



#### **MARCH 2023**

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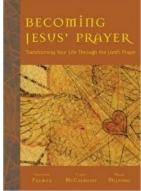
"Lent is a time for discipline, for confession, for honesty, not because God is mean or faultfinding or finger-pointing but because he wants us to know the joy of being cleaned out, ready for all the good things he now has in store."

N.T. Wright

### The Pastor's Corner

In 2019, Pope Francis recommended a change to the English translation of the Lord's Prayer for Roman Catholics. His recommendation was to shift "lead us not into temptation" to "do not let us fall into temptation". I invite you to wrestle with that shift. Who leads us into temptation? God? Satan? Our human condition?

Saying the Lord's Prayer weekly is part of our tradition at First Congregational Church, this Lenten season we'll be offering a weekly opportunity to dig deeper into the words that shape this prayer and hopefully open ourselves up to a more profound relationship with God through the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples.



We will meet weekly for light soup and bread as well as a time for conversation and prayer each Wednesday during Lent from 5:30 -6:30 in the chapel. (Please see the sign up

genius if you are willing to help provide food, Marie Murphy is coordinating). We will be using the book "Becoming Jesus' Prayer" as our guide. You are invited to come to any or all of the sessions- the chapters we'll be exploring are listed below, the readings should take about 10 minutes per chapter, so it is designed for participation with very little preparation. Copies of the book are available in Gifford Hall or you can order used ones on-line for just a few dollars. March 1st --- Four Versions of Jesus' Prayer and Jesus' Prayer Opens Us to

the Holy (chapter 1) March 8th --- Jesus' Prayer Teaches the Faith (chapter 2) March 15th--- Jesus' Prayer Calls us to Forgiveness (chapter 3)

March 22nd --- Jesus' Prayer Brings us Peace & Jesus' Prayer Demands Justice (chapters 4 & 5)

March 29th--- Jesus' Prayer Makes Us One & Jesus' Prayer is our Life (chapters 6 & 7)

Two very specific events to highlight in March are Amistad Sunday where Rev. James Ross II will be bringing us a word on racial justice (March 12th) and our own Carol Baker's presentation on the history of the Underground Railroad in Shrewsbury (March 19th). Visit the National Archives for a brief overview of the Amistad story: https:// www.archives.gov/education/lessons/ amistad

With God's Blessings for the Journey,

Pastor Holly (pastor@fccsm.org)

## **EVENTS**

## AMISTAD SUNDAY March 12, 2023 9:30 am

Reception to follow

Join FCC for Amistad Sunday where Rev. James Ross II, SNEC Minister for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, will speak about our historic legacy and contemporary efforts towards racial equality.





The Trial of the Amistad Captives One of three murals painted by African American artist Hale Woodruff portraying the Amistad mutiny and its aftermath.



First Congregational Church 19 Church Road Shrewsbury, MA 01545 www.fccsm.org 508-845-7286 Sharing God's Love for 300 Years!



Southern New England Conference United Church of Christ Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Troops 114 & 7114 **PASTA SUPPER!** Saturday, March 11, 5-7 pm \$10per person, under 5 Free

Tickets will be sold 2/26 & 3/5 during Coffee Hour & @ the door!



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## **EVENTS**

# The Underground Railroad in Shrewsbury and the North Precinct

Who helped slaves escape? Where were the rumored tunnels? Who delivered abolitionist speeches from the pulpit? Join us to find out!

Hey, Kids! Come hear the story of Peg Leg Joe, design your own UGRR quilt and play the game Freedom North!

## Examining the Evidence

Presentation by Carol Baker Historian, First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury

### Sunday, March 19, 11:00am

This program is free and open to the public.

On display will be an UGRR Sampler Quilt of secret quilt patterns used as clues to tell the slaves which way to go. A light brunch will be served. Attendees will receive an Evidence Pack which is essential to the program. Please reserve yours at www.tiny.cc/nn94vz, by calling the Church Office or by scanning this QR code.



First Congregational Church 19 Church Road, Shrewsbury, MA 01545 www.fccsm.org 508-845-7286 Sharing God's Love for 300 Years!



# **EVENTS**

### ARTS ON THE GREEN PRESENTS

a concert of chamber music composed by European and American masters



performed by Ensemble Aubade

Peter H. Bloom, Flute Francis Grimes, Viola Steven Sussman, Piano

# Saturday, March 25, 2023 4:00 pm

A free-will offering will be gratefully accepted.



First Congregational Church 19 Church Road Shrewsbury, MA 01545 www.fccsm.org 508-845-7286 Sharing God's Love for 300 Years! This program is supported in part by a grant from the Shrewsbury Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



### **Prayer of the Month**

#### Dear God,

In this season of Lent we're reminded of our own difficulties and struggles. Sometimes the way has seemed too dark. Sometimes we feel like our lives have been marked by such grief and pain, we don't see how our circumstance can ever change. But in the midst of our weakness, we ask that you would be strong on our behalf. Lord, rise up within us, let your Spirit shine out of every broken place we've walked through. Allow your power to manifest through our weakness, so that others will recognize it is You who is at work

on our behalf. We ask that you would trade the ashes of our lives for the beauty of your Presence. Trade our mourning and grief for the oil of joy and gladness from your Spirit. Trade our despair for hope and praise. We give you thanks today and believe this season of darkness will fade away. Thank you for being with us in whatever we face and for being greater than this trial. thank you that you are at work right now, trading our ashes for greater beauty. We praise

you, for you make all things new. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

by Debbie McDaniel







**Hanover Theater** APRIL 29, 2PM

Tickets - \$56

On sale during Sunday Coffee all during March



All money is due by March 26th, 2023 3 Ways to Pay:

1) At coffee hour after the Sunday service. 2) Deliver a check to the office. Please write "Show Tickets" on the memo line. 3) Online on the church's website. Click "Give" the top menu, "click here to donate", choose "Other" at the bottom to pay. Be sure to label it "Show Tickets.".

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### 300<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The 300th Anniversary Giving Opportunity for March is the collection of condiments such as ketchup, mustard, salad dressing, mayo, etc. to supplement the Food Pantry at St. Annes in Shrewsbury. Condiments are items that are very much needed and one of the quickest to be emptied off the shelves. Please consider donating what you can to help St. Annes service people who are experiencing food insecurity. Thank you.



#### OUR CONTINUED SHARING, 1723 - 2023 MARCH 2023

During the month of March, we are collecting condiments in nonbreakable containers to be donated to St Anne's Human Services Food Pantry. The Food Pantry services clients for the Town of Shrewsbury. (Each town in Massachusetts has a designated food pantry.) Food is distributed weekly to needy families in Shrewsbury.

"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." *Hebrews* 13:16

\*\*Due to record-keeping and storage issues, please donate allotted items only in assigned month.

#### **300th ANNIVERSARY MEMORABILIA ITEMS FOR SALE**

In celebration of our 300th anniversary, we have several items of memorabilia which we hope will add to the celebration and add to your memories of this historic time in the story of our church.

Please stop by the 300th anniversary table check out the items (on display until March 12) that will be offered for your purchase. All of the items that you will see were from suggestions that were offered at the 300th anniversary meetings that were held during the past year.

These items will be available anytime by contacting Sue and Dave Russell at dasrusl@charter.net or 508-753-1660. We will display them again in May.



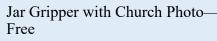


Anniversary Wall Mirror—\$250 Small Replica of the Front of Church with Clock— \$25 Meeting House Cross (Original Wood) - Donation Metal Anniversary Ornament—\$20 Seasonal Note Cards of the Church \$15/ box of 12 Anniversary Trivet/Coaster—\$7











## MUSIC MINISTRY

### Organ Refurbishment News



This is Richard M. Frary, Jr. with a replacement pipe that will go between the great reservoir (pictured) and the great windchest (not pictured) above it.



This is Bill Czelusniak. Behind him are pouch boards from our Casavant.



This is Jon Van Houten working on another wind reservoir from our Casavant at the Czelusniak et Dugal workshop.



This is Gerrard McGovern working on a wind reservoir from our Casavant organ at Czelusniak et Dugal of Northampton, Massachusetts.



Our Bell Choir



Andrew Lefferts, Interim Director of Music

# CHRISTIAN ED

Wednesdays in March 5:30pm to 6:30pm Bible Study and light meal

We will be delving into the Lord's Prayer using the book "Becoming Jesus' Prayer: Transforming Your Life Through the Lord's Prayer" by Gregory V Palmer, Cindy M McCalmont, and Brian K Milford.

Copies will be available through the church or feel free to order a (used) one on-line.

We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to make a soup or bring bread or a plate of cookies for this event. Please use the link to the sign-up genius below if you are willing to provide something for the light meal. Please contact Marie Murphy at 508-845-6948 if you have any questions FCCSM.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a094cafa72aa57-lenten/7413817#/.

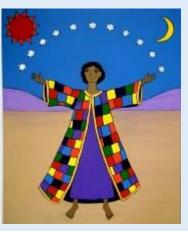


#### In March, KidZone is going to focus on Joseph.

On March 5, the children will create a Coat of Many colors in the Art Workshop. March 12 will find the children playing a quiz game show learning about Joseph's relationship with his brothers during the Games Workshop. On March 19,

after Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery, we will meet the Pharaoh and learn how God "flips bad things into good things" in the Cooking Workshop (which may include pancakes!!) and finally, on March 26, the children will learn how sometimes the most unlike people become heroes through the Video Workshop.

April 2 is Palm Sunday and KidsZone will do an interactive multi-age activity for children ages 3-12 that walks the children through Holy Week. There will be 3-5 workshops where the children will learn of Jesus' days leading up to Good Friday, Experience the celebration of Palm Sunday, Explore the Last Supper, Pray in the Garden of Gethsemane and find out how all things were made new through Jesus.



# CHRISTIAN ED



Thank you to everyone who supported the Youth Group Super Bowl Sub Fundraiser!

#### **MARCH SCHEDULE:**

March 5 - Youth Group Meeting at 7:00pm

March 11-12 (Sat-Sun) – 30 Hour Famine, from 5pm to 8pm (no evening Youth Group) March 19 – Youth Group Meeting at 7:00pm \$100 deposit for Mission Trip to New Rochelle, NY due

March 26 – Worcester Fellowship, meet at church at 11am, pick-up at approximately 2PM (no evening Youth Group)



#### **30-HOUR FAMINE:**

Transformation awaits. Be a part of global change by supporting our youth group and their 30 Hour Famine Experience

What: For 30 hours, we'll fast to raise funds that will help feed and care for hungry children around the world.

**Why:** Every 15 seconds, a child under 5 dies—and nearly half of those deaths are from hunger-related causes. That's why we're taking action now!

How you can help:

Give. Every \$40 we raise helps feed and care for a child for one month. You Can: • Visit our fundraising page at https://www.30hourfamine.worldvision.org//index.cfm?fuseaction=donate.team&teamID=36123
Or give a check at the church or online on our website.

2. Pray. Ask for God's grace over our event and our fundraising, and that we grow deeper in our love for Him while helping change the lives of kids who are hungry.



#### WORCESTER FELLOWSHIP:

On March 26th our Youth Group will prepare 50 brown bag lunches to be distributed to anyone in need at All Saints Church on Irving Street in Worcester. The lunches will contain various sandwiches (peanut butter and jelly, ham and cheese, tuna etc.), a soft dessert or snack, a fruit and a juice box. There are options to also bring clean white socks, Dunkin Donuts Gift cards in \$5 or \$10 dollar denominations, or

hats and mittens in cold weather. "Worcester Fellowship imagines a church where people with housing and people without housing gather together to share worship, to build community, to know God's infinite love and find "home" as part of the Body of Christ the Church." Pastor Zach Kerzee



#### **JUNE MISSION TRIP:**

The Fuller Center for Housing of Greater New York City, faith-driven and Christcentered, promotes collaborative and innovative partnerships with individuals and organizations in an unrelenting quest to provide adequate shelter for all people in need throughout the New York Metropolitan Area. The Center works in collabora-

tion with our covenant partners, other service-oriented organizations and countless volunteers to build and repair homes. All homeowners work hand-in-hand with volunteers to build their own homes, which are then sold to them on terms they can afford, based on the Biblical idea of no-profit, no-interest loans. Please support our Youth Group. There will be fundraisers coming up!

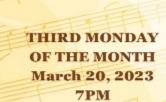




The Keepers hard at work!! The project: Soundproofing the Choir Room!

SHREWSBURY

JAMMERS



BRING YOUR VOICE, YOUR INSTRUMENT, YOUR FRIENDS, AND JOIN US FOR MONTHLY JAM SESSIONS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 9 CHURCH RD, SHREWSBURY 508-845-7286



#### TUB OF TOILETRIES COLLECTION

The Mission and Outreach Ministry will be holding it's annual "Tub of Toiletries" collection for St. Anne's Hu-

man Services from Sunday February 19 to Friday March 17, 2023.

For many years, First Congregational Church, in conjunction with the Boy Scouts of Troop 114, has supported this collection to provide certain items that are in high demand by those in need but are difficult for St. Anne's to obtain. With your help, we hope to continue the tradition this year.

There will be orange St. Anne's Wish Lists in baskets at the usher's table on Sunday mornings between the dates mentioned above. The desired items are also listed below.

You may leave your donations in or by the "tub" that will be on the stage in Gifford Hall until March 17. The scouts will be sorting and delivering the items collected to St. Anne's on the morning of March 18.

Please help us stock the shelves at St. Anne's with these much-needed items.

Thank you so much for your support.

The Mission & Outreach Ministry

Dish Soap, Laundry Detergent, Bar Soap, Body Wash, Body Lotion, Shampoo & Conditioner, Baby Shampoo, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Dental Floss, Deodorant, Toilet Paper, Tissues, Paper Towels, Paper Napkins, Diapers, Sanitary Napkins, Shaving Razors, Shaving Cream, Mayonnaise, Mustard, Ketchup, Relish, Sugar, Sugar Substitute, Flour, Cooking Oils, Coffee (regular & decaf), Crackers.



#### JOIN OUR TRANSPORTATION TREE

We are looking for drivers to assist with transportation of IHN families to social services and educational events. Days, times, and activities vary. Call Sheri (508-755-2212) for more information.

### MINISTRIES



#### **Mustard Seed Ministry**

**Volunteers needed** for our March 1<sup>st</sup> Mustard Seed evening meal which provides a nourishing food to approximately 125 individuals of all ages in need of a meal.

#### Volunteer Openings:

March 1, 2023 April 5, 2023 May 3, 2023 (4) Cooks, (3) Bakers, (2) Driver (4) Cooks, (3) Bakers, (2) Driver (4) Cooks, (3) Bakers, (2) Driver

\* Be part of a team of Cooks who work in our church's kitchen from 1:15 pm to 3:45pm preparing the Meat Loaf  $\sim$  Mashed Potatoes  $\sim$  Green Beans Casserole  $\sim$  dinner. Have fun preparing this meal with others.

\* Be one of the Bakers who make or buy 36 cookies and bring them to the church's kitchen by 3:15pm on the day of the scheduled meal. You can also bring your cookies the night before from 7:00pm - 8:00pm. Please label your cookies "For Mustard Seed".

\* Be a driver to deliver the Mustard Seed meatloaf dinner to Mustard Seed located at 93 Piedmont Street, Worcester. The meatloaf dinner will be ready for pick up, from the church's kitchen, at 3:45pm. Mustard Seed will have people there to serve the meal but you are welcome to stay to help if you would like.

**Thank you** to all the volunteers who helped to make the January 4<sup>th</sup> Mustard Seed dinner a wonderful success: Susanna Meyer, Kathi Buzzell, Deb DelDotto, Jean Feldkamp, Jane Lapointe, Karis Ray, Heather Vaillanc & Randy Robertson.

To volunteer sign-up online by clicking this link: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0b4fafaf2c7-mustard1#/ or you can contact Janet Pike at 774 -243-4395 or mrsbear8@msn.com. Thank you!



Lent is a period of time when we focus on growing closer to God through prayer, sacrifices, and almsgiving. And while certain Lenten practices are common in North America — like giving up chocolate— in countries far and wide, Christians observe other Lenten traditions that

may not be as familiar to us but are still inspirational.

**Czech Republic -- Green Thursday:** With Holy Thursday commemorating the Last Supper, Czechs and Moravians celebrate the day by eating greens, such as salads and spinach, all day long. Known as Green Thursday, from the German word grün, mean-

Lent is a period of time when ing green, it is also believed to be an adaption of the word greinen, which means "to weep."

**Mexico -- La Samaritana:** On the fourth Friday of Lent, Mexicans celebrate La Samaritana, where people will give water, ice cream and fruit to passersby, in homage to the Samaritan woman who gave Jesus water at the well.

**British Isles -- Hot cross buns:** Traditions behind the popular spiced sticky pastry with dried fruits vary. For Catholics, the bun should be made and eaten on Good Friday only, and it is full of religious symbolism. Topping the bun is a decorative cross that represents Christ's crucifixion, and the spices found inside are reminiscent of the spices used to embalm Christ. In the past the buns were also seen as a powerful remedy, and one would be kept aside and used throughout the year to heal the sick.

### MINISTRIES



#### Leveling Up: How We All Got to Level 3

You may recall Earth Stewardship's announcement last fall that FCC achieved Level 3 Green Congregation status as designated by the South-

ern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ (SNEUCC). We are delighted that on Earth Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Rev. Jessica McArdle will present FCC with the award.

Our work that achieved Level 3 included, among many tasks, the creation of a fossil fuel divestment plan, local tree planting events, insulating parts of the building, and advocating against SELCO's participation in the fossil-fuel fired Peabody Peaker Plant. It also included hundreds of other small actions at church in which you have likely directly participated: recycling, using non-toxic cleaners and hand soaps, and using ceramic cups for Coffee Hour.

The Level 3 award being bestowed on FCC on Earth Day weekend is a great reminder for all of us to refocus our attention on those smaller actions that lead to great gains. We request your continued participation and commitment to best practices: When recycling, please refer to the list of acceptable materials posted in each room where there is a recycling bin. And, when in doubt, throw it out.

- The kitchens and bathrooms are supplied with ecofriendly cleaners and soaps. If you would like to contribute a bottle of dish liquid or hand soap, please buy Seventh Generation products. These products have been approved by analysis of their MSDS (material safety data sheets).
- While the main kitchen dishwasher was broken, we had no choice but to use disposable cups, dinnerware and flatware for Coffee Hour and other events. Now that the dishwasher has been repaired, at considerable expense to the congregation, it is time for us to return to our commitment to the resource-conserving practice of using ceramic cups. When you are hosting Coffee Hour or any other meal-related event, please consider the impact on the environment of disposables (the resources to make disposables, the fossil fuel to ship them from China, the trash generated and the money spent for a one-time use item) and choose to use reusable dinnerware and the dishwasher instead.

These small steps do add up and any effort you make leaves a cleaner world for your children and grandchildren. Please join us on Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> for the Earth Stewardship's celebration of Level 3 and commitment to leveling up to Level 4!

As the recycling industry is dynamic, the list of acceptable materials changes almost annually.



### **Easter Order Form**

#### Deadline: Sunday, March 19, 2023



ame		
ddress		
elephone Email:		
ILIES— All flowers are donated to the Care Team to be delivered to people on their care list.		
I would like to order Easter Lilies.		
Total Order: number of plants x \$13.00 each = \$		
For Publication (please print):		
ame of Giver(s):		
In Honor of:		
In Memory of:		
(please use the back of the page for more plants)		
IEMORIAL DONATION		
I would like to make a memorial donation.		
Amount = \$		
elect the Fund (please see the back of the page for fund description).		

Select the Fund (please see the back of the page for fund description):

For Publication (please print):

Name of Giver(s):	
🗆 In Honor of:	
□ In Memory of:	

#### PAYMENT

#### TOTAL ORDER: \$\_

□ Check enclosed (Please make check payable to the First Congregational Church and mark it "Easter Lilies") □ Check will be given at a later date If paying during the Sunday collection, please give a second check (separate from your weekly offering) and write "Easter Lilies" in the memo line.

□ I will pay online (www.fccsm.org click on the "Give" button and make sure to include "Easter Flowers")



# PAST EVENTS



# PAST EVENTS



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#### FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

19 Church Road Shrewsbury, MA 01545 508-845-7286 www.fccsm.org



1923

Church on The Green Newsletter March 2023 Issue



Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30am



#### **Our mission:**

The purpose of this Church is to come together as Christians to serve God by studying and listening to the Word, and living by Christ's teachings. We are committed to reaching our through prayers, caring, sharing, serving and fellowship.

Senior Minister: Rev. Holly MillerShank pastor@fccsm.org

**Director of Music:** Curtis Smith musicdirector@fccsm.org

**Financial Administrator:** Lauren Morse finance@fccsm.org

Interim Christian Education Director: April Mullins cedirector@fccsm.org

Church Administrator and Property Manager: Sabina Terrades office@fccsm.org

Sexton: Benjamin Weiss ben@fccsm.org