
The Good News - September, 2021

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

220 Main Street West, Cannon Falls, MN 55009 (507) 263-2901

cannonfallsucc@gmail.com www.cannonfallsucc.org

A loving congregational family that celebrates God's presence among us



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“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)

As we enter the month of September, we enter into a change not only in our calendar but in the rhythm of our lives. Teachers and professors welcome our children or grandchildren back to school. Summer reunions, vacations and many outdoor activities start to wind down from the frenzy of summer. We begin to see a few leaves start their journey into fall colors and toward their winter sleep. Many reconnect with friends or family who may have scattered in the many ways only summer in Minnesota calls us.

September is also a time in our collective consciousness that we remember and mourn the events of what is now known as “9/11” when our country was under attack by those who wished to harm us as a nation. On that day, almost 3000 people would be killed and scores of others would die later from injuries or the effects from that tragic day. This year, 20 years later, we honor all those who died or were somehow impacted in profound ways. We enter into a time of collective mourning with an understanding that those directly impacted know that grief does not have a time table.

Entering into any new season, we know that our grief may be felt more acutely again as we know that a loved one will once again not be with us as the seasons change. We experience the loss of sharing with them in whatever the season brings and whatever memories will not be made this year.

Mirabai Starr, in her book “Caravan of No Despair: A Memoir of Loss and Transformation” writes, “There is no map for the landscape of loss, no established itinerary, no cosmic checklist, where each item ticked off gets you closer to success. You cannot succeed in mourning your loved ones. You cannot fail. Nor is grief a malady, like the flu. You will only come to integrate your loss.”

How do we integrate our losses? Ritual is important and one that so many have been denied in this pandemic. Memorializing then takes other forms even when a formal ritual is not possible. I know of so many who create places in their homes to remember those no longer with them. Others donate a tree or a bench in a favorite park in the name of a loved one. In New York City, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum was created as a memorial and museum commemorating the September 11, 2001 attacks.

However we greet this time in our collective grief over national events or as an individual grieving the passage of time and the loss of loved ones, remember the words from the Gospel writer Matthew that “blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” May you find comfort in God’s healing arms and know that, as a community, we are here for each other in so many and special ways – even if it means just sitting in silence with each other in our grief.

Pastor Grace

Pastoral Care Needs

Contact Pastor Grace in the event of a pastoral emergency. Her email is pastor.cannonfallsucc@gmail.com, cell phone is 651-367-9328.

Prayer Chain

Morning - Bonnie Hvistendahl 263-4120

Evening - Mavis Johnson 263-2857

When you are in need of prayer for yourself or others, your request will be passed along to the above prayer chains.

Prayer Partners

Each week, we pick staff and members or families at random for us to lift in prayer that week, for no reason other than praying for one another is a good thing to do.

This month we pray for:

Week One: Ruth Rice, Pr. Grace Anderson, and Sarah Hamilton.

Week Two: Al and Jacqui Broin, Marilynn and David Husmann, and Jan Unger.

Week Three: Gloria Strain, Luella Poe, Bruce and Laura Hemmah.

Week Four: Chase and Hannah LaPan, Dorothy Samuelson, Dave and Linda Nelson.

Bible Study

Join us for Bible Study, Tuesdays 10:00 am!

Bible Study Texts:

9/7/21 Mark 8:27-38

9/14/21 Mark 9:30-37

9/21/21 Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

9/28/21 Psalm 8

Adult Education

Adult Education after worship on Sundays will begin in October. Stay tuned for more details.

COVID Policy Updates

Face masks - Everyone entering the church building is asked to wear a face mask - both vaccinated and unvaccinated. Face masks are available at the front entrance. People

who have difficulty wearing a facemask should consider viewing the service from home. If you would like technical help on how to access the recorded service, please reach out to Pastor Grace.

Social Distancing -We return to social distancing both in the sanctuary and for in person meetings in the church.

Sign in - We continue to sign in when entering the building.

Fan and air conditioning -The air conditioning and fans will be turned off during our worship services.

Worship Leaders - Those leading any portion of the service will not be wearing face masks since we are at a safe distance from the pews.

Singing - We have returned to recorded music for our Worship services.

Fellowship - We encourage everyone to visit outside after our Worship services on Sundays.

The First Congregational Church Reunion Team continues to monitor the CDC and Minnesota Department of Health for changes in risks for COVID 19. When our current "High Risk" for community transmission changes, we will make adjustments to our protocols. Thank you to everyone for being understanding in a time that feels frustrating!

Thank You

Kudos to volunteers Roman Mercier, Beth Sagers, Sandy Meglic, Nancy Berhow, and Carol Nelson for weeding and trimming the landscape around the church. Your labors are appreciated and showcase the exterior beauty of the church.

Also thank you to Roman Mercier for painting the front door.

Thank you dedicated members!

Treasurers Note

We are now in person on Sundays. You can donate in person on Sunday or send your donations written to First Congregational

Church- UCC, by mail to: Jon Sagers, 4006
343rd St., Stanton, MN 55018.
Thank you!
Jon Sagers, Treasurer

From the Mission Committee

Food items to the food shelf continue to be welcomed as are Family Fare receipts.

We are asking for your support to help Haitians deal with the earthquake and torrential rains. Please send checks or give via computer to this cause. See next article for addresses.

Our next designated mission is Neighbors in Need. Information will be shared about this mission during the month of September. The offering will take place on October 3rd.

Thank you,
Missions Committee

Thought for the month: "Life doesn't have to be perfect to be wonderful."

Aid for Haiti

As news continues to provide the impact of the **devastating earthquake in Haiti**, aid is desperately needed for its victims. The National Office of the United Church of Christ and in partnership with Global Ministries, Church World Service and ACT Alliance made the appeal to raise \$100,000 for disaster relief for this besieged country.

If you would like to donate, please visit the UCC.org website:
(<https://www.ucc.org/ucc-haiti-appeal/>) or the Church World Service website (<https://cwsglobal.org/donate/haiti-2021/>) for more information or to donate electronically.

Donations to the UCC Disaster Relief Appeal can also be mailed to:

United Church of Christ
Financial Services Attention: Haiti Relief
700 Prospect Ave, 6th Floor
Cleveland, OH 44115

Donations to Church World Service can also be mailed and payable to:

Church World Service Attn: Haiti Relief
P.O. Box 968
Elkhart, IN 46515

Outreach Ministry Team

We are looking for people who are willing to learn how to record the services (or even just to turn on the camera). Contact Cindy Mae or the office for more information.

Our Social media outlets are:

Website: www.cannonfallsucc.org

YouTube: YouTube /cannon falls ucc

Facebook: First Congregational Church of Cannon Falls

Calling All Book Lovers!

Do you love to read? Do you seek out suggestions for books to hold or listen to? Each month, a few book titles will be recommended. The recommendations can be from members, friends or staff of the church. Send your recommendations to either Ki, in the church office or to Pastor Grace.



This month's recommendations come from our own church library. Feel free to sign them out next time you are at church.

- "What is the Bible" by Rob Bell (Religion/General)
- "The Heart of Christianity" by Marcus Borg (Religion)
- "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows (Fiction)

Maybe a book could be read and discussed in a small group book club of church members (in person or via Zoom).

Women's Coffee



Join us for Women's Coffee on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Until the Bakery reopens, we will meet at the church. Our next meeting is September 16th at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Volunteers Needed

Urgent, **Meals on Wheels** Cannon Falls is looking for volunteers! Meals on Wheels Volunteers deliver much more than a hot nutritious meal. For our elderly population, our visits mean contact with the outside world and the chance to remain at home.

Volunteer for Meals on Wheels and enjoy a lunch that's good for your heart. For more information, contact Lora Bremer at Cannon Valley Senior Center by calling 507-263-2136 or lora@cannonvalleyseniorcenter.org

Facebook Page / Facebook Group

First Congregational Church has both a Facebook Page and a Facebook Group, managed by the Outreach Team that has become more popular since the pandemic started. Recently, we received a question on what the difference is between the two.

A Facebook page is like a profile but only public, so everyone on Facebook can view it. It enables businesses, public figures, and other organizations like ours to build a presence. When users connect with our church Facebook page, they receive updates and notifications on their news feed.

A Facebook Group, however, is private and is only visible to people who have asked to join and have been accepted by one of our Facebook administrators (typically either Mary Pat or the church staff). Facebook Groups let users connect in this safe space that enables users to interact and engage with other group members. It works well for discussions, questions and sharing of information in a more intimate setting.

If you use Facebook and have more questions about accessing our page and our group, please feel free to email Mary Pat Kleven, mpkleven55@gmail.com.

This is Good

(back of bulletin, 10-2020)

How good is the world? In the opening of Genesis the first thing to appear by God's command was light, a light shining through

fog and chaos. It says that God saw it was good. Any artist, a painter for example, might step back to see her work in progress and see that it is good. Imagine God is the artist seeing what is good in that harmony between creative action and result, paint and brush, and canvas. Clearly in the beginning according to the storytellers in Genesis. God was creating and stepping back, pleased with what was happening. Think of that opening chapter of Genesis as full of many "aha" moments and the creative pleasure of God.

Some mystics tell us is that what we experience when we feel the beauty of the natural world is a glimpse of the divine, "aha". Somewhere in that moment of making art there is a piece of the creator, of the artist, left behind in the work reaching out to us.

If this world we see is good and the touch of the divine is in it, then our responsibility as people of faith, to every mountain and fresh water stream and bird in the air becomes more than that of a caretaker. We are witnesses to that divine force in all of it. How can we keep quiet when we see the goodness of this precious earth polluted by plastic islands in the ocean and coal dust running through our streams? Creation is a gift from the ONE who saw it as good from the beginning. The United Church of Christ knows this and champions God's good world in its environmental justice ministries. All of us in local churches are urged to gather in small groups and educate ourselves about climate change. There are faith based resources and questions to help guide any discussion. You can download resources at www.ucc.org/enviornmental-ministries.

A good book published by Brooks Berndt, Minister for Environmental Justice in the UCC is titled "Cathedral on Fire, a church handbook for the climate crisis". One reviewer calls the book "Hope at the gut level."

September, 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
			1	2	3	4
5 9:30 am Worship w/Communion	6 	7 10:00 am Bible Study	8	9	10	11
12 9:30 am Worship Homecoming Sunday 	13	14 10:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Committees 7:00 pm Council meeting	15	16 9:30 am Women's Coffee	17	18
19 9:30 am Worship	20 <i>Newsletter submission deadline</i>	21 10:00 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Worship Mtg. on Zoom	22	23	24	25
26 9:30 am Worship at Peterson's	27	28 10:00 am Bible Study	29	30 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Coming in October Church Clean Up Day Blessing of the Animals </div>		

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Celebrating 165 years!
507-263-2901

Pastor email: pastor.cannonfallsucc@gmail.com
Kileen email: cannonfallsucc@gmail.com

The Mission of First Congregational Church, UCC

**We are a welcoming and loving congregational family
that celebrates God's presence among us.**

**Our spiritual growth is enriched through worship, the
Bible, prayer, faith education, and fellowship.**

**We strive to meet the needs of a diverse, multi-
generational congregation.**

**Together we share the message of Jesus Christ and put
our faith into action in our local and global
community.**

