

Tree of Life Newsletter

First Congregational United Church of Christ
235 Kenilworth Avenue – Elmhurst, Illinois 60126



November 2020

FROM OUR PASTOR

Rev. Mike Daly

Peter Storey is a Methodist minister in South Africa who fought hard to keep the Church from becoming a friendly, supporting ally of the South African government. His warning speaks to as a universal message of the Church. "The Church must be different from, and often over against and in contradiction to, the ways of all nations. That alternative identity must be cherished and guarded as the most important characteristic of the Church. *The richest gift the Church can give the world is to be different from it.* It must be a constant irritant that the world doesn't want, but cannot do without." (*With God in the Crucible*)

As Susan Hauptert says, "We need to remember that the Church is the bride of Christ, not a handmaiden of any particular political party, institution, or privileged group." As we move into and out of an election season, these are good words to carry close.

When the church is *different*, it makes a *difference*. In part, that means we are called to have a "Jesus has left the building" mentality. To follow, to go, and to search as far as, in what the Prophet Ezekiel would describe as, even 'the worst places for the weakest sheep.' Jesus taught this prophetic vision to his disciples, and it is what the church teaches even now.

It will be good news to welcome the upcoming holidays to help us get through a difficult pandemic and a contentious election cycle. As we enter the upcoming holidays, we will be met by joys and traditions set in place long ago. But, let's also hold fast to our church's claim for the future and to be *Partner's in Christ's Service* now. The global pandemic has put the world "upside down," and the world will look different, and the needs of many will be great. So, let us ask ourselves, how can we be different from the world in ways that will make a difference?

HAPPY THANKSGIVING EVERYONE! And SHALOM

Faithfully,

Mike

FROM OUR MODERATOR

Mike Hennel

Even though we've had to cease our in-person worship, it hasn't slowed down the programs that are planned at the church by any means. Just check out some of the events being planned over the next few months:

Virtual Town Hall Meetings Our virtual town hall meetings are offering up some really great content for members and a terrific way to communicate to all of you about stewardship. Over the next week, we will be hosting several of these meetings with participation limited to 10 members at each for more effective and interactive communication. We look forward to having YOU join us at these meetings. Simply register at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0f4caaa92eaa8-virtual> to secure your spot.

Stewardship Drive This year's Stewardship Drive is launching now, and we have scheduled November 8th as Stewardship Sunday. Since we'll be virtual at that time, we encourage you to submit your pledges on-line at <https://elmhurstucc.org/stewardship/>. Please pledge early and as generously as you can. Your contribution will help to ensure the continued availability of quality spiritual and educational programs for all church members.

Martin Luther King Program We're excited to announce that Elmhurst UCC will be hosting a virtual, community-wide forum on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Beloved Community" and principles of nonviolent social change. The distinguished Rev. Robert Buckner of the Covenant UCC in South Holland will serve as the guest speaker of this timely, sure to be uplifting, forum. Registration for this virtual event coming soon at <https://elmhurstucc.org>. The deadline is Monday January 11th.

Celebration Garden Memorials Over the past few weeks we've had a lot of interest in the garden memorials being offered in the Celebration Garden surrounding the church's new parking lot. If you have an interest in a garden memorial, please visit <https://elmhurstucc.org> to view the Celebration Garden dedication brochure and aerial photo of the lot to help you with your memorial location selection.

May God bless you all and keep you and your families healthy and safe!

THE TRUSTEES

Margaret Chittaro, Tracy D'Alessandro, Bob Kanzler, Gail Ogdon, Carrie Stone, Bob Tracy

We are so thankful for the continued support of our membership throughout this most unexpected year. Please take some time this month to join one of the Town Hall Meetings we are hosting on Zoom to share about where we are, where we've been and where we hope to go. We look forward to informative and interactive sessions where we can connect. Go to the following link to sign up! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0f4caaa92eaa8-virtual>

On October 18th, we acknowledged the efforts, time and talents of a few of our awesome members with a joyous celebration of the parking lot completion and the dedication of our new Celebration

Garden. Special thanks to **Mike Hennel, Todd Hicks, and Terry Hennen** on the wonderful job that was done to get this long (and sometimes seemingly never ending) project finished!

With the completion of the parking lot and much of the exterior work done on our lovely building, a timeline of our next undertaking is in the works. There are still infrastructure projects on our list that are in the planning stages to get started in the coming months. Repairing one of the building roofs and connecting to the city's storm system on the south side of the building are on the docket. It's also time to turn our attention to updating and upgrading portions of our interior space. The Trustees have begun identifying the best use of various spaces throughout the church and have started setting priorities on which projects to tackle first. We're looking forward to more project completion celebrations in the years to come!

Many blessings are wished to you all by the Trustees this Thanksgiving season. Stay safe and be well.

THE DIACONATE

Fritz Baumgartner, Will Baumgartner, Don Haraf, Carolee Luppino, Claire Richter

The governor and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) have implemented mitigation measures in DuPage County because of an increase in the metrics related to Covid-19. These mitigation measures include a restriction on in-person gatherings, limiting the number of participants to 25. This took effect Friday, October 23.

We suspended in-person services for October 25 and November 1. Instead of the in-person services, Rev. Daly served drive-up curbside communion. We also continued with the Worship at Home program as well as Sunday morning virtual coffee chats and Children's Zoom Sunday School.

We plan to monitor the news from IDPH on a weekly basis, and discussions continue on the resumption of in-person services as well as services for the Christmas season.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Brian Brigman, Dorothy Hamby, Tammy Hicks, Martha Mendoza, Lynette Rosen, Jeff Sloma, Karen Sloma

Magi Star Gift Giving Project

As we live and give during this pandemic, we find that our world is in more NEED than ever for our annual Magi Star Gift Giving Project for children in two Chicagoland communities. Although the method of signing up for stars will be somewhat different, we will use all the precautions necessary for you, the GIVERS, to be safe.



A Sign-Up Genius is available to all the members and friends of First Congregational. You can also call the church and let us know you would like some stars, and we will sign you up. Please click the green box below for the Sign-Up Genius.

We recommend the gift prices be of a \$25.00 value. All the gifts should be left unwrapped and put in gift bags and should be brought to First Congregational no later than **December 13th**.

We will also have gift pick up at your front doors starting in November. Please don't let this pandemic stop you from giving to families that are so in need. Thank you!



Celebrate the Season

by Decorating Your Very Own Gingerbread House!

In an effort to raise funds for our next mission trip to the Island of Puerto Rico and create a fun Christmas activity during this pandemic, the Board of Christian Education is selling pre-built gingerbread house kits. Each kit comes with all you need to get started and costs \$35.00 with proceeds going to our Youth Fund.

Consider purchasing more than one kit to share the fun with family & friends. Create a new family tradition by bringing a kit(s) to your Thanksgiving or Christmas celebrations. Get creative, add your personal touch and make your dream Gingerbread house!

Send a selfie/photo with your decorated Gingerbread House by December 27 to Brian Brigman at bbrigman9700@gmail.com. All participants will be entered in our friendly competition for a chance to win a special prize. We'll be posting the photos on our website and Facebook page to celebrate your creativity!

To purchase a kit, please call the church or visit the church's website and fill out the order form and along with your check drop off or mail to the church. Payment can also be made to our Gingerbread House Fundraiser through the GIVE buttons on our website. We have ordered a limited quantity so reserve your kit soon! elmhurstucc.org

If you have any questions, please call the church office at (630)832-2580. Thanks for supporting our youth!

Children's Sunday School

Our virtual Sunday School continues strong! Children and parents are invited to participate on Sundays at 10:30 am. If you know of families with children, invite them to join in. They can register their child(ren) on our church's website and receive the zoom invite or you can share with them the invitation information. elmhurstucc.org





Confirmation Program

Confirmands are invited to participate in our next class which will take place on **Sunday, November 8 from 2:00 to 3:00 pm**. The information for our first project has gone out to parents. A zoom invitation for November is forthcoming.

High School Gathering

A special "Giving Thanks" youth gathering is taking place at 3:00 pm on **Sunday, November 22**. All high schoolers will be sent a Zoom invite.



Faith Connections with Rev. Daly

Physically distant, but spiritually close!

During the month of November, there are multiple opportunities to connect, discuss and explore. All meetings will take place over Zoom. Hope you will join us for our Sermon Seeds and November Novellas!

Sermon Seeds

We will recap the Sunday message, ask questions, and explore other ways to interpret the text.

Monday mornings at 8:00 a.m. in November – Nov. 9, Nov. 16, Nov. 23, & Nov. 30.

Click the Zoom link below to join in on the discussion.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/79430722348?pwd=Rk9VVGpaRlllobzVyVk9rY2JLbjRJQT09>

Meeting ID: 794 3072 2348

Passcode: Ka0PVS

November Novellas – Adult Faith Conversations

Three long stories from the Bible – Joseph, Moses, and Elijah

What do these stories tell us about the dos and don'ts of faithful living?

Wednesday Nights at 7:00 p.m. in November – Nov. 4, 11, & 18.

Click the Zoom link below to join in on the discussion.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/73222456945?pwd=Y2ZDREZUZIFnZFczM1VxK0tJSS9EQT09>

Meeting ID: 732 2245 6945

Passcode: Ak1n9u

THE MISSION BOARD

Mary Moy-Gregg, Amy Reshamwala, Jan Russell, Allen Sloma, Diane Wells



United Community Concerns Association (UCCA) Events

UCCA is a 100% volunteer driven, non-profit organization that provides grocery gift cards, food, resources, referrals and mobile food pantries for the most vulnerable children and their families in our Elmhurst schools and seniors in-need. 99% of all funds collected go to feed those in our community.

Please consider participating in the following events that support the mission of UCCA and visit <https://www.ucca-elmhurst.org/> for details on each event.

- **42nd Annual UCCA *Virtual* Holiday Food Drive: October 26 – December 1, 2020**
- **Holiday Food Drive Delivery**
- **Dan Gibbons Virtual Turkey Trot**
- **Francesca Amici's Restaurant Eat and Earn Benefit**

HERITAGE BUNCH

Heritage Bunch has braved the storm, donned our masks and is once again meeting from 10:00 to noon on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Which Room? Good question!

Everyone is welcome to join us!

GREEN TEAM

Karen Pachyn

Green Team Tip of the Month – November

If you vote in York Township, you will see or have already seen on your ballot the question “Shall the U.S. Congress pass legislation to place a carbon fee on fossil fuel producers, to reduce emissions and abate climate change and distribute the collected revenue equally to American households?” What is that question all about?



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

It was encouraged by the Citizens Climate Lobby, an environmental advocacy organization. The goal was to get a sense as to how residents of the voting district feel about a carbon tax so that their legislators would know how to support it. This follows the creation in 2018 of the bipartisan House Resolution 763 in the United States Congress entitled “the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act”. A similar bipartisan bill exists in the Senate. The goal of the bills is to drive down American’s carbon pollution in order to help bring climate change under control. It proposes a fee on fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, which would be charged at the source. The fee starts low and grows over time in order to incentivize consumers to move to cheaper and cleaner fuel sources. The fee, less administrative expenses, collected would be distributed equally to the American people as a monthly dividend check to spend as they see fit. Special provisions are included in the bill to address import and export concerns and current EPA regulations. For more information, go to <https://energyinnovationact.org/>

Thanks to Bob Tracy for bringing this to our attention.

The Green Team

Don Haraf, Jennifer Hennen, Carolee Luppino, Chris Murray, Shirley Myers, Gail Ogdon, Karen Pachyn, Claire Richter, Bob Tracy

ERRAND-RUNNING MINISTRY



During this difficult time of limited mobility for so many due to the Coronavirus, our church has put in place an Errand-Running Ministry. Any members needing to have errands run like grocery shopping, picking up dry cleaning, picking up prescriptions, walking your dog can call one of the below dispatchers and they will assign your errand(s) to one of our very own church members to be your runner. Everyone that is available to be an errand runner is a church member that you can trust. Drop-offs will be made at your door with no close contact needed. If you are able to help be an Errand Runner, please contact Martha Mendoza.

Dispatchers to Call:

Tracy D'Alessandro 630-344-5861
Dorothy Hamby 630-779-6294
Carrie Stone 773-569-2444
Margaret Chittaro 312-961-8067

UCC CAMPS

Dear Camp Friends,

Pilgrim Park and Tower Hill were able to keep their doors open this year to provide guests relief from the busyness of life, places where God's presence is obvious, providing moments of warmth, hope, and joy.

We continue to strive to close the gap in our budget as the loss of activities created a huge shortfall. The changes in direction to rent facilities to bring in cash flow has been effective but is still far short of the needed funds.

We are asking you to help us make sure these camps will be here tomorrow, giving campers the opportunity to hear God's voice in the wind, the waves of Lake Michigan, the babble of the creek, and in the laughter of other campers.

As the graphic shows there are "3 ways to save" our camps. We appreciate your support in the past and prayerfully anticipate your continued support.

Mitch Kloster, Site Manager, Pilgrim Park Camp & Conference Center

Reverend Tracy Heilman, Site Manager, Tower Hill Camp & Retreat Center

Please consider donating directly at:

<https://outdoorministries.campbraingiving.com/>

<https://pilgrimpark.campbraingiving.com/>

<https://towerhill.campbraingiving.com/>

Again.... we prayerfully hope you support this fund-raising event.

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Outdoor Ministries

26449 1340 N Ave., Princeton IL 61356

odmregistrar@gmail.com

815-447-2390



CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS



26 Payton Hicks
28 Kim Brigman



Basia Rudy
 Amy Lynch
 Ken Stratton
 Michael Magana
 Ed & Cheryl Eckert
 Susan Gaybill

Jan Russell
 Louis Reed
 Phyllis Crosley
 Tom Myers
 Mary Loss
 Angela Burrell

Joyce Stevens
 Gayle Dawson
 Jim Mowers
 The Leppien Family
 Aleta & Dan Dalla
 Randy Price

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

November	Event/Room	Time
1	At Home Worship - See website for bulletin and audio.	
1	Zoom Coffee Fellowship	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
1	Zoom Children's Sunday School	10:30 a.m.
4	November Novellas- Adult Faith Conversations	7:00 p.m.
8	At Home Worship - See website for bulletin and audio.	
8	Zoom Coffee Fellowship	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
8	Zoom Children's Sunday School	10:30 a.m.
8	Confirmation Class	2:00 p.m.
9	Sermon Seeds with Rev. Daly	8:00 a.m.
11	November Novellas- Adult Faith Conversations	7:00 p.m.
15	At Home Worship- See website for bulletin and audio.	
15	Zoom Coffee Fellowship	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
15	Zoom Children's Sunday School	10:30 a.m.
16	Sermon Seeds with Rev. Daly	8:00 a.m.
18	November Novellas- Adult Faith Conversations	7:00 p.m.
22	At Home Worship - See website for bulletin and audio.	
22	Zoom Coffee Fellowship	9:00 - 9:30 a.m.
22	Zoom Children's Sunday School	10:30 a.m.
22	High School Gathering	3:00 p.m.
23	Sermon Seeds with Rev. Daly	8:00 a.m.
29	At Home Worship - See website for bulletin and audio.	
29	Zoom Coffee Fellowship	9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
30	Sermon Seeds with Rev. Daly	8:00 a.m.

TITHE.LY GIVING



Give with Tithe.ly from anywhere at any time. Download the Tithe.ly giving app to get started. You'll find First Congregational United Church of Christ, Elmhurst, IL. Your gift is safe and secure and goes directly to our church. More information is available online at <https://get.tithe.ly>.

Partners in Christ's Service

Church Leaders

Rev. Dr. Michael Daly, Sr. Minister
Martha Mendoza, Minister of Christian Education
Jim Molina, Minister of Music
Rev. Dr. Ernest H. Huntzinger, Emeritus Minister

Church Office Staff

Heather Cross, Bookkeeper
Kim Brigman, Office Assistant

Contact Us

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