

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF FALMOUTH,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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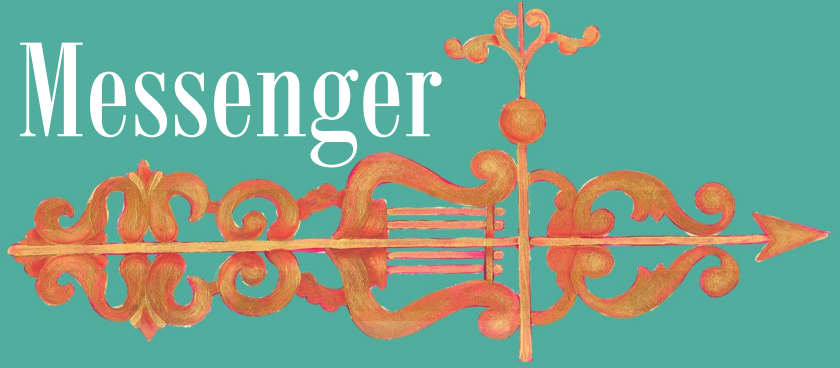
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VOLUME 31, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 2022

The Day Before Christmas

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace!

Neither Joseph, nor Mary, nor Isaiah himself expects the Son of God to be born out back... out in the barn... out with the animals... anywhere but there. What kind of Christmas is this? What kind of Christmas, indeed. But what did they expect, really? What were they thinking? What was this birth going to be like? What was their life together going to be like?

The magi are guided to Bethlehem by their great learning, by their ability to interpret the movements of stars and planets in the heavens, and by the wisdom of the sages in Jerusalem. The shepherds find their way to Bethlehem with the help of a rather dramatic heavenly revelation from an angel. But Mary and Joseph travel there as a family just going about the business of life. Did they know how hard, hot, and dusty the road would be? Did they know how dark and cold the nights would be? Did they expect the crowds? When did they begin to realize they should have called ahead? "No reservation, no room... but, well, I might be able to find a place for you to stay, if you're not picky." They were not picky.

And with their humble accommodation provided for, Mary and Joseph likely began to wonder what was this birth going to be like? How do you plan for such a transformative, remarkable experience as childbirth in a strange place like Bethlehem so far from home? I'm sure they were anxious. Would the baby Jesus be like other babies? God appeared to Moses as a burning bush, as a column of smoke, as a burning mountaintop. So, what would God's son be like?

Whatever they imagined, I am confident their expectations were not met. Perhaps they should have seen it coming. After all no one expects a wolf to lie down with a lamb, or a lion to graze with an ox. Considering in what splendor Jesus might have entered this world, it is astonishing that he slipped unobtrusively into a small town far from where the rulers were ruling, born to brand new-weds.

No elaborate preparations were made for the birth. In fact, no preparations were made at all. Jesus was born on the road. His crib was a feed trough; his nurses were sheep and cows. God came into the world humble, identifying with the powerless, the oppressed, the poor, and the homeless. Here, shepherds

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Advent & Christmas at First Congregational

Sunday, November 27 — First Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m. — Morning service of worship and special activity for the kids

Saturday, December 3 — Annual Christmas Fair — 9am—2pm

Saturday, December 3 — Before & After the Lighting of the Village Green

Singing of Christmas Carols in the sanctuary

Sunday, December 4 — Second Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m. — Morning service of worship and FCC Kids
Sacrament of Holy Communion

Saturday, December 10 — Falmouth Chorale Concert — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 11 — Third Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m. — Morning service of worship and FCC Kids
3:00 p.m. — Falmouth Chorale Concert

Sunday, December 18 — Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:00 a.m. — Morning service of worship and FCC Kids
Special presentation of Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* featuring instrumentalists and soloists

Saturday, December 24 — Christmas Eve

5:30 p.m. — Family service with pageant
8:00 p.m. — Festival service of lessons and carols

Sunday, December 25 — Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. — Morning service of worship (no FCC Kids)



“Socks for the Homeless”

As our temperatures drop, we think of the many homeless here in Falmouth and Cape-wide. One of the most-needed items are socks. The Women’s Union will again collect new, white crew socks. We ask the entire congregation for help in this endeavor to provide for others. The collection box will be outside Fellowship Hall after the Christmas Fair. Monetary donations will also be accepted with checks made out to “Women’s Union.”

As Christ said: “Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to the least of these, my brethren, you did it to me.” Matthew 25:40



Year-end “clean up”...

Nope, it’s not about the grounds of the church! It’s Martha’s year-end pledge reminder so you can be sure to get not only your 2022 pledge payments in, but also ensure we have your pledge card for 2023.

Pledge packets for 2023 have been sent. We ask that pledge cards be returned as soon as possible so that financial planning for 2023 can be completed. Also hinged on the cards is the preparation of envelopes for those who request them.

Year-to-date 2022 pledge statements have also been sent to those who have not completed their 2022 pledge. The last day payments for 2022 pledges will be received — in order to be credited to your 2022 pledge — is Friday, December 30 by noon. Payments received after this will be credited in 2023 as “Previous year’s pledge.”

Theater trip!

Members of the church and friends are invited to attend a trip to see the Falmouth Theatre Guild’s production of the award-winning comedy *Harvey* on Friday, January 20, at 7:30 p.m. at Highfield Theater. Tickets are \$28 per person. Sign-ups are due by January 6.

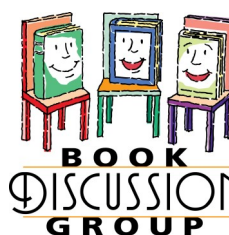


Brighten your winter woes and enjoy some laughter as Elwood P. Dowd enjoys the company of his six-foot-tall invisible rabbit friend, Harvey. His embarrassed sister sees him introducing Harvey all around town and she wants to get him to the local sanatorium. As you see by the picture above, it was one of Jimmy Stewart’s most memorable movie roles.

Mail a check for \$28 per person, payable to “Falmouth Theatre Guild” by **January 6**, to Bette West, 42 East Harbor Drive, E. Falmouth, MA 02536

Annual Report deadline

Everyone responsible for submitting a report for the 2022 Annual Report — Deadline is Friday, January 6. You should know if you need to prepare a report, but if you have a question, please feel free to call the church office. As always, early submissions are greatly appreciated. Late submissions will greatly hamper Martha’s ability to prepare the report in time for the Annual Meeting, and we wouldn’t want to do that, now would we???? Thank you in advance for your submissions.



The book discussion group meets on the fourth Monday of the month from 1-3 p.m. in the church parlor. All are welcome to join us for a single discussion or on a permanent basis — we’d love to have you! The members choose the books to be read and we use discussion guides. We will not meet in December, but will return on January 23 for a discussion of the book “The Only Woman in the Room” by Marie Benedict. This is historical fiction about the life of Hedy Lamarr, who left her Nazi husband and came to America to become a movie star in the 40’s. She was also a brilliant scientist and had many US patents, including one which helped develop modern communication. For more information, call Bette West at 508-457-9860.



Church Council

Reverend Drury opened the November 16 Church Council meeting with prayer. He said we have moved our focus from Stewardship to Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas. There will be two services on Christmas Eve, a pageant at 5:30 and a service of Lessons and Carols at 8:00. There will also be a service on Christmas Day, which falls on a Sunday this year.

Carol Mills, Treasurer, reported that member support in October and year-to-date was significantly higher than in 2021. If the numbers in November and December are also strong, the budget deficit will be less than presented at the October budget meeting.

Katie Dreyer is looking for people to help with set up before, on November 27, and clean up after the Christmas Fair on December 2.

Council then heard from the church boards and committees. Our UCC Delegates recently attended the Barnstable Association Meeting at which Reverend Nell Fields reported on the migrant situation on the Cape and in Plymouth and suggested ways in which churches can participate in helping. Jonathan noted that we do not have the social services in place to adequately assist migrants arriving here. The Nominating Committee has filled all vacancies on the boards and committees except for one UCC Delegate. The Outreach Committee has met this year's commitments, so with funds still coming in has been able to make additional grants to several organizations. The Falmouth Service Center received \$1500, No Guff \$500, the Salvation Army \$1000, and the Upper Cape Chaplaincy \$1000. The Trustees reported that the walkway project has been completed and steel connections to secure the inside of the steeple have been ordered. The Board of Christian Education is recruiting kids for the Christmas pageant. The Stewardship committee encourages everyone to complete and return their pledge cards. The Deacons noted that several new members will be received on December 11. The Music Committee is hoping to expand the Bell Choir. Our choir will perform Vivaldi's Gloria for the December 18 service. Forty people attended the October Woman's Union meeting at which Rachel Lovett, the new executive director of the Museums on the Green, was the featured speaker. The meeting ended with Council members joining in the Lord's Prayer. Marcia Young, Clerk

The Day Before Christmas (Continued from page 1)

stand shoulder to shoulder with kings. For indeed, it is through Jesus Christ that the glory of the Lord has been revealed for the entire world to see.

Jesus tells us we are the light of the world, and God wants all of us to help bring God's children to the light.

This season I encourage you to share the good news... the news of hope... the news of brighter days and better tomorrows! Tell your friends and neighbors the good news of your church, and invite them to meet you here next Sunday! Invite them to share in the hope, joy, peace, and love that surround the promise of the coming Christ child. The greatest gift the universe ever received, once more given to you.

Wishing you a faith filled Advent and Christmas season, Jonathan

We gather to worship

Sunday Morning Worship
10:00 a.m.

Sacrament of Holy Communion celebrated
1st Sunday of the month

FCC Kids!
10:00 a.m.
September ~ June
when school is in session



★ This page replaces the previous church calendar. For ★
★ a detailed listing of all events at the church, please ★
★ visit our website: www.firstcongfalmouth.org. For ★
★ those without internet access, please contact the ★
★ church office for a more traditional, printed calendar. ★
★

We reach out to the Community...

Outside Playtime
Wednesdays
10:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.
When school is in session

Children's Clothing Project
2nd & 4th Saturdays
10:00 a.m. ~ 12:00 noon

Falmouth Eats Together
We host this mission of The Falmouth Service Center on occasional Thursdays during the year

We gather to make music...

Adult Choir
Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

Bell Choir
Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.

We gather to plan...

Unless stated, all meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.

- 2nd Sunday—Music Committee (11:00 a.m.)
- 2nd Wednesday—Board of Trustees (3:30 p.m.)
- Board of Deacons, Board of Christian Outreach
- 2nd Thursday — Board of Christian Ed (8:00 p.m.)
- 3rd Monday—Stewardship Committee
- 3rd Wednesday—Church Council
- 4th Sunday—Good Shepherd Project (11:30 a.m.)

We gather as children & youth...

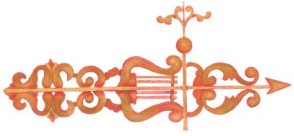
Youth Group
for grades 4-8
1st Sunday of the month
4:30—6:00 p.m.

We gather to socialize...

- Book Discussion Group — 4th Monday — 1:00 p.m.
- Friendly Circle — Every Tuesday — 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
- Men's Group — 1st & 3rd Tuesdays — 9:00 a.m.
- Mahjong — Every Tuesday — 10:30 a.m.—12:30 a.m.
- Wednesday Morning Circle — 2nd Wednesday — 11:00 a.m.
- Theater trips to Falmouth Theatre Guild — dates & times vary

We gather to listen for God...

- Bible Study — Mondays, 6:30 p.m.
- Prayer Group — Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m.
- Healing Group — Speak with Laura Cole, Co-Ordinator of Care & Connection, for more information
- Coffee & Conversation — TBA — an informal time to gather to learn more about the our church



First Congregational Church, UCC
68 Main Street
Falmouth, MA 02540
Address correction requested

December
2022



Check us out on the web!
www.firstcongregationalfalmouth.org
OR
use your phone's camera to scan the QR code!

YOU are welcome here!

The Messenger

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Elected Officials of the Church

Moderator—Katie Dreyer
Clerk—Marcia Young
Treasurer—Carol Mills

Board/Committee Chairmen...

Christian Education—Elsa Partan
Christian Outreach—John Bowers
Deacons—Evelyn Johnson
Music—Robin Bowerman
Nominating—JoAnn Coleman
Reception—Sue Simchock
Stewardship—Dennis McGillicuddy
Trustees—John Farrington