

Congregational Comments

Vol. 20 No 11: November 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



Our Mission is to worship God,
Welcome all who seek God, and
Express our faith in our actions.



Pastor Dave Taylor

FROM THE PASTOR

GIVING THANKS

Does your family have “over the river and through the woods” grandparents, with a 40 pound turkey roasting in the oven and 3 different kinds of freshly baked pies cooling on the pantry shelves? Few of us have grandparents like this. Thanksgiving gatherings are not quite what we think they once were.

Memories...When you think of Thanksgiving, what comes to mind? Wonderfully roasted turkey, crisp tart pickles, and mashed potatoes with puddles of butter in the center. People laughing, and hugging, and grandmothers and aunts who insist on kissing all the kids – even the boys. Memories have a way of bundling together every good thing about many Thanksgivings, and many holidays. So perhaps it’s no surprise that when we live the reality of a new Thanksgiving, it never quite measures up to the perfection of those times in the past.

When we are children, the family is what it is: family. When we grow older, we see the family as fragments, as memories. There are empty chairs, some loved ones are celebrating Thanksgiving elsewhere and some loved ones are no longer with us. The family that seemed so complete when we were children was fragmented to our grandparents, too. So how can we celebrate the perfect family gathering? There are many ways!

First, I return to the frame of mind I had when I was a child. This is the day of giving thanks and sharing love with others. These people are the family: a friend, a couple of relatives, or a few neighbors. It doesn’t matter. Those gathered are our “family” for that moment, one to another. “Where 2 or more are gathered in Christ’s name, there He is also.

Second, we share stories. We can fill those empty chairs with wonderful stories. Everyone at the table can share memories of the special people in their lives. I remember my Aunt Emily, whose ta-

ble always had room for everyone plus one more. Family and neighbors were. We remember how gracious God has been.

Remember how Christ tells the story of the banquet where everyone is invited? Who can we invite to our table that would be a blessing to them...and to us? A lonely neighbor or a recently widowed friend... those hungry in the heart as well as body. We can join others at a community Thanksgiving meal, or help serve a meal at Good Samaritan Inn.

Third, we can accept what the day brings with joy. So we may not have a huge turkey this year – just think, we don't have to deal with scrubbing that large roaster! If we have only one kind of pie, we can smile and say, "I believe I'll have a piece of that delicious pie." Each day is a gift from God for which we can be truly grateful.

Finally, we can offer thanks to God for God's many blessings. If we can't be at the "grandmother's and grandfather's who lived "over the river and through the woods," we can recall how God has been and is ever faithful, loving and generous in so many ways. As we gather around the table, we need to recall and share stories about God's goodness with each other: God did..., God always... (recalling our blessings). The past gives meaning to the present and makes the future possible, as we remember that God is our loving provider, to whom we are truly thankful. We give thanks to God through our worship, and by our loving and caring service with others.

"In all things, give thanks to the Lord."

This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Pastor Dave

Come join us for worship and Christian Education - Sundays at 9:00AM for our Traditional Service and children's Sunday School
11:00AM for our Contemporary Service *and Sunday School opportunities for children*
10:00AM for our *creative, faith growing Sunday School and Bible Study opportunities for children, youth and adults.*
10:00AM *discover a new friend or renew a current friendship visiting over* **delicious refreshments in Fellowship Hall.**

Check out our great children's and youth **LOGOS** program on **Wednesdays**

MEMORIAL SERVICES

Join us November 1, 2015 at our 9 & 11 AM worship for our annual Memorial Services.

We will reflect on and give thanks for those loved ones who have touched us and passed away over the past 12 months. Who have been your saints and what have they taught you about faith and life?

In this season of Thanksgiving – it is right and good for us to honor our loved ones. Please join us for this special day.

THANKSGIVING SUPPER

November 15, 5 PM Come join us for our all church Thanksgivings Supper in Fellowship Hall. Watch for more details.



WINTER WEATHER POLICY

In the event of inclement weather, if church services are cancelled, the decision will be made by 6:00am on Sunday mornings. A message will be posted on the church telephone system no later than 7:00am. To check the message, call 877-2216. After the recorded greeting plays, press "5" for general announcements.



LOGOS

LOGOS recently collected non-perishable food items in conjunction with World Food Day and our "Feed the World" theme. We donated approximately 900 lbs of food to the Good Samaritan Inn, on behalf of First Church. Thanks to all who participated

The LOGOS Worship Skills classes provided a short worship service on October 14. They did a wonderful job. If we ever have any doubt about why we do what we do, even when our numbers are small, this was a great testament to "faith in action." Thank you to all involved!

SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM

We wish to thank all those who volunteered for the summer music program. I know the congregation enjoyed each and every one and always requested more. Your musical talents were greatly appreciated by all those on our ministry and in the congregation. My sincere thanks to the following:

Laurie Matheson	Bill Brooks
Marsha Mower	Dave Mahr
Malone and Devon Morretti	Rick and Missy Boldizar
Carmen Dunn	Alexis Fankhauser
Erica Moster	
Lisa, Anna, and Emma DeBruine	Kelly Cantrell
Pastor Dave Taylor	The First Church Men's choir

Worship Music Ministry

THANK YOU

My sincere thanks to all my church family for the outpouring of prayers and love I received during my hospitalization and recuperation. I am so grateful for all the cards, calls, food, visits, encouragement, and support which came to me daily. I thank God for all the blessings sent my way each day and pray that I can resume my normal routine very soon. God Bless Shirley Kuhn.

2015 LOGOS Butter Braids & Show Me Dough Fundraiser



LOGOS' Butter Braids and Show Me Dough Cookies/Pizza Fundraiser begins on Wednesday, October 7th at LOGOS.

⇒ Orders will be taken October 7 - November 11. Payment must be made at the time of ordering.

Make checks payable to: First Congregational UCC-LOGOS

⇒ Pickup of items will be on Tuesday, November 24, 5:30 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

- ◆ Butter Braids (\$14.00) are 22 oz. pastries in the flavors of: Cinnamon, Cherry, Cream Cheese, Strawberry Cream Cheese and Blueberry Cream Cheese. (Discounted 3-packs and 6-packs are available, too!) Butter Braid Roll Packs are available in Apple Cinnamon, Blueberry and Caramel, with 3 rolls per pack.
- ◆ Show Me Dough Cookies (\$17.00/\$16.00) are 40 pre-portioned cookie dough, ready to bake, in flavors of: M&M's Candies, White Chocolate Macadamia Nut, Chunky Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal Raisin, Peanut Butter and Snickerdoodle.
- ◆ Show Me Dough Pizzas (\$18.00) are 2 delicious full-size 11' pizzas in each box, ready to bake, in flavors of: Four Cheese, Ultimate Pepperoni, Meat Lovers and BBQ Chicken.

These are FANTASTIC for the holidays, so stock up NOW!!!

LOGOS ministry will be in the Fellowship Hall between services and in the narthex after the 11:00 a.m. service on October 11, 18 & 25 and November 1 & 8 to take orders **OR** see a LOGOS participant **OR** LOGOS ministry member to place an order. Ministry members are: Sharon Burbes, Jeanette Flenner, Sandy Harmison, Sheila Mannweiler, Marsha Mower, Maureen Ruski and Debbie Whitney.

Please help support the LOGOS program—order your Butter Braids and Show Me Dough Cookies October 7—November 11!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
1 Memorial Sunday Pastoral Card Sale	2	3 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	4 4:45-7:15 LOGOS 7:30 Cho
8 10th Anniversary Reception for Pastor Dave	9 5:30 Admin 7:00 Property	10 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	11 4:45-7:15 LOGOS 7:30 Cho
15 5:00 	16 6:00 Worship/ Music 7:00 Church Council	17 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	18 4:45-7:15 LOGOS
22 Church Services 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contempo- rary Worship	23	24 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 AI-anon 8:00 AA	25
29 Church Services 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contempo- rary Worship	30		

	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 ir	5 Clergy Meeting 5:45 First Ringers	6 6:00 Macon County Youth Pride	7
5 ir	12 5:45 First Ringers	13 6:00 Macon County Youth Pride	14
5	19 1:15 Book Club 5:45 First Ringers	20 6:00 Macon County Youth Pride	21
	26 Thanksgiving Day	27 6:00 Macon County Youth Pride	28
			

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Women's Fellowship is planning a salad luncheon for their November 13th Gathering. Please mark the date on your calendar and make sure you don't make any reservations with a Dr., friend, bridge partner, volunteering etc...and plan to attend our luncheon. More will be coming forth with!!

We will meet at 12:00 noon and all are asked to bring a salad to feed 3 or 4. You judge. We like to sample everyone's!! Please let one of us know you are coming so we have enough places set up for you. AND of course, friends are always welcome.

See you on Friday the 13th in Fellowship Hall.



SEPTEMBER 2015 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Sept 15</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$17,753.08	\$159,777.72
Budget Expense	\$17,437.57	\$156,938.13
Income	\$12,836.00	\$154,461.82
Expenses	\$22,537.90	\$150,274.91

GENERAL INFORMATION

Fax Machine – The fax line in the Church Office has been disconnected and we will no longer have a fax machine. The fax machine was seldom used and most documents are now sent via e-mail. The fax number has been removed from the Church letterhead and will be deleted from the website.

Donations Needed - Aaron Taylor has shipmates that do not receive any type of cards or care packages. Christen Cantrell is putting together cards and items for care packages to be mailed in November. Please consider writing cards of encouragement. Suggested items are fruit snacks, hard candy, gum, stamps, beef jerky, paper, pens, envelopes, iTunes cards, Amazon cards, popcorn, toilet paper, newspapers, magazines, books, etc. A box is located by the office for donations. You may also donate towards postage costs. Thank you for helping!

Pastor Recognition Sunday – We will recognize Pastor Dave Taylor's 10th Anniversary with First Church on November 8, 2015 with a reception in fellowship hall between services. Please come to share a piece of cake and fellowship with Pastor Dave!

Playmates Update – The new school year has brought some changes to Playmates Preschool. Allie Russell has joined the staff as the teacher of the four year old class and we are happy to have her with us. Allie's daughter, Sophia, is in a three year old class. Alfreda Tribout and Melanie Brown are teachers of the three year old classes. The Playmates classrooms have been updated and provide a wonderful learning environment for the children. Please stop by and take a look at the classrooms. An open house for church members will be held in the Spring.

Playmates has openings for 3 and 4 year olds. Classes meet Tuesday – Thursday from 9:15 A.M. to 11:15 A.M. Contact the Church Office for enrollment information. Word-of-mouth is some of the best advertising, so please share information about Playmates with your families and friends.

Alfreda, Allie, and Melanie will be providing monthly newsletter updates of Playmates activities. They will also be developing a "wish list" for their classrooms that will give us all a chance to participate in supporting Playmates. Be on the lookout for exciting Playmates updates in the coming months!!!

THINKING AHEAD - - -

I know you think this is early but - it is never too early to plan ahead.

This message is a reminder to all of you who claim charitable deductions on your income tax. The last deposit/posting of accounts for the year will be made on Monday, December 28. Because Christmas falls on Friday, December 25, all contributions mailed or brought in person must be received in the office by noon on Thursday, December 24. The Sunday collection of December 27 will be counted on December 28 but mail delivery does not arrive until after the deposit is made on Monday. So please plan ahead – if you are not going to be in church on December 27, please mail or bring your last contribution of the year in plenty of time. If you are considering a contribution being sent from a financial institution in your name, please do it in early December. In order for contributions to be shown on your 2015 statement (which you will receive in January), they need to be in the office by noon on December 24th. Thank you for your continued support of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR AND VISIT MEMBERS WHO ARE IN NURSING HOMES

Primrose Retirement Community

Claude Young—Room 228

Lois Shelton—Room 132

Imboden Gardens

Harriette Horn—Room 120

Keystone

Carolyn Jones—Room 216

Vonderlieth Living Center, Mt. Pulaski, IL

Alice Roach

Fair Havens Christian Home

Al Wilson—Room 425

Evergreen Place

Mary Lou Phipps— Room 333



CHILDRENS MINISTRY

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES

Children's Ministry will again be sponsoring the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes in coordination with Sharon United Methodist Church. The shoeboxes are shipped to children around the world. Our goal is to have shoeboxes and supplies ready for an assembly day on **Sunday, Nov. 8th** after 1st service. You may choose to either fill a box on your own with items from the lists here and tailor it to either a boy or girl of a certain age, or you may choose to bring a quantity of just one or two items that we will distribute to a number of boxes. **Please consider donations** of small toys like dolls, stuffed animals, balls, cars, jump ropes, cards, etc. Also consider school supplies like crayons, markers, small notebooks, pencils, and pens or non-liquid hygiene supplies like toothbrushes, bar soap, combs and washcloths. Consider accessories like socks, hair bows, hats, sunglasses, jewelry or watches. **Please do not include** used or damaged items, food, chocolate, toy guns or knives, breakables or liquid items. We also will **need \$7 per box** for shipping so if you would like to donate to the postage please write your check out to the church and put "Christmas Shoeboxes" in the memo. Please let Carol Robertson, Debbie Moster, or Robert Ruehrup know if you have any questions. We will have a large collection box in the fellowship hall beginning Oct. 25th for your donations. We will also accept empty shoe boxes but have about 40 in stock.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Please let Mindy Bunselmeyer or Debbie Moster know if your child is interested in participating in Children's Choir this year. Practices are at 10:10 after first service and the first choir performance will be on Nov. 8th.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT ON DEC. 13TH

Mindy Bunselmeyer will be directing our Children's pageant for us this year and practices will begin on Sunday Nov. 1st. Please contact Mindy if your child would like to take part! It is always a treat for the congregation!



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. Paula Cordts
Sicily Seitz
5. Katie Malone
Judy Koyak
Tyler Wernecke
Vicki Dabrowka
John Lofland
8. Linda Connelly
10. Bradley Malone
Peggy Ruff
12. Maureen Ruski
13. Peggy Druessel
14. June Coleman
David Mahr
16. Nancy Beede
20. Debbie Moster
21. Howard Beede
22. David Carpenter
Jake Sawyer
Robby Moore
24. Christina Hukile
25. Patrick Carter
26. Jodi Baldwin
27. Laurel Lorey
28. Ramona Borders
Chase Leman
30. Valerie Janvrin

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. Michael & Judy Koyak
8. Ned & Sandy Cummings
Craig & Pam Mueller
11. Tom & Barbara Wildy
24. Joe & Carol Robertson
25. Mark & Pat Jaberg
30. Gary & Judy Sawyer



FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 1

LITURGIST: Darla Weltmer
FLOWERS: Sharon Burbes
COFFEE: Dave & Marlene Gant
USHERS/GREETER: Ev Kuhn,,
Dave & Marlene Gant, Gary Weiss

NOVEMBER 8

LITURGIST: Marilee Gordon
FLOWERS: Helen Johnson
COFFEE: Gary & Pat Weiss
USHERS/GREETER: Todd ,
Christina, Tucker & Zoey Clark

NOVEMBER 15

LITURGIST: Judi Carpenter
FLOWERS:
COFFEE: Bonnie & Ron Rucker
USHERS/GREETER: Pat &
Margie Malone, Chuck Zweck,
Sandi Pleasants

NOVEMBER 22

LITURGIST: Chuck Zweck
FLOWERS: Marylin Cushing
COFFEE: Todd & Christina
Clark
USHERS/GREETER: Jim & Jodi
Baldwin, Mike Koyak, Sheila
Mannweiler

NOVEMBER 29

LITURGIST: Sharon Burbes
FLOWERS: Bill & Alice Huebner
COFFEE: Clarence & Caroline
Elliot
USHERS/GREETER: Martha
Crookshank, Ted & Darby Mitch-
ell, Mike Koyak

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 1

USHER/GREETER: Joe Moretti
REFRESHMENTS: Maureen
Ruski

NOVEMBER 8

USHER/GREETER: Leigh
Myers
REFRESHMENTS: Alex & Angie
Miller

NOVEMBER 15

USHER/GREETER: Wes Pietsch
REFRESHMENTS: Wes Pietsch

NOVEMBER 22

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

NOVEMBER 29

USHER/GREETER: Praise
Band
REFRESHMENTS: Missy
Boldizar





FOODS RESOURCE BANK GROWING PROJECT

Our corn crop has been harvested and it yielded 225 bushels per acre. We have not sold it; it is being stored. We are hoping that after the harvest glut the prices will improve. We will vote as a congregation to choose the sustainable food program to support with this harvest in the near future.

If you have not made a contribution to the input expenses of this crop and would like to do so, please use the envelopes in the pews or mark your donation for FRB Growing Project. Thank you for your support in this tenth year of outreach to help people in some of the poorest parts of the world to experience the dignity and pride of feeding themselves.

YOUTH ACTIVITY

Thanksgiving Baskets

We are excited to announce that the Youth Group will once again be assembling and distributing Thanksgiving baskets. During November, all canned good donations to the bins at the church entrances will be used for these baskets. Monetary donations are also welcome. The Youth will gather to assemble and distribute the baskets after church on November 22. Please remember this outreach while you are shopping and help us spread cheer this holiday season.

Youth Sunday School

November 1st will kick off the start of a brand new Youth Sunday School program. The group will meet during first service. Students in grades 6th – 12th are welcome to attend. Please spread the word to any youth you know who are looking to grow in their faith in a safe and welcoming environment. All are welcome!