

April 2022

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

Nonprofit
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Fairmont, MN 56031



First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza
Fairmont, MN 56031



WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE



*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.

APRIL 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 <i>Communion</i> 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	4	5 10:00 Lakeview Communion	6 4:00 Conf 5:30 Lenten Svc 6:00 Worship Brd 6:15 Diaconate 6:30 CE Board 7:00 Choir	7 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	8	9
10 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	11	12 7:00 Facilities Board	13 4:00 Conf 5:15 Mission Brd 6:30 CE Board 7:00 Choir	14 <i>5:30 Svc</i> <i>Maundy Thurs</i> 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	15 <i>5:30 Svc</i> <i>Good Friday</i> 9:00 Council Agenda Items Due	16
17 <i>Easter</i> 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	18	19 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	20 4:00 Confirmation 5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir	21 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	22 9:00 May Newsletter Items Due	23
24 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Blessing Box Collection	25 5:30 Parent To Parent	26	27 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Free Community Meal 7:00 Choir	28 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 MRCI HH/FS reserved 6:00 TOPS FS Rm	29	30
						

FIRST CONGO NEWS

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

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

The Reverend's Ruminations - April 2022

As I sat down to "ruminate" for this month's newsletter I took a glance back at April reflections past, and found it almost hard to believe that exactly two years ago I was discussing what a difference a month had made—a seemingly innocuous comment that might ordinarily preface an observation about spring weather changes. However, we all realize that the change was in fact the exponential worldwide and national spread of COVID-19 that had ignited massive, unprecedented changes to our world—changes that most of us never could have imagined two years ago (or even the *month* prior, back in 2020). We were about to enter uncharted territory, with "shelter in place" orders, mask mandates, and sudden, complete changes to the way we "did church," as well as so many other aspects of our lives.

Fast forward two years to this April and *most* of the major restrictions have been loosened. Church—as well as most aspects of society in a small, southern Minnesota town—have gradually returned to some semblance of what we knew as "normal." We are certainly not completely clear from the COVID pandemic, but two years have seen lots of changes and growth in the ways we're dealing with it.

One of the things that has been on many of our minds recently is the Russian invasion of their sovereign, democratic neighbor, Ukraine. The reports and the accompanying photos and videos of the sheer destruction being inflicted—much of it indiscriminately targeting innocent civilians—are almost more than many of us can bare. "Thoughts and prayers" may seem hollow, but I do hope that each of us are at least lifting them to God in an effort to bring about peace.

As I opened my copy of this year's UCC Lenten devotional, *The Long Haul*, I found myself contemplating the incredible strength and resistance of the Ukrainian people as I read from the March 23rd reflection on Numbers 13:17-18, entitled "Investigation Incomplete," by Rev. Kenneth L. Samuel, pastor of Victory for the World Church (UCC) in Stone Mountain, GA. Realizing that the submissions for this year's devotional would have been written and submitted at least a couple months prior, I was struck by the connection I saw to the situation continuing to unfold in Ukraine.

For those who did not get a copy of the devotional, here is Rev. Samuel's reflection in its entirety (as stipulated by the UCC's Pilgrim Press publishing company):

After some forty years of wandering through the Sinai desert, the Israelites finally arrived at Canaan, the land they believed God promised them. But before the Israelites took possession of their promise, they thought it prudent to investigate the land of Canaan and the people living there.

So Moses, the Israelite leader, sent spies into Canaan on an intel mission. The spies were to bring back a detailed report on the quality of the land and its produce. In addition, the spies were to bring back an assessment of the Canaanites. How did they live? Were their cities structured and fortified? Were they a strong or weak people?

But the instructions Moses gave to the spies overlooked something very critical. A true assessment of who people are cannot be fully derived by observing their numbers, or their infrastructure, or their military, or their environment.

A full assessment of any people or person must involve an understanding of their values, both personal and communal. Aside from people's everyday existence, for what causes/ideals are they willing to serve and sacrifice? And how are those causes/ideals reflected in the ethos or guiding principles of the people?

Beyond what people possess, incomplete assessments of who people are lead us into battles that we are not prepared to fight and into confrontations that could have been avoided. And beyond the knowledge of how people live, an investigation of what people live for requires much more than empirical observation from a distance. It requires honest person-to-person communication.

Perhaps what Vladimir Putin also overlooked was an assessment of the incredible heart and resolve of the Ukrainian people—the determination of whom has been on full display as they fight to defend their country. As we go about our relatively unencumbered lives, let us remember that no matter the situation or location, most of what we do as Christians is best accomplished through that same honest person-to-person communication. Thinking of inviting someone to church? Need to reconcile with a friend or family member? Have something that needs to be confessed to God? Make time to do so—honestly and, if at all possible, in person!

Yours in Christ's service, *Rev. Cory Germain*



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
FAIRMONT, MN
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 3-16-2022**

Members Present: Marilyn Forstrom, Abigail Roiger, Cathy Celander, Kay Campe, Catherine Johnson, Larry Thompson, Dave Adams, Sue Kruse, Izzy Cruz, Ellen Germain and Christina Hainy. Ex-officio members present: Pastor Cory and Dara Bliesmer, Ass't Treasurer. Visitor: Dean Grotte.

The Council met in Heritage Hall. The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Abigail Roiger. Pastor Cory led in prayer.

Larry Thompson and Dean Grotte from Facilities board informed us about an important change in the amount of stone needing to be replaced by Krause Construction. More stone is needed than was realized, and the cost is therefore higher. A motion to approve the extra funding for the stone project was M/S/C (Marilyn/Ellen).

Minutes of the February meeting were approved as printed. Motion M/S/C (Ellen/Kay).

A Zoom with Dan Hamlet about investments was tabled for the April Council meeting after technical difficulties.

Treasurer's Report: Catherine Johnson presented the treasurer's report and noted that we are in good shape financially due to the congregation's generosity. There was discussion about the assistant treasurer being able to access the bank statements electronically. A motion was M/S/C to add Dara Bliesmer, Ass't Treasurer, to the bank account (Catherine/Ellen).

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cory reported on his activities including home communion visits at Lakeview, home visits at Goldfinch and a funeral service at Lakeview Funeral Home.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Ellen Germain noted that the children are doing a play on Palm Sunday, Confirmation Sunday is being set, and they are doing the Community Meal this month.

Hospitality: Cathy Celander reported that they did not meet this month. They have signed up and are working on the advertising for the Pie Social on June 11th.

Facilities: Larry Thompson reported that they will be getting the Little Free Pantry up soon.

Diaconate: Sue Kruse shared that we were able to have a normal Communion in March.

Missions: Izzy Cruz reported that the February Blessing Box offering for One Great Hour of Sharing was \$310. The MN Food Drive is the recipient of the March Blessing Box. February's Free Community Meal was hosted by Rotary and served 105 meals.

Worship: Dave Adams informed us that 25 palms have been ordered for Palm Sunday. Planning for Easter is in process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel: Jenny Willard will return in April.

OLD BUSINESS:

COVID changes: We will not be signing in. Masking sign changes will be made by Pastor Cory to reflect case numbers.

Talent survey: Marilyn Forstrom will keep compiling these. Surveys are available in the church office, on the website, and in the newsletter.

The Future-Let's Talk: Marilyn Forstrom is working on this.

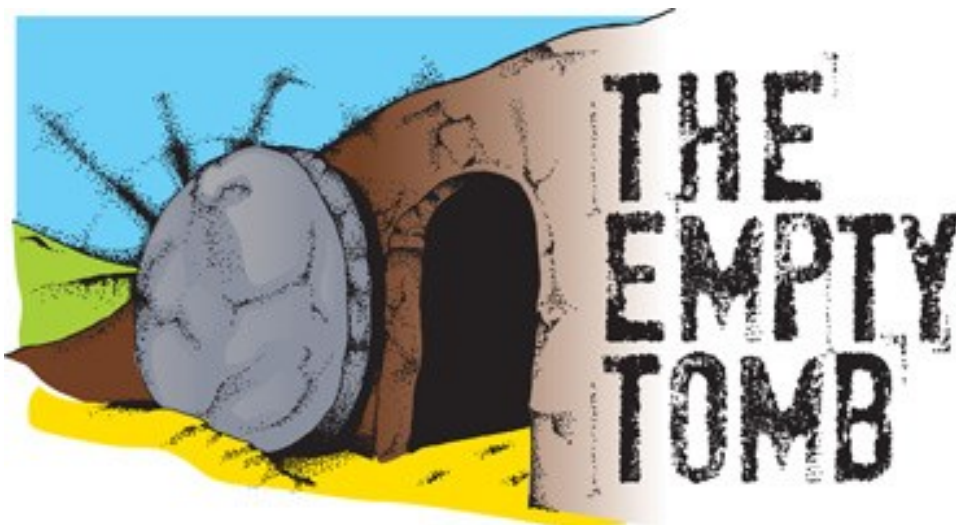
No new business.

Pastor Cory closed with a prayer, and the meeting was adjourned by Abigail Roiger.

Respectfully submitted, Christina Hainy, Clerk

Memorials

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
20-Feb	Memory of Beverly Pugh		Tim & Kay Campe
20-Feb	Memory of Tranna Urban	Capital	MaryDon Kislingbury
27-Feb	Memory of Beverly Pugh		Donna & Dean Grotte
27-Feb	Memory of Beverly Pugh		Wanda Johnson
27-Feb	Memory of Joan Adams		Wanda Johnson
27-Feb	Memory of Tranna Urban	Capital	Wanda Johnson
27-Feb	Memory of Joan Adams		David & Lisa Meschke
27-Feb	Memory of Beverly Pugh		David & Lisa Meschke
27-Feb	Robert & Janet Cone Anniversary		Margaret Weaver
6-Mar	Honor of Margo Weaver	Starfish	Byron & Becky Phillips
6-Mar	Memory of Tranna Urban	Starfish	Byron & Becky Phillips
6-Mar	Memory of Char Kost	General	Kenneth & Joy Rachuy
6-Mar	Memory of Char Kost		Pat & Randy Rowan
13-Mar	Memory of Gail Stremel	Capital	Larry & Carolyn Thompson
13-Mar	Honor of Ann Hartman	Starfish	Les Heinrich
13-Mar	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich
13-Mar	Memory of Gail Stremel	Starfish	Tim & Kay Campe



Easter Flower Ordering Easter is approaching and we would like to plant the garden . . . of lilies and tulips, etc. for the sanctuary. We will be ordering from Dee's Floral and following are the options and prices: Lilies \$18, Tulip \$16, Cyclamen \$18, Hydrangea \$40.

You can place your order by calling the church office or on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex before April 4th. If you have questions, please call Janine Draper at (507) 236-3499.



2022 Time, Talent & Faith Survey

First Congregational UCC, Fairmont, MN

Time, Talent & Faith Survey 2022

Name

Phone

Worship

- Audio-Video Camera
- Greeter
- Liturgist/Reader
- Sanctuary Decorations-Christmas, Easter, general
- Usher
- Children's Message
- Acolyte Organizer
- Acolyte
- Adult Choir
- Children's Bell Choir
- Chimes Choir
- Instrument(s) _____
- Special Music _____
- Ideas _____



Diaconate

- Bake Communion Bread
- CARE Team
- Visitor Follow-up
- Hospital/Shut-in Visitation
- Prayer Chain
- Provide Transportation
- Card Ministry



Christian Education

- Adult Sunday School Leader
- Youth Event Leader
- Adventure Group
- Sunday School Teacher
- Confirmation Assistant
- Vacation Bible School Helper
- Christmas Program
- Costume Closet Assistant
- Activity Planner
- Driver
- Mentor
- Snacks for SS and Confirmation
- VBS planner
- VBS helper
- Children's Bell Leader
- Ideas _____



Financial

- Stewardship Moment
- Fundraiser ideas
- _____
- _____
- Grant Writer
- Financial Secretary
- Ideas _____



Please check any items you are interested in. Feel free to add other talents you have that you would be willing to share with your church family. You can return this to the office, to any council or board member.


2022 Time, Talent & Faith Survey

Time, Talent & Faith Survey 2022



Name

Phone

Missions



- Food Shelf collection & delivery
- Deliver Meals on Wheels
- Mission Moment
- Kids Against Hunger Food Pack
- Sewing
- Knitting/Crocheting 
- Help with Community Meal
- Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup
- Free Little Pantry – Upkeep & fill
- Cross Stitch, Embroidery
- Relay for Life Team (American Cancer Society)
- Need more info for volunteering for Summer Hunger, Kinship, Heaven's Table, Habitat, CREST
- Ideas _____

Hospitality



- Sunday Coffee Prep 
- Kitchen Help
- Dish Washer
- Grocery Shopper
- Bake 
- Funeral Worker
- Funeral Co-ordinator(s)

- Wedding Co-ordinator
- "Deep" Cleaners
- Help with fundraiser food
- Help with Harvest Festival
- Take Recycling
- Ideas _____

Facilities

- Carpentry Work 
- Electrical Work
- Gardening
- Painting
- Raking 
- Other _____

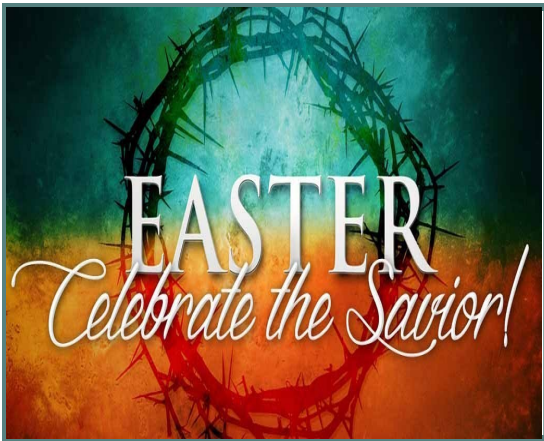
Administrative

- Office Help 
- Special mail help
- Mail Newsletter
- Computer Maintenance
- Website Maintenance
- Facebook Page Maintenance
- Email updates
- Photographer 
- Historical
- Sign Creator
- Ideas _____

Other Ideas . . .

Please check any items you are interested in. Feel free to add other talents you have that you would be willing to share with your church family. You can turn this in to the office, to any council or board member.

GRATITUDE



HyVee and Fareway Receipts Report
Report as of 20 March 2022

During the last four weeks \$11,340.3 (7.56%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were received. After 34 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$128,317.49 (85.54%) toward the 14th \$150,000 goal. There were not as many from Hy-Vee as there had been in the past, so the next \$150,000 could still be reached around the 17th of April 2022.

During the same four weeks, \$9,011.97 (6.01%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 63 weeks, Fareway is at \$86,922.87 (57.95%) toward our 4th \$150,000 goal. It will still take about a year to reach the \$150,000.

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. Thanks to all who bring/mail the slips to the Church, or mailing them or dropping them off at my house. Even the very small amounts help.

Reported by:
Jim Bock



We hope you can join us at a baby shower Open House for
Kristen and Eric

Saturday, April 16th
Anytime between 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
118 Woodland Ave

They are registered at Target

Bring A Book!!

Just one last request that wont be too hard,
please bring a book instead of a card.
Whether a book that is old, or a book that is new,
please sign the inside cover with a note from you.



Thank you
Bible Study
Ladies for
folding and
sealing the
March
Newsletters!



Prayers, love and support that were shared with me during the time my sister, Gail, was ill, had surgery and then died were most helpful and appreciated. She knew that our prayer warriors were busy, and was as thankful as I am. Blessings to each of you with heartfelt love and affection,
Jane Kotewa.



Church family,
Thank you all for the cards, messages, and continued prayers! I am recovering well from my lung surgery. I am back at school and feeling good!

Thanks,
Paige Hainy



"DO YOU COUNT SHEEP TO GET TO SLEEP, GRAMPA?"

"NOPE... I TALK TO THE SHEPHERD."

Christian Education News

Follow CE on Facebook- First Congregational UCC Sunday School



Palm Sunday: The Sunday School will present a short play as part of the opening of the service. Please bring children at 9:15 to the Sunday School area for practice.

Sunday School meets at 9:15 in the Sunday School area on the upper level of the church.



Summer Camp: Our church will pay up to \$100 per child/youth member to attend any faith based camp they chose. Early registration for many camps opens in March. Some of our children are planning to attend camps at the Lakeshore Center at Okoboji or at Ingham Lake Bible Camp. Information went home with the Sunday School and Confirmation students. Contact Catherine Johnson at 507-236-1457 to arrange for the scholarship.

UCC Faith Retreats for Youth and Adults: The Minnesota Conference Outdoor Ministries team is offering a wide variety of retreats this spring, summer and fall. See the flyer on the church website, under "Youth Activities," for something that you would enjoy.

Community Meal: *Thanks to the Confirmation Students and their families for serving the March Community Meal*

Mission Minute

Blessing Box offering for April is Relay for Life. The Martin County event this year is at 4:00pm on Saturday, June 25, 2022 at the fairgrounds.

"The Relay For Life movement is dedicated to helping communities attack cancer. Through funds donated, time given, or awareness raised, our communities are teaming up - virtually or in person - to make a difference. When we rally together in the fight against cancer, we can accomplish anything. "

-Relay for Life American Cancer Society



Little Free Pantry: it's up and running! Please let people know about it. Use what you need and give what you can. We are currently avoiding things that will be affected by freezing until the overnight temperatures are consistently staying above freezing.

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!**

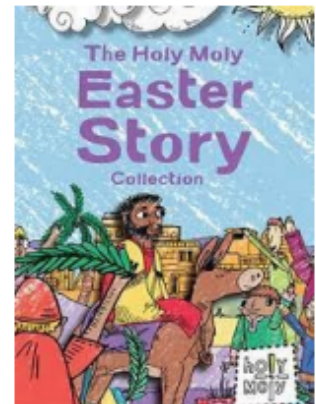


Now that we are at least two-thirds of the way through the season of Lent, Holy Week and the Easter are beginning to come into focus. Have you ever wished you could travel to Jerusalem to see some of the sights associated with the final days leading to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection? Prepare to be immersed in some of the actual locations Jesus visited—sites that hold deep significance to Christians—as Francis Chan visits modern-day Jerusalem to teach about **Good Friday and Easter**. Here is a brief description of his two informative episodes:

In these sessions taken from his larger study on The Gospel of Mark, Chan teaches on Jesus's death and resurrection and challenges us to consider how to live our lives in light of his sacrifice and victory over death.

How familiar are your kids or grandkids with what makes Holy Week so special? How about you? Maybe we could all use a refresher on the events that make this final lead-up to Easter such an incredibly meaningful time for Christians throughout the world! Take a few minutes with your family *before* Holy Week (April 10-16) to watch the four short, uniquely-animated episodes of **The Holy Moly Easter Story Collection**, highlighting the major events of Jesus' passion and resurrection:

Each episode helps kids explore more of the amazing story of Jesus' death and resurrection. In addition to "Jesus Enters Jerusalem" and "The Last Supper" this volume includes episodes covering "Jesus and the Cross" and "The Empty Tomb." The imaginative visuals and humorous sound effects give kids the opportunity to retell the story in their own words and bring the Bible to life like never before.



*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*

INTERVIEW WITH RANDY & SUE KRUSE

by Lee Hanning

Randy Kruse was born in Mankato, Minnesota. Before he was 8 or 9 years old his family had to move because of the terrible flood. They moved to Worthington. Then they moved to the "Cities" for a while. His parents divorced.

Then his Mom and Stepdad moved the family to Wichita, Kansas where his Stepdad was a printer for Hallmark.

In 1974 Randy moved to Fairmont and then graduated from Fairmont High School in 1978. The very next day Randy went to work at Tiger Warehouse (owned by the Gunther boys) and Gunther's Main Store for about 15 years. After that, he worked part-time at the Chateau Restaurant as well as Gunther's Laundromat.

In 1985 Randy worked at Pizza Hut, Bean Town, and the Salvation Army where he was manager of the game room and supervisor of the teenagers.

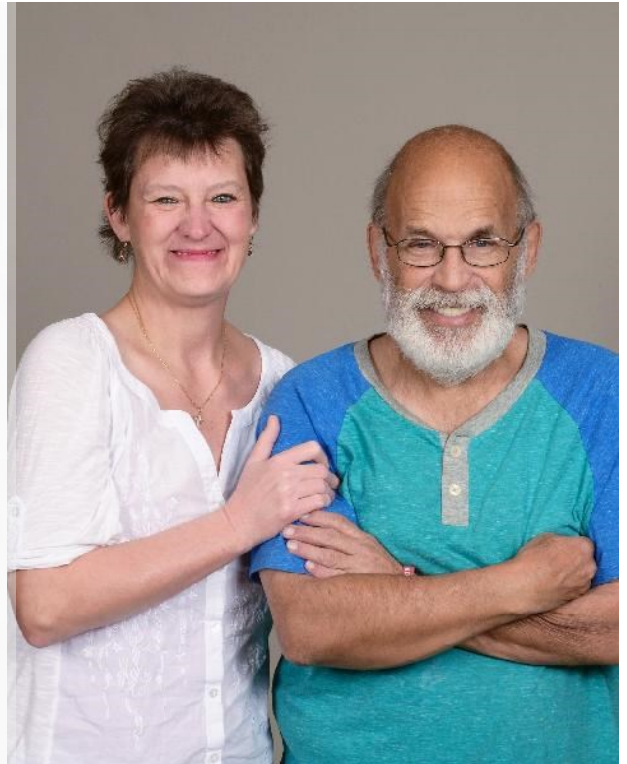
He worked at Walmart and then REM Heartland. He plans to go back to work after his recovery.

Randy met Sue in 1993 at a friend's house and they started dating...read on for more news about the couple.

Sue (Bork) Kruse was born in Fairmont, Minnesota. She was only three weeks old when her father died so they moved to live with her Grandma Gladys Blatti (Blatti's Laundry).

Her family often traveled to Colorado to visit her Mom's sister Jean. Sue is happy that her middle name is "Jean".

Sue graduated from Fairmont High School in 1990 and went to Jackson Vo-Tech for Nursing Aide for about a year. She worked at the Lutz Wing in Fairmont as a Certified Nurse's Aide and also at Truman Lutheran. She moved on and became a Home Health Nurse--now about 20 years. Sue joined our church while Rev. Lyle Norris was here. (Randy joined our church later.)



Randy & Sue met at a friend's house in 1993 and they started dating. She was really happy when he asked her to marry him. They were married in our church 2015 by Rev. Scott Wachholz--the brother of Sue's best friend Jody Wacholz. They are like a family to her since she has lost all of her immediate family to heart attacks over the years.

Sue enjoys helping at church in many different ways. She is on the Church Council and has served on many, many committees.

We are blessed to have these two people in our church. They are cheerful and make us feel "welcome".

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Easter Morning Popovers!



Calling all recipes! Send your favorite recipes in to the church office.

POPOVERS

- 2 eggs
- 1 c. flour
- 1 c. milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt

Heat oven to 450. Generously grease 6 cup popover cups with shortening. Heat popover pan in oven 5 minutes.

Beat eggs slightly with whisk. Beat in remaining ingredients just until smooth. Bake 20 minutes. Reduce oven temp to 325. Bake 10 to 15 minutes longer until deep golden brown. Remove from cups immediately.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC—FAIRMONT, MN

Anniversaries

April 5	Curt & Vicki Bicknase	25 yrs
April 12	Amanda & Ryan Cain	14 yrs
April 16	Kirk & Gina Jorgensen	17 yrs
April 20	Jacob & Abbey Shoen	9 yrs
April 20	Eugene & Polly Mosloski	18 yrs
April 27	Tim & Kay Campe	37 yrs
April 30	Jim & Barb Bock	56 yrs



Birthdays

April 4	Caleb Rachuy
April 5	Vonnie Cone
	Bill Cowing
	Dan Wenz
April 6	James Marushin
	Jan White
	Dave Meschke
April 7	Dan Thate
April 8	Khloe Zabel
April 10	Marcia Musser
April 12	Doug Guritz
	Will Hawkins
April 13	Joyce Knudson

April 15	Randy Rowan
	Chris Draper
April 16	Lyle Norris
	K.T. Magnussen
April 18	Terry Riggs
April 21	Cameron Hainy
	Arianna Moller Smith
	Jerry Norman
April 22	Donna Grotte
	Rachael Tonneson
April 26	Lorin Pollock
	Ken Schwieger
April 28	Nola Thedens
	Michael Neusch