



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

*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

*Rev. Dominic Taranowski, Pastor*

**OFFICE 781-665-2111 - FAX 781-665-8824**

**E-MAIL [info@fccmelrose.org](mailto:info@fccmelrose.org) Website [www.fccmelrose.org](http://www.fccmelrose.org)**

**Cell phone: 781-526-3428**

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**A False Division**

“I will give until it hurts,” said a parishioner to his pastor as a pledge campaign got underway. “But you should know that I am very sensitive to pain.”

It’s an old joke, but still a good one. Actually, probably not such a good one in the end because it presumes that making a generous donation to the church will hurt. The truth of the matter is that all giving to the ministry of Christ should be done joyfully—as an expression of our gratitude to God for the many blessings in our lives and to enhance the good work that the church undertakes.

There are those who dread our annual Fall Financial Pledge Campaign because it means “all this talk about money in church”—all this pressure to give and give more. Believe me, I can understand and I am confident that the Finance Committee understands too. If there were a means of securing pledges and developing the church budget without this process we would gladly embrace it! The truth is, however, that we should view the pledge process not only as a structural necessity but also as a spiritual opportunity.

The division that many people place between a discussion of money and their faith is an artificial one. As I’ve mentioned before, according to the gospels, Jesus spent more time talking about money and its proper place in our lives than any other topic. If he were physically teaching among us today he would probably do the same. In that sense, the church is the best possible venue for discussing money.

We tend to think of money as a means to an end. Especially today, when our personal finances may be less than solid, we easily view money as THE source of our security. The more we have, the greater our security. The less we have, the less our security and the more likely it is that we might find ourselves in a perilous predicament. This, in actuality, is not that far removed from the view of money in Jesus’ day.

To balance this view, Jesus message was simple: Money is first and foremost a tool for expressing one’s discipleship. True security is found in God, not in material wealth. And, to top things off, money is a great means of discovering the miracle of personal blessing through generosity. That is, as backward as it sounds, a generous person is in the end the wealthiest one of all.

**Sunday, October 25, 2009**

*Renewing the Covenant*

**9:00 AM – Youth Groups set up for Halloween Party**

**9:00 AM – Senior Choir Rehearsal**

**10:00 AM – WORSHIP – with guest preacher, Rev. June Cooper, Director of the City Mission Society and Church School Pre-K – 12**

**11:15 AM – Coffee Hour, Narthex**

**11:30-1:00 PM – Halloween Party**

*THE FLOWERS on the communion table are given in memory of loved ones by Robert Hughes.*

*THE FLOWERS are given in loving memory of Sandra Batting Bray and Elaine Gould Batting by Ann Batting Ahlin.*

**DURING THE WEEK**

**Monday, October 26**

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

**Wednesday, October 28**

7:15 PM – Bells Rehearsal, sanctuary

**Thursday, October 29**

7:00 PM – Senior Choir Rehearsal, Music Room

**Saturday, October 31**

**Daylight Savings Time Ends**

**– Turn your clocks BACK**

**Sunday, November 1**

Immediately following worship.

Youth Meeting for those interested in Mission Trip. Bring **specific** ideas about possible trip locations, including cost. Adults welcome!

11:15 AM – Winter Wonderland Fair meeting. lounge



**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, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

This is the message we proclaim at First Congregational as well. Your pledge for 2010 will be something you decide with your family and God. It is when you consult with God that things can start to percolate in your soul as you assess the place of things spiritual in your life.

See you in church,

*Dominic*



Jennie Way, Flo Hall, Kay Bemiss,  
Marilyn McComas, Betty Crane,  
Kate Watson, Anne Wing, George  
Burrell, Bud Pendleton, Barbara  
Jones.

### Reach out and Touch Meeting

We began this program in the late spring, and then the peace and rest of the summer came. Now is the time to review where we are at, where we think we should go and then begin planning to get there. We would like to invite everyone interested in reaching out to those members of our church family who are not able to be with us on Sunday mornings to join us for a conversation. The basis of the conversation is to develop a program where we make sure they know we are thinking of them by reaching out to them.

If you are already a part of this ministry, if you think you might want to become a part of this ministry or if you just have some good thoughts you would like to share about this ministry then we would like you to sit with us this Sunday after church and share a discussion about where we can go with this ministry.

Thank you and we look forward to your being part of this discussion.



### LOOK WHAT'S COMING!.....SOON!

What: Winter Wonderland Fair  
Where: First Congregational Church  
When: Friday, Dec. 4, 6-9pm  
Saturday, Dec. 5, 9am-2pm  
Who: The entire congregation and wider community are invited.  
How to get involved: Come to the next planning meeting. Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> in the Lounge.

### Guest Preacher

This Sunday, October 25, we are pleased to welcome **Rev. June Cooper** to the pulpit to share the sermon time during worship. Rev. Cooper is the Director of the City Mission Society, the Boston based mission arm of the the Metropolitan Boston Association of the United Church of Christ of which we are a part. In keeping with this year's program theme of "Renewing the Covenant", it is our hope to renew our ties to this vital organization which does so much important outreach work in our area. June has a wonderful preaching style so be sure to join us this Sunday!



**Guest Preacher**



### 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.

For more information or to register a, please call MAAV at 781-662-2010 or visit [www.maaav.org](http://www.maaav.org)



# It's Pledge Time

## Our Pledge Campaign Begins

Autumn is here and so begins our church's annual stewardship campaign. This is the start of a process that ends at our winter congregational meeting in February when all of you as members vote to approve the First Congregational Church of Melrose budget for 2010. February is a long way off. But today is the day we should all start to think about our pledge commitment for next year.

Pledge commitments are perhaps the most important part of the budget process because they represent three-quarters of our church's income. It is a very significant way that we all participate in the success of this church. Because this is so essential, you will be seeing and hearing more about the stewardship campaign for the next 6 weeks leading up to Commitment Sunday on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Remember that date: November 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

Each year the UCC suggests a stewardship theme. Its purpose is to frame the appropriate context for our financial commitment to the church. This year's theme is from this scripture (John 1:16): *From Jesus' Fullness We Have All Received, Grace upon Grace.* You'll see a poster of this in the narthex. On that poster you'll see pictures of loaves of bread, recalling the story of when Jesus challenged his disciples to feed the multitude with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.

This theme is quite appropriate for 2009 – which is widely accepted to be the worst economic year since the Great Depression. All of us can relate to this idea of a multitude of need, with little bread. Yet as the story goes, God multiplies. God does not run a deficit. God won't need a bail out. God is not broke. So therein lies our own challenge.

Let me tell you what you can expect during the next few weeks.

- First, brave members of the congregation will take turns to share their personal stewardship messages during worship. These messages will be printed in the weekly Messenger.
- Starting in November, there will be a Stewardship table staffed in the narthex both before and after worship where you can get information about the state of our church's finances, the status of your 2009 giving, and the Vanco e-giving program. Or to ask any other related questions.
- Finally, in mid-November, you'll receive a letter with more information and a 2010 pledge card which we'll ask you to bring to worship on (remember the date?) November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Thanks for your kind attention. I'm looking forward to a successful stewardship campaign!

Ed Arnold  
Co-Trustee of Finance Ministry

### ***RIM International Dinner***

On Sunday, November 1, Refugee Immigration Ministry will hold its annual dinner at Anthony's restaurant in Malden. This is a chance to talk with our present and past clients as well as meet members of other clusters and their clients. There will be a silent auction and a chance to find out more about what the greater RIM organization is doing. We would love to have a table of people from our church attend, as we did last year. Please see Bill Chetwynd or Nancy Toney for tickets or call Nancy Toney at (781) 665-6588.



### ***New Clients***

Our cluster of Refugee Immigration Ministry has taken on a new Congolese family, the Bilimos, as clients. The head of the family is the oldest sister, Sandra, who is twenty-one. She is guardian to her younger brother Nathan, 12, and sister Ruth, 10. Their parents are missing and Sandra has had to take on the responsibility of the family. They have been living in Topsfield with another cluster but have recently moved to Malden. They already have their asylum so we will not need to support them financially but they need our support and community. Sandra is attending a certificate program to become a nurse's assistant and the younger kids are in school. We are particularly interested in identifying people with children of the same age who would be willing to invite them over, take them on excursions and connect them with kid-friendly activities in Malden, but all of us can help make them feel welcome.



**SUNDAY,  
OCTOBER 25  
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

The Youth Groups will be hosting a Halloween Party for the younger children after worship on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.

Youth Groups will arrive at 9:00 AM to set up for the party.

**Young children are invited to wear their costumes to church.** Come and enjoy the fun!



**More Youth Group Dates to put on your calendar:**

(Parents: be sure to mark these dates as well)

**November 1**, immediately following worship. Youth Meeting for those interested in Mission Trip. Bring **specific** ideas about possible trip locations, including cost. Adults welcome!

**November 8<sup>th</sup> - Shareholder's Dinner**

**December 5<sup>th</sup> - Holiday Fair** - possibly hot chocolate station

**December 20<sup>th</sup> - right after worship - Christmas party** in library