

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



February 2021

Volume 5, Issue 76

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What if in-person worship is cancelled?

We hope it is rare, but when the church needs to cancel worship on short notice due to bad weather, no water in the building, or late notice of a Covid-19 exposure, consult these news outlets under "weather, closings". Pastor Jackie will try to post a notice on Facebook as well. If we know soon enough, Susan can send notices through an "Email Blast". She also calls those who do not have email. We will do our best to get the word out.



Pastor's Office Hours

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



Office Hours

Mon- Fri
 8-12



A Letter from the Pastors - Joint Service Postponed

Grace and Peace to the congregations of Trinity Episcopal, First Presbyterian, and First Congregational United Church of Christ,

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Ashes have been symbolic in many cultures throughout history. For some peoples, they were a visible sign of grief and penitence (as in putting on sackcloth and ashes). The year 2020 has been a long season of grief due to the covid-19 corona virus. We remember how in-person worship came to a sudden halt around St. Patrick's Day last year. Some churches in Norfolk had the capacity to continue to worship electronically, while others scurried to find new ways to 'attend' services.

We grieve that we three churches could not participate in our joint ministries including the annual Easter Egg Hunt and summer Vacation Bible School. We are grateful that the churches did hold a joint Thanksgiving Eve Service on You Tube, thanks to Trinity.

Since the pandemic, Trinity has not been able to hold indoor worship services as they wait for covid-19 risk data to decrease to meet recommended levels. Their congregation yearns to worship together, but the time is not yet right.

We three churches also yearn to be together at the start of this holy season of Lent, but we have decided not to gather jointly this year. Rather, each church will be guided by the Spirit to mark Ash Wednesday in their own way. We will post any shared links to electronic services that are available.

Through these extraordinary times, grace to you. We remember that God is with us; we are not alone. And we say, thanks be to God.

Peace,

Rev. Peter Jark-Swain, Trinity Episcopal Church

Rev. Brian Johnson, First Presbyterian Church

Rev. Jackie Perry, First Congregational United Church of Christ





Lent 2021 - Adapting in a Pandemic

Ash Wednesday Service with Communion

February 17th at 5:30 PM

at First Congregation UCC

As COVID-19 cases continue, churches are left with the task of re-envisioning worship rituals while keeping faithful to their importance and meaning in the community of faith. As we prepare for the start of the Lenten season, the church is making plans for how to impose the ashes safely. To maintain our guidelines of at least 6 feet of distancing, FCUCC is planning to have something that represents the ashes for each person, but it won't be the same. Caring for each person and keeping meaningful and memorable worship throughout the pandemic have been key aims throughout this Covid-19 season. May the Spirit of creativity and adaptation continue to guide us through this holy season of self-reflection and faith.



Mark your calendars - June 25 & 26

Joint Annual Meeting 2021

All online. All are welcome. Program to start Friday evening and run thru Saturday afternoon. We are a collection of about 300 churches working in covenant together. Though each conference has maintained its own distinct identity we all work together in Ministry with a shared and collaborative staff.

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Thank you so much for your generous Christmas gift. I will put it to great use. Thank you for your kind words and prayers. In appreciation, Pastor Jackie

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Thank you so much for the \$80
you gifted after the Christmas
season. I appreciate the
thoughts and prayers.
Blessings to you all.
Susan Allyn



DID YOU KNOW??

**54 PAIRS OF GLOVES & MITTENS
46 HATS
28 PAIRS OF UNDIES
21 PAIRS OF SOCKS**

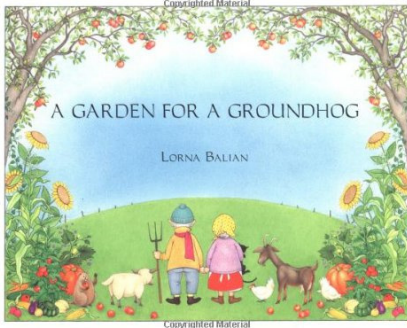
**WERE DONATED TO THE 2020 GIVING CHRISTMAS
TREE FOR WESTSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. A
GRATEFUL THANK YOU TO ALL THE GENEROUS
GIVERS!**



First Congregational United Church of Christ Church
Linaje Escogido Church

Thank you so much for your very generous gift you
gave for our students. I will be sure to get these items
to those students that need them most.

Your Truly, Westside Elementary Staff



Book Club will continue on February 10th with *A Garden for a Groundhog* by Lorna Balian. Jane Uzzell will have the book if you are interested.

How can we ever thank you? Your prayers, support, concern and questions on how Steve was doing, talking to us and so much more has helped me and our family more than a "Thank you" can cover.

All of the food—and it was so good— was a nourishment to our stomachs and our souls. From the sandwiches, salads, chips (let's be honest, the g'kids ate the chips), and bars helped us get through the visitation hours. The cookies shared after the funeral were delicious and appreciated by all of us. We all know that Steve loved his cookies and fellowship time, so this was another way to share his love.

We will also thank you by praying for you, too. We pray that you continue to be safe as we worship and visit until we can hug you physically. We pray that we continue to support each other, the church and our community. Steve loved each of you, just as he loved his faith and church. Even though he wasn't able to worship in person with you these last few months, he always asked how you were doing. Janell stayed with him while I came to church so that I got that nourishment spiritually, and he and Janell worshipped at home together.

Thank you for your love, support and prayers. With heartfelt appreciation and thanks, Jane Uzzell, Ben Uzzell and family, Janell Feenstra and family, and Emily Cropper and family



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



february

February 7

Communion: Ben Uzzell and Susan Surber

Ushers: Tom McConnell and Ed Lindsay

Greeters: Mike Synovec and Chuck Balsiger

Reader: Lori Williams

Leader: Ben Uzzell

Flowers: Garry and Suzan Podliska

February 14

Ushers: Terry Hamilton and Barb Koenig

Greeters: Rita Woodard and Susan Surber

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers: Gene and Darlene Korthals

February 17 Ash Wednesday

Ushers: Scott and Lori Williams

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Jane Uzzell

February 21

Ushers: Ben and Stacie Uzzell

Greeters: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Reader: Chuck Balsiger

Flowers:

February 28

Ushers: Bonnie Dewell and Cole Uzzell

Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Reader: Verletta Olson

Flowers:



March

March 7

Communion: Scott and Lori Williams

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Suzan Podliska

Reader: Ben Uzzell

Leader: Susan Allyn

Flowers: Scott and Lori Williams

March 14

Ushers: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Greeters: Verletta Olson and Terry Hamilton

Reader: Lori Williams

Flowers: Emily (Uzzell) Cropper

March 21

Ushers: Mike Synovec and Cole Uzzell

Greeters: Scott and Lori Williams

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers:

March 28

Ushers: Susan Surber and Evonne Burkink

Greeters: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Reader: Karen Allyn

Flowers: Palms

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

January

From 1/1/21 through 1/31/21

This does not include the deposit for 1-31



Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ 1,869.22
Poinsettias	\$ 13.00
Scholarship	\$ 500.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 18,566.33</u>
Subtotal	\$ 20,948.55
Salary	--\$ 7,496.00
Church Maintenance	—\$ 2,174.95
Office Expenses	—\$ 707.73
Renner's	—\$ 755.00
Substitute Organist	—\$ 70.00
Scholarship	----\$ 500.00
Insurance	—\$ 2,717.75
Funeral	—\$ 40.91
Kitchen Door Concrete	—\$ 4,370.00
<u>OCWM, Christmas Fund</u>	<u>----\$ 709.00</u>
Final Balance	\$ 1,407.21

\$5,000 was transferred to the general account from Madison County Bank to pay for the concrete at the kitchen door.

Linaje Escogido \$900.00 was deposited in Madison County Bank.

▶ February 2021

Sun **Mon** **Tue** **Wed** **Thu** **Fri** **Sat**

1 2 3 4 5 6

5:30 Girl
Scouts 10 Worship
Ministry

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

9 Sunday
School 5:30 Girl
Scouts 10 Book Club 1-3 FH
Delphians
10:15 Worship

14 15 16 17 18 19 20

9 Sunday
School 5:30 Girl
Scouts Ash
Wednesday
Services
7 Unity
Council 5:30 PM at
First Congo

21 22 23 24 25 26 27

Lent Week 1
9 Sunday
School 5:30 Girl
Scouts
10:15 Worship
Faith
Development

28

Lent Week 2
9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

▶ March 2021

Sun **Mon** **Tue** **Wed** **Thu** **Fri** **Sat**

1 2 3 4 5 6

5:30 Girl
Scouts 10 Worship
Ministry

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Lent Week 3
9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship 5:30 Girl
Scouts 10 Book Club 1-3 FH
Delphians

14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Lent Week 4
9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship 5:30 Girl
Scouts 7 Unity
Council

21 22 23 24 25 26 27

Lent Week 5
9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship 5:30 Girl
Scouts

28 29 30 31

Palm/Passion
9 Sunday
School
10:15 Worship