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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Church Weekly Newsletter October 24, 2025

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

Worshiping Sundays at 10:30 am via Zoom and in person.

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Worship with Us



Join us at 10:30 in the sanctuary or [click here](#) to join us by Zoom as we continue our Stewardship theme, "Dreaming God's Dream." This Sunday, we are grateful to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Rev. Sam's ministry at First Church. Kim Darling will offer the call to worship. Rev. Amanda will lead a time with our children. Dennis Turner will direct our children's choir, accompanied by Ulung Tanoto. A reader's theater featuring Patrick Darling-LaGamma, Lucille Dickinson, Abby Goodman-Johnson, and Andy Raver will tell the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). Brendan McFerran will read an excerpt from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s sermon "Drum Major Instinct," and Rev. Karen Byrne will facilitate a dialogue sermon with Rev. Sam. Andy Raver will offer a stewardship testimony, and we will share in the prayers of the people. Join us for this special Sunday as we give God thanks and praise for Rev. Sam and his ministry among us!

Our children will begin worship with us in the sanctuary. Following the passing

of the peace, children in fourth grade and under will move to the Christian Education suite for Sunday school. Our nursery will be open throughout the morning.

Following worship, please join us in the narthex for coffee and community as we continue to celebrate with Rev. Sam. At noon, all newcomers are invited to join Rev. Amanda and Jaimie Orr of Outreach & Membership for an Inquirer's Gathering upstairs in the chapel.

This week's worship folder is available online [here](#).

Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG.

Stewardship Reflection from Courtney McCaffrey

I joined First Church ten years ago. During the past decade, I've seen our congregation go through both difficult times and good times. I've seen my children's faith flourish under the leadership of Reverend Sam. And I've seen Reverend Amanda breathe new life into our church family.

If I envision what First Church could be in another ten years, I envision the pews full every Sunday with members and visitors from a variety of generations, backgrounds, and circumstances. I envision a lively cohort of children participating in the weekly Children's Moment and putting on the annual Christmas Pageant. And I see a joyful and justice-seeking church family united in caring for one another and for our city, our country and our world.

This is what First Church could become. It's what I hope it will become. But in order to make that tomorrow a reality, all of us need to pledge our support to First Church today. Providing joyful programming, engaging in social justice ministries and attracting new members requires us to invest. To pledge. To financially support First Church in the year ahead, so that we can become even stronger in the next decade.

We as First Church have set ambitious goals for who we want to be today and what we want to achieve together. Please join me in thoughtfully considering

how much you can pledge for 2026, and increasing your pledge if you are able to do so. I, for one, am excited to invest more in our church's future.

Announcements

Inquirer's Gathering: October 26

Save the date of October 26 at noon to join Rev. Amanda, our Outreach & Membership leaders, and other newcomers for our fall Inquirer's Gathering. This will be a time of getting to know one another, sharing stories, exploring the history of First Church and the UCC, and answering any questions about membership. All newcomers are welcome to attend! This gathering will take place in the upstairs chapel; if you need a Zoom option, please let Rev. Amanda know. If you plan to attend, please email Rev. Amanda at ahendlervoss@gmail.com; however, you do not have to RSVP to attend.

**inquirer's
gathering:
october 26**



All Saints Sunday, November 2:

Bring Photograph of Departed Loved Ones



On November 2nd, as we mark All Saints Sunday, we invite you to bring a framed photograph of a beloved, departed one. You can place your photograph on the worship table (among the votive candles) before worship, during the prelude, or during the passing of the peace.

Those worshipping from home are invited to set your table with a photograph, votive candle, and the elements of bread and cup for communion Sunday.

First Church Movie Group: November 19

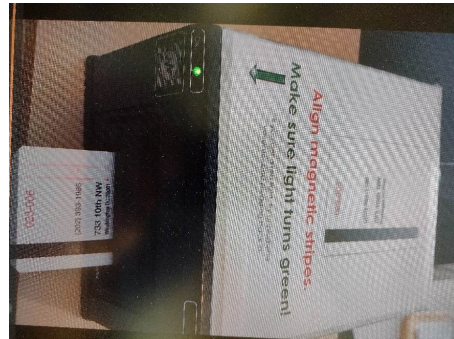
This month the First Church Movie Group invites you to watch *Good Night, and Good Luck* (2005). "Broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow looks to bring down Senator Joseph McCarthy" ([IMDB](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0407886)). We'll gather virtually to discuss the movie at 7:30 PM ET on Wednesday, November 19. Please email Anne Mascolino

(annemascolino@gmail.com) or talk to Trevor Bakker to connect with us and receive the link to our conversation.

Succeeding with the Parking Validator

We are aware of frequent problems with the parking validator over the last 18 months. As a refresher, please be sure to follow these steps when validating your parking for the best chance at success:

1. Try to keep parking tickets flat, unbent, and away from cards with magnetic strips.
2. Align the ticket as indicated on the top of the machine: mag stripe up and on the right side.
3. Gently insert the ticket, listen for it to go back and forth and **WATCH** for the light on the front to turn **green** indicating that your ticket has been validated.
4. When moving the validator, please do so with care.



New Assisted Listening Devices Are Here!

The Facilities Commission is pleased to announce that our new assisted listening devices are now available for use!

See Dwight at the AV console in the balcony if you'd like to try one out. We have four body packs that you clip to your belt or stick in a pocket (we'll get more if we need them) and 3 headsets and 3 loops. Use of the headsets is obvious. The loops work by plugging the 2 ends (earphone jacks) into the two ports in the bodypack, put it around your neck, and it should automatically connect to your hearing aid if it is [telecoil/Tcoil](#) compatible. After the worship service, please bring the device up to the balcony and place it on the sound board or hand it to Dwight. Please do **NOT** just leave it somewhere on the first floor!



If you are going to a nurture or similar event in the Community Hall after

worship, hold onto the device and when you get to the Hall, hold the up and down buttons down together for 5 seconds until a room name shows in the display, then use the down button till Community comes up in the display, then press the button on the top of the bodypack to confirm. And at the end of the nurture give the device to Dwight or leave it on the Sanctuary lightboard.

Let us know what you think of the new devices!

Second Sunday Offering: Neighbors in Need



This October, the recipient of our Second Sunday special offering is Neighbors in Need (NIN), a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). The other two-thirds will fund grants to UCC churches and organizations to lead justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities. The UCC Office of Public Policy and Advocacy

in Washington D.C. is also funded in part by gifts to Neighbors in Need. We invite you to contribute to our second Sunday special offering throughout the month of October, simply note in the memo portion of your check or using our digital giving options that your gift is for the second Sunday special offering. Thank you for your generosity.

Sign Up to Serve as a Scripture Reader or Liturgist



Helping lead worship is a spiritual practice that enriches our common life together and helps us reflect the Beloved Community that is the Body of Christ. We hope you will consider signing up to serve as a liturgist or scripture reader this fall. Liturgists will either offer a call to worship reflection on our fall theme "Into the Deep," with prompts provided by Rev. Amanda or lead a prayer of confession and words of assurance. We also need scripture readers

each Sunday. Please take a moment to [click here](#) to sign up if you are willing to serve in this way. Or, simply email Rev. Amanda with dates when you are

available and she will get you signed up. Thank you for contributing to "the work of the people" by sharing your gifts in this way.

SIGNAL--A New Way to Communicate at First Church

The First Church Council is establishing a Signal group as a way for members to share information about upcoming events and programming. The group will only be available to individuals who are a part of the First Church community and each member can decide whether to participate. Individuals who opt-in will be able to access different group chats, such as a group focused on Christian Education events, one focused on social action events, and one for Young Adults. These groups represent initial ideas for sub-groups, and the Council can add additional groups for other commissions or interest areas.

[Click here](#) for more information on the First Church Signal group and how to sign-up.

We look forward to rolling this out over the summer and will offer a Signal sign up tutorial on Homecoming Sunday in September. Please contact Dwan Reece (dreece111@verizon.net), Kristen Wheeler (dessertlady@mac.com) or Michael Enseki-Frank (michaelensekifrank@gmail.com) with any questions.

Prayer List

As we seek God and walk this journey of faith together, First Church gives thanks that we are a community that prays with and for one another. If you have a prayer request that you wish to be lifted up in service or included in the prayer list below, please email the church office (churchoffice@firstuccdc.org).

Prayers of comfort for Rev. Amanda and her family following the death of her grandmother, Inez Graham.

Prayers of comfort for Garnell Yarbrough, following the death of his mother.

Prayers of comfort for Alyx Cheng and her family, following the death of her father, Alan, and of gratitude that he helped save the lives of three people through organ donation.

Prayers of comfort for Diana Gomez de Molina following the death of her wife, Mari Castellanos, beloved member of First Church.

Prayers of strength for the people of Chicago & Portland as they stand with the most vulnerable to peacefully protest the violent detentions and deportations of their neighbors.

Prayers of comfort for Liz and Lance Warren as Liz heals from a broken hip.
Prayers of compassion and care for all federal workers facing chaos, cruelty, and uncertainty.
Prayers of courage and strength for our democracy.
Prayers of support for Dale Ostrander, living with memory loss.
Prayers that God's strength and wisdom surround the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, the UCC's General Minister and President.
Prayers for a lasting cease-fire in Gaza and the release of hostages and prisoners, leading to peace.
Prayers of mercy for the women of Afghanistan.
Prayers of peace and liberation for Sudan, Ukraine, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Haiti.
Prayers of mercy for families struggling to eat and make ends meet.
Prayers for Peoples Congregational UCC, our sibling congregation.
Prayers of strength for Rev. Laura Simmons and Rev. Diana Gomez de Molina, who serve as chaplains.

Happening at First Church this Week

Sunday, October 26

9:30 am - Bible Workbench
10:30 am - Worship Service &
Sunday School
11:45 am - Coffee Hour
12:00 pm - Inquirer's Gathering

Tuesday, October 28

10:30 am - Staff Meeting
6:00 pm - Drop-In Center

Wednesday, October 29

12:15 pm - Break Away Meditation

Sunday, November 2:

All Saints Sunday

9:30 am - Bible Workbench
10:30 am - Worship Service &
Sunday School
12:00 pm - Community Potluck

Reminders and Quick Links

Upcoming Coffee Hour Hosts

October 26: Trevor Bakker, Abby Goodman-Johnson, Jess Dumas

November 2: Community Potluck

November 9: John Smeltzer, Diane Brenneman, Katie Koza

[Instructions for Coffee Hour](#)

Quick Links

[This Week's Worship Folder](#)

[This Month's Gabriel's Horn](#)

[Worship Service Recordings on YouTube](#)

[Online Member Directory via Servant Keeper](#)

[First Church Usher Schedule](#)

Community Bulletin Board

“After disappointing Chinatown task force, what’s next?”

Gail Sonnemann shares [this article](#) from Greater Greater Washington with a useful summary about the Chinatown task force, community engagement next steps, and information on where to send recommendations.

The Community Bulletin Board serves as a place for members to share announcements or requests. Submissions should be [emailed to Whitney](#) no later than noon on Thursday to be included in that week's newsletter. Announcements will be included as space allows.



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