

October 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:

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 11:00

Communion the second

Sunday of every month.

October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 10:00 Lakeview Communion	2 5:30 Mission Board 6:00 Worship Board 7:00 Choir	3 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	4	5
6 10:00 Worship 11:00 Sunday school 12:00 Oct. Fun Day for youth	7	8 7:00 Facilities Board	9 5:30 Diaconate Board 5:45 CE Board 7:00 Choir	10 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch) 5:30 Hospitality Board	11	12 12:30 Rain date for Highway Cleanup
13 10:00 Worship <i>Communion</i> 11:00 Sunday school	14 9:00 Council agenda items due	15 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	16 5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir	17 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	18 9:00 November newsletter items due	19 HH reserved from 1-5 PM
20 10:00 Worship 11:00 Sunday school 11:00 New member orientation	21	22	23 7:00 Choir	24 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	25 11:00 November newsletter assembly	26
27 10:00 Worship <i>Blessing Box collection</i> 11:00 Sunday school	28	29	30 5:30 Free Community Meal 7:00 Choir	31 Halloween 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)		

The Reverend's Ruminations - October 2024

HAPPY AUTUMN! It seemed to arrive as scheduled on Sunday, September 22, with temps nearly 20 degrees cooler than the previous day, so let's hope that the same will not be true when the first day of winter rolls around in mid-December?!

With an extra-wet late spring and early summer, the area fields are not turning golden brown as uniformly as they do many years—some even have very green areas of replanted soybeans right in the middle of acres nearly ready for harvest (or already picked in several areas). The range of crop maturity may be worrisome as the fall days march on, but let us trust that God still has the final say amid the changing seasons. As always during this hectic time of year, we pray for safe farming operations and a productive harvest for all our area farm families.



I was asked recently, "What are the [*insert other local denomination name here*] doing that seems to fill their parking lot so much more regularly than ours on a Sunday morning?" That is a question not so easily answered. If it were simply a matter of offering a certain Bible study, style of music, or time of worship, we would certainly make adjustments in hopes of returning to the "glory days" of packed pews and a Sunday School program bursting the seams of a dedicated education wing. Unfortunately, that is not the community we live in anymore. Church membership in some sense does historically run in cycles, but a sad statistic I recently read from the researchers at Gallup indicates that "Two decades ago, an average of 42% of U.S. adults attended religious services every week or nearly every week. A decade ago, the figure fell to 38%, and it is currently at 30%. This decline is largely driven by the increase in the percentage of Americans with no religious affiliation — 9% in 2000-2003 versus 21% in 2021-2023 — almost all of whom do not attend services regularly." (www.news.gallup.com, March 25, 2024)

To be clear, none of this is meant to scare you or serve as an excuse not to work at being a more vibrant and welcoming church. Quite the contrary: may it serve as a challenge to prove those national averages wrong in our community! One of the most basic things ALL of us can do is endeavor to attend worship more regularly ourselves. We don't need to live into the Gallup statistics; rather we need to try to increase those slumping percentages within our own congregation. And while challenging yourself to attend church more regularly, why not ask a friend, neighbor, or family member to join you? Having an accountability partner can be beneficial for both parties! Adult Sunday School is also available after worship to help you dig deeper in your faith.

As promised in last month's "Ruminations," the upcoming week's lectionary scripture readings are now listed in the worship bulletin right after the "Partners in Ministry" volunteers, so that you can read ahead and contemplate what you'll be hearing the following Sunday. As an overview, our epistle readings during October and most of November will all be drawn from the Letter to the Hebrews, while our weekly gospel readings over the next two months will all be drawn from Mark. During our October worship services, my sermons will examine selections from the book of **Job** — specifically chapters 1, 23, 38, and 42. Suffering and grief seem to be ever-present in our world, but if you find yourself wondering why bad things seem to be happening to you, or how to make it through your personal struggles, take a few moments to read about the challenges overcome by one faithful and upright Old Testament character with the ironic-looking name of Job (pronounced with a long O)!

I hope to see you in worship soon, where we can all glorify and praise God together!

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Cory Germain

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
FAIRMONT, MN
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 9-18-2024**

Members Present: Abigail Anderson, Amber Brummond, Jane Kotewa, Sherry Larson, Larry Lasch, Marcia Musser, Members Absent: Kay Campe, Marilyn Forstrom, Catherine Johnson, 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. Past Moderator Abigail Anderson called the meeting to order, and Pastor Cory led devotion and prayer. We celebrated generosity in the church, naming several recent events for which we are thankful; Donations for the furnace, choir, Sunday School, Free pantry use and those stepping up to lead our upcoming fundraisers.

Motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on Aug 21, 2024, was M/S/C. (Marcia Musser/Jane Kotewa)

Treasurer's Report Catherine Johnson submitted a report stating the furnace has been paid for by several donations. Each Board/Committee/Office needs to submit their projected budget by November 21st. At the end of August, we received 60% of pledged giving, which is slightly down. A motion to receive the treasurer's report was M/S/C. (Jane Kotewa/ Sherry Larson)

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cory has given out a few more funds from the Star Fish fund this month. Now that Poppe's is closed, we discussed where to purchase "Gas" gift cards from. Kwik Trip sounds like the best way to go for now. Had a few in-home communions with the help of Eric Johnson.

BOARD REPORTS:

Christian Education: Discussed the calendar for the year, confirming major dates. Reflected on summer events, all were well attended.

Hospitality: No meeting.

Facilities: Larry Lasch reported the furnace has been paid for. It will go in as soon as it gets here. They cleared shrubs and branches. Need to remove some trees, going to reach out to Jon Thate for removal estimates.

Diaconate: Eric Johnson and Sue Kruse went along on visits to Goldfinch.

Mission: Ditch cleanup is going to be September 28th, makeup is in October. Working on getting Nov and Dec community meals covered.

Worship: Working on getting pulpit supply filled, Pastor and Joyce working on getting pianist filled for October and November services.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominations committee: Bring nomination names to Abigail for anyone who you feel would be interested in any board for the upcoming year.

Personnel committee: Pastor reviews are out to the boards, and the council reviewed the Pastor working agreement and the personnel committee will be making revisions to military leave.

Stewardship: *Our Church is a Family & we are Stronger Together* is the theme. Looking for a few members to be on the team this year and start working on an "in-gathering" date.

OLD BUSINESS: Complete council write-up and picture for the newsletter. The new signage is ordered for the entrances. Glows Soup supper fundraiser will be November 22 from 5-7pm. Congo Cookie Club met and will have their Crafts and Cookie Sale during Downtown's Merry and Bright. Talked to Wanda Waterbury from St. John's UCC about combining our newsletters to help each other out on postage. Looking into more ways we can help each other out by combining things and saving money.

NEW BUSINESS: Pastor Cory is working with several other churches in Fairmont to put together a Christmas Carol songbook, for the public to have a sing along at the Red Rock Center on December 15th.

Upcoming Dates:

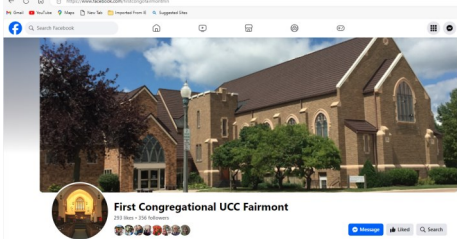
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|-------------------------------------|--|
| - Budget Proposals due by 11/21/24 | - Election Date 12/8/24 |
| - In Gathering 11/17/24 | - Board Reports for Annual Meeting due date 12/20/24 |
| - Budget Meeting 11/25 &/or 12/5/24 | - Annual Meeting 1/26/25 |

Past Moderator Abigail Anderson adjourned the meeting.
Respectfully submitted, Abigail Anderson, Past Moderator

Celebrating Generosity

Fall is here and our Congregation is not slowing down a bit. 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!

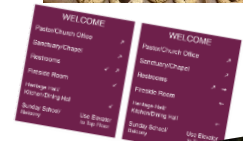
- Bible Study
- Worship Board Free Community Meal
- Lakeview Communion
- Goldfinch Communion
- Newsletter & helpers
- Readers, Ushers, Greeters
- Special Music
- Worship
- Fill in Pianists
- Choir
- Rightnow Media
- Website & Facebook Pages



- Ditch Cleanup
- Wednesday Community Worship at Park
- Church Service Broadcasts
- Sunday School!!! – kids and adults



- Sunday School kickoff, VBS and Dance Party!
- Sunday Fundays . . .
- Military Service Members
- Congo Cookie Club
- Sanctuary Flowers
- Prayer Chain
- HyVee & Fareway Receipts
- Free Little Pantry
- Noisy Sunday – Heifer Project
- Donations to cover the new furnace/air conditioner!!
- New signage
- Contemporary Worship
- Glows Soup Supper
- Produce Sharing
- Starfish
- Cooperation & Coordination with St John's UCC
- Taking care of the lawn, trees, and landscaping
- Helping while Christina is out
- Working together to get things done
- Cards, notes, and calls to those in need



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!



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. 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!

Our Church is a FAMILY – we are stronger TOGETHER!

MEMORIALS

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
15-Sept	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich



Our deepest sympathy and prayers to:

- The Ziemer family on the passing of Kris's mother.

Prayer Request Cards are on the table in the Narthex. Please share your joys and concerns on the card and return it to the usher prior to the Pastoral Prayer if you would like your request included in our prayers during the worship service.

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 22 September 2024

During the last 4 weeks, \$11,118.55 (556%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were received. After 42 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$157,228.02 (78.61%) toward the 17 th goal which is now \$200,000.

During the same time, \$1,583.22 (1.06%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 77 weeks, Fareway is at \$85,590.29 (57.06%) toward our 5 th \$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

Don't miss the next Free Community Meal on Wednesday, October 30th! The Diaconate Board will be serving their famous chili! Join them in Heritage Hall at 5:30 PM!



Recipe for: **Congo Cookie Club!!!**

Have a favorite Christmas Cookie Recipe?

Like to Bake? Like to Decorate?

Like to make Crafts?

Join the Congo Cookie Club!!!

Be on the lookout for information coming in the newsletter, bulletins, Facebook, and your email . . .



Sale During Downtown Merry & Bright Event



Be on the lookout for signups and more information about the Glows Soup Supper fundraiser on Friday, November 22nd!


Coming up in our community:

Oktoberfest

Tuesday - October 15, 2024
5:00pm to 7:00pm

St. John's United Church of Christ
301 N Main Street Fairmont MN

Menu

Roast Pork Loin 


Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

German Potato Salad

Green Beans

Applesauce

Dinner Roll

Pie 

Coffee

Free Will Donation

Call 507-235-3500 for Takeout Order

Gift Basket Prizes

Rummage & Bake Sale

Thursday, October 17th 4 p.m.—8 p.m.

Friday, October 18th 8 a.m.—8 p.m.

Saturday, October 19th 8 a.m.—noon (\$3.00 Bag Sale)

Huge Sale!

Infant through Adult Clothing & Shoes
Toys Books Furniture
Household Items +++ Much Miscellaneous
Taking donations Oct 12 until noon Oct 16

 **Martin Luther JR/SR High School**
315 Martin Luther Drive Northrop, MN
4 miles north of Fairmont & 1/2 mile west www.martinlutherhs.com
Honoring Christ...Welcoming All

CE NEWS:

Snack and juice box donations are now being accepted for Sunday school!

CE's October Fun Day will be on Sunday, October 6th. Youth will have pizza & fun after Sunday school from 12–2 PM.

A little reminder to support our church youth in their activities! It means so much to them! Thanks!

MISSION MOMENT:

The October Blessing Box is for the Little Free Pantry.

Congratulations to Oliver Thedens for the honor of being a Homecoming King candidate at Fairmont High School!



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!

Prayer Chain:

We are looking for a volunteer to lead our active prayer chain. The prayer chain leader sends emails, calls those without email and is a contact for those requesting prayers. Please contact Pastor Cory or the church office if interested!

Thank you to everyone who has filled in for me in the office, taken minutes for me at church council, or helped out with the newsletter while I've been gone! You are a blessing!
- Christina

Annual Halloween Bonfire & Potluck

October 26, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

at the Vogel Farm

717 200th AVE

South of Fairmont

Hotdogs, marshmallows,

& hot apple cider provided

Bring a dish to share & your own chair

Costumes welcome, but not required!

Oct. Diaconate: Dave Huset

Usher: Eric Johnson

Readers for:

6th: Sandra Smith

13th: Marilyn Forstrom

20th: Dolores Gronewald

27th: Carolyn Thompson

Nov. Diaconate: Kris Fuller

Usher: Michael Rowan

Readers for:

3rd: Ace/Deb Adams

10th: Cynthia Celander

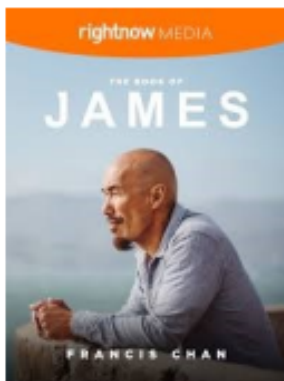
17th: Abigail Anderson

24th: Kay Campe

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!](#)

Have you logged into **rightnow** MEDIA lately? What are you watching? Many of the series available on this valuable congregational resource offer free, downloadable study guides for personal or group use! After a summer break our adult Sunday School class has started examining **The Book of James** with the help of author, teacher, and preacher Francis Chan. If you haven't joined us in the chapel after worship yet, or have missed a session, perhaps you'd like to check out the series to see what we've been discussing:

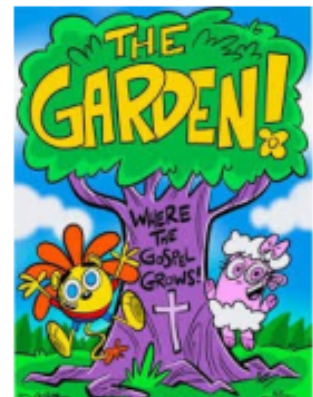


True faith produces fruit. A faith without action and without life change is ultimately a dead faith. The book of James speaks to the realities of a living faith in Jesus—the kind of roll-up-your-sleeves and get-your-hands-dirty discipleship that is borne out of an authentic relationship with the risen Lord. James writes to believers who know suffering, who've faced trials, and who ultimately desire a deep relationship with God.

Francis Chan unpacks the dense truth contained in the book of James in front of the iconic backdrop of San Francisco, the city where he lives and ministers. Through 12 sessions, Francis works through James verse-by-verse, challenging followers of Christ to move beyond a private, intellectual knowledge of God and His Word, to a vibrant faith that impacts every square inch of life.

With the kids back in school, you may be looking for a wholesome break between school, extra-curricular activities, supper, and bedtime. How about including a different form of Bible study that will both entertain and educate? Check out a few short episodes offered in **The Garden**:

*The Garden follows the adventures of **Lenny the Lion** and **Lucy the Lamb** who live and work in a miraculous garden where anything can grow! They work for GOD (who they call 'The Boss') and do different fun tasks for Him as they sing original songs and learn more about Jesus Christ. You'll love the songs and all the fun they have as your kids - and YOU - learn even more about the Word of God. 'The Garden' is a place where the Gospel grows!*



*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



Apple Dapple Cake

Ingredients for Cake:

3 eggs
2 c. brown sugar
1 c. vegetable oil
2 c. flour
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 c. coconut (optional)
1 c. chopped nuts (walnuts or pecans)
3 c. diced, peeled apples
2 tsp. vanilla

Combine eggs, brown sugar and oil. Add flour, cinnamon, baking soda and salt. (Mixture will be very thick.) Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Place in a greased 9 x 13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes to 1 hour until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Ingredients for Topping:

1 c. brown sugar
1 stick margarine
¼ c. milk

Combine and boil for 4 minutes. When the cake is done baking, punch holes in the top with a fork and pour topping over the hot cake. Cool completely.

Ingredients for Cream Cheese Frosting:

6 oz. cream cheese
¾ stick butter
1 Tbsp. cream or milk
1 tsp. vanilla
4 c. powdered sugar

Beat cream cheese, butter, vanilla and milk together until soft. Add enough powdered sugar until it is spreadable. Frost the cake.

Serves 16. Freezes well.

Happy Birthday:

Oct 2	Cheryl Rippke Kristen Abbenhaus	Oct 18	Michael Rowan
Oct 3	Elizabeth Scheppman Adam Rachuy	Oct 19	Brian Thate
Oct 4	Amanda Forstrom Steve Urban	Oct 21	Sue Kruse
Oct 7	Aubrey McAlister	Oct 22	Jane Kotewa Gracie Ziemer David Adams Jessi Kotewa
Oct 11	Jenny Craven Mike Thate	Oct 24	Melissa Goerndt
Oct 13	Logyn Cone Jonissa Neitzel	Oct 25	Kathy Jorgensen
Oct 15	John Holstine	Oct 28	Staci Thompson
Oct 17	Jon Anderson	Oct 29	Angela Vaughn
		Oct 30	Wanda Johnson
		Oct 31	Barb Bittman

October



Happy Anniversary:

Oct. 2	Brandon & Rachel Tonneson	14 years
Oct. 9	Randy & Pat Rowan	53 years
Oct. 15	Bill & Staci Thompson	19 years
Oct. 24	Steve & Janine Draper	44 years
Oct. 31	Dean & Donna Grotte	54 years

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

fairmontucc.org