

March 2024



# 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  
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[www.firstchurchmethuen.com](http://www.firstchurchmethuen.com)



*Worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM*

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

We have been trying not to be too frustrated. The gas company has been replacing gas lines throughout the neighborhood surrounding the church for quite a few weeks now. By “we,” I’m referring to our church staff – preschool director Gina, office manager Roberta, all the Chapel School teachers and me. But the project has disrupted anybody else with business at the church during the week: all Chapel families, members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry, volunteers preparing the George Washington Birthday Dinner, Trustees, our church Treasurer, and anybody coming in to see me or Roberta during office hours. It’s been a mess.

The frustration has been the daily changes to street closures. Granted, I’m no gas company technician. I know next to nothing about the process! But their whole process has seemed random to me. Sections of street get closed in a different pattern daily. They wrap up in one area and move on, only to return a few days or even weeks later to do more digging, more excavating, more filling-in and asphaltting. (Can asphalt be a verb?) I’ve taken to leaving my car in the church parking lot, as the driveway at the parsonage is often blocked early in the morning. Now, I’ll add: the workers have been courteous and friendly to a person. No complaints there! They know the whole process is frustrating for

residents and the church and try to help us make the best of it. Plus, this is an important and necessary project.

For the last several days there has been a huge boulder at the end of my driveway. OK, maybe it's better called a small boulder, or huge rock! The workers dug it up while trenching for the new gas line. Then today, a new boulder landed across the street from me. It fascinates me to think those huge stones were there under the street all along, hidden for centuries, or maybe even all human history. Hidden, that is, until this project came to Tremont Street. And now, there they are, exposed to sunlight and air, for all the world to see. Well, all the world that walks down Tremont Street. You can't drive. The street is closed!



Since those boulders appeared, I've been contemplating the things that reside just under the surface for us, both as individuals and as a community. Perhaps histories of pain or trauma are trapped down there – the kinds of thing we dread getting dug-up and exposed. It's not always bad when they come to light, but it can be a lot of work to process it all. But in those painful moments, when we encounter those memories of a troubled past, we have the chance to find healing in the present, even hope. And we have one another to lean upon as we work our way through.

Or perhaps it's forgotten memories of happy moments, great accomplishments or surprise blessings that long have dropped from our consciousness, becoming hidden below the surface, buried under the layers of our lives' subsequent experiences. When those things come to light they are often accompanied by a smile, or joyful laughter, even. It might provoke us to call a relative or a friend and say, "Hey! I just remembered something. Listen!" And we share the story, and the joy, of something we've not seen, remembered, or even known for a very long time. It is a gift, and a blessing.

Your church staff and volunteers, Chapel School families and our neighbors are all looking forward to this project ending. But the new, improved gas lines will be a gift for us. And perhaps, in some small ways, so is the process.

See you in church!

*- Bill*

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## Construction on the Narthex to Resume!

After many months of chasing contractors and reviewing bids, we are ready to resume construction in the Narthex! We anticipate that construction will take two months to complete. Now that we have final bids in hand, we could use your help in securing the remaining funds for the project. We have \$25,000 left to raise. If you would like to give electronically, please scan the QR to the right - - > >.



If you have any questions about the project, please speak to Steve Boyko or Allan Barlow. Thanks for your continued support.

# 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](https://facebook.com/FirstChurchMethuen)). It will also be posted following the worship service on our YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/channel/UCfLSjhXs9UG8yC89aB8evrA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfLSjhXs9UG8yC89aB8evrA)).

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

\* \* \* \* \*

## ***Breakfast with Bill***

Join Pastor Bill for ***“Breakfast with Bill”*** – an informal time for friendship and conversation on any topic. We will gather on **Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM**, at *Ellie’s Farmhouse*, 436 Broadway, Methuen, MA. And remember, it’s dutch treat!





# 2024 Lenten Services

at

## First Church Congregational

United Church of Christ

### Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>:

10:00 AM – *Palm Sunday* ~ A Triumphant Entry and Celebration of Palms

### Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>:

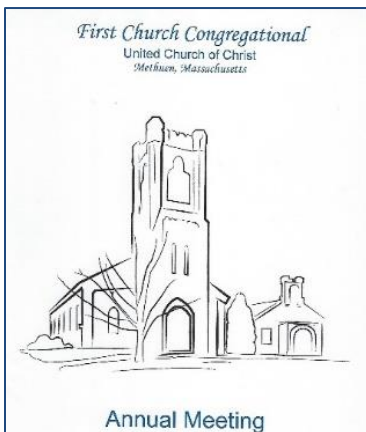
7:00 PM – *Maundy Thursday* ~ A Service of Communion and Tenebrae (dramatic liturgy of Shadows and the Last Supper Together)

### Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>:

10:00 AM – *Easter Sunday* ~ A Joyous Celebration!

\* \* \* \* \*

## Annual Reports are Due



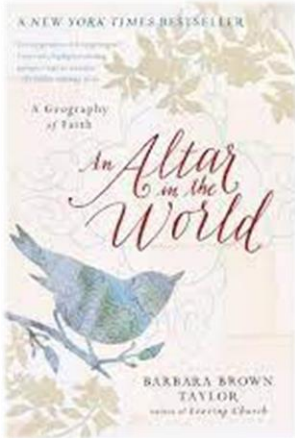
All Committees should submit their annual report to the Church Office **no later than Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**. If it is not received, it may not be included in the 2023-24 Annual Report.

Please contact Roberta at 978-687-1240, if there is any issue. You can submit your report electronically to [firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com).

The Annual Meeting will be held May 19<sup>th</sup>.

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

# Lenten Book Study



We will hold a shared **Lenten Book Study** with our neighboring UCC congregations, Forest Street Union Church UCC in Methuen 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 there is still time to purchase the book.

Lenten Bible Study will meet weekly on Wednesday nights, over Zoom, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM, on February 28<sup>th</sup> (chapters 1-3), March 6<sup>th</sup> (chapters 4-6), 13<sup>th</sup> (chapters 7-9) and 20<sup>th</sup> (chapters 10-12).

**Zoom Information – Meeting ID: 889 9733 0021; Passcode: 293826**

\* \* \* \* \*

## A Youth Outreach Project

The youth of the church will be learning about Heifer International in Sunday School and how they help people in need. They will be learning about this project through lessons and song in class, and how they can help and with some fundraising to raise money to hopefully buy **a hive of Bees, a Goat, and a Sheep**. During these lessons they will learn about the needs of others and how these small gifts of animals will help those families in need. We hope you will support our youth on their outreach Mission. Thank you.





# 2024 Easter Giving



If you would like to donate and/or order a plant for Easter, please use this form and return it to the church office by **Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please note: We will need time to order the plants. All donations and orders received by this deadline will be listed in the "Easter Giving" bulletin pages.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Plant Order

All Easter plants at **\$17.00 per plant**, please indicate quantity below:

Easter Lily \_\_\_\_\_\*  
(white lily)

Tulip \_\_\_\_\_\*

Mona Lisa Lily \_\_\_\_\_\*  
(pink & white lily)

Please print

Given in Loving Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration/Honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle choice)

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

*\*After the Easter service, all plants will be delivered to a homebound member or friend of the church*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Donation

GENERAL FUND \_\_\_\_\_ OPERATING EXPENSE \_\_\_\_\_

ORGAN RESTORATION \_\_\_\_\_ OUTREACH \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Given in Loving Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration/Honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
(circle choice)

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Please make check payable to: *First Church Congregational* ("Easter Giving" in memo)

*Thank you and Happy Easter!*

## From the Chair of the Church Board...

Spring is so close... For some, it means planning the new garden, making arrangements for a warm weather trip with the kids, or getting in a few more ski runs before the thaw. For the church and the season of Lent, it means reflecting on the time Jesus spent in the wilderness and the rejoicing of the gift of eternal life. With Easter upon us, we have a lot of energy here at First Church Congregational. This means that we have plenty going on, including:

- The 142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner was yet another grand time and a wonderful success! It was such a great meal with delicious food, fun fellowship, and joy abound. I would like to thank everyone who helped with the preparation, ad book, ticket sales, food service, and clean-up. There was so much effort to make this annual event its usual success that I am in continuous awe of our congregation. Thank you!!!
- 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.
- Thanks to everyone that helped out with the Ray Benedix Souper Bowl of Caring! The Outreach team set ambitious goals to collect cans of soup and monetary donations to feed our neighbors, and they came very close to them. Winter is an especially tough time for many, so please contribute anyway you can. With its conclusion, the March Diaper Drive is now running, raising funds and collecting much needed infant items for our neighbors. So please assist the team in any way 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. Quotes are being finalized, and work will commence soon. Also, the trustees have worked hard to re-lamp the sanctuary, providing beautiful light during these winter worship services. Thanks goes out to Allan and the entire trustee team!!!!
- 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*

\* \* \* \* \*

## Estate Planning Seminar



Thank you to everyone who took the time out of their Sunday afternoon to join me for the estate planning seminar I held last month! We had over 20 people in attendance, and there were great conversations before, during, and after to be had.

For anyone who couldn't make it, I'll be holding another one in the future. For now, if anyone would like more information on what was discussed, or a copy of the slides, feel free to contact me.

*~ Scott Sanborn*





# *Musical Musings*

I'm writing this a week before surgery to have my thyroid removed after a cancer diagnosis. I'm confident that by the time you all read this, I'll be well on the way back to health! Thanks to all those who reached out to me and sent prayers and food for the journey! You all have been wonderfully supportive. I'm not good at accepting help: I've always been the helper, so I'm grateful that you all have given me the opportunity to graciously accept your many kindnesses. Thank you.

I hope you all are planning to be with us IN PERSON for our upcoming Palm Sunday Cantata on March 24th. There are going to be so many beautiful, amazing, and emotional musical moments. The Cantata, through music, will walk with Jesus from Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to Maundy Thursday's last supper and washing of the feet, then to the Garden of Gethsemani where Jesus faced his fear of the death he knew was coming, to Good Friday's cross, and to the grief of Saturday's tomb. Dance, instruments, a mom and daughter duet that should not be missed, and the amazing Chancel Choir, supplemented by some fabulous guest singers. It will move your heart and soul and get you ready for Holy Week and the joys of Easter. Mark your calendar and do plan to be there in person, please. The choir works REALLY hard for months preparing this: it's really helpful to have more people in the congregation that morning than in the choirs. Please come. Please.

Peace and all good things,

*Mike Boutin*



## ***Stewardship Ministry Team...***

The Stewardship Ministry Team is thankful for the continued support of our members and friends so that ***Together We Make a Difference*** through the new year of 2024. We continue to ***Praise God, Love Each Other, and Help Our Neighbors*** when we meet in church each Sunday, check in with each other during coffee hour and other fellowship gatherings, and participate in our numerous and always growing Outreach programs. We are grateful for the many pledges we have received already. If you have not returned a pledge card, it is never too late to do so. If you have not received the Stewardship Pledge Materials and would like to make a pledge, please contact the church office at 978-687-1240 and one will be mailed to you. You can also make an electronic donation by following the directions at the end of any monthly Beacon. Also, if you are an electronic giver, please remember to return an electronic giving form, even if there is no change of information.

Other ways to donate:

- To make a donation, go the church's website ([www.firstchurchmethuen.com](http://www.firstchurchmethuen.com)) and click on the red Donate button on the Home Page. There, you can make a donation to the Area of Greatest Need or to a specific fund or project that you would like to support.
- You can also donate by scanning the QR code in the Beacon or the Sunday bulletin and following the prompts. You will be able to specify how you would like your donation to be used.
- If you would like to change your pledge to an e-giving pledge at any time, you can contact the church office and ask to have the form mailed to your home. Contact the church office by phone at 978-687-1240 or by email at [firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com](mailto:firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com).

If you have any questions, please contact the church office or a member of the Stewardship Ministry Team.

Stewardship Ministry Team:

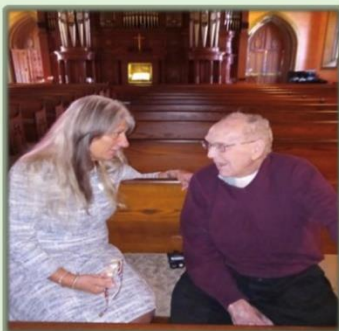
*Kathy Romano – Chairperson*

*Rev. Bill Ingraham, Irene Maggio, Marilyn Peck, Robyn Sliney and Kim Valcourt*

### ***Together We Make a Difference***



***We Praise God***



***We Love Each Other***



***We Help Our Neighbors***

***Your Pledge Makes It All Happen***

## ***From the Outreach Ministry Team***

### **Souper Bowl of Caring 2024**

The Souper Bowl of Caring was a great success due to the generosity of church members and friends. We collected a total of 1107 cans of soup and \$1040! That includes the 205 cans of soup collected by The Chapel School in their Souper Bowl of Caring Train. The soup will remain here at First Church, to be handed out at our Neighbors in Need Food Pantry on Tuesday evenings. The money collected is now in the church's Food Pantry account. It will be spent on needed food items or equipment. The Outreach Team has some special ideas for that, and we will share news when a final decision is made. Thank you to all who participated this year!

### **March "Pampered with Luvs" Diaper Drive**

In collaboration with the Communities Together Undie Sunday project, we will be collecting diapers, pull-ups and wipes the first four Sundays of March (3/3, 3/10, 3/17 and 3/24), before and after church. Also scheduled is a Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> drop-off here at the church from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM. The donations will be shared with a variety of social agencies here in the Merrimack Valley. Check out the Diaper Drive flyer included in the Beacon this month for more information.

### **Mental Health Sunday**

Please join us at worship on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, as we observe our annual Mental Health Sunday. We have invited a special guest speaker from the Samaritans of Merrimack Valley to speak on the topic of "loneliness". According to the U.S. Surgeon General, "Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation has been an underappreciated public health crisis. Our relationships are a source of healing and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us live healthier, more fulfilled, and more productive lives."

### **Pine Ridge Reservation Mission Trip**

The Outreach Team is planning an exciting mission trip to South Dakota the week of September 14-20<sup>th</sup> and any adult is welcome. This trip is to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation where the Lakota and Oglala Tribes live. It is the poorest county in the U.S. and is where our Sewing Group has been sending handmade clothing for many years. We will be building bunk beds, wheelchair ramps, putting skirting around trailers and building out houses, but this is their "Senior Week" so the workload will be less strenuous. No previous carpentry skills are necessary. The estimated cost will be approximately \$1500-2000 per person. A deposit of \$310 is due by April 7<sup>th</sup> to guarantee a spot. If you are interested in going, but the money is an issue, speak with Carole Silva. The cost will include flights, room & board, and transportation to and from 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*



# 2024 “Pampered with Luvs” Diaper Drive



**What:** The Outreach Team invites you to participate in our **2024 “Pampered with Luvs” Diaper Drive**. You can help us out by donating diapers and wipes, or by making a monetary donation to help purchase them.

**Who:** First Church Congregational Methuen will be holding the diaper drive in partnership with **Communities Together, Inc.**, a collaborative group of churches in the Merrimack Valley. The diaper collection will be distributed to various social agencies, including Lazarus House, Bread and Roses, Neighbors in Need, and others.

**Why:** The need for diapers in Methuen and surrounding communities is great, as evidenced by the following facts.

- Families spend \$75-\$80 a month on average to diaper one child, or 8% of a full-time minimum wage salary.
- Though diapers are essential for babies, they are not systematically covered by safety-net policies. Neither WIC nor food stamps cover diapers.

**Where and When:** Diapers, Pull-ups and wipes, as well as monetary donations, may be dropped off on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, between 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, or before/after church (before 10:00 AM and after 11:00 AM) at **First Church Congregational Methuen**, at **26 Pleasant Street**, on the following Sundays:

- Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>
- Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>
- Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>

**Notes:** Checks should be made payable to **First Church Congregational**, with **Diaper Drive** on the memo line. Mail to 26 Pleasant St., Methuen, MA 01844 no later than Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Thank you!

**Outreach Ministry Team** – *Cindy Bateson, Lori Bennett, Cynthia Causbie, Jo Crosby, Barbara Donaghue, Carole Silva, John Silva, Ken Peck, Marilyn Peck, Carole Silva, John Silva and Becky Smith*

# Walking Group for Fitness and Fellowship

## Tuesdays in March

For the months of March through December, we will again be walking at the Raymond J. Martin Riverside Park at 971 Riverside Drive in Methuen. This is a flat, hot-topped loop next to the Merrimack River which is lovely in all seasons. Three times around the loop equals a mile. We would love to have some new walkers join us. We tend to split into 2 groups of slower and faster walkers, so you can walk at your preferred pace. We will be walking the following Tuesdays in March: 3/5, 3/12, 3/19 and 3/26 at 10:00 AM. 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 walk will return in March on Sunday, 3/17. We will meet in the back of the MSPCA parking lot at 12:00 PM. We usually walk to the Lawrence/Methuen line south of the old Methuen Railroad Station, but you can turn around sooner for a shorter walk. Join us for friendly conversation, scenic views, and amazing artwork along the way.



\* \* \* \* \*

## Don't Forget!!



### Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

*Change your clocks and batteries.*

### *First Day of Spring is March 19<sup>th</sup>!!*

# 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 if needed. Please contact Carol Gray or Debbie Bonfanti for more information.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet in the parlor of FCC.**  
We invite you to join us – **Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 PM.**



\* \* \* \* \*

On Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, the Prayer Shawl Ministry ladies took a break from knitting & crocheting to wrap silverware for the 142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner.



# The Chapel School



Valentine's Day was celebrated in a big way here at Chapel recently. There are always the adorable Valentine cards the children enjoy passing out to their classmates. That was just the beginning. Parents took it to a whole new level. The take home treats that were sent in for every child were endless. Everything from stuffed animals to fidget heart toys, stickers, pencils, food treats of every kind, chocolates. Treats for the teachers too included chocolate covered strawberries and more chocolates.

"What is one word to describe Chapel's success?" Now more than ever it is "Love".

We treat each child with love. We respect every family no matter how easy or hard it is. No matter the situation. We have fun while learning. We emphasize kindness and always encourage "please and thank you". We love what we do here and love every child like they were our own. We bring out the best in each child and provide a loving and supportive environment to learn and grow in. Showing love will never fail you.

We are already starting our registration for the new school year. We have been able to tour many families that are interested in our amazing program. We are seeing second and third generation families coming back to Chapel! We are looking forward to having another full enrollment year.

We are excited to have brought back our popular fundraiser again this year. We are working with MCM Fundraising and their Butter Braid Pastry & Classic Cookie Dough. Thank you to all who participated, and we hope you enjoyed your sweet treats!

New England weather is always changing which makes predicting snow amounts even harder. Even the best weather forecast can change frequently. When calling a snow day, we try our best to make sure we are making the safest decision for the children we care for.

*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](mailto:chapelschoolmethuen@gmail.com)**



**[www.chapelschoolmethuen.com](http://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.*

# 142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner

## Great Success!!!

### It Takes a Lot...

It takes a lot of people, resources and time to celebrate a George Washington Birthday Dinner! It takes a huge shopping trip for food and supplies by Carol and Josh. It takes three full days of Carol, Josh, Bobbie, Allan and Pat R. preparing the ingredients. Friday afternoon and all day Saturday several other people join them in the preparation and cooking that gets done on the day of the dinner.

It takes Stacey and Pat W. washing every pot and pan used; Steve and his crew running the dishwasher, keeping up with the dishes that needed to be used again. Five people and 2 carvers served on the buffet table. It takes a kitchen crew pushing out delicious food for 2 ½ hours for 273 guests to make a successful dinner!

It takes the Prayer Shawl Ministry group to wrap 350 knives and forks in napkins, Allen and Pat and their helpers to set up the hall, and the Prayer Shawl group to set the tables with table clothes, wrapped silverware, and placemats. Our Parish Hall looked beautiful when they finished! Kerri added a festive note with the large red, white and blue balloon arch on the front of the stage.

It takes our hostess Maureen to take tickets and assign our guests tables, with wait staff helping to seat them. The Parish Hall is set with 15 round tables and 3 rectangular tables seating 150 guests at one time. It takes 12 wait staff serving our guests, each team of two responsible to serve 3 tables. Our Beverage and Dessert table is headed up by Becky and Sheila and their staff. Scott and Henry bused the dirty dishes to the dishwashers. All of our dining room staff provided great, friendly service to our guests.

It takes Bill and Lori greeting our guests as George and Martha and giving out our Ad Booklets. Martha had a brighter style dress that drew lots of compliments. Bill and Lori had fun and told us they would gladly do it again, if we needed them. Pastor Bill greeted our guests as they entered and Pat K. sold tickets at the door.

It takes Marilyn ably supporting Chef Carol by overseeing tickets, banner, publicity, volunteers, and all aspects of the dinner that are not involved with food and the kitchen. Chef Carol expressed her appreciation and gratitude to Pat R. for teaching her over the last two years everything she needed to know to oversee food preparation for the dinner.

### Income, Ticket Sales, Ad Booklet, Donations & Expenses

We sold 210 adult tickets in advance for \$20.00 each, 49 adult tickets at the door for \$22.00 each, 1 adult ticket at the door for \$20.00 and 12 advance children's tickets for \$8.00 each, and 1 children's ticket at the door @ \$8.00 for a total of 273 tickets. Sunday remaining food Sales were \$243. **Total income** from ticket and Sunday sales was \$5,645.00.

The income from our **Ad Booklet** increased from last year because Pat K. went out and hustled some new ads to replace some that didn't renew. We had 22 full page ads @ \$100, 13 half page ads @ \$50 each, 19 one third page ads @ \$25, and 32 parishioner names @ \$15. The total Ad Booklet revenue is \$3,805.00. \$950 was donated in conjunction with the Ad Booklet and \$340.00 was donated in conjunction with the ticket sales. This income goes straight to our bottom line. We are grateful to Pat K. and Roberta for our larger, beautiful, more profitable Ad Booklet. We encourage you to support our advertisers!

**Material Donations** also help our bottom line. We are very grateful for the “**In Kind Donations**” from Mann’s for again donating the Apple Crisp and to parishioners who donated our banner, tickets, tablecloths, balloons, 4 aprons, and George & Martha’s costumes. There were also some cash donations. Once all our expenses are collected and deducted from our income we’ll announce our profit in church.

### **Advertising and Publicity**

As we did in 2023, we took an ad package with *The Eagle-Tribune* that gave us 4 color ads. In addition to our color ad in the Thursday, February 22 issue of *The Eagle-Tribune*, under “*Merrimack Valley in a minute*, under Methuen,” was a big bold headline saying, “*George Washington Birthday Dinner is Saturday*”. We had a little bump in ticket sales from that. We also had color ads in the February issue of *Salem Life* and March issue of *Methuen Life*. It’s clear from conversations with guests that people saw those ads. We also had good social media presence and were on our church’s web site.

### **Dedicated Volunteers**

After reading this article, it’s clear that “*It takes*” hours of time from dedicated, committed volunteers to put on our annual George Washington Birthday Dinner. The Dinner Planning Team and its Team Leaders want to thank the over 65 volunteers who worked on the dinner and who gave our guests such a delicious meal, friendly service, and wonderful evening.

### **142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner Planning Team**

*Allan & Bobbie Barlow, Josh & Lisa Ferry, Pat King, Pat Romano, Becky Wright, and Carol Sanborn and Marilyn Peck, Team Leaders*



# 142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner

## Fun Night!!!



# 142<sup>nd</sup> George Washington Birthday Dinner

## Thank you to all our volunteers!!!





## 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.

**March 6<sup>th</sup>: 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 13<sup>th</sup>: 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 20<sup>th</sup>: 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.

\* \* \* \* \*

## *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](mailto: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.

\* \* \* \* \*

## *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](http://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 – March 2024 (Year B)

**Friday., Mar. 1**

Psalm 19  
Exodus 19:9b-15  
Acts 7:30-40

**Sat., Mar. 2**

Psalm 19  
Exodus 19:16-25  
Mark 9:2-8

**Sun., Mar. 3**

*Third Sunday in Lent*  
Exodus 20:1-17  
Psalm 19  
1 Corinthians 1:18-25  
John 2:13-22

**Mon., Mar. 4**

Psalm 84  
1 Kings 6:1-4, 21-22  
1 Corinthians 3:10-23

**Tues., Mar. 5**

Psalm 84  
2 Chronicles 29:1-11, 16-19  
Hebrews 9:23-28

**Wed., Mar. 6**

Psalm 84  
Ezra 6:1-16  
Acts 15:36-41

**Thurs., Mar. 7**

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22  
Genesis 9:8-17  
Ephesians 1:3-6

**Fri., Mar. 8**

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22  
Daniel 12:5-13  
Ephesians 1:7-14

**Sat., Mar. 9**

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22  
Numbers 20:22-29  
John 3:1-13

**Sun., Mar. 10**

*Fourth Sunday in Lent*  
Numbers 21:4-9  
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22  
Ephesians 2:1-10  
John 3:14-21

**Mon., Mar. 11**

Psalm 107:1-16  
Exodus 15:22-27  
Hebrews 3:1-6

**Tues., Mar. 12**

Psalm 107:1-16  
Numbers 20:1-13  
1 Corinthians 10:6-13

**Wed., Mar. 13**

Psalm 107:1-16  
Isaiah 60:15-22  
John 8:12-20

**Thurs., Mar. 14**

Psalm 51:1-12  
Isaiah 30:15-18  
Hebrews 4:1-13

**Fri., Mar. 15**

Psalm 51:1-12  
Exodus 30:1-10  
Hebrews 4:14—5:4

**Sat., Mar. 16**

Psalm 51:1-12  
Habakkuk 3:2-13  
John 12:1-11

**Sun., Mar. 17**

*Fifth Sunday in Lent*  
Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm  
119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10  
John 12:20-33

**Mon., Mar. 18**

Psalm 119:9-16  
Isaiah 43:8-13  
2 Corinthians 3:4-11

**Tues., Mar. 19**

Psalm 119:9-16  
Isaiah 44:1-8; Acts 2:14-24

**Wed., Mar. 20**

Psalm 119:9-16  
Haggai 2:1-9, 20-23  
John 12:34-50

**Thurs., Mar. 21**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Deuteronomy 16:1-8  
Philippians 2:1-11

**Fri., Mar. 22**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Jeremiah 33:1-9  
Philippians 2:12-18

**Sat., Mar. 23**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Jeremiah 33:10-16  
Mark 10:32-34, 46-52

**Sun., Mar. 24**

*Sixth Sunday in Lent*  
*Passion Sunday or*  
*Palm Sunday*

**Palms:**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

**Passion:**

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11  
Mark 14:1—15:47 or Mark  
15:1-39 [40-47]

**Mon., Mar. 25**

Isaiah 42:1-9  
Psalm 36:5-11  
Hebrews 9:11-15  
John 12:1-11

**Tues., Mar. 26**

Isaiah 49:1-7;  
Psalm 71:1-14  
1 Corinthians 1:31  
John 12:20-36

**Wed., Mar. 27**

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 70  
Hebrews 12:1-3  
John 13:21-32

**Thurs., Mar. 28**

*Maundy Thursday*  
Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14  
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

**Fri., Mar. 29**

*Good Friday*  
Isaiah 52:13—53:12; Psalm  
22; Hebrews 10:16-25 or  
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9  
John 18:1—19:42

**Sat., Mar. 30**

*Holy Saturday*  
Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations  
3:1-9, 19-24; Psalm 31:1-4,  
15-16; 1 Peter 4:1-8;  
Exodus 19:1-9a; Matthew  
27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

**Sun., Mar. 31****Easter**

Acts 10:34-43 or  
Isaiah 25:6-9  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts  
10:34-43  
John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8

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# Happy Birthday!

- 01 Charlene Bunting
- 03 Thomas Savastano
- 06 Haleigh Sanborn, John Silva
- 08 Heather LoCicero
- 10 Richard Dewhirst
- 12 Nicholas Jurovich
- 14 Dominic Alaimo, George Simonian
- 15 Dennis Michaud
- 17 Patrick Romano, Rebecca Smith
- 19 Kate Dockham, Adam LoCicero
- 22 Abigail Boyko, Alexander Boyko
- 24 Jack Napier
- 25 Carole Sanborn
- 28 Jessica Borislow
- 29 Emily Jurovich
- 31 Ray Valcourt



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 03 Hanson Causbie
- 05 Michael Alaimo
- 07 Justin Hodgkins

\* \* \* \* \*




## MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- |      |                          |                  |
|------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 3/4  | Larry & Robyn Sliney     | Married 29 years |
| 3/6  | Patrick & Rebecca Wright | Married 19 years |
| 3/15 | Bill & Lori Bennett      | Married 44 years |
| 3/28 | Stephen & Judi Boyko     | Married 32 years |



# March 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Worship Service</b> Sundays at 10:00 AM <i>In-Person &amp; on Facebook Live</i> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen">www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen</a>					1	2
<b>3 Communion</b> <b>Diaper Drive Begins</b> 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	4	5 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry	6 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:00 PM Lent Book Study (Zoom)	7 6:30 PM First Church Bells	8	9
10 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	11 4:00 PM Chapel Staff 6:30 PM Outreach	12 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry 6:45 PM Cantata Rehearsal	13 8:00 AM Breakfast with Bill (Ellie's Farmhouse) 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl 6:00 PM Lent Book Study (Zoom) 7:00 PM Diaconate	14 6:30 PM First Church Bells	15	16 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM Diaper Drive Drop-off
17 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship 12:00 PM Walking Group (Methuen Rail Trail)	18 1:00 PM Cook for Bread & Roses 6:30 PM Stewardship	19 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry 6:45 PM Cantata Rehearsal	20 April <b>BEACON deadline</b> 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl 6:00 PM Lent Book Study (Zoom)	21	22	23
<b>24 Palm Sunday</b> <b>Diaper Drive Ends</b> 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship <b>Easter 31</b>	25	26 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry	27 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl	28 <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 7:00 PM Service	29 <b>Good Friday</b> Chapel School & Church Office Closed	30

Dates and times are subject to change



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

**Address Service Requested**