

First Congregational Church Highlights Newsletter November 2019



When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into their harvest.” – Matthew 9:36-38

This time of harvest and the end of harvest has long been deeply important and rich with meaning for shared human life. It seems this season as a church we are enjoying some fruitful harvests, which you can read about in this newsletter.

I would like to especially highlight the great enthusiasm with which the youth group has been launched. Margaret Thomas is leading them in the PeaceJam curriculum, developed by Nobel Prize Laureates, which we are adopting for a church setting. There are more than a dozen young folks involved so far. They decided to call themselves “The Fellowship of the Youth Underground,” in tribute to the basement space they have reclaimed in such a colorful way.

These weeks leading to Thanksgiving I’m going to do a sermon series about the harvest: The Sacred Harvest & the Realm of God.

Jesus used a lot of themes from harvest time in how he taught about the Realm of God.

So, these coming weeks, we’ll explore different aspects of what the harvest means for shared human life lived by the lights of the Realm of God.

10/27 The Sacred Harvest I: Labor & the Realm of God

11/3 The Sacred Harvest II: Death & the Realm of God

11/10 The Sacred Harvest III: Gleanings the Fields & the Realm of God

11/17 The Sacred Harvest IV: Fermented Grains, Fermented Fruits & the Realm of God

11/24 The Sacred Harvest V: Gratitude & the Realm of God

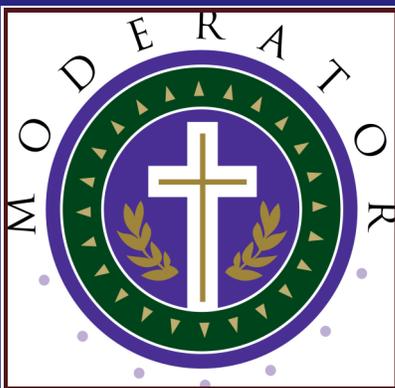
If you can’t come to church you can find recordings and transcripts online.

Be on the lookout for info about a Fermentation Workshop, as part of the November 17th sermon.

We’re working with Welcome Table Farm to do a hands-on teaching about sauerkraut making and fermentation in general. Then after we wash our hands we can puzzle out together why Jesus said the Realm of God is like fermentation.

Finally, no harvest season at church can be complete without a Stewardship Pledge Drive Campaign. Please consider prayerfully how you can contribute to the fruits of this community of faith this coming year. Letters and pledge cards have been mailed to members and friends, and are available in the sanctuary on Sundays. Thank you, as ever, for all you each, and in so many ways, do to make this a special community where Spirit of God is on the move.

Peace,
Pastor Nathaniel



Moderator's Missive

Dear Church Family,

Fall is here and we are particularly blessed by this year's Harvest at First Congregational Church. The Spirit is alive and well within our church, and blessings are flowing from many directions. We have a new youth ministry in place, a fully-functioning solar array atop our fellowship hall, a fresh stewardship season underway, new initiatives in the form of women's lunches, dinner groups, a *Mission & Social Concerns* fundraiser, Meaningful Movies, and performances at the Spire. The list goes on... New guests come to visit us most every week; heck, even our pets are feeling blessed. And let's not overlook the continued, steady leadership of our pastor, staff, boards and committees that design meaningful worship services, fellowship hours and potlucks, and care of our iconic facility. We have so much to be proud of at this moment. Thank you.

As I sit to write this month's installment, I am grateful for First Congregational Church, and I am also hoping that you will play a critical role in helping us maintain our momentum. **In the next week or two, I will be sending out an online survey (via SurveyMonkey), to provide an evaluation of Pastor Nathaniel's performance -and our overall church performance- in meeting your needs as part of our faith community.** This year's evaluation will be a little different in that it will arrive in each church member's email account as a simple online survey. The reason for this change is to conserve our precious human resources while obtaining anonymous and useful feedback as to how we are doing as a church. This change comes with two requests: One, please complete the survey when it arrives in your (electronic) mailbox. **Two: if the online format poses a problem for you, please contact me directly, or Gayle in the church office, and we will arrange for a traditional hard copy of the survey for you to complete.** Thank you in advance for working with this new style of inventory on how we are faring as a faith community.

Blessings,

JR

"May today there be peace within-

May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be...

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise, and love." ~St. Thérèse of Liseaux

Fall Greetings from your Deacons!

A Season of thanksgiving!



Thank you, Lord, for the beauty of our valley, the bounty of the harvest, friends and family. Thank you for a place to gather in your name, a place to feel at home. Thank you for the opportunity to welcome all who enter as our sisters and our brothers.

Coffee Hour Hosts! Everyone please select a Sunday to host the coffee hour! This need not be fancy, as simple as coffee, juice, crackers and cookies from the shelves of the cloister kitchen. It does require arriving a bit early, serving (helps to have two) and clean up after the coffee hour. There are many options if this feels a bit burdensome. **1** Ask someone to partner with you. **2** Write on the sign-up sheet your desire to have a partner. We will make sure a partner is provided. **3** Ask if someone else could get the coffee pot going for you that morning. **4** Always feel free to ask for help! Gayle, our church's Administrative Assistant, will email you a few days in advance as a reminder.

Inquirer's Class--Are you interested to know more about First Congregational Church? Who are we and where do we come from? Come join us after church, 11:30 am on November 3rd in the Fellowship Hall, for an Inquirer session. Pastor Nathaniel and others will gather to share our story and get acquainted. Hope to see you there. All are welcome.

Fall Decorating Party will be November 9th at 9:30 am in the Sanctuary. Great idea! Come early, at 9 am to support the Pancake breakfast, then proceed to decorate the sanctuary about 9:30 am. See more in the Highlights about the pancake breakfast. The more the merrier!

Sharing our bounty! Bring canned or dry goods! We will gather donations of food through the month of November for the Pantry Shelf, a community food pantry. Pantry Shelf was established in 1972 through the efforts of 6 local churches. First Congregational Church was one of the six and continues its support of the Pantry Shelf as one of our missions. Bring your donations to the sanctuary or the church office. **Note:** Donations to the soup kitchen are gratefully accepted as always. To distinguish soup kitchen donations, please label as 'soup kitchen' or deliver to the kitchen at First Congregational Church.

Do not be surprised if our sanctuary Christmas tree shows up the weekend following Thanksgiving. It so happens December 1st is the first Sunday of Advent! We will decorate the tree and sanctuary for the Christmas season on December 7th, 9:30 am. Linnea Keatts, Linda Schopp and Gwyn Frasco are leading the Christmas decorating. Mark your calendar and plan to join us!

If it is helpful in making your holiday plans, note these dates on your calendar. Time and place to be announced at a later date.

- First Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 1
- Decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas, Saturday, December 7
- Ladies Lunch, Monday, December 9
- Christmas Pageant, Sunday, December 15
- Christmas Caroling and Party, Sunday, December 22
- Christmas Eve Service, Tuesday, December 24

Blessings to you and your loved ones this Holiday Season!

~Judy Chacon





Día de los Muertos

Day of the Dead

Honoring the Dead and Celebrating Life

Sunday, November 3rd, our Youth Group invites you to join their celebration of Día de los Muertos.

This holiday is a tradition in rural Mexico. Altars and gravesites are adorned with flowers, especially marigolds, candles and floral wreaths. Small plates of favorite foods of the deceased are also commonly placed on the altars.

On Saturday, November 2nd, our Youth Group will decorate the atrium and bake a special bread, *pan de muertos*. They will also create a colorful *ofrenda* or altar in the atrium to honor deceased family, friends and pets.

Won't you join us again this year by using this lovely celebration from our neighbors in Mexico to honor those you wish to remember? Bring photographs, flowers, and other remembrances. Marigolds are traditional flowers for this holiday but any flowers are welcome. Also you may bring a favorite food of the person you are honoring.

Contact Jane Drabek (529-7589 or jdrabek@charter.net) for additional information.





Theatre at the Spire

Friday, November 1st, 7:00 pm

First Congregational Church

and

Harper Joy Theater

Present a reading of

Our Town

by Thornton Wilder

A Talk Back discussing *Our Town* and the December production of *Ripe Frenzy* will follow the reading.

Free Public Event

Donations to help support the Wednesday Soup Lunch Ministry will be gladly accepted.

Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, November 9th-8:00am-11:00 am

**\$8 for adults, \$5 for kids,
Family rate - \$25**

MENU

Traditional pancakes and
Gluten free pancakes

Maple syrup + butter

Fresh fruit – sliced
apples, bananas, oranges

Fall apple topping for
pancakes

Coffee, tea and juice



Proceeds will support food security in Walla Walla, including the FCC Soup Lunch, Christmas Food and Gift Baskets, and other charitable organizations in our Valley.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WALLA WALLA
73 S. PALOUSE STREET
WALLA WALLA**



Christian Education



Plans for the children's Christmas Pageant have begun for December 15 performance. Practices for the songs by groups of children will begin in November after church.

Parents please fill out the Sunday School registration forms and turn them into box on signup table at church or give them to Dot Willis so we can contact you as to times of practices and rehearsals.

Believe it or not, a joyful Christmas is not far off and no one wants to miss out!



2019 Christmas Pageant Do You Hear What I Hear? Sunday, December 15th

Youth ages 2-12 are invited to participate.

Rehearsal time will take place in Sunday school during November, and dress rehearsal in the Sanctuary, Saturday December 14th from 9-10:30 am.

Please contact the office at 525-8753 or office@fcchurch.net or Emily Asmus at emily@welcometablefarm.com if your child is interested in participating!

~Emily

Christian Education



"Ch..ch..ch..changes! The Youth Room continues to undergo a colorful transformation ~ the backbone of the mural is complete! Yellow, orange, turquoise and purple rays emanate from a central source ~ the sun, spirit, being, God.



And outside, the natural world too continues its colorful transformation. Our Youth Group would like to help with the "leaf"ings that fall on your yard! We have big plans for further decorating the Youth Room, traveling to Eugene for the Pacific Northwest Regional PeaceJam conference this spring, and participating in the week-long ecumenical Sierra Service Project this summer, along with our friends at Pioneer Methodist. The funds generated from our raking service will help get us there! Look for a sign-up sheet in the atrium.

PeaceJam

PeaceJam kicked off on Sunday, October 27th! This exciting standards-based curriculum introduces young people to the lives and work of Nobel Peace Laureates in an interactive, hands-on format that fosters 21st century and leadership skills, Identity development, conflict resolution, service-learning, citizenship, and celebration of diversity.

PeaceJam's Impact

Positive Change. Powerful Impact.

- **1.25 million young people** worldwide have participated in PeaceJam programming.
- **PeaceJam Curriculum** has been implemented in over **20,000 schools in 39 countries**.
- **Hundreds of Youth Leadership Conferences** have been held, connecting young people directly with Nobel Peace Laureates.
- **Millions of new service projects** have been developed by PeaceJam youth activists addressing issues of violence and injustice.
- PeaceJam has **created thousands of new leadership and volunteer opportunities** for young people and adults in their local communities.

Impacts of PeaceJam programs include:

- Evaluations have shown that **incidents of violence decrease** in schools and community-based organizations where PeaceJam programs are implemented.
- Evaluations have shown that young people who participate in PeaceJam programs show statistically significant gains in:
 - **Academic skills & knowledge**
 - Moral development
 - **Understanding of social justice**
 - Life purpose
 - **Compassion, altruism & empathy**
 - Acceptance of diversity
 - **Increased school & community engagement**
 - Social emotional skills such as self-awareness, social awareness, and responsible decision-making
 - **Commitment to positive action**

The dates for PeaceJam are: October 27th, Nov. 3rd, 17th, 24th, December 8th, 15th, January 12th, 26th, February 9th, 23rd. All other Sundays are regular Youth Group.



LADIES LUNCH

On Monday, November 11th, a new program will begin at
First Congregational!

The second Monday of each month, the ladies in our church family will come together to enjoy a light lunch in the Atrium. The lunch is provided and a basket for donations will be available.

Following lunch we will enjoy different programs and activities. If you can only join us for lunch that is fine and if you can stay for the second hour for the program that's great!

We will explain more at our lunch in November about some ideas we came up with and would love to have your suggestions also. We will all have a lot of fun and are hopeful we will be able to do some things to reach out to others in our church family.

Please add your name to a sign-up sheet in the Atrium so we have an idea of how many we will have. If you forget or are unable to do so please don't let it stop you from joining us.

If you have any questions, call Becky Kirtley at 525-4144.
We look forward to seeing you on November 11 at noon.



www.meaningfulmovies.org

Social Justice Documentary Film,
and Community Discussion

Showing This Month

“Heist: Who Stole the American Dream?”

Saturday, November 16th, at 6:00 pm
First Congregational Church
73 S. Palouse Avenue, Walla Walla

“Heist: Who Stole the American Dream?” reveals how American corporations orchestrated the dismantling of middle-class prosperity through rampant deregulation, the outsourcing of jobs, and tax policies favoring businesses and the wealthy. The collapse of the U.S. economy is the result of conscious choices made over thirty five years by a small group: leaders of corporations and their elected allies, and the biggest lobbying interest in Washington, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. To these individuals, the collapse is not a catastrophe, but rather the planned outcome of their long, patient work. For the rest of the country, it is merely the biggest heist in American history.

To learn more about this movie or about Meaningful Movies, visit our websites.

<https://meaningfulmovies.org/>

<https://meaningfulmovies.org/neighborhoods/walla-walla/>

See you at the Movies!!



Whatever we are waiting for - peace of mind, contentment, grace, the inner awareness of simple abundance - it will surely come to us, but only when we are ready to receive it with an open and grateful heart.

Sarah Ban Breathnach

Thanksgiving Potluck

Sunday, November 24th



Hosted by the board of Mission & Social Concerns

They will provide the turkey and ask that guests provide side dishes and dessert. A sign up sheet will be posted on the atrium.

We'd love to encourage folks to invite friends and family too!

*Let us come
before him with
thanksgiving.*

Psalm 95:2, NIV



COMING SOON



Holiday Collectibles and Crafts Sale

Saturday, December 7th, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

&

Sunday, December 8th, 9:00 am-1:00 pm

You won't want to miss the handcrafted items & unique and collectible treasures, perfect for Christmas giving!

Proceeds will go to various church programs



Saturday, December 7th
Time to be determined

This is always a fun time for all involved; decorating, visiting, laughing. It helps get you in the Holiday mood.



Bring canned or dry goods!

We will gather donations of food through the month of November for the Pantry Shelf, a community food pantry. Pantry Shelf was established in 1972 through the efforts of 6 local churches.

First Congregational Church was one of the six and continues its support of the Pantry Shelf as one of our missions. On Sundays, bring your donations to the sanctuary, the rest of week to the church office.

Note: Donations to the soup kitchen are gratefully accepted as always. To distinguish soup kitchen donations, please label as 'soup kitchen' or deliver to the kitchen at First Congregational Church.



Christmas Baskets



The donation of Christmas baskets to families of need in Walla Walla has been a tradition with First Congregational Church for over 30 years. Lee Coleman (who has been working on Saint-hood status for most of her life) has been the coordinator for this ambitious project for over 20 of those years but this year she decided to step aside and find another volunteer to manage it. Luckily, Lee left well detailed notes of her organized efforts and it should be a doable undertaking to follow her lead. It is my hope that it will be a seamless transition from Lee to me this year on the Christmas Basket project.

As many hands make light work, five volunteers are needed from the Mission and Social Concerns Committee to help carry off this effort. Our contact at Blue Ridge, Christine Ludwig, is in the process now of identifying 10 families who can benefit from this congregation's Christmas spirit and tradition of giving generously to this project. She will have the names to me by the end of the month; at the first of November the volunteers will begin to contact the families and get the necessary details from them. Requests for donations from all of you will be made as they have been in the past, groceries will be purchased, and the baskets of food and gifts will be assembled. Pick up at the church by the families is scheduled for Saturday, December 14.

Highlights Newsletter Deadline



Tuesday, November 19
Please plan on having
your submissions in by
that date.

Life is an adventure in forgiveness
~Norman Cousins

NOVEMBER 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!

Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, November 13, 6:00 pm

Council Meeting
Sunday, November 17, 11:30 am

Deacons Meeting
Wednesday, November 13, 6:30 pm



Sunday, November 3rd
2:00 am



Open Coffee With the Rev.
Tuesday, November 5th
8:00am at Coffee Perk



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

Please note the change of venue.

A Great Way to Serve

Liturgist

November 3	Jonathan Webster
November 10	Open
November 17	Galen Unruh
November 24	Open
December 1	Open

Coffee Hour

November 3	Linnea Keatts & Kari Miller
November 10	Open
November 17	Dorothy Knudson & Melanie Plantaric
November 24	Thanksgiving Potluck
December 1	Open

Employment Opportunity Pantry Shelf Manager

This is a part time position with up to 84 hours per month.

Position requires:

- A caring and compassionate concern for others is foremost
- Background check
- Valid driver's license
- Ability to lift 40 lbs.
- Some record keeping and computer knowledge

The successful applicant will manage and work closely with volunteer staff and Board of Directors.

Please send resume and cover letter to Pantry Shelf Food Bank, 325 S 1st, Walla Walla, WA 99362, or e-mail to: pantrysshelf325@gmail.com

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

Embrace our COMMUNITY



The soup kitchen crew plans to clean out cupboards, counter tops, fridges, freezers, bins, etc in the kitchen areas. Please be sure items, edible or not, belonging to anyone other than the soup kitchen is clearly marked for whom it belongs. If unmarked, we presume it is our mission to use it up or perhaps discard to better organize and make way for newer supplies. We want to be respectful of others property. We will plan to perform cleaning between October 28th and November 11th. Thank you for your assistance. Questions? Contact Judy Chacon 509-525-6618.



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



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

Admin. Asst.	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.

Thankful



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.