February 2023

141st George Washington Birthday Dinner
Saturday, February 25th
See Page 8

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

On my most recent trip to Michigan, mid-January, I found myself speaking about people I had not thought of for a very long time. Some have "moved on to their heavenly reward," and others are still around. In conversations with family, friends, colleagues, and even former church members, these memories about people came back into my consciousness. It was remarkable to recognize the many qualities about people I have catalogued in my heart through the years. I moved from Michigan almost 14 years ago and have lived in three consecutive places since, among three consecutive communities. Yet memories of all these people were still in my brain – *are* still there in my brain. I'd just not accessed them for a while.

My cherished memory database of First Church people and Methuen folks is already well established, too. Part of being a community together is that we get to know one another, especially over time. We remember dramatic achievements and traumatic losses. We hold public stories that are known by many and private stories that are known by a very few, if not we ourselves, alone. Some memories are of ordinary moments. Others are extraordinary. And all of it, all these memories, and all this *knowing,* is a gift and a blessing. We get to live life *together*, to share highs and lows, aspire to faithfulness and generosity, to serve others and to be served when needed. And we get to love, laugh and cry together as a community. It is one of life's richest blessings.

It occurs to me that we have some influence over how we are known by others. Some examples: We can ask people how they are doing and listen, actually listen to their response. We can offer to accompany someone through a difficult time or show up for them when the going gets rough. We can notice when someone is absent and check-in to see if they are OK. We can send a note or a card, or make a telephone call or send a text, just to let them know we care. We can laugh with people in their joy and cry with them in their sorrows. And we can let someone know when *we* are in a bad place, ask to be heard, ask for help, ask for company.

Finally, I ponder how our church is known both to us and in the community. For sure, we are known for our faith in God and our commitment to walk in the ways of Jesus. We are known for celebrating our history. We are known for our historic building, our stunning LaFarge stained glass window, and our remarkable, significant and historic James E. Treat pipe organ. For *sure,* we are known for Chapel School, for the George Washington Birthday Dinner and for our love of and dedication to excellent music. We are known for the Tuesday night drive-through food pantry that we share with Neighbors In Need, for the annual Methuen Arlington Neighborhood Back-to-School project, for cooking food for Bread and Roses, for Stride Into the Light and boldly seeking to prevent suicide and talk openly about addictions and mental illness. We're known for quite a lot! What else would we like to be known for?

My prayer is that we are known, too, as a place of extravagant welcome, and a people who respond faithfully with love and compassion through good times and bad, alike. I suspect the *best* and perhaps only way for us truly to be known for these things, and for others, is for us to aspire to them in all we say and do.

See you in church!

- Bill

On Tuesday, January 31st, Pastor Bill and Cindy Mazella, Chapel Director, joined the Chapel School Tu/Th Class for their *Ice Cream Party*! The children were celebrating learning to spell their names!!

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.

* *

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, February 8th 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 "Order of Worship" bulletin. To have someone included on the bulletin prayer list, please let Roberta, in the Church Office, know at 978-687-1240 or firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com. No request is too big or too small! 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.

* *

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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2023 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2023 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 978-687-1240 or firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com, if you would like pledge envelopes. They can be left at the check-in table for you to pick-up.

Thank you.

From the Chair of the Church Board…

Ahh… the quiet of winter. We're through the Advent season, awaiting the season of Lent, and my feelings of hibernation are kicking in. Not at First Church, however! We're as busy as ever with many things going on with your church board!

- **BIG NEWS** – The ***George Washington Birthday Dinner*** is back! It will be this February 25th and as grand as always. There are so many ways that you can participate – kitchen crew, serving, helping with the ad book, cleaning, and more. Please see myself, Marilyn Peck, or Pat King if you'd like to join in the fun. At least, buy a ticket and enjoy a wonderful dinner and outstanding fellowship.

- The Trustees are wrapping up the furnace project and moving on to new things, including the next phases of our capital campaign. If you'd like to help out or get more information, please contact Steve Boyko or Allan Barlow

- The ***Ray Benedix Souper Bowl of Caring*** has kicked off once again! With a goal of $2,000 and 2,000 cans of soup, the Outreach program could really use your help to achieve a worthwhile impact on our community.

- Chapel school is starting the enrollment drive for the 2023-2024 year. If you know of someone who might be interested in an outstanding experience for their youth, please contact Cindy Mazella.

- …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 in this new year, continuing to seek God, care for each other, and improve our community.

God bless!!!

Josh

From the Stewardship Ministry Team…

We are grateful for the faithful support of our members and friends that will allow us to move ***Forward Together*** in the new year of 2023. Together, we seek God as many more of us return to in-person worship in a warm sanctuary with beautiful organ music and a growing choir. Together, we care for each other with a growing Sunday School program, Bible Study and fellowship activities. Together, we improve our community with our traditional and new outreach activities as well as the return of the George Washington Dinner.

We are thankful for the many pledges we have received already. If you did not receive 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. 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, Ken Peck, Marilyn Peck, Robyn Sliney and Kim Valcourt

Musical Musings

As I write this, it's the middle of January, and the post-holiday doldrums have set in for me. For more than 30 years, I have collected a Christmas nativity set from a company in Marblehead called Hestia Creations. At this point, I have more than 100 pieces, each of which is handmade and painted and clothed with real cloth and accessories. I display it from Thanksgiving weekend until Epiphany...once it gets put away, the winter doldrums set in! And even though the weather has been incredibly mild and unseasonable, these winter days are just long and gray for me...

Meanwhile, musically, things at First Church are moving forward. We continue to gain new choir members, and the choir and I are growing together and improving each week. I'd really welcome more men in the choir, especially a tenor! Be sure to take a moment to thank our choir members for their dedication.

The handbell choir is also back to worship. Much thanks to Jim Conner for his commitment and leadership.

Much thanks to Foley Baker for their work on the organ before Christmas. There's lots more work to do-lots of dead notes and other issues that need to be attention. Your donations to the Organ Fund are invaluable in getting that necessary work done.

I'm looking for some help with a winter project. We have an extensive collection of music for the choir, but it desperately needs to be digitally cataloged so that we can know what we have, and be able to access it. Currently, there is no rhyme or reason to how the music is organized in the choir room. I'm looking for some volunteers with laptops to help me in a project to create a Google spreadsheet of all this music. If you can help, email me or catch me at Coffee Hour!

Finally, a word about music choices: Pastor Bill has entrusted me with choosing hymns each week. I take that process really seriously: I pray with the Scripture of the week, I look for hymns that are based on the Scriptures, the liturgical season, what's going on in the world, etc. It's a time-consuming process...and it's even harder when you are new and don't know the congregation, so you don't know what they do or don't know or like. I've reached out to a couple of congregants who provided me with some pretty extensive lists....My goal is to make sure that the hymns that are chosen are appropriate, relevant, singable, meaningful, and sometimes, at least, congregational favorites! Feel free to send me an email with hymns that are on your favorite list, or to let me know when you hear a new hymn that moves you!

On a personal note, I will be away the last weekend of February. I have the amazing opportunity to sing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Joyful, Joyful) with Chorus Pro Musica and the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, Benjamin Zander conducting. On Fri, Feb. 24th we're performing at Symphony Hall in Boston, and on Sun, Feb 26, we're performing at Carnegie Hall in New York City. I'm thrilled to accomplish two things on my bucket list in one weekend! If you're interested, half price tickets to the Symphony Hall concert are available here and be sure to use the discount code: BPO50.

Peace and all good things,

Mike Boutin

141st George Washington Birthday Dinner

February 25, 2023

First Church Congregational

26 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA

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

Buffet Served

4:00 to 6:30 PM

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

The Ray Benedix 2023 Souper Bowl of Caring

On Sunday, January 15th, the Outreach Ministry Team kicked off its 2023 Souper Bowl of Caring in memory of Ray Benedix. Ray was an active, committed member of Outreach until his passing in 2022. He brought Souper Bowl of Caring to First Church in 2008 where he was its biggest cheerleader.

Souper Bowl of Caring is a national organization based in Texas. Every year in the weeks leading up to the NFL's Souper Bowl, groups just like us all over the country ask people to donate cans of soup and money to buy soup which they donate to a local charity. In our case, we donate our soup to Neighbors in Need.

This year in Ray's memory we have set an ambitious goal of having 2,000 cans of soup and $2,000 donated. In the Parish Hall we have an exhibit that shows the history of First Church donations as well as pictures of past Souper Bowls. We've come a long way since 2008 thanks to Ray's leadership.

In recent years we divided the congregation into 2 groups competing against each other to see who could donate the most soup and money. This year we are not doing that! Instead, we are all working together as one team, Team Ray!

As we approached half time on January 29th, you have donated $1,955 dollars and 603 cans of soup. Thank you for your donations. **We still have work to do in the 3rd and 4th quarters to increase our donated cans of soup**. You can bring cans of soup to the church on Sunday or during the week. Please put them under the table in front of the church office in the Crossroads. If you prefer to order soup from Amazon or anywhere else and have it sent to the church, you can do that to. This issue of the Beacon has a flyer with more information on how to donate to The Ray Benedix 2023 Souper Bowl of Caring.

Let's all continue to work together to meet our goals to honor Ray's memory and recognize his commitment to the Souper Bowl of Caring. Thank you for your participation and generosity!

Honduras Mission Trip

We want to call your attention to an article in this month's Beacon talking about Carole Silva's upcoming medical mission trip to Honduras from February 27th to March 6th. We are hoping to send her off with several hundred dollars with which she can purchase much needed items for a local nursing home and orphanage. The article gives examples of what she might purchase and tells how you can donate. Our money goes much further in Honduras and what we would purchase in our country with that money does not have to go through customs. More information on page 11 of the Beacon.

The Ray Benedix 2023 Souper Bowl Challenge

This year, we are excited to hold the 2023 Souper Bowl of Caring in Ray Benedix's honor. Ray was responsible for bringing the Souper Cowl of Caring to First Church in 2008. Since that date until his death in 2022, Ray was a passionate and enthusiastic cheerleader for this annual event. Under his guidance and direction, our church family has increased the number of cans of soup collected and dollars donated each year.

In 2023, we have set our Souper Bowl goals at 2,000 cans of soup and $2,000 in monetary donations. In honoring Ray, we have set our goals to substantially exceed the highest number of donations we have received in the past. This year, we are **not** holding a competition between the Right and Left sides of the church to see who can donate the most. Instead, we will be an ***"All Church Team"*** marching down the football field to reach our goals. All cans of soup and monetary donations raised to purchase soup will go to the Neighbor in Need food pantries.

We are kicking off the Souper Bowl on Sunday, January 15th. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters, respectively, will be celebrated on Sundays, January 22nd and 29th, and February 5th and 12th. We will hold a "half-time" celebration on January 29th, and a Souper Bowl Party on February 12th, both during Coffee Hour.

Cans of soup and monetary donations can be brought to church each Sunday before and after church until 12:00 noon, from January 15th to February 12th. Each Sunday, from January 22nd to February 12th, 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. Let's make 2023 the best year ever!!!

- -

2023 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 6th.

Respectfully,
Outreach Ministry Team – *Marilyn Peck,* Team Leader, *Cindy Bateson, Lori Bennett, Deb Brown. Cynthia Causbie, Jo Crosby, Barbara Donaghue, Ken Peck, and Becky Smith*

Walking Group for Fitness and Fellowship

Tuesdays in February

Bundle up and join us for a brisk walk in the month of February at the Loop in Methuen! We will be walking at 10:00 AM, on the following Tuesdays: 2/7, 2/14, 2/21 and 2/28, weather permitting. We will meet in front of the AMC Movie Theater. We have our faster walkers and our slower walkers so you should have company walking at your preferred pace. Hope you can join us!

Sunday Walk on the Methuen Rail Trail

We will schedule our monthly Sunday rail trail walks again starting in March. If there is a particularly nice Sunday forecast in February some of us may plan a rail trail walk, so talk to Becky Smith or Cindy Bateson if you are interested.

Honduras Mission Trip

Carole Silva will be returning to Honduras this winter, from February 27th to March 6th, on a medical mission trip providing much needed medical care to adults and children. You may have heard Carole speak about her previous missions to Honduras in church last year. In addition to her medical activities, Carole will be visiting a local nursing home and an orphanage. We are hoping to collect money to send with Carole so that she can purchase much needed items in Honduras to deliver to these two facilities. It is easier to purchase them in Honduras, so they won't have to be brought through customs.

Some of our donated funds may also be used to make much needed repairs to broken equipment, including computers. There are also water purification stations that were installed by volunteer groups that routinely need filters and maintenance. In her own words, Carole says "There are truly so many possibilities (to buy and donate), for the kids and elders."

You can donate by checks made out to *First Church Congregational*, with **Honduras Mission** on the memo line. We will also have a donation jar in the Parish Hall on Sundays in February to collect cash and coin donations. Be sure and check out the photo board showing pictures from Carole's previous trips.

Here are just a few:

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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Original Artwork by Emily Jurovich

The Chapel School

Enrollment for the 2023 -2024 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 for the past 65 years. Yikes!!

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 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.

February is always a fun month here at Chapel. Not only do we enjoy celebrating Valentine's Day, but our curriculum focuses on healthy hearts and good health. The children enjoy learning how their bodies work and good nutrition to keep themselves moving and working.

The Souper Bowl of Caring Chapel Train is filling up – we even added a 4th car!! The children have enjoyed loading up the box cars with their donations. Again, a wonderful learning experience for them. Learning that not everyone has good hot food to eat, and some families need our help to stay healthy. Many parents have told us how much they have embraced this food drive to teach their children the importance of helping other families in need. It's a "feel good", paying it forward moment when something so simple can help so much.

Stay Well!

Cindy Mazella
Director

PLEASE HELP SHARE THE WORD!!

The Chapel School

Where a Lifetime of Learning Begins

Register Now for our 2023-24 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:

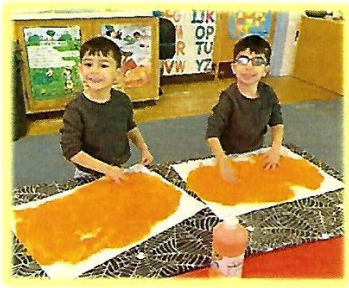
978-689-8414

chapelschoolmethuen@gmail.com

www.chapelschoolmethuen.com

LIKE US ON facebook

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.

2023 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 22 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
90 Broadway, Methuen 01844
- Host Pastor: Rev. Eleanor Prior
- Guest Homilist: Rev. Jeffrey Snyder, First Calvary Baptist Church, North Andover

March 1 Forest Street Union Church
15 Forest Street, Methuen 01844
- Host Pastor: Rev. Carrie Ann Burnap
- Guest Homilist: Linda Zimmerman and Lisa Smith – Neighbors in Need, Lawrence

March 8 St. Augustine Church
43 Essex Street, Andover
- Host Pastor: Fr. Peter Gori
- Guest Homilist: Rev. Edward Frost, Holy Family Hospital, Methuen

March 15 Trinitarian Congregational Church
72 Elm Street, North Andover 01845
- Host Pastor: Rev. Debra Adams
- Guest Homilist: Rev. Carrie Ann Burnap, Forest Street Union Church, Methuen

March 22 Faith Lutheran Church
360 Main Street, Andover 01810
- Host Pastor: Rev. Jeanette Leisk
- Guest Homilist: Rev. Terri Ofori – Dean of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Brooks School

March 29 Christ Episcopal Church
25 Central Street, Andover 01810
- Host Pastor: Rev. Michael J. Hodges
- Guest Homilist: Dr. Joseph Kelley – Prof. Religious and Theological Studies – Merrimack College

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

1. Communities Together, Inc. will be accepting donations of diapers and small children's underwear throughout Lent. They will be provided to local social service agencies. **Please Drop off at Noon Services**. Items needed are as follows:
   - Diapers
   - Boys and Girls "pull-ups"
   - Children's Underwear for young children
2. Just one pair or package will make a difference to a child that goes without.

A few members represented First Church Congregational at the *Bread and Roses' Annual Community Appreciation Night*, on January 27th, at Michael's Function Hall in Haverhill. They accepted, on the church's behalf, a certificate for ***"Partner Appreciation"*** for 2022.

The certificate was given to us and other churches for the support we all gave Bread & Roses last year. During the pandemic our church gave them $200 each month in lieu of the monthly meal we usually provided. For the last three months, we have again been providing the chicken pot pie meal. Our chicken pot pie dinner is clearly a Bread & Roses favorite.

January 4, 2023

Dear First Congregational Church of Methuen,

Thank you for your generous donation in support of Bread & Roses all year. Because of your consistent support, we can continue to provide meals and other everyday essentials to *everybody*.

Food insecurity across Massachusetts is at a staggeringly high rate and continues to grow. More than 3 in 4 Lawrence residents are food insecure and more than 40% of our guests aren't eligible for SNAP and other assistance.

Bread & Roses consists of a small but mighty team that believes everyone has the right to healthy food and other necessities. We are a stable and safe place for our guests to receive care and assistance. You make it possible for us to provide services to more than 20,000 households across the Merrimack Valley annually.

We have been touched by the notes and letters that accompany your donations. We extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude to you. Your support inspires us to continue our mission to fight hunger in our community and provide a safe space for everyone to be together around the community table.

With gratitude,

Jessica Perreault-Gordon
Executive Director

Bread & Roses is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Your donations totaling $2400 in 2022 are tax deductible. No goods or services were exchanged for this gift.

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 2023 (Year A)

Wed., Feb. 1
Psalm 37:1-17
Ruth 3:1-13; 4:13-22
Luke 6:17-26

Thurs., Feb. 2
Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Deuteronomy 4:1-14
1 John 5:1-5

Fri., Feb. 3
Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Isaiah 29:1-12
James 3:13-18

Sat., Feb. 4
Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
Isaiah 29:13-16
Mark 7:1-8

Sun., Feb. 5
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]
Psalm 112:1-9 [10]
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16]
Matthew 5:13-20

Mon., Feb. 6
Psalm 119:105-112
2 Kings 22:3-20
Romans 11:2-10

Tues., Feb. 7
Psalm 119:105-112
2 Kings 23:1-8, 21-25
2 Corinthians 4:1-12

Wed., Feb. 8
Psalm 119:105-112
Proverbs 6:6-23
John 8:12-30

Thurs., Feb. 9
Psalm 119:1-8
Genesis 26:1-5
James 1:12-16

Fri., Feb. 10
Psalm 119:1-8
Leviticus 26:34-46
1 John 2:7-17

Sat., Feb. 11
Psalm 119:1-8
Deuteronomy 30:1-9a
Matthew 15:1-9

Sun., Feb. 12
Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany
Deuteronomy 30:15-20 *or* Sirach 15:15-20
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

Mon., Feb. 13
Psalm 119:9-16
Exodus 20:1-21
James 1:2-8

Tues., Feb. 14
Psalm 119:9-16
Deuteronomy 23:21—24:4, 10-15
James 2:1-13

Wed., Feb. 15
Psalm 119:9-16
Proverbs 2:1-15
Matthew 19:1-12

Thurs., Feb. 16
Psalm 2
Exodus 6:2-9
Hebrews 8:1-7

Fri., Feb. 17
Psalm 2
Exodus 19:9b-25
Hebrews 11:23-28

Sat., Feb. 18
Psalm 2
1 Kings 21:20-29
Mark 9:9-13

Sun., Feb. 19
Transfiguration Sunday
Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2 *or* Psalm 99
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

Mon., Feb. 20
Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55
Exodus 33:7-23
Acts 7:30-34

Tues., Feb. 21
Psalm 78:17-20, 52-55
1 Kings 19:9-18
Romans 11:1-6

Wed., Feb. 22
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. 23
Psalm 51
Jonah 3:1-10
Romans 1:1-7

Fri., Feb. 24
Psalm 51
Jonah 4:1-11
Romans 1:8-17

Sat., Feb. 25
Psalm 51
Isaiah 58:1-12
Matthew 18:1-7

Sun., Feb. 26
First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Mon., Feb. 27
Psalm 32
1 Kings 19:1-8
Hebrews 2:10-18

Tues., Feb. 28
Psalm 32
Genesis 4:1-16
Hebrews 4:14—5:10

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FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

01 Joseph Silva
03 Christopher Brown
04 Lynn Dewhirst, George King
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

* *

MARCH ANNIVERSARY

3/4	Larry & Robyn Sliney	Married 28 years
3/6	Patrick & Rebecca Wright	Married 18 years

February 2023

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

Dates and times are subject to change

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

Address Service Requested