

Congregational Comments

Vol. 19 No 6: June 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

WHAT A DIFFERENCE!

"When the day of Pentecost arrived all the believers were gathered together in one place... They were all filled with the Holy Spirit."

Pentecost - What a difference! Prior to Pentecost, the first Christians were puzzled about the meaning of Easter, the resurrection, and were fearful that their association with Jesus would bring the wrath of the authorities on them. Then God's Spirit brought power, light, and courage to them.

What about today? We, too, need a dependable source of power to empower us. Our culture says wealth, a great job, a physically fit body, sellable skills, relationships of power; even fear and greed are sources of power. We remember the children's song, "The foolish man built his house upon the sand, and the house came tumbling down." These sources of power are incomplete, short-lived, and even deadly. - What is your source of power?

What vision and spirit empowers and guides you? Pentecost celebrates God's empowering people like you and me with the Spirit of Christ. Peter was afraid of being linked with Jesus after the crucifixion. After he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he preached boldly to thousands of people and was even arrested for his bold witness. With this Spirit he "kept on going."

Pentecost shows us in Christ's Spirit, a source that never fails and keeps on going. Like past Eveready commercials, the Eveready bunny suddenly appears in other commercials "Still going"; God's Spirit is continually appearing and calling us to faithfulness in new and unexpected places, exciting and challenging ways.

I have seen that power in the yelps of joy from little ones as they found their Easter egg surprises; as our musicians inspired us with awesome Easter music; as we enjoyed the delicious Easter Breakfast and visiting; as some of our members took colorful bits of yarn and cloth and knitted them into amazing blankets of love; as chil-

dren had a great time at LOGO'S Mexican Banquet day. All these things are happening AND MORE because people – like you and me – allowed God's Spirit to do amazing things. Let God use you – today and every-day!

We, like many other UCC churches, we have also discovered that there are people from all walks of life, hungering to hear that message: that whoever you are, no matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. **On June 8th we will celebrate Pentecost Sunday by wearing red** clothing items, celebrating the renewing presence of the Holy Spirit. As we enter this season, my prayer will be that the Spirit will continue to enliven, sustain, and surprise us as we continue to follow the way of the risen Christ.

God's Spirit brings power today to each of us as individuals, within our church and beyond. We receive power:

- to love others in concrete ways as we have felt God's love;
- to forgive others as we have experienced God's forgiveness;
- to share yourself in caring relationships;
- to provide food to the hungry;
- to visit the lonely, in their home or nursing home;
- to help the Church be a living witness through specific actions of faith and compassion;
- to spend less on ourselves and share more with others;
- to share your talents and gifts with others -- with music, art, conversations, letters, sewing, cooking and more; children can draw a picture and share it;
- to seek and help provide new opportunities for the disadvantaged and oppressed;
- to stand with persons in times of crisis;
- to minister to the sick;
- to visit the imprisoned;
- to live and be witnesses for the risen Christ.

How is God's power being lived out in your life? How are you making a Holy Difference with your family, church family, school mates, neighbors, co-workers and strangers?

Christ's Spirit is alive within us and around us! Live today in the Pentecost Spirit that surprises all of us with new hope and possibilities; and in whom that Holy Spirit ("Still Going") power fills our lives with God's amazing love and truth and mission!

Share God with someone today!

See you in Church and in our community!

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 **11:00AM** for our Contemporary Service. *We have creative Sunday School and Bible Study opportunities for children, youth and adults. At 10:00AM discover a new friend or renew a current friendship visiting over delicious refreshments in Fellowship Hall.*

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Dave

Our Sympathy and love for the family of Marshall Susler who passed from this life to life eternal in Jesus Christ. Marshall was Maureen Ruski's father. We remember Maureen, Joe, Devon and Malone and Marshall's family in our prayers.

Our Sympathy and love for the family of Maurine Boyer who passed from this life to life eternal in Jesus Christ. Maurine was a longtime member of our church. We remember Maurine's family in our prayers

Our Sympathy and love to Tom, Bette and Alexis Fankhauser on the passing of Tom's mother. We give thanks for her life and for Jesus leading her to life eternal. We remember Tom, Bette, and Alexis and their family in our prayers.

We pray God's blessings and comfort be with all who have loved Marshall, Maurine and Tom's mother. Amen.

VACATION TIME

Pastor Dave and Bobbie will be on vacation from June 27- July12. The worship leader for June 29th has yet to be determined and Rev. Paula Carmichael will be leading worship on July 6th. Please call the church office Kapora Boone 877-2216 and Tom Cordts 877-9080 with any church concerns. For pastoral care emergencies you may call one of our church leaders and Rev. Mark Schleeter at 875-5119.

Our Women's Night Out event was a wonderful success! A BIG Thanks to our preparers, servers, cleaners, presenter, and participants.

IS CHURCH CAMP ON YOUR SUMMER CALENDAR?

There is still time to register for a great time at church camp event. Registration information is available by going to <http://www.ilucc.org/> - [the Illinois Conference website]. Click on the **Outdoor Ministries** line – then click on the **poster of outdoor ministries** which will show you the summer programs that are available.

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE
ANNUAL MEETING – June 13-15

You have an opportunity to learn more about our UCC Church by attending part or all of our Illinois Conference Annual Meeting Celebration. to be held **in Springfield, IL Crowne Plaza Hotel**. The Conference is celebrating being 50 years “young.” For more information go to **<http://www.ilucc.org>**/ click on “**Join Us for Our 50th**” button. You can also contact Pastor Dave for more information.

A BIG THANK YOU FOR
ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!

We THANK all our LOGOS and Sunday School teachers, ministry members and helpers for helping our students learn more about their faith and a job - WELL DONE! **We also want say to our families, parents, grandparents and students - THANK YOU** for making faith a priority in your life and life of your children and youth.

Our thanks to all our all of you, church family, for making faith education a vital priority and for remembering our Christian Education and LOGOS programs in your prayers and through your caring support of time, talents and money.

MUSIC SUNDAY WAS OUTSTANDING!
OUR SINCERE THANKS!

A BIG THANK YOU to the members of our Vocal and Handbell Choirs and Laurie Matheson and Bette Fankhauser for their dedication and wonderful talent. Our thanks also to Laurie Matheson for serving as our gifted organist.

A BIG THANK YOU to the members of our First Praise Band and tech team and to Rick Boldizar for their great talents and dedication. Be sure to tell all our gifted musicians...”well done!”

Also a BIG Thank You to all our ministry members such as Worship and Music, whose efforts throughout the year helps make First Church a great place to worship. You are all appreciated so very much! Please take a moment to express your thanks to these folks for their gifts.

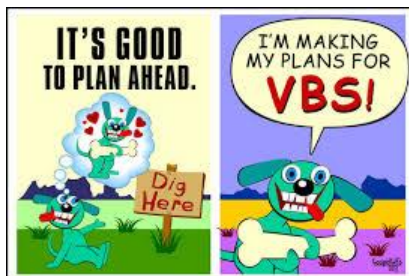
VBS 2014

VBS 2014 at First Church is less than two months away! Have you been thinking and praying about your involvement in this year's VBS program? It promises to be another action-packed, fun-filled week. Plans are moving along, with volunteers making commitments to this year's program. We still have some spots open and are looking for YOU to help us make it another successful year. As we have the past few years, we want to make this a church-wide endeavor, involving as many people and ministries as possible. We are committed to reaching out to children in our church family and the community. So, don't miss out on this opportunity to be involved!

Our theme is *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 dinner available for the volunteers at 5:15.

Areas of need include: Adult Assistants for Imagination Station, Critter Cafe (snacks) and Ozzy's Preschool Park; Crew Leaders and Assistants to shuttle the children through the events each evening; Registration; Decorations; possibly Child Care; Volunteer/Staff Meals and sound/digital projection tech. We need someone to take the lead on set-up before and take-down after. Those children who complete 6th grade this school year are invited to join us as Assistant Crew Leaders. We also have "staff spots" for mature and responsible Jr/Sr High youth to assist in the various areas. Closer to time, there will be opportunities for you to donate food and/or items that will be used during the week. Look for more information on that soon.

Please let us know as soon as possible where you will help. THANKS! Co-directors Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski





FIRST CHURCH
FOODS RESOURCE BANK
GROWING PROJECT

It's time to start our 2014 FRB growing project!

Can you believe this is our 9th year to be a part of the Foods Resource Bank program?

As in past years, a church member has donated 5 acres of farmland for the project and has volunteered the equipment and labor to plant, care for, and harvest a corn crop for our project. Now church members have the opportunity to "sponsor an acre" by giving cash to cover the cost of the input expenses of our corn crop. The proceeds from the harvest will be sent to a Foods Resource Bank sustainable food program that our congregation selects. We will choose from 62 FRB programs supporting families in small villages in 34 countries around the world...growing lasting solutions to hunger! One hundred percent of the money that we send is passed on to the program that we have selected. Nothing is held out for overhead. Our 2013 growing project provided \$6,415.33 to help people in Kenya.

This year's cost of planting our project is \$427.50 per acre--\$3 less than last year's cost (and you thought prices always go up). The breakdown per acre is:

- \$ 142.00 for seed
- 196.00 for fertilizer
- 32.00 for herbicide
- 25.00 for fungicide
- 22.50 for diesel fuel
- 10.00 for crop hail insurance

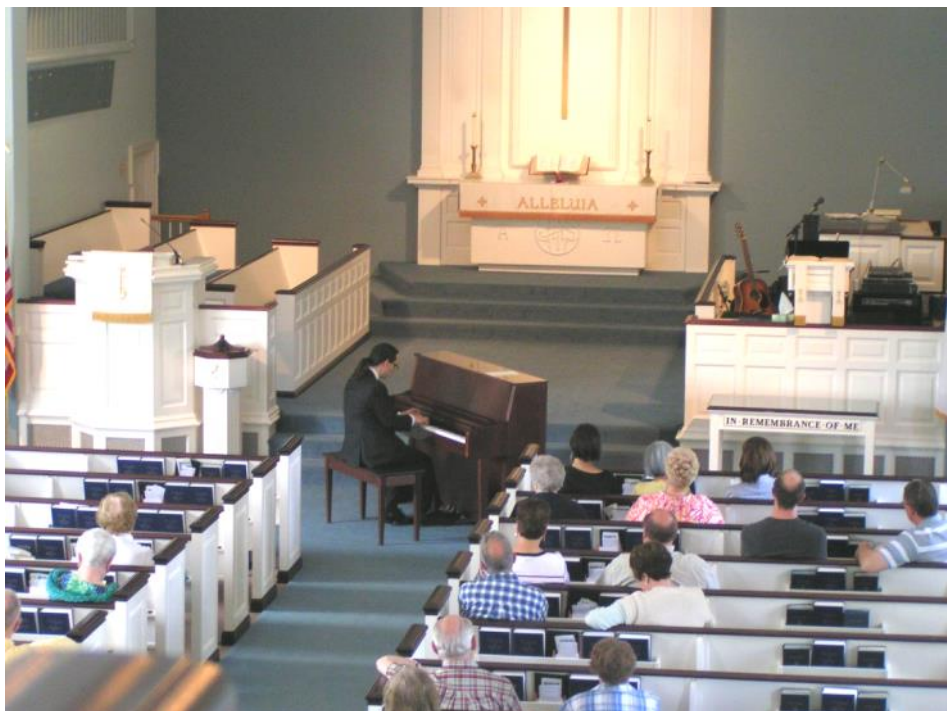
Therefore, the total amount needed to plant our corn crop this year is \$2137.50. Our current crop is planted and you can see the green spikes coming up as you look down the rows.

If you would like to make a donation to help pay the cost of planting this crop, donation envelopes can be found on the bulletin boards and in the pews and may be placed in the offering baskets or delivered to the church office. Please make your check payable to First Congregational UCC, and indicate that it is for our FRB growing project.

Thank you for helping with our Foods Resource Bank growing project which will help people in some of the poorest parts of the world to experience the dignity and pride of feeding themselves and their families.

Chris Reyman's Piano Recital

April 26, 2014




Father & Son



Reception after the Recital



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
1 Pastoral Card Sale	2	3 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	4 7:30 Cho
8	9 5:30 Admin 6:00 Worship/ Music 7:00 Property	10 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	11
15	16 7:00 Church Council	17 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	18 Setup for Rummag
22	23	24 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	25
29	30		

	Thu	Fri	Sat
ir	5	6	7
	12	13 Champaign Youth Group	14
r e Sale	19 1:15 Book Club Setup for Rummage Sale	20 Women's Fellow	21 ship Rummage Sale
	26 6:00-8:00 Praise Band Invitational	27	28



LADIES' NIGHT OUT MAY 9, 2014



Photos by Dave Carpenter



HELP US ASSEMBLE CLEAN UP BUCKET KITS

The Illinois Conference Disaster Team is asking that each church prepare and deliver one or more Clean Up Bucket kits. These supplies enable people to begin the overwhelming job of cleaning up after a flood, hurricane, tornado, or other disaster here in the United States.

We are asking you, our church family, to go to the narthex near the coat rack or Fellowship Hall to the Clean up Bucket Sign up sheet and select and sign up for the items as you want to donate. **Bring** them to church. There will a collection table and box in the coat area in the church narthex or you can leave them on the bench/box outside of the church office. The collected donations will be assembled into Emergency Cleanup Bucket kits and delivered to our Annual Conference meeting. **Please have donations to the church by Monday, June 9th**. A list of needed supplies for the Clean Up Buckets is available from the church office or Pastor Dave. If you wish to make a monetary donation please make it out to First Congregational UCC – (put “Cleanup Bucket” in the memo area). We will deliver them to our Annual Conference Meeting June 13-15th.

Thank you for your help.

THANK YOU

Thank you so very much for all the caring thoughts, prayers and cards during our recent loss. Your kindness is most appreciated.

Tom, Bette Lynn, Alexis Fankhauser and Holly Hamilton.

Thanks,
Bette Fankhauser

YOUR HELP IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!!!!

Any items for the bulletin need to be submitted to the church office no later than Wednesday at noon, to give our office staff time to format and print the weekly bulletins. Thanks in advance for your assistance!



APRIL 2014 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>April 14</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$15,672.57	\$62,690.28
Budget Expense	\$17,414.05	\$69,656.20
Income	\$16,911.08	\$71,579.18
Expenses	\$12,331.92	\$67,093.11

Adult Program News

Ladies' Night – We would like to thank Chef Don Carter and his kitchen crew (Howard Beede, Bob Bunselmeyer, Dave Carpenter, Todd Clark, Mark & Mitchell Daley, Ev Kuhn, Chris Leman, Robert Ruehrup, Frank Smith, Pastor Dave Taylor, Charlie Tribout, and Chuck Zweck. The dinner was delicious and a good time was had by all. Mike King gave us a lot of information on how to improve our health with herbs. It was a great night, and we appreciate all of those who shared your time and talents with us.

Guys' Night Out – Save the date! Guys' Night Out will be held July 19th. Back by popular request ... the First Congregational Pinewood Derby! Watch the July edition of Congregational Comments for more information

WOMAN'S FELLOWSHIP RUMMAGE SALE AT THE CHURCH COMING IN JUNE

Remember, as you are spring cleaning your house and closets, to remember that Women's Fellowship is having their Annual Rummage Sale June 27 and 28. We can start collecting at the Church June 1st if you just have no place to store your tems. Place to be announced later.

We will be setting up on Wednesday June 25th and Thursday June 26th and need everyone to think about helping us. We need tables set up, racks gotten out of the furnace room, boxes of items to display on the many tables, etc. etc. etc. We will have a general meeting and lunch for everyone on Wed. but we do need your reservation PLUS we need your help all or some of those 4 days in June.

Mark your calendar NOW and avoid making any appointments those 4 days! May we count on you??



Youth Activities

Praise Band



**Praise
Band
Invitational**

On Thursday, June 26th from 6 – 8 pm the Youth will be hosting the first-ever "PRAISE BAND INVITATIONAL" at First Congregational United Church of Christ. We have invited a variety of solo musicians, ensembles, and Praise Bands to join our Praise Band under the pavilion for a night filled with music, fun, and fellowship. The Youth will be offering a \$5.00 dinner. Everyone is invited to come listen and enjoy the music. Any questions, please contact Joe Moretti @ 217-433-0522 or Pastor Dave at the church.
COME ONE, COME ALL!

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!

PRAISE in the PARK

Monticello Christian Academy's 9th Annual PRAISE in the PARK
Sunday, June 8 from Noon to 7:00 p.m. Forest Preserve Park, Route
105, Monticello.

Bring your lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy a wonderful day of live Christian music at our 9th Annual PRAISE in the PARK! The grills will be fired up with pork chop sandwiches and hot dogs - we will also have sno cones, popcorn, fun games, balloons, and a BIG bounce house! Schedule to include worship and contemporary music, artists included: Pearl Blind, Forest Preservers Band, Crossroads Band, Captain Keith and the Blue Potatoes, Meadowbrook Community Church Band, and Methodist Church Band! Come out and enjoy this wonderful fundraising event!

For more information, please call the MCA office at (217) 762-3544 or check out our web page at: www.mcacad.org

DOVE Report:

Delegates Madeline Mitchell and Shirley Zimmerman attended DOVE's Annual Meeting on Monday, April 28 at the First Presbyterian Church. Ruth DeBruine was also in attendance. Dinner was served, election of officers was held and followed with a program presented by Jim Walters, DOVE Executive Director. Mr. Walters outlined a capitol campaign addressing some of the needs DOVE faces such as a roof repair, 3 buildings needing upgraded lighting so as to meet code. A much needed repair to the door at the Simcox Conference Center as well as the ramp to that entrance is included in this list of needs. They run 43 computer systems, 17 which have Windows XP. This system is obsolete as of April and has an estimated cost of \$10,600 to replace those 17 programs. Updated technology is needed in the Simcox Center so that DOVE can rent out the space for additional revenue. The estimated cost for the capitol campaign improvements they need is approximately \$120,000.00. DOVE is not only asking for donations but they are asking for our help to inform the community of their needs.
Shirley Zimmerman



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. Patricia Weiss
Reed Cordts
3. Stacey Carter
6. Mark Flenner
8. June Lindsten
Madeline Mitchell
10. Dee Wenneker
15. Bernice Woodhall
Wallace Lorey
Mary Lou Garfield
19. Harold Harmison
21. Jamie Hill
22. Penny Kotal
23. Ann Stringer
24. William Hickman
25. Allen Gerhold
26. Sue Bunselmeyer
27. Paula Carmichael
30. Bonnie Ruecker

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!*

1. William & Alice Huebner
Robby & Kathy Moore
2. Frank & Shelly Smith
7. Tom & Bette Lynn
Fankhauser
8. Paul & Ruth DeBruine
Terry & Heather Stoa
10. David & Brandi Brown
11. Todd & Christine Clark
12. Ronald & Sherry Palmer
14. Bruce & Debbie Whitney
16. Nathan & Natalie Harmison
17. Tom & Penny Kotal
19. Roger & Janice Kahila
20. Ron & Bonnie Ruecker
22. Russell & Janet Tiede
26. Clarence & Carolyn Elliott



FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

JUNE 1

LITURGIST: Chuck Zweck
FLOWERS: Kim Withrow
COFFEE: Sheila Mannweiler
USHERS/GREETER: Sheila Mannweiler, Gary & Pat Weiss, Chuck Zweck

JUNE 8

LITURGIST: Darla Weltmer
FLOWERS: Ron & Sherry Palmer
COFFEE: Sandi Pleasants
USHERS/GREETER: Everett & Shirley Kuhn, Tom & Paula Cordts

JUNE 15

LITURGIST: Alexis Fankhauser
FLOWERS: Gary & Kathy Baker
COFFEE:
USHERS/GREETER: Paul & Ruth DeBruine, Marilee Gordon, Kristin Hargrove

JUNE 22

LITURGIST: Dee Wenneker
FLOWERS: Allan & Ann Gerhold, Ron & Bonnie Ruecker
COFFEE: Dave & Marlene Gant
USHERS/GREETER: Bill & Martha Crookshank, Pat & Margie Malone

JUNE 29

LITURGIST: Sharon Burbes
FLOWERS: Mable McCane
COFFEE: Ted & Darbe Mitchell
USHERS/GREETER: Bill & Martha Crookshank, Pat & Margie Malone

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

JUNE 1

USHER/GREETER: Sandy Harmison
REFRESHMENTS: Sandy Harmison

JUNE 8

USHER/GREETER: Wes Pietsch
REFRESHMENTS: Wes Pietsch

JUNE 15

USHER/GREETER: Betty Wheatley
REFRESHMENTS: Betty Wheatley

JUNE 22

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

JUNE 29

USHER/GREETER: Anna Waller
REFRESHMENTS: Anna Waller



