

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



*Mercy Meals had a Pack
 Away Hunger event
 October 6. Nine people
 packed 1,944 meals.
 That day 149,000 meals
 were packed to be sent to
 Guatemala and Ghana.
 Great work team!!!*



November 2019

Volume 5, Issue 61

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Thanksgiving Eve Service November 27

First Congregational Church will host a joint Thanksgiving Service with First Presbyterian and Trinity Episcopal Churches, Wednesday evening, November 27th at 6:30pm.



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



Office Hours

Mon-Thurs

8-11:30

Friday

8-12

Dis-empowering Loss with Gratitude

“I came naked from my mother’s womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The LORD gave me what I had, and the LORD has taken it away. Praise the name of the LORD!”
-Job 1:21

Over the past month I have visited both churches where I was commissioned and released from my role as pastor and teacher in the Pacific Northwest in March to join you all in Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota. One community is a 125 year old predominantly white congregation who called me as their first queer, African-American pastor; and the second a new church start birthed 12 years ago to be a safe place for folks of color, who were also LGBT that had been displaced from various congregations because of who they were. Somehow these two very different and diverse congregations shared a pastor, similar sermons, occasional joint worship and missional outreach to the community. When I was preparing to transition these were the questions of my heart: Why would God call me to leave these jewels in the Church? Why would God lead me to leave such a model of who we could be as the UCC? What could possibly remedy or feel the void from such loss?

After some prayer and discernment at that time, I realized my framing was all wrong. I wasn’t losing. I wasn’t losing the work of the past 12 years or my church families. The more I curated my experience in loss the more sad and despondent my departure became. The Spirit reminded me that I could choose to use a lens of gratitude. I was immediately uplifted with the amazing memories I had serving these congregations. The first drag show, the first baptisms, the first time we used online giving, the first communion at pride event.

My life was so filled with gratitude that I realized that loss was simply a distraction, blocking me from the abundance I had been privileged by the divine to experience. This abundance would follow me for the rest of my ministry in the church.

These wandering six months ago have proven to be true as I have ministered in the Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences and as I have seen the move of God through her Spirit, I know I have not lost but gained abundantly.

What have you framed as loss that you could choose to see as a blessing of abundance?

Holy One, help me to see how blessed I am, in the midst of transition and change. Help me to see that when one moment in our journey changes we will always carry the life and mission with us forever. Amen

Rev. Darrell Goodwin, Associate Conference Minister



Posted on September 27, 2019 by Aidan Spencer

From Tri-Conference blog <https://www.ucciaconf.org/12327/dis-empowering-loss-with-gratitude#comment-139530>



Living Waters Association Report 2019 Fall Gathering

The Annual Fall Gathering of the Living Waters Association (LWA) of the Nebraska Conference of the United Church of Christ met Saturday, October 12, 2019 at First Congregational UCC – Norfolk.

The morning began with hospitality, homemade muffins and coffee offered by volunteers: **Susan Surber, Dorothy Hull** and **Charlene Fosdick** in Fellowship Hall. Worship with communion followed in the Sanctuary. Licensed Minister, Randy Sanders gave the sermon on the cost and greater joy of discipleship. The offering went to UCC Disaster Relief. Conference Minister Rev. Brigit Stevens officiated at communion.

Rev. Stevens gave an update on coming changes within the Tri-Conference. The term 'Tri-Conference' will be dropped from the logo and used less to describe the ministries of the three Conferences of Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. Perhaps they will hold a contest to rename TCM that is less confusing. Brigit clarified that she is the Conference Minister for all three conferences, working with her team of four Associate Conference Ministers. We share staff and resources, and yet each Conference is distinct, she explained.

Four inspiring speakers addressed the theme of the day, "Living the Marks." Rev. Stevens explained the philosophy behind the development of The Marks as an evaluation tool for ministry as it is done today. Stephen Jackson, Ryan White Program Manager for the State of Nebraska, shared the need for pastoral care for individuals who live with HIV/AIDS. **Steve Uzzell**, licensed minister, shared his ministry with youth in the Northeast Nebraska Juvenile Detention Center. Rev. David Paul, pastor and counselor, shared eight ways the Church can help to connect with our "connected" generation and bring hope. All of these ministries fit into various aspects of The Marks.

At the business meeting, **Susan Allyn** was voted onto LWA Council. **Pastor Jackie** will continue to serve on LWA Church and Ministry Committee. Rev. Stevens installed new Council and Committee members. **Vickie Staab, Karen Allyn** and **Susan Allyn** served lunch catered by Valentino's. **David Thompson** helped with clean up. – Pastor Jackie



UPDATE - Discernment Process with Linaje Escogido Church

(Li-nah' hay Es'-koe hee' doe)

At the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 20, 2019, the congregation voted to approve the lease to rent the basement level of the church (except for a few storage space rooms) to Linaje Escogido Church.

Throughout September, Stan Staab, Scott Williams, Randy Neuharth, and Barb Koenig worked with Chuck Balsiger to create the lease. The congregation was invited to examine the lease the week prior to the meeting. The lease speaks mostly of space, cost, use, insurance, and time. Beyond this agreement, the two churches will have to work out the ongoing details that come with sharing space. The first term of the lease is for six months and then year to year.

After more discussion, the vote was (33) Yes, (1) No, and (1) abstain. As Verletta Olson, Mike Synovec and Stacie Uzzell counted the votes, the congregation sang, "I Love to Tell the Story" to Jill Waterbury's organ accompaniment. After the vote results, Pastor Jackie offered the closing prayer with the congregation naming their future hopes.

Next, Scott, Randy, and Stan presented the lease to three members of the Garcia Family (leaders in Linaje Escogido). "They were glad to hear the news.", Scott said, "They want to be more than tenants, they want to be good neighbors". The next step is for their leaders to bring the lease before their congregation and decide if they will accept it. The conversations between the two churches continue to be warm and hopeful. Please pray for Linaje Escogido, First Congregational, and the Spirit's guidance.

Purpose: "We bind together, to worship God, and to discern God's will"



150th Anniversary Action Team

Bonnie Kroeger, Verletta Olson, Rita Woodard and Pastor Jackie met September 19 and October 15 to brainstorm a tentative timeline for the church's 150th celebration in 2020. According to the records in the archives, the church celebrated throughout 1995 for the 125th anniversary with the theme:

"125 - Unity in Christ". They held seven special events from January to November, including a beef dinner.

The team plans to scale our 150th celebration to fit our membership and resources today.

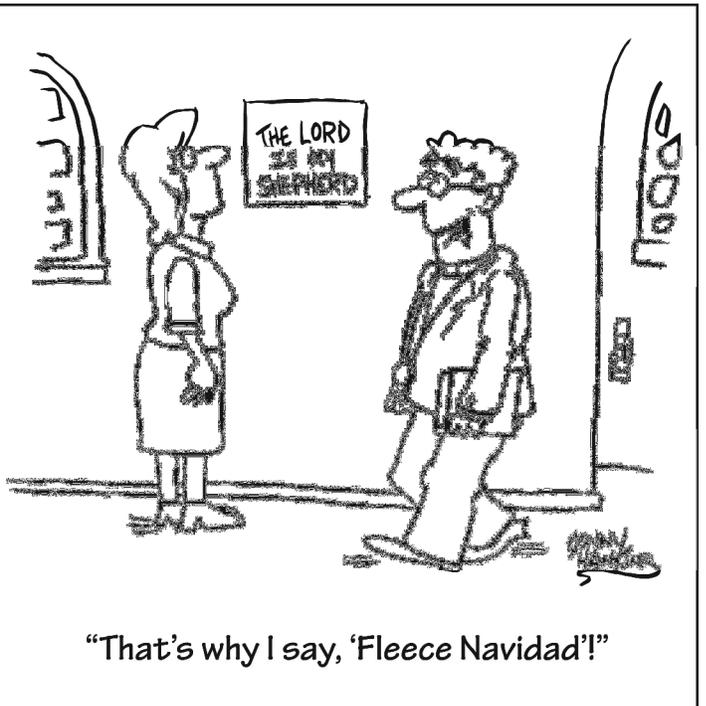
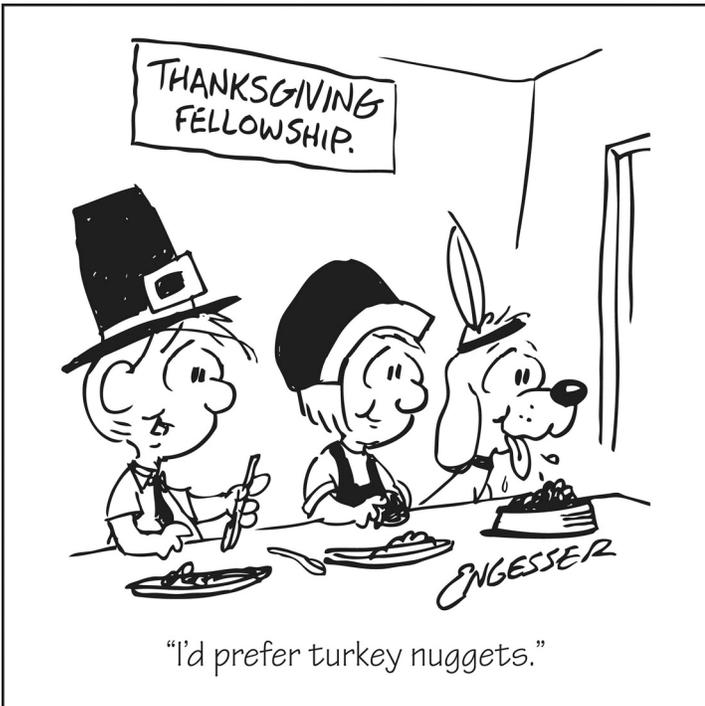
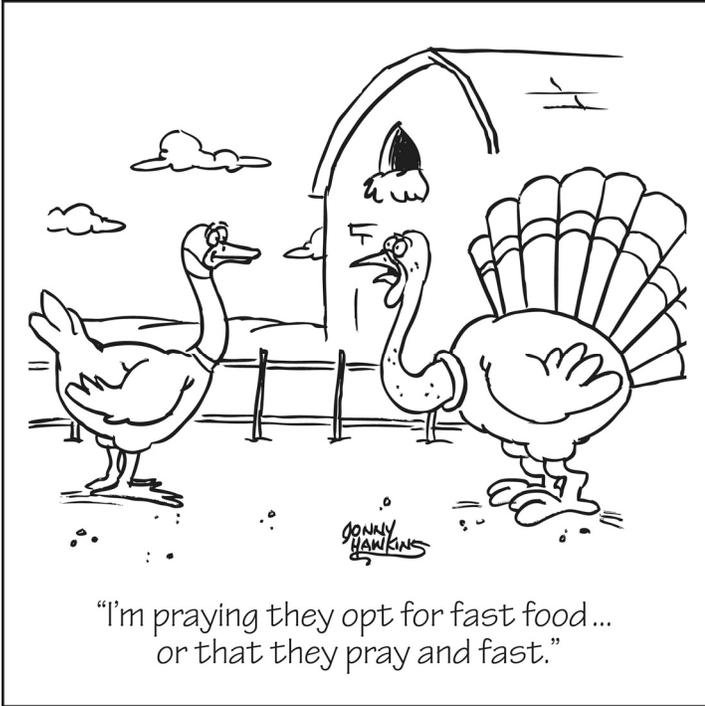
Laying of the cornerstone September 17, 1950. Participants include Rev. Merle Adams and Gov. Val Peterson. (Rev. Elmer Brinkmeyer was Pastor at the time). [photo gift from Ruth Brown]

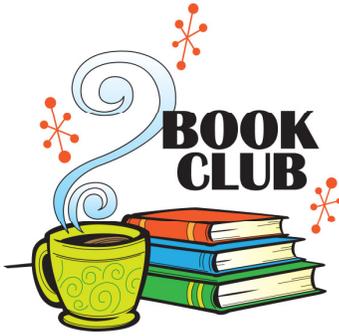
Tentative Timeline of Events:

- Nov 2019 Invite honored guests and preacher (Conf. Minister) for 2020
- Dec 29, 2019 Potluck after worship, freewill offering for 150th expenses
- May 2, 2020 Beef Dinner and Program in Fellowship Hall (catered/tickets)
- May 3, 2020 FUTURE/NEW LIFE - Worship, Conference Minister to preach
- July 4, 2020 Parade float / 150th banner.
- Summer 2020 PRESENT/COMMUNITY - Picnic for the neighborhood
- Sept, 2020 Lion's Parade float / 150th banner
- Nov 15, 2020 PAST/THANKSGIVING FOR 150 YEARS OF MINISTRY -
Worship - Stories and people of FCUCC through the years.

Other topics for discussion included the creation of a 150th logo and banner, and commemorative object/s and fundraising for expenses. Verletta shared that many details of Col. Charles Mathewson's life and founding members are being researched and shared by Steve and Jane Uzzell, who continue to research stories and information around our church's history in Norfolk. Steve organized a bus tour of historic Norfolk for October. Merle Rix volunteered to be tour guide/storyteller.

Funnies for the Month





Book club meets November 13 to discuss *Beatrice's Goat*. Please see Jane Uzzell for the books. Jane would like to request to please check out www.heifer.org for more information, newsletters, and products that Heifer International offers to combat hunger.

Men's luncheon: will meet at Pizza Hut on Benjamin Ave. at noon November 21. Steve Uzzell is the leader for this group.



COMMEMORATION
of the

FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Remembrance Sunday November 3

We will remember the saints of the past on November 3 during Remembrance Sunday (sometimes referred to as "All Saints Sunday"), with special attention on those who have died since early November 2018. The church will also dedicate a new communion set purchased with Calvin Allyn memorial funds.



Men's GROUP



Birthday

- 4th Susan Surber
- 19th Kay Neuharth
- 20th Alta Crandall
- 22nd Ed Lindsay

Anniversary

- 14th Ron and Virginia Barritt

Fellowship Work Committee

November

Candice Korthals

Gene and Darlene Korthals Barb Koenig



November 3

Communion: Verletta Olson, Suzan Podliska,

Charlene Fosdick, Terry Hamilton

Ushers: Scott and Lori Williams

Greeters: Stan and Vicki Staab

Reader: Vicki Staab

Leader: Ben Uzzell

Flowers:

November 10

Ushers: Tom McConnell and Ed Lindsay

Greeters: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Reader: Tom McConnell

Flowers: Tom McConnell

November 17

Ushers: Jane Uzzell and Rita Woodard

Greeters: Charlene Fosdick and Mike Synovec

Reader: Karen Allyn

Flowers: Beth Janelle Rhoades

November 24

Ushers: Stan and Vicki Staab

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Randy Neuharth

Flowers: Tim Ernst



December 1 Hanging of the Greens

Communion: Vicki Staab, Ben Uzzell, Dorothy Hull, Tom McConnell

Ushers: Ben and Stacie Uzzell

Greeters: Jane Uzzell and Cole Uzzell

Reader: Ben Uzzell

Leader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers: Poinsettias

December 8 Christmas Program and Dinner

Ushers: Terry Hamilton and Bonnie Dewell

Greeters: Scott and Lori Williams

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers: Poinsettias

December 15

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Greeters: Terry Hamilton and Rita Woodard

Reader: Kay Neuharth

Flowers: Poinsettias

December 22

Ushers: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Dorothy Hull

Reader: Stan Staab

Flowers: Poinsettias

December 24 Christmas Eve

Ushers: Jeff and Evonne Burkink

Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Reader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers: Poinsettias

December 29 Service of Carols

Ushers: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Greeters: Ed Lindsay and Tom McConnell

Reader: Lori Williams

Flowers: Poinsettias

October

From 10/1/19 through 10/31/19



TREASURER'S REPORT

Checking account information

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Beginning balance | \$ 3,717.40 |
| O'Neill | \$ 320.00 |
| LWA lunch | \$ 204.00 |
| Poinsettias | \$ 104.00 |
| Scholarship | \$ 109.00 |
| <u>Weekly deposits</u> | <u>\$ 11,009.00</u> |
| Subtotal | \$ 8,028.60 |
| Salary | --\$ 5,856.24 |
| Church Maintenance | —\$ 2,098.33 |
| Office Expenses | —\$ 389.93 |
| Faith Development | —\$ 46.03 |
| Worship Ministry | —\$ 47.94 |
| Youth | ----\$ 34.10 |
| Substitute Pastor | —\$ 125.00 |
| Scholarship | —\$ 109.00 |
| O'Neill | —\$ 220.00 |
| Memorial | —\$ 24.95 |
| Insurance | —\$ 1,015.00 |
| Conference | —\$ 467.00 |
| <u>Transfer to Madison County</u> | <u>—\$ 200.00</u> |
| Final Balance | ----\$ 2,604.92 |

▶ November 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|-----|---|--|----------------------------------|---|
| | | | | | 1 7 Card Group | 2 End Daylight Savings Time Fall back 1 hour! |
| 3 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Remembrance Sunday | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 Delphians 1 5 Card Group | 9 Girl Scouts FH 8-12 |
| 10 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship | 25 | 26 | 27 Thanksgiving Eve service 6:30 PM Here | 28 Noon Potluck dinner hosted by Uzzells | 29 | 30 |

▶ December 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|------------|--|------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship | 2 | 3 Girl Scouts FH 7 PM | 4 | 5 | 6 7 Card Group | 7 |
| 8 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Christmas Dinner | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 5 Card Group | 14 |
| 15 10:15 Worship | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 10:15 Worship | 23 | 24 5:30 Christmas Eve Service | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 10:15 Worship | 30 | 31 | | | | |



First Congregational United Church of Christ
1102 W. Norfolk Ave
Norfolk, NE 68701

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Return Service Requested

With love and faith



First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Norfolk, NE 68701

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www.firstconguccc.org

9:00 AM Sunday School Sept-May

10:15 AM Worship Service