



The Church Bell

First Congregational Church, UCC
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capital
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UPDATE

As excitement built around these conversations about how God was moving FCC into the future, we began to consider how we could turn our dreams and convictions of being “In Greeley for Good” into a reality. To that end, we initiated a process to discern the possibility of engaging in a capital campaign as a community. We hosted additional gatherings with John Laster for conversation, questions, and to assess levels of support among members. The feasibility study conducted by John following these gatherings indicated widely shared excitement and hope for how a capital campaign could be instrumental in helping us pursue our dreams as a congregation.

Things were really just beginning to pick up steam when the pandemic hit. Church leadership wisely determined that the capital campaign would temporarily be put on hold.

Last fall, our church’s Cabinet and Trustees determined it was time for us to restart our movement toward a capital campaign. Since then, in consultation with John, your church leadership and staff have been laying the groundwork for our church’s “In Greeley for Good” capital campaign that will take place this fall.

(continued on reverse)

A year and a half ago, we began a visioning process to discern God’s calling for our community as we move into our next 150 years of ministry. Over two hundred members of our church engaged in a number of gatherings with John Laster, Vice President of Horizons Stewardship. Out of these dynamic and hope-filled conversations emerged a picture of a church that seeks to be known by our extravagant welcome; openness to thoughtful, authentic, and honest spiritual exploration; commitment to our children and youth; positive impact on our wider-community; and exemplary music.

(Capital Campaign Update, continued from cover page)

Some of you will remember that During our 2020 Annual Meeting, Rev. Nate and I asked those in attendance to fill out a preliminary survey to receive feedback about potential projects we could pursue through our capital campaign. While this survey was a helpful starting point, it goes without saying that a lot has changed between January of 2020 and now! This past year and a half has changed many things in our lives and world. It has also impacted how we “do” church. What I believe hasn’t changed are the dreams we share about the type of faith community God is calling us to be.

As we continue to prepare for our capital campaign this fall, Rev. Tamara and I would like to share with you some of our hopes and dreams for our faith community, and our vision for how we believe the capital campaign can help these dreams become a reality.

We hope you can join us for these gatherings this summer as we continue this important conversation about how we can invest in being “In Greeley for Good!”

Session 1: Sunday, June 13 - 11:30am-1:00pm OR Monday, June 14 - 6:00pm-7:30pm
Session 2: Monday, July 5 - 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Pentecost



Robb presents 3rd Grade Bibles



Congratulations to our high school graduates & scholarship recipients!



Thank You from Heath

We recently received this lovely pot of flowers from our friends at Heath Middle School. It was accompanied by the following note:

Just a small token of our appreciation for all your support! We love having you as a neighbor and community partner supporting our staff and students! Have a great week!

-Your friends at Heath

Meet Our New Staff Members!

Dr. Derek Chester, Minister of Music

Praised by the New York Times for his "beautifully shaped and carefully nuanced singing" Derek Chester, tenor, has quickly established himself as a preeminent teacher of the vocal arts. Dr. Chester received his bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Georgia and his Master's Degree in Vocal Performance of Oratorio, Early Music, Song, and Chamber Music on full scholarship from the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music. As a Fulbright Scholar, he spent a year in Germany working as a freelance musician and furthering his training. He received his DMA in Voice Performance and Opera Studies with full scholarship and a graduate teaching fellowship from the University of North Texas, with a dissertation on the juvenile song compositions of Samuel Barber.

He currently serves as tenured Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Northern Colorado where he has worked since 2013 and is a featured soloist at the Staunton Music Festival and the Colorado Bach Festival. Despite his focus on academia, Chester continues his worldwide career as a sought-after interpreter of classical repertoire. Chester is a conductor at heart and is currently expanding that part of his creative output. He has served as our Director of Adult Choirs since January 2020 and has conducted UNC's early music vocal and instrumental ensemble, the Ursa Consort, for the last seven years.

Tammi Van Drunen, Children's Minister

Tammi Van Drunen (she/her) is a Michigan native who has called Greeley home for over a decade. She graduated from Calvin University with a double major in Psychology and Spanish and followed that with an M.Div from Western Theological Seminary (Holland, MI). She's married to Phil who does all manner of web and video things and is also the home cook. Together, they love hanging out with their two elementary age kids. When the kids aren't keeping her busy, she loves reading, doodling, and attempting to keep plants alive outside.

She deeply believes that children are already on a spiritual journey. The grown-ups' job is to make spaces for kids to meet God in ways that make sense to them. Children's prayer practices and play languages have allowed Tammi to meet God in new ways. Her favorite prayer practice is blowing bubbles.

Brady Ross, Youth Minister

Brady Ross (he/him) is honored to be joining the staff at First Congregational Church. Raised in the UCC, Brady has been at camp and in youth programs in the church his whole life. He spent his college years working in the youth programs at Wayzata Community Church (Wayzata, MN) and the Wayzata Community Church summer camp. He believes youth ministry should include music, fun, and unconditional love.

During the COVID outbreak, Brady worked with Vote Common Good, a national tour to push Christians closer to radical love and justice. Before he joins the staff here, he will spend his summer guiding canoe trips in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota. Brady's ministry is heavily influenced by a quote from Marianne Williamson, who says, "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, but that we are powerful beyond measure."

Worship Schedule Update

As we continue to follow the guidance of the CDC, state, and local governments, we have determined that we can now safely hold indoor worship! **Beginning Sunday, June 6**, we will offer all of the following opportunities:

- Sunday morning indoor worship in the sanctuary at 8am. Masks and distancing required.
- Sunday morning outdoor worship in the courtyard at 10am. Masks are not required, but physical distancing is still necessary.
- For those most comfortable at home, the 8am worship service will be live-streamed. This will replace our pre-recorded worship, but will still be available through the week on YouTube, Facebook, and via our website.

Vacation Bible School

We are excited to be able to offer a hybrid option for Vacation Bible School this year! Partnering with Heifer International, we'll be celebrating our planet and all of creation, as well as the communities we share each day as a human family in God's world.

Vacation Bible School will be June 28 - July 2, with online activities daily and in-person outdoor events Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9am-11am. Registration for participants and adult volunteers is open now on our website under Kids & Youth > VBS.

Celebrating Kim Pace

Join us for Kim Pace's final Sunday with us as Minister of Music and organist on July 25. Stay tuned for more details to follow about this time of celebrating Kim and blessing her as she begins retirement. Contributions to Kim's retirement gift from the congregation will be received through July 31.



Music for the Soul Concert Series

We had our first Music for the Soul Concert on May 28. It was a delightful evening with music from the John Mills Orchestra and food from Slawpy Barn and Average Joe's. It was so nice to gather together with members of our congregation and wider community.

We have four more Music for the Soul Concerts this summer. We hope you'll join us! Food trucks arrive at 6pm, opening bands begin at 6:30, and the headliner begins at 7!

June 16 - Liam Garcia

July 14 - Tim & Betony Coons

July 28 - Aquiles

August 11 - No Hands Brass Band

Church Work Day

We will host an exterior work day Saturday, June 19, beginning at 8am. We are in need of people, wheelbarrows, pickups, shovels, rakes, and muscles to help us move mulch. In case of rain, we will delay to June 26. For more information or questions, please reach out to the office.

Staff & Publication Schedules

Rev. Ben will be out of the office on vacation June 16 - July 2. Rev. Tamara will be out of the office on vacation July 7 - August 7.

The church office will be closed Monday, July 5.

The next Church Bell publication date will be Wednesday, July 14.