

**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
OF ELLSWORTH, MAINE  
FOUNDED 1812**



**JULY 2021 - THE STEEPLE NEWSLETTER**

First Congregational Church, PO Box 12, 2 Church Street, Ellsworth, Maine 04605 207-667-8321 ellsworthucc.org

From our Pastor



**WELCOME BACK, JOYCE!**

THE MOST WELCOME NEWS IS THAT JOYCE C. IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO THE CHURCH OFFICE ON TUESDAY, JULY 6. IT HAS BEEN A LONG 3 MONTHS WITHOUT YOU, JOYCE.



**THANK YOU, LEITA!**



IN NOVEMBER, 2015, LEITA Z. STEPPED INTO THE POSITION OF TREASURER. SHE HAS BEEN DILIGENT IN HER RESPONSIBILITIES. SHE DESERVES A WELL-EARNED BREAK AND NOTES OF THANKS FROM THE CONGREGATION. HER FEBRUARY 21 LETTER IDENTIFIED MAY 1, 2021 AS THE EFFECTIVE DATE. OF HER RESIGNATION. SHE WAS GRACIOUS ENOUGH TO BE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST AND TRAIN A NEW TREASURER THROUGH JUNE 30. THANK YOU, LEITA.

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Dear friends, This month has been like no other in my life. The speed with which things happened made it difficult to keep church members up-to-date.

In response to a request for a Situational Support Consultation, which was made by some FCC members to the Sunrise Assn. Committee on Ministry (COM), the COM offered to meet with the congregation on June 27. During its regularly scheduled meeting, June 16, Council voted approval of that event. Then on June 24, Moderator Jack and I received notification that the Situational Support Consultation was canceled and would be replaced with a Fitness Review, a structured and confidential process. During the Fitness Review, a Spiritual Guide and a Process Guide will be available to the congregation. On July 1, during a special meeting, the Council voted to place me on paid administrative leave, which they define as "relieved of all the responsibilities and privileges of being Pastor of" FCC. I am "not to engage in any activities on behalf of" FCC.

The Celebration of Our Congregation in Mission and Service on June 27 allowed the congregation to review the two-year history of our Mission House project. Ruth T. brought pictures that she showed on the "big monitor." So many people supported the project with advice, manual labor and money! Then Lois S. told the story of the free Welcome Table meals, the dinners that church members provided to Emmaus Homeless Shelter, and the volunteering we do at the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry. Finally, we sang "mission and service" hymns selected by Katharine and Bonnie.

I continue to hold you all in prayer. Rev. Priem

## JULY CHURCH MEETINGS (ZOOM)

- Adult Forum** – Sundays, 8:30 a.m.  
**Kids Church** – Contact Pastor 412-2035  
**Trustees** – Thursday, July 8 7 p.m.  
**Busy Bodies** – Monday, July 12 11:00 a.m.  
**Missions** – Thursday, July 15, TBA  
**Christian Ed** – Sunday, July 18 11:30 a.m.  
**Deacons** – Sunday, July 18 or 25 TBA  
**Council** – Wednesday July 28, 7 p.m.  
**Re-Opening** – TBA

**FCC Zoom events use the same meeting number and password. Call the church office (T-W-Th) for Zoom instructions if you need them.**

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## JULY LECTIONARY READINGS

### JULY 4 – 6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10 & Psalm 48  
2 Corinthians 12:2-10  
Mark 6:1-13

### JULY 11 – 7<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b—19 & Psalm 24  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
Mark 6:14-29

### JULY 18 – 8<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 7:1-14a & Psalm 89:20-37  
Ephesians 2:11-22  
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

### JULY 25 – 9<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

2 Samuel 11:1-15 & Psalm 14  
Ephesians 3:14-21  
John 6:1-21



## BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

met June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Adult Forum is finishing up the book "The Meaning of Jesus". Next, they will be reading The Guidepost yearbook. See Tom M. for a copy. Children's Sunday School continues on Zoom with Rev. Priem. If anyone is interested in helping with our children's programming contact the chairman, Scotty.  
CE continues to review the by-laws and the children's protection policy. Next meeting will be July 18<sup>th</sup>.

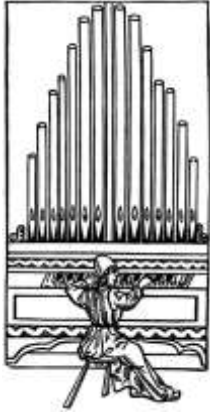
## MUSIC COMMITTEE

Bonnie will set up a meeting soon. A new home has been found for the maroon and gold robes. Thanks to Sid, Louise, and their daughter's help.

## BOARD OF MISSIONS

Lois and Ginny would like to thank all the volunteers for their willingness to serve at Loaves and Fishes.

All Boards and Committees are urged to summarize and submit to the church office a description of what they are doing on a monthly basis so the congregation can be kept up-to-date through brief articles in The Steeple.



2nd Summer Hymn Sing Theme

**July 25, 2021-- Sunday**  
**“God’s Guidance and Presence With Us!”**  
**Please call in or email**  
**suggested hymns by July 20th**

Deacon Musings

The Deacons and Music Committees are trying out some different options for the summer. The fourth Sunday of the month will be themed hymn sings. We would really like some help from each of you by helping us pick the hymns. We have received some ideas and we will continue to use the lists we have but keep sending your suggestions in and we will try to put these into the services. Reminder, the fourth Sunday --Hymn Sing Sunday-- is also Mask Required Sunday so that we are able to offer safe services to our friends and congregants that are Medically Compromised. We also request that on this and all Sundays we continue practicing social distancing for everything we do at the church.

We also wanted you to know who your Deacons are: Anne Bancroft, Cindy Sargent, Katharine Schrader, Jim Kimbrell, and John Lacey. Please feel free to contact any of us with any suggestions or if you are in need of anything. We will call back and see if we can help in any way.

We are sorry to report Irv Hodgkin has resigned from our board due to his family move to Brunswick. They are still keeping the home until they decide if this is a good fit for Helen and Irv. We wish them all God's grace and our prayers are with them.

# THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN OTHER SETTINGS

In the UCC, Associations, Conferences, and General Synod are not levels, but of settings.

## An Excerpt from our Transitional Conference Minister's message.

Jonna's Note June 29, 2021

To live in a democracy is to live perpetually in an "advanced placement", upper level course in citizenship. The homework is unending and the course requirements do present persistent challenges. This might be a good week to wonder and pray around what citizenship is for followers of Jesus.

In response to what could have been a citizenship question, Jesus taught giving to the emperor that which belongs to the emperor and to God that which belongs to God. Then, like any great teacher, he apparently left it to the students to discover what that means. Alongside you, I am a student of the great teacher Jesus and still puzzling with what allegiances belong where. I've arranged the pieces differently during different seasons of my life.

I send you just a few puzzle pieces . . . .

- Diligent attendance at polling places. There are so many who will live their entire lives without even a sturdy hope of ever being able to cast a vote.
- Diligent preparation for the holy work of voting. When I cast my first votes as a Mainer, I am embarrassed to admit that there were candidates on the ballot whom I didn't recognize. I do not want that to happen again.
- Just and generous tax paying. We tend to spend more time seeking ways to offer fewer dollars as tax payments than we do seeking ways to move from "legal" to "just" to "generous".
- Homework. Devout citizens study. Devout citizens ask questions. I imagine that devout citizens lean toward those with different opinions to listen thoughtfully and prayerfully. The arrangement of channels on Spectrum cable service makes me smile when I pick up my remote. News channels presenting widely different interpretations of the day's news are neighbors! Neighbors. The great teacher who invited us to puzzle about emperor and God also invited us to expand our definitions of neighbor.

## UCC Wipes Out Medical Debt for Poor

Excerpts of article by Connie Larkman published on Jun 29, 2021

Eight United Church of Christ congregations in the Washington, D.C., area joined together and changed the lives of more than 7,800 households in four states.

The churches teamed up with the UCC national setting and the Potomac Association of the Central Atlantic Conference to abolish more than \$9 million in medical debt in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and West Virginia.

Financial gifts came from 92 individuals, the Potomac Association Justice and Witness Committee and the UCC national ministries. More than 7,800 households across 87 counties in those four states will soon be receiving letters telling them that their medical debt has been forgiven.

the Rev. Tim Tutt, Westmoreland UCC's senior minister [said] "Imagine a person who 'got well' thanks to a surgery and hospital stay but still owes huge bills they can't pay. That person can't feel fully well. They may have to forego healthy groceries, rent, or other needs to pay for a past sickness. The financial burdens they carry due to medical debt continue the pain and trouble."

The church donors raised \$65,522.21 to help people in that position and sent it to the New York-based nonprofit RIP Medical Debt, which bought up debt for pennies on the dollar in April.

Qualifying debtors were those earning less than two times the federal poverty level; in financial hardship, with out-of-pocket expenses that are 5 percent or more of their annual income; or facing insolvency, with debts greater than assets.

To date, \$66 million in medical debt has been abolished by United Church of Christ.

The UCC's medical debt project began with a 2019 buy in Chicago, where church donations abolished \$5.3 million in debt for 5,888 families on the city's South Side.

In 2020, the effort moved to St. Louis, where \$12.9 million in medical debt was eliminated.

# JULY 2021 EVENTS AT FIRST CONGO UCC

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9 am Bulletin deadline	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3
4 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service & Holy Communion Kids Church	5 OFFICE CLOSED	6	7 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	8 9 am Bulletin Deadline  7 pm Trustees	9 OFFICE CLOSED	10
11 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service Kids Church	12 11:00 Busy Bodies OFFICE CLOSED	13	14 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	15 9 am Bulletin Deadline  Missions	16 OFFICE CLOSED	17
18 <b>Green</b> 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service Kids Church Christian Ed	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20	21 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out	22 9 am Bulletin deadline 9 am Steeple deadline	23 OFFICE CLOSED	24
25 <b>Green</b> Masks Sunday Hymn Sing 8:30 am Adult Forum 10 am Worship Service Kids Church	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27	28 2:30-4 pm Welcome Table take-out  7 pm Council	29 9 am Bulletin deadline	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31



## JULY BIRTHDAYS

07/02 Wendy Turner  
07/06 Nancy Scott  
07/08 Jay Wilson  
07/08 Lyle Stephenson  
07/10 Margaret "Peggy" Smith  
07/12 Rev. Cynthia Priem  
07/13 Christopher Turner  
07/13 Walter Butler  
07/14 Brenda Keep  
07/16 Nate Stephenson  
07/17 Bob Clement  
07/21 Deborah Whitcomb  
07/22 Belva Scott  
07/24 Jim Kimbrell



07/24 Alan Wilson  
07/25 Cathy Johnston  
07/26 Caleb Nadeau  
07/26 Liz Palmer  
07/26 Emily Cambridge  
07/26 Gregory Turner  
07/27 Leita Zeugner  
07/28 Kristen Cartier  
07/31 Doris Johnston

## JULY ANNIVERSARIES

07/08 Becky Leamon & Andy Stephenson  
07/18 Barry & Marianne Jordan

**Please notify the office if your name is missing from the monthly birthday and anniversary lists.**

**Please help us conserve paper and ink.** If you received this newsletter by snail mail and have an email address, please contact the church at 667-8321 or [fccellsworth@myfairpoint.net](mailto:fccellsworth@myfairpoint.net). You may also leave a note on the secretary's desk. Thank you!



## We will miss Irv and Helen's presence in our sanctuary.

They have moved to be near their children.  
If you want to correspond with them, please call Irv's cell phone or contact the office for their new address.

## Sunday Worship Service 10 a.m.

Church office hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Rev. Cynthia Priem, Pastor - [RevPriem@gmail.com](mailto:RevPriem@gmail.com); study phone 207-412-2035

Joyce B. Cornwell, Secretary  
Daryl Whitaker, Sexton  
Lynn Hall, Organist  
Nancy Sargent, Choir Director  
Jack Lacey, Moderator 745-1348  
Tom MacDonald, Vice Moderator  
Sue Fuller, Clerk 610-1626  
Sidney Emerson & Lynn Hall,  
Financial Secretaries

Katharine Schrader, Deacons 266-2541  
Ginny Davis, Missions  
Albert Scott, Christian Education  
Bonnie Carter, Music  
Council Members at Large:  
Joyce Johnston  
Rhyne Robidoux



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