



MESSENGER
of the
**First Congregational
Church**
**United Church of Christ
Melrose, Massachusetts**

An Open and Affirming Congregation

*Rev. Dominic Taranowski, Pastor
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Confirmation Questions

On May 2nd we will be celebrating Confirmation Sunday. It is an exciting time for our Confirmands Will Krol-Sinclair, Joe Murphy, Lilah Drafts-Johnson, Madeline Konicek and Charles Arnold who will help share the sacrament of Holy Communion that Sunday as our newest members.

Confirmation Sunday is the culmination of a commitment made by these youth and their parents to a course of study with me in the fundamentals of the Christian faith. Some of this work has been in the form of classroom time while at other times we have been out in the community visiting another faith tradition, working at Bread of Life, walking the Labyrinth or visiting a funeral home. This coming Sunday evening they will be meeting with our Deacons and Trustees to review their time in the Confirmation Class. Each of them also has a sponsor who will be introducing them on Confirmation Sunday.

Confirmation is a Rite in our tradition that is open to any youth beginning in the eight grade. It is a wonderful opportunity for them to claim our faith as their own—on their own terms. Their Statements of Faith, which they will share on Confirmation Sunday, is a reflection of their relationship with God at this time—knowing that everyone’s faith should be constantly evolving as we have lived experiences.

So what is “confirmed” on “Confirmation” Sunday? Two things: We, as a congregation, confirm the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives by means of blessing. Secondly, the Confirmands confirm the work of God begun in them in baptism and confirm their desire to be disciples of Jesus Christ. In other words, it is a reciprocal Rite. We, the gathered people of God, confirm them as adult members of the church and they, the Confirmands, confirm their commitment to God.

As we celebrate Confirmation Sunday, I would encourage you to ask yourself this: Do you feel confirmed in your own commitment to serve God through Jesus Christ in our church. Can you feel and confirm the embrace of the Holy Spirit in your life right now? How can you encourage this presence and this commitment in your life?

Sunday, April 23, 2010
Renewing the Covenant

8:30 AM – Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:00 AM – WORSHIP

and Church School Pre-K – 12

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour, Narthex

11:15 AM – Music Committee Meeting

**7:30 PM – Confirmands and Parents meet with
Deacons and Trustees, Narthex**

*THE FLOWERS are given in loving memory of
Robert Hall and Nicholas and Louise Parisi by Flo Hall.*

DURING THE WEEK

Monday, April 26

7:30 PM – Common Threads at Sallie Klemm’s

Wednesday, April 28

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal, sanctuary

Thursday, April 29

7:00 PM – Shine the Light Melrose

7:00 PM – MHS Poetry Reading Night, sanctuary

Sunday, May 2

Confirmation Sunday

Walk for Hunger

The following groups meet here regularly:

Boy Scouts – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement

Girl Scouts – Sundays at 5:30 PM, Rm. 1 and lounge, Mon. at 7 PM, Rm. 7/8, Wed. at 6PM, Rm.7/8, Fridays 2:30 and 5PM, 7/8

Pre-PAL – 9 11:30 AM – M, T, Th, Fri, Room 7

PAL – 3:00 PM, Room 7/8

Cub Scouts – Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays

Al-Anon – weekdays at 12 noon, Sunday at 1 & 7 PM – Rm. 8

Blue of a Kind – Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Music Room

S.A.R.P. – Tuesdays at 6:30 PM, lounge

A.W.O.L. – Tuesdays at 7:30 PM, 7/8, lounge, Rm. 1

Mothers’ Group meets Wednesdays 9-11 AM, lounge, 1, 7/8

CODA – Wednesdays at 7:30 PM, lounge

Vital Cycles - Thursdays at 7:00 PM, lounge

O.A. – Fridays at 7 PM, lounge

A.A. – Wednesdays at 7:30 PM, Fridays at 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 3:00 PM – Rm. 8

Additionally, what would comprise your own Statement of Faith at this point in your life? How would you identify the nature of God? What is the role of the church for you?

These are just some of the questions these young people have been asked to ponder and they are questions—dynamic, evolving questions—that are well for all of us to re-visit from time to time. Confirmation Sunday is the ideal time to do so.

See you in church,

Rev. Dominic





Marilyn McComas, Anne Wing,
George Burrell, Bud Pendleton,
Barbara Jones, Rayma Sargent
(Anne Wing's sister).



Congratulations to Allison and John Rynak on the birth of their daughter, Katherine Claire, born on Easter Sunday, April 4th. She weighed 8 pounds 2 ounces and was 20.5 inches. Katherine's big brother is Drew.

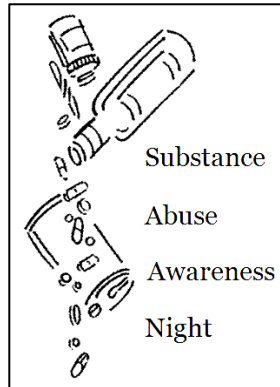


Don't forget to bring your spare change to church on Sundays for the Youth Mission Trip Coin Jar!

Substance Abuse Awareness Night

Thursday, April 22nd at 7:00 PM

First Baptist Church of Melrose (across from City Hall) will be presenting a substance abuse awareness night. There will be a panel of three speakers each sharing their personal experiences with substance abuse. Also, the Melrose Coalition on Substance Abuse will be making a short presentation.



The panel will be made up of:

John Kelly who works as the sexton at First Baptist Church and is also the lead singer of a couple bands. He has a lovely wife, two children, and two grandchildren. John also helps facilitate a 12 step program here at First Congregational, to help him in his alcohol and drug recovery.

Jeff Lavoie who is the Director of Christian Education at First Baptist Church. He has several degrees in theology and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Exeter. Jeff is a recovering heroin addict.

Third panelist TBD



SIGN UP NOW FOR "MEET TO EAT"

One thing our church has always been good at is eating - whether it be celebration cakes in the narthex, bake sales, muffin ministries, or potluck suppers - we turn out to eat!

Well, the Welcome Committee is offering you another wonderful opportunity to get together with church folks to eat. We're calling it "Meet to Eat," and we hope that every single person in our church community will sign up to gather with randomly-assigned fellow parishioners at a host's home to eat and get to know each other better.

We've scheduled 8 times over the weekends of May 14 - 16 and May 21 - 23 when gatherings will take place.

Hopefully one of these times will fit into your schedule. The dates and times are:

Friday evening May 14
Saturday early supper (kid-friendly) May 15
Saturday evening May 15
Sunday afternoon (kid-friendly) May 16

Friday evening, May 21
Saturday early supper (kid-friendly) May 22
Saturday evening May 22
Sunday afternoon brunch (kid-friendly) May 23

There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex, and there will be members of the Welcome Committee roaming the narthex to encourage sign-ups as well. Past years' gatherings of "Nine to Dine" and "Groups for Grub" have been extremely successful and resulted in lasting friendships. This is your opportunity to make connections with people sitting next to you in the pews - connections that just aren't possible in the short fellowship time after worship.

We're hoping for 100% participation! Join the adventure and sign up today! Contact Lisa Oosterman or Rev. Dominic with any questions or if you'd like to be a host.



**Hallmark Health Announces
Annual Stride for Health Walk**

Hallmark Health will host its 3rd annual *Stride for Health* Walk on Sunday, June 6th at 5:00 PM at Lake Quannapowitt in Wakefield. Proceeds will teach valuable CPR and choke-saving skills to high school students in Malden, Medford, Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield. This family-friendly sunset walk will include massage, music, face painting, a "sole" searching scavenger hunt, and a light picnic by the Lake.

To register, volunteer or pledge go to www.hallmarkhealth.org and click on *Stride for Health* or call 781-979-6116. You are also welcome to join the Walk's fan page on Facebook.



**RIM Spring
Flower Sale**

This is your chance to beautify your yard while supporting our Refugee Immigration Ministry clients! Your purchase of a hot pink hanging impatiens plant will go toward our Ugandan client's \$150/month food stipend! If you buy a flat of marigolds, you will be contributing toward our Rwandan client's monthly \$500 rent payment. A six-pack of petunias will help to pay for a client's cell phone minutes which cost us \$15/month. This is our big fund-raiser of the year and we are really in need of money, so if you are not really in need of flowers, consider buying gifts or making a donation. Orders will be taken through Sunday May 2 in the narthex after church. The flowers will be delivered on Sunday May 9, Mother's Day.



THE SALVATION ARMY

Are you interested in learning how we can assist needs in your community?

You are cordially invited to attend an open meeting on May 19, 2010 ay 7:00 PM at the Melrose Public Library, 69 West Emerson St., Melrose.

Robin Longendyke, the local representative from The Salvation Army will be speaking and answering the following questions:

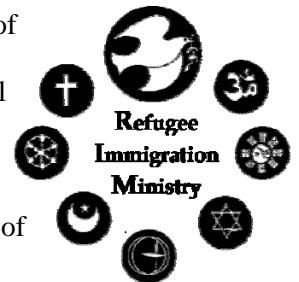
1. What is The Salvation Army?
2. What does The Salvation Army do on a local and international level?
3. What are the needs of your community?
4. How can we partner to serve our own community?

Please come and bring a guest. Everyone is welcome.

Changing Lives

Come to the Concert!

Wednesday May 5 is the day of Refugee Immigration Ministry's annual International Concert at Old South Church in Boston. See the poster on the RIM bulletin board for details; there will be a variety of music from different cultural backgrounds in an impressive historical setting. The proceeds from this concert support the RIM office staff. The money pays for the salaries of the director and the case worker and the volunteer coordinator, all of whom are invaluable to us as a cluster. The daily expenses of running a non-profit organization...paper, printing, phone bills, client emergencies, etc....are high and we hope many of you will attend this event. You will be helping RIM but you will also have a fine evening of music!



Shine the Light Melrose

One evening that could change your life -- or the life of a child

One in four girls, and one in six boys, will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. The only way to change that dismal fact is with awareness and action.

Mayor Robert J. Dolan and the Melrose YMCA invite parents, grandparents, coaches, teachers, volunteers, martial arts instructors, dance instructors, baby sitters, nurses, day care providers, and all Melrose residents to join together in a citywide effort to combat child sexual abuse. Together, they are sponsoring a 2½ hour training provided by Darkness to Light that will teach you

- o How to recognize a potentially abusive situation-before abuse occurs
- o How to help prevent abuse
- o How to minimize opportunities for predators
- o How to talk to children about sexual abuse
- o How to spot the signs that a child is in danger
- o What to do if you suspect a child is being sexually abused
- o How to educate other adults about child sexual abuse

This **FREE** training will take place **Thursday, April 29, at 7 p.m.** at Memorial Hall, 590 Main St., Melrose.

Preregistration is required.

To register online please visit www.melroseyymca.org OR return the bottom of this flyer to the Melrose YMCA by Monday, April 26th.

Training Sponsored By:



City of Melrose



Melrose YMCA

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Are you affiliated with a youth service organization? YES NO

If yes, please list organization: _____