

The Congregator

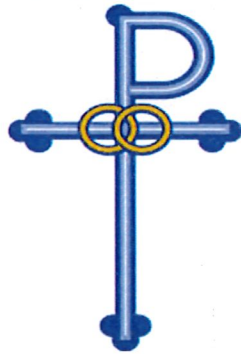
First Congregational Church of River Edge, New Jersey

a congregation of the United Church of Christ

June 2021

Volume 72, Issue 6

WEDDING SYMBOL



This version of the Chi Rho features two interlocking rings on a cross. It symbolizes the partnership a husband and wife make with God as they unite. The Wedding Cross also symbolizes a couple's commitment to grow together in God's grace and love.

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

109 Continental Avenue, River Edge, NJ 07661

Church Office: (201) 261-1712 / office@fccriveredge.org Website – www.fccriveredge.org

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Dennis TeBeest Pastor	dtebeest@fccriveredge.org 201-390-5548
Gloria Norton, S.M.M., Minister of Music	glorinor@aol.com
Nicole Babington Minister for Faith Formation	nbabington@fccriveredge.org 201-956-3435
Anne Cooper Administrative Assistant	office@fccriveredge.org 201-261-1712
Jeff Bernard Financial Secretary	financeoffice@fccriveredge.org 201-538-3563

FIRST (AND FINAL) THINGS

Godspeed

Our time together, as pastor and people (and as Minister of Music and people) is coming to a close. What do you say in times like these? What can you say? What words can start to touch the feelings, the memories and the hopes which I hold for all of us?

The last word is usually (always) the hardest. In grammar-and-style-dom it is known as the "Complimentary Close." Webster says that is the word that expresses the sender's regard for the receiver.

So it immediately occurs to me to close our years together with the word "love." Because that is how I feel toward you. And that is why I have done all that I have intentionally done (and not done all that I have intentionally not done!) over the past six years. I love you, and I love the God who has created and redeemed us, who has guided us together, and has called us to love others. It is a right last word. I mean it.

But there is another last word. One which I have used with y'all again and again. One which I mean just as sincerely and passionately. It is a word rich with meaning, and with the capacity to hold all my overflowing hopes for you and for me. I do not want to leave without wishing you *Godspeed*. It is not just a wish that God will give you success, but a command and an expectation and a reality: *God speede you!* God prosper you! It is a reality which will not be just an easy, effortless gift for you to receive; it will require a great deal of you—*all* of you and *each* of you! *God speed you* to love and to trust and to work with each other and with God. Go...and thrive...and make a Gospel difference around here, for Christ's sake!

Please do wish Gloria Godspeed in the coming days. She *has* made such a Gospel difference around here. Certainly by her unmatched musical knowledge, along with such performance and teaching skills. But even more so because she has dedicated herself to participate in and foster the core ministry and

mission of First Congregational Church: to be a community of Christ's disciples...and the presence of Christ to our neighbors. Gloria gets it! It has been an honor and joy to work with her for these years. Godspeed, Gloria!

I also know that you wish Godspeed for Betty and me as we enter a newness of relationship and life and place. Marriage, the hills of the lower Connecticut River Valley, and retirement together will all be new to us. But what will be unchanging is our assurance of God blessing *and* calling us to faithfulness and service in Christ's name.

By the time you read this, Betty and I will be owners of a home in Haddam, Connecticut, equidistant from New Haven and Hartford, and a bit above the Long Island Sound. I will be taking two weeks of vacation, June 7-22, to ready it for a late July move from the beloved parsonage.

I do so hope that many can join FCC in-person worship on my last Sunday, July 11. The loosening of Covid 19 restrictions will make (safe) attendance of all possible!

I also invite you to witness my marriage to Betty, Saturday, July 17, 11:30 am. Our wedding and celebration will be at Preakness Reformed Church, a congregation I previously served in Wayne. It is impossible to invite so many dear people in person. But we will live-stream the service, so that you (and my far-away family in Wisconsin) can witness it. On that day (or after), simply go to preaknessreformed.org, and click on the "PRC Live" tab, to access our service. It would be an honor to have your presence in that way!

For all the moves and journeys that will take us in new directions, and bring us together in the months and years ahead...

Godspeed! I love you,



Pastor Dennis

JUNE 2021 COMMITMENT REMINDERS

Sunday, June 6, 2021

COMMUNION TEAM/USHERS – Wayne Placek, Jane Silane, Frank Meeks
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Church School Youth
ALTAR GUILD – Michelle Heinzinger, Carole Meeks

Sunday, June 13, 2021

USHERS - ☩ Wayne Placek, Tom Rushforth, Jeff Keehn
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETER– Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Pat Canzani
ALTAR GUILD – Michelle Heinzinger, Carole Meeks

Sunday, June 20, 2021

USHERS - ☩ Betty Hogan, Frank Meeks, Inge Reist
COUNTERS - Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Fred Miller
ALTAR GUILD – Michelle Heinzinger, Carole Meeks

Sunday, June 27, 2021

USHERS – ☩ Bill Hamilton, Don Huggett, Diane Lento
COUNTERS – Don Huggett, Jane Silane, Jeff Bernard
GREETER – Russell Van Wetering
LAY READER – Wayne Placek
ALTAR GUILD – Michelle Heinzinger, Carole Meeks

☩ **Team Leader**



Greeters are needed for upcoming weeks and months. Please contact Russell Van Wetering at 201-261-1795
or email aprilsky@optonline.net.

LEGACY OF FAITH

A meaningful way to remember/honor loved ones and friends is to contribute to the Memorial Fund, Building Renovation Fund, Music & Arts Fund, Care Ministry or the General Fund of the First Congregational Church of River Edge.

BUILDING RENOVATION FUND

In Memory of
Barbara Christiansen
From Robert & Evelyn Fialko

In Memory of
Charles "Charlie" Keehn
From Robert Owens

WORSHIP

Come to worship on Sunday, June 6th and share the Communion bread as Jesus did with his Disciples.

Please join us Sunday June 6th as the Church School students lead us in worship while we celebrate Church School Sunday!!

After service we will share some time together - please join the fun!

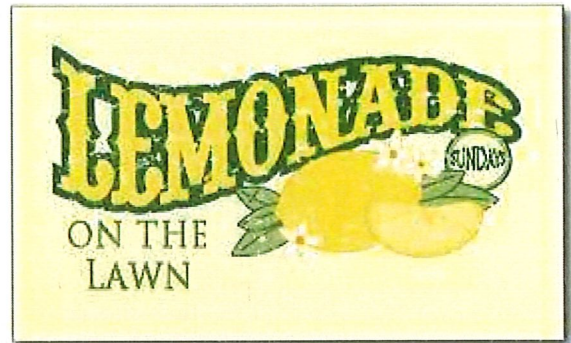
Music is a wonderful and meaningful way to express and share the word of God in worship. Gloria Norton has led us each week (for 30 years) as we participate and worship God through music and listening to singers and musicians share their talents. We will miss Gloria's musical gifts, her participation in so many church activities and her great sense of humor. Gloria, thank you for many years of dedication to our church and for bringing such beautiful music to people of all ages!!! We wish you and Jon a wonderful and well-deserved retirement!

Thank you very much for 30 years of dedication and delight!



MEMBERSHIP

Lemonade on the Lawn is returning!



Hosts are needed!

Commencing Sunday, June 13 immediately following worship service, lemonade and light snacks will be served.

Any member or friend who would like to host is encouraged to do so either as an individual host, as a family or with another person.

Sign-up sheets will be available on the table in The Commons or please contact Russell Van Wetering directly at aprilsky@optonline.net, or 201-261-1795.

In case of inclement weather or excessive heat, lemonade will be served in The Commons.

Sincerely,

Russell

CAN YOU HELP?



Greeters are needed for upcoming weeks and months. Please contact Russell Van Wetering at 201-261-1795 or email aprilsky@optonline.net.

2021

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday



Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



		1	2	3 3:00 Worship Team	4	5 10:00 Bird Walk DeKorte Park 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
6 Church School Sunday 10:00 Worship Service/Communion/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest	7 <u>CHURCH OFFICE</u> <u>CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:00 Education Team 7:30 Step by Step NA	8	9	10 10:00 Funds Advisory 1:00 Shawl Ministry	11	12 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
13 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Nancy Hoerner 11:00 Lemonade on the Lawn	14 <u>CHURCH OFFICE</u> <u>CLOSED</u>  12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	15 7:00 Leadership Council	16 8:00 -1:00 TMS Graduation in parking lot	17	18	19 8:30 KWIS 3:30 Piano Recital in Sanctuary 7:00 AA
20 First Day of Summer  10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Cheryl Daniel 11:00 Lemonade on the Lawn	21 <u>CHURCH OFFICE</u> <u>CLOSED</u> Congregator Deadline 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	22	23 7:00 Mission Team	24	25	26 8:30 KWIS 7:00 AA
27 10:00 Worship Service/ The Rev. Dennis TeBeest 11:00 Lemonade on the Lawn	28 <u>CHURCH OFFICE</u> <u>CLOSED</u> 12:00 Noon Al-Anon 7:30 Step by Step NA	29	30			

MUSIC

As we are now slowly and cautiously returning to some of our former practices, we need to pause and express our gratitude to all those who have helped to keep music alive and well in our services of worship during the past fourteen months. Soloists Bert Schmitt, Nadia Orendain, Kathleen Motoike, Joy Jacobs, Vic Babington and Anabelle Babington have provided solos and service music; and were joined in the Chancel Choir by Beth Shuler, Alice Rushforth, Cynthia Fordham, Betty Hogan, Cynthia Hamilton, Suzie Choi, Art Caughlan, and Gene Hammerle. The Choir has recorded dozens of anthems that will continue to be heard in worship until it is safe to once again have group singing in church.

We are thankful for the good work of Pilgrim Ringers Christine Braden, Cynthia Fordham, Linda Stark, Kathleen Motoike, Alice Rushforth, and Nicole Bolognese in presenting beautiful handbell music in worship. We also thank Gene Hammerle and Fred Miller for keeping our services on the air and available to folks everywhere. Thanks also to Pastor Dennis, Janet Arena, and the Worship Team for their warm support and encouragement; and to Anne and Nicole for their amazing skill and creativity.

As we begin to emerge from over than a year of restrictions and limitations into a more free, safer time, we continue to be a vital witness to Christ in our community and the world.

*When in our music God is glorified,
And adoration leaves no room for pride,
It is as though the whole creation
cried Alleluia!*

*How often, making music, we have found
A new dimension in the world of sound,
As worship moved us to a more
profound Alleluia!*

Fred Pratt Green,
1973

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP



Thank you to all who helped Women's Fellowship complete school and hygiene kits. Your generosity meant supplies for families to clean their homes, hygiene kits for people to stay clean and school supplies for children who no longer have daily access to resources that their schools traditionally provide every day.

We are proud that we assembled and forwarded to Church World Service 54 school kits and 20 hygiene kits. In addition, our church served as a collection site for other local congregations. You exemplify what it means to be charitable and to do God's work.

This summer all the supplies for the school kits go on sale. Please help us to continue this 20+ year tradition and purchase the needed items. You can be an answer to someone's prayers.

With gratitude,
Michelle L. Heinzinger
President, Women's Fellowship

P.S. Special thanks to Gloria Norton who sewed all our school bags.



Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for your love, support and care extended to me these past three months. Pastor Dennis for the prayers, Shawl Ministry for my shawl, Care Ministry and for all the calls and cards.

Thank you for the many, many blessings,
Joan Hammerle



- 1 Rachel Phillips
- 2 Spencer Troy Hosgood
- 2 Callan Thomas Wallace
- 4 Julie Hogan
Russell Van Wetering
James Stawecki
- 6 Jenna Gervasio
Alyson Herrick
- 7 Thomas Robert Gervasio
- 15 Andrew Fialko
- 17 Colleen Banks
Diana Loeffel
- 18 Patrick Hogan
Thomas Karyshyn
- 19 Cassandra Babington
Bridget Babington
Lucas Joseph O'Connell
- 22 Malena Philomena Ferrentino
- 23 James Hildreth
- 26 Victor Babington, Jr.
Brooke Lauren Shirk
Nolan David Hosgood
- 30 John Wayne Lee, Jr.



- 7 Noreen & Russell Van Wetering
- 8 Joan & John Kuharetz
- 13 Tim & Pat Wallace
- 15 Diane & Michael Iaconetti
- 24 Missy & Lou Warnet
- 27 Thomas & Michele DeVincenzo
- 28 Linda Bradbury-Danner &
John Danner

Deadline for the July/August Congregator is June 21.

SPECIAL DATES:

- Flag Day, June 14, 2021
- Father's Day, June 20, 2021
- First Day of Summer, June 20, 2021

EDUCATION

Confirmation Luncheon

Thanks to all who attended this wonderful celebration of our Confirmands. Despite the wind, it was a beautiful afternoon of Fellowship. Chayse and Jack did a wonderful job as lay readers (thanks to Nadia for filling in as well,) and it was a pleasure to have them joined by Brooke and Rylie at the luncheon. I truly enjoyed spending time with these youth, and I hope to see the "God Squad" more often in coming months.

Church School Sunday June 6

The Education Team is looking forward to celebrating our children in person this year! A Church School Sunday service will be held on Sunday, June 6. This church school year has been a challenge for all, so acknowledging everyone's commitment to faith formation is important to me. Please plan on attending in person or on Zoom to witness the joy children bring to our congregation.

Blessings to Gloria

On behalf of the Education Team, our church school teachers and all of the children, I would like to thank Gloria Norton for her tireless commitment to our ministry. Many of our children heard an organ play for the first time by her. She introduced them to the "hymn" when her music filled the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Thanks for all the children's messages, the monthly church school sing-a-longs, and the new addition this year...recording with the children for both the Chrismon and Church School Sunday services. Her inspiration, flexibility and presence was a blessing to our families, and she will be greatly missed. We wish Gloria and Jon a blessed retirement and enjoy your next journey together! Keep in touch...

Childcare & Children's Message Volunteers

The chance of these two ministries returning in September is good, so please consider volunteering. These little moments with our children are a blessing and could be a great impact on their faith development. I will be reaching out in the coming months, so when I do, please say YES!

~Nicole



Family Promise Hike for Hope



Sunday, May 2nd

WOW! WE... OUTDID OURSELVES!

We raised **\$4,400** FOR FAMILY PROMISE.

We were **Team #3** in fund raising.

We were **Team #2** in Hike-participation, with **28 Hikers**.

We had donations from at least 50 people, including many friends and family members.

And, with our help, **Family Promise exceeded** its fundraising goal,
raising \$50, 960 to support its wonderful programs!

***THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED, WALKED,
PROMOTED, OR CHEERED US ON!***



Thank you, Thank you, Thank you



Thank you-Letters:

➤ **From Center for Food Action (CFA)***

"Thank you for your gift of \$900. Your support means that more families will be able to put food on their tables. **Last year, we served more than 120,000 people during the COVID-19 pandemic, more than one third of them children....** You stand at the heart of our mission and together we will rise to meet the growing need for assistance. With gratitude....

➤ **From St. Peter the Apostle Food Pantry***

"We ...thank ...the congregation of First Congregational Church for your continuing support of St. Peter's Food Pantry. The generous donations you make enable us to continue our ministry to support our neighbors. (B)ecause of organizations like you the pantry can keep its shelves stocked and assist our clients in their time of need. ...We are fortunate to be part of such a wonderful community. Our customers are so appreciative of everything that is done for them!

**These gifts to our food-insecure neighbors are allocated from the donations you give on the first Sunday of each month. If you attend church service, the Food Pantry envelope is in your bulletin as usual. If you attend online, you can donate through the "Giving" button on the website, or by mail. The Mission Team is grateful for your unwavering support.*



Christmas Fund

Offering date: June 27, 2021



The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementing small retirement annuities, covering health premiums, and sending Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to our lower-income retirees.

In the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Church Board which administers the Christmas Fund experienced a **400% increase in requests for emergency grants** over the previous year.

~~~~~In the *Christmas-in-June* spirit~~~~~

this is our opportunity to help these Veterans of the Cross who have sacrificed much to help us on *our* faith journeys



## Upcoming Outreach Opportunities



*We will be asking for your Indications of Interest.*

- Second Sunday - We plan to contact the residences of our guests to learn if they would be able (COVID restrictions?) and interested in attending our Second Sunday programs if we re-start them in the autumn. If so, we will need help with the planning, cooking, and program development.
- Loaves of Love – We hope to do a second small bread-baking event soon. The focus and viability of this project is being deliberated. If you would like to be in on the discussion, (or the baking) please let us know.
- Pumpkin Patch – Definitely happening! Pumpkins arriving October 8<sup>th</sup>, with set-up that afternoon, Patch to open for business on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. Much help (Your help!) needed!!!