

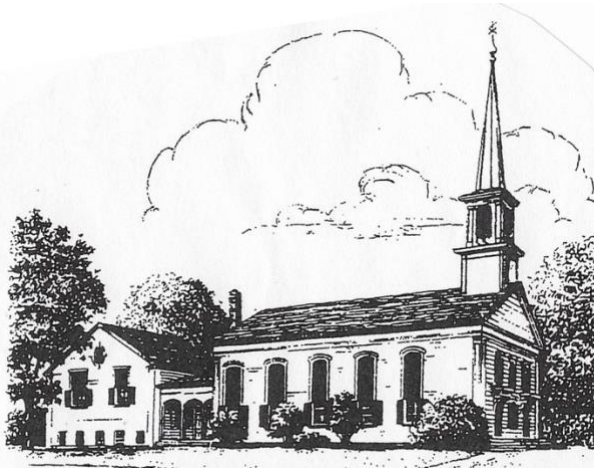
The Steeple Chimes

MAY 2020 EDITION

Columbia Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Established in 1720



Mission Statement

The Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ as part of the United Church of Christ and the worldwide Christian Church is called by God to be disciples of Jesus, the Christ. Therefore, the mission of the Columbia Congregational United Church of Christ is to worship God and to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ; to promote Christian fellowship among our members and friends, and to live in Christian fellowship with the Church Universal and the whole creation; that we might live faithfully, serving God and humanity, and striving for righteousness, justice, and peace.

Staff:

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Is this going to be a period of purification, Lord? is this going to be the time when you give me insight into the chains that bind me and the courage to throw them off? Is this going to be my chance to see my prison and escape it?

John Eudes said: *“This is a time of purification. A time to identify your ambiguous relationships and your ambivalent attitudes, and to make some decisions and choose some directions.”* Lord, it is you who said this to me. If I believe in your church and the voice of those who speak in her name, in your name, then it was you who pointed out to me the meaning of my stay here: *“Identify and choose.”*

And you also said, *“Pray even when you do not feel attracted to it.”* Yes, Lord. I will try to pray, even when I am afraid to face you and myself, even when I keep falling asleep or feel as though I am going around in circles, even when it seems that nothing is happening.

Yes, Lord, I will pray---not only with others, not only supported by the rhythms of the choir, but also alone with you. I will try not to be afraid. Lord, give me courage and strength. Let me see myself in the light of your mercy and choose you. Amen.

“From A Cry for Mercy”
by Henri J. M. Nouwen

My Friends in Christ,

Henri Nouwen, in the passage above, is pointing towards the attitude for prayer in the midst of hard times. A crisis, like the one we are in, highlights all of our spiritual fault lines in life and sometimes the hardships that can overtake us. These days we are being challenged in many ways that had never occurred to us before. (Like preaching to a computer on Sunday mornings!) And it is hard!

Sometimes we lose sight of the One who promises to always be with us. We may even find ourselves in what John of the Cross called the “dryness” in his poem *Dark Night of the Soul*. That dryness is when we seem to encounter nothingness amidst our prayers. Nouwen encourages us to *“Pray even when you do not feel attracted to it.”*

As a Resurrection People going through a challenging time, see yourself in the light of the Easter miracle and remember who you are and to whom you belong.

And keep praying no matter the circumstances.

Easter blessings,
Pastor Barry

Unfortunately . . . Sunday Worship is Canceled

Future Worship will resume when the deacons and state officials deem it is safe for our members.

A request from Janice Thibodeau . . .

As I am sequestered in Florida, it is a good time to begin work on 300th anniversary publication. Since CT residents are supposed to stay at home, please make it a project to look through your pictures. They can't be included if I don't have them! Can mail actual photo to church, put on the cluster app, or take a picture of them and email to me at janicethibodeau@gmail.com

Please don't send multiples of same event, just 1 or 2, that you think best. Please label with year and events, cropwalk for hunger, 2017. I don't need names of everyone in pictures.

In particular looking for pictures of shrimp boils, fairs, breakfasts, suppers, workday at waim, heifer, auction by rt, fellowship hour, parade, weddings, Alabama project, pictures of or with pastor Betsey or jack zap pull a or George Evans retirement.

Thanks,
Jan



Weekly *HONKIN' HELLOS*

**Every Sunday at 4 PM
Columbia Congregational will be
leading a parade through Columbia!**

Join us in your car or at your house!

**Check your email or our Facebook
page for more info.**

The church school teachers coordinated a couple birthday drive-bys in late March & early April. Since it was so much fun, we now plan on visiting everyone with a parade of cars and call it ***HONKIN' HELLOS!*** Our first parade was on Sunday, April 19th, and was a big success.

If you live on the route, please come outside, tell your neighbors, and greet the parade. If you do not live on the route, please join us in the car parade. We will be staying safe in our cars. The more the merrier! Decorating mailboxes, cars, making signs, noisemakers, and costumes are encouraged! And of course.... **HONKIN'!**

We will have a new route each week and are planning on doing this every Sunday at 4:00! The route will be announced via email and Facebook.



We are continuing doing **BIRTHDAY DRIVE-BYS** for our church school children. If you have a birthday you would like us to celebrate, please let us know!

CHURCH SCHOOL UPDATES

We hope this finds you all safe at home. The church school teachers have been meeting on Zoom every Saturday morning since we have not been able to get together in person. We are trying to be creative to keep the children engaged. Additional ideas are always welcome.

CHURCH SCHOOL AT HOME:

Weekly Lessons are available on the [church website](#). (Password is 'WWJD') The materials include a bible story, activities, crafts, and family activities.

There's also **short videos** on our curriculum's website that coincide with the lessons: [deep-blue-connects-adventure-spring-2020](#)

We are now working on fun ideas for a **VIRTUAL CHURCH SCHOOL SUNDAY!** Stay tuned for more information!

Everyone Deserves a Life Free from Hunger and Poverty!



Join our Church School as we raise money to Support Heifer again this year!

HEIFER FUNDRAISING

We have kicked off our virtual HEIFER fundraising efforts. The online **Heifer fundraising** page is now available:

<https://fundraise.heifer.org/ColumbiaCongregationalChurchSchool>

The team goal is a FULL ARK for \$5000 by June 1st! Please support our church school children by donating and spreading the word. Share the link, send emails, texts, put on Facebook, call friends and relatives. And check [here](#) to see if your employer has a match program.

You can either share the TEAM page or JOIN the team and create a page for your child(ren) or whole family. All donations will go toward the Church School Team. As always, donations can also be mailed to the church. Checks can be made out to the church with "HEIFER " noted on the memo line.

More details are in emails from Wendy Tomlinson (wtomlin@sbcglobal.net) and on the [church website](#). The website includes videos, book readings, and the official Heifer calendar. More activities and stories will be available soon.

Shopping on-line?

Since everyone is staying home and shopping online, consider using Amazon Smile. The church gets a small percentage of all sales and does not cost the purchaser anything extra. For more information:
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/06-6038335>

Pastoral Search Committee

Please pray for the committee as they seek to discern the next pastoral leader for our congregation.

*Dave Coley - Joyce Nasin
Denise Parmenter - Dave Pearce
Brian Pedersen - Lynn Sharpe - Audrey Tuttle*

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