

LOVE

Love

THE KING OF KINGS
SALVATION BRINGS,
LET LOVING HEARTS
ENTHRONE HIM.

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 ~ December 17, 2023

9:25AM – 12:00PM	Childcare – <i>Childcare Room</i>
9:30 – 10:30AM	Sunday Worship/Family Service: Bring Your Bells to Ring! (No Children’s Ministry) – <i>Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge</i>
10:30 – 11:30AM	Children’s Choir – <i>Choir Room</i>
10:30 – 11:30AM	Back Bay Shrimp Sale - <i>Narthex</i>
10:45AM – 12:00PM	Advent Book Study – <i>Upper Lounge</i>
10:45AM – 12:30PM	3rd Sunday Family Day: Caroling
7:00 – 8:00PM	AL ANON – <i>Chapel / Alateen – Upper Lounge</i>
7:00 – 8:00PM	First Things First AA Meeting – <i>Fellowship Hall, 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. 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

December 17, 2023 9:30 AM

Third Sunday of Advent ~ New Member Sunday ~ Bell Sunday

PRELUDE

Partitas on *Freu dich sehr* (Comfort, Comfort Now My People)

Georg Böhm (1661-1733)

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

PERSONENT HODIE

arr. Anna Laura Page

Youth Handbells

WELCOME

INTROIT

What Can I Give Him? (from *In the Bleak Midwinter*)

G. Holst

He Came Down

Trad., from the Cameroons

Children's Choir

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Today we welcome David Beers, Brittany Beers, Jacqueline Peters,
Pam Reynolds, Rod Reynolds, Debbie Wagner, Veronica Flower,
Andrew Schmidt, Abby Schmidt, Jim Kriner, and Candace Kriner

INTRODUCTION

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

UCC STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify: You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you, forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – LOVE

The Piepenburg Family

INTRODUCTORY SENTENCES

READING OF SCRIPTURE 1 John 4:9-11

"God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another."

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

UNISON PRAYER

All: O God, we thank you that Jesus showed your love for every person - babies and children, old people and young, sick people and those who were strong, rich people and those who were poor. Come to us in this Advent season and give us love in our hearts for all people. Amen.

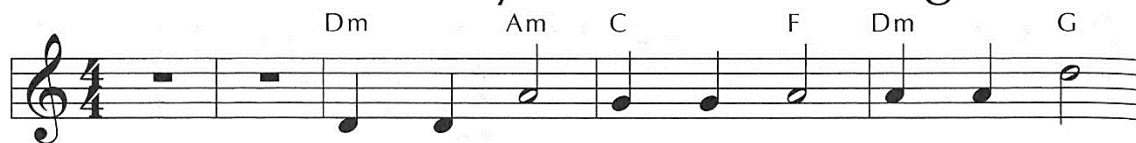
*OPENING HYMN (see bulletin page 4)

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

PERSONENT HODIE

The Congregation is invited to ring their bells on the Refrain (Ideo. . .)

141 On This Day Earth Shall Ring



1 On this day earth shall ring with the song
 2 His the doom, ours the mirth; when he came
 3 God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three
 4 On this day an - gels sing; with their song

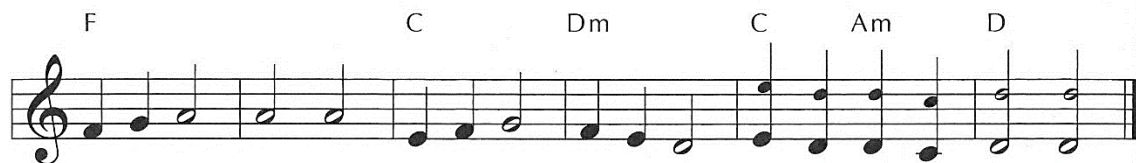


chil - dren sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to
 down to earth Beth - le - hem saw his birth; ox and ass be -
 to him led; kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts be -
 earth shall ring, prais - ing Christ, heav - en's King, born on earth to

Refrain



save us; him the Fa - ther gave us.
 side him from the cold would hide him. *Id - e - o - o - o - o,
 fore him, praise him and a - dore him.
 save us; peace and love he gave us.



id - e - o - o - o - o, id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

*Therefore, glory to God in the highest.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The Baptism of Otto Norman Beers

Parents: David and Brittany Beers

Godparent: Kaylee Glatting

ADDRESS

QUESTIONS OF THE PARENTS AND GODPARENT

CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT (when prompted)

All: We promise our love, support and care.

BLESSING OF THE WATER

ACT OF BAPTISM

UNISON PRAYER OF BLESSING

All: We give you thanks, O Holy One, mother and father of all the faithful, for your child and for the grace acknowledged here today in water and the Holy Spirit. Embrace us all as sons and daughters in the one household of your love. Grant us grace to nurture him in the faith and family of Jesus Christ. Give him strength for life's journey, courage in times of suffering, freedom of love and hope in new life, through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

BAPTISMAL HYMN #306 *Child of Blessing, Child of Promise*

STUTT GART

ANTHEM

Patapan

Youth Handbells

French Carol
arr. Linda R. Lamb

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:46-55

Howard Niblock

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

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

What Is This Lovely Fragrance?

French Carol
arr. Healey Willan

Sanctuary Choir

*RESPONSE (#114, St. 3)

**All: O Come Thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things, far and nigh.
To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!**

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 #135

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

The Congregation is invited to ring their bells on the Refrain.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

All Earth is Hopeful

Tune by Alberto Taulé
Setting by Nancy M. Raabe (b. 1954)

THANK YOU TO TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

Children's Choir: Elise Burton, Harlow Cartier, Malin Cartier, Addie Gingerich, Aralise Gingerich, McKenna Jahnke, Hazel Meier, Stella Meier, Anders Schlabach, Ingrid Schlabach, Abe Slowinski, River Thibodeau, Evy Van Thull, Lou Van Thull
John Albrecht, *director* Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *pianist*

Youth Handbells: Henry Clothier, Will Clothier, Elena Eubanks, Avery Gentile, Logan LaViolette, Luke LaViolette, Easton Piepenburg, Eva Schmidt, Chase Wahl;
John Albrecht, *director*

Sanctuary Choir

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, # A-714899. All rights reserved.

Children's Ministry Locations for Today		
<i>Upstairs, to the Left</i>		<i>Downstairs</i>
Childcare Room Infants and Toddlers	K - 5th Graders Will Stay in the Service Today	Little Angel's Room Preschoolers

Worship Notes (space for your personal notes/thoughts)

How have you seen love born anew in this world?

How do you take time to celebrate this love?

JOIN US CHRISTMAS EVE!

9:30AM Worship Service ~ Sunday, December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve

“Evermore and Evermore” Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Luke 2:1-20

Musicians: Joel Jicha, *bass*; Jann Kostecke, *flute*

4:00PM Worship Service ~ Sunday, December 24, 2023

Family Build-It-Yourself Nativity

“God’s Moment of Glory” Pastor Nick Hatch

Musicians: Children’s Choir; Jann Kostecke, *flute*; Jennifer Hodges Bryan, *oboe*

8:00PM Worship Service ~ Sunday, December 24, 2023

A Service of Lessons and Carols, Candlelight, and Communion

“Who This Child Was and Will Always Be” Pastor Nick Hatch

Luke 2:1-7

Prelude Music begins at 7:35 PM

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

Vocal and Instrumental Soloists and Ensembles

Including Dr. Karen Leigh-Post, *mezzo-soprano* and Matthew Michelic, *viola*

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS



Joy Comes in the Morning

This past Wednesday we had our *Advent Service for Healing and Hope*. This is a time where we meditate and offer up praises to God, even in the pain we carry during the holiday season. For some of us, the holiday season is a powerful reminder of the unresolved grief and dashed hopes we have experienced in life. In this sense we often talk about the holidays and their focus upon relationships and traditions as being difficult. Perhaps it's an empty seat at the table. Maybe it's bitter words that haunt our memories. Whatever it is, our holiday pain often comes because of some form of unfinished business that we carry with us.

Part of this is just the nature of being human, or existing within a linear experience where history and time accumulates a reservoir of experience and emotion. Some of that reservoir is bound to harbor pain and hurt. Holidays give our linear souls "weigh stations" where we take a moment to pull over, like a semi traveling cross country with a full load and breathe deeply taking in the weight of that which comes with us. In this sense, holidays and their traditions can serve as a painful, yet honest, reminder of what it means to live a human experience, just like Jesus. Consider these words from Isaiah about faithfulness, weeping, and joy:

Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.
-Psalm 30:4-5

Today in our interactive meditation we will hear about the Advent joy of love being born anew. We will also honor the pain that comes alongside our joy, just like night and day, God's frustrations and promise for eternal salvation: they come as a pair, side by side. It makes us human. It is what Immanuel came to experience and fully know.

In the Birth of Christ Jesus, we are called not to be ashamed of the pain we carry or let that pain have the last word. Rather, we are reminded that even in the darkest night or most upsetting history, love can be born again like a candle lit on a hope filled morning. This love lets us hear the old anew, see the mundane as miraculous, and feel the familiar as extraordinary. To know both the pain and joy of life can be frightening. So, remember these words from the Gospel of Luke when Jesus was born that say.

An angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. -Luke 2:9-11

May this season prepare your heart for the dawning of something marvelous. Don't be afraid but give thanks. For we only have one more candle to light, the candle of joy, before we light the Christ Candle. And you and I know how deeply we need the light of Christ in this world. Merry Early Christmas friends!

Grace and Peace-
Pastor Nick

RECEPTION
TO
Welcome
THE NEW PASTOR
AND FAMILY



Saturday, January 13, 2024
3:00 - 5:00pm
Fellowship Hall

Please join us to meet the new pastor and family for fellowship and light hors d' oeuvres

RSVP BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 5TH

Email: zgonzales@firstcongoappleton.org
Phone: 920-733-7393



ON REALM



Christmas Caroling Adventures for All

Indoor Caroling
Bring a Travel Mug for Warm Beverages
Christmas Hats & Festive Dress Encouraged!
Come as a Single, Couple, Extended Family...
Invite Friends! Show them how awesome it is to spread God's love with FCUCCI!




We need to know ASAP if we should rent a bus!

.....

All Church Caroling

10:30-10:45 Eat a Quick Sub Lunch
10:45-11:00 Drive to Carolina Assisted Living
11:00-11:20 Carol at Carolina Assisted Living
11:20-11:35 Drive to Touchmark
11:35-11:55 Carol at Touchmark
11:55-12:05 Drive to Heritage
12:05-12:20 Carol at Heritage
12:20-12:30 Drive Back to Church

Scan to Sign up for Dec. 17th!



.....

Scan to Sign up for Dec. 20th!



MS & HS Youth Groups

6:00-6:15 Eat a Quick Dinner
6:15-6:25 Drive to Eagle Point
6:25-6:40 Carol at Eagle Point Memory Care Center
6:40-6:45 Drive to Betty Messaros' Home (Retired CYF Director)
6:45-6:55 Carol Outside Betty Messaros' Home
7:00-7:15 Drive to Pillars Family & Adult Shelter
7:15-7:25 Carol at Pillars Family & Adult Shelter
7:15-7:25 Drive to City Park for a Photo by the Christmas Tree
7:25-8:00 Drive Back to Church

.....

Please sign up by scanning the QR code, emailing, or calling the church office.
info@firstcongoappleton.org / 920.733.7393

Advent/Christmas Floral Donation Form

Donations support this special season's display, and help fund the Sanctuary flowers throughout next year.



Your Name _____

Amount _____ (\$25 suggested)

Please word the following as you would like it to appear in the Christmas bulletin.:

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

In celebration of _____

Drop this form off in the offering plate or return it to the church office by Wednesday, December 20, 2023.

Make check out to FCUCC and in memo field, write "Advent Flowers."

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.

Sue Ahrens	Jean Jepson
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 and Rachel Edwards	Stephen Otto's brother, Gerald
Heidi Mendonca Erstad	Gretchen Revie
Erstad's family friend, Silas, and his family	Larry Schiedermayer
David Galow	Frank and Pat Severin
Art Gandler	Mike Seymour's mom, Debbie
Esther Gehrt and her 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,	Jean Van Wagenin
Eric Montross	Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter, Mya
Joan Jenson's son, John	Diane White

The Open Door Announcements

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

Come Sing in the 8:00PM Christmas Eve Choir! Rehearsal for additional singers on Wednesday, December 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 from 7:00–8:30PM on **Wednesday, December 20** to rehearse the music. 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!

Back Bay Mission Shrimp Sale: We have about a dozen left! Pick up a package of individually flash-frozen-right-on-the-boat gulf shrimp. Available in the narthex in 11b packages, your purchase supports Back Bay Mission. Our **CASH ONLY** 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.



Library Committee Help Wanted: We are looking for 2 or 3 volunteers to help on Sundays after church (10:30-11:00AM) with book checkout. If interested please contact Mary Sullivan, msullivan623@yahoo.com or 920-740-9452.

Adult Education Session: You are invited to attend a session on **January 7, 2024**, 11:00AM-12:30PM in the Upper Lounge on the topic of "Challenges and Opportunities for Ministering with Older Adults." For over a year, John and Susan McFadden have been participating in the Wisconsin and Michigan Conferences' Innovative Conversations on Older Adult Ministries. Susan will highlight the work they have been doing with this group and will report on the results of survey responses they have collected from congregations about their older adult ministries. The ways faith communities in the Fox Valley have been contributing to efforts to make our region more age and dementia-friendly will also be shared.

Business Administrator Job Opening: First Congregational is currently taking resumes for the position of Business Administrator. This person will collaborate with the Co-Pastors and Council to ensure the smooth operations of our church. Key qualities are being a great team player, understanding of business, willingness to lead, and appreciation of our particular faith community. This is a salaried and benefited position. If you have interest, or you know someone who might have interest in being part of a dynamic and positive staff, reach out to Chris Danz at c.danz456@gmail.com for a copy of the job description or to ask questions.

SAVE THE DATE: "Come Away - A Women's Day Retreat on Prayer"



Led by Rev. Nancy Zorn Micke

Including a book discussion of Anne Lamott's
"Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers"

Saturday, February 10, 2024, 9:00AM - 4:00PM
at First Congregational United Church of Christ

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

The First Congregational UCC Racial Equity Group wants the entire congregation to be aware of our recently developed Vision and Mission Statements. Anyone who would like to be part of the Racial Equity Group can contact the church office or Wanda Van De Hey at wanvandh@gmail.com or 920-203-1500.

Vision Statement of the Racial Equity Group: First Congregational United Church of Christ Appleton acknowledges the racial inequity that has been perpetuated from historical, financial, and educational policies and procedures throughout society for generations. We work to promote racial justice. Together we advocate for all people to live free from discrimination and acts of violence. We actively support structures and systems that enhance God's creation.

Mission Statement of the Racial Equity Group: The Mission of the Racial Equity Group at First Congregational United Church of Christ Appleton is to support and encourage our church as it works toward becoming a just, equitable and antiracist community of faith. In partnership with other church advocacy groups, as well as community partners, we will continue to provide education to heighten awareness of whiteness, racism, inclusion and break free from our implicit biases. We seek opportunities to increase our awareness about systemic racism and what we can do with that awareness.

Our goal is to create a safe and equitable community where we respect and celebrate the diversity of God's people. We wish to serve as a resource to move, through actions and awareness, towards becoming a Just Peace Church, a designation from the National United Church of Christ as we strive to truly be the church of the Open Door to all.

This Week's Schedule

Monday, December 18

6:30 – 8:30PM

Safety and Security Team

Tuesday, December 19

11:00AM – 2:00PM

Christmas Eve Musicians' Rehearsal – *Sanctuary*

1:00 – 2:30PM

Chrysalis – *Upper Lounge*

6:00 – 7:30PM

Council Meeting – *Upper Lounge*

6:30 -7:30PM

Living Sober AA – *Common Grounds*

7:45 – 8:45PM

Fireside AA – *Common Grounds*

Wednesday, December 20

10:00 – 11:00AM

Peabody/Heritage Worship – *Peabody Chapel*

12:15 – 1:00PM

Loving Acceptance Meditation Group – *Upper Lounge*

6:00 – 8:00PM

MS/HS Youth Group Caroling with a bus and dinner

7:00 – 8:30PM

Sanctuary Choir – *Sanctuary, Choir Room*

Thursday, December 21

11:00AM – 12:30PM

Finance Committee Meeting – *Upper Lounge*

12:00 – 1:00PM

AA Search for Serenity Group – *Common Grounds*

12:00 – 1:30PM

Theology Discussion Group – *Chefo's Pancake House*

6:30 – 8:00PM

NAMI Mental Illness Support Group – *Upper Lounge*

7:00 – 8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA – *Common Grounds*

Friday, December 22

7:00 – 8:00PM

Al-Anon – *Upper Lounge*

7:00 – 8:30PM

N.A – *Common Grounds*

Saturday, December 23

11:00AM – 12:00PM

Debtors Anon – *Common Grounds*

7:00 – 8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA – *Common Grounds*

Sunday, December 24

9:25AM – 12:00PM

Childcare – *Childcare Room*

9:30 – 10:30AM

Christmas Eve Worship

4:00 – 5:00PM

Family Do-It-Yourself Nativity Service

7:00 – 8:00PM

AL ANON – *Chapel / Alateen - Upper Lounge*

7:00 – 8:00PM

First Things First AA Meeting – *Fellowship Hall, Commons Grounds*

8:00 – 9:00PM

A Service of Lessons and Carols, Candlelight, and Communion

**The main office will be closed on Monday, December 25, and Tuesday, December 26
in observance of the Christmas holiday.**

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.



We are "The Church of the Open Door," a welcoming and inclusive Christian community.
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.