

Church Life

May 2019

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES All Are Welcome

Open Door 8:15 in the Chapel
Worship 10:15 in the Sanctuary

Following the 10:15 Worship Service
we invite you for coffee and fellowship
in Fellowship Hall

Child care is available

Office Hours:
Monday thru Thursday
8:00 am - 4:00pm
Friday
8:00-12:00 noon

Welcome to...

- **Explorations** about the implications of Jesus' Resurrection as our worship services explore Jesus and justice, doubt and love (see pg. 2)
- **Transitional Times** as we as a church bear down on major decisions about who we are going to be and what we will do in our immediate future! (see pg. 3)
- **Celebrations!** For Sunday School, Hispanic culture, and lest we forget, Mother's Day! (see pgs. 4,5)
- **Environmental Action** to help us reduce greenhouse gases and do our part in combatting global climate change. (see pg. 5)
- **Children and Youth** retreats, lock-ins and bake sales! (see pg. 6)



First Congregational - UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

256 E. Chicago St., Elgin, IL 60120 - 847-741-4045 - www.fcc-elgin.org

MAY WORSHIP THEMES

May 5 What About the Fish? In all four Gospels there are feeding stories where the same pattern is followed as in the Last Supper: Jesus took bread, broke the bread, gave the bread to his followers. And in John's Gospel, he gave them fish as well. What's that about? Maybe a lot: the Romans had renamed the Sea of Galilee as the Sea of Tiberias (guess who was Emperor?), a new city was built (Tiberias) and fishing rights and marketing got centralized, freezing out the small, independent fishermen. But the sign of the resurrected Jesus is---justice! John 21:1-19

May 12 Faith and Doubt: Competitors or Partners? The Gospels are pretty resolute about the importance of choosing to follow Jesus, to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Then along comes John with this fascinating tale of Thomas who will not believe what he does not see. The 'Patron Saint of Modernity', he is called. While John's point is 'don't be like Thomas', is there not room to argue with him on this point? Can doubt be a partner of faith? John 20:19-31 And yes: Mother's Day!

May 19 Live Love "What's the Gospel about?" asks John over and over again. "Love one another" comes the answer. Just love one another. We've got this, don't we? Don't we? John 13:31-35

May 26 The text and sermon title were not available at press time because someone was on vacation on a beach in Cancun, Mexico. Home based staff are not bitter. Side bets tilt towards "*Disciples Together*", based on Acts 16:9-15, rather than 'Process theological insights on Postmodern Hermeneutics and Epistemology'.



CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

- **Chicago Street Repairs.** The East Chicago Street repair project is next up on the city's repair schedule. It will be a mess, and will start in May. East Chicago Street will be one way (going east) with parking only on the eastbound direction. This means that in order to park in the gravel lot to the west of the church you can either turn in the driveway on the north side of the church (with handicapped parking spots) and go around the church or come from the east down East Chicago St. and turn into the parking lot. There will be access to parking lots next to the church and there will be no construction on Sundays.

- **Tuck pointing.** By the time that you receive this newsletter, tuck pointing will be completed on two of the three sides of the building that will be tuck pointed. Next up will be reroofing the sanctuary, which is expected to start in May.

- **Air conditioning?** The Ministry of the Building is investigating getting air conditioning for the fellowship hall installed before the beginning of summer (part of our long term building plans and within the spending authorization set by the congregation at our Annual Meeting).

- A **decorating committee** is being formed by Paul Turk for the purposes of **carpet selection** and whether we remove some pews to add space in the sanctuary (and where will we hang our Monets?). See Paul if you are interested.

- **Plaster work** in the sanctuary is currently scheduled to start in June, (but it could start sooner).

- **Painting of the sanctuary** will follow after the plaster has had time to cure.

TRANSITIONAL TIMES



MAY WILL BE A BUSY MONTH!

- On May 5 we will have a special Discovery Time to discuss "what are the values that we live by at First Congregational Church?" This can be thought of as 'conflict prevention', foundational thinking about who we are and how we operate as a church and the possible justification for the church adopting an official 'Open and Affirming' position.

- On May 19 the Search Committee will present a Discovery Time on their work and deep questions as they prepare the profile of our congregation for use in seeking a new settled minister. The 'profile' helps us understand just what we are looking for in our next minister.

- Parents of youth and children in our Christian Education programs will be contacted by Faith Formation Ministry members to be interviewed about our Christian Education. We are using an 'appreciative inquiry' method which identifies strengths and core needs for our ministry. Questions include:

1. When you think about our faith formation program (children's and youth), what do we do well?
2. Why is this good?
3. What values and beliefs do you want your youth/children to gain for their lives?
4. What would make our faith formation program exciting to invite friends to attend?
5. What should I have asked you that I didn't?

- There will be **3 surveys** coming in May. The first reviews what we did over Lent to see whether what was done met the spiritual needs of our members. The second will float some trial balloons for our summer worship services. We will be in the basement, we've really got no customs or expectations about what worship there will look like. What do we want to try? The third will be by our search committee and will help them put the finishing touches on our church profile. Why surveys? They allow us get a far wider range of opinions than simply those who come to meetings. The surveys will be both electronic (through the website and emails) and on paper. Expect to spend about 5 minutes on the first two, longer on the third which is of considerably greater importance.

MAY MISSION PROJECT

Our "mission of the month" in May will be to supply needs for moms at the Crisis Center in Elgin. The Crisis Center started off as a mission of our church, with our purchasing the building that they use as a part of our 150th Birthday. They serve families in crisis, act as the central referral point for people needing some kind of assistance and serve as a shelter and source of counseling for families in crisis, usually but not always moms and their children seeking shelter from a domestic violence situation. They are a major recipient of our Mission Grants program (\$10,000 in 2018). But they have regular ongoing needs for children. When we approached them, they said that their needs included supplies like: Onsie size New Born to 18 months, Receiving blankets (new or gently used), Wash cloths, New bottles, Sippy cups, Pacifiers (all sizes), Infant nasal aspirator, Baby wash, lotion, & shampoo, Diapers: sizes 4, 5, & 6, Baby wipes, Diaper rash cream/ointment, Deodorant for women & men, Disposable razors, Acetaminophen for adults & children, Ibuprofen for adults & children. Bring your gifts to church in May and we will assemble a collection for them.

Spring Women's Retreat

The Women's Spring Retreat will be held in Harbert, Michigan May 14 - 16. The private facility, Hazlehurst, is located along the shore of Lake Michigan and provides a wonderful space to be in touch with nature. The retreat offers time away for personal spiritual growth along with laughter and fun with sisters in our faith community. Lois will be leading this group. Women planning to attend are reminded to get their \$50 deposit to the church office as soon as possible.



Our Sunday School classes will end on May 19th. We will not have family worship on that Sunday, so that the children and their teachers can have one last class together. We have had a wonderful year. Please take a moment to say thank you to the teachers. Please remember to bring your child to worship during the summer. Children learn to worship by worshipping! There will be a children's message each Sunday and fun activity packets to keep the children focused.

OUR DEDICATED CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS!

Preschool teachers: Savannah Lile

Helpers: Toby Underhill, Marnda Lile, Chloe Underhill, B. Wagner

4's & Kindergarten: Lauren Jackson and Liz Schaaf

1st - 5th grades: Lori Schultz, Natalie Underhill, Shannon Lile, Kathryn Miller, Sally Lopez

Jr./Sr. High: Anna Mitchell

Ministry of Faith Formation: Beth Claxton, Sandy Dalton, Shannon Lile, Kathleen Mau, Dawn Schmied, Paul Stocksdale, Sally Szudy, Natalie Underhill, Lois Bucher, Lauren Jackson, Jennifer Phillips, Ellen Henderson, Katie Kamenjarin

FROG Friday Volunteers: Beth Linquist, Shannon Lile, Natalie Underhill, Sally Szudy, Carol Olson, Helen McClure, Mary Underhill, Lori Schultz, Lorri Powell, Ellen Henderson, Lois Bucher. **Helpers:** Savannah Lile, Maranda Lile, Chloe Underhill, Toby Underhill, Dakota Underhill.



At "To Mars and Beyond" VBS, your students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time as they explore where God's power can take them. They will become Voyagers and discover how to serve God and God's mission for their lives. Your Voyagers will also discover our Vector Verse, Ephesians 3:20 - Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us!

Join us June 10th - 12th (Monday - Wednesday), 5:30pm - 8:00pm.

To register, contact the church office at 847-741-4045 or contact Beth Claxton at 517-282-5051 or elinquist@hotmail.com.

MISSION TRIP UPDATE



At this point we have 25 youth and adults who will be going on our mission trip to Providence, Rhode Island July 13-20th. We will be working with an our United Church of Christ Camp called Irons Homestead in Providence, RI. The Providence Experience is an opportunity for us to balance service and devotional time. Our days will be spent serving God through a variety of service organizations and then we will return to the quiet rest of Irons Homestead to relax in the beauty of nature.

GRADUATE SUNDAY

We will be recognizing graduates on June 2nd during our 10:15 worship service. Please call the church office and let us know if you have a high school, junior college, technical school, college, or advanced degree graduate in your family.



NEWS

CHURCH COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT

The annual church council planning retreat will be held on Saturday, May 4 at Immanuel UCC in Bartlett from 9 to 3 p.m. The Council will begin the planning process for next year's programs, take a careful look at constitutional revisions and our safe church policies. See Dennis Leberecht if you are interested in participating!

ONA PLANNING TEAM

Our Open and Affirming (ONA) planning team will meet on Sunday, May 5 at 12:30 p.m. to discuss how we will open our discussions as to whether the congregation will be invited to discuss and vote on official 'Open and Affirming' status for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. We are 'unofficially' Open and Affirming now. Anyone is welcome to join Pat Lindquist, Dennis Leberecht and Rev. Montgomery in the planning process.

FCC HOSTS PROGRAM ON "SOLARIZING OUR LIVES"

Representatives from the Citizens Utility Board will be with us to talk about how we can reduce our carbon emissions by adding solar energy collection to our homes or apartments. What are the myths? What are the facts? Should we act now or later? The program will be in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, May 3 from 6 to 7 p.m. Coupons will be available from downtown restaurants (Al's Creamery, Blue Box and Elgin Public House) for attendees (date night!). Thanks to these co-sponsors!

CINCO DE MAYO

Elgin's Downtown Neighborhood Association invites us all to participate in Elgin's annual Cinco de Mayo celebration to learn, understand and celebrate the lives of our neighbors who may be Hispanic! Stay after church to enjoy the fun and share the love!

RACE RELATIONS DISCUSSION

Second Baptist Church will host a discussion program on racial relations on Wednesday, May 22 at 7 p.m. The program, organized by Second Baptist, Highland Church of the Brethren and First Presbyterian Church will give an opportunity to build bridges of understanding between people of different races as participants hear the racial experiences of one another.

HISPANIC COFFEE HOUR MAY 19

On Sunday, May 19 the Fellowship Hour after the second worship service will be organized by our Hispanic church members. The food both celebrates our diversity and feeds our souls---and we will also honor our Sunday School teachers and program on this, the last day of the Sunday School year.

REV. LOIS BUCHER TO GIVE INVOCATION

The Rev. Lois Bucher will give the opening invocation at the Illinois Legislature session on Wednesday, May 22 in Springfield. The invocation was organized by the office of State Representative Anna Moeller's office.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

As part of our Memorial Day weekend worship services, we will remember those of our number who died in war for our country. Memorial Day, we remember, is not about simply being a veteran. It is about those who made the ultimate sacrifice. All those who served are owed appreciation for their service---but if they are alive to be here, they thankfully "didn't pay the ticket" for this day of observance. If you know of family or friends who died at war, please let the church office know and we will include them in our remembrances.

CREATIVITY SMALL GROUP OUTINGS

The Lenten Creativity Small group invites you to join them in two activities in May: **Field Trip** to Chicago's Art Institute on Tuesday, May 7 to see the current Rembrandt exhibit and other exhibits. Call John Schlomman at 847-456-2441 or email him at jschlomann@wideopenwest.com if interested. **Photography Group** on Sunday, May 19 at 11:30 a.m. to explore the formation of a focused group that would do group outings, going to museums, share knowledge and mentor one another to gain greater skill in taking photographs.

LOCK-IN ON FRIDAY NIGHT, MAY 3RD.



Please join the 3rd - 6th grade Sunday School Class for a fun lock-in on May 3rd. Everyone will meet at the church at 6pm to carpool to Marcus Theater to see the movie "Ugly Dolls." The cost is \$6 for children and \$11 for adults (plus any money needed for snacks). The event is over at 9am on Saturday. Please let Shannon Lile know by April 30th if you can join in this fun evening. Of course, your friends are welcome too.

Youth Event to Underground Retrocade in West Dundee

All youth are invited to join in a fun evening at the Retrocade in West Dundee on Friday, May 10th. Meet at 7pm at Underground Retrocade located at 121 W. Main Street in West Dundee and pick-up is at 10pm.



Youth Group Bake Sale!

Bring your sweet tooth to our Youth Ministry's Spring Bake Sale, Sunday May 5th! All kinds of yummy treats from pies & cakes to cookies & bars will be available up in the Conference Room between the two services and after the second service. Gluten Free & Sugar Free options will also be available. All proceeds help to defray costs of the Youth Mission Trip this summer!

Please let us know if you'd be willing to contribute a bakery item for this sale. Thanks for all of your support.

BEER, BURGERS, AND THE BIBLE

Calling all guys! The next meeting of Beer, "Burgers and the Bible" is May 20th. We meet at 6:30 pm at Elgin Public House, 219 E. Chicago Street. Order something to eat (it's half-price burger night), if you like, and come upstairs for an hour of Bible study for dudes only.



Boys (BOYS OUT FOR BREAKFAST)

Are you a "BOB"? Would you like to be a "BOB"? Our men's breakfast group called "Boys Out for Breakfast" will meet on May 21st at 8:00 am at Alexander's on Hwy. 31, just north of the tollway. There is no agenda except fellowship and good food at the start of the day. If you would enjoy being a "BOB," please email Tom Howard at tlhoward34@gmail.com and let him know you will be coming. A good time will be had by all.



Summer Camping opportunities are available through the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ. Opportunities are available for all ages. There are camps in Princeton, Illinois and in Sawyer, Michigan. If you are interested, please contact the church office for a brochure.

SERVING SCHEDULE



May 19

- Acolyte.....Layla Nickels
- Greeters..... Evelyn Johnson
-Jean Hempstead
- ReaderYouth
- Sound SystemDon Patterson
- Coffee HourCastillo, Noland, Helin,
-Kremen/Cedillo families
- Ushers.....Matthew Schultz
-Claire Noland, Toby Underhill
-William Schultz, Nathan Leith
-Zylle Constantino

May 5

- Acolyte.....Savannah Lynch
- GreetersJan and Wendy Breitmayer
- ReaderJeanne Rothlisberger
- Sound SystemCurt Phillips
- Coffee HourMission Trip Bake Sale
- Ushers.....Kirsten Pedersen
-Laura McMinn, Lindsay Iverson
-Sandy Dalton, Beth Mitchell

May 26

- Acolyte.....Violet Szudy
- GreetersJeanne Rothlisberger
-Elizabeth Sharf
- ReaderJim Schock
- Sound SystemBen Bricton
- Coffee HourBeth Claxton
- Ushers.....Tom Phillips, Dennis Leberecht
-Brian Stark, Martin Cedillo

May 12

- Acolyte.....Ricky Phillips
- GreetersJennifer Green
-Thomas Howard
- ReaderDawn Schmied
- Sound SystemFrank Kottmeier
- Coffee HourKathi Bernhard
- Ushers.....Ron Carlson
-Karen Carlson



- 5/2 Alessandra Castillo
- 5/3 Erik Iverson
- 5/5 Thomas Lenz
- 5/5 Adin Swan
- 5/7 Patrick Lile
- 5/11 William Schultz
- 5/12 Charlotte Norman
- 5/13 Maurice Munch
- 5/16 John Kamenjarin
- 5/18 Calynn Jiacomin
- 5/18 Brett Szudy
- 5/19 Lorri Powell
- 5/19 Jodie Stackowiak
- 5/20 Rita Phillips
- 5/25 Ronald Carlson
- 5/27 Mary Hewitt
- 5/31 Larry Rothlisberger
- 5/31 Alex Halfpenny



First Congregational Staff

Rev. Michael H. Montgomery, Ph.D.....Sr. Pastor
 Rev. Lois Bucher.....Associate Pastor
 Jean Tuohy..... Music Director
 Pam PattersonAdministrative Assistant
 Pat Lindquist.....Congregational Associate
 Rich Wagner Building Steward

First Congregational United Church of Christ

256 E. Chicago St.

Elgin, IL. 60120

847-741-4045

Website: www.fcc-elgin.org

WORSHIP TIMES:

8:15 & 10:15 a.m.

TOGETHER LET'S CELEBRATE!!

Save the date for a retirement luncheon!

Honoring Reverend Lois Bucher

July 28, 2019 - 12:00 noon

Heritage Ballroom - Elgin Recreational Center

Elgin, IL

*Watch for your invitation in June as RSVP's will be needed
for the buffet lunch and celebration*