



First Congregational Church

Highlights Newsletter

February 2019

“Indeed, there is abundant space in Your paradise. Yet there is nothing idle in it. Instead everything is full of fruit. Praise to you, God, the delight of eternal paradise” – from Ode 11 of the Odes of Solomon, an early Christian book of worship.

Probably the most helpful thing I can do with your gracious attention right now is direct you to what J.R. Van Slyke and Judy Chacon share on the next couple pages, from their vantage as the Moderator and Chairperson of the Deacon’s, respectively.

Otherwise, let me share some about the fruits of last month’s Church Vitality Retreat. Four-dozen folks were there. There was great insight, energy, commitment. There were deepening connections with one another, with the ways our church is already vital, with the ways we can grow more vital – and above all, a deepening connection with God.

Several folks said, “We should have retreats like this more often!”

Yes, let’s!

There was a lot of appreciation for what all makes this a special community of faith, qualities to lift up and give thanks for and celebrate.

Just to name a few: The power of the choir and musicians; The space for prayerful stillness; The commitment to an open-minded and non-judgmental faith; The commitment to justice and fairness; The embrace of tough questions, honoring the head as well as the heart and soul; The centrality of divine love over dogma; The rich experiences of serving in the church’s ministries; The ways the church is a resource for community groups seeking healing and justice...

There were also rich insights into growing edges we’d do well to engage with.

Among them:

Strengthening the church’s culture of caring for one another – cultivating an open culture for sharing and caring for one another’s needs and hurts, and ensuring that there aren’t folks who are overlooked.

Amplifying expressions of gratitude for all the ways that so many folks give to and through the church.

Having more education in the Bible and adult religious formation.

Growing more partnerships outside the church, as well as with all the groups who use the church.

There’s so much more to say! This is not at all exhaustive. I’ve sent out full notes via “Midweek Moment” emails and am happy to share them to anyone who wants. We’ll soon have a more digestible summary. And, as I started by saying, your lay leaders are helping us all keep focus.

May we draw from our shared strengths to keep growing, fed by the light of God’s grace.

Peace,
Pastor Nathaniel



Moderator's Missive

It has been an important year in the life of First Congregational Church of Walla Walla. While not the stuff of memories, perhaps, our stewardship campaign was a tremendous success that will likely reverberate throughout the months and years to come. Church leadership set a budget goal that reflected a revenue increase of over 20% year over year, and our congregation came through in a manner that met our goal, and then some. It is a solemn duty of the church leadership to anticipate, request and manage the resources of this church. I am grateful to all for the prayer, trust, and deliberation that has attended each step of this process. I trust God will continue to guide us in the fellowship, programs, and charity that these resources will make possible through our faith community in the year to come.

In 2019, we can anticipate a faith community that plans to engage its membership and community more fully, pursue a more robust youth ministry program, offer growing support to those who have fallen on challenging times, and explore more sustainable options for our church energy needs.

These are encouraging times for First Congregational Church, and it is a true blessing to have you as part of this great church family. I look forward to another year of working with all of you.

Sincerely,
J.R. Van Slyke

SKI FOR LIGHT

During the week of January 26 to February 3, three of the First Congregational family will be at 8000 feet in the Colorado Rockies guiding blind cross country skiers. Fifteen years ago Lee Coleman began guiding for SFL each winter. Three years ago Bernie Newman signed on, and this year Larry Frank will be a guide.

About 125 blind skiers will attend, and each will be matched with a sighted guide. We ski all day on the trails at Snow Mountain Ranch, the YMCA of the Rockies. Each guide provides the eyes for the pair, and each skier, the inspiration. We have meals together, interest sessions, evening programs, and even a biathlon course. At least 50 guide dogs attend, but they aren't allowed on the ski trails, so dog walkers care for them during the days. The trails are set with double tracks. There are courses for beginners and some for advanced skiers. Ski for Light is 100% volunteer ... everyone pays his way, shares in the work and in the camaraderie. When Larry, Bernie and Lee return, they will have represented FCC well and will certainly have tales to tell! ~Lee Coleman



Greetings from your Deacons!

In our endeavor to reach out to our congregation, the deacons created a CARD BOX. Whether a note of celebration, a get well wish, in sympathy, a missing you or thinking of you, even a thank you, reach for a card to send to members and friends of the congregation. This is a way of holding them close in our hearts and letting them know we are thinking of them. This can be done individually or as a group. The CARD BOX will be available Sundays, after service, at the coffee hour. Place the name on the envelope, place the card in the MAILBOX basket. Gayle will address and mail the card. The deacons will provide the stamp or may hand deliver if we are visiting. Thank you for using the CARD BOX!

February 17th, Mark Boyd, the director of our church camp at **N-Sid-Sen** on Lake Coeur d'Alene will be visiting us and preaching. We hope to have a presentation or a question and answer after the service regarding N-Sid-Sen. Have you ever attended church camp? Received the healing of being on the water, hiking through nature, songs around the campfire, worship in the outdoors, a sky full of stars? Consider church camp in your plans this year. Camp videos are available online at www.n-sid-sen.org as well as registration. Camp schedules are available online, in the church office or in the atrium.

Thank you all for a rich and engaging Church Vitality Retreat! Hearing all of our voices come together, thinking and dreaming about the direction and growth of our church, was very exciting! May the Holy Spirit continue to work and move through this body in all that we do.

In Peace and Love,
Judy Chacon, Chair of the Board of Deacons





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 and click on the camp you wish to attend and then "Register for this session". It's THAT easy!

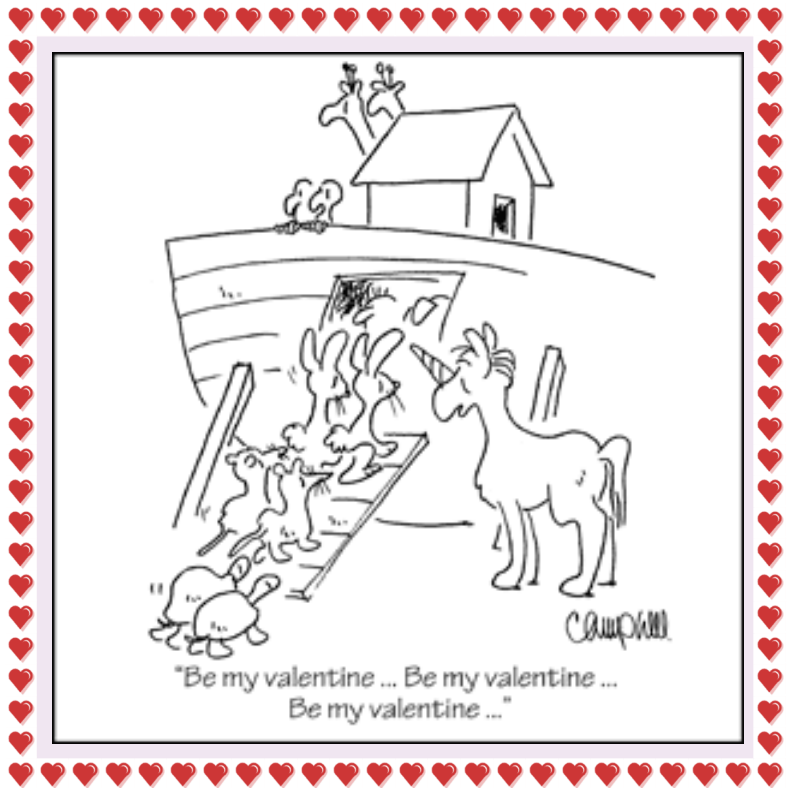
What Is Love?

"When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love."

~ Rebecca, age 8

"If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend you don't like."

~ Nikka, age 6



OUR WHOLE LIVES (OWL)

Sunday, February 3, 2:00-4:00pm

- ♦ Sexuality & Disability

Sunday, February 10, 1:30-5:30pm

- ♦ Healthy Relationships
- ♦ Relationship Skills

Sunday, February 24, 2:00-4:00pm

- ♦ Bullying & Bystander Responsibilities

Sunday, March 3, 2:00-4:00pm

- ♦ Redefining Abstinence



Dinner Groups

We have 3 dinner groups at this time, with an opportunity to start many more. Those of us who have been in groups since the fall have thoroughly enjoyed sharing a more intimate opportunity to get to know others in our community. You don't have to be a member of First Congregational to participate. Friends and neighbors are always welcome, if there is room in your home. Or, you may consider in meeting at one of our many great restaurants!

The dinner groups meet in members' homes, rotating on a monthly basis. The host chooses the entree and the other folks provide appetizers, salads, and/or desserts.

If you are interested in joining a dinner group, please contact Judy Gibbs by calling (505)876-2387

or

email judysue2018@gmail.com.

Hope to hear from you!
Judy Gibbs

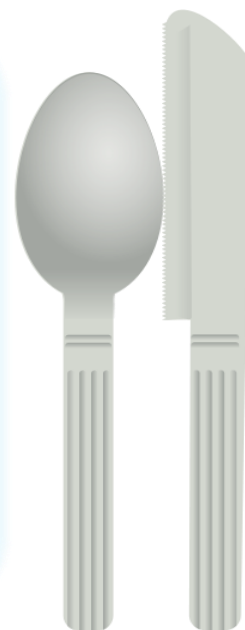
What nicer thing can you do for somebody than make them breakfast?
~Anthony Bourdain



Men's Breakfast

Saturday, February 9th at 9:00am

All the men (members, friends, and visitors) in our church family are invited to share breakfast on the second Saturday of each month. All you have to do is show up and be ready to enjoy the fellowship.



Dances of the Universal Peace

Thursday, February 14th
7:00 pm—8:00 pm
Chapel

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, February 5th
8:00am-10:00am
Olive Restaurant

Pastor Nathaniel is looking forward to visiting with whomever wants to drop by and talk about life, God, the universe, everything, or nothing special



**"If you want to go quickly, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together."**
~African Proverb



The people who come to enjoy our Soup Lunch at FCC on Wednesdays from 11am to 1pm need used coats, jackets, socks, shirts, etc. If you have any clothes that are slightly used and would like to donate them to the FCC Clothing Drive, the kitchen crew will see to it that these clothes go to those who need them.

Our Wednesday lunch guests are welcome to check the Welcome Wardrobe closet in the Fellowship Hall for clothing items that they need.

You may bring your donations to church on Sunday, or bring them in on Wednesday mornings, or call Laurie Manahan at 525-2072

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.

~Martin Luther King, Jr.



Trustees Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 6:00pm

Council Meeting

Sunday, February 24, 11:30 am

Deacons Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 6:30 pm



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

**Tuesday, February
19th**

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



February 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		

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

~ John 13:34-35

Our Sincerest Appreciation to the boards & committee members listed below, who work hard behind the scenes to help make our church run smoothly.

The following Officers will begin or continue another 2-year term:

Moderator -	J.R. Van Slyke
Vice Moderator -	Jen Rickard
Treasurer -	Kim Croft
Financial Secretary -	Bernie Newman
Asst. Financial Secretary -	Jonathan Webster
Head Usher -	Sam Kirtley

2019 SLATE FOR BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Members of boards and committees serve a 3-year term ending January of the year following their name

Trustees:

Dana Taggart	2021
Michael Gillespie	2021
Doug Taggart	2021
Sarah McClure	2021
Emily Asmus	2021
Gail Nielson	2021
Mary Wilen	2020

Diaconate:

Judy Chacon	2020
Melissa Webster	2022
Dot Willis	2022
Sue Lundgren	2020
Linda Schopp	2020
Art Davila	2020
Annie Charnley Eveland	2020
Paulette Newman	2021
Terry Rice	2021
Linnea Keatts	2022
Judy Gibbs	2022
Jackie Wood	2020
Lucy Linker	2022
Mary Wilen	2020
Julie Jones	No Term Expiration

Mission and Social Concerns:

Heidi McFarley	2020
Courtney Kress Van Slyke	2022
Sue Denman	2020
Bart Preecs	2020
Nicole Gryler	2020
Punky Adams	2021
Priscilla Ingebrigtsen	2022
Beth Call	2021

Music:

Steve Wilen	2021
Parke Thomas	2020
Mary Ann Piver	2020

Christian Education:

Dot Willis	2021
Linda Schopp	2021
Margaret Thomas	2020
Gwyn Frasco	2020
Cheryl Pira	2022

...And Affirming:

This committee is reorganizing...

Pastoral Advisory

Nicole Gryler	2021
Steve Wilen	2021
Carolyn Dietzman	2021
Galen Unruh	2022

Nominating Committee:

Becky Kirtley	2021
Melissa Webster	2021
Courtney Kress	2021
Jennifer Rickard	2022

Thank you for your service as board & committee members over the past three years. Your work has helped make us better.

Trustees

Jean Pennington

Diaconate

Daniel Taggart

Mission and Social Concerns

Lee Coleman

Christian Education

Tara Wyrembelski

Jennifer Rickard

...and Affirming

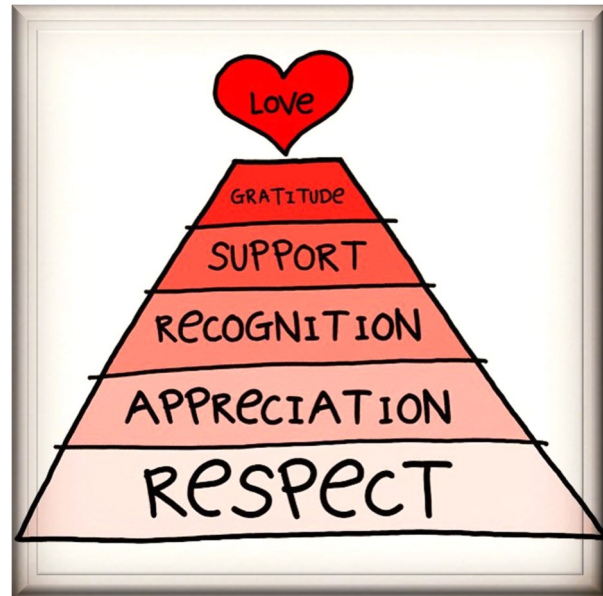
Will Lambert

Lisa Anderson

Tara Wyrembelski

Pastoral Advisory

Jonathan Webster



Invite a Neighbor to Church

...Or a friend
.....Or a loved one
.....Or a stranger



During our Church Vitality Retreat, when asked, "How is the life of the church nourishing you spiritually?", a bunch of folks sung the praises of the choir!

Our dear and dedicated group of singers help us to pray, help us to worship, to feel awe, stillness, mystery.

Thank you to:

**Our Dedicated & Inspirational
First Congregational Church Musicians**

Jackie Wood, piano/organ Julie Jones, Director Phil Lynch, guitar

Our Choir:	Holly Cranston	Stefanie Crumpacker-Flerchinger	Annie Charnley Eveland
	Gwyn Frasco	Brenden Koch	Audrey Renaud
	Terry Rice	Linda Schopp	Joyce Schwenke
	Elsa	David Wassenaar	Kieron Wassenaar
	Jonathan Webster	Melissa Webster	

Here is what members of the choir say about what they do:

We are faithful to arrive at 8:30 each Sunday morning to learn our music, appropriately chosen by Julie to meld with the message of Pastor Nathaniel. ~ Audrey

Choir is a group of enthusiastic singers who gather Sunday mornings to learn the music that compliments, gives more depth and meaning to and enhances the pastor's sermon that day. ~ Annie

When we have a choir, we have a new song in our mouths, a hymn of praise to our God. ~ Kieron

.... Being in the choir is a sacrament like communion. It binds us together and brings us closer to God. ~ Melissa

I often think how much the music we sing enhances my Sunday church experience. --and often at other times a certain song we've sung will come back to me. ~ Gwyn

I don't know where this came from, but I like "Those who sing pray twice." ~ Linda



Caught In The Act of Being The Church.....

CA Dinner 1-20-19

Eliza & Henry Juers

Two of the best helpers!



Church Vitality Retreat
1-12-19

Breaking bread together





Christian Aid Dinner

Sunday. January 20th, 2019



The first snowfall of the year. We were busy preparing the evening meal at the Christian Aid Center. When we arrived at 3:30, it was raining and chilly, but when dinner was almost ready to serve, the raindrops had turned to snowflakes and they were healthy and sticking. That weather scenario probably discouraged many guests from venturing to the Center but the hearty folks showed up, about 40 of them. There are usually 60-70 guests.

We had prepared three huge pans of a spaghetti casserole plus a pan of green beans and diced tomatoes, a green salad, sliced garlic bread, and a variety of cakes and pies. We piled plates high with spaghetti, and still they came back for more.

Preparing the dinner were Punkey Adams, Carolyn Dietzman, Jill, Eliza and Henry Juers and Lee Coleman. The two kids definitely stole the serving show. Eliza (6) and Henry (4) served the salad and bread, and by the time the guests reached the dessert table, many were smiling so much that they forgot to stop for cake.

If you decide to volunteer, it is more than OK to bring your kids!

Next meal is **Sunday, February 17**. Sign up on the poster after church. ~ Lee Coleman



Back Row Left to Right

Punky Adams
Jill Juers
Lee Coleman

Front Row Left to Right

Henry Juers
Eliza Juers

Not Pictured

Carolyn Dietzman



Willing to Serve

A Great Way to Serve

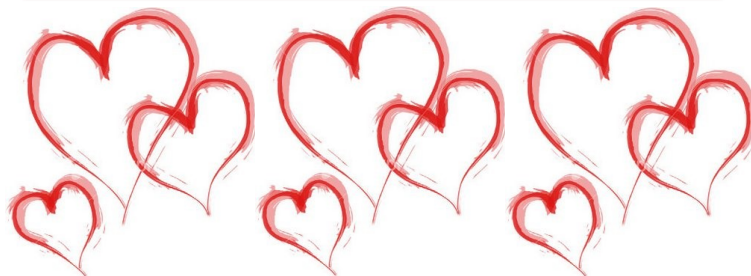
Liturgist

February 3	Bart Preecs
February 10	Annie Charnley Eveland
February 17	Open
February 24	Laurie Logsdon

Coffee Hour

February 3	Open
February 10	Jan Eyestone & Carolyn, Zoe & Eric Leonhard
February 17	Open
February 24	Open

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



Volunteers Needed

"Love Heals" Free Clinic Event Thursday, April 18th & Friday, April 19th

Don't have the time to commit to a long, overseas mission trip but have a passion to serve? How about a short mission trip in the Walla Walla Valley?

The "Love Heals Walla Walla" free clinic event is coming to the Walla Walla Fairgrounds on Thursday and Friday, April 18 and 19 and you are invited to be involved in this event! The clinic will offer free dental, vision, general medical, preventative and educational services to assist uninsured and under-insured people in our community. We need dental, vision & medical providers, as well as general volunteers to dedicate from 1-2 days of service. We currently have 100 volunteers and need 200 more.

Every Love Heals Free Clinic is made possible by the compassion and love of our volunteers. Register to volunteer by March 10 at www.lovehealswallawalla.org.

Thank you,
Brittany Mitchell
Love Heals, Local Clinic Director



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



Congratulations and Abundant Blessings in the coming year!

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.

"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."
~Martin Luther King Jr.

First Congregational Church United Church of Christ

Ministerial Leadership

Minister Rev. Nathaniel Mahlberg

2018 Church Officers

Moderator	J. R. Van Slyke
Past Moderator	Mary Wilen
Vice Moderator	Emily Asmus
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	Parke Thomas

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.