



The Beacon

First Congregational Church of Millbury, United Church of Christ

Our Mission: To welcome and inspire ALL through faith, love,
and fellowship according to Christ's example.

Volume 33 Issue 2 • February 2021

Dear Friends,

As of this month, the coronavirus pandemic has been raging among us for a year. It's been a year different from any other in my life. In many ways, I've had to change how I do the things I've always done: going to the supermarket, visiting friends, worshipping God.

Making these changes is difficult, but it makes me realize how much freedom I've always enjoyed: freedom to go where I want to when I want to, freedom to travel by train or plane or car, to meet up with friends in restaurants, to go to movies and plays and concerts. In a strange way, the virus has made me appreciate these things much more.

Growing up in the 1960s, my generation enjoyed unprecedented possibilities in education, expanded opportunities for women, and better health made possible by medicine and improved nutrition. And, of course, the freedom to go where we want to when we want to.

The world into which Jesus was born was dominated by the harsh rule of the Roman Empire. Throughout the gospels we find people prevented by Roman rule from the kind of freedom you and I take for granted. From birth, when his parents were forced to take a long journey so the emperor could collect taxes (Luke 2: 1 – 7), Jesus lived among people who were oppressed at every turn. As Jesus' ministry was picking up steam, his friend John the Baptist was brutally murdered by King Herod (Mark 6: 17 – 29). And Jesus' own earthly life came to a cruel end when he was crucified by the Roman authorities (Matthew 17: 14 – 26).

In his ministry, Jesus helped his followers live with compassion, despite the cruelty of Roman oppression. He urged them to love their enemies (Matthew 6: 43 – 45). He encouraged them to reach out to help the stranger (Luke 9: 25 – 37). He assured them of God's constant love and care (Matthew 6: 25 – 33).

More than that, though, Jesus shows his followers, including you and me, how our lives can become aligned with the larger purposes of God. Healing the sick, bringing sight to the blind, and helping the lame to walk, he demonstrates that health and wholeness are God's intention for all. Urging the woman caught in adultery to go and sin no more, he makes real the forgiving power of God's love for all. In Jesus' glorious resurrection, we see God's desire to bring new life out of death.

Like people all over the world, I am eager to see the end of the pandemic. I pray for the families of all who have died, that they will find peace and new hope. I pray for parents, teachers, young people, and all who work in education, that our schools can soon re-open. I pray for all who have suffered the loss of jobs and businesses. I pray for health care workers and those who distribute the vaccines, and for all who are suffering from the virus.

And, as Lent begins, I pray that even in this awful year, we will sense God's life-giving presence and strengthen our resolve to be part of God's purposes.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Elva



- 10th Mary Mousseau
- 12th Carolyn Ball-Hanson
- 14th Warren Hanson
- 15th Duane Fortin
- 19th Karen Assad
- 19th Bobby Beauregard
- 24th Susan Banach

SNOW CANCELLATION

From Pastor Elva

If a Sunday worship service has to be cancelled because of inclement weather, notice will be put on the answering machine message you hear when you call the church.

Cancellation notice will be posted on WCVB TV Channel 5.



Remember our shut-ins with a note or a card.....

Mr. Jay Stockwell
110 Hartness Road
Sutton, MA 01590

Chris Rudge
8 Carlstrom Lane
Millbury, Ma 01527

Bill Crandell
Care One at Millbury
312 Millbury Ave
Millbury, Ma 01527

Kathleen (Chase) Rozenas
102 Hayden Pond Road
Dudley, MA 01571

Beverly Stockwell
8 Colonial Drive Apt C
Millbury, MA 01527



Prayers & Concerns

- † Our Community
- † Our Country
- † Our World
- † All Military Men and Women
- † All First Responders
- † Our Church and our Ministry in Millbury and beyond
- † Ron Stead's sister in law Kathie Stead
- † Roberta, Sue Witter's sister in law.
- † All who are suffering from COVID 19 and their families
- † Health care workers and essential workers, providing care and support for those with COVID 19.
- † Christine Hamer's brother Bill, in a long term care facility in Pennsylvania
- † Kay Lachance, receiving care at Notre Dame Health Care, Worcester
- † Roland Lachance, receiving care at Westborough Health Care, Westborough
- † Beverly Stockwell, receiving care at CareOne, Millbury



Lenten Study Group to start February 22

Lent is an opportunity to reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross, and what his self-sacrificing love means for our lives and for the world. This group will meet on Zoom, Mondays from 6:00 - 7:00 PM. For further information, please contact Pastor Elva at 413-579-2873, or Pastor.Millbutry1stchurch@gmail.com.

Wedding Joys

We celebrate with Bill and Sue Witter the engagement of their granddaughter, Candace Scanlon, to Matt Mooney. Candace is the daughter of Don and Wendy Scanlon.

We also celebrate with Joan and Hunter Greenwood the engagement of their granddaughter, Casey McMonigle, to Seth Harris. Casey is the daughter of Heidi and Todd McMonigle. Their wedding is planned for June 5 in Kentucky. We hold these young adults in our prayers as they prepare to begin their journeys as husband and wife.



**The Annual Business Meeting of
First Congregational Church of Millbury
will be held in the church sanctuary
on Sunday February 7, 2021,
following the worship service.**

The purpose of this meeting will be to elect church officers, and members of our church ministry teams, approve our budget for 2021, and act on any other business to come before the meeting.

If it is necessary to cancel worship on February 7th due to weather, the meeting will be held following worship on Sunday February 14, 2021.

Deacons Fund

On Communion Sunday at First Church, the first Sunday of the month, the Deacons take a special offering for the Deacons Fund, which is a fund to provide assistance to members in need. Envelopes marked DEACONS FUND are in your bulletin. Donations may also be made using the envelope any other Sunday.

Thank you for your generosity.

*Where your
treasure is,
there will
your heart
be also.
Matt. 6:21*

On Teaching

The Prophet
by Kahlil Gibran

Then said a teacher, "Speak to us of Teaching."

And he said:

No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of our knowledge.

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.

If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.

The astronomer may speak to you of his understanding of space, but he cannot give you his understanding.

The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm nor the voice that echoes it.

And he who is versed in the science of numbers can tell of the regions of weight and measure, but he cannot conduct you thither.

For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.

And even as each one of you stands alone in God's knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth.

First Congregational Church
of Millbury, UCC
148 West Main Street
Millbury, MA 01527

Address Correction Requested

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February



Worship and Church School: 10:00 a.m.
Church Phone: 508-865-9737
Email: Millbury1stChurch@gmail.com
Web: <http://millburyfirstchurch.com>



**Resolve to
make a
difference
in someone's life!**



To add an event, please
email
Millbury1stchurch@gmail.com

Remember to check us out
on Facebook. See all the
photos. It's a great way to
introduce your friends to our
Friendly Church on the Hill.

The Beacon

Deadline for March
newsletter is
February 21st. The BEACON is
distributed by email or first
class mail. It can also be
downloaded from the church
website. Copies are available at
the back of the sanctuary.



2021