The Meetinghouse Messenger

The First Congregational Church in Stoneham

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The First Congregational Church in Stoneham
United Church of Christ
April 2010

church staff

Rev. Diane Cusumano, Interim Pastor
Sara Thompson, Secretary
John Piskadlo, Sexton
Joyce Simpson, Music Director
Heather Oliver, Treasurer
Judi Perry, Sunday School Superintendent
Donna Wall, Youth Director

LET'S GO GREEN!

We currently have **66** people out of **230** on the mailing list who have opted to receive their Messenger by email. Let's help the planet and the save the church money by increasing that number. If you are willing to receive an e-messenger, please send an email to the Editor at heatherwiw@rcn.com. THANKS!

april birthdays

15	Christopher Haddad
17	William Gullette
20	Helen Lawrence
20	Andrew Thain
20	Caleb Sawicki
24	John McGrath
24	Marion DiMeglio
24	Breanna Jacques
24	Bobby McCorkle
27	Evan Bergstrom
29	Marie Burke

If you would like to be added to the birthday list, please call the church office or email Heather.

Youth Group

Schedule for remainder of the year:

April 9 Fri 5:30-7:30 meeting youth lounge

May 7 Fri 5:30-7:30 meeting youth lounge

June 4 Fri 5:30-7:30 meeting youth lounge

VBB - SAVE THE DATE!
August 9 -13, 2010

Galactic Blast, A Cosmic Adventure Praising God!

I have read the material and am very impressed with the imagination that will go into this year's program. I will be looking for help from adults, teens and smaller hands to find the resources to pull this program off. I will be recruiting help as early as April 1st to get plans in place.

If you know of friends and neighbors who might be interested in coming to our program let the office know so we can get registration materials out to them. This year's program has an undertone consistent with recycling. I am counting on several recycling donations. Look for the upcoming wish list of supplies. More information will follow as it develops.

Correspondance

Dear Friends,

I appreciate the prayers and get well cards and flowers. Thanks to Judy Clark for bringing me the lovely prayer shawl made by Lorraine and her knitting group. God bless you. -Marie Burke

SAVE THE DATE!

Dinner and Silent Auction
Sunday, May 23, 2010
11:30 am in Fellowship Hall

Proceeds will go toward
The Steeple Fund

The menu is:
Chicken Marsala, Delmonico Potatoes
Peas, Caesar Salad, Rolls
Dessert: Strawberry Angel Food Cake

Tickets: Adults - $7.00
Children under 12 - $4.00

The meal will be prepared by Judy Clark

Tickets will be available for purchase at coffee hours during May.
Or please call the church office at
781-438-0097
for reservations.

ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Rummage Sale
Saturday, April 24th, 2010
9:00 am – 2:00 pm
clothing for all ages and household items
may be dropped off at the church and left on the stage.
no computers, microwaves or televisions.
please call lorraine savage 781-438-7545 if you can help.

lots of helpers are needed to sort on Wednesday, April 21st at 6:00 pm and Thursday and Friday from 9:30 am to 8:00 pm.

please call judy clark 781-944-7240
if you can bake items for the snack bar.
sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in fellowship hall

Pastor Search Committee Update

The Search Committee is fully committed to finding the right person to lead our church family. We review each application keeping in mind the 12 qualifications that you, the congregation, deemed most important when completing the church survey. We will base our decision on who is the right fit for our specific church family based on their qualifications, experience, ability to preach and lead. We will not discriminate against anyone based on their color, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, in accordance with the 5 Commitments of Search Committees, and Massachusetts discrimination laws.

We pray each time we meet, and ask God to guide us in our mission. We take very seriously the trust you have instilled in us, and believe with God's help, we will find the right person He calls to lead us. If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to ask us. We are happy to provide you with answers, and ask for your continued prayers for us as we continue on our journey.

Yours in Christ, The Pastor Search Committee

Kevin O'Neil, Chairperson
Joe Haddad
Tim Korwan
Linda Merrow
Linda Paolini
Elsie Wallace
Heather Oliver
Jan Droz
Donna Wall
Dick Perry

Missions/Outreach

Missions Schedule

Tuesday April 13th 5:30 p.m. Hungry Helpers

Ping Pong Tournament 2
RESULTS

Thank you to everyone who supported and/or attended the second annual Ping Pong tournament on Friday, March 12th. We raised $637.50 for Partners in Health's Hope for Haiti fund.

The adult division winners were:

#1 Joe Haddad #2 Fariborz Azima #3 Craig Trueman

The Youth Division winners were:

#1 Kyle Nickerson #2 Adam Chanley #3 Brian Taterini

A big thank you to the following church members who contributed raffle prizes and defrayed expenses including the purchase of another used ping pong table:

Lynda Allard
Bob Bower
Marge Dearth
Nancy Muise
Kevin O'Neil

AND, Jan Droz graciously contributed her winnings from the 50/50 raffle back to the Missions Committee.

The following businesses contributed food and gift certificates. Please keep their generosity in mind the next time you are shopping or going out to eat!

Elements Therapeutic Massage
Felicia's Restaurant
Greenwood House of Pizza
The 99 Restaurant

Next ESL Conversation Group begins April 9

Our Friday afternoon ESL conversation group at the Stoneham Library will begin its spring session on April 9 and continue through May 28. Adults wishing to build their conversation skills may enroll by calling English At Large at 781-395-2374. Or they may call Ben Jacques at 781-438-5596. The group meets from 3 to 4:30 each Friday afternoon in the Stoneham Room. The conversation group is sponsored by Stoneham English for All and supported by Missions at First Congregational.

Bread & Roses Announcement

It is with deep regret that the Missions Committee announces that it came to the difficult decision to end First Church's preparation of our quarterly Saturday meal for Bread & Roses soup kitchen In Lawrence.

Over the past few years our church members' participation in this Missions Outreach commitment to help those in need decreased to the point that the shopping, cooking, cleaning, and delivery was being done by too few members.

Our committee's call for leadership and assistance from the general congregation was not answered. Reluctantly, we have informed Bread & Roses that our participation has ended. The Missions Committee will contribute the cost of the quarterly meal to Bread & Roses through this fiscal year.

Dinner Leaders Needed for Hungry Helpers

We need a volunteer captain to heat the Hungry Helpers meal, dress the salad and start the services for the next few months. Lynn Haddad, who currently leads the Hungry Helper dinners, will continue to coordinate the meal plans. Jocelyn Wise, the caterer, will continue to prepare the entrée. Contact Lynn Haddad.

Lynn will provide training and cooking instructions for any individuals who sign up to lead a meal.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS:

Here is our list of "Items of the Week" for the month of April. Please remember to pick up these items when you are grocery shopping. Please do your part to help stock our pantry for those in need in our church community and in Stoneham and the neighboring communities.

Apr. 4 – Apr.10	Baked Beans
Apr.11 – Apr. 17	Relish/Olives
Apr.18 – Apr. 24	Instant Potatoes
Apr. 25 – May 1	Juice

Thank you all for your continued help!

Lynn Haddad, Lorraine Savage and Sara Thompson

Crafts

Crafts will meet April 6, 13, 27 at 9:30 am in the craft room. Everyone is welcome to come!

VAN DRIVERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to drive our 14-seat, wheelchair lift equipped Ford minivan to transport seniors to and from grocery shopping at Redstone Shopping Center and lunch at the Senior Center on Mondays and Fridays. The schedule is 9 am to 4 pm. Volunteer drivers can serve on a regularly assigned day or on an "on-call" basis. You should enjoy older people and be comfortable with those who may need extra assistance. This is a very important volunteer assignment as it helps to ensure that seniors have safe transportation.

To volunteer, you must be at least age 21, have a valid Massachusetts driver's license and pass a CORI check. Contact Maureen Canova at 781-438-1157 on Mondays or Fridays.

Sunday School Update

The boys and girls in Sunday School has just begun a study on the events of the last week of Jesus' life on earth and his teachings. We will be learning of His promise to send the Holy Spirit to be with believers. Our Bible memory passage for this session is from the Gospel of John 13:34-35: *"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*

A couple of weeks ago, I had the privilege of teaching the Middle Class while Kevin O'Neil substituted in the Junior High. We were discussing what is the cost of discipleship and trying to figure out the answer by answering puzzle questions. Before we had it all figured out, one of the second graders excitedly exclaimed, "My whole heart!!" Good for him! That was, and is, the exact answer! That is what Jesus expects from us – giving Him our whole heart! Praise God that good things are happening in our Church School.

Hopefully, you have had a good time earning some money for Heifer. The activities were meant to be fun and, hopefully, you learned a little, too! The monies are due on Easter Sunday which will be a Family Sunday. Thank you for working together on this project.

May the Easter season bring you continued joy and many blessings. May God's love become more real to you as the days go by.

Please continue to pray for all our Sunday School students and their teachers.

Judi Perry, Sunday School Superintendent

EASTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 1	Labyrinth Walk 5 to 7 p.m. Fellowship Hall Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service including the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper Labyrinth will also be available following worship
Friday, April 2	Good Friday Labyrinth Walk 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
Sunday, April 4	**The Day of Resurrection – Easter Sunday** 10 a.m. worship to celebrate The Resurrection of Our Lord
Sunday, April 11	*A Time to Weep and a Time to Laugh* (Ecclesiastes 3:4) Join us as we continue to celebrate God's gift of resurrection and eternal life on Holy Humor Sunday.

FIRST CHURCH SERVICES ON TV

Here is the schedule and channels for the 1st Church Service broadcast.

Comcast users: Channel 9
Verizon users: Channel 34
RCN users: Channel 3

Weekly Schedule:
Monday 6:00 PM

Tuesday 10:00 AM

Wednesday 4:00 PM

Thursday 10:00 AM

Saturday 8:00 AM

Sunday 8:00 AM

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Sunday, April 4	The Day of Resurrection
Sunday, April 11	Holy Humor Sunday
Sunday, May 16	Share the Spirit Sunday
Sunday, May 23	Pentecost and Confirmation
Sunday, June 6	Annual Meeting following worship
Sunday, June 13	Children's Sunday and Annual Picnic

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

You say you have never heard of Holy Humor Sunday. Come and worship on Sunday, April 11, the Sunday after Easter, as we continue to celebrate God's gift of Jesus. Are we allowed to laugh in church? Why not? God gave us the capacity to laugh so let's do so on Holy Humor Sunday.

Out of the mouths of God's Kids

A child's letter to God: Dear God. In school we read that Thomas Edison made light, but in Sunday school they said you did it first. Did he steal your idea? Mark, age 8

from *The Joyful Noiseletter, used with permission*

SHARE THE SPIRIT SUNDAY

What does First Church mean to you? Have you been keeping the good news of our faith a secret? On Sunday, May 16, we want to share our worship, music, and fellowship with the community. We pray that all members will invite a family member, neighbor, friend or co-worker to join us for joyful worship followed by our convivial coffee hour.

ADULT MUSIC CAMP 2010

July 22-25 Craigville Conference Center
Craigville Beach, Cape Cod
Pastor Diane has a friend who attends this annual event and highly recommends this opportunity to join other musically minded Christian adults for a long weekend making beautiful music together concluding with a Sunday afternoon concert.
See poster on bulletin board by church office or at
http://www.macucc.org/leadership/musiccamp.htm

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Friends in Christ,

When you receive this newsletter we will be in the midst of Holy Week and the Easter Season. As we remember those last days in the earthly life of Jesus we will experience a roller coast ride of emotions in one short week. The festive crowd waving palm branches to welcome the one whom many believe may be the long awaited Messiah sent by Yahweh God. The intimate supper Jesus shared with his trusted disciples. But one will betray him. Yet compassionate Jesus speaks of love: *Love one another just as I have loved you.* (John 13:34) The prayers in the garden. The arrest and injustice of the trial before Pontius Pilate. The suffering of the crucifixion. The overwhelming loss and grief. Then the miracle, the exultation, the resurrection. Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Holy Week mirrors our lives. We experience good and not so good days. Amidst our joys and many blessings we also have times of loss and sadness. We struggle to understand many things as did the disciples. We have fears of the future. Yet, as we face the challenges of our twenty-first century world we have our faith to sustain us. We know the end of the Holy Week story. We can endure the week, and the angst in our present lives, because we know the outcome. God triumphed over death. God's grace, mercy and forgiveness abound.

May we never forget the pain and suffering and sacrifice of our Savior Jesus for each one of us. Let us thank God for the hope and promise of God's gift of eternal life by living our lives in love as Jesus has called us to do. Love God, love all God's people, love our enemies, love life. The Apostle Paul says it well: *Faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.* (I Corinthians 13:13)

With a prayer for the First Church family that our love will guide us to follow in Jesus' footsteps as we share the good news, the hope and promise of the resurrection as we minister to one another and in our community.

Yours in the love of Christ,

Pastor Diane

Rev. Diane Cusumano, Interim Minister

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN STONEHAM
STEEPLE FUND

1 CHURCH STREET
STONEHAM, MA 02180

Yes, I would like to donate to the Steeple Fund

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Amount of donation: $_____

Please make checks payable to:
First Congregational Church in Stoneham Steeple Fund

Please make this donation in memory of:

Name:_____

_____

The Steeple Fund Committee will be printing a list of name of those people who have donated to the Steeple Fund. This list will be displayed in Fellowship Hall. If you do not wish to have your name printed on this list, please indicate here:

NO, do not print my name_____

April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Maundy Thursday Service Labyrinth setup	2 Labyrinth Walk	3 9-2 Adventista
4 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship	5 8-9 AA (lounge) 7:00 Search	6 9:30 Crafts 11:00 Prayer Group 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (parlor)	7 3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 6:30 Bible Study 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	8 7:00 55+ Singles	9 5:30-7:30 Youth Group	10 9-2 Adventista
11 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship	12 7:00 Search 8-9 AA (lounge)	13 9:30 Crafts 11:00 Prayer Group 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (Parlor)	14 3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 6:30 Bible Study 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	15	16	17 9-2 Adventista
18 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship	19 OFFICE CLOSED 7:00 Search 8-9 AA (lounge)	20 9:30 Crafts 11:00 Prayer Group 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study	21 6:30 Bible Study 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	22 **Rummage Sale Setup**	23 **Rummage Sale Setup**	24 9-2 Rummage Sale 9-2 Adventista
25 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship Stewardship Sunday	26 7:00 Search 8-9 AA (lounge)	27 9:30 Crafts 11:00 Prayer Group 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study	28 3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 6:30 Bible Study 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	29	30	