

The Messenger

May 2019

The First Church of Monson, Congregational/UCC

5 High Street, Monson MA 01057

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www.firstchurchmonson.org

www.facebook.com/firstchurchmonson

The Church Office is usually open on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 9 AM to 1 PM. Pastor Peter is usually in his office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10 AM to 3 PM or by appointment.

Please visit our website and calendar at www.firstchurchmonson.org.

*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Our Mission

The Mission of the First Church of Monson is
to praise God through prayer,
to share the Word and love of God by promoting fellowship in the community,
and to serve as stewards of God's creation –
all in a manner that glorifies God and emulates Christ.



Dear Friends,

We are moving into the last weeks of First Church's 2018-2019 program year. Before we look ahead, I'd like to stop and reflect on Holy Week.

I was deeply moved by the solemn Maundy Thursday service of Communion and Tenebrae, where we heard the stories of Jesus' Last Supper, Arrest, Trial and Crucifixion. Joy dawned again on Easter with our Sunrise Service and Service of Resurrection. The strains of "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" with trumpet and organ, and the music of the Sunday School Singers and Easter Choir still ring in my ears.

Easter Sunday is determined by a formula: The first Sunday after the first full moon of the Vernal Equinox. Therefore, unlike Christmas Eve, Easter has no set annual calendar date. This year, Easter was LATE! So late, in fact, that it will be another 95 years before there is another that Easter falls this late in the year. The after-effect is that we have a lot of worshipping, learning, gathering, and noshing to do in a very short period of time.

In the coming weeks, we will celebrate Eastertide, Trinity Sunday, Ascension, Children's Sunday, and Pentecost. We will hold new member classes, Children's Sunday rehearsals, an organ concert and dinner, a congregational meeting, and the reception of several new Covenant Members.

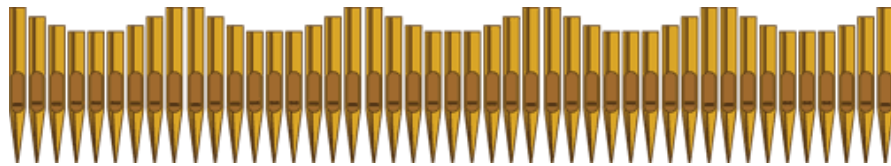
God has blessed us with a growing and verdant ministry at First Church. I think that deserves our thanks, our praise, and our alleluias.

Easter Blessings,

***The Pastor's Open Pantry challenge for May is
canned fruit and pasta.***

On Saturday, May 4, Permelia (Permie) Sears will be a guest recitalist at First Church Monson performing a program “Couperin to Messiaen: Four Centuries of French Organ Music” on the historic 1892 Johnson and Son Organ, Opus 781.

The pieces include works by French composers from the seventeenth through the twentieth century. Featured in the eleven compositions will be Choral No. 3 in a minor by Cesar Franck, Prelude in E Major, Op. 99 No. 1 by Camille Saint-Saens, and Suite Gothique, Op. 25 by Leon Boellmann.



The concert will be preceded at 5 p.m. by a lasagna dinner prepared by members of the First Church Music Committee. Tickets for the concert and dinner are \$20.00 and may be purchased by contacting the Church Office at 413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org by April 28. Tickets to the 7 p.m. concert may be purchased at the door for \$10.00. Proceeds from this event will be donated to the Eva Farr Fund for the care and maintenance of the Johnson organ.

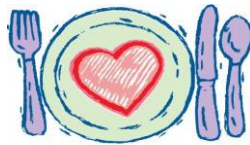


Sunday, June 2 – Children’s Sunday
Special Congregational Meeting following the worship service

Sunday, June 9 – Pentecost
New members received
Pentecost Gifts

Hearts Willing Club
Wednesday, May 22, 2019
Annual Meeting and Banquet
6 p.m. appetizers ~ 6:30 p.m. dinner

Mug-N-Muffin Restaurant
25 Palmer Road, Monson



Meal choices are
Prime Rib, Baked Haddock, Stuffed Chicken, or Vegetarian
\$25.00 plus tax and tip

Election of Officers
Minutes and Treasurer's Report

Please make reservations with
any member of the Program Committee

Recently, Fire Chief McDonald and Assistant Chief Harris did a fire safety walk-through of the church. They cited several areas of concern; thanks to the trustees, all have been addressed or soon will be. One special concern was the clutter near exits; all possible exits must be clutter-free, including the former Open Pantry exit in the basement, the short passageway between the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, and the area from Pastor Peter's Office to the library and elevator. All three areas have been cleared of clutter. Please do not leave any items there that could obstruct those exits.



Kudos to Sunday School Superintendent Carolann Smart and Christian Education Committee members Kristy Kania and Grace McIntyre for their “Family Make and Take” held on Sunday, April 14, 2019. Children and adults made beautiful Resurrection Garden boxes. Scripture readings and artifacts were included so families could retrace the steps of Jesus throughout Holy Week.

May's Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness



If we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us, we will be filled with the fruit of gentleness. Gentleness involves humility and thankfulness toward God, and polite restrained behavior toward others.

Jesus is the picture of gentleness. “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.”

Matthew 11:29 (NIV) “See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey.” Matthew 21:5 (NIV)



Think Mother's Day!

Think Birthdays!

Think Graduations!

All are perfect occasions to honor someone special with the gift of a candle – an organic soy candle from Sturbridge Candle Company! Why organic soywax candles?

1. Organic soywax contains no toxins.
2. Soywax burns longer than petroleum-based wax.
3. Soy candles burn with no black smoke.
4. Organic soywax candles are environmentally friendly.
5. Organic soy candles contain no harmful dyes.

Elaine will be selling candles on Sundays, April 28 and May 5 in Fellowship Hall. Sturbridge Organic Soy Candles are handmade and custom blended. Three sizes will be available, 8 oz., 12 oz. and 16 oz. All proceeds benefit First Church. For more information or to order candles, please contact the Church Office at 413-267-3312 or office@firstchurchmonson.org.

The daily lectionary for May 2019 may be found at

<https://www.macucc.org/files/files/documentsdailylectionary/may+2019.pdf>

National Day of Prayer

The first Thursday in May, May 2 this year, is the National Day of Prayer in the USA. This year's theme is "Love One Another" based on the words of Jesus in John 13:34. "Love one another, just as I have loved you."



Baker's Lane Biscotti (BLB) appeared at two holiday craft fairs before Christmas and 6 dates at the Amherst Winter Farmer's Market in the Hampshire Mall. It was lovely to meet folks and share my biscotti and pizzelle. Many were overcome with memories once they tasted the pizzelle—mostly of their grandmothers who used to make them. It was such a joy to witness this!

A total of \$105.30 was donated to First Church for October - December, 2018. In the first three months of 2019, BLB was able to write a check for \$30.30 to First Church.

As this is an on-going fundraiser, please remember to order homemade biscotti and pizzelle for your family, friends, parties, events and functions! You can place orders on the website, by email, or by phone.

www.bakerslanebiscotti.com

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