

# Congregational Comments

Vol. 19 No 7: July 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*

### **ESSENTIAL OF LIFE**

Is one of your summertime chores mowing the grass? Often when I mow, the temperature is in the 80's or 90's, and by the time I'm done, I'm HOT, sweaty, and thirsty. The fridge has many choices of drinks: soft drinks, lemonade, tea, milk, you name it; yet when I'm hot and thirsty, the one thing I crave most is just a tall glass of ice cold water.

Now, we all know that there is nothing quite as good for us as pure water. It helps the body to better do its job. Water makes up greater than 2/3 of the weight of the human body; the brain is 75% water, blood is 83% water, bones are 22% water, muscles are 75% water, and the lungs are 90% water. Water helps wash the junk and toxins out; it helps maintain health by making sure all the essential nutrients get to where they're supposed to go. That's why medical professionals tell us to drink so much of it every day...*"Drink eight - 8-ounce glasses of water a day." That's about 1.9 liters, which isn't that different from the Institute of Medicine recommendations.*" (Mayo Clinic website).

But you know how it is. You get busy and there doesn't seem to be time to get a drink of water. Or sometimes you look at the glass of water and think, *"Nothing special about that."* You think how much you'd rather have something else, something that looks really good and tasty; so we try to satisfy our thirst with coffee, soft drinks, smoothies, maybe even beer or wine. But all the while, something deep within us cries out for the real deal – good, pure water. Nothing will feel right until we get it.

That doesn't just apply to what we drink. Sometimes we can get thirsty in life. Sometimes we begin wondering if there is really more to it: if it's possible to be happier, more content, more satisfied?

Psychologists tell us that many Americans today are unsatisfied. They don't think there is anything they can do to change their lives for the better.

Often times pain comes in our lives when we're empty. It may not be our stomach that is empty, but our hearts. Sometimes we have a thirst deep down inside and we try to satisfy that "thirst"

with material things, nice houses, cars, clothes, shoes, stimulants, gambling, other people, or other distractions. They all look good for a while, but that kind of fulfillment never lasts. Perhaps we think our happiness depends entirely upon us.

If you've felt that way, there is good news for you. There REALY IS MORE! It is really possible to live a full life, one filled with more joy, faith and strength.

The life that God has for us to live is a lot like a glass full of water. It's refreshing, it's good for you, and it satisfies your thirst in a way that nothing else can. It's something we have to take in daily to be happy and healthy. The Psalmist describes it this way: "*You, O Lord, anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. <sup>6</sup> Surely\* goodness and mercy\* shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.*" Psalm 23:5-6

Often we get so caught up in our daily lives that we only talk (pray) to God occasionally. We become so accustomed to our state of spiritual dehydration that we don't realize how far we have drifted from God.

The Bible urges us to seek God. Isaiah 55:6 says, "Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near." We are to seek, to intentionally devote all our time, energy, and effort into coming into God's presence and joyfully serve God and all people.

Do you seek God daily? When you have a decision to make, do you seek God's direction? When you need comfort, do you seek God's presence?

That's where abundant life is found. When we're willing to believe that, there is more to this life, and God is the only One who can provide the way. If you give God more of yourself, you will receive more of God. With this comes that sense of satisfaction, abundant joy, and peace.

The "good life" begins with recognition of your thirst in life and your willingness to satisfy it in the "pure living water" of Jesus Christ's love and truth for you and all humanity.

"Jesus said, *I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me.*"

On another note - while the choir is on hiatus for the summer, good music certainly isn't! Every Sunday we are being blessed with a wide variety of musical talent.

I do hope you will plan to be here for worship when you are in town. And as always, the offering plate tends to suffer a bit during the summer months, so please remember your giving and support for First Church.

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. Interesting Adult Bible Studies are also happening.

Come join us as we bring our thirsty hearts and minds to God who fills us up and sends us out to make a holy difference.

In Christ's Spirit,

*Pastor Dave*

## **CLEANUP BUCKET REPONSE**

Our church collected **5** Clean Up Buckets each one of them containing 14 cleaning items. These buckets were delivered to our Annual Conference Meeting in Springfield, IL to Church World Service. These buckets will be greatly appreciated by those who have experienced devastation such as flooding and tornadoes to their homes. These buckets say, *God cares and we care about them too.* THANK YOU for your generosity. A Thank You to Jillian Daley for helping Pastor Dave in organizing and packing our buckets. WELL DONE!!



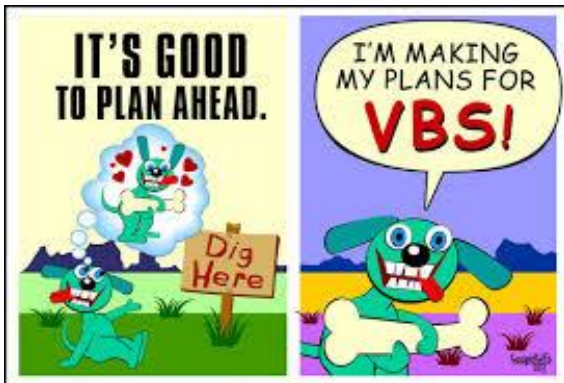
## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

**We celebrate the marriage Jessica Robertson and Bryan Wegman** **They were** united in marriage on May 24, 2014 We offer our best wishes to them for many happy and loving years together in marriage. May God continue to bless them this day and through out their lives.

# VBS 2014

**VBS 2014 at First Church is less than a month away!** Plans are moving along, with volunteers making commitments to this year's program. Special thanks to Children's, Evangelism and Outreach Ministries for their support. It promises to be another action-packed, fun-filled week at *Weird Animals – Where Jesus' Love Is One-of-a-Kind*. We will meet Axl, Fern, Milton, Shred and Iggy as they help us with our daily Bible Point, Story and Key Verse. We will have a wonderful week that will help kids (and adults) experience and be empowered by all of the unexpected and, yes, weird ways that Jesus demonstrated unconditional love.. The dates are Sunday, July 20 – Thursday, July 24 from 6:00-8:30, with the preschool children having the option of leaving at 8:05 and **hopefully** dinner available for the volunteers at 5:15.

Areas of need include: Volunteer/Staff Meals and someone to take the lead on set-up before and take-down after. Please let us know right away if you can help in these areas. THANKS! Co-directors Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski



## OUR SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to the family and friends of Gale Hill who was called home to life eternal on June 7, 2014. We give thanks to God for the gift of Gale Hill's life and that she is with Jesus Christ in life eternal. Please remember Gale's family which include Eddie and Teresa Goller, Kathy Richardson and friends in your prayers and caring ministry.

# VISITATION LIST

Here is a list of people in nursing homes or shut ins. A card, visit or phone call is always a joy to them.



Lois Shelton  
Primrose Retirement Community  
1145 W. Arbor Dr., Apt 104  
428-7527

Claude Young  
Primrose Retirement Community  
1145 W. Arbor Dr., Apt 228

Marieanna Poland  
Keystone Meadows  
1415 W. Mound Rd., Apt 402  
877-5327

Mary Lou Phipps  
Hickory Pt. Christian Village  
565 W Marion Av. Apt 210  
422-0467

Bob Henry  
Veteran's Home in Quincy

Charles/Ann Stringer  
Eagle Ridge  
875 W. McKinley Av., Apt 132  
872-1282

Harriette Horn  
Imboden Gardens  
185 W. Imboden, Apt 120  
362-9391

Celeste Ritter  
Imboden Gardens  
185 W. Imboden, Apt 210  
233-1425



Phyllis Campbell  
Next to Fairhaven Nursing Home  
1212 Fairhaven Ct.

Doris Nees  
Eastern Star Home  
Macon, IL 62544

Alice Roach  
Vonderlieth Living Center  
1120 N. Topper Drive  
Mt. Pulaski, IL 62548  
217-792-3218

Gladys Alburdis  
722 Karen Dr.  
877-3459

Ramona Borders  
651 Karen Court  
877-2963

Ames Hofstetter  
4724 Arbor Court

Carolyn Strong  
12542 W. Pheasant Ridge Drive  
Huntley, IL 60142  
847-515-2936

Adam Wicklund  
3865 E. Cantrell St.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
		<b>1</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 Adult Choir</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>6</b> <b>Pastoral Card Sale</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary Worship</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 Adult Choir</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>13</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary Worship</b>	<b>14</b> <b>5:30 Admin</b> <b>7:00 Property</b>	<b>15</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 Adult Choir</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>20</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary Worship</b>  <b>6-8:30 VBS</b>	<b>21</b> <b>6-8:30 VBS</b>	<b>22</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>6-8:30VBS</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>23</b> <b>6-8:30 V</b>
<b>27</b> <b>9:00 Traditional</b> <b>11:00 Contemporary Worship</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>1:00 God's Busy Hands</b> <b>7:00 Al-anon</b> <b>8:00 AA</b>	<b>30</b>



Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5
10	11	12 <b>Guy's Night Out</b>
17 <b>1:15 Book Club</b>	18	19
24 <b>6-8:30 VBS</b>	25	26
31		



## MAY 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>May 14</u>	<u>YTD</u>
<b>Budget Income</b>	\$15,672.57	\$78,362.85
<b>Budget Expense</b>	\$17,414.05	\$87,070.25
<b>Income</b>	\$15,264.05	\$86,843.23
<b>Expenses</b>	\$20,420.61	\$87,513.72

## Adult Program News

**Guys' Night Out** – Mark your calendars for July 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00. Adult Program Ministry is hosting the First Congregational Pinewood Derby Invitational. Gentlemen have the option of racing last years' car (with or without modifications), starting all over again with a new model, or just coming to enjoy the race. We are making this years' event an invitational. Ladies of all ages are welcome to build a car and participate. Car kits will be available when you purchase your tickets.

Dinner will be served at 6:00, followed by the race. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for 12 and under. Call Alfreda Tribout (877-9896) with any questions.

**Help** – We are missing 8 rectangular burgundy tablecloths. Please check your closets and your laundry room to see if you may have taken them home to wash and forgotten about them.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to these First Church volunteers who helped deliver meals the week of

May 19:

Ev and Shirley Kuhn

Dave Taylor

Charles Zweck

Clarence and Carolyn Elliott

Bill and Alice Huebner

Dave and Marlene Gant

Gary and Pat Weiss

Meals on Wheels always needs more volunteers to deliver meals. Volunteers work in teams of 2 (usually one driver and one runner). Meals are picked up at Decatur Memorial Hospital about 10:15 AM and each route includes detailed directions and instructions for each home. Routes require about an hour for delivery. Our church's next week to deliver meals is September 2 - 5. Volunteers can work one day or every day. If you think you may have time to help with this rewarding service and you have not already signed up on the time and talent sheet in last fall's stewardship packet, please contact Sue Bunselmeyer, 877-5926.

# 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

July 14-19 We have four kids attending church camp this week at Pilgrim Park in Princeton, IL. They will experience a creek walk, swimming, and worship at the cross along with many other activities to enhance their lifetime involvement with God, camp family, and friends. Please keep these campers in your prayers for a safe journey throughout the week. Interested individuals who would like to help support the church camp scholarship fund can make their check payable to the church and put the word CAMP in the memo. Any donations are greatly appreciated.

July 20-24 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL Children's Ministry invites your child to experience a great week where they will meet Axl, Fern, Milton, Shred, and Iggy. The children will learn that Jesus' love is one of a kind.

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.

September 7 RALLY DAY Children's choir and Sunday school will start today as well as our annual Rally Day festivities.

# THANK YOU

Dear friends at First Congregational,

Thank you SO much for allowing us to stay in your building during our mission trip. We appreciate your hospitality.

In God's Love,

Jessica Lofu and the Youth of Community UCC,  
Champaign, IL



## CHURCH DIRECTORIES

Church Directories were recently printed and available for pick-up. You can pick up a church directory a) in the narthex/coat rack area next to the the sanctuary, or b) in Fellowship Hall or c) in the church office. Please follow the instructions on the box of directories. Printing a directory is always a "work in progress" because information changes daily. However, due to many "newbies" working on the church membership records this past year, there may be some things that need correcting. We ask you to please be patient, check your information and let us of know of any errors or changes. We will update the database and print another directory sometime in the future. Thanks for your help! Admin Ministry



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

1. Toni Longstreet
4. David Brown
5. Joe Seitz
6. Shirley Kuhn  
Nancy Leoucis
7. Robert Blackwell  
Cole Mitchell  
Gerald Ruff  
Darla Weltmer
13. Christina Clark
14. Jack McGinnis
15. Carl Jacobs  
Charles Zweck
16. Albert Wilson
19. Lindsay Malone
21. Ellen Whitrock
19. Doris Jacobs
20. Zoey Clark
21. Anna Waller
26. Hayley Bunselmeyer  
Alexis Fankhauser
27. Sharon Burbes
28. Lois Shelton

## **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!*

3. Dale & Beverly Capshaw
7. Harold & Sandy Harmison  
Jerome & Elizabeth Scherer
9. Christopher & Amy Leman
19. Mark & Melinda Bunselmeyer
24. Nicholas & Sally Lauer
25. Robert & Carol Blackwell  
Richard & Sheila Mannweiler



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

**JULY 6**

**LITURGIST:** Ellen Starace  
**FLOWERS:** Mark & Jeanette  
Flenner

**COFFEE:** Peggy Druessel &  
Marylin Cushing

**USHERS/GREETER:** Gary & Pat  
Weiss, Jim & Jodi Baldwin

**JULY 13**

**LITURGIST:** Judi Carpenter  
**FLOWERS:** Gerry & Peggy Ruff

**COFFEE:** Tom & Paula Cordts

**USHERS/GREETER:** Ted & Darby  
Mitchell, Dave & Marlene Gant

**JULY 20**

**LITURGIST:** Mindy Bunslemeyer  
**FLOWERS:** Todd & Christina  
Clark

**COFFEE:** Sandi Pleasants

**USHERS/GREETER:** Kristin  
Hargrove , Mike Koyak, Dave &  
Pat Mahr

**JULY 27**

**LITURGIST:** Carol Robertson  
**FLOWERS:** Gehrig & Emery  
Bunselmeyer, Chase & Quinn  
Leman

**COFFEE:**

**USHERS/GREETER:** Sandi  
Pleasants, David Carpenter, Todd  
& Christina Clark

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

**JULY 6**

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

**REFRESHMENTS:** Jeanette  
Flenner

**JULY 13**

**USHER/GREETER:** Ashley  
Lofland

**REFRESHMENTS:** Missy  
Boldizar

**JULY 20**

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

**REFRESHMENTS:** Bruce &  
Debbie Whitney

**JULY 27**

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

**REFRESHMENTS:** Howard &  
Nancy Beede





# READING TO YOUR GRANDKIDS

Here is a list of just a few of the books that grandparents can check out to read to their grandchildren or the grandchildren can read to themselves. These books are found on the book cart in the Fellowship Hall. Just put your name on the card in the book and leave it in the file box. Thanks to members for the donation of the cart and the books on the cart!

Here are some books appropriate for Infants & Toddlers:

Furry Friends

Little Boy Jesus

Jonah – Bible Pop-up

My First Book of Bible People

Baby Moses

For Pre-School Ages:

Dear God, Thanks for your Help

Jesus Heals a Blind Man

For Elementary Ages:

A Children's Book about: Gossiping, Being Mean or Being Wasteful

Arch Books – Jesus, 12 Disciples

Habitat Books – Grandpa's Hammer

For Junior High Ages:

Today's Heroes – David Robinson

Lord, I Want to Tell you Something

Just in Case You Ever Wonder by Max Lucado

Heart to Heart by Sandra Byrd

For Grandparents and Parents:

102 Questions Children Ask about the Bible

God Knows how to Raise your Kids, even if you don't

Creative Correction by Lisa Whelchel

Alice Huebner

