

"He is not here:
he has •
risen!"



THE MEETINGHOUSE MESSENGER

The First Congregational Church
in Stoneham
April 2009



The Meetinghouse Messenger

The First Congregational Church in Stoneham
United Church of Christ * April 2009

church staff

Rev. Diane Cusumano, Interim Pastor
Sara Thompson, Secretary
John Piskadlo, Sexton
Joyce Simpson, Music Director
Heather Oliver, Messenger Editor
Donna Wall, Youth Director
Lynda Allard, Sunday School
Superintendent

messenger index

Calendar.....	2
Daily Lectionary.....	14
First Church News.....	4-6, 8-11
Missions.....	7-8

april birthdays

15	Christopher Haddad
17	William Gulette
20	Helen Lawrence
20	Andrew Thain
20	Caleb Sawicki
24	John McGrath
24	Marion DiMeglio
24	Breanna Jacques
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.

Welcome Dianel

The Interim Committee is very pleased and excited to announce that Rev. Diane Cusumano has accepted the role of Interim Pastor at the First Congregational Church in Stoneham. She has 12 years experience as a Minister, and has successfully filled the role of Interim at 2 churches. Serving as an Interim is her specialty, and she comes highly

recommended by her references. We feel very fortunate to have found someone who we feel will be a great fit for us during this time of transition, and was flexible to work within our budget constraints and accept a 3/4 time position. Please join us in welcoming her to our church family when she begins her time with us on April 5, 2009, Palm Sunday.

APRIL 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 3:30 Chimes 4:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	2 7:00 Cantata Rehearsal 7:00 Survey Committee (Parlor)	3 7:00 Cantata Rehearsal	4 9-2 Adventista
5 8:30 Choir Palm Sunday Brkfst 10:00 Worship 11:15 Trustees 7:00 Cantata	6 8-9 AA (Lounge)	7 9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (Parlor)	8 3:30 Chimes 4:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	9 7:00 Cantata Rehearsal 7:00 55+ Singles 6-9 Serve NE Orders Labyrinth (Hall)	10 Labyrinth (Hall)	11 9-4 Adventista
12 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 1-room schoolhouse Campership apps due	13 8-9 AA (Lounge)	14 9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Diaconate (Parlor)	15 3:30 Chimes 4:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	16 Labyrinth (Hall)	17	18 9-2 Adventista
19 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:15 Search Comm	20 OFFICE CLOSED 8-9 AA (Lounge)	21 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (Parlor)	22 3:30 Chimes 4:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel) Rummage Sale Setup	23 Rummage Sale Setup	24 Rummage Sale Setup	25 9-2 Adventista (Chapel) 9-2 Rummage Sale 9-11 Serve NE
26 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:15 CE	27 8-9 AA (Lounge)	28 9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (Parlor)	29 3:30 Chimes 4:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	30		

Jesus Son of God

Created by Gary Rhodes
A Dramatic Musical for Easter

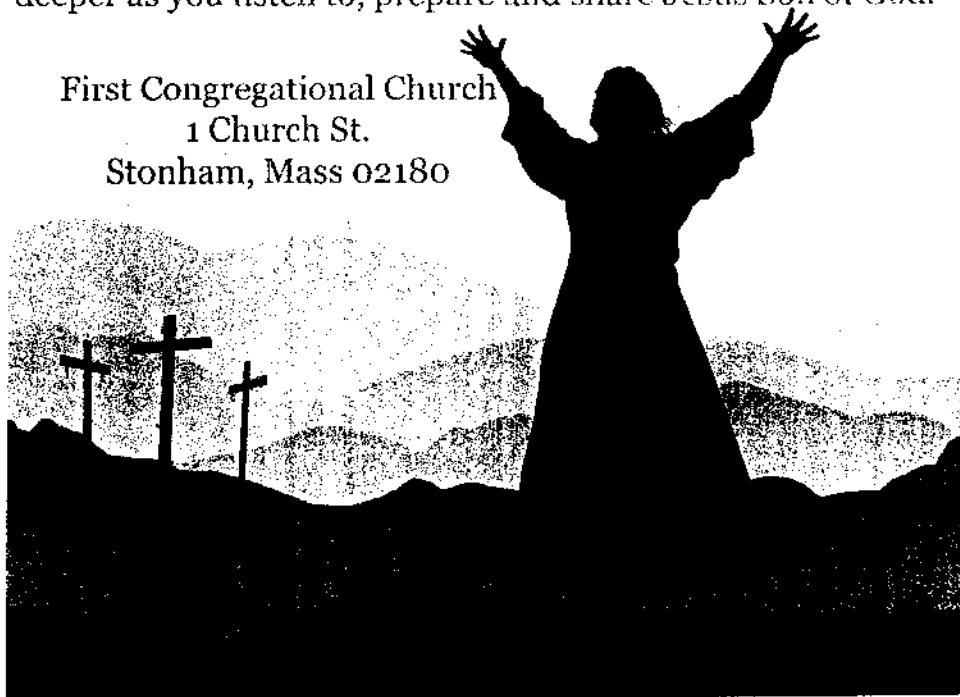
Presented by:

First Congregational Church Choir
and guest vocalists & instrumentalists

April 5, 2009 at 7:00 pm

Only God's Son could defeat sin and death, providing eternal life for us. May your relationship with the Lord grow deeper as you listen to, prepare and share Jesus Son of God.

First Congregational Church
1 Church St.
Stonham, Mass 02180



indoor yardsale/rummage sale
april 25, 9 - 2pm

Are You looking forward to warmer weather?? I am! But for me it starts with changing seasons for my clothes, closets and rooms. When I do this, it is a great opportunity to remove from my home the things we no longer use or want. You can do this too and help out the church. WE are looking for infant and children's clothing, furniture and toys, functioning small household appliances, kitchen goods and storage items. Ask a friend or neighbor if they have anything to donate. We are collecting stuff to sell at reasonable prices. We have held this spring time fundraising event.....forever. Start bringing your items to the stage in Fellowship Hall and we will sell them on Saturday April 25 from 9 - 2pm. NO Tvs or computers, they don't sell.

I will be looking for help sorting and setting up this event beginning Wednesday, April 22 through Friday, April 24. Come during the day or after dinner, help to organize stuff. It is a fun way to help your church community. There will be a sign up sheet in fellowship hall. Does anyone have a place they can hang a sign to help advertise this event? I will have some available in the church office. All profits go to the church and our budget.

Any concerns or questions can be directed to Donna Wall 781-438-4469 or Church office 781-438-0097.

messenger deadline

The Deadline for the ~~May~~ 2009 Messenger is ~~Sunday~~, April 19th.

sunday school news

We continue to learn about Lent and the events leading up to Easter.

The older children made booklets of Lenten Symbols and learned the meaning and purpose of these symbols.

They also made a "Christian Survival Kit" that included several small items (elastic, band aid, etc.) that reminded them to be good Christians. They each had to look up the passages in the bible for each of the various items and find the verse. They did a great job finding the Chapters and passages and were pretty quick doing it!

The younger kids learned about Jesus and made lamb pictures with cotton balls. They love getting messy with glue while being creative! We studied that Lent is a good time to do something nice for someone.

We made stained glass windows (transparencies) with crosses and lilies and the children were encouraged to give them to someone in need of a little heart warming gift. Some children made more than one to give to multiple people in their lives which shows us that even though very young, our kids are generous and caring!

Because it is Jelly Bean time, we filled plastic eggs with Jelly Beans. Each was a certain color representing a line of a poem (red for the blood of Christ, White for His grace, etc.) about Jesus' love. The kids filled plenty of eggs to share with siblings and parents. Then it was fun eating a few leftovers as we were cleaning up!

We have introduced a class for Middle School that will be taught alternating by Sue Witherall and Linda Merrow. We encourage all Middle Schoolers to please come and join us because we miss you and want you to know that you are an important part of our church family! If you have any questions, feel free to call me, Lynda Allard, directly. I'd love to hear from you.

In the next few weeks we will be baking in the kitchen, learning how to make crosses from real Palms and doing a Easter Egg Hunt that includes symbols of the crucifixion plus much more! We look forward to seeing you all Sunday.

Prayer Chain

What a special blessing is the power of prayer! Oh! I do believe!! And, I trust, many of you feel the same way. Prayer is that special link that offers us an intimate connection with our loving Heavenly Father. In 1 John 5 we read, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God; that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of Him."

For the past few months, we at First Church have had an 'official' Prayer Chain. As a concern or joy has been raised, there are people who have dedicated themselves to the purpose of bringing your request before the Throne of God. The more we continue in prayer the more we can see the powerful ways in which God works.

If you would like to be a part of this special ministry, please call Judi Perry (781-942-9785). The other people on the Prayer Chain are:

Carol Paulis	781-279-1355
Betty Baumann	781-438-5931

More important, if you, or someone you know, is in need of prayer, please call Judi or one of the other members. We are at your service and God's help is available for all kinds of requests and issues.

From the CE Committee: The CE Committee is committed to making the Sunday School Program the best it can be. If anyone has any comments, concerns, or praise for any part of CE or the Sunday School program, please direct them to the comment box outside the Pastors office. This way issues can be addressed by the committee as a whole. Thank you!

Missions
Missions Schedule

Tuesday April 14th, 5:30 p.m. Hungry Helpers
be out at coffee hour and in the church office.

Hungry Helpers

The Missions Committee continues to seek volunteers and cash donations to purchase food and supplies. First Church prepares the community dinner on the second Tuesday of each month. If you can help set-up and serve please arrive at 5:00 p.m. Or come at 6:15 p.m. to help clean-up.

Cash and check donations are gratefully accepted. Or remember to put your change (or dollar bills!) in the pails at the entrances to the sanctuary.

For more information contact Lynn Haddad.

Raise \$\$\$ for English language software

Stoneham English for All (SEFA), a community group supported by our church through Missions, has set a goal of raising \$1,000 to buy English language software for the Stoneham Library. The software will provide additional tools for new members of our community seeking to learn English.

At the SEFA anniversary celebration Feb. 26, Library Director Mary Todd introduced tutors to several English-language resources—books and CDs, including programs geared to learners in several languages (Russian, Mandarin, Portuguese and Spanish). But the library, whose budget has been reduced, does not have the highly recommended Rosetta Stone program. Missions would like to raise \$300 towards the \$1,000 goal, needed to purchase Rosetta Stone and other materials.

A special thank you to First Church tutors

Four of the 22 tutors who completed the English At Large training course last November in Stoneham are members of our church.

They joined their "colleagues" Feb. 26 for a tutor reunion and traded stories, teaching methods and questions. A special thanks to our tutors—**Linda DeAmicis, Jill Geisler, Becky Jacques, and Karen McIntosh**. Each week they meet with their adult learners, helping them to improve their English skills.

More volunteers needed

If you would like to share the gift of language by becoming an English At Large tutor, please call Ben Jacques at 781-438-5596, or call English At Large at 781-395-2374. For information about upcoming tutor-training classes, and to learn more about English At Large, visit their website at www.englishatlarge.org.

Palm Sunday Breakfast

The details are: it is Palm Sunday April 5th from 8:00 am until 9:30 am. The price will be \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for kids. Tickets can be bought at the door. Also if there are any of the men of the church that would like to help set up, cook or clean up that would be greatly appreciated. Interested volunteers can e-mail Chuck Severance at barbaraseverance@yahoo.com, or call 781-933-6058. We'll arrive at 6:15 am to start cooking. Thanks!

youth group

There are only a few dates left for the school year.

April 5 - no group; attend the cantata.

April 19 - bowling at Woburn bowl-a-drome

May 3

May 17

June 7

All youth who have participated in group this year have received a letter with group information. They know they need to call or email Donna Wall with their intent to participate. This helps with planning. I will be looking for a chaperone for each of the above dates. We are considering June 7 a night to bring next year's sixth graders in for a night of fun and planning.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS:

We have extra exciting news to report this month. The Stoneham Board of Health is partnering with our food pantry to help procure donations from local businesses and get the word out to the Stoneham community about our pantry. We are already receiving more phone calls from both folks wanting to help in any way, as well as from people wanting to make appointments to receive food assistance. Now more than ever we need our Church community to step forward and lead the way with donations to our food pantry.

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.

March 29 – April 4	Baked Beans
April 5 – 11	Beets
April 12 – 18	Chicken & Beef Broth
April 19 – 25	Regular Tea
April 26 – May 2	Salt & Pepper

Thank you all for your continued help!
Lynn Haddad, Lorraine Savage and Sara Thompson

APPLIANCES & THANKS!

The food pantry has been the recipient of two wonderful donations of appliances recently. Chris and Elly Decker donated a very nice condition used refrigerator to replace the older one that was being used. John and Darrel Thompson donated a beautiful upright freezer to the food pantry, which will allow the storage of much more frozen food which is available for purchase through the Merrimack Valley Food Bank at 16 cents per pound. The Book of Remembrance also purchased a brand new refrigerator for the Church kitchen from Genevieve Bryant's funds. We know Genevieve would be happy to see a new fridge for her church family. And to complete the appliance update, the Decker's also donated a used compressor which Al Savage is repairing which will be used as a back up in the boiler room, as one of our compressors is on the way out. Many thanks to all the people that helped make all these gifts possible. They are much appreciated!

vbb

August 10 - 14 9am - 12 noon

Camp E.D.G.E., Experience + Discover God Everywhere

As it has for over 10 years, First Congregational Church invites all children to go to the edge this summer for Vacation Bible Blast. Camp E.D.G.E.: Experience + Discover God Everywhere is an extreme adventure camp taking kids on exciting Bible treks to experience and discover God everywhere, everyday. The fun begins August 10 and ends August 14, from 9am - 12 noon each day.

Each Bible trek is supported with science activities, songs, crafts, games and snacks.

The cost is \$50 per child unless there is a teenager or adult in the same family volunteering, then the fee will be waived. Registration forms will be available in the Church office May 1st and by a mailing to families who have previously attended. Invite a friend or neighbor to come with you.

We are looking for lots of help, no prior experience needed! This is a great event to incorporate multi-generations of experience and fun.

There are many opportunities to help. Job openings are for photographer, counselors (adults and teens needed), snack leader, craft leader, discovery time leader (science), single story teller character, drama characters, music leader, recreation (games) leader, Sparx the fox (puppeteer), and extras. There many ways to help. Look for the sign up sheet on the bulletin board or talk to Donna.



Check out the bulletin board for updates. There will be a wish list of supplies needed for VBB. Can you help provide these???? Also we will be looking to borrow artificial Christmas trees, minus decorations, of all sizes and colors. Also we would like to borrow a kayak or canoe with paddles, life jacket, helmet, several sleeping bags, a dozen backpacks, flashlights, rope, head lamp, a volley ball net, six pool noodles, six beach balls. Any item borrowed should be well marked and it will be returned at the end of VBB. The borrowing time will be August 1 - 10. Please talk to Donna Wall, she will have the 'borrow list,' to keep track of who will donate and what is still needed. This is a simple way of contributing and helping out with VBB.

craft group

Crafts will meet on April 7, 14, & 28 at 9:30 am. All are welcome to come and join us.

amica

Save Monday, May 4th at 6:30pm for a Spring Amica gathering. We will have a Potluck meal and BINGO evening. Attendees can bring a salad, dessert or \$5 towards the entrees that we will provide. Dinner is at 6:30pm.

labyrinth

On Holy Thursday, April 9, in the afternoon and evening and all day on Good Friday, April 10th, the Labyrinth will be set up in Fellowship Hall. All will be welcome to visit and walk the labyrinth in prayer and peace.

books & chocolate

The Books and Chocolates group is planning a field trip to Salem, Mass. on Saturday, May 2. Our primary focus will be the House of Seven Gables. According to the web site, the admission includes a tour of the House of Seven Gables, the Nathaniel Hawthorne House, the Counting House, the Colonial Revival Gardens and the waterfront. We will also be going out to lunch somewhere nearby. The admission cost is \$12 for adults, and \$11 for seniors, age 65 and over, and AAA members. We will meet at the church and drive in groups. We invite anyone who would like to attend; reading the book is not a requirement. If you are interested, contact Linda DeAmicis or one of the other members.

Our next meeting will be a movie night on Monday, April 13 at 7:00. We will meet again on Monday, May 11 to discuss our next book, *Harvard Yard*, by William Martin. The book is available in local libraries. It can also be purchased for as little as \$0.01 plus shipping at Amazon.com. We have discussed going on a field trip to Cambridge and the Longfellow house, etc.

There is an open invitation to any and all gatherings. No special talents required!

Due to the nature of today's economy and the elevated cost of transportation, there has been a significant increase in the cost of Easter flowers. The Decorating Committee is very sorry for any inconvenience.

Easter Flowers

**If you wish to order a Memorial Easter Lily or Tulip
for Easter Sunday, April 12, 2009**

Please return this form by Sunday April 5, 2009

Please check off:

Lily (24.00)_____ or Tulip (20.00)_____

Give to the sick or homebound _____

I will pick up _____

Given by _____

Address _____

In Memory of _____

Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church

Camp Wonderland

Kids need to get away from it all, too. But many families cannot afford to send their children to summer camp. For more than 75 years, Camp Wonderland has provided an affordable solution.

Located on 110 acres in Sharon on Lake Massapoag, this accredited overnight summer camp introduces kids to the wonders of nature, where it's often easier to feel the presence of God.

The exceptional staff offers campers ages 6 to 12 a variety of healthy activities in a safe and loving environment. Last year, over 1200 campers from all over the Commonwealth enjoyed our Camp activities such as: Boating, Crafts, Native America village, Nature hikes, Pioneering, Playground, Sports area and Recreation hall, Ropes course & swimming. Camp Wonderland features a spacious dining hall, rustic cabins, and a health unit staffed with medical personnel on duty and always available. Nondenominational services are held each morning in our chapel to start the day with inspiration.

There are applications for Camp Wonderland available in the Church Office.

WE ARE ONE

BICENTENNIAL WORSHIP CELEBRATION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY

The Massachusetts Bible Society invites you to join in celebration of our 200th anniversary by joining with us in a worship celebration on Saturday, May 2, 2009 at Old South Church, 645 Boylston Street, Boston. Remembering our ecumenical heritage, **our goal is to have at least one representative from every church in the Commonwealth. Three \$500 Bible grants will be given:** one to the church bringing the most people, one to the church that travels the farthest, and one chosen randomly from those in attendance. An offering will be taken.

Founded in 1809 as the theological debate between liberals and conservatives raged in the universities and seminaries, the Massachusetts Bible Society invited all the warring factions to come together and celebrate a common commitment to reaching everyone with the Word of God. And they came—from the left and from the right. They sat in the same room, signed the same charter, and committed themselves to the same goal. This service is a call to do that again—to put aside for an afternoon our debates and our differences and remember the faith we all share. **Take the hand of the church across the street and come.**

-Daily Lectionary-

April 2009

*These lectionary readings are from A Daily Lectionary-Scripture readings for Every Day based on the New Common Lectionary. Please share this resource with members of your church.
The readings listed for Sundays are from the UCC Desk Calendar and are not part of the daily lectionary cycle.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Epistle</u>
Wed	Apr 1	Lam 3:55-66	John 12:49-59	Rom 10:14-21
Thurs	Apr 2	Lam 4:1-10	Mark 13:1-13	Rom 11:1-12
Fri	Apr 3	Lam 4:11-22	Mark 13:14-27	Rom 11:13-24
Sat	Apr 4	Lam 5:1-22	Mark 13:28-37	Rom 11:25-36
*Sun	Apr 5	Isa 50:4-9a	Mark 14:1-15:47	Phil 2:5-11
Mon	Apr 6	Isa 42:1-9	John 12:1-11	Heb 9:11-15
Tues	Apr 7	Isa 49:1-7	John 12:20-36	1 Cor 1:18-31
Wed	Apr 8	Isa 50:4-9a	John 13:21-30	Heb 12:1-3
Thurs	Apr 9	Exod 24:3-8	Mark 14:12-26	1 Cor 10:16-17
Fri	Apr 10	Isa 52:13-53:12	John 18:1-19:42 or John 19:17-30	Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9
Sat	Apr 11	Exod 14:10-15:18	Mark 16:1-8	Rom 6:3-11
*Sun	Apr 12	Isa 25:6-9	Mark 16:1-8	1 Cor 15:1-11
Mon	Apr 13	Jon 2:1-9	Mark 16:1-8	Acts 2:14,22-32
Tues	Apr 14	Isa 30:18-21	Mark 16:9-20	Acts 2:36-41
Wed	Apr 15	Mic 7:7-15	Mark 16:9-20	Acts 3:1-10
Thurs	Apr 16	Ezek 37:1-14	Matt 28:1-16	Acts 3:11-16
Fri	Apr 17	Dan 12:1-4, 13	Matt 28:16-20	Acts 4:1-12
Sat	Apr 18	Isa 25:1-9	Mark 12:18-27	Acts 4:13-21
*Sun	Apr 19	Ps 133	John 14:8-17	Acts 4:32-35
Mon	Apr 20	Dan 1:1-21	John 20:19-31	Col 1:1-14
Tues	Apr 21	Dan 2:1-16	John 21:1-14	Col 1:15-23
Wed	Apr 22	Dan 2:17-30	John 21:15-19	Col 1:24-27
Thurs	Apr 23	Dan 2:31-49	John 21:20-25	Col 2:8-23
Fri	Apr 24	Dan 3:1-18	Like 24:1-12	Col 3:1-17
Sat	Apr 25	Dan 3:19-30	Luke 24:13-27	Col 3:18-4:6
*Sun	Apr 26	Ps 4	Luke 24:28-34	Acts 3:12-19
Mon	Apr 27	Dan 4:1-18	Luke 24:36b-48	2 Tim 1:1-14
Tues	Apr 28	Dan 4:19-27	John 20:19-23	2 Tim 1:15-2:13
Wed	Apr 29	Dan 4:28-37	John 20:24-31	2 Tim 2:14-26
Thurs	Apr 30	Dan 5:1-12	Mark 9:38-50	2 Tim 3:1-17
			Mark 10:23-31	

Camperships & Scholarships

Once again it is time for Camperships/Scholarships!
Applications are available on the counter in the Church office.
Please return your completed application to the Church office
by Easter Sunday, April 12th, 2009. Thank you!

THANK YOU LYNN !!

The Christian Education Committee would like to extend a huge thank
you to Lynn Haddad for creating beautiful new curtains for the crib
room. They really brighten things up - thanks Lynn!