

First Congregational Messenger
 First Congregational United Church of Christ
 1102 W. Norfolk Ave.
 Norfolk, NE 68701
 402-371-0701



firstcongoucc@fastmail.com
Serving God with love and faith

December 2024

Volume 5, Issue 122



Sunday morning, December 1 at 9 am is the Hanging of the Greens. Soup and sandwiches will be provided after worship.

Christmas Potluck



Christmas potluck with Linaje Escogido on Dec. 8. Turkey and ham will be provided. Please sign up so we have a count for meat preparation.



Pastor's Office Hours

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9-12
 Afternoons by appointment



Church Secretary

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8-12

May be gone to the doctor with Mom

Pastor's pages	2-4
Announcements	5-6
Serving	7
Financial Page	8
Calendar	9-10



Advent

Advent is that season in the Christian year in which we celebrate the coming of Christ. It consists of the four Sundays prior to Christmas, and begins on the Sunday near November 30th. Advent is a season for glad remembrance and becoming more Christ-like.

Advent celebrates Jesus's birth. The word means "a coming or arrival." We recall with gratitude the nativity of Jesus. In addition to the account of his birth, we have the first hymns of Christmas: The song of Zechariah (Luke 16:-79); The song of Simeon (2:29-32); and the "my soul doth magnify the Lord" (Luke 2:14).

The use of the Advent wreath in Christian worship dates from the time of the Renaissance. In Austria, it was used in family worship with each family member contributing to the construction of the wreath: evergreen, a cone, nuts, or berries.

The wreath is a Christian symbol. The circle of the wreath stands for eternity for it has no beginning and no end. The Evergreen is an ancient symbol of eternal life. Purple or blue candles set in the wreath stand for the royalty of Christ. The pink candle represents Mary, the mother of Christ, and the white candle stands for the innocence and purity of Christ himself.

The first candle stands for hope, the second candle stands for love and the third candle stands for Joy and the fourth candle stands for peace. The fifth or center candle is lit on Christmas Eve or day and represents the Christ Candle.

Finally, Advent anticipates the second coming of Christ. We look forward to His “second advent.” Believers await the Lord’s return with patience (James 5:7-8). We are to be prepared for the end time. We also pray for His coming (II Peter. 3:4, and 12).

I love Christmas and Advent at home and in the Church. It is my prayer that you too will truly enjoy this season and God’s presence in everything that you do.

Pastor Brian High

During this time of year Andrea and I would love to have you come to our home for an open house, which will be on December 22. We just want your fellowship with us as we enjoy some drinks and cookies. We ask only for your presence, nothing else but your presence. Please no gifts, just your fellowship. The time is 2 to 4 pm . We live at 111 North 10th St. Norfolk.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

***Pastor Brian and Andrea
High***



The Well is a mental health and substance recovery agency in Norfolk, Nebraska. We offer both long-term residential and outpatient treatment. We believe ALL people in recovery from behavioral health disorders deserve to be treated with dignity and care. We're especially mindful of traditionally underserved populations and people with limited financial resources. We offer a sliding fee scale, and do not turn anyone away based on inability to pay

Personal hygiene items to include full-sized:

- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Hand soap
- Body soap
- Body lotion
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Feminine Hygiene products

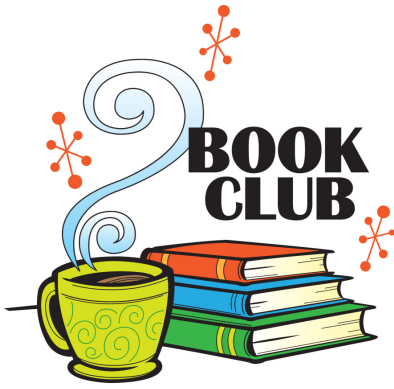
Other items

- Underwear [adult sizes]
- Socks [adult sizes]
- Hand towels, wash cloths, and towels
- Twin or Full bed sheets
- Blankets
- Bedding/pillows
- Kitchen utensils
- Kitchen dish cloths

Only a couple things to note:

- **No aerosol products please**
- **No products with "alcohol" listed in the ingredients**
- **ONLY NEW ITEMS, PLEASE**

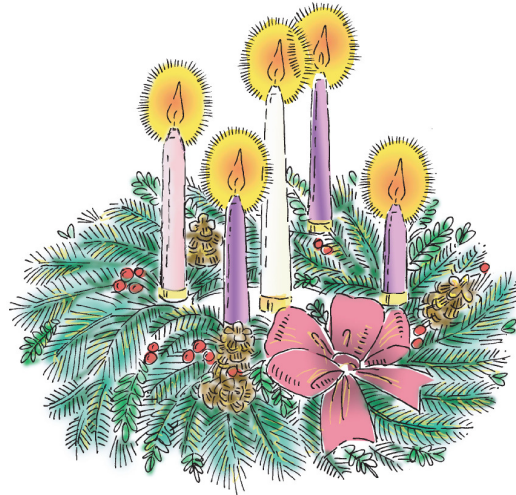




Book Club will meet December 11 at 10 AM. *Soul Food Sunday* by Winsome Bingham. The books can be found in Fellowship Hall or you can contact Jane Uzzell. 2025 theme: Award Winning and Notable Books.

Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 PM and will be a communion and candlelight service.

Christmas Eve



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! Questions? Leave a message for Jane Uzzell at (402) 640-6623.



DECEMBER Birthdays

- 1st Stacie Uzzell
- 18th Ben Uzzell
- 26th Karen Allyn
- 31st Virginia Barritt

December



December 1 First Advent

Communion: Scott and Lori Williams
Ushers: Susan Surber and Mike Synovec
Greeters: Rita Woodard and Evonne Burkink
Reader: Jane Uzzell
Leader: Tom McConnell
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 8 Program and Dinner

Ushers: Evonne Burkink and Pat Jenny
Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Verletta Olson
Reader: Randy Neuharth
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 15

Ushers: Scott and Lori Williams
Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger
Reader: Tom McConnell
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 22

Ushers: Verletta Olson and Barb Koenig
Greeters: Ben and Stacie Uzzell
Reader: Scott Williams
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 24 Christmas Eve

Ushers: Darlene Korthals and Jane Uzzell
Greeters: Bonnie and Gene Kroeger
Reader: Kay Neuharth
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 29

Ushers: Tom McConnell and Rita Woodard
Greeters: Scott and Lori Williams
Reader: Lori Williams
Flowers: Poinsettias



January 5

Communion: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger
Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth
Greeters: Tom McConnell and Jane Uzzell
Reader: Grace Uzzell
Leader: Scott Williams
Flowers:

January 12

Ushers: Bonnie Dewell and Darlene Korthals
Greeters: Pat Jenny and Barb Koenig
Reader: Ben Uzzell
Flowers:

January 19

Ushers: Grace and Stacie Uzzell
Greeters: Mike Synovec and Susan Surber
Reader: Reese Uzzell
Flowers:

January 26

Ushers: Evonne Burkink and Verletta Olson
Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth
Reader: Jane Uzzell
Flowers:

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

November

From 11/1/24 through 11/30/24

Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ -1,190.72
Poinsettias	\$ 33.50
Kamp Kaleo	\$ 25.00
Transfer from Savings	\$ 3,200.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 14700.86</u>
Subtotal	\$ 16,768.64
Salary	--\$ 6,541.98
Church Maintenance	—\$ 942.69
Office Expenses	—\$ 978.17
Faith Development	—\$ 34.24
Kamp Kaleo	—\$ 25.00
Funeral	—\$ 71.45
Poinsettias	—\$ 276.25
Insurance	—\$ 950.67
Conference	—\$ 440.00
<u>Renner's</u>	<u>—\$ 500.00</u>
Final Balance	\$ 6,008.19



▶ December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9 Hanging of the Greens 10:15 Worship	2 GS 6-7:30	3 Bells 5:15	4 Youth Group 6:30 PM	5 GS 6-7	6	7 Rehearsal 11AM
8 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship Potluck with Linaje Escojido	9 GS 5:30-7	10 Bells 5:15	11 10 Book club	12	13	14
15 9 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	16 GS 6-7:30	17 Bells 5:15	18 Youth Group 6:30 PM	19 GS 6-7	20	21
22 10:15 Worship Open House at Pastor Brian's 2-4 PM	23 GS 5:30-7 Sue on vacation	24 5:30 PM Christmas Eve service Sue on vacation	25 OFFICE CLOSED Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation	26 Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation	27 Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation	28 Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation
29 10:15 Worship Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation	30 Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation	31 Sue on vacation Pastor on vacation				

▶ January 2025

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 2 3 4

OFFICE
CLOSED
Sue on vacation
Pastor on vaca

5 6 7 8 9 10 11

9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 6-7:30

10 Book club

12 13 14 15 16 17 18

9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 5:30-7

Youth Group
6:30 PM

19 20 21 22 23 24 25

9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 6-7:30

26 27 28 29 30 31

9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 5:30-7