

FIRST  BAPTIST  
CHURCH OF WESTWOOD

808 HIGH STREET · WESTWOOD, MASSACHUSETTS 02090



*The Message*  
*May 2024*

REV. CATHERINE M. MILLER, PASTOR

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## From The Pastor's Desk

***Greetings...***

***First Baptist Church***

***& Friends...***

***May 2024***



In Christ, our Heavenly Father has given us wonderful promises to turn to and be reminded that Heaven *is* on our side. The Bible teaches that Almighty God even assigns Heaven's angels and other Divine hosts to carry out God's will among us on earth. King David acknowledges this in **Psalm 103:20-21** where in high praise David invites the angels & hosts to praise too:

*“Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers who do his will.”*

**Psalm 91:11-12** explicitly states a promise of angelic protection for God's people:

*“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.”*

These promises and many, many more were ordained by God to be written down so that they'd be preserved for our knowledge. God's promises were preserved from oral tradition having been taught by within the family unit and corporate worship and prayer. God made express covenant promises which are the bedrock of our faith and God continues to fulfill His Word among us right here at FBC. Just as in ancient times we are witnessing miracles and supernatural power at work both seen and unseen, blessing those who know the Lord as *a refuge and fortress; our God in whom we trust.*

Will you try reading a promise from the Bible every day? Even find just one that speaks to you personally and re-read that same promise for a week or so until sinks into your spirit.

Then, say a few words of prayer for the church based upon that Scripture promise.

If even half of our church commits to lifting up a simple prayer for our church using a biblical promise, I believe we God will honor our prayer of faith in His time, His way.

**Learning God's promises can help overcome Bible boredom.** You might find that a Scripture promise you read will challenge you or bring up a question. Feel free to ask me! I'll try to answer. We understand that not every single promise in the Old Testament can be applied to The Church but let's consider Psalm 91:11-12 verses on the first page here. Our church can stand on this promise because we are those 'who abide in the Almighty' (see Psalm 91:1). We are hidden in God in Christ. Do you believe that the Lord has assigned angels to protect you during your years? Not a boring concept at all! Does God have your attention? What's God's voice saying to you as this idea of angelic intervention brings up a memory? I have a vivid memory of angelic intervention on the highway at night, coming home from seminary!

**Learning God's promises can help you pray against fear and doubt:**

"[God/Lord/Jesus/Father...] I know what Psalm 91 says but the world is scary, people are not trustworthy and I don't feel protected. Please help my unbelief. Help me to trust in Your powerful promises of protection."

**Praying biblical promises directs us to pray with "praise" and pray specifically.**

Let's pray for FBC Westwood. "Thank you [God/Lord/Jesus/Father...] for assigning angels to protect our church during the past two centuries! Thank you for keeping our worship and other gatherings safe. Thank you watching over everyone from toddlers through seniors and for protecting the grounds itself."

If you are on the internet you can look up a list of Bible promises or pray as you search The Book of Psalms or read through Jesus Christ's. Even if you struggle with doubt, keep reading one of God's promises every day. Read the ones here. May this practice lift all of our thoughts to God often each day as we become attuned to God's clear *voice* speaking to each of us. For those with a favorite *promise* Scripture; read it, recite it, pray for us all!

Below is a promise from Jesus Christ if we persist in prayer and don't give up:

*"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."* **Matthew 7:7-8** (New Living Translation)

Peace to you,  
**Pastor Catherine**



# “Let’s Talk” group discussion and Holy Communion

Hello everyone!

Pastor Catherine hosts an in-person and Zoom Bible discussion monthly.

In May, it will be held on the third Thursday but **starting in June we will be meeting on the first Thursday of each month** (there will be no meeting in July).

Pastor Catherine 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!

For those attending in person, the group will meet in the Reception room.

**Hope you can join us!**

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

Topic: "Let's Talk" Bible discussion and Holy Communion facilitated by Pastor Catherine.

Time: May 16, 2024 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

May 16, 2024 07:00 PM

June 6, 2024 07:00 PM

July 18, 2024 07:00 PM

Aug 1, 2024 07:00 PM

Sept 5, 2024 07:00 PM

Oct 2, 2024 07:00 PM

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

Monthly: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZEpcu6gqj4rGNKQzhPzBjhjWM\\_euPcsFMH/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGtqj4tEtCQsRuBRpwMBo\\_4KPzwiCVcjY12rQXtMzpxaAv-PNVvDbdqINvD](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZEpcu6gqj4rGNKQzhPzBjhjWM_euPcsFMH/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGtqj4tEtCQsRuBRpwMBo_4KPzwiCVcjY12rQXtMzpxaAv-PNVvDbdqINvD)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85457845126?pwd=bXhNVXNxK0tlbGo1T25MMkZiaDRxZz09>

Meeting ID: 854 5784 5126

Passcode: 655104

# Dogwoods at Easter

*Look closely at the dogwood bloom  
And you will quickly find  
Symbols of Christ's sacrifice  
He made for all mankind.*

*Four petals form that blessed cross  
Marked by nail impressions,  
The center shows the crown He wore  
To cover our transgressions.*

*When springtime comes and dogwoods bloom,  
We recall Christ's redemption  
On first the cross, then empty tomb—*

## *An Easter resurrection!*

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*I am he that...was dead;  
and, behold, I am alive for evermore.*  
REVELATION 1:18

## Easter Sunday March 31, 2024





**A special thank you to John Lewis, Bob Wood and their crew  
for preparing a delicious Easter breakfast following the  
Sunrise Service!**

***Spring is here!***

***Thank you to Carol Ahearn  
for decorating the sanctuary on Easter  
Sunday with the tulips and lilies, and  
for decorating our entrance with her  
spring arrangements.***





## Visits with some of our shut-ins at Easter time



Jen & Ken with Chester



Jodi with Shirley



Ken & Marie with tulips  
from FBC Westwood



## Sunday, April 21<sup>st</sup> Right Hand of Fellowship



New member,  
Brian Beckwith

# Congratulations, Ken!



Congratulations to Ken Shaw on receiving his Masonic Veteran's medal in recognition of 50 years of service to the Masons. The medal was presented by the Celestial Lodge in Westwood.



## Boy Scout Troop #3



Fire practice on April 11<sup>th</sup> -  
Older scouts teaching  
younger scouts.

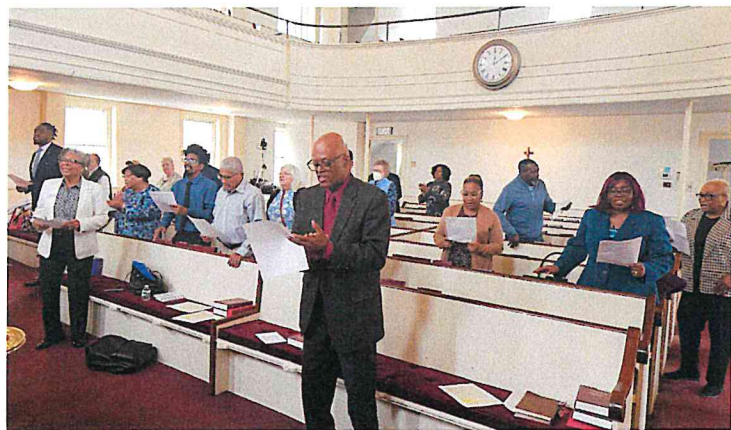




# Boston Southwest Association

## April 13, 2024

Boston Southwest Association offered many thanks to us for being such a hospitable host of the April Spring Gathering. BSW donated the delicious sandwich lunch catered by Bibi's Cafe in Westwood.



Coffee hour donated by FBC was catered by a church member



## **FBC Will Celebrate Its Bicentennial in November!**

On November 3, 1824, our church was formally constituted. And so, on Sunday, November 3, 2024, we will celebrate our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the First Baptist Church of Dedham and later of Westwood! It has been suggested that we do something special on that day to celebrate this milestone, but the big question is: What do we want to do? We have several months to come up with plans and would appreciate suggestions. Please forward your ideas in writing or via email to the church office, Pastor Catherine, or any member of the Church Council.

In 2010, we researched and printed a brief history of the church, and reprints are currently available in the church office. In the meantime, here's a quick review of the history of our church and our meetinghouse.



One must first remember that in 1730, Westwood was still part of Dedham. That year, the General Court created a second Dedham parish which eventually became the town of Norwood in 1872. In 1736, the Third Parish, also known as West Dedham, was established, and the meetinghouse, built in 1731, was located approximately where the First Parish Church stands today.

By the early 1800's, the meetinghouse needed extensive repairs and it was decided in 1806 to replace it with a new structure. The question of where to build it – near the existing meetinghouse or in the geographical center of town – split the congregation into two factions. It was eventually decided to build it near the existing meetinghouse, and those who disagreed began attending the Baptist church in Medfield in 1808.

The new Third Parish meetinghouse was dedicated on March 1, 1809, and the old structure was purchased by Aaron Baker. In the spring of 1810, it was taken down and the timbers moved to High Street. Reconstruction commenced and the building was completed and dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 1810. The services were performed by the Rev. Mr. Gammel, the pastor of the Medfield church, and from then until he resigned in 1823, he preached alternately between Medfield and the reconstructed meetinghouse which served as a branch of the Medfield church.

In 1824, it was decided that the members of the Medfield church living in Dedham would form their own separate Baptist society and church, and the initial meeting of the First Baptist Society in West Dedham was held in the meetinghouse on March 15, 1824. In May, the Rev. Samuel Adlam was engaged to supply the pulpit once every two weeks. In October, twenty-five members of the Medfield church applied for and received letters of dismissal for the purpose of forming themselves into a distinct church. On Wednesday, November 3, 1824, the church was constituted, becoming a legal corporation, and the Rev. Adlam was ordained.

In 1897, the Third Parish was incorporated as the Town of Westwood, and the official name of the society became the First Baptist Society of Westwood. In 1908, the church formally became the First Baptist Church of Westwood, and the First Baptist Society, which had been in existence since 1824, disbanded in 1910, and turned over all the property to the church. In 1966, the new Christian Education Center and Fellowship Hall were completed and dedicated, and in 1989, the historic meetinghouse was jacked up, placed on wheels, and moved to its present location where a new reception room linked it to the education wing.



## Cell Tower Update

It has been over a year since we decided to sell the cell tower. It has been a long process, but a very important one that we cannot rush into. As you may remember from our October interim meeting, the original offer by the Lyle Company/Crown Castle was rescinded. Then in January 2024 they presented another offer based on a 20-year buyout. The Trustees unanimously agreed that this time period was too long. Back to the beginning.

Our cell tower lease must be very desirable because we frequently receive requests to buy our easement. In a discussion with one of these solicitors, Darren was told of a cell tower auction company called Cell at Auction. Thus, the next chapter in this quest began.

Cell At Auction is a Chicago-based company run by Bud Blinick, which advertises and solicits bids from multiple companies. By employing the auction method, the highest price is achieved. Darren contacted Bud and was impressed with him. In Bud's opinion, we should easily obtain a higher price than what Crown Castle has offered. Bud sent us a list of references, which we checked. Four of them replied, all not just favorably but gave stellar reviews.

Bud joined our last Council meeting via Zoom to explain his approach and process. He informed us that there are approximately 35 companies that buy cell towers, and he has connections at all of them. Bud answered our many questions, and the Council and church members in attendance found him to be knowledgeable and articulate. Later in our meeting, the Council unanimously approved using Cell At Auction's services.

Keep in mind that selling the cell tower will definitely increase our cash position; but it will make the cash flow gap smaller, but it won't eliminate it. When the tower easement is sold, we will lose the monthly income but will have more available investment income on which to draw. My estimate is an increased annual cash flow of \$20,000. What it does ensure is that the church gets the best value possible for the tower.

Our dear church member, Audrey MacElhinney always used to say, when God closes a door, he opens a window. How right she was! The Trustees believe that God has led us to the auction approach. He continues to take care of FBC Westwood.

In Christian fellowship,

*FBC Trustees:*

*Darren Valentine, Bob Wood, Bonnie McDonald, David Smith, Donna Folsom*



## 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.**





## 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](mailto: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](mailto:westwoodfoodpantry@gmail.com) or call them at 781-269-2008.



Do you have a favorite hymn or other musical selections you would like to have played during worship? Please speak to Jan Randlett and share your requests.



*The Westwood Ringers  
Dance into Spring  
Concert*

**On Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>  
3:00 pm  
Our Sanctuary**



Sign-up sheets for May and June are posted in the Reception Room for volunteer ushers and greeters. This is your opportunity to volunteer.



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

**May 21<sup>st</sup>  
7:00pm**



**Coffee  
Hour**

What a great time to enjoy catching up with others and having some goodies, too.

We are looking for additional helpers to host a Sunday Coffee Hour. Wouldn't you like to host one? May and June sign-up sheets are posted in the Reception Room.

Have questions?  
Contact Karen Thompson, at  
[kleethompson65@gmail.com](mailto:kleethompson65@gmail.com),  
or

the Church office at  
[office@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:office@fbcwestwood.org) or call  
781-461-1730.



Easter Lilies can  
be replanted!

Don't get rid of those lilies after Easter - they can be enjoyed again later. Keep watering the plant until the blooms are gone, then let them dry out and plant the bulbs in a sunny spot. In Sept/Oct, they may bloom again. If they don't bloom the first year, wait, and they may the second. Tulips can also be replanted, but the success rate is not as good.



### Crafters' Group

Join us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month as we work on items for December's Holly Fair.

Our next meeting is on May 8<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:office@fbcwestwood.org).



One of the crafters' upcoming projects is working on wreaths for the Holly Fair. They are looking for donations of artificial evergreens and small Christmas decorations for this project. Do you have either of these items that you'd like to donate? Donations can be dropped off at the church office Monday - Friday.

Thank you!



### Choir Rehearsal

You are invited to join the Chancel Choir rehearsals on Monday nights.

We meet in the Music Room, adjacent to Fellowship Hall, from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m.

Join us

Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 a.m.



Remembrance  
Sunday

and



Join us as we celebrate the lives of those in our church family who have passed on within the last 12 months and our ongoing memories of them.

We will also be recognizing Pentecost, the birthday of the Church around the world, & celebrate the ongoing life of it.

***Wear red to celebrate the day.***



## June "Message"

Material for next month's newsletter is due to Donna in the church office by:

Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>  
([office@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:office@fbcwestwood.org))



## PRAISE RADIO

Tune in to AM 590 WEZE on Saturdays @ 5:15pm and enjoy our Pastor's prayer/inspiration program, **Be Still**, a family-oriented radio outreach sponsored by FBC Westwood! Livestream & podcasts at <http://wezeradio.com/radioshow/be-still>.



**Mark your Calendars!!**

You are cordially invited to attend the Ordination Service of:

**Shelton Miller**

**June 9<sup>th</sup>**

**2:00 p.m.**

**First Baptist Church of  
Westwood**

**Dinner to follow.**

**Additional information regarding  
R.S.V.P'ing for dinner will be  
provided in May bulletins and in  
June's Message.**



Our summer worship schedule will begin on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Services will be held at 10:00 a.m. in Baker Chapel.

Summer Services will continue through Labor Day weekend.





(for in-person, calls , or Zoom)

Tuesdays:

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Wednesdays & Thursdays:

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

*For an appointment call:*

781-461-0297 or 781-461-1730

*ext. 12*

*or email:*

*pastor@fbcwestwood.org.*

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



### **The Pastor Will Be Away**

Pastor Catherine will be off the following dates:

Tues, April 23 - Sat, April 27

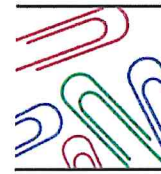
Sun, April 28 &

Tues, April 30 - Sat, May 4

Sun, May 5 - Tues, May 7

Glen Cunningham will be our guest preacher on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Rev Dr. David Wright will be our guest preacher on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>.



## **CHURCH OFFICE**

The Church's Administrative Asst.,

Donna Metcalf is available:

Mon-Fri from 8:00 am- 1:30 pm

She can be reached by

calling

781-461-1730 or

emailing

[office@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:office@fbcwestwood.org)

**Face masks are required in the church office.**

The Pastor's Administrative Asst.,

Susan Merullo, is available:

Tues: 1:30-5:30 pm;

Wed: 1:30-4:30 pm; and

Thurs: 1:30-4:30 pm.

*\*Susan will be on vacation the week of May 27<sup>th</sup> \**

She can be reached by calling

781-461-1730 or by emailing

[pastoradmin@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:pastoradmin@fbcwestwood.org)



## 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 Susan Merullo via email at [pastoradmin@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:pastoradmin@fbcwestwood.org).



## COLLEGE BOUND IN THE FALL? ALREADY IN COLLEGE?

*First Baptist is offering college scholarships to active church members who are pursuing college educations. Awardees will receive their scholarships in two installments – 1<sup>st</sup> half in August and the 2<sup>nd</sup> half in January.*

*Applications must be completed and returned to the church office ([office@fbcwestwood.org](mailto:office@fbcwestwood.org)) **by May 1<sup>st</sup>**. Don't delay – call or email today, and we will mail you an application!*



## Sunday Worship Services

Please check out our website, [www.fbcwestwood.org](http://www.fbcwestwood.org). We post Livestream links and videos of our worship services there, plus other news and devotional materials.



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.