

THE MEETINGHOUSE MESSENGER



The First Congregational Church
in Stoneham

October 2009

The First Congregational Church

1 Church Street

Stoneham, MA 02180

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Website: www.firstchurchstoneham.org

Office Hours: Mon-Fri. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM

Staff of the Church

Rev. Diane Cusumano, Interim Pastor

Sara Thompson, Church Secretary

John Piskadlo, Sexton

Joyce Simpson, Music Director

Heather Oliver, Messenger Editor & Treasurer

Donna Wall, Youth Director



The Meetinghouse Messenger

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United Church of Christ * October 2009

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october birthdays



3 Linda Merrow
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4 Sara Gagnon
4 Ron Oliver
5 Mandy Sawicki
6 Nikki Moccia-Thane
11 Richard Jackson
14 Mallory Fucci
15 Tracy Jacques
17 Doris Lucas
19 Linda DeAmicis
19 Amanda Lumb
21 Della Marek
22 Barbara Severance
24 Denise Doucette
26 Judith Catalano
26 Nancy Sandgren
30 Thomas Vacca

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

'Will you help me learn English?'

Sign up to become an English tutor and share the gift of language with your neighbors in Stoneham. Through our joint program with English At Large, an organization providing free, one-to-one tutoring and conversation groups for adults, you can make a lasting difference in the lives of others—and make new friends.

As a tutor, you will spend 2–3 hours a week with English learners in a schedule that adapts to your—and your student's—work and family needs. Or, you may wish to lead a weekly English conversation group. Tutoring takes place in libraries and other public facilities.

You don't have to be a teacher to become a tutor, or speak another language. All you need is the desire to reach out to others.

To find out more about **English At Large**, including tutor-training workshops in our area, call English at Large at **781-395-2374**. Email volunteer@englishatlarge.org, or visit their Web site at www.englishatlarge.org

Stoneham Training Begins in September

A special tutor-training program will begin in Stoneham in September. As we join with others in this community-wide project, we welcome your support and participation. To learn more about *Stoneham English for All*, please email: bjacq@juno.com.

LET'S GO GREEN!

We currently have **41** 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

heather@firstcongregational.com. THANKS!

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Friends in Christ,

When I turned the calendar page to October I realized I have had the privilege to share in the life of First Church for five months already. How quickly and joyfully the days have flown by. I praise God for the renewed spirit that is permeating our worship and fellowship. Many deserve thanks for giving of their time, talents and treasures in serving on committees, hosting coffee hours, donating flowers, contributing to mission projects, volunteering to help in the Food Pantry, Community Dinners and Bread and Roses, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday School, helping with Vacation Bible Blast. Each person's gift contributes to the body of Christ. Each person's gift contributes to the body of Christ.

In addition to the daily life and worship of the congregation, an interim minister is charged with five developmental tasks that I want to share with you, along with how we are working toward them.

1. Coming to terms with history: As the pastor search committee looks to the future they also look back at the long history of the church and community to understand how The First Congregational Church in Stoneham developed, recognize its strengths and discern how best to serve God and the community.
2. Discovering a new identity: The congregational survey has provided your insights to the search committee as they work toward completing the church profile in preparation for calling a new pastor. The survey helped us to focus on our hopes for the future.
3. Strengthening patterns of lay leadership: While the church has defined and functioning committees we realize the constraints of folks time. The council will be reviewing the by-laws in an effort to provide greater flexibility for carrying out the work of the church such that members may identify their spiritual gifts and joyfully serve God's church.

4. Strengthening denominational ties: We are grateful to the United Church of Christ Massachusetts Conference staff for providing the pastor search committee with guidance and resources. The conference offers many opportunities for growth and I hope we will take advantage of them. Last week I attended a seminar at the Framingham office on "Ministry in the Age of Social Networking (i.e. the Internet and Facebook). In a few weeks I will attend an interim ministers' conference. We will be seeking denominational assistance to update our website.
5. Preparing for new pastoral leadership: I have been meeting regularly with the search committee in an advisory capacity. I want to share with you their dedication. They are working diligently on completing the church profile. I ask you please to pray for them as they continue to work on behalf of your church.

With gratitude to God for each of you and your faithfulness to First Church during this time of transition. Let us live in the joy of being God's blessed and forgiven people.

Yours in the love of the resurrected Christ,

Pastor Diane

Rev. Diane Cusumano, Interim Pastor

NEW MEMBERS: First Church is a welcoming church. We embrace God's people of all faith traditions. As a family of faith we are united by our love of Christ and our love and caring for one another. Please contact Pastor Diane if you would like to inquire about joining our fellowship. 781-252-9320 or revdcusumano@yahoo.com

BIBLE STUDY: Some folks have been asking about a Bible Study class. If you are interested let's meet after church on Sunday October 11, 11:30 am in the parlor to discuss the best time to meet and what you would like to study. If you cannot attend on October 11, contact Pastor Diane at 781-252-9320 or at revdcusumano@yahoo.com.

The Choral Majority Gospel Choir returns to 1st Church

"Awesome", "Inspiring", "Heavenly", "Amazing" are expressions of praise often heard about The Choral Majority gospel choir and Sand, a diverse group of New England singers and musicians who seek to minister God's Spirit of joy, hope, and healing to New England and the world through their music.

On Saturday, October 17th at 7:00pm, TCM returns to grace our sanctuary with their incredible and inspirational sound. Bringing their unmistakable blend of superior musicianship and spiritual energy to churches and stages across New England, they perform contemporary gospel songs and hymn arrangements. Under the direction of Eric and Robin Lindahl, the choir is part of the Blue Window Arts Group, a regional collaborative of artists from eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. The evening's program - featuring solists Gail Dorey, John Haddad and both Lindahls - is sure to interest and inspire listeners of all ages. Please come and enjoy this special evening of music and worship - you'll be glad you did! Tell family and friends too!

There will be a reception following the concert. If anyone would like to help out by bringing refreshments for the reception, please contact Joyce Simpson to let her know.

The concert is free and open to the public. An offering will be taken to support our food pantry.

Books & Chocolate

Our next meeting will be October 19 at 7pm for movie night.

We will meet at Judy Clark's for the big screen!

Our November/December meeting will be on November 30
Everyone should bring a book or author to share with the group.

A New Beginning for Youth Group

After many discussions and decisions a plan has been created. Youth Group will be offered to 6th - 9th graders on Friday October 9 from 5:30- 7:30pm in the youth lounge at the Church. If there are 10th -12th graders interested in being an assistant for the evening (community service hours), they need to speak to Donna Wall to be invited to help at a youth group meeting.

This year we will be welcoming Kyle Droz to help out & chaperone at youth events at the church with Donna Wall. He is the son of Janice Droz (choir and search committee member), he is taking classes in psychology and divinity and is in his mid twenties. He is very nice and very interested in helping get youth group going. He was our 'tree man' for VBB.

WE have planned for pizza, games, and discussions for this first meeting of youth group. We will be looking for youth input of what we might be able to do this year. Please come and offer your opinion as to what we want to do or accomplish this year.

All question and concerns may be directed to Donna, either leave a message at 781-438-4469(home #), 781-438-0097(church #) or email @
dawna28@comcast.net.

At the moment I am looking for a core group(4 or more) of high school youth interested in having youth group and we can plan a time to meet and/or schedule a time you can help with the 6th -9th graders. Contact Donna for more information.

Christmas Pageant

Its that time again! Time to plan the Christmas Pageant.. The Christmas Pageant has been a tradition at First Church for many years and we would like to make sure the tradition continues.

The Christian Education Committee is asking for your help to select a Christmas Story and make it happen! If you have a favorite story that we could turn into a Christmas Pageant please let us know. ! If you are willing to coordinate the pageant, let us know! If you are able to sew costumes, we need your help. We have many costumes that are worn out or need a little mending. If you are willing to spend time at rehearsal to help guide the children we need your assistance. Please contact Jill Albiani if you would like to help.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS:

Here is our list of "Items of the Week" for the month of October. 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.

Sept. 27 – Oct. 3	Juice
Oct. 4 – 10	Mayonnaise
Oct. 11 – 17	Baked Beans
Oct. 18 – 24	Laundry Detergent
Oct. 25 – 31	Parmesan Cheese

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

The Entertainment Book is back!

Please help us raise money for the annual Church Fair fund! We are selling Entertainment 2010, a book packed with money-saving coupons for dining out, travel, entertainment, shopping, home keeping, and much more. The cost of the book is \$25.00, a portion of which goes to the Church. The book will be available during Coffee Hours for perusal and purchase. It makes a wonderful personal gift or hostess present. To purchase Entertainment 2010, contact Jill Geisler on Sundays at church or at 781-662-0450.

Missions Schedule

Sunday October 11th 11:30 Missions Meeting

Tuesday October 13th, 5:30 p.m. Hungry Helpers

Sunday October 18th
Missions Coffee Hour

Friday October 30th
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Bread & Roses Prep

Saturday October 31st
12:30 – 3:30
Bread & Roses Prep

Special Collection for Neighbors in Need(NIN)

During the month of October, we will be conducting a special collection for Neighbors in Need (NIN). NIN is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). The remainder of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Many of us often wonder how we can make a real difference in the world. How can we work for world peace? How can we help end hunger? How can we support justice and fairness? A gift to Neighbors in Need is something we can all do.

Contribution checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church and placed in the attached NIN envelope (also available in the church office). Place your envelope into the offering plate any Sunday during October or drop it off in the church office.

Volunteers Needed for Bread & Roses

Our next Bread & Roses is scheduled for Saturday, October 31st.

On Friday night, the 30th, we need eight helpers or more between 6:00 and 7:30 to cut up the chicken, peel and chop vegetables and bake brownies. On Saturday, at least three volunteers are needed around 1:00 p.m. to assemble the meal and clean up. Bring your favorite knife or peeler, cutting board and apron! Also, don't forget to bring a hat or bandana to cover your hair if you don't like wearing a hairnet.

Hungry Helpers

Volunteers are needed to assist with our church's Community Dinner meal on the second Tuesday of the month. If you can help out, arrive at 5:30 to serve or come a bit later to assist with clearing tables and washing up.

Toiletry Collection

Don't forget to bring home the complimentary soap, shampoo, and other toiletry items from your travels. These items will be delivered to Emmaus, Inc. in Haverhill and Rosie's Place in Boston for distribution to their patrons. Unopened, travel-size toiletries may be left in the Missions' collection basket in the church office.

Save the Date

December 10th, 6 – 9 p.m.

Fundraiser at the Dockside in Wakefield.

craft group

Crafts will meet every Tuesday in October at 9:30 am. All are welcome to come and join us.

messenger deadline

The Deadline for the October 2009 Messenger is Sunday, September 20th.

tea anyone?

We are considering having another Tea Party next year. February 14, 2010, a Sunday which happens to be Valentine's Day, is being considered. Any ladies who would like to hostess a table for her friends and relatives for this event should speak to Judy Clark (781-944-7240). It is early, but I would like to get an idea of who is interested in participating before making any definite plans.

Golden Age Sunday Brunch October 18

Following the church service on Golden Age Sunday we will have a brunch in Fellowship Hall. Breakfast casseroles, fresh fruit, and coffee cakes will be on the menu as well as pancakes.

The cost is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children. Proceeds will go to the Steeple Fund. Reservations can be made by calling the church office or at Coffee Hours.

Anyone who wishes to help prepare and set up on Sat., Oct. 17 or Sunday morning please let Judy Clark know(781-944-7240).

Christian Education

The Christian Education Committee would like to revitalize our Youth Room. Do you have a chair or sofa that you do not use anymore? (in good condition) Would you consider donating a sofa or chair to the church? Pick up at your home and transportation to the church would be provided.

We are also looking for book cases and 2 locking cabinets (not too large) with a couple of shelves to store Sunday School Supplies in the classrooms.

If you are able to make a donation please contact a member of the CE Committee (Jill Albiani, Wenyi Bien, Heather Oliver, Kathy Bergstrom, Susan Witherall or Linda Merrow) We are always there on Sundays with a class or you can see us at coffee hour. Our numbers are also in the directory if it is easier for you to make a telephone call.

The following are the dates for the family Sundays when there will be no Sunday School and all children are welcome in worship. Part of Christian Education is helping our children learn to participate in worship.

October 11	January 17	April 4
November 29	February 14	April 18
December 27	March 28	May 30

TEAM JESUS NEEDS YOU!!!!

If you are available to teach a class a couple times a month, once a month or you would like to assist a teacher, please contact Linda Merrow.



HOLLY FAIR

NOVEMBER 13TH AND 14TH

Friday	7PM - 9PM	Fair and Pie Social
Saturday	9AM - 2PM	Fair, Coffee Hour and Luncheon.
Saturday	5:30 PM	Ham & Bean Dinner followed by Auction.

To make this fair a success requires many, many hands. There will be a book room, a white elephant room, children's room with clothing and toys, cotton and knit items, jewelry, crafts and a country store. If you have time to volunteer, please sign your name on the poster in fellowship hall or contact Linda Merrow.

We would welcome your donations of baked goods, knit items, jewelry, books, children's clothing and white elephant items. Donations for the Auction would also be appreciated.

Donations may be left on the stage. If you have an item that requires pick up, please contact Linda Merrow at 781-438-2475.

Snippets from the Search Committee

Hello Friends-

I just wanted to say thank you very much to everyone who took time out of *their lives to help the Search Committee* with the survey. We are now in the process of gathering the data, to help write the profile for our future leader. The Committee may come to you again in the future to ask for your help. Thank you again for your participation.

Kevin O'Neil

**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 _____

Serve New England

Serve N.E. continues its non-profit food cooperative here at First Church again in October. Sign-Up/Order: October 8th 6:00-8:00pm (outside the youth lounge)

Food Delivery: October 24th 9:00-11:00am (youth lounge)

Serve New England provides monthly distributions of meats, produce, and other grocery items at 30-50% discounts. This program is open to anyone. The only requirement is that participants complete 2 hours of volunteer or community service per month in their community. Sara in the church office will have all the registration forms, as well as the community service receipts.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or you can learn more information about Serve at the website

www.serve-newengland.org

Thanks! Tim Korwan



Missions is Recruiting Meal Captains!

Have you always wanted to be more involved with Hungry Helpers or Bread & Roses, but can't make it each month or every quarter? The Missions Committee is recruiting Hungry Helpers and Bread & Roses Captains. *The commitment is for just once a year!*

Hungry Helpers Captain – one evening a year!

- Time commitment - 3.5 – 4 hours on a Tuesday
- Direct a team of 5 -10 volunteers who will prepare a salad, warm a pre-prepared meal, serve the meal, and clean-up

Bread & Roses Captain - one weekend, once a year!

- Time commitment - about 6 hours spread over a Friday night and Saturday afternoon
- Direct a team of 5-10 volunteers that prepares a set meal for 200

We're also recruiting grocery shoppers and delivery drivers for the Bread & Roses meals.

B & R Shoppers –

- Time commitment – about one hour on the Thursday or Friday prior to the meal
- Purchase and deliver groceries to the church prior to Friday by 5:00 p.m.

B& R Delivery –

- Time Commitment – one hour
- Load meal at 3:30 for delivery to Bread & Roses in Lawrence at 4:00 p.m.
- Must have a vehicle which can accommodate 10 large foil trays.

If you'd like to learn more about any of these volunteer opportunities, contact Lynn Haddad at 781-246-5849 or lahaddad@verizon.net

From the Flower Committee

Your flowers donated on the altar in memory of loved ones are greatly appreciated by all, it keeps our Sunday Services decorated beautifully and cheers up a sick or home bound person later in the day! Our flower committee is small this year. If you have time and would like to deliver flowers to a shut in, please call Betty Baumann or see me after church. (781-438-5931) thank you!

Can you help?

One of our regular food pantry families is a mom with 5 children. She is home -schooling her children, and recently found out that new regulations require that she have a computer for her children to do their lessons on CD-Roms. If anyone has an older computer lying around that they would be willing to donate, please let the church office know. It doesn't have to be new or super fast, just have a working CD Drive. We already have a monitor we can put with it. Thanks!

Dear Church Friends,

Thank you for all the phone calls, cards, the beautiful prayer shawl (delivered by Pastor Diane) and the lovely autumn floral arrangement (delivered by Judi Catalano). My spirits have been lifted by your acts of kindness. As I continue to recover from my injuries. Blessings, Betty Baumann

Community News:

Hallmark Health Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice offers several bereavement support groups for children and adults. They include: "Loss after 60", which meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays at Atria Maplewood Place, 295 Broadway, Malden from 10-11:30 AM; "Kids and Grief", which meets every Wednesday at the Franklin School, 14 Franklin St. in Melrose from 4-5:30 PM (ages 5-8 meet 1st & 3rd Wed, ages 9-13 meet 2nd & 4th Wed); "Grief and Change", a six-session bereavement support group for Adults who are grieving the death of a loved one; and "Loss of an Adult Child", also a six session bereavement support group for anyone grieving the death of an adult child. For information on these groups, which are led by bereavement counselors, call Judy Seifert, LICSW for Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice at 781-338-7861. There is no charge to attend these support groups, however, registration is required.



Chimes & Drama Begins!

September 30, 2009

Chimes will be held in the music room from 3:30 – 4:15

Drama will be held in the Sanctuary from 4:30 – 5:30
We will Begin working on “ARE WE THERE YET!!!”

A Snack will be given to all who participate in both programs from 4:15 – 4:30

Please join us!

Golden Age

It is a long standing tradition at First Church
To honor the elders in our midst
on Golden Age Sunday.

We will celebrate the 134th Anniversary of this special event on Sunday, October 18th, 2009, honoring those who are 80 and over.

Please call Sara in the Church Office to add your name or the name of a friend or family member (with permission, please)

October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:30 Diaconate	8-9 AA (lounge) 7:00 Search	9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (parlor)	3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	6-8 Serve Orders 7:00 Cantata Rehearsal	5:30-7:30 Youth Group	9-2 Adventista
8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship Family Sunday	OFFICE CLOSED 8-9 AA (lounge)	9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study (Parlor)	3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	7:00 55+ Singles 7:00 Cantata Rehearsal		9-2 Adventista 2-10 Choral Majority
8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:30 Search Com.	8-9 AA (lounge) 7:00 Books & Chocolate	9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study	3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	7:00 Cantata Rehearsal		9-2 Adventista 9-11 Serve Pickup
8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:30 Trustees	8-9 AA (lounge)	9:30 Crafts 5:45 Comm. Dinner 7:00 Book Study	3:30-4:15 Chimes 4:30-5:30 Drama 7:30 Adventista (Chapel)	7:00 Cantata Rehearsal		9-2 Adventista