



CONGREGATIONAL CLARION

First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City, Utah

Sunday Worship Services

Services held Sundays at 10:30am
in St. John Hall

July Worship

July 2 - "So Much Grace"

Communion

Psalm 89: 1-4, 15-18

Romans 6: 12-23

July 9 - "It Doesn't Have to Be That Hard"

Romans 7: 15-25a

Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-23

July 16 - "The Surprise of Who We Are Meant to Be"

Isaiah 55: 10-13

Matthew 12: 1-9, 18-23

July 23 - Bill Brown, Preaching

July 30 - JR Baker, Preaching

Newsletter Experiment

Kristi and I are trying a new format for The Clarion. We want it to be inspirational, newsy and helpful in your life and the church's life. See what you think and let us know what you like and what we can work on. Thanks! Doug



Moving into God's Goodness

"What? Are you crazy? Why would you go there?" That's what more than one person said to us in Massachusetts when we told them we were moving to Salt Lake City to be part of the First Congregational Church—you all! The thing is...they're probably right. We are at least a little crazy! With one weekend to house hunt, we even put down our first offer on a property—we didn't get that place, but there we were.

Over the years, Cynthia and I have really tried to see our lives and all our major decisions through the lens of "What does God want us to do?" And into that question are other questions,

- How is God working right now, and how could we give it a boost?
- What is the right thing to do?
- How can we do the most good?
- What's the best choice we can make?

Without God as the foundation, though, these questions turn out to be little more than personal preference, or what makes us feel good. But when we seek what God wants first, everything else falls into place.

Yeah, it's probably crazy that we would come here, but really it's crazy that God would love us, and crazier still that Jesus would die for us. And it's crazy that you all would decide to sell a church so that you can be a better blessing. So we are all crazy, all trying to love well, all trying to do the right thing, and you know what? When we seek what God wants first, God's promise is that something great is going to come!

"Seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." —Jesus, *The Bible*, Matthew 6:34

From the Deacons

We've looked forward to summer and warmer weather, but have been happily surprised with cooler temps (not 107) and rain showers. Amen!

Rev. Doug Gray is settled in with us and has been working with the Deacons for the worship services. His style is exciting and new. He even brought his guitar and taught us a new song to sing for worship earlier in June.

Thanks to Paul Kelley for playing his guitar at the Outdoor Worship service.

Carla McIntire will be the chair of Deacons starting in July. After being Moderator this past year, Deacons should be a breeze.

Rev. Doug attended the NACCC meeting the weekend of June 23. Rev. Joanna Hart preached on June 25. Doug was asked to officiate at a wedding in Chicago on July 23 and he will be out of town for church. Bill Brown, our new Moderator will preach about his vision of FCC. Rev. Doug will then be at Camp Fellowship on July 30. Rev. JR Baker will preach on the July 30.

Please think about sharing your musical abilities with us during the summer. Let Diane Forster-Burke know if you wish to share your musical abilities.

Please plan on attending worship when you are in town this summer.

August Worship

August 6 - Camp Fellowship Sunday

August 13 - "Are You a Boat-Potato?"

Psalm 85: 8-13

Matthew 14: 22-33

August 20 - "From Blame to Brownies"

Genesis 45: 1-15

Matthew 15: 10-28

August 27 - "How to Own the World's Kings and Queens"

Exodus 3: 1-15

Matthew 16: 13-20

September 3 - "Naming Our Hope and Power"

Exodus 3: 1-15

Matthew 16: 21-28

Next
Month's
Worship
Services

Catching Up with Doug and Cynthia



We are so excited—we have an accepted offer on a condo! It's in Three Fountains East and it's really beautiful! We really like the kitchen, bedrooms and entertaining spaces. It will be wonderful to have some outdoor space for our small dog, Watson. (He's not really a dog...but that's a longer story ☺ We have had the inspection, and it's in great shape with just a couple things to fix after we move in.

As I write this, we have all our documents in and our plans made in order to close on that fabulous condo on June 30. Since we still have an apartment for July, we can move things over as we choose, and put them where we want things to go. Oh there's still a lot of work to do, but we left most of our things in boxes to make the move easier. We will be officially moved in by August 1! Give us a little time to get set up, but we hope to start inviting people over in the fall.

Thank you to Glenda LeHoux, for going to look at so many properties while we were still in Massachusetts, and to Miriam McFadden, our realtor extraordinaire, for good advice and riding herd on the process. Thank you to Mike McIntire for helping us figure out how to get the money to all the right places. A huge thank you to all the members of our church—your financial support and creative process is making it possible to own our own home! Thank You, God, for all your generosity and encouragement. We are so happy to be part of this community!

New Address

750 East Three Fountains Drive #94

Murray, UT 84107

Doug's email: dgray1620@gmail.com

Cynthia's email: graycb516@gmail.com

Calendar

July 4 - Independence Day

July 17 - July 24

Rev. Doug Gray will be out of the office

July 24 - Pioneer Day

July 29 - August 4

Rev. Doug Gray will be at Camp Fellowship

Minister's Office Hours

Change in Pastor Doug's Office and Hours and Day Off

Doug's office hours are generally

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
from 8:30a-4:30p**

Change in Day off: Doug is trying to take off Wednesdays now.

Of course, during Doug's office hours, he often has appointments, visits and errands that take him out of the church's offices. Feel free to give him a call. His cellphone is 608-436-6263

Outreach Updates

Join us in supporting **Crossroads Urban Center**

During the summer months children are out of school and families need more help with food. Unfortunately, donations to food pantries generally go down during the summer months. More than ten years ago local congregations came up with a fun way to solve this problem by challenging each other to see who could donate the most pounds per person during the month of July. The trophy to be awarded to the winning congregation would be a gold tinted can of dehydrated celery that was produced in the 1970s.

This year's **Golden Celery Drive** will be even more important because the Crossroads Food Pantry began running out of some basic foods in May, before the summer had even begun. Most non-perishable food items will be counted. Due to lack of need for these items Crossroads will not accept: food storage, #10 cans (the big ones), or other bulk items. Water WILL be counted this year. Bring your items to church beginning the first Sunday in July. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or if you need help with getting your donations to the church.

Top Donation Needs For The Summer of 2023:

- Peanut butter
- Cereal
- Canned fruit/fruit cups
- Individual snacks (granola bars, etc.)
- Ramen
- Crackers
- Canned tomatoes/tomato product
- Canned soup



Camp Fellowship

Camp will be from July 29-Aug 3 this summer. The theme is "Trust Love Know Yourself". As in previous years, some of our members will be attending Camp as staff. Camp always needs cookies. We love having cookies as a treat during Camp. We also will need 8 shepherd's pies casseroles.

Please Contact
Diane Forster-Burke



The Spirit Moves in Milwaukee

National Association Annual Meeting • July 23–27

Conference Theme:

"The Daring Endeavor of Being Church"

So I want you to think for just a moment: who are the two or three people of our fellowship who are deeply spiritual, great leaders, and the most fun? Now I want you to imagine 270 people, and all of them are those people from their church. Oh my goodness! Can you imagine the depth of the worship, the passion for God, and the sheer mayhem that might cause? It feels a little like the world tilts for those few days with the combined wonderfulness

Now imagine not just worship, but great Bible studies and thought-provoking conversations on how to make every church more alive and more faithful. It's breathtaking in beauty and energy and heart-pumping in fellowship and joy. That's what an Annual Meeting of the National Association is like.

This year's theme was "The Daring Endeavor of Being Church," so the conference asked people from cool churches that are doing church differently to talk about how God is doing a new and beautiful thing with them. One person is part of a virtual church—and I thought, "What?!" but they are loving people who would never get in a building, and all over the world! Another person talked about the process they went through evaluating all their ministries from scratch and dreaming how God might use them now—not just 50 years ago. Our very own Michael McIntire was asked to talk about what our church has done and what we are looking forward to. Did you get that? First Congregational Church is one of the cool churches living into God in new ways!

Next year, the conference will be in Spokane, WA, down by the riverfront. Don't know the theme, but the host church, they sang a song that recognized the incredible importance of the Fellowship Hour Coffee Maker, that had us rolling in the aisles! If you have time next year at the end of In case you don't have FaceBook, here are some photos of us enjoying and contributing to this amazing opportunity.



Great Quotes from the NA Annual Meeting 2023

- “Congregationalism is preeminently the spiritual polity. It is less than nothing and vanity if the power of a godly life be not behind it. When the great Master is present in and speaks through the majority of its members, the collective action of a Congregational church will be wise and prudent, and then, humanly speaking, its corporate force will be irresistible.” – Henry Martin Dexter, one of the great ones, Congregational minister and writer from the 1800s
- “I realize what I am suggesting will cause discomfort, but what comfortable things have led to meaningful revitalization in our churches? I also realize the thought of relinquishing control is scary but, if we are truly Congregational churches, shouldn't we be continuously relinquishing control to Christ, the head of the church?” – Justin Berkobien, Associate Pastor, Oneonta Congregational Church (South Pasadena)
- “The next Congregationalism will be missional and radically hospitable. Attuned to the leading of the Spirit, the next Congregationalists will unite across cultural and political divides and embody the gospel in every aspect of their lives.” – Justin Berkobien
- “The glory of God is a human being fully alive.” – Irenaeus
- “Sometimes all we have is sorrow. Sometimes hope is bathed in tears. Sometimes God is with us in the pain and the small graces. Here in this place and this sorrow, it is holy. Even in absence, God is present. Even in the bitterness of disappointment, God is present...What if joining our sorrows leads to joy?” – Debbie Thomas, Author of *Into the Mess and Other Jesus Stories*
- “Some people are less interested in a sermon, and more interested in conversation.” – Justin Berkobien
- “The Gospel is not something to be possessed, but performed.” – Jennifer McBride
- “Hundreds of voices from within and without our fellowship are asking, “Is there anything strong, and great, and enduring in the Congregational Way that the whole Church needs and which must be not be lost whatever the cost?...The answer is a resounding “Yes!” There is depth, and vitality, and power in our way of life. There is, in our way, the highest kind of discipline, the most daring sort of authority, and the most enduring form of strength.” – Arthur Rouner Jr, *The Congregational Way* (1960)
- Mike McIntire asks: “I've been part of Camp Fellowship for 40 years. People ask, “What's the point? We don't get any new members from that!” Justin Berkobien: “We have to measure our success differently. We can't measure the church by business metrics. We are called to be Jesus to people who don't know Jesus, but really need Jesus. Being faithful to the call is how we measure success in our lives with Jesus.”
- “Our task is building bridges across the [toxic, infantile versions of Christianity]...The deep work of ministry is helping connect grace with people's lives...” – Debbie Thomas

