

## April 2020 Newsletter Update:

For supplemental news and weekly updates please visit us at [www.heartofeugene.org](http://www.heartofeugene.org)



Greetings from your Transition Committee,

After considering the Committee's recommendation, your Board of Directors voted--unanimously--on March 22, 2020 in favor of calling Rev. Jerri Handy to be our interim co-pastor. She has joyfully accepted the call. She will begin her ministry later this spring. We are trying to maintain our original timeline despite the upheaval we have all experienced these past few weeks. She will be here at First Christian until the congregation has worked through the interim process and arranged for our future ongoing staffing.

You'll have opportunities soon to learn more about Rev. Handy. And as soon as we can work out the logistics, she will be here with us. We look forward to updating you on this process.

We continue to seek ways to honor Dan's (and Judy's) ministry in these changing times. Stay tuned for ways you can be part of this.

Blessings,  
Your Transition Committee



# Ministers Moment April 2020 Featuring: Pastor Dan Bryant



The date for Easter can vary from late March to the end of April. In 1991 it fell on March 31. That is an odd fact to remember, except it was a very memorable day for me. It was my first day at First Christian Church. I write this at the start of my 30th year, which will be a short one since April 12 will be my last Sunday. The calendar calls it Easter so I suppose I can legitimately say that it will be my 30th Easter sermon, but celebrating Easter while trapped in our homes feels like a birthday without cake and ice cream or July 4th without fireworks. And so I have proposed that the real Easter for us this year will be when we come out of our "tombs" to celebrate and return to life as normal. Except that it won't be. Life will be different in many ways when this pandemic ends, some good and some not. Zoom will be a normal part of work routines in most offices as working from home becomes more common. Changes in habits like hand washing and more frequent walks in the neighborhood may result in better health. NCAA and NBA records for 2020 will forever have an asterisks designating the canceled seasons. The 2020 Olympics will be in 2021. Employment may take years to return to pre-pandemic levels. And I will not be one of your ministers.

Few noticed the change of that first Easter 2000 years ago, but for those who did, the change was world-shattering. Slowly, over the years, decades and centuries that followed, like ripples from a rock thrown in a pond, that change spread across the world until few places were untouched. This pandemic likewise will leave no place on earth untouched. The world will be a different place and whether it is better or worse largely depends on how we respond. And how will it impact the church? Will more people choose to stay home to stream our services online now that they have learned how? Or will there be a resurgence of attendance as people gain new appreciation for what was lost during this time? Will the Sunday Interfaith Breakfast return or will the new Downtown Food Hub that rose to take its place become the new norm for fulfilling Matthew 25, "I was hungry, and you fed me"? How will it impact our interactions, our finances and other ministries?

I do not have a crystal ball and cannot predict how this will all work out, but I have great confidence in the leaders and staff of this congregation to guide the church with the help of God in this challenging time. I look back on 29 years and can see the many wondrous things we have done during that time which give me confidence in the wonders yet to be. While I cannot be with you and ministerial ethics require that I remain away for some time to come, know that I will always hold you in my prayers and that I give my full support and blessing to your pastors. You are blessed to have April and now Jerri as our interim. Please give them all the support you have given me and my family.

As I go about cleaning out my office in an otherwise empty church, there are so many memories that fill my heart. I am so eternally grateful for the opportunities this congregation has given me over the decades and dearly wish I could hug each of you to say goodbye. I understand more now Mary's desire to hold onto Jesus. Would that we could be together just a little while longer! But like that Easter so long ago, the world has changed and soon the church will return to normal, except it will be different. Embrace it, celebrate it, for this is what is good and wondrous about the church. People come and go, even ministers, but the body of Christ lives on. Yes, it will be different and that is a good thing for change is necessary for life. We have a name for this life-renewing change in the church. Whenever and wherever it occurs, we call it, "Easter." May it give you new life, now and forever.

## Meet Our New Interim Pastor, Rev. Jerri Handy



The Transition Committee is pleased to announce that after unanimous support by our Committee and discussion and vote by the church Board, Reverend Jerri Handy has been invited, and has accepted our call to be Interim Co-Pastor of First Christian Church (DOC) of Eugene.

Rev. Handy grew up in the Church of the Nazarene. She discovered the Christian Church (DOC) while attending classes in 1991 at Christian Theological Seminary. She has been active in the Disciples and the United Church of Christ congregations since that time. Rev. Handy was ordained in 2010 in the N. Ca./NW Nev. Region.

She completed her undergraduate degree at the Olivet Nazarene University, and holds advanced degrees: Marriage and Family Therapy from Christian Theological Seminary, and Master of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion. She's received additional training including around issues of racism, legal/ethical, boundary etc. set by the Region and the General Church.

Rev. Handy has served in a variety of capacities: as a congregational minister, a therapist, a missionary, and community caseworker. She currently works at a nonprofit group serving the unhoused in California. Rev. Handy is eager to join us in Eugene as soon as the logistics can be worked out; we expect her by May 1.

The Transition Committee wholeheartedly supported our call of Rev. Handy—noting her interests and strengths match our needs: her skill and experience in pastoral care, preaching from the Scripture, planning worship, trauma-informed care, teamwork, and the larger mission of the Church in the world. Her stated desire to be part of a progressive, Open and Affirming Congregation—a church which is so involved in community ministries—was key to our decision.

We look forward to welcoming Rev. Handy in person soon.

Blessings, your Transition Committee

**Requesting Access to First Christian Church**  
**COVID-19 Rapid Response Team (CRRT)**  
**Procedures and Safety Protocols**  
**April 8, 2020**

The intent of the FCC Covid-19 Rapid Response Team is to help FCC meet related government mandates, maximizing the use of FCC facilities while minimizing our exposure.

We value the mission and purpose of every ministry program of First Christian Church and all the businesses and organizations that rent our spaces; however, we cannot allow all programs and renters equal access under the governors stay at home orders.

Governor Brown did provide clarification for those organizations that provide "basic food, water, shelter and hygiene needs of any person who is unable to meet those same needs without the service provider should remain open" using the Oregon Health Authority's social distancing guidelines." (source)

The CRRT will continue to evaluate the most critical and strategic use of our building during this time, balancing the essential needs of our members and our neighbors while maintaining a clean and sanitized environment for essential services to take place.

**Qualifications for allowed activities:**

The activity must comply with the mandated requirements of the state of Oregon as issued by Governor Kate Brown, as interpreted by FCC's CRRT (Your activity must be determined essential).

When an individual needs to be in the building to perform a specific essential job function, e.g., fire marshal, fire or police personnel, maintenance personnel for critical systems, renters needing access to offices or church members conducting necessary activities, etc. Individuals must request permission in advance from the First Christian Church CRRT by filling out this form . Permission must be obtained before entering the building. The needs/benefits for all must outweigh the risks for all involved.

Any activity held on church property should require the fewest number of people possible.

Social distancing, i.e., at least six feet physical space between individuals, must be maintained at every step of the activity.

Individuals entering the building must be able to self-report the following

Body temperature is less than 99F

No cough or symptoms of upper respiratory illness

No known exposure to a person known to have COVID-19 within the past 2 weeks

**Permission may be granted** to use the building for **essential** services if the following elements have been included in the application. Any plan for entering or staying in the building must be well defined and evaluated, and must include the following elements:

Be essential to the function of FCC or to the requesting entity.

Show it is essential that it take place in the building.

Identify what specific areas of the building will be used, when, and for how long.

Identify total number of participants and explain how activity participants will comply with social distancing, handwashing, and other applicable health and safety practices.

Require the use of protective face masks, whether purchased or homemade.

A compliance officer or designee, must be present when others are in the building to monitor for compliance with social distancing and other applicable safety procedures.

**Upon Arrival to FCC Building**

1. All individuals must sign in when they arrive wearing a face mask and wash hands upon arrival.
  - a. Enter and exit the building through the main office entrance.
  - b. Report immediately to the front office to sign in. Please bring your own writing implement as we are reducing the number of shared office items.
  - c. Wash your hands immediately in one of the restrooms in the main office area of the church. Please only use the main office restrooms.
  - d. As much as possible, please limit your work to your designated workspace. Refrain from using other worker's phones, desks, or offices.
  - e. Use of Copier and General Office Space: You are responsible to clean ALL equipment you use with the cleaner provided. Cleaning materials will be available to clean before and after usage of office copier or commonly used items.

2. Anyone who has been in the church and subsequently tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days must report immediately to FCC at 541-357-7033, who will work with public health department personnel as requested for follow up with those who may have been exposed while in the building.

May God's Peace be with you.

Pastor April Oristano & Pastor Dan Bryand

Executive Ministry Team: Amy Metzger, Tom Kozlowski, Jean Kozlowski, Michael Kennedy



Opened Oct, 1, 2018, The First Place Annex is a permanent home for the Night Shelter program administered by St. Vincent de Paul.

## Interfaith Family Shelter in the Time of the Coronavirus

Like almost everything else, our support of the Interfaith Family Shelter is affected this year by the Coronavirus. But the families still need our help. 67 people are sheltering in place at the St. Vincent DePaul Annex, 37 children and 30 adults. Those families need to be fed. First Christian church has been feeding the Interfaith Shelter families for 27 years, and we are committed to continuing this year, but with modifications. The staff at the shelter will be accepting and serving the food and their crew will be doing cleanup. So our job this year will be easier.....and harder.

Our "normal" week this year is April 27- May 4, and we need your help. Because of virus limitations, we cannot have a kitchen crew in the Annex kitchen. Our goal is to have some of the food catered, "gather" some, and prepare the remaining meals in the Kozlowski and Kennedy kitchens. What we need most this year is pre-packaged single serving sized foods (individual boxes of cereal, breakfast bars, muffins, etc) or cash donations.

If you have questions, please call 541-554-0970 (Tom Kozlowski) or 541-463-7951 (Kennedys) or email [mkennedy5@mindspring.com](mailto:mkennedy5@mindspring.com) or [tkozlow906@aol.com](mailto:tkozlow906@aol.com). Thanks for your help in this important ministry.

JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL  
FAREWELL SERVICE

Tuesday, April 14 7:00 pm  
YouTube: Heart of Eugene

HELP US GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THE  
YEARS WE SHARED WITH PASTOR DAN

# Complete the FCC Technology Assessment Survey



Help members stay connected while staying at home

Let us know what kind of tech you have so we can share praise, worship and inspiration during this time. Connect with us.



## Sundays in April and May Online Worship Only

10:30 AM [CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)

[heartofeugene.org](http://heartofeugene.org)



*Sunday*

# Thoughts of Reverend Dr. Daniel Bryant

As I pen this moment of heartfelt thanks I am mindful that no farewell is perfect; and yet I can think of about 500 different ways I would have liked to toast, roast, honor, and laud my colleague and friend, the right Rev. Dr. Daniel Bryant. In early March I was interviewed by a university student from a journalism class. Interviews are one of the markers of our transition -- students (or reporters) interviewing me instead of Dan. It has happened little by little over the last year. Though often we are invited to talk architecture or open and affirming policies, and sometimes even women in ministry (gasp), this student was writing a profile on Dan, his retirement and his future, and it created space for me to reflect on the times we have ministered together, and give thanks.

What would I miss? What did I enjoy about working with Dan? How would my job change? How do you think he's handling it all? Dan has been a constant presence in my ministry, he is first to arrive, last to leave, eager to do more, it's a challenge for the man to take vacation, but easy to look oppression in the eye and say Not today. That steady presence has encouraged me when I have felt uncertain of the course. It was easy for Dan and I to divide the duties of ministry for we have different gifts and tastes, and this stayed true even as the landscape of the work changed. His preaching was a major influence on Kelly and I making our home with First Christian, for we too were hungry for a good word from an old book. We know we made the right decision to place our family in this learning environment for we see how we have all bloomed here together. Dan has thoughtfully and intelligently cared for this congregation for 29 years. Aren't we all longing for more of that in our national leaders?

There are other fond memories our families shared -- In our first weeks in Eugene, we held Noah's 2nd birthday party at the Bryant's house; Noah and I went to see Patrick regularly at the Friday On the Rocks performances at the ECU in those early years. When Dan came to see me in the hospital room after Thomas was born, and there were so many complications and life was so uncertain, he rolled up on that motorcycle and sat with me. In these last few months I have been honored for the moments we have sat in his uncertain future and shared prayerful breaths and sometimes exasperated breaths. Usually a mixture of laughter and tears. The first time I met Dan was probably on skype, now that I think about it -- How ironic that we will say so long (until I see you at the store or at regional assembly) using the same medium.

We are all blessed for the ways all our families at FCC have shared humor and tears over the years with Dan. May you find ways to express your thanks to Dan and thank you for their ministry to you over the years and the work you shared. Thank you, Pastor, for your compassion and leadership to a community that was hungry to answer the call and will show up to answer the call tomorrow. We carry on in the name of God, in the way of Jesus, and I pray for a continued fruitful ministry with Square One Villages for you and your new team, as I remain here with this team I give thanks for the ways God is making all things new for us here in the Heart of Eugene.

Blessings to all and thank you for everything,

Rev. April Oristano

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Eugene, Oregon 97401

### Church Staff

- The Reverend Dr. Daniel E. H. Bryant, Minister
- The Reverend April Oristano, Minister
- Yvette Diggs, Office Manager
- Melody Doll, Bookkeeper
- Nancy Anderson, Music Director
- Chris Turner, New Celebration Director
- Ron Dalton, Church Custodian
- Larry Wahlstrom, Event Manager
- Ric Satterwhite, Audio Visual Manager
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The **First Christian Church Newsletter** is published by First Christian Church, Eugene for it's members and friends.



### Mission Statement

We believe in love of God for all people

We gather as a worshiping community of faith to follow Jesus Christ

We delight together in what God is doing through us to bring: healing within brokenness; unity within diversity; joy within grief; and power within weakness

Our mission is to strengthen relationships we have with God, with each other, with our families, and with our world.

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation and people of all orientations, and gender identities are welcome in the full life and ministry of our church.

We are a global ministries church and we join and with global and local partners to work for justice reconciliation and peace.

We are a Green Chalice congregation and we strive to demonstrate the fullness of God's Shalom through living out our faith by caring for God's creation.