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The newsletter of First Congregational UCC, Naperville

This Week at Church

Wed. Apr. 1

6:00 p.m. Lenten Family Night (video)

Sun. Apr. 5

10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship (Online)

11:00 a.m - 6:00 p.m. Palm Sunday Pantry Pack (Parking Lot)



join us on
Sunday

Pastor's Notes

Advancing God's Love and Justice

Greetings Friends,

The reality is beginning to set in that social distancing is going to last longer than any

of us want it to. We are all eager to get back to “normal,” but from where I sit, it appears as though we’re experiencing one of those turning points in life where a new normal is under construction.

What will life be like beyond the quarantine? Will we become permanently concerned about handshaking and hugging? Will we become permanently anxious about disinfecting surfaces? Will we have learned skills with video conferencing and telecommuting that we’ll prefer working from home? What about church? Are we interested in continuing live streaming #beyondcorona? We have several people tuning in to our worship services who can’t physically join us, even if it were an option, either because they’re too fragile physically, or because they live out of state. If we were to do this long-term, how might it affect our in-person attendance?

We have a number of folks in our congregation who have been deemed “non-essential” by the powers that be. It hurts economically, of course, but how does it affect the psyche? Does this time give us all pause, to think more intentionally about what we consider to be “essential” to our lives? The last several decades have seen enormous increases in personal wealth in the United States. Think about your grandparents. What would they have considered “essential”?

For many of us, these questions raise some anxieties. But I encourage you to think about this time not as something we’re being forced to endure, but as an opportunity to clarify our vision, to reexamine some of our choices in life. When family are the only ones we can physically touch, how does that impact our choices in regard to our family situations? Does that raise the tension, or raise the amount of grace we extend each other? When we can’t leave town for vacations because everything is closed, does this make us more aware of the family down the block who never goes on vacations, either because they don’t have paid time off from their job, or because they could never afford to travel? Most of us will be getting a stimulus check from the government. For some, it’ll be a drop in the bucket compared to what we need to cover rent or mortgage, utilities, or groceries. But for others, it’ll be another opportunity to make a choice. Do we save it? Share it? Spend it? With whom do we share it, or where do we spend it?

Each of us only lives once, so far as we know. We should live our lives on purpose. We should make choices with our time, our attention, our money, that actually illustrate our values. Being forced into a new normal can be an opportunity for self-reflection that may just lead to important growth.

Grace and peace,

Mark

First Congregational UCC

Palm Sunday PANTRY PACK

Sunday, April 5 | 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Naperville area food pantries are facing a surge in demand coupled with a decrease in supply. We will be holding a Pantry Pack for West Suburban Community Pantry and an online drive for Loaves and Fishes to help meet this need on Sunday, April 5 from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the church parking lot. There are three ways to donate:

In Person

Bring non-perishable items to the back door in the church parking lot on April 5 from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. A container will be sitting outside, ready for you to put your food donation in. We will also have palm branches available sitting next to the container for you take one home with you in honor of Palm Sunday.

Porch Pickup

Call or email Catherine Ross to arrange for porch pickup of your donation. A volunteer will come to your house on April 5 between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to retrieve your donation and leave a palm branch on your porch.

Online Giving

Donate to the [virtual food drive at Loaves and Fishes](#).

Accepted Items

We want to meet the needs of the pantry in the most efficient way possible. Help us by ONLY donating the following items:

Bread | Canned Fruit & Veggies | Boxed Dinners (mac & cheese, hamburger

PADS Update

For more than 30 years, our church has been the site of a Wednesday night PADS shelter for the homeless. We've provided spaces to sleep, hot suppers and breakfasts, a place to shower and supplied socks and underwear. For the first time we're suspending those services until the end of April. DuPage PADS recognizes the threats of Covid-19 and closed our shelter and, as of right now, is moving all their clients to hotel rooms.

It is important to note that this is just a suspension of our shelter status. Ours is a social action church, we are a bunch of doers! We are active in everything from offering prayers to supplying food to the homeless in Chicago to mission trips to Guatemala. The PADS Team thanks the 60+ congregation members who make our shelter happen! And to thank the entire congregation for contributing funds making the shelter effort possible.

Please pray for the homeless in DuPage County.

We hope to be helping them again in May!

Lisle Township Job Club

For those who may be dealing with job loss as a result of Covid-19 or who are already in job search and looking for new ways to connect and find support for their transition as we shelter in place, please join the Lisle Township Job Club.

Typically, the Lisle Township Job Club meets every Wednesday at the Career & Networking Center (C&NC) in Naperville. People are still interviewing--virtually--which makes virtual Job Club a great place to hone your virtual skills and professional presentation.

We start promptly at 11:00 a.m., barring any technical glitches that can happen despite our best efforts - which we will push through with patience and good humor.

We encourage you to join through both video and audio as that's how virtual interviews and meetings often work, but you can join us through just audio if you prefer.

PLEASE NOTE:

- * We will begin at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesdays and have the connection until 1:00 p.m.
- * Here is the link for this week: <https://zoom.us/j/714692940> (The link can also be accessed by clicking on the calendar link for the Lisle Township Job Club at www.careernetworkingcenter.org and in my post on Lisle Township's home page at www.LisleTownship.com)

For the virtual Job Club meetings and any video interaction, please be aware and follow these recommendations:

- * Sign on early and test the software in case you need to download an application or have trouble connecting or experience WiFi complications.
- * Ensure that you won't be interrupted, either by locking the door or by alerting others that you can't be disturbed (a note on the door of the room as well as the door to the outside may be helpful).
- * Check that your webcam is working. Position camera at eye level, not up your nose. Look into the camera.
- * Check that your audio is working. Close any windows, tabs or applications on your computer that you're not using.
- * Check your internet connection and make sure you're not downloading anything in the background.
- * Set your phone to silent.
- * Check that the background behind you is neutral and free from clutter.
- * Adjust the lights in the room. If things appear dark or dim, you may want to bring in an extra desk lamp to brighten the space. Be front-lit not back-lit—don't sit in front of a window, for example.
- * Be dressed appropriately.
- * Don't move around a lot.
- * Smile!
- * Sign in with both your first and last name
- * When you want to speak, click on "raise my hand," when done "lower my hand." Also, be sure to un-mute your mic!
- * Be prepared to send me name, email address, target position(s) by 3:00 p.m., and I will send out to the group in place of our usual sign-in sheet

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sarah Breithaupt, MEd, LCPC

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 during 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 Avenue, 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. 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!**



Celebrate Birthdays

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

Christopher Lorimer

April 20

Allison Trezona

Tina Giehler



Green Team

Can the abandoned satellites, rocket boosters, and other fragments of objects sent into space by humanity be recycled? The answer is that [space junk is made of valuable materials](#), including metals, rare earths, and electronics, are recyclable, but we have only started to build systems to recover items from space. [NASA is experimenting](#) with new options for collecting space junk, too.



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.**



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