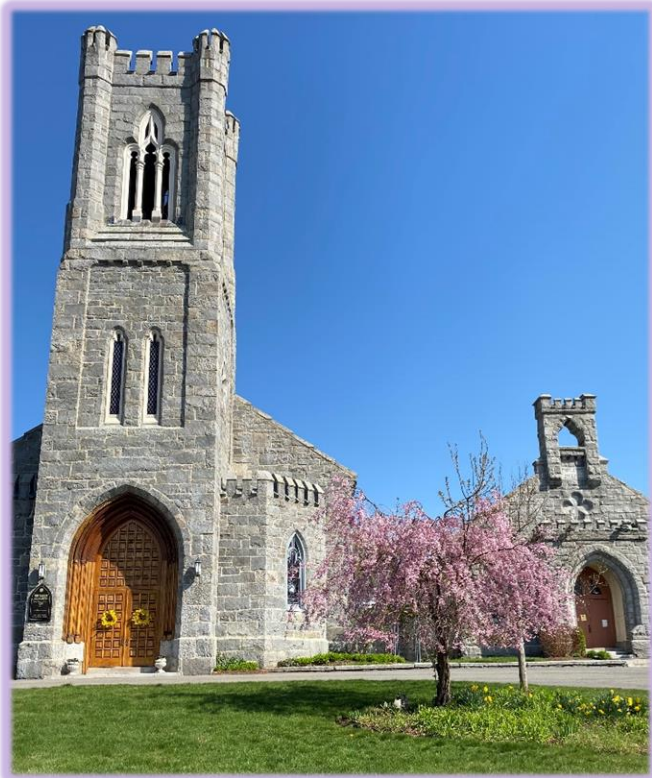


April 2025



THE BEACON



First Church Congregational

United Church of Christ

26 Pleasant Street

Methuen, MA 01844-3199

Telephone: (978) 687-1240

Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers-Brigham, Senior Pastor

amrogersbrigham@gmail.com

Roberta Jurovich, Office Manager

firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com

Mike Boutin, Minister of Music

boutinerjr@gmail.com

www.firstchurchmethuen.com

Worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM



Minister's Message

Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers-Brigham

Dear members and friends of First Church,

We enter April days with Lenten prayers and thoughts of Easter "alleluias" to come mid-month. Planning and anticipation are a big part of me, yet I am glad to be in the moment, as I write to you, grateful for the "moments" that unfold here at First Church in our gatherings for worship, programs, meetings, outreach and warm fellowship. It is exciting to hear conversation around growing our church and preparing for your search for a settled minister. It is wonderful to see you planting seeds and watching them grow!

Lent and Holy Week will certainly keep us "in the moment." As we go through Lenten days leading up to Holy Week, our prayers are that we look around and appreciate ways we can name joys and sorrows, celebrations and longings. Recently, a cousin from Arizona called me to share about our family in the Phoenix area where he lives. I spent my young life in Arizona with extended family members and I have continued to have close contact.

I was so glad to talk with my cousin, a dear friend, but sad as he shared about other family members there who struggle with growing older and facing declining health and limited mobility. His call made me remember times long ago when our families gathered for family reunions in the high desert plains of the family ranch near Young, Arizona, surrounded by a big sky and dark starry nights. Faces of loved ones are still imprinted on my soul; then, all the world was joy, with laughter and hugs and tears flowing among us.

We were in the moment and that was pure joy! My family continues to be “in the moment” as we now move to support one another in grief, in remembrance or in shared concerns about our lives. This is not just the story of my small family, but it is the story of the church family across generations, isn’t it? Here at First Church, we hope we may use this interim time to look back and be grateful for all those who have actively kept our church united and strong in God’s Spirit. We pray we may be in “our” moments and experience pure joy!

Yes, the years move us to appreciate those times of gathering and support at every stage of life. One of my joys in being your interim minister has been hearing about people who have been part of First Church through the years. We hope First Church will continue to be that place where we can reflect on the past and move into the future with confidence remembering that “moments” matter, long ago or today. What is your experience of “moments” with family or friends, even a church family, when you knew, you were closely connected to God and to one another? Is it good for us to look back and look ahead, knowing that God is walking with us through every part of life, the comings and goings, the new and old.

It is not easy to be the church these days with so many other interests in life taking us away from our commitment to let our faith family be a priority in our lives. We are grateful we may encourage and support one another in our good efforts. I believe our faith helps us to do this as we appreciate memories we hold dear while moving on to where we need to go. If there is any message for Easter, this is it! How exciting to be part of a future unfolding here at First Church! We yearn to be Easter people which means, when the “alleluias” are sung and the new day of resurrection comes, we will say “thank you, God” for this moment in time, for our friends in faith, and for our work together to be the church, now and going forward.

Let me close these thoughts with a poem by Ross Gay about life and its joys and promptings to look up and down and around and say “Thank You!”

*If you find yourself half naked
and barefoot in the frosty grass, hearing,
again, the earth's great, sonorous moan that says
you are the air of the now and gone, that says
all you love will turn to dust,
and will meet you there, do not
raise your fist. Do not raise
your small voice against it. And do not
take cover. Instead, curl your toes
into the grass, watch the cloud
ascending from your lips. Walk
through the garden's dormant splendor.
Say only, thank you.
Thank you.*

~ Ross Gay, "Thank You" from AGAINST WHICH

We say “thank you” for this season of budding, sprouting, new birth; truly, it seems our faith allows us to see, smell and touch the miraculous. May we create a life that is aware that we are Easter people, and we have daily invitations to open our eyes, our hearts, or souls to God’s promise to be with us. We have invitation to be “in the moment.” May Psalm 65 give us words for our hearts full of praise:

*In the desert flowers come forth,
the pastures flourish with
fruit and grain;
Creation's diversity is glorious!
May all people honor these gifts
with joyful song
while walking the path of Love.*

~ Nan Merrill from her interpretation of "Psalm 65" in *PSALMS FOR PRAYING*

I continue to thank you for your support of our mutual ministry during this interim time. Don't forget to email, call or text if you need my support.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Dr. Ann Rogers Brigham

* * * * *

Rev. Ann Rogers Brigham will be on Study Leave and Vacation March 22nd - April 4th

Rev. Ann had the opportunity to fly to Northern Ireland to attend The Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DpC) Training, a four-day immersive experience designed to provide participants with practical tools for managing and transforming conflict. It was held at Corrymeela’s Ballycastle Centre, Northern Ireland. Keep her in your prayers while she travels for study and takes some vacation time. Please contact a Deacon or the church office if you are in need of emergency pastoral care while she is away.



* * * * *



A Meal (Breakfast) with Ann

2ND Wednesdays at 8:00 AM

at Ellie’s Farmhouse Restaurant, 436 Broadway, Methuen

Join Rev. Ann and other members/friends of First Church for some good food and conversation. They will next meet on Wednesday, April 9th. And, as always, it’s “dutch treat”.



Sunday Worship

10:00 AM

We hope you will join us!

We like to see you in the congregation on Sunday mornings, but for those who cannot attend in person, worship will be broadcast each Sunday, at 10:00 AM, on Facebook Live (www.facebook.com/FirstChurchMethuen) and posted after the service on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/channel/UCfLSjhXs9UG8yC89aB8evrA). The service can be viewed at any time on either platform.

An Order of Worship will be emailed each Friday before the service. If you do not receive this email, please let the church office know at firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com.

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2025 Lenten Services

at

First Church Congregational

United Church of Christ

Sunday, April 13th:

10:00 AM – *Palm Sunday* ~ Music Cantata, Children/Youth are invited to join a “Palm Parade” in the Sanctuary.

Thursday, April 17th:

7:00 PM – *Maundy Thursday* ~ Communion and Reading of Passion with Music Responses.

Sunday, April 20th:

10:00 AM – *Easter Sunday* ~ A Joyous Celebration!





2025 Easter Giving



If you would like to donate and/or order a plant for Easter, please use this form and return it to the church office by **Sunday, April 6th**. Please note: We will need time to order the plants. All donations and orders received by this deadline will be listed in the "Easter Giving" bulletin pages.

Plant Order

All Easter plants at **\$18.00 per plant**, please indicate quantity below:

Easter Lily _____*
(white lily)

Tulip _____*

Mona Lisa Lily _____*
(pink & white lily)

Please print

Given in Loving Memory of _____

In Celebration/Honor of _____
(circle choice)

Given by _____

**After the Easter service, all plants will be delivered to a homebound member or friend of the church*

Donation

BUILDING MAINTENANCE _____ OPERATING EXPENSE _____

ORGAN RESTORATION _____ OUTREACH _____

OTHER _____

Please print

Given in Loving Memory of _____

In Celebration/Honor of _____
(circle choice)

Given by _____

Please make check payable to: *First Church Congregational ("Easter Giving" in memo)*

Thank you and Happy Easter!

Confirmation Study for Youth



Confirmation education is presently taking place on Sundays after worship. We have five students attending classes: John Pavlenkov (Mentor: Mike Boutin), Andrew Pavlenkov (Mentor: Scott Sanborn), Bella Bane (Mentor: Judi Boyko), Haleigh Sanborn (Mentor: Allan Barlow) and Alexis Murray (Mentor: Sarah Pavlenkov).

Sunday, June 1st – Confirmation is planned for John Pavlenkov, a graduating senior. The other students will spend a longer time in study.

Study dates: March 30th (Led by Josh Ferry and Mentors for youth), April 6th (Mentors attend) April 27th, May 4th. Students will be attending worship and taking parts in service. We are planning a field trip on Saturday, April 12th, to Saint Theresa Roman Catholic Church, 22 Plymouth St, Methuen. Rev. Gregory Vozzo is glad to welcome us to the 4 p.m. service. Parents and Mentors (and other church members/friends) are welcome to go us. We'll meet at 3:45 PM at church. Judi and Steve Boyko have invited us to their home after the service for pizza and conversation. Also confirmands, you will attend the Annual Meeting on May 18th after worship.

Please express your support to our youth in confirmation and ask them about their studies! We keep them in our prayers as they prepare for affirmation of baptism and church membership.

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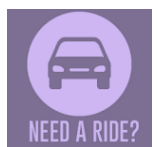
We Welcome You to Church Membership

If you are interested in becoming a member of First Church, please contact one of our deacons or speak to Rev. Ann. We have member registration forms available. We are hoping to welcome new members on Sunday, May 18th. A member orientation will be arranged for you. We hope you'll consider becoming a full member, associate member or friend of First Church!

* * * * *

Need a Ride to an Evening Service?

Do you no longer drive at night, but would like to attend our ***Maundy Thursday Service*** on April 17th? The service begins at 7:00 PM.



If so, please contact a Deacon or Rev. Ann and we will arrange transportation for you to join us.

We look forward to seeing you!

Prayer Requests/List

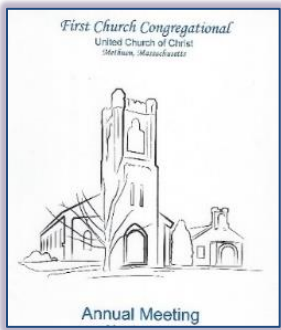
We print a Prayer List in the Sunday worship bulletin. To have someone included on the bulletin prayer list, please let Roberta, in the Church Office, know at 978-687-1240 or firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com. No request is too big or too small! Thank you.



If you, or someone you know, is in need of a pastoral visit, please contact Rev. Ingraham at pastor.bill.ingraham@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

* * * * *

Annual Reports are Due



All Committees should submit their annual report to the Church Office **by Monday, April 1st**. If it is not received, it may not be included in the 2024-25 Annual Report. Please contact Roberta at 978-687-1240, if there is any issue. You can submit your report electronically to firstchurch.roberta@gmail.com.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 18th.

Thank you for your cooperation!

* * * * *

Sound System Upgrades

As you have probably heard, we are experiencing a number of issues with our sound system. Our audio/visual contractor is recommending substantial upgrades to replace all microphones and assisted listening devices, the sound board, and our computer. While we are still working on finalizing the quote, it appears that these upgrades will cost us at least \$30,000. Once we raise funds for the new system, we expect it will take 6-8 weeks to get it installed.

Please see Steve Boyko or Stacey Murray if you are in a position to help or if you have any questions about the upgrades.

If you would like to give electronically, please scan the QR code below.

Thank you.



The Sacrament of Baptism

will be celebrated in worship on April 27th!



Sacrament of Baptism for Natalie Kathryn Feldman

Born: 5/2/23

Natalie's Family: Elizabeth & Jarrod Feldman

Godparents: Crystal Meucci & Eric Feldman

* * * * *

Prayer for Spring Blessing

Friends, may you give your hope room to breathe and expand.

May your anticipated dreams find a voice and a home in your life.

May hope move freely through your heart, gifting your spirit with enthusiasm and joy.

*May you walk through spring storms with a strong sense of purpose,
undaunted by fear.*

May you never lose confidence in your ability to grow.

*May your hope stream outward to the world, dancing in the far realms like a feather
floating in an April breeze, bringing joy to all who need it.*

*May Christ be our mentor for hope. May "Spring," birth mother of greening,
cheer us on!*

(from *The Circle of Life*, p. 102, adapted)

From the Chair of the Church Board...

Spring is here! Lent is here! The celebration of the resurrection is here! What a wonderful and glorious time here at First Church. Sure... as T.S. Eliot said, "April is the cruelest month". However, we will have warm service and fellowship, an amazing choir and worship experience, and Rev. Ann is back from her educational trip. So come to worship, in person or virtually, and enjoy all that the sanctuary has to offer.

As always, we have plenty more going on, including:

- We have begun the search process for our next settled pastor. The team has been created and work is progressing on drafting our church's profile, working with the UCC, and interviewing potential candidates. The committee is meeting virtually and physically, and they are working at a rapid pace to build our future
- There is a lot of work going on with our A/V system to make the service more accessible with hearing assistance devices and other upgrades. It is a large endeavor to upgrade our ailing equipment, so if you'd like to help – financially or physically – please let me know.
- Our Outreach group is hard at work with numerous efforts. Last month, the diaper drive provided a much-needed product for our community. A sincere thank you to all who helped out with time, talent, and treasure. More is being planned and there are a ton of other ways to give for the winter season, so please read further to find out how you can help. Between all these focused projects and our continuing food pantry, helping so many in our community, there are numerous ways to make an impact.
- The Chapel School is stronger than ever, and the teachers and children are filling our parish halls with a joyful noise! Enrollment is starting for the 2025-2026 school year, so if there is a family that may need our services, I invite you to connect them with Gina or Roberta as tours are happening regularly.
- Speaking of child education, our CE group is continuing to create an engaging Sunday school. Confirmation class is under way, with lots of interesting studies and activities in the works. If you'd like to help in any way, please speak with Sarah, Lori, or Rev. Ann for more information.
- Our Membership Development & Communications team is hard at work planning fun events throughout the coming year. The St. Patrick themed potluck was a big hit, and more is on the way. They are investigating lots of activities and fellowship times, so stay tuned. If you're interested in their work or helping out, please reach out to Christine Bane for more information.
- The Trustees are hard at work, keeping out facilities running smoothly and getting ready for more work on the exterior this spring. They could really use more help, so if you're interested, please contact Allan Barlow or Scott Sanborn.
- The Stewardship Ministry Team has completed the hard at work finalizing the annual pledge drive and the nominating committee has the full slate for this year's annual meeting. For those that have turned in their pledge cards or volunteered for a board position, I thank you! Your commitment ensures that we can continue all of the hard work to making our church,

parishioners, and community strong. If you haven't, there is still time to submit it. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

- Mark your calendar – the Annual Meeting of First Church Congregational is May 18th. I hope you can all attend this important meeting, learn and reflect on the business of the church, and exercise your vote as a member.
- ...and so much more!

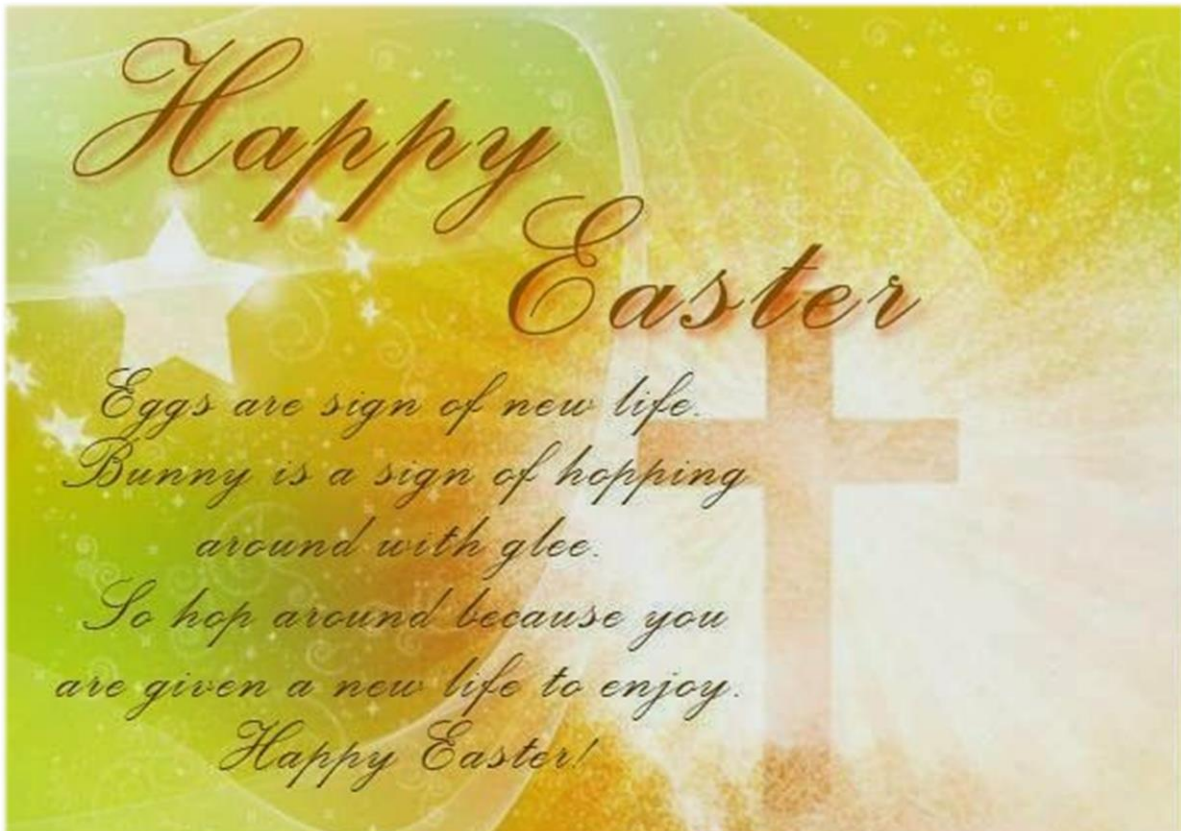
So, if you're looking for some way to help our church and our community, there's plenty of options. Also, there's always the prayer shawl ministry, other outreach projects, singing or ringing in one of our outstanding choirs, or just joining the walking group to help yourself. There are so many new opportunities available through our historic congregation, so feel free to seek out what you would like and help our neighbors & neighborhood at the same time.

As always, all are welcome to chat anytime with me. I love to hear your ideas and suggestions. We also have a lot of other activities and missions scheduled, so I would love your input. I know you all work so hard to make our church a blessing to our families and neighbors, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Let's keep the energy and drive rolling, continuing to seek God, care for each other, and improve our community.

God bless.

Josh Ferry

* * * * *



Musical Musings

Friends:

I am writing this from New Orleans: one of the perks of my full time job is the opportunity to travel for conferences at least once a year. This year, I had the chance to experience New Orleans with Rich after a successful national conference presentation on some of my work with faculty and staff. It's been an amazing experience: the jazz is everywhere, and the food is nearly as good as the jazz! I've worked my way through a hit list of food experiences: beignets, po-boys, muffalettas, gumbo, jambalaya....and of course, Tums!

By the time you read this, we will be nearly at the end of Lent: annually my body yearns for the discipline of Lent, re-learning in community what it means to follow in Christ's footsteps. I hope the music of Lent feeds you as deeply as it does me, especially the chants of Taizé, which we use as our responses each week during Lent. Taizé is an ecumenical monastic community in France most noted for its summer youth retreats and its music. These simple, repetitive refrains get in our heads and hearts and lead us to a place of meditation and stillness where God still speaks. Let me know what you think of the use of Taizé music during Lent.

And of course, we are fast approaching Holy Week and Easter, too. Our Palm Sunday Cantata on April 13 is not to be missed: some glorious music to help you enter into Holy Week. We will be joined by guest instrumentalists, including trumpet, flute, cello, and djembe African drums. Our choirs will be singing in Latin, Hebrew, Swahili and English. Highlights include Ave Verum by Mozart, Soon Ah Will Be Done by Dawson, Total Praise by Smallwood, Ubi Caritas by Gjeilo, and Sim Shalom by Lopes. I really hope you are planning to be there to hear all this gorgeous music live, and invite your family and friends to be there as well. It's also a great opportunity for evangelizing: invite a congregant or neighbor to come who hasn't been to church in a while!

And of course, plan to be with us for our Maundy Thursday service, and a glorious Easter morning service, with trumpet, that will be capped off with a congregational singing of the Hallelujah Chorus from The Messiah by Handel! I look forward to seeing you all there!

Peace and all good things,

Mike Boutin



From the Outreach Ministry Team

Ray Benedix Souper Bowl of Caring



- Due to the church being closed for 2 Sundays, due to extreme winter weather, we were unable to hold our Celebratory Coffee Hour at the conclusion of the Fourth Quarter of this year's Ray Benedix Souper Bowl of Caring.
- However, we did have a very successful event because we more than doubled our goal of 500 cans. Thanks to your generosity we collected 1099 cans of soup and received \$1,125.00 in monetary donations.
- A special thanks to Gina Colarusso, Roberta Jurovich, and the children and parents of Chapel Preschool for collecting 150 cans of soup in the Chapel Soup Train.
- We also thank Cindy Bateson, a former Outreach member, for providing the leadership for this year's Souper Bowl.
- Cindy has said "The overwhelming success of our Souper Bowl this year reflects the love and admiration all of us had for Ray Benedix here at First Church."

"Pampered with Luvs" Diaper Drive

- We are halfway through this year's Diaper Drive with donations coming in as you can see from the boxes of diapers in the sanctuary and under the table in front of the church office.
- Lisa Smith at NIN told us all brands of diapers are acceptable, but their clients have a preference for Pampers followed by Huggies and then Luvs. She also said they have a call for the bigger sizes 4, 5, 6, and 7 because children are in them for a longer time than they are in the smaller sizes.
- If you prefer to make a monetary donation rather than buy the diapers themselves, the Outreach Team will gladly purchase them for you.
- There will be another article about the Diaper Drive in this issue of The Beacon.
- Becky Smith and Jo-Ann Crosby are providing the leadership for this activity.



Mental Health Awareness Sunday

- Mental Health Sunday is May 18th.
- We are continuing to explore possible speakers. One potential speaker has not responded, and another is checking their schedule to see if they can change a commitment they already have.
- At this point nothing is so set it cannot be changed. So if you have an idea for a topic or speaker, please let us know.



Outreach Ministry Team

Lori Bennett, Cynthia Causbie, Jo-Ann Crosby, Barbara Donaghue, Ken Peck, Marie Rubino, Carole Silva, John Silva, Becky Smith, and Marilyn Peck, Team Leader



Walking Group for Fitness and Fellowship

Tuesdays in April

Spring has sprung! Come join us as we return to walking at the **Raymond J. Martin Riverside Park** at 971 Riverside Drive in Methuen at **10:00 AM** on April 1st (no joke), 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th. Spring is beautiful along the Merrimack River. We hope you join us! Contact Cindy Bateson to be included in group emails.

Sunday Walk on the Methuen Rail Trail

TBA



Prayer Shawl Ministry



The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets year-round and always welcomes anyone who wishes to be part of this ministry. Knitting or crocheting experience is not a prerequisite to becoming a member. Come for the fellowship and someone will be glad to help you if needed. Please contact Carol Gray or Debbie Bonfanti for more information.

We will meet on **Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 PM**
in the parlor of First Church Congregational.



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Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry & Rev. Ann went to Holy Family Hospital on Wednesday, March 19th, to deliver lap robes to the Spiritual Care Department. They are pictured with Chaplains Andrea McDonough and Chaplain Beda Linehan.

The Chapel School

Spring has sprung!!!!



We have turned the corner to longer daylight time, later sunsets, and more time to be outside and hopefully warmer weather. The sun is our best friend, especially this time of year. Even though there may still be a chill in the air, sunshine always warms us up especially on the playground.

Children are the most resilient at adapting to change. They have amazed us every step this past year. We've learned that despite all the changes to our daily routine and how we use materials in the classroom, we can still have fun and learn a thing or two.

I love to see how much energy the children have in general, but watching them run, climb and slide down the slides is like watching the amazing race. Fresh air and exercise are always a good thing.

We had another successful fundraiser this year. Lots of yummy goods were purchased and all the proceeds are going towards installing fans in the front classrooms! We are very excited about this!

Registration continues with new inquiries for September enrollment. We are always happy to show off the school to new families. The children enjoy welcoming new friends when we tour them around the school. We already have received registrations both in house and from new families. We receive inquiries every day. People are coming in with registration forms already printed off the website and ready to enroll by the end of the tour. Parents are saying everyone knows about Chapel. You have positive reviews on every webpage for parents. That was so great to hear!

We are looking forward to our Annual Art Show in May. We will have the Art Show in the Parish Hall again this year, and hope you all can make it. The children work hard and love to show off the amazing work they have done.

We will be on April School Vacation the week of April 21st. The kids and staff are excited to get out and enjoy the spring air!

Gina Colarusso
Director



HELP SPREAD THE WORD!!



The Chapel School

Where a Lifetime of Learning Begins

Register Now for our 2025-26 School Year



- **For Children 2.9 - 5 Years Old**
 - 2, 3 or 5 Day Preschool Programs
 - Customizable Days to Fit your Needs
- **Half Day Classes (8:30 - 11:30 AM)**
 - Lunch Bunch (until 2:00 PM)
 - Extended Day (7:30 AM - 4:00 PM)

Fun Learning Environment for Everyone!

- **September - June**
 - Affordable Rates
 - Non-Denominational
- **Over 60 Years in Methuen!**



Contact us for more information or to schedule a tour:

978-689-8414

chapelschoolmethuen@gmail.com



www.chapelschoolmethuen.com



Located at:

First Church Congregational
26 Pleasant Street, Methuen





THE CHAPEL SCHOOL

26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844
(978)-689-8414

20__ - __ School Year

Preschool Registration Form

(Please Print)

Mornings (8:30 - 11:30 AM)

___ **5 Days**, Monday – Friday (4-5 years)

___ **3 Days**, Typically* Mon, Wed & Fri (4-5 years)

___ **2 Days**, Typically* Tues & Thurs (3-4 years)

___ Add **Lunch Bunch (until 2:00 PM)** →→→→

*Contact the School Office if other days are needed

Full Days (7:30 AM – 4:00 PM)

___ **5 Days**, Monday – Friday (4-5 years)

___ **3 Days**, Typically* Mon, Wed & Fri (4-5 years)

___ **2 Days**, Typically* Tues & Thurs (3-4 years)

How many days for **Lunch Bunch**? _____

Please circle: M Tu W Th F

Child Information:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

Gender: [] Male [] Female Date of Birth: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Allergies: _____

Parent/Guardian 1:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

[] Mother [] Father [] Other: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Parent/Guardian 2:

First Name: _____ M.I. _____ Last Name: _____

[] Mother [] Father [] Other: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

You will be receiving additional forms to complete – Information & Authorization, Medical and Developmental.

The Chapel School employs a policy of non-discrimination in all its services to children and their families. We do not discriminate based on race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. Our registration policy is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Parent Agreement

I hereby agree to enroll my child in the Chapel School and I understand that tuition payments must be paid as per the parent handbook. A registration fee of \$75.00 must be paid with this agreement. This fee is non-refundable. I understand that one month's notice will be required to withdraw my child from the Chapel School.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return your completed form as soon as possible. Thank you.

Congratulations to Donnie Blount

who was baptized at FCC
on 3/16/25



To Our First Church Family:
We had anticipated Donnie's baptism being a special day for our family, however we did not realize that you all would make it so much more than that.

From the moment we walked in, to the end, we felt so loved and welcome.

Thank you for your dedication in making this special day so incredibly beautiful for our family. All your efforts and beautiful gifts did not go un-noticed or unappreciated.

We appreciate all of you and are looking forward to seeing you all soon.

With much love & respect,
The Blount Family



MDCC

The Membership Development & Communications Committee would like to thank everyone who joined us for the *"I Feel Lucky"* potluck on March 16th. It was a great turnout with an impressive offering of various green and Irish dishes. During fellowship, we shared what we felt lucky for. Here is a list of everyone's responses:

I feel lucky for...

- *My return to good health*
- *My very cherished friends that I see every Wednesday at Prayer Shawl*
- *The generosity of our church family with their support of all our outreach activities*
 - *Our church*
 - *For the ability to travel and ice skate*
 - *Mike Boutin and his music ministry at our church*
 - *For thoughts and prayers and kindness of members at First Church*
 - *Community, sharing, listening ear and caring*
 - *My family*
 - *My mom*
 - *My daughter*
 - *To see my grandson who lives far away*
 - *Not being caught ;-)*
 - *My friends and my Barbies*
 - *My house*
 - *Rich's spicy chicken wings*
 - *This food*
 - *These wonderful people*
 - *Having amazing privileges*
 - *Being here*
- *My children and grandchildren live nearby so I get to see them and be a part of their lives*
 - *My sons and their families*



And the #1 most common response was...

"I feel luck for my church family!"



2025 "Pampered with Luvs" Diaper Drive

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Communities Together has been holding its diaper drive for children in the Greater Lawrence area during the Lenten season since 1998. And First Church has been participating in this drive for several years.

Many families make significant sacrifices just to afford diapers for their babies. Diaper needs remain a common and hidden problem of poverty.

Families spend \$75 or more a month to diaper one child. On average, a child uses around 8-12 diapers per day, depending upon the child's age, weight, diet, etc. This equates to roughly 240 - 360 diapers in a month.

Although diapers are essential for babies, they are not systematically covered by safety-net policies. Neither WIC nor food stamps cover diapers.

As you can see from the pictures, our Pampered with Luvs diaper drive was very successful this year. We've collected:

- 2,116 diaper wipes
- 3,625 diapers (from sizes 2 to 7)
- \$150 cash



On behalf of the Outreach team, Communities Together and more importantly the families that will receive these donations THANK YOU!!



What's the REACH Ministry?



Do you know of someone facing surgery, recovering from surgery or living with a long-term illness? Do you know someone who has recently lost their job or could use financial support? Do you know someone who suffers from depression or is often down in the dumps around the holidays?

Maybe this person is you?

If so, we can help. Our new REACH Ministry wants to make sure that members of our community have a place to turn for support in their time of need. The term REACH stands for -- Reliable, Engaging, Able, Caring and Heartfelt support.

Contact Judi Boyko or Pat King for more information.

* * * * *

Need Financial Help?

If you, or another member of First Church you know, is need of some temporary financial assistance, please contact Rev. Brigham-Rogers at ambrighamrogers@gmail.com or 978-687-1240.

Due to the generosity of Thomas Longworth, through his estate plan, there are some funds available for short term financial assistance of our members.

* * * * *

Would you like to make an electronic donation to the church?



Use your smart phone or tablet by scanning this QR code!

Or visit our website at www.firstchurchmethuen.com and click the "Ways to Donate" page.

Thank you for your support.

Happy Birthday!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 03 Hanson Causbie
- 05 Michael Alaimo
- 08 Anne Benedix
- 12 Meredith Wright
- 16 Josh Ferry
- 19 Alaina Romano
- 20 Kim Kowal
- 25 Audrey Lang
- 26 Diane Alaimo, Jennifer Borislow
- 30 Janet Tashjian



MAY BIRTHDAYS

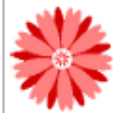
- 02 Susan Newton
- 05 Robyn Sliney

* * * * *






APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 4/12 | Dennis & Brenda Michaud | Married 22 years |
| 4/22 | Thomas & Roberta Jurovich | Married 30 years |



April 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship Service <i>Sundays at 10:00 AM In-Person & on Facebook Live</i> www.facebook.com/firstchurchmethuen		1 ALL Committee Annual Reports Due 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry 6:30 PM Cantata Rehearsal	2 1:00 PM Prayer Shaul 6:30 PM Church Board	3 6:30 PM First Church Bells 6:30 PM Search Committee	4	5
6 Communion Easter Giving Forms Due 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM Confirmation Class	7 4:00 PM Chapel Staff	8 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry 6:30 PM Cantata Rehearsal	9 8:00 AM Breakfast w/ Ann (Ellie's Farmhouse) 1:00 PM Prayer Shaul 7:00 PM Diaconate	10 6:30 PM First Church Bells	11	12 3:45 PM Confirmation Class Field Trip to Saint Theresa Catholic Church
13 Palm Sunday Music Cantata 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship	14 1:00 PM Cook for Bread & Roses 6:30 PM Outreach	15 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry	16 1:00 PM Prayer Shaul	17 Maundy Thursday 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service	18 Good Friday Chapel School and Church Office Closed	19
20 Easter Sunday 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship & Egg Hunt	21 Patriots Day Church Office Closed 	22 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry	23 May BEACON Deadline Church Office Closed 1:00 PM Prayer Shaul	24 Church Office Closed 6:30 PM First Church Bells 7:00 PM Search Committee	25	26
Chapel School Closed - MA School Vacation Week						
27 8:30 AM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 11:15 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM Confirmation Class	28 2:00 PM Stewardship 6:30 PM Finance Committee	29 10:00 AM Walking Group (Riverside Park) 4:30 PM Food Pantry	30 1:00 PM Prayer Shaul			

Dates and Times Subject to Change

First Church Congregational
United Church of Christ
26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844-3199

Address Service Requested