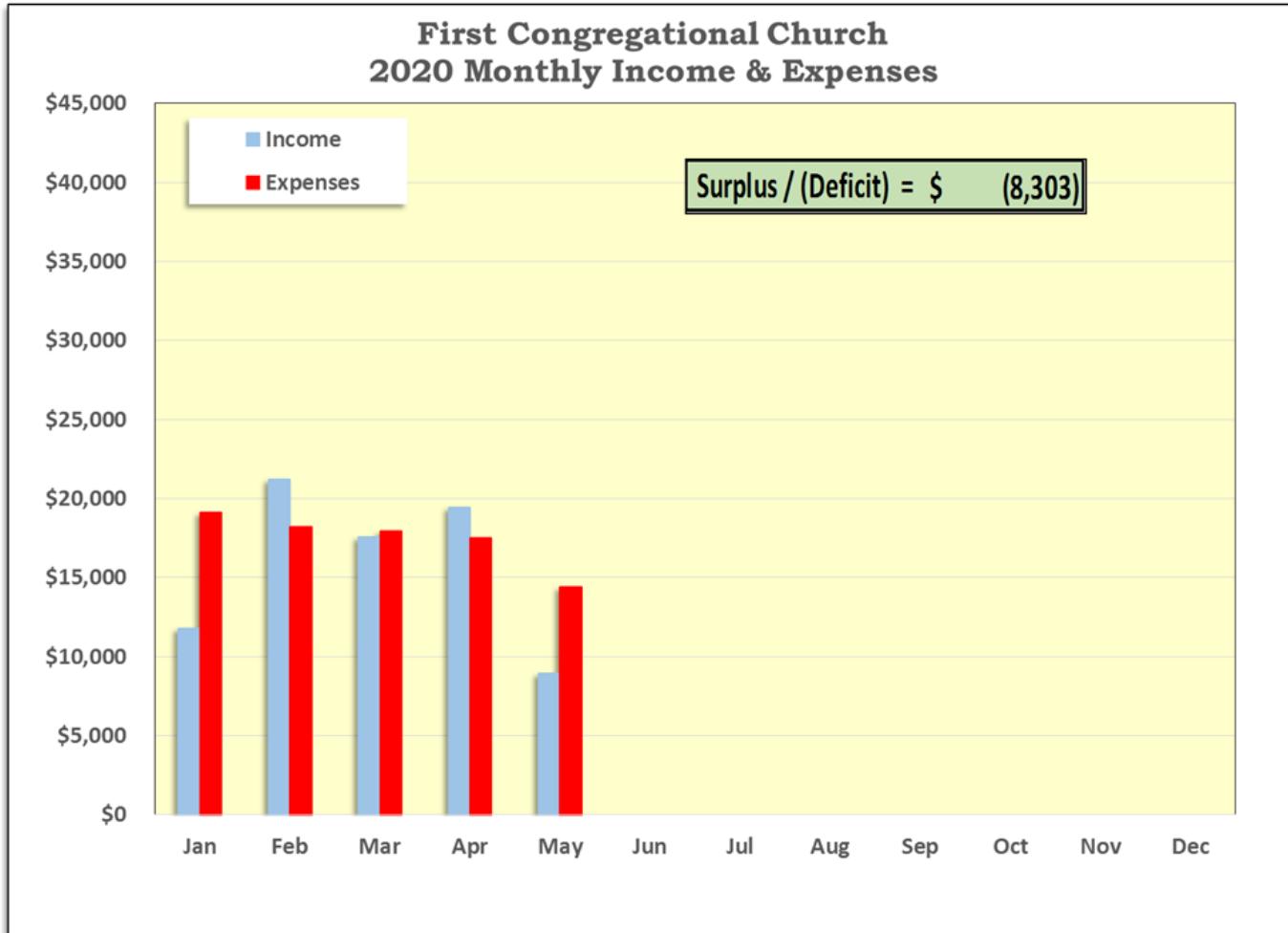
We will explore these ideas of traditions and families as the year unfolds. Stay tuned!

In His love,

Your Stewardship Committee

Michelle Bigelow, Nan Johnson, Ron Klaucke, Ellie Lowell, Debbie Mahlert, Linda Mahlert

Tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire. - Gustav Mahler



Our thanks to Nick Stockhaus, Treasurer, for providing us with this financial update each month.



FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

Just a reminder that the medical supply closet is full! Please pass the word that this resource is available to anyone in need.

Please continue to do your part in keeping you and others safe by washing your hands often, maintaining social distancing, and wearing a mask.

Please stay safe and remember, "We're all in this together."

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse
Cell: 508-612-4521

The Deacons would like to remind you about the Pearl Morrill Trust Fund. This trust was set up by Pearl B. Morrill for the benefit of the elderly members of the First Congregational Church of Auburn. The Trust has helped several members of the Church with meeting a variety of financial needs. Some things you should know about the Trust:

The Trust is open to elderly members of the Church. We have agreed that "elderly" is defined as age 55 and older.

Requests can be initiated by any Church member (do not need to be 55 or older) but must be for the benefit of elderly members of the Church. Requests can be for any number of needs such as financial hardships, medical bills, projects that benefit the elderly, etc.

If you have any questions regarding the operation of the trust itself, please feel free to contact Pastor Brian, one of the Deacons, or one of the Prudential Committee members.

Pastor Brian and the Deacons continue to welcome requests and ideas for usage of this generous trust and would love to see it put to good use.

The Board of Deacons

Please note: request forms are available by emailing: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org or call Denise in the church office at 508-832-2845. Completed forms should be returned to the attention of the Board of Deacons.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be no July or August *Tidings*. Look for our next issue in September. (**Submission deadline is August 24th.**) Have a great summer!

SERMON TITLES

- 6/14 "Hoping and Doing Our Best"
- 6/21 "What Is Whispered in Your Ear, Proclaim from the Roofs"
- 6/28 "Tell Isaac the Truth"
- 7/5 "You Can't Satisfy All the People"

SAVE

THESE DATES!

Sunday, June 21st
Pet Blessing/Parade 10 a.m.

Sunday, July 5th
Patriotic Parade 10 a.m.

THE PUMPKINS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE DELIVERED ON SEPTEMBER 26th!

AT THIS TIME, WE ARE LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER OR VOLUNTEERS TO RUN THE COMMUNITY YARD SALE IN SEPTEMBER.

**WE HAVE A TENTATIVE DATE OF
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.**



Cindy Dube is finding her calendar is filling up quickly with very special family occasions in August and September that require her attention. So, she is reluctantly withdrawing as the yard sale coordinator this year. She is happy to assist her successor with any questions that may arise. Also, at this writing, it is not clear whether Covid-19 related regulations and/or concerns will prevent us from having the yard sale in

September. However, it seems best to secure someone now to head up the yard sale in the hopes we will be able to go forward with this fundraiser in September.

Please contact the church office, 508-832-2845, or Cindy Dube at 508-832-6646, if you are willing to run this year's yard sale.

THE JUNE 13TH PLANT SALE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Thank you to all who came and contributed to the success of this year's plant sale. The plant sale yielded over \$1,300.00 to help the church's budget. This total surpasses all prior years' totals for plant sales with the second highest total being \$975! What a successful sale!

Many thanks to Cindy Dube and helpers for your dedication!

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



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June 2020

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT