

February 2024



142nd George Washington
Birthday Dinner
Saturday, February 24th
See Page 7

THE BEACON



First Church Congregational United Church of Christ

26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844-3199
Telephone: (978) 687-1240

Rev. William D. Ingraham, Senior Pastor
pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com

Roberta Jurovich, Office Manager
firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com

Mike Boutin, Minister of Music
boutinerjr@gmail.com

www.firstchurchmethuen.com

Worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM



“GETTING PARSONAL” *Rev. William D. Ingraham*

I've mentioned it in sermons in January, but as I write this column, I'm aware again of how true it is. We're really hurtling toward Lent and Easter this year! Ash Wednesday comes about as early as it can, landing on Valentine's Day this time around. Our service will be at 7:00 PM that evening. This early date puts Easter just inside the end of March. By the month of April, it all will be behind us!

Things have been going on in the background to get ready. I may be most excited about the project to replace burned out bulbs in the sanctuary light fixtures. This is NO easy task! Those lights are WAY up high, deceptively higher than they appear from the sanctuary floor. The only safe way to address this project is through the use of scaffolding, which the church owns and keeps stored under the stage in Parish Hall. Over Christmas break the scaffolding was moved to the sanctuary and reassembled, and one light fixture was fitted with all new bulbs, for the first time using LED lights in the sanctuary. We needed to see if these new-styled bulbs would work with our light dimming system before the project could move forward. Well, halleluia! Success! The new bulbs work. A donation has been made to put new LED bulbs in all of the sanctuary light fixtures and the appropriate bulbs have been ordered. Between now and Holy Week, the Trustees plan to get them all installed. Next on the lighting list will be to replace the flood lights that address the chancel, or apse. That's an even BIGGER, more challenging project – not least of all, finding the right bulbs for the job. We think we've

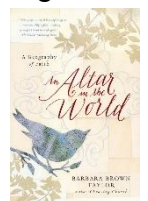
secured the last 12 in existence (as of now, anyway), and have made arrangements to purchase them. Stay tuned! And be ready to be bedazzled by all of the light in the sanctuary!



We've also worried about the pine tree on the Chapel School playground for some time. It hasn't always seemed healthy, but some intentional care on our part seems to have perked it up over the last couple of years. Still, there were several dead branches that worried us. The lowest got removed by Al and Bobbi Barlow with a saw at the end of a long pole and a series of ropes, but it was clear that the higher branches could not be easily removed in a safe fashion. Al consulted with the workers in the city's tree department ask how they thought we should address the problem. Much to our amazement, they volunteered to bring over their crew, their bucket truck and their equipment and remove the branches for us. They made quick work of it one morning last week. We're so grateful! They've not only made our playground safer for all concerned, but they've also helped give our lone playground shade tree a fighting chance for good health moving into the future. We're so grateful!



Finally, we're gearing up for another shared Lenten book study with our neighboring UCC congregations, Methuen's Forest Street Union Church UCC and Christ Church United UCC in Dracut. We will be reading the book ***An Altar in the World*** by Barbara Brown Taylor. Our first session won't be until the end of February, so you've got plenty of time to purchase the book and get started reading. We'll meet weekly on Wednesday nights, over Zoom, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM, February 28th, March 6th, 13th and 20th. More details will be forthcoming in February.



I look forward to seeing you – with more light than ever! – as Lent and Easter come our way.

See you in church!

- Bill

Sunday Morning Worship

10:00 AM

Hope you will join us!



You Are Welcome Here!

For those who cannot attend in person, worship will continue to be broadcast each Sunday, at 10:00 AM, on Facebook Live (facebook.com/FirstChurchMethuen). It will also be posted following the worship service on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/channel/UCfLSjhXs9UG8yC89aB8evrA).

The service can be viewed at any time on either platform.

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Breakfast with Bill

Join Pastor Bill for ***“Breakfast with Bill”*** – an informal time for friendship and conversation on any topic. All will gather on **Wednesday, February 14th at 8:00 AM**, at Ellie’s Farmhouse, 436 Broadway, Methuen, MA. And remember, it’s dutch treat!



Breakfast Group from January

Prayer Requests/List



We print a Prayer List within the Sunday bulletin. To have someone included on – or removed from – the prayer list, please let Roberta, in the Church Office, know at 978-687-1240 or firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com. Thank you.

If you, or someone you know, is in need of a pastoral visit, please contact Rev. Ingraham at pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

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IN CASE OF SNOW...

As we enter the snow season, please be advised that on weekdays, if school is cancelled, the church office will not be open. If a blizzard is predicted for a given Sunday, if there are any changes to the time of worship, or worship is cancelled, please check our church web page, www.firstchurchmethuen.com and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen).



Changes to worship will also be noted on Channel **WBZ-TV (Channel 4)**, **WBZ NewsRadio 1030**, **WCVB (Channel 5)**, www.TheBostonChannel.com, **WHDH (Channel 7)** or **The CW (Channel 56)** for cancellation notifications.



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2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2024 offering envelopes are available for those who would like them. Note: Pledge cards and e-pledging forms are still available.



Please contact the Church Office, at firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com, if you would like pledge envelopes. A sign-up sheet is also located in the back of the sanctuary. They will be left in the sanctuary for you to pick-up.

Thank you.

From the Chair of the Church Board...

Aahh... February... For some it means icy winds, frosty noses, and the perfect time to embrace hibernation. For others, it means days full of sledding & skiing, snowmen building, and extra marshmallows in the hot chocolate. Regardless of how you take on winter's depth, we have a lot of energy here at First Church Congregational. This means that we have plenty going on, including:

- With our warm sanctuary, beautiful choir led by Mike, thoughtful sermons from Rev. Bill, and friendly smiles, Sunday services are not to be beat! So come on in, in person, to worship with your church family. However, if there is any kind of safety concern, snow flying, or just too-cold-to-start-the-car, feel free to watch online. If snow is in the forecast, please log onto Facebook or check your email for any cancellations.
- While the NFL Super Bowl is important for some, the REAL event is the Ray Benedix Souper Bowl of Caring! This month our driven Outreach team has set ambitious goals to collect cans of soup and monetary donations to feed our neighbors. Winter is an especially tough time for many, so please contribute anyway you can. That's not all our Outreach group is hard at work at. Between the focused projects and our continuing food pantry, helping so many in our community, there are numerous ways to make an impact.
- The Chapel School is continuing to go strong. I would like to thank Gina Colarusso for fulfilling the vision of excellent preschool for our community. This also could not be the success without our dedicated teachers and our school administrator, Roberta. Thank you all!!!
- The Capital Campaign continues, with the Narthex project continuing. The demolition of the damaged areas is complete, but the rebuilding will start soon. We have quotes being finalized, so work should commence soon. Thanks, Allan!!!!
- Our Stewardship drive is complete, but if you haven't gotten in your pledge forms or e-tithing forms in, there is still time. The Finance Committee will begin our budgeting process soon, so please do not delay.
- ...and so much more!

So, if you're looking for some way to help our church and our community, there's plenty of options. Also, there's always the prayer shawl ministry, other outreach projects, singing or ringing in one of our outstanding choirs, or just joining the walking group to help yourself. There are so many new opportunities available through our historic congregation, so feel free to seek out what you would like and help our neighbors & neighborhood at the same time.

As always, all are welcome to chat anytime with me. I love to hear your ideas and suggestions. We also have a lot of other activities and missions scheduled, so I would love your input. I know you all work so hard to make our church a blessing to our families and neighbors, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Let's keep the energy and drive rolling, continuing to seek God, care for each other, and improve our community.

God bless & stay warm!!!

Josh Ferry



Musical Musings

Friends,

This month, I'll focus my thoughts on some updates in our music program:

- We are starting a Children's Choir! During Advent and Christmas, we developed a group of kids who voluntarily wanted to sing and did a great job without much effort! So now it's time to channel that energy, do some rehearsing, and put together a real Children's Choir. We will be rehearsing twice a month, on Sunday mornings from 9:30 - 9:50 AM, and my hope is that we can sing once a month during worship, and for musical Sundays, like our Advent and Palm Sunday Cantatas, and Christmas and Easter services. All kids are welcome. Carol Sanborn and Joann Cosby will help me to work with the kids. Talk to any of us to get involved, or just have your kids show up at rehearsal!
- Plans are already in the works for our upcoming Palm Sunday Cantata on March 24. We always welcome new singers for our Cantatas, even if you don't have the time to sing with us on a more regular basis. Rehearsals are each Sunday morning at 8:30 AM. Practice recordings are available for all the music so that you can practice at home. We especially need basses and tenors. Instrumentalists of all types are also welcome.
- Have you heard the organ lately? We had some minor tuning work done to it before Christmas and it really has made a difference! Our Treat organ, Opus 2 (despite the fact that we list it as Opus 1, most records and databases list it as Opus 2), was originally built for Edward Searle's Great Barrington home. Like the invaluable LaFarge window, it really is a masterpiece of organ building. In fact, Foley Baker, the CT organ building company that currently services the organ, was recently awarded a multi-million dollar contract to rebuild the organ at the National Cathedral in Washington, and subsequently, decided to let go of many of the smaller church organs that they had been working on, especially if they were a distance away from their home office of CT. However, they made the intentional choice to continue to service our instrument because, as they put it, "it's an amazingly built instrument and we want the opportunity to continue to work on it." That, however, takes money. The Organ Restoration Fund is one way that we support the upkeep of our invaluable Treat organ. We have some significant work that needs to be done on the organ: the Great, Swell and Pedal ranks need to be re-leathered so that at least all the keys would then work, and then, other restoration projects need to be undertaken. I've submitted an application for a Festival of Trees grant to partner with us in some of this work. But we need your continued and sustained support. Please give.
- Finally, and personally, I am dealing with some health issues and will have some surgery done at the end of February. I will be out for a week. As always, I am grateful to Kathy Romano, who is always so willing to cover in my absence. I would welcome your prayers for a speedy recovery!

Peace and all good things,

Mike Boutin



142nd George Washington Birthday Dinner



February 24, 2024

First Church Congregational

26 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA

Buffet Served

4:00 to 6:30 PM

Buffet Menu

Carving Stations

- Freshly Roasted Turkey Breast
with Cranberry Sauce & Gravy
 - Baked Ham
with Raisin Sauce and Horseradish Mustard Sauce
 - Baked Haddock
with Seasoned Crumbs, Ritz Crackers, Butter

Green Salad, Antipasto, Green Beans, Butternut Squash, Macaroni & Cheese,
Vegan Chili, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Gravy, Rolls & Butter,
Apple Crisp, Coffee, Tea, Lemonade

Tickets

Available at the Church Office (978-687-1240)
and Sundays, following (10:00 AM) worship.

Adults: \$20 (Advance Purchase) or

Adults: \$22 (*At Door*); **Children 6-12: \$8**; **Under 6: Free**

*If you have a large party of 9 or more, please call the church office
at 978-687-1240 to make a reservation.*

From the Outreach Ministry Team

Souper Bowl of Caring 2024

The Souper Bowl of Caring is in full swing and thanks to the donations of friends and church members, we are working toward our 2024 goals of raising \$1500 and collecting 1500 cans of soup. Our final collection Sunday will be on February 11th. The Outreach Team will be providing Souper Bowl snacks at coffee hour. Please join us at our final quarter celebration!

March Diaper Drive

In collaboration with Communities Together Undie Sunday project, we will be collecting diapers and wipes the first four Sundays of March. Communities Together is a consortium of churches in the Merrimack Valley area which work together on various projects to support those in need. Please watch for additional details in upcoming bulletins and email blasts.

Mental Health Sunday

The Outreach Team is in the process of scheduling a special guest speaker on Mental Health Sunday, Sunday, April 28th, to address a specific mental health issue, as we have in the past. This year we are considering "loneliness" as our topic, which has been recently described as an epidemic, affecting mental health at all ages.

Pine Ridge Reservation Mission Trip

The Outreach Team would like to extend an invitation to any adults interested in a September 14-20th mission trip to South Dakota. This will be on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation where the Lakota and Oglala Tribes live. It is the poorest county in the U.S. We will be building bunk beds, wheelchair ramps, putting skirting around trailers and building out houses. No previous carpentry skills are necessary. The estimated cost will be approximately \$2000 per person. This will include room/board and transportation to the reservation. If interested, please contact Carole Silva.

Outreach Ministry Team

Cindy Bateson, Lori Bennett, Cynthia Causbie, Jo Crosby, Barbara Donaghue, Pastor Bill Ingraham, Ken Peck, Marilyn Peck, Carole and John Silva, and Becky Smith





The 2024 Souper Bowl Challenge

The Outreach Team will once again be participating in the **Souper Bowl of Caring** this year and we hope you can help. Last year we honored the memory of Ray Benedix, a long-time church member and Souper Bowl Team Leader for many years. We will continue to honor Ray's memory through our donations of soup and money in 2024. Many of us remember his dedication to and enthusiasm for this outreach project which helps to feed the food insecure in the Merrimack Valley.

For 2024, we have set our Souper Bowl goals at 1500 cans of soup and \$1500 in monetary donations. All cans of soup and monetary donations raised will go to the Neighbors in Need Food Pantry, including the one held here at First Church each Tuesday evening.

We will be kicking off the Souper Bowl on Sunday, January 14th with an announcement and introduction to our "score board" which will track our progress. We will celebrate the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters on the following Sundays: January 21st and 28th, and February 4th and 11th. Please join us for our final tally Souper Bowl celebration on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th, during coffee hour. Don't forget to wear your game jerseys!

Cans of soup and monetary donations can be brought to church each Sunday before and after church until 12:00 noon, from January 14th to February 11th. Each Sunday, from January 21st to February 11th, during announcements, we will report on the number of cans received, enabling us to move down the "field" toward our goals. In achieving our goals, we will be honoring Ray's dedication and commitment to the Souper Bowl of Caring Outreach Ministry. 1...2...3...HIKE!

2024 Souper Bowl Challenge

Print Name: _____

Donation Amount: _____

Please make your check payable to 'First Church Congregational', write '**Souper Bowl**' on the memo line and return no later than Sunday, February 11th.

Respectfully,

Your Outreach Ministry Team

Cindy Bateson, Lori Bennett, Deb Brown, Cynthia Causbie, JoAnn Crosby, Barbara Donaghue, Ken Peck, Marilyn Peck, Carole Silva, John Silva, and Becky Smith

Walking Group for Fitness and Fellowship

Tuesdays in February

Winter 2024 is turning out to be more challenging for walking outside, due to frigid temperatures and snow events. We will continue to try and walk outside at the Loop, but if the weather forecast is too cold or too snowy, then we can try rescheduling the walk, or plan on walking inside the Mall at Rockingham. We will meet outside at 10:00 in front of the AMC Theater at the Loop, or inside the mall in Salem, NH in front of Macy's on the first floor, on the following Tuesdays in February: 2/6, 2/13, 2/20 and 2/27. Contact Cindy Bateson if you would like to be added to the walking group's email list.

Sunday Walk on the Methuen Rail Trail

Our monthly Methuen Rail Trail walks will return in March.



Open and Affirming (O&A) Committee

The Open and Affirming Committee will not be holding the Question and Answer session on January 28th. We are in the process of rescheduling our education sessions and will keep you informed. In the meantime, we encourage you to read the material we distribute and talk to a committee member as we go through this journey together.



O&A Committee – Sue Newton, *Chair*, Becky Wright, Maureen Wright, Makayla LoCicero, Bob Donaghue, Pastor Bill Ingraham, Josh Ferry *Ex officio*



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Estate Planning Seminar

Hello Church Family,

Estate planning is incredibly important and is an often misunderstood and complicated process. I feel it's vital to have a good understanding of what's involved and to get the right plan in place for you and your loved ones. Because of that, I'll be hosting a free estate planning seminar after church on Sunday, February 18th, at 11:30 AM, for all members, friends, and any others who are interested.

For additional info, talk to me at church, or feel free to contact me.

See you there.

Scott Sanborn

PS. Carol said she'll bring snacks. 😊



Prayer Shawl Ministry



The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets year-round and always welcomes anyone who wishes to be part of this ministry. Knitting or crocheting experience is not a prerequisite to becoming a member. Come for the fellowship and someone will be glad to help you started, if needed. Contact Carol Gray for more information.

We invite you to join us on **Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 PM**, in the parlor of First Church Congregational.



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I would like to thank you for your prayers for my aunt, Florence, and my brother-in-law's sister, Virginia.

Virginia passed last week. She had been diagnosed with brain cancer. Thankfully, she was in hospice for a very brief time.

My aunt Florence passed Friday afternoon (Jan. 19). She had been on the decline for some time, and it is a blessing she is now at peace and has joined her family members who preceded her.

I know my First Church Family always comes through when asked for prayers. I would like to impose on you once again to keep their family members in your prayers as they navigate the coming days, weeks, and months without their loved ones.

Please know, I hold each of you in my heart and prayers every day.

Thank you,
Pat Moss-Newbury

The Chapel School



Enrollment for the 2024 -2025 school year has started. Families have been calling to visit and tour our wonderful little preschool. I say that with the upmost of endearment to our presence here at First Church in Methuen serving the Merrimack Valley!

Please share the registration form (on page 14 of this Beacon) with your family and friends who have preschool age children (2.9 - 5 years of age) and have them return it as soon as possible to secure your spot for next year. We will send out the complete enrollment packet in August!

Social Media is now our main source of marketing for the school. Parents are seeking out local Methuen pages online to get referrals to just about everything. Positive referral for quality preschools in the area seem to be at the top of the list for online chats. Even more endearing is the second and third generation of families returning with their own children. Now that is the best referral of all.

Parent/Teacher Conferences were held recently to share each child's progress with their parents. The teachers spend a great deal of time preparing for these conferences. They include a report covering all the developmental milestones at this age including a portfolio with samples of their work. The teachers enjoy spending time with each parent reviewing all their growth and accomplishments. It was especially nice to see all the parents and be able to spend quality time with them.

The Souper Bowl Train is really filling up!! The children have enjoyed loading up the box cars with their donations.

Stay Well!

Gina Colarusso

Director



PLEASE HELP SHARE THE WORD!!



The Chapel School

Where a Lifetime of Learning Begins

Register Now for our 2024-25 School Year



- **For Children 2.9 - 5 Years Old**
- 2, 3 or 5 Day Preschool Programs
- Customizable Days to Fit your Needs
- **Half Day Classes (8:30 - 11:30 AM)**
 - Lunch Bunch (until 2:00 PM)
 - Extended Day (7:30 AM - 4:00 PM)

Fun Learning Environment for Everyone!

- **September - June**
 - Affordable Rates
 - Non-Denominational
- *Over 60 Years in Methuen!*



Contact us for more information or to schedule a tour:

978-689-8414

chapelschoolmethuen@gmail.com



www.chapelschoolmethuen.com



Located at:
First Church Congregational
26 Pleasant Street, Methuen





THE CHAPEL SCHOOL

26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844
(978)-689-8414

20__ - __ School Year

Preschool Registration Form (Please Print)

Mornings (8:30 - 11:30 AM)

- ___ **5 Days**, Monday – Friday (4-5 years)
- ___ **3 Days**, Typically* Mon, Wed & Fri (4-5 years)
- ___ **2 Days**, Typically* Tues & Thurs (3-4 years)
- ___ **Add Lunch Bunch (until 2:00 PM) →→→→**

*Contact the School Office if other days are needed

Full Days (7:30 AM – 4:00 PM)

- ___ **5 Days**, Monday – Friday (4-5 years)
- ___ **3 Days**, Typically* Mon, Wed & Fri (4-5 years)
- ___ **2 Days**, Typically* Tues & Thurs (3-4 years)

How many days for **Lunch Bunch**? _____
Please circle: M Tu W Th F

Child Information:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

Gender: [] Male [] Female Date of Birth: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Allergies: _____

Parent/Guardian 1:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

[] Mother [] Father [] Other: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Parent/Guardian 2:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

[] Mother [] Father [] Other: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

You will be receiving additional forms to complete – Information & Authorization, Medical and Developmental.

The Chapel School employs a policy of non-discrimination in all its services to children and their families. We do not discriminate based on race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. Our registration policy is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Parent Agreement

I hereby agree to enroll my child in the Chapel School and I understand that tuition payments must be paid as per the parent handbook. A registration fee of \$75.00 must be paid with this agreement. This fee is non-refundable. I understand that one month's notice will be required to withdraw my child from the Chapel School.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return your completed form as soon as possible. Thank you.

***Looking for a way to support the
George Washington Birthday Dinner?
Have a local business you love?***

Ask them to support First Church Congregational, and our 142 year tradition, by placing an ad in our George Washington Birthday Dinner Ad Book! All proceeds support the mission of First Church.

Every person who comes to the dinner will receive the GWBD Ad Book and that can bring *LOTS* of exposure for anyone who advertises in it.

Placing an ad doesn't need to be expensive either. Our business card ads are only \$25 each and get plenty of attention. This year we need a bit of help, and our church is great at stepping up to the challenge. We're trying to get as many business card ads as possible. Ask your hairdresser, auto mechanic, dentist, favorite pizza place, manicurist, etc.! Small businesses like these benefit from exposure in the community, and our ad book does just that!

Our business card ads are 5½ x 2¾ (1/3 page). Please bring a business card to the church office or to Pat King on Sunday morning.

The deadline to place an ad is Friday, February 9th. Checks should be made payable to: First Church Congregational.

For more information, please call Pat King at 603-898-6335.

If someone would like to place a larger ad, we offer half page ads for \$50 and full page ads for \$100. Please send black and white ads only to firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com in either a .PDF or .JPEG format, or mail a clean hard copy of your ad to the attention of:

**Roberta Jurovich, First Church Congregational
26 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA 01844**

If advertisers are interested in purchasing tickets for the dinner, they may contact the Church Office at 978-687-1240.

This is a wonderful opportunity for companies, big and small, to promote their business while supporting a worthwhile cause. Thank you for your support and involvement in this year's event. Your generosity of spirit continues to bless the community in which we all live, work and worship.

George Washington Birthday Dinner Planning Team

Note: You can also place an "ad" from you! In memory/honor of someone, as a Good Luck to GWBD, or something else.



2024 Lenten Noon Service and Luncheon Series

Please join us for our series of Wednesday Lenten Services, a time of spiritual reflection and renewal brought to you by Communities Together, Inc.

February 14th: Faith Lutheran of Andover – 360 S. Main St. Andover, MA 01810

- Host Pastor: Reverend Jeanette Leisek
- Guest Homilist: Reverend Carrie Ann Burnap, Forrest Street Union Church of Methuen

February 21st: Forest Street Union Church – 15 Forest St. Methuen, MA 01844

- Host Pastor: Reverend Carrie Burnap
- Guest Homilist: Reverend Debra Adams, Trinitarian Congregational Church of North Andover

February 28th: Parish of Christ Church Episcopal – 33 Central St. Andover, MA 01810

- Host Pastor: Reverend Michael Hodges
- Guest Homilist: Reverend Eleanor Prior, St. Paul's Episcopal Church of N. Andover and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Methuen

March 6th: St. Theresa Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish – 22 Plymouth St. Methuen, MA

- Host Pastor: Father Gregory Vozzo
- Guest Homilist: Deacon Lou Piazza, St Augustine's Parish of Andover

March 13th: St Paul Episcopal Church – 390 Main St. North Andover, MA 01845

- Host Pastor: Reverend Eleanor Prior
- Guest Homilist: Reverend Lewis Floyd, Third Baptist Church of Lawrence

March 20th: St Michael Parish – 196 Main St. North Andover, MA

- Host Pastor: Father Kevin Deeley
- Guest Homilist: Father Daniel Madden, Director of Austin Scholars formation at Merrimack College of North Andover

■ ***Please make Undies Sunday a priority during Lent***

Communities Together will again be accepting donations of diapers, pull-up diapers, and children's underwear for distribution to service organizations in Lawrence. Items will be collected throughout Lent and may be brought to Noon services on Wednesdays.

Diapers, boys and girls pull-up diapers, and underwear for young children are urgently needed. Just one pair or package will make a difference to a child that goes without.

What's the REACH Ministry?



Do you know of someone facing surgery, recovering from surgery or living with a long-term illness? Do you know someone who has recently lost their job or could use financial support? Do you know someone who suffers from depression or is often down in the dumps around the holidays?

Maybe this person is you?

If so, we can help. Our new REACH Ministry wants to make sure that members of our community have a place to turn for support in their time of need. The term REACH stands for -- Reliable, Engaging, Able, Caring and Heartfelt support.

Contact Judi Boyko or Pat King for more information.

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Need Financial Help?

If you, or another member of First Church you know, is need of some temporary financial assistance, please contact Rev. Ingraham at pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

Due to the generosity of Thomas Longworth, through his estate plan, there are some funds available for short term financial assistance of our members.

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Would you like to make an electronic donation to the church?



Use your smart phone or tablet by scanning this QR code!

Or visit our website at www.firstchurchmethuen.com and click the "Ways to Donate" page.

Thank you for your support.



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References – February 2024 (Year B)

Thurs., Feb. 1

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Proverbs 12:10-21
Galatians 5:2-15

Fri., Feb. 2

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Job 36:1-23
1 Corinthians 9:1-16

Sat., Feb. 3

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
Isaiah 46:1-13
Matthew 12:9-14

Sun., Feb. 4

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39

Mon., Feb. 5

Psalm 102:12-28
2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37
Acts 14:1-7

Tues., Feb. 6

Psalm 102:12-28
2 Kings 8:1-6
Acts 15:36-41

Wed., Feb. 7

Psalm 102:12-28
Job 6:1-13
Mark 3:7-12

Thurs., Feb. 8

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 11:26-40
2 Corinthians 2:12-17

Fri., Feb. 9

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 14:1-18
1 Timothy 1:12-20

Sat., Feb. 10

Psalm 50:1-6
1 Kings 16:1-7
Luke 19:41-44

Sun., Feb. 11

Transfiguration
2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9

Mon., Feb. 12

Psalm 110:1-4
Exodus 19:7-25
Hebrews 2:1-4

Tues., Feb. 13

Psalm 110:1-4
Job 19:23-27
1 Timothy 3:14-16

Wed., Feb. 14

Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Thurs., Feb. 15

Psalm 25:1-10
Daniel 9:1-14
1 John 1:3-10

Fri., Feb. 16

Psalm 25:1-10
Daniel 9:15-25a
2 Timothy 4:1-5

Sat., Feb. 17

Psalm 25:1-10
Psalm 32
Matthew 9:2-13

Sun., Feb. 18

First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

Mon., Feb. 19

Psalm 77
Job 4:1-21
Ephesians 2:1-10

Tues., Feb. 20

Psalm 77
Job 5:8-27
1 Peter 3:8-18a

Wed., Feb. 21

Psalm 77
Proverbs 30:1-9
Matthew 4:1-11

Thurs., Feb. 22

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18
Romans 3:21-31

Fri., Feb. 23

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 16:1-6
Romans 4:1-12

Sat., Feb. 24

Psalm 22:23-31
Genesis 16:7-15
Mark 8:27-30

Sun., Feb. 25

Second Sunday in Lent
Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

Mon., Feb. 26

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Genesis 21:1-7
Hebrews 1:8-12

Tues., Feb. 27

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Genesis 22:1-19
Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19

Wed., Feb. 28

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Jeremiah 30:12-22
John 12:36-43

Thurs., Feb. 29

Psalm 19
Exodus 19:1-9a
1 Peter 2:4-10

Happy Birthday!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 03 Christopher Brown
- 04 Lynn Dewhirst
- 05 Joseph Yarid
- 07 Roberta Jurovich
- 14 Carol Gray, Thomas Jurovich, Leslie Shea
- 16 Brenda Killourie, Terry Romano
- 17 Rick Buck
- 20 Caelin Buck
- 23 Melina Gable
- 24 Kyle Brown
- 27 Lisa Ferry
- 28 Kim Valcourt



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 01 Charlene Bunting
- 03 Thomas Savastano
- 06 Haleigh Sanborn, John Silva

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MARCH ANNIVERSARY

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|-----|--------------------------|------------------|
| 3/4 | Larry & Robyn Sliney | Married 29 years |
| 3/6 | Patrick & Rebecca Wright | Married 19 years |

 <h1 style="text-align: center;">February 2024</h1> 						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship Service <i>Sundays at 10:00 AM</i> <i>In-Person &</i> <i>on Facebook Live</i> www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen				1 6:30 PM First Church Bells	2	3
4 Communion 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM Childrens Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	5 6:30 PM Finance	6 10:00 AM Walking Group (The Loop) 4:00 PM Food Pantry	7 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 PM Church Board	8 6:30 PM First Church Bells	9	10
11 Souper Bowl of Caring Ends 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	12 4:00 PM Chapel Staff 6:30 PM Outreach	13 10:00 AM Walking Group (The Loop) 4:00 PM Food Pantry	14 Ash Wednesday 8:00 AM Breakfast with Bill (Ellie's Farmhouse) 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Diaconate	15 6:30 PM First Church Bells	16	17
18 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM Childrens Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship 11:15 AM Financial Planning Presentation	 19 Church Office & Chapel School Closed GWBD Prep 6:30 PM Stewardship	20 Chapel School Closed GWBD Prep 10:00 AM Walking Group (The Loop) 4:00 PM Food Pantry	21 March BEACON deadline Chapel School Closed GWBD Prep 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry	22 Chapel School Closed GWBD Prep 6:30 PM First Church Bells	23 Chapel School Closed GWBD Prep	24 4:00 - 6:00 PM George Washington Birthday Dinner
25 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	26	27 10:00 AM Walking Group (The Loop) 4:00 PM Food Pantry	28	29		

Dates and times are subject to change

First Church Congregational
United Church of Christ
26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844-3199

Address Service Requested