

Vision



"It's not where you are that counts, it's where you are going."

January 2012

The First Congregational UCC "U" Challenge

Inside this issue:

A Word from Our Pastor	2
Cookbook	2
New Website	3
Moderator Musings	4
Karen of All Trades	4
2011 Photo Gallery	5

The First Congregational United Church of Christ "U" Challenge is a weight loss contest for members of the church hoping to shed a few pounds in 2012.

Participants will officially weigh in before February 1st (Sunday, January 29th after the 10am service or sometime Tuesday or Wednesday from 9am-1pm when Pastor Dan is in the office would work best). Each week we will weigh in (preferably on the same day) and Pastor Dan will keep the official record. As a Pastor, he is bound to not share what he learns and will not judge anyone. The purpose of this contest is to build church camaraderie and get healthy together.

When you submit your money and commit to the contest, please give the office your email or phone as well, so we can let you know of special get-togethers. We plan on taking walks after church service and plan some other activities as well.

We will end the contest on May 20th or May 27th. The entry fee is \$15 a person.



There will be two categories in which a top award will be given - most weight lost and percentage of weight lost. Fifty percent of the entry fees will go to the HVAC fund. The other 50% will be divided among the two winners.

So recruit some of your favorite members for the "U" Challenge.

(Pictures taken by photographer at 2010 Memorial Sportscore Women's Biathlon)

Calling All Members For Rummage Sale Items!!!



The 2nd Annual First Congregational UCC Rummage Sale will be here before we know it. It is scheduled for Saturday, March 3rd. We would like to have everyone's donations by February 26th.

We will take books, nic nacs, plates, lamps, furniture, etc. If you donate electronics, please make sure they work and have all cords. We will not take mattresses or clothing.

We also have a pick up date coming up in February for large items. Please call the office at 546-7170 or email firstconucc@comcast.com to let us know if you need a pickup. Otherwise you can drop off items at church from 9am-1pm, Tuesday through Friday or Sunday after service. Also please let us know if you can help with the sale.

A Word From Our Pastor



Happy new-year! The old year has passed away, gone forever except in our memories.

The time to begin again has come. Passing on the responsibility from the old man to the baby

is a powerful symbol of the way organisms and organizations are (and need to be) regenerated. It reminds me of the story of the prophet, Elijah, being taken into heaven in the whirlwind. As he is taken up his mantle falls to the ground. Elisha, Elijah's student, snatches up the mantle and slaps the river with it. The water parts and a new prophet walks across on dry ground. (2 Kings 2:1-14)

Archeologists tell us that humankind has tracked the heavens

and observed the coming of the New Year eons before written records of any kind were kept. In fact, scripture tells us in Genesis 1:14 as part of the account of creation "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years." So, from the very beginning God meant to give us an annual reminder of the new creation that God makes available to any and all who say yes to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Special days,

times or services are no longer needed to avail ourselves of the "beginning again spirit" found in God's unbounded grace and to see everyone around us with new eyes.

My prayer is that you have a great New Year in Christ Jesus. See you in church!

We've come this far by faith.

Pastor Dan

Cookbook Fundraiser Making Progress

Our First Congregational UCC Cookbook has been submitted to the printer. We have more than 250 recipes from our members and it will be another great fundraiser. We will be selling the cookbooks for Mother's Day for sure and most likely will sell them at other times as well.

Stay tuned for more information.

Revamped First Congregational UCC Website Is Up!

Go online and check out firstucc.com. The website has been redone and while it is still a work in progress, there have been a lot of changes.

Our hope is you'll find this website easier to navigate. The Vision Newsletters and Sunday Bulletins will be available on the website as well as the latest pictures from church events and news about members and happenings.

If you find there's something you'd like to see on the website that is not there, please let Joey or Michelle know at spen-arc@gmail.com. If you see any information that needs to be tweaked, let us know. This is our church family's website, so your input is important.

Moderator Musings From Debi Iams



Wow! I started thinking about what our First Family has accomplished and I am amazed! Music Sunday, Forefathers Dinner, Rally Sunday, Advance Planning seminar, Cookie walk,

summer camp, Fill the Sills, Thanksgiving baskets, guest musicians, quilt raffle, Muriel's 90th birthday celebration, new members welcome, ice cream social, knife sale, clergy appreciation, Alaska vacation pictures, choir rehearsals, Julie Boot's marathon celebration, rummage sale, Honor Flight, Anna's Circle, Allen Oertel's Honduras trip, White Gifts pageant, search committee, church picnic, baptisms, men's fellowship, soup/chili lunch, Priester family attending the Super Bowl cheering on the Packers, Wednesday evening fellowship dinners, Mary Alice's trip to Kenya, Howard's 101st birthday

celebration, Scout Sunday, Joey and the Kidzeum efforts, vintage jewelry sales, bell choir and Bells in Motion performances, annual and pre-annual meetings, floral decorating classes, HVAC repairs and planning, sending home Dick Washburn, Maire Schaver's Celtic dances, VIA-literacy participation, Lenten study, confirmation for Chris Boots and Eddie Priester and Anna's Circle.... And what did I leave out? It has been a very busy year for our members, and we have really accomplished a lot. As Pastor Dan says, we are small but mighty! Thank you to everyone for a wonderful year!

News from our Karen of All Trades



Happy New Year to everyone! As many of you have heard, I have started

the year out on the wrong foot, or to be more exact, on the wrong hand. I cut two of my fingers, one severely, and I eventually found myself in surgery where a nerve and tendon repair operation was performed. I am so blessed to have a church family, many friends, and my own family who have lifted my spirits time

and time again. God has been ever present and working through the medical team to get me back at a functional level. It will take a while, but I have hope that I will be able to play the piano again at an acceptable degree of proficiency. In the meantime, I look forward to what the year will bring.

We have several people who have joined the choir. Barb Hershey, Amy Norton, and Esther Carmitchel all can sing harmony, so you will start to witness what they are adding to our choir. This Sunday we are singing three part harmony. What a wonderful gift! In addition, both Jack and Na-

talie McLaughlin are singing in the choir as well. When I first became CE Director, one of our goals was to bridge the generation gap in our congregation. I think we continue to meet this goal, and what can I say: seeing the little ones singing with us is just adorable.

Thank you for your prayers. I have faith this year will be a year of promise and growth.

Respectfully,

Karen Ferguson
Music/CE/Camp Director

Church Calendar

Weekly Happenings

Mondays

Cub Den 2 (Bear Cubs) 6pm
Boy Scout Troop #216 7pm
AA Meeting 8p

Tuesdays

Morning Exercise 9am
Cub Den 9 (Tiger Cubs) 6pm
Zumba 5:30p

Wednesdays

Fellowship Meal 5:30pm
Chancel Choir 6pm
Bell Choir 7pm

Thursdays

Morning Exercise 9am
Clergy Cluster 10:30am
Cub Den 4 (Wolf Cubs) 5:30pm
Zumba 5:30p
AA Meeting 8p

Fridays

AA Youth Meeting 5:30p

Sundays

Chapel Service 8am
Main Service at 10am

Boards & Committees Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule

1st week

Monday - Deacons at 5:30pm
Tuesday - Christian Fellowship at 5:45pm
Tuesday - Trustees at 5:30pm

2nd week

Tuesday - Christian Education 6pm.
Wednesday - Clergy Cluster Meeting 10:30am
Saturday - Men's Fellowship 8:30am

3rd week

Tuesday - Finance & Stewardship 5:30pm.
Cub Scout Pack #331 6pm
Saturday - Anna's Circle (Women's Fellowship) 10am

4th week

Tuesday - Church Council 6:30pm
Wednesday - A.M. Deacons 9:30am

First Congregational UCC
2100 South Bates Ave.
Springfield, IL 62704

546-7170 (church office)
pastordan64@comcast.net

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

UCC Photo Gallery 2011



Help Us Best Reach You

What's the best way to get information to you? We want to make sure you are aware of the happenings at First Congregational UCC. We are working on an updated email list. Please submit your email to firstconucc@comcast.net or give it to Bill in the office. If email is not your thing, please let us know if you prefer snail mail. Plus give us the best phone number to get a hold of you, as well.

In addition, you should soon see changes to the website and if you haven't already, join our Facebook page, FirstCong UCC Springfield.