

Congregational Comments

Vol. 20 No 9: September 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



*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

NEW BEGINNINGS

Part of the "back to school" ritual of many families with school age children is to review the clothes, notebooks, gym shoes, markers, etc. to see what will work for this year and what won't. This ritual of

readiness for the beginning of a new school year is part of millions of families' lives.

Every beginning begins with an ending. The ending of summer activities means possibilities for new beginnings. The first words of Genesis and the Gospel of John start, "*In the beginning...*" The Bible attaches great importance to beginnings, but they do not always come easy. Most beginnings that are positive are difficult. Did you know that most of the fuel for a space shuttle mission is used in the first few minutes as the shuttle breaks free of gravity? "Be strong," says our God, "I am with you always," whether it is the people of Israel journeying to the promised land, or a 4th grader beginning his first day of school, or any one of us as we begin each day, at home or at work.

Just like our "back to school" ritual, it is important to look at our lives to reflect how our beliefs and actions fit our commitment to Christ.

- * Think what 4 values are most important to you.
- * How does Christ fit into your life? Is He in the center or on the fringe of your life?
- * Are there ideas, attitudes, habits that you are outgrowing or no longer need, and need to end in order for you to grow?
- * Are you giving these important values, such as family, faith, church, friendship, compassion, love, community, service to others the time and personal resources you want?
- * Are you living these values out each day in every decision and relationship?

A new church program year is beginning and we invite you to join us as we seek to be a faithful and fruitful congregation serving Jesus Christ.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE GREAT THINGS HAPPENING AT FIRST CHURCH:

- **September 13** come join us at **9AM** for our **Traditional Worship** or **11:00AM** for our **Contemporary Worship**. Come join us in praising God and **check out our new sermon series titled “Why?”** as we seek to understand how God is at work in our lives.
- **Sunday School for our children and youth begins** with awesome teachers and students as we explore our faith together. **10:15 Sept. 13th** Give in to that little nudge of the Holy Spirit and **try one of our small group Bible Study classes**. Discover God anew.
- **YOU ARE INVITED,** all First Church Members, *children, youth, families, and friends*, to **check out our RALLY DAY Sept. 13th noon til 2:30 PM.** There'll be **free food, a great MAGIC SHOW and fun games**, and a great time for visiting.. Invite your friends and family – everyone!. **Come have a GREAT TIME at First Church's Rally Day!!**
- **SEPT 23rd** is the starting date for our great **LOGOS Program**. **Come join us for this great children and youth program!!!**
- **WATCH for a harvest date** for our Foods Resource Bank Project growing on the Buselmeyer's Farm. Your help with the cost of this crop will fight hunger in a community on the other side of the world. Together with God's Spirit - amazing things do happen!
- Many of our fellowship organizations and ministries begin their fall activities. Please read this newsletter and the calendar for more information and discover new ways you can be a part of our First Church community and Christ's ministry.

As we BEGIN this New Fall Program Year, we do so with excitement. Our part is simply to begin in faith. A Greek sage declared, "*A person has half the deed done who has made a beginning.*" New beginnings can bring new life, helping us to experience deeper meaning and joys of the life that we value.

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 at 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 current friendships visiting over **delicious refreshments in Fellowship Hall.***

This is an exciting time of new opportunities and growth at First Church!. Come and be part of it!

Pastor Dave

“WHY?”

Why? It's a simple word, but a deep question everyone wrestles with at some point in their lives, and God at times seems far away, and many cry out, "Why". We will look to the scriptures learning about those who have come through difficult times to help us understand how God is at work in our lives and our world. **Join us Sept. 13th as we begin this new sermon series.**



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

Primrose Retirement Community

Claude Young—Room 228

Lois Shelton—Room 132

Hickory Point Christian Village

Mary Lou Phipps— Room 210

Imboden Gardens

Harriette Horn—Room120

Keystone

Carolyn Jones—Room 216

Vonderlieth Living Center, Mt. Pulaski, IL

Alice Roach

Fair Havens Christian Home

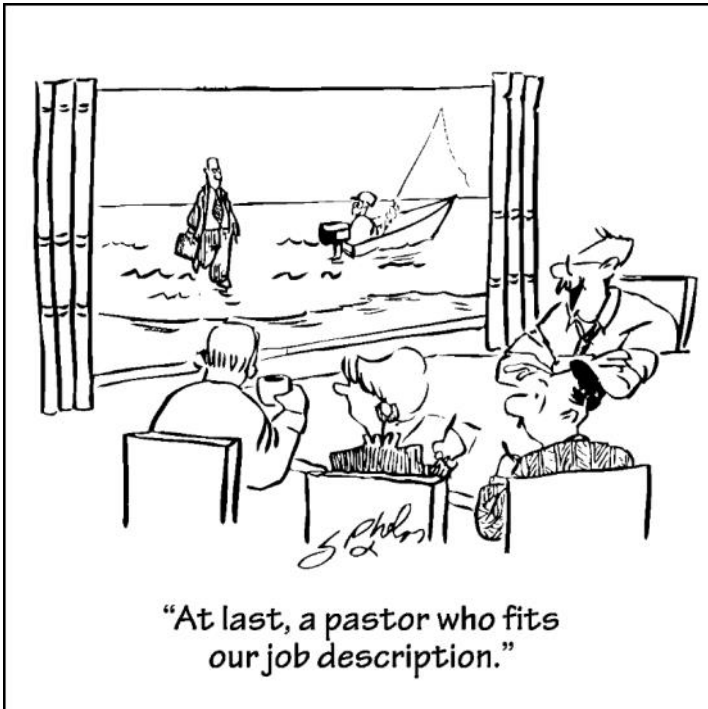
Al Wilson—Room 425





FIRST RINGERS

The First Ringers will start their fall schedule beginning Thursday, September 10th @ 5:45 in the Fellowship Hall.



"At last, a pastor who fits our job description."

Hello Just Flickers - We hope your summer is going well!

The Just Flicks Selection Committee has finalized the schedule for the coming season. As you can see, it's another great lineup with a wonderful mix of titles, genres, and topics. You are probably familiar with some of the films, and the committee also chose some lesser-known but highly regarded titles.

In a week or so you will receive an attractive brochure that you can print and distribute. Meanwhile, please add these dates to your calendar. Opening night is less than eight weeks away!

Just Flicks – Schedule 2015-2016

All films start at 6 PM

Date	Film (Year) Running time	Place
Sept. 13, 2015	<i>Secrets and Lies</i> (1996) 2 hrs 22 min	First Presbyterian Church
Oct. 11, 2015	<i>5 Broken Cameras</i> (2012) 1 hr 30 min	Central Christian Church
Nov. 8, 2015	<i>God Loves Uganda</i> (2013) 1 hr 23 min	First Presbyterian Church
Dec. 13, 2015	<i>A Gathering of Old Men</i> (1987) 1 hr 21 min	Central Christian Church
Jan. 10, 2016	<i>No</i> (2013) 1 hr 57 min	First Presbyterian Church
Jan. 24, 2016	<i>St. Vincent</i> (2014) 1 hr 42 min	Central Christian Church
Feb. 14, 2016	<i>Testament of Youth</i> (2015) 2 hrs 9 min	First Presbyterian Church
Mar. 13, 2016	<i>Cesar Chavez</i> (2014) 1 hr 41 min	Central Christian Church
April 10, 2016	<i>The Promised Land</i> (2013) 1 hr 46 min	First Presbyterian Church
May 8, 2016	<i>Mr. Smith Goes to Washington</i> (1939) 2 hrs 10 min	Central Christian Church

It's LOGOS Time!!!

Plans are underway for our fifteenth year of LOGOS at First Church. It promises to be another fun, faith-filled year and it won't be the same without YOU.

- All children and youth in first through twelfth grades are invited and encouraged to participate in LOGOS. We meet most Wednesday nights September 23 through April 6, from 4:45 until 7:15.
- Adults are invited to listen for God's call to you to serve this wonderful ministry in some way.
- Staff will celebrate a new LOGOS year on Wednesday, September 16, 5:30-7:00 at the home of Jeanette and Mark Flenner.
- LOGOS will begin for students and staff on September 23. Registration forms and fees are due that evening.
- If you would like to sponsor a child/youth's participation in LOGOS, your donation to the LOGOS scholarship fund will be gratefully accepted. Program fees are \$90 per year. Your generosity assures none stays home because of their financial situation.

If you have any questions, please contact co-directors Marsha Mower and/or Maureen Ruski.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
		1 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	2
6 Pastoral Card Sale 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contemporary Worship	7	8 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	9
13 Noon-2:30 Rally Day 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contemporary Worship	14 5:30 Admin 6:00 Worship/Music 7:00 Property	15 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	16 5:30-7:00 Staff Ga
20 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contemporary Worship	21 7:00 Church Council	22 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	23 4:45-7:15
27 9:00 Traditional 11:00 Contemporary Worship	28	29 1:00 God's Busy Hands 7:00 Al-anon 8:00 AA	30 4:45-7:15

Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5
10 5:45 First Ringers	11	12
10 LOGOS Gathering 17 1:15 Book Club 5:45 First Ringers	18	19
15 LOGOS 24 5:45 First Ringers	25	26
15 LOGOS 31 5:45 First Ringers	 <p>The graphic features the word "SEPTEMBER" in a blue, serif font. Below the text are three red apples with green leaves, and two blue books with white pages, all set against a white background.</p>	

Women's Fellowship Annual Rummage Sale

It's almost here... the annual rummage sale for Women's Fellowship. Items have been coming in very nicely and we thank those of you for bringing in your items already and to those of you waiting to bring them....please see that we get them no later than Wed. morning Aug. 26th.

We need help from all who are able to do so. I have the list of those of you who have signed up and if you forget to show up, we will certainly call you to remind you!! (perhaps a joke?? or not!!)

We hope to have a lot more rummage come into the Church this coming week as there is a lot of room to help fill the room!!

IF you did sign up and find you can't come, please let us know. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.

DARLA WELTMER,
877-7008 OR e-mail Lmweltmer@juno.com

JULY 2015 FINANCIAL REPORT

NO DATA AVAILABLE

First Congregational Church, UCC

Family Rally Day
Sunday September 13th
12:00pm-2:30pm

3465 N. MacArthur Rd. Decatur, IL

Lunch 12:00-12:30

Amazing Dudley Magic
12:30-1:00

In Fellowship Hall

Games 1:00-2:30

Plunko **Cupcake/Cookie Walk**
Ring Toss **KerPlunk**
Giant Jenga **Bingo**
Water Balloon Launch

Prizes, Fellowship, Fun!
Join Us!



EVEREST Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power

Matthew 19:14 - Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Our VBS 2015 goal was to share the Word of God with as many children as possible again this summer. We touched the lives of 28 children (20 families) and 36 youth and/or adult volunteers this year, along with the involvement of three ministries of the church. We had an exciting and action-packed week! Many of you volunteered to be part of Everest and we thank you for your willingness to participate. We offered meals for our volunteers each evening.

Each evening, all school-age children participated in Base Camp Sing & Play (where we heard from Trek Rockrambler) and Summit Celebration with Spotlight VBS. The Crews rotated between Bible Expeditions, KidVid Cinema, Glacier Games, Mountaintop Treats, and Imagination Station. Our Preschool Peak children joined in Base Camp Sing & Play and had their own self-contained program in their own area of the building, with their very own Summit Celebration. Families were invited to join us in the sanctuary for Summit Celebration where we reviewed the day's activities, sang songs, and watched our Spotlight VBS video.

Music CDs were available for learning and enjoying the wonderful VBS songs all year long!

Through our Operation Kid-to-Kid mission project, we helped provide colorful, kid-friendly, Thai-language New Testaments for children in Thailand. During the week, participants brought in monetary donations of all sizes – it all made a difference. For just \$4.00, a child in India could have a colorful, kid-friendly, eye-catching, age-appropriate New Testament of his or her own, written in the Thai language! On Sunday at Imagination Station, kids personalized a unique Elephant Bank – then used it to collect coins or spare change to help purchase these New Testament.

We were truly blessed to have an AWESOME spirit-filled week again this year! We were blessed by many monetary contributions, as well as time and talents. We could not have done it without the support and prayers of our church family. Thank you and God Bless you all! Co-Directors: Marsha Mower and Maureen Ruski

Sunday – God has the power to provide. (Klymer)

God provides for Elijah. (1 Kings 17)

"And God will generously provide all you need." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Monday – God has the power to comfort. (Cliff)

God speaks to Elijah. (1 Kings 19)

"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others." (2 Corinthians 1:4)

Tuesday – God has the power to heal. (Mallory)

God heals Naaman. (2 Kings 5)

“He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds.” (Psalm 147:3)

Wednesday – God has the power to forgive. (Pike)

Jesus dies on a cross to take away our sins, then comes back to life. (John 22:31-24:12)

“You are a God of forgiveness.” (Nehemiah 9:17)

Thursday – God has the power to love us forever. (Veddy)

Jesus promises us an eternal home. (John 14:1-3)

“Everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

VOLUNTEERS: Missy/Rick Boldizar, Dave Carpenter, Hannah Cordts, Jeanette Flenner, Katie Hammon, Christina Huckile, James Huckile, Caleb Jefson, Katy Koyak, Pat Mahr, Kathy Moore, Devon/Joe/Malone Moretti, Erica Moster, Marsha Mower, Leigh Myers, Kathy Richardson, Stratus Roberts, Carol Robertson, Jill Robertson, Robert Ruehrup, Maureen Ruski, Pastor Dave Taylor, Alfreda Tribout, Bruce/Debbie Whitney, Chuck Zweck

Our thanks to:

Children's, Evangelism, and Outreach Ministries

Youth "Facilitator of Fun," Joe Moretti, for building the set

Set "assembly crew" - Gerry/Peggy Ruff, Maureen Ruski

"Extra" hands for all the miscellaneous organizing, prep and room set-up work - James Huckile, Marsha/Skip Mower

Special thanks to all who donated snacks/food and/or worked in the kitchen for the volunteer staff meals (Jodi Baldwin, Missy Boldizar, Mindy Bunselmeyer, Sharon Burbes, Stacey/Don Carter, Paula Cordts, Betty Cummings, Peggy Druessel, Jeanette Flenner, Marlene Gant, Shirley Kuhn, Amy Leman, Laurel Lorey, Darby/Ted Mitchell, Kathy Moore, Norma Morrison, Frank/Shelley Smith, Ellen Starace, Ruby Voyles, Debra Wicklund, Shirley Zimmerman)

KIDS: Graham Blackwell, Ben Brown, Emery Bunselmeyer, Gehrig Bunselmeyer, Jasper Cook, Emma Cordts, Reed Cordts, Kallissa Crocker, Noah Crocker, Quincy Harris, Nigel Hawthorne, Isaiah Janvrin, Quincy Janvrin, Azrielle Lauper-Cook, Chase Leman, Mya Lofland, Aidan Miller, Miranda Miller, Logan Moster, Andrew Mower, Lexy Oliver, Korbyn Palmer, Sable Roberts, Hazel Walters, Isley Walters, Ava Wheeler, Elizabeth Whitten, Nathan Wicklund



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. Janice Kahila
Pam Mueller
3. Patty Stemple
5. Helen Johnson
Everett Kuhn
9. Rikki Brady
Nathan Harmison
Roger Metzger
10. Gehrig Bunselmeyer
12. James Huckile
13. Marie Bauer
Thomas Cordts
Patrick Malone
Malone Moretti
14. Ronald Brownfield
17. Carolyn Jones
19. Kyle Brownfield
Tommy Robertson
20. Shelly Smith
21. Alyssa Baker
Sherry Palmer
Brandon Janvrin
22. Katie Hill
23. Aidan Seitz
24. Olivia Wernecke
27. Phyllis Campbell
Ashley Lofland
30. Beverly Capshaw
Brianna Senger

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. Charles & Alfreda Tribout
4. Gary & Kathy Ann Baker
7. Homer & Nancy Leoucis
8. Jerry & Patty Stemple
19. Howard & Nancy Beede
22. David & Pat Mahr

SEPTEMBER



FIRST SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 6

LITURGIST: Mindy Bunselmeyer

FLOWERS: Betty Cummings

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Gary Weiss,
Marilee Gordon, Chuck Zweck,
Dave Carpenter

SEPTEMBER 13

LITURGIST: Melinda Redman

FLOWERS: Charles & Alfreda
Tribout

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Marylin
Cushing, Robby & Kathy Moore,
Ellen Starace.

SEPTEMBER 20

LITURGIST: Amy Leman

FLOWERS: Tom & Betty
Fankhauser

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Jim & Jodi
Baldwin, Tom & Paula Cordts

SEPTEMBER 27

LITURGIST: Carol Robertson

FLOWERS: Ned & Sandy
Cummings

COFFEE:

USHERS/GREETER: Dave &
Marlene Gant, Ted & Darby
Mitchell

SECOND SERVICE
VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 6

USHER/GREETER: Ruby
Voyles/Shirley Zimmerman

REFRESHMENTS: Ruby
Voyles/Shirley Zimmerman

SEPTEMBER 13

USHER/GREETER: Howard &
Nancy Beede

REFRESHMENTS: Howard &
Nancy Beede

SEPTEMBER 20

USHER/GREETER: Joe Moretti

REFRESHMENTS: Maureen
Ruski

SEPTEMBER 27

USHER/GREETER: Praise
Band

REFRESHMENTS: Missy
Boldizer



