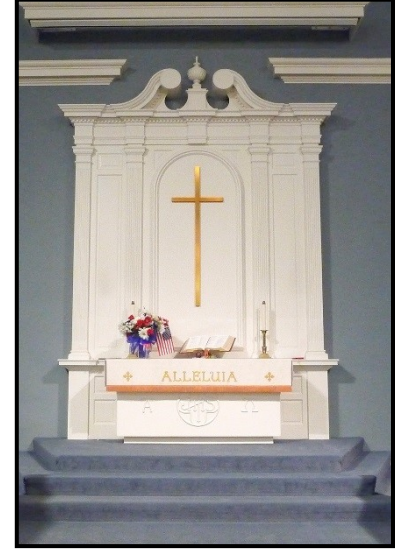


# Congregational Comments



**Vol. 23 No. 11: November 2018**

## Important Contacts in the Church

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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  
 11:15-11:40 am Sunday School

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

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# A Note from Pastor Jan



## Pastor Jan Johnson

As we move through the days and nights of November we begin the month with All Saint's Day followed by All Soul's Day and Voting Day and Veteran's Day and move into the season of Thanksgiving. We have all been blessed by our amazing God with more than we could ever imagine! Have you not received some blessing from God? Why not pass it on? If you have been blessed with a hug from someone you love, share a hug with another you love! If you receive a surprise from someone, think of some way to surprise someone else! If someone blesses you with good food or even just a greeting card, pass on the gift or just the love that offers it. If God has forgiven you, why not forgive someone who has hurt your feelings? You will feel so much better for it and so will they! And there will be a little more care and a little more peace in this world!

The Thanksgiving Litany and Confession I have included is an older one but it has a depth to it that more recent Confessions seem to be missing. You might consider using it for the Blessing you say as you gather around a Thanksgiving Table this year. And may God continue to bless you in surprising and amazing ways!

A Blessed Thanksgiving!

Rev. Jan

## Litany of Thanksgiving and Confession

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God, creator of all things visible and invisible, powerful beyond measure, good beyond all understanding.

**P: God's steadfast love endures forever.**

L: Lord, our God, you bring forth and nourish every living being.

**P: We lift up our hearts to you.**

L: We assemble here celebrating the joys of human life, shared one with the other. We recall the ministry of Jesus, crucified and raised up for our salvation, still present among us through the mystery of the Holy Spirit.

P: **We** praise you for the gift of new life, given us to share, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

L: Confessing that we have strayed from your holy will, and become more concerned with what we want than what we need and are already given, we humbly acknowledge before you.

P: **Merciful** God, we confess that we have sinned in many ways, times, and places.

L: We have mishandled this good earth entrusted to our care and we have misused our personal gifts, hurting both, ourselves and others. Forgive our false pride, which hides our negligence and forgive our careless acts which destroy your handiwork. In your mercy correct our faults and restore us to responsible, compassionate living.

Silent Confession

L: Hear and know that the Lord is good. God forgives those who are contrite in heart. Live in peace, for God's steadfast love endures forever.

P: **Amen.**

# Additional Notes from Pastor Jan

## Interim Task Force.

As a major part of the Intentional Interim Process I will be calling together an Interim Task Force which will guide the congregation through the process that will undergird and support the Search Committee in the work they have to do. There is a challenging task and we want to give each one of them the love and prayerful support of the entire congregation. They will have their work cut out for them!

The ITF needs 5 people – one for each one of the tasks:

- Coming to Terms with your History.
- Discovering a New Identity
- Leadership Changes during an Interim
- Renewing Denominational Linkages
- Commitment to New Directions in Ministry

If the congregation is to grow we will need to address each of these – perhaps some more than others – and become the church family that God is creating!

Churches can flourish and churches can wane. By walking through this process, celebrating who you have been, who you are, and who you are called to be, we can see more clearly the direction God wants this congregation to move. Rather than simply falling into a habit and doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results, the interim time allows the congregation and its leaders to try something new, to get excited about a new possibility, to move more freely into doing ministry in exciting ways.

The Task Force is vital in this process. Please prayerfully consider becoming a part of this dynamic group! You do not have to be on Council or Admin to be a TF member – in fact, it's better if you are not! (although one or two from those groups would be nice).

So, if you would like to be part of God's people 'doing a new thing', this is the group to join!

Please speak to me personally if you are interested.

Rev. Jan

## Adult Confirmation Class.

Since we do not have the possibility of a young people's Confirmation Class this year, I would like to offer a class for any adult who would like to dig a little deeper into their faith for the next few months culminating in a Reaffirmation of Faith Service on Pentecost: June 9, 2019. We would use the same materials but would approach the material from the life experiences of adulthood. (no, you wouldn't have to memorize the Books of the Bible, but it wouldn't hurt!) Come, let us gather to explore Scripture, delve into one or two Scripture Stories more deeply, learn how to express your faith more comfortably and, perhaps, publically! Please let me know if you are interested and we can find a time to meet together – at least 2 people are necessary.

# Adult Progressive Dinner



**SAVE THIS DATE**  
**Saturday, December 8 – 5:00 PM**  
**ADULT PROGRESSIVE DINNER**

Alice and Bill Huebner will be hosting the heavy appetizer course at 5 PM, and Paula and Tom Cordts will follow with dessert. Be thinking about which course for which you would like to prepare and serve a dish. Reservations will be appreciated beginning next month. More details will follow.

## FFDO

First Friday Dinner Out will be on Friday, November 2 at the Red Barn Kitchen (restaurant at the airport). We will meet there at 6:00. Let me know if you will be joining us.

Sandy Harmison





# Thanksgiving Dinner

**DINNER**  
**JOIN OUR CHURCH FAMILY**  
**AND**  
**INVITED COMMUNITY GUESTS**  
**FOR**  
**OUR ANNUAL THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION**  
**IN**  
**FELLOWSHIP HALL**  
**AT**  
**12:30 P.M.**  
**ON**  
**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>**  
**TURKEY, DRESSING, POTATOES AND GRAVY**  
**AS WELL AS DRINKS**  
**WILL BE PROVIDED**  
**PLEASE BRING A DISH OF YOUR CHOOSING TO**  
**SHARE**  
**RSVP by Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> To**  
**JULIE KECK @ 433-2543 or [julieakeck@gmail.com](mailto:julieakeck@gmail.com)**  
**SHIRLEY ZIMMERMAN @ 875-7302 or**  
**[sdzcomm27@comcast.net](mailto:sdzcomm27@comcast.net)**

# Children's Activities

## CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28TH

The children are invited to wear their church-appropriate Halloween costumes to parade at the beginning of both services! Children can Trick or Treat at each table in Fellowship Hall between services.

Stacy Carter will be hosting the activities for Children!



## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT DECEMBER 9, 2018

Please contact Carol Robertson or Mindy Bunselmeyer if your child would like to participate in the annual Christmas Pageant. Practices will begin the first week in November, and we will have a meeting with Mindy on Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup> after the Halloween Trick or Treating. Depending on interest, we may involve our youth, so please let one of us know if you would like to participate.



# Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will be meeting on Friday, October 26th at 1:00 PM for their Annual Game Day party. All are welcome to attend and enjoy some refreshments and who knows... perhaps some lovely re-gifted items to win!!! IF YOU have any of those wonderful gifts and would like to wrap and bring along, they would be welcome!!

Let me know by Tuesday 23rd so we have enough table and chairs set up for us to have a great day.

Call Darla 877-7008 or [e-mail...Lmweltmer@juno.com](mailto:Lmweltmer@juno.com) and plan to bring along a friend.

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The Decatur Area Church Women United will be holding an informative luncheon meeting on Sat. Nov. 3rd. You will enjoy a delicious catered luncheon, entertainment, door prizes and some surprises AND no charge.

We are inviting all women in the many Churches in the area.

We are hoping that you will let Darla, 877-7008 know that you would like a ticket which is necessary. It will be held on November 3rd 11:30 AM arrival and she has the details of the rest. Will you save the date and plan to invite any of your friends to come along with you? Get tickets from Darla.

**REMEMBER**, we are hosting the World Community Day Celebration on Friday, Nov. 2nd and please let me know if you will help me out that day. I will need your help as we never know if 10 or 40 ladies will be coming. I've only had 1 member of our Church to say YES she will help. We serve refreshments at our Celebrations so if you are so inclined to help bake something that would be great and help out wherever needed. THANK YOU.

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## Property Ministry at Work

Gary Baker and Joe Robertson removed the old shrubbery on the south side of the church.



# Foods Resource Bank



## FOODS RESOURCE BANK GROWING PROJECT

At our Harvest Celebration our members voted to send the proceeds from this year's growing project to a program in West Africa. This sustainable food program offers training in tree preservation and reforestation, gardening, rice production, chicken raising, improved cooking stoves, health, hygiene and nutrition. This program operates in an area with challenging security so we will not have information on the specific location in West Africa in order to maintain the safety of the staff. However, we will continue to have stories and pictures of the people we are helping as we have had in past overseas programs.

Our 5-acre corn crop averaged 265 bushels per acre for a total of 1325 bushels. The dollars generated from this project will be available when the crop is sold.

*If you would like to make a donation to help pay toward the input cost of this crop, donation envelopes can be found 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.*

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## Christian Nurture Ministry Team

The Christian Nurture Ministry Team wishes to thank all those that attended the card-making day on Saturday, October 6. Included were Bette Fankhauser, Judi Carpenter, Shelly Smith, Sue Bunselmeyer, Hayley Daniels, Alice Huebner, Ellen Starace, and Jodi Baldwin. Special thanks to Bette who went through her inventory and donated much of it to us. Cards were made to fill every category, from Christmas to birthday to anniversary to get well and sympathy and many others. The card coffers are very well stocked now!

Cards are sent to shut-ins, for birthdays to those over 70 and anniversaries to those celebrating at least 50 years, and to members on the Prayer Chain. Cards are also for sale in Fellowship Hall the 1st Sunday of the month. The next card-making day will be held after the new year.

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**SAVE THIS DATE**—Please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 1st for decorating the Sanctuary for Advent. We will need plenty of help! More details will be released in November.



# Finance Notes

## **SEPTEMBER 2018 FINANCIAL REPORT**

	<u>Sept. 18</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$17,420.92	\$156,788.28
Budget Expense	\$17,269.15	\$155,422.35
Income	\$14,656.09	\$152,643.27
Expenses	\$14,955.55	\$145,129.15



# Happenings

## FFDO

Red Barn  
Kitchen

Friday,  
November 2



## God's Busy Hands

Tuesdays

1:00 - 3:00 pm



God's Busy Hands

Admin Meeting

Monday, November  
19

5:30 pm

Council of Minis-  
try Teams

Monday, November  
19

6:30 pm

## Choir

Wednesdays

7:00 pm



Sing With Us

## Women's Fellowship

October 26

1:00 pm

Annual Game  
Day Party

# November Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

And may the many blessings that have come from God above fill your hearts with all the joy of His enduring love. Happy Anniversary.

- 2. Paula Cordts
- 4. Miranda Miller
- 5. Tyler Wernecke  
John Lofland  
Katie Wright
- 9. Linda Connelly
- 10. Peggy Ruff  
Bradley Malone
- 12. Maureen Ruski  
Brian Traugher
- 13. Peggy Druessel
- 14. David Mahr
- 20. Debbie Moster
- 22. David Carpenter  
Robby Moore
- 25. Patrick Carter
- 26. Jodi Baldwin
- 27. Laurel Lorey
- 28. Ramona Borders  
Chase Leman  
William Mitchell
- 30. Valerie Janvrin

- 8. Craig & Pam Mueller
- 24. Joe & Carol Robertson
- 25. Mark & Pat Jaberg



# First Church Sunday Morning

	Date	9:00 AM Service	11:00 AM Service
 <b>LITURGISTS</b>	November 4	Chuck Zweck	Cathy Richardson
	November 11	Mindy Bunselmeyer	Shirley Zimmerman & Ruby Voyle
	November 18	Dee Wenneker	Betty Wheatley
	November 25	Darla Weltmer	Sandy Harmison
	November 4	Sharon Butler	
	November 11	Helen Johnson	
	November 18	Debbie Beal	
	November 25		
	November 4	Kristin Hargrove	
	November 11	Ted & Darby Mitchell	
	November 18	Frank & Shelly Smith	
	November 25	Everett Kuhn	
	November 4	Darla Weltmer, Dave Carpenter, Ruth DeBruine, Melinda Redman	
	November 11	Bill & Alice Huebner, Mike & Toni Longstreet	
	November 18	Mark & Susan Daley, Ellen Starace, Mindy Bunselmeyer	
	November 25	Dave & Marlene Gant, Sheila Mannweiler, Chuck Zweck	

Thank you to all who participate in these very important activities!



# November Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<i>1</i> 6:30 Bible Study	<i>2</i> 6:00 MCYP	<i>3</i>
<i>4</i> 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellowship Hour 11:00 Contemporary	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i> 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	<i>7</i> 7:00 Choir Practice	<i>8</i> 6:30 Bible Study	<i>9</i> 6:00 MCYP	<i>10</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>12</i> 7:00 Property Meeting	<i>13</i> 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Choir Practice 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> 6:30 Bible Study	<i>16</i> 6:00 MCYP	<i>17</i>
<i>18</i> 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellowship Hour 11:00 Contemporary	<i>19</i> 5:30 Admin 6:30 Council Of Ministry Teams	<i>20</i> 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	<i>21</i> 7:00 Choir Practice	<i>22</i> 6:30 Bible Study	<i>23</i> 6:00 MCYP	<i>24</i>
<i>25</i> 9:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellowship Hour 11:00 Contemporary	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i> 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	<i>28</i> 7:00 Choir Practice	<i>29</i> 6:30 Bible Study	<i>30</i> 6:00 MCYP	



First Congregational UCC  
3465 N. MacArthur Rd.  
Decatur, IL 62526-1450

## 2018 Church Goals

Your Council of Ministry Teams has approved the following 3 goals for 2018:

### **2018 Church Goals**

Working on goals for 2018, let one of the church officers know if you have an idea for a goal.

1. Create a safe church policy and conduct training to support this policy.
2. Reestablish an active evangelism ministry.
3. Initiate a second Bible study for this year.