



**First Central
Congregational**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Congregationalist

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August 30, 2021

Prayers

Elizabeth Wearin, whose brother *Andy Wearin* died last week; *Katie Sawtell Del Conte*, on the death of her mother, *Helen Sawtell*; *Luther MacNaughton*, now at Josie Harper Hospice House; the *Jim Harmon family*, on the death of Jim's father, *Don*; *Leo Yankton*, who crossed over to the Spirit World on Thursday; the *Hamann, Bunderson*, and *Elliott families* on the death of *Ramona Hamann*.

Book Club

The book this month is *The Giver of Stars*, by Jojo Moyes, "a breathtaking story of five extraordinary women and their remarkable journey through the mountains of Kentucky and beyond in Depression-era America."

Our meeting will be hosted by *John Else & Cathy Roller*, 835 Parkwood Lane, on **September 9** at 7 pm.

Brigit St. Brigit

Celebrate BSB's blessed return to production with Ronald Harwood's THE DRESSER. Opens September 10th!

Reservations by phone are now open @ 402.502.4910. Performance dates: Sept. 10, 11, 12; 16, 17, 18; 24, 25, 26. Sunday curtains @ 2 p.m.; all others at 7:30. Location: First Central Congregational Church, 421 South 36th St.

First Central member tickets are available through the church office. Please contact Sara for more information.

Homecoming

Homecoming Sunday has been rescheduled for **September 12**, weather permitting, and the Regathering Task Force met to offer some guidance on how we can hold it as safely as possible.

The Friends and Family team is renting a grill for burgers. New this year, to keep things simple and minimize exposure for everyone, we are **not** asking people to bring potluck side dishes or desserts. Instead, Friends and Family will purchase baked beans and potato salad and provide the entire meal, asking for *free will donations*.

- Ushers will disperse people by row to reduce the wait time in the food line.
- The food line will flow along one side of the table, rather than both sides. Everyone should continue to wear their mask as they go through the food line.
- There will be no dancing or games this year.
- If the weather does not cooperate, we will cancel rather than move indoors.

CEOs

Congregationalists **Eating Out** will dine on Friday, **September 17th**, 6 p.m. at *Anthony's*, 72nd and F. Please RSVP to **Bob Vassell**, 402-391-1059, by or before September 15th. Hope to see you there!

New Members

New members will be welcomed during worship on Sunday, **September 19th**. If you are interested in joining our church family at that time, please contact sara@firstcentral.org.

Scott's Column

Eleven years ago, the week we moved into our new home here in Omaha, Midtown Crossing also opened. One reason I came to First Central was it seemed possible that this congregation was located in a neighborhood with great potential. I guessed right. In the ensuing decade, UNMC has undergone massive building projects, the population of the area has exploded, and the Blackstone District on Farnam is one of the hippest places in town. I like to think we've participated in the revitalization of this part of the city.

Of course, it comes with headaches, such as the parking lot across the street now being a pay lot. But as we anticipate the future of this congregation coming out of the pandemic and think ahead to finally moving forward with the capital campaign we suspended in March 2020, it's worth realizing how exciting our neighborhood is and will continue to be.

At a recent Blackstone Neighborhood Association meeting to discuss the new streetscape for Farnam, we were told that since 2014 the Blackstone Business District has seen thirty new businesses launched and a total investment in the area of \$250 million.

That meeting, the first one in person since the pandemic began, drew 72 attendees and was held in the ballroom of the beautifully remodeled Cottonwood Hotel (formerly the Blackstone Hotel). If you haven't been in the hotel since it reopened, you should. It is already a vital neighborhood hub, with people constantly coming and going to the restaurants, bars, events, and even the swimming pool which is open for public use (for a fee).

Or have you been to The Switch food hall that opened last autumn two blocks from us? It's also become a vital neighborhood hub.

At another recent neighborhood association meeting, this one to discuss the nine-story mixed-use structure that will soon be built two blocks west of us, a neighbor asked, "Surely we have enough apartments already, why do we need to build more?" The answer was that at the time there were 6,000 people looking for housing in Omaha and only 600 homes on the market. Plus, 10,000 new people are expected to move into the

city in the next couple of years. And, further, the planned UNMC development west of Saddle Creek is expected to employ 40,000 people—30,000 construction jobs and 10,000 permanent jobs.

Also, in the coming year there will be changes made to the flow of traffic and parking on Harney Street. Further east of us, the city has already altered Harney to improve pedestrian traffic and bicycling.

In other words—our neighborhood is going to continue to boom with people, investment, and activities. We want to participate in that boom and benefit from it. We want to make sure that our physical facilities keep up—that they are appealing and welcoming and serve the community's needs. We want our programs, events, and outreach activities to engage our neighbors and contribute to their well-being. We want to continue to be a thriving neighborhood hub ourselves, with art, music, and theatre. And, of course, we want to be a place where people's spiritual and emotional needs are met, they connect with others in service to God, and they engage and grow their minds.

The prospects for First Central may be even more exciting than they were in 2010 when I accepted this call. Let's get started with the work God has in store for us.

Peace,
Scott

All Church Retreat

Sign-up soon for the All-Church Retreat! It will be held Saturday, **September 25th**, from 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. ONE DAY ONLY. Registration forms are available in the Parlor, or contact **Judy Bouma**, 402-650-7536, or **Rita Grossenstein**, 402-960-8808.

Pet Blessing

Save the date! Saturday, **October 2nd**, 11 a.m. on the Patio. Pets of all kind are welcome – caged, leashed or bowl-ed only 😊 Tell your friends and neighbors!



Twice-A-Month
FIRSTKids IN PERSON

Due to covid rates, we will continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month during worship: children will be dismissed to class right after the Children's Conversation. All ages will meet on the third floor, with designated areas for the children to remain, individual craft supplies, and other safety measures. Following the service, children will meet their adults on the patio.

Masks will be required for all children and adults involved at all times!

**Fall 2021 Classic Family Movie Night:
Bedknobs & Broomsticks**

Sunday, October 10 @ 5:30 pm
Church Courtyard (weather permitting)
Join us for a time of fall fun, fellowship, and a beloved classic!

Fall 2021 Hiking Day

Saturday, October 9th, 9:30 am
Meet @ the Neale Woods Parking Lot



Join other youth from all across Nebraska at
Youth and Outdoor Ministry Fall Gathering!

October 15-17, 2021
@ Kamp Kaleo in Burwell Nebraska
Contact Pastor Katie for more info!

**Wednesday Night Family Night
RETURNS**

Wednesdays @ 6:00-7:00 pm
Beginning September 12th
Programming for all ages!

Due to covid rates, we will not be providing a potluck at this time. HOWEVER all who wish to bring a sack/indoor picnic supper for themselves (to eat while distancing) at 5:30 pm are welcome to do so! Activities will begin at 6 p.m.

For adults: Wednesday Night Bible Study

Paul wanted to create a new identity through solidarity and mutuality that represented an alternative to the imperial order. This fall in our Adult Bible Study we will explore the *Letter to the Galatians* with class led by *Senior Minister Scott Jones*. Join us Wednesdays in the Parlor at 6 p.m. beginning **September 15**.



**FIRST FORUM
Adult Education**

Third Floor Parlor 9:15 - 10:15 AM
Childcare available in the 1st Floor Nursery

Contact the office for info on upcoming Adult Ed opportunities or to suggest a session! We are hoping to resume First Forum soon!!!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Sundays @ 9:15 a.m., Third Floor Parlor
Led by *Rev. Jeannie Bates*
Tentatively scheduled to return on **October 10th**. Contact the church for more information

Week of September 5

Sunday, September 5

Bible Study, 9:15 a.m. Third floor parlor.
Online or in-person worship, 10:30 a.m.
Food Pantry Sunday

Monday, September 6

Labor Day. Office closed.

Tuesday, September 7

Eves, 7 p.m., 3311 Woolworth Ave.

Wednesday, September 8

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 9

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Book Club, 7 p.m. 835 Parkwood Lane

Friday, September 10

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Brigit St. Brigit presents :“The Dresser,” 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 7

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Week of September 12

Sunday, September 12

Online or in-person worship, 10:30 a.m.
FirstKids, Memorial Hall following the Conver-
sation with the Children. Masks required.
Homecoming! On the patio after worship.

Monday, September 13

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

Tuesday, September 14

Council, 7 p.m., Zoom

Wednesday, September 15

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *through Friday*
Family Night, 5:30 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 16

Congregational Care Ministry, 7 p.m.

Friday, September 17

CEOs, 6 p.m., Anthony’s, 72nd and F

Saturday, September 18

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Week of September 19

Sunday, September 19

Online or in-person worship, 10:30 a.m.
New members welcomed during worship

Monday, September 20

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

Wednesday, September 22

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *through Friday*
Family Night, 5:30 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Saturday, September 25

All-Church Retreat, 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Week of September 26

Sunday, September 26

Online or in-person worship, 10:30 a.m.
FirstKids, Memorial Hall following the Conver-
sation with the Children. Masks required.

Monday, September 27

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

Wednesday, September 29

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *through Friday*
Family Night, 5:30 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Saturday, October 2

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Pet Blessing, 11 a.m., patio

Week of October 3

Sunday, October 3

Online or in-person worship, 10:30 a.m.

Monday, October 4

Staff meeting, 1:30 p.m. Pastor’s Study
Eves, 7 p.m., 4415 William St.

Wednesday, October 6

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. *through Friday*
Family Night, 5:30 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir, 7 p.m.

Saturday, October 9

Evergreen Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

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