



Congregational Courier

THOUGHTS FROM BOB LIVINGSTON
SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Friends:

The summer days are come again;
Once more the glad earth yields
Her golden wealth of ripening grain,
And breath of clover fields,
And deepening shade of summer woods,
And glow of summer air,
And winging thoughts, and happy moods
Of love and joy and prayer.

--Samuel Longfellow

I can't speak for you, but I am so happy and relieved that the summer months are now here! I think we all need a respite from the uncertainty, isolation, and monotony of the past year. I know I do. Certainly, with the availability and expansion of the Covid vaccine, many of us are now fully vaccinated and beginning to feel optimistic about things returning to a more manageable new normal sooner than later. Additionally, we are finally able to open our church for in-person worship beginning on Sunday, May 30. This is all very good news!

Please take a careful look within the Summer Courier for the articles on our summer worship schedule, in-person worship protocols, children and youth weekly and special programming, the Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 13, and so much more. We sincerely look forward to your being involved...and to all of us being back together. I do hope the upcoming fall schedule will announce even more openness and normalcy for our church community.

So, let me conclude by wishing you all a happy, fun, and restful summer!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Sunday Worship.....	2
FCC Core Identity.....	2
Bob's Letter on Opening the Church.....	3
'New' Office Hours.....	4
Darcy Crain.....	5
Sr. High Mission Trip.....	6
Rachel Dudley.....	7
Member Directory.....	7
Annual Meeting.....	8
Core Value Story.....	9
Juneteenth.....	10
Graduates.....	11
Father's Day.....	11
4th of July.....	11
A Conversation with, and Service Spotlight on Terry Farmer.....	12
Historian's Corner.....	13
Church Council.....	14
BOCE.....	15
Scrip Cards NEWS.....	16
M & O.....	17
Treasurer's Report.....	18
Flowers / Lay Readers... Reports.....	19
AFC.....	21
Summer Reading List...	22
Circle of Friends.....	23
Small Groups.....	23
Ways to Give.....	23
Contacts.....	24
Calendar of Events.....	24

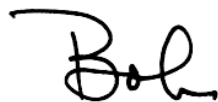
Whatever Your Story, You're Welcome Here

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

May it be for you a time of reflection, refreshment, and renewed relationships for you all.

I look forward to seeing you and greeting you in person this summer!

Affectionately,



Bob Livingston
Senior Minister



FCC SUMMER WORSHIP DETAILS

All services will take place at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary and will continue to be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube. Chapel Communion will be offered weekly at 9:30 a.m. in our Douglas Chapel, utilizing the individually packaged elements like those used for our Curbside Communion. Our Change of Pace service will resume on Sunday, September 12. We are currently seating every other pew to ensure social distancing. As we have been erring on the side of grace throughout these changing times, we are asking everyone to wear a mask inside the church building until further notice. Masks will be available at all doors, as well as touch-free hand sanitizers.

FCC CORE IDENTITY

Mission

We are a beacon of God's love, hope, and Christian freedom.

Vision

**We are a joyous spiritual home, welcoming and valuing all people,
engaging God's Word, and enriching lives.**

Core Values

Compassion – We are a deeply caring faith community, demonstrating God's universal love and mutual respect.

Joy and Positivity – We are a faith community that faces life with open-mindedness, positivity, and a generous spirit.

Integrity – We are a faith community that builds trust through a commitment to authenticity and guided by the humility of Christ.

Courage – We are a faith community committed to persevere and grow in the midst of challenges and opportunities.

Inclusive – Whatever your story, we accept you as you are and believe God's doors are open to all.

BOB LIVINGSTON
LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION ABOUT REOPENING THE CHURCH

Greetings! I am pleased and very excited, to tell you that our Church Council, on Monday night, May 17, approved the request of the Opening the Church Task Force to reopen our church for in-person worship, starting on Sunday, May 30! Yes, after almost 15 months of staying at home, we can finally be together again! On top of that, you now have a beautiful “new” church building to welcome you as you return! Your worship team and I are so eager to see you!

Here are some details that are important for you to know:

1. We will be offering in-person communion in the Lloyd Douglas Chapel again at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings, prior to our regular worship service. Our 9 a.m. Curbside Communion will no longer be offered beginning on May 30.
2. We will be offering in-person worship in the sanctuary at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We anticipate the Change of Pace service will begin again in the fall in Pilgrim Hall, but, as in the past, we will offer only one worship service during the summer months at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary.
3. We will not have a coffee hour following worship on Sunday, May 30, but are considering providing coffee for future Sundays. We will let you know more about the timing of this in coming weeks.
4. We will move cautiously forward on Sunday mornings with certain safety protocols in place in order to make sure we are honoring the safety of our fellow members and guests. These protocols will likely change over the next weeks as we receive more information from the CDC and our State.
5. Here are the safety protocols that will be in place as we gather for worship again:
 - Our maximum capacity will be 225 for in-person worship in the sanctuary (which is a little less than ½ of our full capacity and follows the recommendation of the State). This should not be a problem during the summer months.
 - We will continue to use the individual and disposable pre-filled cups with soft wafers and grape juice for our Chapel Communion services.
 - Our Director of Children’s Ministry, Rachel Dudley, and the Board of Christian Education are currently talking about nursery and church school programming for May 30 and beyond. You will be notified of their decisions through the weekly church emails and the church school weekly email to parents.
 - Everyone is asked to wear a mask within the church building. We will have additional masks and hand sanitizers available at all entrances to the building and sanctuary on Sunday mornings.
 - Sanctuary windows will be open during worship services to allow good fresh

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

- airflow. Please dress for the weather if it is cool outside.
- Sanctuary fans will be running.
 - Social distancing will be in place in the sanctuary. We will seat people in every other row of pews, although we will not dictate who sits where in any particular pew. The balconies are another seating area we can utilize.
 - We will not use a pre-registration process. Instead will have index cards placed in the pews for people to sign-in as a way to provide a record should we need to contact trace people at a particular worship service.
 - At this time, and as we seek further input, we discourage the open singing of the hymns/worship songs, but certainly do encourage humming along!
 - We will not pass friendship pads or offering plates in the service. We will have offering “baskets” located at the doorways. Also, there are mobile options on the back of the Sunday bulletin.
6. Our Annual Meeting on June 13 at 11 a.m. will be held both in the sanctuary and via a Zoom link. The Zoom connection information for the Annual Meeting will be sent out via email prior to June 13.
7. Finally, since the beginning of our virtual Sunday morning worship services, we have been picking up worshippers from all across our State and country (Florida, Ohio, Colorado, Montana, California, Maryland, etc.). We will continue to live-stream our worship services on Sunday mornings via Facebook and YouTube even after we are back to in-person worship. In essence, our worshipping community has permanently expanded to an online presence!

I know this is a lot of information! Please know we will be making changes to our protocols over these next weeks and months, so please be patient. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Darcy. Until later then, please take good care of yourselves and God bless.



New Summer Office Hours in effect...

Good news...the office and church building has been opened with reduced hours. The new Summer office hours will be Monday and Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to Noon. During the week, the only door open into the church is the new south entrance, up the steps at the end of the parking lot behind the church. Please come in and ring the buzzer. A staff person will greet you and let you in.

We look forward to welcoming you!



DARCY CRAIN MINISTER

My Greatest Spiritual Lesson of this Past Year

Apparently I'm a control freak. At least that's what my wife tells me. I find this characteristic far from appealing and despite my best efforts to curb it, to play it cool, to pretend I don't care or, my personal favorite, that I am in fact a spontaneous and playful person, I am not. I'm just not.



In theory, I understand that I am not in full control of my life or my children's life. In theory, I understand that if I do not make a meal plan for the week that we will not go hungry. In theory, I know that God has a plan, maybe not for the meals that week, but an ultimate desire for goodness, opportunity, joy, and love in my life. I get all of that in theory. I really suck at the "in practice" part.

My greatest spiritual challenge this past year was that I am a control freak and couldn't control anything. I spent a lot of time holding this ball of anxiety and my desire to calendar or predict or plan. I tried to take a step back from that ball of need. To let go and let God, so they say. I hate that saying, for the record. I will "let God" while I hold tight, thank you very much.

Every time COVID rendered something cancelled, or unknown, I tried to make time to pray, to ask God what it was I supposed to learn in this incredibly uncomfortable situation of the past year and some months. What I learned was that I spent an inordinate amount of time and energy trying to predict and control what should or might happen. While it gave me a temporary sense of relief, it didn't provide my soul with anything. It didn't ground me. It didn't connect me with God. It left me feeling productive and in control sometimes, but that was fleeting, because the minute a quarantine cancelled whatever I had worked for, I was reminded, I am in fact, not in control. And God kept nudging me, it's okay that you're not. The week will pass if you don't plan it. The sun will still rise my anxious daughter. Close the window of your Google calendar for the love of me. Or at least that's how I hear God speaking to me.

I wish I could say I listened all the time. I wish I could tell you every single time I open my calendar I pray for God to take my anxiety and my need to plan away from me and I fall

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

DARCY CRAIN MINISTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

faithfully into the abyss of God's bigger better plan. But your pastor shouldn't lie to you.

I can tell you with honesty that I'm trying. I'm praying more. I'm trusting more. And this year has been one of the most challenging spiritually, but also one of the most rewarding. I received news in late April that the youth mission trip could be a reality this year for our vaccinated youth. I had a month and a half to plan the program. I usually start in October, so this timeline isn't ideal. To my surprise, my first feeling wasn't anxiety, it was gratitude. I thanked God for the opportunity, and while the details aren't completely worked out, the opportunity is there, and our youth desire to love their neighbor. Maybe God is working through my control freak heart after all. I have no doubt God will work through this trip to NY, even if, maybe especially if, the details aren't typed out in an excel sheet.



SENIOR HIGH MISSION TRIP 2021



New York! New York!

This summer, a group of high school students and college students will hit the road for an epic and purposeful road trip to New Rochelle, NY to serve with Fuller Center for Housing. This work crew of fully vaccinated students will work to learn about the housing crisis and cycle of poverty in urban settings while getting our hands dirty and muscles sore as we seek to do something about it. We are honored to represent FCC as we respond in action to Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves. Please pray for safe travels, changed hearts, and transformed lives as we make our 2021 Summer Mission Trip!

RACHEL DUDLEY
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

This summer at FCC we will have the opportunity to show love to our church family through big and small ways! Just like God made us unique, we also all have unique skills and life situations that we have been through. This gives all of us unique perspectives and opinions on situations and the world around us. As the church reopens, we have opportunities to listen to others around us and to learn how they are feeling and why.



While some in our congregation will be returning to in-person worship on May 30th, there are many others that may have a different timeline for returning in-person. The families in our community have some of the most varied



opinions and timelines. I love talking to them about this and hearing their unique family story that has helped shape their family's opinions and actions. Frequently, I find that love for others is at the root of their unique family story! I've heard stories of families taking on major caretaking roles of grandparents and families working together to protect family members with rare health conditions.

As we return to church, we get to continue to learn about and from each other, and we get opportunities to show love to others that we may not have had in the last year. No matter what your family's timeline for returning to church looks like, we will be happy to see you! Welcome back, whenever you can make it!



2020-2021 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY



We are doing the "done directory" happy dance!

Many thanks to all our members who turned in their update forms. Nancy and Robbie took this opportunity to really triple-check what was in the database vs. what we received. It was tedious work, but well worth the effort. Many changes were made! Your patience while waiting for this important update to be completed is so appreciated. You will find the updated directory on the website by June 14, at the latest. By the way, we all know there are only perfect directories in heaven, so if you find an error, please let Robbie know by emailing her at office@fccannarbor.org. *Thank you!*

**DONE IS
BETTER
THAN
PERFECT**

CALL TO THE FCC ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 13, 2021

**All covenant members of the church are called to
The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor Annual Meeting
on Sunday, June 13, 2021, at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary, following the
10:00 a.m. worship service. You may also attend via Zoom.
(The link will be shared in the June 12th Friday Email)**

At this meeting, annual reports shall be presented, officers elected, and other appropriate business transacted, including a presentation of the (updated) FCC Bylaws for covenant member approval. Please see the article below for more details.

You may preview or print off a copy of this document on the website. If you have any questions, please contact Robbie Sawitski at 734-662-1679 or at office@fccannarbor.org.

Please plan on attending!



Presentation of The FCC Bylaws for Member Approval

Last year, the Bylaws were reviewed and updated so that they represent the current operation of the Church. A Bylaws Committee, appointed by the Church Council, met several times and had discussions with ministers, officers, and the Church Council. Most of the changes are clarifications, so that the Bylaws are aligned with the operation of the Church. The updated Bylaws publication is available on the website for review by the Congregation. It can be found under Member Resources, by clicking on the Constitution and Bylaws button, or by following this link:

<https://www.fccannarbor.org/index.php?gf-download=2020%2F03%2FFCC-Bylaws-and-Constitution-Draft-2020-03Mar-17.pdf&form-id=21&field-id=26&hash=939c5985d2d0987c6af2c3777416a660614d13a88a5360bcaede338df744b29f>

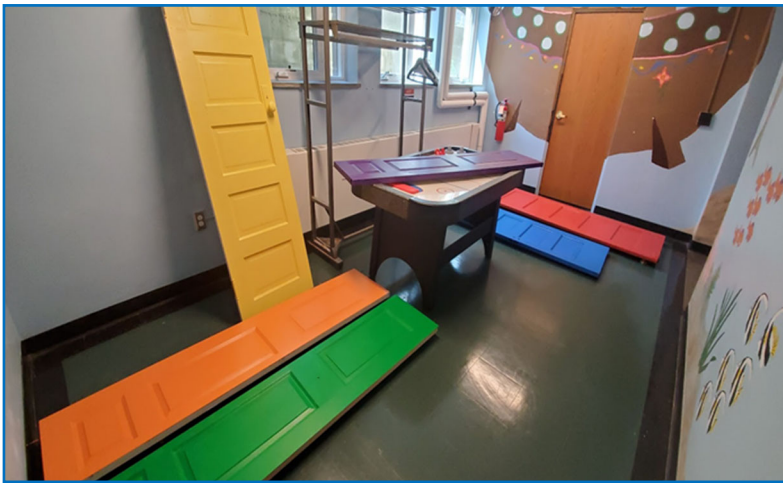
The revised Bylaws will be presented for approval at the Annual Meeting on June 13, 2021.

Following is a summary of the changes recommended:

- Clarification of membership status (see Section 3.1)
- Combining employment matters into one section (see Section 5.1.c)
- Clarification of responsibilities of Church Council (see Section 5.2.a)
- Revised the requirement for an audit of the financial books by the Treasurer and Board of Trustees to a financial review, unless an audit is required by a lender (see Section 6.4.b)
- Clarification of the budget process (see Section 6.4.c)

FCC CORE VALUE STORY on INCLUSIVE SENIOR HIGH YOUTH and DARCY CRAIN

The senior high youth group painted the new doors and installed them on State Street after the ones we had used and displayed for many years had, well, seen better days. Weather had faded the paint, decayed the wood, and destabilized the frames. We might expect that. What we did not expect, however, was to see that one of our doors was vandalized by black spray paint. In addition to the statement of welcome and inclusion to the LGBTQ+ community, our youth felt passionate about communicating our church's openness and welcome to people of other faith traditions. We did that by painting symbols such as the star of David (Jewish), the crescent and star of Islam, and the dharma wheel for Buddhism, on each of the colored doors. When we arrived to survey the old doors we found the Jewish star of David defaced with black spray paint. The youth were visibly hurt that someone would produce this type of anti-Semitic hatred on part of our statement of inclusivity. And so they responded in their efforts. Our new doors are back in their proper place on State Street where they can make a statement of our core value to be inclusive. Because as the wise Rachel Held Evans stated: "The



apostles remembered what many modern Christians tend to forget--that what makes the gospel offensive isn't who it keeps out but who it lets in." Our doors are there to make a statement, and the statement is written on them: God's doors are open to all. Thank you to our high schoolers for embodying our core value to be inclusive.

Please Notice This



If you have a story that you would like to share that reflects an aspect of our FCC Core Identity, please submit it to office@fccannarbor.org. This is who we are...let's share our stories together!

Romans 12:9-16a (NRSV) "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are."



JUNETEENTH

JUNE 19, 2021



Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. The proclamation declaring the abolishment of slavery was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, in the nation's third year of an ongoing civil war. Known as the Emancipation Proclamation, it declared that 'all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State [...] shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.' Major General Gordon Granger's arrival at Texas was to enforce this decree, which had originally gone into effect two years earlier. The news had come as a shock to more than 250,000 slaves in Texas who were unaware of it.

On June 19, 1865, in the city of Galveston, Granger publicly read General Order No. 3, which stated: 'The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.' As to why the news of the abolition of slavery reached Texas so late, there are varying accounts. One story states that the messenger bearing the news was assassinated on his journey. Some historians believe that the report on the Emancipation Proclamation was withheld by slave owners in Texas on purpose so that they can go about their business as usual and keep the labor force working. Historians also note that, until 1865, Texas remained a Confederate State, so Lincoln's proclamation could not have been enforced until Robert E. Lee surrendered to the Union Army and they took over.

Either way, Granger's arrival with the grand news stirred the air with jubilation and massive celebrations across the state. A former slave named Felix Haywood gave his recount of the first celebration in 1865 in the book "Lone Star Pasts: Memory and History in Texas" — 'We was all walkin' on golden clouds [...] Everybody went wild [...] We was free. Just like that, we was free.'

From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond.

Today Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement. It is a day, a week, and in some areas a month marked with celebrations, guest speakers, picnics and family gatherings. It is a time for reflection and rejoicing. It is a time for assessment, self-improvement and for planning the future. Its growing popularity signifies a level of maturity and dignity in America long overdue. In cities across the country, people of all races, nationalities and religions are joining hands to truthfully acknowledge a period in our history that shaped and continues to influence our society today. Sensitized to the conditions and experiences of others, only then can we make significant and lasting improvements in our society.



JUNETEENTH.com
WORLD WIDE CELEBRATION!

Congratulations!

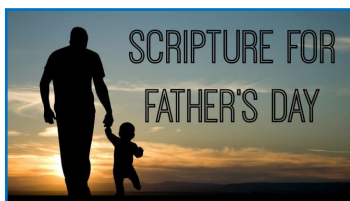
2021 GRADUATES

Sophie Holmes, is graduating from Walt Whitman high school in the Washington D.C. area and will be attending Sarah Lawrence College in New York.

Jamie Norton graduated from Dickinson College with a Bachelors in Archaeology. He's planning to study archaeology in graduate school at Durham University in England in the fall.

Meredith Vohland is graduating from Skyline High School. She will attend the University of Wisconsin this fall.

IN CELEBRATION OF FATHER'S DAY



Proverbs 22:6: "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

2 Samuel 7:14-15: "I will be a father to him, and he'll be a son to me. When he does wrong, I'll discipline him in the usual ways, the pitfalls and obstacles of this mortal life. But I'll never remove my gracious love from him."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7: "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

INDEPENDENCE DAY JULY 4, 2021

Independence Day, also called the Fourth of July, or July 4th in the United States represents the passage of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, and the birth of the United States of America as an independent nation.



The first celebration of July 4 occurred in 1777. However, Independence Day had not become an official holiday until 1870 when Congress made it an unpaid holiday for federal employees. In 1938, it was changed to a paid federal holiday.

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

~ Nelson Mandela

**A CONVERSATION WITH
TERRY FARMER, OUR MUSIC WORSHIP LEADER
BETSY HILL, FCC MEMBER**

Terry Farmer has been blessing us with his inspiring music for 12 years. A recent interview with him delved into his thoughts concerning the worship services and the music he chooses for them:

“I collaborate closely with Bob and Darcy. Using the sermon theme for a Sunday, I look for a main song that speaks to that theme. I explore both secular and religious music that has a universal message. Both secular and religious music evoke insight into our lives.

My role gives me the opportunity to keep exploring. The sermon topics provide never-ending material for me to continue the conversation and interaction of feelings that are timeless. A lot of the songs I choose are not written in a hymn tradition. They are not written for specific services in the church year and so they offer substance and freedom and a different insight. I have found the music that has been chosen bridges both church and the secular. I am much freer to choose appropriate songs that are not in the religious contemporary Christian music genre which I often find contrived. Our church has the maturity and freedom to be real.

I am excited to get back to it, once we are able to meet for services again at the church. We’ve been able to “reset” – start a new beginning. And we will come out stronger, with a new level of quality and professionalism - different segments working together to make the worship better and better.”

Thank you, Terry, for your inspiration and your splendid musicality!

**SERVICE SPOTLIGHT - TERRY FARMER
CINDY BYLSMA, MUSIC COMMITTEE**

Raised in a musical family in the Detroit area, Terry’s career has taken him to all four corners of the country. This includes a 2-year stint as lead guitarist with surf legends Jan & Dean and 3 years of national touring and recording with his band, The Bead Band. In the late 90’s, after several years living in Los Angeles, Terry earned his Bachelor of Music Degree in Classical Guitar Performance at the University of Denver with graduate studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 2000, Terry released River Runs Free a solo CD, and Terry Farmer in 2004. His second solo record features a fusion of styles and players. Terry was musical director for the live radio show, Radio Free Bacon, and co-founded the chamber folk group Cairn to



Cairn, which released two albums in 2009 and 2012. His latest release in 2019, Bag of Bones features live studio videos. You can find Terry’s music in all online stores and streams.

HISTORIAN'S CORNER

BETTY BISHOP

I found this piece written by Rev. Dorothy Lenz, Minister Emerita, some years ago and entitled:

"Faux-Pas on Mackinac! P-shaw!"

I am a Congregationalist – ardent and faithful.

The Congregational Church is the church of the Pilgrims who, in 1620, landed on Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts and eventually gave us Thanksgiving, Harvard, and Yale. They were English fleeing violent persecution from the Church of England. They wanted to follow Christ in their own way. They believed that no one should be telling them what they had to do, even something so innocuous as "A Pastor must wear clerical garb when performing a baptism." They wanted complete freedom in matters of faith. They were never going to get that freedom in England. The Anglican Church was the state church and it booked no deviation.

Congregational churches today treasure the freedom for which their ancestors in the faith fought so valiantly. Each Congregational church owns its own property, calls its own minister, plans its own way of life. The very name proclaims the Congregational Way: it is the congregation in which the power ultimately rests, the congregation which has the final vote.

A person does not have to subscribe to a certain Creed in order to become a member of a Congregational church. Each member works out his/her own faith style as a follower of Christ and the Bible. All members are called to respect the choices of all the others. With no one prescribing exactly what one must believe, a tremendous responsibility is placed on each Congregationalist. There must be no reliance on repeating by rote lists of what to believe which have been developed by someone else. Congregationalism thus requires constant questioning and exploration on the part of each member in order that his or her faith is his or her own and not just a parroting.

With such a heritage of freedom and such enthusiasm for Congregationalism, I looked forward to visiting Mackinac Island. I knew there was an old Congregational church there and was anxious to tour it and hear its history. The day I arrived was sunny and beautiful. The ride on the horse-driven wagon, especially for a city girl like me, was a delight. The college student conducting the tour was very personable, spoke well, and seemed to have a good grasp of the history of the island. As we approached the Congregational Church, his comments about it were particularly fascinating to me. I was really enjoying myself – until, to my great horror, our guide added, "The best part of it is they don't believe anything in that church, so anyone can be married there!" You might well guess that the rest of the church tour was conducted by a Congregationalist – ardent and faithful – who just had to set the record straight!

CHURCH COUNCIL

CHRIS VERMEULEN, CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY

Elected Positions

Church Council Chair	Bruce Pringle
Church Council Vice-Chair	Ellen Rambo
Secretary	Chris Vermeulen
Treasurer	Mike Dabbs
Clerk	Gae Miller
Historian	Betty Bishop

Remaining Positions, Filled According to Role

Board of Deacons Co-Chairs	Jane DeLancey , Michael Makin
Board of Trustees Chair	Mark Schirmer
Board of Christian Education Chair	Val Towery
Director of Children's Ministry	Rachel Dudley
Missions & Outreach Committee Chair	Greg Eggleston
Music Committee Chair	Paul Fossum
Nominating Committee Co-Chairs	Rick Muhs, Kristy Stoneburner
Activities & Fellowship Comm. Chair	Robbie Sawitski
Contemporary Issues Comm. Chair	Sara Holmes
Ministers	Bob Livingston , Darcy Crain

Current Activities

Task Force for Opening the Church:

- The Opening the Church Task Force was formed to look into planning how and when the Church will be opened after the Stay-At-Home order has ended. After almost 15 months of staying at home, the Church Council, on Monday night, May 17, unanimously approved the request of the Opening the Church Task Force to reopen our church for in-person worship, starting on Sunday, May 30.

175th Anniversary in March 2022:

- A group, led by Betty Bishop, started planning several events that will begin in the Fall of 2021, and culminate in a celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Church in March of 2022. Watch for notices of upcoming events, and of how you may participate if you are interested. Volunteers will be needed.

Pastoral Search Committee:

- After Bob announced his plan to retire in June of 2022, the Church Council started a Pastoral Search Committee to begin the process of finding a senior minister that fits the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

VAL TOWERY - CHAIR



Welcome to FCC Kidz!

Our kids' program, formerly known as Church School, is getting a new name! More information will be released this summer as we make the exciting transition.

Summer Class Information

Our summer Sunday morning in-person program for kids will start on Sunday, June 13th. Kids in preschool through 8th grade will be invited down to class after children's circle. The students will all be meeting in what was the 1st-2nd grade classroom. The classroom is down the steps off of the main lower lobby. All students and teachers are to wear masks.



Happy Father's Day

June 20th is Father's Day! Happy Father's Day to all of the wonderful dads in our church and all of the special people who help act as dads to the wonderful kids of our church!

Co-Teachers Needed

As we ramp back up our kids' programming, we are searching for additional teachers for the fall. Interested?



CHURCH COUNCIL

CHRIS VERMEULEN, CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

needs of our future Church. The committee is in the process of evaluating the direction the Church wants to go in the future. An all-church survey has been made available on-line, and by mail to those members who prefer mailings over electronic versions of communications. Compiling responses will be the next step in the process.

Contact Information:

Please feel free to contact any member of the Church Council with questions, comments, or concerns. We appreciate your feedback on the activities of the Church..

Next Scheduled Meetings:

June 21

August 16

THE SCRIP CARD PROGRAM

NANCY SAUVE

Welcome back! The church is open and so is the Scrip table! Look for us in the Terry and Joan Smith Welcome Center. Our Scrip bag is loaded with cash/gift cards for all your spending needs. We have a wide variety of restaurant, gas, and retail cards as well as Visa and Amazon cards. We have movie cards! When was the last time you were in a movie theater? If you go, please think about visiting the Scrip table first. We accept cash and checks at the Scrip table. If you would like to use a credit card, please check out the terrific Raise Right app available in your Apple or Android App Store. From there you can order cards on the run, right while you're in a store in many cases. Remember, profits from Scrip sales benefit the FCC mission/work trips. Many thanks for your support.!

Questions? Contact Nancy Sauve, nancy@fccannarbor.org or 734-926-0560.

THE SCRIP CARD PROGRAM

INTRODUCING THE MOBILE APP

Start earning with the RaiseRight mobile app today!



The same Scrip cards you have come to know and love and purchase from our table at FCC are now available in a mobile-friendly platform through an app called RaiseRight. Cards are still available through Nancy Sauve at nancy@fccannarbor.org.

1. Join the program

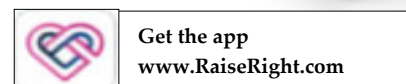
- First, download the RaiseRight mobile app from the app store using your smartphone or tablet.
- Then, enter the enrollment code to join: **484L973E22819**

2. Buy gift cards and earn for your organization

- Buy gift cards and earn for your organization. Browse bonuses, search for a specific brand, shop categories, and more.
- When you're ready to check out, sign up for secure online payments. You can link a bank account, add a credit card, or both.
- The brand gives back to your organization the moment you buy a gift card-at no extra cost to you.

3. Get and use your gift cards

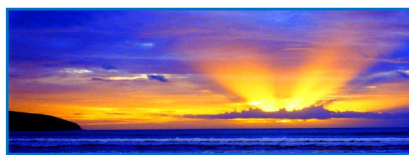
- eGift cards are delivered to the app within minutes-view them in your Wallet. Physical gift cards are mailed to your coordinator.
- Many are reloadable so you can keep earning with the ones you have.
- Use both types in-store and online.



Profits from this fundraiser support the FCC mission/work trips. We greatly appreciate the involvement of our membership and their friends and family. We also appreciate the Mission and Outreach Committee for making donations to the Local Men's Warming Shelter with Scrip cards. Thank you!

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

PAM DABBS, CHAIR



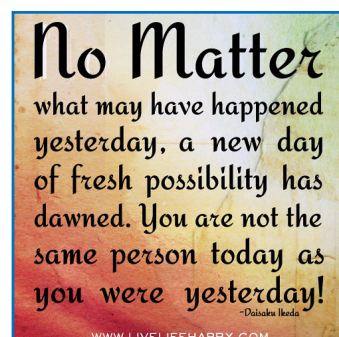
As we move into the summer months, it feels like the dawn of new beginnings!

Our building has been beautifully renovated, we are witnessing an increase in Covid vaccinations, and the weather is making us feel happy about all the positive things going on around us!

Our committee would like to thank you all once again for the support you have given to M&O Projects throughout these difficult times. You have made a big difference in the lives of so many through your annual pledges, buying scrip cards for the backpack drive/JFS Giving Tree, purchasing gifts for the Wish Tree, and all the donations you have made to help with disaster relief! Everything you do to help others is appreciated by FCC!

Near the end of summer, we will once again be helping with supplying backpacks for the children of CAN. The housing areas under CAN's guidance keep increasing, so there are many more children receiving extra love from several churches and community groups...we are proud to be one of them. Our backpack drive may be a little different this year. We are in the process of considering some new options and will keep you posted about what is in the works for the fall.

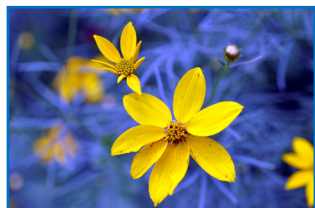
Have a wonderful, carefree summer!
The Missions & Outreach Committee



Poem by Kitty O'Meara - Relevant to Today's Times

"And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

"And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.



"And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed."

~ Kitty O'Meara

TREASURER'S REPORT

MIKE DABBS

The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor 2020 – 2021 SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

April 30, 2021

	ACTUAL 04/30/21	APPROVED BUDGET 7/1/20 – 6/30/21	NOTES
REVENUE			
Pledges	\$357,652	\$500,000	1
Gifts – Operations	61,950	53,000	
Other Income	44,508	26,887	
Special Funds Transfer	<u>-0-</u>	<u>15,325</u>	2
Total Revenue	\$498,027	\$595,212	
EXPENSES			
Ministry	\$182,263	\$232,079	
Administrative/Office	220,269	325,668	
Christian Education	31,789	53,980	
Music	49,208	69,726	
Missions & Outreach	33,348	34,000	
Maintenance & Utilities	<u>62,286</u>	<u>106,060</u>	
Total Expenses	\$579,163	\$821,513	
NET REVENUE	(\$ 81,136)	(\$226,301)	
TRUST FUND DISTRIBUTION	+\$140,000	+ \$184,550	3
	<u>-0-</u>	<u>+ 41,751</u>	4
BALANCE	\$ 58,864	\$ -0-	

Notes

- 1 2020-2021 Pledges estimated to exceed Approved Budget by approximately \$20,000 for a total of \$520,000.
- 2 Pastoral Fund distribution of \$12,500 for staff education, M&O, and pastoral assistance. Memorial Fund distribution of \$3,325 will be made for 175th Anniversary Historian project.
- 3 2020-2021 Budget projected distribution from trust and endowment funds is 6%.
- 4 Additional distribution from trust and endowment funds, if necessary due to pandemic impact on church finances.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

TREASURER'S REPORT

MIKE DABBS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Capital 2020-2021 Mortgage Principal payments will be \$32,406. Capital
Campaign Campaign will contribute \$30,000 for Principal payments. The Principal
Note payment is not reflected in the Annual Budget.

TREASURER'S NOTES

- The Financial Statement Summary reflects FCC's finances after the first ten months of the year. Our pledge revenue has improved but remains approximately 30% less than the budget. There was some improvement in pledge revenue in 2021. The Trustees are closely monitoring our revenues and expenses in the event action as required.
- In early March, the Bank of Ann Arbor provided us the information necessary for FCC to apply for forgiveness of the federal government's PPP first loan. I am pleased to report that the loan of \$84,886 has been forgiven. The Trustees approved applying for a second PPP loan \$58,575 based on our revenues for the first quarter (July – September) of this Fiscal Year being 28% less than the same quarter last year. This loan application was approved, and funds received in February. Like the first loan, much or all the loan is expected to be forgiven.
- Nearly all expenses are at or less than budget, which we expected due to the pandemic's effect on church services and programs. However, until the church can return to in-person services; we have asked the staff, boards, and committees to limit all discretionary spending.
- Overall, our total revenues and total expenses are each approximately 70% of their respective budget amounts, which indicates we are staying in balance with our budget.
- UHY completed their Annual Financial Review of this past Fiscal Year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). If you are interested in receiving a copy of this Review, please contact either Michael Dabbs, Treasurer, or Nancy Sauve, Bookkeeper.

Thrive (v.):
to progress towards
or realize a goal
despite or because
of circumstances.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS AND LAY READERS



Now that we are back to in-person worship, we will once again need a Lay Reader on Sunday mornings, as well as fresh flowers for the communion table. Sign-up sheets are available on the website and on Sunday mornings at the Welcome Desk. You may also call Robbie at the church office to sign-up. Please remember to prepare a flower dedication for the bulletin if you donate an arrangement. Your willingness to participate in the worship service in these ways is greatly appreciated.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

CINDY BYLSMA, COMMITTEE MEMBER



Did you know we have heroes at FCC? Since the pandemic has come into our lives, we have not been able to come into our church building. Yet, there are amazing people who have been working non-stop to bring church directly to us in our homes. Our concerned ministers, Bob Livingston, Darcy Crain, and Rachel Dudley rose to the challenge and brought livestreaming to FCC at a time when we needed it most. They truly could not have done it without the assistance of some remarkable people.

First, our technical heroes who work behind the scenes at each service:

- Rick Reid, cameraman and videographer
- Jared Peterson, computer and livestream expert
- Steffen Gelletly, sound board technician

Second, there are two key musicians who provide the music at the Sunday morning service:

- Dr. Timothy Huth, organist
- Joshua Marzan, pianist

Third, FCC is blessed to have two groups of musicians and singers:

- The Change of Pace Band
 - ◇ Our Change of Pace band is led by Terry Farmer, and routinely features Mike Harrington on pedal steel and electric guitars, Neil Donato on piano, organ and keyboards, Billy Harrington on drums, Samuel Collins on bass, Terry Farmer on acoustic and electric guitars, and vocals, and Thalia Schramm on vocals.
- The FCC Chancel Choir
 - ◇ Our Chancel Choir is small, but, together are a mighty voice. Darnell Ishmel is our Interim Choir Director, lovingly and spiritedly leading the Chancel Choir to new horizons in technology, while also providing heartfelt solos and vocal leadership during the worship services. The current choir is comprised of a group of talented singers who are performing virtually, and have added special music to our virtual worship services throughout the pandemic. These dedicated vocalists are Maitri White, soprano, Myah Rose Paden, alto, Brian E. Buckner, tenor, Joseph Vaughters Sevig, tenor, Jaxon Williams, baritone, Paul Fossum, bass, and Jack Morin, bass.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ACTIVITIES AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

ROBBIE SAWITSKI, CHAIR

After social distancing and isolation, I know we are all looking forward to being outdoors this summer, not only to feel the fresh air and sunlight, but to begin to come together and see each other again. To say I have missed you all would be an understatement.



The R & R Angels need YOU!

Once again, Dave Steiner, Robbie Sawitski, and Chris Vermeulen will be at the helm for this incredibly fun and profitable event. In 2019, FCC was awarded the contract from the State Street Association to manage the Art Fair Rubbish and Recycling program as well as the Hospitality Station for our area. It was a terrific success, thanks to all the volunteers who participated. We were all looking forward to doing it again, but the Pandemic put the kibosh on everything in 2020. Apparently there will be a 3-day Art Fair held this year; Thursday, July 15 through Saturday, July 17. We have already verbally committed to the State Street Association to be on board, and as was the case before, any funds earned during this event will be split 40% to the Youth Mission Trip, 40% to the Intergenerational Mission Trip funds, and 20% to the Activities and Fellowship Committee. Every volunteer will receive a free art fair t-shirt with our church as one of the sponsors listed on the back. Please watch the Monday and Friday Emails for upcoming announcements about this fun and worthy fundraising event. If you would like to be put on our list of potential volunteers, please email Robbie at office@fccannarbor.org. More information and sign-up sheets will be available mid-June.



As the summer unfolds, we will await the word that we can gather safely, and will offer picnics if they are considered appropriate. Until then, may you have a safe and blessed summer.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

CINDY BYLSMA, COMMITTEE MEMBER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

For all their group efforts to their solo offerings, we are most grateful and consider ourselves very blessed to have them in our midst. We want to share each and every one of their stories with you, so we will be featuring one of these heroes every week in the Service Spotlight of the Monday Emails through the summer months. As you read of our heroes this summer, please know that they are caring and humble people, sharing their highly gifted musical talents with us throughout this pandemic. They have given us a little sunshine in our days!

Let's all take a moment and give these fine musicians a big "THANK YOU!" for all they have done for FCC.



SUMMER READING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

a most peculiar book, the inherent strangeness of the Bible by Kristen Swenson (Darcy)

This is a synopsis type book of the Bible, helping us understand how it came to be a synoptic collection of the particular books we now use as well as an honest and comical view of how this collection of narrative history came to be recorded.

Why Fish Don't Exist: A Story of Loss, Love, and the Hidden Order of Life

by Lulu Miller (Bob)

The book suggestion I have for summer reading is a different kind of book. The book details the life and interesting journey of David Starr Jordon, a committed biologist and taxonomist and the first President of Stanford University. It speaks of Jordon's discoveries, losses, and dark hours...and the author's personal story and her reflections and response to Jordon's story, in particular as she faced chaos in her own life. I found the book fascinating! Lulu Miller is a well-known NPR reporter and an excellent and interesting writer. It is one of my enjoyable reads over the past year.

The Book of Longings A Novel by Sue Monk Kidd (Nancy)

This book surprised me. Mind & Spirit read *The Secret Life of Bees*, Sue's first book and loved it. This is more like *The Red Tent* meets *The Secret Life of Bees*. Stay with me here. Monk researched material for this book for 4 years and it shows. We take a trip to the land of Jesus, following his life from the ages of 20 to 33 and of his would-be wife. Total conjecture but a good, well written read.

Building the Earth (1965, Dimension Books) by Teilhard de Chardin (Tim)

Great science based theologian. Opening quote from the book: "The Age of Nations is past. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to build the earth."

Dusk Night Dawn, On Revival and Courage by Anne Lamott (Nancy)

Anne's latest book is here to help guide us through the pandemic and through the "third third" of our lives. I loved her early books, found her books of the last decade somewhat repetitive, and now, new material! Her reflections on her recent first marriage, grand-parenting and friendship are priceless. A quick read....I think I'll go back and read it again.

Trick Mirror Reflections on Self-delusion by Jia Tolentino (Darcy)

This is about the toll of social media on our spirit and on our mental health. Social media, and its barrage of immediate feedback, both positive and negative, creates a trick mirror in viewing oneself. Jia Tolentino offers an intelligent and personal narrative into the self-delusion that is a byproduct of our use of current media platforms.

Unfamiliar Fishes by Sarah Vowell (Nancy)

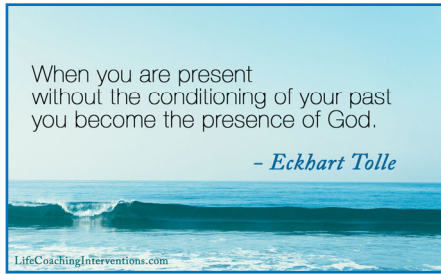
Tells the story of Hawaii – but not the Hawaii we'd travel to today. Thank you Bob Livingston for introducing me to this intelligent and witty author. Sarah travels the islands with her sister and nephew, talking to historians and Hawaiian locals to detail the story of 1898, the year the USA colonization of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines and overall became a militaristic superpower overnight. On top of it all, Hawaii has a quirky history that kept me in the book. Have a fun read!

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens (Nancy)

A hauntingly beautiful book set in a small North Carolina coastal town. Telling the story of a young girl who finds herself alone in the world while still a child, we follow Kya and her beloved marsh country, learning about the land and following a mystery.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

AN OUTREACH MINISTRY OF FCC
MARY ANN MARQUARDT



Circle of Friends is a visitation and assistance ministry that links home-centered members, including those in long term care facilities, and Circle Friends (active members of The First Congregational Church) in a one-to-one relationship. Circle of Friends provides a caring connection to the church through regular visits, spiritual support, and other kinds of assistance as appropriate for both parties.

Circle of Friends offers support to not only seniors, but also to those church members who are experiencing isolation at home due to health issues, loss of a loved one, or other family stressors. If you would like to join our group to participate in our ministry of caring and support, my number is 313-303-1989. Also, please let me know if you know someone who could benefit from having a friend. Thank you so much!



SMALL GROUP MEETINGS SUMMER BREAK

All Small Group meetings will be going on hiatus for the Summer and will plan on resuming sometime in September. It must be said that we did a great job of staying in touch with each other during this time of social distancing. Even though we are all so tired of Zooming, being together and sharing ourselves with each other has been a blessing during this isolated time. A very special thank you to those leaders who kept us going! Please watch your Monday Emails in August and the 2021 September Courier for the Fall start dates of these special groups. If you have any questions, please contact Robbie at the church office.

WAYS TO GIVE

In addition to automatic payments and checks by mail, there are 3 other ways to give:

Online: <https://secure.accessacs.com/access/oglogin.aspx?sn=97116&f=2>

Text: OpenToAll To: 73256

*Thank you for your
Generosity!*





P.O. Box 7970
608 E. William Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7970
(734) 662-1679

FCC Staff

Robert Livingston
Senior Minister
734-926-0554
bob@fccannarbor.org

Darcy Crain
Minister
734-926-0552
darcy@fccannarbor.org

Rachel Dudley
Director of Children's
Ministry
734-926-0553
rachel@fccannarbor.org

Nancy Sauve
Bookkeeper
810-599-6859
nancy@fccannarbor.org

Robbie Sawitski
Interim Admin. Asst.
Office 734-662-1679
office@fccannarbor.org

Crystal Harris
Communication Specialist
crystal@fccannarbor.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP AND CHURCH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m. Chapel Communion (*please see page 2*)
10:00 a.m. In-Person and Livestream Worship Service
Starting June 13 One-Room Church School for K-8th Grade
(following the Children's Circle)

Broadcasting links can be found on our Facebook page, our YouTube page, and on our website. Links will not be live for the current services until approximately 9:50 a.m.

SUMMER 2021 CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Please note that, unless specifically noted, all calendared events are virtual. If you have any questions, please contact the specific group leader.

Jun. 2	9:00 a.m.	Text Breakfast
	10:15 a.m.	Reopening Task Force Meeting
Jun. 3	7:00 p.m.	Missions & Outreach Committee Meeting
Jun. 8	11:15 a.m.	Reopening Task Force Meeting
Jun. 9	9:00 a.m.	Text Breakfast (last one until September)
Sunday, Jun. 13	11:15 a.m.	ANNUAL MEETING - Sanctuary In-person and on Zoom
Jun. 14	5:00 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting
Jun. 19		~ Juneteenth ~
Sunday, Jun. 20		~ Father's Day ~
		~ Summer Begins ~
	11:00 a.m.	Music Committee Meeting
Jun. 20 - 26		~ Senior High Mission Trip to New Rochelle, NY ~
Jun. 21	7:00 p.m.	Church Council Meeting
Sunday, Jun. 27	11:30 a.m.	Board of Christian Education Meeting
Sunday, Jul. 4		~ Independence Day -
Jul. 5		~ Church Office Closed in observance of July 4 ~
Jul. 12	5:00 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting
Jul. 15 - 17		~ Ann Arbor Art Fairs -
Sunday, Jul. 18	11:00 a.m.	Music Committee Meeting
Sunday, Jul. 25	11:30 a.m.	Board of Christian Education Meeting
Aug. 5	7:00 p.m.	Missions & Outreach Committee Meeting
Aug. 9	5:00 p.m.	Board of Trustees Meeting
Sunday, Aug. 15	11:00 a.m.	Music Committee Meeting
Aug. 16	7:00 p.m.	Church Council Meeting
Sunday, Aug. 22	11:30 a.m.	Board of Christian Education Meeting



"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, place to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

~ John Muir

Engaging God's word and enriching lives.