

First Congregational United Church of Christ

January 14, 2024

We know that all things
work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called
according to his purpose.

ROMANS 8:28, NRSV

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 - Call Sunday and Congregational Vote – <i>Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge</i>
9:30 – 10:30AM	Children’s Ministry – <i>CYF Wing</i>
10:30 – 11:30AM	Children’s Choir – <i>Choir Room</i>
4:15 – 5:15PM	LU Music Scholars’ Rehearsal – <i>Choir Room, Sanctuary</i>
6:00 – 8:00PM	First Things First AA Meeting – <i>Commons Grounds</i>
7:00 – 8:00PM	AL ANON – <i>Chapel / Alateen – Upper Lounge</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

January 14, 2024 9:30 AM
Second Sunday after Epiphany ~ Call Sunday

PRELUDE

Here I Am, Lord

Tune by Dan Schutte
Setting by Anne Marie David

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*

WELCOME

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We come into this sanctuary from many places.

All: We have come as individuals who long to be here and as individuals who are uncertain about who you are or how you are working in our lives.

One: We have come into this sanctuary with many different questions.

All: Some of us hold fast to the kingdoms of this world. Others are longing for a new kind of community to be made manifest here and around us.

One: We have come into this sanctuary to praise God.

All: No matter who we are or what we bring, may the Spirit help us listen deeply for your calling and praise your Holy Name!

*OPENING HYMN (see bulletin page 6)

Here We Gather

BEACH SPRING
Text by Rev. Katherine

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 1 Samuel 3:1-20

LouAnn Graf

Samuel's Calling and Prophetic Activity

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said,

'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The LORD called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' Then the LORD said to Samuel, 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever.'

Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.'

As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.

SERMON "Here We Are"

Rev. Katherine

*HYMN (see bulletin page 7)

Here I Am, Lord

HERE I AM, LORD

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

I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me

African American Spiritual
arr. Uzee Brown, Jr.

Sanctuary Choir

This new (2021) choral arrangement is by the Chair of the Division of Creative and Performing Arts at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA. This spiritual is included in hymnals across many denominations, speaking to our shared faith and aspirations.

*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.**

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

*CLOSING HYMN #481

Lift Every Voice and Sing

LIFT EVERY VOICE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Tune by J. Rosamond Johnson
Setting by David Gale

THANK YOU TO TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Rev. Katherine

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		
Upstairs, to the Left	Upstairs, to the Right	Downstairs
Childcare Room Infants & Toddlers	Nursery 4 th /5 th Graders	Little Angel's Room Preschoolers
Theater 2 nd /3 rd Graders	Art Kitchen	Science Room
Scripture Tent K/1 st Graders		Middle School Room

Sunday, January 21, 2024 Worship Service

"He Sees You"

Pastor Nick Hatch

Mark 1:14-20

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

Worship Notes (space for your personal notes/thoughts)

HERE WE GATHER

Tune: Beach Spring Text by Rev. Katherine

Here we gath - er, as God's peo - ple, to at last disc - ern our way.
Here we gath - er, as God's peo - ple, bid - den by the Spir - it's voice.
Here we gath - er, as God's peo - ple, full of hope and gra - ti - tude.

Tel - ling stor - ies, cast - ing vi - sions, seek - ing gui - dance as we pray.
Long we ling - ered, seek - ing wis - dom, trust - ing one day we'd re - joice.
From a sea - son of un - know - ing our vo - ca - tion is re - newed.

Here we gath - er to find cour - age, here we ache to be trans - formed.
Here we gath - er to i - ma - gine how we'll share in min - is - try:
Here we gath - er for a mis - sion: wor - ship, work, and grow in grace.

On this day of cel - e - bra - tion, may our hearts be Spir - it - warmed.
Do - ing just - ice, lov - ing kind - ness, serv - ing neigh - bors faith - ful - ly.
In the val - ley, by the ri - ver, we seek Je - sus in this place.

Here I Am, Lord



1 "I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2 "I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
3 "I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?"
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?"

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Joys and Concerns of Our Faith Community

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

Please call the church office if you have a prayer request: 920-733-7393

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

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

Mental Health Task Force (MHTF): Due to scheduling conflicts, the MHTF will meet next on Monday, **January 22**, 6:00-7:30PM in the Upper Lounge. In February we will return to our regular schedule - the 2nd Monday of the month. If you have questions, please contact Mary Sullivan msullivan623@yahoo.com or 920-740-9452.

Church Library News: Each month in 2024 the library will focus on a theme and display books related to the theme. In January our theme is relationships - any kind of relationships - friendship, partner relationships, parent/child, relationship with God, even with enemies. Please check the display - you may find something worth reading.

"Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life" Book Study, by author Fr. Richard Rohr, led by Derek Elkins: Join us in the Upper Lounge or by Zoom from 10:45AM-12:00PM on these Sundays: **January 28, and February 4, 11, and 18 (note: change of start date.)** Description of the conversation: If you've ever felt like there is an important difference between getting older and growing up, then I hope you will join us for a conversation about Fr. Richard Rohr's book, "Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life." Fr. Richard offers a breath of fresh air to anyone seeking wisdom as we age and trying to understand how to turn life's suffering, loss, and failure into sources of meaning and hope. A few books are available in the narthex for \$8, or you can order a copy of the book from any local bookstore or online retailer and read the first few chapters before our first gathering right after worship on January 28. We'll gather and discuss the rest of the book on February 4 and 11. We'll watch a short video of Fr. Richard discussing the main themes of the book on February 18. Everyone is welcome to join us for any and all of these gatherings! Childcare will be provided.

FIRST WEDNESDAY DINNERS - Mark Your Calendars! Join us on Wednesday, **February 14** (that's Ash Wednesday -- we're making an exception on the 'first' part for the month of February!) for our monthly meal in the Fellowship Hall. Serving is from 6:00-6:30PM. EVERYONE is welcome for these meals. You don't have to be involved in Wednesday night activities. There is no advance registration. There is no cost -- though a free will offering is very much appreciated. The schedule (and menu) through spring is:

- * February 14 (**SECOND** WEDNESDAY - just for February!) - Pizza
- * March 6 - Lentil soup and bread
- * April 3 - The return of "Hot Dogs on the Run"
- * May 1 - Salad Extravaganza

Mark your calendars! See you there!

Thank you, Christmas Eve Choir & More!



Special thanks to all who sang in the Christmas Eve Choir (pictured, 8:00PM service) and the many who served as soloists and instrumentalists in the three services that day. Serving in music ministry were: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ and piano*; Sanctuary Choir (with additional guest singers); Jann Kostecke, *flute*; Joel Jicha, *bass and arranger*; First Congregational Children's Choir, John Albrecht, *director*; Jennifer Hodges Bryan, *oboe*; Matthew Michelic, *viola*; Lori Murphy, *violin*; Melanie Riley, *soprano*; Jack Murphy, *tenor, violin*; Michael Murphy, *guitar, tenor, cello*; David Murphy, *percussion*; Abe Slowinski, *boy treble*; John Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*. Praise God for a day of beautiful music in celebration of Christ's birth!



A Coffee "Talk" is planned after the service on Sunday, January 28 (weather permitting). Did you know that for the last several years Ron and Cheryl Reissmann have made coffee for our weekly coffee hours? (We need to give them a Golden Mug for that....seriously!) Their cup has been filled as coffee gurus, and though they say it's 'bean' fun, it's time for some other 'mugs' (singles, 'cup'-ples!) to carry on the task!!! Ron and Cheryl will be hosting this "how to" session in hopes that we can continue coffee hour and also find more willing participants to host coffee hour. (Right now, our sign-up sheet is well, empty!) Our Fellowship team is sure there are plenty of "splenda-id" people out there that will work to keep this part of our church life 'perking'. See you on January 28! We cannot 'espresso' our appreciation in advance enough!

“Come Away – A Women’s Day Retreat on Prayer”

Retreat Guide: UCC Pastor Nancy Zorn Micke

Date: Saturday, **February 10**, 9:00AM – 4:00PM at First

Congregational United Church of Christ

Cost: \$30.00

What’s Provided?

- Morning refreshments/snacks and lunch
- Anne Lamott’s book “HELP THANKS WOW: The Three Essential Prayers” (See Pastor Mary Jo to get a copy of the book and read its 102 pages prior to the retreat)
- Prayer Bead Kit

Register and make note of any dietary restrictions on or before Friday, January 26 through REALM or call the church office. Contact Debbie Hoogesteger at djhooge@gmail.com or Pastor Mary Jo at mllaabs@firstcongoappleton.org with any questions.



Two Upcoming ESTHER Events: 1. MLK Event 2. Strategic planning for ESTHER is underway. Please help us reach individuals who might care to shape the future of ESTHER. See our FCUCC webpage or Facebook page for more information.



33rd Fox Cities Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

Along with other community partners, ESTHER is co-sponsoring this event! Lawrence University is hosting the 33rd Fox Cities Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Celebration. Join us on Monday, January 15, 6:00-7:30PM, in the Lawrence Memorial Chapel.

ESTHER hosts a listening session: Your Community, Your Voice You are invited! Thursday, **February 8**, 2024, at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 724 E. South River Street, Appleton. ESTHER wants to hear about what matters to YOU in our community. We value your experience and your voice. There will be a group discussion and smaller conversations. We hope you can be there for most of the meeting or just stop in. And come eat free pizza with us! Good news! We can provide free childcare if we find some of you would like to use it for your kids. The registration link will let us know you are coming, ask you to answer a few other questions including dietary restrictions, and if you plan to bring children with you, how many and what are their ages. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE. This discussion will help ESTHER with decisions about OUR next steps and perhaps be helpful to other groups too!! [Register here.](#)

Or use this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdKHdxRJmcXaK1EFNjADQwc2B75G6xDtzoQvhZklzszKdEZ9w/viewform>



A NEW Children's Mini-Musical
Presented During Worship on Sunday, March 17
Singing Together, Narrator Parts,
Vocal Solo Parts, and Fun Movement...
Reminding Us to Be Good Stewards of God's Creation!

Main Cast is Open to All Children in Grades 2-6

1st Read-Through in the Choir Room ~ Sunday, January 21, 10:30-11:45AM

Rehearsals ~ Every Sunday, January 28-March 3, 10:30-11:45AM

Two Dress Rehearsals ~ Sunday, March 10, 10:30AM-12:30PM, and
Saturday, March 16, TBD

Grades K-1

Kindergarten and 1st graders are invited to participate in a smaller way by singing short sections of songs in the musical. They will rehearse songs during Children's Ministry and then will attend a portion of both final dress rehearsals.

Parents, please email John Albrecht at jalbrecht@firstcongoappleton.org to register for the main cast or to be one of the K-1 participants!

This Week's Schedule

Monday, January 15

4:00 - 6:00PM

6:30 - 8:30 PM

Tuesday, January 16

9:00 -10:00AM

11:00AM - 1:00PM

1:00 - 2:30PM

1:00 - 2:30PM

6:00 - 8:00PM

6:30 - 7:30PM

6:30 - 8:00PM

7:45 - 8:45PM

Outreach Ministry - *Upper Lounge and by Zoom*
Fox Valley Flute Choir - *Sanctuary*

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

Staff Epiphany Party - *Upper Lounge*

HR Meeting - *Library*

Chrysalis - *Upper Lounge*

Wild Women of First Congregational - *Stone Arch Brewpub*

Living Sober AA Group - *Common Grounds*

Safety Committee Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

Fireside AA Group - *Common Grounds*

This Week's Schedule continued on page 14...

Wednesday, January 17

10:00 -11:00AM Adult Ed – *Upper Lounge*
12:15 – 1:00PM Loving Acceptance Meditation Group – *Upper Lounge*
2:00 – 3:00PM Peabody/Heritage Worship – *Peabody Chapel*
5:30 – 7:30PM Childcare – *Childcare Room*
5:45 – 6:25PM Youth Handbells – *Amistad Room*
6:30 – 7:30PM MS Youth Group Community Collaborations @ Brewster Village
6:30 – 7:30PM HS Youth Group @ Pillars Adult & Family Shelter
6:30 – 7:30PM Bible Study: Romans, Lesson 3 – *by Zoom*
7:00 – 8:30PM Sanctuary Choir – *Sanctuary, Choir Room*

Thursday, January 18

9:00 – 10:00AM Strong Bodies – *Fellowship Hall*
11:00AM – 12:30PM Finance Committee Meeting – *Upper Lounge*
12:00 – 1:30PM Theology Discussion Group – *Chefo's Pancake House*
12:00 – 1:00PM AA – Search for Serenity Group – *Common Grounds*
6:30 – 8:00PM Family/Friends of NAMI – *Upper Lounge*
7:00 – 8:00PM Fox Valley 94 AA – *Common Grounds*

Friday, January 19

7:00 – 8:00PM Al-Anon – *Upper Lounge*
7:00 – 8:30PM N.A – *Common Grounds*

Saturday, January 20

7:00 – 8:00PM Fox Valley 94 AA – *Common Grounds*

Sunday, January 21

9:25AM – 12:00PM Childcare – *Childcare Room*
9:30 – 10:30AM Sunday Worship & Installation of Dianne & Sarah in Their
“New” Roles – *Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge*
9:30 – 10:30AM Children’s Ministry – *CYF Wing*
10:30 – 10:45AM Congregational Meeting to vote for 2024 Church Council
Officers/Co-Councilors/Chairs – *Sanctuary*
10:30 – 11:30AM 3rd Sunday Family Day: CYF Coffee Hour – *Nursery, Art Kitchen*
10:30 – 11:45AM Children's Mini-Musical 1st Read-through – *Choir Room*
10:30 – 11:30AM Children’s Choir – *Choir Room*
10:30AM – 12:00PM Kenya Trip Meeting – *Common Grounds*
4:15 – 5:15PM LU Music Scholars’ Rehearsal – *Choir Room, Sanctuary*
7:00 – 8:00PM First Things First AA Meeting – *Fellowship Hall, Common 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.



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.