



808 HIGH STREET · WESTWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02090



The Message

August 2026

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

CHURCH OFFICE: 781-461-1730 EMAIL: OFFICE@FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

PASTOR'S STUDY: 781-461-0297 EMAIL: PASTOR@FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

WEBSITE: WWW.FBCWESTWOOD.ORG

August 2026



Mid-Summer Greetings!

***Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart and
with all your soul and
with all your mind.’ Matthew 22:37***

Family of Christ, we are in the middle of another lovely New England Summer. Nature gives all people so many gifts to help us pause, ponder and engage God's glorious wonders. The simplest of these wonders nudge our souls in the early mornings and refresh our souls through evenings.

The awe of Creation is another sign of the sensitive love that Almighty God has for humanity. Yet even in midst of breathtaking and harmonious days, whether on vacation or at home, faithful Christians are harboring spiritual restlessness. Why? Because the ways of our Heavenly Father cannot be traced. Pondering nature differs a lot from wondering what God is up to in the world and/or in our lives.

***O Lord, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I need you the most? Psalm 10:1***

We believe Jesus' promise that He never leaves us nor forsake us; that He is really present within us by His Spirit. We are committed to knowing God's Word, turning to its' reassurance and comfort. We have a healthy faith practice doing our part to stay anchored in Jesus and His Church. We are even told that the Lord is at the right hand of the Father, always interceding for us. Like even right now! (**Romans 8:34**) God's good purposes are at work always.

Yet, since our ways are nothing like God's ways. (**Isaiah 55:6-9**) We are often left stumped.

Christ's 'footprints in the sand' cannot be seen while He leads us *through, over, under, and around* obstacles and pitfalls getting us back on the straight ***patches*** of His plan, for a reprieve. A candid confession shared at our Prayer & Friendship small group was this: "Accepting God's will can be extremely hard. It requires a type of patience that can only come from the Lord." None of us could deny this truth... we had a good time laughing at ourselves as we shared our attitudes of impatience with God.

Psalm 10:1 reminds us that even while faithfully loving, obeying, and serving God, various wounds and disappointments are inevitable. BUT count it all joy! God will not allow anything to cancel God's blessings that are ours and also meant to impact those around us, for their good!

***Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all.
Psalm 34:19***

*O Lord, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I need you the most? Psalm 10:1*



If Psalm 10:1 sums up how you feel, know that you are not alone...
AND also know that God does not toy around with us like playing a game of Hide & Seek.

May the below devotional and prayer be helpful as you trust in God's faithfulness!

Hide and Seek

From: The One Year Praying Through the Bible: Experiencing the Power of Prayer
Author: Cheri Fuller

*O Lord, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I need you the most? Psalm 10:1*

The psalmist's question is not an uncommon one to ask when our lives turn upside down. It is difficult to grasp the idea that a loving God might hide away while chaos seems to be reigning. The psalmist was honest with God. He didn't conceal his fears or the feeling that he was alone in his battle. Yet he also encouraged himself with these words: ***"You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry"*** (Psalm 10:17, NIV). This assurance was birthed out of past experiences when God heard him in his time of need and responded. Sometimes we are frustrated or overwhelmed when we cannot fix the battles that threaten us or our loved ones. Honesty with God is not a lack of faith but rather an admittance that we are powerless to turn the situation around. The good news is that producing strength and beauty out of darkness is God's specialty. When we seek him in the hard times, we find that he is not far away and that he is faithful.

Prayer: *ABBA, FATHER, sometimes I feel abandoned when I can't fix my circumstances. Please help me to trust you, to place this situation in your hands, for you can see this battle from a perspective that I do not have. Lord, though I feel weak, I know that I am strong as I lean on your strength rather than my own.*

Christian, you say, "But he has not answered." He has; the Lord is so near to you that His silence is the answer. His silence is big with terrific meaning that you cannot understand yet ...but presently you will.

Peace to you.

Pastor Catherine



Did You Know?

Photo: Public Domain, trumanlibrary.gov
Harry S. Truman, 33rd U.S. President



The One Great Hour of Sharing offering began seventy-seven years ago in response to the devastation of World War II. On Saturday evening, March 26, 1949, a national broadcast titled "One Great Hour" featured a remarkable assembly of national leaders and celebrities. The 33rd U.S. President, Harry S. Truman's, radio address during the broadcast included the following:

"There are thousands of children in foreign lands today who have no memory of their parents, no knowledge of the meaning of the words "home" and "family," and who have forgotten what it feels like to have enough to eat. There are hopeless thousands who wander among the shattered towns seeking a place to rest, seeking security and a chance to begin their lives anew. There are many who pray to God only in secret, fearing persecution if they profess their beliefs openly. It is hard for us to comprehend grief and distress such as this because we in America are so much more fortunate. Our country has been blessed with material riches. Our homes are secure. We can go to our churches and worship God as we desire. We know that we enjoy these great blessings not because of any special merit on our part, but because of the bounty of God. It is to His Providence that we owe the richness of our country and our heritage of freedom. Since these good things come to us from Him, we know that we must use them for the good of others in accordance with His will."

The broadcast concluded by asking Americans to give generously the next morning in their churches. More than 75,000 churches responded.

Today, One Great Hour of Sharing serves people in over 80 countries around the world. Sponsored by five Christian U.S. denominations and Church World Service, One Great Hour of Sharing makes sure that we can respond to needs as soon as they happen and that tens of thousands of people receive support for ongoing relief, rehabilitation, and development. The World Relief Committee of the American Baptist Board of General Ministries reviews each development project request funded by the One Great Hour of Sharing offering received from American Baptists. Gifts reach the ministries and people in need through a network of regional and international partnerships with the following: American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (International Ministries) American Baptist Home Mission Societies Baptist World Aid – the compassionate arm of the Baptist World Alliance, supporting three areas of ministry: relief, development, and support of national partners. Church World Service – Founded in 1946, Church World Service is a relief, development, and refugee assistance ministry. Church World Service transforms communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster.

FBC Westwood will be receiving donations for OGHS starting on Sun., Aug. 16th and continue through the end of September. Our goal is \$500.00.

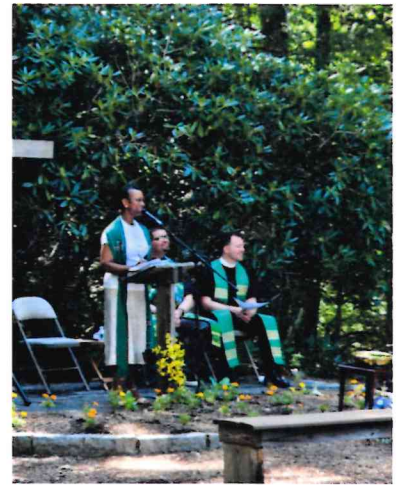
Please make donation checks payable to: "FBC Westwood" and note in the memo section "OGHS". Donation envelopes can be found in the sanctuary pews and on the Summer Worship Cart in Baker Chapel on Sunday mornings. You may place your donation in the offering plate or mail to the church office.

~Thank you.

Westwood Clergy Ecumenical summer worship service at First Baptist Church of Westwood July 12, 2026



Rev. JT Hills, Pastor of First Parish Church, preached



Clergy from all 3 churches

Flowers by Carol Ahearn



Photos from around our campus this summer



Baker Chapel



**Baker Chapel – plantings
by Carol Ahearn**



pathway to fire pit



Community garden - June



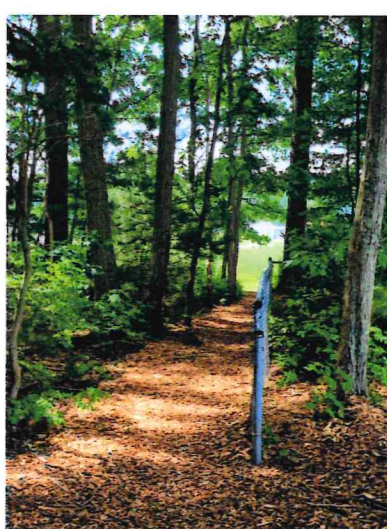
Library box exchange



sitting area by library box



Rice Reservation entrance



left and right pathways to middle school





Courtyard and gazebo



Back parking lot by WNS playground



**front parking lot looking
down to High Street**



**Community Garden, mid - July
tomato plants on left**



Courtyard, outside Music room



**Grassy area looking towards
Fellowship Hall**

Pastor's visit to Women's Lunch Place, Boston July 15th



On July 15th the Women's Lunch Place, Boston warmly welcomed Pastor Catherine for a tour and delicious lunch prepared by their skilled Executive Chef, Inna Khitrik and crew. The tour of the organization's facility and daily operations was amazing, in seeing how they have grown since being founded by two women in 1982 and securing basement space in Church of the Covenant in Back

Bay. Not only are healthy, delicious hot meals *from scratch* provided daily, but many other essential resources are provided including business space with internet access; support groups; education /job training resources; yoga and dance classes; on-site mental health clinicians; medical staff; on-site attorney; immediate assistance triage staff for crisis/same day referral; etc. WLP has opened their first "shelter to housing" space for women transitioning into permanent housing. They provided a Q&A time for Pastor Catherine. It was extremely informative hearing about the history and future vision from long-time as well as newer staff some included in the photo: Amelia Cortez, Managing Director of Philanthropy (far right); Wade Dunham, Director of Philanthropy and Foundation Relations (far left); and Directors of Case Management-Housing-Healthcare and the Day Shelter Community and was pleased to meet Jenniger Hanlon Wigon, the organization's CEO. Women's Lunch Place expressed both shock and deep gratitude to be a recipient of one of the Hill Memorial Baptist Church *Memorial Fund* donations, which FBC Westwood helped facilitate. We look forward to receiving an 'impact statement' from them and know that God will continue to bless WLP service of mercy that clearly honors their motto: *Dignity is Everything!*

Click on <https://womenslunchplace.org/mission> for information on their mission and history.



Crafter's Group



The Crafter's group has been busy seeking out new ideas and recycling church and household goods. These church candles have been melted down to make new holiday jar candles.

We are looking for plain 8" x 10" handled bags to decorate. If you have any please drop them off at the church office.

While you are doing your spring/ summer cleaning, if you have any craft items that you don't need, please consider donating them to the Crafter's group. Items can be left in the church office.



Save the Date



Sunday, September 13th

Join us for Rally Day at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. Directly following worship, we will be having an extended coffee hour. Details to follow in upcoming Sunday bulletins.



Alyssa Alexis<alyssa.alexis@greatrockchristianacademy.org>
GRCA Office
office@fbcwestwood.org

Dear Pastor and Ministry Leaders,

I hope this message finds you well and that your ministry is thriving under God's grace.

I am writing to you on behalf of **Great Rock Christian Academy**, located at 256 Andover Street, Danvers, MA 01923. As we prepare for the upcoming school year, we are seeking Bible-believing, Spirit-led educators and staff members who are deeply committed to academic excellence, the authority of Scripture, and the Great Commission.

If you have believers in your congregation who feel called by the Lord to the ministry of Christian education, we would be deeply grateful if you could share these opportunities with them.

Ministry Openings & Interest Form

Interested candidates can view our open positions and fill out our interest form directly through a link you can request to be forwarded by the FBC Westwood church office.

Thank you for your time, partnership in the Gospel, and continued dedication to building the Kingdom. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In His Service,
Pastor Igor Alexis
Great Rock Christian Academy
igor.alexis@greatrockchristianacademy.org
greatrockchristianacademy.org





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.



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 1,600 tabs in one pound.

The Aleppo Shrine Center has processed over 10 TONS of pull-tabs collected from throughout Eastern Massachusetts.

Funds generated in the pull-tab program are used to transport children and their parent or guardian, free of charge to a Shriners Hospital for Children. Volunteers from local shrine organizations use specialized vans, small buses and automobiles and give freely of countless hours of their time providing transportation to and from doctor's visits. One very important mode of transportation this fund pays for are the life-saving med-flights transporting children from all over the world to a Shriners Hospital when their life is in the balance. These specialized med-flights cost tens of thousands of dollars, but when a child's life hangs in the balance, money is no object. Parents of injured children admitted to a Shriners Hospital for Children do not see a single bill for transportation provided through this fund.

FBC Westwood donates the tabs to the Shriners' Burns Hospital – Boston. Neil Patterson coordinates this project, and Ken Shaw delivers the tabs to the hospital. There are two plastic bottles 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.



Information from the Shriners Hospital website
 -> <https://hospitals.alepposhriners.com/childrens-transportation-fund/>



Summer Pastoral Care

Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Stop by the Pastor's office on
Tuesdays between 1:30 - 4:00 pm

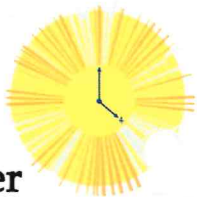
Scheduled time is on Wednesdays
between 1:00 - 3:00 pm

(Schedule with Pastor Catherine
after service; call 781 461-0297;
or email pastor@fbcwestwood.org).

Prayer & Friendship meeting

Weekly on Wednesdays
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*All are welcome!
Come to the sanctuary.*



Summer Church Office Hours

July 6th - September 4th:
Tuesdays & Thursdays
8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Donna can be reached by
calling 781-461-1730 or
emailing office@fbcwestwood.org



Crafters' Group

The Crafters' Group will
be taking the summer off. Their next
meeting will be held on Wednesday,
September 9th at 10:00 a.m.

Foundations Bible Study

Weekly on Saturdays, 11:00 a.m.

A small group focus on core
principles of our Christian faith,
work through common questions,
and to discuss life applications.
July & August meetings, we will
be Zoom only. For the link, please
see Rev. Shelton Sunday mornings
or contact the church office.



Choir Rehearsal

July & August
The Chancel
Choir will take
off Monday
night practices for the summer and
will resume in September.



"Let's Talk" Bible discussion & Holy Communion

We will break for July &
August and resume in
September.



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.



**Joyful Song &
Prayer at
The Ellis Senior
Residence**

Sunday, August 9th

Pastor Catherine and Jan Randlett host service and times of musical fun for residents at The Ellis Rehab & Nursing Center, one Sunday a month, starting at 2:00 p.m. located at 135 Ellis Ave in Norwood.

The residents and staff join in singing hymns, Oldies but Goodies, & participate in prayer.

Come join us at the Ellis for our next monthly gathering.



Reception Room

**August 18th
7:00pm**

**News letter
DEADLINE**

Material for September's "Message" is due to the church office by:

Wednesday, August 19th

Information can be emailed to:
office@fbcwestwood.org



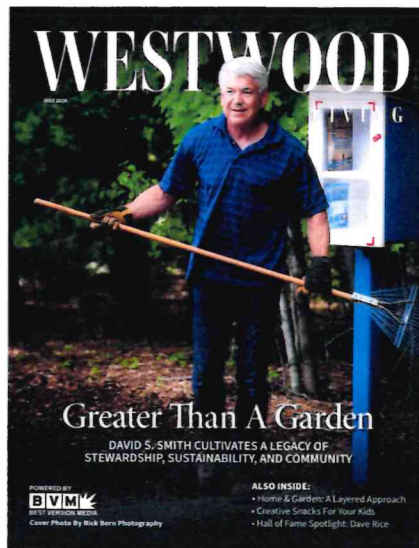
**2026 Chairperson
opportunity**

We want to thank our 2022-2025 Holly Fair chairperson for her great work. Unfortunately, she is unable to head up this year's fair due to her new role as Church Treasurer.

Our various fair tables have experienced coordinators running their tables. We are looking for someone to be the chairperson (or 2 co-chairs) to oversee the coordinators for this December's fair. Please speak with Vickie DeVoy if you have any questions or are interested.



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.



Member featured in Westwood Living magazine

David Smith, FBC Westwood's Campus Coordinator, is featured in the July 2026 issue of Westwood Living magazine. There is a copy on the coffee table in our Reception room and if you'd like to check it out online, go to <https://westwood-living.com/issues/july26/>



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.

