

# Congregational Comments

Vol. 18 No 8: August 2013

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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

11:15-12:00 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**

**“Remember Who You Are”**

Bobbie and I first heard the phrase “Remember Who You Are” in a sermon given by my Preaching Professor on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of my Ordination. Dr. Hale Schroer shared that while he was in high school and he was getting ready to head out for an evening of fun with his friends, his father wouldn’t recite a long list of “do’s” and “don’ts” or rules, but simply said, “Hale, remember who you are.”

Those simple words have become part of our family. When Christen and Aaron were old enough to go off to activities on their own, Bobbie and I would often say as part of our goodbyes, “Aaron/Christen, remember who you are.” Remembering who they are in relation to our family means that they know they are greatly loved and valued. We encouraged them to live out their family values even when we’re not standing beside them.

It is sometimes hard to remember who we are in a world of peer pressure, advertising bombardment, and unlimited options. We sometimes bow to the pressure to be someone we are not and never can be, or someone we don’t need to be. We need God’s help to live good lives.

Just as family heritage can remind us who we are, our baptism also tells us in the most profound sense who we are and whose we are. Baptism gives us our true name as daughters and sons of God. In the family of God’s belonging, we know we are wondrously loved and greatly valued. *For God so loved the world (us and all people) that He gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* That’s amazing love and we are part of it.

Jesus created a community of faith where people came to remember who they were and to whom they belonged. That community is the Christian Church. You and I gather here at First Congregational UCC to hear again the faith stories of our family and remember how we are part of them...Queen Esther, a woman of cour-

age; David, a shepherd slayer of evil giants... to name a few. Even when our ancestors messed up big time like the Prodigal Son, we hear how God is merciful, forgiving, and welcoming, offering the sinner another chance at life. These faith stories give us hope and new life in Jesus Christ. It is in his love that we are forgiven and loved, free to grow and become all that God envisions us to be.

During the times of slavery in the United States in northern states, many future UCC churches were active in the abolitionist movement, and some served as stops on the Underground Railroad. And in 1839, Congregationalist John Quincy Adams argued before the Supreme Court for the freedom of the *Amistad* captives –Africans who mutinied aboard the schooner *Amistad* after having been kidnapped and illegally sold into slavery. This was the first human rights case that was successfully argued before the US Supreme Court. Congregationalists also led to form the *Amistad* Committee to educate and care for the captives – a committee that later evolved into the American Missionary Association. We must not allow our UCC traditions to simply become pleasant memories of the past, but to energize us to acts of justice and love in this time and place.

We are continually called to remember that each person is created in the image of God. But whenever people devise, maintain or perpetuate systems and attitudes that oppress other people based on race or ethnicity, we interfere with God's purpose and the opportunity for all God's children to be fully who they are created to be. Racism is an affront to God.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said: “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.” We who are UCC seek to work for racial justice for all God’s people. God’s dream for God’s children is that all are judged by the content of their character and not their skin color, for each person is precious in God’s sight. *For all of you are the children of God. —Galatians 3:28*

Following Christ’s example, we in the United Church of Christ are proud of our history of leading the way towards the creation of a more inclusive, welcoming, and just world. Let us boldly live our faith.

Come join us at First Congregational UCC as you and I come together to “remember who we are.”

Pastor Dave

## SUNDAY SERVICES

We invite you and a friend to join us for worship at First Congregational United Church of Christ on Sundays at:

**9:00AM** for our **Traditional Service** and  
**11:00AM** for our **Contemporary Service**.

At **10:00AM** we have our ***faith growing Bible Study opportunities for adults***. In September our Sunday School will begin again for our children and youth.

Also at **10:00AM** ***discover a new friend*** or renew a current friendship by visiting over ***delicious refreshments*** in Fellowship Hall.



**Pastor Dave hard at work**



**FIRST CHURCH**  
**FOODS RESOURCE BANK**  
**GROWING PROJECT UPDATE**

OUR GROWING PROJECT -- As of July 15, our Foods Resource Bank corn crop is tasseling and near pollination. The crop is growing well with the warm weather and steady rainfall. But pollination is a critical time and all must go well to make the crop.

NEWS FROM KENYA – The proceeds from this year’s growing project will again benefit a food program in Ndeiya Kenya. Reports say 205 households have been trained and are now practicing conservation farming (Farming God’s Way) techniques such as slashing, uprooting weeds and gathering mulch. Households have been trained on planting more drought tolerant crops – dolicos (a bush bean), pidgeon peas, cowpeas and sorghum – and uses for each. Participants are consuming these products in new recipes almost daily in their meals, and surplus is sold to neighbors. In addition some are learning about potatoes and their production, manufacturing, sorting, packing and marketing.

OUR GARDEN SURPLUS – Some of our church members’ gardens will be producing vegetables soon. If you have one of those and are willing to share, please bring in your surplus “crop” for our FRB table in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to “shop” at the table during Fellowship Hour and enjoy this produce in exchange for a freewill donation. All donations will be used to pay for the expenses of planting our Foods Resource Bank corn crop.

If you would like to make a donation for the cost of the inputs of our growing project corn crop, envelopes are available in the pews. Checks may be made to First Congregational United Church of Christ and marked “FRB” in the memo line.

# THANK YOU

Thank you so much for your prayers, cards and phone calls while I continue my medical journey. My heart valves are healing and working well. Because I was doing so well, I was able to have a stent put in to correct another problem on July 9. I am improving and getting strength back and your prayers and cards have encouraged me. Thank you so much for your caring and concern.

Ann Gerhold



## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

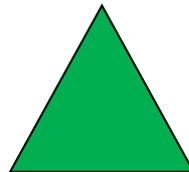
Several years ago we had lunch at an Amish home and the food was delicious and our hosts were very accommodating and interesting. We are again planning to have lunch at an Amish home on Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup>. The menu will consist of 2 meats, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, noodles, drink and pie for dessert. The cost will be \$15 dollars for the meal and \$5 for gas to whoever drives. We will need paid reservations by August 4<sup>th</sup>. The donation of \$15 should be given to Martha Crookshank and checks should be made out to Women's Fellowship. The \$5 per person for gas will be given to each driver that day.

We will meet in Fellowship Hall at 11:00 a.m. and will be on the road no later than 11:15 a.m.

Forget about those calories and join us for a great home cooked meal and fellowship.

## ARE YOU SEEING THIS NEWSLETTER IN BLACK AND WHITE?

People who are getting this newsletter by email are seeing the newsletter in **Color**. You can see it in color too, just give the church office your email and we will begin to send the color version to you every month.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
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**9:00 Traditional**  
**10:00 Fellowship**  
**Hour**  
**11:00**  
**Contemporary**



**4**  
**Noon—3:00**  
**Children’s Water**  
**Day**  
**Pastoral Care**  
**Card Sale**

**5**

**6**  
**1:00 God’s Busy**  
**Hands**  
**7:00 AA: Al-anon**  
**8:00 AA**

**7**

**11**

**12**  
**6:00 Worship/**  
**Music Ministry**  
**7:00 Super**  
**Monday**

**13**  
**1:00 God’s Busy**  
**Hands**  
**7:00 AA: Al-anon**  
**8:00 AA**

**14**

**18**

**19**  
**7:00 Church**  
**Council**

**20**  
**1:00 God’s Busy**  
**Hands**  
**7:00 AA: Al-anon**  
**8:00 AA**

**21**

**25**  
**1-3:00 Darla**  
**Weltmer**

**26**

**27**  
**1:00 God’s Busy**  
**Hands**  
**7:00 AA: Al-anon**  
**8:00 AA**

**28**

Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b>  <b>12-3:00 GFWC Decatur</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>4:15 Wedding Michael/Taylor</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>Women's Fellowship Amish Home</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>15</b>  <b>1:00 Book Club</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

# LOGOS

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer!!! It's not too early to start thinking about the next season of LOGOS (Sept-Apr). Your LOGOS Ministry is working on preliminary plans and would like to remind you to pray and listen for God's call to you to be part of this wonderful program. If you have an area you are feeling called to, please let us know as soon as possible. (Bible Study, Family Time (table parent, kitchen, dinner dean, set-up, clean-up, laundry), Recreation, Worship Skills, check-in, transportation, etc). We look forward to hearing from you soon. We hope you will also encourage the children and youth in your lives to join us on Wednesday evenings this fall. Information will coming out in the near future. THANKS! Marsha Mower

## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

### HIGH SCHOOL:

Brianne Senger—is graduating from Central A&M in Moweaqua, member of the National Honor Society: She will be attending McKendree University in Libanon, IL. Her major will be Business and minor in Music.

Olivia Wernecke—is graduating from MacArthur High School and she will be attending Richland Community College where she will focus on her Associate of Science Degree.

### COLLEGE:

Ben Carter—is graduating with a BA in Communications from Columbia College (Chicago).

Patrick Carter—is graduating with a BFA in Economics from DePauw University (Greencastle, Indiana)

Tommy Robertson—graduated with a Masters in Business Administration from Millikin University. Tommy works as a Cost Analyst for ADM.

Jennifer Ruff—Received her Master of Arts degree from Ohio State University May 5, 2013. Her degree is in the College of Education with a focus on Student Counseling.

Tyler Wernecke—graduated from Elmhurst College with a Bachelor of Science Biology degree.

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR 2013

The officers for Women's Fellowship met on March 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss plans for the rest of the year. The decision was made to schedule as many of our activities for the second Friday of each month as we can. The following schedule is TENTATIVE, but we hope you will mark your calendars and plan to join us. **Women's Fellowship is open to all women.**

**August 9<sup>th</sup>** We hope to have lunch at an Amish Home. We did this several years ago and the food was delicious and our hosts were very accommodating and interesting.

**September 13<sup>th</sup>** We will travel to Elkhart, IL to have lunch and shop at the Wild Hare/Horse Feathers restaurant and antique store. This is a beautiful drive in the fall when the leaves are turning.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** – October is Fire Prevention month and we hope to have a presentation by Decatur's Fire Chief.

**November 8<sup>th</sup>** – Bette Fankhauser will present a program on the beautiful bells that we are fortunate to have at our church.

**December 13<sup>th</sup>** – We will have our annual Christmas tea on this day.

We are always open to new ideas and suggestions. If there is something you would like for the group to do, please share your thoughts and ideas.



*Join the  
Youth Group*

# Youth Activities

## Youth Can Collection Campaign

The Youth are collecting aluminum cans this summer to raise money for Youth Activities. We are going to make it easy for you to help us. All you have to do is drop off your aluminum cans behind the church on Sunday morning, and the Youth will store them until we get enough to take in. Put your cans in a plastic or a paper bag and place them in the designated area behind the church. The Youth will do the rest. We want to thank you in advance for helping to support the Youth of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

## *LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!*

The Youth are now on facebook. Do you want to keep up with what the Youth Group is doing? Like us on facebook to receive updates about all of our upcoming events, projects, missions, and activities! Stay informed and help us spread the word! Find us and like us at [FCUCC Decatur Youth](#) .

## **Book Time!**

The Youth Group is now collecting books for our annual Book and Bake Sale! Collection boxes are now located around the church for the sale in late September. This is a great opportunity to clear out those bookshelves while supporting the Youth.

# Adult Program News

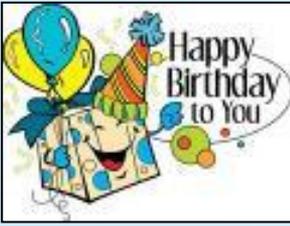
## Guys' Night Out

The results are in. The winners of the First Congregational Pinewood Derby are:

Charles Tribout - adult division, and Gehrig Bunselmeyer - junior division. The winners of Fan Favorite (best design) are Clarence Elliot - adult division, and Andrew Mower - junior division.

Adult Program Ministry would also like to thank Jim Baldwin for conducting the races and setting up the track, also Don Carter, Dave Carpenter, Todd Wernecke, and Sue Bunselmeyer for their help.





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

4. Janet Tiede
5. Zachary Wernecke
6. James Clifton
8. Jeffrey Mockaitis  
Emery Bunselmeyer
9. Margie Malone  
Isaiah Janvrin
10. Dick Cheatham  
Richard Kelley
11. Gary Baker  
Sharon Walker
12. Jim Baldwin  
Ruth DeBruine  
Don Wenneker
16. Mya Lofland
17. Darby Mitchell  
Glenn Wernecke
19. David Logan
21. Betty Cummings  
Melinda Redman
22. Charles Tribout
25. Claude Young
26. Gladys Alburtis  
Ingrid Cox
27. Dustin Goodman  
Olivia Harmison
28. Christopher Harmison  
Terry Stoa  
Brent Morey
29. Skip Mower  
Kelly Tribout

30. Betty Wheatley
31. Anna Belle Anderson  
Amanda Williams  
Mark Jaberg

## **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!*

1. Michael & Rachel Ogden
3. Michael & Toni Longstreet
4. Jim & Jodi Baldwin  
Allen & Ann Gerhold
5. Robert & Shirley Young  
Gregory & Tara Baltimore
6. Don & Stacey Carter
7. Walter & Carolyn Jones
9. Thomas & Paul Cordts
11. David & Bobbie Taylor
12. Stephen & Malinda Dicken
15. Brandon & Valerie Janvrin  
Lynn & Darla Weltmer
18. Robert & Sue Bunselmeyer
19. Wesley & Lori Pietsch
23. Randal & Mary Beck
25. Carl & Doris Jacobs
26. Don & Dee Wenneker

# **AUGUST**

**FIRST SERVICE**  
**VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE**

**AUGUST 4**

**LITURGIST:** Marilee Gordon

**FLOWERS:** Tom & Paul Cordts

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Joe & Carol  
Robertson, Dave & Pat Mahr

**AUGUST 11**

**LITURGIST:** Marilee Gordon

**FLOWERS:** Walter & Carolyn  
Jones

**COFFEE:** Rob & Kathy Moore

**USHERS/GREETER:** Sandi  
Pleasants, Carl Jacobs, Paul &  
Ruth DeBruine

**AUGUST 18**

**LITURGIST:** Darla Weltmer

**FLOWERS:** Peggy Druessel

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Don & Dee  
Wenneker, Al Gerhold, Chuck  
Zweck

**AUGUST 25**

**LITURGIST:** Bill Huebner

**FLOWERS:** Marylin Cushing

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Ev & Shirley  
Kuhn, Sheila Mannweiler, Mike  
Koyak

**SECOND SERVICE**  
**VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE**

**AUGUST 4**

**USHER/GREETER:** Jeanette  
Flenner

**REFRESHMENTS:** Jeanette  
Flenner

**AUGUST 11**

**USHER/GREETER:** Mike Koyak

**REFRESHMENTS:** Mike Koyak

**AUGUST 18**

**USHER/GREETER:** Bruce/  
Debbie Whitney

**REFRESHMENTS:** Bruce/  
Debbie Whitney

**AUGUST 25**

**USHER/GREETER:** Betty  
Wheatley

**REFRESHMENTS:** Betty  
Wheatley



