



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 Two Wolves”

An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life: “A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy. “It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil—he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.”

He continued, “The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: “Which wolf will win?” The old Cherokee simply replied, “The one you feed.”

This story was told by Billy Graham in his 1978 book, *The Holy Spirit: Activating God's Power in Your Life*. I think it is appropriate for Lent.

If we are not careful in life, we can find ourselves feeding the wrong wolf. The needs of today can

overwhelm our long term plans. In those immediate moments we might do what is easy rather than what is right. We might be stressed at work and yell more at home. Yelling at home is less likely to get you fired, after all, than yelling at the boss.

We have big plans to be good people. We want to be generous, compassionate, patient, but temptation can get in the way.

So, we have Lent, when we take 40 days (not counting Sundays) to prepare for Jesus’ resurrection. Let us, during this time, feed the bright wolf and starve the dark wolf. Let prayer have a greater role in our life. Let us do the things we put off until, “a better time.” Let now be the better time.

Let us acknowledge when we feed the dark wolf and resolve to feed it less.

I look forward to seeing your well fed, cute, and friendly wolf during Lent.

Pastor Brian

MARCH SERMON TOPICS

March 1- First Sunday in Lent
Sermon: “Temptation”

March 8 - Second Sunday in Lent (Girl Scout Sunday)
Sermon: “Faith Becomes Righteousness”

March 15 - Third Sunday in Lent
Sermon: “Faith Alone”

March 22 - Fourth Sunday in Lent
Sermon: “Who Sinned? We All Sin”

March 29 - Fifth Sunday in Lent
Kid’s Sermon: “Judas Iscariot”
Sermon: “Judas Is a Saint”

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS MARCH 8TH



Remember to set your clock ahead one hour when retiring on Saturday evening, March 7th.

Coffee Hour Hosts

March 1	Personnel Committee
March 8	Board of Deacons
March 15	Prudential Committee
March 22	Board of Trustees
March 29	Music Comm. & Historian



Happy Birthday to:

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

We recently received a beautiful thank you card from Bessie Morgan, thanking the Deacons and congregation for her Christmas basket.

A NOTE OF

We want to thank all the members who sent cards as well as all those who attended the memorial service for our mother. Mom loved her church family and had many fond memories of all her participation in church activities. We greatly appreciate the outpouring of love you showed our mother. A big thank you for making her memorial service so special for us.

God bless,
The family of Lorain Johnson

CORNED BEEF & CABBAGE COMMUNITY SUPPER

Saturday, March 21st, at 5p.m.

Adults - \$10 Children - free

OUR BOY SCOUT TROOP 101 HAS GRACIOUSLY VOLUNTEERED TO RUN THE MARCH SUPPER TO **BENEFIT THE CHURCH. PLEASE SUPPORT THEIR EFFORTS** BY ATTENDING AND ALSO INVITING FAMILY, FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS TO JOIN YOU.

**WE EXTEND OUR SINCERE THANKS TO
THE SCOUTS & LEADERS!**



WE ALSO CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR CHEFS TO HEAD UP OUR APRIL, SEPTEMBER, AND OCTOBER SUPPERS. PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST. **THANK YOU!**

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 "Invest in Futures," based on 1 Corinthians 3:5-9. It tells us we are servants in the service of God, one planting, one watering, and God being the one who grows and nurtures it all.

Offering envelopes are enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Please place in the offering plate when it's passed during the Sunday service or mail to:
First Congregational Church, 128 Central St.,
Auburn, MA 01501.

Thank you on behalf of the individuals and communities who will benefit directly from your support.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Welcome to the Easter Season and the beginning of spring! Lent, as you know, began on February 26. Some say this is early, but my thought is . . . with Lent and Easter comes spring, and the flowers that appear slowly after their winter slumber. Many of us also feel rejuvenated during the spring. Please take time to enjoy the warmth of the sun as well as the warmth of our Father's love as we prepare for Easter.

YOUTH ON a MISSION

Butter braids are HERE! On March 1 and again on March 15, the youth will be selling butter braids and cake rolls to complement your Easter dinner. The orders will be available for pick up on Sunday, March 29, well in time for Easter. **If paying by check, please make out to First Congregational Church with "YOM" in the memo section.**

Nine youth and three adults will be venturing up to Monadnock for a weekend of prayer, devotion, music, and fun on Friday, March 7 - Sunday, March 9. Please keep the youth, as well as the leaders, in your prayers. Please pray that the youth are open to the Word of God and take the message to heart. My hope is they return a stronger group and stronger in their faith in God.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

As always, we are looking for floaters and cradle roll volunteers to help out downstairs. Please see Shannon Hartmann if interested. Thank you to everyone who helps out with the children; it is truly appreciated. The children's choir will be singing on March 29th, while all the children partake in the beginning of the service. Anyone interested in joining, see Paulette after service. Looking ahead, we will have our annual Easter egg hunt on April 5th after service. We will place a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Fellowship hall. PLEASE note any allergies.

May the Lord bring warmth to your heart and a smile on your face.

Jean McPherson



March is Brain Awareness Month, Colorectal Cancer Month, Kidney Month, and M.S. Education and Awareness Month. It is also National Nutrition Month, Save Your Vision Month, and Workplace Eye Wellness.

March 1-7	National Sleep Awareness Week
March 3	World Birth Defects Day
March 6	Lymphedema Awareness Day
March 8-14	Cardiac Rehabilitation Week
March 8-14	National Pulmonary Rehabilitation Week
March 9-13	Patient Safety Awareness Week
March 15-21	Brain Awareness Week
March 15-21	National Poison Prevention Week

On March 31st I will be attending a health fair, hopefully to get new information about health services available in the area. Soon I hope to have new information on the health table in fellowship hall.

The flu hasn't reached its peak yet, so please continue to be careful. Handwashing is the best prevention, but also avoid crowds if you can. Have a healthy month.

God Bless!

Debbie Pranaitis, Parish Nurse, 508-612-4521

Here We Grow Preschool



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 during the week or Deb Minor at coffee hour? 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 30 beautiful greeting cards. See us at HWG to grab a box or 2; they make great gifts.

The children and staff celebrated Valentine's 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 3, 2020, 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 in 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 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 3rd, from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.

Join us on Sunday, March 8th, for
Girl Scout Sunday.



Girl Scouts Grace Shoblom, Harper Shoblom, and Elizabeth Grimshaw will be selling Girl Scout cookies during coffee hour on March 8th. (Yum!)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS ARE 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.

BELL CHOIR SCHEDULE

Rehearsals will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Sundays during March.

There will be a 9 a.m. rehearsal on April 5th.

There will be no rehearsal on Easter Sunday, April 12th.

On April 19th, April 26th, May 3rd, and May 10th rehearsals will be held at 2:30 p.m.

On Music Appreciation Sunday, May 17th, rehearsal will be held at 9 a.m.

Please continue to keep Joyce Ringgard and family in your prayers due to the sudden passing of Joyce's daughter, Cheryl Ringgard Boivin, on January 30th. Cheryl was living in Florida at the time. 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 Covenants. 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.



<u>Covenant:</u>	<u>Soup/sandwich provider:</u>
3/4 Covenant in the UCC with Association Conference Minister Kelley Gallagher	Board of Deacons
3/11 The Covenant with Noah	Mem'l/Scholarship & Library Committees
3/18 The Covenant with Abraham	Music Committee
3/25 The Covenant with Moses	Outreach Committee
4/1 The New Covenant in Jesus' Blood	Board of Christian Ed (BOCE)

"We can care for a needy world with the things we throw away." — Rev. Wendell Mettey, Founder of Matthew 25: Ministries

The mission of Matthew 25: Ministries is to fulfill Matthew 25:34-40 of the New Testament by providing nutritional food to the hungry, clean water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, affordable shelter to the homeless, medical care to the ill, and humanitarian supplies to those in need. Additionally, Matthew 25: Ministries is committed to fulfilling Matthew 25:40 by educating the public on the conditions and needs of the "least of these" and by providing resources for action.

Matthew 25: Ministries is an international humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization helping the poorest of the poor and disaster victims locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. By rescuing and reusing products, Matthew 25: Ministries provides basic necessities, nutritional supplements, educational materials, micro-enterprise supplies, and disaster relief across the US and worldwide.

The Outreach Committee is collecting your old pill bottles.

Matthew 25: Ministries accepts donations of empty plastic pill bottles for inclusion in shipments of medical supplies. Acceptable collection items include: prescription and over-the-counter pill bottles, large and small pill bottles, pill bottles with and without secure caps (child-resistant). Please remove labels, leaving no glue or residue, and wash bottles in very hot water and dish soap. Rinse and dry thoroughly. Replace lids on clean, dried bottles.

Look for a collection box in fellowship hall for your pill bottle donations and **thank you** for your help!

2020 COMMITTEE NOMINEES WANTED

At this time, vacancies still remain on the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees. If you are a church member and interested in joining either of these boards, please contact Nominating Committee members — Sue MacPhee, Judi Taft, or Sheila Skog at:
 Sue, 508-832-9347, or susiemac2002@gmail.com
 Judi, 508-341-4530, or jtaft01527@aol.com
 Sheila, 508-832-5649, or sheilaskog@gmail.com.

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 17th at 6 p.m. when we will discuss the book *Didn't See it Coming* by Carey Nieuwhof.

"Didn't See It Coming reveals the seven core issues that take people out: cynicism, compromise, disconnectedness, irrelevance, pride, burnout, and the emptiness of success. Discover how to reverse the most significant challenges to your life, closing the gap between who you are and who you've always longed to be."

THEY'RE B-A-A-A-C-K!

Once again, Youth On a Mission (YOM) will be selling delicious butter braids! You know the ones . . . strawberry cream cheese, raspberry, blueberry cream cheese, cinnamon, apple, Bavarian crème. There's also cheese and herb bread, cinnamon rolls, and new this year . . . cake rolls! (in pumpkin, chocolate crème, red velvet, and strawberry cheesecake) Yummy! The youth will be taking orders during coffee hours on March 1st and 15th. Delivery will be in time for Easter! If paying by check, please make payable to First Congregational Church with "YOM" noted in the memo section. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Wine Tasting and Silent Auction

To support the homeless in our community

Saturday, March 14, 2020 7:00–10:00 p.m.

Temple Emanuel Sinai
661 Salisbury Street, Worcester, Massachusetts

\$75 per person

Menu selected especially by Struck Catering of Worcester

To purchase tickets via mail, send check (payable to Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester) to IHN, 91 June St., Worcester, MA 01602 or purchase tickets online at ihnworchester.org *For tickets please respond by March 9, 2020.*

(Note - if you purchase tickets online there will be a service fee of \$4.90)

ESTATE PLANNING?

Have you included the church in your will or estate planning? Please prayerfully consider if the Lord would have you remember your church when completing your will.

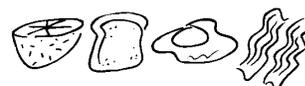
“One of the greatest missing teachings in the American church today is the reminder to men and women that nothing we have belongs to us.”

Gordon MacDonald, American Pastor & Teacher

TWO CHICKS CLEANING SERVICE

Church member Nikki Angers and her mom operate **Two Chicks Cleaning**. They do one time only deep cleans/spring cleans and bi-weekly cleans as well. This includes kitchens, baths, wiping/washing blinds, washing windows, cleaning appliances inside and out, vacuuming and washing your floors by hand, dusting woodwork and baseboards, moving furniture and dusting and vacuuming behind. Your mirrors will sparkle, your sinks will shine, and your floors will gleam! Call 774-670-8899 for more info.

PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST



We hope you can join us for our annual PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST on April 5th beginning at 8 a.m. Please look for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall as the date approaches. Thank you! Also, our thanks to Jennifer Bohn and Ron Hanks for agreeing to prepare the breakfast!

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 Sunday 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 Sun., Mar 29th.**

Lilies (1 stem) \$10.00 _____

Lilies (2 stems) \$20.00 _____

Lilies (3 stems) \$30.00 _____

Tulips 6" \$10.00 _____

Color Choice: Yellow _____ Pink _____ Purple _____

White _____ Red _____

Tulips 8" \$18.00 _____

Color Choice: Yellow _____ Pink _____ 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 _____

COMPLETE DEDICATION ON BACK.



ANNUAL COMMUNITY YARD and PLANT SALE SAVE THE DATE ~ SATURDAY JUNE 20TH ~ 8am-1pm

Once again we will be holding our Community Yard and Plant Sale. As in the past, we will have a "church table" with items for sale donated by church members and friends of the church. The remainder of the participants are members of the church and the community who rent spaces for the day to sell their items.

Our Plant Table Team is organized this year by Connie Hanks and staffed by a committee of gardeners. If you are interested in becoming a part of this group, contact Connie Hanks at clwhanks@gmail.com or call her at 508-832-4227. Last year the plants alone raised \$975.00 for the church's general fund.

Although refreshments will be somewhat scaled back this year, we will have coffee and baked goods available in the morning and something for lunch, TBD, as well.

As the date draws closer, we will be asking for a minimal amount of your time to help with this FUNdraiser. **Please mark your calendars to lend a hand.** If you don't plan on renting your own space, please start setting aside things you no longer want and donate them to the church's table. PLEASE, NO VCR TAPES, CLOTHING, TVs, OR COMPUTER EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING MONITORS.

If you have any questions about this event, please contact me, Cindy Dube, at home, 508-832-6646 or call or text my cell, 774-238-0260. I am looking forward to another year working together and having fun while doing it!

God Bless — Cindy

Easter Flower Dedication

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

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

Name(s): _____

Include above name(s) in dedication? Yes _____ No _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

In Memory of _____

OR

In Celebration of _____

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

BULK RATE
 U.S. POSTAGE
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 or PastorBrian@auburnfirstucc.org

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

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

March 2020						
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				