

the first church in chestnut hill

[UNITARIAN]

26 SUFFOLK ROAD OFF HAMMOND STREET



September 2017

SUNDAY SERVICE at 10:30

Rev. Mark J. T. Caggiano, *Minister*

VERITAS, CARITAS, ET RISUS

Why do we pray? How do we pray? What is prayer?

This fall, I will be taking up these and other questions about the practice of prayer. Our style of service is from a prayer book, a set form of liturgy, meaning literally “the work of the people.” Prayers are key pieces of that public working, some spoken by a minister and others said or sung in unison. In a sense, we step into service as we attend the service. And we step into moments of the holy when we pray.

Prayer itself can take many forms and have many purposes. Anne Lamott once wrote that the three essential prayers can be described as “Help, Thanks, and Wow.” “Help” is a petition in time of need, lifting up to God the hopes, needs, and (yes) wants we have in any moment.

“Thanks” describes moments of gratitude, times when we take stock and then acknowledge the good things in our lives. And “Wow” captures feelings of awe, surprise, or joy that erupt from time to time. Of course prayers come in blended forms, petitions of help and comfort along with words of thanksgiving. I would guess that prayer rosters tend to be filled more with “Help” than “Thanks” with the occasional dash of “Wow.” It depends on the person.

As we come back to church, I would like for us all to think about prayer and to consider what it means to offer prayer more than on Sunday morning, more than when something is lacking in our inventory of wants. I will confess that I am also looking for a little more “Thanks” and “Wow” in my own prayer life. There are many reasons to pray and one particularly important reason is to help lift the veil of the everyday and to open our eyes to what is always there: the presence of God in our world and in our lives. That is worthy of a few “Wows.”

Welcome back and God bless,

— Mark

**Please note: my new email address is
*mjtcaggiano@gmail.com***

MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible Study group will resume meeting on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., beginning on September 13. We encourage new participants to join us.

OUR SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SEASON

September 10: Exodus 12:1-14, Matthew 18:15-20, Psalm 149

September 17: Numbers 21:4b-9, John 3:13-17, Psalm 98

September 24: Exodus 14:19-31, Matthew 18:21-35, Psalm 114

SEPTEMBER SERMONS

September 10: *Where Two or Three are Gathered*

September 17: *Before Whose Face the Generations Rise*

September 24: *Forgive Us Our Trespases (Special Service)*

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR SEPTEMBER

September 10: The flowers are given in loving memory of Barbara Morss Marshall by the Drayton family.

September 17: The flowers are given in loving memory of Walter T. and Nan St. Goar by their friends at First Church.

September 24: The flowers are given in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Thomas by their family.

USHERS

September 10: G. West Saltonstall *September 17:* Herbert P. Dane

September 24: John Wyman

COFFEE HOUR

All are welcome at the coffee hour following the service each Sunday. The Lohe family will be in charge of refreshments on September 10. On September 17, will be the Baker family, and on Sunday, September 24, the Batchelder family. Thank you for your participation!

Sally Baker (sallybbaker@comcast.net; 617-566-7564)

Carol Lohe (ctroyen@mfa.org; 617-739-0892)

VOLUNTEER LECTORS FOR SEPTEMBER

September 10: Carol Lohe

September 17: Judith Vanderkay

September 24: Greg Jones

Lectors enrich our worship by reading each Sunday's first and second Scripture lessons. You'll receive the readings via email, usually about 5-6 days prior to the Sundays you are scheduled to read. If you are interested in reading during October and/or November, email Greg Jones (*gjones@ants.edu*) to receive the "live" link to the user-friendly online scheduling form, or go directly to the form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9M2YZH3>.

WELCOME, KATHRYN!

The Music Committee is pleased to announce that Kathryn Rosenbach has joined us as our new Music Director. She is a pianist, organist, choral conductor, composer and teacher with forty years of diverse experience. **Please join us at coffee hour on September 10 to welcome Kathryn to First Church.**

September 10

Preludes:	<i>Pastorale</i>	—Bach
	<i>Two Miniatures</i>	— Peeters
Anthem:	<i>Sound the Cymbal</i>	— Schubert
Response:	<i>O Hear, My God, My Pray'r</i>	— Bach
Anthem:	<i>O Let My Mouth be filled with Thy Praise</i>	— Zingarelli
Choral Amen:	<i>Threefold Amen</i>	— Traditional
Postlude:	<i>Fugue in C</i>	— Buxtehude

September 17

Preludes:	<i>Toccata</i>	— Frescobaldi
	<i>Two Voluntaries</i>	— Jackson
Anthem:	<i>O be Joyful in the Lord</i>	— Purcell
Response:	<i>Lord, Jesus Christ, My Life, My Light</i>	— Bach
Anthem:	<i>De Profundis</i>	— Mozart
Choral Amen:	<i>Sevenfold Amen</i>	— Stainer
Postlude:	<i>Now Let Us to God, the Lord, Give Thanks</i>	— Pachelbel

September 24

Preludes:	<i>Meditation</i>	— Arcadelt
	<i>Adagio</i>	— Marcello
	<i>Air</i>	— Scarlatti
Anthem:	<i>O Christ, who Art the Light and Day</i>	— Whyte
Response:	<i>Draw Us to Thee</i>	— Bach
Anthem:	<i>Almighty God, who hast brought</i>	— Ford
Choral Amen:	<i>Twofold Amen</i>	— Persichetti
Postlude:	<i>The Heavens Declare</i>	— Marcello

Program Notes:

Benedetto Giacomo Marcello (1686-1739) was an Italian composer, advocate, magistrate and teacher. He was a member of a noble family and combined a life in law and public service with one in music. Marcello was a contemporary of J. S. Bach.

SAVE THE DATE

This year's homecoming potluck will be combined with our **Annual Meeting luncheon on Sunday, October 15, after church.** A light luncheon and beverages will be provided. For dessert, we ask that you bring your favorite confection. Please contact Lisa Piel (26suffolk@gmail.com) to sign up.

BOOK GROUP

We will meet on Wednesday, September 27 to discuss *Barchester Towers*. Please join us at 3:00 p.m. at Molly's (303 Goddard Avenue, Brookline.) All are welcome!

THIRD ANNUAL EVENING UNDER THE STARS*

The Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry invites you to a special gathering at the historic First Church in Roxbury Meetinghouse on Friday, September 22 at 6:00 p.m. There will be wine, hors d'oeuvres and music. For more information please contact Annie Stubbs (astubbs@uum.org) or 617-318-6010 x 205.

(* Not a fund-raiser, just a celebration!)

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Committee has been working on the initial phase of the assessment and planning process it will be leading over the coming year. This phase focuses on identifying ways to gather information that helps us understand who we are and what is important to our congregation. A valuable source of “baseline” detail has been the comprehensive surveys and reports completed during the search for a new minister (2007-2009). This information will allow for useful “then and now” comparisons to measure congregational change.

You are invited to a strategic planning information session on Sunday, September 17. It will begin after the worship service, at 11:45 am in the Parish Hall. Committee members will be on hand to explain the process and answer questions.

For more information, contact Dick Benka, chair, (rcvben@verizon.net) or Greg Jones, who is helping facilitate the project, (gjones@ants.edu).

OUTREACH COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Last June we completed the Walk-a-thon Fundraiser for The Outdoor Church in Cambridge, raising a total of \$948.84. Many thanks to all who walked/ran/strolled and contributed a penny per step. We’ve received a letter of appreciation from The Outdoor Church, which is led by our former First Church intern, Rev. Jedediah Mannis.

We look forward to another year of participation in community events and programs. As always, the Thanksgiving Food and Flower Sale in November is our major fundraiser for supporting food pantries in Brookline and Newton. In addition, there are opportunities to volunteer throughout the year with projects described in this column.

In September and October, we will hold a drive for healthy food items specifically requested by the Centre Street Pantry in Newton. With that in mind, we are collecting low-sodium soups and vegetables for September. There will be a box in the parish hall for the collected food.

Sally Baker, Chair, Outreach Coordinating Committee

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR FALL/EARLY WINTER

We are actively interviewing several candidates to serve as an Assistant Minister to lead religious education and to expand the scope of family ministry here at First Church. We hope to have someone in place by the start of church on September 10.

We are also making changes to the format of Sunday School. Instead of every Sunday, we will have Sunday school gatherings during church services on October 15, November 12, and December 10 (Christmas pageant rehearsal).

To acknowledge the modern reality that Sunday mornings can be difficult to manage, we are also looking to schedule events at other times during the week. We are also planning field trips at other times, to places like the historic Unitarian churches in Boston or for social action events like working at the local food pantries. As a part of this, we will be creating a Facebook page for communication among the families at First Church – this will be a closed page for coordinating dates, offering information, and sharing photos.

We will also be having at least monthly intergenerational services, meaning that families will all be together for church in the sanctuary. We will be varying our liturgy on those days, following a printed order of service and enjoying new music. **For the fall, those special services will be September 24 (Welcome Sunday), October 29 (Halloween), November 19 (Thanksgiving), December 17 (Christmas Pageant), and December 31 (New Year's Eve).**

INTERN INSIGHTS

Recently, I chuckled at traffic reports about miles-long backups behind the closed Commonwealth Avenue bridge. I don't commute by car, so I could afford to chuckle. Then I learned that a long section of the Green "D" line was going out of service for a while. This is the train I take into Boston, and during the shut-down, I would need to travel to South Station, where I was to catch an early train to New York City. But I would need to grab a shuttle to detour around the closed section of track. I wasn't chuckling anymore.

There was a cosmic irony in my situation. I was headed to NYC to preach at my home congregation. The title of my sermon? "Detours"! In fact, the entire service was about accepting – and living into – the detours along life's way.

Each of us encounters detours in life. Some of mine have been long and rough. The Scriptures are filled with stories about detours: Joseph into Egypt; Moses out of Egypt into the Sinai; Jonah to Nineveh via the belly of a fish; Jesus into the wilderness on the way to Jerusalem. Along those detours, each traveler had unexpected – and life-changing – encounters with the divine.

Like angry drivers in traffic jams, we can turn our detours into episodes of road rage. Or we can stay calm, centered, and open to surprises. Detours can be mystical and magical. They take us to astonishing places we never would have dreamed to go. Let's enjoy the trip.

*In peace and service,
Greg*

ORGANIST and MUSIC DIRECTOR

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MINISTERIAL INTERN

Gregory A. Jones, 917-687-6368

SEXTON

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ADMINISTRATOR

Lisa Piel, (*26suffolk@gmail.com*); 617-965-1551

STANDING COMMITTEE



Werner Lohe, Chair

Deborah Brooks (Chair Emerita)

Sally Baker

Richard Benka

G. West Saltonstall

Ludy Shih

Carol Stuart

Molly Batchelder, Clerk

Judith K. Wyman, Treasurer

Mark J.T. Caggiano, Minister



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