

## RESOURCE GUIDE

This document has been created by Follen's Caring Congregation Committee (CCC.) and was updated on January 29, 2020. It is a resource for the Follen Community to support Follen's dedication to being an inclusive and supportive congregation for families and individuals facing special challenges. The church resources are available to members of the Follen community only while those in the greater community are available for all.

## FOLLEN RESOURCES

### [Caring Congregation Committee](#)

The mission of the Caring Congregation Committee (CCC) is to support families of children and adults with a variety of special needs to insure that Follen Church is inclusive and supportive to these families and individuals. We work against stigma, and we provide resource materials in Follen library and a curriculum for increasing understanding of persons with mental health or learning challenges. In addition we arrange speakers on relevant topics ranging from Estate Planning for your Adult Child to use of Multiple Intelligence Theory as an inclusive teaching approach. We advocate for inclusion of those with special needs within our community as well as those in the larger community, and we provide mental health-focused input into worship services. We also fund-raise to support the Minister's Discretionary fund for Special Needs. The proceeds of this fund are used by the minister anonymously to assist families with costs of neuropsychological testing, tutoring, advocacy, and other expenses.

If you have any questions or concerns or if you have suggestions for how Follen might be more supportive, contact chair, [Sharon Cerny. MSW,](#) [caringcong.org](http://caringcong.org)

### [Minister: Reverend Claire Feingold Thoryn](#)

The minister is available by appointment to discuss concerns and needs regarding significant life issues or transitions. A Special Needs Fund is available for Follen families who need financial assistance with extraordinary health needs for their child. Recipients and aid are kept confidential. Please contact the [Reverend Claire Feingold Thoryn](#) or call 781-862-3805, x1002.

## [Director of Religious Education: Beryl Aschenberg](#)

The Director of Religious Education is available by appointment to discuss concerns regarding children and youth and any accommodations that may be possible to support their participation in the Follen Church community. Please contact [Beryl Aschenberg](#) or call 781-862-3805, x1004.

## [Parent/Caregiver Support Group \(Currently not meeting\)](#)

This group is for parents/caregivers of children with special needs. The focus is to provide a place where parents can come to discuss their experiences, stresses, and needs, in a safe and nurturing environment. Confidentiality is strictly maintained. If you are interested in participating in such a group please contact [Jim Herzig](#). [caringcong.org](http://caringcong.org)

## [Life Planning for Adults with Special Needs](#)

This is an 8 session workshop that provides a psycho-educational experience where each participant develops his or her individual plan for their adult family member within the structure and support of the confidential group setting. Topics include financial, housing, vocational, social, medical, legal, family and community resources. The series includes a combination of exercises within the group, readings and discussion and presentations by experts. CCC members who developed the curriculum are available to consult with others wishing to start such a program. If you are interested in participating in the next offering of the workshop, please contact [Sharon Cerny](#). [caringcong.org](http://caringcong.org)

## [Consultant to CCC Neuropsychological/IEP Consultant](#)

If you could use assistance understanding your child's neuropsychological profile or his or her IEP (Individual Education Plan), contact school psychologist, [Dr. Dorothy Vacca](#). [caringcong.org](http://caringcong.org)

## [CCC Mentor Program](#)

Several Follenites who have dealt with mental health/learning issues in their own lives have volunteered to act as mentors to parents/caregivers who are currently going through the process with a child or young adult. This journey can be less difficult if shared with someone who has already traveled this road. If you would like to be matched with a veteran, please contact [Sharon Cerny](#), [caringcong.org](http://caringcong.org)

## [Minister's Discretionary Fund for Special Needs:](#)

This fund is available for families with children with special needs that require assistance in funding expenses (not covered by insurance) for neuropsychological testing, tutoring advocacy, respite care and other needs. Requests are confidential and are made to our minister, [Claire Feingold Thorn](#) at 781-862-3805, x1002.

## [Lay Ministry](#)

The Follen Church Lay Minister Team has been trained, commissioned and installed and works closely with the Reverend Claire Feingold Thorn to support her ministry. They are here to listen and to provide emotional and spiritual support. If you or someone you know in the church family needs or would like to have a visit from a sensitive, compassionate, caring person, please contact the [Reverend Feingold Thorn](#) at 781-862-3805, extension 1002. All calls and visits are kept strictly confidential.

## [Volunteer Service Network \(VSN\)](#)

For more than 25 years the VSN has provided supportive, friendly, and practical assistance in crises and other times of need. The monthly VSN coordinator can help arrange rides to doctors' appointments, provide meals, and other services as needed. Please check the website: Follen Volunteer Services Network, or call one of the VSN Coordinators, [Leslie Stebbins](#) or [Wendy Slattebo](#).

## [Support Group for Those Caring for Elderly Parents](#)

This is an open group—anyone who is dealing with issues related to elderly parents is invited to come. If you are new, or for more information, contact [Steph Chiha](#).

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

(These resources have been used by members of the Follen community. Follen does not necessarily endorse these.)

### NETWORK AND REFFERAL

The Disability Resource Network  
[jfcsboston.org/Our-Services/People-with-Disabilities](http://jfcsboston.org/Our-Services/People-with-Disabilities)  
781-693-5023

Free information and referral service for parents, seniors, people with disabilities and mental illness. It is open to call faiths and cultural or ethnic backgrounds, funded by Combined Jewish Philanthropies. Callers receive professional evaluation of their needs and referral to appropriate resources.

NAMI-Mass  
[namimass.org](http://namimass.org)  
800-370-9085

Information, referral, education, support groups, legal services and advocacy. Superb resource for free educational programs for family and caregivers and adults living with mental illness such as:

United Way State-Wide Information and Referral System  
[mass211.org](http://mass211.org)  
Call 211 or text zip code to 877-211-6277

Similar to 911 but for information on health and human services. 24/7 local information about food banks, shelters, doctors, crisis services, benefits, disabilities, and other services and programs. Interpreter service available in over 140 language

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## HEALTH CARE

### General

Massachusetts Health Connector ([mahealthconnector.org](http://mahealthconnector.org))  
1-877-623-6725 | 1-877-623-7773 (TTY)

The website for the state sponsored health insurance. Has information for individuals and businesses.

Health Care For All ([hcfama.org](http://hcfama.org))  
1-800-272-4232 | 617-350-7279

A Massachusetts organization dedicated to making adequate and affordable health care accessible to everyone, regardless of income, social or economic status.

Partnership for Prescription Assistance ([pparx.org](http://pparx.org))

A non-profit organization that helps people get enrolled in prescription assistance programs for free.

## MENTAL HEALTH

### Suicide Prevention

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide please call one of the 24-hour crisis hotline numbers below immediately:

Samaritans Statewide Hotline:

1-877-870-HOPE (4673)

National Suicide Prevention Line:

1-800-273-8255 – 24 hour support

1-800-273-TALK (8255), press #1 if you are a Veteran

Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership Emergency Hotline:

1-877-382-1609

## Youth and families

Wayside Youth and Family Support Network  
Arlington center (locations elsewhere, see website)  
waysideyouth.org  
781-643-1668

Non-profit human services agency providing services including residences for youth needing a structured environment, substance abuse treatment, counseling for families and individuals and free support groups and educational programs. Serves at risk youth and their families, teenagers and young adults.

Lexington Youth and Family Services, (lyfsinc.org)  
781-862-0330 (call or text for appointment 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)  
First Parish Unitarian Church, 7 Harrington Rd. Lexington

Free drop-in and short-term counseling for youth (11-22) and families. Parent or youth can call for appointment during office hours or can visit during drop-in hours Wednesday and Friday from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## Support for LGBT youth and young adults

The Trevor Helpline  
866-4-U-TREVOR (488-7386)

Trevor Text (avail. Fri 4:00 p.m. to 8 p.m.)  
Text the word "Trevor" to 1-202-304-1200. Note: Standard text messaging rates apply.

Greater Boston, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays  
(GBPFLAG) [gbpflag.org](http://gbpflag.org)

866-427-3524 - helpline

Information, referral, education, support groups and advocacy for families of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered people.

## [Resources for education and support](#)

National Institute of Mental Health  
[nimh.nih.gov](http://nimh.nih.gov)

Official site of the National Institute of Mental Health. Contains comprehensive definitions of diagnosis in easy to understand terms for the layperson. Also has pages dedicated to NIMH sponsored clinical trials, publications, and press releases.

NAMI-Mass  
[namimass.org](http://namimass.org)  
800-370-9085

Information, referral, education, support groups, legal services and advocacy. Superb resource for free educational programs for family and caregivers and adults living with mental illness.

Information, referral, education, support groups, legal services and advocacy. Superb resource for free educational programs for family and caregivers and adults living with mental illness such as:

**NAMI Basics:** education program for parents/caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illness

**NAMI Family to Family:** 12 week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illness. Discusses clinical treatment and teaches knowledge and skills to cope effectively.

**NAMI Family support groups** for family members and caregivers of those living with mental illness

**NAMI Connection Recovery Group:** for adults living with mental illness

**NAMI Peer Support resources:** Peer-run support groups and programs

Site also lists other support groups run by various organizations as well as online support through NAMI's online communities for all family members, including StrengthofUs, an online community to empower young adults through resource sharing and peer support to build connections to meet the challenges of transition years.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Boston-(DBSA Boston )  
617-855-2795  
dbsaboston.org

A non-profit, self-help organization run by and for people with affective disorders and their family and friends. Information on treatment options, finding a mental health professional and support groups.

National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse  
mhselfhelp.org  
800-553-4539

Information on various mental health conditions and learning differences. It has resources organized by topic including autism, Asperger's Syndrome, Depression, Bipolar Disorder and many other topics.

Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP)  
masspartnership.com  
800-495-0086  
877-509-6981 (TTY)

The MBHP manages mental health and substance abuse services for many people who have MassHealth (Medicaid) insurance.

Massachusetts Clubhouse Coalition  
massclubs.org  
781-788-8803

Helps people with long term mental illness find and secure employment, housing, education, services and support in the community. Also a clearinghouse of information, a provider of technical assistance, and a coordinator of resources.

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National Empowerment Center ([power2u.org](http://power2u.org))  
800-769-3728

A consumer/survivor/ex-patient run organization with the mission to carry a message of recovery, empowerment, hope and healing to people with lived experience with mental health issues, trauma, and/or extreme states. Provides information and referral and networking among consumer-run and advocacy groups in all 50 states. Also active in the cross-disability rights movement and can help you network with independent living centers and disability rights groups across the country.

Transformation Center ([transformation-center.org](http://transformation-center.org))  
617-422-4111

A statewide training, peer support, policy and best practice center operated by and for people with lived experience of mental health, substance use and trauma recovery.

## [Domestic Violence](#)

Casa Myrna ([casamyrna.org](http://casamyrna.org))  
1-800-799-7233 | 1800-787-3224 (TTY)

National domestic abuse hotline and clearing house. Online chat also available.

[SafeLink Hotline](#) 1-877-785-2020

Information and referral for counseling, shelter, and other resources for all people facing domestic violence.

## [Substance Abuse](#)

[Massachusetts Substance Abuse Helpline](http://helpline-online.com) ([helpline-online.com](http://helpline-online.com))  
1-800-327-5050

Information, resources and referral.

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## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Child at Risk Hotline - 800-792- 5200

This is an anonymous hotline for suspected abuse or neglect of children up to 18 run by the Massachusetts Department of Child and Family Services.

Families for Depression Awareness ([familyaware.org](http://familyaware.org))  
781-890-0220

Organization that helps families recognize and cope with depression and bipolar disorder to get people well and prevent suicides. Offers an educational web site, family and expert profiles, trainings for families, advocacy, brochures, depression wellness guides for people of all ages and for parents of children and teens with depression.

Federation for Children with Special Needs ([fcsn.org](http://fcsn.org))  
800-331-0688

Provides information, support, and assistance to parents of children with disabilities, their professional partners, and their communities. Most Federation staff members are parents or family members of children with disabilities and people with disabilities.

Greater Boston, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (GBPFLAG) [gbpflag.org](http://gbpflag.org)

866-427-3524 - helpline

Information, referral, education, support groups and advocacy for families of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered people.

Parents Helping Parents  
[parentshelpingparents.org](http://parentshelpingparents.org)  
800-632-8188 (Free and confidential, 24/7)

A nonprofit organization focused on preventing child abuse by offering free parenting help and support through a 24-hour Parental Stress Line and a network of anonymous and confidential Parent Support Groups meeting throughout Massachusetts.

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Parent/Professional Advocacy League ([ppal.net](http://ppal.net))

866-815-8122

A statewide family organization dedicated to improving the mental health and well being of children, youth and families through education, advocacy and partnership.

### Legal Assistance

Greater Boston Legal Services - [gbls.org](http://gbls.org)

800-323-3205

617-371-1228 (TDD)

Helps people get on SSI and SSDI; must meet federal poverty guidelines or will be referred to Disability Law Center (see next listing). Free legal service/representation on civil matters.

Disability Law Center of MA -[dlc-ma.org](http://dlc-ma.org)

800-872-9992

Non-profit agency that provides protection and advocacy for the rights of MA residents with disabilities. Provides legal information, education, consultation, advocacy and representation for people with disabilities.

### GOVERNMENTAL ASSISTANCE

DPPC (Disabled People's Protection Commission) [mass.gov/dppc](http://mass.gov/dppc)

800-426-9009 (Anonymous hotline for suspected abuse or neglect of disabled adults)

The mission of the DPPC is to protect adults with disabilities from the abusive acts or missions of their caregivers through investigation oversight, public awareness and prevention.

Mass Rehabilitation Commission ([mass.gov/mrc](http://mass.gov/mrc))

General Inquiries: 617-204-3603

Information about Home Care Assistance, Head Injury Program, Independent Living Programs, and the Assistive Technology Program in addition to many other useful resources for caregivers of people with disabling conditions.

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Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee ([mhlac.org](http://mhlac.org))  
800-342-9092, 617-338-234

**Legal information, education, referral, consultation, and advocacy for people with mental illness.**

MassHealth Customer Service Center [mass.gov/masshealth](http://mass.gov/masshealth)

800-841-2900, Intake line

617-847-3468, To report denial of special accommodations for disabilities

Information about covered services, referral to specialists, changing your address or phone number and reporting a lost MassHealth card.

Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Information and Referral Line [mass.gov/dmh](http://mass.gov/dmh)

800-221-0053 (monitored voicemail box)

**Information and referral, DMH services, patient records, human rights, and other resources.**

Social Security Administration [socialsecurity.gov](http://socialsecurity.gov)

800-772-1213

800-325-0778 (TTY)

Information about Social Security benefits. Applications for disability benefits.

## Meetings

SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training)

[smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org)

866-951-5357

**Self-empowering addiction recovery support group. Helps people recover from all types of addiction and addictive behaviors.**

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## Twelve Step Programs:

Alcoholics Anonymous (Eastern Mass)  
[theagapecenter.com/AAinUSA/Massachusetts.htm](http://theagapecenter.com/AAinUSA/Massachusetts.htm) 617-426-9444

Locations of Alcoholics Anonymous in Massachusetts.

Emotions Anonymous ([emotionsanonymous.org](http://emotionsanonymous.org))

Program for those seeking emotional health. Site has a state meeting database which you can search to find the closest one to you. Also has online and phone discussions plus publications that offer stories of and tools for recovery.

Debtors Anonymous ([debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org))  
800-421-2383

Help, resources, and support meetings for people with unsecured debt to help people stop incurring unsecured debt, to share experiences with newcomers, and to reach out to other debtors. Link to searchable database of meetings state and worldwide.

Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling  
[masscompulsivegambling.org](http://masscompulsivegambling.org)  
800-426-1234, 24-hour helpline 617-426-4554, Boston Office

Lists of GA and Gam-Anon meetings and resources

New England Region of Narcotics Anonymous [nerna.org](http://nerna.org)  
866-NA-HELP-U (624 3578)

Support meetings for addicts and former addicts searchable by area, zip code and day of the week.

Overeaters Anonymous MetroWest Intergroup ([metrowestoa.org](http://metrowestoa.org))  
508-875-0001

Home page of the OA MetroWest Intergroup. Has a link to a searchable database of meetings worldwide.

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