

# Congregational Comments

Vol. 19 No 2: February 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*

## **From the Pastor**

What a wonderful day Valentine's Day is. Where did it come from? One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Valentine Day is a day dedicated to the positive feelings of the heart...one day of the year to contemplate the wonders of love. The glorious truth is that God unconditionally shares God's love with us every day. We see the wonders of God's love for us in nature, listening to good music, pondering new ideas, reading scriptures. We can see examples of love in family and friends and other people. We can even feel God's love in our own hearts. We experience God's love and forgiveness through Jesus' ministry and when he gave his life on the cross so that we might have life. We need to be open to receiving God's love and willing to share it in our actions of compassion and joy with others. Like Jesus and St. Valentine, our faith and love calls us to take risks as we seek to love boldly and doing justice with others.

1 Corinthians 13 is called the Love Chapter of the Bible. This chapter is often read at weddings because it teaches about LOVE. It says, "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous." I hope you take time with your Bible and read this chapter, and more. This short phrase shows us that our lives are not perfect. Our love is not always patient and kind, and sometimes we are

jealous. Yet in the reality of our imperfection, God loves us, forgiving and empowering us to live and love beyond our imperfections, sins, and limitations. We can have **NEW LIFE** because Jesus shows us the way. *“Love one another as I have first loved you.”* Make a holy difference with your life – let Christ’s love flow through you in loving actions that help others.

Come join us at First Congregational UCC as we come together to experience God’s love and to live that love with one with another.

**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 for Children and Youth’s Sunday School and **11:00AM** for our **Contemporary Service**. At **10:00AM** we have our faith growing **Bible Study opportunities for adults**. Also at **10:00AM** **discover a new friend** or renew a current friendship by visiting over **delicious refreshments** in Fellowship Hall.

Check our great children’s and youth **LOGOS** program on **Wednesdays** 4:45-7:15 pm.

Come grow with us in faith and love.  
In Christ’s Love,  
*Pastor Dave*



# Senior Appreciation Dinner January 18



**Our Seniors**



**Nancy and Don**



**Joe, Maureen and Marsha**



**The Cooking Staff, Joe, Roel Villanueva & Maureen**

# THANK YOU

Dear Friends of First Church and beyond,

I want to thank you for your caring prayers, kind words and thoughtful cards for my family and I during this time of grief. These expressions of kindness have given us strength and comfort knowing that we go through this time with your caring support and with God's uplifting Spirit.

My sincere thanks to Marsha Mower, to Admin members, Rev. Mark Schleeter and many of you for your supportive work enabling our First Church ministry's to continue to provide what is needed during my grief leave.

What happened?

James Everett Taylor, my Dad (in Largo FL), on Sunday, Dec. 29th had severe back pain and activated his Life Alert button and he was taken to the hospital. He was diagnosed with Sciatica and was treated with pain medication. They also discovered of a slow heart beat that they addressed with medication. Doctors indicated that he was doing fine and would be released to a rehab/nursing care facility. He was transferred Friday evening to the care facility. Dad and I talked after he was settled and he sounded good – I teased that I was going to send him a box of snow and he laughed. The next morning Jan 4th 6 AM the nursing staff found Dad breathing shallowly and was unresponsive. They called the paramedics and he was “coded” more than once on their return to hospital. He was in a coma. The hospital staff did all they could – but determined that he had suffered significant brain injury. Sat. afternoon, Jan. 4th after having conversations with the medical staff – per Dad's request through his Living Will - we made the decision to discontinue the heroic medical measures . He died peacefully. We give thanks for Dad's life. We give thanks that Dad is past all illness and death and he is with God in life eternal. Mom and Dad had been married 66 years. Dad chose to live, alone, the last 2 1/2 years in their home, making his own decisions – not moving to an assisted living facility. He lived life “his way.” We will have a family time of faith and remembrance for Dad soon. Your prayers for our family during this time are greatly appreciated.

Thank you again for your caring support.


In Christ's Spirit,  
Pastor Dave Taylor

## **Adult Bible Study**

"God Is Still Speaking" Adult Bible Study will be discussing the weekly seeds from the UCC web site from Feb 2 through March 9. On March 16 we will begin a yet to be determined Bible study. If you would like to join us, the weekly seeds can be found at <http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/weekly-seeds/>. Any suggestions as to what Bible study you would like to participate in beginning March 16 would be gladly accepted. Just let Sandy Harmison know. This group meets Sunday mornings at 10:00 AM until 10:50AM in room C.

## **Meal on Wheels Volunteers**

Meal on Wheels Volunteers -- First Congregational Church has been scheduled to help deliver Meals on Wheels the weeks of May 19 - 23 and September 1 - 5. Please mark these weeks on your calendars. Sue Bunselmeyer will be in touch with you when she gets the route list closer to those dates. Catholic Charities now requires all delivery volunteers to agree to a State of Illinois background check. This requires volunteers to fill out and sign several forms. If you have already filled out this information for Meals on Wheels, it will not be necessary to do so again. Anyone who would like to help with the delivery of Meals on Wheels is welcome; just let Sue (877-5926) or the church office (877-2216) know of your interest. Thank you for supporting the Meals on Wheels program.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
<b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>10:00 Fellowship</b> <b>Hour</b> <b>11:00</b> <b>Contemporary</b>			
<b>2</b>  <b>Pastoral Care</b> <b>Card Sale</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>  <b>1:00 God's Busy</b> <b>Hands</b> <b>5-9:00 Cordts FH</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>5</b>  <b>4:15-7:15</b> <b>7:30 Adu</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>6:00 Worship/</b> <b>Music Ministry</b> <b>7:00 Super</b> <b>Monday</b>	<b>11</b>  <b>1:00 God's Busy</b> <b>Hands</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>12</b>  <b>4:15-7:15</b> <b>7:30 Adu</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  <b>7:00 Church</b> <b>Council</b>	<b>18</b>  <b>1:00 God's Busy</b> <b>Hands</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>4:15-7:15</b> <b>7:30 Adu</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>1:00 God's Busy</b> <b>Hands</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>26</b>
			



	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1
5 LOGOS ult Choir	6 5:45 First Ringers	7	8
5 LOGOS ult Choir	13 5:45 First Ringers	14	15 5-10:00 Sweet Heart Dinner
5 LOGOS ult Choir	20 1:00 Book Club 5:45 First Ringers	21	22
	27 5:45 First Ringers	28	
			



## DECEMBER 2013 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Dec 13</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<b>Budget Income</b>	\$17,568.17	\$210,818.00
<b>Budget Expense</b>	\$17,685.50	\$212,226.00
<b>Income</b>	\$27,035.24	\$200,117.97
<b>Expenses</b>	\$20,756.62	\$191,477.76

# THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST WHO WE ARE

Our faith is 2,000 years old. Our thinking is not.

We believe in God's continuing testament. This is why we are committed to hearing God's ancient story anew and afresh in our lives and in the world today. We try to remain attentive to God's creative movement in the world. Religion and science are not mutually exclusive, and your head and heart are both welcomed into our places of worship. We prepare our members and leaders to be engaged in ministry in the present and future church, and we embrace all kinds of communities and new modes of thinking. Why? Because God is still speaking,

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

We believe in extravagant welcome. This is why we insist that God's communion table is open, not closed, and God's gift and claim in baptism are irrevocable. We advocate justice for all. Our congregations extend hospitality as a sign of God's inclusive love. We teach that evangelism — offering bread to those in search of it — is God's mission. Our perspective is global, not provincial. We work with — not against — people of other faiths. Why? Because God is still speaking,

Never place a period where God has placed a comma.

We believe the church's mission is to change lives — individually, systemically and globally. We work to make transformation possible, but trust in God's grace. This is why we insist that churches must be places of vitality in worship, learning and advocacy. We are committed to working for justice, and we believe that lives are changed through global experiences and friendships. Why? Because God is still speaking,



Join the  
Youth Group

# Youth Activities

## Sweetheart Dinner

On Saturday, February 15, 2014 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 between services in Fellowship Hall, youth ministry, or ask Kapora in the church office. We hope to see you and your family and friends for an evening full of fun and fellowship. All proceeds will be used for the 2014 youth Mission Trip to Daytona Florida in July.

## SUPER BOWL

It will soon be time for **THE SUPER BOWL**. You can't stop it, so you might as well get prepared for it, and the Youth Group has a great idea. On February 2, 2014, if you are having a party or just relaxing in your arm-chair, why not enjoy the game with a big plate of **Chili Mac** prepared for you by our very own Youth Group. You can even pick it up between services that morning.

The Youth will be taking orders between services in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 26. You can also call the Church office (877-2216), email Joe Moretti at [ajmo40@comcast.net](mailto:ajmo40@comcast.net), or tell any Youth Ministry member how much you need by January 30 and it will be ready for you on February 2.

All proceeds will go toward the Youth Mission Trip in July 2014.

## Senior Appreciation Dinner

The youth of our church and the youth from the United Methodist church of Moweaqua served a wonderful dinner for 42 senior members of our church on January 18. Thank you to the youth from the United Methodist church for helping our youth put on this dinner. This was the fourth 'Celebrate Our Seniors Dinner' put on by the youth of our church. We may not have a large youth group in our church, but they do put a lot of work in the things that they do. We should all be very proud of them..





*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
8. Katherine Koyak  
Claudia Metzger  
Harriette Horn
10. Christen Cantrell
12. Keith Carmichael
13. Andrew Mower
15. Rick Boldizar
16. Shirley Ritchie
17. Nellie Brookhauzen  
Clarence Elliott  
Alice Roach  
Hannah Cordts  
Shirley Young
18. Devon Moretti  
Marsha Mower
19. Jean Hoelzen
20. Benjamin Carter  
Mable McCane
21. Andrew Tucker
23. Janet Mockaitis
27. Quincy Janvrin
28. Pat Mahr
29. J. Thomas Pleasants

## **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!*



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

**FEBRUARY 2**

**LITURGIST:** Darla Weltmer  
**FLOWERS:** Debby Beal  
**COFFEE:** Ted & Darby Mitchell  
**USHERS/GREETER:** Women's Fellowship: Martha Crookshank, Paula Cordts, Ellen Starace, Alice Huebner

**FEBRUARY 9**

**LITURGIST:** Chuck Zweck  
**FLOWERS:** Howard & Nancy Beede  
**COFFEE:** Don & Stacy Carter  
**USHERS/GREETER:** Darla Weltmer, Jim & Jodi Baldwin, Sandi Pleasants

**FEBRUARY 16**

**LITURGIST:** Marilee Gordon  
**FLOWERS:**  
**COFFEE:** Mark & Susan Daley  
**USHERS/GREETER:** Sheila Mannweiler, Dave & Judi Carpenter, Kristin Hargrove

**FEBRUARY 23**

**LITURGIST:** Bill Huebner  
**FLOWERS:** Ted & Darby Mitchell  
**COFFEE:**  
**USHERS/GREETER:** Marlee Gordon, Jim & Jodi Baldwin, Sandi Pleasants

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

**FEBRUARY 2**

**USHER/GREETER:** Sandy Harmison  
**REFRESHMENTS:** Sandy Harmison

**FEBRUARY 9**

**USHER/GREETER:** Ruby Voyles/Shirley Zimmerman  
**REFRESHMENTS:** Ruby Voyles/Shirley Zimmerman

**FEBRUARY 16**

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

**FEBRUARY 23**

**USHER/GREETER:** Betty Wheatley  
**REFRESHMENTS:** Betty Wheatley



