

# Congregational Comments

Vol. 20 No 1: January 2015

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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**

Happy New Year!

I hope your Christmas was wonderful, your days filled with friends, family and time to enjoy the season. Bobbie and I want to thank everyone for

all the kind wishes, cards and gifts.

As you may be aware, some of our members have had a tough time over the holidays, a few have had hospital and hospice stays, and others have had family members or themselves dealing with serious illness. Please remember these loved ones in your prayers in the coming days.

We have now begun the season of Epiphany, which means to make manifest, to reveal. As the colorful Christmas lights come down, the window candles get put away, and the cold grey sky of January sets in, it is up to us to keep watch for the light, within and all around us. Where is God's Word-made-flesh showing up in the cracks and crevices of our lives? How can we be bearers of the light in our relationships, our work, in the challenges and hopes of this New Year?

Take on something new: get out of your comfort zone and come to a Sunday morning class or a Bible Study, explore new areas of your faith, help another in a new way, come to worship more often. Throughout the coming weeks and months, there will be a variety of opportunities for you to enhance your spiritual well-being. I hope you will join me in making your spiritual life a main priority for 2015.

Frederick Beuchner once wrote something to the effect '*that once Jesus has shown up in a manger there's no telling where he may show up next*'. In these winter days, let us keep our eyes open and discover anew the presence of Christ everywhere.

In the season of Epiphany, we are especially watchful for God's revealing light. To be attentive to the Spirit is to learn to

carry the light of Christ with us always, no matter what the road may bring. Join us at First Church as we seek to be transformed by Christmas – not just for a month, but every day.

**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.** We also have a **faith growing Sunday School and Bible Study opportunities for children, youth and adults.** Also at **10:00AM discover a new friend** or renew a current friendship by visiting over **delicious refreshments** in Fellowship Hall.

May you have a blessed, healthy, peaceful, joyous, Spirit-filled New Year!

Yours in Christ's Spirit,  
Pastor Dave

## **CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS**

A special Thank You to all our Decorators, the Sanctuary is beautiful and very much appreciated.

Dave and Marlene Gant, Ev and Shirley Kuhn, Clarence & Carolyn Elliott, Bette L. Fankhauser, Keith & Paula Carmichael, Ted and Darby Mitchell, Robert Ruehrup and Chuck Zweck.

The Youth that moved all our decorations from the attic storage. Lunch was served by Shirley Kuhn, Marlene Gant and Carolyn Elliott

January 4th, at noon, we plan to remove the Christmas decorations and place them back in attic storage. Please help with this project.

Thank you, Worship Life/Music Ministry

# Pindai Sithole

Dear Pastor Dave & Brethren at First Congregational Church,

I greet you in the name of our Lord. I write you with great happiness that on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Dec 2014, I graduated with a Doctorate Degree in Development Studies at Witwatersrand University, South Africa. I have enclosed a copy of my degree and a few photos for your convenience. My wife (Abigail) and I cordially invite you all to my graduation party at our house in Harare this Saturday, 20 Dec.

I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, express my heartfelt gratitude for your prayers and support during my undergraduate studies at Millikin University and in 2011 when I underwent head surgery. Indeed, I am a living testimony. May our Lord continue to bless you.

Warm regards,

## **Pindai Sithole, PhD**

Director & Senior International Development Consultant

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## New look for old chairs



The committee to update the look in the parlor/lounge thanks the Women's Fellowship for the financial support of upholstering the two wing-back chairs. The chairs have a new fabric, new cushions and polished wood on the legs. Fabric scraps from the chairs have been saved to coordinate with new window treatments (which is under consideration now) to make a pillow for each chair. If you have not seen the improvements, please take a tour of the "new" lounge.

Paula Cordts, Peggy Druessel, Alice Huebner

# CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Christmas Pageant

Sleepover at the Stable: A Christmas Musical

Music and lyrics by: Christy Long, Script by Douglas J. Eboch

Donkey: James Huckile

Goats: Mitchell Daley and Gehrig Bunselmeyer

Cow: Andrew Mower

Sheep: Grace Stanley

Pigs: Stratus Roberts and Sable Roberts

Chickens: Lexi Oliver, Logan Roberts, Noah Harmison, Kaden Roberts, Jacob Harmison,

Logan Moster and Cameron Malone

Angel Choir: Mya Lofland, Isaiah Janvrin, Quincy Janvrin, Chase Lem-an and Emery Bunselmeyer

Angel Choir Led by: Jillian Daley

Special thanks to Jillian Daley and Erica Moster for leading the Angel Choir and helping with music and scripts. Many, many thanks to Susan and Mark Daley, Robert Ruehrup, Carol Robertson, Pat Mahr, Jeanette and Mark Flenner, Sandy Harmison and Marsha Mower for your time and dedication to helping everyone with pageant practices. Most importantly thank you to the parents, grandparents and families for sharing your children with us, they are a great blessing to our church. How blessed we are to have them share the birth of our Savior with us. Merry Christmas and a blessed new year!

Our sincere thanks to Mindy Bunselmeyer and her talented team for sharing their talents, love and leadership enabling our children to share the story of Christ's birth with us today.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
			
<b>4</b>  <b>Pastoral Care Card Sale</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 AA: Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>7:30 Cho</b>
<b>11</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>10:00 Fellowship Hour</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary</b>	<b>12</b> <b>5:30 Admin</b> <b>5:30 Worship/ Music Ministry</b> <b>7:00 Property M</b>	<b>13</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 AA: Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>14</b>  <b>4:45-7:15</b> <b>7:00 Cho</b>
<b>18</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>10:00 Fellowship Hour</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>7:00 Church Council</b>	<b>20</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 AA: Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>21</b>  <b>4:45-7:15</b> <b>7:00 Cho</b>
<b>25</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>10:00 Fellowship Hour</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 AA: Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>4:45-7:15</b> <b>7:00 Cho</b>



	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
	<b>1</b> <b>NEW YEARS DAY 2015</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
ir	<b>8</b> <b>5:45 First Ringers</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>5:00 Senior Dinner</b>
5 LOGOS ir	<b>15</b> <b>1:15 Book Club</b> <b>5:45 First Ringers</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
5 LOGOS ir	<b>22</b> <b>5:45 First Ringers</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Adult Program to be announced</b>
5 LOGOS ir	<b>29</b> <b>5:45 First Ringers</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>



**NOVEMBER 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT**

	<u>Nov 14</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<b>Budget Income</b>	\$15,672.57	\$172,398.27
<b>Budget Expense</b>	\$17,414.05	\$191,554.55
<b>Income</b>	\$20,011.88	\$181,085.16
<b>Expenses</b>	\$13,403.54	\$178,661.59

# LOGOS THEMES 2014-2015

## JANUARY

- 7 - LOGOS (Staff?)
- 14 - Opposites
- 21 - Board Games
- 28 - Super Bowl

JANUARY 2015						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## FEBRUARY 2015

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

## FEBRUARY

- 4 - Animal Friends
- 11 - NO LOGOS
- 18 - Ash Wednesday
- 25 - Hooray for Hollywood

## MARCH

- 4 - Colors of the Rainbow
- 11 - Spuds 'n Suds
- 18 - NO LOGOS
- 25 - March Madness

MARCH 2015						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## APRIL 2015

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## APRIL

- 1 - Autograph T's
- 8 - FINAL Banquet

LOGOS meets 4:45 - 7:15pm, unless otherwise noted.



## MITTEN TREE

Our Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall was filled with wonderful warm gifts. We delivered 34 scarves, 97 gloves and mittens, 42 hats, 8 blankets, 3 pair of slippers, and 1 pair of ear muffs to DOVE to include in their Christmas baskets. Thank you to all for your gracious and generous donations to make others' winter a little warmer.

# Youth Activities

**Mark your calendars now for the months of January and February for two great Youth events.**

## **2015 SENIOR APPRECIATION DINNER**

On January 10, 2015, dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for those who are in the '60 and Over crowd'. Please join us so we can show you that we appreciate the support that you give the Youth of this church.

Please RSVP to the church office (877-2216) or to Joe Moretti at [ajmo40@comcast.net](mailto:ajmo40@comcast.net) by January 5, 2015. Please let us know when you RSVP if you will need a ride.

## **Sweetheart Dinner**

On Saturday, February 14, 2015 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 will go on sale in February. 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 2015 youth Mission Trip to Bayou LaBatre Alabama.

## **Adult Program News**

Our annual Progressive Dinner put everyone in a holiday mood. Our thanks to Chris and Amy Leman who hosted appetizers, Mark Bunselmeyer who prepared prime rib for the carving station, and Bill and Alice Huebner, our dessert hosts. It was an enjoyable night and no one went home hungry

**THANK YOU** to all who went Christmas caroling on December 14 Missy and Rick Boldizar, Judi Carpenter, Ashley and Mya Lofland, Marsha Mower, Carol Robertson, Mark Schleeter, Joe Seitz, Terry Stoa, Pastor Dave Taylor and Chuck Zweck. We visited 15 people and had a spirit-filled afternoon. Blessings to all!

**Opportunity to Help:**

We have a family in our church who is in desperate need of a reliable older-model used vehicle. The two most important things are reliability, as they cannot afford to have it fixed every few weeks and it needs to comfortably seat four adult-size people. We are reaching out for two reasons - to see if you have, or know of anyone who has, a reliable "oldie but goodie" vehicle that needs a new home and would be willing to donate it to this family; or you can make a monetary gift to First Congregational UCC with "Car Fund" in the memo area of your check. Any assistance you can give would be much appreciated, especially as the winter weather approaches and transportation becomes more of an issue. Thank you for your caring spirit and generosity. Blessings, Pastor Dave Taylor

**Annual Reports for 2014** – Due no later than January 10, 2015 for pastor, officers, ministries, committees and other organizations. Please get these written and sent into the church office (with a copy to Marsha Mower) as soon as possible, but no later than January 10<sup>th</sup>. (THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 2014 FOLKS!)

## **GIVING ENVELOPES**

When you receive your 2015 envelopes in the mail, some of you may notice you have a different number than in 2014. Don't panic if you think you may have received the wrong packet. We did not order as many envelopes this year and, consequently, numbers had to be re-assigned. Your past contributions will carry over to your new number.



*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. Emily Beck
4. Alice Huebner  
Laura Gerhold
8. Ross Hartman
10. Paul DeBruine  
Wallace Reifsteck  
Kathy Richardson
11. Carolyn Elliott  
Joshua Smith
13. Ann Gerhold
14. Ellen Henry
15. Ted Michell  
Jerome Scherer
19. Gloria Cheatham  
Betty Johnson
20. Gary Sawyer
21. Charles Stringer
22. Homer Leoucis
23. Ned Cummings  
Susan Daley
25. Marlene Gant
26. Mark Daley
27. Russell Tiede
29. Carol Blackwell  
Shirley Zimmerman

## **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. William & Martha  
Crookshank
20. Mark & Jeanette Flenner



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

**JANUARY 4**

**LITURGIST:** Marsha Mower

**FLOWERS:** Poinsettias

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Sandi  
Pleasants, Don & Dee Wenneker,  
Marilee Gordon

**JANUARY 11**

**LITURGIST:** Melinda Redman

**FLOWERS:**

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Jim & Jodi  
Baldwin, Pat & Margie Malone

**JANUARY 18**

**LITURGIST:** Marilee Gordon

**FLOWERS:** Mark & Jeanette  
Flenner

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Ted & Darby  
Mitchell, Sandi Pleasants, Dave  
Carpenter

**JANUARY 25**

**LITURGIST:** Bobbie Taylor

**FLOWERS:** Mark & Susan Daley

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Al & Ann  
Gerhold, Marilee Gordon, Mike  
Koyak

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

**JANUARY 4**

**USHER/GREETER:** Mark &  
Jeanette Flenner

**REFRESHMENTS:** Mark &  
Jeanette Flenner

**JANUARY 11**

**USHER/GREETER:** Betty  
Wheatley

**REFRESHMENTS:** Betty  
Wheatley

**JANUARY 18**

**USHER/GREETER:** Howard &  
Nancy Beede

**REFRESHMENTS:** Howard &  
Nancy Beede

**JANUARY**

**USHER/GREETER:** Joe Moretti/  
Maureen Ruski

**REFRESHMENTS:** Joe Maretti/  
Maureen Ruski



# WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship met in December for their Annual Christmas Gathering and had a wonderful "Cookie Exchange"~~~~for those of you who had to miss, you really missed out on some delicious cookies. We played a game that stumped some of us. Winners were Judi Carpenter, Ellen Starace, Marlene Gant and Kathy Moore.

Officers will remain in office for another year.

We voted to send \$500.00 to Hoyleton Children's Home - our own UCC Children's Home - for our Christmas giving this year. For those of you who aren't familiar this is a home for children about 50 miles east of St. Louis area. It is funded by UCC Churches and I am glad we are one Church involved in this. We donated in memory of Ida Koelling, Ruth DeBruine's mother.

The Officers will be meeting in January to plan out 2015 activities and if you have any suggestions for a program or place to visit please let any of us know. We welcome suggestions. Plans in the future..."our annual rummage sale". Save up those great items for us!! AND when we come up with a date, keep that week free...please!

Advisors Norma J. Lingenfelter, Ellen Whitrock  
Treasurer Martha Crookshank  
Secretary Ellen Starace  
Vice President Sandi Pleasanats  
President Darla Weltmer

## THANK YOU

We wanted to say a big "thank you" again to everyone who donated to our Christmas shop.

We made a little over \$400 which will be used to help purchase preschool supplies.

Thanks to Sue Bunselmeyer for coordinating our shop.

We had our Christmas program "The Littlest Tree" and the kids did a terrific job!

