



# Tidings

766 Graceland Ave.  
Des Plaines, IL 60016  
847-299-5561



## February 2021 - Vol. 82 – No. 2

*Following Christ, We Connect a Diversity of People with each other and with God!*

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### **In-Person Worship**

Our Council confirmed at their last meeting that once our state goes back into Phase 4, we will resume with in-person worship, following safety guidelines of the State of Illinois. As of writing this, I don't have an official date for re-opening, but Illinois is currently in Tier 1 Mitigation and considering the decline of the positivity rate, chances are good that we will move back into phase 4 soon. Once we are in phase 4, we will communicate our starting date for in-person worship.

Here is a refresher of when we did go back to in-person worship last year:

### **Worship Service**

We will only have one worship service at 9:00am.

- There will be no hymnals as singing is not allowed.
- There will be no bibles, and no bulletins.
- People participating in the worship service will have their own microphones – no sharing.
- Instrumental music is allowed – no wind instruments.
- Worshippers will enter through the West-Entrance and sit on the clearly marked pews.
- At the conclusion of the worship service please make your way through the choir room and exit through the choir side door.
- Offering plates will be stationed at the exit doors.

### **Live-stream**

If you chose to worship at home, the service will still be streamed live via our website. You will be able to access it the same way you currently do with the online worship services. You will also be able to watch the service on the demand at your convenience, for example in your pajamas any time later the day or week.

### **Registration**

Since we don't know how many people to expect in the beginning, registration will be required starting from the Tuesday (not before) before the next Sunday service via our website, or by calling the church office. Phase 4 will allow for up

to 50 people. If you don't make it on the list for a specific Sunday, you will be placed first on the following Sunday's list. Please note that "advance registration" for other upcoming Sundays won't be allowed as this will only complicate things. If you have registered and can't attend a specific Sunday, please contact the church office on or before the Friday at Noon.

### **Basic Safety Measures**

You will be required to:

- Always wear a mask as you enter the building.
- Sanitize your hands as you enter the building.
- Keep a physical distance of at least 6 feet, except if you are with family/partner.
- If you have used the bathroom, please sanitize after you for the safety of the following person.
- Drinking fountains will be taped off.
- Keep your physical distance once you are outside.
- If you used the lift – please bring it under the attention of the usher so that it can be sanitized for the next person.

### **Fellowship**

There will be no physical fellowship at this stage. For now, we will continue with online fellowship on Sundays at 10:00am.

### **Covid-19 Vaccines**

Illinois is currently in phase 1B of its COVID-19 vaccination plan. I urge you to get vaccinated if you have the opportunity to do so. Remember a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. You can get updates about the vaccine's availability for various groups on the [Illinois Department of Public Health's COVID-19 website](#) .

### **High Risk Group**

COVID-19 is often more severe in people 60+yrs or with health conditions like lung or heart disease, diabetes or conditions that affect their immune system. If you are in this high-risk group, I ask you, lovingly, to consider continuing worshipping at home. Together we can work against the spread of this deadly virus.

In-person worship is an important part of our spiritual experience. However, our main concern should always be the safety of all our congregants, and we encourage you to use your judgement and do what you feel comfortable doing.

With love,

Rev. Co DuToit

## Worship Ministry

<b>February 7</b>	<b>Communion</b> Service of Worship Virtual Coffee Hour Lay Reader Scripture Reading	9:00a – <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> 9:50a – 11:00a <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> Teena Whittenhall Mark 1:29-39
<b>February 14</b>	<b>Valentine's Day</b> Service of Worship Virtual Coffee Hour Lay Reader Scripture Reading	9:00a – <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> 9:50a – 11:00a <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> Rhonda Yost Mark 1:40-45
<b>February 17</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	
<b>February 21</b>	<b>First Sunday in Lent</b> Service of Worship Virtual Coffee Hour Lay Reader Scripture Reading	9:00a – <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> 9:50a – 11:00a <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> Jackie Schmitt Mark 2:1-12
<b>February 28</b>	<b>Second Sunday in Lent</b> Service of Worship Virtual Coffee Hour Lay Reader Scripture Reading	9:00a - <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> 9:50a – 11:00a <a href="http://www.fccdp.org">www.fccdp.org</a> Flo Hoffman Mark 2:13-22



## Membership & Communications Ministry

### **Evening Circle Sets February Meeting; All Women Welcome!**

Evening Circle's next Zoom meeting will be on Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00pm. All women of the church are invited to join us. Link will be in a "Notes from Co" as well as emailed to all current members. We will be discussing our next "virtual" Bake and Craft Sale, on the calendar for March 21 and 28, as well as enjoying visiting with each other.

## Property Ministry

### Furniture for Sale

Property Manager Jim Foster is making the gently used furniture currently stored on the stage in Webster Hall, available to interested church members for purchase. Items not purchased will be sold online on Marketplace. To learn more contact Jim at 224/361-6735.

## Youth Ministry



## **News from Pilgrim Fellowship**

The Pilgrim Fellowship Youth Group of First Congregational Church will conduct a special Valentine's Day Cookie Fundraiser to help raise money for their summer youth trip to the Boundary Waters. The group will be home-baking and pre-packaging a delicious assortment of goodies for you to share with your special Valentine. From cookie decorating kits to chocolate covered pretzels, you won't want to miss out on our tasty treats. Won't you help support our youth group? You can place your order via our church website at [www.fccdp.org](http://www.fccdp.org). You will find an order form under "News" and "Upcoming Events." All orders are due by January 31. You will receive an email confirmation of your order by February 1, along with information on your balance due. Cookies will be ready for pick-up in our church parking lot on Saturday, February 13 from 10 am - 12 noon. Payment by cash or check is due at time of pick-up. Thanks in advance for your support!

## **Finance Committee**

### **Financial Report**

Thank you to all of our church members and friends for your ongoing support of FCCDP; for keeping up with your pledges and offerings ... and even making extra contributions during this difficult year. Through your generosity and a Payroll Protection Program loan/grant of over \$38,000, we ended December 2020, \$32,031 in the black, year-to-date.

### **Star of Bethlehem**

A special thank you to everyone who responded to the recent Star of Bethlehem appeal. Through your generosity over the holidays, we were able to raise over \$4,000 for the General Budget.

## **Talent & Gift Auction**

This year's Talent & Gift Auction is going virtual. Log on to our Church website, at [www.fccdpc.org](http://www.fccdpc.org), to see the auction items with their current bids - or watch for a link in Co's Notes. (Current bid amounts will be updated regularly.) You'll find gift baskets, artistic creations, home-baked treats, hand-crafted items, theatre tickets, an outing to the Botanic Garden, dinner for 6 delivered to your home, a day at the beach complete with catamaran sailing, and much more. Place your bids by emailing [surry1024@comcast.net](mailto:surry1024@comcast.net), or by calling Sharon at 847-421-1491. Bids will be accepted through 6:00 pm on Monday, February 15.

Thanks for supporting this important fundraiser for our church.

## **Diaconate Ministry**

### **February Zoom Meeting**

The Diaconate Ministry will be holding a Zoom meeting on February 21st, following the virtual coffee hour, at 11:05 AM

# Happy Birthday to You!!

Congratulations to the following church members/friends on their birthdays!!

Doug Laws	01-Feb
Brian Rust	02-Feb
Amanda Smith	03-Feb
Christine Ashby	03-Feb
Barb Franzen	05-Feb
Shelby Lauterburg	05-Feb
Flo Hoffman	06-Feb
Lynn Vedral	06-Feb
Mary Spiegler	07-Feb
Jennifer Nelson	08-Feb
Laurel Douthwaite	09-Feb
Dave Kaplan	09-Feb
Elizabeth Liston	09-Feb
Ben Whittenhall	10-Feb
Robbie Pittman	12-Feb
Karen Potempa	14-Feb
Emily Cruz	16-Feb
John Foster	16-Feb
Doug Koulerentes	16-Feb
Erik Lodewyck	17-Feb
Carl Mahr	19-Feb
Norm Boyer	20-Feb
Frank Potempa	20-Feb
Deb Fogarty	22-Feb
Jayne Villa-Alvarez	22-Feb
Erika Hahn	23-Feb
Joyce Masciopinto	23-Feb
Vito Pelletiere	23-Feb
Harrison Nutley	26-Feb
Paul Schmitt	27-Feb
Bob Crocker	28-Feb



## In Memoriam

Richard "Dick" Wilson  
January 22, 2021

Gifts & Memorials

From the Community



Boy Scout  
Troop 6

Spaghetti  
Dinner  
Fundraiser

2021  
Drive-Thru  
Spaghetti Dinner

SUNDAY March 7th, 2021  
First CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,  
766 GRACELAND AVENUE, DES PLAINES  
4:30PM - 7:30PM

**Dinner Includes:**  
SPAGHETTI in RED SAUCE with MEATBALLS,  
GARLIC BREAD & SIDE SALAD

Cost Per Dinner: \$6.00  
\$100.00 Grand Prize Raffle - \$5.00 per chance

## **From our Historian, Nancy Meyer**

There was a wonderful article written by reporter Lauren Barry in the Des Plaines Journal on Dec. 30 that gave the history of the Backpack Project that has been one of great ministries of First Congregational Church for the last several years. I received their permission to reprint it, with the photo that accompanied the online version.

Child hunger was an issue for Des Plaines before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and it continues to grow daily, according to a local charitable organization. “I don’t think we know the whole extent of the need yet,” Jana Haas of the Des Plaines-based Community Backpack Project told the Journal & Topics Monday (Dec. 28). She said around 2,300 students in Des Plaines Elementary School Dist. 62 are eligible for free and reduced lunch, up from 2019 estimates. Factoring in the siblings, parents and other family members of these students, Haas said there are probably at least 10,000 people in the city struggling to afford food.

The Community Backpack Project began at St. Stephen Catholic Church in Des Plaines in 2014 as an effort to provide local children in need with meals. Within two years, First Congregational Church volunteers joined the effort. By the 2018-2019 school year, the organization was providing 120 backpacks filled with six meals per week 36 weeks a year to Des Plaines students who met certain criteria. Volunteers would bring the backpacks into local schools for students to take home. The process was anonymous for both the volunteers and students, Haas explained.

Community Backpack Project meals are funded by donations and social service funds provided by the city. Since the start of the pandemic, Community Backpack volunteers have not been able to drop off the bags at schools, so the organization has found different ways to provide meals to vulnerable families. “They look a little different,” said Haas of the group’s efforts this school year. Forms of aid supported by the group have included donations provided by St. Stephen, an open grocery event at St. Zachary Catholic Church and food pickup events at First Congregational Church from March through June. Haas said the group also works with social workers from Des Plaines Elementary School Dist. 62 to provide meals for families in need.

Instead of providing backpacks with meals for one child, the group now often provides meal packages for entire families. “We jump in where we can and help where we can,” said Haas. Due to the economic stress of the pandemic — which has caused businesses to close, people to lose jobs, parents to quit jobs to take care of their children while schools are closed and infection from the virus for over 6,000 Des Plaines residents — many families Haas has worked with this year are “almost flailing,” she told the Journal.

Other organizations that have helped the effort to feed local families during the ongoing crisis include: the Des Plaines Elks Club, the Des Plaines Optimist Club, Boy Scout Pack 14, Boy Scout Troop 6, the Des Plaines Park Dist. and the Des Plaines Public Library. “It’s a lot of people who need food,” Haas said. As the group continues to help families in need, volunteers hope to soon be able to begin regularly providing the six-meal backpacks again sometime soon. Those who are interested in providing donations or volunteering can contact Haas and the Community Backpack project at 847-951-5111. Anyone with school age children who is having a difficult time providing food for their family should contact Dist. 62 social workers, she added.

*Sally Fortier and Jana Haas of the Community Backpack Project.*



**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
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[www.fccdp.org](http://www.fccdp.org)

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## February 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 10:00a Food Drop-Off 7:30p Wholly Ringers	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:30p Music & Drama	<b>4</b> 7:00p Membership & Communications	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship	<b>8</b> 11:00a Creative Conversation 7:00p Finance 7:30p Wholly Ringers	<b>9</b> Noon: Staff Meeting 7:00p Evening Circle	<b>10</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:30p PRC	<b>11</b> 6:30p Chair Meeting	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 11:05a Ministry Staff	<b>15 President's Day</b> 10:00a Food Drop-Off 6:30p Property 7:30p Wholly Ringers	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 7:00p Ash Wednesday	<b>18</b> 7:00p Worship Ministry	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Tidings Deadline
<b>21 Lent 1</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 11:05a Confirmation 12:00pm Diaconate	<b>22</b> 7:30p Wholly Ringers	<b>23</b> 7:00p Council	<b>24</b> 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28 Lent 2</b> 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship						