



First Congregational

UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

THE HERALD

SEPTEMBER 2021

## Minister's Musings

Dearly Beloved,

I have been thinking and praying about our congregation's Open and Affirming process these last months. In doing so, I have been reminded that this is a journey that we are on collectively and also individually. We are not all in the same place and that is okay, yes, and also good and beautiful.

As I have said since becoming your pastor, one of the gifts of this congregation is that we do not agree about everything -- from politics to musical preferences. From what to do with our rental property to which baseball team we cheer for (or if we even like baseball!). From how to navigate a pandemic to how to interpret the Bible. The diversity we bring enriches our community as we learn from one another and experience just how big and mysterious God is.

### **We are a loving, kind and giving church community.**

- I have watched us grow in allowing disagreement to rise to the surface and be voiced -- a sign of a healthy congregation!
- I have watched us respond to disagreement and conflict with respect, resilience and integrity.
- WE CAN BE PROUD!

### **Even as we disagree about all sorts of things, the fundamentals of our Christian faith are evident:**

- We desire to grow closer to the God of love made known through Christ.
- We want to love God, one another, ourselves and our neighbors.
- We seek to follow Jesus, though we have differing ideas of what that looks like.

### **And so with our upcoming Open and Affirming (ONA) vote:**

- **We do not all need to agree.** We are not and do not seek to be a community where we all must believe the same thing.
- **Rather, we are challenged to grow in our ability and resilience to stay at the table with one another.** To listen deeply and with compassion. To share bravely and with love.

I am honored to serve a congregation that is already striving to live into the kind of welcome and affirmation described in the proposed ONA Welcome Statement. I believe that those of us who are struggling with Open and Affirming are doing so because of belief or semantics and not because of hatred, interpersonal angst or animosity. I believe that those of us who want ONA to pass will not judge someone who wants to hold onto their expressed belief. Rather, they desire that all persons

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## Minister's Musings (continued)

be fully and explicitly welcome in this congregation and for them, this means adopting a clear statement of welcome. I trust that we can hold this tension because I have seen each of you seeking to treat others with openness, respect and love -- whoever they are and wherever they are on life's journey.

However you vote and whatever our congregation decides on September 19th, I hope and pray you know that there is room for you here. First Congregational Church will continue to grow and change as we seek to be a community where all people can find belonging and experience God's love, welcome and grace.

With much love,  
Thandiwe

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## Sunday Morning Worship, 10:00 am

Worship is held in a variety of formats. You may worship in-person in the sanctuary, participate online through Zoom, or stream the service on Facebook.

### In-Person Worship

Join us in the sanctuary! **Masks required.** We continue to **HIGHLY RECOMMEND** that only vaccinated people attend in-person worship at this time. We have begun singing together and gathering in Fellowship Hall (church basement). The church balcony is available for those who wish or need to continue maintaining physical distance and not singing.

### Zoom Call-In

Dial: 312 626 6799

When prompted for the meeting ID, Enter: 966 390 616#

### Zoom Meeting By Computer

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/966390616?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/966390616?pwd=eXBIRC9Kc0V6S3BxM3NBQzIDaHRTdz09)

[pwd=eXBIRC9Kc0V6S3BxM3NBQzIDaHRTdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/966390616?pwd=eXBIRC9Kc0V6S3BxM3NBQzIDaHRTdz09)

Meeting ID: 966 390 616; Password: 773088



### Sunday Worship on Facebook Live

*You DO NOT need a facebook account to watch our worship on Facebook Live*

<https://www.facebook.com/LovelandUCC>

# Autumn Worship: A Season of Blessing

**Our worship theme for autumn is “A Season of Blessing.”** When we bless something, we see, name, and celebrate the sacredness within it. In so doing, we call forth the power of the divine that is present in all things. Sometimes we are casual about our blessings -- the kiss we give a loved one as they walk out the door or the song we sing in the shower. But when we are intentional about the act of blessing, we find that it is not simply words or a gesture. Instead, it is “a peace-making, earth-shaking, dead-waking, light-creating, dark-abating act” of love (SALT Project).

Blessing changes us. It binds us to the things we bless. After all, you don't think that God would allow us to call forth divine power and then not use us to fulfill that blessing, do you? After all, “your blessing is your covenant.... When you lift up your hands, when you extend your arms,... when you call down the source-of-all-that-is power of God, you can be sure that you will be part of God's plan,” (SALT Project).

So, this season, let us bless. Flash a smile to the grocery store teller. Serve someone in need. Share time with your beloved ones. Let someone else care for you. Consider how you use your time, talents and treasure. Notice and receive God's gifts and offer gifts of your own in gratitude and joy.

Each Sunday we focus on a different aspect of our individual and communal lives. Join us as we celebrate the sacred in the world all around us!

- Sept 12 - Blessing the Water (Living Water Worship)
- Sept 19 - Blessing Sunday & Congregational Meeting
- Sept 26 - Blessing God's Creation (Bicycles & Pets)
- October 3 - Blessing Our Tables: World Communion Sunday, Stewardship
- October 10 - Blessing Our Path (shoes), Receiving New Members, Stewardship, Sunday Afternoon Hike
- October 16 - Hay Ride & Activities @ Jim Croissant's Farm
- October 17 - Blessing the Harvest, Stewardship
- October 24 - Blessing The Road, Stewardship, Afternoon Community Blessing of the Motorcycles
- October 31 - Blessing Our Gifts; Commitment Sunday
- Nov 7 - Blessing the Generations (All Saints Sunday)
- Nov 14 - Blessing the Work of Our Hands
- Nov 21 - Giving Thanks & Blessing the Days to Come  
Celebrating 120 Years & Hanging of the Greens



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# Virtual & In Person Congregational Meeting - Sept 19

Sunday, September 19, following Worship

We will have a Congregational Meeting in the sanctuary and via Zoom immediately following our worship service. In addition to our normal September business, our Music Director Nikki Glantz will share about her sabbatical and we will vote on the Welcome Statement proposed by the Open and Affirming (ONA) Discernment Team. All Active Members are encouraged to attend and participate in this decision. **Please be sure to read the ONA Discernment Team's message with the proposed welcome statement (next page).**

If you join us virtually, the Zoom information is the same as that for worship:

Meeting ID: 966 390 616; Passcode: 773088, Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/966390616?pwd=eXBIRC9Kc0V6S3BxM3NBQzIDaHRTdz09>

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## ONA Voting Procedure

As per our Constitution, active members present at the congregational meeting may vote. Given COVID-19 concerns, members present in-person and on Zoom may vote. Those voting in-person will have secret ballots. Due to technological limitations, Zoom votes will be received confidentially by Pastor Thandiwe and recorded by a 2nd person.

We encourage you to attend this meeting in-person if you are safely able to do so. Thank you for participating in this important decision for our congregation.

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## Rocky Mountain Conference App

We are thrilled to announce that the free, all-new **Rocky Mountain Conference App** is now available for iOS and Android! Never miss out on an important event or announcement again - the RMC App is all our information in one easy-to-use place! **Watch the 3-minute video on how to download and use the app [HERE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFQxhFT9Foo)** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFQxhFT9Foo>).

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## RMC Associate Conference Minister Installation

**Save the Date!** Rev. Dr. Anthony Scott will be installed as the new RMC Associate Conference Minister on Sunday, October 10, 2021. This will be a celebration you won't want to miss! It will be a hybrid event, with in-person and online options for attending. Registration will be required. More details will be announced on the [Conference website](#) soon!

# Open & Affirming Discernment

Dear Members,

The Open and Affirming Discernment team was formed by the Church Board (10/12/2020) to guide our congregation through a discernment practice concerning becoming an Open and Affirming church. We have talked with other ONA churches, surveyed our congregation, held personal conversations with all members willing to participate, led group discussions and seminars, and continually prayed for discernment.

After reviewing dozens of other ONA welcome statements from other UCC churches, we have drafted the following statement for our church. This statement was discussed and approved by the Church Board (8/5/2021) to be voted on at our congregational meeting on September 19, 2021.

Voting will follow the church constitution policies, which recognizes “members present”. During the Covid restrictions, the Board has considered people attending through Zoom to be “present”. There are no provisions for absentee ballots.

Please prayerfully reflect on this proposed ONA Welcome Statement and be present to cast your vote.

## ***Open and Affirming Welcome Statement***

*First Congregational Church UCC of Loveland, Colorado, affirms that ALL people are created by God, in the image of God, and are beloved in the eyes of God. We affirm that every member of this congregation, a covenant community, has an equal opportunity for full participation in the life of the church, as well as the love, respect, and support of the congregation. In a covenant community, members support each other, worship together and provide the guidance each person needs to strengthen their faith.*

*As an Open and Affirming congregation, we seek to be an expression of God’s all- encompassing love in the world. We reach out to those who have known the sorrow of exclusion, discrimination, and marginalization by society and the church. We seek to promote Christ’s compassion, healing, and fullness of life for all people.*

*Embracing the gifts of diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of each person, we extend a welcome to persons –*

*of every race, ethnic heritage, and nationality,  
of every sex, gender identity, expression, and sexual orientation,  
of every age,  
of every physical and mental ability,  
of various marital and familial statuses,  
of various economic statuses or financial situations,  
of different faiths or without faith.*

*We believe God calls us to create a sacred, safe, and inclusive space where all are loved as Christ loved them. The Holy Spirit moves among us to create a sense of belonging to a sacred community, and to encourage love and acceptance of one another.*

*Whoever YOU are and wherever YOU are on life’s journey, YOU are welcome here.*

# Autumn Educational Opportunities

## Nursery Care

Every Sunday, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Available for children aged 6 months - 3 years

## Children's Worship

2nd & 4th Sundays following the Children's Moment

All elementary-aged children are invited downstairs for Children's worship on 2nd and 4th Sundays. This is a time for building community, learning about God's love and becoming more familiar with God's word.

*On 1st & 3rd Sundays, children will remain in the sanctuary for worship. Activity bags are available and will be updated monthly and the Cozy Corner is always open.*

## Youth Group

6th-12th Grades

1st & 3rd Sundays following Worship

Daniel and Sara Gardner have generously agreed to serve as our Youth Ministers this year. Youth group will meet twice a month for socializing, service and spiritual exploration. All middle and high school youth are welcome to participate! More details to come.

## New Members Class

September 12 & 19 on Zoom 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Are you interested in learning more about our church and exploring membership? You're invited to participate in our New Members class. It will be held on Zoom on Sunday September 12 and 19. Please contact Pastor Thandiwe (970-405-9184 or [thandiwe@lovelanducc.org](mailto:thandiwe@lovelanducc.org)) to sign up for the class or for more information.

**Zoom Information:** Meeting ID: 880 7380 9267; Passcode: 357958;

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88073809267?pwd=TE0wdDI4U0hJZDgyLzIyaHJHREhjUT09>

# All-Church Work Day - October 2

Join us for an all-church work day! Bring your work gloves and any outdoor cleaning tools (brooms, rakes, etc.).

Tasks will include:

- raking leaves
- cleaning out window wells
- weeding shrubs and cleaning out trash
- any minor cleaning/repairs around the outside of the building
- other indoor and outdoor tasks as determined by the Trustees.



## In Need of Financial Assistance?

Our congregation has set aside some funds to assist members of our congregation and extended community (your neighbors, friends, family) with money for groceries, rent, mortgage payments and medical bills. **Please reach out to Pastor Thandiwe or one of our deacons.**

## Online & Text Giving is Now Available!

**ONLINE GIVING:** First Congregational Church is now ready to accept online donations! Please go to: <https://FCCUCC.breezechms.com/give/online>



**TEXT TO GIVE:** Simply text the amount that you'd like to give (e.g. 10) to 720-674-7372. You will be directed to a secure link to give to the church!

## Financial Notes

Budgeted Offerings through July: \$107,092

Offerings Received: \$143,054

Donation of Goods/Services in July: \$153

## Serving in September

### LAY READERS:

9/5 Rhonda Racicot

9/12

9/19 Paul Heintzleman

9/26 Craig Bialy

### GREETERS:

9/5 Larry Schuetz, Lee Daniels

9/12 Dana Stanke, Ali Eleam

9/19 John & Sheryl McCoy

9/26 Brian & Julie Schuetz

### USHERS:

9/5

9/12 Georgene Hill, Charlotte Parkes

9/19 Troy Jackson, Allen Lebsack

9/26 John Schwartz, Charlotte Parkes

## September Celebrations

### Birthdays

Alec Britt

Maria Greaves

Ted Swanson

Steve Betz

Sara Gardner

Ann Baker

Duane Shable

Sherri Frank

Robert Peters

Matt Bialy

Bill Shanahan

Virgil Schuetz

### Anniversaries

Bill & Karen Shanahan

Lee & Linda Daniels

John & Ann Baker

Elvin & Connie Spreng

Darryl & Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson

Jay & Tena Britt

Ted & DeLoris Swanson

Karl & Ashley Vetter



**If your birthday or anniversary is NOT listed, please let the office know.**

# SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Virtual and In Person Worship 10 am Virtual "Homosexuality & the Bible" Education Event 11 am	30	31 Virtual Lectio Divina 8 am	1 Virtual Autumn Seasonal Team 1 pm	2 Virtual Open & Affirming Discernment 7 pm	3	4
5 Virtual and In Person Worship 10 am	6 <i>Labor Day</i> (office closed)	7 Virtual Lectio Divina 8 am Deacons 7 pm	8	9	10	11
12 Virtual, In Person, & Children's Worship 10 am Virtual New Member Class 2 pm	13 Trustees 6:30 pm Church Board 7:30 pm	14 Virtual Lectio Divina 8 am Staff Meeting 10 am	15 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	16 Virtual Open & Affirming Discernment 7 pm	17	18
19 Virtual and In Person Worship 10 am Congregational Meeting 11 am Virtual New Member Class 2 pm	20	21 Virtual Lectio Divina 8 am	22	23	24	25
26 Virtual, In Person, & Children's Worship 10 am	27	28 Virtual Lectio Divina 8 am Faith Formation 9:30 am	29	30	1	2 <i>All Church Work Day</i>

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Email: [Office@LovelandUCC.org](mailto:Office@LovelandUCC.org) ● Website: [LovelandUCC.org](http://LovelandUCC.org) ● Facebook: Loveland UCC

Rev. Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson, Pastor, [thandiwe@lovelanducc.org](mailto:thandiwe@lovelanducc.org)

Nikki Glantz, Music Director & Accompanist, [nikki@lovelanducc.org](mailto:nikki@lovelanducc.org)

Staci Hennings, Administrative Assistant, [office@lovelanducc.org](mailto:office@lovelanducc.org)

## Salvation Army Respite Care Program

The Salvation Army of Loveland continues to recognize, develop, and meet the needs of the most vulnerable in the community. In May 2019, The Salvation Army of Loveland created a Respite Care Program to assist the medically fragile homeless in Loveland and Berthoud communities. Before the origination of this program, a temporary respite resource for the medically fragile homeless men and women was not available in the Northern Colorado area.

The program provides acute and post-acute medical care for homeless individuals who are wither too ill or too frail to recover from a physical illness or injury while living on the streets and yet no longer qualified to be hospitalized. The homeless men and women of the community are particularly vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic. This program serves as a model to other Salvation Army centers throughout the United States.

This new program addresses four areas of need. The Salvation Army of Loveland liaisons with community health providers, and provides food, shelter, and transportation assistance. These four components are essential for healing and recovery from illness or injury.

Medical respite care offers a safe, nurturing environment from the hardships of the street to recovery, especially during the pandemic. The cost of a one-week lodging is approximately \$450 per client. Can you imagine trying to recover from an illness or injury while living on the street with nowhere to sleep, no running water or access to a bathroom, and having to search for food?

The Salvation Army of Loveland encourages you to partner with us to help those needing respite care. Please join us in this lifesaving program by calling our office at 970-699-8380 or visit [www.salvationarmyloveland.org](http://www.salvationarmyloveland.org).

