

ANNUAL MEETING

February 3, 2013
10:00 AM



Newsletter

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Just send the church office your e-mail address.

Congregational Comments

Vol. 18 No 2: February 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

Congregational Comments is a publication of 1st Congregational UCC, 3465 N. MacArthur Rd., Decatur, IL. 62526
-1450. Published monthly, it is used to keep its members informed about programs of the church and to report
news about First Church's people



*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

Season of Change

Lent officially begins on Ash Wednesday, February 13th. Please join us as we participate in this Christian tradition of receiving ashes, reflecting, confessing, praying – meaningful ways to begin the 40 day period of prepar-

ing our souls for their spiritual “Springtime” awakening and new Easter growth. We may not yet feel the full warmth of the sun as there will still be some blasts of frigid air and snow, but we know that Spring is coming. A local camping trailer dealer is displaying a sign counting down of the number of weeks until Spring.

So, too, in our everyday lives the cold, sun-deprived days come – some bringing unwanted change such as illness, job loss, death of a loved one, destruction from a storm, loss of a safe place or other transition. On the worst of days it is hard to believe Spring will come again, that health will return, a new chapter of life will bring new joys, new challenges, new meaning. But new life is indeed there, it maybe hidden from view. Yet in Christ, new life will break through the hard soil of doubt and fear and make its way toward full bloom. New life may take us through unexpected places, but God is there, God helping us discover again, “who we are,” and “whose we are,” and “the joy of serving others.”

I imagine if we had nothing but Spring year round we’d eventually stop noticing it, stop being amazed by its awesome color and beauty and stop being thankful for it.

As we make it through the cold, dark days of winter toward Spring, we begin to see the first budding leaves on the trees, the tips of flowers poking up in the flower beds, the return of the certain birds, which announces this wonderful miracle of Spring. Yet if we pay no attention to our souls, or the life of the Holy Spirit within us, how can we experience the transformation of life and hope in Christ’s resurrection? The more we are aware of the beauty, grace, wisdom and love of Jesus Christ, the more we experience new life with God and all others.

So - how do we “Do” Lent? We can respond in many ways: making time for prayer and meditation, journaling, worshipping,

reading, attending Bible Study, doing acts of kindness, doing acts of justice. Take time to reflect and write what you believe about your faith. Put into words - what you believe about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, about being Christian, about the Church, and about mission (serving others). Take a look at how you relate this faith to your family, friends, church, job, God, persons in need, enemies, and as a citizen of this community, nation and world.

Waiting – whether for the earth’s annual turning to Spring or for the spiritual rebirth of Lent and Easter – need not be passive. Like other areas of life, the more you put into it, the more you get out it. Each season of our lives carries its own special beauty, its own needed grace. Being a church community means we “wait” together, not alone, and we help one another discover what God is offering us in each season of change.

*Come experience God’s amazing grace every **Sunday** in **worship 9am Traditional** and **11am Contemporary**. Our Sunday School is held during both worship services. Come join us at **10 am** in the Fellowship Hall for delicious refreshments and great fellowship! Check our great children’s and youth **LOGOS** program on **Wednesdays 4:15-7:15 pm**.*

Our new Bible Study Animate will begin soon, so check the bulletin, or church office or with me for details. Join us as we explore 7 Christian Ideas!

Pastor Dave

ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 13th - 7 PM

You are invited to take part in our special Ash Wednesday tradition. A simple **Soup Supper at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall** will be prepared and provided by LOGOS Ministries **for everyone! Call the church office by Feb 11th**, 877-2216, to help those planning the meal. Please know, even if you haven’t called, you are welcome to join us for our Soup Supper. Following the Supper **at 7 PM, we will have an Ash Wednesday Service**, which will include the tradition of imposition of ashes. Come and share in this meaningful start to our Lenten season.



God

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

2. Robert Henry
3. Judi Carpenter
William Huebner
4. Christopher Tribout
5. Rhett Beede
8. Connie Booth
Katherine Koyak
Claudia Metzger
Harriette Horn
10. Christen Taylor
11. Stephen Vaughn
12. Paul Kelley
Keith Carmichael
13. Andrew Mower
Tara Wenneker
15. Kristin Bainbridge
Rick Boldizar
Morgan Stogner
16. Shirley Ritchie
17. Nellie Brookhauzen
Clarence Elliott
Alice Roach
Hannah Cordts
Shirley Young
18. Devon Moretti
Marsha Mower
Devyn Riewski
19. Jean Hoelzen
Richard Williams
20. Benjamin Carter
Mable McCane
21. Andrew Tucker
23. Janet Mockaitis
24. Joe Flies

27. Quincy Janvrin
28. Pat Mahr

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!*

FEBRUARY

FIRST SERVICE VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 3

LITURGIST: Marilee Gordon
FLOWERS: Tom & Bette Lynn Fankhauser
COFFEE: Bill & Martha Crookshank
USHERS/GREETER: Tom & Paula Cordts, Mike Koyak & Jodi Baldwin

FEBRUARY 10

LITURGIST: Any Leman
FLOWERS: Frank & Shelly Smith
COFFEE: Mark & Susan Daley
USHERS/GREETER: Kristin Hargrove, Alexis Fankhauser, Dave & Judi Carpenter.

FEBRUARY 13

LITURGIST: Marsha Mower
USHERS/GREETER: Dave & Judi Carpenter, Todd & Christina Clark

FEBRUARY 17

LITURGIST: Sharon Burbes
FLOWERS:
COFFEE: Jim & Jodi Baldwin
USHERS/GREETER: Ted & Darby Mitchell, Darla Weltmer, Chuck Zweck

FEBRUARY 24

LITURGIST: Chuck Zweck
FLOWERS: Ted & Darby Mitchell
COFFEE: Ted & Darby Mitchell
USHERS/GREETER: Marilee Gordon, Carl Jacobs, Lindsay Malone, Frank Smith

SECOND SERVICE VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 3

USHER/GREETER: Maureen Ruski & Joe Moretti
REFRESHMENTS: Maureen Ruski

FEBRUARY 10

USHER/GREETER: Mike Koyak
REFRESHMENTS: Mike Koyak

FEBRUARY 17

USHER/GREETER: Bruce & Debbie Whitney
REFRESHMENTS: Bruce & Debbie Whitney

FEBRUARY 24

USHER/GREETER: Betty Wheatley
REFRESHMENTS: Betty Wheatley



*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and
with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.*

Luke 10:27

February

Stewards of Our Relationships with One Another:

On Holy Ground



We belong to God; we belong to one another. In his book, *Reaching Out*, Henri Nouwen tells of a reunion with a former student, an experience that revealed to him the meaning of community: "It is the Christ in you, who recognizes the Christ in me... From now on, wherever you go, or wherever I go, all the ground between us will be holy ground."¹

During February, let us walk on holy ground, practicing the radical hospitality Jesus modeled. Starting with our most personal and intimate relationships and moving through expanding circles – of friends, relations, church family, co-workers, and others with whom we come in contact – we tend to the quality of our interaction in these relationships using spiritual practices of forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, openness, honesty, hospitality, shaping communities. We widen our circle, reaching out to unknown neighbors through local and ecumenical service organizations and UCC programs and networks. We participate in the One Great Hour of Sharing special mission offering, typically promoted in churches during February and received the first Sunday in March.

As centers of hope and transformation, local churches guide people onto holy ground.



**Deadline for MARCH newsletter is Friday,
February, 15th.**

**Please email any information you would like included in the
newsletter to the newsletter editor at**

wshuebner.editor@prodigy.net

BY THE DEADLINE.

Thank you for your help!





Join the Youth Group

Youth Activities

Senior Appreciation Dinner – Another Successful Night!

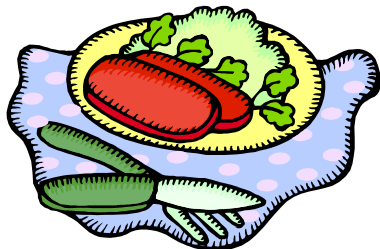
The Youth started the New Year by again honoring the senior members of our congregation. Thanks to all of our volunteers and honored guests, the dinner was once again a smashing success.

Sweetheart Dinner

On Saturday, February 16, the Youth will be hosting the Annual Sweetheart Dinner at 6:00 p.m. This event, held in Fellowship Hall, is a pasta dinner and silent auction for families. Tickets are \$5 per person or \$15 for a family (up to 5) and can be purchased from any member of the youth group, youth ministry, or ask Nancy in the church office. We hope to see you and your family and friends for an evening full of fun and fellowship.

Chili Mac, Anyone?

What is hot and yummy and is a great Super Bowl Sunday meal? CHILI MAC!! The Youth are currently accepting orders for their special, secret-recipe chili mac. Orders are \$12.50 for a half gallon. We will be accepting orders until the 31st of January.



Food Resource Bank

Kenya FRB project

Kenya Ndeiya program 1300-1104

Story: Goats Help Me Grow Younger

Farmers in Ndeiya have a tradition of rearing cattle for milk and sheep and goats for meat (usually consumed during the annual festivals). Milk and meat from these animals are sold for extra income and provide a source of nutrition for the household. However, erratic rains in Kenya and recurrent droughts have led to the reduction of pastures. Farmers have seen their animal stocks dwindle. As a result milk, which is a major source of protein, has become a rare commodity for many rural households.

The Ndeiya Integrated Food Security Project introduced the concept of rearing dairy goats for milk, trained the program participants on animal husbandry, and loaned 16 female goats to 16 households in Ndeiya. Four male goats were also procured and loaned to four households to serve the 16 nannies and upgrade the local goat breeds reared by the participating households.

Miss Wangui was among the first farmers to benefit from this loaning scheme. At present she is able to obtain a liter of milk each day from her goat, which is equal to what she used to get from her cow that died during the last drought. She describes dairy goat rearing as less tedious and easier to manage, since goats eat less than cows. She discovered that feed for one cow is enough to feed eight goats. This has left her with more time for her other chores. She concludes by saying, "Milk from the goat has already changed my life and I



feel I'm growing younger day by day".

THANK YOU

Dear Pastor Dave and Church Family,

I would like to thank you all for the prayers, visits, cards, letters and phone calls showered upon me since my hospitalization last summer. I especially enjoyed the Christmas carolers who visited me in December. I am still residing with my daughter and hope to someday be able to walk again. It is comforting to have such a supportive church family lifting me up on a regular basis.

Thank you,
Mary Lou Phipps



DECEMBER 2012 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Dec 12</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$15,739.17	\$188,870.00
Budget Expense	\$17,140.48	\$205,685.76
Income	\$19,342.04	\$203,559.21
Expenses	\$21,076.52	\$189,842.64

SUNDAY COFFEE & FELLOWSHIP TIME

Every Sunday, a dedicated group of people prepare great food between services for all the congregation. We should all give them a big THANK YOU.





You're Invited.....

Ash Wednesday Soup Supper

Wednesday, February 13, 6:00-6:45 p.m.

Fellowship Hall

*Followed by worship in the sanctuary,
7:00 p.m.*

We will be celebrating Ash Wednesday with a soup supper for our congregation and our LOGOS families. The Ash Wednesday worship service starts at 7:00, and we will invite our LOGOS families to join us for this service upstairs in the sanctuary. Our LOGOS schedule for this evening will be adjusted to accommodate the worship service. Your RSVP will help us plan for dinner, but is not required.



Sponsored by
LOGOS Ministry



THANK YOU

WOW What a fantastic turnout we had to get the Christmas decorations back in their storage space. We had 31 volunteers who made the job look like child's play and we did it in a record 40 minutes. Now that is what working together can do for all of us. The youth plus their sponsors carried all the boxes down to the main floor a couple days before we took everything down and the remainder of the work was completed by the following volunteers: Joe, Devon, and Malone Moretti, Erica Moster, Dave Carpenter, Alyssa, Gary, and Kathy Baker, Dr Beede, Todd, Christina, Tucker and Zoey Clark, Martha Crookshank, Mark and Jeanette Flenner, Al and Ann Gerhold, Debbie Moster, Andrew and Marsha Mower, Wes Pietsch, Robert Ruehrup, Frank Smith, Bobbi Taylor, Ruby Voyles, Shirley Zimmerman, Chuck Zweck, Evertt and Shirley Kuhn, Clarence and Carolyn Elliott.

Worship Music Ministry wishes to thank all those individuals who helped with the hanging and "unhanging" of the greens. We could not have done it without you.

SAVE THIS DATE

March 16, 2013

*Adult Program Ministry is planning a
night of fun and fellowship.*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service					1	2
3 10:00 Annual Congregation Meeting	4	5 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	6 7:30 Adult Choir	7 5:45 First Ringers	8	9
10 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service	11 6:00 Worship/ Music Ministry 7:00 Super	12 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	13 6:00 LOGOS Soup Supper 7:00 Ash Wed	14 5:45 First Ringers	15	16 6:00 Sweetheart Dinner
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 4:15-7:15 LOGOS 7:30 Adult Choir	21 5:45 First Ringers	22	23
24 9:00 Traditional Service 11:00 Contemporary Service	22	26 1-3:00 God's Busy Hands. 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	27 4:15-7:15 LOGOS 7:30 Adult Choir	28 5:45 First Ringers		

FEBRUARY