

Congregational Comments

Vol. 19 No 8: August 2014

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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

SOMETHING SPECIAL

“We have something special here, don’t we?!” That was the comment made by a member. I wholeheartedly agree – we do indeed have something special here! 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 weaknesses and instead to identify strengths and build on those.

One of our great strengths — perhaps *the* greatest — 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 list, our staff, the pastor, our congregation and our ministry together. Ask God to fill all with healing, creativity, compassion, spirit, peace, and strength. Or simply be still and hold all in the Light of God’s grace.
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 just the pastor and the church leaders. 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 Fellowship Hour at 10 AM, 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 “a part of the First Church Family?” Come to the 10 AM Fellowship Hour and enjoy great refreshments, talk to people, go for a class, make a new friend. Come volunteer and make a holy difference.

4. **TELL:** Hospital privacy policy prevents pastors and lay members from reviewing a list of hospital patients as in the past. *If you or a loved one have a need, are facing surgery or other procedures – whatever may be weighing on you at present, let the pastor, church leaders and other members know rather than assuming people will somehow hear about it.* If you desire, we'd like to include you or loved one on our Prayer Chain. You can forward your prayer requests to Marsha Mower at m.mower@sbcglobal.net or Pastor Dave at pastor-daveucc@sbcglobal.net. We want to be supportive and caring for you and our faith family.

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, leaders, staff or pastor, 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 in worship: 9:00 AM for Traditional Service, 10:00 AM for fellowship and refreshments, and 11:00 AM for our Contemporary Service. Check out our interesting Adult Bible Studies.

In Christ's Peace and Love,

Pastor Dave

ATTENTION ALL MEN

For all those men who have volunteered to sing in the men's choir on August 31, Lourie will hold practice sessions on August 10 and 24 after the first service in the choir room. Come join in on the fun and we look forward to your songs of praise.



GOD IS MY



And every hero needs a good sidekick...

So, plan to join us on Sunday, August 24
from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. for...

Sidekicks in Training

Who: All LOGOS Volunteers from Westminster Presbyterian Church, First Congregational UCC, and Mt. Zion Presbyterian Church

Where: Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1360 W. Main St., Decatur

When: Sunday, August 24, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.

What: An afternoon to prepare for our upcoming LOGOS programs

Includes: Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Interactive Bible Study, Recreation, Worship Skills, and Family Time training with our most common discipline concerns addressed.

Individual Church Meetings (this takes the place of our usual Fall meeting)

A meal during Family Time

Free babysitting

Lots of laughs, fun, and hands-on training!

Please R.S.V.P. to Marsha Mower (875-0733), Molly Tenuto (853-4207), or Teresa Goller (972-7093) by Monday, August 18.

LOGOS

It's almost time for the 2014-2015 LOGOS program year at FCUCC! We encourage you to spend some prayerful time with God and consider where He might be calling you to help this year. LOGOS is a mid-week, inter-generational, relationship building program for children and youth in 1st through 12th grades. There are four parts to this weekly ministry: *Bible Study* – where children and youth are nurtured into intelligent, obedient, and biblically-informed discipleship; *Worship Skills* – an essential and central part of the Christian community where young people learn about worship and prepare to lead in the Sunday morning service of worship; *Recreation* – where young people are allowed to experience great fun at the expense of no one else; *Family Time* – where young people are assigned to a table along with adults who act as “table parents” and experience being a part of the family of God over a shared meal, with a weekly theme and fun activity. LOGOS meets on most Wednesdays from mid-September through mid-April, 4:45-7:15 p.m. We are always looking for new people to join us in this amazing ministry on a weekly, occasional or substitute basis. We strive to have consistency with the leaders in each of the four-parts, so relationships can be built between the kids and adults. Adult volunteers are needed for the elementary grades to teach/co-teach Bible Study, lead/assist in recreation, assist with Worship Skills and possibly serve as Table Parents. In "The Lounge," (junior/senior high) we need strong adult leadership to meet with them each week for discussion, relationship building, etc. Currently, this group is primarily 8th grade girls, with an occasional older girl or two. We also have spots for kitchen helpers, to assist with cooking and clean-up every week. Please pray, pray, pray and let us know where you and God decide you can help! Your LOGOS Ministry - Sharon Burbes, Jeanette Flenner, Sandy Harmison, Sheila Witts-Mannweiler, Marsha Mower, Maureen Ruski and Debbie Whitney.

VBS

VBS 2014 at First Church was a wonderful blessing to many children, youth and adults! Thank you to everyone for your support and prayers. Look for our complete follow-up report, including the list attendees and volunteers, in next month's newsletter. Co-directors Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski

HELP PLEASE

Clarence and I prepare communion quite often, and we had wondered about Pauline Turner, since the communion sets (for bread and wine) were given in memory of her. What little I found out was that she was a teacher, a tall lady and never married (as far as anyone knew). We appreciate the set, it is beautiful and easy to use and felt the congregation should be reminded that we have it. If anyone knows of any more friends or family, please remind them that we still use it. (please let me know more about her). Carolyn E.



THANK YOU

Thank you to the God's Busy Hands group, for the cake and ice cream furnished by Alice, Laurel and Pat for our 60th wedding anniversary, believe me when I say it is a shock to both of us how many years we've been together. We dated 18 months before our wedding. We are thankful everyday or at least every week, that we grew up together and all the blessings we have enjoyed. Thank you again, for the cards (not only from our group but the congregation) Clarence and Carolyn Elliott





FOODS RESOURCE BANK **GROWING PROJECT UPDATE**

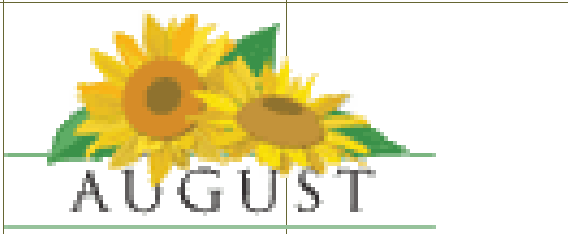
OUR GROWING PROJECT -- As of July 15, our Foods Resource Bank corn crop looks great. It is taller than Charles Zweck. We applied fungicide with an airplane to protect the crop from foliar diseases (diseases that destroy leaf tissue.) The crop has pollinated, which means the pollen has fallen from the tassel to the silk to pollinate the kernels. We have large ear size and good kernel numbers and looks like a good crop in the making. For the next 6 weeks the stalk will harvest solar energy and turn it into sugars to fill the kernels.

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 for helping us to help others to learn to feed themselves and experience the dignity and pride in doing so.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
3 Pastoral Card Sale 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service	4	5 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	6
10 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service	11 5:00 Admin 5:30 Children's Social Mobile Zoo 7:00 Property	12 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	13
17 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service	18 7:00 Church Council	19 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	20
24 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service LOGOS Training	22	26 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	27
31 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service			

Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2
7	8	9
14 12:00 Decatur Women's Club 1:15 Book Club	15	16
21	22	23
28	29	30
 <p>A decorative graphic featuring two bright yellow sunflowers with dark brown centers and green leaves. Below the sunflowers, the word "AUGUST" is written in a large, grey, serif font. A thin green horizontal line is positioned below the text.</p>		

Kroger News by Jeanette Flenner

We received a rebate check for \$172.11 from Kroger's for the use of our Kroger gift cards. That makes our year-to-date rebate total, \$373.99. Thank you for your continued support of this program.

You may buy gift cards in the church office during the week. I can sell you one on Sunday, if you call me and let me know you want one. (My phone number is in the new directory.) I usually attend Bible study from 10-11, but I would meet you in fellowship hall right after first service. I can also sell cards after the second service. The cards are worth \$20 and cost \$20. You may add money to the cards at the Kroger service desk. If you go to the service desk at the beginning of your shopping trip, the amount you added will be available by the time you check-out. The church gets 3% of the amount that we spend using the church-issued cards.

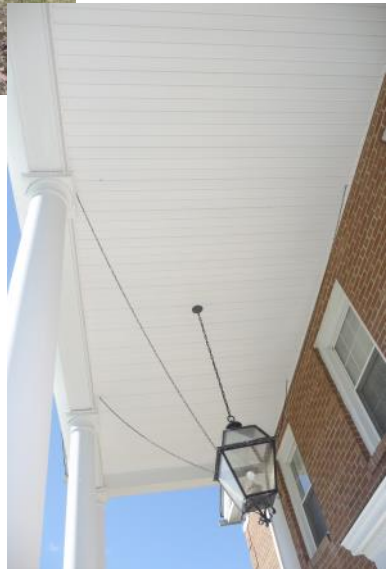
Jeanette



JUNE 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>June 14</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$15,672.57	\$94,035.42
Budget Expense	\$17,414.05	\$104,484.30
Income	\$17,546.36	\$104,389.59
Expenses	\$16,017.23	\$103,530.95

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHURCH



Youth Activities

YOUTH CAN COLLECTION CAMPAIGN

The Youth will be collecting aluminum cans throughout the summer, in order to raise money for various Youth activities. We are going to make it easy for you to help us. All you have to do is this: Drop off your aluminum cans behind the church on Sunday morning, and the Youth will store them until there are enough cans to take in. Please put your cans in a plastic bag, and place them in the designated drop-off site behind the church. The Youth will do the rest. We want to thank you in advance for your continued support of the Youth of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

The Youth are our future!

Children's Activities

August 11 MOBILE ZOO Hotdog Dinner will be provided at 5pm. Mobile Zoo 5:30pm. Please sign your child up for this animal experience during the week of VBS.

Sunday September 7th Rally Day! Meet & Greet Sunday School and introduction to Children's Choir. Rally Day festivities include: games, cake walk, concert by praise band, meal, blown up slide and bounce house. Come out and join us for our annual church family event.

THANK YOU



Dear Friends:

Thank you for your generous contribution to the work of Church World Service - which we appreciate more than ever in these challenging times.

Your compassionate support is helping impoverished communities

- develop clean, reliable water sources.
- teach poor farmers sustainable ways to create food security
- provide food, water, shelter and other necessities to families struggling to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, after natural disasters and civil conflict.

I have seen both the resilience and the resolve of the women, men and children we assist. And I have been deeply moved by the generosity of people like you, who give hope and opportunity to people in need, here in the U.S. and around the world.

May God bless you for your kindness.

Rev. John L. McCullough
President and CEO
Church World Service



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
Quinn Leman
8. Emery Bunselmeyer
9. Margie Malone
Isaiah Janvrin
Ellen Starace
10. Dick Cheatham
11. Gary Baker
12. Jim Baldwin
Ruth DeBruine
Don Wenneker
16. Mya Lofland
17. Darby Mitchell
Glenn Wernecke
21. Betty Cummings
Melinda Redman
22. Charles Tribout
25. Claude Young
26. Gladys Alburdis
Olivia Harmison
28. Christopher Harmison
Terry Stoa
29. Skip Mower
30. Betty Wheatley
31. 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!*

4. Jim & Jodi Baldwin
Allen & Ann Gerhold
5. Robert & Shirley Young
6. Don & Stacey Carter
7. Walter & Carolyn Jones
9. Thomas & Paula Cordts
11. David & Bobbie Taylor
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



FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

AUGUST 3

LITURGIST: Carol Robertson

FLOWERS: Walter & Carolyn Jones

COFFEE: Betty Cummings

USHERS/GREETER: Marilee Gordon, Gary & Pat Weiss, Dave Mahr

AUGUST 10

LITURGIST: Sharon Burbes

FLOWERS: Tom & Paula Cordts

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Dave Carpenter, Mike Koyak, Robby & Kathy Moore

AUGUST 17

LITURGIST: Darla Weltmer

FLOWERS: Marylin Cushing

COFFEE: Ev & Shirley Kuhn

USHERS/GREETER: Sandi Pleasants, Dave & Marlene Gant, Mike Koyak

AUGUST 24

LITURGIST: Paul DeBruine

FLOWERS: Peggy Druessel

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Jim & Jodi Baldwin, Tom & Paula Cordts

AUGUST 31

LITURGIST: Alexis Fankhauser

FLOWERS: Betty Wheatley

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Frank & Shelly Smith, Sharon Burbes, Don Wenneker

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

AUGUST 3

USHER/GREETER: Sandy Harmison

REFRESHMENTS: Sandy Harmison

AUGUST 10

USHER/GREETER: Wes Pietsch

REFRESHMENTS: Wes Pietsch

AUGUST 17

USHER/GREETER: Anna Waller

REFRESHMENTS: Anna Waller

AUGUST 24

USHER/GREETER: Joe Moretti & Maureen Ruski

REFRESHMENTS: Joe Maretti & Maureen Ruski

AUGUST 31

USHER/GREETER: Ruby Voyles & Shirley Zimmerman

REFRESHMENTS: Ruby Voyles & Shirley Zimmerman



BOOKS ON CART

The books on the cart are ready to be checked out. Just take the card from the book, sign your name and file the card in the file box by the author's last name. Read the book and return it in a couple of weeks.

Alice Huebner

