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The Message

August 2025

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

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From The Pastor's Desk



August 2025

Greetings...

First Baptist Church Westwood & Friends

***"For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth
to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." II Chronicles 16:9***

The above verse is in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. It is a reminder of the Lord's constant and loving watch care of those whose hearts are authentically true to Him.

It was striking to find this blessed promise mentioned during words of judgement from the Lord to an Israelite leader who became indifferent to Divine accountability and began to despise godly counsel. We are to heed the Divine lessons and warnings shared in biblical accounts such as this. Humans tend to desire 'alliances of power' among themselves. In arrogance they don't seek God's guidance nor blessing. Hence the fall from grace begins...

***"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword,
it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow;
it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.
Everything is uncovered and laid bare before
the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Hebrews 4:12-13***

Indifference or unbelief regarding the reality of human accountability to God will always be prevalent among those who claim to be God's. One example from antiquity (B.C.) is in the Old Testament book of Judges. It records periods of religious-spiritual decay and moral chaos among God's people. Rather than trying to be godly people, a stabilizing presence; beacons of light for the path to Creator God's redemptive plan on earth they fell short. A sobering recurring theme starts at Judges 17:6 (repeated in 18:1, 19:1) and ending in Judges 21:25. ***"In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit." "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did what was right in their own eyes."*** Judges is merely one record of periods when evil's oppressive and shameful deeds controlled hearts and there was no remedy but thank You Father, for sending Your Son, The Christ, The Messiah!

Now, let us share a moment of praise. Shout Hallelujah!! Because the very God who Scripture says “judges our thoughts and attitudes of heart” has granted you and I amazing grace and undeserved mercy! We can agree with Job’s testimony: ***“For He wounds, but He also binds up; He injures, but His hands also heal.”*** **Job 5:18** The Lord Jesus Christ has healed us by His shed blood and Divine forgiveness. We have been delivered from all our sin (past, present, future) and from sin’s domination! In Christ the power of God keeps us faithful as we are being sanctified and set apart for the day of His return!

Friends, we know that God is Spirit, as Christ taught in **John 4:24**. God does not have physical eyes like his creatures. God stands outside of Creation. God is Sovereign and holds Supreme Providence. Our gift of faith empowers us to comprehend biblical metaphor, etc. that the Lord uses to warn, teach, train and mold us into the ***“true worshipers [who] will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.”*** God IS present! God IS assessing human hearts!

Yes, the world is harsh and dismal to say the least, but refuse to be intimidated by evil’s works of division, cruelty, injustice, and mercilessness among multitudes of **innocents and vulnerable** both young and old. Evil unfolds in households and among nations. Pray!!! for residents and communities. Pray!!! for mercy upon all nations. Most importantly, live faithful to Jesus teachings and stand firm against temptation. Receive your new mercies from God each morning for *great is God’s faithfulness!* Obey Christ by planting your Gospel seeds! (see July’s writing) Talk to people who know you about why your hope rests in Jesus Christ. With courage obey God in small acts of faith that the Spirit shows you.

Take heart! We go in God’s strength and have Christ’s power over fear!

Declare with me **Psalm 28:7-8 !!**

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.

My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.

The Lord is the strength of his people,...”

God bless you as you continue enjoying Summer and planting of your Gospel seeds!

Pastor Catherine



Baker Chapel
10:00 a.m.

We are presently enjoying summer services in our outside Baker Chapel. Summer services will continue through August 31st.

August's Communion Sunday will be celebrated inside (in the sanctuary) and it will be held on the 2nd Sunday, August 10th rather than the traditional 1st.

We have enjoyed our Westwood Clergy Ecumenical services this summer with First Parish Congregational Church and St. John's Episcopal Church of Westwood. The 3rd and last of these summer services will be held at First Parish Congregational Church on August 17th at 9:30 a.m., Pastor Catherine will be preaching.

* * * * *

In Baker Chapel there are several benches for seating, but we encourage you to bring your own chair, as these may fill up quickly. There will be folding chairs available for those without their own.

In the case of inclement weather (rain or extreme heat outside), worship will be held in our air-conditioned sanctuary.

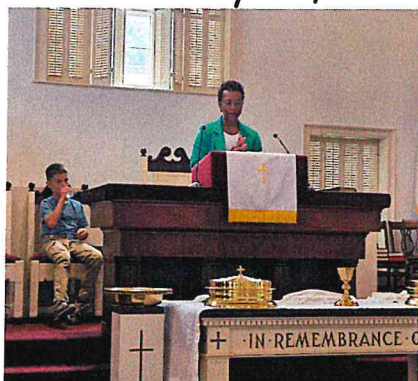
If you are unable to join us on a particular Sunday, worship is livestreamed and also video-taped so it may be viewed at a later time. The livestream and YouTube link can be found on our website, fbcwestwood.org, by clicking on "Worship Services" and then choosing which service you'd like to view. In addition, an all-church email will be sent out a few days prior to the upcoming service with that service's link. If you are not on our email list and would like to receive the link to our services, please email Donna Metcalf at office@fbcwestwood.org.

Westwood Clergy Ecumenical summer worship service at First Baptist Church of Westwood July 6, 2025



Rev. V. Michael Bousquet, Rev. Catherine M. Miller, and Rev. J.T. Hills
(St. John's Episcopal Church) FBC Westwood (First Parish Church)

July 13, 2025 Worship service



Pastor Catherine &
Evan (Westwood Ringer Mel's son)



Westwood Ringer's Quartet



Let's Talk" group discussion and Holy Communion

Notice the changes in dates

Hello everyone!

Pastor Catherine hosts an in-person and Zoom Bible discussion where she will present a topic for us to reflect upon and there will be open discussion for sharing and learning from each other, with the Holy Spirit's guidance.

We'll close with The Lord's Supper, so bring your bread and juice!

The sessions are held in the Reception room and on Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

There have been changes in the gathering dates

- *Thursday, July 31st (new date)*
- *Thursday, August 7th has been cancelled*
- Thursday, August 21st

Hope you can join us!

For those attending by Zoom, Rev. Catherine M. Miller is inviting you to the scheduled event.

Topic: Let's Talk: Bible Study & Holy Communion w/ Pastor Catherine

Time: July 31, 2025 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

July 31, 2025 07:00 PM

August 21, 2025 07:00 PM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZcodu-urTwuHdac3InSTEQ_Ezi5BrhXckDa/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGrqzosHNeStB6FRpwqGYj4M-7ztmZbgqdcn0zMDRNNRzLJE_hLZ5BtGODT

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83516637472?pwd=EvL6pkHvrpuOfst9PyI3PKEydXFVak.1>

Meeting ID: 835 1663 7472

Passcode: 618284

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/k1OBxoEcM>



Pull-Tabs for Shriners Hospital

Are you aware that for years we've been collecting pull-tabs from beverage cans – and we're still doing it? Why? Here's the story.

Shriners Hospitals in Springfield and Boston have been collecting pull-tabs or "pop-tops" from beverage cans since 1989, recycling them, and putting the money toward programs that directly benefit children. The pull-tabs are the only pure aluminum part of the beverage can, and there are approximately 1,200 to 1,400 tabs in one pound. Since the program's inception, about a half-million pounds of aluminum tabs have been collected and recycled.

We donate the tabs to the Shriners' Burns Hospital – Boston. Neil Patterson coordinates this project, and Ken Shaw delivers the tabs to the hospital. There is a plastic jug in the Reception Room at church where you can leave the tabs you have removed from beverage cans.

Their website reminds us that Shriners' Children's Hospitals are "always here for our patients, regardless of a family's ability to pay or insurance status".

You can help a Shriner help a child. Donate pull-tabs for recycling.



The Women's Council Spring Event at Gordon Conwell's South Hamilton campus



Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary's Women's Council Leadership Committee



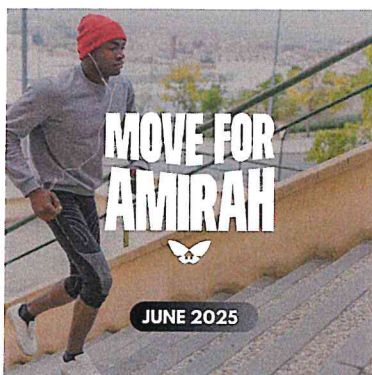
Our former substitute organist,
Ji Young So,
was the guest pianist.

The Event was a gathering of approx. 80 including alumni, professors, and local churches who support the Women's Council mission of providing enrolled students with scholarship funds.



We are pleased to announce that we received donations totaling **\$1,227.27** from FBC Westwood's church family and friends in April & May for *America For Christ Offering 2025*.

Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Thank you to all who have participated in our June fundraiser, "Move For Amirah".

Update:

We have received donations of \$445, as of July 13th

September's Message will report the grand total of miles FBC Westwood participants walked, ran, hiked, etc and the total amount we raised.

July & August's Mission offering



**One Great
HOUR
OF SHARING**

A LETTER FROM YOUR WORLD RELIEF OFFICER

Dear American Baptist Church members,

I love Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of these verses in Matthew 5, and the clear commission they give to show up brightly in the world and be generous with our lives. That is the invitation extended in this year's One Great Hour of Sharing theme, Be the Light.

The scriptures tell us that huge crowds were gathering, drawn to Jesus by his teachings and the miracles of healing he performed. So, Jesus climbed a hill and delivered his "sermon on the mount." He opened his message by bestowing beautiful blessings that must have been like balm for those hearing it, and then he described a life of discipleship. He commands us in those verses to be light-bearers, to raise that light high and cast it wide.

Our giving to One Great Hour of Sharing is one way we can heed that call. When we participate in One Great Hour of Sharing, we shed light in places where circumstances make it difficult to imagine a future with hope. We create possibility for people forced to flee their homes in search of safety and new promise. We support life-giving recovery efforts when disasters devastate communities and overturn lives. We empower partners around the globe in their labors to build sustainable futures. We plant seeds of peace where war has wrought despair and destruction.

I think of the ministries our One Great Hour of Sharing gifts enable as a showering of unexpected blessings, much like those blessings Jesus granted in his sermon on the mount. Our offerings let people know that they are not alone, that people they don't even know see their pain and care enough to respond. They extend a mighty witness of love that is powerful and healing.

I hope you will participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing offering this year with a spirit of joyful generosity! Thank you for 'bringing out the God-colors in the world' by generously sharing your OGHS gifts. This is why we are here: to be shining witnesses of uncommon love and enduring hope, to share abundant blessings with others.

In grateful partnership,

Lisa Rothenberger-Winter

World Relief Officer

Please make donation checks payable to:

"FBC Westwood" and note in the memo section "OGHS".

Donation envelopes can be found in the sanctuary pews and on the Summer Worship Cart in Baker Chapel on Sunday mornings. You may place your donation in the offering plate or mail to the church office. Thank you.



Donation requests from The Westwood Food Pantry

1. Please do not travel to the stores just to pick up donated items- instead we suggest that you purchase a few donation items during your regular shopping trip, especially if they are on sale.
2. You can bring your items to worship on Sunday.

Suggested items:

- Canned Soups -especially Progresso (Vegetable types, Clam Chowder, etc)
- Canned Vegetables (Peas, Corn, etc.)
- Canned Baked Beans
- Canned Fruit (Pineapple, Fruit Cocktail, Peaches, Pears, Mandarin Oranges, etc.)
- Canned Beef Stew, Hash, Chili with Meat)
- Spaghetti Sauce (small 24 -25-ounce jars)

Other "Always Needed" Popular Items

- Health & Beauty Aids (shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste etc.)
- Diapers
- L or XL Depends
- Cleaning Products (dish detergent, laundry detergent, etc.)
- Cake mixes and frosting
- Canned **White** Albacore Tuna in water
- Canned Chicken (5-ounce cans or small pouches)

Volunteers:

At this time they have all the volunteers they can use, but their needs may change at any time. If you or your high school or college-aged student is interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please email westwoodfoodpantry@gmail.com.

(Sorry, but they are unable to accept volunteers younger than 9th grade.)

How to Apply:

The Westwood Food Pantry is available to all residents of Westwood who are experiencing temporary or long-term food insecurity.

To request assistance from the Westwood Food Pantry or to set up a client visit, please email them at westwoodfoodpantry@gmail.com or call them at 781-269-2008.



Pastoral Care Meetings (in-person or virtual meetings):

For meetings with the Pastor
please

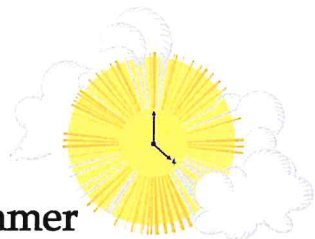
email: pastor@fbcwestwood.org

or call (781) 461-0297.

Pastoral Care meetings are held on
Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday between 1:30 - 4:00 pm.

The Pastor will try to
accommodate other times on
these days.

(if you call when she isn't there,
you can leave a message)



Summer Church Office Hours

Now - August 29th:

Tuesdays & Thursdays
8:00 am - 2:00pm

**Church Office will be closed
the week of August 11th.*

Donna can be reached
by calling

781-461-1730 or

by emailing

office@fbcwestwood.org



Sunday Worship Services

Please check out our website,
www.fbcwestwood.org. We post
Livestream links and videos of our
worship services there, plus other
news and devotional materials.



Digital version of the Sunday Bulletin

We produce a digital version of the
weekly Sunday bulletin that is
formatted so that it can be easily
read on a cell phone, tablet, or
computer. This is being emailed to
people a day or two ahead of the
service. It can be helpful when
watching the worship service online
or simply to find out what's
happening at FBC that week. If you
wish to be added to the email list to
receive the digital bulletin, please
contact Donna Metcalf via email at
office@fbcwestwood.org.



You are invited to join our Prayer
Chain. This is a small group of FBC folk
who email one another with prayer
concerns of the larger church
community and then include those
concerns in their prayers. This is
beyond the all-church prayers shared
by the Pastor. If you would like to join
The Prayer Chain, please contact
Sunny O'Malley.



Crafters' Group

The Crafters' Group have been taking a summer break.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 10th to prepare for our December Holly Fair. They meet in room 7 from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at office@fbcwestwood.org.



**Church Council
and Staff meeting**
hybrid (Zoom & Reception Room)

**August 19th
7:00pm**



September "Message"

Material for next month's newsletter is due to Donna in the church office by Wednesday, August 20th
(office@fbcwestwood.org)



Saturday, September 20th

Once again, FBC will have a booth at Westwood Day. We'll be there to let people know what's going on at the church, to talk to them about the church, and answer any questions.

But we'll also be there to join in the day's festivities, to have fun, and to greet people walking by. We can't do this if we don't have volunteers to staff the booth from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Please sign up and come join us for an hour (or more) that day.

We'd like to have 2 people at the booth each hour.

Please contact-

Jen Cromack:

- email jenstenc@yahoo.com

- call 781-436-5541

or

the church office:

- email office@fbcwestwood.org

- call 781-461-1730

If you have any questions, please contact Jen Cromack.

PayPal®



If it's easier for you, we accept PayPal payments on our website for offering or other donations. Just click on the "donate" button on www.fbcwestwood.org.

Another option we offer is through using Venmo. Below is our QR code that you can scan.





New Address

Daniel & Sarah DeVoy
447 Cider Hill Rd
York, ME 03909



8/4 Jessica (Lewis) Matthews
8/6 Shirley Munroe
8/8 Corey Folsom
8/9 Austin "Bill" Poirier
8/10 Phil Shepperson
8/14 Samuel Salinas,
Suzanne (Mahan) McLaughlin
8/18 Robert Girling
8/22 Eileen Keller
8/24 Tina Blood
8/26 Jan Shepperson
8/27 Austin (Michael) Poirier
8/29 Ziva Urio
8/30 Brian Folsom



August Anniversaries

8/15 Eileen & Rev. Sheldon Keller
8/26 Emily & Rev. Jim Leavitt

