

First Congregational Messenger
 First Congregational United Church of Christ
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Serving God with love and faith



February 2024

Volume 5, Issue 112



Congregational Meeting:

has been called by Unity Council Sunday, February 18, immediately following worship to discuss budget concerns, management team and interim minister.



Ash Wednesday
 service at Trinity
 Episcopal at 5:30
 PM



If we should need to cancel due to weather, check these web-sites:



The Daily News will have this information. Go to <https://norfolkdailynews.com/>
 On the top bar, click 'weather', go to 'Cancellations/delays'.



News Channel Nebraska and US92 will also have this information.

Go to <https://northeast.newschannelnebraska.com/closings>

PASTOR'S HOURS

Monday-Thursday 10-4
 Other times by appointment
 May be out of the office for meetings or visits



Office Hours
 Monday-Friday
 8-12

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“They will know we are Christians by our Love”



Well, I did it. After ten years, I locked myself out of my car and duplex as I was heading out for an 8:00 a.m. ministerial meeting at the monastery. You know that sinking feeling when you discover that you have locked yourself out? I had no spare keys in my garage. I couldn't call my landlord because my phone was in my purse locked in the duplex. There was still too much snow and ice to try to walk to the church. What to do?

I really wanted to get to the meeting, because I was the one who set it up and I had not seen the sisters for many months; I was so looking forward to seeing them. Then I spotted a neighbor's car with its lights on as if it was being remotely heated. I knew that these neighbors had lived in the ranch house for many years on my cul-de-sac, but I had never met them or spoken with them.

I walked through the slushy snow on the road, and up their driveway. As I was about to reach their door, it opened, and out came a smiling teenager, a woman, and a man—all smiling. I told them my trouble, and asked if they could give me a ride to the church. They heartily agreed! First, they delivered the teen to the high school, and then, they dropped me off at the church. I was glad to see Sue's van parked in the church parking lot, because I had no key to get in.

Sue was able to give me a ride to the monastery, and I was only 10 minutes late for the meeting. I call it a “meeting”, but it is more “a fellowship”. We share some coffee and rolls and something of our ministry and lives “that moves us to glorify God”. I was so happy to see Sr. Celine, Sr. Hilde, and Sr. Micheal Marie. I had missed them for many months and was reminded of their warm welcome.

After the gathering, I asked another clergy friend to drop me off at the church, which he gladly did. Once at the church, I realized that I didn't have my landlords' phone numbers; they were on my locked-up phone! Nor did I have numbers for neighbors who would have the landlords' phone numbers. Then, I remembered Darlene knew my landlords. I called her and she was able to give me a landline phone number. I left a message for that number and hoped they were in town.

Before it was all done around 10:00, Sue had given me a couple more rides to the duplex: one to get the cell phone number from my duplex “roof-mate”, and another to finally meet my landlord at the duplex to let me in.

I felt vulnerable asking for so much help from others, but discovered they all went out of their way to graciously help me. At our ministerial gathering, after Sr. Michael Marie's devotional, she played “They will know we are Christians by our love”. We all sang with the recording, and wondered how we can show love to people. I had so many examples before it was even 10 a.m. to give glory to God!

Peace, Pastor Jackie



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January 8, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with mixed emotions that I announce my intention to retire from ministry this summer. My last day to serve as Pastor at First Congregational United Church of Christ will be June 30th.

In this season of my life, I believe God is calling me home—back to Southeast Iowa—to be near my family, and to serve in new ways.

In the next five-plus months, I plan to continue to serve FCUCC as your pastor and assist with the transition as needed.

I have loved my 20 years of pastoral ministry (half of them with you!). It has been an honor and a blessing to be part of this church, serving God with love and faith.

Peace and grace to you,

Pastor Jackie Perry

Time Away – Pastor Jackie will be celebrating her mother's birthday in Iowa February 6 – 8. After her Friday day off, she will return to the office Saturday, February 10.

40 days OF LENT

Feb 14	Ash Wednesday –5:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church <i>A joint service of First Presbyterian, Trinity, and First Congregational UCC Churches</i>
Feb 18	Lent 1 – Stewardship Kick Off, Congregational Meeting
Feb 25	Lent 2 – Stewardship
Mar 3	Lent 3 – Stewardship
Mar 10	Lent 4 – Stewardship Dedication
Mar 17	Lent 5 – One Great Hour of Sharing Dedication
Mar 24	Palm/Passion Sunday
Mar 28	Maundy Thursday Service (TBA)
Mar 31	Easter (Yes! We get to celebrate early this year!!)



Stewardship 2024

It's a bold and simple statement. It boldly expresses the truth about the nature and the purpose of the church: to engage in acts of transformation.

It boldly asserts that we see our mission as one that gives assurance to every person that their life matters, not because we say so, but because the gospel says so. We can be bold because we know it is true.

Our theme this year: *Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives*, is also simple. It recognizes that each of

us, by our gifts and the decisions we make to employ them, power this sacred work. Our resources make ministry happen. The arithmetic is not complex. Our choice to grow in our generosity enables the church to increase the impact of the difference it makes. By choosing to give, even a little bit more, we will expand our shared quest to change lives – even our own. Be bold! Take a step forward in your generosity. It's simple!

GOING BEYOND OUR WALLS

Beat cabin fever - Do you have some ideas how we might share God's love outside of our church building this Lenten season? Let Pastor Jackie know.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) 2024



We will dedicate our special offering to **OGHS, Sunday March 17**. Through this offering you engage development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing, and women's empowerment. Find more info at: ucc.org/oghs



February 18

Sunday afternoon crafting at The Villa

New activity. You're invited to come craft with us. Any age. 3rd Sunday of each month. 2pm-3pm. Skyview Villa—St. Joseph's Assisted Living, 210 Harris Drive (behind St. Joe), 2nd floor sunny gathering room.

Last month, it was fun to catch up with church member, Charlene, and play with supplies and visit. We hope to see you on February 18. For more info, contact Jane Uzzell or Pastor Jackie.



Book Club will meet February 14 at 10 AM. *Chinese Menu* by Grace Lin and various other books about Chinese food. The books can be found in Fellowship Hall or you can contact Jane Uzzell.



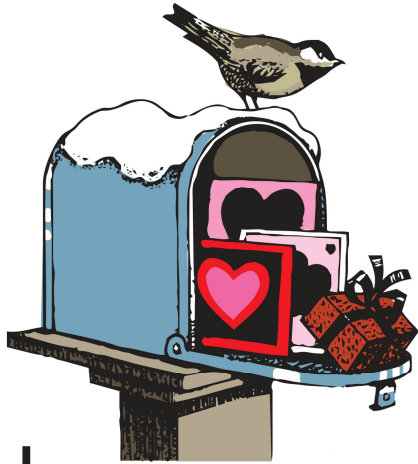
A Special Thank You to those who brought cookies & bars for Jeff Burkink's funeral. I was asked by someone attending where we ordered all the goodies from. I explained everyone brought some and they said it looked so professional, that they thought they were brought in. Our contributors should be very proud. Also, a big, big thank you to those who stayed and help clean up, washing dishes, and taking down tables and chairs. Betty Morrison, Gene Kroeger, Darlene Korthals, Jill Waterbury, Pat Jenny, Rita Woodard, and Bonnie Dewell. Also, to the Burkink family, who helped set up and tear down. It meant so much to us. The Funeral Committee, Bonnie Kroeger, Verletta Olson, and Evonne

A HUGE thank you to everyone who has helped shovel, scoop, sweep, put out salt, snow blow and try to keep every one safe with the snow storm. Many people came to help keep things cleaned up and cleared. THANK YOU!



Thank you to my church family for the thoughts and prayers during my surgery and through my medical situations. Suzan Podliska

4th Suzan Podliska -80th!
Paige Uzzell
5th Tim Ernst
15th Barb Koenig
17th Garrett Korthals
Mary Rhodes
18th Bonnie Dewell
27th Mike Synovec-80th!
28th McKenna Waterbury



February

February 4

Communion: Ben Uzzell and Randy Neuharth

Ushers: Ben and Stacie Uzzell

Greeters: Mike Synovec

Reader: Grace Uzzell

Leader: Tom McConnell

Flowers: Suzan Podliska

February 11

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Greeters: Tom McConnell and Verletta Olson

Reader: Ben Uzzell

Flowers:

February 18

Ushers: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Greeters: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Reader: Kay Neuharth

Flowers:

February 25

Ushers: Scott and Lori Williams

Greeters: Ben and Stacie Uzzell

Reader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers: Scott and Lori Williams



March 3

Communion: Evonne Burkink and Kay Neuharth

Ushers: Ed Lindsay and Brian Seier

Greeters: Scott and Lori Williams

Reader: Tom McConnell

Leader: Randy Neuharth

Flowers: Scott and Lori Williams

March 10

Ushers: Mike Synovec and Evonne Burkink

Greeters: Barb Koenig and Ed Lindsay

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers: Gene and Darlene Korthals

March 17

Ushers: Susan Surber and Bonnie Dewell

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Lori Williams

Flowers:

March 24 Palm Sunday

Ushers: Verletta Olson and Tom McConnell

Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Mike Synovec

3 Readers: Reese Uzzell, Ben Uzzell and Verletta Olson

Flowers: Palms

March 31 Easter

Ushers: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Greeters: Rita Woodard and Brian Seier

Reader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers: Lilies

Please notify the office if you are not able to attend a service.

January

From 1/1/24 through 1/31/24

Deposits for 12-24 and 12-31 are included

Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ 4,615.53
Christmas Fund	\$ 100.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 16,538.91</u>
Subtotal	\$ 21,254.44
Salary	--\$ 8,400.42
Church Maintenance	—\$ 2,935.04
Office Expenses	—\$ 445.34
Substitute Organist	—\$ 140.00
Scholarship	—\$ 500.00
Insurance	—\$ 1,901.38
Conference, Christmas Fund	—\$ 1,394.00
<u>Renner's</u>	<u>—\$ 500.00</u>
Final Balance	\$ 5,038.26



► February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6:30 PM Girl Scouts	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Unity Council	6 PM Girl Scouts	5:30 PM Girl Scouts	10 Book club Ash Wednesday Trinity Episcopal Church 5:30			
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Congregational Meeting	6:30 PM Girl Scouts 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in FH	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				
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25	26	27	28	29		
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9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6 PM Girl Scouts	5:30 PM Girl Scouts				
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► March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6:30 PM Girl Scouts	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Stewardship Sunday	6 PM Girl Scouts	5:30 PM Girl Scouts	10 Book club		5:30 PM Girl Scouts FH for overnight	9 AM Girl Scouts FH
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6:30 PM Girl Scouts	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				Egg Hunt 11 AM
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6 PM Girl Scouts Annual Reports Due	5:30 PM Girl Scouts		Maundy Thursday		
31						
Easter 10:15 Worship						