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# Herald of Good TIDINGS



NOVEMBER 2017

*“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

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## The Nature of Evil

This has been a year that evil has dominated the news. There were hate groups marching. A shooting that seemed to be for no reason other than to cause pain and death to complete strangers. Then there was the evil of storms and earthquakes and wildfires.

All three forms of evil have been in the news this year. First is the evil of systems. Systems that want to use people. Systems that treat people like cogs in a big machine. Systems that think people are no more than parts easily replaced when they wear out. It is evil to treat any person as anything less than a child of God, worthy of love and respect. Yet there are still people who judge and devalue people based on the color of skin or how much money is in their bank account. An evil system.

The media is still desperately looking for a motive for the Las Vegas shooting. The man had money. Though a gambler, he didn't seem to be in debt. It seems he lived a pretty normal life. He had plenty of money to do what he wanted. Then he decided to commit murder. He went to great lengths to plan these murders. He stockpiled guns, researched locations and committed the crime only after everything was just right. It seems he did this evil thing just because he wanted to. There was no grand idea behind the massacre. He wasn't a member of ISIS, nor did he hate country music. He seemingly did it just because he wanted to hurt people and be infamous. No one, not even his family, can think of him as a good man anymore. He will always be a monster, an evil person.

Lastly the planet and nature herself have been causing destruction. There were earthquakes off the Mexico coast and one in Mexico City. There were massive hurricanes that hit the Caribbean Islands, Texas, Florida, Louisiana, Central America and Ireland. Wildfires are destroying homes, farms, and businesses in California.

This can all be overwhelming. Especially if we watch too much TV news. Instead of being overwhelmed by the images, do something, anything helpful and productive. Helping make the world better, even if it does not directly help the issue that has you most scared or worried, can be a great help to our peace of mind and mental health.

Issues and problems can be overwhelming and feel too large for one person or family. But if we all do a little bit to help, where and how we can, even the biggest problem can be solved. The proverb is: “You can't empty the sea with a teaspoon.” But, 330 million people with 330 million teaspoons could drop the sea level pretty quick.

Let us pray for all the people suffering from all these evil things, and may we, the good people, commit ourselves to doing good to help others.

May God bless those who suffer. God who sent His own Son to suffer, knows the pain that is often part of human life. May God's loving presence be felt in the time of tragedy. God knows suffering, God goes with us through the valley of death, and has a table ready for us when we pass out of the darkest part of the valley.

May God bless us all and be with us in triumph and tragedy, Amen.

Pastor Brian

### NOVEMBER SERMON TITLES

- 11/5 “Martin Luther and Indulgences”
- 11/12 “Women At War”
- 11/19 “It Ain't Easy”
- 11/26 “Thanksgiving Prayer of Bart Simpson”  
Children's Sermon: “Giving Thanks”

### Join us at the Community Thanksgiving Eve Service

Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 p.m.  
at Pakachoag Church, 203 Pakachoag St., Auburn

A monetary offering will be taken for Auburn Youth & Family Services and Kateri's Kitchen Food Banks

**Coffee Hour Hosts:**

11/5	Financial Secretaries/Treasurers
11/12 & 19	Board of Ed
11/26	Board of Trustees
12/3	Historian, Nominating, Library & Memorial/Scholarship Committees



**Happy Birthday wishes to:**

- Rich McPherson ~ Nov. 6th
- Nick Stockhaus ~ Nov. 7th
- Victoria Stockhaus ~ Nov. 14th
- Suzanne Kress ~ Nov. 22nd

**\*\*\* PUMPKIN PATCH FAIR \*\*\***

**THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the fair fundraiser, whether through donations, by working the fair, making purchases, or all of the above — it was a real team effort! The final numbers are not in yet, but will be published once available.**

MANY THANKS to so many who helped behind the scenes with the fair. Special thanks to Cindy Ryan, Diane Moore and Judy Murphy for all their hard work, to Gayle Farley for once again heading up the jewelry table, to Sheila Skog for heading up the "attic treasures" with help from Marion Woodcock and family, to Lois Therrien for overseeing the silent auction, and Lori Stockhaus for keeping cashiers stocked. **Thank you to everyone who helped the day of the fair** (too numerous to mention here, but know you are appreciated) and to Pastor Brian, Todd Dube, Ron and Connie Hanks, Scott Veau and all others who helped with clean-up after the fair. And, thanks to anyone we may have overlooked (our apologies).

**THANK YOU** to everyone who has helped with this year's pumpkin patch. The pumpkin patch total as of the end of the day October 23rd = \$17,220.75. Of that amount 67% goes to support the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. From Christian support and with diligent coverage, First Congregational's volunteers (to date) have earned our church 33% profit from numerous public sales. With 8 more days until the close of our patch, there is hope and faith that sales will continue to bless us. Thank you for the generous support.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO DEBBIE MAHLERT, LINDA MAHLERT, SHEILA SKOG, JUDI TAFT and SUE MACPHEE** for all they did in organizing this fundraiser.

Our thanks to the Auburn community for supporting our fundraiser and supporting the Navajo Indian Reservation in Farmington, NM where the pumpkins are grown on 1,200 acres or approximately 2 square miles of pumpkins. During the harvest months of September and October over 700 Native Americans are employed as well as a full time off-season NM staff that is comprised entirely of Native Americans. This has a positive and lasting impact on a region with 42% unemployment.

Thank you to all for another successful pumpkin patch season!



Remember to turn your clocks back on November 4th before retiring for the evening. Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 a.m. on November 5th.

Sue Campbell wishes to thank everyone for their generous donations to the Auburn Walk for Hunger. Her total raised was \$464.50 to benefit the Auburn Youth & Family Services and Kateri's Kitchen food banks!





## ALTERNATIVES CLUB 21

### Change Lives by Having Fun Become a Member of Club 21

On Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, please join Dana Chalberg in Fellowship Hall after the worship service to learn about Alternatives' Club 21.

Club 21 is a social club devoted to friendship and fun. Sponsored by Alternatives, it brings together Discovery Members, people in life's mainstream, and Recovery Members, individuals being served by Alternatives for mental health challenges.

Become a Discovery Member in Club 21 and share the opportunity to meet new people and have new experiences. Enjoy outings of mutual interest with a Recovery partner and other Club members.

Alternatives is a non-profit human services agency that has been helping individuals with disabilities build meaningful lives in the community for 40 years – lives that include real homes, real jobs and real relationships. For more information please visit the Alternatives' website at [www.alternativesnet.org](http://www.alternativesnet.org).

Join us monthly for our potluck supper get-togethers. The potlucks begin at 5:30 p.m. on movie nights and 6:00 p.m. on book discussion nights. You do NOT have to read the book, if you just want to come for food and fellowship, please do! Our next get-together will be on **Tuesday, November 21st, at 6 p.m.** when we will discuss the novel *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

In December we will be viewing *Prancer* (on Tuesday, December 19th, beginning at 5:30 p.m.) *Prancer* is the story of 9-year-old Jessica who is convinced she has encountered Prancer, one of Santa's reindeers, and is now determined to nurse him back to health so he may return to Santa.

"The best thing about *Prancer* is that it doesn't insult anyone's intelligence. Smaller kids will identify with Jessica's fierce resolve to get Prancer back into action, and older viewers will appreciate the fact that the movie takes place in an approximation of the real world." — Roger Ebert

The following note comes from Rev. Bob Fenby's family:

*1st Church Members,*

*We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the many parishioners and friends for their comfort during the passing of Dad and attending the tribute of his life on Sept. 29th.*

*The outpouring of sympathy and cards from everyone was overwhelming. It was certainly an indication of how his calling influenced so many during the course of his life. The many stories we heard were amazing.*

*We were so fortunate and blessed to have such a wonderful person to call husband, dad and grandpa.*

*Dad had a zest and loved life. His favorite motto was, "To enjoy each day as if it was your last."*

*Sincerely,*

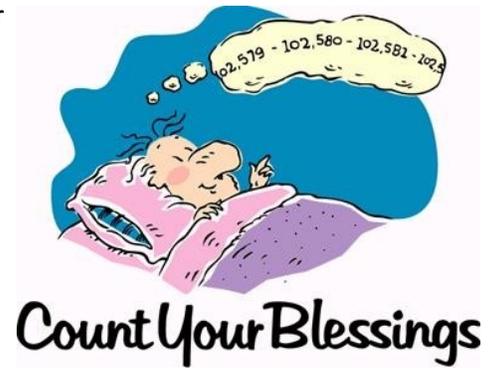
*Lee, Pam, John, Zach & Gabe*

**From the Director of Religious Education**

Happy Thanksgiving to you all. Please take a moment or two to say a prayer of thanksgiving for all the blessings we share every day.

On October 21st Youth On a Mission (YOM) hosted a Harvest Festival for the children of the church. We had old fashioned donuts on a string games, pumpkin painting and a costume parade complete with trick-or-treating.

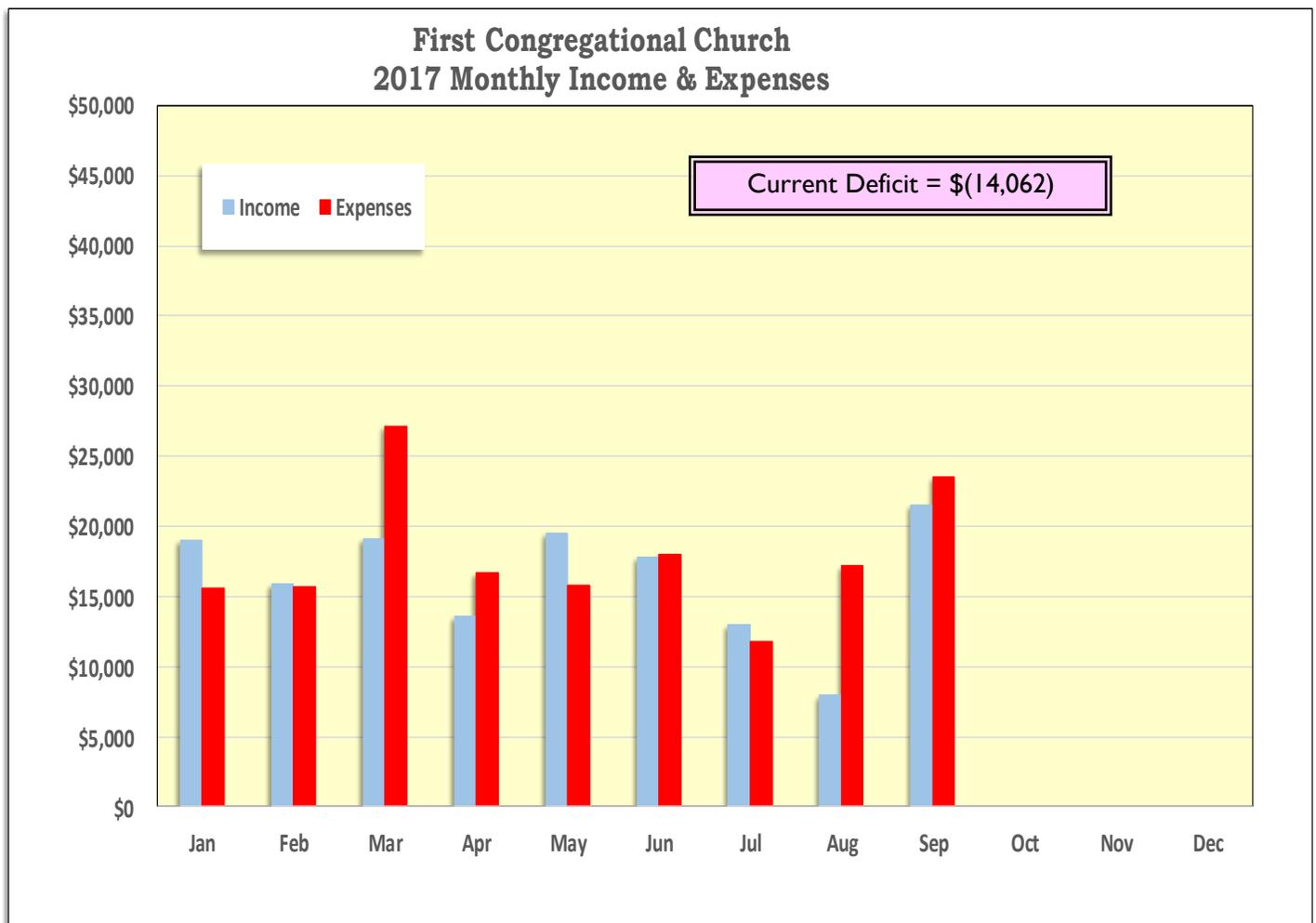
YOM would like to thank everyone that helped with our pie/cookie dough fundraiser. We earned \$232.00; this money will go toward our "Encounter Weekend" on January 26 at Monadnock Bible Conference in New Hampshire.



Sunday school is now in a rhythm and each week we are busy learning new things about the Bible. You are all welcome to come down anytime and see what we are doing.

Jean McPherson  
 Director of Religious Education

Below is a bar graph depicting 2017 income and expenses through September.





### **Here We Grow Preschool**

Welcome everyone to the third month of the school year. Everyone has settled in nicely and we are greeted each morning by happy, smiling faces. The children and staff are busy planning and preparing for Thanksgiving and the winter holidays.

During October we had visits from the Auburn Fire and Police Departments. The children talked about the safest way to exit their homes in case of fires. The Police talked to the children about Halloween and safety tips they should follow.

We still have available openings in both 3 and 4-year-old classes.

During the month of November, the students of **Here We Grow** will be learning about: Healthy Foods, Manners, What We Are Thankful For, and Weather. Our feast days are November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Our feast day tradition began over 26 years ago when Fawn Robidoux, **Here We Grow's** first Director, began this wonderful experience.

The children and families of HWG will again be participating in "The Giving Basket." All foods collected will be given to Pastor Brian to distribute to families in need during the season of Thanksgiving. We hope to continue with the tremendous amount of support from the HWG families. The need for help grows each year.

Sadly, we have learned that one of our young students has been diagnosed with cancer. Michael recently turned 4 and has an older brother and his family is expecting a new baby in the next couple of weeks. A fund has been set up at Webster Savings Bank to help the family with the unexpected costs associated with Michael's treatments. Donations may be made to "The Allen Family Fund," c/o Webster Savings Bank, 400 Southbridge Street, Auburn, MA 01501. We ask you to keep the family in your thoughts and prayers as they travel this road.

Until next month, enjoy the season of fall and stay healthy.

Cristi Corey, Director  
**Here We Grow** Preschool



### **Annual Christmas Bazaar**

Saturday, December 2nd

9:00AM – 2:00PM

St. Joseph's Parish Center

68 Central Street, Auburn

Come and enjoy an old fashioned Christmas Bazaar and check out the Collectibles, Attic Treasures, Plants, Jewelry, Knit Goods, Holiday Décor, Toys, Candy & Baked Items and so much more!

Take a chance on one of our many raffles.

There is something for everyone!

During the October 15th service we welcomed new members: Peter Crone, Jr. and Angela Muller-Crone, and Debra and Colin Minor. Please be sure to introduce yourself to our newest church members.

New member classes will be starting up on Sunday, November 5th, following the worship service.

If you're interested in learning more, please speak with a Deacon or Pastor Brian.





November is American Diabetes Month, Bladder Health Month, COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) Awareness Month, Diabetic Eye Disease Month, Lung Cancer Awareness Month, National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, National Family Caregivers Month, National Healthy Skin Month, National Hospice Palliative Care Month, and Stomach Cancer Awareness Month.

November 16th is the Great American Smokeout.

November 19th is International Survivors of Suicide Day

November 20-26th is Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease Awareness Week

November 24th is National Family Health History Day

Thank you to all who got their flu shots at church. Hopefully, we will have a healthy winter.

If you know of anyone that needs medical equipment, please check the closet. If the item you need isn't there, please ask me because I know some people are storing items at home.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and God bless!

Debbie Pranaitis  
Parish Nurse  
Cell: 508-612-4521

### 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](mailto:library@auburnfirstucc.org). Please include "cookbook" in the subject line.

### Neighbors In Need

The Neighbors in Need offering supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. The national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports

our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, MN. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

You'll find an offering envelope enclosed in this month's *Tidings*. Please return it to the church — thank you.

**QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

"No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave."

- Calvin Coolidge

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

**God's Gifts, My Gifts**

The Stewardship Committee wishes to thank all of you who have taken the time to fill out and return your pledge cards to us. **It is important that you return your pledge card whether you plan on pledging or not.**

Thank you again and may God Bless you.

Your Stewardship Committee

New Bibles have been selected to replace the old ones. What better way to remember loved ones than to purchase Bibles in their honor and memory?

An order for 192 pew Bibles (New International Version) has been placed. The purchase price is \$12 each. Won't you please purchase one or more in honor of and/or memory of loved ones? As we did previously with our new hymnals, dedications will be printed onto labels and affixed to the inside front cover. Please complete an order form and include a check payable to First Congregational Church noting "Memorial Fund – Bible" in the memo section.

Thank you for your help –  
The Memorial Committee

\* Bibles ship 16 to a carton; orders will be accepted until supply of 192 Bibles is dedicated.

**BIBLE ORDER FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ (quantity) Bibles at a cost of \$12 each.

Label should read: (**PLEASE PRINT**) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

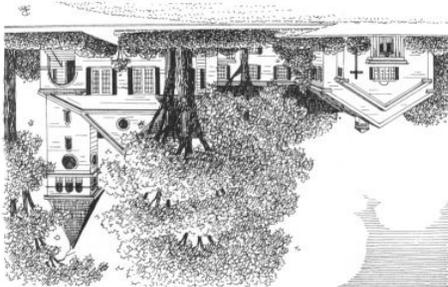
2nd Bible dedication should read: (**PLEASE PRINT**) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Non-Profit Org.  
Permit No. 6  
Auburn, Mass



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*God's church in Auburn Center  
 doing Christ's work in the world.*

*Web: auburnfirstucc.org*

November 2017						
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

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

**2017 Christmas Poinsettia Order**

Once again we are offering the opportunity to purchase poinsettias at great prices. In the past we've decorated the sanctuary with these beautiful plants and at the close of the Christmas Eve service members are able to claim their plants and continue to enjoy them at home, or give them as gifts. You may dedicate your poinsettias in memory of a loved one, or in celebration of a special occasion, etc. Please complete the poinsettia order form below and include a check or cash with your order.  
 Please use a separate order form for each plant.



**Poinsettia Given By: PLEASE PRINT**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

or

In Celebration of \_\_\_\_\_

**Size: (Please indicate 1st, 2nd and 3rd color choices.)**

**Single Plant Pot \$8.00**

Color: Red \_\_\_\_\_

Pink \_\_\_\_\_

White \_\_\_\_\_

Marble \_\_\_\_\_

**Double Plant Pot \$15.00**

Color: Red \_\_\_\_\_

Pink \_\_\_\_\_

White \_\_\_\_\_

Marble \_\_\_\_\_

**Three Plant Pot \$22.00**

Color: Red \_\_\_\_\_

Pink \_\_\_\_\_

White \_\_\_\_\_

no marble \_\_\_\_\_

**Four Plant Pot \$28.00**

Color: Red \_\_\_\_\_

no pink \_\_\_\_\_

White \_\_\_\_\_

no marble \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please check here if you will **NOT** be taking your poinsettia home.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Michele Schillinger, cell # 508-259-2239.

**ORDERS DUE BY DEC. 3<sup>RD</sup>**

