

Congregational Comments

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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 Mother's Day – May 12th!
Mothers are important part of what makes up a family. We give thanks for their love, encouragement and caring support.

Families today are more likely to look different from one another than before. You can have one parent, or two, or none. You can have 3 or 4 parents, if you count the "steps", and oodles of grandparents, including, if you are lucky, the neighbors. A family can be 1 person or many members. I saw a T-shirt that announced, "A family is a circle of friends who love you." I thought, yes that's true - sometimes a circle of friends who love you is a family.

Lots of family circles are connected by love and nurture most of the time. Often those bonds mature into overlapping circles where relatives are friends. But some families are trapped together by tangles of lies and violence, anger and abuse. And some family attachments are so fragile that they hardly exist, or so painful that they can't go on.

Our family is our first experience with living in community. If we are fortunate, we learn to receive and give love, to hear and listen, to experience success at trying new things, to follow rules, to be challenged, to forgive and be forgiven, and to move confidently into larger communities: the church, the schools, the neighborhood, and eventually, the world. We are both blessed and cursed with families. No one can irritate us more than a relative. Families bring us the deepest joy - - and the greatest pain.

There has never been only one kind of family. The Bible shows us lots of kinds: Adam and Eve and their tragic sons; the extended, intriguing family of Jacob, Rachel and Leah; the gracious sisters and brother, Mary, Martha and Lazarus; and the households, complete with slaves, baptized by Paul.

"What is a family?" is not the crucial question. The harder question that confronts us all the time, no matter how our families are shaped, is this: "What do I do in this particular family?"

Dolores Curran's says these are some of the traits commonly present in healthy families..

- communicates and listens;
- affirms and supports one another;
- teaches respect for others;
- develops a sense of trust;
- has a sense of play and humor;
- exhibits a sense of shared responsibility;
- teaches a sense of right and wrong;
- have a sense of family rich in rituals and traditions;
- has a balance of interaction among members;
- has a shared religious faith;
- respects the privacy of one another;
- values the service to others;
- fosters family table time and conversations;
- shares leisure time;
- admits to, and seeks help;
- helps others observe guidelines;
- works at problem solving rather blaming one another;
- challenges/encourages one another to be the best one can be;

A family can be as small as one person, or as encompassing as the whole family of God. When you make peanut-butter sandwiches, help with homework, play a game, help another follow the rules, teach a teen to drive, give a comforting hug, call a lonely friend, squeeze a fearful hand or cut the toenails of someone who can't do it anymore...God is nurturing life through you.

All families have problems. Not even the best ones completely live up to God's dreams for what they could be. Families can be where Christ brings us God's love and unconditional acceptance.

Families, even "church families", can be intimate learning places, prime places to practice forgiveness, healing, maturing and to work at being merciful and loving. Families are places where, by God's grace, we can give each other fresh starts and renewed hope.

Creating, nurturing, forgiving, renewing... by God's grace we're all in this together as members of God's family. As we are loved so may we love each other. Our prayer is "God help us to be a 'loving family' to one another as You have loved us. Amen.

Come join us at First Church on Sundays at 9 & 11 am for worship, and 10 am for Sunday School, fellowship and refreshments as we discover together what it means to be part of God family.

In Christ's Love, *Pastor Dave*

WHAT IS LOVE? by Bernice Ross

L **Love** is found in **Life** as we **Listen** to the calls of many who are in need. We can become **Leaders** as we **Learn** and are **Liberal** in sharing our time and talents to help others. Just **Lend** a hand wherever you can.

O We need to **Observe** the needs around us. Indeed, our **Originality** and **Opportunities** will guide us, and God will give us strength, as we **Open Ourselves** to **Others**.

V It is **Vital** to step out and **Volunteer** to serve. Let us **Vigorously** answer the call to **Vocalize** God's Word and use our **Variety** of gifts in God's service.

E May we be **Eager** to give **Effective** help as we **Express** God's LOVE through words & deeds.

In Honor of Mothers

A Mother...

When you're a child she walks before you,
To set an example.

When you're a teenager she walks behind you
To be there should you need her.

When you're an adult she walks beside you
So that as two friends you can enjoy life together.

GOT GRADUATES?

We want to celebrate with you! Let the church office know if you, your child or grandchild is graduating from high school, college or graduate school this Spring. We will seek to honor our graduates at an upcoming worship service.

PENTECOST MAY 19th – Our Music Sunday

We, like so many other UCC churches, have also discovered that there are many people from all walks of life, hungry to hear that message: that whoever you are, no matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. On May 19 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.

ADULT PROGRAM MINISTRY

Easter Breakfast

Thanks to all sixty of you who got up early and joined us for Easter breakfast. A special thanks to our kitchen angel, Marlene Gant.

Ladies' Night Out

May 10, 6:00"

"Here Comes the Bride"

In honor of Mother's Day, Adult Program Ministry invites ladies of all ages to an evening of fun and fellowship. We will begin at 6:00 with dinner, followed by an entertaining program, "Here Comes the Bride", presented by Nancy Torgerson. You are invited to bring a wedding photograph to share. This could be from your own wedding or even a friend's or relative's. Tickets cost \$10 for adults and \$5 for little ladies 12 and under and are available in the office during the week or in Fellowship Hall between services on Sunday. You may also call Alfreda Tribout (877-9896) for reservations or more information.

Guys' Night Out

Coming up next...Guys' Night Out, the Pinewood Derby edition. The details are still being finalized. See June's newsletter for more information

Kroger Gift Cards

We are still participating in the Kroger fundraiser. In fact, this fundraiser earned over \$700 for the church last year. If you haven't been participating, you first get a \$20 gift card from Jeanette Flenner . You then add any amount of money to that card at the Kroger service desk Because the card is registered to our church, we get 3% of all money added to it. The card is used just like any gift card. If you shop at Kroger you could be earning money for the church quite painlessly. You may contact Jeanette at jflenner@yahoo.com to arrange your purchase.

Decatur Area Church Women United

The Decatur Area Church Women United will meet Friday, May 3rd at the Church of the Brethren, 4415 N. Water Street (Crestview Christian Worship Center) at 1:00 for their May Friendship Day Celebration. Behold, I stand at the door and Knock "Swinging Wide the Doors of Hospitality" is the theme for this Celebration. All are invited to attend this Celebration. For further information, contact Darla D. Weltmer, 877-7008 is a member of Church Women United and represents our Church.

Meals on Wheels Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

All Meals on Wheels volunteers are invited to a Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast on Wednesday, May 15, from 8 AM to 10 AM at the Decatur Memorial Hospital Classrooms ABC. Please enter through the front lobby. No reservations are necessary.

THANK YOU

Thank you for all the prayers, phone calls and cards. They are much appreciated while I am recuperating. There was a little set back last week with new blisters appearing on my legs, so we are waiting for those to heal so testing can occur to see what needs to be repaired or replaced. Quoting Virgil, "Perhaps some day it will be pleasant to remember even this."

Ann Gerhold

MARCH 2013 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>March 13</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$17,568.17	\$52,704.51
Budget Expense	\$17,685.50	\$53,056.50
Income	\$17,403.22	\$50,663.07
Expenses	\$19,938.82	\$47,628.99

Pentecost Sunday

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19, we celebrate the birth of the church. We know this story as recorded in the Book of Acts: *“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit...” Acts 2:1-4*

Peter quotes the prophet Joel to the startled crowd: *“In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” Acts 2:17*

What vision does God have for our church? What does God dream for the many people who are still seeking and yearning for a little love, a little hope, and a reassuring word; people who have not heard the Pentecost message of the unconditional love of our still speaking God?

Each year, we receive a special offering called Strengthen the Church, that invests in the vision. As God calls our congregations to be “church” in new ways, your gift will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Because of this offering, many more will hear the good news that “God is still speaking.”

We will receive this offering on May 19 – the birthday of the church – Pentecost Sunday. I invite you to celebrate by giving to Strengthen the Church.

Thank you,
Outreach Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
<p>Church Services</p> <p>9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contemporary Worship</p>			<p>1</p> <p>7:30 Adult</p>
<p>5</p> <p>10:00 Pastoral Care Card Sale</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7:00 Adm Meeting 7:30 Adult</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13 Memorial Committee 6:00 Worship/Music 7:00 Super Monday</p>	<p>14</p> <p>1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA</p>	<p>15</p> <p>11-8:00 P mates Gr tion FH and S ary 7:30 Adult</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Music Sunday</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 Church Council</p>	<p>21</p> <p>1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA</p>	<p>29</p>

	Thu	Fri	Sat
Alt Choir	2 5:45 First Ringers	3	4
Alt Choir	9 5:45 First Ringers	10 6:00 Ladies' Night Out—FH	11 Wedding Phillips/Young
Alt Choir	16 8-1:00 Playmates Picnic 1:00 Book Club 5:45 First Ringers	17	18
	23	24	25
	30	31	



VBS 2013

July 21-25

Sunday through Thursday

6:00-8:30 p.m.

**All Children age 3 through completed 5th grade are invited to attend!
(preschool children have the option of leaving at 8:05 p.m.)**

SAVE THE DATES for VBS 2013 at First Church! I hope you have 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 taking shape, but we are still looking for YOU to help us make it another successful year. Serving as co-directors this year are Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski. We have a few people that have already committed to join us, but will need lots of additional help to make this a wonderful experience for all involved. 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 *Kingdom Rock - Where Kids Stand Strong for God*. We will meet Truman, Duke, Swift, Sir Valiant and Victoria as they help us with our daily Bible Point, Story and Key Verse. We will have an amazing experience that will help kids (and adults) explore God's incredible love for his children. The dates are Sunday, July 21 - Thursday, July 25 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 (\$3 per person, per evening).

Areas of need include: Adult Leaders for Imagination Station and Tournament Games; Adult Assistants for Chadder's Royal Theatre & Missions, Imagination Station, The King's Kitchen (snacks), Tournament Games and Pip's Preschool Palace; Crew Leaders and Assistants to shuttle the children through the events each evening; Registration; Decorations and possibly Child Care. We will need help with 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.

Monetary donations are always a blessing to help defray costs. We are planning for 65 children this year, with a cost of approximately \$25.00 per week (\$5 per day), per child. We want to provide for any and all children that wish to participate. We encourage you to sponsor a child (or children) for this year's program. Checks should be made payable to First Congregational Church, with a memo for VBS 2013.

Included in the program again this year is a mission project. This year, we will purchase "God's Love for You" Bible books - a kid-friendly Scripture piece, written in Hindi - that will be sent to children in India. Throughout the week, our VBS participants will interact with the Bible books and during the family craft time on Thursday evening, the books will be personalized.

And of course, we always need your prayers. For more information, contact VBS Co-Directors Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski. THANKS!

Dear Church Family:

This year I was blessed to teach the 4th Grade Bible Study LOGOS class. During the year we studied Heroes of the Bible. One of the things we learned about was the building of the temple in Jerusalem and the subsequent deterioration of the temple. We discussed how the temple fell apart because the early Christians stopped worshipping God so they didn't care how the temple looked. My class discussed this and decided to take a tour of our own church. They decided that they should be responsible for the upkeep of our church too. They chose to spend one class time washing walls in the downstairs hallways and washing chalkboards in the classrooms. This could be enjoyed by everyone from church. And then they decided to spend another class time cleaning their classroom and putting up a new bulletin board and decorations.

I am so proud of all they have learned this year.

Stacey Carter - 4th Grade LOGOS Bible Study Teacher





*Join the
Youth Group*

Youth Activities

THANK YOU

The Youth of First Congregational United Church of Christ want to thank you for your continued support. The Soap Drive for Dove was a huge success and will help many people in our community, and thank you for the support you show as we continue to raise funds for our mission trip and youth activities.

SAVE THE DATE!

First congregational UCC and the youth group will once again be hosting the Decatur Park Singers and Young Park Singers this summer on Thursday June 20th from 6-8 pm! We invite everyone to join us for a fun filled evening of entertainment and fellowship.

Donations for the Park Singers Event

The youth group will be running the concession stand as a fund raiser for the Park Singers event and would greatly appreciate donations of bottled water or soda. Thank you and we hope to see you at the event!

Youth Can Collection Campaign

The youth are collecting aluminum cans this summer to raise money for Youth Activities. We are going to make it easy for you to help us. All you have to do is drop off your aluminum cans behind the church on Sunday morning, and the Youth will store them until we get enough to take in. Put your cans in a plastic bag or even a paper bag and place them in the designated area behind the church near the fire escape. The youth will do the rest. We want to thank you in advance for helping to support the Youth of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

THANK YOU!!
2012 - 2013 LOGOS FAMILIES and VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to everyone who helped make our eleventh year of LOGOS at First Church a HUGE success. Thanks to the support of our congregation, our volunteer staff and our families, we touched the lives of many young people and adults, building life-impacting faith-based relationships.

Our Families – Davis/Maxedon, Harmison, Hawkins, Huckile/Richardson, Malone, Ruski/Moretti, Moster, Pope, Schilling/Puckett, Roberts and Warner

Bible Study Teachers - Bruce Whitney and Pastor Dave Taylor; Stacey Carter; Sharon Burbes and Harold Harmison

Kitchen Coordinators - Sheila Mannweiler and Maureen Ruski

Dinner Dean - Marsha Mower

Table Parents - Sandy and Harold Harmison; Katy Koyak and Robert Ruehrup; Dave and Pat Mahr; Debbie Whitney and Chuck Zweck

Table Guardians (Substitutes) - Sharon Burbes; Gary and Judy Sawyer

Recreation Leaders - Joe Moretti and Chuck Zweck

Worship Skills - Jeanette and Mark Flenner; Mindy Bunselmeyer

The Lounge at LOGOS (Jr/Sr High) - Dave Carpenter, Joe Moretti, Carol Robertson and Katie Slingerland

Greeters - Pat Mahr and Marsha Mower

Bingo - Sharon Burbes

Floater - Sandy Harmison and Pat Mahr

Laundry - Marsha Mower

Kitchen Crew - Sharon Burbes, Martha Crookshank, Betty Cummings, Peggy Druessel, Marlene Gant, Shirley Kuhn, Lindsay Malone, Skip Mower, Robert Ruehrup, Cheryl Warner, Darla Weltmer, Bruce Whitney

Dining Room Help - Sandy Cummings and Debbie Moster

Our apologies if we omitted anyone!



30. Mia Wenneker
31. Andrea Dicken

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. Marilyn Schoettle
Amy Kretsinger
3. Carol Robertson
5. Tom Kotal
7. Jay Stevens
8. Mackenzie Knop
Ryan Stogner
9. Noah Harmison
10. Dale Capshaw
12. Jessica Robertson
Jacob Harmison
13. Ryan Wildy
14. Tara Baltimore
17. Martha Crookshank
19. Devin Lieper
Tom Wildy
20. Todd Wernecke
21. Sarah Brown
Melinda Bunselmeyer
Debbie Whitney
22. Lisa Harmison
Emily Carter
Emma Cordts
Robert Young
Jerry Stemple
23. Matthew Cordts
25. Christine Priestler
27. Cameron Malone
28. Johnathan Weber
30. Maurine Boyer
James Jordan

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. Gerald & Peggy Ruff
Paul & Nan Kelley
2. Todd & Jennie Wernecke
18. Roy & Kim Tsuda
25. Skip & Marsha Mower
26. Ronald & Janet Brownfield
29. James & Marilyn Jordan
Richard & Vicky Williams

MAY

FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

MAY 5

LITURGIST: Darla Weltmer
FLOWERS: Carol Blackwell
COFFEE:
USHERS/GREETER: Marilee
Gordon, Gary & Pat Weiss, Chuck
Zweck

MAY 12

LITURGIST: Amy Leman
FLOWERS: Joe & Carol
Robertson
COFFEE:
USHERS/GREETER: Frank &
Shelly Smith, Jerry & Liz Scherer

MAY 19

LITURGIST: Mindy Bunselmeyer
FLOWERS: Jerry & Peggy Ruff
COFFEE:
USHERS/GREETER: Dave & Mar-
lene Gant, Don & Dee Wenneker

MAY 26

LITURGIST: Paul DeBruine
FLOWERS: Roger & Jan Kahila
COFFEE:
USHERS/GREETER: Tom &
Paula Cordts, Jim & Jodi Baldwin

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

MAY 5

USHER/GREETER: Maureen
Ruski
REFRESHMENTS: Maureen
Ruski

MAY 12

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

MAY 19

USHER/GREETER: Sandy
Harmison
REFRESHMENTS: Sandy
Harmison

MAY 26

USHER/GREETER: Wes Pietsch
REFRESHMENTS: Wes Pietsch



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR 2013

The officers for Women's Fellowship met on March 14th to discuss plans for the rest of the year. The decision was made to schedule as many of our activities for the second Friday of each month as we can. The following schedule is TENTATIVE, but we hope you will mark your calendars and plan to join us. Women's Fellowship is open to all women.

May 10th This event has been cancelled due to a conflict with another event.

June 5th and 6th will be set up, sorting and pricing days for our annual rummage sale which will be held on **June 7th and 8th**. Lunch will be served on the 5th and 6th. We will also have a short business meeting. We always have a lot of fun sorting through one person's "trash" and finding another person's "treasure". This is our only fund raiser for the year. Please join us and stay as long as you can.

August 9th We hope to have lunch at an Amish Home. We did this several years ago and the food was delicious and our hosts were very accommodating and interesting.

September 13th We will travel to Elkhart, IL to have lunch and shop at the Wild Hare/Horse Feathers restaurant and antique store. This is a beautiful drive in the fall when the leaves are turning.

October 11th – October is Fire Prevention month and we hope to have a presentation by Decatur's Fire Chief.

November 8th – Bette Fankhauser will present a program on the beautiful bells that we are fortunate to have at our church.

December 13th – We will have our annual Christmas tea on this day.

We are always open to new ideas and suggestions. If there is something you would like for the group to do, please share