MARCH 2022

MODERATOR’S MINUTE
Margaret Chittaro

I read our newsletters and am so proud!
We are a small but mighty church.
Every one of us can attest to the love received just by walking in the front door.
But our church is so much more ...

We have extraordinary staff in Marta Mendoza, Jim Molina, Heather Cross and Kim Brigman.
They are the center of our church.
We are thankful for all they do. Their efforts do not go unnoticed.

We have dedicated lay leaders that constantly give of their time and energy.
Many thanks to those members stepping off of boards and committees ... we are so grateful for all you have given.
And a special welcome to those members who have newly joined ... we appreciate the gift of your time.

We have so many programs to be proud of, so many wonderful events in which to share fellowship, and so many ideas yet to be realized!

I look forward to working with all of the incredible people that make up our church's leadership.
I am very lucky indeed to share this time together to lift up this amazing church.
There is always much work to be done ... but together, we will accomplish so much!

A SEASON OF RENEWAL
WORSHIP MINISTRY
Martha Mendoza, Jim Molina and Margaret Chittaro

The Worship Team meets every Wednesday to plan out worship service.

We continue to seek out guest ministers that inspire us.
If you feel so moved to share your gifts with the Congregation by preaching on Sunday, please reach out to a member of the Worship Team.

Our in-person worship every Sunday morning is our focus.
Knowing we come together weekly excites and pushes us to deliver to the congregation a fulfilling and rich service.

While we collectively worship on Sundays, another part of worship is what we do individually.
This year, CE brings us an important Lenten Study, THE LORD’S PRAYER, March 9 and March 23. You will be hearing more about this study in the upcoming weeks.

We also highlight our upcoming Lent season: A Season of Renewal.
Lent is a time to renew our faith.
Lent is a time to renew our hope.
Lent is a time to renew our hearts.
Lent is our time of spiritual renewal.

We look forward to sharing this Lenten journey together ...

PULPIT SEARCH COMMITTEE
Fritz Baumgartner, Margaret Bixler, Margaret Chittaro, Gayle Dawson, Vanessa Jackson, Bob Kanzler, and Janet Russell

After several remote interviews via Zoom, the Search Committee is focusing it's attention on two candidates. One of the candidates has been to the church for an in-person interview, and the second candidate is
scheduled for an in-person interview in the very near future. There is still work to be done, but are prayerful that we will be able to make recommendations to the congregation soon.

TRUSTEES
Jan Davis, Fritz Baumgartner, Don Haraf, Mike Hennel, Carrie Stone, Chair

We are excited to start a new church year with the addition of Don Haraf to the Board of Trustees. We also want to say a heartfelt thank you to Bob Kanzler for his years of service to the church as a member of the Board of Trustees. It is the everyday work and leadership of committed volunteers that allows us to maintain and improve our church for everyone.

The work and reach of First Congregational is defined by the interests and passions of our membership. The Board of Trustees seeks to support the creative endeavors of our members by providing a safe, clean, and comfortable place for us to gather for worship, fellowship, learning and serving. We have a large facility complete with sanctuary, chapel, classrooms, meeting halls, and office space that require our attention. Further, we manage a multi-talented staff as they seek to preach, play, discern, and lead us toward our vision to be Partners in Christ's Service.

We encourage you to think creatively about our church home and how our faith family can continuously reach out to people with the Word of God and the Love of Christ. What invitations can YOU make to bring people into our faith family and spiritual experience? These invitations can open doors for people that are meaningful and profound. It is wonderful to think of the invitations we have made the last several years, including: Please join us.....on the Island of Puerto Rico, at DeColores, at the Green Garden Fair, at the Women's Gathering, at an Advent Study, or at the Heritage Bunch.

It is no secret that our congregation is small relative to the size of our building. Through prayer, planning, and outreach, we have been able to care for and improve our facility through the years. As we move forward, we need to challenge ourselves to keep BEING CREATIVE and THINKING OUTREACH. Let's make plans for and investments in our future so that we may welcome more visitors and members into our community. Your ideas are welcome!

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Amarelis Morales- Berent, Vanessa Jackson, Martha Mendoza, Lynette Rosen, Karen Sloma

As the season of Lent approaches you are invited to join us for our two part study series on Wednesday evenings, March 9 & March 23. We will be focusing our study on the book titled: “The Lord’s Prayer” by Adam Hamilton.

Each of these two gatherings will commence with a delicious gourmet dinner at 6:30 p.m. followed by discussion from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Books and the sign-up sheet are available on the Hospitality Table in the church foyer and in the church office. A $10.00 donation would be appreciated to help cover some of the cost of the books.

Let’s come together for these two studies during this season of renewal. Looking forward to your participation.

Parents are invited to drop off their kindergarten through 6th grade children to First Congregational Church’s Movie Night on Friday, March 18 from 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM. Our evening’s movie is Coco.
Keeping our commitment to contributing to your children’s faith formation and being global citizens as promoted in our De Colores Spanish Camp, there will be activities that promote learning Spanish. We will also highlight some of the cultural aspects the movie portrays.

Together children will enjoy a traditional Mexican dinner of cheese quesadillas, salsa, guacamole and churros. (Note: if your children don’t eat any of our food selections, please have your them bring their own sack meal.)

Spots are limited so please sign up your child(ren) soon. Please click the red box below to reserve your spot.

An offering will be collected on the night of the event to help cover costs. Hope you can join us!

Parents' Night Out/ Children's Movie Night Sign-Up

Confirmed in Christ

In the midst of this pandemic, our two confirmands have stayed strong and have been able to meet regularly. When you see them please affirm their efforts. They are Morgan Scumaci and Nik Reshamwala.

If all goes as planned, we will be confirming these two young men on Sunday, May 1 at our 10:00 a.m. service. During March, confirmands are expected to help lead our Communion Service on March 6. Their leadership also will be needed during the morning worship on March 13 with confirmation class immediately after worship.

Parents, please mark your family calendars. Thank you!

Youth Ministry

Youth, young adults, and parents are invited to a work trip informational and registration meeting on Sunday, March 6 from 11:00 a.m. to noon. We will be meeting in the Youth Room.

Together we will go over the state of the Island during this latter part of the pandemic, what type of service work we will be doing, and other important details. By this meeting, everyone should have received their registration forms. Please bring your completed forms and deposits to this meeting. Slots are limited. We look forward to our presence. Thank you!

Women's Spiritual Growth Gathering

Friday, April 1, 2022
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

We are so excited to finally be having an in-person women's gathering. Our guest speaker is Dr. Adrienne Colemen who will be exploring with us how to continue to grow our faith.

As part of our evening, we will be enjoying an AMAZING spread of appetizers, raffles, door prizes, and best of all each other's company.

Mark your calendars and plan on joining us (bring a friend).
Our women empowerment free will offering for the evening will go to #LovePurse.

THE DIACONATE
Bridget Bixler, Brian Brigman, Calvin Jackson, Raquel & William Roman

Sunday Service Updates
We don’t have all the details yet but are hopeful that on March 1 the indoor mask requirements can be lifted.

The parlor is open for coffee and fellowship before Sunday service and we hope that people will reconnect while being cautious and respectful.

Sign-up sheets are posted on the foyer bulletin board for Scripture readers. If prospective readers are wary of doing readings that may have difficult pronunciations, the music team is available right before service to help with hard to pronounce names and places.

Thank you to Don, Carolee and Claire!
A great BIG thank you to Don Haraf for chairing the Diaconate these past four years! He has contributed so much to the worship planning team and his participation in our worship services has been invaluable. Also thank you to Carolee Luppino and Claire Richter for their dedication to our church and the Diaconate board. We appreciate your time and commitment to making sure our worship services are safe and welcoming each Sunday.

MISSION BOARD
Jorge Morales, Gail Ogdon, Amy Reshamwala, Ann Thoele

Thank you to Mary & Diane!
A great big thank you to Mary and Diane for the sharing of their time, effort and talent these last four years on the Mission Board. They certainly have made a difference in identifying and helping those in need throughout our community as well as our national and global efforts. We look forward to their continued support of the Mission projects and programs throughout the year.

One Great Hour of Sharing
Each year during Lent, we participate in One Great Hour of Sharing, a nationwide appeal for gifts of money and time to aid ministries worldwide which help those individuals and communities who suffer the effects of disaster, conflict or severe economic hardship. This year our collection will be on March 27th. This program began after World War II when appeals were made for relief and reconstruction. It has grown from one denomination to many across the country. The purpose for over 60 years has remained the same: To collect special gifts to assist those in need.

The project was started in 1946 and became a strong effort in 1949 when church leaders put together the first nationwide appeal. A cast was recruited from among the foremost dramatic and musical talent in the US, including Gregory Peck and Ida Lupino. Over the radio on Saturday evening, President Truman brought greetings for a broadcast of One Great Hour. The show closed with a request that listeners attend their local church the following morning and make a sacrificial contribution. It was estimated that more than 75,000 churches participated.

One Great Hour of Sharing supports projects that break the cycles of poverty, hunger and thirst, as well as providing aid during times of crisis. One Great Hour of Sharing changes lives and gives people a future filled with hope. The bulk of the offering goes to support water, hunger, disaster relief and empowerment programs. Focusing on these four areas allows One Great Hour of Sharing to address some of the root causes...
of suffering in our world. Your gifts make hope possible, so please donate generously this year on Sunday, March 27th.

GREEN TEAM
Don Haraf, Jennifer Hennen, Carolee Luppino, Chris Murray, Karen Pachyn, Claire Richter, Bob Tracy

Green Garden Fair Planning

Thanks to everyone who preordered Organic Seedlings and helped spread the word about our sale. Don’t worry if after placing your order you thought “I wish I’d ordered another tomato”. We will have additional seedlings available for purchase at our Green Garden Fair.

Our Green Garden Fair will be on Saturday, May 7th from 9 AM to 1 PM. During that time, gardeners will be able to pick up their seedlings, compost and growing mix. We’ll have additional plants, compost and growing mix available for purchase too. We’ll also have a number of exhibitors who will share with our community ways to live more sustainably. Some of the exhibitors who have agreed to be at our Fair so far include the Elmhurst Cool Cities Coalition, the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners, City Bee Savers, the DuPage Monarch Project, and the Elmhurst Garden Club just to name a few. And a perennial favorite, Synapse House will be selling their Flower to Empower bakery products. Yum! We’re also going to have a church table to promote our ministries.

All this will take a lot of volunteers to pull off. Plants will be delivered on Thursday, May 5th and we will need help unloading the truck. It would be especially helpful to have some young folks with strong backs then as we will have at least 100 bags of compost and growing mix to move. Then on Friday, May 6th it will be an all-day effort to sort individual orders in Fellowship Hall. Early on the day of the Fair, we’ll also need some help to get all the orders into our parking lot before 9:00 on Saturday morning. Beginning at 9AM we’ll need help with the preorder pick up, with the day of seedlings sale, with manning the church table and with a variety of other things. If you can pitch in on one or more of these days, please mark your calendar and let Karen Pachyn know. There will be a Sign Up Genius as we get closer to May.

Thanks for all your help! It’s always a fun event, especially when we all pitch it to make it a success. Proceeds from the sale support the church’s general ministries.

Green Team Tip of the Month - Grocery Bags

When the Green Team was first formed a number of years ago, we spent a lot of time educating our congregation about the negative value of plastic grocery bags. I hope by now we are all using reusable cloth bags and I don’t have to repeat the reasons why that’s the right thing to do for our environment. If you are using cloth bags at check out, congratulations!

Are you also using reusable bags when you go thru the Produce Department? I have to admit that until recently I was still using the plastic produce bags provided when I picked up my fruits and vegetables. I ordered reusable produce bags last year and they work great. See the photo for an example of the bags I’m talking about.

If you just google “reusable produce bags” you’ll find a wide variety of them from which to choose on Amazon and from other sources. They come in different sizes so they fit one tomato or a whole head of leaf lettuce, wash easily and are inexpensive. I was afraid cashiers would give me a hard time about using them but I haven’t had any issues and they are way easier to open than those sticky bags you get at the store!

Karen Pachyn
HERITAGE BUNCH

Greetings …

We are called the Heritage Bunch
We meet 10 to Noon …yes, just before lunch
Two Wednesdays a month and we really have fun
It’s interesting talk … from when we start till we’re done!

We solve the world’s problems, of each other we care
We talk and we laugh and we end with a prayer.

If you’re looking for a group, but you don’t just know where
There’s nothing we’d like better than to have you right there.

Come join us …
On the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

PASTORAL CARE
Rev. Jan Davis

Caring for One Another
Supporting our members during everyday occurrences, ailments, and even the passing
away of a loved one is highest among our calling as a church. During this period of a
pastoral search, Rev. Jan Davis will be providing pastoral care. She will be reaching out to those of us that
have enjoyed regular pastoral visits and for any emergency that may arise.

If you have any pastoral needs, please contact the church office at 630-832-2580.

CHURCH APARTMENT FOR RENT

The 1-bedroom apartment in the church, located on the lower level south east side of the
building, is currently vacant and available for lease. Please contact Carrie Stone (773-569-2444) or Margaret Chittaro (312-961-8067) if you would like more information.

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

1 Laurie Stevens
9 Jack Hamby
15 Katie McCann Carlson
19 Bridget Bixler
23 Ann Thoele
27 Erin Stone

Jeff Barkley
Katy McCann Carlson and Baby
Susan Graybill
Louis Reed
### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday Service at St. Peter’s Church</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Summer Work Trip Meeting – Youth Room</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Heritage Bunch – Parlor</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lenten Dinner &amp; Study “The Lord’s Prayer”</td>
<td>6:30 – 8:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Confirmation Class</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Parents’ Night Out/ Children’s Movie Night</td>
<td>5:30 – 8:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Heritage Bunch – Parlor</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Lenten Dinner &amp; Study “The Lord’s Prayer”</td>
<td>6:30 – 8:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Choir Rehearsal</td>
<td>7:00 – 8:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TITHE.LY GIVING

Give with Tithe.ly from anywhere at any time. Download the Tithe.ly giving app to get started. You'll find First Congregational United Church of Christ, Elmhurst, IL. Your gift is safe and secure and goes directly to our church.

Click HERE for more info on Tithe.ly

Support First Congregational each time you make a purchase on Amazon. Sign up and shop at smile.amazon.com and a portion of your purchase will be donated back.
to First Congregational at no cost to you. This is an easy way for us to earn some extra money! Please make sure you sign up to participate. Thank you!

Click HERE to sign up for Amazon Smile

**Partners in Christ’s Service**

**Pastoral Care**
Rev. Janet Davis  
revjcd@aol.com  
(630) 400-7747

**Church Staff**
Martha Mendoza, Director of Christian Education  
Jim Molina, Director of Music  
Heather Cross, Bookkeeper  
Kim Brigman, Office Assistant

Rev. Dr. Ernest H. Huntzinger, Emeritus Minister

**Contact Us**
Phone: (630) 832-2580  
Email: elmhurstucc@sbcglobal.net  
Website: www.elmhurstucc.org  
Facebook: First Congregational UCC Elmhurst