

First Congregational Church UCC
est. April 29, 1856

December 2019

Pilgrim's Echo



Home for Christmas

It had been nearly six years that I felt alienated from the church and my family and did not much participate in either, including Christmas. Then I began my trip back home for Christmas by attending the Midnight Service on Christmas Eve at Historic Trinity Lutheran Church, Detroit. It was a difficult, tear filled and happy Christmas Eve. As I went to the communion table and knelt, I heard the words "Given and shed for you" followed by "Henry we love you and you are welcome here." These words were spoken by the now deceased, Rev. Dr. David Eberhardt. Then as I was leaving, he said, "Let's get together for coffee the beginning of January." And we did. It was the first step of many in my journey home to God and my family.

Then it was Easter of that following year, that a friend dragged me to church again. This time it was a small United church of Christ Church, called Faith-Trinity in Warren, where I was welcomed with open arms and once again heard the words, "Given and shed for you." as I received communion. Within a few weeks, they had me preaching and leading worship for the first time in over six years. I knew God was calling me home to himself and my family and so the journey continued to wholeness and restoration.

In the end, God nor my family had not really forsaken me – I forsook them. And to be sure God was always there at my side, in spite in spite of it all. That's what grace is all about.

Looking forward in the coming weeks to welcoming you all home for Christmas! And for those who have not been home in a while. Give it a try. Maybe you could invite someone who has lost their way to join you at Christmas? Not only at church but possibly even to your home for Christmas?

We soon will be singing, *Emmanuel, that is God is with us.*

Rev. Henry C. Brinker, Pastor



Welcome Home

Church Staff:

Pastor,
Reverend Henry C. Brinker

Office Administrator,
Cathy DeWulf

Office Assistant & Newsletter,
Barb Schuster

Choir Director,
Bette Carrothers

Organist,
Richard Wolf

Child Care,
Beth Robbins

Custodian,
Ralph Dunsmore



Church Council:

Moderator - Greg Harmon

Vice Moderator - Ed Kammer

Clerk - Donna Dunsmore

Treasurer - Bonnie Kandler

Diaconate Chair - Barb Schuster

Trustees Chair - Chuck Maddix

Religious Ed - Sandra Wasilina

Ushers - Richard Kordas

Missions - Phyllis Maddix,
Barb MacDonald

Decorating - Sherry Cole

Technology Team - Dennis Halstead

Music Chair - Jim Parsons

Dorcas Circle - Anna Cratsenburg

G.L.E.E. - Marge Reh, Bev Reno

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

Weekly Food, Fellowship and Worship

Every Wednesday evening with
a meal at 6:00 p.m.

A \$5.00 donation is suggested.
A casual worship service with
communion led by Pastor
Brinker begins at 7 p.m.

Reservations are encouraged.

Sign up in the fellowship hall,
call the office: (586) 725-0909
or email: fccnb@att.net by 10
a.m. Wednesdays.



*Please welcome the Southeast
Michigan Deaf Community
Ministry to our 10:15a.m. ser-
vice when they join us every
few months on a communion
Sunday.*

*For information on learning
American Sign Language, go
to their website
www.asldeafined.com*



Once again this year we ask
that anyone with extra holiday
treats on their hands bring some
to share at coffee hour on
December 29 and January 5.

Mark your calendars:

December 1 - Advent begins

December 4 - Dorcas Circle Luncheon at Cedar Glen at 12n

December 5 - Decorating the Sanctuary 9am

December 6 - Big Family gift wrapping

December 8 - Multi generational Christmas pageant at 10:15am

Dorcas holiday pot luck

December 15 - NBIC concert at 2:30pm at Lighthouse Bible Church

December 18 - Blue Christmas service 7pm Meal at 6pm

December 22 - Choir Cantata at 10:15am

Decorating our Sanctuary for Christmas

On Thursday, December 5th, the Decorating Team will be meeting
at 9:00 a.m. to decorate our Sanctuary for the holiday season.
Any and all help would be greatly appreciated . . . even the men!



Christmas Pageant

December 8 there will be a telling of the Christmas story
with an inter generational pageant at the 10:15 service.
Looking for people, especially some children and youth to
be in the cast. Rehearsal will be Saturday, December 7, at
10:00. Non speaking parts and costumes available.
Questions?

Cynthia. 313-207-0174 cynharmon@yahoo.com

Next Sunday, December 8th, the **Dorcas Circle** will be hosting a **Potluck**
following the 10:15 p.m. service. Please bring your own place setting and a
dish to pass and join us for this special time of food & fellowship. Chicken
will be provided.



Blue Christmas Service Wednesday December 18

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a
loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been
difficult. The constant refrain on the radio and television, in shopping malls and churches
about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends,
reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken
relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of
isolation—all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and
spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need
to know that we are not alone.

Our spirits sink as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper
around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us.

For these reasons, First Congregational offers a special Blue Christmas service on
Wednesday, December 18 at 7:00p in the Sanctuary.

Come out and join with us in sharing prayers, scripture and music that
acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle—and
that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone is welcome.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL PASTY SEASON HAS ENDED AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

We finished our fall season on Tuesday, Nov. 5 and of this date, Nov. 13, 2019, there are just four left. The total pasties baked totaled 8,498 and when the crew left on that last day, each had a huge smile. Perhaps they were happy that the season had ended, but I feel that many had a smile because they had shared time two marvelous weeks with great people. A sense of satisfaction, in other words.

Those who participated with hours and hours of effort or simply provided lunch one day, were: Cherie Atkinson, Rev. Henry Brinker, Simone Campau, Bill and Sherry Cole, Anna Cratsenburg, Kim Demmers, Roger and Cathy DeWulf, Ralph and Donna Dunsmore, Jon Foster, Dennis Halstead, Kenny Hancock, Greg and Cynthia Harmon, Dennis and Shirley Hawk, Jason Hawk, Cheryl Hill, Paul Horan, Bob and Sally Hudson, Ed and Jeannie Kammer, (who came up from South Carolina to be with us), Bonnie Kandler, Jack and Rosalie LeRoy, Peg Linnenbrink, Bob MacDonald, Chuck and Phyllis Maddix, Dave and Michele Ostrowski, Jerry Pielack and Theresa Emmanuel, Bob and Ann Potteiger, Frank and Bev Reno, Doug and Jackie Rice, Joan Rifenberg, Dan Ross and Sally Sutley, Jerry and Barb Schuster, Peggy Sehlmeier, Marlene Steer, Kathy Vardon, Bill and Sandra Wasilina, and guest helpers, Mary Bole, Danielle Boyd, Michelle Boyd, Barbara Godbey, Linda Marling and Julie Varady.

Our church is blessed every day because of the love and companionship that we share. It's a ministry in itself.

Bette

P. S. I am meeting some of the church men in the morning, Nov. 14, to pick up 350 bags of flour in preparation for our Feb./Mar. season. The fun continues.

PPSS....On Sunday November 17, a check for \$31,500 was presented to the Trustees from the Pasty Sale!!!

ECHO deadline:

The **deadline** for the January 2020 Echo is Monday, **December 16th.**

Please submit all articles/ announcements to
Barb Schuster at
baschu65@att.net or
the church office at

The Monthly
Pilgrim's Echo
is available on
our website
under the
newsletter tab.

Web Address:

1stcongregationalchurch.org



If you would like to order a red **Poinsettia Plant** to decorate our Sanctuary for the holidays, please call the church office (586 725-0909) no later than Monday, December 9th. The cost per plant remains \$16.00.



Like us on Facebook

MANAGE YOUR GIVING ONLINE

First Congregational Church UCC is excited to announce that we now offer e-giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

- Visit the church website at www.1stcongregationalchurch.org
- Click on the green "E- Giving" button,
- Click on the Create Profile button, then
- Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contributions.

If you have any questions, please contact Cathy DeWulf or Barb Schuster.

"Watch for future announcements about adding an e-giving app to your smart phone."

Attention Snow Birds:

If you wish to receive your Pilgrim's Echo via e-mail, please notify
Barb Schuster at
baschu65@att.net or
the church office at
fccnb@att.net.

December birthdays

07 Colleen Hirsch
08 Bill Cole
16 Juanita Brabeau
19 Joan Rifenberg
20 Jerry Churchill
22 Michelle Ostrowski
23 Simone Campau
24 Marian Wilber
Sharon Kuykendall
27 Mary Bole

children birthdays-

02 Logan Parsons
12 Collin Atkinson

December Anniversaries

07 Jerry & Melidee Churchill
23 Joe & Rachel Pomaville

If you would like to be a part of our
telephone prayer chain or would like
to begin a prayer,

Please contact Rosalie LeRoy at
586-725-0743.

Please remember our shut-ins and those recuperating:

Bev Harwood
Penny Kurtz
Sharon Kuykendall
Marge Reh
Bev Reno
Jesse Thompson
Marian Wilber

Sharon Kuykendall -

33713 Bayview Dr #41
Chesterfield, MI 48047

Bob Mack -

29891 23 Mile Rd #18
Chesterfield, MI 48047

Norma Michael

29831 23-Mile Road, Apt. #12
Chesterfield, MI 48047

Sue McPhedran

40844 Fuller
Chesterfield, MI 48051

December Mission News

The Giving Tree is up! Please visit it in the dining hall and, if you would like, take one or two tags from the tree. Please return the item purchased to the Giving Tree no later than **Sunday, December 8th**. When you return the item please be sure **the tag is attached**. Please **do not wrap** the item. If you purchased a gift card we would prefer you place this, with the tag attached, in the collection plate or turn it into the office. We would prefer these not be left under the tree. We thank you so much for your continued generosity.

We have many more projects we are working on for the month of December. On Friday, December 6th we will again be wrapping gifts for Big Family of Michigan. It is always a good time. It is not too late to sign up in the dining hall. Also we will again be making Christmas Food baskets on Saturday, December 14th. If you would like to donate food items you may leave your donation in the collection boxes in Freedom's Gate and in the back of the church. **If you know of any individuals or families in need of a food basket please let Phyllis Maddix or Barb MacDonald know.** We will need to know the composition of the family so we can prepare baskets to meet their needs. This includes the family size with the number of adults and children plus the ages of the children. Also if there are any dietary restrictions.

On Sunday December 22nd we will be taking a collection for the Christmas Fund. For over 100 years the **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund** has helped clergy and lay church employees who are facing challenging financial situation. United Church of Christ congregations and individuals all across the country give generously so that the Pension Boards, on behalf of the whole church, can continue this ministry of direct support. It is no surprise that people run into difficult financial situations. It is also no surprise that the wider church family has found a way to be there with support and care when these needs occur for those who serve God's mission through the United Church of Christ.

Watch your bulletin for more information on this worthwhile collection. You can donate by cash or check in a designated envelope that will be available in your bulletin. You can include it in your weekly offering envelope, just indicate the amount on your envelope. You may also now donate electronically. Directions are available in the ECHO or see Cathy or Barb.

THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS DEC. 22, 2019

Our Church Choir will perform the cantata, "Joy Has Dawned," by Lloyd Larson, during the second service on Sunday, Dec. 22. There will be solos, readings and choral selections as the story is told in words and music. Our wonderful accompanist, Richard Wolf, and choir members Juanita Brabeau, Choir Director Bette Carrothers, Anna Cratsenburg, Jon Foster, Cynthia Harmon, Shirley Hawk, Bonnie Kandler, Jack LeRoy, Rosalie LeRoy, Chuck Maddix, Jim Parsons, Frank Reno, Barbara Schuster, Kathy Vardon, Bill Wasilina and Sandra Wasilina will find it a pleasure to present the cantata to our congregation that Sunday morning, just in time for Christmas.

Many thanks

Words cannot express how much the outpouring of get well and sympathy wishes have meant to me and how much they have helped in my healing both physically and mentally.

A cartoon illustration of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ages and ethnicities, all with their mouths open as if singing. They are gathered around a large, open music book that shows a musical staff with several notes. The illustration is in a simple, colorful style.

The Mission Team will be teaming up with the Dorcas Christmas Luncheon participants in collecting new, **reusable water bottles** for children & teens (think age appropriate and cute designs) along with **measuring cups**. These will be donated to the Diabetic unit at Children's Hospital and used to teach and encourage children with Diabetes to measure and drink more water. If you are not able to attend the luncheon, but would still like to donate, you may drop a water bottle or measuring cups off by the food bins in Freedom's Gate or in the back of the church.

I am so grateful for all your prayers, cards and phone calls. I'm blessed to have such a wonderful church congregation.

I would like to thank the entire Church family for all the prayers, cards, calls and well wishes for me during my recent surgery.



**Holy
Baptism**

Clara is the daughter of Paul and Karla
Parenteau and was born on
September 23, 2019. Godparents are: Kayla
Townsend and Jennifer Penman.
Proud grandparents are: Larry & Janet
Parenteau and Randy & Karen White.

The sympathy of the church is extended to the Hawk family on the death of Dennis' sister, Beverly Salyers on Wednesday, November 20, 2019.

December Serving Schedule

DATE	GREETERS:	COFFEE HR HOSTS	READERS:	NURSERY:	SUNDAY SCHOOL	TRUSTEE:	CAMERA:	A/V:
December 1	Nancy Curd	Available	Sandra Wasilina	Beth & Ann P	Barb MacDonald	Doug Rice	Marlene Steer	B. Cole L. Rice
December 8	Bob Potteiger	Dorcas Potluck	Deb McCray	Beth & Beverly B	Barb MacDonald	Dan Ross	Sherry Cole	B. Schuster B. MacDonald
December 15	Rick Curd	Diaconate	Frank Reno	Beth & Liz R	Barb MacDonald	See Bulletin	Cathy DeWulf	D. Halstead G. Harmon
December 22	Juanita Brabeau	Ushers	Shirley Hawk	Beth & Cathy D	Barb MacDonald	See Bulletin	Frank Reno	S. Hawk L. Rice
December 29	Marlene Steer	Bring holiday treats to share	Alan Naldrett	Beth & Cynthia H	Barb MacDonald	See bulletin	Marlene Steer	B. Cole A. Naldrett

Communion Servers Sunday December 1:

8:45a - Cynthia Harmon, Bonnie Kandler & Kathy Vardon

10:15a - Sally Sutley, Barb & Jerry Schuster

December Decorating - Peggy Sehlmeier

USHERS

December 1	8:45a - Bette Carrothers & Maggie Peacock 10:15a - Richard Kordas, Claude Sirois, Luke Sirois
December 8	8:45a - Chris & Karen Leduc 10:15a - Dennis Hawk, Chuck Maddix, Greg Harmon
December 15	8:45a - Bob & Sally Hudson 10:15a - Bob & Ann Potteiger, Dan Ross
December 22	8:45a - Simone Campau, Sharon Kuykendall 10:15a - Jerry Schuster, Marlene Steer & Kathy Vardon
December 29	8:45a - Simone Campau, Sharon Kuykendall 10:15a - Jerry Schuster, Marlene Steer & Kathy Vardon

Advent Readers:

December 1:

1st service— Simone Campau & Deb McCray

2nd service -Adkinson/Sirios family

December 8:

1st service -

2nd service - Maddix family

December 15:

1st service— Liz Rice & Rami Guergis

2nd service— Hawk family

December 22:

1st service -

2nd service -



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

36223 Alfred Street
New Baltimore, Michigan 48047



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
ANCHORVILLE, MI 48004
PERMIT #7



**Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Sunday Worship Schedule

8:45a.m. And 10:15a.m.
Open Communion 1st Sunday of the
Month and Special Services
Special Music each week

Certified Child care available
10a.m. 12noon,
for Infants thru age 4

Sunday School for ages 5 and older
following Children's moment at 10:15a.

Wednesday Eat & Pray 6p.m.

Handicap Accessible

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 8a.m. - 12noon

Friday - 9a.m. — 12noon

Phone: (586) 725-0909

Email: fccnb@att.net

www.1stcongregationalchurch.org

Our Mission Statement

"Welcoming any and all, we join together in the love of Jesus,
reaching out to the community and beyond"
