

# November 2023

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  
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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](mailto:uccsecretary319@gmail.com)

**Web Site Address**

[www.fairmontucc.org](http://www.fairmontucc.org)

Rev. Cory Germain  
Minister

Christina Hainy  
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.

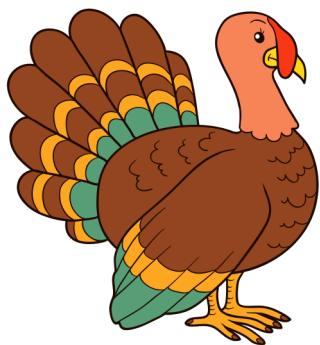
Rev. Cory's phone: 507-399-8282

**Worship Hours**

Worship 10:00

Sunday school 10:00

Communion the first Sunday of  
every month.



# NOVEMBER 2023

**Sun                      Mon                      Tue                      Wed                      Thu                      Fri                      Sat**

			<b>1 All Saints Days</b> 4:00 Confirmation 6:00 Worship Board 7:00 Choir	2 11:30-2 MRCI (HH/FS) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	3	4
<b>5 Daylight Sav- ings Time ends</b> 10:00 Worship/ Sunday School Communion <i>*Packing boxes for            Operation Christmas            Child during Sun. Sch.</i>	6	7 10:00 Lakeview Communion	8 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Diaconate Board 5:30 Mission Board 5:45 CE Board 7:00 Choir	9 11:30-2 MRCI (HH/FS) 1:00 TOPS (Ch) 5:15 Hospitality Board	10 9:00 Council agenda items due	<b>11 Veterans Day</b>
12 10:00 Worship/ Sunday School Stewardship Pledge <i>Ingathering</i>	13	14 7:00 Facility Board	15 4:00 Confirmation 5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir  <i>*budget proposals            due to Catherine</i>	16 11:30-2 MRCI (HH/FS) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	17 9:00 Items for the December/January newsletter due  5:00 Fairmont Glows Soup Supper	18
19 10:00 Worship/ Sunday School  11:00-noon practice Christmas play	20	21 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	22 4:00 NO Confirm 7:00 Choir	<b>23 Thanksgiving Day</b> <b>Office closed</b>  	<b>Office closed</b>	25
26 10:00 Worship/ Sunday School <i>Blessing Box collec-            tion</i>  11:00-noon practice Christmas play	27 5:30 Pizza/ 6:00 Budget meeting (HH)	28 10:00 Newsletter assembly	29 4:00 Confirmation 5:30 Free Community Meal 7:00 Choir	30 9:30 Bible Study 11:30-2 MRCI (HH/FS) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)		

## *The Reverend's Ruminations - November 2023*

As I look ahead at my calendar, there are still nine more weeks left in the year. But in the church's liturgical year we are rapidly approaching a new season. Yes, the entire month of November is still the Season after Pentecost (often called Ordinary Time), but by December 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be into the season of Advent with its anticipation of Christmas. It may seem I'm jumping the gun, but I'm sure you, too, saw a few Christmas trees and decorations beginning to occupy aisles near the Halloween costumes by mid-October, just as the autumn leaves were just reaching peak colors!?! I must admit, our warm late-October did recently give me pause to think of putting up some Christmas decorations—but that's only in a quintessentially-Minnesotan nod to "getting them up before it's too cold or snowy to work out there."

As usual, there is plenty more I should be doing outside before the snow flies, so let's not rush that part of winter just yet. As I recall, November also has at least one big holiday that many of us are "thankful" for—not to mention local elections, Veteran's Day, and a little-known holiday known as Ellen and my **25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary** on the 21<sup>st</sup>. It's hard for us to believe we've been married that long, but for some in this congregation a quarter century together is just a drop in the bucket. Thank you for the inspiration!

In our wide-ranging Old Testament journey exploring the ancestors of our faith, November will include passages from the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ezekiel. One of the most familiar verses we'll encounter from Joshua is an affirmation that you may well have displayed somewhere around your home—although likely only the final dozen words: "*Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; **but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord***" (Joshua 24:15, NRSV). Have you contemplated Joshua's impact on your life?

In this month of thanks-giving, I challenge you to take a moment and think back on the examples of faith that you saw modelled in your household by parents, grandparents, or other family members. Though some in the congregation may have come to faith later, or by other means, it is likely that most of us grew up in a household that instilled the importance of prayer, church attendance, and faithfulness you have today. Please pause—on Thanksgiving or sometime this month, whether in person or in prayer—to thank those most influential in your Christian development!

After a bit of a hiatus, I'm happy to announce that our **Adult Sunday School** is getting a reboot in a new time slot—and with the addition of a light meal! A survey of past participants and those interested in joining indicated a preference to meet immediately following the worship service once or twice a month. So... on **Sunday, November 12** we will start a 7-part video-based series from **rightnow MEDIA** entitled "For the Life of the World." Please join us for some lively discussion, a warm bowl of soup, and maybe a few extra treats too! The schedule of subsequent sessions will be determined with those in attendance, so stay tuned to the bulletin or Facebook page for information about our next gathering.

With a new year inevitably around the corner, I also ask that you prayerfully consider how you might serve a more active role at First Congregational United Church of Christ. We are actively seeking board and council members for a new term, and I encourage each of you to take your turn in these valuable ministries of the local church. None of the board positions takes more than a few hours a month, and are a great way to get acquainted with other members of our congregation. Of course, there are also opportunities for short-term help in the way of kitchen workers, singers, Christmas decorators, ushers, greeters, or scripture readers as well. Volunteers, no matter the duration of the task, help make the many ministries of First Congregational UCC possible.

As November wears on and *snow* inevitably makes its way into our vocabulary, I hope you and yours remain warm, healthy, and safe!

Yours in Christ,  
*Rev. Cory Germain*



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC  
FAIRMONT, MN  
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 10-18-2023**

**Members Present:** Abigail Anderson, Catherine Johnson, Sue Kruse, Amanda Forstrom, Wendy Ziemer, Kay Campe, Marilyn Forstrom, Larry Lasch, Cindy Huset, and Christina Hainy. Ex-officio members present: Pastor Cory, Dara Bliesmer, Ass't Treasurer. Absent: Joanne Eisenbarger, Erica Jorgensen.

The Council met in Heritage Hall at 5:45 PM. The meeting was called to order by Moderator Abigail Anderson. Pastor Cory led in prayer. Motion to approve the minutes from the September 20 meeting was M/S/C (Catherine/Amanda).

**Treasurer's Report:** Catherine reported that we are at 59.40% of pledged giving received at the end of September. Boards should be thoughtful about spending. Budgets should be returned to her right after the November boards meetings. Ask Catherine if you have any questions. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was M/S/C (Amanda/ Larry).

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Cory reported that visitations have been up, and he was able to go up to Mankato for a visit as well.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

**Christian Education:** Wendy reminded us that the Operation Christmas Child packing will be on Nov. 5. The upcoming Christmas program will have a Wizard of Oz theme.

**Hospitality:** Abigail reported that Erica said they are looking for a time to meet this month.

**Facilities:** Larry said that they worked on the proposed budget at their meeting. Snow removal will not be done on the NE entry steps this winter. The entry will be closed starting Nov. 15 or at the first snowfall.

**Diaconate:** Sue reported that they are serving the free community meal for the month and are working on visitations.

**Mission:** Amanda said the Fall highway cleanup was able to get mostly done.

**Worship:** Cindy said they talked about the Soup Group and the Glows parade. They also are discussing having an organ concert for a fundraiser.

**Carpet Committee Report:** Carpet has been ordered. It is on backorder and the order will be in about Dec. 11. It may be January when the carpet is in the church.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Kay will be contacting applicant for Financial Secretary.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Glows Parade:** soup will be \$8/cup with 12 and under \$5 and takeout is available.

**Budget proposals** need to be submitted by Nov. 15.

**Stewardship Campaign:** Ingathering will be Sun, Nov. 12.

**Budget process:** The budget meeting will be on Monday, November 27 in Heritage Hall. 5:30 PM for pizza and 6:00 for the meeting.

**Election Sunday** will be Dec 10.

**Board reports for the annual meeting packet** to Christina by Fri, Dec 22.

A motion to set the **annual meeting** for Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> was M/S/C (Catherine/Kay).

Moderator Abigail Anderson adjourned the meeting, and Pastor Cory closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Christina Hainy, Clerk

# MEMORIALS

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
24-Sep	Honor of MaryDon Kislingbury		Linda Blair Masters
24-Sep	Memory of Carl Bosshart		Lyle & Charlene Norris
1-Oct	Honor of MaryDon Kislingbury		John & Sherry Larson
1-Oct	Honor of MaryDon Kislingbury		Donations
8-Oct	Dean Grotte Birthday		Margaret Weaver
8-Oct	Ginny Riedesel Birthday		Marilyn Forstrom
15-Oct	Memory of MaryDon Kislingbury	Starfish	Tim & Kay Campe
15-Oct	Jordan Lamoureaux Birthday		Douglas & Kristine Fuller
15-Oct	Memory of MaryDon Kislingbury	Starfish	Jane Kotewa
15-Oct	Memory of Carl Bosshart		Jane Kotewa
15-Oct	Memory of Gin Mevissen	General	Les Heinrich
15-Oct	Memory of Julie Kasten	Starfish	Les Heinrich
15-Oct	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich

Our deepest sympathy and prayers to:

-the family of Mary Don Kislingbury.

-Les Heinrich on the passing of his daughter, Julie Kasten.

In this season of remembrance and thanksgiving, our congregation is grateful for the monetary gift from Kathleen Simpson earlier this year. The gift was from the estate of Don and Dorothy Simpson. Don and Dorothy were long time active members of our church. Don passed away in 2010 and Dorothy in 2020. We are blessed that Kathleen and her parents' legacy has included support for this church's ongoing ministries.



## Hy-Vee & Fareway Report as of 22 October 2023

During the last four weeks, \$11,698.08 (5.98%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were received. After 43 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$173,907.26 (86.95%) toward the 16<sup>th</sup> goal which is now \$200,000.

During the same time, \$3,545.15 (2.36%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 25 weeks, Fareway is at \$32,563.05 (21.71%) toward our 5<sup>th</sup> \$150,000 goal.

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 Fast & Fresh (Gas), Coffee Shop, Food Service, and Pharmacy help us toward the goal. Delivery slips/sheets can also be used. Thanks to all who bring/mail the slips to the Church, or mailing them or dropping them off at my house

Reported by;  
Jim Bock

**Altar Flower Signup:** If there is a Sunday that has a special meaning to you and you would like to provide the flowers, please sign up on the calendar by the coat closet. Write your name and who the flowers are in memory/honor of. Please know that we appreciate you sharing your special memories/days with us! Contact Janine Draper with questions at (507) 236-3499.

# Celebrate Generosity – Nov 12

We need to thank our Church Family for giving so **generously** of their time, talents and treasures. **Sometimes** it doesn't seem like we're doing enough to make a **difference** in the world or that our gifts aren't that great, but **when we put them all together**, when we work together, **we accomplish great things in God's name**. The ministries of this Church would not be possible without **every one of you**. Your generosity matters!



Join us in a **Celebration of Generosity** and the great things we have accomplished...



Join us in celebrating the opportunity to **continue** to do great things...

Join us in **thanking** each other for being part of this generous, loving family.

**Sunday, November 12**, during the worship service, we will celebrate together our wonderful Family and will receive the **promises of support for our continued mission** as followers of Jesus Christ.

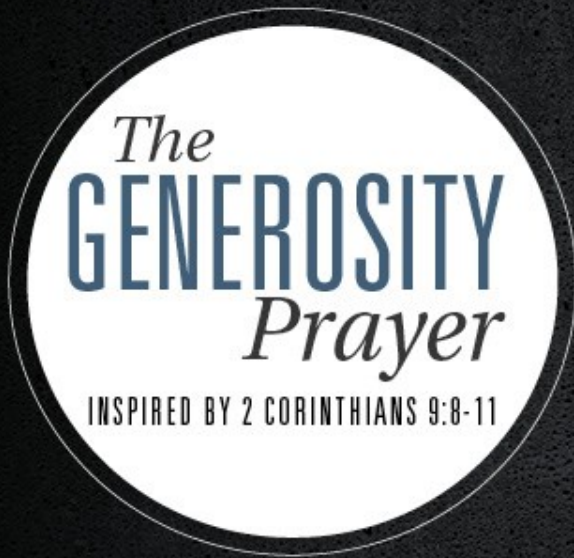
Members, be watching your mail for a letter **thanking you** for your generosity and asking you for your pledge of support for 2024. We ask that as you pray **the Generosity Prayer**, you consider your pledge, you **thank God** for all the many blessings you have received, and you look for ways to continue to **express your generosity** to others. Generosity requires that we **open our hearts** to the world and each other. We don't need to have material wealth to be generous. The only requirement is a **willingness to open our hearts**, to see life as it is, and to interact with others from a place of **compassion** and **love**.



It's not about the amount you have, it's about **the joy of giving**.



Please join us Sunday, November 12 ... **Celebrate Generosity!!!**



THANK YOU,  
LORD,  
*for blessing me*

in all ways, at all times, with more than I need.

**LEAD** to live generously,  
**ME** share joyfully,  
and look expectantly  
toward my future.

***What do we have to celebrate?*** Sunday Worship, ***Beautiful Music***, Bible Study, Adventure Trip, Sunday School, ***Bible School***, Confirmation, Summer Camps, Right Now Media, A Safe Building to meet in and serve others in, ***Family Gatherings***, Ushers, Meals, ***Clean Ditches***, Easter Egg Hunt, Beautiful Flowers, Christmas Programs, Forgiveness, Kids Against Hunger Food Pack, ***Readers***, Church World Services, Faith, Operation Christmas Child, IHD Activities, ***Shared Ministry***, Glows Activities, Visits and Communion for Shut-Ins and Homebound, Heifer Project International, Family, ***Broadcasts of our Services*** via Cable TV, Facebook, Website, ***Free Community Meals***, Working Together, Starfish Ministry, ***Free Little Pantry***, Faith, Beautiful Building, Food Drive, Habitat for Humanity, Delivery of Hot Meals on Wheels, Communion, Pastoral Counseling, Funeral Services, ***Welcoming New Faces***, Weddings, CREST support, Relay for Life, ***Beautiful Grounds***, Acceptance, Community, Greetings, ***Concerns for Others***, Accessibility, Newsletters, ***Card Ministry***, Encouragement, Ride Assistance, Coffee Time, Contemporary Sundays, Prayer Chain, ***Smiles***, ***Singing in the Choir***, Playing Chimes . . . just to name a few.

***What do you celebrate?***

## Christian Education News:

This fall our weekly Sunday School lessons are following the Old Testament lessons that are used in our service. Our sessions start with a large group opening. Then, we divide into an older and younger group to explore the lessons and close with a full group activity and prayer.

Thank you to everyone who has donated items for the Operation Christmas Child boxes. The Sunday School goal is to pack 50 boxes this year. Packing will be during Sunday School on Nov. 5.

The Sunday School Christmas program will be on Dec. 17th. Practice will be right after Sunday School until noon on Nov. 19th, Nov. 26th, Dec. 3rd (during Sunday School but Cookies & Craft advent festival is after Sunday School until noon), & Dec. 10th.



### Advent Festival- "Cookies and Crafts"

On Dec. 3rd, after worship, there will be an Advent Festival with cookie decorating, a craft and games. A light brunch will be served. ALL are welcome!

## Mission Minute:

Thank you to those who helped with highway cleanup. We had a nice sunny afternoon for a comfortable experience.

Blessings Box: Church World Service (Blanket Sunday)

November Free Community Meal: Mission board. We will be serving: turkey commercial, veggies, pumpkin bar and beverages.

A BIG THANK YOU to Kathy Jorgensen, Margo Weaver and Catherine Johnson for assembling the October newsletter!

THANKS to Dolores Gronewald and Margo Weaver for staffing the church office as well!





## CHRISTMAS IS COMING!!



Poinsettia orders are due by November 13th. We will be ordering through Hy-Vee. Cost is \$12 for a 6" plant and \$25 for an 8" plant. If you would like to help make our sanctuary fit for a King, please call the church office (507-235-5382) with your order or sign up in the narthex. Thank you so much in advance!

### Worship Board

**REPORT TIME!!!!!!** Please start working on your board's annual report. Reports should be submitted to the church office **by December 22 or earlier** if possible. (Financial reports can be submitted the first week in January.) Thank you!!

## ATTENTION SNOWBIRDS:

Please, notify the office of dates you'll be gone & your southern address for the winter if you haven't already. Thank you!!



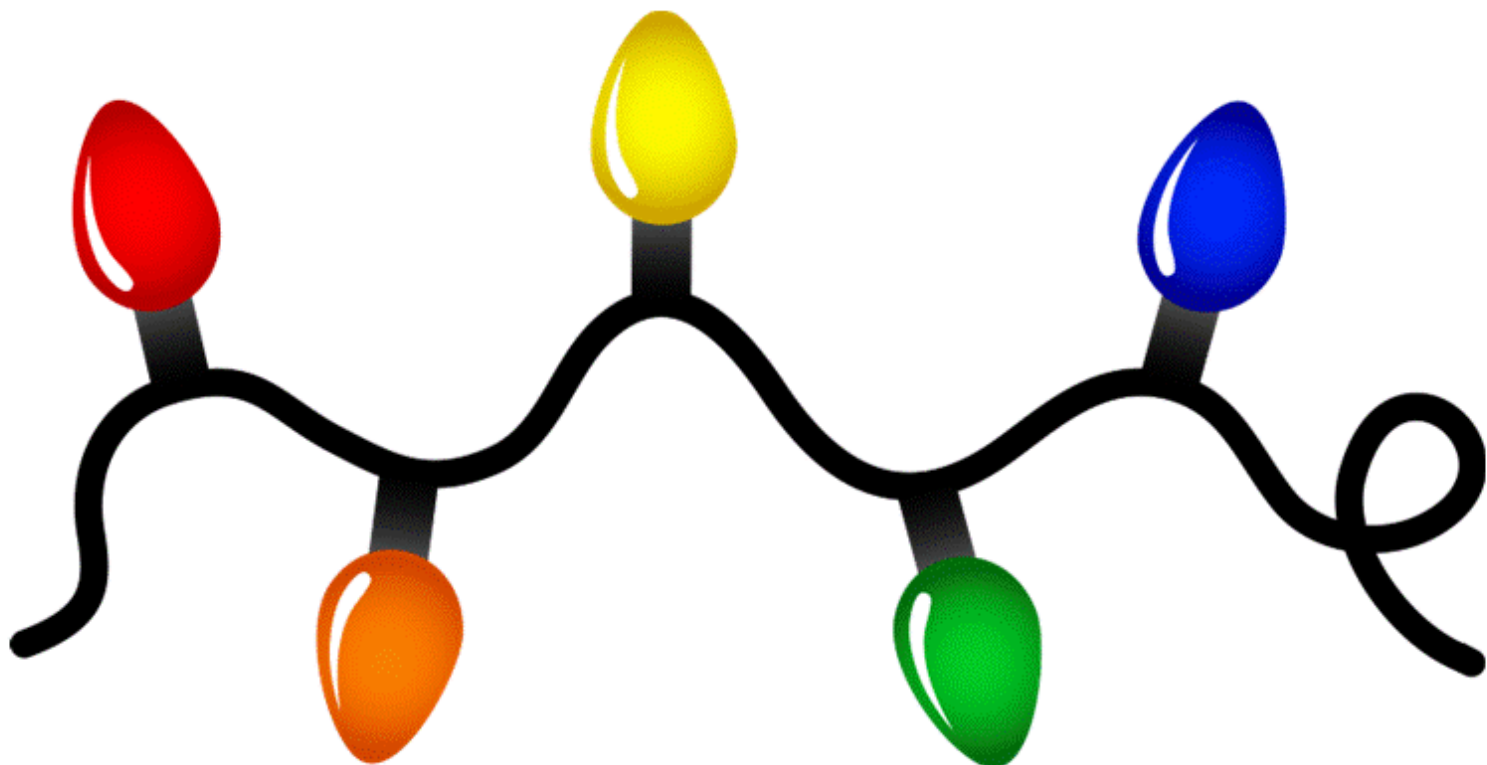
**The NE entry to the church will be closed starting on November 15th or earlier if it snows.**



**Looking for:**



**Someone to provide snow removal for First Congregational! This is a paid position! We have the snow removal equipment to use. Just looking for the labor! We will not be cleaning the NE entry steps this year. Please, contact Dean Grotte (507-236-0216) or Larry Lasch (507-432-8121) if you are interested.**



# **Fairmont Glows Soup Supper**

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC**

**319 DOWNTOWN PLAZA**

**Friday, November 17**

**Serving 5 PM until parade &  
after parade until the food is gone**



**SERVING: 3 Soups— Ham & Wild Rice, Vegetable  
Beef & Chicken Noodle, fresh baked  
rolls, milk, coffee & water**

**COST: \$8/cup. \$5 for 12 & under.**

**TAKEOUT AVAILABLE!**

**FREE Popcorn & Hot Apple Cider outside!**

**Come for the soup. Stay for the parade!**

*Provided by the SOUP GROUP*



# **Free Community Meal**

**on**

**Wednesday, November 29**

*Serving at 5:30 PM until food is gone*

**First Congregational UCC**

**319 Downtown Plaza**

Menu:

Turkey Commercial

Veggies

Pumpkin Bar

Beverages

**ALL are Welcome!**

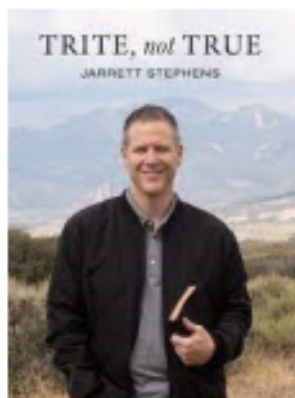
**Served by the UCC Mission Board**

# rightnow MEDIA

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

Our culture is full of opinions masquerading as wisdom. What's worse, much of what passes as wisdom today has the ring of biblical truth. How can we tell the difference, and sort through the half-truths and self-help trends to access the deep wisdom of God's Word?

Those are the questions Jarrett Stephens tackles in this series—***Trite, Not True***—where he explores seven of the most common pop philosophies that influence people's lives today, including Christians. Ultimately, the life of meaning and impact you long for doesn't come from a philosophy, platitude, maxim, or mantra...but from one person, Jesus Christ.



**We've all heard these statements. At one time or another in a noble attempt to encourage someone else or coach ourselves up in the midst of a challenge or difficult situation, we say what's easy. At the time, it sounds good to say and feels even better to hear, but is what we are communicating even true? Is it even biblical? This is important because shallow statements won't lead to deep living, and false belief can lead to a false hope. This series looks at some cultural beliefs and trite statements inside Christianity that sound good, wise and helpful, but in the end might not be true biblically, and if not dealt with in an honest way could discourage people, disrupt their faith, and lead them further away from a true relationship with God.**

As the weather turns colder and your kids or grandkids start to beg for a bit of screentime after school or supper, I of course encourage you to help them find creative outlets that keep their imaginations active. But we all know that there are moments when they (and you) can also benefit from wholesome, fun shows that inspire them without the fear of commercials and online ads. ***Whirl*** — published by *Sparkhouse Family Media*, the creators of our Sunday School curriculum — offers hundreds of short, animated stories that will keep the kiddos interested and inspired for positive growth. There are 7 volumes of 20, 4-minute videos available. The description of the series is short, but gets to the heart of what they offer for kids 3 & up:

**Ada & Friends introduce kids to a group of friends who help each other navigate real-life problems and adventures using biblical values.**

## Whirl



\*Still need your own **FREE rightnow** MEDIA account, or want to share this great resource with a friend?

There are 3 convenient ways: Go to <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/FCONG>

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



Once logged in to your **FREE** account, 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 grows 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

This is one of the soups that will be served at our Fairmont Glows Soup Supper on Friday, November 17th. Eat some soup and watch the Glows parade!

## **Wild Rice Soup** from Mary Ellen Mackey

1 C. wild rice

1 medium onion

½ C. diced ham or 7 slices of bacon

2 cans cream of potato soup

1 qt. milk

¾ lb. Velveeta cheese

Cook wild rice in 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 30 minutes. Dice and sauté onion. Fry bacon and cut into small pieces. Place in crockpot and add soup, milk, and cheese. Simmer for 2 to 4 hours.



# November Birthdays:

Nov 5	Jessica Bicknase Rose Barnes
Nov 8	Tom Jorgensen
Nov 9	Joy Pollock Chelsea Celander
Nov 10	Conrad Zoeller
Nov 11	Bob Cone
Nov 13	Dalton Massey
Nov 14	Hillary Forstrom Harrison
Nov 15	Andi Wegner
Nov 16	Steve Draper
Nov 17	Tyler Grefe
Nov 20	Vince Vaughn
Nov 20	Reid Cain
Nov 23	Wanda Anderson Lee Hanning Reid Rosen
Nov 25	Erica Jorgensen
Nov 26	Kate Hawkins
Nov 27	Jodie Whitmore
Nov 28	Douglas Fuller
Nov 29	Ryan Meyer Jeff Skog
Nov 30	Jenny Willard Savannah Goerndt Scottie Celander



# November Anniversaries:

Nov 3	David & Lisa Meschke	16 years
Nov 18	Gene & Barb Pitcher	45 years
Nov 19	Jamis & Emma Hueper	1 year
Nov 21	Pastor Cory & Ellen Germain	25 years
Nov 23	Bill & Pat Cowing	67 years
Nov 29	Byron & Becky Phillips	54 years
Nov 29	Bill & Barb Bittman	48 years

**If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or is incorrect, please notify the church office.**