



# First Congregational United Church of Christ

[eagleriverucc.org](http://eagleriverucc.org) September 2022

## **PASTOR'S REPORT**

As the fall season looms large on the horizon, as always there is a lot of activity coming our way as a congregation. On the last Sunday of September, we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting, a time to reflect on the past year, elect new officers, and to ponder the days ahead as we plan for the days ahead as a local missional church. I hope you will plan to come and be a part of the festivities. After all, this is a sacred time in which you, as members of the congregation, are entitled to voice and vote. As I like to say membership has its privileges.

A major event coming your way this fall, following on the heels of the annual meeting, is an invitation to read, study, and then approve a visioning statement designed to help us best focus on who we desire to be as the First Congregational United Church of Christ. I will not go into any detail here because I want you to read the carefully crafted words in the document with fresh eyes. I also do not want to prejudice you about any of the content. I will tell you that this proposal has been given the proverbial fine-toothed comb by your Church Council, the group coming to consensus after much debate and discussion. The dialogue was positive and productive, though certainly flavored with the strong opinions that are delightfully present on the Council. It is now your turn! As a church living into the tradition of the "Congregational Way" it is imperative, most important, that your stamp, the imprint of the body politic, be upon every word that will become our daily guide as we plan for what we hope and pray to be a bright future as beloved faith community.

It is also my pleasure to announce a fall Bible Study. For quite some time I have debated just what the content of this study would be. Many of you have asked me about my research in the area of biblical hospitality and so I have decided that my first formal Bible Study here at First Congregational United Church of Christ should be on that subject. The gist of my theory is that you cannot read the biblical narrative, Hebrew Bible or Christian Scriptures, without understanding the ancient cultural practice of hospitality as first observed by the nomads and then codified by the Bedouins. Our study together will begin on Wednesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. You are welcome to bring something to eat if you desire but we are not planning any formal food preparation for our time together. As a part of the study, we will gladly chase some rabbits so plan to bring your questions. I want this study to have a very informal, free-flowing style, allowing me to do a very different kind of presentation from what I do in the pulpit on Sundays. I hope you will come and be a part of the fun! (If plans remain the same, I will be away on September 21<sup>st</sup> as a part of my fall clergy retreat. Still to be determined because of my elbow situation!)

I look to see you on Sundays!

Timothy W. Shirley

## **PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

First Congregational United Church of Christ has offered me many privileges during these past 22 years. Marlyn served terms on Boards, helped organize a team for decorating, and offered watercolor painting time in a room that became known as the Art Room. I have been able to serve terms in the Moderator structure and the last two years as President of this congregation and Council. This church, which will miss deeply, is a dynamic church and has always been open to introducing new thinking as well as new activities.

I think of Carmen Domek introducing us to the Christmas Cantata; the Women's Fellowship creating both the Cranberry Fest Luncheon and the Women's Luncheon. The Spring Cantatas 2004-2009 brought more ecumenism into church activities. And chief among all we enjoy here, the completion of the Rose Project brought us into the 21st century with a new sanctuary. I can't mention everything, and this is really not meant to be a "goodbye" statement from Marlyn and me.

As the church has done in the past, it continues to look forward. A major chance to look forward will happen this fall. Through September into late fall, we will have a chance to continue building for our future. On September 25 we will have our Annual Meeting (This is your first warning that we need a quorum to conduct business.) The Meeting in the sanctuary will follow the 9 a.m. Unity Service and take place. A complete Annual Report will soon be in the mail to you.

Please look it over, paying close attention to the 2023 budget prepared by Paula Hendrickson, Cindy Schattner, and Donna Adams. In the Annual Report you will find an explanation of the budget from Paula. You will note that to continue our vision as a church the Finance Committee deems it might be necessary during the year to take the allowed funds (\$23,055) from the Continuing Ministry Fund. Questions about the budget will be answered at the Annual Meeting, or you may contact Paula by email or phone before the Meeting. We will also elect a new President of the Council: Donna Adams has been nominated for that position. Trisha Moore will be on the ballot as well; she is seeking a second term as Council Member.

In October there will be three opportunities for members and associates in particular to attend discussions regarding the Strategic Plan that will be in your mailbox October 3 or shortly thereafter. The Plan indicates Council's definition of who we are and what our vision is, what we want to do in the next few years. I urge you to attend one of the advertised meetings, so that you place your stamp of approval on the Plan and all it entails.

Bernie Hupperts, Council President

## **COUNCIL REPORT**

The Council met twice in August. During the first meeting, August 8, Paula Hendrickson reported on special non-budgeted expenses facing the Council. This included tuck pointing on the exterior bricks, roof repair and elevator maintenance. All have been paid by taking allowable funds from the budget. She also informed Council that Otis Elevator has required an oiling of the elevator piston which is required every ten years. That expense of \$8750 will come from the 5% Council is allowed to withdraw annually from the Continuing Ministry Fund. The CMF was created out of the Maggie Ball bequest, and its principal has continued to grow. Council has taken no withdrawals in three years from the fund and draws only from the interest accrued. The 5% which Council may withdraw is \$22,954 for this year. Only the amount needed will be withdrawn.

Council has been working on a Strategic Plan drafted, first, by Steve Burrill. The plan focuses on who we are and includes items that will be discussed in three different congregational discussion groups. Council will schedule a special congregational meeting to pass the Plan after the groups have met in September.

In the second August meeting, on the 15th, the Strategic Plan was approved by a vote of Council. Three discussion dates were set. Please plan to attend one, as the direction of the church will be defined for the next years by this Plan.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 17 AT 7 P.M. / SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23 BETWEEN SERVICES AT 8:45 A.M. / WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26 AT 12 NOON**

Council listened to an initial presentation of the 2023 budget at this August 15 meeting.

Council also approved the nominations for positions for the years 2023-2026. Nominated are Donna Adams and Trisha Moore for the three-year terms. Donna Adams is also nominated for a two-year term as President of the Council.

For the final time, Bernie Hupperts, Council President



**A Message from the Christian Education Director, Sharon R. Breit**

September is always an exciting time because our youth return to continue their Faith Formation. This fall they will be invited to attend Confirmation instruction. Confirmation’s root meaning is “to make firm” or “to strengthen”.

Their confirmation journey will encompass more than a cognitive approach to the language and doctrines of the Christian faith. They will be encouraged to affirm what they believe and speak their minds regarding questions they have about God, Jesus, the Bible; or other matters that concern them.

Pastor Tim and I will be teaching the class and Louis Krus will participate in accordance to our Safe Sanctuary Covenant.

If any members know of youth, i.e., grandchildren, who may be interested, please let me know. I can be reached at church (715-801-8501) or at home (715-477-2163). More information will be sent to students and parents soon.

*“Education is the art of helping young people to completeness; for the Christian, this means education is helping a young person to be like Christ, the model of all Christians.”*  
Basil Moreau

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**Women’s Fellowship**

Women’s Fellowship meets the second Tuesday of every month except for December, June, July and August.

The May spring luncheon, with some very talented high school students performing, was a highlight of the year for Women’s Fellowship. Norma Yeager and Bernie Hupperts arranged for musical and forensic students to perform followed by a turkey salad luncheon.

Deb Stolze taught the group how to make a scrap quilt with donated fabrics.

Women’s Fellowship helps with decorating the church at Christmas, the Mitten Tree and last year the Christmas Open House. We also provided support with the NATH meals and coordinated the Lenten Soup Suppers.

Lap robes and beanie babies were distributed to the VA, NATH, Tri County.

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**F.Y.I. The ushers have access to an emergency button should an emergency happen. Let them know if there is some sort of emergency and they will activate it.**

In accordance with CDC guidelines, wearing of masks is now optional. We will continue to sign in for worship. If we have cases of COVID within our congregation brought to our attention, we will notify everyone as soon as possible.

Online Giving is now available on the church website. With online giving, you can set up recurring or one-time gifts to be made automatically from your checking account or by debit or credit card. Online giving allows you to make gifts more conveniently and easier, especially when not physically attending worship.

Designated offering envelopes are not necessary to make a gift and to receive a yearly contribution statement. With our new accounting software, we will be recording contributions based on name and not by envelope number. Any cash offering that is placed in any envelope with a name on it, or a personal check will be recorded. If you would like to donate to a specific ministry, please indicate on the envelope or on the check memo line.

## **Just a reminder that we continue to receive and accept pledges throughout the year.**

As a church family, we are ready, willing, and able to share with you in your prayers of sadness and celebration. Please feel free to share your prayer with us on the church website, under the Ministries heading, or by calling the church office at 715-802-8501. To protect the privacy of all individuals please only share prayers for those you have received direct permission to share on their behalf. We ask that any prayer requests mentioned from the pulpit have the permission of the one desiring prayer. Thank you for your understanding. Prayer Concerns: Our thoughts are with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

Scripture readers, ushers, and camcorder operators are always needed as well as readers for the Concerns of the Church. You may sign up by visiting our website; or you may also contact Joy Turpin at: [joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com](mailto:joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com) or the Church office.

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## **MELODY OF COMPASSION**

Many of us have missed the sound of coins dropping onto the metal rings of the offering plates during these past several years of COVID. Ushers have begun to pass the offering plates during the singing of the Doxology. The Melody of Compassion has been our way of helping the Eagle River area needy for many years. Please bring your coins and keep the Melody singing for others during offering time.

## **Calling All Book Lovers**

The UCC Book Club, also affectionately called "Knights of the Reading Round Table" will gather in September to select our books for the coming year. Please join us September 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm. If all goes well, we will meet in the Parlor at the church. If COVID levels are high, we will zoom. Please bring the names and authors of 1 or 2 books you recommend for our reading this year. In the past we have suggested that the books be ones you have already read and that there be copies available through the library systems. However, we don't always follow those suggestions so if you have a book that you really want to discuss but you haven't read yet bring it along anyway.

Please contact Donna De Pape via email at [spindle257@gmail.com](mailto:spindle257@gmail.com) to let her know you are planning to attend. In the event that we have to change the time, location, or any other inconvenience she will be able to reach you with the necessary information. Hope to see you there!

## **COFFEE HOUR**

The August Sunday Social Hour providers are listed below. If you are not able to provide goodies for your designated Sunday, please try to change with someone else on the schedule.

<b>September Bakers</b>	<b>7:30 a.m.</b>	<b>10 a.m.</b>
September 4 <sup>th</sup>	B. Mattes Family	D. Breit Family K. Witkopf Family
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	D. Hendrickson Family	M. Congdon Family B. Hupperts Family
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	L. Thompson Family	P. Fox Family T. Helmick Family
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>UNITY SUNDAY @ 9</b>	

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### **Annual Meeting to follow September 25<sup>th</sup> Unity Service**

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## **PHONE DONATIONS**

With the limited access to our church parlor during the Covid pandemic, our used phone initiative has suffered but it's back!!!! A brand-new collection box is positioned in the entry foyer and is waiting for your old phone (and hearing aid see below). Every year, millions of phones are thrown away crowding landfills, creating hazardous waste, and hurting our environment. Give your old phones a new sustainable life by dropping them here! The used phones (any age, working or not) will be sent to Medic Mobile and through their recycling partner, The Wireless Alliance, they will be safely recycled to fund open-source software and support health care workers across Asia and Africa. A reminder: Medic Mobile takes data security and privacy seriously. Your phone will be erased of all data through a secure process that has a bunch of numbers and letters (which are too complicated for ME to explain) but the bottom line is that your phone donation is safe. We started this program in 2013 and to date, we have contributed 276 phones. It's time to get going again! If Medic Mobile can recycle just 1 % of disposed phones each year, they can outfit 1 million health care workers and improve the lives of 50 million people! Don't let your old phone go to the trash. It can have another life somewhere and help someone in need! And let's not forget HEARING AID DONATIONS. We started this program in 2017, collecting used hearing aids and donating them to organizations who refurbish them free of charge. The gift of hearing is then distributed to needy people in over 100 countries all over the world. Any make or model of used hearing aid, working or not working, is accepted. To date, we have sent 13 hearing aids on to a new life. Please drop your used hearing aids into the same box as the phones and empower a needy person to build a better life.

Questions? Ask me! Nancy Diepenbrock: [petsX5@gmail.com](mailto:petsX5@gmail.com).

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There have been a few inquiries about getting together in person occasionally for a Prayer/Meditation type of gathering. We would like to see how many others might also be interested in meeting, maybe once or twice a month. If you are interested, please contact Debbie at the church office to let her know. (Office hours Monday – Thursday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Thanks, Tobi Johannsen

## **Can you help the residents of Frederick Place?**

**Please help us make this a church-wide mission.**

Frederick Place is a 16-bed temporary emergency housing shelter for families run by the Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing (NATH). Admission is on a first come, first-serve basis and applicants must meet the federal and state definitions of homelessness including income limits. Residents receive services to help them draft and execute a plan for obtaining permanent housing. There is a zero-tolerance policy for violence, drug use or alcohol use in the home. Residents must be able to care for themselves without assistance. While the initial admission is for 30 days, stays may be extended for up to 90 days. There are guidelines for reapplying after 90 days to prevent additional bouts of homelessness.

Some of the ways that First Congregational UCC can assist the residence are:

- \* Help prepare or shop for ingredients for the monthly meals we are currently providing.
- \* Donate sides, such as bread, butter, dessert, and milk or juice.
- \* Drive the meals to Rhinelander on the meal day.
- \* Donate cash to help offset the cost of the meals.
- \* Donate needed items for the Wish List published monthly on the Frederick Place website; items can be purchased on Amazon and shipped directly to Frederick Place. (These items are given to the residents when they obtain housing to help them set up housekeeping.)

There are people in the Northwoods who need our help.

Please help us provide a dinner for the residents of *Frederick Place* on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Check the bulletin board outside the sanctuary for further information.

Please plan to help with this important mission opportunity.

**Contact Mary Lou Congdon or Susan Krivichi for more information.**

### **Flower Calendar** *(to reserve a Sunday please add your name to the calendar on the bulletin board)*

Choose your Sunday and write your name on the Flower Calendar. If you want the office to order flowers, write **"order"** after your name and they will be ordered from Vintage Garden with the cost of \$35 (please return the vase if possible). You may take them home after the last service.

If you prefer to order the flowers yourself or are bringing flowers from your garden, please write your name on the calendar with the word **"self"**.

**Important**, please call Debbie and inform her of the purpose of the flowers i.e., birthday, anniversary, etc.

What better way to honor anyone or anything than to share flowers with your church family on Sunday!

**September sponsors:** September 4<sup>th</sup> - Linda & Leta Cole in loving memory of Noel Hope.  
September 25<sup>th</sup> – Marilyn Preisler in loving memory of Duane Preisler.

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## PERFORMING ARTS

COVID has certainly played a dominant part in our lives. The amount of performing arts events here in the church building and available to our congregation and the community was reduced even within this church year.

The Women’s Fellowship Luncheon in May of 2022 featured performances by a number of young people in the music and forensics departments of Northland Pines Middle and High School. One of the performers for the luncheon was church member Malia Remme.

As of this writing one event of a performance nature was still to occur. The Northwoods Performing Arts Radio Players will present THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER by Moss Hart and George F. Kaufman on September 15. The classic three-act comedy, directed by Bernie Hupperts, is planned for the sanctuary.

No admission will be charged; however, a free-will offering will be taken and donated to a charity of the church’s choice as recognition of the group’s use of the church for rehearsal and performance. The play features performance by Joy and Joe Turpin, and Cathy Palmer, assistant director and character actor. Norma Yaeger will be at the piano, while Jean Hack will supervise sound effects to help create the radio experience. 2023 will hopefully bring more performances.

Bernie Hupperts  
Performing Arts for UCC

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September 15 at 7 p.m. in UCCER  
**THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER**  
A radio comedy in Three Acts  
by Moss Hart and George F. Kaufman

Presented by Northwoods Community Players and featuring UCC members Joy and Joe Turpin, Cathy Palmer, Jean Hack with a cast of Eagle River area actors and sound effects creators

Directed by Bernie Hupperts

**PLOT: Celebrity slips on ice at your house and you are saddled with his recuperation, as he becomes the most annoying patient ever. He takes over the house invites his friends to visit and shows life at its most cantankerous. How to remove him while he stirs the plot makes for much laughter.**

Admission Free  
Free-will offering to be taken for HCPA and UCCER

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# First Congregational United Church of Christ

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## **CHURCH COUNCIL**

President, Bernie Hupperts

Vice President, Mark Johannsen

Trisha Moore

Cathy Palmer

Luke Aschbrenner

Deb Stolze

Steve Burrill

Clerk, Norma Yaeger

Pastor Parish Relations, Tobi Johannsen

Women's Fellowship, Linda Sanborn

Sanctuary Arts Group, Patti Roberts

Performing Arts Music, Bernie Hupperts

Facilities, Donna Adams

Finance, Paula Hendrickson

Gifts and Endowments, Bill Marshall

Safety and Security, Carlton Schroeder

Scholarship, Ursula Charaf

## **CHURCH STAFF**

Timothy W. Shirley, Pastor

Debbie Brown, Church Administrator

Sharon Breit, Director of Christian Education

Lori Lee Hunter, Director of Music

Linda Brainard, Pianist

Norma Yaeger, Pianist

Christine Clough, Cleaning Services