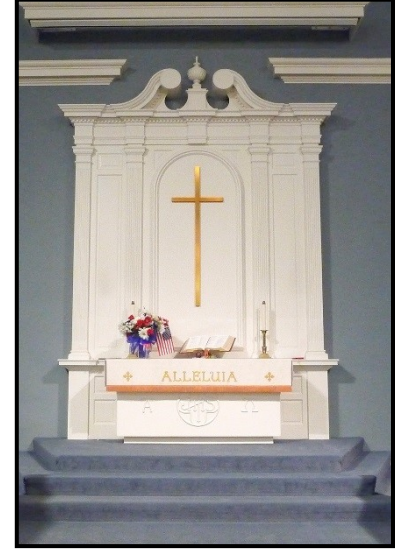


Congregational Comments



Vol. 24 No. 4: April 2019

Important Contacts in the Church

Pastor: Rev. Jan Johnson, 309-267-3260
 Email: jancastegnarojohnson@comcast.net
Prayer Chain: Bette Fankhauser, 877-6723
 Email: bfankhauser@comcast.com
Playmates Preschool: Interim Director: Alfreda Tribout
Newsletter Editor: Bill Huebner, 876-1446, cell 855-7677
 Email: wshuebner.editor@prodigy.net

Church Contact Information:

3465 N. MacArthur Rd.
 Decatur, IL 62526
 Telephone: 877-2216
 Email: firstchurchdecatur@sbcglobal.net
 Website: www.firstchurchdecatur.org
 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

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

Inside this issue:

A Note from Pastor Jan	2	Mary Hamman at 104	6	Happenings	10
General Information	3	Easter Flowere	7	Birthdays & Anniversaries	11
General Information	4	Events	8	First Church Sunday Morning	12
General Information	5	Finance Notes	9	Calendar	13

A Note from Pastor Jan



Pastor Jan Johnson

This month, April, holds the week we call Holy Week, also called Passion Week. It is the week we live in spirit and in scripture, the last week Jesus was alive, from the human perspective. It was an eventful week, as weeks go, in Jerusalem. There was the Triumphal Entry, the preparation for the Passover for the Jews that Jesus and His disciples celebrated together. There was a betrayal, a denial, an arrest, a mock trial in the middle of the night (making it illegal by Jewish law), a flogging, a mocking, a crucifixion, and a burial. There were also palms and cloaks and rocks that would have been singing had the crowd been silent, broken hearts and weeping and mourning and jeering and cheering and self derision and accusations. There was a lot going on in that week we call Holy. And not all of what was going on was Holy. In

fact, much of it was UNholy! Not much has changed in our world since that time. We still remember and celebrate Holy Week in the Christian Church and the Jewish community celebrates Passover – each of us celebrating much of the same thing in a different way. This year Passover begin at sundown on Good Friday. Alongside our individual celebrations, there will be palms and bread and cups and meals. There will be grieving and mourning. Someone will be betrayed. Someone will be denied. Someone will be arrested. Someone will be killed. Somewhere there will be cheering and jeering. Some will be self-deriding. But also, some will be praying fervently for forgiveness, for mercy, for grace around tables and around The Table. Some will be forgiving and merciful, caring and compassionate. Some will be healing and teaching and preaching.

Perhaps this year, we all need to take a long, hard look at ourselves and see where our hearts are focused, see what we will be doing during that week we call Holy.

From Ann Weems, Kneeling in Jerusalem:

Lost and Found

As we approached Jerusalem
The crowd stood at the gate
And cried in tear-choked voice:
“We are lost in his death.”

Upon the hill
The angels sang:
“We are found
In his rising.”

Throughout Lent and Holy Week, may all those who are lost, be found.
Blessings of New Life in Christ,

Jan

This note was placed in my mail cubby the week I addressed your Questions of Faith: How do we reconcile Bible stories like that of Cain and Abel, and where they got their wives with non-believers?

My response: The first 12 Chapters of Genesis are faith stories handed down from parent to child to child for several hundred years before being committed to papyrus. We look at these wonderfully familiar faith stories, not as factual stories. Rather the stories are simple understandings of how our world came to be from primitive people who were trying to make sense about the world they lived in. There are actually 2 Creation stories in chapters 1 & 2 of Genesis, probably from the tribes of the northern and southern kingdoms. I find it fascinating that people from two different areas in that part of the world, had similar, if not exact, tales of how the earth came into being!

General Information

FFDO

FFDO will meet on April 5 at Benny's at 6:00 pm. Let me know if you will be joining us.

Thanks , Sandy Harmison



Thank You

A big thank you to the people who worked in the church office during Jackie's medical leave:

Clarence Elliott, Betty Wheatley, Paula Cordts, Mike Longstreet, Betty Cummings, Shirley Zimmerman, Chuck Zweck, Alice Huebner, Sue Bunselmeyer, Sheila Mannweiler, Shirley Suttan, Lou DeGroot, Carol Robertson, Judi Carpenter, and Jodi Baldwin.



Formerly Foods Resource Bank

This year our growing project generated \$7,563.74—from the sale of garden produce, from the sale of our 5-acre corn crop, and from the generosity of our church members and friends. Growing Hope Globally says \$55 will make one person food sustainable. That means that \$55 will teach one person to feed himself for the rest of his life. At that rate, this year our growing project in Decatur, IL, will help 138 people in West Africa to change their lives and never be hungry again. This is outreach at its finest!

General Information

Things to mark on your calendar

Lenten Services

April 3 - noon - Lenten Meditation: Isaiah 56: 3-8

April 10 - noon - Lenten Meditation: Isaiah 43: 16-21

April 14 - Palm Sunday - Children process with palms

April 17 - noon - Lenten Meditation: Isaiah 50: 4-9

Easter Services

April 18: Maundy Thursday, Seder Service and Meal at 6pm in Fellowship Hall, Communion in Sanctuary following. **The Seder meal will have a choice of beef, chicken or vegetarian. When you call or email the office your reservation, please indicate which you would prefer.**

April 19: Good Friday: Tenebrae Service with Communion in Sanctuary

April 21: Sunrise Service, Easter Breakfast at 8am, Worship at 9am and Praise at 11am, Communion at both.

Other Dates

Interim Task Force on April 22 at 5:30pm

Choir is at 7pm on TUESDAY, April 23

Saturday, April 27, all are invited to join Rev. Jan at Bloomington for The Passion Play at 1pm. Cost: \$25 per person

Betty Henry's 90th Birthday



Betty Henry will be celebrating her 90th birthday in the fellowship hall on Sat April 20th between 1 and 4pm. Her family would like to invite her church family to attend. Please gift her only with the honor of her presence.

General Information



From the Pastoral Search Committee

Our Pastoral Search Committee has been diligently working on all the tasks involved in seeking and calling our next settled pastor. The group has finalized the three required profiles and we are now active in the UCC as seeking a pastor. Rev Norwalk will be meeting with the committee again on next steps and hopefully bring some profiles for viewing.



Youth Activities

Attention Seniors

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 27th. The youth will be hosting their Annual Senior Appreciation Dinner. All senior members of the congregation are invited to be guests of this dinner held in their honor. RSVPs are requested, but not required. Please call the church office to let us know if you will be attending. Thank you.

Youth Events for April

- 4/6 - Board games/Easter Sunrise Prep
- 4/14 - Scavenger Hunt
- 4/21 - Easter Sunrise Service
- 4/27 - Senior Dinner

Mary Hamman at 104 Years



Mary Hamman was born on March 16, 1915. She remembered the Rev. Leo L. Duerson, 1934-1941. Her parents were always taking the youth and going places with them. When asked about other ministers, Mary thought maybe hearing about the Rev. H. S. Roblee, 1911-1915. "When she was young, the church building was a scary place because it was so big."



Betty Wheatley and Mary sharing something funny.



Mary and Laurel Lorey in deep conversation!

Sandi Pleasants, daughter of Mary, Pat Mahr, and Betty Henry review birthday cards Mary received.

Photos by Alice Huebner



Cake, strawberries and cookies were enjoyed by all at the birthday celebration.

Easter Flowers

Order Your Easter Flowers

Complete this form and remit with payment in the offering plate
or to the church office. **THE DEADLINE TO ORDER IS MARCH 31.**

Please pick up your flower after Easter service.



I would like to order _____ (#) lilies @ \$15.00/ea.

I would like to order _____ (#) tulips @ \$15.00/ea.

I would like to order _____ (#) daffodils @ \$15.00/ea.

I would like to order _____ (#) hyacinths @ \$15.00/ea.

In lieu of flowers, I would like my donation made to the:

- ☐ Memorial Fund
- ☐ Scholarship Fund

Please make donations on separate checks from flower purchases.

Your Name: _____

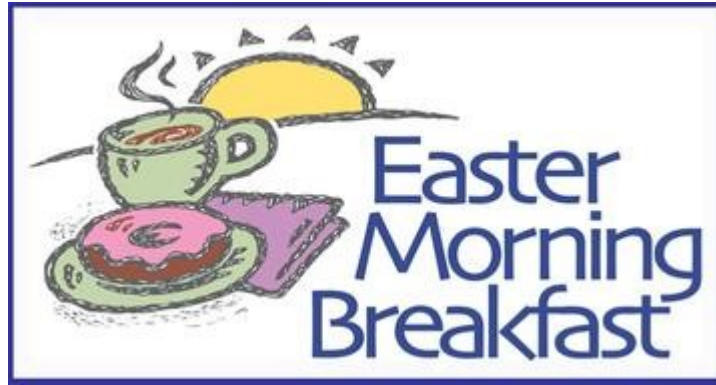
In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Questions? Call Shirley Kuhn at 468-2052 or the Church Office at 877-2216.

EVENTS

EASTER MORNING BREAKFAST



The congregation is invited to the Easter Breakfast on April 21 at 8 am in the Fellowship Hall .

Julie Keck & Shirley Zimmerman

Decatur Area Church Women United

Decatur Area Church Women United will hold their April 8th Representatives Meeting and Bible Study on Monday April 8th at 9:00 AM at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1360 W. Main Street. The Bible Study is led by Ardena Hunter. This study is based on Ruth 1:6-18.

May Friendship Day will be held on Friday, May 3rd at 1:00 PM at St Peter's AME, 515 S. Church Street. Theme is The Time is Now! "Agree to Differ"

contact Darla Weltmer 877-7008 for further information

Palm Sunday



Children's procession for Palm Sunday will be April 14th before each service, if the kids could arrive a church a few minutes early to get their palms. Also The Easter Egg Hunt will be April 14th between services starting at 10:00 am and will include treat bags and a visit from the Easter Bunny.

Finance Notes

FEBRUARY 2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Feb. 19</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$17,051.92	\$34,103.84
Budget Expense	\$17,947.02	\$35,894.04
Income	\$14,433.87	\$29,374.87
Expenses	\$17,503.63	\$33,897.26



Happenings

FFDO

Benny's

April 5

6:00 pm



God's Busy Hands

Tuesdays

1:00 - 3:00 pm



God's Busy Hands

Admin Meeting

Monday, April 22

5:30 pm

Council of Ministry Teams

Monday, April 22

6:30 pm

Choir

Wednesdays

7:00 pm



Sing With Us

Interim Task Force Members

Gary Baker

Jeanette Flenner

Kelli Fonseca

Erick Hubbard

Alice Huebner

Shelia Mannweiler

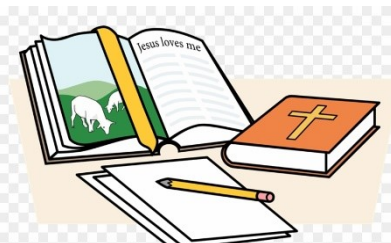
Robert Ruehrup

Exploring Christian Faith Study Group

Sundays at

10:30 am

Choir Room



April Birthdays and Anniversaries

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 Lingefelter
4. Michael Koyak
Elizabeth Scherer
7. Jeanette Flenner
10. Morgan Malone
14. Betty Henry
16. Janiece Traugher
17. Sandi Pleasants
Bruce Whitney
Katie Hammon
18. Brittany Kappler
19. Joe Moretti
David Taylor
20. Bob Butts
25. Megan Hartman
Vicky Williams
26. Kristin Hargrove
28. Mark Bunselmeyer
29. Logan Moster
30. Kay Janvrin

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

15. Patrick & Margie Malone
16. Roger & Melinda Redman
19. Eugene & Nellie Brookhouzen
21. Mac & Sharon Butler



First Church Sunday Morning

	Date	9:00 AM Service	11:00 AM Service
 LITURGISTS	April 7	Chuck Zweck	Betty Wheatley
	April 14	Marilee Gordon	Mark & Jeanette Flenner
	April 21	Darla Weltmer	Shirley Zimmerman & Ruby Voyles
	April 28	Judi Carpenter	Sandy Harmison
	April 7		
	April 14		
	April 21		
	April 28		
	April 7	Don & Dee Wenneker	Missy Boldizar
	April 14	Martha Crookshank	Mark & Jeanette Flenner
	April 21		Shirley Zimmerman & Ruby Voyles
	April 28	Frank & Shelly Smith	Sandy Harmison
	April 7	Jim & Jodi Baldwin, Tom & Paula Cordts	
	April 14	Butts Family	
	April 21	Bill & Alice Huebner, Ted & Darby Mitchell	
	April 28	Shelia Mannweiler, Gary Weiss, Jennie Wernecke, Mike Koyak	

Thank you to all who participate in these very important activities!

April Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	3 Lenten Meditation Lunch 7:00 Choir Practice	4 5:45 1st Ringers 7:00 Bible Study	5	6
7 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	8 7:00 Proper- ty Meeting	9 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	10 Lenten Meditation Lunch 7:00 Choir Practice	11 5:45 1st Ringers 7:00 Bible Study	12	13
14 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	15 5:30 Admin 6:30 Council of Ministry Teams	16 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	17 Lenten Meditation Lunch 7:00 Choir Practice	18 Maundy Thursday 6:00 Seder Service and Meal	19 Good Friday Tenebrae Service	20 1:00 Betty Henry's 90th Birthday Party in Fel- lowship Hall
21 7:00 Sunrise Service, 8:00 Breakfast, 9:00 Service 11:00 Service	22	23 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	24 7:00 Choir Practice	25 5:45 1st Ringers 7:00 Bible Study	26	27
28 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	29	30 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA				



First Congregational UCC
3465 N. MacArthur Rd.
Decatur, IL 62526-1450

2019 Church Goals

Your Council of Ministry Teams has approved the following 3 goals for 2019:

2019 Church Goals

- Goal No. 1—Reestablish an active evangelism ministry
- Goal No. 2—Instituting new fellowship programs for working women, men and young families
- Goal No. 3—Hire a new pastor for the church.