



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

Dear church family,

My carved pumpkin from the pumpkin patch is turning to mush, with a fascinating science experiment of cobweb-like mold on the inside. Fortunately, I have a farmer friend who is delighted to share this pumpkin mush with her goats and pig, and two more beautiful pumpkins just begging to be carved in time for Halloween.

We are entering the season of Allhallowtide, when autumn sheds glorious colors and leaves us with barren branches, when we remember our loved ones who have passed, and the veil is thin between this world and the next. I relish these weeks before the holiday momentum really accelerates, a time intended to reflect upon the necessary autumn within each of us; we are always changing, shedding who we were and become something new, shaped by loss and faith’s tug to emerge again.

Our Remembrance Sunday (November 10th this year) is a sacred way for us to mourn together, allow the reading of names and the lighting of candles to be a healing balm. Further, there will be an opportunity to deeply explore these themes through conversation in a workshop I will be offering, “The Spirituality of Dying” on Thursday, November 7th at 6:00pm.

Before we focus on remembrances, we have our Stewardship campaign and a glorious Consecration Sunday planned, the day when we ritualize our giving through remembering the story of the Joash Chest and its inspiration for our generous offerings before God and one another. King Joash commands that a chest be made and placed at the gates of the holy temple, for offerings to be received.

“Then all the leaders and all the people rejoiced, brought their contributions, and put them into the chest until all had given.” (2 Chronicles 24:10)

Through their joy, their giving was so generous, that the chest was overflowing every day and the funds were used to completely repair and staff the house of God. I have never participated in a worship with an actual Joash Chest, and I love the embodiment of this biblical story for our context now. Let’s truly embrace this timeless story and give with rejoicing and rejoice with our giving!

We are giving to not only sustain our vibrant congregation in this moment, but to preserve and boldly imagine its future. As we invest deeper into our faith and church family, there are three themes that I would like us to discern and deepen:

Welcome – How can we be a church with a wide, all-embracing welcome within our sanctuary and throughout our town, region and world?

Safety – How can we be a church that is genuinely safe, a true sanctuary that is comfortable and restful, protected and protective?

Imagination – Do we dare imagine where God leads us? Can we envision our congregation in one year, five years, ten years, fifty? Let us boldly imagine our church as a relevant beacon of hope for the duration....and live into the dream.

In the meantime, I pray for our necessary autumn to be a blaze of colors as we transform into whatever is next.... living into the mystery with trust. We have work to do, FCC of Auburn, and God has great plans for us.

Yours in Christ — Pastor Julie

The Ache of Autumn in Us by Joyce Rupp

There is a season for everything, a time for giving birth, A time for dying. A time for tears, a time for laughter, A time for mourning, a time for dancing. (Eccles. 3:1,2,4)

The trees grow more restless;
October wind weaves through them.
They shake their arms in dismay
as if to fight the coming cold
and the grief of leaves going.
Autumn air does a heart-dance
on branches already gone barren;
the misty air clings to golden leaves,
making the trees bend even lower.
It is a season to hold the trees close,
to stand with them in their grieving.
It is a time to open my inner being
to the misty truths of my own goodbyes.
Autumn comes. It always does.
Goodbye comes. It always does.
The trees struggle with this truth today
and in my deepest of being, so do I.
Every autumn nostalgia fills me;
every autumn yearning holds me.
I cling to the ripeness of summer,
knowing it will be many long months
before I catch a breath of lilac
or the green of freshly mown grass.
And so I begin my fallow vigil,
remembering the truth of the ages:
unless the wheat seed dies
it cannot sing a new birth.
Unless summer gives in to autumn
springtime will never embrace me.

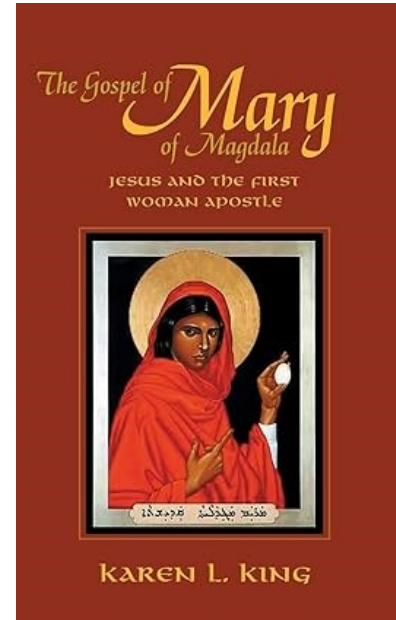
Happy Birthday wishes to:

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

**Happy Anniversary to**

Skip and Paula Bigelow who will be celebrating their special day on November 29th.

In the New Year, we will begin “The Gospel of Mary Magdalene.” I (Pastor Julie) will order books in mid-November, so please let me know by November 10th if you are interested in this study.

**HURRICANE RELIEF:**

The impact of Hurricane Helene is widespread and devastating. Please consider a gift to the **Hurricane Helene Recovery Appeal**. This is something you can do to help alleviate suffering, rebuild homes, and restore communities.

As we've done in the past, donations may be made payable to our church with “hurricane” noted in the memo and placed in the offering plate. We will total the donations and mail one check to the conference, or call the church office for information on how to donate directly to the UCC Conference. Thank you for your support.

PRAYERS ON ELECTION DAY

On November 5th, Election Day, rather than Bible Study, we will hold a prayer vigil at noon in our sanctuary. This will be a peaceful opportunity to pray for a peaceful election and our nation's leadership following a turbulent campaign season. We vote for Jesus first, trusting that the holy will always transcend political feuds. Your presence and prayers are welcome.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED (NIN)

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we promote during the month of November, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. This year's Neighbors in Need theme “**Mental Health Justice for All: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right**” highlights our God-given right to mental health. **Everyone is created in God's image, and everybody should receive quality mental health care.** In 2015, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution to become **WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged)** for mental health. “**Mental Health Justice for All: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right**” provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to build a more justice world for all, dismantling the shame and stigma of mental health challenges. We invite you to be part of God's work of mental health justice, join the WISE movement for mental health in your congregation, and support the Neighbors in Need offering. A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life's mental health journey. **Two-thirds of your donations to NIN support advocacy, programming, and grants. One-third of your generous gifts directly support CAIM (Council for American Indian Ministries).** Please join us in supporting the **2024 Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering**. If you would like to make a donation, please make checks payable to the church, noting NIN in the memo section and return to the church in the enclosed offering envelope. Donations may be placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings or mailed to the church at: 128 Central Street, Auburn, MA 01501. Thank you.



November is American Diabetes Month, Lung Cancer Awareness Month, and National Family Caregivers Month. It is also National Epilepsy Awareness Month and Eye Disease Month.

November 5 is Daylight Savings.

November 6 is National Stress Awareness Day.

November 11 is Veteran's Day.

November 17 is Great American Smokeout.

November 28 is Thanksgiving.

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you! God Bless!

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

Women's Fellowship's next monthly gathering will be on Saturday, November 9th in fellowship hall at 9:00am for "coffee and..."

We will be meeting for craft nights November 13 and 20 from 6:30 to 8:30pm in fellowship hall. Michele Schillinger will be setting up by 6:00 for those who wish to come by earlier than 6:30pm.

Hoping you can join us for any of the above. Sign-up sheets for craft nights are on a table in fellowship hall.

ADDITIONAL WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP DATES TO REMEMBER

(Please watch for sign-up sheets to these events.)

- Thanksgiving floral arrangement with Berg Florist - Friday, November 22, 6-9 p.m.
- "Everything Pumpkin" bake sale Sunday, November 24 - watch for sign-up sheets for bakers
- Holiday Marketplace — Sunday, December 8, after church
- Christmas party gathering with a Yankee Swap - Saturday, December 14, from 1-3 p.m.
- Monthly planning meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of the month 9-11 a.m. in fellowship hall

Coffee Hour Hosts:

11/3 Nikki & Dave Angers

11/10 Lynn & Dan Largesse, Bev Geddes, Bette Parker & Linda Fox

11/17 Outreach Committee

11/24 Board of Deacons

HERE WE GROW PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER

We will be doing another Savers clothing drive this year. We will begin collecting soft items (clothes/textiles/linens, NO PILLOWS), shoes and books, movies, records, etc. beginning November 4 and ending November 15. Clothing should be in bags; books and other media can be boxed. During the designated collection dates, items may be left on the stage in fellowship hall or in the Sunday School room next to Shannon's office.

For those not familiar with this fundraiser, donated items are weighed and a price per pound is totaled in a check payable to the preschool. We appreciate all your donations as we couldn't do it without your help!

FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This past Sunday, we wrapped up the life of Moses in our Sunday School classrooms. The children did a great job listening, asking questions, and understanding the important role that Moses has in the Bible. There are many questions surrounding the life of Moses and many miracles surrounding him as well. As a little baby, Moses survived the mass murder of many baby boys. He was raised by Egyptian royalty and then proceeded to lead the Israelites to freedom while receiving from God, and then providing, the first rules or 10 Commandments to his freed people. Through him, we see many miracles of God, including, but not limited to, the 10 plagues of Egypt and parting of the Red Sea. Moses also is the one that brought the Jews toward their promised land. These are a few things that Moses DID... but what can we learn from Moses?

We learn a lot from Moses! Without getting too deep and turning my *Tidings* into a Biblical journal, here are just a few things we can take with us after learning the life of Moses. Humility. Moses was humble and even unsure if he could do the things that God told him to do. This teaches us that we do not have to be perfect for the Lord to work His miracles through us. In fact, it should be noted that God often works through the weakest and meekest of us all! Moses was both a leader and servant. He was a servant to God and a leader of the Israelites. Fear and obedience. Moses feared God and was therefore obedient. He understood, he experienced the great power of God (Yahweh) and fell quickly into an obedient role. Did you know that the life of Moses is important not only to Christians, but to all Abrahamic religions including Judaism and Islam? Yes, I would certainly say that Moses had quite the impact on all of us!

When you see a student at coffee hour or in the pumpkin patch, feel free to ask questions about Moses. This is a great way to support the learning of our students and a great way for young and old to get to know each other! Sunday School, YOM and BOCE have so many fun things happening this whole year. Although we are **almost** done with the season of spook, we are already ramping up our holiday activities.

Please mark these dates in your calendar: (There are more to come!)

Lyman Orchard Pie YOM fundraiser: Orders accepted through Nov. 21 and pies delivered in time for Christmas.

Pageant: December 24th 5:00PM (Look for sign ups in early November)

Parents Night Out: December 6th, 5PM- 8PM

YOM Cookie Walk: December 22nd during coffee hour

Monadnock Berea Encounter: February 7-9

Thank you to our church family for all your support and love. I am so grateful for Michele in the Sunday School classrooms, BOCE for supporting me and Denise for always keeping me focused! It certainly takes a village!!

LOVE and PEACE,
Shannon

Youth On a Mission will again be selling pies and cookie dough with delivery in time for Christmas. **The youth will be taking orders on Sunday, Nov. 3, 10 and 17. Orders will be delivered to the church on Dec. 19.** Pies include 3 versions of apple pie, blueberry, strawberry-rhubarb, bumbleberry (mixed berry), chocolate peanut butter, pumpkin, banana cream and chocolate cream. Cookie dough includes: chocolate chip, white chocolate macadamia nut, oatmeal raisin, peanut butter with Reese's, and triple chocolate blond cookie. Please make checks out to: **First Congregational Church with YOM in the memo section.** Thank you in advance for your participation.



During our worship service on Sunday, October 13, we were pleased to welcome the following new members. Please be sure to introduce yourself when you see them.



Juan Pablo Casilla - I was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to the United States when I was 10. I work as a Software Trainer for eClinicalworks, helping medical staff become fluent in their documentation. I went to school at Fitchburg State University where I completed my Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science. This is also where I learned that I loved singing with the school choir. After graduating I moved to Auburn with my family.

Soon after, I found that I could join the church choir and praise while singing. This is one of the reasons I wanted to join the church. I have seen how close-knit the community at the church is, and I want to become more involved in it.



The Rev. Dr. Julie Lynn Cedrone - Pastor Julie accepted the call to be our Settled Minister and began her ministry here this past September. Pastor Julie holds a BA in English, Women's Studies from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. In addition, she earned a Master's Degree in Divinity from Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, MA and a Doctor of Ministry from Boston University School of Theology.

Pastor Julie was ordained with full standing in the UCC in 2003. In her early career she was a Chaplain and Spiritual Care Manager with Pathways Hospice in San Francisco, CA. She is dedicated to the mission of providing quality end-of-life care and decisions. She has also worked with VNA Care Hospice in Worcester as a Chaplain. Pastor Julie has worked in local churches as an Associate Minister, Bridge Minister and Senior Pastor. She has continued involvement with the Boy Scouts, currently serving on a leadership committee, and has directed and grown Sunday School programs.

Pastor Julie and her family reside in Northborough, MA where they live in a historic 1700's home.

We have found Pastor Julie to be warm, compassionate, respectful and knowledgeable. In just a short time, Pastor Julie already has a place in our hearts and church family, and we feel so blessed to have her leadership.



Suzanne Flake - I was born in Houston, Texas in 1947, the third of four children. We attended a Christian Science church until my parents divorced in 1951, after which we began going to a Unitarian church. My husband, Billy, and I were married there in 1966.

Billy was offered a job in Hartford, CT, and we moved in 1970. Our two daughters, Melissa and Emily, were born in Connecticut. After our children were born, I felt the need for a more spiritual place of worship. I found this in Windsor, CT, at Poquonock Community Church, where I became a very active member.

Eventually, we moved to Spencer, MA. At that time our grandson, Adrian, then 17, was accepted at a college in Charleston, SC, and it was suggested Billy and I move to that warm climate where we could also look after him. We stayed in South Carolina for five years and attended the Congregational Church there.

This past July, we moved back to Massachusetts and share a lovely two-family house in Auburn with our middle grandson, Anthony, and his fiancée. We felt the need to be closer to our family.

One fine day I discovered the First Congregational Church and attended a service. You welcomed me and were playing one of my favorite hymns. I knew I was home!

I have worked as a medical secretary and editor, newspaper reporter, communications director for a chamber of commerce, preschool teacher and Reiki practitioner.

I feel blessed to join FCC, a vibrant, devotional and friendly church! Thank you for welcoming me.

Continued from page 5 . . .

Join us in welcoming our newest church members. If you're interested in church membership, please speak with Pastor Julie.



Don Patoka - I was born on April 20, 1950 in Erie, Pa. We moved to Renova, PA. I graduated from Bucktail High School. After school, I joined the Navy and served from 1969 to 1972. I moved back to Erie where I worked at General Electric where I was a machinist and then a pipefitter building locomotives.

I moved to Massachusetts in 1979 where I worked for Jamesbury/Metso for 36 years. I have been retired for 8 years enjoying fishing, bowling and golf.



Alex Rozak - I was born and raised in Plymouth, MA. I graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 2016. After meeting Alyssa through a friend at college, I moved to Auburn and we started our family here.

I currently work as a construction manager in Boston. When I'm not working or spending time with my family, I enjoy playing golf and hockey.



Evelyn Tomasso (Barrus) - I am thirty nine and holding, make that 59 and holding. I have a Masters Degree from Fitchburg State in Mental Health Counseling and Child Protective Services.

I am one of twelve children and I grew up on a small farm in Leicester. I have been a social worker, a secretary, and many other vocations. I have three adult children, two sons and a daughter. I have three grandsons.

I was baptized at Greenville Baptist Church when I was fourteen, married in a Congregational Church in Worcester, attended and taught Sunday School at the West Boylston Congregational Church in West Boylston. Most recently I was a member of the First Baptist Church in Holden before I moved to the North Oxford area. Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior and I try to follow His Word.



Kaylyn Violette - I am originally from Oxford, MA. I live in Charlton, MA with my grandpa and sister but spend most of my time with Juan and his family right down the street in Auburn! My parents are in Florida and they live in a trailer and work for an RV park almost year round.

I am a senior Nursing student at Fitchburg State University graduating in May. I work per diem as a caregiver at The Overlook in Charlton, a PCT at Emerson Hospital's Mother/Baby Unit in Concord, and a PCA at St. V's as a float on all med-surg floors and ICU/PCU.

I would like to be a part of this church family because everyone has been so welcoming towards us, I love being a part of the choir, and ultimately I want to continue growing in my faith and growing closer to God.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

Berg Florist's Holiday Open House

19 Blackstone River Rd., Worcester, MA
December 7, 2024 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

20% off all fresh arrangements and plants from November 29 – December 7

50% off all permanent arrangements and gifts until December 31

Our annual raffles will be held as well as the
Grand Prize – 1 monthly arrangement for 12 months.

Coffee and light refreshments will be served.

FROM THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE

We are collecting warm winter clothing for El Buen Samaritano (The Good Samaritan). Donations can be put in the plaid box in fellowship hall. Items should be clean and in good condition. Looking specifically for coats, jackets, hoodies, etc. Male and female. All Ages. Thank you for your ongoing support.



During the worship service on Sunday, October 20th, the Music Committee surprised Fran Mower and family with news that a plaque has been dedicated in Herb Mower's memory. The plaque is currently in fellowship hall and will eventually be displayed on a wall here in the church.

The wording on the plaque reads:

IN REMEMBRANCE OF HERB MOWER

OUR CHURCH FAMILY WILL FOREVER BE THANKFUL FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT HERB GENEROUSLY MADE TO OUR CONGREGATION. HE SHARED WITH US HIS LOVE OF LAUGHTER, MUSIC, AND FELLOWSHIP. HIS ABUNDANCE OF MUSICAL TALENT WILL BE REMEMBERED FONDLY BUT WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO HAVE CALLED HIM A FRIEND.

BELLS ARE MUSIC'S LAUGHTER.

THOMAS HOOD

“The Spirituality of Dying”

We will honor our departed loved ones on Remembrance Sunday, November 10th this year for our community. To prepare for this intense and beautiful experience, we will have a Christian Education offering for adults on Thursday, November 7th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on "The Spirituality of Dying" in Fellowship Hall.

MEMORIAL/REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE 10 A.M. NOVEMBER 10TH

At this special worship service we remember church members that we have lost in the past year. Also during this service, congregants will have an opportunity to come forward and receive a flower and light a candle in memory of a loved one. This service of remembrance has proven to be moving and very special to those who have lost loved ones. So please mark your calendars for November 10th, and plan to join us on Memorial/Remembrance Sunday.

FROM YOUR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A very big **THANK YOU** to all who have volunteered in the past as well as into the future! We appreciate your commitment to serve our church.

Below are the current available openings for all Boards and Committees.

Do not be hindered by the length of terms available below; if you are willing and can only offer your services for a year at a time, we would love to have you join us. If you do not think you have the talents needed for a particular board or committee...if one sparks your interest, you'd be surprised by what you can offer. I look forward to hearing from you!

If you are a current member of FCC of Auburn and if any of our boards or committees interest you, please reach out to me @ 508-259-2239 or email me @ chel061759@gmail.com.

~ Michele Schillinger

1 Peter 4:10: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

Bd/Comm	1 Yr Term	2 Yr Term	3 Yr Term
Board of Deacons (3 vacancies out of 12)	0	0	3
Board of Education (2 vacancies out of 7)	0	2	0
Music Committee (1 vacancy out of 6)	0	0	1
Board of Trustees (2 vacancies out of 9)	0	0	2
Stewardship Committee (2 vacancies out of 6)	0	1	1
Nominating Committee (1 vacancy out of 3)	1	0	0



THANK YOU to everyone who participated in Consecration Sunday or returned a pledge card.

If you have not yet returned your pledge card, please do so (whether you're making a pledge or not) so that we can plan the budget for 2025. **As we Imagine Together this year, your pledge makes our vision into a reality: livestream worship, outreach community meals, teen programming, mission trips at home and abroad, quality worship services, education and workshops for all ages, collaboration throughout our town to bring healing and love to all the places where it is needed.**

No pledge is too small, and if your situation changes, your pledge can be changed at any time.

The Deacons or the church office can provide you a pledge card.

FROM HERE WE GROW PRESCHOOL



Welcome everyone to the third month of the school year. Even though the weather is getting colder, spending time outside is still so important for all of us. Fresh air and sunshine is one of the best things we can do for our bodies and minds.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Bemis Farm Scarecrow Fundraiser; we hope you had a good time.

The children had a lot of fun on their Halloween parades; this year we held a trunk or treat during the parades. If you were in the area, we hope you got to see them.

We have been having a great year so far and are now entering our busy season. We are planning for our Thanksgiving Feast, the clothing drive, holiday toy collections, and holiday programs. The next two months go by so fast.

We are once again doing a clothing drive with Savers, we will collect clothing, shoes, purses, belts, towels, blankets, etc. This year we are also taking books, movies, and CDs in boxes. The last day for dropping off will be Nov 15. Bags/boxes can be left in fellowship hall or in the hallway near the Sunday school rooms and we will put them away.

We have scheduled our first Papa Gino's night of the year for November 13 in Auburn.

Here We Grow will be closed on Monday, November 11 in honor of Veteran's Day. We want to say thank you to all who have served or are currently serving our country.

We will be closed Wednesday-Friday November 27-29 for Thanksgiving break. We hope you are all able to enjoy some time with family and friends for the holiday.

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

On Sunday, October 20th, we celebrated the baptism of Kinsley Elizabeth Spencer, the 6-month-old daughter of Ariana Spencer.

We pray God's continued blessing upon Kinsley and her family.



NEWS FROM THE PUMPKIN PATCH

Again, 2024 has not disappointed regarding our annual Pumpkin Patch coverage and sales. Every day, we had volunteers and customers willing to show up. Thank you to all who supported this church fundraiser! And, many thanks to our Pumpkin Patch Committee members: Deb Minor, Tricia Gervasi and Michelle Bigelow for running a very successful sales year. We hope to have final tallies available in our December newsletter.

ATTENTION ALL COMMITTEES & BOARDS

The Trustees will be preparing the 2025 budget soon. Please submit your 2025 budget requests by their December 19th meeting. Thank you.

Please note address change: Lillian McPherson
525 NW 8th Street, #6
Ontario, Oregon 97914
We're sure Lillian would love to hear from you!



2024 Christmas Poinsettia Order

Once again we are offering the opportunity to purchase poinsettias. In the past we've decorated the sanctuary with these beautiful plants. At the close of the Christmas Eve service, members may 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 form below and include payment (cash or a check to the church noting poinsettia in the memo section) with your order.

Please use a separate order form for each plant.

Poinsettia Given By: PLEASE PRINT 

Name(s): _____

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

Phone: _____

Email: _____

In Memory of _____

or _____

In Celebration of _____

Color: red _____ white _____ pink _____

Size: Single Plant Pot \$10.00 _____

Double Plant Pot \$19.00 _____

Three Plant Pot \$28.00 _____

Four Plant Pot \$34.00 _____

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

If you have any questions, call Michele Schillinger, cell # 508-259-2239.

ORDERS DUE BY DEC. 8TH

TIDINGS is a monthly publication of

**First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
128 Central St., Auburn MA 01501**

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

Web: auburnfirstucc.org



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OR CURRENT RESIDENT