



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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Health Care—A Faith Issue

Reform of our health care system in this country has at last taken center stage. I say “at last” because changes in this area of our common life are long over due.

The reason this issue is often described as a “health care crisis” is because of the devastation that can be wrought in people’s lives when access to health care is unaffordable or even denied. Because of this, it is a deeply personal topic for many people but the ripple effects extend well beyond individual lives. One of the leading causes of personal bankruptcy and home foreclosures in this country is an inability on the part of families to pay medical bills. The cumulative effect of these bankruptcies and foreclosures has greased the wheels of the present, deep recession.

Is this a faith issue? Yes! Christ spent most of his time with the downtrodden and with those who were ill and hurting. As his disciples we are tasked with implementing social systems that attend to those Jesus attended to—creating a culture of equal access to the best society has to offer.

I mentioned in last Sunday’s sermon that it is a misnomer to say, as some theologians do, that we live in a “post-Christian” society. On the contrary, we live in a “pre-Christian” society. It is not that the gospel of equity and justice has been tried and found wanting. It is that the gospel has yet to be tried! When someone loses their home because of medical bills or when someone has to choose between prescription medication and food, we have blatant evidence of our pre-Christian status as a nation. Such circumstances should spur us on to implement the gospel in new and practical ways. Health care reform that provides options for not only the poor but a growing number of middle class families is one step we can take in that direction.

See you in church,

October 4, 2009
Renewing the Covenant
Worldwide Communion Sunday
Food Pantry Sunday

9:00 AM – Senior Choir Rehearsal

10:00 AM – WORSHIP –

and Church School Pre-K – 12

11:15 AM – Coffee Hour, Narthex

11:15 AM - Mission Trip Meeting for Youth

(their Adults are welcome to attend)

We’ll be discussing the upcoming Mission Trip and possible trip locations.

11:30 to 3:30 – Open House at Temple Beth Shalom

THE FRESH FLOWERS are given by Ron, Donna, Michael and Ally Miner in loving memory of parents and grandparents, Robert and Dianne Snyder.

THE SILK FLOWERS are given by Joel and Joan Nordberg in loving memory of her parents, Joseph and Laurie Cussen, and his parents, Pat and Elwyn Nordberg.

DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday, October 6

7:15 PM – RIM meeting, Seminar Room

Wednesday, October 7

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal, sanctuary

Thursday, October 8

7:30 PM – Deacons and Trustees at the Packham’s

Friday, October 9

9 AM – 5 PM - Lifeline Screening – Rm. 7/8

call to pre-register 1-800-679-5192

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 – Wednesdays, 3rd Thursday

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

How good and pleasant to dwell together

Temple Beth Shalom Rededication

Please join our celebration

Rededication Service - Friday, October 2nd at 7:30 PM

Sanctuary (Mezzuzah Hanging) - Community Open House

Sunday, October 4th From 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Nancy Kukura

President

Arnold M. Fertig

Rabbi

21 East Foster Street, Melrose MA



**FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY
October 4, 2009**



Jennie Way, Flo Hall, Kay Bemiss,
Marilyn McComas, Betty Crane
(Rosewood Nursing and rehab
Center, 22 Johnson St., West
Peabody MA 01960), Kate Watson,
Anne Wing, George Burrell, Bud
Pendleton, Barbara Jones.



RIM Flower Bulb Sunday!

Sunday, October 4 is the day to buy bulbs to support our Refugee Immigration clients...all profits will go to paying their rent, giving them a twice-monthly food stipend, paying for minimal cell phone use, and providing transportation to English classes, the hospital, and their lawyer. There will be daffodils, hyacinths, crocuses, narcissus, irises, and a dazzling array of fancy tulips...also amaryllis and paper whites for indoors. If you don't need bulbs yourself, consider giving a gift of bulbs or making a donation!

We are looking for a few people to help move the bulbs from Nancy Toney's house down to the church late Saturday afternoon or evening or early Sunday morning...if you could help, please call Nancy Toney at (781) 665-6588.



MELROSE ALLIANCE AGAINST VIOLENCE

14th Annual Walk and Candlelight Vigil

Step it Up! For MAAV

Sunday, October 25, 2009

Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School

Lynn Fells Parkway in Melrose

3:15 PM – Walk registration

4:00 PM – Candlelight Vigil

4:30 PM – Walk around Ell Pond

Please join us to commemorate the lives of those lost to domestic violence in Massachusetts over the past year and rededicate ourselves to preventing violence in our community.

Want to lead a team from First Congregational?

Call the church office (781-665-2111 or info@fccmelrose.org) and we will help you advertise your team.

Help us raise funds to support MAAV's violence prevention programs.

For more information or to register your team, please call MAAV at 781-662-2010 or visit www.maav.org

Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice will be sponsoring a Bereavement Support Group entitled "Kids and Grief" for kids ages 6-12 who have experienced a loss due to the death of a loved one. The group will meet twice monthly on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at the Franklin School, 14 Franklin St., Melrose from 4:00-5:30 PM. (Parents and Caregivers are invited to attend an Adult Support Group that will meet at the same time in another room.) The first meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 14th. **NO** fee but registration is required. Please call Judy Seifert at 781-338-7861 to register or for more information.