

# Landmark

### October 2021

First Congregational Church An Open and Affirming Congregation Vol. 67, Number 10

landmark@firstchurchguilford.org

#### AS FIRST CHURCH TRANSITIONS...

#### Greetings!

Soon we will say good-bye to our Associate Minister, The Reverend Jake Joseph. As Council Chair, I am writing to update you on the plans for filling the position of Associate Minister.

First, it is important to know that a call from First Church to any minister is an offer for that member of the clergy to join us in our journey as we all work to further God's kingdom here at First Church and beyond. It is not a contract for any period of time – either the minister or the Church can end the call agreement. Jake has discerned what he feels is God's call for his service and, after prayerful consideration, has accepted that position. We will miss him and we are grateful for his time here. We wish him well, and blessings as he begins his new position.

As First Church's ministries continue, we are fortunate to have our intern, Clara Sims, to help. We also have other clergy available to assist our staff with preaching through the end of the year. Currently, we are investigating candidates for an interim associate position and hope to have further information on those possibilities in the future. Please feel confident that we are working diligently to ensure the ministerial needs of the congregation are met.

Several meetings have been held with Lead Minister, The Reverend Doctor Ginger Brasher-Cunningham as well as Church Council. At the September Council meeting, we proposed a possible Pastoral Search Committee structure – around eight individuals, including a few deacons, persons who have served on previous committees and a couple of church members new to the search process. Ginger strongly requested that I serve on the new committee, and that was discussed with Council. Council had no objection and concurred with allowing me to assemble a committee, then present it to Council and then a special congregational meeting for approval. Individuals are being contacted now and we hope to have that congregational meeting in October.

Once the Committee is in place, the current Church Profile will need some updating. The committee would be seeking an Associate Minister with an emphasis on Faith Formation. A review of the profile indicates that the updating will be minor, and the new committee should be able to accomplish the update quickly. It would be my hope that the committee could be in a position to start receiving profiles by the first of the year. As you know, once profiles are received, it is a matter of discerning the gifts of the candidates that match the needs of First Church – not an easy task, but with prayerful consideration and diligence, we will hope for a good match. There is no schedule for a decision – the committee will review profiles until they discern the best candidate. Once that happens, interviews will occur, and references will be checked. If positive, then the candidate will be presented to the congregation for consideration. As you can see, there are numerous steps in the process. The process takes the time it takes and there is no deadline – just the discerning of the best candidate. Updates will be provided as the committee works to keep the congregation aware of the process.

On a related item, Jake had been assisting us with some technology items. It is clear to many of us that the time has come to start addressing some more of the technology issues that will help us move into the future adequately prepared. To that end, we are also working on hiring an individual to handle our technology and communications needs. More to come in the future!

As you can see, we are working to move forward. More information will be forthcoming in the following weeks. In the meantime, if you have any comments or concerns, please contact Ginger or me – my church email is <a href="mailto:council@firstchurchguilford.org">council@firstchurchguilford.org</a>.

Prayerfully, Stephen Dudley Chair, Church Council

#### OCTOBER SUNDAY WORSHIP

Masked and physically distanced in the Sanctuary

Sundays October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 10:00am

Those unable to attend in person may worship virtually via the email sent out Sunday morning.

Those not online who request it will receive a hard copy of the bulletin and sermon via mail.

If you are not on the worship email list, please contact the Church Office at office@firstchurchguilford.org.

# INQUIRER/NEW MEMBER MEETING Sunday, October 24th after worship

Are you new - or relatively new- to First Church? Or are you considering becoming a member? Please join us in the Narthex for this conversation about our journey of faith as First Church, and as a United Church of Christ congregation. *New members will be received on Sunday, Oct. 31.* Please speak with a Deacon, clergy or call the Church Office at 203-453-5249 with any questions.

The Board of Deacons

#### **NEW LANDMARK EMAIL**

landmark@firstchurchguilford.org

Going forward please submit all articles to this new email address. This will keep all Landmark communication in one place. It also will make it easier for someone else to take over in the future.

Submission deadline reminder – 15th of each month.

# PARISH CARE TEAM CONTACT FOR OCTOBER

Please notify Barb Hazall (203-640-3907) of anyone who may need a prayer shawl or a note of sympathy or encouragement.

#### **BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

Saturday, October 2 at 1:00pm on the Green Ginger and other clergy will be present on the Green to bless beloved 4-legged, furry, feathery, etc., family members. This is open to the community.

### BAPTISM

September 4, 2021
Winnie May McCarthy
Child of Jacqueline and Christopher McCarthy



### "30 MINUTES OF JOY"

Take a music break on Thursdays at noon. Bill Speed continues his 30 minutes of live music. Join him on the

church's Facebook page, or in person!

# GROCERY CARDS AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE Wednesdays 10:00am – Noon Spencer House Finance Office

Our grocery card program is an easy fundraiser for the church: \$100 cash or check buys a Big Y, Bishop's or Stop & Shop card – you receive \$100 of groceries and First Church receives 5%.

Thanks to Bob Howard, Susan Leete, Shannon Clarkson and Jane Rowen who rotate selling the cards! Any questions, please call the Church Office.

#### **NEW BLINDS IN SANCTUARY**

The Business Committee wants to replace the window blinds in the Sanctuary: the cords are breaking, and the fabric is deteriorating. At the September Church Council meeting, it was suggested that the congregation be asked if they would like to sponsor or donate towards this project. We need 10 window blinds at \$260 each and 5 have already been spoken for.

If you wish to donate to purchasing the remaining 5 blinds needed, please make the check payable to First Congregational Church and on the memo line, please include "Sanctuary blinds." Thank you.

Peter Rebuzzini, Business Committee

#### **GENTLE WALKING GROUP**

Interested in a gentle walking group as a way of exercise and fellowship? Please contact the Church Office 203-453-5249.

## CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS September 14, 2021

Goals for 2021: Stephen Dudley

• Stephen asked for suggestions for 2022 goals.

### Treasurer Report Paul Kuehn

 August results: income - 2/3 budgeted income after 2/3 of the year.

#### **Board of Finance** – Budget 2022 MaryJane Potter

- Budgets due by Sunday, Sept. 19. Stewardship needs budget numbers to begin the campaign. They anticipate a tight year.
- Start conversations with your families about new pledges.
- A substantial number of pledges come from a small number of members. As these people leave, we need to find ways to replace their pledges/financial commitment.
- Also consider First Church in your wills.
- Finance Office group has produced an updated manual of Church Policies. It will be presented to the Board and then to Council with the caveat that someone review/update it every few years.
- Digital Church: what will it take for the Church to become resilient digitally? Another topic the Board is reviewing.

#### Ministers' Report

Ginger, Jake

- Ginger
  - Worship felt like "church" this week, but there are still many who feel disconnected and detached. Try to encourage people to come back to church to reconnect.
  - We need to recognize that our postpandemic church will be different from prepandemic church and need to be prepared to move forward and shift our mindset.
  - Pastoral Care team is doing terrific work
  - Judi is doing terrific work with our youth.

#### Jake

- Called to First Church- for two years of pandemic. It has been wonderful and too short. We have been able to reduce redundancy with increased efficiency.
- Millennials probably won't pledge in the same way, but it doesn't mean that they don't care. Perspective and mindset shift.
- Jake's passion for people comes through in institutions and national organizations, so he is excited about the next step. October 10 will be his last day.
- The Steeple will move to twice a month. We will see who takes it over.

- Gini King thanked Jake for his work and hoped that he will return to pastoral ministry someday.
- Stephen Dudley commented that we had hoped for a longer tenure with Jake Joseph, but that there is a "time for everything under heaven" and this is a new page for Jake.

#### **Business** Peter Rebuzzini / Susan Leete

- 2021 is the year of security. New system is going online on September 20 (armed and secured). Every person with a key needs to have their own personal code. First person in the building will disarm the system and leave it disarmed until people leave. Motion detectors in the church school building in the hallways. Business Committee will help anyone who needs it. They anticipate false alarms and other incidents after the system comes online. Security presence has been enlarged with cameras outside too. If someone trips the alarm, the police will be contacted through the security company.
- Window shades in the sanctuary are wearing out. They propose replacing the shades on the first floor. Anne Godsey suggested that we put the request out to the congregation as with the FH lights- she pledged 5.
- Zoom account. Last year it was used extensively. How many does the church need?
- Neighborhood Music School is back. They wanted to renegotiate their contract because they have half the number of students. It was agreed to cut their room costs in half to be renegotiated in January.
- Historic District Commission is recognizing the Church for taking such good care of our historic campus. Bob Howard has been instrumental in working with the commission.

Review Prior Minutes June Stephen Dudley

Peter moved. Anne seconded. Report approved.

#### New /Old Business A

Gay Harter presented a resolution from the "Tree of Life Educational Fund" to support H. R. 2590 which promotes and protects the human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. PAJ wants the church to support this resolution and statement from the Tree of Life. It has been past policy of Council to make sure that new resolutions and bills are put in front of the congregation for input before the Church Council votes on it. This is not a UCC issue, but a legislative issue. Stephen is concerned that a vote could jeopardize our non-profit status. Gini King suggested that we find that out. Ginger agreed that it is important for us to know whether our non-profit status is affected by endorsing legislative issues for now and the future. PAJ will discuss next steps. Bill Speed questioned the timing with the recent administration changes in the Middle East. Stephen suggested to PAJ to decide whether they would endorse it themselves without the church backing or move forward to get the church backing.

- Gini King met with a group of people interested in being part of an Afghan Refugee Team to see if we can sponsor or co-sponsor a refugee through IRIS in New Haven. Anyone is welcome.
- International Day of Peace on September 21.
   Our observation will be on the Green at noon.

#### Discussion of Transition as Jake leaves

- New intern, Clara, will be a terrific asset.
- Ginger has already set in place a full preaching schedule through December and is working on coverage of the other pieces.
- Judi, Penelope, and Bill picked up much of the pastoral care load during Ginger's sabbatical and they have a real team now. The team will probably continue to help Ginger while we are searching for a new minister.

# Discussion of Search Process and Possible Search Committee Stephen, Ginger

- The Profile from two years ago just needs a little tweaking. We will look for an Associate Minister with an emphasis on Faith Formation.
- Maybe a slightly smaller Search Committee (8 or so people). Stephen Dudley was asked to be on the Search Committee again. Hoping to get a group together sometime in October with a new Profile available sometime in November. Maybe start reviewing profiles after the first of the year. Anne Godsey said this is the most expedient Search process she has ever witnessed. No one had any objections to Stephen joining the Search Committee.
- Question about why ministers leave- are we missing important questions. Discussion included how life changes in unexpected ways.

# **Discussion of Communication Duties/IT needs**Stephen, Ginger

- This has been under discussion. Ginger and others will meet and will bring information to the next Council meeting.
- Peter brought up communications in the church, especially when someone asked Ginger last week if we were meeting in person after we had been worshiping in person for over a year. With all the methods of communication we use, how do we get people to utilize them?

#### **WELCOME CLARA SIMS!**

I am delighted to be working with First Church as a Ministerial Intern for the upcoming year. I look forward to getting to know you, to sharing in this time of transition and opportunity, and to all I will learn alongside, and from, each of you.



A little bit about my background and sense of call to ministry. I grew up in Los Lunas, New Mexico in a predominantly Hispanic agrarian community, to which my parents moved as a part of the "back-to-the-land" (or hippie) movement of the 1970s. Though I did not grow up in an institutional faith, I was deeply influenced by the earth-honoring spirituality embedded in my parents' choices of how and where to live. Swimming in the deeply Catholic culture of that community, I grew up with lots of questions about God and theology, which I would not know how to name as such until I began college at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

At Willamette, majoring in Religious Studies and History, my entire worldview was broken open and expanded as I was exposed to the beautiful and fraught complexity of the Christian tradition, and, most significantly, to aspects of that tradition which resonated powerfully with my own sense of the sacred. Though I began college expecting to pursue Politics and Environmental Studies, I was swept up in a new path of holding my deep care and concern for the earth in tandem with my studies and increasing personal draw toward Christianity.

During my 2019 summer internship with the faith-based environmental group New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light, I attended my first UCC service in Taos, New Mexico, and the "rest is history"! I felt immediately at home. When I became aware of Yale Divinity School and its robust leadership in religion and ecology, I knew YDS would also be a home for my continued exploration of call to environmental ministry.

At First Church I look forward to exploring the ways in which we are called to put faith into action for the common good of all persons, beings, and ecosystems. A question I hope to hold closely in my work this year is: How can we evolve into enlarged narratives of interrelatedness, interdependency, and care for *all* of God's creation? I look forward to living into this question with you, with excitement and gratitude for all that is to come! Thank you for welcoming me with such warmth into your community.

Clara Sims

#### **DEACON DIGEST**

I grew up singing in church choirs and it is there, in the words of the songs, that I learned most of what I know about the Christian faith. I have sung in the Senior Choir at First Church for over thirty years. We have had some wonderful Directors of



Music with Patricia Snyder, Jim Gower, Mary Morreale and now Bill Speed. Singing can find words we are unable to say. One of my favorite hymns, "This is My Song", the words of the last verse are: "This is my prayers, O ruler of all nations. Let thy reign come, on earth they will be done. In peace may all earth's people draw together, and hearts united learn to live as one." Who cannot be moved by the hope of these words.

When I directed the Cherub Choir, one of our favorite children's hymns was "Wherever I May Wander". The words of the first verse are: "Wherever I may wander, Wherever I may be, I'm certain of my Maker's love; God's care is over me. God made the great high mountains and made the wide blue sea; God made the world, and me." May all former Cherubs carry these words in their hearts.

On June 27, 2021, the Senior Choir actually sang in front of the sanctuary without masks! This was the first time since March 13, 2020. For the Introit, we sang a new piece by Eric Whitacre called "Sing Gently". This piece was sung virtually by 17,572 singers from 129 countries. I highly recommend you Google this video to see and hear this many singers making music together.

The lyrics to "Sing Gently" are:

May be sing together, always. May our voice be soft. May our singing be music for others and may it keep others aloft. Sing, sing gently, always.

Sing, sing as one.

May we stand together, always. May our voice be strong. May we hear the singing, and may we always sing along.

Sing, sing as one."

Whether you are a singer or listener of what music gives us, may the words be meaningful to your lie and help to strength your faith in God.

Gail Etter, Deacon of the Month

Please contact Gail at 203-453-8818 or gail.etter@snet.net if you have questions or reflections about the spiritual life of the church.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

October brings cool air, colorful leaves and new hope! We had a great beginning in September with a back-to-school blessing on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the outside, all ages Sunday School class on the 12th! God can create a stream in the desert and a path in the wilderness as the wise prophet Isaiah tells us!

We will continue to have outside, all ages Sunday School once a month through December. Dates are as follows: October 3, November 7, and December 5. All ages are welcome, masks are worn by all.

October 3 will also be Bible Sunday. Traditionally, Bibles are gifted to each 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grader present. This year we will be giving Bibles to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students as well as 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students! We missed a year, and we invite all in those grades to come to worship at 10 AM to receive your Bible!

Children are welcome at all worship services, masks are worn by all, Sunday school will only be offered on the first Sunday of each month as listed above.

The nursery will be available for those comfortable with that starting in October. Our nursery care staff are fully vaccinated and will be wearing masks at all times. We welcome children aged 4 and under in the nursery.

Check out the CE Newsletter for upcoming family baking and activity events.

If you are not getting that Newsletter, please email Judi Wallace at <a href="mailto:judi@firstchurchguilford.org">judi@firstchurchguilford.org</a>.

Pilgrim Fellowship is excited to be gathering again and we love starting the season with the Annual GLOW-IN-THE-DARK CROP Hunger Walk on October 3 If you would like to donate to PF's effort to raise awareness and funds for Church World Service and the Hunger Walk, please let Judi know. judi@firstchurchquilford.org

October has some fun events planned and we hope to fundraise by raking leaves in November! If you are interested in having PF rake leaves for you, please contact me for pricing and dates.

Autumn blessings to all! Judi Wallace, Dir. of Children and Youth Ministries

#### OCTOBER CREATION CARE TIP

The next time you go out to eat, bring a reusable container for your leftovers. One-time use plastic and Styrofoam (polystyrene) containers are easily replaced with a reusable container. Leave one by your door, in your car, or in your backpack so that you always remember it when you dine out.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS

One of the priorities of the Business Committee over the last year has been to review the church's emergency preparedness. We found we needed to update our training for the congregation, such as fire drills and what to do during a medical emergency. The latter includes another round of AED training and handling medical situations in the building. We also commend the CE staff who are already doing much of this in their teacher training each year.

We hired an emergency preparedness/security consultant, who inventoried the church and Moore Education (MEB) buildings, and prepared an emergency planning flip chart for easy, quick reference, which will be hung in every classroom and other areas around the church. He will also do a couple of emergency preparedness training sessions later this fall for anyone in the congregation who is interested.

In order to update our thinking on what we should be doing to protect our buildings, last February we asked the Guilford Police Department to do a crime prevention survey (CPTED Public Assessment). In conjunction with our consultant, we developed a building protection and intruder prevention plan. A major project was to change the locks in the Moore Education Building which had not been done in recent memory. In addition to new keys for the MEB, an individual code will be required for each person to enter either the sanctuary building or the MEB. The keypads are inside each entry The GPD and the consultant also both recommended that we install security cameras outside each entry door. They are recorded for future use if needed but are not continuously monitored. There are no interior security cameras.

An alert Business Committee member discovered a new state grant for security enhancements for non-profits, and we applied for and received \$14,300 to pay for purchasing and installing the cameras and keypads. We are one of two UCC churches in the state to receive the grant. Special thanks to Jeff Weber, Bob Howard, Peter Palumbo, and Sexton Mark Twombly, for doing so much work on this project. Please feel free to call Business Committee co-chairs, Susan Leete or Peter Rebuzzini if you have any questions.

#### WHY YOUR NEXT CAR WILL BE ELECTRIC

Burning fossil fuels (like gasoline) for transportation contributes almost one-third of the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. To fight climate change we have to move away from using gasoline and diesel in cars, trucks and buses. That is why President Biden has set a goal for half of new passenger car sales in the U.S. to be electric by 2030.

This seems like a stretch goal considering that today only 4% of vehicles sold this year are either allelectric or hybrid! The transition to electric vehicles will require significant upgrades to infrastructure. Improvements to the electric grid will be needed since many new charging stations will have to be installed and many consumers who buy electric cars will want to have home chargers installed in their garages. It is doable.

Congress is working on the infrastructure part. The infrastructure plan being considered includes \$73 billion for improvements in the electric grid and \$7.5 billion for charging stations.

Auto manufacturers had already been planning for transition to electric even before the President announced his goal. GM is planning to introduce at least 30 new electric vehicle models by 2025 and offer only electric cars by 2035. Both Ford and Honda have said they expect 40% of their vehicle sales to be electric by 2030. Toyota plans to have 70 electric vehicle models by 2025. Even BMW, "the ultimate driving machine," expects half its vehicle sales to be electric by 2030.

If you plan to go shopping for a car in the next few years, you are likely to be surprised at all the choices that will be available to go electric.

Susan Arnold Member Environmental Ministry Team

### 17th Annual ROSLYN YOUNG MEMORIAL CONCERT Virtually on Sunday, October 10 at 4:00pm

"Gems of the Piano Four-Hands Repertoire"
Julia Bady and Andrew King will be featured performing the Mozart Sonata in B flat Major, K 358, Schubert Grand Rondo in A Major, Opus 107, Bach Chorales BWV 643 and BWV 601, Bach Orchestral Suite #3 in D Major, Brahms Liebeslieder Waltzes, Opus 52. A link to the concert will be available on the day of the concert on the memorial's website: <a href="https://www.roslynyoungmemorial.org">www.roslynyoungmemorial.org</a>. Roslyn Young, daughter and sister of First Church members Jean and Beth Young, grew up in Guilford. The concert is free, and donations are gratefully accepted.

						9am Sunday School on Facebook Live 10a In-person Worship No PF
						4p Family Baking -FH 7p PF-outside
		7:15p Adult Choir- Sanctuary	No Children's choirs	Fellowship & Outreach		11am New Member Mtg- Garden or Sanct
		30 Minutes of Joy Sanct & FacebookLive	10-12 Grocery Cards-	Noon- Staff Mtg	/p Finance 7p PF Comm Zoom	10a In-person Worship
		Noon-12:30p Concert:	9a Meditation	9a Ginger Phone hours	1	9am Sunday School on
30	29	28	27	26	25	24
		7:15p Adult Choir- Sanctuary	3p Junior Choir 4p Cherub Choir			7p PF - outside
		Sanct & FacebookLive	Spencer House	7p Human Resources	Sanct	10a In-person Worship
		Noon-12:30p Concert:	9a Meditation	Noon- Staff Mtg	7 Confirmation -	9am Sunday School on Facebook Live
23	22	21	20	19	28	17
		7:15p Adult Choir- Sanctuary	3p Junior Choir 4p Cherub Choir		-	No PF
9	Sanct	Sanct & FacebookLive	10-12 Grocery Cards- Spencer House	7p ChurchCouncilZoom	Narthex 7p Parish Care Team	10a In-person Worship
3p Wedding-Sanct	4p Wedding Reh-	Noon-12:30p Concert:	9a Meditation	Noon- Staff Mtg	7p Business Comm-	9am Sunday School on Facebook Live
16	15	14	13	12	3	10
		,	7p Trustees of Enduring Gifts			-
		7:15p Adult Choir- Sanctuary	3p Junior Choir 4p Cherub Choir	7p Deacons		6:30p Pilgrim Fellowship CROP Walk
		30 Minutes of Joy Sanct & FacebookLive	10-12 Grocery Cards- Spencer House	6: 30p Music Comm	7p Confirmation-Sanct	In-person Sunday School outside
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Animals- Gfd Green	0	1		ה	_	3
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Thurs NA 7p GH Fri 7:30p AA- FH Sat. 7:30a AA- GH	Tues 7p <b>AA</b> - Room 9 Tues 7:30p Alanon-CH			17(	ctober 20	Octo
Wed 10a Alanon-FH Wed 7p Mens AA Rm9 Wed 7:30p-GH	12 Step Groups: Sun 7:15a AA-GH Sun 1p NA - GH					
Saturday	Friday	Thursday	Wednesday	Tuesday	Monday	Sunday



### First Congregational Church 122 Broad Street Guilford, CT 06437 203-453-5249 office@firstchurchguilford.org

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return this sheet to the address above. Thank you.

Please email articles to landmark@firstchurchquilford.org

DEADLINE for the NOVEMBER 2021 ISSUE:

October 15th

THE LANDMARK editor: Jeanie Cacopardo

Vol. 67, No. 10 October 2021

THE LANDMARK

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First Congregational Church Clergy and Staff

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