

First Congregational Messenger
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1102 W. Norfolk Ave.
Norfolk, NE 68701
402-371-0701

firstconougcc@fastmail.com
Serving God with love and faith



July 2024

Volume 5, Issue 117



Welcome to Pastor Brian High and his wife, Andrea. Pastor Brian will begin working July 1 and will be leading us in worship on July 7. He will walk with us as we move forward.

Updated church directory is now available. Please pick one up for updated information.



Office Hours
Monday-Friday
8-12

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Pastor's pages | 2-5 |
| Announcements | 6 |
| Serving | 7 |
| Financial Page | 8 |
| Calendar | 9-10 |

Farewell Message

In October 2013, I began my ministry with you at First Congregational UCC in Norfolk. As I was also completing my Interim Ministry Network training (IMN), I was required to work on a project with a congregation. After getting to know you a bit, I realized that our project would need to be fun and involve food!

In conversation with Unity Council, I proposed a project we called “Around the Table”. In the Spring of 2014, small groups (60 people) gathered for a meal at homes, Fellowship Hall or a restaurant to share stories about congregational members past and present. I proposed a question, took notes, distributed a list of 88 values after the stories were all told. I recorded the number of times participants named a value that they heard embedded in a story.

As a result of this *pertnear* scientific study, three values were mentioned much more than any others: caring, compassion, and welcome. Over the past 10 ½ years serving with you, I can testify that these values characterized our ministry together. I listed a small number of these in my Pastor’s 2024 Annual Report.

At a follow-up visioning session in June 2014, I learned that the congregation strongly identified as *servants*, affirming this characteristic as they voted on the motto: “*Serving God with love and faith*”. The basin of water, pitcher, and towel all point to Jesus’ insistence that he is a *servant*, and his disciples are to follow his example.

In my time with you, I also learned a few other things. Every time a new person comes to church (even to visit), the church is changed. Over ten plus years, the church is not the same church.

With your new pastor, together you will discern:
Who are we today? and How is God leading us?



With love and faith

When I arrived, there was a spirit of *renewal* in and among us that has never left. With the Spirit of the Risen Christ to lead us, life is new each day. I believe it was also this Spirit that called our sisters and brothers of Linaje Escogido Church to base their ministry on this same small corner of the world.

As I begin the next chapter of my life back home in Southeast Iowa I know that I am excited, and that I will miss you all and our ministry together. Every beginning starts with an ending. Thank you; we ended well and we both can look ahead with hope and joy knowing God goes with us, Christ gives us direction, and the Spirit guides each step. Our job is to stay *open*.

Peace and grace to you,

Jackie



First Congregational serves at the Food Pantry

First Congregational UCC volunteered at the Norfolk Community Food Pantry weekday mornings June 17 through June 28. On June 19, Pastor Jackie helped with registration, while Grace and Reese Uzzell, and Darlene Korthals worked to fill orders and deliver the food boxes to cars. They served 13 families. That morning, a large supply of fresh raspberries was delivered, a fun surprise for all! Volunteers enjoyed serving and meeting the community! Alene, Cindy, and Karolee were great coaches for the volunteers. Other volunteers in June included: Bonnie Kroeger, Pat Jenny, Susan Surber, Kay Neuharth, David Thompson, Rita Woodard, Evonne Burkink, and Jane Uzzell.



Thank you to all who participated in the first Linaje Escogido (LE) and First Congregational (FCUCC) Joint Church Picnic on Sunday, June 9. The Garcia's provided the delicious grilled chicken with all the fixings: rice, refried beans, tortillas and salsa. FCUCC provided picnic-type side dishes, desserts, and beverages. We served around 80 people (about 25 from our congregation, which was very good!)

David Gonzalez served as interpreter. Pastor Jackie welcomed everyone and offered the grace before the meal. After all were served, Pastor Abel Garcia introduced his family and shared the story of their search for church space in 2019. Pastor Aracelli (or Shelly) Garcia shared a blessing and prayers for Pastor Jackie and the congregation. Scott Williams introduced his family, Unity Council members, and Susan Allyn, Church Secretary. Barb Koenig and Randy Neuharth (with Scott) have served as liaisons between the two churches since 2019. Scott introduced new Interim Pastor Brian High and his wife Andrea High. Pastor Brian said that he and Andrea often partner together in ministry.

Several LE youth joined Jonathan Garcia who led the singing in Spanish and English ("He Touched Me" by Bill Gaither, and "Come, Now is the Time to Worship" by Brian Doerksen). Jonathan Garcia played guitar and Jovani Garcia played piano. They play in the Garcia's band, *Grupo Linaje*. The family are accomplished musicians. You can hear their music regularly on Facebook available at: <https://www.facebook.com/elgrupolinaje/> .



Pastor Jackie, Reese Uzzell, Grace Uzzell and three LE youth provided games for young children: hula hoop game, cement chalk art, and bubbles. The LE youth volunteered for kitchen clean-up. Many others helped with clean-up.



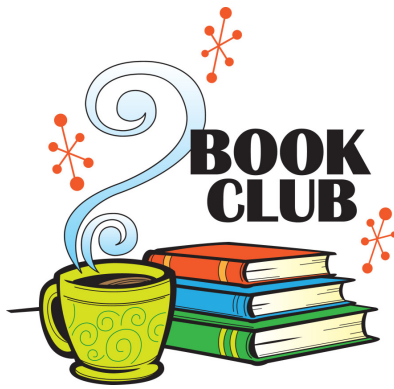
To register, go to: <https://ucctcm.org/jam2024/>

*The Joint Annual Meeting (JAM 2024) will be held **September 27-28, 2024** at Countryside Community Church located at 13130 Faith Plaza, Omaha, NE. Come participate in business meetings, workshops, and worship.*

This meeting would be great to attend! Why?

It will take place at Countryside UCC on the campus of Tri-faith in Omaha, the new General Minister and President of The United Church of Christ, Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, will speak, and other attendees are coming from all three states: Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota.

A Jamaican immigrant, a mom, and a grandmother, Dr. Thompson has served in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ since 2009 as minister for racial justice and minister for ecumenical and interfaith relations. Prior to joining the national staff, she was on staff for UCC's Florida Conference, as a church planter in Florida and in family ministries in New York. She is the first woman to be elected to lead the denomination. Do consider attending! -Pastor Jackie



Book Club will meet July 10 at 10 AM. *The Sweetest Scoop: Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream Revolution* by Lisa Robinson. The books can be found in Fellowship Hall or you can contact Jane Uzzell.

A celebration of life gathering for Terry J. Hamilton, 75, of Norfolk will be Saturday, July 20, 1-5 p.m., at the Norfolk Arts Center in Norfolk.



Do you go grocery shopping? At Lou's? At HyVee? **We have an easy way to bump up your donation to the church budget**--use a Lou's or HyVee gift card when you go shopping or get gas. You can buy them **Sundays** in Fellowship Hall. We currently get \$25, \$50 and \$100 gift cards.

See you at the table in Fellowship Hall! Questions? Leave a message for Jane Uzzell at (402) 640-6623.



★ ★ ★ JULY Birthdays & Anniversaries

6th Verletta Olson
 10th Evonne Burkink
 12th Merle Rix
 Michelle Indra
 17th Chuck Balsiger
 28th Randy Neuharth
 30th Pat Jenny

Anniversary

5th Tom and Sandy McConnell
 15th Erik and Katie Gamerl



July 7

Communion: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Ushers:

Greeters: Pat Jenny and Evonne Burkink

Reader: Jane Uzzell

Leader: Susan Allyn

Flowers: Barb Koenig

July 14

Ushers: Ben and Grace Uzzell

Greeters: Stacie and Reese Uzzell

Reader: Tom McConnell

Flowers: Ginge Dudley

July 21

Ushers: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Greeters: Bonnie Dewell and Barb Koenig

Reader: Scott Williams

Flowers: Ed Lindsay

July 28

Ushers: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Greeters: Susan Surber and Rita Woodard

Reader:

Flowers:

August 4

Communion: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Ushers: Tom McConnell and Evonne Burkink

Greeters: Mike Synovec and Jane Uzzell

Reader: Kay Neuharth

Leader: Randy Neuharth

Flowers:

August 11

Ushers: Pat Jenny and Rita Woodard

Greeters: Tom McConnell and Verletta Olson

Reader: Grace Uzzell

Flowers: Mark and Vicki Walker

August 18

Ushers: Mike Synovec and Susan Surber

Greeters: Randy and Kay Neuharth

Reader: Lori Williams

Flowers: Susan and Tom Surber

August 25

Ushers: Jane Uzzell and Verletta Olson

Greeters: Gene and Bonnie Kroeger

Reader: Ben Uzzell

Flowers: Karen Allyn

Please notify the office if you are not able to attend a service.

June

From 6/1/24 through 6/30/24

Checking account information

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Beginning balance | \$ — 758.12 |
| Food Pantry | \$ 75.00 |
| Transfer from savings | \$ 3,200.00 |
| <u>Weekly deposits</u> | <u>\$ 10,024.00</u> |
| Subtotal | \$ 12,540.88 |
| Salary | --\$ 7,054.63 |
| Church Maintenance | —\$ 2,225.18 |
| Office Expenses | —\$ 520.16 |
| Worship Ministry | —\$ 30.00 |
| Substitute Organist | —\$ 280.00 |
| Continuing Education | —\$ 70.00 |
| Insurance | —\$ 950.67 |
| Pastor's discretionary | —\$ 450.00 |
| <u>Renner's</u> | <u>—\$ 500.00</u> |
| Final Balance | \$ 460.24 |



▶ July 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 OFFICE CLOSED | 5 OFFICE CLOSED | 6 |
| 7 10:15 Worship | 8 | 9 | 10 10 Book club | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 10:15 Worship | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 10:15 Worship Unity Council | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 10:15 Worship | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

▶ August 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----|--------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 10:15 Worship | | | | | | |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 10:15 Worship | Norfolk begins school | | 10 Book club | | | |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 10:15 Worship | NECC begins school | | | | | |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 10:15 Worship | 6-9 PM Girl Scouts FH | | | | | |