



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

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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Transfiguration

This coming Sunday presents us with one of the most amazing stories from the New Testament. In fact, it is so amazing that church history has assigned it its very own Sunday designation. Next Sunday is Transfiguration Sunday and we will hear the story from the ninth chapter of Luke in which Jesus takes a few trusted disciples up to the top of a mountain and is "Transfigured" before them.

So what does "Transfigure" mean? It means to physically transform. In the story Jesus became dazzling white and there appeared with him two other people: Moses (representing the Hebrew Law) and Elijah (representing the Hebrew Prophets). A cloud envelops the whole scene and the voice of God instructs the disciples to "listen to" Jesus.

This story is so out of the ordinary that it has (enjoyed?) the full spectrum of interpretation. On one extreme are those who say this clearly points to the fact that Jesus had a working relationship with extraterrestrials. On the other end of the continuum are those who postulate that this story highlights the fact that Jesus had no real humanity at all and was instead pure divinity. In the middle are those who say that the story tells us that Jesus is the perfection of God's redemptive plan for humanity-- in Christ is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets and our call, therefore, is to "listen to him."

I think we can do more than "listen" to Jesus. As impossible as it may sound, I think we are also called to emulate Jesus' transfiguration. Well, maybe not in the sense that we become "dazzling white" and surround ourselves with long dead historical figures, but rather in the sense that "transfiguration" was the cornerstone of Jesus' ministry.

In so many ways, we live in a disfigured world. Wars, natural disasters, racism, sexism, economic injustice, anger in political dialog are just a few examples of disfiguration in our world today. As evolved as we'd like to think ourselves to be, many of these elements remain unchanged from the time of Jesus himself. His ministry, his very being, sought to transfigure the world and those in it; from woundedness to health. He brought a message



Sunday, February 14, 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

*THE FLOWERS are given by Alice Johnson
in loving memory of her twin sister Ethel Rufener.*

DURING THE WEEK

Wednesday, February 17 – ASH WEDNESDAY

6:00 PM – Pancake Supper, Narthex

7:00 PM – Worship Service, Sanctuary

8:00 PM – Bell Rehearsal, Sanctuary

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

that should cause us to trade in despair for hope and violence for a new way of social betterment and equality. His ministry of physical healing exemplifies his holistic vision for our lives and our world.

As his followers, we are to be about the work of transfiguration. We are, first of all, to exchange our own sullen disfigurations for transfigured, optimistic ones. We then are to go out and aid others in doing the same-- personally and socially. In this way, the kingdom of God is revealed.

May our church always be a vehicle for the transfiguring work of Christ in our midst.

See you in church,

Dominic



Suzanne Hampson (infant daughter of Dan and Beth Hampson), Jennie Way, Marilyn McComas (Essex Park Rehab, Beverly MA), Betty Crane, Kate Watson, Anne Wing, George Burrell, Bud Pendleton, Barbara Jones.



The Giving Tree

Have you ever wondered how to get more involved in our Church and did not know where to start?

Do you have a passion you would like to share in support of our growing Church?

Please stop by and pick your passion off of our Giving

Tree in the Narthex.

Each shape on the tree clearly identifies an area where your help is needed and a contact person to follow-up with for further details.

Special thanks to our Sunday School K - 5th who worked hard to build our tree.

Timothy 6:18: "Be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share."

To add additional requests to our tree please contact Maura or Brian Packham 781-665-2305.

Celebrating Black History Month at FCC - February 2010

In honor of Black History Month, the service music selections will include Gospel songs and spirituals in the New Century Hymnal, as well as from other sources.



The celebration of 'gospel music' is to recognize the importance of this once grass-roots American style of music which, through cultural infusion, has made a distinct impact on the American music scene throughout history. Generally distinguished by the biblical and spiritual texts, unique ornamentation and high stylization signature points, gospel music has greatly expanded the boundaries of sacred music.

The Congregational Church has historically played a large role in the support of Black Americans (i.e., the defense of the *Amistad* Africans by John Quincy Adams was financially supported by many church-based abolitionist groups).

This is your invitation to celebrate Gospel music - a true American musical idiom.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
FEBRUARY 17TH
First Congregational
(Joint Service with Highlands Congregational and United Methodist)

6:00 PM – Pancake Supper
7:00 PM Worship Service



GOSPEL ORIGINS—A LENTEN JOURNEY

Rev. Dominic will be leading adult education classes following worship during four Sundays in Lent: February 28th, March 7th, March 14th, and March 21st. All are welcome!



Bread of Life

Our church serves a meal at Bread of Life on the second Tuesday of each month. This takes place at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Malden and work begins around 4:00 p.m. Paul and Barbara Sinisgalli graciously head up this effort on behalf of our church and you have probably heard or read announcements about this important ministry. In case you are new to our church or were wondering about Bread of Life as an organization, here is some background:

Bread of Life is a faith-based organization of 35 partner churches, synagogues, high schools, businesses and community groups from north metro Boston. It offers free food to hungry, homeless and isolated people in the community through its dinners, held four nights a week, emergency food pantry, grocery delivery to seniors in public housing, and motel meals program for homeless families. Bread of Life is one of the top purchasers and distributors of food at the Greater Boston Food Bank. In 2009, Bread of Life distributed the equivalent of 408,800 free meals—a 20% increase over 2008. Bread of Life also works with local agencies to provide local low-income residents with free health care, furniture, clothing, housewares, referrals and advocacy. First Congregational Church is proud to be a part of this inspiring ministry of compassion.

Welcome to our newest members who joined our congregation on January 31:



John and Heidi Buser

Heidi grew up in Pepperell and works in finance at Metabolix, a very environmentally-friendly Cambridge company that makes biodegradable plastic products. Heidi was

baptized in the Catholic faith and was raised in that faith in her early years; then when she went to live with her dad she attended a Protestant church.

Before their daughter Grace was born two years ago, John was a chemist, but he put that career on hold to become a stay-at-home dad with Grace. He gets support from a local group of stay-at-home dads that meets regularly and often arranges play dates among the group, when he's not taking Grace to the Y for gymnastics and swimming or managing the household. John's grandparents were Swiss, and he grew up in the German Reformed tradition in New Jersey.

Heidi and John met through a mutual friend and were married in the Pilgrim UCC Church in Lexington, which they liked a lot. But after moving from Malden to Melrose 4 years ago they wanted to find a closer church, and luckily their search ended here with us.

Candy Brower and Jim Sugrue



Rynak Family John and Allison

have lived in Melrose for the last 7 years. Their 17 month old son, Drew, is a very happy, active, little toddler that loves giving goodnight kisses to their yellow Labrador,

Chloe, and keeps his parents very busy. The Rynaks are expecting a daughter this April. John hails from Chicago. He owns his own business doing human resources consulting for biotech companies. He practices Judo. He also enjoys the lost art of Pond Hockey. He's got a hockey tournament coming up in New Hampshire on Lake Winnepesaukee. He's also been known to try his hand at making beer and hard cider with mixed results. Allison grew up in North Andover. She has a career in public relations and marketing and works at GSN/WorldWinner in Newton. Last year Allison ran the Melrose Road Race but for some reason thinks she won't be running it this year. Instead, she is currently enjoying pre-natal yoga classes.

Kara Larzelere



Erika Rheume comes to our church after growing up in a Congregational church and she was very active in her church through high school. After her first visit here, she immediately felt that she had found her new church home. Erika is originally from Rhode Island, went to college at the

University of Vermont, and came to the Boston area after college. She and her husband Brian, a Saugus native, now live here in Melrose. Erika is in the event planning business, currently with Wolfgang Puck at the Museum of Science. Prior to that she worked with the Odyssey and Spirit of Boston. Given her experience in event planning, she is eager to start helping with some of the events we hold here at First Congregational Church. Erika and her husband enjoy skiing, hiking, and camping. They have 2 cats and plan to add a puppy to the family in a few months.

Sherri Towle



It is my distinct pleasure to introduce you to **Nyasha Pfwkwa**. Nyasha was born in Zimbabwe and came to Maine for her senior year in high school as part of an exchange program. Her host family, Dexter and Gretchen Kamilewicz, are

former members of this church and welcomed my family almost 30 years ago. It was with their encouragement that Nyasha found her way to First Church and as she explained to me "it felt right".

Nyasha's senior year in high school transitioned into college at Colby where she received a Bachelor's Degree in English and Anthropology, then on to Lesley College where she received a Masters degree in International Development. She is currently living in Winthrop and working in Arlington as a development coordinator for the Germaine Lawrence School, which is a 96 bed residential program for girls 11-19 who are in crisis. Nyasha is currently working on the school's 30th anniversary celebration.

Nyasha is truly blessed to have a very supportive family structure: her parents and 5 siblings in Zimbabwe and her parents and 4 siblings in Maine.

So please join me in welcoming to the First Church family, Nyasha Pfwkwa.

Ann Ahlin



Many of you have seen or met **Bill Chetwynd**, since he and his wife Joan have been among us for a number of years. Bill grew up in Wakefield, and served in the armed forces in both Korea and in Vietnam. He and Joan have been married for 27 years, and enjoy summers at their cottage in Ocean Park, Maine. Bill was baptized at the 1st Baptist Church in Melrose, and then

attended the Greenwood Union Church, the 1st Baptist Church in Wakefield and then back to the 1st Baptist Church in Melrose. He has served on two pastoral search committees, taught Sunday school, led youth groups, and has also served as a Deacon and Moderator. Bill and Joan currently serve as our church's Co-Deacons of Spiritual Care. They started our *Card Ministry* and are trying to jump-start the *Reach Out and Touch* program. Bill is very involved in activities in Wakefield and is frequently read about in the local paper for all of his volunteerism!

Jim Oosterman



John and Megan McGrath with Ian

John and Megan met at a mutual friend's party after both attended Bates College. John is a Compound Manager at the Broad Institute and Megan works for Harvard University as an Events Planner. Their infant son, Ian keeps them on their toes and is a joy. They both enjoy running, traveling and are avid Celtics fans. They are looking forward to finding ways to use their time and talents to give back to the community through their involvement in the church. Please welcome John, Meghan and Ian McGrath!

Brian Packham



...HOW WIDE AND LONG
AND HIGH AND DEEP
IS THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

EPHESIANS 3:18, NIV

**WARRANT FOR THE WINTER
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OF
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH in
MELROSE, UCC
February 21, 2010**

To the Members of the First Congregational Church in Melrose, United Church of Christ:

In accordance with the by-laws, there will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, February 21, 2010 immediately following the worship service to receive and act upon the following Articles:

- Article 1: To receive and act upon the Clerk's Report for the calendar year 2009;
- Article 2: To receive and act upon the Treasurer's Report for the calendar year 2009;
- Article 3: To adopt a budget for calendar year 2010;
- Article 4: To transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

James Oosterman,
Co-Trustee of Human Resources and Congregational Records/Clerk



Help with TV for Will
Refugee Immigration
Ministry client Will now has
TV and the necessary
box...could anyone donate half an hour to go over and
connect them? Please call Nancy Toney at (781) 665-
6588.

Refugee Update

Our refugee families are beginning to arrive. One family, a couple with a two-year-old, will arrive the last week of February. Another family of Iraqi Christians, parents with two daughters (I don't know the age yet) and two grandparents, will arrive on March 3...if anyone has donations of furniture, kitchen stuff, winter 2-year-old girl's clothes, adult or children's clothing, toys...really anything to help them get settled...please call Nancy Toney at (781) 665-6588 or email me at toneybn@gmail.com. I will be away during the school vacation beginning Saturday but will check my email and connect with people who will contact you about your donations.

THINKING OF LENT

Advent prepares us for Christ's birth; Lent prepares us for the glorious act of Christ's resurrection. Churches have special services during the weeks of Lent, but it's what each of us does regarding our spiritual life that makes Lent most meaningful.

Lent is a good time to read, study and inwardly digest the four gospels. (The word gospel means "good news.")

A college student decided to work his way through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for his Lenten devotional time. Soon he was fascinated by the stories, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees trying to trap Jesus in debate. The brilliant Jesus handled every occasion with wisdom, leaving the authorities dumbfounded.

During his devotional time, the student was filled with laughter and amazement at the brilliant son of God, who was only in his 30s. Get to know the good news, and you'll understand the young man's amazement.

Just for KIDS

Our first love

In Deuteronomy 10:12 (NIV), Israel is asked a question that's also for us to answer: "What does the LORD your God ask of you?"

To find the answer, write the words from the puzzle pieces on the matching shapes in the completed heart.

... your heart and with all your soul ..."

Answer: " ... fear the LORD ... to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all ... "

* A JAR OF * Love and Appreciation



Sometimes we forget to show love and appreciation to people who are closest to us. Use this fun craft to let everyone in your family know how much you care.

What you need:

- Plastic jar with lid
- Heart-shaped foam pieces
- Heart-shaped stickers
- Glue
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Pencil or crayons

What you do:

1. Decorate the jar and lid with heart-shaped foam pieces and stickers.
2. Cut out 2" or 3" heart shapes from the construction paper.
3. On each paper heart, write what you appreciate and love about your family and each member. Have all family members do this, too.
4. Place the heart messages inside the jar. Fold them in half, if necessary.
5. On each day in February, pull out one heart and read the message aloud to the family.
6. Notice the changes in your family when everyone feels loved and appreciated!



100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT

Lord Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941) was a lieutenant-general in the British Army who loved hiking and camping in the wilderness. He wrote a small handbook for soldiers called *Aids to Scouting*. It became so popular among teachers and youth leaders that he rewrote it with young people in mind. *Scouting for Boys* was immediately a best seller and led to the establishment of many Boy Scout groups in England.

Soon afterward, scouting groups began popping up across America. Churches were so supportive of the movement's values that many churches sponsored Scout troops — and still do.

The official beginning of Scouting in America was February 8, 1910. Each year, many churches recognize their Scouts on the Sunday before February 8. (We were honored to have our scouts here to help lead the worship service last Sunday, February 7.)

The leaders of Boy Scouts of America have designated September 1, 2009, through December 31, 2010 as "A Year of Celebration." The year's highlight will be Jamboree 2010 (July 26–August 4, 2010), which promises to be the largest celebration of Scouting in America. More than 43,000 scouts and leaders are expected to attend the event at Fort A.P. Hill, a 76,000-acre camp outside Washington, D.C.



100 YEARS
OF
SCOUTING
1910-2010