

First Congregational Messenger  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
1102 W. Norfolk Ave.  
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firstcongoucc@fastmail.com  
*Serving God with love and faith*



Since Pastor Jackie will be on vacation July 4, communion will be celebrated on July 11.

July 2021

Volume 5, Issue 81

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Thank you to Gene Korthals for setting up and cleaning up Fellowship Hall for Lowell Jenny's funeral. Lots of work and well done!

THANK  
*you.*



Pastor's  
Office Hours

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



Office  
Hours

Office Hours

Mon- Fri

8-12

## Mission

Given our church's work this spring, I've been thinking about the word 'mission'. Mission originates from the Latin *missio*, from *mittere*, "to send". According to the *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, by Donald K. McKim, 'mission' means "all that is done by the church and by Christians to serve God." This is a pretty broad meaning.

Those who study mission (missiology), think about the missionary nature and action of the Christian church. Deep within the meaning of the word is the church's awareness of God's command to preach the name of Christ to the whole world and practice what that name means (Acts 1:8). The command comes from the very character of God who we learn from Scripture to be mission-minded and loving.

**The English word 'mission' points to a God who "sends" God's people to proclaim the good news.**

Romans 10:15 "And how can they preach unless they are sent?" As it is written, *How beautiful are the feet of those who announce the good news.*" [Isaiah 52:7].

John 20:21 "Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you."

**God's love is always seeking and inviting all creation to God.**

Luke 15:3,4 Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn't he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it?"

John 12:32 "Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights in giving you the kingdom."

**God's own activity in the world is mission.**

When Jesus describes himself as "the gate of the sheep", he says:

**John 10:10** "The thief enters only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest."

*The UCC purpose statement (from the Gospel of Mathew) is: To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.* The church exists to increase love of God and neighbor. Mission is all our energy and action to that end.

*Peace, Pastor Jackie*

Resource: *Hand-book of Christian Theology*, D.W. Musser & J.L. Price, ed.

## Mission is Sharing Our Stuff



*Left: Choir enters worship at Bethlehem UMC, Kasumbalesa. Right: Hauling Chairs to Orphan Grain Train storage: Kailee, Ben, Gene, Jane, Grace, Reese, Pastor Alice, Micah. Not pictured: Stacie, Cole, Pastor Jackie.*

The church was blessed to have Rev. Alice Abiba Shomari (Pastor Alice) preach Sunday June 6. She also shared her conversion story and ministry, inviting the church to move out and share the good news with family, community and world.

In June, FCUCC donated 130 choir robes, some 80 children's chairs, and some 80 brown vinyl folding chairs to Bethlehem UMC and Emmanuel Pentecostal Churches in Kasumbalesa, Congo (D.R.C.), a small southern border town near Zambia. Pastor Alice partners with Orphan Grain Train to ship the mission's container.

Pastor Alice, husband Rev. Rodgers Chishiba, and family move this month from Osmond to serve UMC churches in Kansas.

## Mission is Friendship



In June, First Congregational and Linaje Escogido Churches worked together on a Saturday cleanup day. Over a dozen members of each church pulled weeds, swept, cleaned window wells, and dug a new drainage system near the kitchen door. Two weeks later both churches experienced loss and held funerals in the sanctuary. The grounds looked beautiful and welcoming for all who attended those services.



### **150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY - FREE SUMMER CONCERT**

**Sunday, August 22, 4PM-5PM**

On the church yard at  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
1102 W. Norfolk Avenue, Norfolk, NE

*Bring your lawn chair, enjoy an hour of great music by  
**'A TOUCH OF BRASS'***

*(Steven Uzzell memorial funds)*

In case of rain, concert will be in the church sanctuary.

## **Covid-19 Guidelines Update**

On June 13, 2021 Unity Council approved the recommendations proposed by Worship Team:

### **Worship to remain in sanctuary for now.**

**Masking** – Masking is a choice. Free masks will continue to be gifted to those who want one.

**Spacing & Distancing** Tape comes down, except near the pianist. In building and sanctuary use your discretion in distancing.

Keep passing the peace as is.

Children to remain with parents for now.

No sharing of objects; keep offering as is. If signing cards, a pen is available, or folk can carry their own pen (“like elementary school teachers have done forever!”, says Mike).

**Communion** continues as is for now except with real bread, served with gloved hand; and more trays with cups spaced more widely to allow folk to take cups from trays without touching others.

Ushers dismiss family units back to front on communion Sundays. Otherwise, folk can use their discretion at dismissal.

**Food/Beverage Service** – See *Fellowship Time* below.

**Data & Vaccines**– Pastor Jackie presented data updates from Nebraska and Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health websites and “Situational Reports” for leaders. Madison County has been in the Green Zone (Low/Stable) for 4 weeks in a row. 50% of Nebraskans have been vaccinated. Vaccinations have slowed down.

**Theological** - Christian principals remain: Do unto others, and care for the neighbor. We value protecting others and self.

**Timeframe** – Worship remains in the sanctuary for now. The team scheduled to meet September 1st at 10am to re-evaluate moving worship to Fellowship Hall.

**Fellowship Time** – Fellowship hour opened June 6. Volunteers are signed up for first 3 weekends in June to make coffee, set out juice and water. For Fellowship time after worship beverages in ceramic cups (to save \$ on paper), no food for a while. Cups need to go into dishwasher. Team will encourage people to rinse their own cup and set it on the dishwasher tray. We recommend 4-5 people at a table for distancing and not to leave someone ‘out’.

**Funerals** – See below.

**Funeral Guidelines Update.** There are fewer changes as these are larger gatherings:

**Masking** – We change the current wording from “request” masks to “encourage” masks. Masks will continue to be available for those who want one.

**Spacing** – Continue funeral guideline spacing and numbers. Funeral Home Ushers to encourage people to space as per the guidelines. For funerals, blue tape would help ushers.

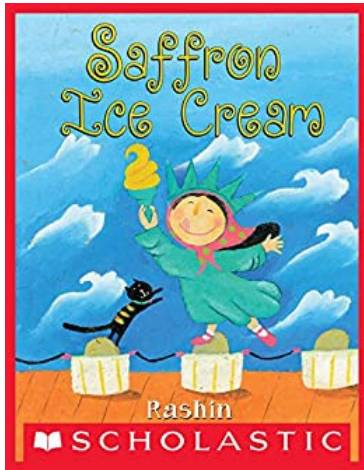
**No funeral meals in Fellowship Hall, but** families may use Fellowship Hall to gather and eat. They will be responsible for their own set up and clean up. They will need to arrange (independently) with Susan Allyn for key pick up and instruction to use the space. We encourage catering.

Worship Team to re-evaluate September 1 @ 10am.



### **Chamber of Commerce Ribbon-Cutting**

Wednesday, August 18 at 10AM - Chamber of Commerce AMBASSADORS (the ones with the red jackets) will be at First Congregational UCC to support our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and upcoming free summer concert. MaryBeth Renter, Member Relations called on the church early June; Pastor Jackie told her about the Touch of Brass free August concert, and they scheduled the visit! The concert is sponsored by Steve Uzzell memorial funds donated by the family. We'd love to have church members come for the ribbon cutting that morning!



Book Club will continue on July 14 with *Saffron Ice Cream* by R. Kheiriyan. Jane Uzzell will have the book if you are interested.

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. The church buys \$1000 of gift cards for \$970, so we get \$30 for the budget. 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.**

**JULY**  
Birthdays & Anniversaries



**Birthdays**

- 6th Verletta Olson
- 10th Evonne Burkink
- 12th Merle Rix
- 17th Chuck Balsiger
- 18th Terry Hamilton
- 19th Kellen Rossman
- 28th Randy Neuharth
- 30th Pat Jenny

**Anniversaries**

- 5th Tom and Sandy McConnell
- 15th Erik and Katie Gamerl

## Coffee

July 4

July 18



**July 4**

**Ushers:** Bonnie Dewell

**Greeters:** Chuck Balsiger

**Reader:** Tom McConnell

**Flowers:**

**July 11**

**Communion:** Evonne Burkink and Charlene Fosdick

**Ushers:** Susan Surber and Suzan Podliska

**Greeters:** Ben and Stacie Uzzell

**Reader:** Reese Uzzell

**Leader:** Susan Allyn

**Flowers:** Ginge Dudley

**July 18**

**Ushers:**

**Greeters:** Jane Uzzell and Rita Woodard

**Reader:** Chuck Balsiger

**Flowers:** Ed Lindsay

**July 25**

**Ushers:** Ed Lindsay and Tom McConnell

**Greeters:** Randy and Kay Neuharth

**Reader:** Henry Gamerl

**Flowers:**

July 11

July 25



# August

**August 1**

**Communion:** Ben Uzzell and Tom McConnell

**Ushers:** Verletta Olson and Evonne Burkink

**Greeters:** Mike Synovec and Tom McConnell

**Leader:** Randy Neuharth

**Reader:** Chuck Balsiger

**Flowers:** Garry and Suzan Podliska

**August 8**

**Ushers:** Randy and Kay Nueharth

**Greeters:** Susan Surber and Suzan Podliska

**Reader:** Ben Uzzell

**Flowers:**

**August 15**

**Ushers:** Susan Surber and Suzan Podliska

**Greeters:** Scott and Lori Williams

**Reader:** Kay Neuharth

**Flowers:** Susan Surber

**August 22**

**Ushers:** Ben and Stacie Uzzell

**Greeters:** Verletta Olson and Jane Uzzell

**Reader:** Reese Uzzell

**Flowers:** Karen Allyn

**August 29**

**Ushers:** Rita Woodard and Mike Synovec

**Greeters:** Sue Surber and Barb Koenig

**Reader:** Verletta Olson

**Flowers:**

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



# June

From 6/1/21 through 6/30/21



TREASURER'S REPORT

## Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ 171.14
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 8,924.63</u>
Subtotal	\$ 9,095.77
Salary	--\$ 6,745.08
Church Maintenance	—\$ 1,308.65
Office Expenses	—\$ 619.74
Faith Development	—\$ 20.23
Worship Ministry	—\$ 53.19
Insurance	—\$ 2,717.75
Substitute Pastor	—\$ 399.75
Substitute Organist	—\$ 210.00
Renner's	—\$ 755.00
<u>Conference OCWM</u>	<u>—\$ 1,224.00</u>
<b>Final Balance</b>	<b>—\$ 4,957.62</b>

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

# ▶ July 2021

**Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat**

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1      2      3

Pastor Jackie on vacation      Pastor Jackie on vacation      Pastor Jackie on vacation

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4      5      6      7      8      9      10

10:15 Worship  
Pastor Jackie on vacation

**OFFICE  
CLOSED**  
Pastor Jackie on vacation

Pastor Jackie on vacation

10 Worship  
Ministry

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11      12      13      14      15      16      17

10:15 Worship  
Unity Council

10 Book Club

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18      19      20      21      22      23      24

10:15 Worship

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25      26      27      28      29      30      31

10:15 Worship

# ▶ August 2021

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

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1            2            3            4            5            6            7

10:15 Worship

10 Worship  
Ministry

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8            9            10            11            12            13            14

10:15 Worship

10 Book Club    NPS begins

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15            16            17            18            19            20            21

10:15 Worship

10 Chamber  
Visit

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22            23            24            25            26            27            28

10:15 Worship

4 PM Touch of  
Brass

NECC  
begins

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29            30            31

10:15 Worship