



The newsletter of First Congregational UCC, Naperville

This Week at Church

Mon. May 4

7:00 p.m. Virtual Women's Spiritual Gathering

Tues. May 5

7:00 p.m. Virtual Executive Meeting



Pastor's Notes

Advancing God's Love and Justice

Greetings friends,

Online, in the media, and in many conversations, I keep hearing talk about how we might have to radically alter our activities in order to safely do them again in person. But rather than trying to see what we can get away with, where we can push the boundaries, what if, instead, we considered the question - what can we do while remaining socially distant from one another? Rather than being anxious about the restrictions and limitations, we can focus on the positive - what can we actually do, easily and safely, without "testing the waters" of what is safe?

For example, we have had a lot of success with online worship. How can we make this experience even better, even more effective? Are there folks among us who have experience with social media who might be willing to help? Are there folks with basic video editing skills, who, from the safety of their home, would be willing to collect the clips of various worship participants and put them together for a scheduled broadcast? Is anyone willing to donate some cash so we can purchase the right equipment that would allow us to A) no longer rely on my iPhone, and B) place the camera in different locations, including the back of the sanctuary so we can continue doing online worship even after the restrictions are lifted?

Our Christian Education Ministry is trying out online Sunday school! There are so many great technological tools available to us. We can use those tools to connect our youngest members with each other, and continue building their faith, from the safety of their own homes.

The People Tree is a wonderful project of the Community Life ministry, making sure we're in touch with everyone in the congregation periodically. Are there ways we might build off of that into some kind of small group ministry, where we have groups of 8-10 folks we connect with for a game night, a cocktail hour, or Bible study, all over Zoom?

Our Missions and Social Action Ministry is acting fast to get donations of much-needed funds to organizations like People's Resource Center, PADS, SamaraCare Counseling center, and our Pantry Pack yielded wonderful results for the West Suburban Community Pantry. In a couple of weeks, First Congregational is cohosting a Zoom meeting with Act Connect Engage (ACE) and the Community Renewal Society to talk about a more just tax system for our state. We can still do all of these things effectively from a safe social distance!

First Congregational United Church of Christ has survived the Civil War, the 1918 Flu Pandemic, two World Wars, the Great Depression, times of great unrest and division, and tremendous expansion and change in our city. We have not survived by complaining about how hard life is, but by adapting to changing circumstances, by serving the spiritual needs of our community in spite of the difficulty.

We can do this. And we can do it well.

Grace and peace,
Mark

New Hand Bells!

Good news!!! After several years of searching, we have found a set of 3 octave Schlumerich bells for our church. They have been purchased from a UCC church in California, and are on their way to Naperville. They should arrive on May 1. It will be great to hear them ringing in our sanctuary as soon as possible. Thanks to Laura Kopff and Sharon Schmidt for offering their expertise and experience during the search and decision-making process.

Visibility Survey

The church is trying to gain some insight as to how you found First Congregational, what you like about it, and what could be done to increase awareness of our church in the community.

Through [this short survey](#), we ask that you please provide some information about the different activities you participate in throughout the community and events that you attend. This will give us an idea of potential spaces where we could have a presence as a church. Please note that our intention is not to create an outreach campaign advertising our church to recruit new congregants, but rather to increase awareness that a church like ours exists within the community for anyone searching for a church like ours. Thanks so much!

Giving Options

As we navigate our way through the uncertainty of 2020, our collective ministries would like to recap the ways you can financially support the church and its missions. [Here are ways you can help.](#)

Gratitude Campaign

[Here](#) is an invitation from the Fox Valley Association Justice and Witness Committee to join in a gratitude campaign.



Celebrate Birthdays

April 30

Gene Wollaston
JoLynn Mitchell

May 1

Minnieta Heinen

May 4

Nolan Majewski
Val Runner

May 5

Hannah Lorimer

May 6

Joan Cooke

May 7

Parker Healey
Paul Spangler

Andrea Lyonstford

May 9

Mary Clare Graff

May 11

Marilyn Wollenmann

May 12

Zack Newman

May 13

Diane Herr

May 15

Nancy Harper
Betty Robson
Isaac Winters



Green Team Tips

In the past we've heard about recycling old clothes, and now here's some information about buying recycled clothes. The Renewal workshop Workshop in Oregon <https://renewalworkshop.com/> carefully cleans and repairs clothes that have been returned to companies like North Face, Carhart, and prAna. The deals are pretty good - 30 to 40% off original prices. They're on track to keep 1 million pounds of clothes out of landfills by 2025.

We Squenched the Squall!

We collected a whole carload of Styrofoam! Thanks to all of you who braved a rainy afternoon to bring Styrofoam to church for recycling. It's gone back to its maker, Dart Industries!



Would You Like to Contribute to Our Church?

You can make credit card or direct debit payments using the QR code. You may also use the QR code to donate to other special offerings. Thank you!



Our Staff

Rev. Mark Winters, Minister
Denise Majewski, Christian Education Coordinator
Christopher Lorimer, Director of Music Ministry
Sue Flaatten, Organist
Barbara Bailey, Secretary
Ann Marie Gajdalo, Bookkeeper

Lay Leaders

Susan Greenwood, Moderator
Cheryl Newman and Eliseo Martinez, A Joyful Sound!
Laura Kopff, Chimeringers
Ron and Vicki Keller, Chancel Band
Deb Zelman, Spirit Band
Tom George, Stephen Ministry Leader
Dale Bryson, Diana Lorenz, Steve Kilar - Pastoral Relations

Contact Us

630-355-1024 / 630-355-1072 - fax

Publication of the Leaflet

Articles for the Leaflet must be in the church office no later than Mondays at 10:00 a.m.

