



MESSENGER
of the
**First Congregational
Church**
United Church of Christ
121 W. Foster St.
Melrose, Massachusetts

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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Standing with Standing Rock

You may have heard of protests in North Dakota regarding the construction of an oil pipeline across tribal lands. I think it is important that you know that our United Church of Christ is actively involved in this protest and this week is part of a large delegation of faith leaders to the site of this protest (actually, the protesters prefer to be called "protectors" since they see their role as protectors of threatened water resources).

Four conference ministers of the United Church of Christ, and a score of pastors from at least nine states will be part of a group of 300 clergy of several faith traditions gathering this week to stand with the water protectors at the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in North Dakota.

The tribe water protectors and their allies are blocking construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a \$3.8 billion dollar project designed to carry oil across four states, through the sacred lands of the reservation and under the Missouri River, the water supply of millions of Americans.

"Our duty as people of faith and clergy could not be clearer: to stand on the side of the oppressed and to pray for God's mercy in these challenging times," said Fr. John Floberg, an Episcopal priest who serves the reservation and organizer of the event. "There is hardly a place in North America that isn't somehow being represented by those that are coming for this Peaceful, Prayerful, Lawful, Non-Violent witness."

The group, which includes UCC Conference ministers the Rev. Gordon Rankin, South Dakota; the Rev. Keith Mills, Northern Plains (North Dakota); the Rev. Shari Prestemon, Minnesota; and the Rev. John Vertigan, Florida, is responding to increased aggression by state authorities working to move the water protectors out of the way of DAPL contractors. In the last week, more than 140 people have been arrested.

"The coordinated gathering of religious leaders at the Oceti Sakowin camp will be participating in an allied action of prayer with indigenous tribes from all over the world," said Rankin, conference minister of the

Sunday, November 13, 2016

9:00 AM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal
10:00 AM – WORSHIP and Sunday School
11:15 AM – Coffee Hour
11:15 AM – Reflect and Respond, Library

*THE FLOWERS are in loving memory of my grandmother,
Nellie R. Bodtke, given by Karen Friedman.*

DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday, November 15

7:00 PM – Deacons and Trustees, Library
7:00 to 8:00 PM – Morning Star Voices Rehearsal

Wednesday, November 16

7:15 PM – Bells rehearsal

Thursday, November 17

4:00 – 7:00 PM – Bread of Life Dinner, American Legion,
368 Pleasant St., Malden

Friday, November 18

2:30 PM – Staff Meeting

Saturday, November 19

9 AM to Noon – Fall Cleanup Day

Sunday, November 20 – Thanksgiving Sunday

11:15 AM – Thanksgiving Dinner

South Dakota Conference United Church of Christ. "We gather to pray, not just with Christian or Jewish or Muslim prayers, but with smudge and with dancing. We are there to pray as our native sisters and brothers do."

The Rev. Denise Griebler, pastor of First UCC in Richmond, Mich., lives in Detroit and sees a number of parallels between the struggle in Standing Rock and the one she's lived through.

"I've been a part of the water struggle in Michigan, resisting water shut-offs in Detroit, advocating for an affordable water plan and resisting efforts to privatize our water system," Griebler said. "We've called for public accountability and repair of the nearby Flint water system that is still poisoning residents. We've been bringing water to people who have been shut-off, protesting, blocking shut-off trucks, mapping the shut-offs, writing church resolutions, holding teach-ins, fighting legal battles and more. All of this is teaching us that water is life."

"We gather to protect the sacred," said UCC Conference Minister Rev. Gordon Rankin, South Dakota. "We are there to protect sacred burial sites made holy by the tears and prayers of those remembering ancestors interred there. We are also there to protect Mother Earth and remember the sacred call that all of us have received to steward her resources gently."

See you in church,

Rev. Dominic



Ginny Niles, Tom McLoughlin (Judy Murphy's brother), Nyal Fuentes, Bryan Mc Allister-Grande, Claire Griffin, Herb Gray, Bill Albright, Barbara Wellington, Becky Faro, Bill Copeland, Gem Colvin, Dot Allen, Bob Pierce, Anne Wing, Ella Boyle, Scott Chisholm.



SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Our Toddler through Grade 5 classes this week will continue with the lesson theme "Children of the Bible", with the story of David & Goliath. Our Middle School class will meet in the library to conclude their lesson unit "Friends Forever"

High School youth are invited to meet with Jen Crain in the Spollett Youth Room for a discussion as part of "Your Faith ... Your Way". Those who do not wish to join the discussion are encouraged to remain in Worship.

Announcement: 2016 Christmas Pageant

Plans are coming together for a Christmas Pageant, to be performed by our Sunday School children on December 18. Parents are invited to sign up their children on the posted board this Sunday. Adults are also needed to assist with costumes and props. Please note that this production will not involve multiple rehearsals, but planners do need an idea of the number of children who may want to take part. For more information, please see Heidi Buser or Lisa Warner.

Youth

Big thanks to our team of youths who braved the rain to form the Raking Brigade: Alex Brincheiro, Anna Brincheiro, Adam Drafts-Johnson, Jack Durant, Will Durant, Eden Hudson, Hudson Kugele, and Katie Pluskey. We appreciate your service to our community!

Fall Clean Up: Saturday, November 19th! 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Join us as we rake up the leaves and prepare the grounds for winter. There may also be some interior cleaning jobs. Hope to see you there!



The following groups meet here regularly:

- Boy Scouts** – Tuesdays at 7:00 PM in the basement
- Girl Scouts** – Sundays, 3:00 to 5:00 PM
- AI-Anon** – weekdays at 12 noon, Sunday at 1 & 7 PM – Rm. 8
- Blue of a Kind** – Mondays at 7:00 PM in the Music Room
- S.A.R.P.** – Mondays and Tuesdays at 6:30 PM, Lounge
- Tai Chi for Arthritis** – Wednesdays at 10:00 AM, Room 8
- A.A.** – Mondays at 4:30 PM, & 7:00 PM (men), Tuesdays at 4:30 PM, 7:30 PM (Women's AWOL), Wednesdays at 4:30 PM & 7:30 PM, Thursdays at 4:30 PM and 7:00 PM, Fridays at 8:00 PM and Saturdays at 9:00 AM (men) and 3:00 PM – Rm. 8



6TH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER NOVEMBER 20TH Right after Church

On November 20th, right after the service, our church will have its 6th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner! It is always a meaningful time in that we all can gather in the Narthex, share in a delicious potluck meal and visit with one another.

As in the past, there will be turkey for everyone, and members of the congregation bring their choice of a side dish, salad, or dessert. A signup board is now in the Narthex on one of the front windows. Take a moment when next you are at church and sign up to join us, and think about what you might like to bring to share.

Please plan to join us on November 20th. We hope to see you there!

Donna and Ron Miner



Reflect and Respond

Rev. Dominic will be hosting a Reflect and Respond session after worship November 13. This will be held in the Library and will be a time to discuss the themes of the worship experience. All are welcome to ask questions, share, and benefit from the reflections of others. Please let Rev. Dominic know if you would like child care. It can be easily provided if needed.

Mission Opportunity – Bread of Life

November 17th is the Third Thursday of the month... so the FCC volunteers are heading to **Bread of Life** in Malden! We would love to have a few more people join us. Bread of Life provides the food, we prepare and cook it, then serve the clients. Our team from First Congregational Church volunteers from 4pm – 7pm. You can make a difference, even if you can only spare an hour during that time!

The location for the meals is: **The American Legion Post 69, 368 Pleasant Street, in Malden**—one block from the Malden MBTA station, near the intersection of Rte 60 and Pleasant Street. (There is a parking lot!!!)

If you can't make it to the dinner but would still like to help, we can always use donations of dessert. If you have questions about this mission of our church, please speak with Sallie Klemm shklemm@verizon.net or 781-665-0159.



Winter Wonderland Fair

**December 2 –
6:00-8:00 pm**

**December 3 –
9:00 am-2:00 pm**

Gingerbread Houses: These houses are a real crowd pleaser and provide an opportunity for volunteers to join the assembly crew the week leading up to the fair. If construction is not your thing you can participate by donating the “building materials”.

Ingredients: graham crackers, 2 lb. bags powdered sugar, mini candy canes, small hard candies.

Nancy Gift: 781- 665-1790

Used Toys: What a wonderful opportunity to sort and recycle toys that have been outgrown or have lost their “luster” in your family. Good autumn clear out for you, and inexpensive toys for another family! This is a popular shopping spot at the fair.

Kara Larzelere: 781-662-5604

Books: Used books are also a big draw for children and grown-ups alike. Please go through your books now in readiness for the Fair. **Volunteers are needed the week leading up to the fair to sort and display.**

John Whalen: 617-763-5318

Man Cave: Specializing in used tools and other neat stuff.

Steve Gyurina: 781-665-7872. Steve can answer inquiries you might have for contributions.

Volunteers needed!!!!!!

- *Bake for the baked goods table
- *Sign up to work in the Children’s Room
- *Decorate
- *Set up
- *Take down tables and chairs and clean up at

Fair’s end

Thanks to all for your contribution of goods, time, and energy!!!

MBA Office Has Moved

The Massachusetts Conference's Waltham office, serving the Metropolitan Boston and Northeast Association leaders, churches and clergy, has moved to Winchester as of Nov. 1.

The change will reduce the rent being paid for the office space from \$20,000 a year to \$3,600 a year.

"Contributions to the Conference from local churches are declining slowly but steadily over time, so the Board of Directors needs to be constantly attentive to opportunities to reduce costs without diminishing ministries with our churches and clergy," said Associate Conference Minister Wendy Vander Hart. "The end of the Waltham lease provides such an opportunity."

Wendy works out of the office with Administrative Assistant Colin Loggins.

Churches on the southern end of the Northeast Association and northern edge of the Metropolitan Boston Association were approached about available space at a modest rent. The First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC, responded with an offer of space.

The office is in flux this week while moving, but the contact information is currently:

21 Church St., Winchester, MA 01890
781-369-1396

waltham@macucc.org

All the women of your Church are cordially invited to attend the
United Methodist Women's Annual Christmas Tea
Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 1:00 PM
at the First United Methodist Church of Melrose
645 Main Street, Melrose MA
 2:00 PM - Musical Program
Please R.S.V.P. to their church office
as soon as possible – 781-662-7060
Monday thru Thursday 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Reservation is essential as seating is limited.

Stewardship Moment **An Easy Promise to Break**

A while ago I promised myself that I would NEVER again volunteer for another church pledge campaign. Asking people for money is perhaps one of the most uncomfortable and least desirable task inside a church. A pledge campaign demands hours of lonely work and coordination. Look, I happily did my share of them – but I must confess I was quite happily enjoying my post-pledge campaign retirement.

Yet here I am today asking you for money.

As you know, our good friend and Trustee of Finance, Nyal Fuentes needed some help recently, and many in our congregation mobilized for him and his family. It was immediately obvious where I should pitch in. Suddenly my old promise melted away without misgivings. Like the New England Patriots, we at the FCC of Melrose have outstanding bench strength. The next person always steps up when needed. It's why we look forward to coming here most Sundays – as well as all the other days and nights we gather in the various activities of our church.

Soon after, I spoke to Rob (our other Trustee of Finance) about the theme of this year's campaign. His idea was to broaden the regular campaign to ask for BOTH money AND a volunteer time commitment. Yes, he's technically correct that Stewardship means both, but I fretted he was also doubling the burden. It's challenging enough to pull in a hundred or so monetary pledge forms, and now we're asking you to commit upfront hours of time TOO? That's crazy!

So again like the Patriots, "in Rob we Trust." He's right of course. In my twenty-plus years at FCC Melrose, I've observed there is a high correlation between generous giving of time and money. And I've also observed and experienced a high correlation between giving and receiving tremendous positive energy in return – call it personal fulfillment or spiritual well-being or just plain

old happiness. In other words, you are truly missing out on a good thing if you hold yourself back.

Let me share with you a few of my own joyful memories volunteering here at FCC Melrose.

- As a Sunday Usher along with my son Charles when he was a little boy (now a college junior). To this day, I can't help but smile whenever I see young children usher with their parents.
- As a Sunday Teller where I got to know quite a few people in the church including Nyal and Rob.
- As a Holiday Fair Lunch Cashier, my annual gig with Steve where we take orders (often correctly), and entertain the customers with our banter.
- As a Confirmation Sponsor, where I got to meet Matthew, an impressive young man.
- As a Youth Mission Trip Chaperone. A legendary trip where my fellow chaperones and I had several "A-team" like adventures.

I can give many more examples. All of them allowed me to connect with great people, give back to the community, and live a more complete, richer life than my normal daily routine can ever offer. And I certainly see that reflected in the lives of others I connected with – the more we give, the richer we feel.

This idea was underscored recently in a blog article I read that highlighted the profound differences between a resume and a eulogy. In our resumes, we pile up the fruits of our professional life – our accomplishments, job titles, marketable skills and the like. Our eulogies, however, capture how we really are remembered and how we live in the hearts and minds of others. For me, Stewardship at FCC Melrose is an important and proud part of my personal legacy. I hope you feel the same.

Ed Arnold

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS - \$15.00 per plant

Send your order form by Sunday, December 11 to: Darby Drafts, 25 Adams St., Melrose MA 02176

Ordered by: _____

Phone #: _____

IN MEMORY OF:

of plants ordered _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to *First Congregational Church*.

