



SEPTEMBER 2021

## *First Congregational Church of Santa Ana*

A diverse Christian fellowship open to all and dedicated to singing God's praises, learning God's word, and loving one another on our journey of faith.

### *A Message from Our Moderator*

Dear FCC Family and Friends –

Our word for this month is “reconciliation” thanks to Rev. Dr. Jeff Utter.

*rec·on·cil·i·a·tion*

1. Our FCC definition is the restoration of our Family of Faith!

We need to come together as a Church Family to restore and reconcile our faith in this worship community.

Thanks to Nicole Aquino, our Sunday Services are available anytime. The link on our website <[firstchurchsa.org](http://firstchurchsa.org)> will send you to the livestream services on YouTube. We have:

July 18 – Rev. Dr. Paul Tellstrom

July 25 – Rev. Marcia Hoffman

August 1 – Rev. Dr. Gary Barmore

August 22 – Rev. Dr. Jeff Utter

As you have heard, we will be having an abbreviated calendar for services in Sept., Oct., and Nov. We will worship every Sunday in Advent!

Holy Action/Church Council will continue to meet on the second Sunday of every month after worship. Trustees will continue to meet on Zoom the fourth Monday of every month.

We continue to be: “A diverse Christian Fellowship open to all and dedicated to singing God’s praises, learning God’s word, and loving one another on our journey of faith!”

Please know that ALL of you are an important part of our faith community! We continue to pray for our First Congregational Church and all of our friends – past, present, and future.

Blessings to you and yours!

Sue Stewart, Moderator

## Laboring for the Lord

For many people, the pandemic redefined work, with more employees logging hours from a home office — or kitchen table. Boundaries between job and personal life blurred, as did any sense of being “off duty.”

Most of us prefer clear divisions between our tasks and time. While such separations may help with scheduling, they are artificial human constructs. “*Whatever* your task,” says Colossians 3:23 (NRSV, emphasis added) — whether in public or private, family or job, spiritual or worldly activities — “put yourselves into it as done for the Lord.” Verse 17 tells us to “do everything” in Jesus’ name, “giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

That means even work and worship interlock. As Rick Warren writes, “Work becomes worship when you dedicate it to God and perform it with an awareness of his presence.”

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## Worship Update

As we decided at our Holy Action/Church Council meeting on Sunday, August 22, we will have a modified worship schedule for the rest of this year. If you have a favorite minister, or you know of someone you would like us to invite for a Sunday, please let Jim Stewart know.

We agree to worship twice a month in September, October, and November and then worship together through the Advent Season. We had talked about the first and third Sundays, but if you check the information below, you will see that the second and fourth Sunday fits into our plans better. Thanks to Nicole Aquino, our worship services will now be available on our website!

This is our tentative schedule for the rest of the year:

SEPTEMBER 12 – Rev. Nancy Brink

26 – open

OCTOBER 10 – open

24 – Rev. Lenny Anderson

NOVEMBER 14 – open

28 – First Sunday of Advent – open

DECEMBER 5 – Second Sunday of Advent – open

12 – Third Sunday of Advent – open

19 – Fourth Sunday of Advent – open

24 – Christmas Eve – open

We hope to see you all as we heal and make plans for the future of our beloved congregation and Congregational Church!

Prayers and Blessings!

## Returning this Fall

We are very excited to have NOC Tot Lot resume their classes in our Fellowship Hall this month.

Our long-time renters and friends, Golden State Squares, have also decided to return to dance in our Hall on September 8th! Welcome back!

## God Languishes with Us

A headline from last spring teased, “There’s a Name for the Blah You’re Feeling.” The writer decided what he and others felt as the pandemic wore on wasn’t burnout

or depression but *languishing* — decreasing vitality; feeling dispirited. People of ancient times experienced this too: “The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine” (Genesis 47:13). “The wine dries up, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh” (Isaiah 24:7). But there’s more.

If you used to be “merry-hearted” but now sigh a lot, hear this: “The heavens languish together with the earth” (Isaiah 24:4). Isaiah uses “the heavens” to refer to God, who languishes with us. Like an empathizing friend, God sits *with* us in our struggle. Sure, we pray for rescue *now*: “I am languishing; O Lord, heal me” (Psalm 6:2). But when our timing isn’t God’s, we trust his promise of restoration: “[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes ... mourning and crying and pain will be no more” (Revelation 21:4).

With the psalmist we hold two truths at once: “My soul languishes for your salvation; I hope in your word” (119:81).

—Heidi Hyland Mann  
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## Holy Action/Council

Our next Holy Action/Council meeting will be on Sunday, September 12th, following Worship.

## Our Help — Past, Present and Future

This month, America marks the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which ended almost 3,000 lives and changed life forever for millions more. The nation was shaken to its very roots, with violence jolting out of us any assumption that “it can’t happen here.” September 11 banished any lingering notion that being on the side of “liberty and justice for all” served as insulation against mass tragedy. We now had more to fear than fear itself.

Psalm 46 reminds us that “though the earth should change” (v. 2) — as it did on 9/11 — God remains “our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (v. 1). We are never alone or without hope, even on life-altering days.

How have God’s presence and power sustained you through life’s changes? How might sharing your story help someone else when their world or faith gets shaken?

—adapted from *The Wired Word*

## Trustees Meeting

This month's Board of Trustees meeting will be on Monday, September 27th, at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

## Neighbors in Need 2021

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports Ministries of Justice and Compassion in the United States.

The 2021 Neighbors in Need "Unfailing Love" offering is focused on supporting organizations and projects that are serving homeless and immigrant neighbors or communities. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their communities.



FCC will be collecting for this special offering on Sunday, October 10th.

### Scripture Readings:

September 5:	Prov 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Ps 125 James 2:1-10, 11-17 <b>Mark 7:24-37</b>
September 12:	Prov 1:20-33 Ps 19 James 3:1-12 <b>Mark 8:27-38</b>
September 19:	Prov 31:10-31 Ps 1 James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a <b>Mark 9:30-37</b>
September 26:	<b>Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22</b> Ps 124 James 5:13-20 Mark 9:38-50



# September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 9:00 am NH Worship NO FCC Worship 12:30 pm Ministerios	<b>6</b> 	<b>7</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:30 pm BSA	<b>8</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 7:00-10:00 pm GSS	<b>9</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30 pm Tot Lot Mtg. 6:30-8:30 pm Copy Cats Mtg. 7-9:00 pm 777 Men's	<b>10</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:00 pm Ministerios Youth	<b>11</b> 10:00 am-4:00 pm CRECE (Farm)
<b>12</b> 9:00 am NH Worship 10:30 am FCC Worship 11:45 am Holy Action 12:30 pm Ministerios	<b>13</b> 6:00-9:00 pm Ministerios Choir Practice	<b>14</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:30 pm BSA	<b>15</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 7:00-10:00 pm GSS	<b>16</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-8:30 pm Copy Cats Mtg. 7-9:00 pm 777 Men's	<b>17</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:00 pm Ministerios Youth	<b>18</b> 5:00-7:00 pm Retrouvaille Mtg.
<b>19</b> 9:00 am NH Worship NO FCC Worship 12:30 pm Ministerios	<b>20</b> 6:00-9:00 pm Ministerios Choir Practice	<b>21</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:30 pm BSA	<b>22</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 7:00-10:00 pm GSS	<b>23</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-8:30 pm Copy Cats Mtg. 7-9:00 pm 777 Men's	<b>24</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:00 pm Ministerios Youth	<b>25</b> 
<b>26</b> 9:00 am NH Worship 10:30 am FCC Worship 12:30 pm Ministerios	<b>27</b> 6:00-9:00 pm Ministerios Choir Practice 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting	<b>28</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-9:30 pm BSA	<b>29</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 7:00-10:00 pm GSS	<b>30</b> 8:00 am-12:30 pm OC Tot Lot 6:30-8:30 pm Copy Cats Mtg. 7-9:00 pm 777 Men's Mtg.		