

Tree of Life Newsletter

First Congregational United Church of Christ
235 S. Kenilworth Avenue – Elmhurst, Illinois 60126



January 2019

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FROM OUR MINISTER

Rev. Mike Daly

A brilliant magician was performing on an ocean liner. But every time he did a trick, the captain's parrot would yell, "It's a trick! He's a phony! It's not magic!" Then one evening during a terrible storm, the ship sank while the magician was performing. The parrot and the magician ended up on the same lifeboat. For several days, adrift on the open seas hoping for a rescue, the two glared at each other, neither saying a word to the other. Finally, the parrot spoke, "OK, I give up. What did you do with the ship?"

More and more, I see that humor is not only fun, it is spiritual. Medical science has shown the benefits of laughter for our physical health and state of mind. The same is true for our spiritual health. A good laugh or even a smile promotes a sense of well-being and lowers stress. When that happens our ability to connect with God is less distracted by our self-limitations. And we become more inclined to share a nice gesture or affirming words with others.

Now that I am starting my second year as senior minister of First Congregational, I find myself looking back and enjoying many fun and funny moments. The exchange of jokes and humorous stories on Sunday mornings. The laughter that pours out of the parlor when the Heritage Bunch meets. The clever email repartee I have with many of you. And so much more.

Partners in Christ's Service

Minister

Rev. Dr. Michael Daly, Senior Minister

Christian Education

Martha Mendoza, Minister of CE

Music

Jim Molina, Minister of Music

Church Office Staff

Heather Cross, Bookkeeper
Kim Brigman, Church Office Assistant

Emeritus Minister

Rev. Dr. Ernest H. Huntzinger

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[For general information about our Boards and Committees, click here.](#)

All, good natured, gentle moments that soothes our souls and builds us up. I look forward to many, many more smiles and laughs ahead.

It is a gift and a treasure that I cherish. So, in closing, "What do polar bears like to eat for lunch?" (ice bergers). Or, "What do skunks bring to church?" (Their own pew)

Faithfully Silly,
Mike
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

FROM OUR MODERATOR

Mike Hennel

Greetings, everyone! I hope all of you have been enjoying this beautiful holiday season and are ready to ring in the New Year with lots of joy, hope and spiritual warmth.

Kicking things off in 2019 will be our annual chili cook-off on January 27th. As always, this fun-filled event is guaranteed to warm the hearts and souls of everyone who participates. I personally look forward to joining you at it, at our Sunday services, and at all our planned events throughout the year as we continue to celebrate the Church's mission. May we all resolve in 2019 to spread the word about the many wonderful things that First Congregational stands for to our friends, families and neighbors.

Wishing you all a healthy, happy, spiritually fulfilling New Year!!

THE DIACONATE

Allen Sloma and Bob Kanzler



Taking Down the Greens

Immediately after the service next Sunday, January 6, we will be taking down the greens. We hope you'll be able to stay to help us. Thank you.

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Martha Mendoza, Director of Christian Education

Magi Gift Giving Project

It is with much gratitude that the Boards of Christian Education and Mission give thanks to all those who bought gifts and donated money towards our Magi Star Gift Giving Project. As a result of your generosity, over 100 gifts will end up being given to the children of Humboldt Park, Chicago and Ford Heights, Illinois. We are honored to continue to be mission partners with San Lucas United Church of Christ and God Can Ministries United Church of Christ.



A special shout out to Joseph D'Alessandro who kicked off the project with a Sunday mission moment, Pam McCann who was the liaison between the two boards, Kim Brigman from the Mission Board who purchased gifts with the monies that were donated and Margaret Chittaro from the Christian Education Board who coordinated the distribution of gifts with her crew of college students Carina Kanzler, Julia Morrow and Erin Stone. We could not have carried out this effort without all these contributions. Thank you!



Confirmation Retreat

A reminder that our Confirmands are scheduled to go on their retreat Sunday, January 20 through Monday, January 21. We are meeting here at First Congregational Elmhurst at 8:30a.m. and driving to San Lucas United Church of Christ in Chicago where we will be spending the night. Together we will grow in

faith and friends. Permission slips are fourth coming. Looking forward to our time together as we also observe Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Day.



CHILI COOK-OFF

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Chili Cook-Off
Sunday, January 27, 2019
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Our youth are hosting their Annual Chili Cook-Off fundraiser this month. It is our hope that you will consider attending and maybe even submit your own special recipe.

For a free-will donation, you will get to sample and vote for your favorites. You will also receive a bowl of gourmet chili, toppings, cornbread, dessert, and a beverage. Chili entry forms can be found on the hospitality table in the foyer.

Invite your family and friends to "Stuff the Ballot Box".

THE MISSION BOARD

Dan Briggs, chair



Sunday, February 3, is the date of the NFL's 2019 Super Bowl. For our church that translates into Souper Bowl Sunday, the day our church gathers canned food to help stock area food pantries. The pantry can purchase many items at deep discounted prices through the Northern Illinois Food Bank so they ask you consider the following list when choosing your donation items.

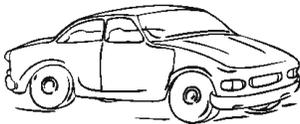
Cereal	Rice and Pasta Mixes	Potato Mixes
Ramen Noodles	Peanut Butter/Jelly	Saltine Cracker
Salad Dressing	Canned Fruits	Canned Beans
Condiments	Spaghetti Sauce	Pasta
Mac and Cheese	Canned Tuna	Canned Meats

Having difficulty getting out to shop? Donate dollars and we will do the shopping for you.

Put your cash or check into a "Special Offering" envelope found in the pews and drop it into the Sunday collection. (Make checks payable to First Congregational Church, with the notation "Souper Bowl.") You can also give your contribution to Dan Briggs or send it to Kim Brigman at the church office.

Please drop off your canned food donations in the church foyer anytime between January 13 and February 3. Questions can be directed to Dan Briggs at danbriggs9@hotmail.com or 630 427-7879. Thanks for joining us in this much needed effort to serve our community.

Mission Rides



This year's Mission Rides program was very successful! Because of your generosity, we were able to make year-end donations to Elmhurst Walk-In Assistance Network, Synapse House, St. John's UCC and God Can Ministries. Thank you for using this service whenever you need a ride! A special thank you to Linda Donahue for managing the program.

Please call Linda Donahue's cell phone at 630-564-5808 if you need a ride. You can also call the church office at 630-832-2580. Thank you again for supporting this important mission.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Jim Molina, Director of Music



The Music Ministry would like to express our gratitude for the monetary contributions that were made on our Christmas Cantata Sunday. It was a real joy and pleasure to work with the chancel choir and guest singers on this music. We were excited to welcome Tim (tenor) and his brother Bradley Kirby (bass) as well as Michelle Maiers (soprano). Meg McGarry sang a moving rendition of "Mary Did You Know?" and really "rocked out" on "Somethin's Up". Dave Benziger got to show off some of his virtuosic guitar playing on "Miraculum" and "Faith Noel".

On Christmas Eve we welcomed guest singer, Lisa Griffith as she sang a powerful and stirring, "O Holy Night". Once again Meg McGarry touched our hearts with her solo, "Here With Us".

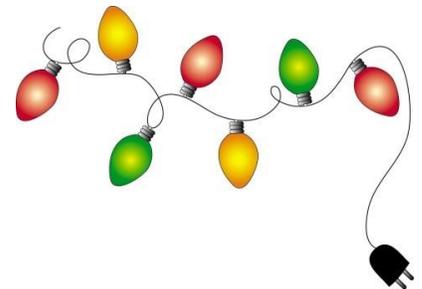
The choir will take a small break as we prepare music for the upcoming Sundays. We look forward to a new year filled with joyful singing!

THE GREEN TEAM

Karen Pachyn, chair

Christmas Lights Recycling Reminder

Just a reminder - the last Sunday to bring your lights in for recycling is Sunday, January 6th. You can dispose of them in the large box in the Tree of Life Foyer until that date. We will accept Italian mini lights, traditional lights, extension cords, rope lights and LED lights in working or non-working order, from any holiday. Lights will be taken to Elmhurst City Hall to become part of a larger collection being done by the community in conjunction with SCARCE. Happy New Year!



Green Team Tip of the Month - January, 2019

Did your family get a lot of new electronics for Christmas? Are you now looking for a place to dispose of the old ones? You don't have to wait until the spring recycling events. Take a look at this link <http://www.elmhurst.org/1266/Residential-Electronics-Recycling-Progra>

from the City of Elmhurst website to find places you can take your devices. Most are ongoing and open to all residents of DuPage County.

Save the Date **Our Green Garden Fair will be May 11, 2019**

The Green Team has confirmed that our fifth annual Green Garden Fair will be on Saturday, May 11, 2019. We will need help again in selling our organic seedlings, shoveling compost and sharing the good news about our church. So please mark your calendar and plan to join in on all the fun.



And the Green Garden Fair doesn't just miraculously fall into place on the day of the event. A lot of work goes into planning the event, beginning in January. We could really use some help in contacting our exhibitors, getting the word out about pre orders, helping with publicity and working on other logistics. If you could spare some time to help out, please let Karen Pachyn know at kpachyn@comcast.net or 630-279-7403.

We will once again be getting our organic seedlings from Montalbano Farms, who also supplied our beautiful vegetable and herb plants in the last two years. Watch for more information about ordering seedlings later in January. Then, when the winter doldrums start to get you down, just start thinking about your summer garden. It's guaranteed to lift your spirits!

HERITAGE BUNCH



The Heritage Bunch meets in the parlor the second and fourth Wednesdays each month from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Please join us for fellowship and friendship!

JEAN'S POEM

Jean Schildbach

A special poem to recap December here at First Church.



Celebrations - Congregational Style

There are many performances and days to remember
before the celebration of His birth in December.

The young and the younger - each dressed for their part
presented their pageant with talent and heart.

And there's a study of a book called "Not a Silent Night"
in the parlor for discussion on Wednesday night,
And the Christmas Cantata on the twenty-third
by the Chancel Choir will inspire when heard.

Now the Heritage Bunch put their heads together,
planned a party for the staff on this 12th of December
with tasty repast and many a treat,
and always - yes, always, ending up with a sweet.

We hope 'twill be followed with music by Jim
with carols and songs we can all join in.

Now if Jan will lead us in a sweet little prayer,
we'll fill our plates with delectable fare.

Jean 12-12-18.

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS



January

7	Mary Moy-Gregg
8	Jim Mowers
10	Sandy DuBois
13	Martin Pacheco
13	Diane Wells
14	Miles Schacht
16	Paula Fabbri
18	Jim Achen
20	Evan DuBois
22	David Vastola
23	Aleta Dallas
29	Dave Schacht
30	Larry Meyer



Clare and Jean Jacobi	Ken Stratton	Bill Nagy
Kim Rudakas	Mike Magana	Rozella Nagy
Basia Rudy	Amy Lynch	

If you would like someone added or removed from the prayer list, please contact the church office at elmhurstucc@sbcglobal.net or 630-832-2580. Thank you.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

January	Event/Room	Time
6	Communion Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
8	Mission Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.
9	Heritage Bunch- Parlor	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
10	Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
12-13	PADS	6:30 p.m. - 7:30 a.m.
13	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
15	Trustees Meeting	6:00 p.m.
17	Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
20	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
20-21	Confirmation Retreat	8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
22	Council Meeting	7:00 p.m.
23	Heritage Bunch- Parlor	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
24	Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
27	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
27	Chili Cook-Off Youth Fundraiser	11:00 a.m.
31	Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.