

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



January 2024

Volume 5, Issue 111

## Undeck the Halls



Undecorating the church will be January 7 at 9 AM. If you can, please come to church early to help put away Christmas.

### 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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## Prayer for the New Year of Faith

At the beginning of a new year,  
keep alive in us the hope of the angel's song.  
Help us notice the possibility of peace in a child's cries.  
Push us to live out the love of the babe in the manger.  
At this time of new beginnings,  
we enter the new year of faith.  
At this time of looking ahead,  
we move into the unknown with hope.  
At this time of new commitment to following in the footsteps of Jesus,  
we proceed forward together as God's family.  
Loving God, as we turn the calendar page,  
Reveal to us the joy of new beginnings found in you. Amen

--Carman McClelland, *United Church of Canada, Brampton, Ontario*

## Winter Announcements



**Pastor's Time Away** Pastor Jackie will be on vacation Friday December 29 through Thursday, January 4.

After her day off, January 5, she will return to the office January 6. Chaplain Jim Wonnacott (FRHS) will be on call for emergency pastoral care—contact him directly at: 402.992.2468 (*Leave a message, he will call you back*).



If we should need to cancel due to weather, check these websites:



**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>  
On the top bar, click 'weather', go to 'closings and delays'.

# MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS



On December 10, we held the church Christmas Program and Dinner 2023. Barb Koenig coordinated the potluck, and the Williams' family provide the turkey. Those providing stories and/or serving as readers included: Trudy Dannelly, Susan Allyn, Pastor Jackie, Kay Neuharth, Kailee Feenstra (Guide), Bonnie Kroeger, Grace Uzzell, Reese Uzzell, Verletta Olson, Jane Uzzell, and Mike Synovek. Mike also came up with the theme this year. Jill Waterbury played accompaniments to carols, and Darlene Korthals and Pastor Jackie served as supports.

Susan Allyn created the three categories: Christmas traditions, Christmas away from home, and a Christmas memory that sticks with you. The following story of *Christmas away from home* certainly stuck with Evonne Burkink.

## **Evonne & Jeff Burkink's Story**

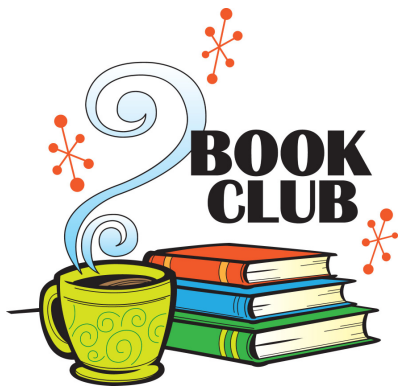
A most memorable Christmas! Almost 63 years ago, December 23, 1960, Jeff and I were married at the Swedish Covenant Church in Wakefield, NE. Yes, we were crazy to be married in the COLD, COLD of Winter. The wedding setting was beautiful with two white flocked trees with blue lights. (Sign of JOY!) Everything went as planned and more.

We went to Minneapolis right afterwards on our honeymoon. We had been told the lights would be fantastic. They certainly were. What we had not planned was NO restaurants were open over Christmas. Do not recall fast-food restaurants 63 years ago! By Christmas Day we were starved. Driving around looking at lights, we were thrilled to find a very small corner neighborhood grocery store where we purchased bread and lunch meat. We proved, without a doubt, you cannot live on LOVE alone. We were ready to go home!

And, we did!







**Book Club** will meet January 10 at 10 AM. *Where 3 Oceans Meet* by Rajani Laroocca. The book can be found in Fellowship Hall or you can contact Jane Uzzell.

Do you go grocery shopping? At Lou's? At HyVee? **We have an easy way to bump up your donation to the church budget**--use a Lou's or HyVee gift card when you go shopping or get gas. You can buy them **Sundays** in Fellowship Hall. We currently get \$25, \$50 and \$100 gift cards.

See you at the table in Fellowship Hall! Please help out. The gift cards fit right in your billfold by your dollar bills, so it's even easy to remember to use them when you go to pay for your groceries. Questions? Leave a message for Jane Uzzell at (402)640-6623.

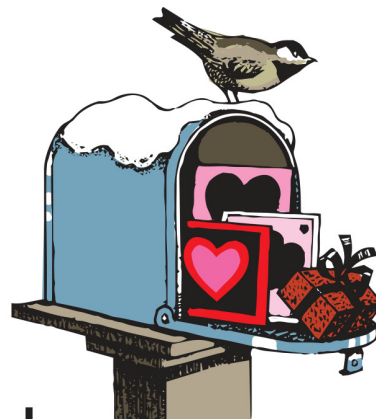


 **JANUARY**  
Birthdays

8th Stan Staab

11th Tom McConnell





### **January 7**

**Communion:** Sue Surber and Brian Seier  
**Ushers:** Tom McConnell and Bonnie Dewell  
**Greeters:** Ed Lindsay and Verletta Olson  
**Reader:** Lori Williams  
**Leader:** Susan Allyn  
**Flowers:** Susan Allyn

### **January 14**

**Ushers:** Ben and Grace Uzzell  
**Greeters:** Rita Woodard and Jane Uzzell  
**Reader:** Verletta Olson  
**Flowers:**

### **January 21**

**Ushers:**  
**Greeters:** Grace and Reese Uzzell  
**Reader:** Randy Neuharth  
**Flowers:**

### **January 28**

**Ushers:** Rita Woodard and Jane Uzzell  
**Greeters:** Sue Surber  
**Reader:** Reese Uzzell  
**Flowers:**

### **February 4**

**Communion:** Ben Uzzell and Randy Neuharth  
**Ushers:** Ben and Stacie Uzzell  
**Greeters:** Mike Synovec  
**Reader:** Grace Uzzell  
**Leader:** Tom McConnell  
**Flowers:**

### **February 11**

**Ushers:** Randy and Kay Neuharth  
**Greeters:** Tom McConnell and Verletta Olson  
**Reader:** Ben Uzzell  
**Flowers:**

### **February 14 Ash Wednesday**

**Ushers:** Jane Uzzell and Barb Koenig  
**Greeters:** Evonne Burkink  
**Reader:** Brian Seier  
**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:**

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

# December

From 12/1/23 through 12/31/23

Most end of the year expenses are included. Deposits from 12-24 and 12-31 are not included.

## Checking account information

Beginning balance	—\$ 379.61
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	\$ 15,553.04
Subtotal	\$ 15,173.43
Salary	--\$ 8,217.57
Church Maintenance	—\$ 1,215.60
Office Expenses	—\$ 387.23
Faith Development	—\$ 17.50
Poinsettias	—\$ 220.00
<u>Renner's</u>	—\$ 500.00
Final Balance	\$ 4,615.53



# ▶ January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 OFFICE CLOSED  Pastor vaca- tion	2 6:15 PM Girl Scouts  Pastor vaca- tion	3 Pastor vaca- tion	4 Pastor vaca- tion	5 Pastor day off	6
7 9 Sunday School <a href="#">Undecorate the church</a> 10:15 Worship	8 6 PM Girl Scouts	9 5:30 PM Girl Scouts	10 <a href="#">10 Book club</a>	11	12 12:30 FH Delphians	13
14 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship <a href="#">Faith Develop- ment</a>	15 6:30 PM Girl Scouts	16 6:15 PM Girl Scouts	17	18	19	20
21 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship <a href="#">Unity Council</a>	22 6 PM Girl Scouts	23 5:30 PM Girl Scouts	24 2 PM FH Evonne	25	26	27
28 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	29	30	31			



# ► February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6:30 PM Girl Scouts	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6 PM Girl Scouts	5:30 PM Girl Scouts	Ash Wednesday 10 Book club			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6:30 PM Girl Scouts 5:30 PM Girl Scouts in FH	6:15 PM Girl Scouts				
25	26	27	28	29		
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	6 PM Girl Scouts	5:30 PM Girl Scouts				