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The newsletter of First Congregational UCC, Naperville

This Week at Church

Wed. Mar. 18

1:30 p.m. Rev. Mark's Virtual "Coffice" Hours (online)

7:00 p.m. PADS (Community Room)

Sun. Mar. 22

10:00 a.m. Worship (Online)



join us on
Sunday

Pastor's Notes

Advancing God's Love and Justice

Greetings Friends,

Well, we survived our first COVID-19 online worship experience. We have a number of ideas on how to make it better/easier as we continue living into this strange, new

reality, but considering we put that together in a fairly short amount of time, I'm pleased with how it turned out. It was really cool to see a number of our home-bound folks be able to join us for worship, as well as some of our further-flung emissaries!

As I've said in a couple of places now, church is not a building or an event, it is a people. And we are still church! We're just needing to be more creative in terms of how we're able to do and be community without gathering in person.

Our Council and Ministries are not only planning for these changes, they are also starting to experiment with video conferencing for their meetings in order to better maintain social distance.

Our Community Life Ministry has put together a phone tree, and you should be getting a call shortly from one of your fellow congregation members.

The Christian Education Ministry has already circulated some resources to families, and I'm very excited to announce that for our Lenten Family Nights at First, we're experimenting with some pre-recorded YouTube videos, which will be shared with you all shortly. You may not be able to climb the bell tower or hear the organ demonstration in person, but you can watch the videos and enjoy the experience virtually!

One thing that we are endeavoring to keep open is our PADS homeless shelter. Homeless folks are one of the vulnerable populations, so having clean, safe places to sleep, and healthy food to eat, will help them get through this difficult time. You may have seen on Facebook that Susan Greenwood needs some extra help with PADS tonight. We are following the CDC recommendations for homeless shelters as best we can, but there is still a risk to any gathering of people in this time. So please exercise caution - if you have any thought you might be a carrier, please do not volunteer to help with PADS. If you are in the vulnerable groups - 65+, immune compromised, or have any respiratory health issues - please do not expose yourself to unnecessary risk. Amongst our congregation, we have plenty of folks who are in the lower risk categories and can help take this on. Which means...if you have never volunteered for PADS because of a busy work schedule, perhaps this is your chance to help, because your commute time has shrunk from a 40 minute train ride down to a flight of stairs! Please contact Susan Greenwood ASAP if you're able to help.

In terms of information from the church - most of it will be coming out by email. We recognize some of you prefer texting, and others of you don't have email, but simply put, email is the quickest and easiest way for us to get out detailed information to the biggest number of folks. So if you have email access, you may consider checking

there first before calling the church with questions. Our staff will still be responding to emails and phone calls, so if you do have questions, please feel free to continue using email and phone. And please do that rather than coming into the church building.

Last but not least, because we have a number of staff who depend on their jobs for income, the Trustees have committed to continuing to pay everyone through this time. We are also committed to keeping our building clean and maintained for our PADS guests and so that it will be ready when we are able to be together again in person. In order to do these things, we are relying on continued income from all who pledged to support the church this year. You can continue mailing in your check, giving through your own bank or credit union, or utilizing our online giving platform. This Sunday, we're still collecting for the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering, which goes to help refugees and disaster relief on behalf of the United Church of Christ. You can give any of the ways described above. If you give online, please select "One Great Hour of Sharing" or OGHS from the drop-down menu.

Remember to breathe, take time to rest your minds from the corona virus news, get outside when the sun is shining, and call your friends!

Grace and peace and love to you all!

Mark

Join Us Today for Rev. Mark's "Coffice" Hours!

Since Starbucks is closed for sitting in, join Rev. Mark for virtual Coffice Hours!

Click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/279392817?pwd=dTZZZm5zRjRacFh0emFTM3h3dzgzQT09>,

or go to zoom.us, click "Join a Meeting" and type in the following:

Meeting ID: 279 392 817

Password: 762851

Alternatively, you can call in by phone: (312) 626 6799,

and use Meeting ID: 279 392 817

"See" you online!

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!

People Tree

We want to be sure our church family stays connected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For many of us, life has become more stressful and more isolated over the past few weeks. We know that members of our church family may be feeling worried, anxious, and fearful with all the changes going on in their lives, and we want to make sure that even if we can't come to Benton Ave., we can stay connected and care for each other during this time.

The Community Life Ministry has implemented a "People Tree" to ensure that everyone is in contact with someone from church on a regular basis. It will help us maintain social connections and identify any concerns, needs, or prayer requests, while still maintaining social distance. We plan to call each person/family in the church this week to check-in. To all those who responded to our request for volunteers, thank you! It is a testament to the kind of members we have that we were able to fill every volunteer slot so quickly.

To our church family: when someone calls you, please pick up if you are able. We will ask your communication preference (phone call, email, text), and we'll use that after the initial call, but we would love to touch base by phone with each member at least once. Although our regular channels of communication remain the same, your caller can also help connect you with resources (if you have a prayer request, would like to speak to a Stephen Minister, or need help from the Caring Ministry). If you are able to help others in need, and you aren't in a high-risk group yourself, you can also let your caller know that.

If you have questions or feedback about the FCC People Tree,
feel free to contact one of our coordinators:

**Lee Ann Huang, Theresa Hus,
Community Life Co-Chairs: Barb Kling, Carol Patterson**

**Let's make sure we take care of everyone
in our church family during this difficult time!**

Making Computer Work Safer at Home for Kids and Adults

See this short video [here](#).



Celebrate Birthdays

March 18

Sam Hus

Aaron Newman

March 19

Diana Lorenz
Dylan Wiersema

March 25

Haley Willson
Sharon Robson

March 26

Jack Holzhauer
Jon Brusha

March 28

John Healey

March 30

Everett Day

March 31

Dave Wise

April 1

Sophie Winters

April 4

Zachary Lyonsford

April 5

Michael Healey

April 7

Ann Montgomery

April 8

David Giehler

April 11

Nathan Breithaupt

Ben Hus

April 13

Madeline Willson

April 14

Frank Breithaupt

Amy Freitag

Penelope Walker

April 15

Ben Mitchell

April 20

Allison Trezona



Green Team Tip

Refuse! That's the most important of the recycling motto. Refuse first before you think of reducing, reusing and recycling! During Lent work on refusing single use plastics and packaging you don't need.

Would You Like to Contribute to Our Church Online?

You can make credit card or direct debit payments below.



This Sunday, March 22, is One Great Hour of Sharing.

"You are God's field; God's building." Through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, we are planting seeds of new life. Together, we are investing in communities worldwide: providing education to girls and boys, empowering communities through vocational training, supporting microcredit lending and seeing people through to self-sufficiency, empowering families

with skills to support themselves and their neighbors, and participating in sustainable solutions that offer dignity to all. These are just a few ways the OGHS offering touches God's children, in addition to disaster relief and refugee initiatives. Through your generosity, the world is a better place. But more is needed. You have an opportunity to plant seeds into the lives of others. Be a co-worker with God. Building, planting, watering...and trusting that God gives growth to all good gifts shared in faith. **Please use the QR code to make a donation to One Great Hour of Sharing.** Thank you in advance for your generosity.

You may use the QR code to donate to other special offerings, as well. Thank you!



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.**



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