

The Church Bell

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Meet Our New Organist, Dr. Keenan Boswell



I am pleased to announce the hire of Dr. Keenan Boswell as First Congregational Church's Organist upon Kim Pace's retirement. You can learn more about Dr. Boswell by reading his bio below. Dr. Boswell's first Sunday with us will be August 1st. -Rev. Ben

Dr. Boswell received a Bachelors in Organ Performance from The Juilliard School, a Masters in Organ Performance from Westminster Choir College and a Doctorate in Opera Coaching from The University of Texas in Austin.

As a keyboardist for the Carmel Bach Festival between 2014 and 2018, Dr. Boswell served as chorale accompanist, orchestral keyboardist and collaborative pianist for the festival's main stage solo vocal concerts.

Selections from his voice-piano song cycle *Trinity* were premiered to much acclaim during one of the featured main stage concerts during the 2018 festival. As a composer, Dr. Boswell's works have been and continue to be performed across the United States in schools, churches and concert halls.

Dr. Keenan Boswell is also a highly regarded professional coach who teaches self healing practices through music and metaphysics as the means through which one can access and actualize their most authentic expression of self.

In 2017, Dr. Boswell launched Return to Self Healing, commencing his work as a personal coach. Using metaphysical studies + astrological archetypes as the basis of his coaching, he works with individuals one-on-one and in group settings to help them consciously see and accept all aspects of self as well as see any and all ways in which they avoid aspects of self. Most recently, Dr. Boswell has merged music and metaphysics together by offering coaching sessions in which he composes music that reflects one's authentic energetic expression and self healing journey.

Above all, Dr. Boswell seeks to explore and express the connection in all things through all that he does and loves sharing the journey of self healing with others.

Meet Our Capital Campaign Consultant, John Laster



I have appreciated the opportunity to begin to get to know First Congregational Church over the past almost two years that we have been collaborating together. The spirit and heart—the soul—of the congregation is so refreshing to experience! God is still speaking and engaging the community of Greeley and beyond in and through your faith community. It has been, and will be, exciting to see you continue your journey into your next 150+ years of ministry!

My religious pedigree is eclectic; growing up in the Presbyterian Church in Michigan, becoming a religious sceptic in my late teens, then running into a non-denominational group of passionate Jesus followers in Texas. It was in this community that I felt the calling toward vocational ministry.

I served 18 years on the pastoral teams in four non-denominational congregations in Texas, Alabama, and Oklahoma, ranging from 500 to 1500 in weekend attendance, focusing my ministry on spiritual formation/discipleship, infrastructure development, and small groups (engagement/deployment).

I joined the Horizons Stewardship team in the summer of 2003. Horizons has been helping congregations and faith-based non-profit groups grow disciples and fund ministry cross denominationally since 1992. Our team has assisted thousands of churches in raising over 7 billion dollars in capital funding and uncountable amounts of annual and planned giving.

So far in my time with Horizons I have worked with over 180 churches and other faith-based groups. The majority of my time is spent in the traditional mainline denominations; United Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, and Lutheran congregations. These groups have ranged in size from 40 to 2000 persons. Regardless of the setting, I relish seeing God show up in surprising and wonderful ways as we journey together.

My wife Lisa and I live on a farm in Michigan and enjoy a large boisterous family spread out across the country (9 kids ranging from 17 to 37, plus spouses, significant others, and 10 Grands, so far).

I am encouraged by the early campaign conversations we have been having since last fall; it is obvious that people deeply love and appreciate the faith community and ministry of First Congregational Church. You are a healthy congregation that is in the very early stage of a wonderful new chapter in the congregation's life; your future is filled with possibility and opportunity as you launch your next 150 years of difference-making ministry in Greeley. I am honored to walk alongside you, your pastors, and leadership teams as you navigate forward.



Save the Date!

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, September 8 at 6:30pm for a congregational meeting. We'll share updates and ask for feedback and project priorities regarding our upcoming capital campaign. The ideas and projects will be presented at this meeting. Please plan to join us!

Capital Campaign Timeline

Prompt

We were prompted to evaluate the potential of embarking on a capital campaign because of damage to our roof, soffits, and gutters following hail storms. (Early 2019)

Sharing Emerging Vision We are engaged

Staff & John hosted two gatherings (in person or on Zoom) to share what's been happening and our vision for the future. A recording is available from the church office. (June 2021)

Congregational Meeting

On Wednesday, September 8 at 6:30pm we will hold a congregational meeting to provide updates and gather feedback around project priorities which will be presented at the meeting. Please plan to join us.

Seek & Hire Consultant

Rev. Ben & Rev. Nate researched, vetted, and interviewed consultants & coaches. The Cabinet & Trustees met with John Laster from Horizons Stewardship & they voted to enter into a contract for visioning work & a feasibility study. (Oct. 2019)

Project Development

We are engaged in the process of developing our campaign project list. While this requires that staff & leadership bring greater specificity to individual projects, as John says, "we are still working in sand, not concrete." (Early 2021)

Public Phase Kickoff

We kick off the public phase during worship October 17, 2021. After worship, we'll have a kickoff celebration meal, complete with a mac & cheese bar and s'mores!

Feasibility Study, Pt. 1

John hosted two sets of church-wide listening sessions around the questions "Who Are We Really?" and "What Is Our Vision for the Future?" Around 200 people participated. (Nov. 2019)

Silent Phase

We are grateful to have received early pledges that are helping us build momentum towards our final campaign goal, remembering that God can do so much more than we can ever imagine. First Step Goal: \$1.1 million; Next Step Goal: \$1.5 million; Above & Beyond Goal: \$1.75 million

Public Phase

From October 17 to
November 7, we'll walk
through who we've been,
who we are, & dream about
who we can be. We'll ask
you to consider your gifts to
the campaign & will provide
a devotional to use as you
consider your gifts.

Feasibility Study, Pt. 2 We received the final

We received the final feasibility study from John Laster. A copy of the report is available from the church office. (Feb. 2020)

A Note from Leaders

The pandemic has had a significant effect on the assessment of some of the highest priority needs for our building and grounds. This has helped guide our continued development of the capital campaign projects list.

Commitment Sunday

We will ask for your pledges on November 7. Gifts will be received over a 3-year period. We'll celebrate with our annual chili dinner following the 10am service.

Return to the Process

Interim Happenings

Trustees began developing

an early-stage potential

project list. At the Annual

Meeting (Jan. 2020) we took

a survey to hear feedback

regarding potential projects,

which served as a means to

receive broad input at that

time.

The Board of Trustees, with the support of the Cabinet, voted unanimously to enter into a second 18-month contract with John Laster and Horizons Stewardship to move forward with the capital campaign. (Oct. 2020)

Implementation

The Trustees & Cabinet will approve final selections in materials, artwork, etc. (or designate a team to do so). They will coordinate teams and contractors to complete projects as appropriate.

(Beginning 2022)

Pandemic, Pt. 1

Due to the pandemic, church leadership decided it was prudent to push pause on the forward movement of the capital campaign. The hope was to re-initiate the campaign at an appropriate time in the near future.

Pandemic, Pt. 2

Church staff continued to meet regularly with John Laster during the pandemic to lay the foundation for a future campaign. John also provided guidance that helped us navigate the challenges of the pandemic as a church.

Questions & Feedback

At any point in the process, we're glad to address your questions & receive your feedback. It is extremely helpful to receive them in a written format first.

Here's how you can share
with us:
By Email
1stconggreeley@gmail.com
By Text
970-616-5352
Or drop off your written
comments to the church
office.

So What About Our Insurance Claim for the Roof?

The short answer is that right now, we just don't know. Our insurer inspected roof damage and offered a settlement which was unsatisfactory. We have since hired an engineer to inspect the roof who has provided us with a full report regarding damages, which far exceed the initial settlement offered by the insurance company. We are working with an attorney, who has offered their services pro bono, to negotiate our claim. We hope that we'll know more this fall, but we are aware that we may not.

We are dreaming as though the roof will be covered solely by our insurance and we will be able to spend the entire amount raised in the campaign on other projects. We also recognize that some of those of those projects and dreams may not end up part of this campaign and may be longer-term goals.