



The Messenger

Volume 20, Issue 8

May 2010

First Congregational
Church of Falmouth



While this *Messenger* might arrive “too late,” just in case, we wanted to remind you that donations are being accepted until 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28. We’ve begun setting up, but help is always needed and welcome, so stop by the church some morning this week and lend a hand! Friday, April 30, is the final push, so bring a bag lunch; beverages will be provided.

On Saturday, May 1, come ready to find and purchase your treasures; there is guaranteed to be **something** you won’t be able to live without! While at the sale, stop in for lunch where Lois Parker and her crew will be glad to serve you anything on the menu.

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Special dates of interest:

• *Sunday, May 2* —
Rev. Nan Geertz
Scholarship Sunday

• *Sunday, May 9*—
Nell Fields—guest
preacher

• *Sunday, May 16*—
Confirmation Sunday

• *Sunday, May 23*—
New Member Sunday
— *blended worship*

• *Sunday, May 30*—
Pentecost

• *Sunday, June 6*—
Children’s Day



A Moment with our Senior Minister

What do you think? As a church family are we as hospitable as we can be to the people who visit our Sunday morning worship services and coffee hours?

Our United Church of Christ in its "God Is Still Speaking" initiative has developed the following special greeting in its outreach to our world: *Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

That "Still Speaking" initiative recognizes how important it is for our UCC congregations, as part of their Christian discipleship, to be people of "extravagant hospitality"--people who truly receive visitors and new members with open arms and hearts. That initiative reminds us of how welcoming Jesus was and to all kinds of people. As UCC minister Sidney D. Fowler wrote,

Jesus lived and breathed gracious hospitality...In the reign of God that Jesus spoke of, he declared there is room for all—children (Luke 18:15-17) and those who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, ill, poor, grieving, persecuted, and in prison (Matthew 25: 31-46 and Luke 6:20-26). Jesus put faith and hospitality together...A surprise in the Bible is the way you welcome a stranger expresses how you embrace the very presence of God (Genesis 18:1-8 and Luke 23:28-35). The church, since its beginning, continues to "extend hospitality to strangers (Roman 12:13)." The church, after all, is a blessed company of strangers held together by the grace of God.

We say that our church here in downtown Falmouth is very friendly, and I believe it usually is. However, to put "extravagant hospitality" into practice, we need to take special care every Sunday, to see that all our visitors are made to feel welcome and that no one is ignored and just left standing alone at our coffee hours.

How does one measure a church's level of hospitality? Here's a set of criteria developed by a man who then applied it to eighteen different churches he visited on successive Sundays. That individual awarded points to those churches on the following basis:

- 10 points for a smile from a worshiper
- 10 points for a greeting from someone sitting nearby
- 100 points for an exchange of names
- 200 points for an invitation to have coffee
- 200 points for an invitation to return
- 1,000 points for an introduction to another worshiper
- 2,000 points for an invitation to meet the minister



Sad to say, more than half the churches visited by that man earned fewer than 100 points! And of that number, five churches earned even fewer than 20 points each! As the man concluded from his experiment, "The doctrine may be biblical, the singing inspirational, the sermon uplifting, but when visitors find nobody who cares whether they are there, they are not likely to come back."

Imagine that you are a visitor to our church. If you were, how do you think our church would rate on the above scale? For example, would people in the pews around you acknowledge your presence and verbally welcome you? Would many people around you be wearing name tags, thus showing their likely interest in exchanging names with you? Would anyone invite you to join them at coffee hour?

As a worthy expression of our Christian discipleship, and on behalf of our church family, let us all do our part to practice such "extravagant hospitality."

Yours in Christ's Service,



The Stewardship Committee would like to thank those who have contributed to the "Extra Mile" drive and those who have faithfully been fulfilling their pledges. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Pictorial Directory

Your scheduled appointment will be here before you know it! Please plan to arrive 10-15 minutes ahead of time. If you provided an email address, you will receive a reminder of the time online. In that reminder you will be able to access a **\$10.00 coupon** to use if you decide to purchase additional pictures.

Lifetouch participates in the **Feed the Need Program**. For each family that is photographed, Lifetouch will donate \$1.00 to the Falmouth Service Center, our local food pantry. Also, if you bring a non-perishable food donation for the Service Center to your photo session, you will receive a **\$5.00 coupon** which can be used toward the purchase of pictures.

Lifetouch will also help us create a **custom online community** exclusive to our church members only. The site cannot be accessed just by visiting the church website. The **site is secure**, and each member will have a unique user name and password. Also, each family can control which is displayed. A major advantage to the church having this online directory is the ability to add members as our church grows—so we always have a current directory!

If you need assistance, please call Wil Bindler-Desbiens at 508-548-3295, Jan Hull at 508-495-1765, or Marcia Young at 508-540-5877.



Women's Union

We want to welcome **Carol Andersen** as our new leader and **Sandy Abt** as our assistant leader. Special thanks are due to **Barbara Bosselman** for all the effort she has put into holding our group together for the last several years.

The Wednesday Morning Circle will meet May 12 at 11:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Following our business meeting, we will car pool to Marilyn Sanborn's home for lunch and a program. Bring a bag lunch; Marilyn will once again treat us to one of her delicious desserts and coffee. The program for the afternoon is *A Look at Our National Parks*. Marilyn and Diana Geigis will moderate a discussion which we hope members will join by sharing their favorite National Park(s) experiences. Perhaps you found or bought something special that you would like to bring and share!

We had a very nice meeting in April with our guest from the Waquoit and Mashpee churches who joined us for lunch and a program about Cape Cod. There was much laughter and conversation by the more than 70 ladies in attendance. Once again, Nancy Church and her committee made us proud.

Our next meeting will be in September, but the Friendly Circle will continue to meet on Tuesdays during the summer.



Choir Notes

May has arrived and, hopefully, there won't be any snow. I say that with tongue-in-cheek because I was born in Ohio in May and it snowed the day I was born. We've had some late snowfalls in May in the past, so I'm always prepared. The Senior Choir members will continue weekly rehearsals through May and into June. It's never too late to join us. The Bell Choir will play for the last time on April 25 and then we'll have our "cleaning and polishing evening." Children's Choir will rehearse each Sunday after church until about 11:30 or 11:45 then sing on Children's Day, which is scheduled for June 6. We have four regular singers now and are ready to welcome more young people into the group. It would be delightful to have more young singers join us for Sunday after church for rehearsals so we can have a big group to sing on Children's Day.

On May 30, I will give a concert in the sanctuary at 3:00 p.m. The songs are in various styles, come from many different countries, and will be sung in several languages. The concert has a little bit of everything: folks songs, art songs, and opera arias in Spanish, Italian, German and Welsh. Each May for the last four years I've given a concert and been joined by another singer or two. It is always a fun day for me and for the people in attendance. This year I will be joined once again by Nirole Nelson, a senior voice student from the Cape Cod Conservatory. The concert is free, but a donation basket will be available for those who may wish to donate to our church's hymnbook fund. I hope to see you there. If not...

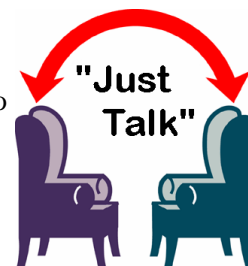
I'll see ya in church, Howard



Did you forget?

Those who would like to order a name tag (notice how many are wearing them on Sundays?) may do so by signing up on the Opportunity Table in the lobby outside Fellowship Hall.

The Men's Cancer Support Group, "Just Talk," invites all men to the 13th Annual Prostate Symposium to be held on Saturday, May 8, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Marriott Quincy Hotel, Quincy, MA. All newly-diagnosed men, survivors, and concerned people are invited — including women.



A group from our church will meet to car pool to Quincy. Breakfast and lunch are included at no charge. Please call Walt Mitchell at 508-540-3287 for more information.

Board of Deacons

In order to enter into the worship service, we observe a time of quiet meditation. The start of this time is signaled by chimes played by organist Pat Crews. We have plenty of time for conversation before this time and after the service during coffee hour. The quiet time is during the prelude which lasts from five to seven minutes, depending on the music. Please respect those who treasure this time of meditation before the service.

May Computer Seminar

Our next Computer Seminar is entitled "Open Forum" and will take place on Thursday, May 27 from 10 to 12 noon in Classroom 1 downstairs. Here's how it works: Sign up for the seminar at the Opportunity Table, then email topics you'd like to see us cover to webmaster@firstcongfalmouth.org by May 18. We'll pick the top 4 or 5 and cover those in the seminar. Only eight slots are available, so don't delay signing up!

Christian Outreach

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10, we will accept offering for Church World Service's **BLANKETS +** program. For more than 60 year, congregations across the United States, in partnership with Church World Service, have been responding to Jesus' call to be neighbors to those in need. At home and around the world, congregations are helping impoverished communities with the basic tools they need to sustain themselves and their families. When disaster strikes, people are helped with blankets, food, shelter and safe water. As the recovery process unfolds, they are given tools, training, and other resources to help them rebuild. Included with this issue is an offering envelope for your donation. Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church and earmarked "Blankets+." Please give generously. Thank you.

Church Council

After opening the meeting with a devotional reading, Moderator Jan Hull called on our minister. Doug began by reviewing the schedule of morning services of worship for the coming months. Included in them are the Confirmation Service for our five confirmands, a guest preacher, Nell Fields, on Mother's Day, and a blended service at the end of May which will include elements of modern music with the traditional service. Commitments for the new hymnal are coming in at a sufficient rate to insure the purchase of the hymnal which will be unique to our church. In closing, Doug expressed the hope that more people would volunteer to be lay readers in our services.

Our Treasurer's report was distributed and reviewed. After speaking of a very successful meeting of the Women's Union and their guest from the Waquoit and Mashpee UCC churches, Barbara Bosselman appealed for help with the Union's rummage sale. John Honey reported on the Board of Deacons continued consideration of having our church become "Open and Affirming." Plans are also moving ahead for implementing a Youth Ministry in our church. The Stewardship Committee has decided that it will undertake an every member canvass this fall seeking support for the ensuing year's budget. The Trustees reported that the exterior of the church has been painted, the switch from oil heat to gas heat has been completed, work is being done to remedy the over-heating problem in the sanctuary, and plans for repairing the clocks in the steeple are in the works.

H. Alfred Allenby, Editor

Online Messenger Supplement

Church Calendar:

Our Church Calendar, for our online readers, is now on our website where it is always up-to-date. [Click here](#) to access the calendar.

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Falmouth, MA 02540
Address correction requested

U. S. POSTAGE PAID
NON-PROFIT ORG.
PERMIT NO. 31
FALMOUTH, MA



Everyone is Welcome!

The Messenger

is published monthly by

The First Congregational Church
of Falmouth, UCC
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Falmouth, MA 02540
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Sunday Schedule

10:00 a.m.
Worship Service
and Church School

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Sexton

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Elected Officials of the Church

Moderator—Jan Hull
Clerk—Marilou Whitmore
Treasurer—Dick Meyer

Board/Committee Chairmen...

Trustees—Walter Slaboden
Deacons—John Honey
Christian Education—
Lise McGillicuddy
Christian Outreach—
Sue Anttila/Carole Lyons
Music—Karin Bohr
Stewardship—John Farrington
Nominating—Evelyn Johnson
Reception—Gretchen Partridge

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.FIRSTCONGFALMOUTH.ORG