

February 2022

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
319 DOWNTOWN PLAZA
FAIRMONT, MN 56031-1776

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First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza
Fairmont, MN 56031



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*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Fairmont, Minnesota*

How to reach us....

Church Office
507-235-5382

Hours: Tuesday—Friday
9:30 a.m. 12:30 p.m.

E-mail

uccsecretary319@gmail.com

Web Site Address

www.fairmontucc.org

Rev. Cory Germain
Minister

Ann Osborn
Administrative Assist

Joyce Jorgenson
Choir Director

Rev. Cory Germain

Office Hours:

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday 12:30 p.m. through
evening meetings & activities

Thursday 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Friday 9:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Rev. Cory's phone: 507-399-8282

Worship Hours

Sunday School 9:15

Worship 10:30

Communion the first Sunday of
every month.

FIRST CONGO NEWS

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
319 DOWNTOWN PLAZA; FAIRMONT, MN 56031

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

The Reverend's Ruminations - February 2022

With the short, frigid days of midwinter upon us, I pray that you are finding ways to embrace the beauty of the snow-covered landscape around us and keeping yourself spiritually connected, while doing your best to avoid any symptoms associated with "seasonal affective disorder." If you do find yourself struggling with SAD symptoms like oversleeping, low energy, appetite changes, or loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, I pray that you take such signs seriously and reach out for medical help. I am also available to talk if you just need to process a lesser feeling some refer to as "the winter doldrums."

Though it may not seem so yet, we are already gaining minutes of daylight. I promise, spring is not as far away as it may seem! As we look expectantly toward warmer and longer days ahead, may we draw strength from the words of our Savior who said, *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life"* (John 8:12, NRSV).



If you are looking for inspiration during the chilly days ahead, perhaps this is an excellent time to dig into your Bible a bit and examine the passages that will be part of our worship services in the weeks ahead. The gospel readings will come from the 5th, 6th, and 9th chapters of Luke, including the stories of Jesus calling his first disciples, sharing wisdom about blessings and woes, and offering some tough teaching about love for our enemies and not being judgmental of others. These days in our news and social media cycles, it seems we could all use a refresher on these basic concepts!?!

The epistle lessons (from which I'm continuing to preach this year) will be concentrating on the 15th chapter of First Corinthians, where the Apostle Paul examines the core Christian truth of Christ's resurrection, and its impact on our understanding of the resulting resurrection of believers after death, as well as our vision of what a resurrection body will look like. Though I could not dream of speaking as eloquently as Paul, let me echo his words as we look toward February's sermons: *"For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures..."* (1 Cor. 15:3-4, NRSV). May we each hold fast to the miracle and promise of this guiding tenet of our faith!

I will briefly be escaping the cold February 6-11 to attend the "Chaplain Spiritual Leadership Course" at the Air Force Chaplain Corps College at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama. Ellen has graciously agreed to preach on Feb. 6 as I fly to Alabama to start the course on Monday morning. CSLC is one more step toward hopefully getting promoted in the near future, and will concentrate on additional skills to better advise commanders and senior enlisted leaders on moral, spiritual, ethical, and religious matters that impact the planning and application of Air Force programs and missions.

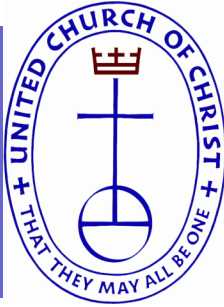
May you remain healthy and inspired
as we step carefully into 2022,

Rev. Cory Germain

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		1 4:00 PEO Kitchen/HH	2 9:30 Circle of Friends 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Diaconate 5:30 Worship	3 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	4	5
6 Communion 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	7	8 10:00 Lakeview Communion 7:00 Facilities Board	9 9:30 Circle of Friends 4:00 Confirmation 5:15 Mission 6:30 CE Board	10 5:15 Hospitality 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	11 9:00 Council Agenda Items Due	12
13 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	14Valentine's Day 5:00 FCH Foundation	15 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	16 9:30 Circle of Friends 4:00 Confirmation 5:45 Church Council	17 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	18 9:00 March Newsletter Items Due	19
20 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	21 Presidents' Day	22	23 9:30 Circle of Friends 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Free Com- munity Meal	24 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	25	26
27 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship One Great Hour of Sharing Collection	28 5:30 Parent To Parent					



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC FAIRMONT, MN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 1-19-2022

Members Present: Marilyn Forstrom, Abigail Roiger, Cathy Celander, Robbin Celander, Jane Kotewa, Wendy Ziemer, Kay Campe, Catherine Johnson, Larry Thompson, Dave Adams, Sue Kruse, Ellen Germain and Christina Hainy. Ex-officio members present: Pastor Germain and Dara Bliesmer, Ass't Treasurer.

The Council met in Heritage Hall. The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Marilyn Forstrom. Pastor Cory led in prayer. Minutes of the December meeting were approved as printed. Motion M/S/C (Dave/Larry).

Treasurer's Report: Catherine Johnson presented the treasurer's report. Motion to receive the treasurer's report was M/S/C (Ellen/Abigail).

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cory talked about his recent and upcoming activities. He was away for a 4-day drill, and Bruce covered pulpit supply. He will be going to Alabama for a week-long course, and Ellen Germain will be covering.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Wendy Ziemer reported that Christian Education has been planning for the spring. Ten \$100 scholarships will be available for camps. Note that most camps have signup in March. Let Christian Education know if you have a child who would be interested in camp. Council added that the Christmas play was a hit. Wendy said there will be a skit on Palm Sunday.

Hospitality: Cathy Celander inquired about the possibility of publishing on the calendar when rooms are reserved for events so that rooms are not double-booked. We are looking at putting the reservations in the newsletter's calendar and on the website.

Facilities: Larry Thompson reported that there may be some extra flooring in the church to replace parts of the main floor men's restroom floor. Krause Construction will be here to measure stone soon. They will be back in the spring/summer to replace some remaining stone and to paint tower louvers and trim. New microphones from Gemini Studios have been installed on the lectern and pulpit.

Missions: Kay Campe reported that Kids Against Hunger will be the recipient of the January Blessing Box. The food pack is scheduled for February 12th. Our church team has an 11 AM-1 PM time slot and a signup sheet is available for anyone interested in joining.

Worship: Dave Adams stated that the Christmas decorations have been packed away. On Sunday, March 20th, Mark Gould will be playing the organ for the worship service.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel: Jenny Willard will be on leave through April 1st.

OLD BUSINESS:

COVID changes: Coffee time will begin again on February 6th. The Mission Board will discuss dining options for the Community Meals. We will begin singing the Doxology as the offering plates are brought forward by ushers.

Talent survey: Survey is included in the Annual Report.

The Future-Let's Talk: We are looking for feedback from younger members.

NEW BUSINESS:

There is a MN Conference clergy care grant available to support pastors. Motion was made to apply for the \$500 grant was M/S/C (Catherine/Abigail).

Dara Bliesmer mentioned that there may be some changes for us with the sale of PetersonAnthony Insurance. Robbin Celander will stop in to check on it.

Pastor Cory closed with a prayer, and the meeting was adjourned by Marilyn Forstrom.

Respectfully submitted, Christina Hainy, Clerk

WITH GRATITUDE



A Note to Say . . .

Thank you so much for the delicious cookies and gift certificates. They helped a lot with grandkids gifts.

I want to say how much I enjoy working here and hope I'm doing a good job.

God Bless,

Jill Houge

Thank You So Much!

Thank you First Congregational UCC for your generosity and thoughtfulness at Christmas time.

I want you to know for certain that it does not go unappreciated for a second!

*. . . nor does your friendship!
Ann O.*

Thank you Margo and Joanne for folding and sealing the December newsletters!

First Congregational Church,

I want to thank you for the use of your fellowship hall to package fudge for our People First Sellers in 2021.

We had another successful fundraiser.

Thank you!

*Sincerely,
Pat Willert Kietzer
Martin County People First Ally*





Christian Education

Sunday School - Meets at 9:15 each Sunday in the north Sunday School room.

Summer Faith Camps for children and youth! Now is the time to plan to go camp this summer. The church will pay up to \$100 per child for the children and youth of the church to help with the cost of attending the faith camp of your choice. Early registration for camps is often in February and March. More information will be sent home with Sunday School children soon. If your child isn't part of Sunday School, but is planning on attending a Summer Faith Camp, please contact Catherine Johnson 507-236-1457 for more information about how to arrange for payment.



Family Camp: Several Minnesota families who enjoyed going to Pilgrim Point are now attending UCC Family Camps in Wisconsin at Moon Beach. Moon Beach offers a variety of programming for families year round.

<https://ucc.org/moon-beach/>



Mission Minute

-Kids Against Hunger: We'll be using our January Blessing Box offering to fund our church team's participation in the Kids Against Hunger food pack on Saturday, February 12. We'll meet at the National Guard Armory at 10:50 am and pack from 11:00 to 1:00. If you'd like to participate in the group packing activity, there is a sign up at the back of the church. We would love to have more people involved. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Forstrom at 507-279-1607.

-February Blessing Box: Our February giving will be for One Great Hour of Sharing, one of five special offerings in the United Church of Christ.

"The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. One Great Hour of Sharing also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response."

-March Blessing Box: Our March giving will be the Minnesota Food Drive. Heaven's Table Food Shelf receives matching funds for our gifts given in March. If you would like to help us plan and carry out the food drive please let us know. We will be working on this project in February. Contact Amanda Forstrom, 507-279-1607.



rightnow MEDIA

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***Worship services from First Congregational UCC are available (and searchable by date) alongside the other great content on the rightnow MEDIA website & app!**

Here in cold opening months of a new year, I challenge you to log into your free rightnow MEDIA account and find a study or show that doesn't just occupy a long winter night, but rather inspires you toward a deeper faith. When you do, would you drop me an email so that I can share some member picks with next month's newsletter readers?

This month I'd like to promote a RNM series that we're going to be watching and discussing throughout the spring with our Adult Sunday School class—which, by the way, is open to anyone from confirmation age on up at 9:15 Sunday mornings in the chapel! Early last year the group enjoyed studying the Gospel of Luke through a series called *Eyewitness*, in which familiar Bible passages, as well as the history and culture of the region, are brought to life as they are explored by narrators portraying the famous characters. In this spring's study, we will be examining many of the epistle lessons of the year as we unpack **Paul's Letters**. Here is a brief description:

Paul's Letters is composed of narrative accounts by Bible personalities about the letters of Paul found in the New Testament, such as Eunice helping us understand his Letter to the Galatians, or Aquila and Priscilla talking about First Corinthians. Together, the videos and study guides provide a good overview of the letters of Paul. By placing the letters in the approximate order in which they were written, this series provides special insights that are sometimes missed when reading in the order they are found in the New Testament.



***Do you still need to sign up for a FREE rightnow MEDIA account?**

There are 3 convenient ways:

Go to <https://www.rightnow.org/Account/Invite/FCONG>

Text **FCONG to 49775**, or scan this QR code with your smartphone camera or code reader:



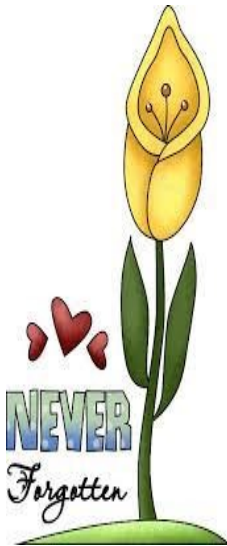
Once logged in to your **FREE** account, now updated to rightnow MEDIA 3.0, you can click directly on "First Congregational UCC" near the top of the page to access the "Fairmont Worship Services" channel, or "Pastor Cory's Picks"—which is where you'll find videos I've recommended here, as well as others that interest me. Stay tuned... the list changes as I discover new picks! As I challenged you above, if you've discovered a show or video on **rightnow MEDIA** that you think others would enjoy, email me and I'll promote it in next month's column.

~ Pastor Cory

HTTP://
WWW.FAIRMONTUCC.ORG/

Memorials

28-Nov	Lee Hanning Birthday	Starfish	Virginia Riedesel
28-Nov	Bill & Pat Cone Anniversary		Margaret Weaver
28-Nov	Memory of Mike & Evelyn Graham	General	Mark A Hamre Fund, Sue Hamre
12-Dec	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	HA & DA Fancher
19-Dec	Thanks to Jenny for Special Music		James & Barbara Bock
19-Dec	Honor of Angela Vaughn's Father		Wanda Johnson
19-Dec	Justin & Tara Thedens Anniversary		Margaret Weaver
19-Dec	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich
19-Dec	Honor of John & Donna Holstine	General	Les Heinrich
26-Dec	Memory of Bruce Schwieger		Kenneth Schwieger
16-Jan	Memory of Tranna Urban		Janine Draper
16-Jan	Memory of Tranna Urban	Starfish	Dolores Gronewald



Library on Wheels

The Martin County Library in Fairmont is excited to begin offering "Library on Wheels" to homebound residents. If you or someone you know is homebound, the library will deliver up to five items to their home each month. You tell us what you like or enjoy, we'll pick it out for you and deliver! If you are interested in learning more,

call Chris at 238-4207 or email chasek@tds.lib.mn.us.

Don't have a library card? No problem...we can get that up and running for you too!

Altar Flowers

The Worship Board will be arranging for altar flowers If there is a Sunday that would have a special meaning to you and you would like to provide the flowers, please sign up on the large calendar by the coat closet with your name and who the flowers are in memory/ honor of. Please know we appreciate your sharing your special memories with us! Please contact Janine Draper at 507-236-3499.

Would you like to help give the newsletter a name? Please drop off or email some suggestions to the church office!



INTERVIEW WITH CONRAD & LORIE ZOELLER

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by Lee Hanning

Lorie was born the second child of Gail & Carol Suter of East Chain. Her siblings are Kathy, Brian, and Betsy. (An interesting side story about her parents: Gail is the oldest of ten children. When they count all the spouses, children, and 28 grandchildren of the Suter family there are 165--soon to be 166--and all the elders are still living!!)

Lorie grew up on the family dairy farm. She attended East Chain School and was graduated in 1979. During those high school years, she and Conrad Zoeller (who had graduated from earlier in 1977) became high-school sweethearts.

Conrad and Lorie were married June 16, 1979 and lived on the family farm. They moved an older home onto the new basement they constructed and continue to live there now. They became parents to:

Angie b. 1980--married to Kevin Ritter (relative of Rev. Penny Ritter), Angie & Kevin live in Belle Plaine and have two children: Tyler, 18 yr. and Chloe, 16 yr.

Eric b. 1982--lives in Fairmont and attends STEP, Inc.,

Allie b. 1986--married to Michael Brown 2014. Sadly, Allie died Oct. 6, 2015 in a car accident.

Then, Lorie attended Jackson Technical School in 1987-1988 and started working at STEP, Inc. where she has worked for 34 years!



After his graduation, Conrad began farming and a truck driving for the Fairmont Canning Company and also Northrup King Seed Co. in Amboy for a while. He now drives the STEP, Inc. bus and has done so for about 15 years.

Conrad and Lorie have a Fifth-wheel camper and love to go camping!

They usually try to get away a couple times during the year. Their son-in-law Kevin's brother Dan has a campground in Lanesboro, MN and they enjoy spending time there with family.

We had such an enjoyable conversation during the interview. It was a lot of fun for me to visit with Lorie. We've know each other for years and yet there were so many things I learned! THANKS FOR SHARING!



(My apologies to Lorie & Conrad Zoeller for misidentifying them in the December newsletter.)

Lemon Chicken Piccata

Cook time: 30 Min Prep time: 30 Min Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
- 1 c panko bread crumbs, or 1/2 cup flour
- pinch salt and pepper
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 7 Tbsp butter, unsalted and divided
- 2 medium lemons
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 2 c chicken stock (I use low sodium)
- 1 Tbsp chicken stock concentrate, optional
- 2 Tbsp capers, drained
- 3 Tbsp parsley, finely chopped and divided

Directions

1. Heat oven to 180 degrees. Juice one whole lemon, reserving juice. Cut the second lemon from pole to pole and cut off the end pieces. Fruit side down, slice ONE lemon half into very slender slices, reserve. Use the other cut half for additional juice to make 1/4 cup of fresh lemon juice or plate garnish.

2. Butterfly each chicken breast into two pieces, then cut each piece in half. Pound chicken to about 1/2 inch thick. Dry chicken thoroughly with paper towels. Salt and pepper both sides lightly. In a large skillet, add 2 Tbsp oil and 2 Tbsp butter. Heat to medium high. Dredge chicken pieces in panko bread crumbs or flour. Fry half the chicken pieces until browned, about 2 minutes. Flip chicken pieces and brown on the other side for an additional few minutes until they are cooked through. Add the remaining 2 Tbsp oil and 2 Tbsp butter for the second batch of chicken and repeat.

Plate the pieces as they cook, wrap with foil and keep in a warm oven. NOTE: If chicken is browning too quickly, reduce heat to avoid burning.

3. While chicken stays warm in oven, add the shallots to the skillet. If more butter is needed to saute the shallots, feel free to add a bit. Stir quickly for about a minute until they begin to soften. Add the garlic and stir for another 30 seconds until fragrant. Add the chicken broth, stock concentrate, lemon juice and lemon slices. Bring liquid to a simmer and continue simmering until the broth reduces to about 1 1/2 cups - around 10 minutes. Add the capers and parsley to the stock, then add 3 TBS of the remaining butter and swirl the pan off the heat until the butter is melted. Plate the chicken and ladle the sauce on top. Sprinkle with a bit of leftover parsley if you wish.



Plain or smothered & covered! Delicious either way.

February Anniversaries

Feb 2 Bob & Jan Cone 59 years

Feb 14 Jon & Cindy Anderson 24 years



February Birthdays

Feb. 1 Mark Craven

Feb. 2 Sarah Zabel

Feb. 3 Faith Kotewa

Feb. 4 Jim Bock

Joyce Jorgenson

Feb. 6 April Rachuy

Feb. 10 Jenna Moller

Feb. 13 Janine Draper

Remi Shoen

Feb. 16 Jim Marushin Sr.

Owen Becker

Feb. 17 Vicki Bicknase

Carter Rowan

Colby Whitmore

Feb. 18 Kirk Jorgensen

Feb. 19 Joe Craven

Courtney Kuperous

Feb. 21 Larry Lasch

Feb. 23 Lee Trunkenbolz

Feb. 25 Cindy Anderson

Feb. 27 Larry Christensen

Henry Brummond

Feb. 28 Matt Guritz