



**First Central  
Congregational**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## The Congregationalist

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### Prayers

the *Trautman Family*, on the death of *Steve's* mother; *Kay Jensen*, who has been ill; *Natalie Lewis*, recovering from surgery; the *Irish Family*, on the death of *Patrick's* father, *Timothy Wallace Irish*; *Sue Cassidy*, recovering from COVID19; *Cheryl Novak Heller*, continuing to improve.

### Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held this Sunday, **January 31<sup>st</sup>**, 11:30 a.m. on Zoom. Annual Reports are available on the church website, or in the church office.

### COVID19 Precautions Update

The Re-Gathering Task Force met on Monday, and have decided to make no changes to our closures just yet. They will meet again in two weeks.

The office continues to be closed to the public. If you need to drop off a donation, or have an appointment, please call first to make sure someone is here to let you in.

The Evergreen Thrift Shop remains closed. If you have donations to drop off, or have an urgent need to shop, please call **Gary McConnell** or **Sam Pfeifer** to make an appointment.

Worship is online only for the time being. Only worship participants will be in the sanctuary. If you would like to be the liturgist, and feel comfortable being here, please let [sara@firstcentral.org](mailto:sara@firstcentral.org) know, and we will get you on the schedule.

### Women's Retreat Update

The women of the church were supposed to be on retreat February 26-28. Unfortunately, this will not be happening. We are already on the schedule for next year – mark your calendars for **January 21-23, 2022**.

### Church Directory

For those of you interested in having access to the most current phone numbers and addresses, just use your **FellowshipOneGo** app. If you haven't set up your account, contact [sara@firstcentral.org](mailto:sara@firstcentral.org) for a password. You can even use it on your phone!

If you need a print directory, please call **Sara**, 402-345-1533. I will print up a few as needed.

### Electronic Newsletter

If you are currently receiving this print newsletter, you may want to make the switch to the newsletter delivered weekly to your email. Since it is sent out weekly, there is much more timely information than we are able to provide in this monthly version. If you're interested, just go [firstcentral.org](http://firstcentral.org) and sign up, or contact Sara for assistance.

### Coming Up Soon!

Hard to believe, but – Ash Wednesday is **February 17<sup>th</sup>**! Mark your calendars – Palm Sunday is **March 28<sup>th</sup>**, and Easter is **April 4<sup>th</sup>**. Watch for more Lent information soon.

### **Guest Columnist: Jamie Rudd**

“Adopting an Attitude of Gratitude” was the culture topic at Nebraska Medicine for the month of December. How timely. On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, as I sat briefly in a chair in a massive conference room converted to be a large scale vaccine clinic, to get my first COVID vaccine, I couldn’t help but feel gratitude and relief. For all, 2020 has been exhausting, frightening and over-whelming, but it’s awe-inspiring to reflect back on what was accomplished. The care, the compassion, the adaptability, the logistics and the SCIENCE! For the 0.3mL of liquid medical miracle that I received, thousands of hours of drive, ambition, study, ingenuity, resiliency & fortitude went into its creation. Thousands had a hand in getting that vaccine into my body.

It has been a pleasure to work at these employee vaccine clinics. Staffed by 30 volunteer colleagues per day, some who have been telling me for months that they wanted to help when it was time, the music plays and people are excited. “Joy was the only side effect”, Dr. Linder, Nebraska Medicine CEO, said on national t.v. last week. It’s true – we set up a selfie station so that joy could be captured and shared.

I personally did not have any side effects. I was expecting to feel a bit feverish and achy on Christmas Eve, but never did. Not even a sore arm. Whatever negative effects I may have had, would have been worth it. That much hope and relief feels like it should have cost my body more.

Now the work comes to get the vaccine out to everyone. The logistics hurt my head and hours of meetings trying to figure it out have me exhausted each night. But we are getting there, bit by bit. I do hope that when it’s your

turn, you can feel what I felt – the gratitude for all that went into it, as well as the hope and relief.



*Jamie Rudd is a member of First Central, a Registered Nurse at Nebraska Medicine, as well as Manager of Clarkson Family Medicine, Residency Program Administrator, and manager of the*

*Universal Swab Center.*

### **If you do get sick...**

Just for fun 😊

*From a very old First Central cookbook – date not noted:*

#### Chicken Broth

Scald feet. Remove skin and nails. Cover skinned feet, neck, wings, giblets, and celery tops with cold water and simmer 2 hours. Season and strain. This will make a pint that will jelly.

#### Beef Tea

1 pound beef off the round, 1 cup cold water. Let stand one hour. Heat slowly. Stir until liquid begins to turn color. Strain and add pinch of salt.

#### Oyster Broth

Chop a dozen oysters fine; put into saucepan with a cup of cold water. Bring to boiling point; simmer five minutes, then strain and season. By adding milk three minutes before broth is taken from the fire, it is made more palatable.



Please check out our FIRSTKids YouTube Channel for our Quarantine series...

## FIRSTKids CORNER

Join Pastor Katie every other Sunday for YouTube Sunday school, in which we will be discussing some classic and not-so-classic Bible stories and how they relate to our pandemic lives!

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### Twice-A-Month FIRSTKids IN PERSON ON HOLD

Due to the virus rates in our community, our plans for in person Sunday school are on hold. We hope to be able to offer this in the new year, but it will depend on numbers. Keep an eye on your email and this space for more info.



During social distancing, the youths will be meeting on **Sundays @ 8 pm via Zoom** for games and fellowship and discussion, and are looking to add some more outdoor in-person gatherings.

## VESPERS

Wednesdays, 6:00 pm  
On Facebook Live

Grab a cup of tea or hot chocolate and join Rev. Katie for a simple midweek service of song, prayer, scripture, and reflection.



## The Lifesaving Church

Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m., Zoom

Recently, the diagnosis of anxiety has gone from 1 in 5 to 1 in 3 and may become 1 in 2 by the time pandemic is over. This confirms what we already know: pandemic has increased stress for all of us. For many, it has put us over the edge between stress and anxiety. Between the increase in isolation, the increase in COVID cases, grief, and the political situation, it is no surprise that people are struggling more than ever before. The question of how we care for ourselves becomes essential.

Join us for a special **Forum** featuring **Rev. Dr. Rachael Keefe** of the Living Table United Church of Christ in Minneapolis. She will join us to discuss these mental health topics as well as a number of ideas from her book, *The Lifesaving Church*. Copies of the book will be available at the church prior to this special Forum. (It is also for sale on Amazon.)

Rev. Dr. Keefe is the author of *The Lifesaving Church: Faith Communities and Suicide Prevention* (Chalice Press, 2018). She's a favored conference presenter on topics related to the church and mental health, particularly suicide and congregations. Previously, she served as clinical chaplain at a state psychiatric hospital where she worked with patients, staff, clergy, and faith communities to increase understanding and welcome of persons living with severe and persistent symptoms of mental illness. She also served on a State Suicide Prevention Council.

Since her ordination in 1992, Keefe has served in many different ministry settings. Keefe has graduate degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary and Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School (formerly Andover Newton Theological School), and is currently enrolled in a graduate certificate program in spiritual direction at St. Catherine University.

## Week of January 31

### Sunday, January 31

YouTube online worship, 10:30 a.m.  
Annual Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Zoom  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m., Zoom

### Monday, February 1

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Pastor's Study

### Wednesday, February 3

Choir, 7 p.m., Zoom  
Vespers with Katie, 8 p.m., FaceBook Live

### Saturday, February 6

Mental Health forum, 10 a.m., Zoom

## Week of February 7

### Sunday, February 7

YouTube online worship, 10:30 a.m.  
Food Pantry Sunday  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m., Zoom

### Monday, February 8

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Pastor's Study

### Tuesday, February 9

Council, 7 p.m., Zoom

### Wednesday, February 10

Choir, 7 p.m., Zoom  
Vespers with Katie, 8 p.m., FaceBook Live

## Week of February 14

### Sunday, February 14

YouTube online worship, 10:30 a.m.  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m., Zoom

### Monday, February 15

Presidents' Day. Office closed.

### Wednesday, February 17

Ash Wednesday, 6 p.m. Details soon.  
Choir, 7 p.m., Zoom

## Week of February 21

### Sunday, February 21

YouTube online worship, 10:30 a.m.  
FirstYouth, 8 p.m., Zoom

### Monday, February 22

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m., Pastor's Study

### Wednesday, February 24

Choir, 7 p.m., Zoom  
Vespers with Katie, 8 p.m., FaceBook Live

*Please send address changes to:  
First Central Congregational Church  
421 S. 36<sup>th</sup> St  
Omaha, NE 68131.*