

AUGUST 2020



What's new at
FIRST CHRISTIAN
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

"A Church Where Faith Is Active In Love"



Dear folks,

This week I started having Circle Conversations with folks in the church. These are facilitated conversations that invite folks to listen to one another and reflect on their own feelings about church. These are conversations I start in every church where I serve as an Intentional Interim. If we were meeting in person, I would divide the congregation into small groups and do the meetings that way. But given our current virtual status, I'm starting them with Zoom and they will take a bit longer to fully get going. But that's ok.

Circle Conversations particularly help when there is conflict present in the church as there is at the church right now. Conflict is not uncommon in churches especially during a pastoral transition. Having opportunities for folks to share their fears and their hopes in the midst of conflict, while also not getting into a cycle of blame and retaliation, is helpful. Another helpful tool I'll invite you to do in the future is a timeline of the church's history including all the celebrations, crises, and changes across your long tenure. We will all learn a lot and be able to see more clearly those conflicts rooted in old patterns or old trauma that lives in the church system. I'm looking forward to it. Meanwhile I'm figuring out how we will do the timeline virtually if need be.

Finally, I want to say thank you for all the ways you have welcomed me in as your Interim Pastor over the past few weeks. Thank you for sharing information about how the church works, how to turn off the alarm when I set it off accidentally, how various programs and ministries are run, who could use a pastoral care call, and where to go for ice cream (the most important thing!). I appreciate all the ways in which this church has strived to serve each other and the community. And I appreciate how hard it is to figure out how to be church during a pandemic. I see a lot of strength and compassion in you all, and I look forward to what we can do together as we move through this season of transition. We may be wandering in the Interim and pandemic wilderness, but we are together and God goes with us.

Blessings,

Karen

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

Please keep these folks in your prayers:

- Gwen's sister, Gracie "Snooks" Donnelly will be transferred to St. Luke's Hospital. She is doing ok at the moment. Keep Gwen in your prayers.
- Rev. Elizabeth "Betty" Watson died on July 21st. Please pray for her family and friends, particularly Cheryl Crossley-Simmons, in this time of loss and grief.
- Elizabeth Labossiere asks for prayers for her cousin Kristen whose triplets arrived. All are doing well.
- Prayers of celebration that Charlene Murray's husband is back baking at Panera
- Charlene Orton offers prayers of thanks for her daughter's recent road trip that happened safely.
- Bernice Church, who is not feeling well
- Mary Finnin's colleagues who have contracted Covid-19
- Martha Curtis' sister-in-law, Holly, who is dealing with some medical issues.
- Charlene Murray offers prayers for school administrators and committees.
- Evan Colbert gives thanks for new office space
- Continued prayers for Betty Stiles in the hospital in Worcester
- Prayers for Bets and Gerrit Sanford who have been unable to have visitors in many months and feel that loss
- Toosie Margolies asks for prayers for all those working on racial justice through the Black Lives Matter movement
- Evan Colbert prays for the people of Portland, OR
- Shannon Avery-Desmarais as her parents are coming back from Florida
- Bob Eddy, who is at Fall River Healthcare, 1748 Highland Avenue, Fall River, MA 02720, for continued medical care.
- Continued prayers for Joyce Wilson, Linda Desmarais, Hope Douglass, Rosemary Marshall, Becky Chace, Ken Bosworth, Lorraine Barboza, Dot Wiggins, Hope Douglass, Deb Athearn, and Lorraine and Ed Barboza

- Prayers for Karen Rebello's friend Lisa, whose German Shepherd is very sick.
- Everyone affected by this challenging time, particularly those who are isolated the most during this time of self-quarantine.

If anyone has a prayer request or news to share, please call or email the church office (508-673-7179 – churchoffice@uccswansea.org) or Pastor Karen (517-899-4851 – pastor@uccswansea.org)

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

- **Thank you to Pastor Holly, Haylie, Kacie, Amberly and Gracie** for a wonderful Aloha Worship Service and Farewell Car Parade. We all wish you well on your journey!
- **To Mary Murphy, John Carlson and Chris Roy** for helping to lead worship by offering the readings.
- **Greg & Cheryl Hordern and Bob Paige & John Correia** for donating air conditioners to the church.
- **To Bob Paige**, who has worked diligently in contacting the surrounding Cable TV Channels to enable our worship service to be viewed on the local channels in Swansea, Somerset, Seekonk and Dartmouth.
- **To Pastor Karen, Danielle Avery-Desmarais, Shannon Avery-Desmarais and Evan Colbert** for continuing to work so hard to offer everyone such beautiful virtual worship services and experiences.

VIRTUAL WORSHIP CALENDAR for AUGUST

Sunday, August 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

10:00 am – Sunday morning worship

View in one of the following ways:

- with the link that will be sent by email each Saturday
- on our new Church YouTube Channel – **FCCC Swansea** – please subscribe if you wish.
- on our new website, <http://uccswansea.org/>
- on our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstChristianCongregationalChurchOfSwansea/?ref=bookmarks>

-on local Cable TV Stations using Comcast. Always check your local listing weekly:

- Swansea Cable TV Channel 15 on Sundays at 9:30 am, Mondays at 8 am and Tuesdays at 10 am
- Somerset Cable TV Channel 9 each Sunday at 7 am and 7 pm
- Seekonk Cable TV Channel 9 each Friday somewhere between 7 am and 10 am.
- Dartmouth Cable TV Channel on Sunday

Please check your local listings for updated days and times. We at Church are never certain which service will air at which time. It is a gift that we have currently been given.

11:00 am Zoom Coffee Hour: Join by clicking

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85288871179?pwd=OXlEOEpXSEdxOWgvOXhnbWModHBTdz09>

Meeting ID: 852 8887 1179

Password: 904521

Or Join by Calling:

1 253 215 8782

Thursday, August 6, 13, 20 & 27

7 pm Zoom Check –in. Join by clicking

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89604116781?pwd=VlhzM011TFA3aEZEYUQwTUl5R1Bldz09>

Meeting ID: 896 0411 6781

Password: 918244

Or Join by calling:

1 253 215 8782

Thank you for your continued support of First Christian Congregational Church!

We appreciate everyone who has graciously continued to give to the church during this challenging time.

If you are looking for a way to send in your offering, please consider the following:

**submit a donation online using our website: www.theoldewhitechurch.org; click on GIVE, make a profile, and choose your giving amount*

**drop it off in our mailbox, we have a mail slot*

**mail it into the office: 1113 GAR Highway, Swansea, MA 02777*

**please feel free to drop by the office on a Tuesday or Thursday and ring the doorbell for Deb Gray.*

**if you would like to donate to Danielle's new computer which allows her to magically pull together our beautiful worship services, please note that in the memo line.*

Dear Church Members,

I would like to thank the whole congregation for stepping up their contributions. A fair number of you (I don't really know who, as the Treasurer does not see incoming monies) have gone above and beyond. I thank you, the staff thanks you, and all the companies sending us bills thank you!

We have had a few expenses that we could not forecast. The tremendous burden that Danielle has had to go through to get our virtual worship out there involves her Mac computer which is very under powered. We needed to step up our game to keep the services going and for Danielle to not spend hours and hours editing and uploading. I honestly believe we are permanently providing this sort of service in some way moving forward. We will have a worldwide presence on our website and through YouTube. Which, having a 14-year old has taught me, is all the younger folks watch.

The other expense is for the anti-Covid 19 materials we have had to buy. A fogger for cleansing, a few auto-dispense hand sanitizing machines, PPE and cleaner service training. A few members have designated monies toward those items. I want to thank them also.

Our fund-raising car wash ran afoul of the water restrictions in place for Swansea. I thought a de-salinization plant would alleviate this problem for the town but not so. Please consult your local town board members and water board folks to find out more information.

Lastly, on a personal note, I want to thank everyone that sent my family a card for the loss of my Mom. She was 87, a nurse's aide for over 40 years, caring for folks in various institutions around the state of Massachusetts, had four kids and helped raise my 4 half-brothers and sisters as well. If we had money after bills, we purchased hot dogs at the beach or park. When there wasn't, we packed peanut butter sandwiches. She made do with what she had to keep us kids entertained. She always told us we were her relief from work. Imagine that. She was with my sister when she passed.

I pray every morning we will get together soon. I know I miss coming to church on Sunday as you all do.

Please take care, stay home if possible and stay safe!

Love you all,

John Chace, Treasurer

First Christian Congregational Church

VIRTUAL MEETING CALENDAR FOR AUGUST

Due to the building being closed and the decision of our leadership to not gather in person, all church team meetings are currently being held via Zoom. Look for the link that will be sent prior to the meetings in order to access the meeting ID and password needed to join in the meeting. You do not need a computer; you may access the meeting using your phone only. When a decision needs to be made, only voting members are able to vote; guests are unable to vote. Please contact Deb Gray at 508-673-7179 or churchoffice@uccswansea.org with any questions.

***Tuesday, August 4th: Re-Opening Planning Meeting at 6:30 pm via zoom. If you are interested in learning about and helping with the church re-opening, please join us.**

Join Zoom Meeting by clicking the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82327067500?pwd=c1dwMnVOUWdDdjZobU1JZVQxUGxkZz09>

Meeting ID: 823 2706 7500

Passcode: 964036

Or Calling in at 1 253 215 8782

***Wednesday, August 12th: Property Team Meeting via zoom at 6:00 pm**

***Thursday, August 13th: Finance Team Meeting via zoom at 5:30 pm**

***Monday, August 17th: Outreach Team Meeting via zoom at 7:00 pm**

***Thursday, August 27th: Executive Council Meeting via zoom at 6:00 pm**

New Updates!!!

YouTube Channel - First Christian Congregational Church's new YouTube Channel is **FCCC Swansea**. Please subscribe to our channel to watch our virtual worship services.

New Church Website -- uccswansea.org

It is under construction, but you are able to access our virtual worship services through the website.

New E-Mails – The Church Staff all have new emails which are as follows:

Pastor Karen may be reached at pastor@uccswansea.org

Deb Gray may be reached at churchoffice@uccswansea.org

Danielle Avery-Desmarais may be reached at music@uccswansea.org

Evan Colbert may be reached at youth ministry@uccswansea.org

Annie Colbert may be reached at support@uccswansea.org If anyone is in need of IT tech support, please contact Annie.

Stay Connected

Make sure the email newsletter, weekly pastor's notes, and meeting links arrive in your inbox by adding churchoffice@uccswansea.org and pastor@uccswansea.org to your email contacts... And you can also help other members! Here's how: moving our messages out of spam by clicking "not spam" makes it more likely the message will reach you—and others—next time.

Also look to add our new email addresses to your address book

Prayers During Virtual Worship

You may have noticed that the prayers offered during virtual worship are different than when you gathered in the sanctuary. Prayers of the People is a strong and wonderful part of this church's tradition, and the tradition in most UCC churches. We lift up people and situations that are on our hearts. Those prayers are noticeably absent in virtual worship and I wanted to let you know why.

When the church posts a virtual worship service to the internet, we lose all control over how that service is viewed and by whom. This means that we could inadvertently share information that should be private. For example, if we pray for John Smith as he recovers from his heart attack, John Smith's boss or company might find out. It might impact how they view him as an employee or just a "healthy" person or someone who could handle a new position with more responsibility. Insurance companies might find out information that he'd like to keep private. If Jane Smith asks for prayers for an upcoming interview, that could affect her current job. Celebrations of being on vacation or at a family reunion lets the whole world know that someone's house is vacant. I know these are unlikely scenarios, but not unheard of. I want to be sure that as we engage with the world as a congregation, we are doing it as safely as we can. Please know that even as I pray more generic prayers during worship, I am privately lifting up the specific prayers for all of you that we include in our weekly email and newsletter.

Pastor Karen



Wanted: Scripture Readers!

As Karen gets to know the congregation, she doesn't yet know who likes to read scripture for Sunday services. Please send her an email if you would like to be on the scripture reader rotation. The only catch during virtual worship is that you need to be able to film yourself reading and send it to Danielle to add to the video. However, Karen or Danielle can walk you through that part if you are interested. You only need a smartphone to do it.

If interested, please contact Karen at 517-899-4851 or Danielle at 508-844-9611.

Music News...

Do you have a hymn you love to sing or play on your favorite instrument? We want to hear it! What talent, hidden or obvious, would you be willing to share as part of our virtual worship services? There are lots of ways you could participate. You could record yourself playing, I could send you an accompaniment to sing along to, I could layer a piece of you singing or playing into a piece with myself or others. . .

What creative ideas do you have? Give me a call, text, or email so we can explore possibilities.

“My heart, O God, is steadfast; I will sing and make music.” *Psalm 57:7*

Danielle Avery-Desmarais

508-844-9611

danidandco@yahoo.com

Printed copies of Pastor Karen's Weekly Sermons

Please look for Karen's sermons in our monthly newsletter mailing. If anyone would like a paper copy, please call or email the church office and Deb Gray will send you one.

Staff Hours

The Office and Building are still closed to the public.

Deb Gray is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. Please do not drop by without making an appointment.

Please feel free to call the church office at 508-673-7179 with any questions or concerns you may have.

Pastor Karen is available by calling the church office at 508-673-7179 or Pastor Karen directly at 517-899-4851. If you wish to see Pastor Karen, it MUST be by appointment only. Please call and a time will be made available to you. Masks must be worn in the church building as is socially distancing. (see below)

Danielle Avery-Desmarais is available at 508-844-9611 or music@uccswansea.org with any questions or concerns you may have regarding music or worship.

Pastoral Care Appointments

The church building remains closed for worship and meetings. However, Pastor Karen worked with E-Council to allow for pastoral care appointments in her office. If you would like to meet with her in person, please give her a call at the office or on her cell phone and she will set up an appointment. Please do not drop by the office. She is also happy to be available by phone or Zoom. At this time, she cannot make in person visits to homes or facilities.

If you do want to come in for an appointment, please know that masks are required (or a face shield if a mask is medically impossible) as is socially distancing. For that reason, Pastor Karen can only meet with one or two people at a time. If you need the lift, please let her know so she can meet you to operate the lift for you. If you are part of a committee or group, please get in touch with her to set up a Zoom meeting.
Thank you!

Items for Sale

We are starting an "Items for Sale" section of our Church Newsletter for anyone who would like an opportunity for direct sales of items that can be safely sanitized. If anyone has an item they would like to advertise in our newsletter, please forward the information to Deb Gray at swanseawhitechurch@meganet.net

This is our first item for sale from Martha Curtis:

* 2013 Subaru Outback Limited 2.5Li H4 model wagon with a Harmon AM/FM radio, back-up camera, moon roof, and roof rack. The car is black with heated black leather seats. It has a newly rebuilt automatic transmission (April 2019) in good working order and 4 new tires. It is in "as is" condition and gets 24 mpg in the city and 30 mpg on the highway. It has a current MA inspection sticker and a clear title. It has 157,341 miles, which are mostly highway miles. I hope to have the car detailed prior to the sale. I am asking \$7,500 or best offer.

Please contact Martha H. Curtis if interested at: 774-526-5300 or martha.h.curtis@gmail.com

*The second item looking for a new home is an HP PhotoSmart 5514 Desktop Printer from the church office. The printer takes 564 black and color ink cartridges. Please call the church office if you are in need of this device.

Basketball Hoop for FREE!!

The Olde White Church is looking to giveaway the basketball hoop that is currently in a horizontal position on the side of the shed. We have decided to dispose of it and would like to make it available to anyone in the congregation who is interested in taking it and putting it to good use!

Please contact Bob Paige at 508-514-0840 or fenceman_1@comcast.net if you are interested in picking it up.

Thank you!!

Collection of Cans and Bottles

John Carlson is continuing to collect redeemable cans and bottles during this time. All the proceeds from his collections will go towards the cost of the Veterans Supper in November so that all donations will go directly to local Swansea Veterans in need.

If you have empty cans and bottles, please call or text John at 1-774-644-7471 or 508-677-9539 and he will make arrangements to pick them up. Thank you all for your continued support. Stay safe and God Bless.



Outreach – Mission News....

The Outreach - Mission Team has been busy researching and planning activities. We have reached out to the Greater Fall River Council of Churches, Church of our Savior in Somerset and First Baptist Church of Fall River to support their food missions. These volunteer opportunities include stocking pantry shelves, packing bags and boxes and loading car trunks, with social distancing. Volunteer dates and times for Church of our Saviour in Somerset are Friday, August 14th from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm and Saturday, August 22nd and 29th from 8:00 - 9:30 am.

We have contacted Saint Vincent's regarding a youth mentorship program which is currently on hold, and fundraiser assistance is needed for a Bike Run on Sunday, August 16th at 9:00 am.

There will be an Alzheimer's Walk on October 3rd at Bristol Community College in Fall River. We continue to look for opportunities to support Black Lives Matter and have bumper stickers available. New attendees have been making calls to congregants and are willing to bake for the continuing food insecurity in our area.

Please call or text Nancy Nancy Smalzel at 617-335-9014 if interested in these opportunities.

Church Congregation Photos Available!!



If anyone would like to receive a hard copy of the all church photo which was taken in February of 2020, please call or email the church office and you may pick up a copy or have one sent to you. The cost per photo is \$5.00 per photo.

AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>***All August worship services are available on our Facebook page, on our website, on our YouTube Channel, and through a link that will be sent to your email***</p> <p>***If you are interested in participating in any of our zoom meetings during the month, please look for the link in our weekly emails. You do not need a computer; you may call in on your phone.***</p>						1
<p>2</p> <p>10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship</p> <p>11:00 pm Zoom Coffee Hour</p>	3	<p>4</p> <p>Re-Opening Planning Meeting via zoom at 6:30 pm</p>	5	<p>6</p> <p>7:00 pm Zoom Check In</p>	<p>7</p> <p>AA 7 – 8:15 pm (outside)</p>	8
<p>9</p> <p>10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship</p> <p>11:00 pm Zoom Coffee Hour</p>	10	11	<p>12</p> <p>6:00 pm Property Meeting via Zoom</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30 Finance Team Meeting via Zoom</p> <p>7:00 pm Zoom Check In</p>	<p>14</p> <p>AA 7 – 8:15 pm (outside)</p>	15
<p>16</p> <p>10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship</p> <p>11:00 pm Zoom Coffee Hour</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Outreach Meeting at 7 pm via zoom</p>	18	19	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 pm Zoom Check In</p>	<p>21</p> <p>AA 7 – 8:15 pm (outside)</p>	22
<p>23</p> <p>10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship</p> <p>11:00 pm Zoom Coffee Hour</p>	24	<p>25</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline</p>	26	<p>27</p> <p>Executive Council Meeting at 6:00 pm via Zoom</p> <p>7:30 pm Zoom Check In</p>	<p>28</p> <p>AA 7 – 8:15 pm (outside)</p>	29
<p>30</p> <p>10:00 am Sunday Morning Worship</p> <p>11:00 pm Zoom Coffee Hour</p>	31	<p>Remember, church is not the building, WE ARE! Let's stay strong, church – together!!</p>				

First Christian Congregational Church

The Olde White Church

1113 GAR Highway

Swansea, MA 02777



**AUGUST
2020**



First Christian Congregational Church

"A Church Where Faith is Active in Love"

1113 GAR Highway

Swansea, MA 02777

Church Phone: 508-673-7179

Email: swanseawhitechurch@meganet.net

Website: www.uccswansea.org

Facebook: [FirstChristianCongregationalChurchofSwansea](https://www.facebook.com/FirstChristianCongregationalChurchofSwansea)

The Reverend Karen E. Gale

Pastor Karen's Phone: 517-899-4851

Virtual Worship Service at 10:00 am

Church Office Closed to the public until
further notice

UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

All are Welcome!!

Virtual Worship Service	August 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 10:00 am by email link and Facebook 11:00 am Coffee Hour/Fellowship
Virtual Check in	Thursday, August 6, 13, 20 & 27 7:00 pm Zoom Check in – look for link
Re-Opening Planning Meeting	Tuesday, August 4 at 6:30 pm via Zoom
Property Team Meeting	Wednesday, August 12 at 6:00 pm
Finance Team Meeting	Thursday, August 13 at 5:30 pm
Outreach Team Meeting	Monday, August 17 at 7:00 pm
Executive Council Team Meeting	Thursday, August 27 at 6:00 pm via Zoom