

[View this email in your browser](#)



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Church Weekly Newsletter

March 27, 2026

No matter 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](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Prayer List](#)

[Happening at First Church this Week](#)

[Reminders and Quick Links](#)

[Community Bulletin Board](#)

Worship with Us



"Palm Sunday Was a Protest" by Nicolette Faison | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Join us at 10:30 in the sanctuary or join us [by Zoom](#) on this Sunday of Palms & Passion. Rev. Sam will call us to worship with the words of acclamation, followed by a processional of palms during the opening hymn including our children and the First Church Choir. The First Church Choir will sing the anthem, "Let the Rocks Cry Out," By Lloyd Larson under the direction of Dennis Turner. John Smeltzer will lead us in a unison prayer and extinguish the sixth and final Lenten candle as we journey into the shadows of Holy Week. Dwan Reece and Diane Brenneman will serve as our scripture readers with focus texts from Mark 11:1-10 (Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem) and Mark 15:1-

15 (Jesus is handed over to be crucified). Rev. Amanda will preach. We will also join the prayers of the people. Join us for this poignant service of worship which moves from palms and praise into the shadow of the cross.

Children are invited to join us at the start of worship. Following the passing of the peace, they will move to the Christian Education suite for Sunday School with Rev. Sam.

Following worship, join us in the narthex for coffee and fellowship. All those assisting with our Easter Sunday service are invited to join Rev. Amanda, Rev. Sam, and Dennis in the sanctuary for a dress rehearsal immediately following worship.

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

Announcements

TOMORROW: No Kings Protest

Join us on Saturday, March 28th for the No Kings 3 protest, which promises to be the largest day of citizen protest in US history. **We will meet at the church at noon for sign-making, then step off at 12:30 to travel by metro to the SE side of the Frederick Douglass Bridge** (near 600 Howard Rd SE). A rally led by partner organizations like Free DC and Congregation Action Network will take place there at 1:30, then we will march across the bridge past Fort McNair where Stephen Miller and Pam Bondi reside. We will end at the Waterfront Metro by 3:30. Americans rejected the rule of kings 250 years ago and will come together across the nation to reaffirm our commitment to a thriving democracy that respects the rule of law and ensures justice for all. If you cannot join us in DC, consider joining another mobilization in the DMV, such as the one that will take place in Arlington from 10:00am - noon. Point people for the First Church gathering are Jim Riker and Sandy Sorensen, please reach out to them or check in on the Signal group to stay connected and follow details.



Due Sunday: Easter Flower Orders



Members are invited to order an Easter plant in honor of or in memory of a loved one. On Easter Sunday, their names will appear in our worship folder. The order form is available for those worshipping in the sanctuary; please fill it out and place it in the offering plate on the way out of worship. Or you can use the online order form available [here](#). Payments can be made online via Vanco or PayPal (indicate Easter flowers) or by mailing a check (with Easter Flowers on the memo line) to the church at 945 G Street NW, Washington, DC, 20001. You may also email your order information to the church office at churchoffice@firstuccdc.org. Please note that all orders must be received by Sunday, March 29th. Questions? Contact Whitney at churchoffice@firstuccdc.org.

Maundy Thursday Worship: April 2 at 6:30

Join us for a powerful experience of the Holy Week journey on Maundy Thursday. We will begin in the Community Hall with a simple middle eastern meal and communion feast as we remember the last supper; we will move to the chapel to pray with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, then we will move to the sanctuary as we remember Jesus' trial and crucifixion. Please join us for one of the most deeply felt services of the year, brimming with music, scripture, and prayer. This hybrid service will take place in person and also be accessible on Zoom, beginning at 6:50 (after the meal), by [clicking here](#).



Maundy Thursday April 2: Food Donations Needed

We are planning for 60 people - at least - for a simple meal prior to proceeding into the worship service. Contributions needed:

- 8 bags of pita

- 9 tubs of hummus
- 2 large bags (approx 50) mandarins
- 6 bags of dried fruit
- 3 large bags nuts
- 3 bottles of olives
- 4 bags CUBED cheese

Contributions should be marked and left in Kitchen by March 29 so Care of Parish can fill in as needed. Thank you.



Easter Pancake Breakfast

Plan to join us for the annual -always wonderful - Easter Pancake Breakfast immediately following the Easter Sunday Service in the Community Hall. Care of Parish is currently organizing this event and is looking for volunteers! We

need help with -- 1) specialty pancake makers, 2) set-up on Saturday and 3) clean-up on Sunday. In addition, we could use a couple more electric griddles. If you're interested in helping in any of these ways, please contact Susan Anderson (ssba@gmail.com) or Nan McConnell (nancyfmcconnell@aol.com). Thank you.



March Second Sunday Special Offering: Tommy's Pantry



We invite you to give generously to our Second Sunday special offering in March, [Tommy's Pantry](#). Tommy's Pantry proudly carries the name of the late Tommy Raskin, whose unwavering belief in ensuring human dignity is the foundation and guiding principle of this valued partner organization. Each month, Tommy's Pantry distributes food boxes, wellness boxes and fresh produce boxes, including to immigrant neighbors. Our children and youth frequently volunteer with

Tommy's Pantry by packing food boxes. On Sunday, March 8th, we invite you to attend a nurture program led by Rev. Sam with Adrian Tilton of Tommy's Pantry to learn more about their work and the ways we can deepen our collaboration.

Sign-Up for Coffee Hour in 2026

Coffee Hour gives each of us an opportunity to provide a warm welcome to visitors and regular attenders alike by setting out drinks and snacks for post-worship fellowship. **For this to happen each Sunday, we need all members to sign up at least twice per calendar year.** Care of Parish is scheduling for 2026. If you've not signed up for at least 2 dates in 2026, you can do so by

- Visiting our [SignUpGenius page](#) to select your preferred date
- Emailing us at copfirstuccdc@gmail.com with your requested date(s)
- Signing up on the paper calendar after church

If you're looking for additional information on our Coffee Hour Tradition you can go:

- [here](#) for background information
- or [here](#) for instructions

Thank you for supporting this vital ministry of hospitality. Together, we can ensure Coffee Hour continues to be a warm and welcoming space for all. Many hands make light work, so sign up today to take part in this vibrant tradition!

Sign-Up to Serve as a Scripture Reader this Lent - Easter

[Click here](#) to sign up to serve as a scripture reader or liturgist in worship this holy season of Lent and Easter through Earth Sunday. We welcome members and friends, local and far-flung, adults, youth, and children to participate. Your voice helps make us who we are, so please take a moment to sign up. Our worship is enriched by your participation.



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 for peace and safety for all those impacted by the war in Iran, especially low-income workers in expat communities throughout the Gulf States and our Muslim siblings who may fear gathering to break their fasts during Ramadan.

Prayers of joy for Dwight Isaiah Davis following his acceptance to Candler School of Theology with a full scholarship.

Prayers of comfort for Gail Sonnemann and her family, following the death of her beloved mother, Betsy.

Prayers of blessing and gratitude for Lindsay Swisher as she relocates to Detroit for a new job.

Prayers of support for Bob, the father of Rev. Laura Simmons, who was recently diagnosed with cancer.

Prayers for justice, healing, and peace for the people of Minneapolis and for our friends and former members there: Rev. Susie Hayward, Welling Hall, Rev. David Lindsey, and Susan Peacock.

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 peace and rebuilding in Gaza.

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

Saturday, March 28

12:00pm - No Kings Protest

Sunday, March 29: Palm & Passion Sunday

9:30 am - Bible Workbench

10:30 am - Worship Service & Sunday School

11:45 am - Coffee Hour

Tuesday, March 31

10:30 am - Staff Meeting

6:00 pm - Drop-In Center

Wednesday, April 1

12:15 pm - Breakaway Meditation

Thursday, April 2

6:30pm - Maundy Thursday Worship Service

Sunday, April 5: Easter Sunday

9:30 am - Bible Workbench

10:30 am - Worship Service & Sunday School

11:45 am - Pancake Breakfast & Easter Egg Hunt

Reminders and Quick Links

Upcoming Coffee Hour Hosts

March 29: Dwan Reece, Andrew Hamilton, Abby Goodman-Johnson

April 5: Easter Pancake Breakfast

April 12: Ethan Miller, Kim Darling, Lucille Dickinson

[Instructions for Coffee Hour](#)

[2026 Coffee Hour Host Schedule](#)

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

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.



Copyright © 2026 First Congregational UCC, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

