



# The Congregation at Duke University Chapel

## Fellowship . Mission . Education

DEEPENING CONNECTIONS

12.30.2020

Happy New Year!

Lois Oliver, the Congregation at Duke Chapel historian, has once again written the annual end-of-year letter for this final edition of the 2020 eNews. What a year it has been!

As a staff, we wish to thank you, our members and friends, for your faithfulness in the midst of this difficult year. You have graciously accepted online ministries. You have cared for one another with prayers and phone calls. You have been creative in developing ways to adapt to our circumstances. And while you miss in-person ministries, you are being patient as we all wait for the right time to return to campus. Thank you for the incredible grace, love, and faithfulness that you have shown this year, and every year. It is our pleasure to minister among you.

Blessings to you in 2021,

Carol Gregg  
Phyllis Snyder  
Michael Larbi  
Nathaniel Metz  
Ken Moland  
Matt Wright

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### This Sunday January 3

Sunday morning classes will meet virtually from **9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m.** as follows:

- **WEE PRAISE:** Children ages 0-3 along with parents or caregivers may utilize the online videos previously shared via email. If you are not receiving emails with this information, please contact [Phyllis Snyder](#).
- **GODLY PLAY:** Children ages 4-5<sup>th</sup> graders can find a new video, and re-watch previous videos, on the [Congregation's YouTube channel](#).
- **YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASS:** For students in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, [Confirmation Class Zoom link is here](#). \*\*Please note a second session of this class is offered from **2:00 – 3:00 p.m.** to accommodate youth schedules. [The Zoom link for the afternoon class is here](#).
- **ADULT FORUM:** Michael Larbi, Duke Divinity Student and Pastoral Assistant for the Congregation at Duke Chapel will lead "Life Together Groups Testimony Day". [Adult Forum Zoom link is here](#).

### UNIVERSITY WORSHIP 11:00 a.m. Online

#### Epiphany Sunday

Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Carol Gregg, Senior Pastor, Congregation at Duke University Chapel

[Worship Online Here](#)

[Lectionary Readings](#)

All are welcome!

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## 2020

The year 2020 has been a memorable one for all of us, and tested our long-standing connections. It started out with the Congregation pursuing its usual activities, and having

fellowship both at Chapel services, and education and outreach programs. We baked cookies at the Ronald McDonald House, and had a grand retreat with Dean Greg and Reverend Susan Jones. Seven new members joined us through the spring New Member class. There was a Lenten service trip to repair a home for a family inundated by Hurricane Florence.



Then the pandemic forced us to change our style of connecting. We were ably led in this by Pastors Carol Gregg, and Phyllis Snyder, with the support of Pastoral Assistants Reverend Kenneth Moland, Matt Wright, Michael Larbi and Duke Divinity School Intern, Nathaniel Metz. While we thanked Nelson Strother for his service to us when he left the office in February, and miss him being on Staff, we are grateful he remains engaged with Adult Forum leadership and participation in the Education Committee. All have urged us to remain spiritually connected while socially isolated.

There was a transition period, when gradually the unconventional gatherings began electronically. The Sunday morning classes, Godly Play, Youth Bible Study, Adult Bible Study, and Adult Forum were the first, and then joined by Wee Praise. The Chapel Services began for the spring and early summer, with Reverends Bruce Puckett, Kathryn Lester-Bacon, and Carol Gregg, joined by Zebulon Highben, Philip Cave, and Christopher Jacobson providing the words and the music. Dean Powery returned from his sabbatical in the summer. Attending services online and seeing the empty choir and nave was as close as we could come to imagining ourselves in our usual pews on Sunday morning. In fact, many who have left the area and are far from the Chapel, can now rejoin us on line.

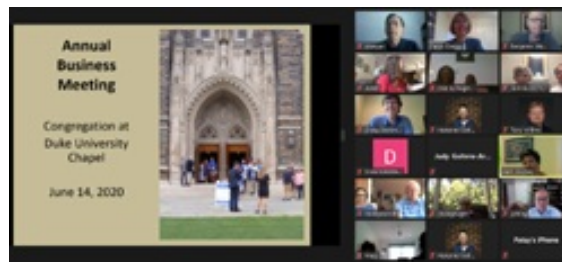


In May, the Education Committee named "Prayer", as their theme for the year. This was related to the study of the Psalms and the pandemic. Book groups were meeting weekly and one of these concentrated on the Lord's Prayer. Since we could not have our

overnight retreat, there was a Saturday morning mini-retreat in May. Reverend Amanda Highben discussed theology of the Psalms , and Zeb Highben presented songs of the Psalms.



As the summer wore on, it was clear that any change was going to come much, much later. The Fellowship Committee organized get togethers after the service, and book studies and prayer groups started. The Council planned our first-ever virtual Annual Business Meeting for June. Our President, Craig DeAlmeida, led the business of the meeting, and provided the information we members needed to approve our new strategic plan, and the election of officers. A dedicated planning committee pondered the best way to celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our founding as The Congregation at Duke Chapel. The committee lined up speakers to provide reflections on our rich history, including founding members to recent members. We were glad to have former pastor Nancy Ferree Clark, former Deans Will Willimon and Sam Wells, as well as Dean Powery and Assistant Dean, Bruce Puckett, all join in to share our celebration in September. [Click here to view a recording of the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.](#)



Fall brought another connection when the Life Together Groups started up and these met weekly. Dr. Brian Stratton began a Philosophy Study Group. In October, nine new members attended the fall New Members class for four weeks and were welcomed into membership. November brought us a morning retreat led by Dr. David Goatley, Professor of Theology and Black Church Studies, which let us share our experiences with racism. And, of course, we had Thanksgiving and Christmas parties to join us in fellowship.



So, the year 2020 has been difficult, but the Congregation has learned to remain connected, and has reached out to serve others, and pray for each other, and for peace and good will to come. May we rejoice and thank God for the good things we experienced this year.

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## **GOOD TO KNOW**

### **OFFICE CLOSED**

The Congregation staff will be on holiday the follows days:

- New Year's Eve: **Thursday, December 31**
- New Year's Day: **Friday, January 1**
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: **Monday, January 18**

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## JOYS AND CONCERNS

- *Steven DeAlmeida* – Steven was recently diagnosed with COVID-19.
- *Linda Gauger* - Linda is recuperating from surgery to repair a broken thumb.
- *Judith Goodman* – Judith will be moving to Ohio on January 6.
- *Harry Rodenhizer* – Harry is recuperating from surgery to repair a broken femur.
- *Eleanor Smith* - Eleanor is recuperating from knee replacement surgery.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[Visit our Website](#) | [Visit our Calendar](#) | [Online Giving](#)

[Email](#) | Phone: 919-684-3917 | Mailing address: Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708-0974



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*The Congregation at Duke University Chapel*  
*Staff*



The Rev. Dr. Carol Gregg  
Senior Pastor

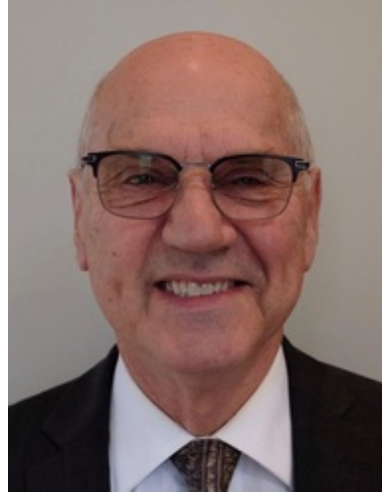


Phyllis Snyder  
Children's Pastor and Office  
Administrator





Michael Larbi  
Pastoral Assistant



The Rev. Ken Moland  
Pastoral Assistant



Matt Wright  
Pastoral Assistant



Nathaniel Metz  
Duke Divinity School Intern