



The Church Bell

First Congregational Church, UCC
2101 16th Street - Greeley, CO 80631
970-353-0828
www.firstconggreeley.com

January 6, 2021

**THE CHURCH BELL (USPS 110-560)
PERIODICALS MAILING**

VOLUME 76, ISSUE 1, Wednesday, January 6, 2021
THE CHURCH BELL (USPS 110-560)
Published once monthly by First Congregational Church,
2101 16th St., Greeley, CO
Periodicals Postage Paid at Greeley, Colorado
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHURCH BELL,
% First Congregational Church UCC
2101 16th St., Greeley, CO 80631

(Minister's Message, continued from cover page)

Our nearly 60-page profile detailed who we are as a church and what we were looking for in the minister we would be calling to join us. After the Profile Committee finished writing an excellent profile in June, a Search Committee of eleven church members began reading applications and interviewing candidates.

While we had many strong applicants, when the Search Committee first met with Rev. Tamara in August, it just clicked. We knew we had found the person God was calling to join us. And thankfully, Rev. Tamara felt the same way!

The excitement and enthusiasm for Rev. Tamara's arrival has only grown since the congregational vote last October to call her as our new Minister, Head of Programs. In my many conversations with Rev. Tamara over the past months, I know that this excitement and enthusiasm has only grown for her as well.

Rev. Tamara and her family's upcoming arrival in Greeley will be the end of one journey, and the beginning of a new one for us as a church family. I can't wait for you to have a chance to meet Rev. Tamara and to experience what "clicked" for the Search Committee in that first conversation with her. And as we move into this New Year, may we trust in the wonderful possibilities that await us as we live faithfully into God's calling for our community to be in Greeley for Good.

Welcome, Rev. Tamara!

MINISTER'S
message

As I write this, Rev. Tamara and her family are a couple of hours into their westward trip towards Greeley. This journey for Rev. Tamara, Piper, Tovi, and their dog Caper from Portland, Maine to Greeley is the final leg of the journey that our congregation began nearly a year and a half ago when Rev. Nate announced that he would be retiring at the end of 2020.

Since that time, our congregation has been making plans for what life and leadership would look like upon Nate's retirement.

At last January's annual meeting, we voted to adopt a new ministerial configuration that would be less hierarchical than the traditional Senior/Associate Minister paradigm. While this model of Minister, Head of Staff and Minister, Head of Programs felt (and may still feel) new, in practical terms it formalized the dynamics of the ministerial partnership that Nate and I had grown into over the course of nearly a decade of ministry together at FCC. In that time, Nate and I both experienced the ways in which this new paradigm, that has a greater collaborative nature to it, holds great promise and possibility for our church to move into a healthy and vibrant future.

Last February, a team of six church members was formed to write the profile that would be used to search for our new Minister, Head of Programs.

(continued on facing page)

Our Advent Sanctuary Kits



2020 Annual Meeting

Please join us Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 6:30pm via Zoom for the 151st Annual Meeting of the congregation. The Zoom link will be emailed out to all who receive our regular weekly emails. You may also join by phone. The instructions for doing so are below.

For help setting up or navigating Zoom in advance of the meeting, please call the church office or email Alex Rodriguez (alex@firstconggreeley.com). For technical support during the meeting, please go online to support.zoom.us.

To join using Zoom:

Click on the link found in the email blast that will be sent out on Friday, January 22 and enter password: faith

-OR-

Go to Zoom.com (or open the Zoom app) and click on "Join Meeting." Enter the following:

Meeting ID: 316 320 2511

Password: faith

To join by phone:

Call (253) 215-8782. When prompted for a Meeting ID, enter 316 320 2511#. When prompted for your Participant ID, enter #. To raise your hand to be recognized by the Moderator, press *9 at any time. You will be unmuted when called upon.

Help Welcome Rev. Tamara!

Please help us welcome Rev. Tamara with an open-house style drive-through welcome on Sunday, February 7th from 2-3pm in the west parking lot. Take this opportunity to briefly introduce yourself and say hello! Please remember to wear your mask and stay in your car.

You may also drop off cards welcoming Rev. Tamara, her wife Piper, and their daughter Tovi to the church anytime! A drop box is outside the west doors on the wall.

thank you

A Note from Rev. Nate

My dear friends at First Congregational Church,

It is difficult for me to put into words my appreciation for all cards, phone calls, gifts and good wishes for my retirement. I have been transformed by the Spirit at work here and have every expectation that it will only be amplified as you welcome new leadership in Rev. Ben and Rev. Tamara. Please know that I keep you all in my prayers for a fruitful and vibrant ministry. Though I am not leaving town, you will not see me around church for a time (even when people actually return to in-person worship!). Thank you for the opportunity to serve among you this last marvelous (and occasionally challenging) decade.

With Deep Appreciation,
Rev. Nathan Miller (ret.)



Learn About the COVID-19 Vaccine

Dr. Keith Thompson will offer an information session on the COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday, January 14 from 6-7pm. The Zoom link will be included in the Friday email blast on January 8. You can also dial in and listen to the meeting by phone. Please contact the church office if you would like help accessing this meeting.

January & February Office Hours

The church office will be closed Monday, January 18 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Monday, February 15 in observance of Presidents' Day.

Online or In Person? That is the Question!

We are thrilled that the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine is happening in our community and that some in our congregation have already received their first dose. This news offers us a much awaited glimpse of a light at the end of the tunnel. However, we still remain committed to following the advice of scientists and doctors about resuming large group gatherings. While we cannot yet be certain when it will be safe to meet again on Sunday mornings, please know that we have not forgotten about in-person worship! We give you thanks for your ongoing patience and support as we seek to navigate the pandemic with a priority on the well-being and health of our faith family and wider community. For now, we hope you will continue to remain connected through our online worship and many other virtual gatherings and events.

Thank You for Your Generosity!

Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to continue supporting the work of our ministry partners through the holiday season! Look at what our collective gifts have given:

Weld Food Bank Backpack Program - \$12,220

We sponsored 122 backpacks this year!

Weld Food Bank Christmas Boxes - \$4850

In memory and honor of our loved ones, we sponsored 194 food boxes!

Heath Giving Tree - \$4510

We provided gift cards for Christmas gifts to 20 Heath families!

Lutheran Family Services Coat Drive - \$2400

That's a lot of coats to keep people warm!



Sunday, January 10, 2pm

On Sunday, January 10 at 2pm, we will gather in the west parking lot to say farewell and happy retirement to Rev. Nate. If you'd like to contribute to Rev. Nate's retirement gift from the congregation, you may send or drop off a check to the church before January 30. Checks should be made payable to the church with "Rev. Nate's Retirement" on the memo line.



Mail Delays

You may have noticed that there are currently significant delays with both incoming and outgoing mail. We are doing our best to plan more than a month out and communicate with you as efficiently as possible, but it is possible that information may not make it to you as quickly as we'd like. If you do not receive the Friday email blast and would like to be added, please let us know. That is currently the most efficient and reliable way for us to communicate with you. You can also connect with us on any of our social channels to stay up-to-date!

Website: firstconggreeley.com
Facebook Page: facebook.com/greeleyfirstcong
Facebook Group: facebook.com/groups/fccgreeley
Instagram: [@greeleyfirstcong](https://instagram.com/greeleyfirstcong)

If you are still feeling out of the loop, please reach out to any staff member. We are here to help!