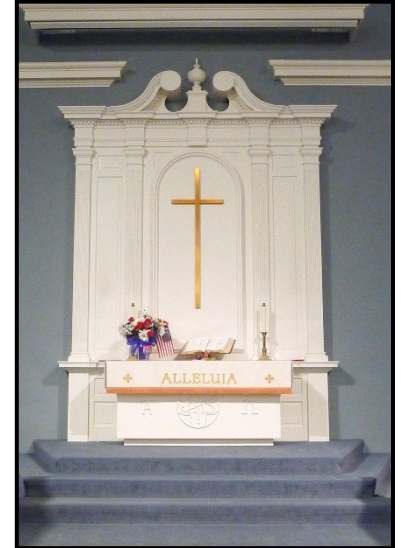


Congregational Comments



Vol. 23 No. 10: October 2018

Important Contacts in the Church

Pastor: Rev. Ryan Travis, 217-413-4272

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Email: firstchurchdecaturn@sbcglobal.net

Website: www.firstchurchdecaturn.org

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 will be joining us as our Interim Pastor on October 15

Pastor Jan Johnson

Paul writes the same greeting for each of the letters he wrote to the churches he spoke with on his missionary journeys: **Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**"

'Grace and Peace in the name of Christ' is a wonderful way to greet a congregation! Even one who already knows you! Greetings seem to go by the wayside in our world these days; at the store you are lucky if someone smiles a hello! But when Christians greet one another, it should be with the embrace of Grace and Peace!

Grace is a gift of God that allows for our humanness – warts and all! Grace is given to us, not because we deserve it, but because we are loved by God! Grace is transferable – once we have been gifted God's Grace, we can share it with one another, even when we don't know each other! Peace is the result of God's blessing of Grace that allows us to have a sure and certain knowledge that God is with us – no matter what! Peace is what comes from having been forgiven! Peace is a fresh start!

So I greet you, once again, in the Grace and Peace that comes from God and given through Christ's love and forgiveness! We begin a new journey together on October 15th! I am looking forward to catching up on what life has brought you for the last 19 months – joys and sorrows!

I promise to TRY not to continually share my granddaughter's antics – but I'm not sure how well I can do that! Adalyn will be 7 at the end of November and is in first grade now – and she is a Lego maniac! And Emily Lynne came into our lives July 20th this year. She is the splitting image of Adalyn at that age! Amazing! Christina is still at OSF in the Lab and I will be helping her with babysitting when I can while I can. When their home in Mackinaw, IL sells they will be joining their dad in Crossville, Tennessee where he is now working. (that's not going to be a good week!) Our son, Dang, is still working at CAT and still lives in Pekin.

Together we will walk through the Intentional Interim Process which involves accomplishing Five Developmental Tasks: Renewing Denominational Connections, Coming to Terms with History, Discovering a New Identity, Managing Power Shifts, and Commitments to New Leadership and a New Future. These are the older set of tasks. There are additional tasks that have presented themselves as our culture shifts, such as Financial Tasks of calling a new minister and the shift of the importance of the church in our communities and in our country. There are a few others – 9, I think. Some we will address, others we will not.

Once we address these tasks (some will be brief, usually 1-2 will take a bit more time) the church's profile can be updated and circulated once again. We will address those tasks that might mean a tweaking of the profile first to get the profile back into circulation quickly. Then we can use the remaining time to work on any other tasks that need addressing.

I am with you for one year. It will be an exciting year because God's Grace and Peace are with us!!

Jan Johnson

Pastor Ryan's Last Article

Dear Church Family:

In the eighth chapter of Acts, Phillip was walking along the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, when he encountered an Ethiopian member of the royal court who was riding in a chariot and struggling to read the biblical text he cited aloud. Phillip explained and expounded the Scriptures to him, performed the sacrament of baptism, and then "the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away...[to] Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea."

It's with sorrow that I share my official goodbye with the congregation. Looking back on the past 19 months, we've certainly accomplished a lot. We've established a popular, well-attended weekly Bible study; the elevator project has moved from the drawing board to installation – and fully paid for; a Safe Church policy has been enacted to protect volunteers and children; a new projector has been installed; and lay members have initiated new outreach programs and traditions, such as inviting our neighbors from the Oasis Center to dine at our Thanksgiving table.

I have greatly enjoyed our time together, as brief as it may have been, and I hope that you feel the same. I cannot begin to express how much I appreciate the support and compassion you showed to me and my father during my mother's brief illness and death. I am forever grateful for your kindness.

I've said this before, but it bears repeating: My departure is not related in any way to dissatisfaction with the congregation or its leaders, unhappiness with the community, or any form of discord whatsoever. This truly is one of those moments when I sense God moving me, even when it defies immediate explanation. I am simply following where I sense the Spirit guiding. I have a very good life here in Central Illinois and a happy ministry, and I certainly care very much for the people of this church. I don't look at this as God merely moving me on to something else, but I also fully believe God is moving First Congregational toward the next stage of your journey. In the overall scope of this congregation's history, I may never know this side of glory why God brought us together at time and place, but I do believe we both are better for it – and that God has good things in store for our futures.

After I leave, pastoral ethics require me to leave a wide berth for successive pastoral leadership to grow and thrive. Accordingly, I will be unable to engage in conversations with you about ministries and personalities of the church. Additionally, I will be unable to perform ministry duties here, like weddings or funerals, that are rightly officiated by your new pastor. It's perfectly fine to send occasional cards or ask about family and such, but I am sure that you understand I cannot comment on church leadership or initiatives once I depart. Those are simply the rules UCC clergy are expected to follow.

Know this: I will keep the people of First Congregational Church of Decatur in my heart and my prayers. I hope for you, that the joy of Christ may grow in your hearts and strengthen your service to the broader community. I am confident that the Spirit will lead the interim period and search process every step of the way.

And now the LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The LORD look upon you with favor and grant you peace. Go in peace and serve the LORD!

Pastor Ryan Travis

RECEPTION FOR PASTOR RYAN - Please join us in celebrating our time with Pastor Ryan between services on Sunday September 30th. This will be our last Sunday with Pastor Ryan and a time to say farewell and best wishes. A basket will be available for cards. See you there!

Adult Progressive Dinner



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

Tom and Paula Cordts have volunteered to host the dessert portion of the evening event. We are looking for someone to host the heavy appetizer course. If you are interested in hosting, please call Bob Bunselmeyer at 877-5926.

FFDO

First Friday Dinner Out will be TUESDAY October 9 at Richland Community College's Bistro 537. We will meet there at 6:00. Let me know if you will be joining us.

Sandy Harmison

THANK YOU

A sincere thanks to all who volunteered for the Summer Music Program.

It is a blessing to have so many talented members who are willing to share with our congregation.

God Bless you all.

Worship Music Team

Safe Church

Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention

Our Church has never had a case of abuse, but to insure that we never have one, church council has approved a policy to create and maintain programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons associated with First Church should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention of the church to take action in an attempt to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

As a first step in putting this policy into force, all employees of the church will need to complete an Employee Commitment. This involves the following:

1. Read the Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention.
2. Sign the Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Verification Form.
3. Read the Equal Employment Opportunity Statement
4. View the required video on Child and Youth Sexual Abuse.

All volunteers will need to do all the above and also:

1. Sign the Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form.
2. Sign the Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer Application and Discloser Form if working with Children and/or Youth.

Church volunteers who must complete these forms are members of all church ministries, children or youth leaders, members of the Memorial Committee and the Pastoral Support Committee. Volunteers like ushers, cooks, communion preparers, etc. do not need to complete the forms, but are still expected to follow the Safe Church policy.

Copies of the Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention are available in the Church office. Forms for reporting incidences of Harassment or Child Abuse are also available in the office.

Any question about this new policy should be directed to members of Admin or Church Council.



Rally Day



Rally Day September 9 Fun for the whole family

Photos by Susan Daley

THANK YOU to everyone who helped with Rally Day! Fun was had by all! The kids enjoyed our Dinosaur visitors and giant dinosaur egg! We all enjoyed the Pizza and salad lunch and the music by Beyond the Blue, a group of some of our own Praise Band members.



Meals on Wheels

Thank you to these First Church volunteers who helped deliver Meals on Wheels the week of August 27:

Sharon and Mac Butler
Dave Carpenter
Bill and Alice Huebner

Ev and Shirley Kuhn
Peggy Ruff and her brother
Charles Zweck

Some of these volunteers most generously delivered meals on two days. This was a huge help as we were assigned our routes with only a few days notice.

Meals on Wheels always needs more volunteers to deliver meals. Volunteers deliver one route on one day and work in teams of 2 (usually one driver and one runner). Meals are picked up at Decatur Memorial Hospital between 10:00 and 10:30 AM and each route includes detailed directions and instructions for each home. Routes require about an hour for delivery.

If you would like to be included on the list to help with this rewarding service, please contact Sue Bunselmeyer, 877-5926 or leave a message at the church office.

Baptism



Baptism of Mazey Kate Robertson
Daughter of Tommy and Jill Robertson
Granddaughter of Joe and Carol Robertson



Carol and her granddaughter

Photos by Mindy Bunselmeyer

**On August 19, Dave Mahr
Presented the Church with his
Special Music**

Photo by Susan Daley



Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet on Friday, Sept. 28th and leave the church at 9:30 for the Okaw Apple Orchard. We are on our own this time...parents retired and now run by the daughter per Norma. They want some idea of how many are coming.

Want to purchase a donut or slurpee??? We just order and pay for ourselves. No tour of the orchard as this is a busy time and especially on Fridays. They suggest you purchase a bag of apples while there...and I can attest to the fact their apple butter is wonderful!

We want to carpool so let me know if you can drive and how many you can take in your car. Friends are invited to come along.

Give Norma 877-3952 or me 877-7008 a jingle by Tuesday the 25th. The more the merrier. We'll discuss events we plan to have for the rest of this year.

SAVE Nov. 2nd to help me out - Decatur Area Church Women United will be holding their World Community Day Celebration that day at 1:00 at our Church. Refreshments are always served following the celebration. Will you save the date and help me make some goodies for the ladies to enjoy???

Thanks, Darla

Decatur Area Church Women United

Decatur Area Church Women United will meet on Monday, October 8th, 9:30 AM at the Grace United Methodist Church, 901 N. Main St.

Bible Study Leader Ardena Hunter will present the study "In Harmony With God's People" leading us to our World Community Day Celebration on Nov. 2nd. at 1:00 at our Church.

Please mark your calendars for the Nov. 2nd Celebration now! I will be needing help that day.

Any questions, contact Darla Weltmer 877-7008

Children's

We are in need of one or a couple of volunteers to help teach our grade school age Sunday School. Stacy Carter has agreed to do one Sunday each month and is looking for one or two others to co-teach with her. Please contact Carol Robertson if you can help! 413-1257

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 11TH
TURKEY, DRESSING, POTATOES AND GRAVY
AS WELL AS DRINKS
WILL BE PROVIDED
PLEASE BRING A DISH OF YOUR CHOOSING TO
SHARE
RSVP by Nov. 4th To
JULIE KECK @ 433-2543 or julieakeck@gmail.com
SHIRLEY ZIMMERMAN @ 875-7302 or
sdzcomm27@comcast.net
OR
JACKIE at the church office 877-2216

Foods Resource Bank



FRB Harvest Celebration, Sunday September 16

Harvest Blessing Service

Our partnership with the Food Resource Bank is dedicated to reducing world hunger one village at a

SAVE THE 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

AUGUST 2018 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Aug 18</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Budget Income	\$17,420.92	\$139,367.36
Budget Expense	\$17,269.15	\$138,153.20
Income	\$13,152.30	\$137,987.18
Expenses	\$13,344.33	\$130,173.60



God's Busy Hands

**Appreciates all the donations given for the brunch on
Sunday, August 19**



Happenings

FFDO

Bistro 537

Friday,
October 9
6:00 pm



God's Busy Hands

Tuesdays
1:00 - 3:00 pm



God's Busy Hands

Admin Meeting

Monday, October 15
5:30 pm

Council of Ministry Teams

Monday, October 15
6:30 pm

Choir

Wednesdays

7:00 pm



Sing With Us

Women's Fellowship

September 28
9:30 am

Okaw Apple
Orchard

October 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.

- 6. Todd Clark
Alfreda Tribout
- 7. Don Merritt
- 17. Ronald Palmer
- 19. Bobbie Taylor
- 20. Frank Smith
- 21. Marilyn Jordan
- 23. Amy Leman
Don Moster
- 24. Robert Ruehrup
Christina Huckile
- 25. Alex Miller
- 26. Mary Beck
- 28. Tracy Johnson
- 31. Mark Jaberg

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

- 4. Ted & Darby Mitchell
- 10. Joe Moretti & Maureen Ruski
- 11. Mark & Susan Daley
- 12. Everett & Shirley Kuhn
- 20. John & Ashley Lofland
- 21. Don & Debbie Moster



First Church Sunday Morning

	Date	9:00 AM Service	11:00 AM Service
 LITURGISTS	October 7	Ellen Starace	Mark & Jeanette Flenner
	October 14	Marilee Gordon	Wes Pietch
	October 21	Chuck Zweck	Kelli Fonseca
	October 28	Penny Butts	Sandy Harmison
	October 7	Debbie Beal	
	October 14	Ev & Shirley Kuhn	
	October 21	Betty Henry	
	October 28	Don & Dee Wenneker	
	October 7	Kathy Hardy, Bob Lueca	
	October 14	Jim & Jodi Baldwin	
	October 21	Chuck Zweck	
	October 28	Kristin Hargrove	
 USHERS	October 7	Darla Weltmer, Dave Carpenter, Ruth DeBruine, Melinda Redman	
	October 14	Bill & Alice Huebner, Mike & Toni Longstreet	
	October 21	Robert & Penny Butts, Jim & Jodi Baldwin	
	October 28	Mark & Susan Daley, Mark & Mindy Bunselmeyer	

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

October Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	3 7:00 Choir Practice	4 6:30 Bible Study	5 6:00 MCYP	6
7:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	8 7:00 Proper- ty Meeting	9 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	10 7:00 Choir Practice	11 6:30 Bible Study	12 6:00 MCYP	13
14:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	15 5:30 Admin 6:30 Council Of Ministry Teams	16 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	17 7:00 Choir Practice	18 6:30 Bible Study	19 6:00 MCYP	20
21:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	22	23 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	24 7:00 Choir Practice	25 6:30 Bible Study	26 6:00 MCYP	27
28:00 Traditional 10:00 Fellow ship Hour 11:00 Con- temporary	29	30 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-Anon 8:00 AA	31 7:00 Choir Practice			



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.