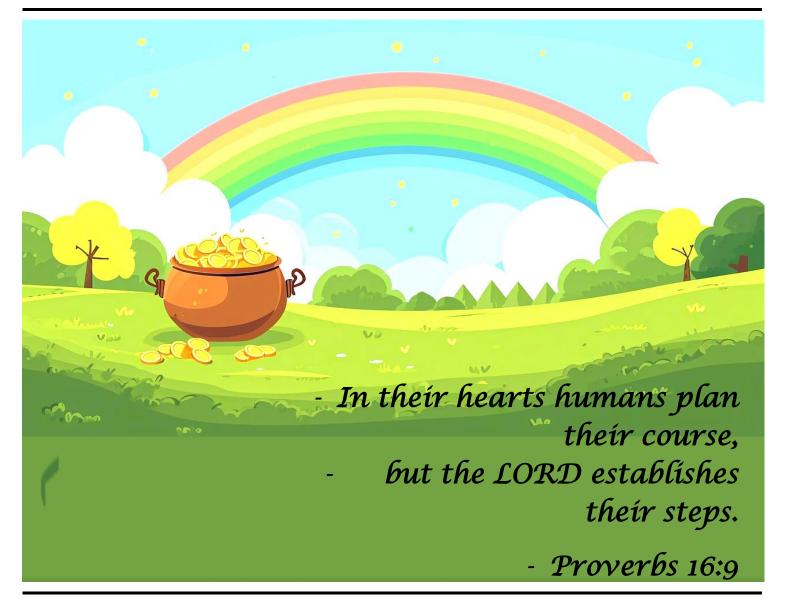


FIRST CHURCH NEWS March 2024



REFLECTING THE MANY FACETS OF OUR LIVES TOGETHER AS A FAMILY OF FAITH

MUSINGS FROM YOUR PASTOR

It is starting to feel a bit like Spring, which is fitting because Holy Week starts on March 24th. This is one of the highlights of the year. If you are new or newer to church, Holy Week is the week that leads to the resurrection:

Palm Sunday — Jesus enters Jerusalem to shouts of "Hosanna." The Messiah is being received by the people.

Maundy Thursday — The Last Supper. Jesus washes his disciples' feet and institutes Holy Communion.

Good Friday — Jesus is crucified and buried.

Holy Saturday — Nothing but silence...

Easter (Resurrection Sunday) — Jesus is alive!

The season of spring is such a fitting season for Easter. Dead things spring to life. Elizabeth and I were just in Newport celebrating our 14th wedding anniversary. We were walking on the Cliff Walk, and we noticed a field where hundreds of tulips were starting to sprout. Life is springing forth from a place, where only a few weeks ago, life couldn't be seen.

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate life springing forth from a place where life couldn't be seen. When Jesus defeats death, Jesus defeats the power of hell. Jesus defeats all that is evil. Jesus defeats our own rebellious hearts and offers us eternal life, which includes a new way to be and live in our broken world.

What good news we celebrate. On Easter Sunday, I want to encourage you to bring someone who needs to hear this good news. Easter is a great Sunday to bring a skeptical friend or a curious neighbor. It is one of the only Sundays of the year when people who never go to church are open to going to church. Let's not miss an opportunity to share God's love and the Gospel message.

Soli Deo Gloria, Pastor Zac



The Servant Leadership Team Update — March 2024

February gave us an extra day due to Leap Year. Puxatony Phil predicts an early Spring...let's hope that it is true!!!

We will celebrate St. Patrick's Day mid month. Then there is a perfect ending of the month with Easter.

Fun fact: Easter is held (in the Western Church) between March 21 and April 25, on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the northern spring equinox. This year it is quite early!

Following is a summary of some of the things discussed at the SLT meetings:

- Prayer Bears were blessed on February 4th and are ready to share our church's love with people!
- February 25th Celebrated new members and those who have been involved with the church for 50 years or more!
- Spring cleaning of the kitchen will be done on April 20th
- Easter plans 2 services, sunrise at 6:30AM and 10:00AM
- Maundy Thursday Service
- Due to the early date of Easter, we will do a Spring Fair on June 9th, instead of the Easter Egg Hunt.
- The ad-hoc committee has been formed to look at the safety plans for the church



~ CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ~ SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

Do you ever wonder what happens in Sunday School after Pastor Zac blesses the children and sends them downstairs. Maybe you don't, but if you do, here's the scoop.

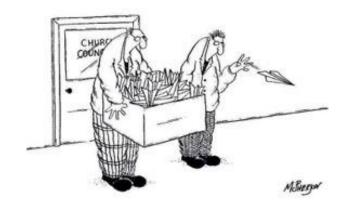
- First, we meet together for an opening discussion about the theme of the lesson.
- Next, we watch a video about the Bible story on which we are working.
- After that, Miss Gigi comes down to sing with us. Wait until you hear the song for Palm Sunday.
- Then, we separate into two groups, the older kids and the younger kids.
- We continue the discussion and lesson with each of the groups at their level.
- Craft time comes next! Always look to see what the children have done. The project goes along with the theme of the week.
- Last is wrap up, clean up, and then head up to coffee and community.

So, now you know how the Sunday School schedule goes. What, you might ask, are some of the stories we have worked on. In February, we learned that God provides. The Bible story was the story of God sending food to Elijah by using ravens to carry bread and meat to him. We also learned that God is generous. Our Bible story again focused on Elijah. This time, Elijah was sent by God to get food from a widow. This widow had only enough flour and oil to make one last meal for herself and her son. Elijah asked her to make the bread and told her that God would continue to give her flour and oil. The widow did as he asked and God was generous.



Saturday, March 2nd at 6pm

We will be showing the Minions movie in Fellowship Hall. All generations invited. Bring your friends! There will be pizza! KIDS wear your PJs, bring a blanket, a pillow and have fun!



"Remind me never to ask the Youth Group to help fold the church bulletins again."

~ HOLY WEEK INFORMATION ~

Palm Sunday (3/24/24) Service: 10 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Service (3/28/24): 6:30 p.m.

On **Easter Sunday** (3/31/24) we have 2 Services:

Sunrise Service will begin at **6:30 am** in the Church Park behind the church.

At **10:00 am** we will hold our regular Worship Service

MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

The Memorials committee would like to express their gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the memorial and scholarship funds. These contributions have helped to enrich our church with many new items. Recent purchases have included sanctuary carpeting, streaming equipment, and an i pad for the Sunday school. We welcome new ideas as to how memorial funds might be used. Also, every year in May, we have been able to award scholarships to all of our students heading off to college.

We rely on donations from memorial gifts to keep these programs going. Memorial donations can be set up as either the general memorial fund or scholarship program. We hope you will consider in the future starting a memorial fund or scholarship fund in memory of a loved one.

Thanks again from the Memorials committee.

~ SAVE THE DATE ~

May 2nd – National Day of Prayer

We will be gathering on the town common. Additional details will be announced soon.



~ MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS ~



Scholarship Applications are now available from the First Congregational Church Scholarship Fund. Please look on the

bulletin board for a paper application or click <u>here</u> to download the form. First Congregational Church Scholarship recipients must be students who are both active in the church and church members. Applications are due back in the church office no later than Sunday April 21st.



Please join us to celebrate BABY BORCHELT & BABY PEARL Join us as we help the Borchelt & Pearl families get ready to welcome their new baby boys! We will have food, fun, & fellowship. If decorating onesies isn't your thing feel free to grab a glass of punch & play some boardgames!

RSVP by March 3rd 774-464-7351

Sunday 3/17@ noon in the fellowship hall

*Gifts are not required. We'll have a meal sign-up for the families once the babies arrive, & a donation jar for items they still need. Contact Elizabeth Stephenson if you'd like their registry for specefic gifting.

~ BOYLSTON FOOD PANTRY ~

We have a couple of specific requests for the food pantry.

- Dinty Moore Beef Stew
- Canned Pineapple (not in syrup)
- Ground Coffee!

Thank you for continuing to bless our town with so many wonderful donations.



· COFFEE & COMMUNITY ~



Formerly known as "Fellowship Coffee Hour" – Coffee & Community is the time we gather as a community immediately after

our Sunday Worship Service to share something to eat and drink, welcome new people, and check in with friends. For many, this fellowship time feels like an extension of our worship. Each week, we need 3-4 volunteers for set-up, clean-up and to supplement the food. Some folks enjoy making this a bigger affair, and that's wonderful, but not necessary. We suggest you keep it simple. You'll need to arrive early, bring and prepare food and beverages for service; refill coffee as needed, and help with clean-up. Additional instructions and guidelines will be provided to you. Please sign up on the board in Fellowship Hall.

BLESS YOU FOR AGREEING TO SERVE IN THE IMPORTANT "FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY" OF FCCB!



~ Memorial Easter Lilies & Tulips ~



The Sanctuary Committee is planning to decorate the church for the Easter Services on March 31, 2024. With the limited availability of lilies this year, we will be offering lilies or tulips. Please select your preference on the form below.

The cost of each plant will be \$14.00. Checks should be made payable to the First Congregational Church. All orders must be received no later than Sunday, March 17^{th} .

If you would like to purchase a lily or tulip, please fill in the form below and return it with your remittance to First Congregational Church, 10 Church St, Boylston, MA. 01505 or it may be placed in your offering envelope.

We are requesting that you PLEASE TAKE YOUR LILY OR TULIP AFTER THE SERVICE so that you may enjoy it at home. Any plants that are left will be given to an ill or shut-in person.

	h to give a memorial Lily Tulip For the Easter Service on March 31, 2024.
would like	it printed in the bulletin as follows:
In memory o	of:
2	
Given by:	



What's Happening This Month?

March 2	6:00 p.m.	Movie Night	March 17	Noon	Baby celebration
March 3	8:45 a.m.	Choir Practice	March 17	2-3:30 pm	Girl Scouts Meeting
March 3	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service/ Communion/ Family Sunday	March 18	7:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
March 3	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hour	March 18	7:00 p.m.	Trustees Meeting
March 4	5:30 p.m.	Parenting Group	March 19	6:00 p.m.	Men's Bible Study
March 4	7:30 p.m.	AA Meeting	March 20	10:00 a.m.	Women's Bible Study - Morning
March 5	6:00 p.m.	Men's Bible Study	March 20	6:30 p.m.	SLT meeting
March 6	10:00 a.m.	Women's Bible Study - Morning	Mar. 21	7:30 p.m.	Young Women's Bible Study
March 6	6:30 p.m.	SLT meeting	March 22	Newsletter	Article Submissions Due
March 7	3:00 p.m.	Christian Outreach Meeting	March 24	8:45 a.m.	Choir Practice
March 7	7:30 p.m.	Young Women's Bible Study	March 24	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service – Palm Sunday
March 10	8:45 a.m.	Choir Practice	March 24	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School
March 10	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service	March 24	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hour
March 10	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School	March 25	7:30 p.m.	AA Meeting
March 10	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hour	March 26	6:00 p.m.	Men's Bible Study
March 10	11:00 a.m.	Christian Ed Meeting	March 26	6:30 p.m.	Deacons Meeting
March 11	5:30 p.m.	Parenting Group	March 27	10:00 a.m.	Women's Bible Study - Morning
March 11	7:30 p.m.	AA Meeting	March 28	6:30 p.m.	Maundy Thursday service
March 12	6:00 p.m.	Men's Bible Study	March 31	6:30 a.m.	Sonrise Easter service
March 13	10:00 a.m.	Women's Bible Study - Morning	March 31	8:45 a.m.	Choir Practice
March 14	10:00 a.m.	Ladies Benevolent Society	March 31	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service-Easter Sunday
March 17	8:45 a.m.	Choir Practice	March 31	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hour
March 17	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service			
March 17	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School		AK	
March 17	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Hour			

~ Volunteer Schedules ~



~ *March 2024* ~ Volunteer Schedule

~ Lay Reader/Worship Leader~

March 3 – Deb Larkin March 10 – Tom Tasker March 17 – Brennan Lau March 24 – Mark Fuller March 31- Jan Fuller



~ Lay Reader/Worship Leader~

April 7 - Cheryl Mongeon April 14 - Gigi Zepp April 21 - Peter Haynes April 28 - Tom Tasker

Deacon – Deb Ellis

Deacon – Ginny Ekblom

The First Congregational Church of Boylston

10 Church Street Boylston, Massachusetts 01505

Worship Schedule Sunday School: 10:00 a.m. Service of Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Pastor:	Rev. Zac Stephenson
Ministers:	All the Members
Office Administrate	or: Darcy Gebo
Office Phone:	(508) 869-2027
Website:	www.fcc-boylston.org
Office E-Mail:	admin@fcc-boylston.org
Pastor's E-Mail:	zac@fcc-boylston.org
Servant Leaders:	servantleaders@fcc-boylston.org

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Monday - Friday And by appointment Our Purpose

The First Congregation Church of Boylston is a welcoming family and community-oriented church inspired by the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ that seeks to present the good news, equip our parishioners with a faith that works in real life, and send them into the world to serve in Jesus' name.

Our Covenant

Having become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we now, rely on the Holy Spirit to help us live this covenant we make with our Lord and one another. In all we do, we will aim to glorify God.

We make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace by walking together in love and by putting away all bitterness, anger, and hurtful speech. With humility, gentleness, and patience, we will be kind to one another, tenderhearted, and forgiving each other, even as God has forgiven us.

We will carry each other's burdens, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep.

We will train our children in the instruction of the Lord and strive to live godly lives, seeking to walk in a way that is consistent with the teachings of Christ before our family, friends, and neighbors.

We will gather regularly for worship, prayer, instruction in God's Word, and fellowship with one another and the sacraments of baptism and communion. We will contribute cheerfully and generously to the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the advancement of the Gospel both to our neighbors and the nations.

And when we move from this place, we will partner with another church with whom we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. So help us, God.

> The First Congregational Church Of Boylston Cattered Street 10 Church Street Boylston, Massachusetts 01505 Boylston, Massachusetts 01505