

First Congregational United Church of Christ

January 28, 2024

Look, I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth,  
do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.

*Isaiah 43:19*



*Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.*

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

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**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>
10:30-11:45AM	Children’s Choir/Musical Rehearsal – <i>Choir Room</i>
10:45-11:15AM	"Coffee Hour Talk": How to make coffee! – <i>Kitchen</i>
10:45-11:45AM	Small Group for Parents – <i>CYF HS Room</i>
10:45AM-12:00PM	Book Study, “Falling Upward” – <i>Upper Lounge and Zoom</i>
11:00AM-1:00PM	Community Living Room: In Memory of Jill Smith – <i>Common Grounds</i>
4:15-5:15PM	LU Music Scholars’ Rehearsal – <i>Choir Room, Sanctuary</i>
7:00-8:00PM	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](mailto: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 - 5<sup>th</sup> 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 28, 2024 9:30 AM  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

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## PRELUDE

*Herr Christ, der einig Gottes Sohn (The Only Son from Heaven)* 15<sup>th</sup> c. German folk tune  
Setting by Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)  
Dr. Nathan Birkholz, organ

## WELCOME

*\*Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We gather here in the presence of Christ, who is our friend and healer.

**All: We have entered here, and in our worship together,  
we yearn for hope and comfort.**

One: Let us reach to the heart of Jesus, who is our life.

**All: In him we are made whole.**

One: We are welcomed, loved and cherished!

**All: We are all God's beloved ones.**

**Let us rejoice and give God thanks and praise.**

### \*OPENING HYMN (see bulletin page 5)

*The Only Son from Heaven*

HERR CHRIST, DER EINIG GOTTS SOHN

## 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 the CYF building.)

## ANTHEM

*O Salutaris Hostia*

Jacob Narverud (b. 1986)

Text by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

*O salutaris Hostia  
Quae Caeli pandis ostium  
Bella premunt hostilia  
Da robur, fer auxilium  
Uni trinoque Domino  
Sit sempiterna gloria:  
Qui vitam sine termino,  
Nobis donet in patria. Amen.*

O Redeeming Sacrifice  
which opens the gates of heaven:  
enemies threaten wars;  
give us strength, send aid.  
One in three,  
let there be everlasting glory  
and grant us life without end  
in our true native land. Amen.

Lawrence University Music Scholars

**Confident Teaching**

Then they entered Capernaum. When the Sabbath arrived, Jesus lost no time in getting to the meeting place. He spent the day there teaching. They were surprised at his teaching – so forthright, so confident – not quibbling and quoting like the religion scholars.

Suddenly, while still in the meeting place, he was interrupted by a man who was deeply disturbed and yelling out, “What business do you have here with us, Jesus? Nazarene! I know what you’re up to! You’re the Holy One of God, and you’ve come to destroy us!”

Jesus shut him up: “Quiet! Get out of him!” The afflicting spirit threw the man into spasms, protesting loudly – and got out.

Everyone there was spellbound, buzzing with curiosity. “What’s going on here? A new teaching that does what it says? He shuts up defiling, demonic spirits and tells them to get lost!” News of this traveled fast and was soon all over Galilee.

SERMON *“We’ve Got Good News to Tell”*

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

\*HYMN #39

*O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

AZMON

MOMENT FOR MISSION ~ THE ISAIAH PROJECT

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 God Ordains Is Good Indeed*

WAS GOTT TUT

Settings, J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

What God ordains is good indeed, for all life well providing.  
 The will of God is best for me, the ground of my confiding.  
 My faithful God, on every road you know the way unfolding;  
 Your strong hand I am holding.

What God ordains is good indeed. My friend will never fail me  
 On danger’s path, in deepest need, when death in grief shall veil me.  
 My God so dear, oh, draw me near; in loving arms now hold me:  
 At last in light enfold me.

Sanctuary Choir

*We dedicate this musical reflection to the memory of tenor Roger Spindler and soprano Cheryl Benzschawel, two faithful Sanctuary Choir members who passed away this month.*

**\*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 (see bulletin page 6)**

*Rise, Shine, You People!*

WOJKIEWIECZ

*This strong hymn tune bears the Polish family name of its prolific composer (having written over 300 musical compositions), church musician Dale Wood (1934-2003.) The text was written by Ron Klug who worked and studied in WI at various points in his life.*

**\*BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

*Wojtkiewicz (Rise, Shine, You People!)*

Tune by Dale Wood  
Setting by David Cherwien (b. 1957)

**THANK YOU TO TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS**

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

Sanctuary Choir

Lawrence University Music Scholars

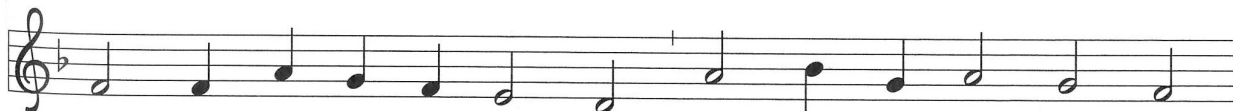
John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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

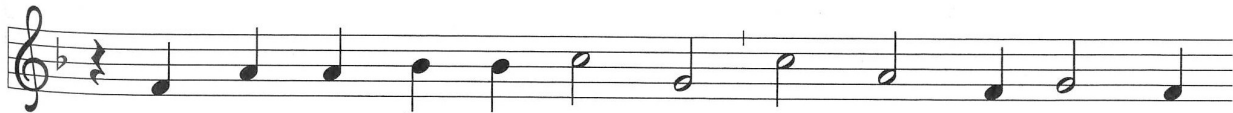
# The Only Son from Heaven



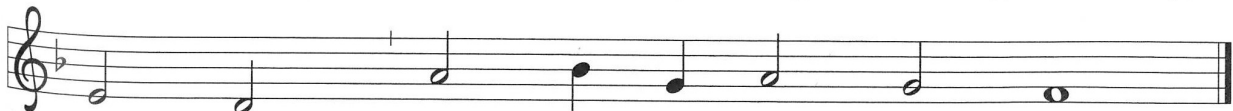
1 The on - ly Son from heav - en, fore - told by an - cient seers,  
 2 Oh, time of God ap - point - ed, oh, bright and ho - ly morn!  
 3 A - wak - en, Lord, our spir - it to know and love you more,  
 4 O Fa - ther, here be - fore you with God the Ho - ly Ghost,



by God the Fa - ther giv - en, in hu - man form ap - pears.  
 He comes, the king a - noint - ed, the Christ, the vir - gin - born,  
 in faith to stand un - shak - en, in spir - it to a - dore,  
 and Je - sus, we a - dore you, O pride of an - gel - host:



No sphere his light con - fin - ing, no star so bright - ly  
 grim death to van - quish for us, to o - pen heav'n be -  
 that we, through this world mov - ing, each glimpse of heav - en  
 be - fore you mor - tals low - ly cry, "Ho - ly, ho - ly,



shin - ing as he, our Morn - ing Star.  
 fore us and bring us life a - gain.  
 prov - ing, may reap its full - ness there.  
 ho - ly, O bless - ed Trin - i - ty!"

# Rise, Shine, You People!



- 1 Rise, shine, you peo - ple! Christ the Lord has en - tered
- 2 See how he sends the pow'rs of e - vil reel - ing;
- 3 Come, cel - e - brate; your ban - ners high un - furl - ing,
- 4 Tell how the Fa - ther sent the Son to save us.



our hu - man sto - ry; God in him is cen - tered. He comes to  
he brings us free - dom, light and life and heal - ing. All men and  
your songs and prayers a - gainst the dark - ness hurl - ing. To all the  
Tell of the Son, who life and free - dom gave us. Tell how the



us, by death and sin sur - round - ed, with grace un - bound - ed.  
wom - en, who by guilt are driv - en, now are for - giv - en.  
world go out and tell the sto - ry of Je - sus' glo - ry.  
Spir - it calls from ev - 'ry na - tion God's new cre - a - tion.

Text: Ronald A. Klug, b. 1939, alt.  
Music: Dale Wood, 1934-2003

WOJTKIEWICZ  
11 11 11 5

**Children's Ministry Locations for Today**

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

**Sunday, February 4, 2024 Worship Service**

*"Come and See"*

Rev. Kerri Parker

Mark 1:29-39

Musicians: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*; Youth Handbells; Daniel Boyd, *baritone*;  
Sanctuary Choir

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



## 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
David Andrus & Family	Nancy Kandler
Jill Anthony, her sister & her nephew	Kandy Kueler
Katie Behl and her sister, Barbara	Bill Lenz's cousin, David Andrus, who is living with end-stage brain cancer
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 and our FCUCC Kenya travelers.
Beth Detienne's mother	Stephen Otto's brother, Gerald
Erstad's family friend, Silas, and his family	Gretchen Revie
The families of Jim Edwards, Heidi Mendonca Erstad, Esther Gehrt, Cheryl Benzschawel, Lynn Meyer, Paul Siket and Roger Spindler, as they grieve their passing into eternal life.	Larry Schiedermayer
David Galow	Frank and Pat Severin
Art Gandler	Mike Seymour's mom, Debbie
Ken Geiger	Kinsley Tarr
Margaret Hankwitz	Gloria Tate
Judy Hanson	Jack Thiel
JoAnn Helms	Peter Thiel
Shirley Hoft	James Totzke
Misty Hofman	Jean Van Wagenin
Joan Jenson's son, John	Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter, Mya
Jean Jepson	Diane White
	Those living with mental illnesses.



## Wonderful Staff Transition to Celebrate!

In the life of every congregation people grow and take on new forms of leadership. For the Apostle Paul says in Colossians 2:6-7,

*As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

Last week we offered our blessing to Pastor Dianne Droster and Director Sarah Wilterdink as they undertake new efforts to serve our church.

Dianne Droster joined our church over ten years ago. She has been part of the faculty at Lawrence University, has completed the WI UCC Conference Lay



**Pastor Dianne and her dog, Pip**

Academy Program and has had additional theological training to be an Authorized Pastor. Dianne has served Howards Grove UCC and Brillion UCC as their pastor and has served here as Sabbatical Interim and as Director in Children's and Youth Ministries. Dianne has served our ministries faithfully for years and she is a regular, well-known face among us!

Many of you already know Dianne and those that don't, we hope you soon will! Dianne has been hired as a half-time Pastor for Visitation and Youth Ministries on a year-to-year basis to support and encourage us as we transition into a co-pastor model.

In June of 2022, our church hired Sarah Wilterdink as Director for Children's and Middle School Ministries. Sarah brought with her over twenty years of experience as a public-school teacher and a master's degree in educational

leadership and curriculum development. Sarah and her family have been active members of our church for over a decade. She comes to us not as an outsider, but as a home-grown faith leader here at FCUCC.



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**Sarah, Director for Children and Youth Ministry**

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During these first couple of years she has shown continuous initiative to be a team player, a deep love of young people, and an increasing interest in deepening her spiritual life and theological education. Her new role reflects a larger umbrella of responsibility as our new Director for Children, Youth, and Family ministries.

Sarah also has started the process of attending the Damascus project and being a Member in Discernment (MID). This is a first step that could potentially allow her to become a Commissioned Pastor here at First Congregational, if the Spirit so moves us in that direction.

What a blessing it is to have two gifted, enthusiastic, and willing disciples to serve on our church staff. I encourage you to welcome them into their new roles and also enjoy a moment of thanksgiving for the way God is calling forth, equipping, and loving our church community as we seek to serve and love the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Nick



## The Open Door Announcements

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

**FCUCC Job Posting:** Childcare Worker (w/administrative assistant tasks) needed to work with one other person when supervising children (while their adults are in the building). During times when there are no children present who need care, you will complete administrative tasks as assigned by the CYF Director.

- 18 or older
- Background check required
- Non-relative references WILL be checked
- \$20 per hour, taxed
- 3 Hours on Sundays, 9:00AM-12:00PM (infants-toddler care during the service, school-aged childcare and/or administrative tasks after the service); includes at least one Easter Sunday service and one Christmas Eve service.
- 2 Hours on Wednesdays **during the program year only**, 6:30-8:30PM (infants-5th grade childcare and/or administrative tasks)

**Community Living Room:** Connection is so important for our mental health. Sometimes it's hard to find someone who will listen. Often, we don't take the time to talk, to hear each other. Come find space to be seen, heard and valued for who we are. Come for meaningful conversation. In honor of Jill Smith, a former member of FCUCC and the ESTHER board, the ESTHER/FCUCC Mental Health Task Force is hosting a Community Living Room facilitated by Ebb and Flow **today, Sunday, January 28**, 10:45AM-12:00PM in Common Grounds. For more info, please contact Mary Sullivan at msullivan623@yahoo.com or 920-740-9452.

**Join us for "Coffee Talk"**(a 'how to make church coffee' session) **today** in the kitchen area downstairs after today's service. Ron and Cheryl Reissmann, long-time coffee gurus here, will be hosting this session in hopes that we can continue coffee hour and also find more willing participants to host. Interested? See you in the kitchen after the service **today, Sunday, January 28!**

**Book Study begins today:** "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 (today), and February 4, 11, and 18.** Our first gathering will be right after worship today. 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.

**Pillars Meal Sign-up:** Time to Create a Nourishing Meal for Pillars Thursday, **February 1, 2024**. 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.

**Cabin Fever Craft Circle ~ Ladies! Come Craft with Us!** Saturday, **February 3** AND Saturday, **March 2**, 1:00-5:00PM in the FCUCC Upper Lounge.

- Bring whatever project you're working on!
- Feel free to bring a snack to share!
- Come join us for fellowship & fun!
- No need to register – Just come on out!
- Let's get CRAFTY!

Questions? Email Debra at dawest@centurytel.net

**Virtual Town Hall:** The League of Women Voters Appleton-Fox Cities is hosting a virtual Legislative Town Hall, 6:30-8:00PM on Monday, **February 5**. Questions from the public (including some from our own Economic Justice Work Group) will offer insight into the legislative priorities of our representatives in Madison. To receive a Zoom link, you must pre-register at:

[https://lwwappletonfoxcities.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=4002&club\\_id=264322&item\\_id=2076286](https://lwwappletonfoxcities.org/content.aspx?page_id=4002&club_id=264322&item_id=2076286)

**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!



**Vacation Bible School Possibility:** We would love to host a Vacation Bible School-Type Experience This Summer for incoming Kindergarteners - incoming 6th Graders (Your friends are invited, too!) We know summers are busy and transportation can be hard. In order to begin spending time planning, WE NEED TO KNOW that you want a VBS offering, and what will work for your family. Please email

[swilterdink@firstcongoappleton.org](mailto:swilterdink@firstcongoappleton.org) or call the church office to let us know if you're strongly interested in your child attending VBS in the morning or evenings for one week. ALL adults and youth are invited to help us run VBS. Let us know if you can help as well! More info to come!

**ESTHER hosts a listening session:** Your Community, Your Voice You are invited! Thursday, **February 8, 2024, 4:30–6:00PM** 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>

### “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 (scholarships are available, contact Pastor Mary Jo info)

What’s Provided?

- Morning refreshments/snacks and lunch
- Books are in the church office. Please 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](mailto:djhooge@gmail.com) or Pastor Mary Jo at [mjaabs@firstcongoappleton.org](mailto:mjaabs@firstcongoappleton.org) with any questions.



**The 2024 Back Bay Mission trip** is scheduled for **April 7-13**. Volunteers will work with the housing rehabilitation ministry. There are also opportunities to work at the Micah Day Center and the food pantry. Join us at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi for some fun and fellowship. I need to know by March 1 if you are interested in joining us. Please contact Ken Jahnke at [kjahnke@new.rr.com](mailto:kjahnke@new.rr.com) or call 920-427-5996 with your questions.

**LEAVEN Hygiene Drive: Now through February 4.** LEAVEN helps clients in financial crisis with limited monetary assistance and referrals to existing programs in the community for which they are eligible. When available, LEAVEN distributes basic hygiene products to clients to help ease the burden of purchasing these items. All hygiene items distributed to clients are donated to LEAVEN - no budgeted funds are used. It is through the generosity of hygiene drives/collections that LEAVEN is able to keep a closet stocked with cleaning supplies and hygiene items. Boxes are in the narthex until February 4, when the final collection will take place. **Needed items include:**

- **Deodorant (men's and women's)**
- **Toothbrushes (individually packaged)**
- **Shampoo & Conditioner (please, no jumbo-sized bottles)**
- **Disposable Razors (in small packages; please, no refillables)**
- **Shaving Cream**
- **Laundry Detergent (small bottles or packages)**

Representatives from LEAVEN will be on site at First Congregational after service today, Sunday, **January 28** and **February 4** to collect items and answer any questions.

**Coming! A panel discussion on Indigenous Solutions to Climate Change**, Monday, **February 19** from 6:00-9:00PM at Huron/Ontario Room at Radisson in Green Bay. Attendees can sample Indigenous cuisine from 6:00-7:00PM. Discussion begins at 7:00PM. Tickets are free. Here's a link to register for a ticket if you are interested: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/indigenous-solutions-to-climate-change-tickets-781010873547>

**Turtle Trek Fund-Raiser 2023:** The results are finally in! Our Turtle Trekkers, who collectively walked, jogged, or roller-bladed more than 2,400 miles, raised a total of **\$3,408** for our mission partner, Re-Member. These funds will go directly to offset winter fuel costs of Oglala Lakota families on the Pine Ridge reservation. Thank you to all who supported our efforts!

**NOAHH Requests:** Rear facing car seat, full size box spring, dresser for a 14-year-old female who is moving in with her grandmother, a bassinet for a 16-year-old pregnant teen with a baby due in May, cost for driving school. To arrange for pick up contact Barb Mincheff at 920-832-5515 or questions contact Sue Ahrens at 561-531-3211. Thank you.

**Estate Planning Workshop:** Local Attorney Matt Brehmer is sharing his knowledge in an upcoming free workshop. On Wednesday, January 31 in the Mary Beth Nienhaus Community Room at Samaritan, 1205 Province Terrace, Menasha. Learn why the estate planning process isn't just for the rich, and what important decisions you can make now to set yourself up for success later. This workshop is free, but space is limited. Email to [shomburg@samaritanfoxvalley.com](mailto:shomburg@samaritanfoxvalley.com) and we'll get you registered!

**UCCI Rep Needed!** United Church Camps is our partner camp system here in Wisconsin. With three amazing locations and thousands of camper days spent every year, it's an example of faith in action taking place in the richness of creation. UCCI is a non profit with a Board of Directors and currently has an opening for one person to be part of their governing structure. If you have a passion for camping or love of one of the UCCI sights, and think you might have the interests and skills for a once a month board position, please reach out to Pastor Nick.

**WCC Strongly Encourages Masking – Again:** First Congregational UCC has followed the advice of the Wisconsin Council of Churches since the beginning of the pandemic. WCC strongly encourages congregations to return to using masks in worship and other gatherings. The current wave of COVID and other respiratory virus infections calls for increased caution and the use of mitigation strategies.



WCC suggests two primary ways to get through the remainder of the respiratory virus season:

**Mask up.** As mentioned above, we strongly encourage congregations to go back to using masks in worship and other gatherings through the end of February. It's the easiest, most effective way to prevent us from making one another sick.

**Get vaccinated.** It's not too late to get a booster shot, and it's a powerful way to keep yourself and the people around you safe and healthy. COVID boosters also dramatically lower the chances of getting long COVID.

We at FCUCC strongly encourage everyone to be vigilant regarding seasonal illnesses. You can mask up, stay at home if you are feeling ill and get tested for COVID and also utilize our online worship experience. We recognize the difficulty of sticking with best practices in a world that's, by and large, decided that COVID is done. But it is exactly the business of the church to model persistence in the face of challenges, to show extra care when no one else will. We are grateful for all that you've done so far to keep others healthy and safe in our communities.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Ash Wednesday Dinner & Worship

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

~~First~~ **Second** Wednesday Dinner Night at 6:00PM

Youth-Led Worship following dinner at 6:30PM





Hymnfest  
“Declare His Works”

Sunday, January 28, 1:30 pm  
Faith Lutheran Church  
601 E. Glendale Ave.  
Appleton

*One generation  
will declare  
your works  
to another.  
They will tell of  
your  
marvelous  
deeds.*

*Psalm 145:4*

Come and warm your soul and celebrate Faith's 75th (diamond) anniversary with a unique blend of Scripture-inspired reflections and hymns. Music is provided by a variety of instrumentalists and the choirs of Faith (Green Bay) and Faith (Appleton). A commissioned arrangement of the hymn text “In Darkest Night” will be premiered and Dr. Michael Culloton from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN will be our guest conductor. A reception will follow. For more details visit [faithfoxvalley.org/hymnfest](http://faithfoxvalley.org/hymnfest).

Sponsored by the Faith Lutheran Church Worship Arts Enhancement Fund



## Communications at First Congregational UCC

1. The hub of communication will be our **website**.
2. **Weekly E-Newsletters** will be sent out Mid-Week and on Fridays.
  - a. The Mid-Week E-news will be sent out late in the day on Tuesdays to provide updates about Wednesday evening activities.
  - b. The Friday E-news will provide the virtual version of the coming Sunday's "Open Door," which includes the **weekly bulletin** along with its attached announcements.
3. Look for us on **social media**.

Submit your articles/items to be included in the **Weekly Church E-Newsletters /Social Media/Website Announcements**. These articles, 150 words or less, can also include pictures and clipart and links for people to "learn more."

Articles submitted for the **Sunday Bulletin's The Open Door Announcements** are limited to 2 Sundays per month (additional Sundays only if space is available) and are subject to editing for clarity and/or space available.

Deadline for submitting articles for any announcement is 4:00PM on Tuesday.

Submit articles, questions, or ideas to [opendoor@firstcongoappleton.org](mailto:opendoor@firstcongoappleton.org).

## Guidelines for Worship Service Announcements

- Requests for announcements must come to both pastors a week in advance (not the week or day of the service). These must be submitted in writing and less than 100 words; these are brief announcements!
- We have a maximum of three announcements per week, first-come, first-served at the discretion of the pastors. Multi week announcements are discouraged.
- Generally, the pastor leading the worship service that week makes the announcement themselves. Exceptions are made.
- If the pastor cannot fit this request into worship, it will go into the bulletin, and the one making the request notified as time allows.
- Mission Moments are also available on a limited basis. These are longer and highlight critical needs or commitments for our faith community.

# This Week's Schedule

## Monday, January 29

6:30-8:30PM Fox Valley Flute Choir - *Sanctuary*

## Tuesday, January 30

9:00-10:00AM Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

11:00AM-12:00PM Staff "Check In" Meeting - *Library*

6:30-7:30PM Living Sober AA Group - *Common Grounds*

7:45-8:45PM Fireside AA Group - *Common Grounds*

## Wednesday, January 31

10:30-11:30AM Membership Committee - *Mary Jo's Office*

12:15-1:00PM Loving Acceptance Meditation - *Upper Lounge*

5:30-7:30PM Childcare - *Childcare Room*

5:45-6:25PM Youth Handbells - *Sanctuary*

6:30-7:30PM Bible Study: Romans Lesson 5 - *Zoom only*

7:00-8:30PM Sanctuary Choir - *Sanctuary, Choir Room*

## Thursday, February 1

9:00-10:00AM Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

12:00-1:00PM AA - Search for Serenity Group - *Common Grounds*

12:00-1:30PM Theology Discussion Group - *Chefo's Pancake House*

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

## Friday, February 2

10:00-11:30AM The Curious Co-op Rehearsal - *Theater*

7:00-8:00PM AI-Anon - *Upper Lounge*

7:00-8:30PM N.A - *Common Grounds*

## Saturday, February 3

1:00-5:00PM Cabin Fever Craft Circle - *Upper Lounge*

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

## Sunday, February 4

9:25AM-12:00PM Childcare - *Childcare Room*

9:30-10:30AM Sunday Worship with Youth Handbells - *Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge*

9:30-10:30AM Children's Ministry - *CYF Wing*

10:30-11:45AM Children's Choir/Musical Rehearsal - *Choir Room*

10:30-11:45AM CYF Committee Meeting - *MS Youth Room*

10:45-11:45AM Small Group for Parents - *HS Youth Room*

10:45AM-12:00PM Book Study, "Falling Upward" - *Upper Lounge and Zoom*

4:15-5:15 PM LU Music Scholars' Rehearsal - *Choir Room, Sanctuary*

6:00-8:00PM 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, soil, 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.**



724 E. South River Street | Appleton, WI 54915  
920.733.7393 | [firstcongoappleton.org](http://firstcongoappleton.org)  
Office hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00AM – 3:00PM