



First Congregational United Church of Christ

eagleriverucc.org February 2023

PASTOR'S REPORT

It is almost hard to fathom but we have already finished one month of 2023! Not only is the groundhog on the horizon, but that also means that Lent is not far behind. Ash Wednesday is February 22nd and, as always, begins the forty-day discipline of the Lenten season. Our solemn Ash Wednesday service will be at noon on that day! For those who are counting, the forty days never includes the six Sundays "in" Lent. They, like every Sunday, is considered a celebration of the resurrection, even if we do dampen the mood just a bit! When considering the seasons of the Church Year, prepositions always matter! The plan for this year is to once again have our midweek Lenten "Soup and Service" on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm, beginning on March 1st. Holy Week begins on Palm/Passion Sunday on April 2nd, culminating with Easter Day, the Resurrection of the Lord, on Sunday, April 9th. Once again this year we will combine Maundy Thursday and Good Friday with the Agape Feast, Holy Communion and Foot Washing, and the Service of Tenebrae (Darkness) on April 6th at 6:00 pm. Plan now to be a part of these special services!

Let me offer a quick reminder that Bible Study is ongoing on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. We are exploring both some familiar and some not so familiar texts. It is never too late to come and join us for this great time together. The thing I am enjoying the most is the conversation, the questions, and answers, that the group brings. I am impressed with how many of our folks know a lot about the biblical narrative and really do want to learn more. Of course, I am also thrilled when someone will say to me, I had never heard that before or I did not know about that text. I confess that I am having a blast and love doing this kind of dialogue.

One other reminder that I would like to offer as we anticipate the high and holy festival days to come. It is a great time to invite someone to come to church. I think perhaps that we often forget to do that, but the main way to get new church members is to invite others to come. You are the ones who have a variety of relationships and know individuals who might very well be a good candidate for membership here. We know that there are many other inclusively minded people in this area and our job is to make ourselves known to them. Remember, every opportunity is an opportunity!

Finally, I appreciate all the good wishes as I continue to battle long COVID. I have been accepted by the good folks at Mayo Clinic and am pondering next steps as I hope to quickly recover from this dreadful illness. Thank you again for your understanding, grace, and prayers. I am truly grateful for your compassion!

I look to see you on Sundays!

Timothy W. Shirley

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Hello Congregation,

Well, January found Council losing the battle with Mother Nature. While most of the month has been far above average temperature-wise, it also gave us ice and snow for our regular meeting and make-up dates. We will now move our regular meeting to February 13th at 6:00 pm.

Stay tuned for upcoming information on Strategic Planning, and know that ultimately your input will be a critical part of creating a successful document. You will also notice other happenings with Bible Study resuming as well as meetings to discuss how you can support ministry ideas.

As always, please consider any ways might share your own time and talents, whether it be ushering, checking out Chimes, singing with choir, indoor or outdoor building and grounds, decorating the sanctuary, technology... we do have a place for you!

Donna Adams
Council President

FLOCK

The FLOCK will be meeting again on February 15th at 6:00 pm in the conference room. Once again, if you wish to bring something to share that would be nice. As always, BYOB (bring your own beverage! 😁) Bring your project(s) to work on and if you have a finished project, please bring to announce!

If there is someone who would like to join us, let them know they are welcome here!!!
See you on the 15th of February.

Hope to see ewe there! 😂
Your Shepherdess,



Linda Brainard

Just a reminder that the Church Council meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 6 pm in the Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

**WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP WILL BE MEETING ON
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH AT 9:00 AM.
LADIES - COME JOIN US!**

UCC BOOK CLUB

As we settle into a few more weeks of winter we have two selections to keep you reading. One is a rollicking adventure, and the other will take us exploring in detail natural aspects of parts of Wisconsin. We hope we will join us for an enthusiastic discussion starting at 6:30 pm. Come if you only read one of the books.

February 23.	<u>West with Giraffes</u>	By Lynda Rutledge	Facilitator	Susan Krivichi
	<u>Sand County Almanac.</u>	By Aldo Leopold	Facilitator	Kristin Anchor

Google Review of West with Giraffes.

An emotional, rousing novel inspired by the incredible true story of two giraffes who made headlines and won the hearts of Depression-era America.

"Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes..."

Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave.

It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

Goodreads Synopsis of Sand County Almanac

First published in 1949, *A Sand County Almanac* combines some of the finest nature writing since Thoreau with an outspoken and highly ethical regard for America's relationship to the land.

Written with an unparalleled understanding of the ways of nature, the book includes a section on the monthly changes of the Wisconsin countryside; another part that gathers informal pieces written by Leopold over a forty-year period as he traveled through the woodlands of Wisconsin, Iowa, Arizona, Sonora, Oregon, Manitoba, and elsewhere; and a final section in which Leopold addresses the philosophical issues involved in wildlife conservation. As the forerunner of such important books as Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, and Robert Finch's *The Primal Place*, this classic work remains as relevant today as it was sixty-five years ago.

Questions? Contact Donna De Pape at spindle257@gmail.com or call 715 617 1710.

FEBRUARY COLLECTION: The Foster Closet

The Foster Closet started several years ago to assist families in Vilas County by providing them with non-perishable hygiene products and clothing for the children they foster. It has grown and now provides free items to foster homes, kinship care providers, unlicensed relative homes, Adult Protective Services clients (elders at risk), and youth aging out of care. The Closet is located in the Vilas County Courthouse Complex and open only by appointment.

First UCC will be supporting this effort by collecting needed items during the month of February. Can you help these wonderful families that open their hearts and their homes to children and others in need?

If so, **here are some items that are frequently used in the Foster Closet:**

- Diapers and wipes
- Garanimals winter clothing from Walmart in sizes 6 months to 6T
- Infant socks
- Baby bottles
- Children's socks
- Underwear sizes 2T to 6
- Toddler toothpaste
- Toothpaste and deodorant for older youth

Other needs include:

- Shampoo and conditioner sets (see note below)
- Single wrapped toothbrushes
- Floss
- Deodorant
- Bar soap
- Body wash and loofahs
- Baby shampoo, lotion and wash

NOTE: Please no generic or Suave brand as many children have allergies and sensitive skin

- T-shirts, running pants, leggings for girls, and sweatshirts: Sizes 3 months to adult XL
- Underwear
- Butt Cream brand diaper rash cream, toddler toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Coloring books for all ages, Crayola crayons and colored pencils, small Lego kits, drawing pads and pencils, art kits, books and games.

We also have hygiene products for our elders and household items for youth aging out of care.

Questions? Please reach out to Mary Lou Congdon or Barbara Helmick. Mary Lou and Barb are also interested in your ideas for future monthly collections. Please share your thoughts!

Special thanks to all who donated to the January collection for the Weekend Backpack Project. Your generosity is truly amazing!

MEETING RESCHEDULED: Pursuing your PASSION and using your GIFTS

By Barbara Helmick

Do you want to learn more about how easy it is to pursue your passions and use your gifts at First Congregational United Church of Christ? Join us at **5:30 pm, Tuesday, January 31st**, in the parlor at church for to talk about this very subject!

Specifically, we'll look at ARTICLE VIII of our CHURCH CONSTITUTION, which the congregation adopted four years ago in an extremely bold step. Article VIII empowers ever member of our church to pursue their passions and use their gifts to share God's love with others in our congregation and the world outside our doors.

What's more, it allows you to do so WITHOUT having to commit to serving on a board or committee for three years, attend monthly meetings – and quite likely – get involved in things they are NOT interested in doing.

We held one meeting earlier in January but canceled the second session because of the weather. I hope you receive this information in time to plan to attend the meeting on the 31st. If not, let me know. I'm happy to schedule another session or two in February, March and/or April and beyond!

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 requests with us on the church website located 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 or the Church office.

MELODY OF COMPASSION

Ushers will be passing the offering plates among us as they used to.

The time for our offerings will be printed in the bulletin and the Doxology will be sung as we sang it in the past.

The Melody of Compassion has been our way of helping the Eagle River area needy for many years.

Please bring your coins to keep the Melody singing for others.

These gifts are collected during the Offertory.

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**Please check the lost and found in the office as we
have accumulated several items.**

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COFFEE HOUR

We are resuming coffee hour after the 9:00 am service. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the church if you would like to provide a treat.



The Family of Marlys Lee would like to thank the church family for all the prayers, visits, flowers, cookies, and condolences given during her hospital stays, rehab, and while in hospice. She was very proud to be a member of the church and enjoyed volunteering for the many areas where she was needed. A special thank you to Pastor Tim for his visits and providing over a beautiful service. I know both her and dad were looking down and smiling!
Don, Paula and the entire family!



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. 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 United Church of Christ 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.)

Thanks to everyone that helped with the Frederick’s Place January Meal. Please check the bulletin board outside the sanctuary to see if you could provide something for our February meal.

Contact Mary Lou Congdon or Susan Krivichi for more information or sign up on the volunteer sheet attached to the poster in the church lobby on the church level.



311 !!!

Nice work, First Congregational!!!! The Hope Phone Box in our lobby was emptied this month and 35 more phones were sent off for a new life. This brings our total donation since the start of the project to 311 phones! So easy to do, and such a good cause! Thank you for your donations!

Every year, millions of phones are thrown away...crowding landfills, creating hazardous waste and hurting our environment. By donating your old phone, Medic Mobile in partnership with The Wireless Alliance, safely recycles them 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 is erased of all data through a secure process that has a bunch of letters and numbers too complicated for me to explain, but the bottom line is that your phone donation is safe. And Medic Mobile is rated 4 stars by Charity Navigator, the highest rating possible, so you can be comfortable that this is a legit organization.

New as of 2023, Medic Mobil will also accept used iPods, digital cameras, and tablets! (Just leave them on the table by the Hope Phone box).

AND...

Don't forget our hearing aid and battery collection, which can also be deposited in the Hope box! Six more hearing aids were collected and will be sent off to the Hearing Charities of America, where the devices are refurbished and distributed to needy children and adults in over 100 countries. To date, we have sent off 19 hearing aids along with countless batteries! Thank you!

Questions? Ask me! Keep up the good work!

Nancy Diepenbrock

If you have ideas on articles or items you would like to see in the Mouse or the weekly Bulletin, please let the office know.

Church Notes

Worship service is Sunday at 9:00 am. through the winter months of January, February, and March, up to and including Easter Day, April 9th.

Offering Envelopes are now available in the church office. Please take a box and write your name next to the number of the box on the list provided.

Scripture readers (Lectors) and ushers 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 or 715-479-6560.

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.

F.Y.I. The ushers have access to an emergency button should a crisis develop. Please let them know if there is an emergency and they will activate it.

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

Please pick a Sunday and put your name on the Flower Calendar that is in the hall next to the elevator. The office will order flowers from Vintage Garden at a cost of \$35. Please get a separate check for \$35 to the office at your earliest convenience. ***Please let the office know what information you want on the card.*** If you want to get your own flowers, please let the office know you are doing that, so we don't have a double order. You are welcome to take them home after the service. It is also helpful if you bring the vase back to return to Vintage Gardens as we then get more flowers for the money. You may also bring flowers from another source and place them on the flower stand next to the piano. ***What better way to honor anyone or anything than to share flowers with your church family on Sunday!***

February flower sponsors are:

5th Linda Cole

12th Barb Flaherty

19th Marilyn Preisler

26th Susan Krivichi

A special thanks to Pat Fox for the beautiful new flower sign up board!

Happy February Birthday to:

William Charaf

Loleta Cole

Kerry Griesbenow

Charles Hill

Tobi Johannsen

Susan Krivichi

Sandra Mettler

Keenan Roberts

Charlotte Thomson

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Church Office Hours

Monday – Thursday - 8:00 am to 1:00 pm – CLOSED ON FRIDAYS

CHURCH COUNCIL

President, Donna Adams
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, Sharon Breit
Sanctuary Arts Group, Patti Roberts
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

Worship Service

Sunday at 9:00 a.m.