



The Church Bell

First Congregational Church, UCC
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Update on the Church Interior Revisioning Project : All About the Process

First off, I wanted to say thank you to all the members who took the time to walk through our church spaces with me these last three weeks. I learned many insights and stories about the rich history of First Congregational Church that are helping me weave together the threads of what is most cherished by our faith community.

In case you missed the walk throughs, the areas I will be focusing on reimagining are the west entrance and labyrinth area, the hallway leading to the sanctuary, the sanctuary, and Chadwick Hall.

As a designer, one of my deepest values is honoring the history of the spaces I am working in. I have always seen my creative process as an excavation of sorts; a brushing back of the dust to reveal the beauty that is already here. This past week Rev. Ben and I literally did just that! We sifted through old newspaper articles in the archives, read about the stories of the many art pieces that grace the walls, climbed into the organ loft to see the original church backdrop and cross, and climbed inside the belly of the choir loft to examine the structure and bones of the church.

As I am moving out of the research stage and into the design phase of this project, I wanted to share a few of the bigger ideas I am using to orient my designs. I will leave this list very open-ended and simple, but each idea carries a lot of weight and I would love to have longer conversations with you about what each of these means to me. Some of my grounding ideas are:

- Creating Sacred Space
- Connecting to Our History and Roots
- Communicating a Sense of Inclusiveness, i.e. “You are Welcome Here”
- Showing Proof of Life within These Walls

(Continued on reverse)

(Continued from front)

- Understanding that the Medium is the Message
- Acknowledge Seasons and our Liturgical Practices
- A Feel of Ancient/Modern
- Beauty as a Moral Imperative/Nourishment
- Grounded by Intentionality/Quality
- Meeting People on Their Spiritual Journey/Pilgrimage

In terms of the designs themselves, I am pulling much of my inspiration from what is already loved and beautiful in our church - the labyrinth, the stained glass windows, the ceiling of the sanctuary, and from the original blueprints/designs. I want to connect the two additions of the building into the aesthetic of the sanctuary by pulling from a 1950’s design palette, but not without breathing a touch of modern into it. I believe this overall look will reflect the diverse population of our congregation. It will honor our history while moving us into the new seasons to come.

Are you excited to see how this all plays out?! Mark your calendars! During the Congregational Meeting on September 8th I will share some first designs and dreams with you all. October 17th will be the full unveiling and official kick-off of the capital campaign. Thank you again for all your input and for the trust you have given me with this exciting project.

-Betony Coons

Thanks VBS Volunteers!

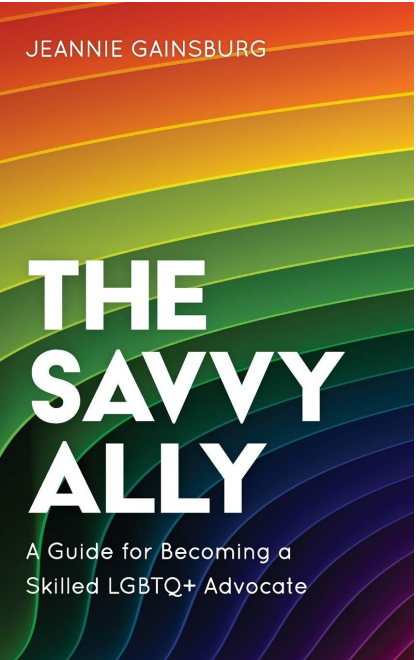
Thanks to all of the volunteers who made Vacation Bible School such a success this year! Our kids shared stories, crafts, and games over two jam-packed days! The VBS team would like to give a special thank you to Kathy Battleson, who just completed her 25th year leading VBS.

Congregational Meeting

Please save the date for a special-called congregational meeting on Wednesday, September 8 at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. We are excited to share the emerging vision for our upcoming Capital Campaign in October. Our church consultant, John Laster, will join us for this meeting.

Become a Savvy Ally with PFLAG

PFLAG Greeley will host a virtual book talk with Jeannie Gainsburg author of *The Savvy Ally* Saturday, Sept 18 at 10:00 a.m. This book is useful for parents, teachers, counselors, social workers, medical personnel, and any others seeking to become a more confident, effective ally of the LGBTQ+ community. Registration is required in advance. [Click here](#) to register. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. For other questions email pflaggreeley@gmail.com.



A Double Installation for Revs. Tamara and Ben, Sunday August 22, 5:30pm

In the United Church of Christ we don't refer to a minister's "job" so much as their "call." For those of us engaged in ministry, our sense of call is central to the work we do. We believe that the Holy Spirit is an engaged partner in the unfolding life of the Church. An Installation Celebration is an affirmation of the movement of the Spirit who participates with us in this process. And this year, FCC has twice as much to celebrate! In January Rev. Ben was called into a new role as *Minister, Head of Staff* and Rev. Tamara joined us as *Minister, Head of Programs*.

So let us gather to celebrate the Holy Spirit at work in the life of this church. **We invite you to bring a potluck dish that reminds you of a table where you experienced love or belonging.** Perhaps it is your grandma's mac and cheese, or Uncle Andy's deviled eggs that take you back to a beloved table. Or perhaps it is a bag of salty chips, to remind you of a summer picnic you had with a dear friend. Whatever love tastes like to you, please bring that food and story to share at your table. We will eat, sing, and worship together outside on the lawn. All are welcome!

Upcoming Capital Campaign Dates

September 8: Congregational Meeting at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. Rev. Ben, Rev. Tamara, and Betony Coons will share more about the vision and project list for the capital campaign.

October 17: Campaign Campaign Kick-Off with mac & cheese and music at 11:30am outdoors.

November 6: Commitment Sunday: We will celebrate the financial commitments pledged to the capital campaign by church members. Our beloved chili and cinnamon roll lunch will be held at 11:30.

In Memoriam

Please hold the families of the following church members in your prayers, as they say goodbye to their loved ones:

Jeannine Shadwick

July 19, 1931 - August 8, 2021

Celebration of Life August 21, 2021

10am, Sanctuary

John Cronin

August 17, 1928 - January 6, 2021

Celebration of Life September 18, 2021

2pm, Sanctuary

Pronouns

You may have noticed that most of our staff have decided to add their pronouns next to their names when they are printed. This is one of the ways we can make visible our commitment to being an Open and Affirming faith community. Sharing pronouns acknowledges that not everyone uses the pronouns assigned to them at birth. It also demonstrates that our non-binary friends (who often use they/them pronouns), who have a history of experiencing rejection in the church, are safe here. If you would like to learn more about about sharing pronouns, please [click here](#).

Weld Food Bank Volunteers Needed!

In a recent news segment featuring church member Jon Billheimer, the Weld Food Bank shared that they're facing the decision to scale back operations unless additional volunteers step up to help fill some of the vital operations roles that support the Food Bank's work. Most shifts are 2 or 3 hours. Daytime shifts are available on weekdays, evening shifts are available on Tuesdays, and weekend shifts are available one Saturday a month. Please consider volunteering your time to the Weld Food Bank. You can find the schedule and sign up at weldfoodbank.org/volunteer.

Welcome Back Picnic

We hope you can join us for our fall Welcome Back Picnic on Sunday Sept. 12 at 11:30. You don't need to bring anything! We will have both meat and veggie brats along with side dishes.

10th Anniversary Quimby Organ Concert

We invite you to a special organ concert on Sept. 19th played by Dr. Keenan Boswell in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the installation of our Quimby Organ. The concert will be at 4:30 with a reception and hor d'oeuvres to follow.

Children's Fall Faith Formation Sneak Peek from Tammi Van Drunen

We are excited to begin a new chapter of children's faith formation this fall! Starting in late August, we'll be providing a safer experience with a simple check-in and out procedure. If you're a tech savvy parent, I encourage you to download the church's app (Realm Connect by ACS Technologies) and use it to check-in on your phone! It's super simple - more instructions coming soon. If you haven't yet logged into Realm, be on the lookout for instructions to do so arriving in your email inbox!

Through October we plan to continue to hold kids' faith formation outside. Starting in October, we will move our kids' faith formation programming (preschool-5th grade) upstairs in the space that had been used as the library and lounge. We believe this space closer to the sanctuary will be more accessible, safer, and will work better for our current Sunday morning needs for our kids. This fall we are also excited to try out a new approach to kids faith formation that is based in storytelling, play, and exploration. Stay tuned for more news soon!

Greetings from Our New Youth Minister, Brady Ross

My name is Brady Ross (he/him/his) and I am so excited to be joining the FCC staff at the beginning of September! I will be working primarily with the 6th-12th grade youth groups, though I will also help organize activities for our families at the church.

This summer, I have been guiding groups of young people around Minnesota's untouched lakes of the Boundary Waters. Connecting with the beauty of the great outdoors while unplugging from the spinning of the world has been deeply nourishing and grounding for me.

Moving from Minnesota to Colorado is the next adventure that I couldn't be more excited about! I grew up in a UCC congregation in Wayzata, Minnesota. So far in my ministry, I have worked with middle and high school youth groups, led youth retreats, and served as a summer camp counselor for many years. I reflect on these experiences as some of the most formative and meaningful in my life so far.

I've learned from my mentors that there are five goals of youth ministry: Safety, Fun, Message, Affirmation, and Community. These will be the goals that help guide my ministry among you.

I cannot wait to begin working with you on building on the great foundation Robb Carlson laid for youth and family ministries that are inclusive, welcoming, and vibrant. I am thrilled to have the chance to continue this work for the youth of FCC and the broader Greeley community.

See you in September!

Brady

