





SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024 — 10 AM

SERVICE OF HEALING

WORDS FOR CONTEMPLATION

"Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase." – Martin Luther King Jr.

GATHERING THE COMMUNITY OF THE FAITHFUL

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PRELUDE

WELCOME

This is the Day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!

CALL TO WORSHIP

- One: We are called here this morning to learn of Christ's healing love.
- Many: Help us, O Lord, to learn your lessons of compassion.
- One: Every day there are many ways in which we can offer help to others.
- Many: Help us, O Lord, to be ready to reach out to all in need.
- One: Come, let us worship the One who prepares us for service.
- Many: Let us sing our songs of praise to the One who has healed us. Amen.

₩ Hymn	O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come	#638
	O Christ, the healer, we have come to pray for health, to plead for friends. How can we fail to be restored when reached by love that never ends?	
	From every ailment flesh endures our bodies clamor to be freed; yet in our hearts we would confess that wholeness is our deepest need.	
	In conflicts that destroy our health we recognize the world's disease; our common life declares our ills. Is there no cure, O Christ, for these?	

Grant that we all, made one in faith, in your community may find the wholeness that, enriching us, shall reach the whole of humankind.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

A TIME FOR THE CHILDREN

A TIME FOR CHILDREN singing.....

Kids of the kingdom, that's who we are Kids of the kingdom, that's who we are We love Jesus, we love the Lord We love Jesus, we love the Lord

A MESSAGE FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

HEARING AND PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST LESSON

James 1:17-27

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

#734

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

"This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines."

You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.'

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.'

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

ΗγмΝ

Meekness and Majesty

#97

Meekness and majesty, human and deity, in perfect harmony, the One who is God. Lord of eternity, dwells in humanity; kneels in humility and washes our feet. O what a mystery, meekness and majesty; bow down and worship, for this is your God.

Father's pure radiance, perfect in innocence; yet learns obedience to death on a cross. Suffering to give us life, conquering through sacrifice; and as they crucify prays, "Father, forgive." O what a mystery, meekness and majesty; bow down and worship, for this is your God.

Wisdom unsearchable, God, the invisible; love indestructible in frailty appears. Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly; lifts our humanity to the heights of his throne. O what a mystery, meekness and majesty; bow down and worship, for this is your God.

REFLECTION

The Power to Save our Souls

THE PEOPLE AT PRAYER

-010-

JOYS AND CONCERNS

CARES CHORUS

#493

I cast all my cares upon you; I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And any time that I don't know what to do, I will cast all my cares upon you.

INVITATION INTO PRAYER (from the Iona Community)

Eternal God, we praise you as people have done for near two centuries within these walls.

We are not alone: saints and angels, invisible, yet in splendor, surround us; Jesus, the healer, is with us.

Your Holy Spirit leads us to yearn for our own completeness, for the well-being of others, and for a better life.

Fill us with the expectation of goodness; and should any here feel burdened by guilt or inadequacy, let the grace of Jesus be made real in all its liberating power.

Here let your word come alive in our hearing; here let our concern respond to your compassion.

Here let hope lead a path through heaviness; here may your kingdom come.

Amen.

ALTAR CALL - the pastor and deacon's invite all who would like personal prayer for themselves or a loved one to come forward for prayer with the laying on of hands and anointing. Those who are worshipping on line will be invited in to a break out room for prayer.

UNISON PRAYER FOR HEALING

Dear Lord, it is my will to surrender to you everything that I am and everything that I'm striving to be. I open the deepest recesses of my heart and invite Your Holy Spirit to dwell inside of me. I offer you my life, heart, mind, body, soul, and spirit. I surrender to you my past, present, and future problems. I ask You to take hold over every aspect of my life. I surrender to You all my hurt, pain, worry, doubt, fear, and anxiety, and I ask You to wash me clean. I release everything into Your compassionate care.

Please speak to me clearly, Lord. Open my ears to hear Your voice. Open my heart to commune with You more deeply. I want to feel Your loving embrace. Open the doors that need to be opened and close the doors that need to be closed. Please set my feet upon the straight and narrow road that leads to everlasting life. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.



CALL TO CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Loving God, we come before you as we are: broken, disappointed, and suffering in so many ways. Unlike the crowds who surrounded Jesus, urgently turning to him to be made well, we are all too likely to try to heal ourselves. We attempt to fill our emptiness with crowded schedules and with the pursuit of pleasure, prestige and power. We mask our pain instead of facing our fears and loneliness. We confuse what we need with what we want, and we are unwilling to allow you to change our desires to reflect what you want for us. Forgive us, merciful Friend. Forgive our misguided attempts to heal ourselves apart from the transforming grace and power of your love. Strengthen our faith so that we may trust in your healing presence in our lives. Amen.

(Silent prayer of confession)

Gracious God, forgive us, and renew a right spirit within us, a spirit of compassion, understanding, and humility. Fill us with the vision of unity in Christ, and enable us to incarnate Christ's love, so that we may worthily partake in the body of Christ and the cup of the new covenant. Amen.

The good news in Christ is that God is more willing to forgive our sins than we are to acknowledge them. The God of Peace be with you all, keeping you in unity with Christ's people everywhere.

INVITATION ♦ CONSECRATION PRAYER ♦ THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS The Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (IN UNISON)

We bask in the healing power of your love, O God. You are always with us. You are with us when we cry out in fear. You are with us when we are discouraged. You are with us when we are alone. You are with us all the time, day and night. For your presence, we are most thankful. In Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen.

Responding in Love

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Beautiful Savior

	Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen.		
⊛ Hymn	There Is a Balm in Gilead #63 ^r	1	
	There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.		
	Sometimes I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain, but then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again. There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.		
	If you cannot preach like Peter, if you cannot pray like Paul, you can tell the love of Jesus, and say, "He died for all." There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.		
	Don't ever feel discouraged, for Jesus is your friend, and if you lack for knowledge he'll ne'er refuse to lend. There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole, there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.		
BENEDICTION			
POSTLUDE			

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Save me and I'll be saved, for you are my heart's desire. — Jeremiah 17:14

Friends, there are times when I think my grandchildren save me from myself. They require me to be present in the moment and to look at the world with curiosity and wonder. I've been blessed to have time with many



of them during my vacation. Each night as I laid my hands upon their heads and prayed for the Lord to bless and keep them I had tears in my eyes. They are each so wonderful in their own ways, bright and funny, curious and determined, loving and caring. I'm blessed, truly blessed.

Holding them in my arms helps to heal my grief. A grief that I forget I'm carrying. I guess grief is like that. Their wonder and hope returns me to the root of my faith, where Jesus beckons me to find awe and joy in the mundane moments of life.

We saw a heron perched in the top of a weeping cherry tree overlooking a pond. It swept down to the water and landed on the bank thirty feet from us with a fish in its mouth. The dog barked and it flew away before we saw it eat the fish. And we saw some really big snapping turtles, and box turtles. And had a Gilmore Girls marathon. Healing comes in the little moments. Thanks be to God.

With blessings of healing love, Katheríne



Our purpose is to seek God's grace for ourselves and the world. As followers of Jesus:

- we perpetuate the Word of God by worshipping, teaching, and ministering in a loving and caring way;
- we are an open and affirming congregation that welcomes the diversity of individuals and their gifts;
- we provide a place of Christian learning for ourselves and our children:
- · we seek the betterment of the church, the community and the world.

.....so that God's love and justice are made real.

First Congregational Church in Billerica United Church of Christ

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. and around our community.

The good news we have of hope, love, grace, mercy, & forgiveness is needed now more than ever.

The church is working diligently to provide both online and in person worship & programming to reach in

There are 3 ways to give: 1.Online using the QR code on the right or go to our website FCCBillerica.org 2.Mail checks to FCCB, 18 Andover Road Billerica, MA 01821 3.Sundays during the Offertory



irst Congregational Church

JOIN US FOR COFFEE TIME AFTER THE SERVICE

IN PERSON IN THE PARLOR

AND

VIRTUALLY ON ZOOM

CONVERSATION, LAUGHTER, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

Memorial Flowers

Sept 1st

The flowers on the altar are given in loving memory of Gladys and Arthur Barnard from Barbara George and family.

Sept 8th

The flowers on the altar are given in loving memory of her parents, Leonard and Barbara Brown, from Susan Brown.

Sept 15th

The flowers on the altar are given in loving memory of Lonnie and Jonathan Watts and Mary and Larry Watts from Donna Ricarte and family.

Sept 22nd

The flowers on the altar are given in loving memory of Barbara and Harold Johansen from Jane and Paul Johansen.

Sept 29th

The flowers on the altar are given in loving memory of Fred Jollimore by his children and grandchildren. The flowers on the lectern are given in loving memory of Robert Swansburg by his wife, Barbara Swansburg.

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

PRAYERS

Prayer

God of the word, help me to listen more, to be slower to speak, slower to anger, and to be quick to act for those in distress. Help me to let go of the anger I have so loved, and to fill up instead with passion for your righteousness. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

- Prayers for peace as wars and conflicts continue to escalate around the world. Injustices and inequalities manifest as racism, discrimination, gender-based violence, economic disparities, and other issues.
- For those grieving or suffering due to the ~10,900 gun violence deaths that happened in the US since the start of the year.
- For those who fear about what might happen if politics is brought into church.
- For reducing anger and building up our ability to work toward the righteousness that God desires.
- For the folks impacted by the flooding in CT.

Prayers of Joy and Thanksgiving

- For those who stand together with determination.
- For those teaching, practicing, and learning about innovative, experimental and non-traditional preaching.

August 25, 2024

To All Members of the First Congregational Church in Billerica, Massachusetts

A Special Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, September 8, 2024 immediately following the worship service on Zoom and in person.

The Agenda includes:

1. Review and approve recommendation for construction project scope based on bids received.

- 2. Discuss and approve financing methods and use of the church building so construction can begin.
- 3. Other such business as may properly be considered at the Congregational meeting.

Susan Hagel

Clerk

First Congregational Church, Billerica, MA



FCCB Website Re-launch! It's today!

Use it as a tool to highlight what our church is all about and who we are. Share it with friends and on your social media accounts. Spread the word!

VISIT OUR NEW & IMPROVED WEBSITE: fccbillerica.org



First Congregational Church in Billerica United Church of Christ

Council Highlights 8/20/24

Members: Ed Reinecker, Susan Hagel, Barry Merrill, Elaine Keough, Jane Johansen; Erika Rinaldi, Leann Barden, Taryn Gillis, Rev Katherine. Not able to attend were Brooke O'Connor, Sally Pantano, Craig Gottmann Hanrahan and Richard Normandin.

Council spent time planning the date and topics for the October Congregational meeting, (October 27, 2024). The warrant is posted and should be in this week's announcements.

Rally Day is coming September 15! We are asking the congregation to bring a dessert or a salad and all other food will be provided. We could use help with purchasing and cooking and games and look forward to the start of a new Sunday School kickoff. Contact a Council member or Taryn if you can help.

Yankee Doodle Homecoming is September 21 and while building construction will not allow us to do a boiled dinner this year, we do need help with the activity our church runs annually. Volunteer for a few hours anytime between 9:30 and 4 pm to help run the booth. We need someone to pick up 3 bales of hay, buy pumpkins and set up and break down the booth. It's a fun activity to help kids of all ages enjoy.

We are looking for two families to volunteer to manage Thanksgiving at our church as Jon and Katherine will not be able to do what they usually do. They have notes and can support your efforts and we need to know soon if we have enough volunteers to be able to pull off this community Thanksgiving event this year...purchasing, peeling, cooking, table set ups, serving and coordinating desserts, and yes, dishes, pots and pans to be washed.

Council also discussed both the 200th anniversary of First Congregational church in Billerica, to be celebrated in 2029 as well as Reverend Katherine's planned retirement during that same year. There will be more discussion about this at the October congregational meeting.





We will be hosting a stall at Yankee Doodle on Saturday 21st September and we need people to help 9am-4pm.

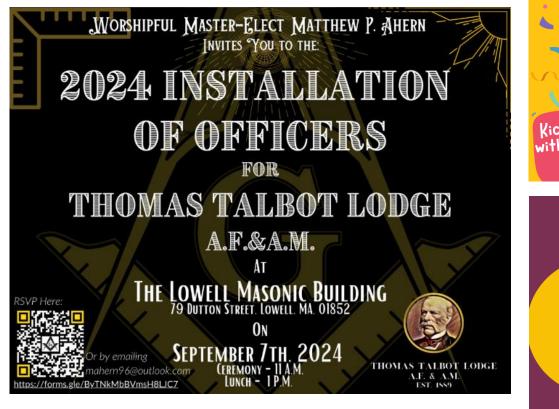
Email - communications@fccbillerica.org or call - 978-663-8433 if you can help.



First Congregational Church in Billerica United Church of Christ



UPCOMING EVENTS HERE AND IN TOWN







Starts 22 September 18 Andover Road, Billerica



SUNDAY SCHOOL! Pre K thru 8th Grade! Starts 22 September 18 Andover Road, Billerica



CONFIRMATION CLASS Bth Grade +

SATURDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2024 9AM-4PM WOMEN'S RETREAT DIVING DEEPER INTO GOD & PRAYER



First Congregational Church in Billerica United Church of Christ

PRAYER LIST

Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. - Matthew 11:28

Let us pray for the family and friends of Lenity Gathingu (Faith Gathingu's mom) as they mourn her passing from this life to eternal life in Christ. Hold in prayer Matthew Ahern, Eddie Thompson, Kevin Corkery, Jason Pantano, & Thomas Knox as they serve our country. Let us pray for the protection & safety of all those who serve in the Military & all First Responders. Prayers for those struggling with mental health. We pray for those that have been lifted up:

Amelia Athans Lee Backman Alyssa Barras Veronica Beargeon Joan Bello John Berard Debbie Bionelli **Dennis Blanchette** Les Bockmann David Breen Allan Broome Julie Brown Victor Campana Angela Caron Larry Carroll **Edith Clooney** Matt Cornaro Josh Croteau Jeff Danzig Caitlin Doherty Rose & Bill Dixon Patty Dooley **Richard Dube** Noreen Duxbury Cathy Barrett Errickson Christy Fajkowski Claire Fell Lindsay Ferraro

Claire Flynn **Bill Flynn** Linda Russell Gallivan Sebastian Gard John Gianacopolis Maryann Giardina Cara Glennon Carol Goss Mary Gottmann Eddie & Linda Grab Paula Halbedl Jim Hamilton Patricia Hamilton Kathleen Marie Healey Al Heard Clara Kerin Kirkland **Bobby Lockett** Karen Lynne Elizabeth Mahoney Abby Metcalf Samantha Metcalf Vince Michaels Diane Morrison Memorie Munson Neil Nagle Gloria Norman

Beverly O'Brien **Richard O'Brien** The Pantano Family Scott Phippen Helen Potter Tammy Potter Haylee Reed Harper Reis **Florine Rogers** Sheryl Roth Rogers Allan Sampson Lauren Sampson **Rylee Sandland Diana Saunders** Keara Schmidt Maureen Schroeder Ryan Scurka Joan Slaney **Paul Sneeringer** William Spencer Heather Strassel Michael Ta **Cindy Tallman Paul Timmins Cindy Tomlin** The Tracy Family Judy Volpicelli Honey Waldman

Please notify the church office or pastor when you are hospitalized or in need of pastoral care. Due to HIPAA laws, we are not notified by hospitals. You can add or remove a name to the prayer list by notifying the church office. Please have permission from the person you are listing.

ONGOING EVENTS & ZOOM INFORMATION

Sunday Worship, gather at 9:45, worship at 10 am. In person and online.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82776552946?pwd=NGNnaUZlczRRWHg1ODFnOGg3ZEEvQT09 Meeting ID: 827 7655 2946 Password: 364377 Connect by phone (audio only) call 253-215-8782

Tuesday Evening Prayer, online only, is on hiatus and will resume on September 10th.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89052674342?pwd=RURJWW1yNllxVkEvUzAzK0xHLy9JQT09 Meeting ID: 890 5267 4342 Password: 510800 Connect by phone (audio only) call 253-215-8782

Bible Study, Wednesdays, online only, is on hiatus and will resume on September 11th. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85104261041?pwd=ci95b28xNHF2ZEdEeW5kY3NOTnpYQT09 Meeting ID: 851 0426 1041 Passcode: 847812 Connect by phone (audio only) call 253-215-8782

20 Somethings! has paused for the summer and will resume on September 18th.

Pilgrim Fellowship Youth group (grades 8 to 12) will resume in September.

Led by Matt Ahern, Angela Hiott, and Rev Katherine in the parlor. Reach out to one of them for the schedule of meetings.

Trustees: 1st Thursdays at 7:00pm in the parlor and on Zoom

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89368255444?pwd=Uzkvbmlnb3RvV3dkaXRBbjN6M1V4QT09 Meeting ID: 893 6825 5444 Passcode: 368023

Council: 3rd Tuesdays at 7:30pm on Zoom

Meeting ID: 328 925 2858 Passcode: Beacon

Aim Hi Lunch, 3rd Thursdays at noon in the parlor. Join us for friendship, fellowship and fun activities! Contact Taryn to confirm we are meeting and to get more information. Get-togethers will resume on September 19th.

Lay Shepherds: 4th Thursdays at 10:30am in the parlor

All are welcome to join us! We send cards and make calls to keep in touch with people in the congregation.

<u>Choir and Junior Choir</u> Everyone is welcome! Come Thursday evenings Sept. to June from 7:00 to 8:30pm in the Sanctuary. Youth Choir meets every Sunday after worship, in the Chapel, also Sept to June. Choir will resume on Sept. 12th and Junior choir on Sept. 22nd.

Deacons: 2nd Sundays at 11:30am in the parlor

Contact Liz Antoszewski if you would like to attend a meeting and she'll confirm the meeting time.

Outreach: 2nd Sundays at 11:30am in room 5. Contact Carol Young for more information.

<u>Pizza and Bible</u> has paused for the summer.

FCCB CONTACT INFORMATION

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 18 ANDOVER ROAD BILLERICA, MA 01821 www.FCCBILLERICA.ORG Sunday Service: 10 a.m.

Church Office: communications@fccbillerica.org 978-663-8433 Office Hours: Tues. - Friday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

CHURCH STAFF

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Dir. Christian Ed, Taryn Gillis communications@fccbillerica.org 978-502-7684

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Pilgrim Fellowship Matthew Ahern Angela Hiott Rev Katherine

Sexton Beth Downer

Nursery Teacher Helen Pynn 978-663-4071

CHURCH OFFICERS

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Aim Hi Donna Ricarte 978-663-4043

Congregational Relations Jenny Carmichael 978-987-1146

Memorial Flowers Ruthie Elliott 617-281-8056

Lay Shepherds Sandy Galvin 510-329-2169

Junior Choir April Goss-Baker 978 670-8993

Outreach Committee Carol Young 978-663-5658

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Generosity Ministry Laura Bosworth 978-604-1189

Fundraising Ministry Laura Bosworth 978-604-1189