



# *June 2019*

## *First Congregational Church*

### *Highlights Newsletter*

"I praise you God, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made! Wonderful are your works, that I know very well." – Psalm 139:14

"Treat others as you would want to be treated. This is the meaning of the Law and the Prophets" –  
Matthew 7:12

This month of June brings two related celebrations for the church:

1. Pride Month, celebrating the diversity of sexual and gender orientations with which humans are created.
  - The Walla Walla Pride March will once again begin and end at our church, Saturday June 22, at 10:30am.
  - This is a good opportunity to acknowledge that our church is approaching next year the 20th anniversary of becoming Open & Affirming.
  - We're planning a series of classes to discuss faithful approaches to Christian commitment and the Bible that are affirming of diverse sexual and gender orientations. Stay tuned for announcement of dates.
2. A new cohort of middle school youth has graduated from our "Our Whole Lives" sexuality and faith education program. We are extremely proud of these brave and good-hearted young people. And we are very grateful to our facilitators – Margaret and Matthew Thomas, Cindi Abbott, and Rachel Elfenbein.
  - Here are the guiding values of the United Church of Christ's Our Whole Lives program:
    - Every person is entitled to dignity and self-worth
    - We respect other people because they are equal to us, as beloved children of the living God,
    - We need to avoid double standards. Women and men of all ages, people of different races, backgrounds, income levels, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientations must have equal value and rights.
    - Sexual relationships should never be coercive or exploitative.
    - Sexuality in our society is damaged by violence, exploitation, alienation, dishonesty, abuse of power, and the treatment of persons as objects.
    - We are called to enrich our lives by expressing sexuality in ways that enhance human wholeness and fulfillment and express love, commitment, delight and pleasure.
    - All persons have the right and obligation to make responsible sexual choices, in ways that are appropriate to them, and to their age and stage of development.

Peace,  
Pastor Nathaniel



This past Sunday I had the delightful opportunity to hold Sunday school with our intermediate (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> grade) kids. We were discussing *Matthew 3: 16-17*, the story of the River Jordan, Jesus, John the Baptist, the dove, and God saying “this is my Son, with whom I am well pleased.” Our kids provided insightful commentary on how it feels when someone is truly proud of us. We then brainstormed ways that we might support those around us – friends, classmates, teammates, neighbors- who perhaps don’t hear “I’m proud of you” on a regular basis. The green shoots of our church are a precious treasure, and I can’t wait to see how their values, spirit and bountiful gifts will mix with the pathways before them.

I’m also very proud of our church. You all are part of the wonderful growth and opportunity that is unfolding before us. Young teens who are learning in-depth about healthy sexuality from caring and committed instructors of our OWL (*Our Whole Lives*) program; a youth ministry that is receiving a timely infusion of resources and energy from a special Christian Education committee so we can better support the spiritual development of FCC’s next generations; the exploration of improved signage to better welcome people into the physical space of our church community; on-going ministries of Wednesday Soup Lunch, the Christian Aid Center, and Helpline; the widely supported initiative that will raise solar panels to our church roof by summer’s end; spiritual support of our covenant groups; and the on-going partnerships that our faith community maintains with the recovery, LGBTQ, immigrant, arts, and environmental interests that add life and vitality to our valley.

In the coming weeks our church leadership will begin preparations for next year’s budget, which will encompass the priorities of our faith community in the coming year and beyond. Please add your voice to this important process by working with our trustees, deacons, officers and committees. While our future is bright, it is highly dependent upon each of us working and sharing together. It is exciting to imagine how the decisions we make in the coming months might ripple out well into the future of our church, and our world.

Proudly,  
JR

## Potluck hosted by Covenant Groups

**Sunday, June 30th after worship**

Bring your favorite main dish, side dish or dessert. Coffee and juice will be provided.

**Come One, Come All!**





# Greetings from your Deacons!

As the season changes, we celebrate and express gratitude for what we are leaving behind and we anticipate and plan for the new beginnings ahead. Our choir has ended its season and we are so grateful! We celebrate graduations! The end of the school year. We anticipate and plan for sunny summer days, vacations, camping, swimming. We lean in to summer. It feels like a creative time, to regroup, think about what will best serve our family, how to use this new-found sense of freedom and how do we best enjoy these long warm summer days. Time to take a breath!

The deacons are taking a breath as well. A little lull, while we continue to nurture and celebrate the life of this church, the good work and the good news!

We look forward to the coffee hours being hosted by various committees of the church.

June--Mission and Social Concerns

July—Trustees

August—Christian Education

September—Nominating and Pastoral Advisory

We are grateful to the committees for hosting this fellowship. Be sure to chat with them to find out what wonderful work their committee is planning! In October, we will begin recruiting hosts from the congregation at large again.

This summer, the deacons will be planning the Annual Picnic in the Park for September 8<sup>th</sup>. This will also mark the beginning of Sunday School and the FCC Choir. Be sure to save the date.

Might you be interested to know more about membership in First Congregational Church? A New Member Inquirer Class is scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>, after the church service. Pastor Nathaniel and members of the church are happy to meet with anyone interested. We will share information and answer any questions. We hope to see you there.

The deacons have been reviewing our responsibilities and duties. One area we would like to provide more oversight and opportunity is visitations and nurturing the members and friends we do not see on a regular basis or seeing the needs in our midst. Linnea Keatts and Lucy Linker have begun a subcommittee to address the issue with the deacons. This is a work in progress. We want also to ask your help. If you see a need or concern for a member or friend of the church which is not being met, please speak to Pastor Nathaniel or one of your deacons. If you find yourself in need, please let us know. Help us to be the loving, caring community we are called to be. Remember to provide acts of kindness and share your time and talents. We are all called to ministry.

May God hold you in the palm of her hand and give you peace. Judy Chacon, Deacons Chair

## New Member



## Inquiry Class

Feeling led to explore what it means to join our church as a member?

Join Pastor Nathaniel and current members on **Sunday, June 2nd** after worship to discuss and learn.

If you are interested but unable to make it, please let us know!



## *A Note of Thanks to Our Choir*

Many thanks and much appreciation for all of the glorious music that you've blessed us with over the past months.

Have a great Summer break! Looking forward to your return in September.



### **The Pastor Will Be Away**

Pastor Nathaniel will be out of town attending the National UCC Synod in Milwaukee, **Thursday, June 20th through Wednesday, June 26th.**

If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Nathaniel at 525-8753 or [pastor@fcchurch.net](mailto:pastor@fcchurch.net), for more information.

Also....Irina continues to be away and will return on Tuesday, June 11th. We hope that she is finding some closure and look forward to having her back with us.



# 2019 N-SID-SEN CAMP & RETREAT CENTER Lake Coeur d'Alene

## Spring Retreats

Clergy Retreat	April 22-24	"Coming Together"
Women's Retreat	May 17-19	"Weave us Together"
Work Camp	June 10-15	"Working Together"

## Summer Camps

Curriculum Theme: "Peace Works, Empowering the next generation of Peacemakers"

Intermediate Camp (Entering Grades 5-6)

July 7~ July 13

Junior High Camp (Entering 7th, 8th, 9th grades)

July 7~ July 13

Kid's Camp (Entering Grades 2-4)

July 14 ~ July 17

Senior High Camp (Entering Grades 10-Entering College)

July 14 ~ July 20

Emerging Adult Retreat

July 19 ~ July 21

Family Camp #1

July 20 ~ August 3

Family Camp #2 aka Camp Together

August 4 ~ August 10

## Fall Retreat

Fall Youth Event (Jr. & Sr. High)

September 20 ~ September 22

## Registering

If you're interested in attending one or more of these camp experiences, It's easy! Just log onto [www.n-sid-sen.org](http://www.n-sid-sen.org) and click on the camp you wish to attend and then "Register for this session". It's THAT easy!





## Petunia Planters from left to right:

Jane Drabek  
Theo Gryler  
Kellen Van Slyke  
Myles Pira  
Priscilla  
Ingebrigtsen



## Planting Petunias

This annual youth service project and gift to the congregation provides an opportunity to have a discussion about Earth care. The youngsters hope their flowers bring joy to pedestrians and drivers who stop at Palouse and Alder.



THANK YOU TO OUR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS

The last day of Sunday  
School will be June 9th.

During the summer  
months, childcare will be  
available during worship  
for children through 2nd  
grade.

Thank you to those who  
cared for our children  
and taught them about having God in our  
lives and his love for us.

You all hold an important role here and  
we appreciate you ~ enjoy your Summer!



"Let the  
little children  
come to me ...."

## Welcome Elise!

Elise Gryler will be helping with the  
childcare during the summer months  
until she has to leave for college.

We will start looking for a new teacher  
as we near the end of summer.

OWL has reached the end of a  
second successful year of classes!

Thank You to:  
Matt & Margaret Thomas  
Cindi Abbott and Rachel Elfenbein, who  
bravely volunteered to tackle a very  
important and, at times, awkward topic.





## Oh! The Places You'll Go!

"You have brains in your head.  
You have feet in your shoes.  
You can steer yourself any direction you  
choose." — Dr. Seuss

Graduating High School: Elise Gryler

Graduating Middle School: Ave Kirtley  
Zoe Leonard  
Claire LaVille

### Congratulations!



## OWL-Our Whole Lives



On May 19th OWL graduates, parents and facilitators gathered to celebrate their journey through Our Whole Lives sexuality education.

The nine youth who completed the program this year did so with great courage, humor, curiosity, maturity, candor, creativity and grace. We are extremely honored and proud to have shared in the exploration of the both complex and fundamental issues of human sexuality with these bright souls!

We will recognize their success during service June 2nd, and rejoice in knowing that they will go forth into the world carrying with them OWL's core values of self-worth, sexual health, responsibility, and justice and inclusivity.



## COVENANT GROUPS



We have come to the end of the season for Covenant Groups. It was a wonderful year for the Thursday morning group. We met every two weeks for eight months, shared some laughs, tears joys, and insights. In the end, we found that we had become dear friends and had some added strengths and stability born of our conversations.

I urge you to consider joining a Covenant Group next fall. I promise that you will find it time well-spent. ~Lee Coleman



## MEN'S BREAKFAST

9:00 am  
Saturday, June 8th

**All men are invited!**  
**We're saving a seat just for you!**

There is something  
profoundly satisfying about  
sharing a meal. Eating  
together, breaking bread  
together, is one of the  
oldest and most  
fundamentally unifying of  
human experiences.

Barbara Coloroso

[www.STOREMYPIC.COM](http://www.STOREMYPIC.COM)



## *Dances of the Universal Peace*

**No Dances in June**

Everyone is invited! The Dances are  
simple, and easy-to-learn circle  
dances. We use sacred phrases,  
chants, movements, and music from  
the world's wisdom traditions.

~ Led by Rena Coon

## Open Coffee With the Rev.

Tuesday, June 4th

8:00am-10:00am

Olive

Pastor Nathaniel is looking forward  
to visiting with whomever wants to  
drop by and talk about life. Stop by  
and have a chat!



"Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men. Our hope for creative living lies in our ability to reestablish the spiritual needs of our lives in personal character and social justice. Without this spiritual and moral awakening we shall destroy ourselves in the misuse of our own instruments." ~Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.



# Church



# Happenings



Courtney Kress Van Slyke, Nikki Gryler, Terry Rice, and Pastor Nathaniel sharing an enriching and inspiring experience at the Pacific Northwest Conference Annual Meeting at 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church of Bellevue.

There was opportunity to meet and learn with the other two churches the Strengthen the Church Program, with Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear, Conference Minister on Church Vitality. Shared worship was creative and reviving. The Conference engaged with important conversations

around racism in the church. The Conference voted to support urgent public efforts to stem catastrophic climate change. Ask Courtney, Nikki, or Terry for more of their perspectives.

## Solar Panel Project

We have had an amazing response to this project from members, friends, and the community!

We are over half way there already.

To those who has given financially, those who have given of their time, and those who have supported us in spirit -Thank You !

It's not too late to adopt a panel if you would like to. A panel costs \$155.67, you may adopt a whole panel, or part of one.

Pictured: J.R. Van Slyke & Dr. Eric Gryler





# Christian Aid Dinner

Sunday, May 19th, 2019



We met at 3:45 on Sunday, May 19, prepared to cook dinner for the guests at the Christian Aid Center. We had a crew of all ages: Jenn, Oliver and Kirby Rickard, Jill and Eliza Juers, and Lee Coleman. Doug Juers arrived later with Henry to help cook and serve. Jenn engineered a casserole that was a huge hit. It included rice, ground pork, peppers and olives, cheese sauce, tomatoes, and hot sauce. Jill and Eliza prepared steamed broccoli, cooked carrots and cucumbers. Oliver and Kirby polished apples and selected and sliced a host of cakes and pies. We served well over 60 guests, and scraped the bottom of every serving dish. We also served about 25 folks from the women's shelter across the street. One gentleman wanted to express his thanks for hosting the 12 Step programs that he has been attending for decades. He said "your church saved my life".

Over the Summer Courtney Van Slyke will be seeking volunteers to cook these dinners. She would love to have a few volunteers!







This is a early reminder to think about joining a Dinner Group when sign-ups begin in September.

There were 3 dinner groups this past year. My husband, Ron, and I participated in 2. Start a conversation with Melissa & Johnathan Webster, Gwyn Frasco, Becky & Sam Kirtley, Courtney Kress-Van Slyke, Cheryl Pira or Heidi & Kyle McFarley and ask them to share their experiences in the laughter, good food and making new friends. It's a wonderful way to "feed our souls" and help us on our journey of faith at First Congregational.

All adults are welcome and encouraged to participate in the dinner groups. The "rules" are simple. In each group one person/couple rotates hosting each month. They prepare the main entree and the others fill in with a vegetable, appetizer, dessert, etc. It's a BYOB, if you wish.

**Look for the announcement in the fall to sign-up for the 2019/2020 season!**

Have a great summer! ~ Judy Gibbs

**Pride March: from Stonewall to Walla Walla**

**Saturday June 22, 10:30am**

**First Congregational Church of Walla Walla Parking Lot**

On Saturday, June 22nd we will unite as a community in honor of the giants upon whose shoulders we stand today. We will celebrate the victories that have been hard fought and secured over the last five decades. We will stand up against injustice against our community and stand in solidarity with other groups that march with us.

After the march, we will come back together to connect with community resources, register to vote and to celebrate the diversity that pride represents. We warmly invite you to join us!





**Newsletter Submissions**

**Deadline**

*Tuesday, June 18th*

**Please plan on having your submissions in by that date.**



To share your pictures, events, happenings, stories, jokes... Please

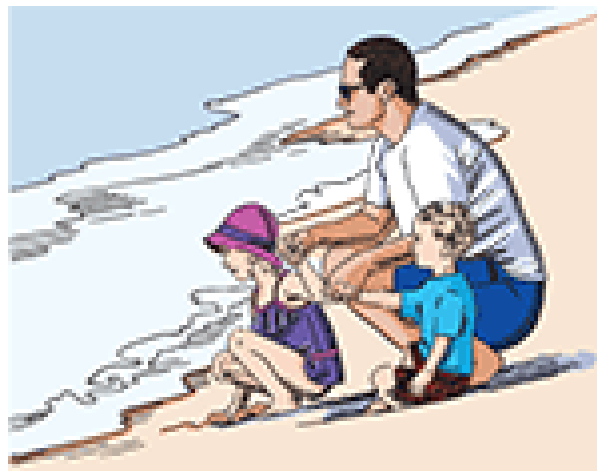
*June 2019*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### VOUCHERS

**Please have your vouchers turned in by the dates indicated above.**  
**Thanks!**

**Sunday, June 16th**



**Happy Father's Day!**



**Trustees Meeting**  
Wednesday, June 12, 6:00 pm

**Council Meeting**  
Sunday, June 16, 11:30 am

**Deacons Meeting**  
Wednesday, June 12, 6:30 pm



## Summer Music

With our choir off for the summer, we can **always** use special donations to help us bring guest musicians to worship.

Just put "Summer Music" on the memo line of your check, on an envelope for cash OR go to the green **Online Giving** tab at our website:

[www.firstchurchuccww.org](http://www.firstchurchuccww.org)



# Online Giving

Electronic Giving is a convenient, consistent way to help our church grow.



Consider scheduling a recurring electronic contribution today. You won't need to write checks and prepare envelopes every week. And even when you can't attend services, your contribution will arrive without delay.

If you do not use a computer or are just not comfortable setting up an online contribution, we can help you with setting up an alternate method of automatic contribution.

Ask for an authorization form in the church office, our office hours are Tuesday through Friday, 9am-2pm, or visit our website at [www.firstchurchuccww.org](http://www.firstchurchuccww.org).

If you have questions, please contact us at 525-8753 or [office@fcchurch.net](mailto:office@fcchurch.net)



## SUMMER IN THE MINNESOTA WILDERNESS

My dog Chip and I will soon leave to drive the 1550 miles to our wilderness camp on Cedar Lake near Ely, Minnesota. This will be my 62nd season running our camp. Last summer we had well over 100 young people spending time in tents, swimming, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, and exploring... all without any of their tech devices ... and busy changing their lives in big ways or small ones. I hope this summer will be as successful. Once again Chip and I hope to write adventure pieces for Highlights. Any of you are most welcome to visit or stay for a bit. And we love snail mail (or email works, too) Lee Coleman



# Hats Off to our Volunteers

## A Great Way to Serve

### Liturgist

June 2	Jonathan Webster
June 9	Gwyn Frasco
June 16	Laurie Logsdon
June 23	Open
June 30	Open

### Coffee Hour

June	Mission & Social Concerns
July	Trustees
August	Christian Education
September	Nominating & Pastoral Advisory

Sign-up sheets are available in the atrium each Sunday following worship or you may call the office at 525-8753.

## Volunteer Opportunity

Christian Aid Center has the following openings:

Childcare Helper (Thursday mornings)  
Women's Bible Study Leader (Monday am)  
Receptionist (Tuesday mornings)  
Registered Nurses (Thursdays)

For more information, contact Jeannette Regalado, Volunteer Coordinator, at 525-7153 ext. 114.

You can fill out a volunteer application at [christianaidcenter.org](http://christianaidcenter.org).

Thank you for your help!

Jeannette Regalado  
Volunteer & Donor Relations  
Christian Aid Center  
(509) 525-7153 ext. 114

## Another Great Way to Serve Wednesday Soup Lunch

### Soup Makers

June 5	Elise O'Connell
June 12	Open
June 19	Open
June 26	Open

Sign-up sheets are available in the atrium each Sunday following worship, as well as, in the kitchen or you may call the office at 525-8753.



"In every community, there is work to be done.

In every nation, there are wounds to heal.

In every heart, there is the power to do it."

— Marianne Williamson



In order to protect the privacy of our members and friends, we do not display personal information in the web version



You can read Pastor Nathaniel's sermons in his online blog at:  
<https://thedandelionwayblog.wordpress.com>  
 Or hear them on our website at:  
[www.firstchurchuccww.org](http://www.firstchurchuccww.org).



## First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

### Ministerial Leadership

Minister Rev. Nathaniel Mahlberg

### 2019 Church Officers

Moderator	J. R. Van Slyke
Past Moderator	Mary Wilen
Vice Moderator	Jennifer Rickard
Clerk	Larry Frank
Treasurer	Kim Croft
Financial Sec.	Bernie Newman
Asst. Fin. Sec.	Jonathan Webster
Head Usher	Sam Kirtley
Diaconate	Judy Chacon
Christian Ed	Dot Willis
Trustees	Dana Taggart
Mission/Social Concern	Heidi McFarley
Music	Open
... and Affirming	Open

### Staff

Office Manager	Gayle Kubrock
Bookkeeper	Kim Croft
Custodian	Irina Kostenko
Organist	Jackie Wood
Choir Director	Julie Jones
Webmaster	Emily Asmus

### Church Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday  
 9 am - 2 pm

### Pastoral Assistance

Church Office 525-8753  
 Rev. Nathaniel Mahlberg  
 (608) 469-1406

*We celebrate our diversity as an expression of God's Creative love. We welcome persons of all age, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and physical and mental ability.*