

February 2025

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.

FEBRUARY 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 Worship with Blake Potthoff 11:00 Sunday school 12:00 Youth Fun Day	3	4 10:00 Lakeview Communion	5 5:30 Mission Board 6:00 Worship Board 7:00 Choir	6 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	7	8 11:30-1:30 Kids Against Hunger pack at Fairmont Armory
9 10:00 Worship Communion 11:00 Sunday school	10	11 6:00 Facilities Board	12 5:45 CE Board 7:00 Choir	13 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch) 5:30 Hospitality	14 	15
16 10:00 Worship Baptism of Astrid Rose Stich 11:00 Sunday school	17 Presidents' Day *9:00 Council agenda items due	18 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	19 4:30 Diaconate Board 5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir	20 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	21 *9:00 March Newsletter items due	22 6:00 Nomads (Family Game Night) (HH)
23 10:00 Worship Blessing Box collection 11:00 Sunday School	24	25	26 5:30 Free Community Meal 7:00 Choir	27 9:30 Bible Study 11:00 Newsletter assembly 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	28	

The Reverend's Ruminations - February 2025

With the oddly variable temps of a second dry midwinter upon us, I pray that you are finding ways to embrace the unexpectedly brown, frozen landscape around us and keeping yourself spiritually connected, while doing your best to avoid any symptoms associated with "seasonal affective disorder." We've actually had some fairly sunny (albeit short) days lately; but if the long, dark nights cause you to struggle with SAD symptoms like oversleeping, low energy, appetite changes, or loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed, I pray that you take such signs seriously and reach out for medical help. I'm also available to talk if you just need to process a lesser feeling some refer to as "the winter doldrums." Together we can weather many storms!



Though it may not seem so yet, we are already gaining minutes of daylight. I promise, spring is not as far away as it may seem!?! As we look expectantly toward warmer and longer days ahead, may we draw strength from the words of our Savior who said, *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life"* (John 8:12, NRSV).

If you are looking for inspiration during the inevitable chilly days remaining this month, this is an excellent time to dig into your Bible a bit and examine the passages that will be part of our worship services in the weeks ahead:

The epistle lessons for the last three weeks of February will examine the 15th chapter of First Corinthians, where the Apostle Paul examines the core Christian truth of Christ's resurrection and its impact on our understanding of the resulting resurrection of believers after death, as well as our vision of what a resurrection body will look like.

The gospel readings will come from the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters of Luke, including stories of Jesus struggling for acceptance in his own hometown, helping some as-of-yet-unknown fishermen pull in a huge catch before calling them to be his first disciples, and then delivering what has come to be called his "Sermon on the Plain."

In my sermons based on the Old Testament lectionary readings, we'll be exploring highlights of Jeremiah's 1st and 17th chapters (in which the prophet prepares to carry God's word to the people, and later teaches on the importance of trusting God instead of trusting in one's own flesh), as well as the opening of Isaiah's 6th chapter, where we'll encounter his famous response, "Here am I; send me!"

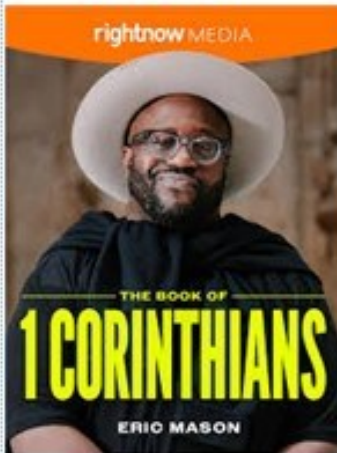
Ellen and I will briefly be escaping the cold February 17-21 on a little vacation to Las Vegas with one of my oldest friends and his wife. We won't be missing Sundays, just a short work-week reprieve in what we hope will be sunny and warm surroundings. When Ellen and I visited Vegas for our anniversary back in 2013, the only day that didn't include rain was the morning we flew back to Minnesota, so this trip has nowhere to go but up from that experience!?!

May you remain healthy and inspired
as we move boldly into 2025,

Rev. Cory Germain

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!

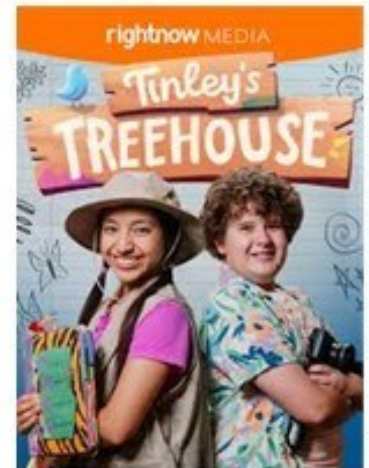


My Sunday sermons will continue to focus on the Old Testament lectionary passages for the next several months, but we will continue to hear epistle readings each week as well. Throughout February, those epistles will be from the 13th and 15th chapters of Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*, so why not dig a little deeper into what makes this such a unique and impactful book? Join author and pastor Dr. Eric Mason as he leads you through this significant book in a quick ten-session series. Episodes average only ten minutes each! Check out ***The Book of 1 Corinthians***:

In his First Letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul wrote to a church divided, worldly, and immature in the faith. Immersed in an indulgent, immoral culture, they struggled to separate themselves from the world around them. Paul urged them to remember the gospel and start acting like disciples of Jesus, and his rebukes and encouragement remain very much relevant for the church today. Discover the power of the gospel that brings order, heals wounds, unifies the faithful, and demonstrates how to love well.

Have your kids (or grandkids, nieces, nephews) enjoyed the **rightnow** MEDIA series, *The Creators*? If so, by now they may have exhausted all of the episodes. Well, good news — there's a new "spin-off" featuring one of the main characters, and the first episode will be available by the time you read this! It's called ***Tinley's Treehouse***:

Tinley from The Creators is back in a show of her own called Tinley's Treehouse. Join Tinley and her neighbor Max as they document their adventures in nature while learning important truths from God's Word. Engaging enough for the whole family, Tinley's Treehouse will have you laughing and learning right alongside this delightful duo. Come and explore God's world with Tinley's Treehouse!



*Do you still need your own **FREE** **rightnow** MEDIA account, or would you like 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**



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
FAIRMONT, MN
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 1-15-25**

Members Present: Kay Campe, Abigail Anderson, Catherine Johnson, Marcia Musser, Cynthia Celandar, Carol Barrick, Donna Grotte. **Members Absent:** Amber Brummond, Jane Kotewa, Sherry Larson, Larry Lasch, Marilyn Forstrom, Christina Hainy, Sue Kruse, and Abby Shoen. **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 in prayer. We celebrated family sharing by introducing ourselves, our position and a little bit about our family.

Motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on 12/18/24, was M/S/C. (Abigail Anderson/Marcia Musser)

Treasurer's Report Catherine Johnson submitted a report stating we ended the year at 102% of the budget met. There will be a quarterly recap of giving in the newsletter and bulletins. A motion to receive the treasurer's report was M/S/C. (Abigail Anderson/Carol Barrick)

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cory has used a few more vacation days this month with the passing of his father. There were several home communion visits accompanied by Eric Johnson. Service preparation for Sunday's and Christmas Eve worship.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Welcomed Cheryl A. and Sophia B. to the team and assigned positions with everyone. Discussed the upcoming February Fun Day doing games and crafts in the basement.

Hospitality: Welcomed new member Becky L. Did planning for the annual meeting, worked on the coffee/treat schedule along with kitchen maintenance and updates plan. Would like to do the March Community meal

Facilities: July Community meal. Gave a full tour to the new members Zach A and Robert L. North towers are possibly leaking, and they believe it is under warranty yet.

Diaconate: Assigned rolls

Mission: Assigned rolls and reminders their meetings moved to the first Wednesday @ 5:30 pm.

Worship: Assigned rolls and removed Christmas stuff. They will be going through all the decorations on the stage in Heritage Hall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations committee: We have 1 opening to fill on the Missions board

OLD BUSINESS: Annual meeting is 1/26/25. Hospitality will set-up for the potluck. Table talk during the meeting of group gathering activities to do as a "Family." Online giving will be introduced to the congregation and a demonstration on how to use it.

NEW BUSINESS: Resolution made to keep Kay Campe and Catherine Johnson on, remove Jane Kotewa and add Carol Barrick to the State Bank of Fairmont's checking account. M/S/C (Cynthia Celandar/Abigail Anderson)

Council goals for 2025: ideas for updating the directory-Carol will help lead, work on Online giving, investments to include St. John's in activities, fundraising events and putting together a new member orientation packet.

Moderator Kay Campe adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Abigail Anderson, Past Moderator

MEMORIALS

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
24-Nov	Honor of Pat & Randy Rowan's Anniversary		Virginia Riedesel
24-Nov	Honor of Steve & Janine Draper's Anniversary		Margo Weaver
24-Nov	Honor of Bill & Pat Cowing's Anniversary		Margo Weaver
1-Dec	Honor of Bil & Pat Cowing's Anniversary	Starfish	Les Heinrich
1-Dec	Memory of son-in-law Paul Mevissen	General Fund	Les Heinrich
2-Dec	Memory of Peggy Heinrich		HA & DA Fancher
8-Dec	Memory of Judy O'Brien	Capital Fund	Larry & Carolyn Thompson
22-Dec	Memory of Judy O'Brien	Starfish	Marilyn Forstrom
24-Dec	Honor of Justin & Tara Thedens Anniversary		Margo Weaver
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain	Starfish	Pat & Bill Cowing
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain		Cynthia Celander
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain		Julie Elliott
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain	Starfish	Jane Kotewa
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain		Pat & Randy Rowan
5-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain	Capital/Building	Larry & Carolyn Thompson
5-Jan	Memory of Jim Forshee	Capital/Building	Larry & Carolyn Thompson
12-Jan	Memory of Craig Germain		Dolores Gronewald

Our deepest sympathy and prayers to:

- the Germain family on the passing of Craig.
- the Eisenbacher family of the passing of Linda.

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 Kay Campe with questions at (507) 236-9097 or kayanncampe@gmail.com.

Pastor Cory is available for counseling, home visitation and hospital visitation. Please notify the church office (507-235-5382) or Pastor Cory (507-399-8282).

Pastor Cory's office schedule has changed slightly. His day off is now Friday. He is in his office Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 AM—12:30 PM. Wednesdays hours are 12:30 PM through evening meetings & activities.

CE NEWS:

Sunday, February 2nd is a **Youth Fun Day**, starting at noon.



February Partners in Ministry:

Diaconate: Dave Huset

Reader:

2nd: Bonnie Sue Bennett
9th: Dolores Gronewald
16th: Carolyn Thompson
23rd: Ace/Deb Adams

Usher:

Cory Hainy
Cory Hainy
Ellen Germain
Ace Adams

March Partners in Ministry:

Diaconate: Dave Huset

Reader:

2nd: Sandra Smith
9th: Eric B. Johnson
23rd: Cynthia Celander
30th: Abigail Anderson

Usher:

Dave Huset
Dave Huset
Dave Huset
Dave Huset

Congratulations to Paige Hainy for earning a place on the dean's list at SDSU for the fall 2024 semester with a 4.0 GPA. Paige is in the College of Education and Human Services.

Thank you to the awesome Annual Report assembly team of Kathy Jorgensen, Lorie Zoeller, Joanne Eisenbarger & Catherine Johnson! Your work is soooo appreciated!!

Also, thank you to my faithful newsletter assembly team! I couldn't get the newsletter out each month without you!

- **Christina**

Setting up online giving to First Congregational UCC, Fairmont

See the links on our church website, fairmontucc.org,

or

Scan the QR code



Or use this web address:

<https://firstcongoucc.churchtrac.com/give>

You will be taken to our ChurchTrac page where you will be asked to sign in or create an account. ChurchTrac will link you to Stripe, the secure payment system.

Giving can be done through your checking account or by credit card.

MISSION MINUTE:

Kids Against Hunger pack event: We are participating in the food pack event for Kids Against Hunger on Saturday, February 8, from 11:30 to 1:30. It is at the Fairmont Armory, and we'll meet there. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthex or you can contact anyone on the Mission board.

Blessing Box: February's blessing box is one of the UCC's five special offerings, One Great Hour of Sharing. It is officially offered on March 30, 2025, though we are collecting a month early. "It supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response."

The Free Community Meal schedule for 2025 so far is:

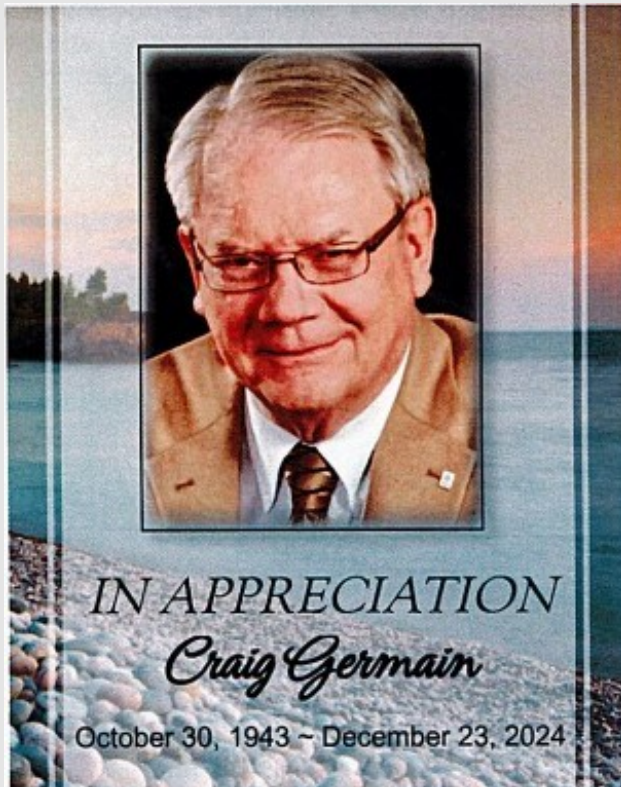
January-Congo UCC
February-Hospitality board
March-Worship board
June-4H (pending)
July-Facilities board
August-Kiwanis
October-Diaconate board

If anyone has a group that would like to host, please contact someone on the Mission board (Dave Adams, Renae Vetter, Jim Bock, Marcia Musser, Amanda Forstrom). We welcome all!



A BIG WELCOME to our new members:

James "Jim" Hatch, Tom & Carol Barrick, and Barbara Young!!



Our family thanks the First Congregational UCC family for all the kindness shown to us since the time of Craig's death. We appreciate the floral gift, cards, and memorials—and especially your friendship!

Gratefully,
Peggy Germain
Pastor Cory, Ellen, and family
Cara & Wade Gustafson and family

Getting to Know our Church Family . . .

Name _____

Fill out as many questions as you'd like from this questionnaire and bring it to the annual meeting or send it into the church office. Would you be OK with us publishing some of your answers in a newsletter? Yes _____ No _____

1. Who is in your family?
2. What different jobs have you held?
3. Where have you lived?
4. What was your greatest accomplishment?
5. What goals do you have for your future?
6. What was your favorite game or activity when you were a child?
7. Did you have any childhood nicknames? How did they come about?
8. What was your favorite subject in school, and why?
9. Were there any family traditions from your childhood that you carried on with your family?
10. What was your dream job or career when you were young?
11. How did your parents handle discipline when you were a child?
12. How did you spend your summers as a child?
13. Were there any family recipes passed down from your childhood that you still cherish?
14. Did you have a favorite pet or animal?

15. What was your most memorable vacation or road trip?
16. What's the most unusual talent or skill you have?
17. If you could choose a church family mascot, what would it be and why?
18. What's the goofiest thing you remember doing?
19. Can you share any stories about our church family?
20. What was church like when you were younger?
21. Are there any church traditions or customs that you cherished that are no longer practiced?
22. Can you recall any church family members who had unique or memorable impact on our church family history?
23. What values or principles do you believe are important to our church family?
24. What is your favorite memory of the church family?
25. What do you want others to remember about you?
26. How can we better support each other as a church family?
27. What is your biggest fear regarding the future of our church family?
28. How do you think we can create a more inclusive and supportive church family?
29. What can we, as your church family, do for you?
30. What activities would you like to do with your church family?

FAMILY

GAME NIGHT

/NOMADS

AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

FEBRUARY 22

6:00 PM IN HERITAGE HALL

CARD GAMES
BOARD GAMES
REFRESHMENTS

BRING A DISH TO PASS AND A GAME OR PUZZLE IF YOU'D LIKE

ALL ARE WELCOME

FAIRMONTUCC.ORG



First Congregational UCC
Free Community

MEAL



All
are
Welcome!

Wednesday, February 26th
Starting at 5:30 PM
319 Downtown Plaza, Fairmont, MN

Served by the
Hospitality Board

MENU:
Spaghetti with meat sauce
Lettuce salad
Breadstick
Cupcake
Beverages

fairmontucc.org



Crunchy Pineapple Salad

Sherry Larson made this for the Church Family Reunion Potluck

8 oz. cream cheese

1/3 cup sugar

8 oz. Cool Whip

20 oz. can pineapple (crushed or tidbits), drained

Mix cream cheese with sugar. Add drained pineapple and Cool Whip. Refrigerate. (Can be made ahead of time.)

1 cup crushed pretzels

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup butter, melted

1/2 cup chopped pecans

Stir pretzels, sugar, butter and pecans together. Line a baking sheet with a silicone mat or parchment paper. Spread it with the pretzel mixture. Bake for 10—20 minutes in a 350 degree oven stirring occasionally. Cool. Break apart.

Fold in the pretzel mixture right before serving. Enjoy!

February Birthdays:

Feb 1	Mark Craven	Feb 17	Vicki Bicknase
Feb 3	Faith Kotewa		Carter Rowan
Feb 4	Jim Bock		Colby Whitmore
	Joyce Jorgenson	Feb 18	Kirk Jorgensen
Feb 6	April Rachuy	Feb 19	Joe Craven
Feb 10	Jenna Smith	Feb 21	Larry Lasch
Feb 13	Janine Draper	Feb 25	Cindy Anderson
	Remi Shoen	Feb 27	Larry Christensen
Feb 16	Jim Marushin Sr.		Henry Brummond
		Feb 28	Matt Guritz



February Anniversaries:

Feb 14 **Jon & Cindy Anderson** **27 years**

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