

Tree of Life Newsletter

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



APRIL 2024

FROM OUR MODERATOR

Janet Russell

Hello all,

Welcome to April and welcome to spring! I hope you all enjoyed our Holy Week services. I also hope you were able to get your favorite goodies at the bake sale.

Now you may ask what's next? We have a women's gathering on April 12, Confirmation Sunday, May 5 and Commissioning of our Puerto Rico delegation on May 19 and that's just our Christian Education Board.

Our Music Department will be putting on an intimate concert in April. And don't forget the Green Garden Fair in May. We will round this all off with our annual church picnic immediately after service on June 9. And of course we will be having our regular wonderful services on Sunday mornings.

We are a busy church and I hope that everyone can find that something that is special to them and participate. I hope that if you have an idea of something that you think would broaden our horizons, please feel free to reach out to me or anyone of our church leaders. We can only continue to grow if we continue to challenge ourselves. Thank you to all of you for the love and support I feel every time I am at church.

Take care and again - Happy Spring!!

Jan Russell

FROM OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dorothy Hamby, Don Haraf and Carrie Stone (chair)

We wish to thank Kim Brigman for her outstanding service as our Office Assistant. As a church member and long-time volunteer leader, Kim has never hesitated to step in and help out whenever needed. When we needed to fill this staff position several years ago, Kim graciously accepted to do

so! We all have greatly appreciated her friendly demeanor, smiling face, and attention to the many details that make our church work each week. Kim has decided to leave her staff position and place her focus on her family going forward. Please be sure to thank her for her service when you see her in the pews on Sunday! Rest assured, Kim is working with Martha to devise a transition plan to make sure her tasks are covered and the Personnel Committee has posted a "help wanted" ad online to search for Kim's replacement.

The Building & Grounds Committee (Terry Hennen, Don Haraf, Tom Cooper, Carrie Stone) continue to work on your behalf to care for our beautiful building. This March, we completed some roof replacement and repair on the east side of the building, including replacement of our steeple roof. We also completed our water abatement work on the south side of the building to protect our basement apartment.

While Tree Town is on Spring Break, we are adding air conditioning to the nursery so that room is comfortable on warmer days. We continue to work with our heating & air maintenance contractor, Service Express, to even out the heat in the Sanctuary and reduce the noise of the A/C in that room. You will notice new thermostats with a code on them. Staff members and our team will have the codes required to make any temperature changes. We are focused on increasing comfort and decreasing cost and wasted energy in our building.

You may notice that we have a new tenant on the lower level, in the Blue and Yellow Rooms. We are welcoming a local photographer to our space and are thrilled to have them here.

FROM OUR TREASURER

Margaret Chittaro

HELP WANTED!

First Congregational is looking for a **very** part-time **TREASURER**.

Looking for a self-motivated, personable, & dependable individual.

Must possess a basic understanding of numbers.



Excellent benefits & working conditions!



**DON'T LET THIS JOB GO
UNFILLED IN 2025!**

**CONTACT MARGARET CHITTARO
FOR MORE INFORMATION AT
MCHITTARO@SBCGLOBAL.NET**

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Connie Bryant, Vanessa Jackson, Martha Mendoza, Amarelis Morales-Berent, Lynette Rosen (chair), and Donna Scumaci



Our De Colores Children's Conversational Spanish Summer Camp is **Monday, July 29–Friday, August 2** from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. with our Celebration Sunday on **August 4** at 10:00 a.m.

Our De Colores adult volunteers are truly the backbone of this ministry and we need your help!

One of our most important adult volunteer positions is the **Shepherd**. Each Shepherd greets and dismisses their children by having parents or guardians sign them in and out. Shepherds also travel to the educational stations with their group and engage and participate in each station's activities.

It is among my prayers that you will join us as an adult volunteer for our church's De Colores camp.

A sign up sheet has been established on the hospitality table in the church foyer.

Thank you for your consideration, Señora Martha Mendoza

Celebrating A Valued Addition to Our Christian Education Board

On Sunday, March 17, our Christian Education Board gathered after worship for our first meeting after our Annual Congregational Meeting. It was a time of reflection, planning, and joyful anticipation. But this month held an extra special moment—a warm welcome to our newest board member, Connie Bryant.

Connie's dedication to our church community is evident.

She has been the creative force behind our beloved Children's Christmas Program for several years. Her leadership during our De Colores summer camp has been invaluable.

As Connie steps into her role on the board, we are filled with excitement. Her passion for education, her heart for children, and her unwavering commitment to our church family is a blessing to all.

Please join us in welcoming Connie Bryant as she joins our Board of Christian Education.





On **Sunday, May 5**, our hearts will swell with joy as we witness a significant milestone in the faith journey of two remarkable young ladies—**Katie Cooper and Farrah Beavers**. These names are not new to our church; they have been a part of our church since their earliest days.

Their Journey:

- **Rooted in Faith:** Katie and Farrah have been part of our church family since they were both very young.
- **Faith Formation:** For the past two years, they've engaged in faith formation conversations and learnings. They've explored Scripture, wrestled with doubts, and deepened their understanding of God's love.
- **Public Witness:** On May 5, during our Sunday worship service, Katie and Farrah will stand before us—a public witness to their faith. Their "yes" to Christ will resonate through our sanctuary, reminding us all of the sacred promises we've made.

How Can You Participate?

- **Mark Your Calendar:** Set aside Sunday, May 5. Be present as witnesses, encouragers, and fellow travelers on this faith-filled path.
- **Pray:** Lift up Katie and Farrah in prayer. Pray for their continued growth, unwavering commitment, and the joy of their public affirmation.

We hope you can join us! Martha Mendoza, Associate Pastor

Summertime Sunday School for Kids: June 2 – August 25

Dear Parents and Grandparents

Get ready for a sun-soaked adventure! Our **Summertime Sunday School** is in the works, and we're excited to create a vibrant, faith-filled experience for our young ones. From **June 2 to August 25**, our church will be buzzing with laughter, learning, and love.



Your Input Matters: We believe that the best ideas come from our congregation. So, we invite you to share your thoughts on summer Bible themes. What topics would resonate with kids from preschool to 8th grade? How can we nurture their faith as they bask in the warmth of the season?

Reach Out: Connect with **Lynette Rosen** or **Martha Mendoza** to contribute your ideas. Let's make this a summer of growth, friendship, and deepening our children's walk with God.

Stay tuned for more details—it's going to be a splashing good time! With sunny anticipation.

THE DIACONATE BOARD

Brian Brigman, Rev. Jan Davis, Calvin Jackson, Carolee Luppino, Ray Perez, Claire Richter (chair), and William Roman

March has been a rush! Jean Schildbach's memorial, St. Patrick's Day, Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter- the month has flown by.

Looking forward to April: The Women's Spiritual Growth Gathering on April 12; Earth Day on April 21 featuring your Green Team and the Rev. Tracy Heilman from Tower Hill.

On April 28, come hear a new guest preacher. We're also looking forward to holding a luncheon for new prospective members right after the service.

Then comes May: Confirmation, Green Garden Fair, Mother's Day, work trip commissioning and special music by our music committee.

We are a busy & welcoming church- looking forward to seeing all of you.

Claire Richter, chair

THE MUSIC MINISTRY BOARD

Gayle Dawson, Linda Donahue, Jim Mowers, Carol Ringhoff, Mary Swanson and Jim Molina
(Music Director)



Organ and Piano Duets

On April 27 and 28, our music director, Jim Molina will be performing two concerts, “A Festival of Hymns”. The concerts will feature organ and piano duets, all performed by our very own music director.

Come join us for a musical event filled with some of the most memorable hymns arranged for piano and organ. Jim Molina will perform on the piano along with our programmable Berghaus Pipe organ some exhilarating arrangements of Ode To Joy, Lift high the Cross, Battle Hymn of the Republic, and many more. Each piece will have a spoken narrative of the origins of the compositions.

Experience the power of music in a unique way as the piano and organ come together in perfect harmony. This is a concert you won't want to miss! There are only 40 seats available per concert so order your ticket right away! All tickets must be ordered and reserved.

The Saturday evening concert will be \$25 to attend and there will be a wine and cheese reception to follow. Our Sunday afternoon concert will be a free will offering (no reception).

Mark your calendars and invite your friends and family for a memorable event of sacred music duets. See you there!

Details are as follows:

Concerts

Saturday, April 27 at 7 pm \$25 tickets (wine and cheese reception)

Sunday, April 28 at 2 pm Free-will offering

All tickets will be made available online at elmhurstucc.org.

THE GREEN TEAM

Adison Goble, Don Haraf, Carolee Luppino, Gail Ogdon, Karen Pachyn (chair), Claire Richter, Carol Ringhoff and Bob Rosiejka

Coming May 11 – The Green Garden Fair

Thanks to everyone who preordered organic seedlings and to all who helped spread the word about our sale. For our tenth annual fundraiser we exceeded our goal of grossing \$10,000 and we sold 2,978 plants, 12% more than last year, to 164 gardeners. We couldn't do it without everyone's support and energy so the Green Team is grateful to everyone for their help.



We're now looking forward to the Green Garden Fair which will be on Saturday, May 11 from 9:00 AM to Noon. You will be able to pick up your preorder there. We will also have a large selection of additional plants available for sale at the Fair. (Remember – it's the day before Mother's Day. Mom would love some flowers, or maybe some basil or tomatoes!) You'll be able to enjoy our many exhibitors too.

NEW THIS YEAR – Custom Edge Sharpening (<https://www.customedgesharpener.com/>) will be joining us. Bring your garden tools, knives and scissors and they will be sharpened on site, while you enjoy the Fair. And Prairie Wind Natives will be selling native plants. The Garden Works Project will share with us what they do and Children UP will be making dried flower cards to raise money to help provide education to children in Uganda. Many of your old favorites will be back too. The University of Illinois Master Gardeners will be answering your growing questions and "Caroline's Birdie Tweets" will be selling bird seed ornaments. City Bee Savers will be selling their delicious local, raw honey and Sustain DuPage will be giving out heirloom pole beans again. That's just a few of the fun things that will be happening at the Fair.

The Green Team can't do this alone. We need *everyone's* help, so mark your calendar for these important dates. Our providers, Baas Greenhouses, Inc. and We Grow Dreams, will make their deliveries on the morning of Thursday, May 9. We will need help getting everything off the truck. Seedlings will be taken to Fellowship Hall where they will be sorted into individual preorders on Friday, May 10 for pick up at the Fair the next day. We'll need help sorting the plants on Friday and getting everything outside and set up on Saturday, beginning at 7:30 AM. During the actual Fair, we'll need folks to distribute preorders, sell additional plants, and sit at a table sharing information about our church with our visitors, among other things. And then of course, there will be clean up after the event. There will be something for everyone to do on May 9, 10 and 11. Look for a Sign Up Genius, coming soon.

It will be a busy couple of days, but it's always fun when we all band together to make our event a success! Proceeds from the sale support the church's general ministries.

The Green Team – Adison Goble, Don Haraf, Carolee Luppino, Gail Ogdon, Karen Pachyn, Carol Ringhoff, Claire Richter, Bob Rosiejka

Green Team Tip of the Month
April, 2024
Spring Cleaning



It's spring, at least according to the calendar. It's hard to tell by the weather, but it's a good time to do some spring cleaning. If that includes cleaning out a closet or two, the goal should be to keep things out of landfills.

Here's a list of all the things that SCARCE accepts: <https://www.scarce.org/accepted-items/> They are very conveniently located just north of North Avenue at 800 S. Rohlwing Road, in Addison. They accept drop offs on Tuesdays through Fridays from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. For more information, see the link. If you have something that SCARCE will not accept, please take a look at this list of recycling collections to look for one close to you. <https://www.scarce.org/recycling-events/>

Note that Elmhurst's next Electronics and Textile Recycling event is on April 27 from 8:00 AM to Noon at 985 S. Riverside Drive. Yes, they do take textiles of all kinds, as long as they are clean and dry. So bring them your old clothes, socks, towels, bedsheets, drapes, and a long list of other things included on the list, accessible via the link, and empty up some space in those crowded closets or drawers.

Do the cleaning while you celebrate Earth Day on April 22 and Arbor Day on April 26. We'll be celebrating them both during our annual Earth Day service on April 21. We hope to see you there.

Karen Pachyn

THE 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

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.

If you find yourself needing pastoral support, please contact our church office at 630-832-2580. We will reach out to Rev. Jan Davis or a member of the pastoral care support team to contact you.

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS



- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 3 Brian Brigman | 15 Bob Kanzler |
| 5 Olivia Scumaci | 28 Jorge Morales Jr. |
| 6 Donna Scumaci | 29 Amarelis Morales-Berent |
| 7 Margaret Chittaro | |



- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| August (Augie) Carlson | Virginia and Jim Moss |
| Maxine & Wade Cassidy | Lisa Moy |
| Aleta Dallas | Randy Price |
| Cheryl & Ed Eckert | Basia Rudy |
| Susan Graybill | Joyce Stevens |

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April	Event	Time
4	Choir Rehearsal	7:00–8:30 p.m.
7	Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School	10:00 a.m.
10	Heritage Bunch	10:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.
11	Choir Rehearsal	7:00–8:30 p.m.
12	Women’s Spiritual Growth Gathering	6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
14	Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School	10:00 a.m.
18	Choir Rehearsal	7:00–8:30 p.m.
21	Sunday Worship Service with Sunday School	10:00 a.m.
23	Council Meeting	7:00 p.m.
24	Heritage Bunch	10:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.
25	Choir Rehearsal	7:00–8:30 p.m.
27	Jim Molina’s “A Festival of Hymns” Concert	7:00 p.m.
28	Sunday Service with Sunday School	10:00 a.m.
28	Jim Molina’s “A Festival of Hymns” Concert	2:00p.m.

GIVING OPTIONS

For your convenience, payment for any event, fundraiser, or offering can be done multiple ways.

Below are our giving options.

For online givers, we urge you to switch to **PayPal or Venmo** as both of these services greatly reduce our processing fees.

1. PAYPAL: Use [@fcuccelm](https://paypal.me/fcuccelm)

We prefer and recommend PayPal for electronic giving at this time. We receive a reduced processing fee, which is a benefit for both you as the donor, and First Church as the recipient.

Paypal users can setup an account and store their credit card and bank to make payments.

2. VENMO: User is @FCUCCElthurst

We are excited to offer the option to use Venmo.

Click the icon below, or simply enter @FCUCCElthurst in your Venmo app.

<https://account.venmo.com/u/FCUCCElthurst>

3. You may mail a check to:

First Congregational UCC

Attn: Bookkeeper

235 S Kenilworth

Elmhurst, IL 60126

4. Tithely

We continue to keep our legacy e-giving platform, Tithely, active. <https://tithe.ly/give?c=317447>

Partners in Christ's Service

Pastoral Care

Rev. Janet Davis

revjcd40@aol.com

(630) 400-7747

Church Staff

Martha Mendoza, Associate Pastor

Jim Molina, Director of Music

Heather Cross, Bookkeeper

Kim Brigman, Office Assistant

Rev. Dr. Ernest H. Huntzinger, Emeritus Minister

Contact Us

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