

## The Church Mouse - March 2021

**First Congregational United Church of Christ 715-479-8501**

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### Message from Pastor Gail

I'm grateful to everyone who came to the Zoom history gatherings in February and shared honest stories about your church. I included a summary of these stories in the Ash Wednesday worship service, which you can access on our YouTube page if you missed it. I suspect these stories will continue to surface in sermons in the near future. If you have a story you want to share about First Congregational, call me! I'd love to hear it.

Looking back at last year's Mouse, I can see that you were, and are, a church that likes to stay busy with mission projects, fundraisers, music and worship events. A year ago, most of those pursuits ceased as we locked down in quarantine. But now, as the days lengthen, we need to stretch our creativity, to stop waiting for Covid to disappear, and engage in ministry in new ways.

I wonder: if Covid had never happened, what would your church be doing this month? And then I wonder: because Covid DID happen, what *should* your church be doing now?

If you are a leader or participant in any area of church life, from mission projects to building maintenance, or if you have a new idea, consider what God might need from you right now, in spite of Covid restrictions. And then consider how you can engage in ministry in new ways. We can't do everything we want to do right now, but we can do *something*. Talk to me or the Council about your ideas!

Peace!

*Pastor Gail*

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### What's Happening During Lent?

#### **Lent Adult Zoom Study: What is the Church For?**

During this past year, with churches unable to gather, you may have wondered, ***if we can't gather on Sundays, what's the point of being the Church?***

For five Tuesday evenings during Lent, we will study Five Purposes of the Church. In an era when some question the relevance of the Church, this study will help us get back to the basics of why Christ calls us together. Are churches still doing what Christ wants us to do?

The class will also help you think about how you personally embody the Church; and how your congregation might continue ministry in new ways in the future.

Oh, and you will learn some cool Greek words, too!

If you don't have a **Lent kit** and want to join the class, contact Pastor Gail for materials.

**Below is the Zoom link for Tuesday nights, 7:00 - 8:00 PM.** It should be the same for every week's meeting.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85604580633?pwd=VHY0dzR1b3pGQkdMnhyVFVMSEtPZz09>

Meeting ID: 856 0458 0633

Passcode: LENT

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### Holy Week Plans

Holy Week this year will be different from past years and some plans are still up in the air. We know services will be held the following days:

**March 28th - Palm Sunday**

**April 1st - Maundy Thursday**

**April 2nd - Good Friday** - UCC and Prince of Peace Lutheran members will join for an on-line worship service featuring Paul Oman, artist of "*Drawn to the Word*" who will share an art presentation reflecting on the story of Good Friday. Watch for news in your Friday email about how to tune in to this worship presentation!

**April 4th - Easter Sunday**—Music Director Lori Hunter is planning a virtual choir presentation, along with other special music for an on-line Easter service. Please watch for more Holy Week details coming in your Friday mailings and April newsletter!

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**“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)**

## **PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Hello to all from the depth of February winter (while I write, below zero is still a reality, not a memory). You are reading in March, though. We have a renewed sense of promise: more first and second vaccines will be received, more steps towards a new masked normalcy are being taken as we sensibly live our way through COVID-19 and its variants. The Spring which later this month will be upon us, will warm us, make us laugh a little more readily.

Our Lenten journey of repentance and preparation for April’s Easter Sunday will be unique this year. From outside on cold Ash Wednesday night we have moved into our own homes to begin a Zoom discussion of the purposes of the Church on Tuesday evenings. This discussion is part of our on-going Lenten life. Just look for the invitation from Pastor Gail in your weekly email titled: On Line Worship Details.

By the way, the evening Ash Wednesday service, although cold, seemed warmer than the Christmas Eve service. The 17 of us there didn’t shiver as much. The fire tended by Cathy Palmer and Jean Haack warmed us and turned our written negative thoughts into ashes.

## **COUNCIL REPORT**

A major discussion at our February Council meeting was the 2021 Year of Giving. We received ten diverse nominations and approved them all for \$100 each. They included:

- **Jane Goodall Institute** - promoting understanding and protection of great apes and their habitat and builds on the legacy of Dr. Jane Goodall, the founder.
- **Physician’s Committee for Responsible Medicine** - promoting nutrition.
- **Repairers of the Breach** - non-partisan, non-profit seeking to build a moral agenda for the country.
- **NATH/Frederick Place** - Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing in Rhinelander.
- **Re-Member** - organization to improve the life of the Oglala Lakota Nation on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the poorest reservation in the United States.
- **Wild Instincts** - non-profit wildlife rehab in Rhinelander.
- **Moon Beach/United Church Camps** - outdoor Ministry of the WI Conference UCC with camps for children, families, caregivers and more.
- **Micah Project in Honduras** - non-profit Christian organization dedicated to seeing Christ transform the lives of young men who once had no hope for a future.
- **FORK - Feed Our Rural Kids** - providing nutritional support to kids in the Northland Pines and Phelps school districts.
- **Vilas County Food Pantry**

Our sincere thanks to the nominees who helped broaden our church giving from Eagle River to state-wide, nation-wide, and international scope. Those nominees were Kate Remme, Pat Tucker, Nancy Diepenbrock, Norma Yaeger, Kathy Holperin, Kamie Kolb, Barb Helmick, Cathy and Bill Marshall, Shirley Thompson and Mark Johansen.

Another discussion included the proposals concerning the \$200,000 Vine Family Fund. While a final decision on how to use the Fund and still keep it growing has not yet been made, the proposals on the table all have our church mission in mind, as well as an educational ministry action. A final discussion, or tabling until fall, will be held at the March Zoom Council meeting.

Council also heard from Kamie Kolb who substituted for Trista Langley-Tyler, chair of the Search Committee. The Committee had news regarding progress and also needed questions answered regarding our member tally. A full Search Committee report is printed in another part of this Mouse.

Each month we also discuss recommendations for holding in-person church and how to safely use our building. We have set some protocols for when the sanctuary can be safely opened for church services, and we continue to monitor the recommendations coming both from the UCC Conference as well as the Wisconsin Council of Churches. **Our goal has not changed; we will open safely when we can open safely. A lot of thinking and preparation has to go into making that statement a reality.**

Wishing you good health and safety.

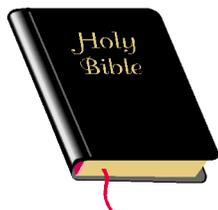
Bernie Hupperts, Council President

**NEEDED:**

**We all want to return to in-person worship.**

**We are looking for a volunteer who would help devise the protocols necessary for stages of return to in-person gatherings. We have a skeleton of the practices adopted last summer, and documents to guide us from the wider church to build upon. A proposal would need to be discussed and approved by Council. Please contact Pastor Gail or Bernie Hupperts if you are interested in helping with this project so we can be ready to gather together when the time is right.**

***We build our temples with stones at hand.***



**MARCH SCRIPTURE READINGS**

<b>March 7</b>	<b>Third Sunday in Lent</b> 1 Cor 1:18-25      Jn 2:13-22	Ex 20:1-17	Ps 19 <i><b>Beautiful Law</b></i>
<b>March 14</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday in Lent</b> Eph 2:1-10      Jn 3:14-21	Num 21:4-9	Ps 107:1-3, 17-22 <i><b>No Matter What</b></i>
<b>March 21</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday in Lent</b> Heb 5:5-10      Jn 12:20-33	Jer 31:31-34	Ps 51:1-12 <i><b>Deep in Our Hearts</b></i>
<b>March 28</b>	<b>Sixth Sunday in Lent (Palm Sunday)</b> Mk 11:1-11 or Jn 12:12-16 <i>Passover begins</i>		Ps 118:1-2, 19-29 <i><b>Into Jerusalem</b></i>

**Thank You**

March Scripture Readers:

- March 7 - Paula Hendrickson
- March 14 - Mark Holperin
- March 21 - Sandy Kaitchuck
- March 28 - Marilyn Preisler

**Thank you Cathy Palmer, Mark Holperin, Lori and husband Chuck Hunter for assisting with Ash Wednesday service. And Joy Turpin for enlisting scripture readers.**

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING MARCH 14, 2021**

Dear Members and Friends of First Congregational UCC,

**One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)** special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes, if people are displaced or made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women’s empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response and recovery networks, your contributions to OGHS put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Please consider giving to **One Great Hour of Sharing** any time this month using the enclosed envelope. You can also give on line at [ucc.org/oghs](http://ucc.org/oghs)

Sincerely,  
Luke Aschbrenner and the  
First Congregational UCC Council

## **Covid 19 Vaccination - Part of the Story**

Pastor Gail has asked me to share some information about receiving your Covid vaccine, but there is so much to tell! It has been difficult to narrow things down to a short blurb, and things are changing so rapidly, that by the time you receive this, the info provided may have already changed. Thus, if you have any specific questions that I can help you with, please call me at 715 - 479 - 2498 or email me at [petsX5@gmail.com](mailto:petsX5@gmail.com)

### **Scheduling your vaccination**

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is working to get the Covid vaccine to all Wisconsinites ASAP.

Groups currently eligible include:

- Essential healthcare workers and residents in nursing/long term care facilities
- Non-essential healthcare workers (fire, police, correctional staff)
- Adults over 65 and high risk patients

**Starting March 2, 2021, the eligibility will be expanded to include:**

- Educational and child care workers
- Individuals enrolled in Medicaid long term care programs
- Non-frontline essential healthcare personnel
- Staff and residents in congregate living facilities

However, there is not enough vaccine to treat everyone who is eligible immediately, so please be patient.

- Even if you are not currently eligible, you can get on a wait list.
- You can register at a clinic that is not your usual provider.
- You can register at more than one location, but if you do receive your vaccine, ***please call to remove your name from the other places you registered to avoid the waste of vaccine!***

**Local contacts to register for your vaccine:**

- **Ascension:** 715-361-2000
- **Aspirus:** 1-844-568-0701
- **Marshfield Clinic Health System:** 877-998-0880 or visit their website at <https://www.marshfieldclinic.org/CovidVaccine>
- **Lac Vieux Desert Health Center:** 715-337-2247
- **St. Germain Hometown Pharmacy:** 715-479-7608 or visit online at <https://hometownpharmacyrx.com/Covid-19-Vaccine>
- **Trig's Pharmacy:** 715-479-6411 or <https://www.trigs.com/covid-19>
- **Walgreens (Eagle River)** 714-479-1069
- **Wall Street Hometown Pharmacy:** 715-479-3306

### **What to Expect**

- Please wear loose fitting clothing that can easily expose your UPPER arm.
- DO NOT pre-medicate yourself with Tylenol, Ibuprofen or any OTC pain reliever in anticipation of discomfort. This may cause a decrease in antibody response.
- If you have had a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to injectables or other vaccines in the past, it is advisable to discuss the vaccination with your doctor before going to a vaccination site. You may need to get your shot at a location where an emergency team is readily available. If you carry an "epi-pen" please let your vaccinator know.
- After your injection, you will be "observed" for 15 minutes (or 30 minutes if you have a history of reactions).
- You will be given a "wallet card" that has your vaccine information on it. Please *bring it back when you get your second shot so it can be updated.* You can also access a record of your vaccination in the Wisconsin Immunization Registry ([www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov/immunization](http://www.dhfs.wisconsin.gov/immunization))
- You will be given information on how to register and use V-Safe, an optional smart phone based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins post vaccination and provides data to help keep the Covid vaccines safe.

### **After your vaccination**

- Common side effects of the vaccine may include: fever, chills, fatigue, headache, muscle/joint pain, nausea, or arm pain, swelling and/or redness. Effects typically last 24 to 48 hours.
- If you feel the need, you may mediate with your favorite over the counter pain reliever.
- Drink fluids. Rest. Sometimes a cool, wet washcloth to the site is comforting.

- Side effects of the second shot are historically a little worse than the first because of the “cumulative” effect of the vaccine. Plan on taking it easy the day after your second shot, just in case, but don’t EXPECT to feel badly. Many people do not.
- You will have 95% immunity *two weeks* after your second dose of the Moderna vaccine, or 95% immunity *seven days* after the Pfizer vaccine.
- Please continue to wear a mask and social distance after you receive your shot to protect others who are not yet vaccinated.

**What if you’re reluctant to get the vaccine?**

Getting the vaccine is a personal choice. Yes, there are side effects, but the risk of getting a serious Covid-19 infection is also present. Before declining, it is advisable to review the literature at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) so you can make an informed choice. But if you decide to not be vaccinated, it will not change your standard medical care.

Nancy Diepenbrock, RN



**Pastor Search Committee Update - March  
Greeting Church Family,**

We are getting close to completing the editing of the church profile, and hoping to finish within the next few months. Once we complete this initial edit we will go back to the beginning to do one last edit making sure we are happy with all our changes, additions ... We feel good about our progress and continue to think of you, our Church Family, during this part of the pastor search. Once again, if you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any committee member.

The Search Committee

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Trista Langley-Tyler (Committee Chair) <a href="mailto:jewelry@metalurges-upnorth.com">jewelry@metalurges-upnorth.com</a> 715-617-1162 |   |
| Kelli Burrill: <a href="mailto:kelli.burrill@gmail.com">kelli.burrill@gmail.com</a>  | Nancy Diepenbrock: <a href="mailto:petsx5@gmail.com">petsx5@gmail.com</a>           |
| Pat Fox: <a href="mailto:wpine2fox@yahoo.com">wpine2fox@yahoo.com</a>  | Sandy Kaitchuck: <a href="mailto:skait85@gmail.com">skait85@gmail.com</a>           |
| Kamie Kolb: <a href="mailto:kamiekolb1@gmail.com">kamiekolb1@gmail.com</a>   | Doug Malinsky: <a href="mailto:doug.malinsky@gmail.com">doug.malinsky@gmail.com</a> |
| Patti Roberts: <a href="mailto:robertsupnorth@hotmail.com">robertsupnorth@hotmail.com</a>  | Krista Wittkopf: <a href="mailto:copper4811@gmail.com">copper4811@gmail.com</a>     |

**Growing Spiritually**

A few members and I have picked a time and day for our devotional talks which I mentioned in last month’s Mouse. We are meeting via **Zoom on Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. each week** for 15 - 30 minutes. It is a very informal get together. We try to daily read the devotions from the free “3 Minute Retreat” app, then share one or two things that might have moved or excited us during the readings that week. We “try” to read them daily, but some weeks are harder than others to get them all in. We certainly don’t have to read them all in order to get together.

We welcome anyone who would like to join us. We’ve met once and have already seen how encouraging it is to share thoughts and experiences with others. You can download the free app from the App Store. If you have any questions regarding the app or how to obtain it, please contact me. If you’d like to join us, I will send you the Zoom meeting information.

In Christ, Tobi Johannsen      Cell: 920-450-1402      Email: [tjharleygal56@gmail.com](mailto:tjharleygal56@gmail.com)

God bless and have a fantastic day!



**Daylight savings  
time begins  
SUNDAY  
MARCH 14th**



**First day of  
spring is  
Saturday,  
March 20th!**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mar 7	Ned Loar
Mar 9	Dawn Parker
Mar 10	Jerry Stadler
Mar 13	Logan Liddle
Mar 15	Gwen Scharf
Mar 17	Meg George
Mar 20	Becky Deditz
	Linda Jorgensen
	Bob Mather
Mar 21	Noah Miller
Mar 22	Cindy Schattner
Mar 24	Larry Wright
Mar 25	Arlene Turk
Mar 28	Marcia Rondello
Mar 29	Joan Temme
April 3	Marilyn Dunphy
April 5	David Holperin
	Gene Yahr
April 7	Jeff Collins
April 8	Connie Hill
April 9	Matt Kaitchuck
April 10	Abigail Thompson

Do you or someone in your family have a birthday in March/early April 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.*

*Thank you!*



Wishlist

### NATH - Frederick Place - Most Needed Items

1. Hairbrushes
2. Combs (pocket size)
3. Men's deodorant
4. Kitchen & bathroom trash cans
5. Black Sharpies
6. AAA batteries
7. Top tab manilla folders
8. Brooms
9. Swiffer pads

**What is Sunday Zoom Coffee Hour?** These are informal gatherings on-line to check in with church friends and talk about different themes. **Watch for Zoom links in your Friday emails or on our Facebook page.** With a little coaching, you can use your computer, tablet, cell phone or a land line phone to tune in. Call Pastor Gail if you need help connecting. Upcoming Zoom Coffee House will be: **Sunday, March 7th and March 21st at 10 a.m.**



The family of  
**Bette Vande Hey**

Bette, age 94, died Tuesday  
January 26 at Friendly Village  
Nursing Home in Rhinelander.

Bette was a long time member of our church and attended the 10:00 worship service with her daughter Louise Krus.

### Malcolm "Mac" McKeen Fell

died January 24th in Las Cruces, New Mexico, at the age of 101. Mac spent his summers in the Eagle River area and was well-known at the 10:00 worship service.

*"Thank you for all the cards, messages, kind words, thoughts and prayers extended to us at the passing of our Dad and Grandpa, Bob Cole. We truly appreciate your thoughtfulness."*

*Linda and Leta Cole*



**PLEASE NOTE: All scholarship applications are due in the church office Thursday, March 25th (we're not here on Fridays) or Monday, March 29th at the latest.**

If you would like to donate items from the "Wishlist" bring them to the church, rap on the door and we'll take them from you. They can also be taken to Frederick Place in Rhinelander at 204 W. Frederick St. *Monetary donations are always welcomed!*  
nathnorthwoods@gmail.com

*The Bible is the only book in which the author is always present.*

## A MESSAGE FROM SHARON R. BREIT, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

My January Mouse article was called “Drop Everything”, Jesus choosing His first two disciples. The kids had a questionnaire to complete before our zoom session on January 20th. They had several bible verses to read in order to list all of the chosen. We had a great discussion about giving our lives up to follow Jesus.

In February, I delivered an activity kit for a King Cake. Pastor Gail video taped me “in my own food kitchen” on how to make the cake. I don’t think I will be asked to be on the food channel any time soon!

On February 20th we had our second zoom session in which they showed off their cakes. Below is a picture I received from Wyatt Stebbeds. His sister Madison (a confirmand from 2018) had the baby Jesus in her piece of cake and therefore was the queen for a day and she must provide the cake next year. The paper crown and extra cake mix were included in the kit. They did a great job making their cakes and waiting until our talk session before they could eat it.

Their March kit included six lessons about Jesus’ life before Holy Week. One of the lessons is about Jesus’ 40 days in the desert. To make it more meaningful, they were to bake some cookies (included in the kit) and not eat them until our session on February 24. They were also provided with candles to form into a cross and we will light them during our prayer at the end of our zoom session. I also included word search and crossword puzzles for fun. We will have zoom sessions on each Wednesday night in March at 6:30 p.m.

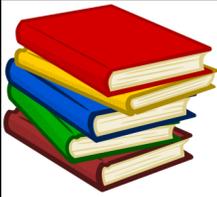
*Dear Lord,  
Thank you for this new month and all  
you have seen us through so far this  
year.  
May we feel your nearness, joy,  
and peace in all that lies ahead.  
Amen.*



### Old English Prayer

Take time to work — it is the price of success.  
Take time to think — it is the source of power.  
Take time to play — it is the secret of perpetual youth.  
Take time to read — it is the fountain of wisdom.  
Take time to be friendly — it is the road to happiness.  
Take time to dream — it is hitching your wagon to a star.  
Take time to look around — it is too short a day to be selfish.  
Take time to laugh — it is the music of the soul.





### BOOK LOVERS READING GROUP

We will meet via Zoom on March 18th at 7 p.m.

March's book is **MY NAME IS MARY SUTTER** by Robin Oliveira, an enthralling historical novel about a young woman's struggle to become a doctor during the Civil War.

In this stunning first novel, Mary Sutter is a brilliant, headstrong midwife from Albany, New York, who dreams of becoming a surgeon. Determined to overcome the prejudices against women in medicine and eager to run away from her recent heartbreak, Mary leaves home and travels to Washington D.C. to help tend the legions of Civil War wounded. Under the guidance of William Stiff and James Blevens — two surgeons who fall unwittingly in love with Mary's courage, will and stubbornness in the face of suffering — and resisting her mother's pleas to return home to help with the birth of her twin sister's baby, Mary pursues her medical career in the desperately overwhelmed hospitals of the capitol.

Like Charles Frazier's "Cold Mountain" and Robert Hick's "The Widow of the South", **MY NAME IS MARY SUTTER** powerfully evokes the atmosphere of the period. Rich with historical detail (including marvelous depictions of Lincoln, Dorothea Dix, General McClellan, and John Hay among others), and full of the tragedies and challenges of wartime, **MY NAME IS MARY SUTTER** is an exceptional novel.

And in Mary herself, Robin Oliveira has created a truly unforgettable heroine whose unwavering determination and vulnerability will resonate with readers everywhere.

*Hope you are enjoying or will enjoy the book. Anyone can join us for our discussion. Contact Donna De Pape: [spindle257@gmail.com](mailto:spindle257@gmail.com) or 715-617-1710 with questions or concerns and to access the zoom link.*

#### First Congregational UCC Contact People - 2020 –2021

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#### CHURCH COUNCIL

**President: Bernie Hupperts 715-617-9468**

**Vice President: Mark Johannsen 920-475-7576**

**Molly Jaeger: 715-479-4505 Trisha Moore: 715-617-1102 Shirley Thompson: 715-479-8753**

**Cathy Palmer: 715-617-6373 Luke Aschbrenner: 715-358-6579**

Pastor Parish Relations Committee - Tobi Johannsen 920-450-1402

Women's Fellowship - Linda Sanborn, 715-479-8091

Sanctuary Arts Group (SAG) - Patti Roberts, 715-479-6191

Performing Arts Music - Bernie Hupperts, 715-617-9468

Music Director - Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078

Organists/pianists - Linda Brainard, 715-479-5043; Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078,

Norma Yaeger, 715-477-1984

***May your joys be added,  
Your sorrows subtracted,  
Your friends multiplied,  
And your enemies divided.***

*Irish Blessing for St. Patrick's Day*