



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

I have been thinking about kids moving out into the world. It is a natural topic with Confirmation winding down and Confirmation Sunday being May 5. Confirmation was an early step into adulthood. Children were confirmed just as they entered their teen years. Which was also the time that boys and girls entered service or started apprenticeships.

In Europe and America it was common for boys and girls to leave their homes at 12 or 13 to go live in another house to learn what they needed to do to be adults. I left home a little before my 15th birthday to go to boarding school; I imagine that was similar. Boarding school exposed me to a lot of different experiences. I learned putting on dirty clothes is worse than doing laundry. I learned sleep is very important and going to sleep before you have to is a wise thing to do (sometimes).

Today, this age is when we go from small neighborhood elementary schools to larger middle or high schools. This is the way of humans. We go from family to neighborhood to eventually the whole wide world.

I have lamented the lack of kids in my neighborhood. Many kids are kept inside where it is safe. At home they are out of danger, or so we think.

A big question is: “When should a child have a phone?” A phone is nice for parents to get a hold of their kid, but... a phone also opens the world up to the kid. Or possibly exposes the kid to adult stuff they are not ready for.

I am of the age that it was normal for me to walk into a dozen houses in my neighborhood without needing to knock. These were places I could get a cup of water or a band aid for a skinned knee or even a full meal. These were also people who knew precisely what time my mom got home from work and would call her as she came in the door to tell her what they had seen me doing which they knew was against the rules.

Now things were not all roses. Along with the houses that I was welcome in, were the houses I was to avoid. Houses even where some of my friends lived.

“You are NEVER to go into Todd’s house EVER. Do you understand?”

“Yes mom. But why?”

Only as an adult did I figure out that Todd’s parents were not trusted or were known not to be safe around kids.

I hope you pray for our confirmands as they take another step into adulthood. Adulthood can be a long, difficult place to get to. Have you gotten there yet?

God Bless,

Pastor Brian

SERMON TITLES FOR MAY

- May 5 Communion & Confirmation Sunday - “What Does God Need To Do To Get Your Attention?”
- May 12 Mother’s Day, New Member Sunday & Choir Appreciation - “Tabitha Dorcas”
- May 19 “Joyful Music”
- May 26 Memorial Weekend/Baptism Sunday - “The Spirit Will Teach Us”

We spoke to our son Tom and he truly appreciates all of the love and support the church has given him through the gift boxes filled with all kinds of great things. He and the other servicemen in his unit really enjoyed the contents of the boxes (especially the cookies) that did arrive in great shape.

It is with our heartfelt thanks that we ask you to make mention of this in the "Tidings" so all the members of our congregation, most particularly Deb Pranaitis, know how thankful we are for their generosity towards Tom while serving over there.

*Thanks again,
Skip and Paula Bigelow*

Note: Tom Bigelow is currently deployed to Afghanistan.
Please pray for Tom, Haydn McPherson, and all of our military.

Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 2nd**, 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 to complement the burgers and dogs supplied by the Board of Ed. Please look for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall.

Coffee Hour Hosts

- 5/5 Board of Ed
- 5/12 Board of Deacons
- 5/19 Financial Secretaries/Treasurers
- 5/26 Outreach Committee
- 6/2 Board of Ed (BOCE)

Join us at our monthly potluck suppers and book/movie club - "Dinner and Discussion" (also known as "Spirit Supper"). The next get together will be on **Tuesday, May 21st**, beginning at **6 p.m.** when we will discuss the book, *VOX* by Christina Dalcher.

Jean McClellan spends her time in almost complete silence, limited to just one hundred words a day. Any more, and a thousand volts of electricity will course through her veins. Now the new government is in power, everything has changed. But only if you're a woman. Almost overnight, bank accounts are frozen, passports are taken away and seventy million women lose their jobs. Even more terrifyingly, young girls are no longer taught to read or write. For herself, her daughter, and for every woman silenced, Jean will reclaim her voice.

This is only the beginning...

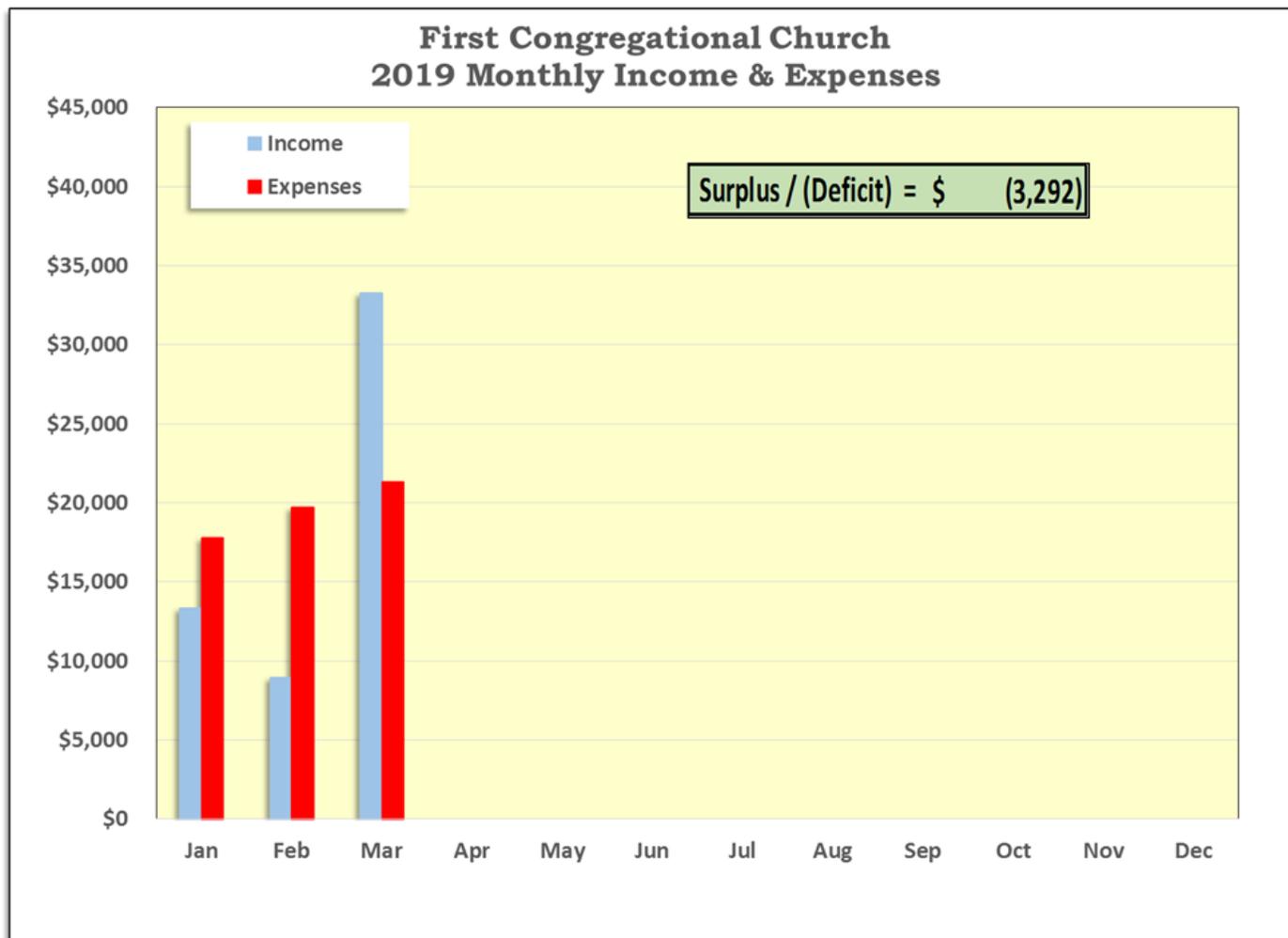
CELEBRATING AN
Anniversary 

Carole & Bob Murray will be celebrating their special day on May 4th.
Happy Anniversary, Bob & Carole!

Paul and Diane Moore will be celebrating their 50th anniversary on May 10th. Rev. Shire performed the ceremony at church and it was his first official duty. Congratulations, Paul and Diane!

Below is our monthly financial “snapshot.”

Thank you to Nick Stockhaus, Treasurer, for keeping us apprised of church finances.



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

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way." - unknown

Calling All Soon To Be Graduates . . .

If you are aware of any students with ties to First Congregational who will be graduating this spring, please email Denise at: secretary@auburnfirstucc.org or call the Church office, (508) 832-2845. Please include where they're graduating from and when, details of their future plans, and list family members (parents/grandparents) who are known within the church.

We would like to acknowledge our graduates in the June *Tidings* and a future bulletin.



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I hope you all had a wonderful Easter. The kids had a wonderful time at the egg hunt; we had over 20 children. We were very fortunate that the weather held off.

The Sunday school kids have raised enough money to purchase a goat through the Heifer International project. The kids have now decided to work toward a water treatment system. This will help the entire village. Please keep an eye on the bulletin board in fellowship hall to see our progress.

The Confirmation Class along with Outreach attended Worcester Fellowship this past month. Confirmation Sunday is May 5.

I would like to congratulate all the teens for their work this past year. I believe each of them has worked hard and learned a lot about their faith during the past year. Please seek them out to

congratulate them. Our new confirmands are: Nicholas Comeau, Anthony Gervasi, Reanna Largesse, Gabriel Lazerick, Abigail Morrison, and Cameron Scobie.



Thank you to everyone who supported our recent Youth On a Mission fundraiser. With your help we raised \$215.

Our Annual Church picnic is Sunday, June 2, after church. As always, the Board of Ed will provide the burgers and fixings; we will ask the congregation to provide salads and dessert. Please plan to attend this fun annual event. Look for a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall.

Jean McPherson
Director of Religious Education

Lynn Largesse is selling fresh eggs at \$4 per dozen. Please see her after church on Sundays or call her at (508) 868-5188, if you're interested.

She will bring orders to church with her for pick up after the Sunday service.

MOTHER'S DAY BAKE SALE

The Choirs and Music Committee are joining efforts by holding a bake sale fundraiser during coffee hour on Mother's Day. So look no further when in need of something delicious for Mother's Day on Sunday, May 12th!



SAVE THE DATE:

The Auburn Faith Walk for Hunger is scheduled for Sunday, October 27th, at 1:00. The Publick House in Sturbridge has scheduled a barbecue feast under the tent on Monday, September 23rd to benefit the hunger walk. Look for more information to follow in September. Please contact Sue Campbell, 508-799-2718, with any questions.



May is: Arthritis Awareness Month, Better Hearing and Speech Month, Food Allergy Action Month, Hepatitis Awareness Month, International Mediterranean Diet Month, Mental Health Month, National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month, National Osteoporosis Month, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, National Stroke Awareness Month, National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month, Preeclampsia Awareness Month and Skin Cancer Prevention Month ®

May 1 - 7 is National Physical Education & Sport Week

5 - 11 is North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

5 is Hand Hygiene Day

6 - 12 is National Neuropathy Awareness Week

7 - 13 is Children's Mental Health Awareness Week

9 is Bike to School Day

12 - 18 is National Alcohol & Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week

12 - 18 is National Women's Health Week

12 is Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Awareness Day

13 - 19 is National Stuttering Awareness Week

18 is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

19 is National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

20 - 26 is National Hurricane Preparedness Week

20 is World Autoimmune/Autoinflammatory Arthritis Day

21 - 27 is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week

24 is Don't Fry Day

25 is Heat Safety Awareness Day

29 is National Senior Health & Fitness Day ®

31 is World No Tobacco Day

Remember to protect yourself with sunscreen and sunglasses.

God Bless!

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



On Sunday, March 31st, we celebrated the baptism of Leo Steven Kupstas. Leo is the 7-month-old son of Amy Cariglio and Joseph Kupstas. Proud grandparents are Steven and Cindy Cariglio, and great-grandparents are Paul and Debra Pellegrino and Cheryl Cariglio. We pray for God's continued blessing upon Leo and his family.

IMPORTANT — PLEASE NOTE:

The Church Council has approved the implementation of a new fundraising policy. Fundraisers are broken down as follows: **major fundraisers** (with proceeds greater than \$1,000 that require church space for more than one day), **small fundraisers** (proceeds less than \$1,000 that need church space for one day or less), and **coffee hour fundraisers** (only run in fellowship hall during Sunday coffee hour). Major fundraisers require both Trustee and Council approval at least 3 months prior to the event. Small fundraisers require Trustee and Council approval at least 1 month in advance. Coffee hour fundraisers require approval by the Church Council or Council President.

If you are involved with any fundraising, please familiarize yourself with the policy and request form well in advance of your fundraiser in order to meet specified deadlines. Copies of the policy and attached request form are available on the table in fellowship hall or by calling the church office, 508-832-2845, and requesting that a copy be mailed to you.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us on
Confirmation Sunday, May 5th.
 Our service will begin as usual at 10:00 a.m. Please come
 and support our newest church members.



From the Outreach Committee

While I write this, the rain is coming down in buckets. By the time you are reading this, my prayer is for sunshine and flowers!!! Seeds have been sown, we have the rain... the goal is for a beautiful and plentiful garden. I love this time of year, as everything is new and I cannot see my mistakes yet!!!

Worcester Fellowship was a huge success. We had a wonderful team to represent FCC Auburn in a beautiful day of charity and worship and making new friends. Our group showed up with 4 gallons of cold drink, about 100 sandwiches including ham and cheese and PBJ; we supplied fruit cups, dessert and clean socks. Our group also provided bags for sandwiches and brown bags for lunch! A very special shout out to YOM, who not only showed up, but showed up early and put all those sandwiches together!!!! Those kids deserve a high five when you see them. They worked really hard to be a part of a very generous group! Our guestimate is that there were about 100 folks who came for lunch and a service without walls or a ceiling. God Bless!

For the month of April, Outreach has donated \$500 to The Royal Family Kids Foundation. This is an incredible group that brings foster children together in the form of a summer camp. I learned that this is often the only time siblings, who have been separated through foster care, have a chance to spend time together. Knowing the love I have for my siblings, this brought tears to my eyes. Sadness, but also gratitude. Gratitude for organizations such as this one, who are changing the lives of children a little bit at a time!

For the food pantry: March 17 - \$12 and April 7 - \$105 - Thank you!

~ Please remember as the warm weather is upon us, the people that were hungry over the winter, are probably hungry throughout the spring and the summer!

Coming up is the Dismas House Barn Dance on Sat., June 1, 6-9 P.M.

This is a fun time for the family. Food, dancing and games! Find an outreach member (Cindy Dube, Pat Bukoski, Shannon Hartmann, Joyce Ringgard, Kay Shapter, or Marion Woodcock) if you would like to attend; we can go as a group!

Thank you to everyone for your generosity and support. Remember, Outreach represents all of YOU here at FCC Auburn! WE are doing great things.

Shannon Hartmann

The June 15th Yard Sale Plant Table Team is forming into a terrific group of plant lovers. Sheila Skog, Lynne Largesse, Diane Moore, Carmela Hansen, Shirley Hill, Lois Therrien, and myself, Connie Whitehead Hanks, make up our team so far. Let us know if you'd like to join us.



So what are we looking for from the rest of the church members and family? PLANTS! As you clean up your gardens, pot up those perennials that have spread beyond their boundaries. If you're inclined, start some pots with seeds of herbs. It's a fun project with children too. Basil is easy to grow and is a great seller.

Some other items that sell well are:

- Herbs: mint, lavender, tarragon, oregano, sage, chives, etc.
- Succulents
- Lily of the Valley
- Ground cover - vinca, pachysandra, etc.
- Small shrubs and trees
- Annuals
- Perennials - sedum, hosta, iris, delphinium, liatris, peonies, lilies, astilbe, and too many others to name
- Starter plants for veggie gardens
- House plants are welcome too

We can use any pots you have hanging around in your cellar or garage. As you do your Memorial Day plantings, don't throw those pots in the trash. We will take them.

The plant sale has raised over \$500 each year in the past. Please help us continue its success. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me, Connie, at clwhanks@gmail.com or call me at 508-832-4227.



Here We Grow Preschool

As we enter the last full month of the school year, we are very busy with field trips, and preparing for spree day and graduations. With so much to do, let's hope this nice weather stays with us for a while.

In April, Neal Primeaux was here to do both class pictures and individual pictures of all the children. Thank you to the board of Christian Ed for use of the Sunday school room.

We were fortunate to have had members of the Massachusetts State Police Amber Alert team, along with Auburn and Worcester Police Departments visit us recently to do fingerprinting of all graduating four-year-olds. Thank you to all community groups for their continued support.

Spree Day and graduations will be held during the day, the first full week of June. We are excited to once again have Pumpnickel Puppets in for Spree Day, June 3. His show will begin at 10:45, if you have a little one and would like to stop in to watch. Our summer program will be happening the weeks of June 17 and 24. There are still open spots if you have a child ages 4-9 who would like to attend. Our themes are "It's a Pirates Life for Me" and "The Wonderful World of Wizards." Our days start at 9 and end at 1:30.

We still have openings for both 3 and 4-year-olds for next year. Spread the word.

Until next month,
Cristi Corey, Director, ***Here We Grow Preschool***

COMMUNITY YARD SALE---PLANT SALE---COOKOUT
SATURDAY, JUNE 15th, 8 A.M. to 2 P.M.



Mark your calendars for our **Community Yard Sale on June 15th** and begin setting aside items. As we've done in the past, we will rent spaces and tables, plus we'll do all the advertising, and remember, our prime location can't be beat! Sort those items now and prepare to turn that "trash" into "treasure." 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.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO MAKE THIS EVENT A SUCCESS. You can carry out tables and chairs on Friday night (the 14th), help serve and clean refreshment tables, help clean-up and return tables inside at the end of the day on Saturday, make a monetary donation to help defray costs, **SHOW YOUR SUPPORT** by donating perennials, renting a yard sale space, shopping at the yard sale, and joining us for hamburgers, hot dogs and strawberry shortcake. Remember to invite lots of friends and family to join you!

Returning this year we will be having a church table at the yard sale, so when doing your spring cleaning, keep the church in mind. Your items may be dropped off in early June (date to be determined). Please ensure your items are clean and in working order. Books will also be accepted. Please, no clothes and no VCR tapes.

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of
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God's church in Auburn Center
doing Christ's work in the world.
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OR CURRENT RESIDENT