

The Steeple Chimes

SEPTEMBER 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:

The Rev. Don Francois , Interim Pastor

Cell: 860-416-5134 eMail: revdbf@gmail.com

Alexander Chiu, Organist and Choir Director

Michele LaBrec, Administrative Assistant

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COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

P.O. Box 177

COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT 06237



ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The members of the Columbia Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ, Columbia, Connecticut, are hereby notified that the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the Church will be held immediately following morning worship on Sunday, September 20, 2020 for the following purposes:

- 1) To receive the reports of all Officers, Boards, Committees, and Organizations of the Church, and take any action relative thereto;
- 2) To act upon the nominations presented by the Nominating Committee to fill Offices, Boards, and Committees.
- 3) To act upon the proposed budget for the 2020 fiscal year (September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021);
- 4) Other Business.

Dated this date, August 27, 2020

Arnold Hinckley, Council President

Introducing our Bridge Interim Pastor, Rev. Don Francois

“Pastor Don” Francois was raised in Prospect, CT. He received his B.A. from the University of Hartford, West Hartford, CT and an M.A. in Religious Studies from St. Joseph College, also in West Hartford. He served as a Director of Religious Education and Youth Minister in the Roman Catholic Church for seventeen years. In 1993, he joined the United Church of Christ and became Director of Christian Education at the Ellington Congregational Church. He attended Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, MA and received his M.Div. in May 1998 and was ordained the following month. In 1996, he was called as the first Associate Pastor of the Ellington Congregational Church and in 2003, he was called as Senior Pastor. Pastor Don retired from full-time parish ministry in 2017 and has been providing Bridge Interim support and pulpit supply for local churches.

Don lives in Ellington with his wife, Laurie, and has two children, Danielle (husband David) and Jonathan and two step-children, Aaron and Amanda. His first grandchild is due in early October! Don enjoys history (particularly the FDR years), stamp collecting, 60’s music, and reading.



From left to right: Amanda, David, Danielle, Laurie and Don, Jon, Aaron



**July 5th we started our
in-person Sunday morning
services.**

**We all gather, socially distanced, outside on
the lawn in front of the gazebo.
(Weather permitting.*)**

Safety guidelines we will follow:

- **Masks required.**
- **You'll need to bring your own lawn chair or blanket.**
- **A link will be provided to print out your own worship bulletins.**
- **Maintain at least a ten-foot distance between separate family units.**
- **There will be limited parking along the parsonage driveway for members with physical infirmities who will be able to listen via their car radios. Each car will be spaced at least ten foot away from adjacent cars. Please respect that this limited availability is reserved for those at highest risk.**
- **All others should use the regular parking lot and walk around the church building.**
- **THE CHURCH BUILDING ITSELF WILL REMAIN LOCKED AND UNAVAILABLE, INCLUDING THE REST ROOMS.**

***In the event of rain or very wet conditions, a cancellation email will be sent who receive the weekly email updates.**



Thank you!

My heartfelt thanks to all who came out in the rain to give a “Honkin’ Goodbye” on my last Sunday as your intentional Interim Minister. It was a further blessing of the many I had already received from the congregation. It has been my pleasure to serve with you in the ministry of Columbia Congregational Church during this past year.

I received a number of gifts from members, but a particularly meaningful parting gift came from the Denise and David Parmenter. Dave wrote this description: "The pen set I made (and I'm not a wood working expert just an amateur). You may of noticed out the back door of the church on the left of the pathway to the parsonage before the garage is a stump with a new tree growing out of it. The stump was left behind about 7-8 years ago when the tree standing there can down during a storm. The tree a black walnut tree was about 120 years old based on the non technical counting of the rings on the pieces of wood I gathered and saved. So you now have a small piece of history of The Columbia Congregational Church. Your pen and letter opener were made from the wood of the tree that stood next to our church for at least a third of it's 300 year history." It is a true momento to cherish and to create fond memories of the congregation when I sit down to write with it.

Blessings of Christ,
Barry

Update on the 300th Anniversary Book

We ordered 85 copies and have 14 copies left . We will not be selling them after services, so if you want a copy please contact me or Carmen at 860-228-4509. We will arrange to get you one of the remaining copies.

After these are gone, we will start a list and order a batch more for a later time, should that be required.

Janice

Church Website

The church Website is now secure, we have a valid Certificate and HTTPS: as part of our Domain name. (**HTTPS** (Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure) is an internet communication protocol that protects the integrity and confidentiality of data between the user's computer and the website.) Basically this means any data on our site is secure and encrypted for our member's safety. I have received notes before from members who were afraid to make online donations or pledges because our site was displayed as "Not Secure" in their web browsers. This has been corrected and our site is now been certified by our web host and in independent certification company. Thanks to Michele for being available to confirm our information with them.

<https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/>

Church Calendar

We would like to keep the church calendar on the website updated as much as possible. Please email Michele with any scheduled meetings.

Church School Updates

It's hard to believe we are approaching a new school year, especially one with a lot of unknowns. The church school teachers would like to start the year with **virtual church school classes**. We will be **surveying the parents** to determine the best times and tools to meet. Please keep an eye out for the survey.

We have received a **Church School Curriculum** for all ages for the fall. If you haven't yet checked out the spring or summer curriculum online, please do so. It is available on the [church website](#) under "Church School at Home" (Password is 'WWJD'). Each lesson includes a bible story, activities, crafts, and family activities. Even though they are numbered/dated, they don't have to be done in order.

We are in the process of donating **114 school bags/kits** for Church World Services! Thank you to everyone that has donated school supplies. We are not asking for supplies at this time, but rather, we packed up all the supplies we had previously received.

Even with all the unknowns, I am looking forward to upcoming school year. I would also like to thank our Church School Teachers and parents for their continued support!

As always, if you have any Church School questions, concerns or ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Wendy Tomlinson

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***

**To contact Pastor Don
Please Call or Text Directly:
860- 416-5134
eMail: revdbf@gmail.com**

**To contact Michele LaBrec
Now working from home: Please
Call or Text Directly:
860-734-3899**

**REMEMBER OUR
HOME BOUND AND
FRIENDS RESIDING IN
CARE CENTERS . . .**

Dot Davis

Mansfield Center
for Nursing and Rehabilitation
100 Warren Circle
Storrs, CT 06268

Jean Peters

Hattie Ide Chaffee Home
200 Wampanoag Trail, Room 15
East Providence, RI 02915

Mary Jane Johnston

C/O Westview Health Care Center
150 Ware Road
Dayville, CT 06241

