

Congregational Comments

Vol. 21 No 4: April 2016

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Office Hours: Mon. –Thursday, 8:00-4:30

Worship and Sunday School Times

9:00 am - Traditional Worship Service

9:15-10:15 am Sunday School

10:00 am - Fellowship Hour

11:00 am - Contemporary Worship
Service

11:15-11:40 am Sunday School



*First Congregational
United Church of
Christ
"A united and
uniting church"*

Our Mission is to worship God,
Welcome all who seek God, and
Express our faith in our actions.



Pastor Dave Taylor

FROM THE PASTOR

BUILDING ON
STRENGTH

We have something special here at First Congregational UCC, don't we?!" And when you have something special, you take extra good care of it. Several years ago, church management experts shifted their approach, advising congregations to stop focusing so much time and energy on their weaknesses and instead to identify their strengths and build on those.

One of our great strengths is the loving, compassionate spirit of our members and regular visitors. So how do we build on that vital strength? I want to suggest five ways:

1. **PRAY: Make a habit each day to remember those on our prayer chain, our staff, our congregation and our ministry together.** Ask God to fill all with healing, peace, strength. Or simply be still and hold everyone in the Light of God's grace. You are invited to join our Bible Study on Prayer as we explore "how we pray" and "what happens when we pray" and more. Contact Pastor Dave for more information.

2. **NOTICE: Look around on Sunday morning. Who's been missing in action for a while?** Give 'em a call, send an email letting them know they are missed, asking if they are o.k. Don't leave it to staff; when a person hears from members and friends, it means a great deal.

3. **RISK: Talk with people, even if you aren't sure they are newcomers.**

Invite them to come join you for the fellowship hour after worship, introduce them to others. People are rarely offended by someone asking their name and if they are new (even if they are not), but are more likely to be offended by no one speaking to them in the sanctuary or fellowship hall! Want to feel more "plugged in?" Take a risk: stay for refreshments, talk to people, come for a program, volunteer.

4. **ASK: If you or a loved one have a need, are facing surgery or other procedures – whatever may be weighing heavily on you at present, let staff and other members know rather than as-**

suming people will somehow hear about it. We all want to support you.

5. **LOVE: When you have a concern, go to the appropriate person and speak from a place of love.** When you are grateful for the efforts of other members or staff, let them know. To truly love another person, a group, a congregation, is to understand that perfection is neither a helpful goal nor a reasonable expectation. At the end of the day what we will cherish is how well we loved and were loved, whether we walked in grace with one another. We really do have something special here. Let's build on it.

We invite you to join us for worship at First Congregational United Church of Christ on Sundays at 9:00AM for our Traditional Service and Sunday School for children and **11:00AM** for our Contemporary Service. At **10:00 AM** we have creative adult Bible Study opportunities. Also at **10:00 AM** you can enjoy renewing or making new friendships while visiting over delicious refreshments in Fellowship Hall.

Come join us in the refreshing experience of worship as we learn God's truth and love for our lives and as we are called to that gift with others. Have a great spring!!

In Christ's Spirit,

Pastor Dave

Our Sympathy and love for the family of Carol Ruehrup who passed from this life to life eternal in Jesus Christ. Carol was Robert Ruehrup's mother. We remember Robert in our prayers and compassion.

A BIG THANK YOU

April 6th is our Celebration Banquet as another LOGOS season of learning and fun draws to an end.

We THANK all our LOGOS teachers, Rec. leaders, worship leaders, kitchen crew, ministry members and helpers for helping our students learn more about their faith and a job- WELL DONE! We also want say to our families, parents, grandparents and students - THANK YOU for making faith a priority in your life and life of your children and youth.

Our thanks to all of you, church family, for making faith education a vital priority and for remembering our LOGOS and Christian Education programs in your prayers and through your caring support of time, talents and money.

PLAYMATES NEWS

Playmates Open House: You are invited to a Playmates Open House during Fellowship Hour between services on April 3rd! Playmates has been a part of First Congregational for 48 years and during that time many young lives have been touched in a loving Christian environment . Please join the Playmates teachers, Melanie Brown, Allie Russell, and Alfreda Tribout, for a tour of the redecorated classrooms. The teachers will be available to discuss their classroom programs and answer questions. We look forward to sharing the Playmates program with you. See you on April 3rd!



Photo by Clarence Elliott

SILVER TRAYS

HELP!

The church owns 12 silver trays. There are only 4 in the kitchen cabinet. If you have access to the missing trays, please return them to the kitchen. Thank you.

REMEMBER

Church property can not be removed from the church for personal use. If church property is needed for church related activities, it must be checked out.



CHURCH GOALS FOR 2016

It has been Pastor Dave and Church President Marsha Mower's desire to establish goals for our church for 2016.

After much discussion in the Administration Ministry and in Church Council three goals have been approved. These goals are stated below:

1. Review our organization structure to better align with other United Church of Christ churches of our size and improve the staffing and effectiveness of our ministries.
2. Continue to expand and improve fellowship activities within our church to cause more socialization and comradery between attendees of both services, age groups, and those who lead our ministries.
3. Increase attendance to our church offerings including Sunday services, social gatherings, bible studies, and youth and children activities to share God's word with as many of our friends, neighbors, and relatives as possible

These goals are intended for us to reflect on how we are aligned with other small UCC churches along with staffing ministries. We also want to encourage more fellowship activities and develop opportunities to increase our attendance.

Look for more discussions in church services, ministry meetings, and in church news.

Welcome to Worship

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

When donating for a memorial, if you would write on check or on the envelop if it is for a special fund. It would help greatly.

Betty Wheatley



**I see plenty of empty seats.
Should you be in church filling them?**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
3 Playmates Church Open House	4	5 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	6 4:45-7:15 Final
10 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contempo- rary Service	11 5:00 Admin 7:00 Property	12 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	13 7:00 Adu
17 LEGOs Party— Children's	18 7:00 Church Council	19 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	20 7:00 Adu
24 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contempo- rary Service	22	26 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	27 7:00 Adu
			

Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1	2	
5 LOGOS	7 5-7:00 Playmates Open House 5:45 First Ringers	8 6:00 MCYP	9 9-2:00 Card Mak- ing in Choir Room
Choir	14 5:45 First Ringers	15 6:00 MCYP	16 Fellowship Hall in use
Choir	21 1:15 Book Club 5:45 First Ringers	22 6:00 MCYP	23 Fuster Wedding
Choir	28 5:45 First Ringers	29 6:00 MCYP	30
APRIL			



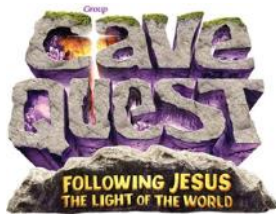
Cheerful Givers

JANUARY 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Jan 16</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$18,431.00	\$18,431.00
Budget Expense	\$17,971.56	\$17,971.56
Income	\$20,068.50	\$20,068.50
Expenses	\$13,562.52	\$13,562.52

FEBRUARY 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Feb 16</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$18,431.00	\$36,862.00
Budget Expense	\$17,971.56	\$35,943.12
Income	\$15,206.50	\$35,275.00
Expenses	\$17,176.96	\$30,739.48



SAVE THE DATES for VBS 2016 at First Church! It is time to start thinking and praying about your involvement in this year's VBS program. It promises to be another action-packed, fun-filled week. Plans are taking shape, but we are still looking for YOU to help us make it another successful year. Serving as director again this year is Marsha Mower. We have a few people that have already committed to join us, but will need lots of additional help to make this a wonderful experience for all involved. As we have the past few years, we want to make this a church-wide endeavor, involving as many people and ministries as possible. We are committed to reaching out to children in our church family and the community. So, don't miss out on this opportunity to be involved!

Our theme is *Cave Quest – FOLLOWING JESUS – THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD*. We will meet Sal, Mawtha, Radar, Olivia and Ray as they help us with our daily Bible Point, Story and Key Verse. We will have an over-the-top underground adventure that will ground kids (and adults) in the rock-solid foundation of God's love, a love that takes us through life's dark times. The dates are Sunday, July 24 – Thursday, July 28 from 6:00-8:30, with the preschool children having the option of leaving at 8:05 and dinner available for the volunteers at 5:15.

Areas of need include: Adult Leaders and Assistants for Deep Bible Quests, KidVid Cinema, Imagination Station, Cavern Cafe, Spelunker Sports & Games, Spotlight VBS (videographer/photographer), Sing & Play Rock (opening), Cave Quest Closing and Tad's Preschool Pool; Crew Leaders and Assistants to shuttle the children through the events each evening; Registration; Decorations; possibly Child Care; Volunteer/Staff Meals and sound/digital projection tech. We will need help with set-up before and take-down after. Those children who complete 6th grade this school year are invited to join us as Assistant Crew Leaders. We also have "staff spots" for mature and responsible Jr/Sr High youth to assist in the various areas.

Please let us know as soon as possible where you will help. THANKS! Marsha Mower

CHILDREN'S NEWS!



On Sunday, April 17th at 10:00 we will have a LEGO's Party! Please bring any LEGO creations you have built and display them for the congregation to see.

We will provide LEGO'S to build with and we'll have prize ribbons for you to win! Join us for the LEGO's fun!

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR AND VISIT MEMBERS WHO ARE IN NURSING HOMES

Primrose Retirement Community

Claude Young—Room 228

Lois Shelton—Room 132

Imboden Gardens

Harriette Horn—Room120

Keystone

Carolyn Jones—Room 216

Vonderlieth Living Center, Mt. Pulaski, IL

Alice Roach

Fair Havens Christian Home

Al Wilson—Room 425

Evergreen Place

Mary Lou Phipps— Room 333



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Babies and Mothers in Need

Seniors from our Youth Group and the Youth Group in Moweaqua are going on a week-long mission trip to Daytona, Florida. The main mission of this trip is to provide donations of baby clothes, baby blankets, and other items that a mother may need for a new baby.

After arriving in Florida, the seniors will use any monetary donations to purchase bulkier items (diapers, baby food, and formula) that would take up too much space on the long trip.

The seniors on this trip have fond memories of their mission trip to Daytona two years ago and the community is dear to their hearts. While in Daytona they will make stops at the UCP center and other places that they previously served so they can again visit and share some Love with a community in need.

Please consider donating to this worthy cause. You may give your donations to Joe Moretti, Malone Moretti, Chuck Zweck, or the Church office.

Thank you for your support of such an important mission!



God bless you on your birthday and each day the whole year through. May all His blessings bring you joy in everything you do.

1. Norma Jean Lingenfelter
4. Michael Koyak
Elizabeth Scherer
5. Kim Tsuda
Lois Hofstetter
7. Jeanette Flenner
9. Paige Tsuda
14. Betty Henry
16. Janiece Traughber
17. Sandi Pleasants
Bruce Whitney
Katie Hammon
18. Brittany Kappler
19. Joe Moretti
David Taylor
23. David Gant
25. Megan Hartman
26. Kristin Hargrove
28. Mark Bunselmeyer
29. Logan Moster
30. Kay Janvrin

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:

And may the many blessings that have come from God above fill your hearts with all the joys of His enduring love. Happy Anniversary!

15. Patrick & Margie Malone
16. Roger & Melinda Redman
19. Eugene & Nellie Brookhouzen
20. Jeffrey & Connie Mockaitis
27. Joe & Melissa Flies

APRIL

FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

APRIL 3

LITURGIST: Melinda Redman
FLOWERS: Al Wilson
COFFEE: Bill & Alice Huebner
USHERS/GREETER:

APRIL 10

LITURGIST: judi Carpenter
FLOWERS:
COFFEE: Darla & Lynn Weltmer
USHERS/GREETER:

APRIL 17

LITURGIST: Dee Wenneker
FLOWERS: Dave & Marlene Gant
COFFEE: Chuck Zweck
USHERS/GREETER:

APRIL 24

LITURGIST: Bill Huebner
FLOWERS: Tom & Paula Cordts
COFFEE: Kristin Hargrove
USHERS/GREETER:

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

APRIL 3

USHER/GREETER: Sandy
Harmison
REFRESHMENTS: Sandy
Harmison

APRIL 10

USHER/GREETER: Leigh
Myers
REFRESHMENTS: Leigh Myers

APRIL 17

USHER/GREETER: Ruski-
Moretti Family
REFRESHMENTS: Ruski-
Moretti Family

APRIL 24

USHER/GREETER: Betty
Wheatley
REFRESHMENTS: Betty
Wheatley



