

July 25-August 1, 2021 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 this Sunday by Zoom at 10:30 AM as we continue our summer worship theme, "Wade in the Water." Rev. Jason Carson Wilson will offer a Call to Worship, Dennis Turner will serve as our guest musician, and Jamey Moore will be our scripture reader with a focus text on Mark 4, the story of Jesus calming the waves. Rev. Sam is on vacation with his family this week, but we will enjoy a Children's Moment from the national setting of the United Church of Christ, created for General Synod. Rev. Amanda will preach on the waters of chaos, and we will enjoy special music (pre-recorded) from The Porter's Gate, a collective of musicians formed to help worship leaders respond theologically to the pressing questions of our day. LaTayna Purnell and Rev. Amanda will co-lead prayers of the people. The Social Action & Awareness Commission and the Sanctuary Committee are invited to worship in person in the sanctuary this week, along with members of their families.

Following worship, please join us for our Zoom coffee hour, a time of fellowship with one another. The optional discussion question will be: What is the best thing that happened to you this week?



Guest Preacher Next Sunday, August 1: Lynaya Morris

Originally from Pocomoke on Maryland's Eastern Shore Lynaya holds a Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from George Washington University, and a bachelor's degree in biology from Syracuse University. She recently graduated Wesley Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree. Lynaya served and lived among students as part of GWU for eight years, as an Area Coordinator, Residence Director, and later a Career Coach. Lynaya currently works at Catholic University as an Academic & Career Advisor but will return to GWU as an Associate Director of Career Coaching this summer. Lynaya enjoys not just science disciplines and theology, but also creative endeavors such as baking, painting, knitting, and listening to music.

Summer Fun at Yard's Park on August 21

Join us on August 21 for summer fun at Yard's Park. Come meet Rev. Amanda in person from 10:00 AM through noon on Saturday, August 21, at Yards Park. Yards Park is located at 355 Water Street SE, Washington DC. We will meet on the west bank of the water feature. Consider packing swim clothes if you want to splash around and walking shoes to go for a stroll on the boardwalk. For more information about Yards Park, including parking options, please check out their website: <https://www.capitolriverfront.org/yards-park/faqs>. We look forward to seeing you there. Please contact Kristy Goodfellow Mills with questions at kristy.a.goodfellow@gmail.com or 563.580.5558.



Memorial Service for Pat Ashbrook: August 4 at 2:00 PM

Join us in the sanctuary on Wednesday, August 4, at 2:00 PM for a Memorial Service to mourn the loss and celebrate the life of Pat Ashbrook led by the Rev. Sam McFerran with John Horman providing music. [Click here](#) if you prefer to join us by Zoom. A reception hosted by Care of Parish will follow in the Community Room. The reception is being coordinated by Kristy Goodfellow. To read Pat's loving obituary written by her family to honor her life and legacy, [click here](#). Let us continue to hold Pat's family and all who have loved her in our hearts and prayers.

Develop a Spiritual Practice: Come Meditate with Us!

From Nora Marsh: for the past few years, I have had a regular spiritual (non-religious) practice of participating in our Wednesday 12:15-12:45 PM meditation group. We previously met in the chapel but have been meeting remotely via Zoom since September during COVID. We do a mix of silent and guided meditations with time on either end for checking in with each other. Taking even ½-hour a week in a regular practice has been very grounding for me especially during the stress of COVID.

We welcome newcomers and drop-ins, so please give it a try. And it's free! You can contact me, Nora Marsh, at knoramarsh@icloud.com or Amanda Hendler-Voss at ahendlervoss@gmail.com to receive an invitation on Wednesday mornings. We hope to resume in the chapel in the near future.

Regathering Update

The Regathering Task Force recommended the following changes to our Regathering Plan (for return to live worship), which were approved by Council. These changes are based on observations made during the first several weeks of Phase 3 and the rapidly improving COVID metrics in the Washington, DC area.

Phase 3 Changes

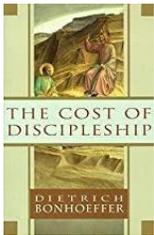
1. We welcome brief visiting (with masking) in the sanctuary after the service.
2. We plan open sign-ups, of up to 50 worshippers, for services on August 22, August 29, and September 6. To sign up, contact Kim Darling at kdarling@gmail.com.
3. In the online (pre-worship) signup form, we are now asking an optional question about household vaccination status. This is strictly to provide congregation-wide statistics for the Regathering Task Force to inform their recommendation as the church moves into Phase 4.

Phase 4 Changes

1. On September 12, we will begin using open sign-ups with no attendance limit (instead of dividing congregation into in-person groups). We will continue to ask worshippers to sign up in advance to attend in-person services, so that we have necessary information for contact tracing.
2. We welcome brief visiting (with masking) in the sanctuary and narthex after the service.
3. We will need four ushers each Sunday during Phase 4.
4. We will continue to track community case numbers. If case rates begin to rise steadily, we will step back to Phase 3.

The completed updated Regathering Plan [Regathering Plan Update](#) and updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) [FAQs Update](#) can be found on our website. We acknowledge that we are taking a cautious approach, relative to other institutions. This approach is informed by our desire to prioritize the health and safety of the whole congregation and to ensure that all feel welcome and comfortable at live services. We are encouraged by the improving metrics and optimistic that we will be able to further relax our protocols in the future. As always, we welcome your feedback.

Phase 3 Schedule	
July 25	Social Action Commission & Sanctuary Group
Aug. 1	Finance & CE Commissions
Aug. 8	Anti-Racism Task Force
Aug. 15	Young Adults
Aug. 22 & 29	TBD



Theology Book Group: September 7

The Theology Book Group meets next on September 7, at 7:00 PM, to discuss Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s classic and ever relevant, *The Cost of Discipleship*. The meeting will be held on Zoom: <https://georgetown.zoom.us/j/93643277834>. All are welcome.

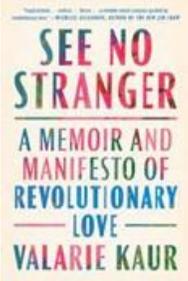
Search for New Music Director

Council is pleased to announce that we have appointed a search committee to help select a new director of music in the wake of John Horman’s retirement. Marian Drake has agreed to chair the committee. She will be joined by Kristy Goodfellow Mills, Andrew Hamilton, Michael Hopkins, Emily Laing, Priscilla Waters, and Jason Carson Wilson. Jo-Anne Henry has agreed to assist the committee with its initial work of implicit bias training and preparation of a position description and announcement.

The committee hopes to begin reviewing resumes and interviewing candidates in September, with a goal of selecting a new music director by Thanksgiving. But we intend to be deliberate, to maximize our chances of attracting high-quality candidates and securing the best person for the position. In accordance with our bylaws, the committee will bring a candidate to the congregation for the congregation’s approval. Upon the committee’s recommendation, Council may hire the selected candidate on a temporary basis to fill the vacancy prior to the next scheduled congregational meeting. Until a new director of music is hired, we will rely on a quality pool of substitute musicians.

Council is very grateful to each of the committee members for agreeing to undertake this important task for the church. If you have ideas or suggestions for the committee, please feel free to contact Marian at mariandrake@yahoo.com.

If you have any questions about the search process, etc., please feel free to contact Moderator John Smeltzer at johnsmeltzer@gmail.com or Assistant Moderator Susan Anderson at ssba92@gmail.com.



All-Church Summer Book Read: *See No Stranger* by Valerie Kaur

This year's selection is *See No Stranger* by Valerie Kaur. Valerie is a Sikh activist, filmmaker, and civil rights lawyer. In this memoir/manifesto, Valerie shares her personal experiences confronting racism, sexual assault, and police violence and her vision for a revolutionary love that can transform and heal our personal relationships, our communities, and nation.

Prayer List

Prayers of peace and liberation for Nicaragua, Cuba, and Haiti.
Prayers of comfort for the family of Ron Hopson after the death of his nephew.
Prayers of comfort for the family of Pat Ashbrook following her death.
Prayers of healing for Dwan Reece's daughter, Maya, with long haul COVID
Prayers of comfort for Grace Bassler following Don's death.
Byron Adams' niece, Valerie, undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
Prayers of hope for our Racial Justice Audit yearlong process.
All those who mourn the loss of a beloved one.
Families struggling to eat and make ends meet.
Garnell Yarbrough, for continued healing
People's UCC, our sibling congregation
Emmanuel Okorie-Dunn and Ellen Bushmiller, who serve as nurses.
Rev. Laura Johnson and Rev. Diana Gomez de Molina, who serve as chaplains.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church
Designated Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Cindy Dobbs
Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez
Members in Discernment –Lynaya Morris, LaTayna Purnell
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