

December 3, 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.*

Worshiping Sundays at 10:30 AM via Zoom and in person



## **Worship with us this Communion Sunday**

[Click here](#) to worship with us by Zoom at 10:30 AM as we mark the second Sunday in Advent and celebrate communion. We will continue our Advent theme, "Close to Home" with Emily Laing and Allison Truhlar lighting the candle of peace. Susan Goodman and Rev. Jason Carson Wilson will serve as scripture readers with focus texts from Malachi 3:1-4 and Luke 1:39-45. We will welcome the Rev. Freeman Palmer, our Central Atlantic Conference Minister, into our pulpit as our preacher, and the First Church choir will provide a choral blessing. If you are joining us from home, please be sure to set your table with the elements of bread and cup, which we will bless together. In this Phase of our regathering, we have open sign-ups each Sunday for up to 25 people worshiping with us in the sanctuary while others join by Zoom. [Click here](#) to sign up; there's still room for this and upcoming Sundays.

Following worship, please join us for fellowship--remain in the sanctuary to greet one another or join us for our Zoom coffee hour. The optional discussion question is: What traditions are close to your heart this time of year?



First Church is very excited to bring Christmas cheer to DC children and youth through our Christmas Toy and Gift Drive. This will be the fifth year that we will collect funds, toys and gifts for Washington families. There are many exciting ways for you to support this toy drive. Please let Rev. Sam know you plan to support. He would love to keep the congregation updated and tally our results as we meet each goal.

We will be supporting three wonderful partners:

- 1) **Shaw Community Center** – this UCC ministry provides tutoring, mentoring and support to youth in the Shaw, DC neighborhood. Our goal is raise \$650 to enable the executive director to purchase the perfect gifts for each youth. We are already off to a great start. At the outdoor service on Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, First Church and People’s UCC were able to raise \$101. To support this cause, you can either send a check or paypal to First Church with “SCM” in the note.
- 2) **A Wider Circle** – this national leader in helping reduce poverty provides over 10,000 gifts to children in DC public housing. You can learn more about their holiday program at their website. <https://awidercircle.org/holiday> . The easiest way to support this cause is to purchase gifts from their [Wish List](#). Our goal is to purchase 50 gifts toward this cause.
- 3) **Friends of First Church** – Last Christmas, several families experiencing poverty or homelessness reached out to First Church directly to provide gifts for their children. These families are hoping we can help them out again this year. Our goal is to provide each child with the gifts their families have identified. We would love for 2 families to support each child. Please let Rev. Sam know if you or your family would like to support one of these children.
  - a. A 4 year old boy: Learning toys and clothing (4T)
  - b. A 10 year old boy: Learning toys and clothing (10-12t)
  - c. A 9 year old girl: Clothes (pants/shirts in 10T), Shoes (Size 3 in Big Kid shoes), Toy
  - d. A 6 year old boy: Clothes (pants/shirts in 8T), Shoes (Size 2 in Big Kid shoes), Toy

## **Palestinian Oil Sale: An Opportunity to Support SAAC**

Dear First Church members and friends,

We rejoice in this season of gratitude and expectation. We look forward to a receding Covid19 dark cloud and welcome the chance to re-engage with family and friends over the holidays. What better time to start thinking about your holiday shopping. And as you ponder what to give to loved ones, consider our Palestinian Oil Ministry.

In partnership with other congregations in the DMV, we are selling olive oil and other items produced in the West Bank and Gaza. These sales support family farms, assure food security, and promote peace in the Holy Land. It also support the justice initiatives we are working on through our Social Action Committee.



For the Palestinian Framers: From the 2020 earnings, so far \$5,000 have been donated to Anera to cover the cost of transporting a container of emergency medical supplies to Gaza after the Israeli attacks in April-May; \$2,500 each to St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus for an emergency room monitor (with matching funds from American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem) and to Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem for its mobile mammography unit which serves rural women in the West Bank; \$316 to Anera's Gaza Food Security Program in conjunction with \$2,184 from a special fund-raising effort by our partner Trinity Presbyterian Church in Arlington, VA to fund one family garden in Gaza; and 20 bottles of olive oil for resale to help the Museum of the Palestinian People in Washington, DC meet its cost of operation. A detailed report on OOM operations this year will be issued in early 2022.

For our SAAC Committee: We helped fund our work on housing, immigration and anti-racism.

**Time is Short:** Order by December 10<sup>th</sup>

We are taking orders through December 10, 2021 for mid-December delivery (local DMVonly). See the ordering instructions below.



OILs for sale are:

- **Nabali Olive Oil** – from the Nablus region. Smooth and delicate, sweet and fruity; mild flavor perfect for salad dressings or to enhance the taste of any dish. **\$25 per half-liter bottle.**
- **Rumi Olive Oil** – from indigenous Surri olive trees, some more than 1,000 years old. Tangy, with hints of bitter, and a spicy, peppery finish, perfect for dipping fresh bread or enhancing flavor in cooking. **\$25 per half-liter bottle.**

**Jenin Olive Oil** – signature blends from farms near Jenin. Each batch has a distinctive and diverse range of flavors that will add distinction to any salad, spread or special meal. **\$25 per half-liter bottle; \$30 per one-liter tin.**



- **Tomato or Olive Tapenade** – a spread for toast, dip, or condiment for pasta or meat. **\$7 per 130 gram jar.**

- **Za'atar** – beloved Palestinian spice mix of dried oregano, toasted sesame seeds, and sumac. **\$6 per 2.3 gram package.**

### How to Pay

To participate in the Olive Oil Ministry, follow these three easy steps.

**One: place an order.** Send an email to Susan Saudek at [saudeksusan@gmail.com](mailto:saudeksusan@gmail.com). State "olive oil" in the subject line. Provide the item(s) and number of each item to be purchased. We will confirm your order and amount due. Please order early to enable us to make delivery arrangements.

**Two: make payment.** Pay electronically on the church's website: <https://www.firstuccdc.org/> by using the "olive oil ministry" tab on the "Vanco" link, or by noting "olive oil" when paying via PayPal. Or mail a check—memo line "olive oil"—to [First Congregational Church 945 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20001](#). *For electronic payments via credit card, please add \$1/item for processing.*

**Three: sit back and relax!** We'll drop off your order at church or deliver to your doorstep by December 15, 2020. We will contact you in advance to confirm delivery instructions.

Thank you! The Social Action and Awareness Commission



### Christmas Pageant December 12th<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 AM

Please join us for the wonderful tradition of the Children's pageant! This year, the story of Jesus' birth will be how God is with each of us on our journey with God. It will be wonderful! Please note that we invite children and their families to worship in-person, and ask all others to join us by zoom.



### **Blue Christmas Service: December 16 at 7:00 PM**

Join us for a Blue Christmas service on Thursday, December 16 at 7:00 PM. As we approach the longest night of the year on winter solstice, we await the birth of an inner light and dare to imagine that God will come to us again. The Blue Christmas service is traditionally a time to

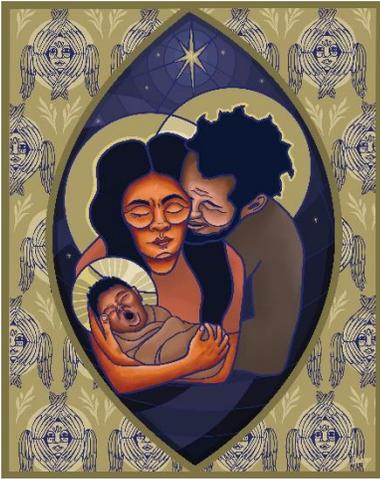
acknowledge the underside of "the most wonderful time of the year." This year, we are even more mindful of the stress, the amplified grief of loss, the sorrows of those living on life's edge, and the realities of a world in which violence is a lived experience for too many. From the coronavirus pandemic to bleak isolation, a racial reckoning, a challenging election season, and lowered expectations for what is possible this holiday season, we will lean into the ancient lament of our tradition as well as God's comfort. This service will meet us in our grief and struggle and lead us out toward the light with healing music, words that nurture, and the warmth of community. Join us and tend to your soul.



### **Memorial Service for Peg Lorenz: Saturday, December 18 at 1:30 PM**

Join us in the sanctuary or by Zoom on Saturday, December 18 at 1:30 PM to mourn the loss and celebrate the life and friendship of Peg Lorenz. Rev. Amanda and Rev. Sam will lead the service, with John Horman serving as our musician. Polly and Judith will offer special music, and Barbara Gerlach will reflect on Peg's life, along with members of her family. We will also enjoy a slideshow treasure trove of photographs from Peg's life, put together lovingly by Rev. Sam. Byron

Adams will arrange the flowers. A reception hosted by Care of Parish will follow in the Community Room. [Click here](#) to view Peg's obituary, where you can also leave a message for her family. Please note that while masks will be required for this Memorial Service and we strongly encourage all who attend to be vaccinated (and boosted), there will be congregational singing in the second half of the service and we are anticipating up to 75 people joining us in the sanctuary. Please assess your own comfort and risk level to decide how you will participate, and feel free to be in touch with Rev. Amanda with any questions.

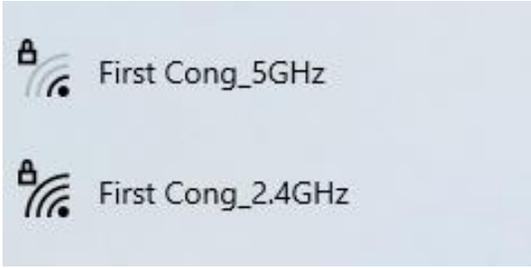


**Family Worship on Christmas Eve: 5:30 PM**

Join us at 5:30 PM on Christmas Eve by Zoom or in the sanctuary for our family-friendly Christmas Eve worship service. This simple service will feature scripture readings focused on the story of Jesus' birth, pre-recorded Christmas carols (dancing welcome), and it will end with lighting candles and singing Silent Night. We expect the service to last 45 minutes. Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with the children of our congregation.

**Candle-Light Christmas Service: 7:30 PM**

Join us at 7:30 PM on Christmas Eve by Zoom or in the sanctuary for our traditional lessons and carols candle-light service. The service will include a brief meditation from Rev. Amanda, exquisite instrumentalists, and a choral anthem. It will end with the lighting of our candles as we sing Silent Night. In Bethlehem is born the one who is for all, the light of the world, the hope of the ages, as God's love comes to us once more.

	<p>First Church wifi password:</p> <p><b>first1865</b></p> <p>To avoid echo/feedback, please mute your device when taking part in group discussions.</p>
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## Prayer List

Prayers of comfort for the family and friends of Peg Lorenz, following her death.

Prayers of healing for Hugh Bushmiller

Prayer for the mother of Cynthia Hobbs as Cynthia cares for her.

Prayers of healing for Priscilla Waters as she recovers from a back injury.

Prayers of healing for Liz and Lance Warren, as Liz recovers from a fall and Lance recovers from surgery.

Prayers of healing for Diane Brenneman's daughter Sara as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers of mercy for the people of Afghanistan and Afghan families resettling in the U.S.

Prayers of strength for the people of Haiti as they mourn those lost in the earthquake and begin to rebuild.

Prayers of comfort for the family of Joan King, following her death, and for this community who loved her.

Prayers for Monte Hillis and her husband Bert, as she faces the rapid onset of dementia.

Prayers of peace and liberation for Nicaragua, Cuba, and Haiti.

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.

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.

## Upcoming Events

### December Calendar

#### Sunday, December 5

Second Sunday of Advent

10:30 am Worship

#### Tuesday, December 7

6:00 pm Drop-In Center for  
Homeless Youth

6:30 pm Drop-In Center Yoga Class

#### Sunday, December 12

Third Sunday of Advent

10:30 am Christmas Pageant

#### Tuesday, December 14

6:00 pm Drop-In Center for  
Homeless Youth

#### Thursday, December 16

7:00 pm Blue Christmas Service

#### Saturday, December 18

1:30 pm Memorial Service  
for Peg Lornez

#### Sunday, December 19

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:30 am Worship  
Christmas Cookie  
Exchange

#### Tuesday, December 21

6:00 pm Drop-In Center for  
Homeless Youth

#### Friday, December 24

5:30 pm Family Christmas Eve  
Service

7:30 pm Candle-Light Christmas Eve  
Service

#### Sunday, December 26

10:30 am Worship (Zoom Only)



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church

Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran

Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams

Administrative Assistant – Ms. Trista Dunlap

Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez

Members in Discernment –Lynaya Morris, LaTayna Purnell

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