

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



October 2023

Volume 5, Issue 108



Potluck after worship  
 October 29th as a fund  
 raiser for the Scholarship  
 Fund. Join us for Food and  
 Fellowship!

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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## Welcome



*“pilgrim - a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons.”*

On Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, I led a group of nine members and friends of First Congregational to the Tri-Faith Initiative campus in Omaha. Staff member, Lucas, greeted us warmly at the **Welcome Center**. Then at 10:00 a.m. we gathered next door at the **American Muslim Institute** to meet our tour guides Miriam and Abdullah. At the mosque, the towering minaret serves to call people to prayer.

In the foyer, Abdullah, assistant-Imam and youth leader, gave a brief introduction to Islam and then invited our questions. As is custom, we took off our shoes and entered the carpeted worship space. He and Miriam enjoyed answering questions as much as the group enjoyed asking them.

The congregation is made up of people representing over 30 nationalities. Abdullah enjoys the diverse mix as well as the faith they all share. He cited one study in the United States that showed 50% of Americans have never met a Muslim. Since most Muslims live in or near larger cities, far fewer people living in rural areas have ever met one. Meeting a real person face-to-face often changes a person's point of view from a negative stereotype to something positive.

After an hour, we thanked our hosts, then walked or drove to **Temple Israel**. Our guide, Mel, welcomed us and invited us to take special gift bags prepared for guests during September high holy days. Mel said that he has been a member of Temple Israel for 40 plus years. Being part of Tri-Faith has given him an opportunity to learn, grow, and respect people of other faiths.

At noon, we returned to the lower level of the Welcome Center where a catered lunch from Valentino's awaited us. Before we left the campus, a few of us stopped at Countryside Community United Church of Christ, to see the award-winning architecture.

Jane Uzzell reflected on the AMI and the Temple: "What I remember most from the American Muslim Institute is the importance of cleanliness to their entering the mosque. They wash their mouth 3 times, their hands, their feet, wipe their faces, etc—all 3 times. I would not have learned this if I wouldn't have asked about the individual little benches by faucets in the women's bathroom. And, they have low wall mounted electric blow driers to dry one's feet!"



"What I remember the most from Temple Israel is the stained-glass panels in the hall—2 sections of 7 panels, representing the 24 hours of a day—progressing from dark blues to the light of day as orange, reds, yellows, and back to the shades of blue. And, the kindness of an apple and honey—a wish for the sweetness of a new year, Rosh Hoshana."

Verletta Olson sent her thoughts about the tour:

- "The chant or calling of God to the Muslim prayer room was very moving. The sacredness of the room and how you needed to prepare your heart and body to enter into the presence of this holy place. Moses being so very important in their religion was something I didn't realize and the importance of praying and the rituals of it was so informative.
- The history of Temple Israel, again the laws given through Moses, the Holy Day's and the meaning of the ways they are celebrated and remembered.
- The simplistic beauty of the Christian sanctuary, Countryside UCC, the outreach and welcoming of anyone that comes to worship.
- The welcoming feeling of the entire campus. It was a great experience."

Nebraskans can be proud to have this godly experiment in our midst called Tri-Faith Initiative. Learn about tours at: <https://www.trifaith.org/tours/>

*Salaam, Shalom, Peace, Pastor Jackie*

**Time Away** Pastor Jackie will be on vacation October 1 through 6. Susan Allyn will lead worship and preach. Chaplain Jim Wonnacott will be on call for emergency pastoral care, his cell phone # is 402.992.2468.

### **“Serving God with love and faith”**



On Sunday October 15, from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm, FCUCC youth and adults will participate in the **Pack Away Hunger** event. We are accepting donations to help cover the food cost; our goal is \$260. Sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall.

### **“Serving God with love and faith”**



#### **Rescue Mission Receives Chairs**

On August 30, Merle Rix, Jane Uzzell and Pastor Jackie loaded up Merle's truck to take a dozen chairs to the Rescue Mission. Chaplain John and another disciple unloaded the chairs. They appreciated these sturdy chairs, and Chaplain John said that it was nice to have so many that matched.

The donation is part of a project started in January 2023 to make more room for storage for Linage Escogido Church, who use the space downstairs. Also in August, the church donated its choir music collection to *Lord of the Mountains Lutheran Church ELCA* in Dillon Colorado, facilitated by Jim Luellen. The collection filled the entire back of his truck with a topper. Jim explained that several years ago, the church built special cabinets to hold the music that had accumulated over decades. This fine collection may now serve the church choir and community choir in Dillon.

Pastor Jackie said, “We’re called to be good stewards of our stuff. Like everyone, over time we accumulate things we don’t use”.







### **Special Mission Offering NIN – October 1, 2023**

We will receive Neighbors in Need (NIN) offering October 1. This special mission offering of the United Church of Christ supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to provide funding grants to UCC churches and organizations leading justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects in their

communities. This year's focus is on environmental justice. Find more at the UCC website, [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).



### **The Living Waters Association 2023 Fall Annual Meeting**

**Saturday October 21, 2023, 9:00 a.m.**

**St. Luke's UCC, 11072 – 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Columbus, NE**

Fee \$20 includes lunch.

To register, simply go to [www.livingwatersassociation.org](http://www.livingwatersassociation.org) click on the "Living Waters Fall Gathering" link. Registration closes on October 3, 2023! For more information call Adam at 402-910-8111

Keynote speaker, Teresa J. Stewart, author of the book "The Small Church Advantage," will be discussing worship styles suited to the assets of small churches and the advantages of small congregations.

A second guest speaker will be The Rev. Roberto Ochoa, Minister for Ethnic Inclusion and Congregational Support for Rural and Small Churches in the United Church of Christ's National Setting. He will be joining us to talk about the Rural Church Coalition.



# Food Pantry Needs

Canned Soup  
Spaghetti Sauce  
Meat helpers (hamburger, tuna, chicken)  
Peanut butter (15-16 oz. size)  
Boxed or pouches of Rice dishes (Rice-a-Roni type)  
Canned fruit (applesauce, peaches, pears)  
All canned & boxed food items are welcome.

Youth are collecting food for the pantry during the month of October. The food will be dedicated October 29 and delivered after that.

# *Poinsettias*

This year Shamrock Nursery will be offering poinsettias, in a 7 1/2" pot for \$16.75. We are able to get them in red, white, jingle bell or ice crystal. Please indicate your color and if you would like a message in the bulletin for the season. Orders need to be in by **October 27.**

\_\_\_\_ red

\_\_\_\_ white

\_\_\_\_ jingle bell

\_\_\_\_ ice crystal

Order for: \_\_\_\_\_

Message:

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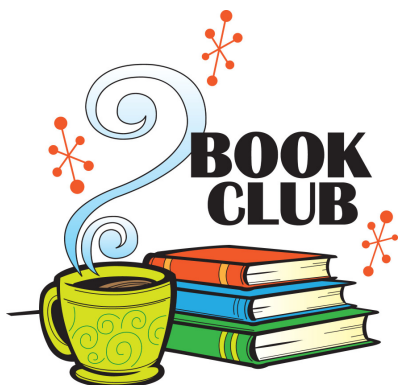
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Jingle Bell



Ice Crystal





Book Club will meet October 11 at 10 AM. *A Sick Day for Amos* by Phillip C. Stead. We will also be reading *Superfudge* by Judy Blume for a chapter book. The books 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.



## OCTOBER Birthdays & Anniversaries

18th Lee Frisch

20th Brian Seier

Anniversary

2nd Gene and Darlene Korthals





## OCTOBER

**October 1     World Communion Sunday**

**Communion:** Ben Uzzell and Susan Surber

**Ushers:** Ed Lindsay and Susan Surber

**Greeters:** Verletta Olson and Rita Woodard

**Reader:** Grace Uzzell

**Leader:** Brian Seier

**Flowers:** Ginge Dudley

**October 8**

**Ushers:** Barb Koenig and Evonne Burkink

**Greeters:** Bonnie Dewell and Ed Lindsay

**Reader:** Kay Neuharth

**Flowers:** Mark and Vicki Walker

**October 15**

**Ushers:** Tom McConnell and Verletta Olson

**Greeters:** Jane Uzzell and Reese Uzzell

**Reader:** Lori Williams

**Flowers:**

**October 22**

**Ushers:** Bonnie Dewell

**Greeters:** Barb Koenig and Brian Seier

**Reader:** Verletta Olson

**Flowers:**

**October 29     Heritage Sunday**

**Ushers:** Randy and Kay Neuharth

**Greeters:** Susan Surber and Mike Synovec

**Reader:** Jane Uzzell

**Flowers:** Scott and Lori Williams



**November 5     Remembrance Sunday**

**Communion:** Scott and Lori Williams

**Ushers:** Suzan Podliska and Rita Woodard

**Greeters:** Evonne Burkink and Tom McConnell

**Reader:** Reese Uzzell

**Leader:** Jane Uzzell

**Flowers:**

**November 12**

**Ushers:** Brian Seier and Jane Uzzell

**Greeters:** Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

**Reader:** Randy Neuharth

**Flowers:**

**November 19**

**Ushers:** Scott and Lori Williams

**Greeters:** Ben and Stacie Uzzell

**Reader:** Grace Uzzell

**Flowers:**

**November 26**

**Ushers:** Stacie Uzzell and Reese Uzzell

**Greeters:** Ben Uzzell and Grace Uzzell

**Reader:** Ben Uzzell

**Flowers:** Scott and Lori Williams

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

# September

From 9/1/23 through 9/30/23

## Checking account information

Beginning balance	-\$ 3,355.93
Mercy Meals	\$ 25.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 10,105.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 6,774.07
Salary	--\$ 7,436.26
Church Maintenance	—\$ 1,071.22
Office Expenses	—\$ 647.99
Insurance	—\$ 1042.20
Substitute Organist	—\$ 140.00
Conference	—\$ 492.00
Continuing Education	—\$ 70.00
<u>Renner's</u>	<u>—\$ 500.00</u>
<b>Final Balance</b>	<b>—\$ 4,625.60</b>



# ► October 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Pastor on vacation 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Renewed Hope 4-7 FH	2 Pastor on vacation	3 Pastor on vacation	4 Pastor on vacation	5 Pastor on vacation	6 Pastor on vacation	7
8 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	9	10 5:30 PM Girl Scouts	11 10 Book club	12	13	14
15 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Unity Council Mercy Meals 4-5:30 PM	16	17	18	19	20	21 Girl Scouts FH 9-4 LWA fall gathering St Luke's Columbus
22 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Children's Sabbath	23	24 5:30 PM Girl Scouts	25	26	27	28
29 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Heritage Sunday Potluck	30	31				

# ▶ November 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
				Sue in Omaha		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Remembrance Sunday Renewed Hope 4-7 FH			10 Book club		Sue in Omaha Delphians FH 1-4	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Faith Development		5:30 PM Girl Scouts				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship			Thanksgiving Eve Trinity Episcopal	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED	
26	27	28	29	30		
9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Hanging of the Greens		5:30 PM Girl Scouts				