

The Church Mouse – January 2018
First Congregational United Church of Christ

Rev. Mary Anne Biggs, Pastor

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Beloved,

I have already made one New Year's resolution and that was to tidy the files on my computer. I got an early start but I haven't made much traction. Like sorting through old photographs, I couldn't easily decide which to keep. However, the following was a simple choice. In 2008, the Rev. John Thomas, then General Minister and President of the United Church, sent out a Christmas letter. While his message is now 10 years old, his words could not be more timely.

Blessings for the New Year ... may it be filled with hope, peace, joy and love!

Pastor Mary Anne

Benedictus!

For many members of the United Church of Christ this year, the journey toward Bethlehem is passing through ominous and uncertain terrain. The financial crisis affects some more than others, but everywhere there is anxiety threatening to divert our attention from the gift of God's presence remembered at Bethlehem and available to us each day. One pastor recently wrote, "In my own congregation I have members losing jobs or facing severe cuts in hours, retirement funds evaporating, and tangible anxiety." Meanwhile, the desperately poor in our communities are increasingly looking to us for help with housing, food, and other basic needs. The stunning economic reversals leave us silenced in the face of a future we no longer imagine we can predict or control.

Centuries ago, according to Luke, a priest named Zechariah found the angel's good news of a child so incomprehensible that he, too, was silenced. His world, like ours, was shrouded in uncertainty. A Roman occupation, a paranoid ruler prepared to slaughter innocent children in order to retain power, a population uprooted by a census, a pregnant mother seeking shelter and care from strangers — these were the realities surrounding the birth of Jesus, realities not unlike those facing so many in our world today. Christmas is not the festival of prosperity so many would make of it: Christmas is the celebration of God with us in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. This year it's helpful to remember that, for Matthew, the Christmas story did not end with the magi's gifts, but in a refugee settlement in Egypt. Who would have imagined that the place remembered for Pharaoh's tyranny would become the place of the Holy Family's protection.

Christmas is always about surprises, holy surprises, when "the way out of no way" is revealed. I recently heard such a word from an Egyptian Christian and partner with the United Church of Christ in ecumenical work in the Middle East. Speaking to representatives of churches in the United States, Samuel Rizk said, "the most significant revelation for many Christians in the Middle East during these very violent times is that they are not alone. War has taken a toll on everyone. They, along with their compatriots of all faiths, ethnicities, and economic classes, have shouldered the burden of endless conflict for many years. But in the midst of such desperation, it has often been the Transatlantic friendships and partnerships that have brought significant glimmers of light at the end of each dark tunnel." The lands of Jesus' birth often speak a litany of unrelenting gloom, leaving us silenced with Zechariah, unable to trust a word of hope. Yet beyond the cadences of war and terror drummed into us by the media, there is another melody that sings with Zechariah of light for those in darkness.

And so it is with the corrosive fears we harbor, often in silence, in this season of economic uncertainty. Long after this year's advent candles are extinguished our church, our congregations, many of our members and neighbors will be dealing with painful economic adjustments. Long after we sing of the hopes and fears met in Bethlehem the pain of today's occupation in Palestine will endure. And long after the peaceful refrain of "Silent Night" dies into the cold silences of Christmas eve many in our world will be fleeing Herod's wrath. Will we remain mute like Zechariah, unable to believe good news in

(continued)

***Benedictus!* continued**

the face of persistent shadows? Or will our Egyptian colleague's gratitude for our friendship remind us that our words, our ministries, do have power whether in the face of violence or economic crises, that the last thing our world needs from us is silence born of fear?

This year scaling back and toning down may seem to make sense when it comes to a Christmas that doesn't feel very merry. Luke says otherwise. This year is the time for lavish, extravagant acts of hope, sharing, friendship, and joy. Consider doing the following as an expression of this:

Read Luke 1-2, and Matthew 1-2 and reflect prayerfully about how God worked through the most vulnerable and uncertain circumstances to give birth to the Good News in our lives. Celebrate what God may be doing in those similar circumstances today.

Volunteer at a local anti-poverty ministry or project in your community.

Write your senators and representatives and ask them to ensure that plans for the economic recovery include our poorest neighbors as well as those who live in poverty around the world. Remind them of the poverty of the Holy Family in Bethlehem, and of their life as refugees in Egypt.

As Samuel Rizk has asked in his letter, pray for the countries of the Middle East, that peace may come as a sign of hope for all the people. Make this a special prayer discipline for the days between Christmas and Epiphany.

Join other Christians in asking the new President to make peace in the Middle East a priority that the place of Jesus' birth may fulfill the angels' promise of glory and peace.

The Holy Spirit returned a voice to Zechariah. May his song be ours as well: "Benedictus! Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has looked favorably on the people and redeemed them, and has raised up a mighty savior for us, giving light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, guiding our feet into the way of peace."

"Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God, we open our doors and hearts to all in service and love, as modeled by Jesus Christ."

(Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Eagle River, WI)

Moderators' Report — January, 2018

Refreshing! Spiritual! Lively! Full of Heart! All descriptors of the December 9th Ecumenical Advent Christmas Cantata, "Songs of the Season from Around the World" prepared and presented under the direction and leadership of Lori Hunter, Kris Eisele, and Norma Yaeger and hosted by First Congregational United Church of Christ. With accompaniments of piano, flute, guitar, clarinet and percussion, the members of our choir and the UCC Quartet joined with the voices of numerous others, community wide, to bring the celebration of God's promise of salvation and its fulfillment through Jesus Christ, to us, through music, scripture and story. It was spectacular! Thank you, thank you to all who contributed of your time and talent to bring us this joy and wonder as we prepared for and anticipated the coming of Christ. It was wonderful.

Also remarkable, was being privy to our beautifully adorned sanctuary. The tree, the ornaments, the banners, the boughs, the wreaths, the sensitively designed niches, the altar garments, all breathtaking upon first glance and spiritually renewing every sight there after. Thank you to our Sanctuary Arts Group for what enchantments you work as you adorn our worship space.

As we welcome the New Year, the Church Council thanks you for the opportunity we've had to review our traditional board practices and through study, conversation, contemplation, and prayer, consider significant shifts that position us for a more effective ministry in changing times. Without doubt, we, your Council, with former Moderators, and members of the congregation have deepened and refreshed our lives as Christians through this process. We have participated in nine classes of exploration based on Mark Tidsworth's Book, Shift: 3 Big Moves for the 21st Century Church, read and dissected numerous articles, developed, achieved, and evaluated quarterly goals, written a vision statement for our Church, formed a Governance Committee, met for four sessions as said committee, designed a read-friendly schematic of our proposed new governance structure, made recommendations for changes to our constitution based on the findings of our study, and provided four feedback sessions to open the doors of conversation to you all, those hesitant or questioning or uncertain of how any changes may affect the health and wellbeing of our Church.

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JANUARY CHOIR SCHEDULE

Rehearse at 8:30 a.m.
to sing at the 10:00 service
January 21st

Moderators' Report — continued

And now, let the drums roll! We have a full slate of nominee officers for the new 2018 Council! They are: *Barb Helmick/President, Kathy Holperin/Vice-President, Mark Johannsen, Carlton Schroeder, Sally Kemp, Nancy Diepenbrock and myself*, as members at large. *Marilyn Preisler/Clerk, Nan Pophal/Office Manager, and Pastor Mary Anne* will also be in attendance and participation at Council meetings. It's a good mixture of folks; some of the early service, some of the late, some members for many years, some not so much. What unites us is our concern for, commitment to, and deep love of First Church and our hope to be in service as Disciples of Christ.

Please come to the **Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28th!** It is here where your participation is critical! It is here where the proposed constitutional changes will be presented and voted upon, It is here where the new slate of officers will be presented and voted upon. It is here where we will give thanks to all who have served as Council Members in 2017 and in previous years. It is here where the feast of our first ***Unity Sunday Potluck Brunches*** will be devoured. :) It is here where friendship and fellowship will grace the tables. It is here where we need you to be as we turn our postures, hopes, and prayers for the future.

Quote of the Month: *“With a positive theology of change, we can live as Christians know not for disagreements or self-interest, but for love ... as we create a new story for our future.” Reverend Anita L. Bradshaw, PhD.*

Respectfully yours, Joy Turpin, Co-Moderator

The following was presented to the Church Council and unanimously passed in a motion at the December 13, 2017 Council Meeting:

Voting on agenda items at Annual Congregation Meetings or Annual Budget Meetings will be by either:

- a. voice vote
- b. written vote
- c. email vote
- d. USPS vote

Those in physical attendance at the duly-called meeting will decide upon method a or b for any motion at the meeting. Should a voting member not be able to attend an Annual Congregation Meeting, an Annual Budget Meeting, or any specially called meeting of the Congregation, that member may vote by either email or by USPS. The member will have received a proposed budget, a slate of officers, or proposed motions in the mail or email, having recorded and alternative address with the Office Manager in advance. The member will be obligated to return a ballot by email or US mail 48 hours before the actual date of the duly-called meeting, so that this vote can be counted with the votes of the members physically present. Members who vote by email or US mail will not be counted as part of the quorum for the meeting.

Journey to Generosity “The Way of Jesus” Matthew 9:35-10:23



We have received **82** pledges totaling

\$155,348 toward our goal of **\$165,000**

YOUR pledges are VERY IMPORTANT and MUCH NEEDED for 2018.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Jan. 1	Wilma Frisque
Jan. 2	Chris Thomson Myrna Wright
Jan. 4	Paula Hendrickson Barbara Mather
Jan. 10	Phil Jensen Gary Stevens
Jan. 11	Carl Gromoll
Jan. 13	Kathy Holperin
Jan. 14	Sharon Breit Marlys Lee
Jan. 15	Barbara Mattes Julia Nesbitt
Jan. 17	Bill Schattner
Jan. 18	Joe Panci
Jan. 20	Drew Schulta
Jan. 22	Gene Welhoefer
Jan. 27	Brenna Yakel
Jan. 28	Gary Gilbert Marilyn Nelson Bette Vande Hey
Jan. 29	Mike Mettler
Feb. 1	Sandra Mettler
Feb. 2	Myrtle Bucholtz
Feb. 3	Leta Cole Ann Dunphy Kim Kaitchuck

Do you or someone in your family have a January/early February birthday that isn't listed? Call the church office and we'll add you to our list. *You don't have to reveal your birth year!*

Our church IS accessible to ALL!

Wheelchair accessibility

Handicap parking area

Handicap restrooms for both men and women

A unisex handicap restroom in the lower level of the building

Ramp accessibility to altar



*Happy
New Year*

Remembering Carl Lautzenheiser, a former active member of our congregation — Carl was an integral part of our "Reach 2000" building program. He and Ellie lived in the Phelps area and had Oak Ridge Resort for several years before moving to MI to be near family. Carl was Ellie's caregiver before her death in 2013. He "lived a life of integrity and strength" even as he fought a 6 month battle with esophageal cancer and died November 27th at the age of 90.

To Our Church Family,

**Our hope is not in the new year...
but in the One who makes all things
new.**



If you know of someone who would benefit from a call, visit, or a card, please let Pastor Mary Anne or a Befriender know.

**Nursery care is not available
during the worship services.**

*Activity/quiet bags for children are
available in the entry/coat area.
Enjoy the worship service with your family!*



Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry — two which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is **Yesterday**, with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back **Yesterday**. We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said. The other day we should not worry about is **Tomorrow**, with its possible adversaries, its burdens, its large and poor performance. **Tomorrow** is also beyond our immediate control. This leaves only one day ... **Today**. Any person can fight the battle of just one day. It is only when you and I add the **Yesterday** and **Tomorrow** that we break down.

It is not the experience of **Today** that drives people mad — it is remorse or bitterness for something which happened **Yesterday** and the dread of what **Tomorrow** will bring. Let us, therefore, live but one day at a time!

—Author unknown

UCC Reading Group –Thursday, January 18, 7 p.m.

**“ALL THE PRESIDENTS’ PASTRIES:
Twenty-Five Years in the White House, A Memoir”**
By Roland Mesnier with Christian Malard



This extraordinary success-story — told by the hero himself — of a young French pastry chef who climbed his way to the top, embodies the great American dream. After working at the Savoy in London, the George V in Paris, the Princess in Bermuda, and the Homestead in Virginia, Roland Mesnier took on the job of a lifetime as pastry chef to the White House. He provides behind-the-scenes insight into the characters, tastes, and obsessions of the five presidents — Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush — and first ladies he served during his 25 years in Washington. Having witnessed major world events from the hub of the world’s superpower, Mesnier has unique perspective on both crises and celebrations.

**JANUARY 28 “UNITY SUNDAY”
SINGLE SERVICE AT 9 A.M. followed by
POTLUCK & Annual Congregational
Meeting**



Mindfulness
Starts Here



Eagle River Mindfulness Group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, at 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the parlor or the music room.

For more information, contact Chris Meier, 715-891-2075
chrismeier050@gmamil.com

COUNT YOUR
BLESSINGS.
NAME THEM ONE BY ONE.
COUNT YOUR
MANY BLESSINGS
SEE WHAT GOD HAS DONE.

VERY IMPORTANT!!!
PLEASE ...

Keep the church office informed with your address changes as you leave for the winter months.

This also applies to email addresses and phone numbers — we can’t reach you if we don’t have the correct information.



EPIPHANY: A time to ...

The word Epiphany means “to make known.” On Epiphany, Christians celebrate the full manifestation of God’s glory in the coming of Christ. The day of Epiphany (January 6) brings Christmas to a glorious conclusion, but we are not to stop there. The season of Epiphany is God’s **TIME** to reveal God’s glory. It is:

A time to worship because it deals with the glory of God manifested in Jesus Christ. The season begins with the Wise Men coming to worship the newborn King. The season ends with the worship experience on Mount of Transfiguration.

A time of light because the light of Christ knows no end; it goes to the ends of the earth. He is the light to lighten the whole world. The light of Christ is not merely to shine on Christians, but through them, for the salvation of humankind.

A time to witness because the light of Christ needs to be spread throughout a dark world.

Be an Epiphany. Make know the presence of God by the witness of your life!

A NEW YEAR OF GIVING: Who do you want us to help?

The Board of Missions is kicking off 2018 with a special request to YOU!

For the second year in a row, we’ve set aside \$500 from the Maggie Ball Missions Fund for donations to mission-related efforts that **YOU** want our church to help. Here’s how it works:

The Board of Missions has designated a minimum of \$100 for up to five mission-related efforts nominated by YOU. The primary criteria: Does the request “respond with compassion to the needs of our brothers and sisters locally, nationally and internationally”? (Per Board of Missions Operations Manual)

Submit your nomination either as a paper document or via email by **January 15th**.

Here’s the information we need:

- Your name, address, phone number and email address
- Name of the organization/group/person or people nominated
- Web site of the organization or group (contact information if no web site)
- Purpose of the organization or group
- A brief explanation (no more than two or three paragraphs), explaining why the Board of Missions should select your nominee for funding. Please include any personal connection you may have to the nominee.

Nomination forms will be available at church throughout December and early January. You can complete the form and either leave in in the church office or mail it to the church. If you’d like to submit your nomination via email, please send it to office@eagleriverucc.org Please put NEW YEAR OF GIVING in the subject line.

Nominations must be received no later than January 15th. The Board will review the requests and select recipients by the end of January.

Questions? Please see Norma Yaeger, Barbara Helmick or Krista Wittkopf.

Every chance taken is another chance to win.

—Author unknown



SUNDAY BAKERS

Date	7:30 Service	10:00 Service
Jan. 7	Paula Hendrickson	Donna DePape/Ingrid Stephan Carol Smart
Jan. 14	Pat Mayo	Jane Shadick Trista Langley-Tyler
Jan. 21	Linda Brainard	Nancy Palmer Arlene Turk
Jan. 28	“UNITY SUNDAY” single service at 9 a.m. followed by POTLUCK and ANNUAL CONGEGATIONAL MEETING	

Please plan to attend!

All coins received in the offering plates are put into the Local Missions/Melody of Compassion Fund and are greatly appreciated. Keep the “melody” ringing!



JOIN US FOR COFFEE IN THE CHURCH PARLOR EVERY SUNDAY!
We use biodegradable paper cups!



Equal Exchange ORGANIC COFFEE and TEAS are available in the church office.

- Decaf coffee: \$8.50
- Regular: \$7.50
- 2 lb. bags of coffee beans: \$18.60
- Green tea: \$4
- Hot chocolate: \$7



January Scripture Readers

	7:30	10:00
Jan. 7	Marilyn Preisler	John Biggs
Jan. 14	Chuck Kemp	Bernie Hupperts
Jan. 21	Char Thomson	Ursula Charaf
Jan. 28th	“UNITY SUNDAY” single service 9 a.m.	

Gary Gilbert

Acolytes (10:00 service)

Jan. 7	Royce Remme
Jan. 14	Daniel Brunstad
Jan. 21	Rose Tyler
Jan. 28	“Unity Sunday” 9 a.m. service

Ayla Shepherdson

Thank you for wearing your name tag and for signing the pew pad during Sunday worship.

Happy New Year!

from

Sharon R. Breit, Christian Education Director

Eight youth will return in January to complete their Confirmation Study. We are using the Spark House book called "Re-Form." We begin with a video and then have discussion. The group includes: Leta Cole, Grace Florence, Grace Wittkopf, Drew Schulta, Julia Nesbitt, Madison Stebbeds, Rose Tyler and Jacob Klopp.

We combined our younger kids with those at Prince of Peace, led by Pastor Andrea and Louise Krus. Their smiles tell me they are enjoying their time there.

I am so proud of all of our children. They did a wonderful job when they presented the Christmas Program, "The Christmas Tree". Thanks also to Bernie Hupperts who read the scripture passages. The children brought presents that will be donated to children less fortunate. I appreciate the support of the parents, Pastor Mary Anne, and of course, Nan. And ... a special thank you to our "Cheese Man" John Schroeder.

Wreath sales: Forty-two 24 inch and nine 36 inch wreaths were purchased for a profit of \$334.25.

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY is February 4th. Bring non-perishable food items and/or monetary donations to church. Remember to check the dates on the packaged goods; the Food Pantry cannot accept outdated items.

Faith makes all things possible, Hope makes all things work,
Love makes all things beautiful; may you have all three in this New Year!

Advice for teenagers

Don't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth; even that fades away.
Go for someone who makes you smile, because it takes only a smile to make a dark day seem bright.

Find the one who makes your heart smile.

—Author unknown

NATH — 12 most needed items!

Tall kitchen garbage bags
Cold medicine
Ibuprofen
Ice melt
Soft scrub w/bleach
Paper towels
AA batteries
Disinfectant cleaner
Ziploc bags, all sizes
Masking tape
No. 10 envelopes
Laundry baskets
Dinner napkins
Toilet paper
Air fresheners
Thank you!





HEARING ...

SPEAKING ...

Keep the collections going!!! Both collection boxes are located in the parlor. Please don't let your old phones or used hearing aids go to the trash! They can have another life somewhere, for someone in need!

PARLOR BOOKS

Hard cover - \$2 Paperback - \$1

We have children's books!
Hard cover: \$1 Paperback: 50 cents

Clean your book shelves and bring them in to fill our shelves!



Gathering of the FLOCK

Thursday, Jan. 11th, 6:00 p.m.

**At the home of
Bobbie Fleischman
RSVP
410-271-7456
Email: mcmith57@yahoo.com**

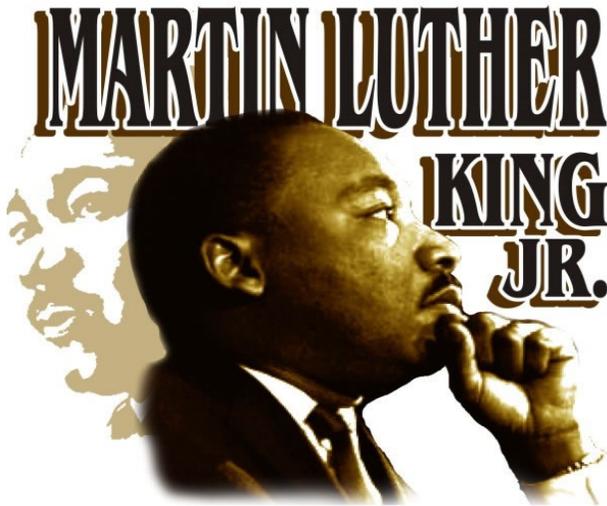


Join us for an evening of friendship, fun and just "yarning" away.



**for 2018 will be available on our
web-site in mid January!**

A pastor's prayer for the New year: "May the telemarketers wait to make their sales calls until you finish dinner, may your checkbook and your budget balance, and may they include generous amounts for your church."



1929 1968

**Monday, January 15, 2018
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy”

Flower Calendar (to reserve a Sunday)

Pick your Sunday and put your name on the Flower Calendar that is in the hall next to the elevator. If you want Nan to order flowers, put “order” after your name. She will order them from Horant’s and the cost is \$30; you are welcome to take them home after the service. Your name will be in the bulletin and the name of the person or event you are celebrating if you let her know.

You may also bring flowers from another source and place them on the flower stand next to the piano, put your name on the calendar and let Nan know if you want additional information in the bulletin. Weather permitting, you are also welcome to bring garden flowers, or even an arrangement of wild flowers. Put your name on the flower calendar and let Nan know if there’s a special person or event involved. What better way to honor anyone or anything than to share flowers with your church family on Sunday.

ALL January dates OPEN

December sponsors....

- Dec. 3: Tom Helmick in honor of Barb’s birthday on Dec. 3rd
- Dec. 10: Tom Smart in honor of Carol’s birthday on Dec. 10th
- Dec. 17: The Holperin Family in loving memory of Russell Holperin
- Dec. 24: Bob and Barb Mather in honor of their 50th anniversary on Dec. 23rd

First Congregational UCC Contact People - 2018

Rev. Mary Anne Biggs, 715-891-2124 (home) Church: 715-479-8501

email: pastor@eagleriverucc.org

Church emails: Nan - office@eagleriverucc.org

HOME PAGE - www.eagleriverucc.org

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| Co-Moderator - Joy Turpin, 715-479-6560 | Co-Moderator - Doug Malinsky, 309-582-4846 | |
| Past Moderator - Nancy Diepenbrock, 715-479-2498 | Clerk - Marilyn Preisler, 715-479-4331 | |
| | Office Mgr. - Nan Pophal, 715-479-9882 | |
| Board of Trustees - | Donna Adams, 715-479-8808 | |
| Board of Deacons - | Marlyn Hupperts, 715-479-9468 | Diane Lausar, 715-479-4570 |
| Board of Missions- | Barb Helmick, 715-337-0133 | |
| Board of Christian Education - | Sharon Breit, 715-477-2163 | youthministry@eagleriverucc.org |
| Pastor Parish Relations Committee- | Donna DePape, 715-617-1710 | |
| IT Director - | Lake Edwards, 715-891-7028 | infotech@eagleriverucc.org |
| Christian Education Director - | Sharon Breit, 715-477-2163 | youthministry@eagleriverucc.org |
| Women’s Fellowship - | Marlys Lee, 715-479-5443; Char Thomson, 715-479-4907 | |
| Director of Music - | Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078 | |
| Organists/pianists - | Linda Brainard, 715-479-5043; Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078 | |
| Early Bird Service Organist/Pianist - | Gary Stebbeds, 715-479-5937 | |

The Annual Mitten Tree was again
OVERFLOWING!

Thanks to everyone who contributed:

- 33 hats
- 36 mittens/gloves
- 1 pair of socks
- 10 scarves

All were distributed to Head Start, Caritas, Tri-County Council for Abused and NATH (Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing) and are greatly appreciated by the recipients.



Shepherding the Light,
the theme of the 2017 Christmas Fund
(Veterans of the Cross) offering

\$1,675.00
Received.
Thank you!

The well of Providence runs deep. It's the buckets we bring to it that are small.

**Service - Learning Trip to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota:
Won't you join us?!**

We have an opportunity to send six volunteers to learn and work with the Oglala Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota from June 30 - July 6th, 2018.

The counties that make up Pine Ridge Reservation are the poorest of our nation's 3,141 counties. The poverty on Pine Ridge can be described in no other terms than "third world." It is common to find homes terribly overcrowded, as those with homes take in anyone in need of a roof over their head. Many homes are without electricity, running water, or sewer. Here are some deeply troubling statistics about those living at Pine Ridge:

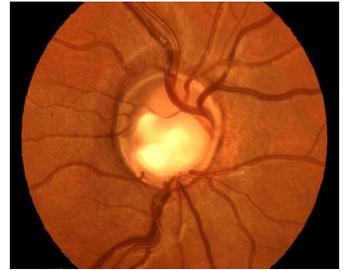
- * Unemployment rate of 80-90%
- * Per capita income of \$4,000
- * 8 times the US rate of diabetes
- * 5 times the US rate of cervical cancer
- * Twice the US rate of heart disease
- * 8 times the US rate of tuberculosis
- * Alcoholism rate estimated as high as 80%

Our volunteers will have an opportunity to work across Pine Ridge, **but just as importantly**, they will have a chance to be immersed in Lakota culture as well, as we study their history, culture and spirituality. Each morning and evening we will meet with the elders to learn about the basic tenets of their beliefs. Growing in our understanding of their lives and culture is every bit as important as the physical labor that will be provided (building bunk beds, outhouses, trailer skirting, ramps and entry steps, structural repairs, and hauling/splitting/delivering firewood.)

Thanks to the **generosity** of our Board of Missions, our Women's Fellowship and the Northwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference, substantial scholarships are available to our volunteers.

Please speak with Pastor Mary Anne if you are interested in being a part of this exciting and enriching trip. You will be blessed to be a blessing!

January is GLAUCOMA Awareness Month



Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in the world, second only to cataracts. In the U.S. more than 2.7 million people older than age 40 have the condition, though as many as half of them may not know it. By 2030, the number of people in the U.S. with glaucoma could more than double.

Glaucoma is most often the result of fluid buildup in the eye, which can increase pressure and damage the optic nerve. This is the nerve that sends images from the eyes to the brain.

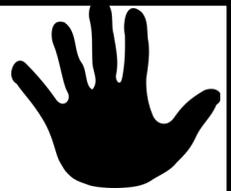
The most common type of glaucoma — open-angle glaucoma — develops slowly over time. The vision loss first happens around the edges of what you see; eventually all vision is lost. People with this condition might lose up to 40% of their eyesight before they notice.

Ophthalmologists and optometrists can detect glaucoma in its early stages during comprehensive eye exams. They might prescribe eye drops or pills that can slow the progress of the disease and preserve eyesight. Doctors can also recommend laser surgery or procedures to reduce fluid or pressure in the eyes. Stem cells taken from bone marrow or fat may one day help grow new healthy optic nerve cells to replace those damaged by glaucoma.

Not all rock stars have an excuse to wear dark glasses. But U2 rocker Bono has become very sensitive to bright lights in his 20 years living with glaucoma. Though studies don't yet prove medical marijuana improves eye pressure as well as prescription medications can, Whoopi Goldberg wrote in *The Cannabist* that it helps her "live comfortably" with the condition.

FIVE-FINGER PRAYER

1. When you clasp your hands in prayer, your thumb is closest to you. Begin your prayer by remembering those closest to you — your children, parents, friends, and other loved ones.
2. The pointing finger is next. Pray for those who point the way: teachers, pastors, and mentors.
3. The tallest finger reminds us to pray for our leaders in government, business, schools, and churches.
4. The ring finger is actually our weakest finger. Pray for those who are sick or in trouble. Ask God to show them that they are weak but He is strong.
5. The smallest finger reminds us that we are to put others before ourselves, even in prayer. By the time we have prayed for the needs of the four other groups of people, our own needs will probably seem much less important. The little finger reminds us to pray for ourselves — and to hold to the Bible's promise that "the least shall be the greatest among you."



Resolve in the New Year ...

- To be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind.
- To look at the sunny side of everything.
- To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
- To wear a cheerful face and give every living creature you meet a smile.
- To laugh more in 2018.
- To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.
- To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to allow trouble to distress you.

—Author unknown —

Happy New Year 2018!



BOOKS For EVERYONE!

Take a walk down to Fellowship Hall and you'll see three full book shelves on the left as you enter. These books were once in the parlor and were pulled as non-sellers after a time, taken down-stairs to spend forever in what was once the "rummage sale room."

With so many groups using Fellowship Hall, sharing the books seems like a good idea., leading to this: "You are encouraged to take a book -- or many -- and leave a donation ----"

(Donations help support our Local Missions Fund)

HAPPY NEW YEAR

"Rock-a-bye Retreat"



is located in the hallway across from the conference room and designated to give parents with infants and very young children a quiet "retreat" to tend to their needs. There are diapers and wipes available; changing tables are in the nearby rest rooms.

YOGA IN FELLOWSHIP HALL! EVERY WEDNESDAY:



11:30 - 1 P.M.

Greeting card collections are on-going — ONLY the fronts of the cards ... birthday, anniversary, Christmas cards, thinking of you, Halloween, whatever you have. Bring them to the church office — we check them over, box them up and send them to St. Jude's where the cards are recycled to become NEW cards that help support their missions. *Thank you!*



Nicolet Fitness Classes Fellowship Hall
Easy Pace Aerobics (Mondays & Wednesdays) 9 - 10 a.m.

New class begins January 8th, 2018

Qigong (chee gung) Mondays & Wednesdays 10:15 - 11:15 a.m.

New class begins January 8th, 2018

To register: 715-365-4493 or 1-800-544-3039 ext. 4493

nicoletcollege.edu



1887—2018

SELF CARE

I am only one, but still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
but can still do something.
And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something
that I can do. — Edward Everett Hale



Our website:

www.eagleriverucc.org

Check it out!

Pastor Mary Anne's office hours:

Monday - Thursday: 9 - 4 p.m.

Friday - day off

Phone: 715-479-8501

Email: pastor@eagleriverucc.org

(715)891-8722 cell phone

(715)891-2124 home phone

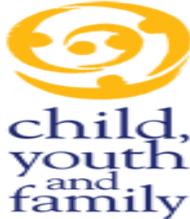
Nan's office hours:

Monday - Thursday, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Friday: 7 a.m. - noon

The church offices are CLOSED Friday afternoons.

Email: office@eagleriverucc.org



Sharon Breit's office hours:

Tuesday: 10 - 4 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 - 5:30 p.m.

Thursday: 10 - 4 p.m.

Email: youthministry@eagleriverucc.org

CANCELLATION POLICY Ever so often the weather alters our plans for a church event. Please use one of the listed methods to verify cancellation. This ONLY pertains to church programs, NOT other groups using the building.

Radio: WERL-950 AM

WRJO-94.5 FM, Eagle River

WXPR 91.7, Rhinelander

Television: WJFW, Rhinelander, Channel 12

Phone: during church office hours, our secretary will have the information. When the church is closed a message will be on the answering machine.

Church website: www.eagleriverucc.org

Facebook: First Congregational United Church of Christ-Eagle River, WI

First Congregational United Church of Christ has been serving Eagle River and surrounding communities since 1887. This church is made up of people committed to sharing the love of God. We are diverse in our religious backgrounds and spiritual development. We are a growing congregation that is excited about involving new people.

If you would like more information about First Church, please call us at 715-479-8501 or visit our home page.....www.eagleriverucc.org



PLEASE! Keep the church office informed with your address changes.... email addresses phone numbers.

We can't reach you if we don't have the correct information.

Thank you!

Words To Start the New Year

Another fresh new year is here ...
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!

This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest ...
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!

I have the opportunity
Once more to right some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!

Happy New Year — 2018