

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



May 2022

Volume 5, Issue 91

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class of
20
22

let's celebrate
COLE UZZELL'S
graduation
on 05.14 from
4pm-6pm
First Congregation
UCC--1102 W
Norfolk Ave

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



Office Hours
 Monday-Friday
 8-12

Interfaith



"I've always said that Tri-Faith isn't as much for me as it is for my grandchildren, because they won't know any different. My grandchildren will grow up as members of Temple Israel on the Tri-Faith Commons with Christian and Muslim neighbors. They'll work in the garden together, play together on the playground, and attend one another's place of worship. Tri-Faith is a legacy for our grandchildren."

-- Vic Gutman, President, Gutman & Associates, Omaha

I love getting to know neighbors of other faiths. Inter-religious relationships are one of God's special callings in our time. While the Church has always lived among a rich diversity of different faiths, in our global world today it is more visible than ever.

The National Council of Churches publishes a brochure called "Getting to Know Neighbors of Other Faiths". It highlights eight theological reasons why Christians would value people of other faiths. Topics include:

- God and human community
- Person and work of Christ
- Loving God and neighbor
- Peacemakers
- Christian witness and reconciliation with others
- Hospitality to strangers
- Spirit of God and human hope
- Reconciliation with God

As a Christian and Nebraskan, I rejoice that the *Tri-Faith Initiative campus* exists in Omaha! Go to trifaith.org to learn more. Not only can you visit, but you can take part in some of their online programs. Today I took part in a study they call, "Making the Familiar Strange: The Story of Sacrifice" with UNO Professor and Islamic Institute Member, Dr. Ramazan Kilinc.

The purpose of the series is to look at Scripture together from the Abrahamic tradition; where the *Bible, Torah, and Koran* share stories of Abraham. The one-hour lunchtime zoom is a respectful sharing of perspectives and consideration of new perspectives. The goal is not to agree or persuade.

Today we looked at the story of sacrifice concerning Abraham. Compared to Genesis 22, there are few details in *The Koran* 37:99-111. We don't even know which son is to be sacrificed (Isaac or Ishmael). There are many differences in the Muslim version. In all three traditions, the story is disturbing, and raises ethical questions. Professor Kilinc graciously asked participants to share their understanding, then shared the two Islamic versions. He doesn't advocate a preferred interpretation, but asks as a political scientist, why one of these versions is promoted and the other of these is pushed aside. You don't have to be a Bible scholar or a pastor to join these sessions. Ask me how you can subscribe to Tri-Faith announcements, and take part in some unique opportunities to witness, love and serve "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Peace, *Pastor Jackie*



Pastor's Time Away – Pastor Jackie will be on vacation June 1 through June 14, returning to the office June 15. Guest Preacher/s and pastoral emergency coverage to be announced.



The Easter Egg Hunt Returns after two years of Covid-19 precautions. Thanks to all who participated in the Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday April 2nd. We placed 1000 eggs and welcomed 32 young children plus their families on a beautiful sunny day! Between the churchyard banner and going door to door with flyers, we got the word out. Volunteers included Darlene & Gene, Reese, Grace, Barb, Kay, and Pastor Jackie.



A Celebration of Life for Janet Lane

will be Saturday, May 7 @ 2:00 p.m. with a light reception to follow. Janet died at her home in Arkansas on 12/20/21. She had been in hospice.



Save the Date

Love Your Neighbor Blood Drive

Wednesday, July 13, Noon to 6 p.m.

@ First Congregational UCC

A joint American Red Cross drive with the Seventh Day Adventist Church (Pastor Sandro Sandoval) and First Congregational Churches.



More details to come this summer.



Congo Mission & Orphan Grain Train Shipment

Last June 2021, FCUCC donated 130 choir robes, some 80 children's chairs, and some 80 brown vinyl folding chairs and chair cart to Bethlehem UMC and Emmanuel Pentecostal Churches in Kasumbalesa, Congo (D.R.C.), a small southern border town near Zambia. Pastor Alice Shomari partners with Orphan Grain Train to ship the mission's containers.



Pastor Alice (Left) shares update with Pastor Jackie about the shipment of donations that will go to the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.).

Global supply chain and shipment problems caused delays last fall and this winter. The OGT hopes to ship the container this Spring. To save a costly border fee, Pastor Alice hopes they can deliver the container on the Zambia side of the border, so the churches can send a truck to pick up the donations. Please pray that the shipment issue is resolved.

About seven churches donated to fill this container. Pastor Alice said that the churches are excited to receive the chairs and choir robes. Right now, worshippers carry their own chairs to church, and carry them back home. One person said of our church, "Even the children helped!" They liked the pictures of the youth and children helping.

Go to *Women of Diverse Confessions* new website: <https://www.womenodc.org> to see pictures from our church, churches who will receive the donations, and to learn more about the mission. Pastor Alice will continue to update the pictures, so when the congregation receives the items, we will be able to see the robes and chairs in use! On the website, there is a Go Fund Me link if you wish to donate to the water project. Pastor Alice Shomari and her husband now serve UMC churches in Kansas.

Pastor Jackie said, "At a time when we thought we had little to give, we discovered that we had an abundance to give. We didn't even know that we had 150 choir robes."

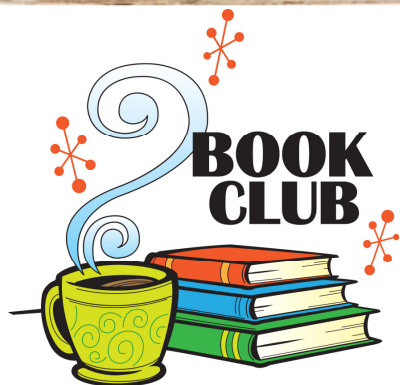


ANIMAL SHELTER OF NORTHEAST NEBRASKA

Youth are collecting donations now through May 22, 2022.



- NON-CLUMPING cat litter
- Purina One dry dog food
- Purina One dry cat food
- Purina One dry kitten food
- Fancy Feast canned KITTEN food
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Kleenex
- 55 gallon (heavy duty) trash bags
- Dryer sheets
- Liquid laundry detergent
- Kong toys (large and extra large)
- Nyla-bones - medium/large size
- Copy paper



Book Club will meet May 11. *Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs* by Tomie dePaola. The books can be found in the office or you can contact Jane Uzzell.



MAY
Birthdays & Anniversaries

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.

Birthdays

- 15th Cole Williams
- 17th Deanna Alexander
- 23rd Reese Uzzell
- 25th Grace Uzzell
- 30th Megan Williams
- 31st Darlene Korthals

Anniversary

- 26th Garry and Suzan Podliska



May 1 Graduation Celebrated

Communion: Evonne Burkink and Susan Surber

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Greeters: Chuck Balsiger and Mike Synovec

Reader: Verletta Olson

Leader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers:

May 8 Mother's Day

Ushers: Gene and Darlene Korthals

Greeters: Ed Lindsay and Tom McConnell

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers: Karen Allyn

May 15

Ushers: Bonnie Dewell and Charlene Fosdick

Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Reader: Henry Gamerl

Flowers: Jane Uzzell

May 22

Ushers: Ben and Stacie Uzzell

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Tom McConnell

Flowers: Garry and Suzan Podliska

May 29 Memorial Weekend

Ushers: Verletta Olson and Barb Koenig

Greeters: Susan Surber and Rita Woodard

Reader: Randy Neuharth

Flowers: Deanna Alexander

June 5

Communion: Scott and Lori Williams

Ushers: Jane Uzzell and Evonne Burkink

Greeters: Verletta Olson and Barb Koenig

Reader: Reese Uzzell

Leader: Ben Uzzell

Flowers: Jane Uzzell

June 12

Ushers: Scott and Lori Williams

Greeters: Evonne Burkink and Suzan Podliska

Reader: Kay Neuharth

Flowers: Bonnie Dewell

June 19

Ushers: Susan Surber and Mike Synovec

Greeters: Jane Uzzell and Ed Lindsay

Reader: Lori Williams

Flowers: Scott and Lori Williams

June 26

Ushers: Suzan Podliska and Rita Woodard

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Jane Uzzell

Flowers: Susan Allyn

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

April

From 4/1/22 through 4/30/22

Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ 613.50
Lilies	\$ 45.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 11,207.41</u>
Subtotal	\$ 10,638.91
Salary	--\$ 6,848.35
Church Maintenance	—\$ 2,720.40
Office Expenses	—\$ 957.80
Substitute Organist	—\$ 210.00
Worship Ministry	—\$ 20.00
Lilies	—\$ 90.00
Renner's	—\$ 755.00
<u>OCWM, OGHS, Ukraine</u>	<u>—\$ 714.00</u>
Final Balance	—\$ 1,676.64



TREASURER'S REPORT

▶ May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 AM Sunday School 10:15 Worship Graduation Celebrated Renewed Hope 4-8 FH	GS 6:30 FH	GS 5:30	10 Worship Ministry			Janet Lane Memorial 2 PM
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9 AM Sunday School 10:15 Worship Teachers Celebrated	GS 5:30 GS 6:30 FH	GS 5:30	10 Book Club		Delphians 12-3 FH	Cole Uzzell graduation party Fellowship Hall 4-6 PM
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10:15 Worship		GS 5:30			Sue out of office	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
10:15 Worship Unity Council following worship	GS 5:30 GS 6:30 FH	GS 5:30				
29	30	31				
10:15 Worship	OFFICE CLOSED					

▶ June 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 GS 6:30 FH Pastor on vacation	2 Pastor on vacation	3 Pastor on vacation	4 Pastor on vacation
5 10:15 Worship Pastor on vacation	6 Pastor on vacation	7 Pastor on vacation	8 Pastor on vacation	9 Pastor on vacation	10 Pastor on vacation	11 Pastor on vacation
12 10:15 Worship Pastor on vacation	13 Pastor on vacation	14 Pastor on vacation	15	16 Food Pantry	17 Food Pantry	18
19 10:15 Worship	20 Food Pantry	21 Food Pantry	22 Food Pantry	23 Food Pantry	24 Food Pantry	25
26 10:15 Worship	27 Food Pantry Sue on vacation	28 Food Pantry Sue on vacation	29 Food Pantry Sue on vacation	30 Food Pantry Sue on vacation		