

September 2021

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

Nonprofit
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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

(starting Sept 12th)

Sunday School 9:15

Worship 10:30

Communion the first Sunday of
every month.



September 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5:30 Worship Board 6:30 CE Board	2 6:00 T.O.P.S.	3	4
5 <i>Communion</i> 9:30 Worship	6 Labor Day	7 10:00 Lakeview Communion	8 5:15 Mission Board 5:30 Diaconate	9 5:15 Hospitality 7:00 Facilities 6:00 T.O.P.S.	10 9:00 am Council Agenda Items Deadline	11
12 <i>SS Kickoff!</i> 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	13 5:00 FCH Foundation	14	15 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Church Council	16 6:00 T.O.P.S.	17 9:00 am October Newsletter Submission Deadline	18
19 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Habitat for Humanity	20	21 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	22 4:00 Confirmation First Day of Autumn	23 6:00 T.O.P.S.	24	25
26 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Blessing Box Neighbors in Need	27 4:30 Parent To Parent	28	29 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Free Community Meal	30 9:30 Bible Study 6:00 T.O.P.S.		

The Reverend's Ruminations - September 2021

Recently Ellen and I had a chance to get away for a week in the Blue Ridge Mountains about 20 miles outside of Asheville, North Carolina. As a Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies training and credentialing event, it wasn't specifically a vacation, but there was time allotted each morning before afternoon classes and discussions for personal devotions and exploration of the surrounding area. We didn't pack to do any serious hiking, but did enjoy strolling the beautiful grounds of Montreat and the many quaint shops of the picturesque neighboring town of Black Mountain.

There is a bit of Congregational UCC connection to Montreat, as the Rev. John C. Collins (a Congregational minister from Connecticut), with a group of other interdenominational clergy and lay leaders, originally purchased the area of 4,500 acres in the mountains of western North Carolina. Their vision was to build a Christian settlement—a mountain retreat (shortened to the name "Montreat")—where people could come for physical and spiritual renewal. Much of the building and development of the area, including nearby Montreat College, took place in the early 1900s, and the construction of the buildings reflects the craftsmanship of that era. Montreat Presbyterian Church was established in 1906, and the first Presbyterian conference was held in Montreat the following year. Years later, the property became a national conference center of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) when the northern and southern branches of the denomination reunited in 1983.



While you may not have travelled quite as far as North Carolina (or endured the flight delays we encountered), I hope that you and your families have had a chance to enjoy some moments of rest and relaxation this summer. By the time you read this, area schools will be back in session or soon set to resume, and we'll be launching into another busy year of church activities as well. We want to see you back at church as you feel safely able! Sunday School for all ages will be resuming on September 12th, and I want to invite each and every member to find a way in which they can be involved. There are plenty of opportunities to participate in learning, discussing, leading, or volunteering, so let's make this a year of involvement at First Congregational United Church of Christ. If COVID infection rates or preventative measures necessitate format changes in our programs, we'll adapt again—but by now we've gotten pretty good at being flexible!?!

During our September worship services, my sermons will examine the lessons found in the epistle of James. As I encouraged last month, here is another accessibly short book of the Bible: James has only 5 chapters! We'll start with a selection from the first chapter on August 29, and continue through the four Sundays of September, so I challenge you to read ahead to prepare for the upcoming week's worship experience.

Looking ahead to the 5th chapter of James on September 26th, we encounter the reason for two of the prayers we offer each week during worship (confession and intercession):

"Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (5:16, NRSV).

Prayer is one of the greatest joys of being in Christian community, and our world needs it now more than ever! See you soon, whether in person or virtually, where we can pray with and for one another.

Yours in Christ's service,

Rev. Cory Germain

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
FAIRMONT, MN**

Notes from Council Meeting - August 18, 2021

Members Present: Jane Kotewa, Larry Thompson, Abigail Roiger, Kay Campe, Cathy Celandier, Marilyn Forstrom Ex Officio Dara Bliesmer and Rev. Germain.

Visitors: Joanne Eisenbarger, Jim Bock from Capital Campaign committee

A number of items were discussed but nothing was voted on as there was not a quorum.

Treasurer, Catherine Johnson submitted a report by email indicating that expenses at this point in the year are generally in line with the budget. Thank you to Dave Meschke for completing paperwork has been completed for forgiveness of the second PPP loan. The process to receive another \$1000 from HyVee thanks to everyone for collecting receipts and Jim Bock for tracking and submitting.

Pastor Cory submitted his monthly report of his activities. He will contact J&L Computers to conduct maintenance of all church computers.

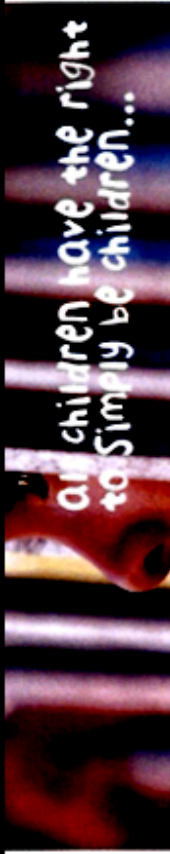
Reports were shared by Board Liasons who had met in August. August Blessing Box will be for Habitat for Humanity. They are proceeding with the Food Blessing Box Library.

Discussion took place regarding timing and details of a Capital Campaign and this year's Stewardship drive. Since it was a small number in attendance and questions arose needing more input, we will try to schedule an informal meeting to discuss further before the next Council meeting.

Reverend Germain closed with prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Marilyn Forstrom, Moderator

September Blessing Box – Neighbors in Need – 9/26/21



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUBURN

“We serve the community to express who we are.”

Residing and ministering in Northern California, project co-directors, Susan and Kenneth Moore, wanted to live out their faith by being a loving neighbor to the immigrant families in a nearby community. Equally, they knew that members of their congregation would need to be educated on the impact of immigration policies on their neighbors. Thus, they applied for and received a \$2,000 NIN grant.

Between Advent of 2018 and the fall of 2019, the Moore's began educating their religious community. They viewed documentaries, read books, and had a panel discussion, hoping to gain a broader perspective, including why people migrate. It was a big success! Notably, some members went a step further and began to learn Spanish.



With the task educate completed, the Moore's were able to invite their church family to begin by doing something for immigrant children who attended a local elementary school. Through a relationship with the school's community liaison and the school nurse, the congregation learned what some of the children needed. Members of First Congregational of Auburn were invited to provide clothing (shoes, socks, pants, shirts, coats, etc.). They did so, in abundance.

According to the Moore's, "we are learning more of the needs of the children and teachers... Some of us have become music docents, as they have no music program at all also, no art, library." Furthermore, they added, "we hope to recruit church members to help with tutoring... and to go on a people to people pilgrimage to Central America." While their journey is just beginning, Susan and Kenneth Moore, are grateful their church family for being willing to begin investing in lives of their neighbors.

Because of your generosity, direct service programs like that of First Congregational are grant funded, communities are strengthened, and neighbors experience love without judgment.

all children have the right to simply be children...

Please join us in supporting the 2020 Neighbors In Need Special Mission Offering. Thank you!



UNLEASHING POTENTIAL (formerly Neighborhood Houses) OF ST. LOUIS, MO

“Unleash[ing] the magnificent potential in children, families and neighborhoods that leads to a just community for all.”

Denise Carter, early childhood education director, was well aware of a rather large need within the population served by Neighborhood Houses. Many of the families are low wage earners, 75% of them earn less than \$20,000 annually. Truthfully, some simply struggle to provide many of basic needs for their children.

To that end, she designed a program to meet the health and development needs of infants and toddlers. Thus, the "Baby Essentials" program was birthed. The main goal was to provide diapers and formula for all of the children enrolled at the early childhood education center for families who could not afford a consistent supply.



Denise met with interim director of development, Christine Krueger, and shared her desire and need for funding. Christine went in search of those sources. She applied wherever she felt the need of the program matched the granters requirements. Fortunately, she filled out an application for a NIN direct service grant and was awarded \$3,000 in 2019.

In 2020, it was reported back to us that 100% of babies ages six weeks to 12 months received milk they needed while attending the Center. 50% of those babies also received one canister of formula per month for home consumption. Lastly, 100% of babies/toddlers ages six weeks to three years had diapers needed for Center and home use.

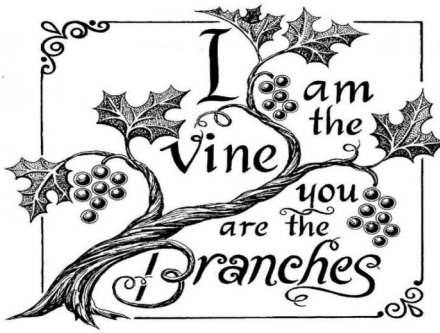
According to Christine, "thanks to the Neighbors in Need grant, our babies are dry and their tummies are full, and parents, who are already stressed financially, socially, and emotionally, have two less potential health issues with which to contend!"

Because of your generosity, direct service programs like that of Neighborhood Houses are grant funded, communities are strengthened, and neighbors experience love without judgment.

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Please join us in supporting the 2020 Neighbors In Need Special Mission Offering. Thank you!





Memorials



Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
25-Jul	Memory of George Jones		David Bishop & Nancy Rostvold
25-Jul	Memory of George Jones		Art & Julie Elliott
25-Jul	Memory of George Jones		Eric & Catherine Johnson
25-Jul	Memory of George Jones		David Meschke
1-Aug	Memory of Mary Beth Snyder		Vicki Terhark
1-Aug	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	General	Les Heinrich
8-Aug	Jeff & Renae Vetter Anniversary		Margaret Weaver

Giving...

Coming soon.....

Three Great loves and more

***It's
Heart
work***

Don't miss the official start of the new 2021-22 church year.

As you can see from the CE Board's letter elsewhere in this newsletter, they have been busy planning many exciting things for the young kiddos! That doesn't mean the rest of us will be left out. An adult SS class is also being planned for each Sunday and we are planning to serve coffee and lemonade once again following worship!!! It will be sooo good to worship, learn and socialize with our church family again!!

So on Sunday, September 12 we will order pizza for the young and not so young kids following worship. If you would like to bring a salad to share, that would be excellent!

Join our church family in the Heritage Hall after the worship service. Since COVID remains a concern, we must continue to be very mindful of just how we gather. We will continue to distance as best we can, move forward in our own "Covid Comfort Zone" and hope that we can be safe and healthy as we continue to worship together and support one another.



Letter from the CE Board

As summer is winding down, the CE board has been gearing up for the start of Sunday school. The first day of Sunday school will be September 12th. Sunday school is from 9:15-10:15, with church starting at 10:30 AM. Parents are asked to bring children up to the classrooms for a quick sign up before class starts.

For the first day of Sunday school we will be having a *kickoff party*! Kids will have a short lesson and learn a song to sing in church. Kids and families are invited and encouraged to stay for church following Sunday school to perform their song during the children's service. After church we will be having a pizza party to finish off our first day. Parents are welcome to stay for pizza.

Covid Notice: Our Sunday school program will be mirroring what the Fairmont School District enforces for Covid guidelines. If the kids have to wear masks at school, we will be wearing them in Sunday school.

Looking for Donations:

We are looking for donations of individually wrapped snacks, juice boxes, and small water bottles for our Sunday school class and confirmation class. Donations can be left in the kitchen area of the upper level. If you'd like to leave a note with who brought the donation, the kids would love to write you a **Thank You!**



Needless to say, 2020 & 2021 have been filled with ongoing updates to national and state COVID-19 responses, and these have continued to affect the way all of us live our lives. This has continued to be the case for our congregation's Starfish Fund as well. For nearly two years already, help from the state Human Services department, as well as widespread stimulus checks and subsidized rides on Prairie Lakes Transit, has caused a notable decrease in the total number of requests for help from area churches. Now that some of this aid has begun to be scaled back by the state, I have seen a slight uptick in the number of persons coming to the church, although the majority seem to be for smaller amounts of help. Regardless of overall trends, during the first 8 months of 2021, I have been able to bless 19 different individuals and family units, both in our church and community. Already this year that amounts to nearly \$2,700 in aid, still disbursed in the form of Poppe's gasoline vouchers, Fareway restricted gift cards, Prairie Lakes Transit tokens, and checks directly to various public utilities or landlords. Thanks to one particularly large donor and several other generous memorial donations over the last two years, the Starfish Fund is currently well-equipped to continue helping those in need. I am honored to administer this unique and beneficial fund on behalf of the congregation, and pray that what we are doing for those in need helps them see more clearly the light of Christ in our community.

Pastor Cory

HyVee & Fareway Receipts Report as of 15 August 2021

Sorry about no report last month, but I was on vacation with wife, daughter and 3-grandchildren. On the sixth of August, I took \$150,000.17 net worth of slips into Hy-Vee. Jeff was in Des Moines this month, so I would expect the Church will receive the \$1,000 before mid-September.

During the nine weeks since the last report, \$38,653.97 (25.97%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were turned in. After 3 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$14,009.27 (9.34%) toward the 14th \$150,000 goal. (It took Fareway over 29 weeks to reach \$38,005.)

During the same nine weeks, \$12,206.60 (8.14%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 32 weeks, Fareway is at \$44,267.76 (29.51%) toward our 4th \$150,000 goal.

During these nine weeks, nine people took to the church, mailed, or dropped off at our house slips they had been collecting for 6 to 11 months. Each group was worth between \$2,500 and \$5,800. Thanks!

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

9:00 a.m. September 17th is the October Newsletter submission deadline.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

September Birthdays

1 Daniel Moller	18 Dean Grotte	26 Ben Riggs
3 Bev Norman	Marie Stoeckman	Cameron Germain
7 Abby Namken	19 Joanie Maday	Chad Thate
8 Eric Zoeller	21 Sarah Gerhardt	Tyler Goerndt
10 Marian Buchan	22 Dave Huset	28 Jon Neitzel
12 Don Marks	25 Cathy Buckmeier	Patti Norman
13 Mike True	Virginia Riedesel	Dustin Bicknase
15 Oliver Thedens	Jan Cone	29 Mackenzie Jones
16 Evie Wenz	Amanda Jaskulke	30 Tranna Urban
17 Polly Mosloski	Zack Ashland	
Jeff Vetter	Terry Winegar	

September Anniversaries

Sept 8	Andrew & Erica Jorgensen	3 yrs
Sept 8	Jeff & Jennifer Grefe	9 yrs
Sept 10	Justin & Tiffany Radcliff	10 yrs
Sept 11	Travis & Melissa Goerndt	17 yrs
Sept 13	Mike & Erin True	6 yrs
Sept 16	Joe & Morgan Christensen	4 yrs
Sept 19	Dandy & Sue Kruse	6 yrs
Sept 22	Dan & Anne (Saxton) Wenz	9 yrs
Sept 29	Jacob & Tana Lasch	9 yrs

DENNIS THE MENACE



"YOU KNOW, AFTER KINDERGARTEN THEY EXPECT US TO GO TO SCHOOL...UNTIL WE GET A JOB!"

Thank you for giving us a
opportunity to go to Ingham
lake bible camp we all had
a fun time. My favorite part
was bible study, and the little
girls favorite was singing
songs. Once again thank you
for letting us go to Ingham
lake bible camp.

Thank you!

...thanks a bunch
for all you do!

Blakely Presley
Weber Wegner

Rem. Shoen
Reagan Shoen

{ Thank you Margo W. for folding and sealing the August newsletters! }

Sunday School Kickoff!
Sunday, September 12th
@ 9:15

Worship Service Time
changes to 10:30,
starting Sunday,
September 12th

This is what the past is for! Every experience God
gives us, every person He puts in our lives is the
perfect preparation for the future that only He
can see.

- Corrie Ten Boom

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!**

As the supposedly lazy days of summer wind to a close, perhaps you've begun to notice that the world forgot to slow down. There is so much debate in the public sphere these days, and it's not just about fashion trends or viral videos. Luckily, **rightnow** MEDIA has both fun and serious videos available to feed your Christian curiosity. Pete Briscoe offers a 5-message series that will help you find your voice and confidence to speak with tender boldness in an increasingly messed up world. Here's a synopsis of his appropriately titled series, ***Living in a Messed Up World***:

You might think that we have more intense and volatile issues in our world to wrestle with than ever before, but much of the New Testament was written to encourage believers living in similar hostile times. These early believers were often seen as unpopular outsiders going against the new fashioned cultural tides. Today, speaking in favor and holding true to faith-based beliefs on issues like marriage and abortion can put Christians on the front lines of confrontation and persecution. So how do you keep your voice and still live peacefully?

*In **Living in a Messed Up World**, Pete Briscoe answers that question by pointing us to Paul as the perfect example of one who speaks with tender boldness. Pete reminds us that our goal is not to win arguments, but to win people. And to do that, we must avoid falling into the trap of our Christian beliefs being pitted against culture in the public sphere of debate.*

Now that the younger kids or grandkids in your life are back into a routine of kindergarten, preschool, or day care, maybe they need some brief rewards of "screen time with a purpose." **The Emily Elephant Show** is a new series of six short (10-minute or less) videos exploring surprisingly "big" questions that are on young children's minds as they discover God at work in their lives:

Emily the Elephant has her very own show! Join Emily and her friends as they answer big questions about God, learn Bible stories, and sing songs about biblical truths. Enjoy this show from Phil Vischer, the founder of Jellyfish Labs and co-creator of the acclaimed VeggieTales series, with your whole family.

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

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



Puppy Chow Snack Recipe Without Peanut Butter

With the return to School, I thought this recipe would be a fun one to share. It was created by a teacher in order to circumvent any children's allergies. These are her instructions. I made it for my Granddaughter's birthday party and it works well and is very tasty!

Ingredients

- 8-10 oz Dark or Semi-Sweet Chocolate (dark if you want these less sweet)
- Cups Crispix, Chex or Any Rice Squares Cereal
- 2 4.6 oz Packages Instant Vanilla Pudding

Instructions

1. Add cereal of choice into the largest bowl you have and set aside.
2. Place chocolate in another large bowl and heat in the microwave for 30 seconds on high. Remove and stir well. The chocolate should just begin to melt. Be patient.
3. Heat for 15 more seconds and stir again well. Repeat for 15 second intervals until fully melted, mixing well in between. (This should not take more than 2 minutes!)
4. Drizzle your melted chocolate all over the cereal and work quickly!

Mix it **CAREFULLY** trying not to break up the cereal. I like to use my hands for this. The cereal might clump together but that's okay, it will separate once the pudding mix is in.

BEST SNACKS

5. Finally, add in your pudding mix and toss again lightly until your cereal is not sticky anymore and everything is fully coated in the pudding mix. (You might need to add more mix.)

****You do NOT want to make pudding! You are simply adding the pudding POWDER straight from the bag, NO MILK!**

6. Enjoy right away or store in Tupperware for up to 2 weeks! Refrigeration is not needed.

Tip* If your chocolate does not melt properly. You have either made it too hot or got water in your chocolate.

Interview
with
Bob & Jan Cone
By
Lee Hanning



Bob was born in Alta, Iowa and moved with his parents to a farm near East Chain. He attended school in East Chain graduating in 1957. He joined the Marine Corps and served for 4 years. When Bob returned, he worked the farm with his Dad. They lived on a farm near Pilot Grove, Minnesota (about 4 miles from the East Chain School.) There used to be a grocery store, church, and gas station—it was a small community—but there's nothing there anymore.

Jan was born in Fairmont to Edwin & Hazel (Colton) Larson. She attended school in Fairmont graduating in 1960. She went to college for two years and was working in Fairmont when she and a girlfriend went to a dance in 1962 at the Interlaken Ballroom.

She said a handsome man asked her to dance but she said "no" because she didn't want to leave her girlfriend alone. Later, when he asked her a second time, she said "yes". During the interview she referred to Bob as a "gentle giant".

Bob & Jan were married at First Congregational Church of Fairmont on February 2, 1963. He took over the farm from his Dad. They moved on February 2, 1974 and bought more land near Fairmont on Lake Aires Road and, again, bought more land. Over the years they sold some of the land for development of homes.

Later, Jan finished college in 1972. She continued working as a Claims Representative at the Social Security Office for 20 years.

They have three sons: Robert R. born 1963, Bradley born 1966, and David born 1969. Robert lives in Colorado while Bradley and David live near Fairmont. They have 6 grand-children.

Over the years Jan & Bob have traveled to California and Colorado. Several years they have "wintered" in Palm Springs. They have visited their son and Jan's brother.

They have been married for 58 years!! and gone to the same church all those years. Bob has served as a Deacon and Jan has taught Sunday School. During the interview, Jan and I shared several special "moments" of laughter.