

# Vision



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

May 2011

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## Music Sunday Is Here!!! May 22nd at 10am.

By: Our Karen of All Trades, Karen Ferguson

Batter up! Here's one last pitch for the May 22 Music Sunday! First of all, Kids Klub will be well represented. Natalie will play a piano duet and sing a duet with me. (I'm truly honored that she asked me!) Jack will play Mozart's Sonata in A Major. Sarah will sing a solo and a duet with Vanessa while leading the congregation. She is also in the choir which is

singing about 5 selections! Vanessa is singing a solo.

Our special guest Kelly Trier is singing a solo as well as participating in the men's gospel number, choir, and a quartet. Ann Collins who has become a staple to our special church events will also be singing in several numbers as well as sharing her violin talents.

The Sunday wouldn't be complete without the bell choir under the leadership of Mike, and of course Gina and I will be doing our thing! So don't miss this big event.

Come and worship with us as the musicians share their gifts on this special day. And remember, bring a friend or two!



Music Sunday Rehearsal and Performances Last Year.



## A Word From Our Pastor



The temptation to look back usually doesn't sway me, as there is always plenty to look forward to both in life and in the church. But I want to make an exception this month. Your faithfulness as a con-

gregation through Lent and Easter Sunday was a joy to experience.

The Wednesday Evening Potluck expanded considerably to accommodate significantly more people for a basic teaching program. It really looked great to see so many proudly wearing their beaded pins on Easter signifying their regular attendance in the Lenten program. This success has provided a springboard for another Wednesday program entitled

"The Authority of Scripture" which will begin in the fall (more to come).

Easter was especially well attended with additional family members and many visitors in the pews.

Thank you Karen, Gina and choir for your truly inspiring music.

More recently, many enthusiastic worshippers also attended our Mother's Day service and were treated to more outstanding music.

I truly believe we are a congregation on the move. We are seeing glimpses of what we really are and what we can become as a fellowship contagiously committed to caring for one another.

We've come this far by faith,

Pastor Dan

PS Don't forget to check the calendar. There are many good things ahead to feed your spirit.

## A Call to Action for "Springfield In Bloom"



The Illinois Times is not holding a contest with awards this year, but it is still recognizing places that spruce up by providing a "Springfield In Bloom" sign and featuring the organization in the paper.

Ada Lyn Shrewsbury has been kind enough to take a look at the area we want to

spruce up by the sign at Bates and Cherry and along the North side of the building. She is going to be getting back to us soon about what we will need to accomplish making the corner of our property look much better.

We will be asking for donations of items and time. If you

have an idea, please share with Ada Lyn or the PR Committee. We hope to get this done in June with it all looking good by July.

This will be a great way to get our church some more recognition in the community.

## One Great Adventure-Submitted by Leslie Dickson

Michelle and Leslie Dickson (and Leslie's sister Debbie) completed a 224 mile hike on the John Muir Trail (JMT) in California last summer. The trail begins in Yosemite National Park (4,000 feet elevation) and terminates at Mt. Whitney (14,497 feet elevation), the highest peak in the lower 48 states. This was a challenge and adventure for all, as well as a transition to civilian life for Michelle who completed five years of active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps in May of 2010. She began a two year graduate program studying Environmental Planning and Management at UIS in August.



The planning for the trip was extensive, beginning in 2009 when Michelle was considering an even longer hike, the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) which starts in Mexico and ends in Canada. The PCT joins the JMT through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The JMT is considered the most scenic portion of the 2,650 mile PCT. Once Michelle was admitted into graduate school, her available time was cut down

to a month, not the six months needed to traverse the PCT. She decided to hike the JMT, and invited Leslie and Debbie to join her.

The JMT is a rugged trail that crosses Yosemite National Park, Kings Canyon National Park, Sequoia National Park, Ansel Adams Wilderness and the John Muir Wilderness. The trail is extremely remote with



no crossroads for over its 220 mile length. Because of this, logistical plans for resupplying food had to be made. We planned four resupply points – a box to Tuolumne Meadows post office in Yosemite, two five gallon buckets to Reds Meadow Ranch and Muir Trail Ranch (these were mailed to the closest town and picked up and brought in for us to pick up at these two ranches located near the trail) and two buckets to an outfitter who packed them in on horseback to Charlotte Lake Ranger Station for a stiff fee.

We each carried a large backpack that weighed between 35 and 40+ pounds depending on the amount of food and water we carried on any particular day. Water was plentiful along the trail and we pumped (filtered) water from streams twice a day to fill a camelback and one liter bottle each. It was our bad luck that the Sierras had 50% more snow the previous winter and a colder spring, factors that caused the trail to be covered by snow, mud or water in many places. This also caused some water crossings to be deep and hazardous. A veteran JMT hiker told us she had often only walked through ankle high water other years. We had several crossings that were hip high and raging.

Michelle carried a three person light weight hiker's tent and Leslie carried the cooking stove, pots and fuel in addition to each of us carrying our own clothes, sleeping bag, mattress and bear vault. A bear vault (a hard plastic canister that cannot be opened or carried by a bear) is required to store all food items and anything else with an odor, i.e. toothpaste and sunscreen. The vaults have apparently been effective in driving the bears away from the trail since we never saw a bear during 30 days in the wilderness, which was fine with all of us.



The scenery on this hike was amazing. We all felt extremely privileged to see in person what many only see in photos. Multicolored wild flowers of many varieties were

everywhere. We climbed and crossed eleven mountain passes and at the top of each pass we saw numerous mountain ranges in the distance. The mountain lakes were clear and aptly named for their hue, i.e: Emerald Lake and Sapphire Lake. We each thought this must be what heaven looks like and even expressed we felt we were in the presence of departed loved ones.

## Graduate Salute

There are several members or family and friends of members of our church who have graduated or will be graduating this month or next. A big congratulations to all of them.

Anthony Miller graduates from SHG on May 22nd. He will be attending the College of Engineering at University of Iowa.

Kristy Ulm graduates from University of Illinois Springfield with a major in biology. She is starting her Masters in occupational therapy this fall.

Matt Dickson graduates from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale with a Bachelors of Science degree in Marketing.

Vanessa Ferguson graduates from University of Illinois Springfield with a degree in communications. She plans to pursue work in public relations and work on her Masters in the future.

Kate (Katherine Anne) Priester graduates this June from the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis) with a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree.



## Moderator Musings From Debi Iams



Compassion. How we interact with others makes a difference in how others perceive us. Sometimes, a headache, stomachache, heartache or any old kind of ache can make us cranky. However, if we receive a smile, a pat on the shoulder, or a kind word, that can impact our

ability to overlook the pain. I try to go out of my way to smile at a clerk and say his or her name, because I know I feel better when I am on the receiving end of a smile. Sometimes it is the little things in life that can make a difference in how our days go. In fact, there is a movement called Random Acts of Kindness that inspires people to show kindness and compassion. Barb Hershey always asks how many hugs have you had today! She read an article that makes the case that seven hugs are needed each and every day for good mental health. Every time I see Barb, I think of how positive her question makes me feel, and I always get a hug from her! Be someone who shows compassion, whether it is with a hug, a pat, a kind word, a listening ear, a smile, or any one of a million ways to show compassion.

## Church Picnic is Sunday, June 5th

Don't miss the Annual First Congregational UCC Picnic. It's on June 5th at the Springfield Motor Boat Club. We'll have fried chicken and rolls and everyone's asked to bring a side dish or a dessert of some kind. It's always a great time of eating, visiting and celebrating our faith.

The outdoor service starts at 10am and then the picnic, which will be held indoors, will follow. Please look for an RSVP slip in the church bulletin so we know how much chicken we'll need.



# Kids Korner



Kid's Korner  
Special Addition: Mother's Day

Honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God has given you. Exodus 20:12

Honoring your father and mother means obeying them and respecting their wishes. We honor our mothers on Mother's Day.

Can you guess who wrote what??

Letter #1

Dear Mom-

Happy Mother's Day. Thank you for fixing my hair and washing my clothes. Thank you for setting the table and cooking.

Letter #2

My mom is awesome! She cares for us, works for us, feeds us, helps us. I am very grateful to have her. I LOVE YOU MOM!!!!

Letter #3

My mom is kind. She is kind because

She helps me with my homework almost every day I have homework. She is also caring. For example if I were to somehow hurt myself somehow she would make sure I was all right.

Letter #4

Happy Mother's Day! I LOVE YOU MOM!!!!!!!

Letter #5

I love you mom. You are the best. I'll always be by your side.

Happy Mother's Day to everyone!!!!

From,  
Kids Klub

## Church Calendar

### Weekly Happenings

#### Mondays

AA Meeting 8p

#### Tuesdays

Zumba 5:30p

#### Wednesdays

Fellowship Meal 5:30pm

Chancel Choir 6pm

Bell Choir 7pm

#### Thursdays

Clergy Cluster 10:30am

Zumba 5:30p

AA Meeting 8p

#### Saturdays

AA Meeting 10:30a

#### Sundays

Service at 10am only this month

### Boards & Committees Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule

#### 1st week

Monday - Deacons at 5:30pm

Tuesday - Christian Fellowship at 5:45pm

Tuesday - Trustees at 6:30pm

#### 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 7pm

Wednesday - Cub Pack #331 6pm

Saturday - Anna's Circle (Women's Fellowship) 10am

No matter who you are or  
Where you are on life's journey,  
You are welcome here.

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

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

## *There's still time to register for the "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" Summer Camp*

There's still time to register kids for summer camp. If you know someone who has kids and may be looking for help with activities this summer, First Congregational UCC's Summer Camp is a great summer program. Check out more information and the video about it at [firstucc.com](http://firstucc.com).

The UCC Summer Camp orientation is Sunday, June 5th and camp starts with a soft week on June 6th. This year we've added the soft weeks at the beginning and end of camp to help accommodate those parents who need places to have their kids all summer. The regular curriculum will start up the next week.

### ***A call for snacks for campers!!!***

We will need snacks for summer camp and the congregation has always come through with flying colors. We will need items that do not contain peanuts, and if you feel inclined to buy gluten free items, that would be grand as well.

Packages of chips, granola bars, animal crackers, fruit snacks and other similar items are great. Thanks for your assistance. You help make summer camp a great experience for the many campers.

### ***Summer Camp 2010***



### ***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](mailto: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.