

November 2024

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

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First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza
Fairmont, MN 56031



WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE



*First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Fairmont, Minnesota*

Rev. Cory Germain
Minister

Christina Hainy
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

fairmontucc.org

Rev. Cory Germain

Office Hours:

Monday 9:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

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.

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

Worship Hours




Worship 10:00

Sunday school 11:00

Communion the second

Sunday of every month.

November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 All Saints Day	2
3 Daylight Savings Time ends All Saints Sunday 10:00 Worship 11:00 Sunday school 12:00 CE Fun Day 2:00 Cookie baking	4	5 10:00 Lakeview Communion	6 5:30 Mission Board 6:00 Worship Board 6:00 Cookie baking 7:00 Choir	7 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	8	9
10 10:00 Worship <i>Communion</i> 11:00 Sunday school	11  2:00 Pastor Cory speaks at FHS	12 7:00 Facilities Board	13 5:30 Diaconate Board 5:45 CE Board 7:00 Choir	14 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch) 5:30 Hospitality Board	15 *9:00 Dec/Jan newsletter items due NE entry closed	16
17 Church Family Reunion 10:00 Worship (Sunday school/play practice during worship) 11:00 Stewardship Ingathering & Potluck 2:00 Cookie baking	18 *9:00 Council agenda items due	19 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	20 5:30 Free Community Meal 5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir	21 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 12:00 K/HH reserved for Glows setup 1:00 TOPS (Ch) *Board budget proposals due	22 8:00 K/HH reserved for Glows setup 5:15 Glows Parade Soup Supper Fundraiser	23
24 10:00 Worship <i>Blessing Box collection</i> 11:00 Sunday school/play practice	25 5:30 Food for Budget meeting (HH) 6:00 Budget meeting (HH)	26 11:00 Dec/Jan newsletter assembly	27 7:00 Choir	28 Church office closed 	29 Church office closed	30

The Reverend's Ruminations - November 2024

As I sit down to “ruminate” on yet another unseasonably warm late-October day amid crystal-blue skies and with many colorful leaves still filling area trees, it doesn't seem possible that I'm writing for the November newsletter. I'm still wearing a short-sleeved shirt and sandals when I'd ordinarily be wearing at least a flannel shirt and starting the day with a vest or jacket!?! Unfortunately, we can be certain that the “other boot” will drop soon enough, and it really will be a rude adjustment after such an incredible month. Though they may seem early amid such a mild autumn, we do already have a sign-up list out for the Christmas poinsettias that will grace our sanctuary with their beautiful winter colors in a little over a month. **If you intend to purchase one in honor or memory of a loved one, please note that the sign-up deadline is November 10. See the sheet on the narthex table or contact Marilyn Forstrom or the church office.**

November is filled with several special events, not the least of which is of course Thanksgiving. Turkey day falls late in the month this year, so please note by the included church calendar that it will push both the Free Community Meal and our monthly Bible study a week earlier than normal. If eating is your favorite part of Thanksgiving, then you're in luck this month! We'll be having a “Family Reunion” Stewardship Ingathering & Potluck after church on the 17th, the Free Community Meal on the 20th, and a soup supper fundraiser before/during Fairmont's annual Glows Parade on the evening of the 22nd. Those involved in the annual budget process will also have a light meal at their meeting on the 25th!

As if you could have missed it, there is also a big event on November 5th known as Election Day. It is a civic duty that some would have you believe is of such grave importance that our nation may somehow cease to exist if one or another candidate or party is elected. Are free and fair elections essential to the existence of our country? Absolutely, so please get out and VOTE. Now, could some policies undergo changes that you and a neighbor or family member might disagree on? Very likely. But will either party destroy what makes America a beacon of freedom, peace, and prosperity to the rest of the world? NO.

Two years ago in this very space I included a quote from Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ from 2015-2023. Sadly, similar anxieties are still being experienced by many during this election cycle, so I invite you to ruminate on his sage words again:

“We are a people divided, a country split on too many issues to name. And many are the powers that thrive on keeping us divided, pitting one person or group against another.

But you are different. You are part of the United Church of Christ. You are about loving God and neighbor. You are about building bigger tables. You are about giving everyone a voice. You are about uniting across our divisions to join with the Holy Spirit in working toward a just world for all.

You are about upholding the democratic principles of social equity and the equal power of each person made in God's image...

...Together we are stronger than the divisions. Together our churches are stronger in witness to Christ's love for all people. Together we offer extravagant welcome and radical hospitality to a world seeking lives of deeper meaning and greater value.”

It bears repeating also that as Christians — and United Church of Christ members in particular — we are called to a deeper understanding of world events, institutional policies, community struggles, and individual relationships. Rather than allow ourselves to be pulled into the chasms of fear, hate, or division so prominent in our country (and accentuated by scheming election ads), we are called to rise above the politicism of seemingly every detail of public life. We are called instead to model Christ's grace, love, and care for those around us.

In a much less contested “election” of sorts, we will soon be looking for new board and council members to serve our congregation. Would you prayerfully consider how you might serve a more active role at First Congregational United Church of Christ? None of these positions take more than a few hours a month, and are a great way to get acquainted with other members of our church family. Of course, there are 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 and varied ministries of First Congregational UCC possible.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Cory Germain



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
FAIRMONT, MN
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 10-16-2024**

Members Present: Kay Campe, Abigail Anderson, Catherine Johnson, Abby Schoen, Jane Kotewa, Sherry Larson, Larry Lasch, Marcia Musser, and Cindy Huset. **Members Absent:** Christina Hainy, and Sue Kruse. **Ex-officio members:** Pastor Cory and Dara Bliesmer, Asst Treasurer.

The Council met in Heritage Hall at 5:45 PM. Moderator Kay Campe called the meeting to order, and Pastor Cory led prayer. We celebrated generosity in the church with the Stewardship campaign “Family Reunion” theme, choir, and those stepping up to lead our upcoming fundraisers.

Motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on Sept 18, 2024, was M/S/C. (Abigail Anderson/Marcia Musser)

Treasurer’s Report Catherine Johnson submitted a report stating we will start including, once a month in the bulletin, the past months Giving Report. At the end of September, we received 66% of pledged giving. Each Board/Committee/Office needs to submit their projected budget by November 21st. A motion to receive the treasurer’s report was M/S/C. (Jane Kotewa/ Abigail Anderson)

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Cory has given out a few funds from the Star Fish fund this month. The funds are starting to run low. He’s been able to get together with the UCC Clergy cluster and Ecumenical Partners, meeting with area pastors. Some community involvement with being in the Legion Honor guard this past month along with some home visits.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Discussed the first Funday, went well. Trunk or Treat happening on Downtown Plaza 10/31 from 4-5 pm. Anyone is invited to set up a Trunk or Treat site in front of our building- facing the sidewalk. Discussed selling Congo Kids Store goods at different events to raise money for camp.

Hospitality: Discussed needing to purchase more glass bowls for the kitchen and going back to serving coffee every Sunday. Going to be reorganizing the storage closet.

Facilities: Larry Lasch reported we need a new vacuum for the church and getting rid of the old/broken ones. There are a few tables that will be set out free for taking, in front of the church. There are no new projects being added.

Diaconate: Discussion on community meal for October.

Mission: Going to try and get one more day in for ditch clean up. Worked on getting Nov and Dec community meals covered.

Worship: Going back to passing the offering plate on Sundays with the exception of Communion Sunday and it will be in the back on the table. Motion made to give Joyce Jorgensen a gift card from the Lee Trunkenbolz gift giving, for all the extra work the last few months. (Larry Lasch/Jane Kotewa) M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations committee: Abigail has talked to a few people about filling positions for next year along with getting a few names of people to ask. Vice-Moderator has been filled for 2025.

Personnel committee: Pastor reviews are out to the boards. They will meet in November to review submissions.

Stewardship: *Our Church is a Family & we are Stronger Together* is the theme for November 17th service followed by a “Family Reunion” PotLuck and games in Heritage Hall.

OLD BUSINESS: Complete council write-up and picture for the newsletter. The new signage is in for the entrances. Glows Soup supper fundraiser will be November 22 from 5-7pm. Congo Cookie Club will meet 6 times for baking before the Crafts and Cookie Sale during Downtown’s Merry and Bright, Dec 6th.

NEW BUSINESS:

Designated financial gifts that are given will be used before budget monies, to honor the intent of the donation. Discussed ways to encourage our congregation to “Bring a Friend to church.”

Moderator Kay Campe adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Abigail Anderson, Past Moderator





Join us this fall as we start on a journey for 2025, exploring how we can make our church family stronger; helping one another and our community, sharing our strengths and our weaknesses; learning to lean on one another, to be there for one another. This journey will begin with a **CHURCH FAMILY REUNION** on November 17th. That will be the day of our pledge in-gathering. Please prayerfully consider how you can give in 2025. This will be a day to **celebrate** all that we **give** to our church family – all that we **receive** from our church family – all that we can **accomplish** together. Plan to attend the festivities that day; **invite others!**

Church Family Reunion

November 17 – Church 10 am; meal following Potluck Meal, Fellowship and FUN (and games!!)

If your last name starts with . . . bring . . .

A-H . . . Main Dish

I-P . . . Side Dish

Q-Z . . . Dessert

Bring the whole family . . . and more!!!

Let's all come together in love and friendship.

Our Church is a FAMILY – we are stronger TOGETHER!

Celebrating Generosity

The holidays will be here before you know it . . . and our congregation is SOOOO busy! Here's some of what our congregation has been up to – there is so much going on – join us in Celebrating the Generosity shown to our Church Family and our community. Since last month, your generosity has been at work in so many ways . . . it's impossible to list them all!

- Bible Study
- Diaconate Board Free Community Meal
- Mission Board Free Community Meal
- Lakeview Communion
- Goldfinch Communion
- Newsletter & helpers
- Readers, Ushers, Greeters
- Special Music
- Worship
- Fill in Pianists
- Having Jenny BACK!!
- Choir
- Rightnow Media
- Website & Facebook Pages



- Building usage
- Church Service Broadcasts
- Sunday School!!! – kids and adults
- New members!
- Stewardship – time, talents, treasures

- Sunday Fundays!!
- Military Service Members
- Congo Cookie Club
 - Volunteer Bakers
 - Ingredient Donations
 - Recipes
- Sanctuary Flowers
- Prayer Chain
- HyVee & Fareway Receipts
- Free Little Pantry
- Church Family
- New signage – check it out!
- Glows Soup Supper
 - Volunteers
 - Ingredient Donations



- Produce Sharing
- Starfish
- Cooperation & Coordination with St John's UCC
- Trees removed that were "sick"
- Helping while Christina is out
- Working together to get things done
- Cards, notes, and calls to those in need
- Visitors . . . new friends/family!
- Halloween Trunk or Treat, Bonfire & Potluck
- Community involvement



These are just a few examples of the generosity we need to celebrate each and every day within our Church Family. Each of these items ignited a different passion in those who took part. We are so fortunate to have a Church Family with such diverse passions and generous souls! There is so much more to come . . . together we can do so many wonderful things and touch so many lives. Let's keep the celebration going!

Thank you all for sharing your time, talents, and treasures!

MEMORIALS

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
22-Sep	Dean & Donna Grotte's 54th Anniversary	Capital	James Grotte
29-Sep	Jon Neitzel's 50th Birthday	Capital	Ace & Deb Adams
29-Sep	Memory of Penny Ritter	Capital	Larry & Carolyn Thompson
13-Oct	Ginny Riedesel's Birthday		Joyce Jorgenson
13-Oct	Ginny Riedesel's Birthday		Margaret Weaver
13-Oct	Dean & Donna Grotte's 54th Anniversary	Starfish	Les Heinrich
13-Oct	Memory of Bob Cone		Lyle & Charlene Norris



Pastor Cory is available for counseling, home visitation and hospital visitation. Please notify the church office (235-5382) or Pastor Cory (399-8282).

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 Dolores Gronewald with questions at (651) 249-6236.

Hy-Vee & Fareway Report as of Report as of 20 October 2024

During the last 4 weeks, \$18,821.75 (9.41%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were received. After 46 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$176,049.77 (88.02%) toward the 17th goal which is now \$200,000.

During the same time, \$5,869.9 (3.91%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 81 weeks, Fareway is at \$91,460.19 (60.97%) toward our 5th \$150,000 goal.

This program started the first of March 2011, so any slips from then until now can be used (a number from May 2011 through July 2012 were turned in during this time). 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

CE NEWS:

November 3rd is the next Fun Day!



During Sunday school, on **Nov 17th & 24th**, we will be practicing the Christmas play. The play will be performed on **Sunday, December 15th!**

MISSION MOMENT: The blessing box for November is designated for Church World Service/Blanket Sunday.



November Partners in Ministry:

Diaconate: Kris Fuller

Usher: Michael Rowan

Readers for:

3rd: Ace/Deb Adams

10th: Cynthia Celander

17th: Abigail Anderson

24th: Kay Campe



Attention Snowbirds!



Please let the office know if you are flying South this winter, your address & what months you'll be soaking up the sun!

December Partners in Ministry:

Diaconate: Eric Johnson

Usher: Ellen Germain

Readers for:

1st: Abigail Anderson

8th: Eric Johnson

15th: Sandra Smith

22nd: Amanda Forstrom

24th: Ellen Germain

29th: Margo Weaver

Thank you for the help in the office and with producing and mailing the newsletter! **I appreciate you all!!**

- Christina



Cookie Walk, Bake and Craft Sale

Join us for the return of our annual **Cookie Walk**, Friday, December 6, beginning at 3 pm in Heritage Hall. Watch for posters soon!

New this year will be a bake and craft sale in addition to the cookies.

We could use your help . . .

- **Bakers** – Nov 3, 6, 17, Dec 2
- **Set-up** – Dec 4 & 5
- **Sale** – Dec 6
- **Ingredients** – a list will be emailed out and on the back table

We are also doing a bake and craft sale, so if you have any **bakery specialties** or **crafts** you make and would like to donate for sale, let us know and have them to the church by Dec 4.

To reserve a plate of cookies, please call the office (507) 235-5382 by December 5th. Delivery available upon request.

EAT COOKIES! GET CRAFTING!! BAKE UP A STORM!!!



ANNUAL REPORT TIME:

Please start working on your board's annual report. Reports should be submitted to the church office by **December 20 or earlier if possible**. (Financial reports can be submitted the first week in January.) Thank you!!





"For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me." (Mark 14:7, NRSV)

In the setting of this famous quote, Jesus was defending a woman who had extravagantly anointed him with an entire jar of costly ointment. But his statement on those less fortunate in our society was nothing new. Deuteronomy very similarly proclaims, *"Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land'"* (15:11, NRSV). Similar commands are repeated throughout both the Old and New Testaments, challenging churches and individuals to carry on God's redeeming work in our broken and hurting world.

Our venerable Starfish Fund is one important way that First Congregational UCC offers care in the Fairmont and Martin County area. It has been generously supported for many years, including a nearly \$2,700 anonymous donation in October of 2018. As its name suggests, our fund continually regrows itself (not unlike the healing of a starfish) through your gifts. The Starfish Fund has seen fairly steady requests for assistance during 2024, but would now benefit from "regrowth" in the form of a boost in donations to continue serving those who need it most. I will continue to administer it judiciously on behalf of our congregation, so that it has the broadest effect in our community.

Pastor Cory

Finance Dates Coming Up:

**-Thurs, Nov 21:
Budget proposals
are due**

**-Mon, Nov 25:
Budget Meeting in
Heritage Hall
(food at 5:30 PM,
meeting at 6 PM)**

Church Finance Update

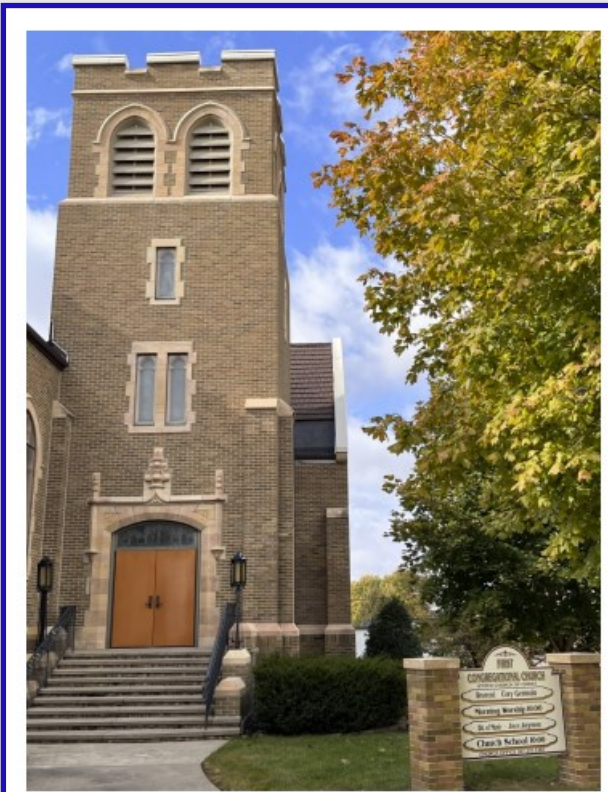
Giving and Spending Report: 1/1/24-9/30/24

Pledge Giving	\$ 68,798.00
Non-Pledge Giving	\$ 48,409.93
Total Offering	\$ 117,207.93 (66% of our budget)
Total Spending	\$ 122,653.67
Budget	\$ 177,048.00

Explanation- Pledged giving is the amount paid toward peoples pledges for 2024.

Non-pledged giving is all other giving and other income such as fundraisers and rent.

These are combined for the Total Offering. Money received for Capital (building projects and maintenance) and Missions (Blessing box offerings, other projects, and Starfish) are separate from the Total Offering and are not included in the Budget.



The NE entry to the church will be closed starting on December 1st or earlier if it snow.



Three long tables will be available for adoption in the beginning of November. They will have a sign on them and can be seen in Heritage Hall . The tables may be great to use in a rummage sale or at a graduation party! Ask the Facilities Board if you have any questions!





JOIN US FOR A

Free Community MEAL

ALL are Welcome!

NOVEMBER | 20 | 5:30 PM

First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza,
Fairmont, MN

Menu:
Pork Commercial
Green Beans
Bars
Milk, Water & Coffee

Served by the Mission Board
fairmontucc.org

Glow's Parade Soup Supper Fundraiser

Friday, November 22

5:15 - 7:15 PM

**First Congregational UCC
319 Downtown Plaza, Fairmont**

Menu:

Your choice of soup:

Cheesy Turkey

Vegetable

Chicken Noodle

Ham & Wild Rice

Fresh-baked Rolls

Apple Dessert

Milk, Coffee & Water



\$8/serving, \$5/children 10 & under

fairmontucc.org

rightnow MEDIA

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



As the weather gets colder and the nights get longer, instead of mindlessly watching sitcoms or drama re-runs until bedtime, how about gathering together as a family to dig a little deeper into your faith? One of the most intriguing — if not troubling — books of our Bible is *Revelation*. But don't be intimidated by it; explore the impact that it has for us in the here and now. Matt Chandler, the senior pastor of Village Church, based in Flower Mound, TX and the executive director of the board of the Acts 29 Network, offers great insight in a new study called **The Overcomers**. Here's a brief synopsis of his 8-sessions:

Are you ready to live fully prepared and fully equipped to handle anything life throws at you? As Christians, we can be courageous and confident, knowing that God has placed us in human history for his purposes, and he will empower us regardless of our circumstances. In this eight-session series, pastor and author Matt Chandler will walk us through the book of Revelation to remind us of God's fierce, conquering, commanding authority over all the earth.

During October and November, we are continuing to hear epistle readings each Sunday from the book of *Hebrews*. Chock full of teachings and encouragements for our daily living, this important New Testament book is one I've touched on in sermons during previous years, but could easily be a source of study for many months. So why not explore it with short highlights from each chapter in 14 quick sessions? It's called **Hebrews—Timeless Truths**:

Westcliffe and Joshua Duffy present the entire book of Hebrews. Each episode of this series both explains and provides practical application of each chapter of Hebrews. Shot in various locations to further connect our current context to the timeless relevance of God's Word to our day to day lives. Perfect for personal devotional or small group settings, this series, when paired with the group discussion questions, equips us to understand more deeply the heart, will, intent and design of our Heavenly Father, the life, ministry and teachings of Jesus, and the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in our world today.



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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**

November's recipe is from The Boxcar Children Cookbook. Abigail Anderson submitted this recipe for you to enjoy. Her favorite books to read when she was a child were The Boxcar Children collection created by Gertrude Chandler Warner. This recipe is from Tree House Mystery in the series.

New Neighbor Casserole

(6 servings)



What to Use:

1 pound ground beef
1 medium onion, chopped
1/4 tsp. pepper
2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 10.5 oz. cans tomato soup
1 soup can of water
1.5 cups elbow macaroni
8 oz. shredded cheddar cheese

Large saucepan with lid
Knife
Pancake turner
Cutting board
Can opener
Mixing spoon
Measuring cups
Measuring spoons
2 qt. casserole dish
Non-stick cooking spray

What to Do:

1. Cook ground beef and onion in the large pan, breaking the beef apart with a pancake turner, until the beef loses its red color. Drain off fat.
2. Add pepper, parsley, garlic, soup, water, and uncooked macaroni. Stir to mix well.
3. Over medium heat, bring the mixture to a boil. Stir. Cover and turn heat down to low. Simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Spray casserole dish with non-stick cooking spray.
5. Pour ground beef and macaroni mixture into the casserole.
6. Sprinkle cheese on top. Keep your covered casserole in the oven on warm (200 degrees) until serving time.



Birthdays:

Nov 5	Jessie Bicknase Rose Barnes
Nov 8	Tom Jorgensen
Nov 9	Joy Pollock Chelsea Celander
Nov 10	Conrad Zoeller
Nov 11	Travis Goerndt
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	Jeff Skog
Nov 30	Jenny Willard

Anniversaries:

Nov 3	David & Lisa Meschke	17 years
Nov 18	Gene & Barb Pitcher	46 years
Nov 19	Jamis & Emma Hueper	2 years
Nov 21	Pastor Cory & Ellen Germain	26 years
Nov 23	Bill & Pat Cowing	68 years
Nov 29	Bill & Barb Bittman	49 years



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

