

October 2021

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

Nonprofit
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Fairmont, MN 56031



First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza
Fairmont, MN 56031



WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Fairmont, Minnesota*

Rev. Cory Germain
Minister

Ann Osborn
Administrative Assist

Joyce Jorgenson
Choir Director

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

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.

20 21

October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Communion Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	4	5 10:00 Lakeview Communion	6 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Diaconate 5:30 Worship Board 6:30 CE Board	7 5:15 Hospitality 7:00 Facilities Board 6:00 TOPS	8	9
10 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	11 5:00-6:00 FCH Foundation	12	13 4:00 Confirmation 5:15 Mission Board 6:30 CE Board	14 6:00 TOPS	15 9:00 a.m. Council Agenda Items Deadline	16
17 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	18	19 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	20 5:45 Church Council 6:30-9:00 Sunday School Fun Night	21 6:00 TOPS	22 9:00 a.m. November Nwsleter Submission Deadline	23
24 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship <i>Blessing Box Collection</i>	25 5:30 Parent To Parent	26	27 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Free Community Meal	28 9:30 Bible Study 6:00 TOPS	29	30
31 <i>Noisy Sunday</i> 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 11:45 Trunk-or-Treat						



The Reverend's Ruminations - October 2021

One year ago in this very space, I was “ruminating” about how we had already been dealing with seemingly-constant adjustments to our worship and other church activities for *six whole months*...oh, the horror!?! As you may recall, my refrain throughout the spring and summer of 2020 had been “stay tuned”—a call for all of you to be alert to various changes in not only health guidance, but ways of safely being the church. In the year since, I’m happy to say that our congregation has indeed “stayed tuned.” We have enjoyed (endured?) streaming worship services, Zoom meetings, outdoor Bible studies, and drive-thru community meals, some of which have been able to return to their normal practices over the course of the last year.

Now eighteen-plus months into this ongoing worldwide pandemic, we had certainly hoped that everything would be better. But while many overarching restrictions have been eased or lifted entirely, we are painfully aware that infection rates are NOT trending the right direction. COVID has taken the lives of friends or relatives; it has altered graduations, weddings, funerals, and other social gatherings; recently it has even touched the lives of members here in our church—although we pray that there will be no long-term health effects. The signs on our church doors have changed a couple times already to reflect vaccination rates and policy changes, but they will likely see further changes as fall leads into winter and cold/flu season adds additional uncertainty to community activities. “Stay tuned” will likely be my rallying cry yet for months to come!

But fear not. We serve an awesome and powerful God, the one who created heaven and earth, and rules evermore in grace and power. The Apostle Peter assures us that despite the constancy of change—and even public health threats—in our human world, God is still on the throne:

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 5:6-11, NRSV)

As September somehow already winds to a close and the vibrant colors of October begin to pop, let us all remember to hold our area farmers in our prayers for a safe, successful, and timely harvest. This has been an uncertain growing year with a summer of drought, and even though we’ve received rains recently, they may not have been enough to help every field. There is bound to be much variation in crop yields among varying soil types, field terrain, and natural or man-made drainage, so let us pray that the averages still come out positive. Agriculture is the backbone of this region and directly impacts our church in countless ways, from the availability of church volunteers to the financial support that keeps our church running. May God continue to grant favor upon this land as we all seek to be good stewards of this planet we call home!

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Cory Germain

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

FAIRMONT, MN

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 9-15-2021

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

The Council met in Heritage Hall. The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Marilyn Forstrom. Pastor Germain led in prayer. There were no questions about the August Council meeting. Nothing was voted on at that meeting as there was not a quorum.

Treasurer's Report: Catherine presented the treasurer's report. There will be budget meeting in October, and boards will want to look at their budgets beforehand. Motion was M/S/C (Dave/Abigail) to receive the Treasurer's report.

Finance/Business: After much discussion, it was decided that a subgroup (Catherine, Dara, Kay, Jodi, Dave M.) will meet to look at simplifying Capital accounts/records.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Germain presented the report. He will be gone this coming Sunday (Ellen will be filling in) for advising about religious beliefs/COVID shots in the National Guard, He will know more later about being gone again in November or December.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Wendy shared that Sunday School is off to a good start with around 9 students attending the first day for the kickoff/pizza. There will be a Trunk or Treat coming up on October 31st after church.

Hospitality: Cathy reported that hospitality did not meet in September.

Facilities: Larry discussed the sharing/blessing box that Jon Riggs will be building.

Diaconate: Sue reported that there are now a couple of members that are needing rides to church. Please, let the office know if you are able to help out.

Missions: Kay reported that the Missions financial accounts were reviewed. Kay shared about the sharing/blessing box being built. In October, items can be brought for the box. They will be proceeding with an Adopt the Highway program. Also, Community meals for November 17th and December 29th are still in need of a board or group to serve. Please, consider volunteering for one of those months.

Worship: Dave reported that November 21st is the day to decorate the church for Advent. They are needing people to help. More pulpit supply will be needed coming up.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Stewardship Drive: Marilyn reported that they are tentatively planning to send out letters at the end of September/beginning of October. Pledge cards will need to be returned by the end of October. They are looking for creative ideas to present the Stewardship Drive if anyone has thoughts.

OLD BUSINESS:

COVID changes: Signs will be updated to strongly encourage all to wear masks inside the church.

J&L computer report: Pastor Germain has daily computer problems with his laptop that was purchased around December 2015. J&L cleaned up/updated all of the church computers, but Pastor Germain's had many issues. A motion was made to get a new computer for Pastor Germain (M/S/C by Larry, Wendy with Catherine amending to get a media-forward one for Zoom, projecting, audio. Dave mentioned possibly portable docking stations.)

NEW BUSINESS: We will be thinking of how to do a better job of getting thank you notes written and how to decide who should receive one. This will be discussed at next meeting.

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

Respectfully submitted, Christina Hainy, Clerk

Happy Autumn!



October Blessing Box – Little Free Pantry

Give What You Can...



Take What You Need...



Above All Be Blessed.

This year the Mission Board of First Congregational UCC is taking on an exciting new ministry to help our community. We are in the process of having a **Little Free Pantry** box built and mounted in the yard of the church.

The idea is that this will build a sense of "neighbors helping neighbors". For those who struggle to make ends meet, this is something that can get them by when the other food sources aren't available. For others, it may furnish a snack for a child after school. **The pantry will be available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.** Anyone who has a need is free to take from the pantry; anyone who has a desire to give is welcome to help stock the pantry. **Give when you can, take when you need.**

To get the pantry started, we are focusing our **October Blessing Box** offering on the pantry. You are welcome to give a monetary donation to help defray the cost of building the pantry and stocking it. Or, if you'd like to donate pantry items, leave them in the entryway of the church. Below is a list of suggested items. Make sure all items are non-perishable, sealed, and able to withstand the temperatures. Do not bring sharp items, glass bottles/jars or expired items.

Bring what **you** would want to receive; when you are shopping for your own groceries, pick up **an extra** and donate it.

Proteins – meat & fish – canned or packets; nut/seed butter; jerky; assorted nuts; protein bars

Fruit & Veggies – apple sauce; dried fruits; canned fruit; gummies; canned veggies; pizza sauce; baby food

Grains & Carbs – pasta; rice; beans canned or dry; cereal; granola bars; trail mix; crackers; pretzels; popcorn; pudding; jello cups

Boxed Entrees – Mac & cheese; chili; hamburger/tuna helper

Beverages – powdered milk; water bottles; juice boxes

Non-Food – dog/cat food; socks; baby wipes; diapers; deodorant; toothpaste; toothbrush; shampoo & conditioner; sun block; toilet paper; sanitizer sprays & wipes; first-aid supplies; cleaning supplies; hand warmers; Chapstick

Remember, don't just count your blessings . . . share them!

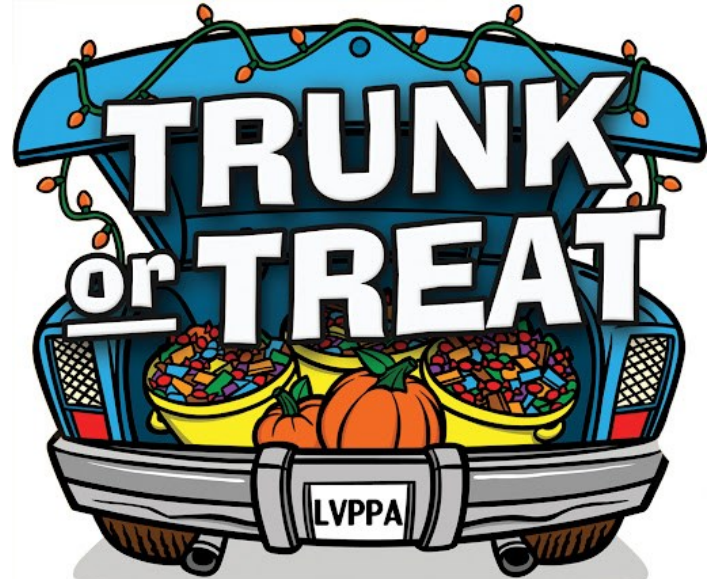


**Sunday
School Fun
Night
Wednesday,
October 20**

Snacks, Games, Movie-The Prince of Egypt
6:30-9:00 at the church

Hello
autumn

Are you
FALL-O-WEEN
Jesus?



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31

Kids & adults encouraged to wear a costume to church!

It's Reformation Sunday, so maybe you'll be John Calvin, Martin Luther, or one of the apostles? How about a cowboy, football player, princess, or superhero?

**Whatever you choose, all costumes should be church-appropriate—no ghouls allowed!*

It's **Noisy Sunday** too, so dig out that spare change to support our *Heifer International* mission collection.

After worship we'll move outside to continue the fun with a **Trunk-or-Treat**:

Decorate your car's trunk or the back of your SUV/van (again, church-appropriate) and hand out candy to the kids from First Congregational and St. John's UCC.

Have fun with a theme: Noah's ark? Church basement ladies? A barnyard or movie set? Use your imagination!

Memorials

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
29-Aug	Memory of Laura Jaqua	Starfish	Jay Jaqua
5-Sep	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich
12-Sep	Memory of Coach Tietje		Steve & Janine Draper

Giving...

***Watch for more messages in your mailbox
and Sunday morning worship services.
What will your heart say?***

***It's
Heart
work***

First Congregational Church-United Church of Christ, 319 Downtown Plaza, Fairmont, MN 56031



Report as of 1 September 2021

During the last four weeks \$20,140.35 (13.42%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were turned in. After 7 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$34,149.62 (22.77%) toward the 14th \$150,000 goal.

During the same four weeks, \$1,615.78 (1.08%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 36 weeks, Fareway is at \$45,883.54 (30.59%) toward our 4th \$150,000 goal.

Thanks for bringing the slips into the Church, or mailing them to me or dropping them off at my house. Even the very small amounts help. This program started the first of March 2011, so any slips from then until now can be used. Any Fairmont Fareway and Hy-Vee food store register slip can be used. Even slips from Hy-Vee Gas, Coffee Shop, Food Service, and Pharmacy help us toward the goal.

Reported by;
Jim Bock

John was born at the Fairmont Community Hospital to John & Minnie Larson. They lived on a farm by Ormsby and then moved to St. James when he was 5 years old. He attended and graduated from school in St. James. He worked in Trimont at Temple Mercantile Country Store for 2 years and then Stokely/United Foods in Fairmont.

John entered the Army for 2 1/2 years serving in Vietnam and then Germany. In 1967 he moved into an apartment in downtown Fairmont above Wolf's Store. He went to school in Albert Lea. (He had disability from arthritis and both hips replaced.)

He met Sherry in 1973 at a dance at State Line. They married in Fairmont First Congregational Church in 1974. Sherry had 3 girls--Kim, Sonja, and Amy. He said he married them, too, as a "package deal". Then their daughter Rebecca was born in 1978. He said it was a *lively* household--from a guy's point of view.

They lived on 4th Street until they moved to Shoreacres in 2015.

Sherry is the 4th child of 13 born to Vern "Shorty" Rowan and Ruby (Yackle) Rowan. She was born at home on the Clair Clark farm near Granada.

She attended Country School District #28. Ruth Anthony was her teacher for six years. Sherry was the only one in her class. They carried sack lunches and heated meals in a pan of water in a canner cooker. Country School put steps up and over a fence so the kids could play on the cow pasture.

(Imagine--"cow pies") The teacher rang the bell to call them in when recess was over.

When the Country School closed, Sherry attended Granada High School graduating in 1960. Her youngest sibling Karen was born after Sherry was graduated. By this time the family had moved into Granada. Sherry worked at Erickson Furniture as bookkeeper for two years then worked at Fairmont Railway Motors in the printing department doing the "mail run" and then did the books for Hy-Rail for about two years.



Interview with
John & Sherry Larson
by Lee Hanning

Sherry went to Denver with some girlfriends in 1965 where she worked at the Denver Post. She met and married her first husband and moved back to Granada where her daughters Kim & Sonja were born. Amy was born in 1970 after Sherry separated from her husband (they later divorced), and Sherry moved to Fairmont. Sherry worked at Penney's, then Title I at Budd School.

Then her wonderful life really started when she met and married John! They have celebrated 46 years together!!

She taught Sunday School and served on the Christian Ed Board as well as Worship Board, and Mission Board. She helped with the Free Community meals and any other areas needing help. She retired in 2008 after working at the School for 18 years.

The Larsons have been very active in our congregation over the years. How great it is to have people who are willing (when able) to further the work of our Church!

rightnow MEDIA

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

With school in full swing, our tweens & teens are being exposed to plenty of opinions about Christianity and the church, whether across the lunchroom table, in the locker room, on the bus, or on social media. But far too many of their peers don't attend a church, or are even non-believers—and they talk a good talk about how Christianity is just too weird to accept. Take a few minutes to explore the short explanations offered in ***The 10 Worst Objections to Christianity***, and be prepared to stand up for the faith that has formed you:

We live in a culture that is skeptical of Christianity. It's common to hear people say that believing in God is like believing in Santa or that Christianity is based on blind faith. How can we respond to people's objections?

In this series, apologist Sean McDowell will give us quick answers to the top ten worst objections to Christianity that we hear on a regular basis. Learn to defend your faith and give an answer for why you believe in Jesus.

As October arrives, you'll soon be hearing more about church budgeting and stewardship. Those can seem like daunting concepts, but you don't need to be a banker or financial advisor to understand that Biblical theories of giving not only support the missions and operation of the church, but can be life-giving to you personally as well. ***The Treasure Principle*** is a series of four, 16 to 18-minute videos that will help you look at tithes and offerings in a whole new light:

Jesus told a story about a hidden treasure that, once discovered, brought life-changing joy. In this new video series based on the best-selling book, [The Treasure Principle](#), Randy Alcorn unearths a simple yet profound principle that will radically change your concept of stewardship. Short on guilt, Alcorn illuminates the liberating joy of giving and its impact, not only for today but for eternity as well.

*Do you still need to sign up for a FREE **rightnow** MEDIA account?
Go to **<https://www.rightnow.org/Account/Invite/FCONG>**

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



Once logged in to your **FREE** account, you can either scroll down the left side library list OR click on the LIBRARIES icon in the upper left corner of the screen and select "First Congregational UCC" to access the "Fairmont Worship Services" channel, or any of the other great resources on the site. "Pastor Cory's Picks" 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! 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

Thank You!

To Pastor Germain for his visit to us in Lakeridge. To all the members of this congregation who have sent cards, called, sent flowers and food, to those who have stopped by to visit we are so thankful for all of your acts of kindness. We are both doing well with our recovery since our surgeries. Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts. Pat & Dick Cowing

The Pastoral Relations Committee will meet Sunday, October 10, following the church service.

Thank you Sherry Voyles for folding and sealing the September newsletters!

We have a lovely opportunity to live the UCC's 3 Great Loves initiative, this time focusing on Love of Creation. We are participating in the Minnesota DOT Adopt-A-Highway program. We will be looking to do a fall clean-up time on Sunday October 17 (time TBD). Adults and kids 12 and above are welcome! We'll have a sign up available or you can let the Mission board know if you'd like to participate. E-mail: amandaforstrom@hotmail.com More details to come!

Here is some more info about the Adopt-A-Highway:

- More than 3,800 groups volunteered in 2019
- Volunteers picked up more than 40,000 bags of trash in 2019
- 630+ segments of state roadways are available for adoption
- \$7 million realized in benefit in 2019
- Some groups have been volunteering since AAH began in 1990

9:00 a.m., October 22nd, is the November Newsletter submission

St. John's United Church of Christ is having their **Oktoberfest** meal on Tuesday, October 19, from 4:30pm to 7:00pm. Menu is Roast Pork Loin, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, German Potato Salad, Green Beans, Applesauce, Dinner Roll, Pie & Ice Cream, Coffee or Ice tea. Price is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for ages 4 to 12, and Free for ages 3 & under. Call 235-3500 for Take-Out order. No raffle will be held this year.

CLARE'S PECAN GRANOLA



Cooking spray
3 c. oats
1 c. pecan pieces
2 t. ground cinnamon
1/4 t. salt
1/2 c. packed light brown sugar
2 T oil
1 T pure vanilla extract
Position racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat to 300. Spray two rimmed baking sheets.

Pour over oat mixture. Mix well.

Divide between two pans. Place on separate racks and bake 15 minutes. Stir and trade places on the racks. Bake another 10-15 minutes. Oats may feel soft but will crisp as they cool, leaving granola in the pan.

In large bowl, mix oats, pecans, cinnamon and salt. In small saucepan, combine the brown sugar and 1/4 c. water. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring until the sugar is melted. Stir in oil and vanilla.

3 c. flour
1 c. sugar
1/2 t. salt
4 t. baking powder
Stir together with whisk.
Add: 1 c. oil
2 beaten eggs
1 c. milk

Mix gently, then add:
2 c. fresh or frozen blueberries.
(Fold in gently)

Sprinkle sugar over top, or use streusel mixture after pouring into muffin cups, greased or with paper liners. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes.



BEST EVER BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

October Anniversaries

Oct 2	Brandon & Rachael Tonneson	11 yrs
Oct 9	Randy & Pat Rowan	50 yrs
Oct 15	Bill & Staci Thompson	16 yrs
Oct 20	Ken & Joy Rachuy	48 yrs
Oct 22	Kevin & Sarah Zabel	16 yrs
Oct 24	Steve & Janine Draper	41 yrs
Oct 31	Dean & Donna Grotte	51 yrs



2 Kristen Campe
3 Elizabeth Scheppman
Adam Rachuy
4 Amanda Forstrom
Steve Urban
7 Aubrey Elaine McAlister
11 Jenny Craven
Mike Thate
13 Logyn Cone
Jonissa Neitzel
15 John Holstine
17 Jon Anderson
18 Michael Rowan

19 Brian Thate
21 Sue Kruse
22 Jane Kotewa
Gracie Ziemer
David Adams
Jessi Kotewa
25 Kathy Jorgensen
28 Mark Becker
Staci Thompson
29 Angela Vaughn
30 Wanda Johnson
31 Barb Bittman