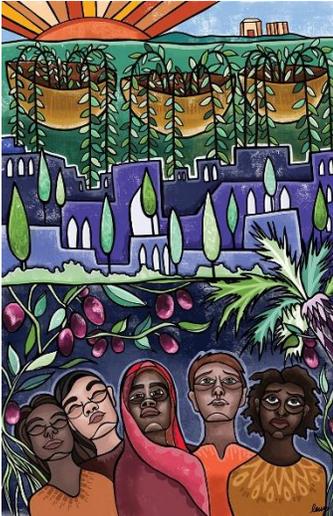


August 16-23, 2020 at

First Congregational United Church of Christ

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Worshipping Sundays at 10:30 AM via Zoom



Worship with Us This Sunday

[Click here](#) to join us for worship by Zoom at 10:30 AM as we continue our summer series, "Unraveled: Seeking God When Our Plans Fall Apart." Rev. Barbara Gerlach will offer a personal call to worship. The scripture for this service comes from the prophet Jeremiah, who instructs the exiles in Babylon, "build houses... plant gardens... seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile." How is this an exilic season for people of faith? What does it mean to be fully present to what this season is teaching us? Rev. Amanda will preach on the theme of unraveling in exile. We will also be blessed to hear from Sandy Sorenson on the "Our Faith, Our Vote 2020" campaign to empower voters. Musical contributions include the First Church Ringers, the First Church Choir, and other gifted musicians. Join us as we lean into God's word for us in a time of exile.

Comprehensive Plan for Dismantling Racism: August 19 at 7:00

[Click here](#) to join Rev. Amanda and a team of folks committed to the work of anti-racism as we gather to develop a comprehensive plan for First Church to participate in dismantling racism. We will look broadly over the coming year and envision the plan will include congregation-wide sacred conversations, a racial justice audit of our ministries, exploring reparations and deepening relationships with sibling churches, preachers of color and culture, affinity group healing conversations and learning, educational opportunities, and deepening relationships with partner organizations, including Howard University and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, among other possibilities. The planning session will take place on Wednesday, August 19, from 7:00-8:30 PM. Please email Amanda to confirm your attendance at ahendlervoss@gmail.com

Small Groups

- Our monthly small group that meets on Mondays is now full. Diane Brennehan is the contact person for Zoom links for this group.
- Our quarterly small group that meets on Tuesdays is now full. Andrew Hamilton is the contact person for Zoom links for this group.
- Our monthly small group that will begin meeting on Sunday, August 23 from 7:00-8:30 PM still has a few open spaces. Allison Truhlar is the contact person for Zoom links for this group. Please email Rev. Amanda at ahendlervoss@gmail.com if you wish to join this group.

Blessings to all of our small groups as they deepen relationships, offer spiritual support to one another, and enrich our lives in this time of physical distancing!



First Church Mystery Night: Saturday, August 22 at 7:30 PM

Please RSVP by Wednesday, August 19

Care of Parish is hosting a virtual mystery party on Saturday, August 22 at 7:30 p.m. Please RSVP by Wednesday, August 19, to Kristy Goodfellow Mills at kristy.a.goodfellow@gmail.com if you are interested. The activity will take approximately two hours and will take place via Zoom using a [procured mystery party package](#). Care of Parish will pick a specific mystery based on the number of

RSVPs and the ages of participants (note that the recommended ages start at 13). We look forward to spending time together virtually and will explore game nights that involved church members of all ages for a future event.

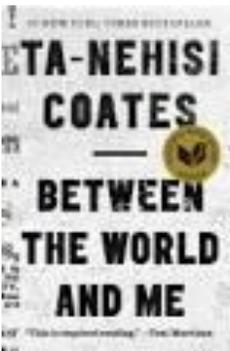
Guest Preacher on August 23: The Rev. Vahisha Hasan

On August 23, we will be blessed to hear a word from guest preacher the Rev. Vahisha Hasan, who lives in Nashville, Tennessee. Rev. Hasan is a faith-rooted organizer working at the intersections of faith, social justice, and mental health. She serves as the director of the SEAL (Social Justice, Equity, Advocacy, Leadership) initiative at American Baptist College, where the Rev. CT Vivian and Congressman John Lewis graduated. We welcome Rev. Hasan with gratitude!



Healing Conversation for Members and Friends of Color with Dr. Ron Hopson: August 26

If you are a member or friend of color at First Church, please mark your calendars for a conversation on healing from racial trauma with the Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson on Wednesday, August 26 from 6:30 - 8:00 PM. A link to join the meeting will be forthcoming. This affinity group will make decisions about whether they would like to meet regularly. Dr. Hopson is a professor of psychology and pastoral care at Howard University, and he is ordained in the United Church of Christ, a long-time friend and former associate at First Church. We are grateful for his gifts and leadership.

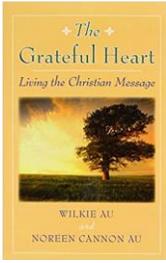


All-Church Summer Read!

Book Discussion on August 30 at 4:00 PM

The Church Council would like to invite each of you to join us on our All-Church Summer Read. We have selected Ta-Nehisi Coates' book *Between the World and Me*. This book is available in a variety of formats including an audio book read by the author himself and is appropriate for teens as well as adults. Mark your calendar and plan to join us by Zoom at 4:00 on the afternoon of Sunday, August 30 for a rich discussion of the book. All are welcome!

Below is a link to a guided reading document that provides a few questions for reflection as you make your way through the book. <https://www.iwu.edu/summer-reading/between.questions.pdf>



Theology Book Group: Wednesday, September 9

The Theology Book Group will meet again on Zoom at 6:00 PM, on Wednesday, September 9. We will discuss Wilkie and Noreen Au, *The Grateful Heart; Living the Christian Message*. The authors, a theologian and a psychologist, explore how cultivating habits of gratitude enrich our lives and bring us closer to God. All are welcome. Here is the link: [Theology Book Group](#)

Prayers of the People: Wednesdays at Noon

Join Rev. Amanda and our community for a brief sharing of the burdens we are bearing, the great joys we want to celebrate, and a time of prayer. We will gather through Zoom from 12:00-12:30 every Wednesday. [Click here](#) to join this standing call.

Staff Vacations

- Rev. Sam will be away August 10-23. While he is away, Rev. Amanda will be available for all pastoral care needs.

Deadline for September Gabriel's Horn: Tuesday, August 25

Prayer List

Garnell Yarbrough, for healing from illness
Dwan Reece and Peter Parsons, as Peter faces complications from a recent procedure.
David Greer as he cares for his husband Frank who tested positive for COVID-19
Rose Berman, as she recovers from a recent hospital stay
Immigrants in the Farmville ICE Detention Center, upon the police violently disrupting their peaceful protest, and the outbreak of Covid
The family and friends of George Floyd, and the city of Minneapolis and our nation
Asian Americans and other racial, cultural, and religious communities targeted by threats based on COVID conspiracy theories
All elders living in care facilities
The Latinx and immigrant communities who are suffering and for the Congregational Action Network seeking to support and resource the congregations that serve them.
People's UCC, our sibling congregation
Emmanuel Okorie-Dunn and Ellen Bushmiller, who serve as nurses
Rev. Laura Johnson, who serves as a hospital chaplain
Hospital employees and first responders
Rosa Gutierrez Lopez (in sanctuary at Cedar Lane UU Church)
Pat Ashbrook • Don Bassler



Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church
Designated Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran
Director of Music – Mr. John Horman
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Cindy Dobbs
Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez
Members in Discernment – Dwight Davis, Lynaya Morris
Nursery & Childcare Staff – Timur Murillo, Ziyah Holman, Jordann Edwards, Patrick Darling-LaGamma

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