

**ANNUAL
MEETING**
Sunday, May 17th
following worship

May 2026



THE BEACON



*First Church
Congregational
United Church of Christ*

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

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www.firstchurchmethuen.com

Worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM



Minister's Message **Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers-Brigham**

Dear Members and Friends of First Church,

In our May newsletter, I'd like to speak about my recent study leave in New York at the United Nations and affirm with you our gladness for the Easter season we are in now and the Pentecost season arriving on May 24.

Thank you for the time away mid-April to ponder with many from nations around the globe about how we care for the weak and tired, the vulnerable and those at risk. Human rights were always at the heart of every discussion in the meetings I attended at the United Nations the week of April 13-April 17. So, what was this meeting?

The meeting I attended was the 59th meeting of the Commission on Population and Development. I heard from member states and NGO (non-governmental organizations or non-profit

entities) representatives on their progress with past policies and resolutions. Yes, to be part of the UN means there is accountability. At some point, each country reports on their progress with goals they have set. The United Nations has 193 member countries from around the world with two non-member states, Vatican City and Palestine, who are permanent observers. Tight time limits for spoken reports is essential. People were always well prepared!

What was being reported? The work was to hear how countries across the world are dealing with population, technology and research in the context of sustainable development. People are asking everywhere about these subjects where they live and work: Aging, Adolescents and Youth, Capacity Development, Family Planning, Fertility and Marriage, International Migration, Mortality, Population Policies, Population Trends, Sustainable Development Goals, Urbanization. What was impressive to me was the many young adults at this meeting who cared deeply to discuss these subjects and ask how we can learn from one another and encourage one another in finding health and wholeness and growth in societies and nations.

Especially interesting for me was the opportunity to attend small “side events” that were sponsored by different non-government organizations. Our UCC had one of these on Wednesday, April 15, and I was able to be part of the presentation with other colleagues in UCC ministry. The title of the side event was “Faith and Ecumenical Actors and Colleagues in Support of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights: From Curriculum to Global Advocacy.” Dr. Donna Bollinger, our UCC representative to the UN, was in charge of the side event. The event was organized to ask how we work together, how we have a voice, how we, from a progressive faith perspective, can be part of the discussion. Rev. Amy Johnson, who holds office in our national UCC, spoke about sexual reproductive education within our UCC and the curriculum “Our Whole Lives” that is widely used by UCC and UU churches.

Another side event organized by young adults located off the UN site at the Scandinavia House was all about how we use technology. Conversation was heavy around special apps that help women with reproductive health. This event was titled “Innovation for Equality: Advancing SRHR (Sexual Reproductive Health Rights) in the Digital Era - A multi-stakeholder dialogue on technology, safety, and rights for women and girls.”

The presenters were representatives from the Philippines, Indonesia, the UK, Norway and Nigeria. They expressed concerns for safeguards to be in place to keep data confidential. There was concern for those who live in remote areas who don't have access to the internet and for those experiencing violations of sexual and reproductive health rights. It was clear that the question on the table was always “How do we fulfill our obligations to respect, protect and fulfill rights related to women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health?”

There was much I took away from the week in this setting with “global actors” to pass on in our setting in the local church. We will agree with those young adults who presented so well their perspectives on how we want technology and resources to be ethical, inclusive, safe, regulated and always respectful of human rights. Yes, there are those who want to do harm, so we have to monitor technology to protect the most vulnerable among us.

With awareness of our call to be Christians who are in conversations with others, I hope that my sharing has helped affirm gratitude for circles where we can talk honestly about how we can use technology to equip us to be a church living firmly in the present. We never forget the stories of faith, accounts of Christ arisen among us, that are foundational to this call and the dynamism of the Spirit that is promised to us. We each have a calling to make a difference and the Spirit who guides us to speak up and speak with others.

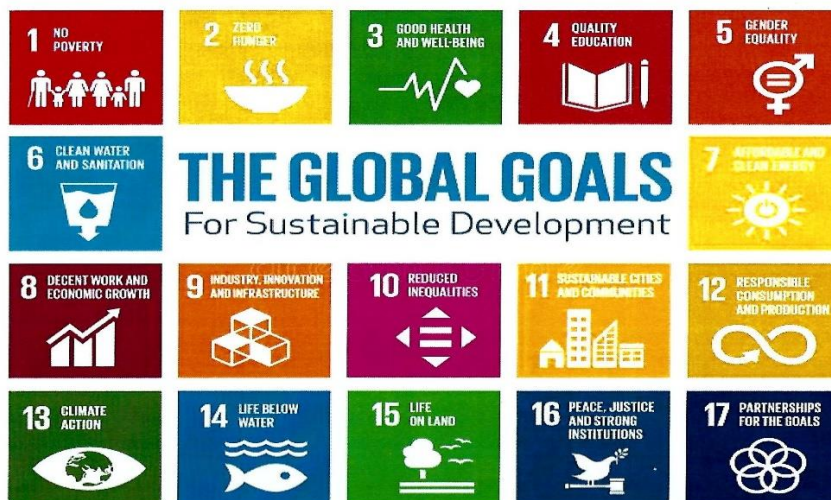
The prayer I share written by Joyce Rupp for Pentecost says much about how we move from the Easter season to the long season of Pentecost in the church year as followers of the risen

Christ. We give witness to the risen Christ, and we move with the Spirit to ask that our days, our moments, matter in the ways we care for one another, especially those who are the most vulnerable among us.

Look at the third stanza of the prayer below: Spirit! Blessing for the heart grown weary, encircle me with your loving energy, empower me with your active gentleness. Deepen within me a faith in your dynamism which strengthens the weak and the tired.

May God's gentle care for each of us and for our church give us all a part to play on the global stage.

Grace and peace in name of the Holy Trinity, Love, Wisdom, Source of Life,
Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers Brigham



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Update from the Search Committee

The Search Committee has been very active over the last few months. Since our last update, we received three additional profiles and invited all three candidates to interview with us. In total, we have screened 12 candidates and invited eight candidates to interview. One dropped out for personal reasons. The interview team met the remaining seven candidates by zoom and invited five candidates to meet with additional members of the Search Committee for a second interview. Interviews are ongoing.

We have had a great response to our profile, and have interviewed some highly qualified candidates. We will be meeting as a full committee on May 7 to discuss next steps.

Our committee members are Steve Boyko, Christine Bane, Lori Bennett, Mike Boutin, Jen Dockham, Stacey Murray, Sue Newton, Sue Riedel, Carol Silva, John Silva, Becky Smith and Josh Ferry (ex-officio).



Please speak to any one of us if you have any questions about the search process.



Sunday Worship

10:00 AM

We hope you will join us!

We like to see you in the congregation on Sunday mornings, but for those who cannot attend in person, worship will be broadcast each Sunday, at 10:00 AM, on YouTube Live (www.youtube.com/@firstchurchcongregationalm1729).

An Order of Worship will be emailed out by the Friday before the service. If you do not receive this email, please let the church office know at firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com.

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Prayer Requests/List

We print a Prayer List in the Sunday 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. Ann at amrogersbrigham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

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Breakfast with Ann

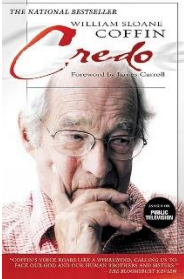


Join Reverend Ann and friends for some good food and conversation on the next **"Breakfast with Ann"** on **Wednesday, May 13th** at **8:00 AM**, at *Ellie's Farmhouse*, 436 Broadway, Methuen, MA. And remember, it's dutch treat!



April Breakfast with Rev. Ann!

INTERESTED IN SUMMER BOOK STUDY?



I invite you to consider joining me for summer reading of CREDO—beginning June 21st and going through July 19th (5 Sundays). We will meet after worship/coffee hour for about an hour for discussion in the Pastor’s Office. You can come to any of the sessions; each Sunday we’ll be reading some of the passages and inviting discussion. (It is not necessary to purchase the book as readings will be distributed for each week but it is a great book and you may want to own one) If you read ahead and find favorite passages, we’ll invite you to share them as we move through the sections.

If you have never read Rev. William Sloane Coffin, you may find his writing engaging. This book (c. 2004) is a collection of sayings and passages from Rev. William Sloane Coffin's sermons. He was the chaplain at Yale University during the Viet Nam era, and the pastor at New York's famous Riverside Church for twenty years. He was the most famous 'progressive' pastor in America for a long time. He invites discussion of social justice issues of our time even though he lived and preached many years ago.

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Mental Health Awareness Sunday May 17th

On Sunday, May 17, the Outreach Committee of First Church is pleased to invite Thomas Donovan to be our guest speaker in worship. Mr. Donovan is the Path Program Director here in Methuen. Please meet Tom through this information he shares about himself. Join us for worship and welcome Mr. Donovan to First Church as we mark Mental Health Sunday.



“My name is Thomas E. Donovan and I’m a Licensed Mental health Counselor (LMHC) in MA and a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor(LCMHC) in NH. I have been practicing in this role for (12yrs). Prior to becoming a therapist, I was a Police Officer for (25 yrs), (17yrs) in Methuen and (8 yrs) in North Andover, MA. Over the years I specialized in both substance abuse and mental health and have worked in both inpatient and outpatient capacities as a therapist and administrator. I’m currently employed by Frontline as Director of their PATH program which is partnered with the Methuen Police Department to provide support and MH services to residents experiencing a mental health crisis. My experience in both the MH and Law Enforcement allows me to bridge the gaps between both worlds and provides better understanding and outcomes.”

“I’m a husband, a father, grandfather, and a recovered alcoholic of (17yrs). I use my personal experiences to benefit others and hope to be a power of example. My family has struggled with addiction, and I have experienced the loss of two siblings. I rely on my higher power, who I call God, to turn my life over and guide me. I live by a set of principles and practice what I preach. My faith is now strong, but it was not always the case. I realized that I am not in control and I need to live clean and not just be clean. I focus on gratitude and have appreciation for the world around me. I pride myself on helping others and encourage others to do the same and find themselves and their own path to a better life.”

A Prayer for Pentecost

by Joyce Rupp

Spirit! Power and Passion of my being,
press upon my heart your profound love.
Move through the fragments of my days;
enable me to sense your fiery Presence
consecrating my most insignificant moments.

Spirit! Source of Vision, Perceptive Guide,
permeate the moments of my choices
when falsehood and truth both call to me.
Turn me toward the way of goodness,
so that I will always lean toward your love.

Spirit! Blessing for the heart grown weary,
encircle me with your loving energy,
empower me with your active gentleness.
Deepen within me a faith in your dynamism
which strengthens the weak and the tired.

Spirit! Breath of Life, Touch of Mystery,
you are the ribbon of inner connection,
uniting me with the groaning of all creation.
Because of you, my life gathers into a oneness.
Keep me attentive to this interdependence.
Fill my being with constant compassion
and a deep hope that knows no bounds.

Spirit! Dwelling Place, Sanctuary of Silence,
you are the home for which I deeply yearn.
You are the resting place for which I long.
I find both comfort and challenge in you.
Grant that I may keep my whole self open
to the transforming power of your indwelling,
that I may ever know the blessings
of your tremendous companionship.

WARRANT

First Church Congregational

United Church of Christ

297TH ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, May 17, 2026

The 297th Annual Meeting of First Church Congregational, Methuen, Massachusetts, will be held in person, at 11:00 AM, on Sunday, May 17, 2026. Business to be conducted at the Annual Meeting is outlined below.

1. Welcome and Call to Order by the Chair of the Board ~ Josh Ferry
2. Opening Prayer and Necrology ~ Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers-Brigham
3. Old Business
 - Review of Minutes of the May 18, 2025, Annual Meeting
 - Board Report
 - Pastor's Report
 - Treasurer's Report
4. New Business
 - Adoption of 2026-27 Budget
 - Nominating Committee Report
 - Election of Officers
 - Other Business
5. Closing Prayer and Benediction ~ Rev. Rogers-Brigham
6. Call for Adjournment ~ Josh Ferry

Teri Padula
Church Board Secretary

From the Chair of the Church Board...

Wow... Four years! This Beacon update will be the last of my term as board chair, expiring at the end of the month. It has been quite the time, and I pray that I have done what you have asked of me, and that First Church Congregational is a better place than when I started. It has been the honor of a lifetime to have served God, the church, the community, and all of the congregation. Thank you!!!

Of course, even as I leave the chair to Steve Boyko, I know there is always a lot of energy at First Church. As always, we have plenty more going on, including:

- With Lent behind us but fresh in our hearts, wonderful worship services are always happening. Mike and the choir are creating joyful music to accompany Rev. Ann's prayerful sermons, so come one – come all to Sunday service!
- Our annual meeting is May 17th!!! This is always an important event in the life of our church. We learn about the various activities and financial aspects of church life, and most importantly get to vote on those issues and the elected officers of our historic congregation. Please plan on attending.
- The search process for our next settled pastor is continuing. Interviews are happening, but it is a very thought and prayer filled process. The committee is meeting virtually and physically, and they are working at a rapid pace to build our future. If you have any further questions or input to the committee, please see Steve.
- Our Outreach group is hard at work with numerous efforts. I sincerely thank you all for time, talent, and treasure given for those less fortunate. This month is mental health awareness month, so stay tuned for a special service recognizing that issue. Next month will begin the work of our Back-to-School program, so please speak to Lisa Ferry if you'd like to volunteer to help. More is being planned and there are a ton of other ways to give for the upcoming season, so please read further to find out how you can help. Between all these 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 having a great year! The teachers and children are busy in the classrooms and playground, and it is wonderful to hear the joy throughout the church. Enrollment is still active for the 2025-2026 school year, so if there is a family that may need our services, I invite you to connect them with Gina or Roberta. Tours are happening regularly.
- The finance committee is getting close to finalizing next year's budget. If there is something you may be interested in pursuing or helping out with, please contact Scott Sanborn. He would love to talk about options, funding, or grants to help our church grow.
- Our Membership Development & Communications team is hard at work planning fun events throughout the coming year. They are investigating lots of activities and fellowship times, so stay tuned. If you're interested in their work or helping out, please reach out to Carol Sanborn for more information.
- ...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.

Once more, I would like to thank you all for supporting me as your board chair. We had numerous chats, loved to hear your ideas and suggestions, and worked a lot of other activities and missions of our church. 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!!!

Josh Ferry



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Special Worship Opportunities in May

- **May 3rd – Fifth Sunday of Easter and Service of Word & Sacrament**
 - Children/Youth Message features Heifer Project Kick-off
 - Readings: Acts:7:55-60; John 14:1-14

- **May 10th – Sixth Sunday of Easter**
 - Mother's Day Prayers
 - Readings: Acts:17:22-31; John 14:15-21

- **May 17th – Seventh Sunday of Easter**
 - **Mental Health Sunday**; Guest Speaker: Tom Donovan
 - **FCC 297th Annual Meeting** following worship
 - Readings: Acts:1:6-14; John 17:1-11

- **May 24th – Pentecost Sunday (wear RED!)**
 - Memorial Day – Lighting of candles to remember those who served our country
 - Readings: Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23

- **May 31st – Trinity Sunday**
 - Children/Youth host Fellowship Time for Heifer Project
 - Readings: Psalm 8; Matthew 28:16-20

Musical Musings

Most of us hear the organ every week—but not everyone knows just how special it is.

Built in 1886 by James E. Treat (Opus 2), our organ is a rare and historically significant instrument—**built right here in Methuen** and originally installed in the mansion of James Searles in Great Barrington. It's been at the heart of our worship life for generations, bringing depth, beauty, and a sense of the sacred to this space.

Like anything this old, though, it needs care. Over time, wear and aging have begun to take their toll, and a thoughtful restoration will be needed to preserve both its sound and its legacy, even as we prepare for our 300th anniversary and beyond.

I've recently submitted a proposal to the Sisler Foundation to help support this work—an important first step in what will be a longer-term effort.

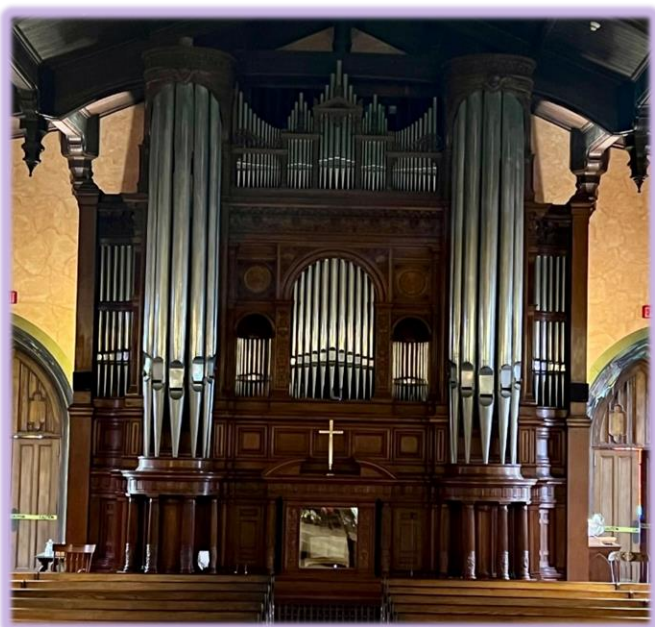
This isn't just about fixing an instrument. It's about stewardship—caring for something entrusted to us so that future generations can experience it the same way we do today.

If you feel moved to support this effort, contributions can always be made to the Organ Restoration Fund. Every gift helps sustain the music and ministry of this place.

More to come—but in the meantime, listen closely the next time the organ plays. It's telling a story we now get to carry forward.

Peace and all good things,

Mike Boutin



Christian Education

We will be continuing our Spark SS lessons through April and the beginning of May. We will finish the year using a Heifer Curriculum to go with the youths Outreach Mission of buying a Cow for Heifer.

It is wonderful having more adults signed up to help assist weekly in the Sunday School program and getting to know our youth.

The Sunday School will be doing a special coffee hour on May 31st to help raise the money needed for the Heifer project. It will cost us \$500.00 to purchase the cow. Hope you will join us for a Coffee Hour filled with MOOO-ING treats, and some beautiful Prayer jars made by our youth when you make your donation.

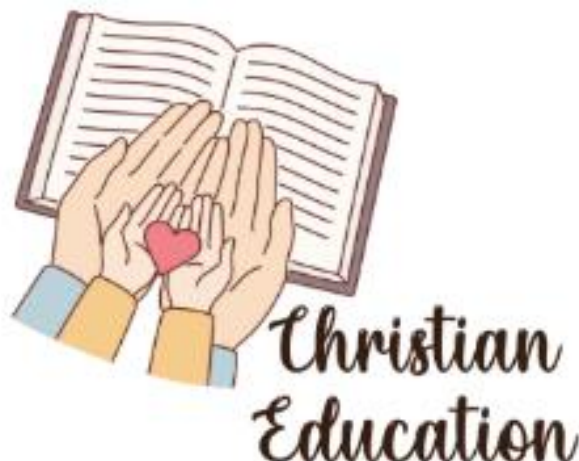
Mark your calendars for Children's Day June 7th. Our youth will be participating in the service, and we will recognize our teachers and volunteers.

I (Mrs. B) have been approached by a parent and asked if I'd do an Adult Craft night. I said "Yes". **Watch for more information for date and time !**

Blessings,
Lori and Sarah

Sunday School Lessons for May:

- May 3rd – *Jesus is the Way*; John 14:1-14
- May 10th – *Jesus Comforts Us*; John 14:15-21
- May 17th – *Celebrating God's Creatures*; Animals are amazing
- May 24th – *Pentecost Sunday*; Happy Birthday!; We Need to care for the Earth!
- May 31 – *Trinity Sunday Lesson*
 - *Children's Day Rehearsal/Coffee Hour led by our youth to raise money to buy a Heifer*
- June 7th – ***Children's Day Celebration***



Information about Heifer International



Early in the year we spoke with the youth about supporting Heifer International. They decided they wanted to raise money to buy a cow. **On Sunday, May 31st, the youth will be hosting Coffee Hour**, and all proceeds donated that morning would go toward buying the cow for Heifer. For those of you not familiar with the program Heifer is an International Company, here is some information from people who have benefitted from the program.

Here at Heifer, we believe livestock has an important role to play in ending global hunger and poverty. Here are 5 reasons why:

1. Animals provide nutritious food.



Anisha drinks milk from her family's dairy cow in Parbat, Nepal. In poor countries, many people — especially women and girls — have few high-nutrient foods like pulses, milk, meat or eggs in their diets. With animal proteins, people can get the nutrients they need quicker and with smaller amounts of food. That's what makes them especially important in areas of high malnutrition. For children especially, eating animal-sourced foods and a variety of nutritious sustenance is one of the most direct ways to avoid the permanent consequences of an insufficient diet and stop hunger from affecting learning and future outcomes.

2. They generate income.



Rosemary Odongo runs a shop selling chicken eggs in Kagan East, Homa Bay County, Kenya. Livestock products can be used in many different ways. Chicken eggs and goat milk can be turned into yogurt and cheese, and access to markets to be collected and sold. Milk from cows and all of these products can be sold, providing money for health care and sending kids to school.

3. They empower women in rural communities.



Salafina Nyirabagoyi tends to her pigs in Rwanda's Rutsiro District. In many communities, looking after cows can often be highly profitable. Research shows that women reinvest up to 90% of their earnings back into their households. That's money spent on nutrition, food, health care, school and income-generating activities that help break the cycle of poverty.

4. They increase access to renewable energy.



Sumitra Rijal lights up a biogas stove powered with the family cows' manure. Animals produce waste — lots of it! In many of the communities where we work, people don't have access to energy. They often cook using wood fires, but chopping down trees can be bad for the environment, and the smoke is detrimental to human health. Animal waste can be used to make biogas which can fuel stoves, giving communities a renewable source of energy for cooking and an innovative way of reducing livestock waste.

5. They help communities build resilience.



Vestine Tibasima feeds her cow in the village of Mulindi, western Rwanda. Animal manure is a readily available and nutrient-rich fertilizer for many smallholder farmers who grow crops alongside their livestock. Using animal waste in this way helps farming families build resilience against the fluctuating cost of supplies, while improving the quantity and quality of the food they grow for household consumption.

Walking Group for Fitness and Fellowship

Tuesdays in May

Spring has sprung! Come walk with other church members along the Merrimack River to enjoy exercise, nature and good conversation. We are a small but dedicated group who would love to have you join us. We will be walking at the Raymond J. Martin Riverside Park at 971 Riverside Drive in Methuen, which provides a safe, flat looped walkway. We will meet at 10:00 AM on the following Tuesdays in May: 5/5, 5/12, 5/19, and 5/26.





Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Super Saturday comes to you!

“Bound by Story, Sent in Hope: Learning from What’s Working”

Sunday, May 17th at 2:00 PM

Central Congregational Church of Newburyport UCC

14 Titcomb St.

Newburyport, MA 01950

Registration: <https://sneucc-reg.brapp.com/sscomestoyounortheast>

Prayer Shawl Ministry

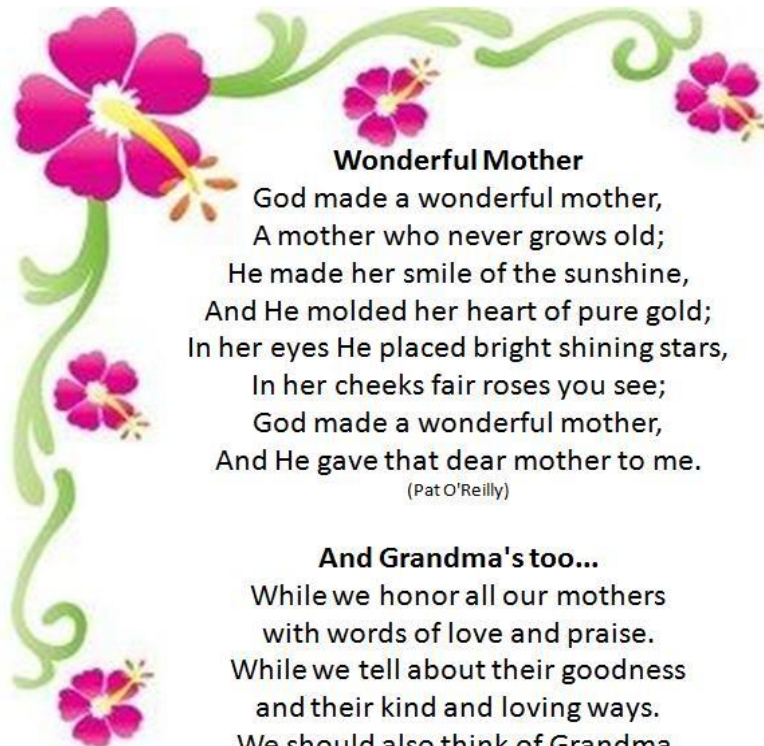
The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets year-round and always welcomes anyone who wishes to be part of this ministry. Knitting or crocheting experience is not a prerequisite to becoming a member. Come for the fellowship and someone will be glad to help you if needed. Please contact Bobbi Barlow for more information.

If you know of someone who may like a prayer shawl or lap robe, please let someone on the Prayer Shawl Ministry know.

Prayer Shawl will meet on **Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 PM**
in the parlor of First Church Congregational.



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Wonderful Mother

God made a wonderful mother,
A mother who never grows old;
He made her smile of the sunshine,
And He molded her heart of pure gold;
In her eyes He placed bright shining stars,
In her cheeks fair roses you see;
God made a wonderful mother,
And He gave that dear mother to me.

(Pat O'Reilly)

And Grandma's too...

While we honor all our mothers
with words of love and praise.
While we tell about their goodness
and their kind and loving ways.
We should also think of Grandma,
she's a mother too, you see....
For she mothered my dear mother
as my mother mothers me.

Author Unknown



The Chapel School

Springtime is upon us and we are winding down with 7 weeks till the last day of school for the summer!!

We are excited to have our Annual Art Show on display starting May 18th. We will display the children's artwork in the Parish Hall, hallways and lobby area. We will have this colorful artwork ready for the Annual Church Meeting on Sunday May 17th. We hope you can stop in and enjoy the exhibit.

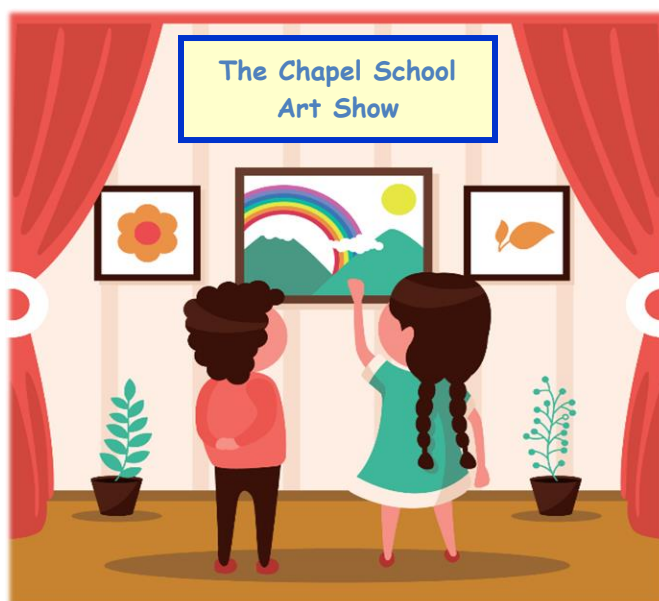
It has been so amazing to see how much the children have grown since the start of the school year. Not only have they grown taller, you can also see their confidence has grown as well. They have all made positive progress both physically and emotionally. We are excited to see many of the children transition to Kindergarten in the fall. We are sending them off feeling empowered and ready to learn.

Outdoor play is being enjoyed by both the children and teachers at this time of year. The weather allows us more time to outdoors to foster our gross motor skills, exploration and our imagination. Getting fresh air each day is also important for our growing children.

Enrollment continues for September and we are getting lots of phone calls and setting up tours for the fall. If you or anyone you know is looking for an exceptional early childhood experience, please reach out to myself or Roberta and we can start the process.

Enjoy the spring weather!

Gina Colarusso
Director





The Chapel School

Where a Lifetime of Learning Begins

Register Now for our 2026-27 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!

- **School Year Program** (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



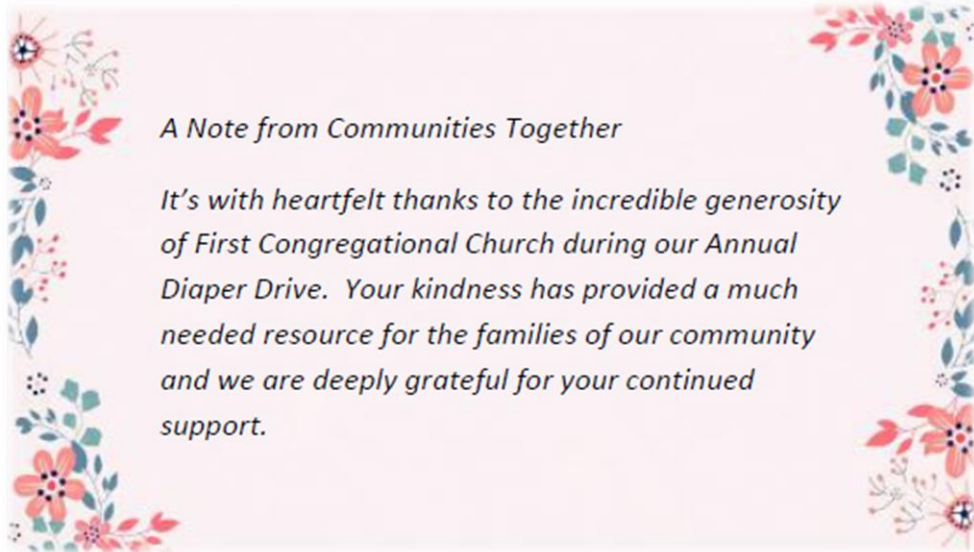
www.chapelschoolmethuen.com



Located at:

*First Church Congregational
26 Pleasant Street, Methuen*





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From a Neighbors In Need Facebook post on 5/23/26:

“Shining a light on the incredible team behind our largest pantry in Methuen! Every Tuesday night at First Church Congregational in Methuen, this dedicated group of volunteers works tirelessly to service as many as 400 families through our fast-moving, efficient drive-through pantry. Their commitment, teamwork, and compassion make it all possible.”

A special thank you to Ken Peck, Bev Maxwell, Bob and Sue Newton, and so many more amazing volunteers who show up week after week to support our community. Because of you, families leave not just with food – but with dignity, care and hope.”

Easter Sunday

4/5/26



Saint Andrew's
Episcopal Church



COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR AT ST. ANDREW'S



SATURDAY
MAY

30

11am-2pm

90 Broadway, Methuen

MeVa Bus Route #10
(Methuen Square via Broadway)

Join us for an afternoon filled with community, social, and literacy services information to best support your health and wellbeing



Vendors Include:

- Merrimack Health
- Gr. Lawrence Family Health Center
- Gr. Lawrence Community Council
- Nevins Memorial Library
- and many more!!

More
info

Eileen Woelfel
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admin@standrewsmethuen.org

 www.standrewsmethuen.org
  @StAndrewsMethuen



Footprints in the Sand

*One night I had a dream.
I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life,
and for each scene I noticed two sets of footprints
in the sand, one belonging to me and one to my Lord.*

*When the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that many times along my life's pathway,
especially at the lowest and saddest moments,
there was only one set of footprints.*

*This troubled me, and I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said if I followed you in life,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the most difficult
times of my life, there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed
You the most, You would leave me."*

*He whispered, "My precious child,
I love you and will never leave you.
During your times of trial and suffering,
When you saw only one set of footprints,
It was then that I carried you."*

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 -- **R**eliable, **E**ngaging, **A**ble, **C**aring and **H**earfelt support.

Contact Judi Boyko or Pat King for more information, or speak to our Pastor.

* * * * *

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 **“Donate”** button.

Thank you for your support.

Happy Birthday!

MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 02 Susan Newton
- 03 Ryan DiZoglio, Dorothy Watson
- 05 Robyn Sliney
- 07 Rena Caron
- 24 Jennifer Dockham
- 31 Ethan Bennett

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 03 Stephen Boyko
- 06 Cindy Bateson

* * * * *



MAY ANNIVERSARY




5/21 Richard & Lynn Dewhirst

Married 37 years



May 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship Service <i>Sundays at 10:00 AM</i> In-Person & on Facebook Live www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen	 4 6:30 PM Finance	5 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Methuen Food Pantry Distribution	 6 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl 6:30 PM Church Board	7 7:00 PM Search Committee	1	2
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> 8:30 AM 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 Methuen Food Pantry Distribution	13 8:00 AM Breakfast with Ann at Ellie's Farmhouse 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl 7:00 PM Diaconate	14 <i>Chapel Art Show</i> <i>Set-up</i>	15 <i>Chapel Art Show</i> <i>Set-up</i>	16
17 <i>Mental Health</i> <i>Sunday</i> Chapel Art Show 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:00 AM Annual Meeting 2:00 PM NE Assoc. Meeting	18 <i>Chapel Art Show</i> 1:00 PM Cook for Bread & Roses	19 <i>Chapel Art Show</i> 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Methuen Food Pantry Distribution	20 <i>June</i> BEACON Deadline <i>Chapel Art Show</i> 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl	21 <i>Chapel Art Show</i>	22	23
24 <i>Pentecost</i> 8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM MDCC 11:30 AM Trustees Trinity Sunday 31	25  Memorial Day Church / Chapel School Closed	26 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Methuen Food Pantry Distribution	27 1:00 PM Prayer Shawl	28	29	30 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM Community Health Fair at St. Andrew's, Methuen

Dates and Times Subject to Change

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

Address Service Requested