

First Congregational United Church of Christ

November 26, 2023



Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.

Our door is open to you at whatever point you are in your journey of faith.

TODAY AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC, APPLETON

9:25AM – 12:00PM	Childcare – <i>Childcare Room</i>
9:30 – 10:30AM	Sunday Worship – <i>Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge</i>
9:30 – 10:30AM	Children’s Ministry – <i>CYF Wing</i>
10:45AM – 12:00PM	Advent Book Study – <i>Upper Lounge</i>
10:45 – 11:45AM	Parents’ Book Discussion – <i>HS Room</i>
7:00 – 8:00PM	AL ANON – <i>Chapel / Alateen – Upper Lounge</i>
7:00 – 8:00PM	First Things First AA Meeting – <i>Commons Grounds</i>

We are glad you are here today! You are welcome to worship in person with us in the Sanctuary or watch it livestreamed in the Chapel, Upper Lounge, or Narthex. The Nursery also has livestreaming, on the other end of the building.

Baptisms are held on the third Sunday of each month. To schedule a baptism, contact the church office six weeks before your desired baptism date.

Childcare is available for all infants and toddlers, regardless of membership status. Please see an usher for directions to the Childcare Room.

Communion: The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Communion elements are gluten free. All are welcome to join us!

Donating to First Congregational UCC, Appleton: We have many convenient ways to donate. Giving envelopes are in the pews and may be put in the offering plates, checks can be mailed to the church, you can visit our webpage and click “Give,” or you can text FCUCC GIVE to 73256. *Messages and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.

Flowers: Today’s flowers were arranged by Cindi Ritcey Fox.

Hearing Loop: Need help hearing our service? Ask an usher. They can help get you in the loop!



Online Streaming and Podcasting are available on Facebook: FCUCCAppleton or Youtube: First Congregational UCC Appleton.

Open Door Announcements can be shared by emailing opendoor@firstcongoappleton.org or calling the office.

References to God in our worship may at times be gender specific. You are invited to substitute terms that reflect your understanding of the inclusiveness of God.

Sunday School: Our PreK - 5th graders begin in worship. After the children's message, they walk together to the CYF wing for our Children's Ministry Program. Youth gather on Wednesday evenings.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

November 26, 2023 9:30 AM
Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE

Beautiful Savior

Silesian folk tune

Setting by Charles W. Ore (b. 1936)

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

WELCOME

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Today we celebrate the reign of Jesus Christ.

People: We are thankful that Jesus Christ is the ruler of our lives.

Leader: Today we put ourselves within the promises of God, past, present and future.

People: Today we claim the promises of God for our lives and for the world.

Leader: Let us worship this amazing God, Promiser, Christ and Spirit.

*OPENING HYMN (see bulletin page 5)

Beautiful Savior

SCHONSTER HERR JESU

St. 1, 2, & 4 All in unison

St. 3 All in harmony

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(During the sermon, the prayer request cards will be collected. After the Children's Sermon, the children will follow their teachers to Church School.)

SCRIPTURE READING MATTHEW 25:31-46

Karen Gosse

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will

answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

SERMON *"All God's People Gathered Together"*

Pastor Nick Hatch

*HYMN (see bulletin page 6)

Jesus Shall Reign

DUKE STREET

St. 1 All in unison

St. 2 Women and high voices

St. 3 All in harmony

St. 4 Men and low voices

St. 5 All in unison

MOMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP

Andrew Burton

OFFERING

CALL TO THE OFFERING

(During this time, you are invited to a virtual offering. Please visit our webpage and click "Give" to make your weekly offering, or text FCUCC GIVE to 73256).

MUSICAL REFLECTION

How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place

Daniel Kallman (b. 1956)

Paraphrase of Psalm 84

Sanctuary Choir

*DOXOLOGY

ALL: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host:

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

(You are welcome to submit your prayer requests throughout the week to the church office, or email to a pastor for confidentiality.)

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN #529**

Let All Things Now Living

ASH GROVE

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

The Ash Grove

Setting by Mark Sedio (b. 1954)

THANK YOU TO TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch

Pastor Dianne Droster

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

Sanctuary Choir

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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Children's Ministry Locations for Today		
<i>Upstairs, to the Left</i>	<i>Upstairs, to the Right</i>	<i>Downstairs</i>
Childcare Room Infants and Toddlers	Nursery 4 th & 5 th	Little Angel's Room Preschoolers
Theater 2 nd & 3 rd	Art Kitchen	Science Room
Scripture Tent K & 1 st		Middle School Room

Beautiful Savior

1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion,
 2 Fair are the mead - ows, fair are the wood - lands,
 3 Fair is the sun - shine, fair is the moon - light,
 4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions,

Son of God and Son of Man!
 robbed in flow'rs of bloom - ing spring;
 bright the spar - kling stars on high;
 Son of God and Son of Man!

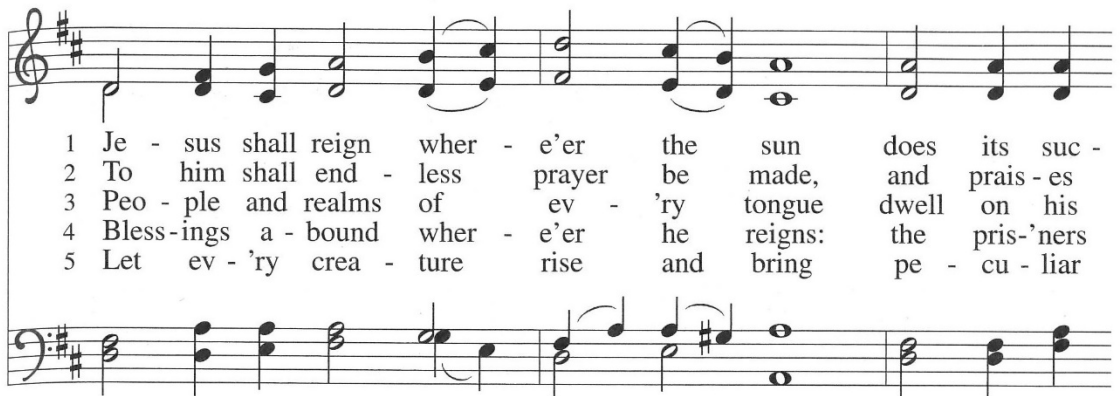
Tru - ly I'd love thee, tru - ly I'd serve thee,
 Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is pur - er,
 Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines pur - er,
 Glo - ry and hon - or, praise, ad - o - ra - tion,

light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
 he makes our sor - rowing spir - it sing.
 than all the an - gels in the sky.
 now and for - ev - er - more be thine!

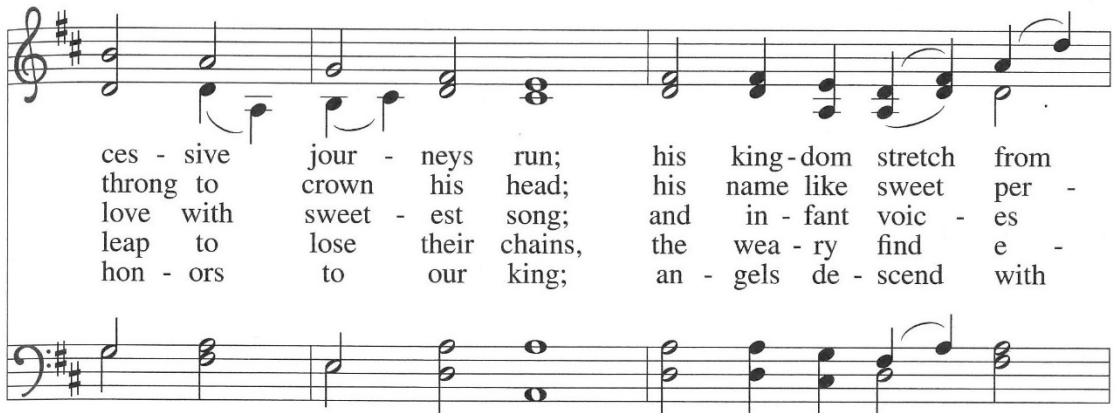
Text: Gesangbuch, Münster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823-1904
 Music: Silesian folk tune, 19th cent.

SCHÖNSTER HERR JESU
 557558

Jesus Shall Reign



1 Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun does its suc -
2 To him shall end - less prayer be made, and prais - es
3 Peo - ple and realms of ev - 'ry tongue dwell on his
4 Bless - ings a - bound wher - e'er he reigns: the pris - 'ners
5 Let ev - 'ry crea - ture rise and bring pe - cu - liar



ces - sive jour - neys run; his king - dom stretch from
throng to crown his head; his name like sweet per -
love with sweet - est song; and in - fant voic - es
leap to lose their chains, the wea - ry find e -
hon - ors to our king; an - gels de - scend with



shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.
fume shall rise with ev - 'ry morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
shall pro - claim their ear - ly bless - ings on his name.
ter - nal rest, and all who suf - fer want are blest.
songs a - gain, and earth re - peat the loud a - men.

Sunday, December 3, 2023 Advent I Worship Service with Communion

"Waiting in Hope"

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Mark 13:24-27

Musicians: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*; Sanctuary Choir

Sermon/Worship Notes (space for your personal notes/thoughts)

Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Wednesday, November 29

Hanging of the Greens, 6:00PM Dinner (pizza and salad) & ornament making followed by 7:00PM Worship

Sunday, December 3

First Sunday of Advent, 9:30AM Worship & Communion

Sunday, December 10

Second Sunday of Advent, 9:30AM Worship, Major Choral Works, Joyful Noise Collection

Wednesday, December 13

Taizé Service of Healing & Hope in the Chapel, 6:30-7:00PM

Sunday, December 17

Third Sunday of Advent, 9:30AM Family Worship/Bell Sunday

Sunday, December 24 ~ Christmas Eve

Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve, 9:30AM Worship;

Childcare provided as well as a whole-group activity for children PreK - 8th grade.

Family Do-It-Yourself Nativity, 4:00PM Worship. Childcare provided.

A Service of Lessons and Carols, Candlelight & Communion, 8:00PM Worship;

Childcare is not provided for this service.





Dear friends,

In his book, "Markings," Dag Hammarskjöld wrote: "For what has been, 'thanks.' For what will be, 'yes.'"

I believe that these are the best words that we can say as we gather around tables of all shapes and sizes as we celebrate Thanksgiving this week. I invite you to enter into the coming days with thanks-giving lingering in your heart and on your lips.

Give thanks to God for the many times, the varied places and the many people that fill our lives. Give thanks for opportunities that we have embraced and for those we have left behind; for the times we have said, "Yes!" to God's nudging and the times we have held back, saying, "No, not now." Give thanks for this pathway of transition that we have navigated together as a church family!

It is sometimes difficult to be thankful for all that has been and at the same time, be receptive to all the unknown that is yet to come. But can we do it? "Yes!" By faith, we are drawing the connecting line between gratitude for God's gifts *already received* and the hopeful welcoming of the gifts just around the corner. (That God has yet to reveal to us!)

May this connection between "thanks" and "yes" be swirling around us all!

I invite you and your family to come "home" to First Congregational United church of Christ for Advent. The weeks of the "new" Church Year begin with Advent, on Sunday, December 3. This year, we will be turning the pages of a new chapter in First Congregational UCC's History, as we gratefully celebrate Jesus, the "Light of the World" in our midst.

You won't want to miss any of the upcoming services and gatherings as listed here in the "Open Door." Just come! Come as you are, knowing that whoever you are or where you are on your life's journey, you are always welcome here!

As I count my blessings, I am gratefully counting every one of you!

Pastor Mary Jo

Joys and Concerns of Our Faith Community

Members of our church family benefit from our prayers, support, and words of encouragement as they celebrate special times or struggle with difficulties in their lives.

Please keep these people in your prayers and greet them with a loving word when you see them.

Please call Pastor Mary Jo at 715-351-0450 or [email her](#) if you have a new joy or concern you would like us to pray for, as well as any questions and other assistance needed.

In cases of a pastoral emergency, please call 920-810-2600.

Jill Anthony, her sister & her nephew	Kathy Lannoye
Katie Behl and her sister, Barbara	Nancy Kandler
Don Brittnacher	Kandy Kueler
Chris Brittnacher's brother, Steve Reinkober	Helen McKean's daughter, Larri Jacquart
Karen Crawford's niece, Lori	Richard Miller's son-in law, Rick Kramer
Beth Detienne's mother	Our friends in Kerio Valley, Kenya
Jim Edwards	Stephen Otto's brother, Gerald
Heidi Mendonca Erstad	Gretchen Revie
Erstad's family friend, Silas, and his family	Larry Schiedermayer
Phil Gabrielson	Judy Schneider
David Galow	Frank and Pat Severin
Art Gandler	Mike Seymour's mom, Debbie
Esther Gehrt's sons, Steve and Ken	Paul Siket
Ken Geiger	Mark Spindler
Margaret Hankwitz	Kinsley Tarr
Judy Hanson	Gloria Tate
JoAnn Helms	Jack Thiel
Shirley Hoft	Peter Thiel
Misty Hofman	James Totzke
Phil & Mary Hornseth's nephew, Eric Montross	Jean Van Wagenin
Joan Jenson's son, John	Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter, Mya
Jean Jepson	Joe Wells
	Diane White

The Open Door Announcements

For more information on these announcements and other events, please visit our website, weekly e-newsletter, and social media.

Helper(s) Wanted: We are looking for a helper(s) for the Christmas Eve services, this person would be paid to be on hand to do snow removal, help pastors with set-ups, and minor custodial clean up. They can contact Bart at bforseth@firstcongoappleton.org or 920-851-9907 for more information.

An Advent Book Study led by Pastor Mary Jo and Mary Dees will be held on Sundays from **November 26 through December 17** from 10:45AM-12:00PM in the Upper Lounge and on Zoom. The book, *Prepare the Way for the Lord, and the Message of John the Baptist*, (author Adam Hamilton) is available in the church office for \$8.

Pillars Meal Sign-up: Time to Create a Nourishing Meal for Pillars Thursday, **December 7, 2023**. Check out the link to sign up! [Pillars sign up](#) We will be making soup and grilled cheese sandwiches. It's a great way to meet new people and enjoy fellowship. For questions contact Shelley Nulton, snulton@att.net or 920-202-4419.

Back Bay Mission Shrimp Sale: Three Sundays: **December 3, 10 and 17**. Pick up a package (or two!) of individually flash-frozen-right-on-the-boat gulf shrimp. Available in our narthex in 1lb packages, your purchase supports Back Bay Mission. Our price of \$15 per package allows you to enjoy delicious gulf shrimp and helps the only UCC ministry on the Gulf Coast. We are grateful to Jacobs Meat Market in Appleton for supplying shrimp for the sale again this year.

Looking for Wednesday Servers: Our "First Wednesday" dinners are off to a great start, but we could use a few extra hands in the kitchen! Time commitment is from about 4:30-6:45PM. Are you willing and able to help do a little prep work and serve? We'd love to have you! Two upcoming events to round out 2023 are:

Wednesday, **November 29** - Hanging of the Greens (pizza and salad dinner)

Wednesday, **December 6** - Soup and Sandwiches

Please contact the church office if you're interested.

Looking for a Coffee Hour Coordinator: Everybody's lovin' coffee hour following service. We'd love to have someone to coordinate and 'recruit' for the rest of the church year. Is it YOU? Contact the church office if it IS you!!! (Also, there's a sign up sheet in the narthex for you to sign yourself or your group up for any given Sunday!)

World Relief is collecting winter coats, hats, and gloves of all sizes for new refugees who are arriving without warm outerwear. If you can help, please bring new or clean-used items to the narthex through **November 26**.

The Fox Valley Flute Choir will present a winter concert Saturday, **December 2** in the church sanctuary at 4:00PM. The concert is free and open to the public. The Flute Choir will perform selections across the music spectrum. Composers Boismortier and Bach will be joined by secular pieces: The Girl from Ipanema and Danse Nègre from Coleridge-Taylor's African Suite. The concert will feature all members of the flute family: Piccolo, C-Flute, Alto Flute and Bass Flute. The one-hour concert will conclude with a selection of Christmas music. The 15-member flute choir has rehearsed in the church sanctuary for 10-years. They are under the direction of Dr. Marc Sackman. Interested parties wishing to join should contact Marc at msfoxband@gmail.com.

Come Sing in the 8:00PM Christmas Eve Choir! Rehearsals for additional singers on **Wednesdays, December 13 & 20, 7:00 – 8:30PM - RSVP**

Our Sanctuary Choir welcomes additional *high school age through adult singers for our 8:00PM Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols!* (NOTE: This is our single evening service, at the new time of 8:00PM)

Each year we include familiar carol arrangements, in addition to new music. Returning college students, young adults, choir family members, spouses and partners of choir members, members and friends who love singing, etc. . . . *all are welcome!* We ask that you join us for 7:00 – 8:30PM rehearsals on **Wednesday, December 14 and Wednesday, December 21** to rehearse the music. Your **attendance at BOTH rehearsals is preferred**, of course, but let me know if only one of the dates is possible for you. Instrumentalists will make music with us, too.

Interested? Questions? **RSVP via e-mail to John Albrecht at jalbrecht@firstcongoappleton.org**, or call John at the church, 920-851-8097 (direct line), or speak with John or Nathan, our organist, *so that our choir librarians can prepare a choir folder for you.* Thank you!

Economic Justice Work Group Hybrid Presentation: Two speakers, Vaya Lauren Jones and Denise Fenton, will talk to us on Monday, **December 4** from 7:00-8:00PM in the Upper Lounge and by Zoom. Jones is the Social Determinants of Health Team Lead at ThedaCare and Appleton Alderperson District 10. Fenton is Appleton Alderperson District 6 and worked in information technology for close to forty years.

Of top concern for Jones is the availability of affordable housing in Northeast Wisconsin, as well as a comprehensive approach to health care that recognizes issues such as income, transportation, housing, and food insecurity that play roles in health care access. Fenton also sees affordable housing as affecting the whole economy: businesses need workers with housing near their jobs. Fenton supports changes to city zoning ordinances and other regulations that make it easier to provide housing.

Join with this Zoom link: <https://EJWGHPDec4>

Sailing the Allyship: Sunday, **December 3**, 12:30-3:30PM at UU Fellowship, 2600 Phillip Lane, Appleton. Come join us to learn how to be a stronger ally to trans and non-binary people. This workshop is led by two trans educators with the goal of increasing your awareness and understanding of the issues that trans folks face in society. We will be teaching the most relevant terms, practicing using pronouns and gender affirming language. This workshop is open to people of all ages and experience levels. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP using [THIS LINK](#) and fill out the form.

Last Chance to Support the Turtle Trekkers! Twenty-three people from FCUCC Appleton collectively walked at least 2,300 miles (100 miles per person) this fall to raise funds for our mission partner, Re-Member. Donations to the Turtle Trek will support the purchase of winter fuel for the Oglala Lakota people on Pine Ridge reservation. If you wish to sponsor our trekkers and give to this fund-raiser, please make your checks out to "FCUCC Appleton" with a note in the memo line indicating "Turtle Trek Challenge." Please contribute before **December 15**.

Membership Exploration Gathering: Are you new to First Congregational and want to learn more about our faith community? Would you like to find a place to ask your questions of faith and call your faith home? Then join Pastor Mary Jo and Pastor Nick after worship Sunday, **December 3**, 2023 (10:45AM-12:00PM) in the Upper Lounge.

We'll be talking about our journeys of faith. We will share about this church, our theology, and get to know one another. We hope to listen to the story of your spiritual journey and the questions that have guided you to seek new answers.

Please RSVP for the new Membership Exploration Gathering by signing up on the sheet in the narthex or by contacting the front office at info@firstcongoappleton.org.

If you have completed one of the former classes and are ready to join in the membership of First Congregational UCC, we will be introducing all our new members to the congregation during worship on Sunday, **December 17**.

A note of thanks from our partners in Kenya: The generosity and thoughtfulness of sponsors have truly made a difference in the lives of those students. Their willingness to go above and beyond to help these students means more to us than words can express. I hope they (the students) will always remember sponsors kindness and generosity and we hope to one day have the opportunity to pay it forward and make a difference in someone else's life, just as you have done for them. The kindness of sponsors has truly touched their lives in a meaningful way.

Pick up your decorated Christmas gift bag (1 per/household), made by our youth, today and next Sunday, December 3. Please note we will be accepting donations to help us buy craft projects for the children living at Pillars Emergency Shelter. The High School Youth meet with the children every third Wednesday night for crafts and games.



HANGING OF THE GREENS

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

First Congregational UCC
724 E. South River St.
Appleton, WI 54915



6:00 - 7:00PM Salad and Pizza Dinner While Creating Ornaments

7:00 - 7:30PM Interactive Worship Service With
Placing of the Christmas Symbols

The Church of the Open Door

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



📞 920.733.7393

✉ info@firstcongoappleton.org

🕒 Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM



Christmas Caroling Adventures for All

Multi-Generational

Sunday, December 17

10:45AM-12:15PM

Light Lunch Provided

Please Bring Your Own Drink



Scan Me
To Sign up for
Dec. 17th!

Sign-up ASAP so we know if we should rent a bus!

Itineraries are available for those who wish to drive separately.



Scan Me
To Sign up for
Dec. 20th!



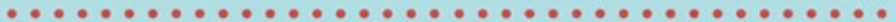
MS & HS Youth Groups

Wednesday, December 20

6:00-7:30PM

Pizza and Hot Cocoa

Please Bring Your Own Travel Mug



Contact the Front Office or use the QR codes to sign up!

info@firstcongoappleton.org / 920.733.7393



This Week's Schedule

Monday, November 27

6:30 - 8:30PM

Fox Valley Flute Choir - *Sanctuary*

Tuesday, November 28

9:00 - 10:00AM

Strong Bodies - *River Room*

11:00AM - 12:00PM

Staff Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

6:00 - 7:30PM

Council Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

6:30 - 7:30PM

Living Sober AA Group - *Common Grounds*

7:45 - 8:45PM

Fireside AA Group - *Common Grounds*

Wednesday, November 29

12:15 - 1:00PM

Loving Acceptance Meditation - *Upper Lounge*

5:30 - 7:30PM

Childcare - *Childcare Room*

5:45 - 6:25PM

Youth Handbells - *Amistad Room*

6:00 - 7:30PM

Hanging of the Greens and Pizza & Salad Dinner - *Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Sanctuary*

7:00 - 8:30PM

Sanctuary Choir - *Sanctuary, Choir Room*

NO YOUTH GROUPS TONIGHT

Thursday, November 30

9:00 - 10:00AM

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

12:00 - 1:00PM

AA - Search for Serenity Group - *Common Grounds*

6:00 - 8:00PM

TnT SOAR Fox Cities - *Fellowship Hall*

7:00 - 8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA - *Common Grounds*

Friday, December 1

7:00 - 8:00PM

Al-Anon - *Upper Lounge*

7:00 - 8:30PM

N.A - *Common Grounds*

Saturday, December 2

11:00AM - 12:00PM

Debtors Anon - *Common Grounds*

4:00 - 6:00PM

Fox Valley Flute Choir Concert - *Sanctuary*

7:00 - 8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA - *Common Grounds*

Sunday, December 3

9:25AM - 12:00PM

Childcare - *Childcare Room*

9:30 - 10:30AM

Sunday Worship - *Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge*

9:30 - 10:30AM

Children's Ministry - *CYF Wing*

10:30 - 11:30AM

Poinsettia Sunday - *Narthex*

10:30 - 11:30AM

Back Bay Shrimp Sale - *Narthex*

10:30 - 11:30AM

Children's Choir - *Choir Room*

10:45 - 11:45AM

New Members Gathering - *Chapel*

10:45AM - 12:00PM

Advent Book Study - *Upper Lounge*

10:45 - 11:45AM

Parents' Book Discussion - *HS Room*

6:00 - 8:00PM

First Things First AA Meeting - *Commons Grounds*

7:00 - 8:00PM

AL ANON - *Chapel / Alateen - Upper Lounge*

Land Covenant

The land now occupied by Appleton, Wisconsin and surrounding areas - including the current site of First Congregational UCC - was the home, hunting, gathering, and farming land of the First Peoples of this territory: the Ho Chunk Nation and the Menominee Nation. Other tribes were forcibly re-located to this region by the actions of colonialism. Despite centuries of reprehensible treatment, the peoples of these sovereign nations are robust and enduring among us.

We are truly saddened by the genocide of their ancestors, the seizure of their lands, and the repression of their cultures and languages. We acknowledge that we benefit from the economic and social legacy left by settler colonialism.

We are grateful that many members of these original Nations have honorably served and defended the United States. We strive to honor their cultures and their insightful stewardship of this land and all creatures on it, recognizing our common interest in protecting its air, water, soils, and web of life for all future generations.

We commit ourselves through study and immersion experiences to learn the history and cultures of these peoples and their traditional knowledge.



Welcome to our Home of Homes.

We are “The Church of the Open Door,” a welcoming and inclusive Christian community.

We’re committed to tolerance, justice, and exploration – not dogma and rules.

So, no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.