



**First Church Squantum
Congregational**

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March Birthdays

David Stohlberg, March 6
Jack Westerbeke, March 8
Tim Lynch, March 14
Gene Bolden, March 24
Harry Marcel, March 31

Lenten Devotionals

Want to get closer to God this Lent? Why not add a few minutes to focus on God each day? This year the Deacons have purchased Lenten Devotionals from the National Association. These Lenten devotionals feature a brief scripture, message and prayer to help your day have more of God in it. You can find these devotionals on tables in the entryway, or feel free to ask the office to send one to you. These are free for anyone to take or to give away.

The Light

“We know that all things work together for good, for those who are called according to Christ’s purpose.” – Romans 8:28 March 2021

A Time of Learning to Trust

by Rev. Doug Gray

“But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.’”

– Isaiah and then God, The Bible, Isaiah 43:1–3a

Do you remember a year ago? March 15, 2020 was our last in-person worship service for weeks, months really. That was a big Sunday for us! We had great turn out in Sunday School and worship, though we chose not to have Coffee Hour that day because of COVID. We were “Finding God in Disney” with Mulan’s “Who I Am Inside?” Little did we know what was ahead the rest of the year

We all started to learn ways to be online—Zoom and video chats with loved ones. I couldn’t have imagined all the video recording I would be learning! We realized we would have to look out for not just our families, but for our neighbors who were shut in, sick or in need. We started learning the meaning of social distancing, and it was really hard!

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Worship in Lent: Watching Our Giants Fall!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
March 7	Communion Sunday Rejection Must Fall	Isaiah 62:1–5, 10–12 Romans 8:12–17
March 14	Comfort Must Fall	Philippians 1:19–29 Luke 9:18–27
March 21	Anger Must Fall	Psalm 32 James 1:19–21
March 28	Addiction Must Fall	Isaiah 40:18–23 1 Corinth. 10:11–17
Thurs, April 1	Maundy Thursday A Table in the Presence	Psalm 23 Mark 14:12–26
Fri, April 2	Good Friday	@St. Chrysostom’s/ online
Easter, April 4	Sunrise Communion Sunday	6:00a, Orchard Beach 10a, Fuel for the Fight



Sunday School All This Month!

Women's and Men's Breakfast's

We are still waiting for things to get safer before we restart



this wonderful ministry.

Fiber Arts

The monthly Fiber Arts Group meets



outside as weather allows. In addition to working on things for family and friends, this group also donates some of its work to helping needy children have warm heads and hands.

A Prayer for Lent

Almighty God, You who call me to prayer, and who offer Yourself to all who seek Your face, pour out Your Holy Spirit upon me today and deliver me from coldness of heart, a wandering mind and wrongful desire. By the power of Your Spirit, place within me steadfast love and devotion, so that today I may worship and serve You with all of my life, through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

—from *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*

Lent: A Season to Seek God!

Lent is an ancient Christian season for growing deeper into relationships with God. At first, Lent was the time of preparation for people who wanted to be baptized, and it concluded with an all-night prayer vigil and fast before their baptism on Easter Sunday.

Lent continues to be a time of preparation for a new life or renewed life in Christ. Many Christians “give up something” for Lent, something they feel is getting in the way of a better life with God. For some it’s a kind of food (some Catholics won’t eat any meat on Fridays, remembering Jesus’ sacrifice), but it can also be a practice that’s interfering with a spiritually healthy life. One year my family gave up driving through fast-food places. We could still eat there; we just had to sit at a table together. A friend of mine unplugs from his social media for the month.

I am not a fan of just giving up something, but also “picking up something” that helps us grow stronger and get deeper in our life with God. Some people like to add a daily devotion to their lives—the church has some on the tables in the narthex and entryway—others add some extra prayer time, sing in the choir, read the Bible or attend Bible Study. One year I took my coffee break (when I usually played solitaire) and I read one of the Gospels and wrote one thing I thought God was saying to me. Another friend of mine added time walking.

This year, the Deacons and I pray you will have a Lent that leads you deeper into your love relationship with God.

Monday Night Bible Study A deeper look

Just need a moment to gather yourself for the week? Looking for some inspiration and insights that might improve your family and work life?

Monday Night Bible Study is for you! If Sunday morning is a hearty meal for the spirit, then our Bible Study is a feast! We take the same theme and scripture from Sunday and delve deeper, savoring and exploring how God might be speaking to and through us. We always learn things we never thought before.



Welcome Miles, Our New Accompanist!

In February, we were joined by our gifted, new accompanist, Mr. Miles Fellenberg. As many of you have heard either in person or through recordings, Miles is extremely talented. He is currently working on his doctoral degree at New England Conservatory of Music. Miles is married to Alice Chenyang Xu, the organist/accompanist at Wollaston Congregational Church (UCC). Though organ is not Miles main instrument, now that his feet are under him, you will see us adding in the organ where it makes sense. If you have the chance, don’t miss one of our worship services to enjoy his masterful playing. He has even invited requests for his preludes/postludes!

Critical Needs at ISS

Inter-faith Social Services (ISS) is Quincy's outstanding, integrated services organization. (For more information, see elsewhere on this page.)

Here are the critical needs for donations this month:

Tuna
Canned meat
Cereal or oatmeal
Peanut butter & jelly
Healthy snacks for kids
Juice boxes
Shelf-stable milk
Rice
Canned soup
Mac & Cheese
Canned fruit or vegetables
Dry or canned beans
Condiments (incl. salt & pepper)
Salad dressing
Gluten-free foods
Low-sodium canned items
Cooking oil / Olive oil
Diapers (size 4, 5 & 6)
Baby wipes
Personal care items: toothbrushes, toothpaste, bar soap (unscented), shampoo, body wash

You can deliver them yourself, or you can just bring them to church on Sunday and leave them in or near the ISS bin in the Narthex. Every week or so, members of the Board of Deacons take the church's donations over to ISS from us. Your donations really do make a huge difference! Thank you!



Easter Flower Order Form

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

I would like to order _____ plants @ \$10 each = \$_____ total

Deadline: Orders due by Monday, March 29th

(Please circle one) In Honor of / In Memory of / In Celebration of

Name: _____

(Please circle one) In Honor of / In Memory of / In Celebration of

Name: _____

Daffodils # _____

Lilies # _____

Tulips (pink and yellow) # _____

Helping People in Need in Quincy

Interfaith Social Services (ISS) was founded in 1947 by several churches in Quincy, including the First Church of Squantum! ISS is one of the largest helping agencies in Greater

Boston, providing over 940,000 pounds of food to more than 21,000 of our neighbors! What I hear from them is that the pandemic and the lockdown continue to beat on people. In addition to folks who were "on the bubble" before the pandemic, more and more "middle class" folks need help with food to make ends meet. Another desperate need our community has is for counseling, to help people make sense of their lives, especially in the wake of tragedy and trauma. Last year, ISS provided more than 2600 hours of counseling free of charge to our neighbors struggling with mental health issues. A third desperate need in our community at this time is homelessness prevention. ISS' homelessness prevention program, HomeSafe, provides budget counseling, career counseling and financial assistance to keep people in their homes. Last year, they helped keep 645 people in their homes! Incredible! Their last big program is helping bring joy and hope to children. Whether it's holiday presents, Halloween costumes or school supply backpacks, ISS spearheads our community's efforts to make life fun and meaningful for our community's kids.



**INTERFAITH
SOCIAL SERVICES**

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Last Easter, we brought all the donated flowers into Pastor Doug's office for our worship. They were spectacularly beautiful...and fragrant!

through—all thanks to the grace of God. Why are we here and not others? I can't say...but here we are. So today, my heart is singing with gratitude for all the ways God has seen us through this time of testing. Today, I am reminded of what a miracle it is that we have today. How are you going to use the miracle of your day today? How will you give thanks with your life, for all that God has done for you in the last year? Times like this last year are when God forges faith in us, when we experience how God guards, guides and gifts us through the hardest of times. Perhaps it's worth taking a moment to think about how God has worked in your life and how you have been learning to trust God with the stuff of life. Another reason to give thanks!

Thank You, God, for hope! Some of us have had vaccinations already, and some of us are still waiting in line. We have not made it to the end, but we can start to see it from here. I can't tell you the joy I feel as I say this to you: See you in church!

Members of our congregation have had COVID, though thankfully, none of our number has died of it. But we all know people who have either died or had family who died. Maybe we couldn't be with someone when they were in the hospital because of this. Maybe we couldn't spend someone's last moments telling them we loved them. That heartache has been all around us. It's hard to believe that more than half a million Americans are gone from our midst because of this terrible disease, but we all know someone... We can share their sorrow, and there's a lot of sorrow to go around.

But if you are reading this, you are blessed. God has walked with you over the last year—preserving your life, helping your family cope, finding ways to help you

Great Food Grown Locally! Farmer Dave's Kicks Off Another Great Season

The Spring share of Farmer Dave's Consumer Supported Agriculture (CSA) begins March 6. Why is that so exciting? You pay for a share (Spring, Summer, or Fall) up front. Then every Friday from 3:30–6:30pm (from early March thru November), you pick up your share at the church. Think recycling-bin-full! Vegetable shares (small and regular) and fruit shares are available. Can't eat a share by yourself or your small family? Why not "share a share"—splitting it between you? Why is CSA so great?

- 1. Great tasting fruit and vegetables because it's local.** Farmer Dave grows everything on his farm in Dracut and Tewksbury, MA. It comes to us freshly harvested!
- 2. Variety of vegetables and fruits are available.** Farmer Dave plants lots of different things, and staggers the planting time so that he can harvest and distribute the food every week throughout the summer.
- 3. Great for us and our kids.** CSA helps us stay closer to the land and the seasons. CSA also helps us teach our kids and grandkids about eating a wide-variety of vegetables, perhaps in ways we didn't expect.
- 4. Supports a local farmer.** The problem with most farming is that the farmer plants the crops at his own expense. If the farmer has a tough year, the farmer financially can lose everything, while consumers like us just see prices rise a little. The farmer takes all the risk and we get all the reward—very exploitative and encourages bigger and bigger operations. With "consumer supported agriculture," consumers like us pay up front for our "share" (or portion of a "share") in the crop, and share the risk as well. That seems much fairer to me.
- 5. A great service to the community!** The hardest part for bringing Farmer Dave's to Squantum is having a place to be the pick up. Our church can do that for Squantum!

You can check things out on-line at www.farmerdaves.net.



STOP the STIGMA ^{Virtual} 5K

INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES

April 26-May 2, 2021

An opportunity to support our friends, neighbors and family members affected by mental illness and addiction.

Nearly everyone in our community knows someone who has been affected by mental illness or addiction. To bring awareness to these issues and raise funds to support our New Directions Counseling Center, each year Interfaith Social Services hosts the **Stop the Stigma 5K**.

You can help show our community that mental illness is not a cause for shame.

Your sponsorship will:

- Publicize your business to **thousands of South Shore residents who support Interfaith's programs.**
- Sustain Interfaith's **New Directions Counseling Center**—a mental health safety net for the community since 1947.
- Fund **counseling sessions** for local residents in need.
- Help **Stop the Stigma** associated with mental illness and addiction!



StopTheStigma5K.org



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Published by

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Where We Love Kindness

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