

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

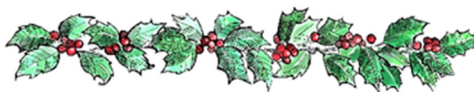


November 2021

Volume 5, Issue 85

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Daylight Savings Time
ends November 7.
Please remember to
reset your clocks and
fall back one hour.



Hanging of the Greens will be November 28th, immediately after worship.

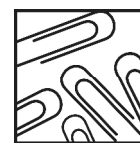


Pastor's
Office Hours

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

MAZE



When I visited my hometown, one of the highlights of the trip was going through my first corn maze. Each year, the family owners of 'The Red Shed' put on a fall festival. The Red Shed is a country gift shop, restaurant, and bakery surrounded by cornfields a few miles out of town.

The fall event is a hit with children who enjoy pumpkins, an old-fashioned apple cider press, a heavy hand-crank corn sheller, free hayrides, a bounce house, and the corn maze.

That sunny afternoon, my 7-year-old nephew, Cam, had tried the maze twice with his grandpa, so I asked him if he would take me through. He eagerly agreed, and off we ran to the maze located behind the restaurant.

Narrow paths cut through rows of tall corn in an area about the size of our church property in Norfolk (measuring from the neighbors' picket fence to 9th Street, and from Norfolk Avenue to the end of our parking lot). To glimpse the clear blue sky, I had to look straight up. Otherwise, all I could see were rows of sturdy stalks, leafy blades, and countless ears of corn.

Cam advanced through the paths of the maze at a quick pace, touching the large narrow leaves as he went, stepping over a few random stalks that were down. We must have made twenty to thirty turns, but my maze guide never missed a beat. Mid-way through he stopped to ponder two directions, one was a dead-end, the other, a more promising direction. The boy chose the way forward even though we couldn't see where the path would lead.

When we reached the end of the confusing network of leafy green twists, turns and tunnels, I was suddenly filled with wonder thinking about my small guide. How could this child be so confident after only experiencing this maze twice? How did this tyke know where and when to turn?

In this often-bewildering time of twists, turns and tunnels through the uncertainty of a puzzling pandemic and economy, I wonder if God is like a pint-sized maze guide confidently leading us through, inviting us to enjoy up-close all the light and growth that surround us. When we cannot see very far into the future, when the way is not clear, know that God is able, willing (and excited) to guide us through.

Peace, Pastor Jackie

Worship Team Update

On October 13, the Worship Committee made small changes to their recommended guidelines. Though numbers of new Covid cases have continued to drop since September, the team decided to stay in the sanctuary for worship through Advent and Christmas season, and reevaluate at the January 12, 2022 meeting as to when we might move to FH to worship. The situation remains fluid.

Caring for Others

That we may live out our values of caring, compassion, and welcome, we ask guests, friends, and members to maintain these healthy practices:

Masks encouraged. Free masks are available to those who want one.

Social distancing - use your discretion.

Ask children to remain with parents or guardian (to be re-evaluated in January).

No passing of offering trays (there will be an offering basket at the main sanctuary exit).

Gatherings in Fellowship Hall, but no food sharing for a while. Fellowship time may include cookies (bagged so people can take them to go). Styrofoam cups are fine. Ceramic cups need to go into the dishwasher.

We encourage those who are sick or at risk to stay home.

Greeters will:

- Hold door open as a sign of welcome.
- Offer welcome packets to new guests.

Ushers will:

- Pass out bulletins
- On Communion Sundays, dismiss by family units, starting with back pews

FELLOWSHIP TIME - HOSTS NEEDED



There is a need for more people to sign-up to make coffee and clean up on Sundays. Please glance at the sign-up sheet and add your name to host on a Sunday. You are not required to bring cookies or to be a fancy coffee barista

☐ Just need folk to make & serve coffee, juice and water. Thanks for your consideration!

THE FIRST THANKSGIVING (from: *kids.nationalgeographic.com/history*)



Native Americans and early settlers gave thanks together with this historic feast. On the fourth Thursday of November, people in the United States celebrate Thanksgiving, a national holiday honoring the early settlers and Native Americans who came together to have a historic harvest feast.

NATIVE AMERICANS

Long before settlers came to the East Coast of the United States, the area was inhabited by many Native American tribes. The area surrounding the site of the first Thanksgiving, now known as southeastern Massachusetts and eastern Rhode Island, had been the home of the Wampanoag people for over 12,000 years, and had been visited by other European settlers before the arrival of the *Mayflower* in 1620. The native people knew the land well and had fished, hunted, and harvested for thousands of generations.

THE SETTLERS

The people who comprised the Plymouth Colony were a group of English Protestants called Puritans who wanted to break away from the Church of England. These "separatists" initially moved to Holland. But after 12 years of financial problems, they received funding from English merchants to sail across the Atlantic Ocean in 1620 to settle in a "New World." Carrying 101 men, women, and children, the *Mayflower* traveled the ocean for 66 days and was supposed to land where New York City is now located. But windy conditions forced the group to cut their trip short and settle at what is now Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

SETTLING AND EXPLORING

As the Puritans prepared for winter, they gathered anything they could find, including Wampanoag supplies. One day, Samoset, a leader of the Abenaki people, and Tisquantum (better known as Squanto) visited the settlers. Squanto was a Wampanoag who had experience with other settlers and knew English. Squanto helped the settlers grow corn and use fish to fertilize their fields. After several meetings, a formal agreement was made between the settlers and the native people, and in March 1621, they joined together to protect each other from other tribes.

THE CELEBRATION

One day that fall, four settlers were sent to hunt for food for a harvest celebration. The Wampanoag heard gunshots and alerted their leader, Massasoit, who thought the English might be preparing for war. Massasoit visited the English settlement with 90 of his men to see if the war rumor was true. Soon after their visit, the Native Americans realized that the English were only hunting for the harvest celebration. Massasoit sent some of his own men to hunt deer for the feast and for three days, the English and native men, women, and children ate together. The meal consisted of deer, corn, shellfish, and roasted meat. They played ball games, sang, and danced. Although prayers and thanks were probably offered at the 1621 harvest gathering, the first recorded religious Thanksgiving Day in Plymouth happened two years later in 1623. On this occasion, the colonists gave thanks to God for rain after a two-month drought.

Pack Away Hunger – October 3 –

Thanks to our 10 team members who, along with two other groups, packaged more than 7700 meal packs. At 6 servings per pack, we provided more than 46,000 meals! Team members include (back to front/left to right): Kailee, Reese, Brian, Jane, Darlene, Micah, Susan, Pastor Jackie, Skylar, and Grace.

Mercy Meals has a newly renovated facility near the silos on Madison Street.



October Food Drive - Thank you, Congregation, for your generous donations to the Community Food Pantry, and to Reese, Grace, and Darlene for their help in gathering and delivering the food. We appreciate Aileen Johnson (pictured center) for giving us a tour of the food pantry on October 25th.





UPCOMING Cook & Deliver - November 7 – Youth are planning to cook a meal in our church kitchen to deliver to Rescue Mission. During this Covid-19 season, we won't stay for devotions and serving of the meal.



We welcomed new members

Jeanne Rix and Brian Seier (with baptism) October 19. Jeanne has been a long-time friend of the church. Brian returned to his hometown last year.



It is really our great pleasure to have Brian and Jeanne with us. We are happy to get the opportunity to worship, pray and serve God together.

We pray that their faith and love for God increases every day!



Thanksgiving Eve Service

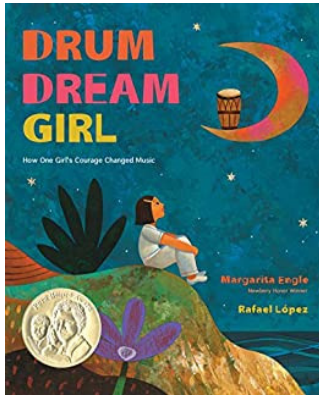
Wednesday, November 24, 6:30 PM
at First Presbyterian Church, 104 South 10th St.
A joint service of the First Presbyterian, Trinity Episcopal,
and First Congregational UCC Churches

Heritage Sunday



Heritage Sunday was October 24. Sixteen members who have belonged to First Congregational UCC for 50 years or more were recognized during the service with red carnations. We also celebrated the four major roots of the United Church of Christ: Congregationalist, Christian Connection, German Reformed, and German Evangelical. Present that Sunday were: Merle Rix, Bonnie Dewell, Rita Woodard, Pat Jenny, Jeff and Evonne Burkink and Verletta Olson. Thanks for so many years of service to the church!





Book Club will continue on November 10 with *Drum Dream Girl* by Margarita Engle. Jane Uzzell will have the book if you are interested.



Giveaway-13 metal framed house window screens in various sizes. Talk to Mike Synovec or call 402-379-4042.

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.

NOVEMBER



Birthdays

- 4th Susan Surber
- 19th Kay Neuharth
- 22nd Ed Lindsay

Anniversary

- 14th Ron and Virginia Barritt
- 25th Merle and Jeanne Rix





November

November 7

Communion: Scott and Lori Williams
Ushers: Rita Woodard and Barb Koenig
Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger
Reader: Verletta Olson
Leader: Jane Uzzell
Flowers:

November 14

Ushers: Gene and Darlene Korthals
Greeters: Susan Surber and Rita Woodard
Reader: Lori Williams
Flowers: Beth Janelle Rhoades

November 21

Ushers: Evonne Burkink and Verletta Olson
Greeters: Tom McConnell and Mike Synovec
Reader: Jane Uzzell
Flowers: Scott and Lori Williams

November 28 **First Advent**

Ushers: Bonnie Dewell and Suzan Podliska
Greeters: Gene and Darlene Korthals
Reader: Scott Williams
Flowers:

December



December 5

Communion: Evonne Burkink and Verletta Olson
Ushers: Ed Lindsay and Tom McConnell
Greeters: Jane and Reese Uzzell
Reader: Henry Gamerl
Leader: Ben Uzzell
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 12

Ushers: Susan Surber and Rita Woodard
Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger
Reader: Reese Uzzell
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 19

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth
Greeters: Barb Koenig and Evonne Burkink
Reader: Chuck Balsiger
Flowers: Poinsettias

December 24

Christmas Eve

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

December 26

Ushers: Mike Synovec and Tom McConnell
Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Suzan Podliska
Reader: Lori Williams
Flowers: Poinsettias

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

October

From 10/1/21 through 10/31/21

This does not include the deposit for 10/31.



Checking account information

Beginning balance	\$ 1,035.82
Poinsettias	\$ 104.00
<u>Weekly deposits</u>	<u>\$ 9,895.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 11,034.82
Salary	--\$ 7,114.49
Church Maintenance	—\$ 1,244.77
Office Expenses	—\$ 431.78
Worship Ministry	—\$ 17.25
Substitute Organist	—\$ 70.00
Pastor Continuing Education	—\$ 70.00
Worker's Comp Insurance	—\$ 985.00
<u>Renner's</u>	<u>—\$ 755.00</u>
Final Balance	\$ 346.53

▶ November 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 GS 5:30	3 10 Worship Ministry	4	5	6
7 Daylight Savings Time ends 9 AM Sunday School 10:15 Worship	8	9 GS 5:30	10 10 Book Club	11	12	13
14 9 AM Sunday School 10:15 Worship	15 GS 6:30 Sue vacation	16 GS 5:30	17	18 Jackie in Lincoln for training	19	20
21 9 AM Sunday School 10:15 Worship	22 Sue vacation	23 GS 5:30 Sue vacation	24 Thanksgiving Eve service 6:30 PM at First Presbyterian Sue vacation	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 Family Rental Fellowship Hall
28 10:15 Worship	29 GS 6:30	30				
Hanging of the Greens						

▶ December 2021

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 2 3 4

10 Worship
Ministry

5 6 7 8 9 10 11

9 AM Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 5:30

10 Book Club

12 13 14 15 16 17 18

9 AM Sunday
School
10:15 Worship
Church
program

GS 5:30

GS 5:30

19 20 21 22 23 24 25

9 AM Sunday
School
10:15 Worship

GS 5:30

**OFFICE
CLOSED**

26 27 28 29 30 31

10:15 Worship

GS 5:30

GS 5:30

**OFFICE
CLOSED**

Sue vacation

Sue vacation

Sue vacation

Sue vacation