

narthex



and so our
conversation continues...

Pastor Julie Van Til

Dear Church Family,

I'm so grateful for the open-hearted and curious engagement you offered each other in our late summer worship series, "I've Been Meaning to Ask". As we keep reconnecting and moving forward in the months ahead, remember the humble, loving posture these questions offer us to grow together: Where are you from? Where does it hurt? What do you need? Where do we go from here?

Where do we go from here? What an exciting question. Now more than ever, where we go from here will shape our future. Yes, we'll need to remain flexible and adaptable with our best-laid plans, but we get to choose where to put our efforts - our gifts, hearts, minds and hands - next. We get to choose how we as FCC will tangibly radiate Christ's love in our diverse community!

Let's focus on the "we" for a moment, a crucial part of the question. Ruth and Naomi set out to search for bread, and each found sustenance in the company of each other. Paul & Cornelius experienced the Spirit expanding who they thought of as "we", converting us all into God's great, diverse, inclusive family. I'm so thankful that each and every one of you is part of this "we", and it's been good for my soul to gather in person. If you have not been back to see us yet, we understand and trust you've sensed our prayers for you as you've worked through this past year the best way you could. If you're finding yourself ready, a great time to return would be **September 12** when our new season kicks off. We'd love to welcome you home!

Now for the "where". We have been weathering a season of change, haven't we? The ground keeps shifting under our feet, and yet we get to take one step forward at a time in faith together! To give us direction for our next steps, do whatever you can to reserve the first weekend in October for an exciting communal discernment process laid out in the next few pages. We need as many of us as possible to bring our experience, insight and creativity to the table, where we fully expect the Spirit to draw out our best strengths, ideas and designs to guide the work ahead.

Join with me in prayer for our next steps, and until then, keep doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God.

Pastor Julie

FALL
2021

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let's choose our future together

As a family of faith, we have learned in these last challenging eighteen months that we need to be ready to pivot, dig deep, and work together to meet the needs of our congregation and our neighborhood. There is much we don't know about our future, but we want to be intentional and united as we dream and plan for the future of Flossmoor Community Church!

In that spirit, we are committed to sharing a process called Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI is used by businesses and not-for-profits to gather a broad swath of ideas, focus on a group's most compelling gifts, and collectively commit to concrete actions. A small group of church members and staff have been working with facilitators to set the stage for a productive community exploration. Together, they created a guiding statement for our time together in October.

how will FCC
tangibly radiate
Christ's love in our
diverse neighborhood?



This inquiry needs YOU – your observations, your ponderings, and your ideas for action. All FCC members, friends, and staff are desired – no matter what. To make participation as easy as possible, childcare will be provided upon request. Teens (confirmation class and older) are encouraged to join us. Meals during our Friday and Saturday sessions will be provided. All sessions will be held in person at FCC. (Mask policy TBD closer to the event.) Thanks to the support of the FCC Foundation, there is no charge to participants.

Your presence, prayers and most creative thinking are what is requested to make our journey a success!

Weekend Agenda

We know it's a lot to ask, but our hope is that you can commit to the entire process, as all of our voices are needed to weave together our plans for the future!

Friday, October 1: 5 – 8:30 pm

5-6pm Dinner (included but optional)

6-8:30 Introduction to AI, Overview and Capturing of Raw Ideas

Saturday, October 2: 10 am – 2:15 pm

Exploration and Refinement of Common Themes, lunch included.

Sunday, October 3: 1 - 4 pm

Building, weighing, and choosing action prototypes

Please note:

While we encourage everyone to participate as much as possible, we understand that sometimes schedules don't line up and life surprises us. If your time is limited, these brief guidelines might help you choose which part of the collaborative process is most important to you to attend:

Friday Night – Introductions and sharing stories

Saturday – Dreaming and imagining visions of a new future

Sunday Afternoon – Practical plans and thinking through processes

Registration

Registration is required and will be at fccfaithful.org and linked in eblasts beginning September 1. You will be asked to indicate which sessions you will attend and what meals you will share with us. To encourage parents to attend, childcare is offered by request. **PLEASE REGISTER NO LATER THAN SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25!**

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please contact Betsy Hanzelin with any questions or to request assistance in sign up or participating in this exciting weekend! (bhanzelin@fccfaithful.org or 708.798.2800, ext. 18)



The Convening Core

The Convening Core is the group of members and staff who have been preparing and planning for Appreciative inquiry. They include Bradley Byrd, Dana Dolan, Pastor Julie Van Til, AI facilitator Christina Walker (first row) and Rebecca Courington, Rick Hanzelin, Anna Carvalho, Betsy Hanzelin (staff rep), Esther Jenkins, Bob Norby and Fredric Mitchell (standing).

Our Facilitators

Yulee Lee is the Senior Director of Staff and Partnerships at the Fuller Youth Institute (FYI), where she oversees the leadership development of staff, develops team culture and office systems, helps build strategic partnerships, and facilitates trainings. She has served the local church for 12+ years in the areas of revitalization and innovation, worked in government on the local and national levels, and directed strategy for service learning in higher education while also teaching on the topics of organizational and change leadership. Ultimately, Yulee is passionate about collaborating for change in systems to reflect greater human dignity and flourishing for the vulnerable.

Dr. Christina Walker is the Assistant Professor of Leadership at Lenoir-Rhyne University, Center for Graduate Studies. Prior to working in higher education, Christina led in the corporate world as a Commercial Banking Officer and Branch Manager, served as a full-time Pastor, and started two businesses. As a leadership coach, Christina specializes in working with individuals and teams to grow in their leadership skills, manage transition and change, strengthen diversity and inclusion in their organizations, and create healthy rhythms to sustain their leadership. Christina brings together her passions for leadership, adult formation, and systems thinking to equip diverse leaders to expand their influence in their community and beyond.

AD ED

ADULT EDUCATION FALL 2021

We never become too old to grow, learn, and connect while being formed and informed for following the Way of Jesus. Your presence and participation, whether regular or occasional, is most welcome!

Casting a Vision

Borrowing the theme from our Summer Series, "I've Been Meaning to Ask", Adult Education plans to provide space for "curiosity, courage, and connection". This fall, our offerings will focus on coming together as a congregation around the things that matter to us and to our neighborhood.

Topics

Adult Education plans to bring in speakers and facilitators that will bring us together to explore topics that the congregation has set as priorities. Examples include:

- Food equity and serving our neighbors
- Anti-Racism education, story sharing, and future commitments
- The past history and present challenges of Harvey
- Affordable mental health and wellness

Our hope is to have these sessions once a month, following worship in the Sanctuary for those who are comfortable attending, and available streaming to those at home.

Questions? Suggestions?

Please reach out to Pastor Julie Van Til or Betsy Hanzelin. Watch for information on our website (fccfaithful.org) and in our weekly eblasts as our schedule develops.

Wednesday Bible Study

October 13 – November 17, 10 am in person; 7 pm on Zoom

Led by Pastor Julie & Betsy Hanzelin

Following the texts we will focus on this fall, our studies will include Visio Divina, Lectio Divina, and guided reflection and discussion. Morning sessions are contingent based on it remaining safe for small groups to gather in person, in a space to be determined. The link for the evening Zoom sessions will be posted in our eblast and online at fccfaithful.org/adult-education.

Sunday Book Discussions *led by Trina Hayes*

Saving Ruby King
by Catherine Adel West

September 19 @ 12:30 pm on Zoom

This debut novel uses multiple narrators including the fictional Calvary Church where the characters share their lives and secrets of living on the south side of Chicago.

The Book of Longings
by Sue Monk Kidd

October 10 @ 12:30 pm, via Zoom

A novel narrated by Ana, the wife of Jesus. The book offers a woman-centered version of New Testament events.

Dusk, Night, Dawn: On Revival and Courage by Anne Lamott

October 31, November 7, 14, 28, & December 5 @ 11:15 am in the Family Room

This discussion will use Lamott's book to explore ways to accept our flaws, recapture joy, and recover from dark times.

also this Fall...

Firekeeper's Daughter
by Angeline Boulley

November 21 @ 11:15 in the Family Room

We have shared our titles with our local Bookie's Bookstore (2015 Ridge Road in Homewood, 708.377.0789) and encourage you to shop local!



FCC HAPPENINGS



Harvey Project Update

NeighborScapes is up and running in Harvey! Groundbreaking for the first building at 15720 Park Avenue was held in July, attended by Harvey's Mayor Christopher Clark, the Chair of the Harvey NeighborScapes Advisory Board, Joseph Whittington, and our own Jay Readey, President of NeighborScapes. The property has been cleared, permitting is under way, and construction is expected to start in the fall. A second property has been identified and has a contract pending. Stay tuned for more announcements, and follow updates at fccfaithful.org/harveyproject.

ready to learn more?

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION CLASS

Saturday September 18, 10am-noon

Interested in learning more about our church and examining the possibilities of joining this faith community? Come and think through your own faith commitments and prayerfully consider whether this church might be a good connection for your worship life, your spiritual nurture, and your discipleship in the world.

Contact Betsy Hanzelin, Director of Congregational Enrichment at bhanzelin@fccfaithful.org or 708-798-2800, ext. 18 to register or ask questions.

HIDDEN GEM HALF MARATHON



FCC Mile 10 Water Station Volunteers

**Saturday, September 11
7:30-11 a.m.**

Flossmoor's Hidden Gem Half-Marathon is back this year, and participants including our very own Rev. Travis Adams, Dave & Anna Carvalho, Kim Mitchell, Josh Grenard and Tracey King-Danadio will run past FCC at Mile 10- and they'll be THIRSTY!

FCC will head up the Mile 10 water station and we need volunteers to pass out water and cheer runners on with our encouragement! Please check your eblast or fccfaithful.org/happenings to sign up, and contact Brooke King-LaBreck at bking@fccfaithful.org with any questions.



Children's Ministries



We've dabbled in it all this past year trying to find the best fit: Outdoor Sunday School (even in the snow), online video lessons and book readings, a Zoom Christmas pageant, socially distanced lunches on the lawn, and our biggest venture yet - the return of Vacation Bible School. In July, we joyfully welcomed 60 children to our all-outdoor and fully masked "Compassion Camp". What a sight for sore eyes to see everyone learning and playing together again. Thanks entirely to its volunteers and donors, its success was a perfectly timed reminder that simplicity and flexible creativity will carry us through.

As the new season approaches, we're eager for the return of some

consistency, but ever mindful of the safety of our children and teachers in times which remains delicate. Following the success of our VBS model, we feel confident in carrying forward a similar plan for Sunday School, beginning **September 12 at 10 a.m.** (Check out the Sunday breakdown details on the following page!)

We're excited to share our new curriculum which builds on "Godly Play" ideas and coordinating visual pieces. Children will be led into a deeper dive of the day's Bible story in a way which captivates their minds and leaves them with wonder in their hearts. Stories are paired with intentionally simple coordinating images. This approach encourages learners to process the

story and imagine themselves as a part of God's story, in which we all belong. And of course, like always, we'll have fun! Each Sunday we'll enjoy a creative activity coresponding with our lesson.

Regardless of whether you have a little one involved in Children's Ministries, we'd love to have you join us in building a quality year for our kids. Would you be willing to give up about 15-20 minutes of worship time to be a special guest reader? We are also seeking volunteers for every other week as a part of a teaching team. Please reach out to me at Imaxie@fccfaithful.org - I'd love to find you fit!

Leslie Maxie
Director of Children's Ministries

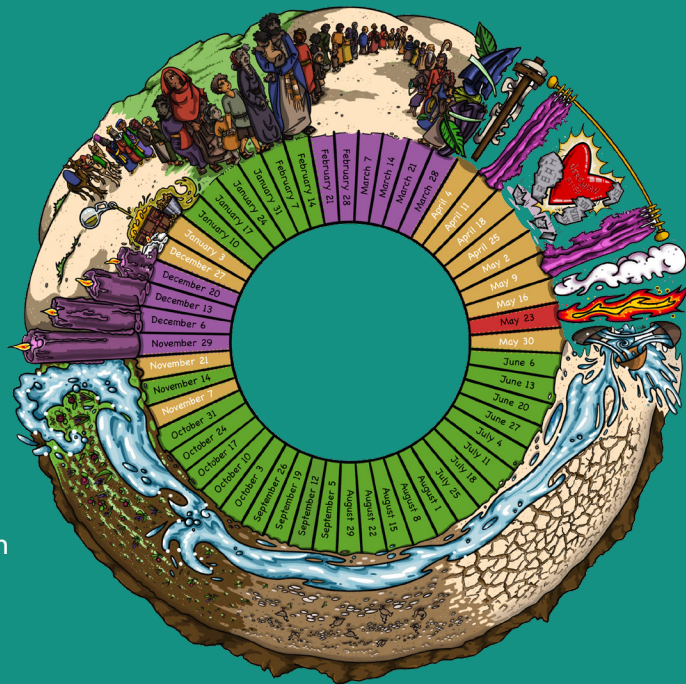
A New Schedule for Fall

Children's Worship @ 10 a.m.

(replaces 11 a.m. Sunday School)

Children will begin worship with their families in the Sanctuary at 10 a.m. Following a time with the children, they will be released to Children's worship at approximately 10:20. Children will remain outside as long as weather permits. Due to the new time and current climate, snack will not be provided, but water will be available.

If you are not comfortable having your children inside the Sanctuary, volunteers will be available at the playground for drop-off while you attend worship. Your children will then join the others as they leave the Sanctuary.



1st Sundays: Communion

On the first Sunday of each month, Children's Worship will conclude in time for children to be ushered back into the Sanctuary to participate in Holy Communion with their families. We ask that you sit on the left side of the Sanctuary (when walking in the doors from the Gathering Space) so that your children can quietly enter and look for you without disrupting the service.

5th Sundays: All-Church Worship

For the 3 months that have a 5th Sunday (October, January, and May), we will have multi-generational All-Church Worship with special content geared toward younger audiences. Our Nursery will be available for children up to 2 years of age for those who are unable to sit through worship.



FCC Weekday Preschool

What a difference a year makes!

As the last days of summer wind down, we're excitedly anticipating the new faces (masked of course) that will be creating in our classrooms, playing on the playground and learning all the routines of a preschooler. Our teachers have been busy prepping, planning and resting this summer to be ready for the long-awaited return of our children this September. The classrooms have been painted, floors were waxed and the playground has been spruced up! We will welcome 9 teachers back and 75 children for the 2021-2022 school year. Prayers are appreciated for a joyful and healthy school year!

YM



YOUTH MINISTRIES 2021-2022

A new year with new plans! We are super excited to begin meeting with our youth once again! After numerous meetings with parents and students, we've arrived at a fall schedule and content we're excited about. We look forward to helping our young people build strong relationships and learn more about the depth and beauty of our faith while still having a lot of fun in the process!

Our Youth Leadership Teams spent an August weekend together planning for the year ahead, and we can't wait to welcome everyone back on **Sunday, September 12!**



Tribes: 6th-8th grade

Our younger squad will engage the grander scope of the biblical story this year via the video/discussion Bible study series known as Echo: The Story. Starting in Genesis and concluding with the birth of the Church, we'll learn about all of the major plot points of biblical history, how they affect one another, and how our personal stories intertwine with the story of Christ. To better learn one another's stories, we'll also enjoy Game Nights throughout the semester! Keep a close eye on the website and eblasts to learn more!



Quest: 9-10th grade

Our older kids will engage in a wide array of team-building games, unique challenges, and occasional straight-up bizarre activities as we learn more about our theological presuppositions, various Christian traditions across history, and challenging ethical questions. For those wishing to undergo Confirmation, we will also be encouraging our students to put their faith into action as we participate in worship and service activities throughout the year. And of course, the major highlights of our year include three weekend retreats designed to enhance our understanding of faith further than ever before!

NEW YOUTH MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

BEGINNING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAY EVENINGS 6:30-8 P.M.

In response to the majority requesting a time slot change, our Youth will now meet on Sunday evenings rather than immediately after Sunday worship. This new time slot allows more students to join us more regularly. It also permits us to take some extra time to engage in unique activities, including a weekly Large Group gathering featuring worship music, team challenges, and other shenanigans! At the conclusion of our opening ceremonies, our Tribes and Quest groups will congregate in their separate spaces to engage in specialized studies and small group discussions.

JUNIOR & SENIOR LEADERSHIP NIGHT

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS 7:30-8:30 P.M.

This gathering features only our Juniors, Seniors, and Adult Leadership Staff. On the first Wednesday evening of the month, we'll collectively plan the curriculum and events for the rest of the youth program. All other Wednesday evenings will focus solely on advancing our adults and oldest students' skills, knowledge, and personal growth. ***While numerous Junior and Seniors dedicate themselves to serving as volunteer leaders for our Tribe and Quest programs, this regular Wednesday evening meeting is open to all Junior and Seniors wishing to join a particularly unique youth group experience!***

CAREGIVER COFFEE COLLABORATIONS

MONTHLY FOLLOWING SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Once a month, parents and caregivers of our youth are invited to join us for a time of informal fellowship and collaboration. After touching base with one another over a cup of coffee, we'll highlight our plans for the upcoming month and invite parents to give us feedback on what is going well, what could be better, and what families need at the moment. The exact date of these gatherings will differ from month to month due to various scheduling reasons, so be sure to check our website and eblasts for further details!

We wouldn't be able to do any of this if not for the support of our gracious parents and outstanding Leadership Staff! As we begin in-person events once again, I know God shall bless these gatherings. The Lord shall undoubtedly create memories and relationships that provide a special space for our teens to grow, heal and learn as they traverse the often-treacherous waters of high school life. As we look to kick off our regular program year on September 12th, please say an extra prayer for all of those involved:

May the Creator bless this new year with new opportunities to experience new life!

May the Redeemer resurrect this program to serve our students' needs after a year of difficult Covid setbacks.

May the Sustainer continue to empower us with Peace, Love, Mercy, and Justice as we step out in faith together to be an inclusive community that can encourage these teens to mimic the character and convictions of Christ Jesus Our Lord.

Amen and Amen! Rev. Travis Adams, Director of Youth Ministries



FCC STAFF NEWS

SEASONS OF CHANGE



Vonda Hardesty Departs After 16 Years

On Sunday, August 29, we celebrated our Organist/Piano Accompanist, Vonda Hardesty in worship. Serving FCC for 16 years, Vonda was an important part of our vital music team. Our “barefoot organist” delighted us with masterful skill and versatility, playing everything from classical pieces to surprising us with classic rock! We wish Vonda well as she departs to share her many musical gifts in new arenas.



Mike Rugen to Retire After 15 Years

Our Director of Chancel Ringers and Chancel Choir, Michael Rugen, has announced his impending retirement. In the Sundays ahead, Mike will continue leadership through song in worship directing “pick-up” choirs, COVID willing, until his final Sunday on September 19. We recognize his musical gifts, his dedicated teamwork and his creativity in meeting the challenge to continue presenting music for us in worship during this past year. We hope you will be on hand for these choral Sundays until he leaves us to enjoy a much-deserved retirement with his family.



Megan Maginity Leaves the Office to Grow Her Family

Our wonderful administrative assistant, Megan Maginity, is due with a baby girl in November. Her last day at the FCC office will be September 1. Megan was recognized during worship on Sunday, August 22 to celebrate her almost two years at FCC serving our office. We wish Megan, Scott and Henry the very best as they expand their adorable family! Thankfully, we will continue to see the Maginity family at church as members on a regular basis.

Join our amazing fccfaithful team!

Could one of these positions be a great fit for you or someone you know? We'd love to connect!



NOW HIRING:

INTERIM* ORGANIST/PIANIST
INTERIM* ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
NURSERY LEADER
NURSERY WORKERS
WEDDING COORDINATORS

**As we move forward, interim positions have the potential to become regular positions.*

Please visit fccfaithful.org/jobopenings for full job descriptions and pass along the info to any candidate you feel might be the perfect fit!

FCC HAPPENINGS

Upcoming Memorial Services

Jerry Smejkal

The memorial service for Jerry Smejkal, who died August 11, will be held at FCC on Saturday, September 11 at 11 a.m.

Arthur Gottschalk

A memorial service for Arthur Gottschalk, who died June 17, 2020, will be held Saturday, September 18, with Visitation at 11 a.m. in the Gathering Space followed by the service at 12 p.m.



SAT. OCT. 16

**Save the date for
outdoor live music,
drinks, contests and
fun for all ages!**

FCC Community Fall Festival

Contact Brooke King-LaBreck at bking@fccfaithful.org for more information or to volunteer to help with festivities!

Volunteer Our Faith into Action

Respond Now has several activities underway to address food insecurity and they are looking for volunteers. Volunteers can apply online at the Respond Now website (www.respondnow.org) or contact Anita Alvarado at 708-755-4357.



FOOD PANTRIES

Chicago Heights Food Pantry 1439 Emerald Avenue

- Bag perishable and non-perishable items so they can be safely distributed by employees, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Lifting, sorting, and stocking food distributed from the food depository, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 4:30 p.m.

Sauk Village Food Pantry 21701 Torrence Avenue

- Bag perishable and non-perishable items so they can be safely distributed by employees, Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Chicago Heights Food Pantry, 1439 Emerald Avenue

- The outdoor community garden was not planted in 2021 but the plot is in need of weeding and sweeping. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays from 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

DONATIONS

Respond Now welcomes donations of non-perishable and unexpired good such as canned veggies and fruit, pasta, boxed good; paper products are always appreciated. (1439 Emerald Ave, Chicago Heights)



Flossmoor Community Church
Where Christ is Central and Diversity is Cherished

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