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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Church Weekly Newsletter **June 26, 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.

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Worship with Us



"They Stood" by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Join us at 10:30 in the sanctuary or join us [by Zoom](#) this Sunday for worship. Robin Olson will call us to worship with a personal reflection on our summer

theme, "Unsung Heroes." Kim Darling will lead us in a unison prayer of confession and we will receive words of assurance. Dwan Reece will sing "Some Days" (text by James Baldwin; music by Steve Marzullo) as a special music offering. Polly Gordon and Peter Byrne will serve as our scripture readers with focus texts from Numbers 27:1-11 (daughters of Zelophehad) and Philippians 3:12-21 (press on toward the goal). Abigail Cipparone will preach the sermon. We will also share in prayers of the people. Join us!

There will be no Sunday school or childcare this Sunday; children and youth will worship with us in the sanctuary and families with infants or toddlers may use the playroom that overlooks the sanctuary.

Following worship, please join us in the lobby for coffee and community.

The worship folder for this week is available [here](#).

Announcements

Memorial Service for Hugh Bushmiller: June 28



Join us in the sanctuary or [by Zoom](#) at 1:00 PM on June 28th as we celebrate the life and mourn the loss of Hugh Bushmiller. We will hear stories and reflections about Hugh from the Rev. Barbara Gerlach and his daughters, Ann and Ellen Bushmiller and Susan Anderson. There will also be a slideshow lovingly arranged by Rev. Sam. John Horman will serve as our guest musician, and Rev. Amanda will lead the service. A reception in the lobby will follow, hosted by the Care of Parish Commission. The worship folder for this service is available [here](#).

Frederick Douglass House: July 4th

Join First Church friends to mark the 250th anniversary of our nation's independence at the [Frederick Douglass National Historic Site](#) for the annual dramatic reading of one of Douglass' most famous speeches, "[What to the Slave is the 4th of July?](#)" The reading, performed by actor Nathan Richardson,

will take place at 10:00am, followed by recitations by student winners of the Frederick Douglass Oratorical Contest. This year there will also be a public reading of the Declaration of Independence. The event is free and no registration is required. Join us to ground ourselves in a telling of our nation's history rooted in truth and a call to greater justice. We will meet at the Frederick Douglass House at 9:45. Questions? Contact Michael Enseki-Frank or Jaimie Orr.



Lean into Summer Worship

This summer, when you hear the singing bowl invite us into holy time, the musical prelude marks the shift between the noise of the world and the sanctuary of God's house. We invite you to consider the prelude as a spiritual practice; a cue to breathe deeply and quiet the heart, to return to the life-giving love of God. Throughout the summer, you will notice our sanctuary is set for a more intimate gathering. Please join us in the chairs on the floor of the sanctuary as we sit in the round, so we can see one another and worship side-by-side. Special music will minister to



us weekly, and we will enjoy a deep bench of preachers from the pews: Abigail Cipparone, Trevor Bakker, Diana Gomez de Molina, and Sandy Sorensen, along with Rev. Amanda and Rev. Sam. On July 12th, our youth will deliver the message following their service learning trip to Detroit. Lean in this summer as together we invite the gospel message of liberation and love to wash over us here in the nation's capital.

All-Church Summer Read: Stamped from the Beginning

Join us throughout summer for our All-Church Summer Read. We have selected Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's book *Stamped From the Beginning*. This book is available in a variety of versions designed for most levels of readers, making it a great option for a read aloud or read along for your entire family. It's available in print, electronic, and audible versions. The public libraries in our area carry copies. We will host a discussion of the book and its relevance to our



community at the end of August. Below are links to the different versions to help you acquire your own copy.

- [Original Version](#)
- [Graphic Novel](#)
- [Young Adult Version](#)
- [Kid's Version](#)

Each week we will provide a prompt for those reading to stay engaged. Here's your weekly prompt: **Throughout the book, we are shown examples of how our history has been hidden. Make note of one example that speaks to you, and consider ways in which, as antiracists, we can reclaim our history.**

Welcome to the World: Josephine Cheng Meekins



With great joy, we welcome the newest member of First Church born the first weekend of June to Alyx Cheng and Matthew Meekins: baby Josephine. Welcome to the world, beloved child of God! While they are not in need of a Meal Train, you can send any cards of welcome and congratulations to the family using the address in your church directory.

Connect with Rev. Amanda this Summer

Connect with Rev. Amanda this summer by signing up for one of her Friday coffee and conversation slots. This will be a time to enjoy conversation, deepen connection, or to receive pastoral care. You can pick a date and time and please note where you wish to meet (her office or a nearby coffee shop). Please note there are some Fridays when she is away on vacation. Sign up [here](#).

First Church Goes to the Soccer Pitch!!!

Our Washington Spirit vs Denver Summit FC

July 26 at 7pm

Audi Field (DC)

In honor of the World Cup and all of First Church's soccer players and fans, we are excited to cheer on our Washington Spirit on July 26. It will be an awesome night and will also be Women's Empowerment Night! Tickets are \$25 per person. If you'd like to go, please email Rev. Sam at mcferran.sam@gmail.com

June Second Sunday Special Offering: Juneteenth for the City

Our Second Sunday special offering in June will support [Bread for the City](#)'s free community block party in Anacostia to celebrate Juneteenth. Every neighbor who attends the celebration will receive a free meal provided by local Black-owned food vendors. Last year, over 600 meals were distributed. Our sponsorship will feed families, support local businesses, and create a joyful celebration centered on Black history, culture, economic empowerment, and freedom.



Sign Up as Scripture Reader or Liturgist



[Click here](#) to sign up to serve as a scripture reader or liturgist in worship this summer. 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 you! Questions? Email Rev. Amanda at ahendlervoss@gmail.com.

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed

Each church member is asked to sign up two times a year to host coffee hour and we need 2-3 hosts each Sunday. Hosting includes providing a snack, making coffee and tea, and cleaning up. If you need more information or have questions, please contact Nick McConnell (nicholasmcconnell@msn.com) or go to our [SignUpGenius page](#) to select your preferred date.

Thank you,
Care of Parish

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 peace and comfort for Polly Gordon as she undergoes treatment for lung cancer.

Prayers of joy for the birth of Josephine Cheng Meekins to Alyx and Matthew. Welcome to the world, beloved child of God!

Prayers of comfort for Ann, Paul and Ellen Bushmiller, Susan Anderson, and their families following the death of their beloved father and longtime First Church member, Hugh Bushmiller, at age 98.

Prayers of healing for Dwan Reece following an appendectomy.

Prayers of comfort for the family of Rev. Laura Simmons, whose father passed away after battling cancer.

Prayers for peace in Iran and for all those impacted by the war.

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

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

Sunday, June 28

9:30 am - Bible Workbench
10:30 am - Worship Service
11:45 am - Coffee Hour
1:00 pm - Hugh Bushmiller Memorial

Tuesday, June 30

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

Wednesday, July 1

12:15 pm - Break Away Meditation
7:00 pm - Care of Parish
Commission

Friday, July 3

Church Office closed for the Fourth of July (observed)

Sunday, July 5

9:30 am - Bible Workbench
10:30 am - Worship Service &
Sunday School
11:45 am - Coffee Hour

Reminders and Quick Links

Upcoming Coffee Hour Hosts

June 28: Anisa Heming, Meg Maguire

July 5: Moira Jones, Sophie Jones

July 12: Ice Cream Social

[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](#)

[How to Access and Update Online Member Directory](#)

[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.



Want to change how you receive these emails?

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