

The Meetinghouse News

The First Congregational Church of Madison

September 2023

Making Kindness Contagious

Over the past year, through a grant from the Lilly Foundation and Yale Divinity School, Jordan Syler gathered several members of the church to spend a few months discerning and dreaming about how First Church could continue to build on our abundant strengths—and perhaps find new ways of reaching out beyond our doors to inspire something in our wider community.

The group included Kevin Kane, Mary Olson, Carol Robbins and Katy Webb. Together they developed the theme of improving the relational life of the Church by addressing loneliness and social disconnection in our own midst. In addition, they discussed a book by Vivek Murthy, MD, the US Surgeon General, entitled, *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely*. Murthy describes what he calls the “epidemic of loneliness” in America, finding that loneliness and isolation lead to a variety of physical health issues.

As Mary Olson observed, we human beings are wired for social connection. Murthy not only makes the case for widespread loneliness in the United States as a public health emergency but, he also describes unique outcomes in those places where communities have found sustainable solutions to reduce loneliness and isolation. Among them is the culture of kindness established in Anaheim, California. This cultural shift began as the result of a mysterious poster campaign on walls scattered around the city. A family grieving the tragic loss of a young daughter found that she had left behind a collection of beautiful notes about the importance of kindness. Natasha’s notes inspired her father to create and hang posters around the city reading, simply, “Make Kindness Contagious.” The posters sparked a fascinating series of events. Anaheim’s mayor, Tom Tait campaigned on a platform of creating a culture of kindness and won by a wide margin.

Our Reimagining Church Team was inspired by this and hopes that First Church can imagine ways of *Making Kindness Contagious* in the coming year by fostering a deeper sense of belonging and building a more robust culture of kindness, both in our church and in the broader community. And hopefully, as has been the case in other places, the simple commitment to practicing kindness will have a radiating effect. What begins with us will infect the life of our communities and allow all of us to reimagine the power that kindness has to heal the things that currently isolate and divide us. We look forward to what will come next.

Peace, Todd



Nick Rose & Brendan LeMieux
Invite you to their joint
Champion of the Year Event!

BEST BUDDIES
CHAMPION
OF THE
YEAR

BBQ, BREWS & BLUES

Sunday Sept. 17, 2023
3:00 pm to 7:00 pm
9 Inwood Road
Madison, CT

In Support of
BEST BUDDIES
CONNECTICUT

* DONATIONS OF ANY AMOUNT ARE WELCOME *



Best Buddies Campaign 2023

The Rose Family welcomes the members of the First Congregational Church of Madison to join them for a gathering to kick off Nick’s Best Buddies campaign.

Our church community has helped to support Nick’s efforts in the past, and we hope you will continue to support him this fall as well.

Please RSVP to Burt Rose at Brose400@aol.com

To donate to Nick’s efforts this year, please follow the link below. We are grateful for your support:

<https://www.bestbuddieschampion.org/connecticut/supporting/#NickRose>



Worship with Us! Sundays 10 am

Worship In Person

*Join us in the sanctuary for worship.
Masks are recommended.*

Worship Virtually

*Worship will be livestreamed on Facebook
(www.facebook.com/fccmadison)*

and YouTube:

www.youtube.com/@fccmadisonct/streams

Worship on TV or our Website

*You may watch the service on Madison Public
Access, and on YouTube or Facebook*

September 3	14th Sunday after Pentecost
September 10	15th Sunday after Pentecost Rally Day & Picnic
September 17	16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 24	17th Sunday after Pentecost

Help Lead Worship!

We are always looking for as many voices as possible to participate in Sunday morning worship.

If you are interested in reading scripture on a Sunday morning this Fall, please contact Todd Vetter

at tcvetter@gmail.com



Lemonade on the Lawn

Please join us for lemonade, iced tea, and refreshments under the tent in the Chi Rho garden after worship.

TUESDAY NEWSDAY

Sign up for our weekly email, the Tuesday Newsday, and stay up-to-date with everything that is happening at FCC.

To sign up, send an email to:

mainoffice@fccmadison.org



Rally Day Picnic

All are welcome to a cookout on the front lawn of the church after worship on Sunday, September 10th! Fellowship will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, desserts, and water. Everyone is asked to please bring a green salad, fruit salad, deviled eggs, baked beans, potato salad, pasta salad, tomatoes, etc. to share. **Many church tables are covered with kitchen items as the kitchen renovation is not yet complete. We will have some tables available for you to sit at; however, if you have a foldable table or card table, please bring it! You don't need to bring chairs as we have plenty.**



Birthdays

Birthdays are special days of celebration and acknowledgement of the gifts of life.
Please join us in praying for these September birthdays!

Joseph Altonji	9/26
Matthew Altonji	9/30
Barbara Cottrell	9/28
Kaitlin Jarvis	9/20
Loren Johnston	9/4
Cedar Lowry	9/25
P.J. O'Hanlon	9/20
Suzanne Sale	9/27
Steven Seehusen	9/15
Ella Skonieczny	9/30
Phoebe Trowbridge	9/3

Orion Brueckner	9/16
Keith Costa	9/16
Cynthia Dreier	9/8
Parke Johnson	9/29
Richard Kos	9/7
Benjamin Moreno	9/24
Caitlyn Rubino	9/12
Andrew Schofield	9/23
Dean R. Singewald	9/26
Ellen Swiggett	9/19
Brooke Williams	9/10



Connection: a Ministry for Women

Join us on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of
each month for meaningful conversation,
prayer, laughter and friendship.

Wednesdays, September 13 and 27
7:00– 8:30 pm in the Parlor



Saturday September 30th 6:00-8:00 pm

Join us for dinner and a fun guided activity designed to bring
your family closer together.

All expressions of family are welcome!

RSVP to svetter@fccmadison.org



*Here's where to get the latest scoop on what's happening musically in the church!
For even more information, call Nathan at: (203) 245-2739, ext. 14.*



Welcome back to choir season! We would love for you to join one or more of our ensembles.

- **TREBLE CHOIR:** All the children of the church grades pre-K to fourth grade have the opportunity to learn music on Sunday mornings. The first ten minutes of Sunday School will be devoted to learning music which will then be sung in church, and they will sing in church about once a month. **Rehearsals begin during Sunday School on September 17th.**



- **SPIRIT CHOIR:** The ultimate in flexibility and simplicity! Singing every week, the intergenerational Spirit Choir meets for only ten minutes right before each church service to rehearse easy yet fun music to sing that morning. Simply show up as you are able and join in! **Rehearsals are Sundays from 9:30-9:40 am by the piano, beginning Rally Sunday, September 10th.**



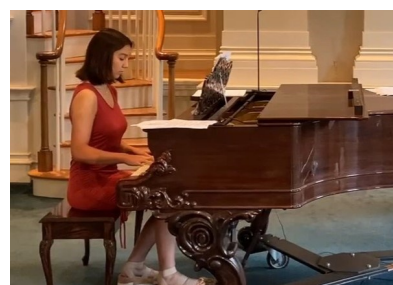
- **ADULT CHOIR:** This choir is open to high school students and older with an interest in singing multiple-part music. Having the ability to read music is an advantage, but not a requirement. They sing almost every Sunday and also for special music events. **Rehearsals are Thursdays from 7:00-8:30 pm in the church house Chapel, beginning September 14th.**



- **HANDBELL CHOIR:** The Handbell Choir operates on a four-week rotation where they practice four Thursdays in a row and play in church the next Sunday. You must be able to make at least three out of the four rehearsals, and it is open to anyone age twelve and older. **Rehearsals are Thursdays from 6:00-6:45 pm in the balcony. The first rotation begins September 28th.**



- **SOLOS & ENSEMBLES:** Both students and adults are encouraged to participate in the music life of the church as their schedules allow. Anyone who plays an instrument or sings is invited to contact me to see what is possible! Call 203-245-2739, ext. 14 or e-mail (nbayreuther@fccmadison.org). I would be thrilled to work with you.



GALVANIZED JAZZ BAND FOR RALLY DAY

Fred Vigorito's "Galvanized Jazz Band" has played for the Rally Sunday church service and picnic for many years. This year, **Rally Sunday is September 10th**, and we can't wait to have them again. The music department is **hoping there might someone interested in sponsoring them**. If you love having them come every year, please consider getting helping to offset the costs. Thank you for whatever you can do.



HANDBELL CHOIR ROTATION DETAILS

The first Handbell rotation will begin at the end of September, with the following schedule:

- **Thursday, September 28th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, October 5th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, October 12th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Thursday, October 19th, 6:00-6:45 pm:** rehearsal
- **Sunday, October 22nd, 10:00 am:** play for church



Even if you've never picked up a handbell in your life, you are invited to join in the fun! You must be able to make at least three out of the four rehearsals, and you must be over 12 years of age. Please let Nathan know if you are interested in participating so he can prepare music for you!

CHARTER OAK BRASS BAND: SUNDAY, OCT. 1st, 4 pm

Join us for the first *Music at the Meetinghouse* concert of the season as the Charter Oak Brass Band (COBB), led by Dr. Daniel D'Addio. The band is an elite 28-piece musical ensemble showcasing the best brass musicians in the area. Based on the British brass band model, the group combines cornets, flugelhorn, tenor and baritone horns, euphoniums, trombones, tubas and percussion to produce its unique, thrilling, and dramatic sound. COBB is based in eastern Connecticut and has been performing since 1988. Tickets are \$15 at the door, and we hope you will come and experience this exciting group!



ROSLYN YOUNG CONCERT: SUNDAY, OCT. 8th, 4 pm

You are invited to the 19th Annual Roslyn Young Memorial Concert, Quint'Essence': Music for Clarinet and String Quartet by Brahms and Weber. The concert will feature the New York-based clarinetist, Matthew Goodman (pictured), with string quartet, Circle of Friends. There will be a reception following the concert. Tickets are \$20 at the door, under 18 free. Roslyn Young, who grew up in Guilford, performed widely in the U.S. and Europe.



WELCOME OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



KEVIN KANE
MODERATOR



JEREMY CLARK
CLERK OF THE CHURCH



PARKE JOHNSON
TREASURER



GARRY LEONARD



ELLEN SWIGGETT



ROSS TUTSCHULTE



KATY WEBB

A Word of Gratitude for our Properties Committee

FCC Madison has been particularly fortunate to have a great team of people working over the past three years to improve our physical space. Led by our past Chair, Cathy Hopkins, Properties has installed new floors in the downstairs offices and meeting rooms of the Church House, improved the environmental quality by installing split units in our offices, completed a renovation of the space under the sanctuary, creating fresh new spaces for our Church School, completed a physical assessment of the Meetinghouse, and is currently in the process of renovating our church kitchen. In addition to Cathy's tremendous leadership, we are grateful to Garry Leonard for securing in excess of \$100,000 in state and Federal grants, to Bob Blake who is serving as the manager of the kitchen project, Ken Dreier and our current chair Lyle Holmberg for their work on bringing solar panels to the Church House. We are grateful to each of you for all your work on behalf of First Congregational Church.

CAN YOU HELP OUR CONGOLESE FAMILY?



Furniture Needed for our Congolese Family! The Ngetas are looking for a 2 bedroom apartment in Madison, Guilford, or Branford for \$1800 or less. They will need 2 twin beds including mattresses, mattress pads, pillows, sheets, and blankets; 2 dressers, a kitchen table and 4 chairs, lamps, pots and pans, dishes, and silverware. If you have a lead for an apartment or have furniture to donate, please contact alisonhubley@gmail.com.



YOUTH GROUP

This is what the Sunday School kids have been up to this summer.... parades, crafts, kickball, yoga and more! Come join us each Sunday to learn, have fun and meet new friends.



RENOVATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RENOVATIONS

This summer First Congregational Church will embark on a series of upgrades to our facilities in the Franklin Bower Church House. Over the past few years, our Properties Committee has worked very hard to improve the downstairs level of the building, installing new floors and split-unit heating and air-conditioning units throughout, vastly improving the work environment for our staff.

Their work continues this summer with a complete renovation of our kitchen. This timely and essential improvement is made possible by an extraordinarily generous gift from a church member. This new kitchen will provide us with more opportunities for fellowship, of course; but also with the possibility of hosting a soup kitchen and other community events. We hope it will also make possible a new source of revenue, as a commercial kitchen might be made available as rental space for catered events.

In addition to the kitchen, Properties is also working to bring solar panels to the Church House roof, which would make us more energy independent. And later this year, we will replace the old furnace in the Meetinghouse with a liquid propane system that should reduce our cost and provide a much more environmentally friendly source of heat. We are grateful to Garry Leonard for his work on accessing state grants that will cover 50% of the costs of this new system.

Again, we owe a great debt of thanks to Cathy Hopkins and all the members of Properties for the gift of their experience, talent and for the enormous amount of time they have devoted to these projects.

Finally, we are grateful to the small, dedicated group of people who will be redecorating the Parlor this summer. It is a space that has served our church so well for so many years, but some of the furnishings have begun to break down as things do over time, and so the season has come to imagine a new look for the Parlor to serve the next generations of the church.

As an additional note, the church kitchen will be closed for renovation beginning in very early July. If you have any materials in the kitchen, we will have them moved to the stage in Hubley Hall.

The large and small refrigerators in the kitchen will also be moved to Hubley Hall.

During the summer, we will have Lemonade on the Lawn as always in the garden next to the Meeting House.



Are you someone who would like to get together with others and work on some kind of craft for the fair, whether it be knitting, making ornaments or some other craft? If you are interested in joining such a group please let me know, and tell me your availability and what you would be interested in making.

As we get closer to the Fair, we will also be looking for people who would be interested in getting together and making Christmas wreaths and apple pies.

Thank you.

Kathleen Bidney Singewald
Kmbidney@aol.com



The First Congregational Church of Madison

26 Meetinghouse Lane, Madison, CT 06443

Overlooking the Green

An Open & Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Non-profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Guilford, CT
Permit #271

Change
Service
Requested

The Meetinghouse News September 2023

This newsletter is available on our website and via email. If you would prefer an electronic version to a paper copy, please let the office know.

Mainoffice
@fccmadison.org

Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

Join our livestream worship on Facebook.com/fccmadison

Or watch it later in the day from our website:
fccmadison.org

Our Worship Service is broadcast on Madison Access TV Channel 18, Sunday at 12:00pm and 10:00pm, check their listings.



The Rev. Todd C. Vetter
Senior Minister

The Rev. Sarah E. Vetter
Minister of Community Life

Phone: 203-245-2739
Fax: 203-245-3341
E-mail: mainoffice@fccmadison.org
Website: www.fccmadison.org
Facebook: fccmadison
Church Office Hours:
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday - Friday



GO.BE.LOVE.

