

Tower *chimes*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC | GRAND JUNCTION, CO | DECEMBER 2020

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP



Although we will not be gathering in person for worship during our Advent and Christmas season, our Advent Planning Team (Gail Gordon, Pam Gregory, Martha Jones, and Sharyl Peterson) have put together a series of creative worship experiences for us that will bring the message of the season home to both our hearts and minds in powerful ways.

In addition to the usual components of worship that we share together regularly like music, scripture, and proclamation of the Word, our services will also include special readings, time with children, and the Lighting of our Advent candles. For those who are interested, advent candles will be provided for you to use at home, so that you can more completely participate in the worship experience.

Each week during Advent, we will be focusing on the lectionary readings, which will include one of the well-known gospel passages related to the Christmas story, as well as a reading from the Psalm which helps us look at the message of God's promises through the eyes of our forbearers in the faith, people who lived through challenging times not unlike what you and I are experiencing today.

Below are the themes for each of the weeks of Advent, along with the scripture readings we'll be focusing on together. I'd encourage you to read through and reflect on these passages prior to viewing each Sunday's worship experience. It will enhance your understanding and appreciation of the worship experience:

November 29 First Sunday in Advent: "Where are You, God?"
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Mark 13:24-37

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP CONT'D

- December 6 Second Sunday in Advent: "Messengers of Hope"
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Mark 1:1-8
Sacrament of Holy Communion
- December 13 Third Sunday in Advent: "Shouts of Joy!"
Psalm 126; John 1:6-8, 19-28
- December 20 Fourth Sunday in Advent: "Birthing a Promise"
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Luke 1:26-38
- December 21 Longest Night Service offered by the Western Slope Association.
This service will be a celebration of what Brian Wren calls "joyful
darkness far beyond our seeing" and will be offered online.
Stay tuned in your CHAT for more details.
- December 24 Christmas Eve Worship. A Service of Lessons and Carols
- December 27 An informal Post-Christmas Worship Celebration. No need to dress
up for this service. Come in your jeans or jammies and Bring Your
Own Beverage! 😊

PASTORAL SEARCH UPDATE MICHAEL PETRI

The Pastor Search Committee (PSC) has been working to prepare UCC's Local Church Profile (LCP) form. This form will be posted on the UCC Ministry Opportunities website for use by potential candidates to learn about our church and determine their interest in working with us. The form required a lot of thought and reflection by the PSC, and your comments on the LCP are welcome.

The Pastor Search Committee will make the LCP available to our church for review and comment on December 7. The form will be available for download from the church via a link to be provided in an e-mail on December 7. If you don't have access to a computer, hard copies of the document will be posted on the bulletin board outside of the church office on December 7.

Comments should be submitted no later than Monday, December 14. Instructions for submitting comments electronically will be provided with the e-mail on December 7. If you don't have access to a computer, please submit any comments in writing to the church office marked to the attention of the Pastor Search Committee.

Note that some sections of the document may not yet be complete as we await additional instructions from our regional conference representative. These sections will be clearly marked. Also, the financial information in the LCP will be updated/completed based on the outcome of the church budget review at the annual congregational meeting to December 13.

- Michael Petri

Pastor Search Committee Chair

A LETTER FROM THE MODERATOR MARK LONG



Here we are in the Advent season with no place to go! We've already started opening the other days to get the chocolate morsel out of the Advent calendar we bought because we're binge eating to counteract the boredom or stress. Well, put that chocolate back and close the door! This is a season of anticipation and this year that season is filled with anticipation of what's next...

For some of us, the anticipation we hold is one of dread...dread of the loneliness, pressures of the season, financial and job stress, fear of the expanding pandemic...and a host of other things I'm sure most of you can envision. And we need to acknowledge all those sorrows, just as we acknowledge the sorrow that Jesus was brought into this world with joy, only to be ridiculed, harshly judged by his own people and ultimately killed for standing up for what God wants for us. But with this harshness and sadness, Jesus brought messages of love and hope... That this harsh world can be a better place where love and caring for and with each other can happen if only we will listen, consider and act.

So this Advent season, I'm going to face head-on the sorrows that inhabit my life and greet them with the same anticipation I greet the (much greater number) joys, peace and happiness that bring smiles and laughter to my spirit. I love the image of the laughing

Jesus and will keep that image along side the sorrowful image of Jesus on the cross in anticipating greater joy than sorrows over the coming year and wish the same for each of you. My prayer is that you find encouragement in this season because we were given the gift of the life of Jesus to show us that, with all the injustice and sorrow that life brings us, there is a gift of love from God that will carry us through with hope and optimism. I pray also that we will all see that our lives are rich and full simply because we have the love of God and all the Angels moving through us every moment of every day!...it's that simple!...

Blessings and Peace this holiday season,
Mark

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Joyful Darkness Far Beyond Our Seeing: A Longest Night Service for the Western Association

Join with UCCers along the Western Slope for a service celebrating the gifts of darkness as we gather on the year's longest night, December 21st at 7PM via Zoom.

To receive a link, please reach out to Rev. Karen Winkel at Community Spirit UCC. Her office phone is 970-765-7070 and her email is revkaren@communityspiritucc.org

ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION OFFERINGS KAREN CATON

We have several adult education offerings coming up in the not-too-distant future that folks might be interested in joining.

The first session is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 6th at 11:30am. This will be a Zoom get-together to view and discuss a video called The Forgiveness Project. The discussion after the viewing the video will revolve around the concept of forgiveness and how we might apply this to our lives in our current culture. This session will last approximately 1 hour. Contact Beth to add your name to the list to receive the Zoom link. This session will be co-hosted by Karen Caton and Beth Rakestraw.

Beginning in January 2021, Andrea Leak will host an online series called Being Grateful In Difficult Times. This is a series based on the book Grateful by Diana Butler Bass. The series will run from Sunday, January 10 at 11:30am and run for 7 Sundays. This group is limited in size, so let Beth or Andrea know if you are interested in joining this group. Watch for more specific details in December.

Bob Peterson will be hosting a book study based on the book Christ in Crisis by Jim Wallis. This book study is tentatively scheduled to start in March 2021. Bob had just started this book study last March – just before the COVID lockdown hit us. The start date and time are still being determined, so stay tuned for more information. If you don't already have the book, you'll have plenty of time to get it. If you have specific questions, please let Bob know.

Some additional ideas and bible study groups are also being discussed, so watch Church Chat and the Tower Chimes for additional information in the coming weeks! If you have an interest in a specific topic, please let someone on the Spiritual Formation Team know! (Your Spiritual Formation Team consists of Karen Caton, Andrea Leak, Marie Koontz, Elizabeth Montgomery-Anderson, Dana Brosig, Sarah Downing and Pastor David).

MORE ABOUT THE FORGIVENESS PROJECT

The Forgiveness Project is a short film about the 1994 Rwandan genocide when nearly 1 million people were slaughtered in less than 100 days. Communities of the Hutus and Tutsis - families, friends and neighbors senselessly killed each other.

During the Belgian rule of Rwanda in the 20th Century, the government began officially labeling Rwandans as Hutu, Tutsi and Twa – creating a social hierarchy that favored the Tutsi minority population. In 1961, Rwanda gained independence but now under the Hutu majority. Conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi steadily increased. When the President's plane was shot down in 1994, the country erupted into violence. Today – 26 years later, nearly 32,000 genocide perpetrators remain incarcerated in Rwandan prisons.

The Forgiveness Project film explores the lives of the perpetrators and survivors and the government's desire to restore unity among the communities, build understanding of the true meaning of repentance and begin the process of reconciliation. This film documents part of their journey.

The film is approximately 22 minutes long with discussion to follow. We are planning on about a 1-hour Zoom call. **We hope you'll join us for this very powerful story !**

THE SINGER, THE SONG, AND THE SINGING

MARTHA JONES

As I noted before, I joined The Hymn Society to stay connected with church musicians around the world and to explore keeping church music alive at a time when we cannot safely sing together. Recently they shared a set of "COVID Carols" – new words to traditional carols written for a pandemic - a lighthearted way for some famous hymn writers to have a little fun. Most of the songs are silly, some ridiculous, a couple sublime. But, hey, when church is anywhere two or three are gathered, even if separated by the space of internet or print, don't you think it brings joy to the heart of God? While we probably won't be singing these new carols in old carol-skins in our upcoming services, I thought I'd share one with you. This is actually one of the more sublime efforts and actually has a good message for us as the holidays approach.

A TINY THING WE CANNOT SEE

By: Rae E Whitney

Tune: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

A tiny thing we cannot see
or taste or feel or hear,
has shut down nearly half our world
and brought distress and fear.
We've read about the plagues of old:
Now a virus gone astray
has caused much sickness, death and grief,
with new reports each day.

But many helpers brave this plague
and serve those most in need,
and offer comfort, help and care
through many a word and deed.
We thank our true and gallant ones
who risk their lives to bring
relief and help to sickened folk
touched by that tiny thing.

Yet there are other tiny things
to cheer each anxious heart,
a smile, a wave, a caring note,
though we must stay apart;
a phone call, email, Facebook, Zoom,
can curb anxiety,
while faith and hope and love abound
to keep our spirits free.

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"Keep singing until, one day, we will again sing together!"

MAPPING THE ROAD AHEAD:

A ONE YEAR REPORT FROM THE INTERIM MINISTER

Two significant events took place recently. One: I celebrated my one-year anniversary as your Interim Minister. Two: I had my annual performance review with Mark Long, Ken Puhler, and Joan Levy. In that review session we had some great conversation about where the church is right now and what I believe are the critical things the church needs to accomplish in the remaining time that I am your Interim Minister.

At the end of the conversation, the team encouraged me to share my thoughts with Council. I did that at the October Council meeting and the Council unanimously approved these five items as “marching orders” for the next six to eight months, while I am still with you.

1. Hire a New Senior Minister

The Search and Call Team is currently hard at work on the Church PROFILE. I would hope that they will be able to complete the PROFILE by Thanksgiving and get sign-off on it from the Conference prior to the first of the year. Most pastors won't be looking to move (or candidate) during the Advent and Christmas season but after the first of the year there will be lots of interest. If we can begin screening candidate applications and interviewing candidates shortly after the first of the year, we should be able to have a new pastor in place by June or so. This would give the new settled pastor the summer to settle in before gearing up in the fall.

2. Determine the Disposition of our Buildings

Buildings can be either a valuable asset or a major liability, depending on how they are used and whether a church has the resources to maintain them. The Christian Education building in particular is an albatross that is only going to weigh more heavily with every passing year. Right now, we have significant repair and remediation expenses because we have deferred maintenance of that building for decades.

It appears to me that we do not have anyone in the church family who has the passion, time, and expertise to explore ministry-related uses for that facility. Everyone on the Buildings Team already has numerous other leadership responsibilities within the church family. Perhaps the most expeditious and realistic solution is to sell the CE building and the property it's on to a developer.

3. Change the Endowment Policy to Allow the Use of Endowment Principal

The current policy only allows us to use 95% of the interest earned on current ministries, which is a rather insignificant amount annually. Given the financial challenges the church is going to be facing in the short-term, you need to be able to access the principal. This will not be a long-term solution, of course, but can help the church get through the next three or four years when, hopefully, it will have stabilized and can resource its current ongoing ministries.

4. Complete the work of the Staffing Team and Reshape our Staff Structure to Reflect Current Priorities

The Staffing team has done great work and is almost finished. Council should review its recommendations and implement staffing changes prior to the arrival of a new Senior Minister, so that the new Senior Minister and the leadership team are in place and can focus on ministry priorities.

MAPPING THE ROAD AHEAD:

A ONE YEAR REPORT FROM THE INTERIM MINISTER

5. Implement the Five Immediate Priorities Identified by the Visioning, Programming, and Marketing Team and Approved by Council at the August 2020 Council Meeting

These five priorities are a good first step in focusing, implementing, and communicating our vision to the community. Ken and his team did a great deal of other good work that was included in their initial report and should not be lost, but much of that will need to wait until a new settled pastor is in place.

Ken Puhler and I have committed to creating a Marketing Team which has been recruited and should be having their first meeting shortly. Specific ministry teams or individuals should be identified who will take responsibility for each of the other four priorities, so that they actually happen.

If you as a congregational member have questions about any of these priorities, feel free to talk with any member of Council or, better yet, give me a call!

With you on the journey,

Pastor David

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

Our Council has been working hard to develop a proposed budget for 2021. We are dealing with a number of uncertainties this year which have made the budget building process more challenging than usual, including:

- ◇ The impact of the pandemic, both now and projecting into 2021
- ◇ A loss of revenue due to the continuing aging of our congregation
- ◇ The calling of a new settled pastor and the impact of that on the budget

On the next three pages, you will find the proposed budget that our Council approved at a special session on Sunday, November 29th. Please take some time to review it at your earliest convenience. **A Congregational meeting will be held via Zoom on Sunday, December 13th, at 11:30 AM to review and approve the budget.** You'll receive the link to the Zoom meeting via email in the December 10th CHAT. Even if you don't have a computer, you will be able to call into the meeting using your telephone. Information will be provided in the December 10th CHAT on how to do that.

I will be offering a Question and Answer session on the proposed budget on Tuesday, December 8th, at 4:30 PM via Zoom. Martha Jones and Pastor David will be joining me for the conversation. This session is for anyone who would appreciate more detailed information and answers to specific questions in advance of our Congregational Meeting on the 13th. You'll receive a link to the Zoom meeting in your email not later than next Monday, December 7th.

With you on the journey,

Mark Long, Moderator

First Congregational Church
Operating Budget - 2021 PROPOSED

	Jan - Nov 15 2020 Actual	Approved 2020 Budget	PROPOSED 2021 Budget	
OPERATING INCOME				
Pledges	151,704	161,000	146,582	Giving is stable but we're losing to death.
Offerings & Donations	26,648	20,000	20,000	
Main Building Use Income	1,185	5,750	2,875	May be optimistic. Depends on COVID!
Miscellaneous Income	2,069	500	500	
CE Building Income	21,779	24,000	22,000	
Ann.Transfer Endow to Operatin	391	350	3,200	Includes endowment income less restricted for library & camperships
Restricted Income as Expensed	2,954	4,000	1,330	\$1100 Graham (music); \$230 JAM
Budgeted Reserves		20,017	31,933	Have \$60,000 total unrestricted reserves as of 11/15/2020.
Passive Income-grocery, Amazon	1,077	700	1,200	
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	207,807	236,317	229,620	
EXPENSES				
Building/Grounds Maintenance	7,628	7,700	7,700	
Utilities				
Water, Sewer, Trash	5,236	4,500	6,000	
Gas & Electric	11,336	15,000	13,000	
Telephone/Internet	750	2,000	1,000	
Total Utilities	17,322	21,500	20,000	
Office & Supplies				
Office Supplies	951	1,600	1,200	Reduced - closures
Building Supplies	745	3,000	1,500	Reduced - closures
Copying	3,518	3,600	3,600	
Information Technology	2,266	3,000	3,000	
Postage & Delivery	422	500	600	
Advertising and Promotion		500	3,000	
Total Office & Supplies	7,902	12,200	12,900	
Professional, Bank & Legal				
Property Tax	1,887	1,900	1,900	
Background Checks	0	120	120	
Bank & Payroll Fees	607	800	800	
Total Professional, Bank & Legal	2,494	2,820	2,820	

First Congregational Church
Operating Budget - 2021 PROPOSED

	Jan - Nov 15 2020 Actual	Approved 2020 Budget	PROPOSED 2021 Budget	
Insurance				
General Insurance	7,691	8,000	8,000	
Health Insurance-Senior Minister		0	0	See Sr Min package
Life & Disability - Senior Minister		0	0	See Sr Min package
Pension-Senior Minister				See Sr Min package
Workers Compensation	883	1,000	1,000	
Total Insurance	8,574	9,000	9,000	
Worship & Celebration Team				
Music Equipment & Maintenance	0	350	350	
Copyrights (music & video)	536	450	550	music \$277; video - \$247
Worship & Special Services	106	300	300	
Choral Music	82	400	200	6 mo
Handbell Music	119	200	100	6 mo
Special Musicians	0	250	250	
Total Worship & Celebration Team	843	1,950	1,750	
Spiritual Growth & Ed Team				
Adult Programs	35	250	500	
Nursery Supplies	0	50	50	
Children K-5 Supplies	430	600	600	
Youth Supplies	118	750	500	
Total Spiritual Growth & Ed Team	583	1,650	1,650	
Congregational Life Team	135	750	750	
Mission Team	1,003	2,000	2,000	
Justice Action Ministry Team	69	600	600	
UCC Partners				
OCWM-Our Church's Wider Miss	6,375	8,500	8,500	
UCC Conference - Per Capita	1,536	1,900	1,500	
Western Assn. Dues	640	800	625	
Total UCC Partners	8,551	11,200	10,625	
Council Expenses				
Delegate Conf. Expenses	0	1,000	250	All meetings will be virtual
Church Growth	176	250	0	See Advertising
Pastoral Search	0		2,000	Estimate. Will also need moving expenses.
Total Council Expenses	176	1,250	2,250	

First Congregational Church
Operating Budget - 2021 PROPOSED

	<u>Jan - Nov 15 2020 Actual</u>	<u>Approved 2020 Budget</u>	<u>PROPOSED 2021 Budget</u>	
Conference & Travel				
Senior Minister Conf. Expenses	0	0	0	See Sr Min package
Senior Minister Mileage	0	0	0	See Sr Min package
Total Conference & Travel	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
Continuing Ed & Prof Exp				
Senior Minister Contin Education	0	0	0	See Sr Min package
Senior Minister Profess Exp	0	0	0	See Sr Min package
Staff & Lay Leader Training	0	250	250	
Sabbatical Reserve	0	1,000	1,000	
Sr. Minister Benevolences	1,153	600	600	
Total Continuing Ed & Prof Exp	<u>1,153</u>	<u>1,850</u>	<u>1,850</u>	
INTERIM Sr Minister Compensation	75,250	86,000	43,000	Interim minister. Total package w/ benefits for 6 mo. Detail on request.
NEW Sr Minister Compensation			46,467	New minister. Total package w/ benefits for 6 mo. Detail on request.
Payroll - All Others				
Youth Leader	0	3,182	0	
CE Director	6,549	7,426	7,522	10 hrs wk + 1.3% raise
Office Administrator	21,443	22,349	22,639	29 hrs wk + 1.3% raise
Facilities Manager	12,762	14,311	14,496	20 hrs wk + 1.3% raise
Choir & Handbell Director	5,100	7,650	3,951	6 mo, 1.3% raise
Organists	6,392	8,859	8,568	56 services at current rates + 1.3% raise
Nursery Attendant	1,067	2,500	936	6 mo, current rate
Total Payroll - All Others	<u>53,313</u>	<u>66,277</u>	<u>58,112</u>	
Payroll FICA	4,078	5,070	4,446	calculated .0765%
Contract Employment				
Substitute Organist	200	0	0	
Pulpit Supply	900	1,500	1,200	Interim: 4 vac, 1 study; new minister 2 vac 1 study = 8@\$150
Prof. Bookkeeping Service	2,118	3,000	2,500	
Total Contract Employment	<u>3,218</u>	<u>4,500</u>	<u>3,700</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>192,292</u>	<u>236,317</u>	<u>229,620</u>	
NET INCOME	<u>15,515</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	

- * Interim Senior Minister compensation for 2020 includes expenses previously included as accountable reimbursements (conference & travel, continuing ed, professional, health ins.)
- * New Senior Minister package is listed as a total for 6 mo. until negotiated. Details on request.

OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES BETH RAKESTRAW, SCRIBE

The church council of First Congregational Church United Church of Christ met on October 18, 2020 for the monthly stated meeting. The meeting was conducted on-line. Present were council members Cindy Haas, Martha Jones, Joan Levy, Mark Long, Ken Puhler and Sally Shell, intentional interim pastor David Dethmers, and church administrator Beth Rakestraw. Council members Nancy Palubicki and Michael Petri were absent. Max Reilly attended the A/V portion of the meeting.

A quorum was established. The meeting was opened at 12:34 pm with a reflection by Pastor David from the Gospel of Luke and then prayer.

Minutes of the September 20, 2020 meeting were approved as distributed, on motion.

The following reports were distributed prior to the meeting:

- ♦ Interim Minister Report: October 2020
- ♦ Mission and Outreach, minutes from October 2020 [typo: soles for souls]
- ♦ Worship and Celebration, draft minutes from September 2020
- ♦ Christian Education, minutes from October 2020
- ♦ Property and Finance, draft minutes from October 2020
- ♦ Strategic Opening Team, minutes, October 2020
- ♦ Finance Reports for 3rd Quarter: Treasurer's Report, Balance Sheet and Budget Performance

Other information distributed prior to the meeting included:

- ♦ a proposal from the Audio/Visual Team to finance a proposed equipment upgrade
- ♦ a bid received from Avalanche for cooler replacement and repair

Discussion of Interim Minister's report. David gave a brief overview of his report, a list of recommendations regarding what he believes are the highest priorities for the church and council's work during his remaining time with us:

1. Hire a new senior minister
2. Determine the disposition of our buildings
3. Change the endowment policy to allow the use of endowment principal
4. Complete the work of the Staffing Team and reshape our staff structure to reflect current priorities
5. Implement the five immediate priorities identified by the Visioning, Programming and Marketing Team and approved by Council at the August 2020 Council meeting

High points of the discussion: all of these priorities are critical, and we must work on them concurrently. These should be listed on the council agenda every month, and an accountability structure for accomplishing the tasks must be put in place.

Cindy reports that the first draft of the profile for the pastoral search is mostly completed and believes that Michael will be sending it along to Erin Gilmore for feedback.

More work is needed to improve accessibility to the moneys included in the endowment. The work that was done previously cleaned up the language and restructured the availability of the endowment's income, but at this point we still cannot touch the principle. It would be helpful to have the flexibility to touch the endowment if necessary. Any moneys drawn from the endowment would be included in the annual budget, and as such would be communicated to and voted upon by the congregation.

David has asked that the council affirm these priorities and flesh out how they will be

accomplished. It was moved that council accept these priorities, seconded; the council approved unanimously.

It was recommended that the council sub-committees spend some time creating timelines and assigning responsibilities for these tasks and bring them back to the next council meeting. Pastor David has agreed to develop a tentative timeline for the VPM tasks. The staffing has one more area to focus on, Christian Education, and will await the completion of and vote upon the church budget before making their final recommendations. The building subcommittee will consult with Archway Construction about using a portion of our land for construction of non-profit housing. Martha will develop a timeline for the work of changing of the endowment.

Update from Congregational Life. Although plans were in the works for an in-person Thanksgiving meal, the congregational life team has decided to offer a “to go” only Thanksgiving meal in light of recent covid-19 numbers. A FOG event took place Friday, October 16, with 6 persons in attendance, masked and socially distanced.

Financial reports. Martha gave an overview of the financial and treasurer's reports, pointing out that our limited reserves make it more important that we make the endowment funds more fluidly accessible than they presently are. Moved and seconded, treasurer's reports approved.

Other Business:

Discussion/Approval allocating funds for CE building repairs-Martha. Martha's recommendation is that we send this back to property & finance to sequence the order of the repairs and utilize building reserves to cover the expense. It was moved and seconded that Council approves the use of funds from the Building Reserve for replacement and refurbishment of coolers presented in the Avalanche bid. Council approved unanimously.

Approval to receive anonymous gift for AV equipment and Proposal from Audio/Visual Team. Moved and seconded that the council approves the \$1500 donation for the purchase of A/V equipment, and that any remaining unused funds will revert to the general fund. Martha will notify the donor and write a thank you.

Results of Pastor Evaluation. Mark reviewed the results of the evaluations, noting that every score was meets or exceeds expectations for all questions. Pastor David expressed appreciation for the process.

Display of US Flag. Noting that much discussion had already happened via e-mail, Mark asked if there was more discussion. Discussion ensued. A motion was made and seconded to display the flag. After more discussion, it was moved and seconded to table the motion to display the US flag until the next meeting of council. There were three yes votes and two nays, motion to table carried.

Stewardship Update-David. David indicated that he had sent out two special stewardship related articles so far and would send out two more. The timeline will be sent again to make sure everyone has the same information.

Ken asked a question about **Pastor's Appreciation Month**. Discussion followed.

AV Position. Ken asked about whether we were going to discuss an AV position for Max at this meeting. It was determined that Beth will create a draft job description in consultation with Max and others and email it out to the necessary parties.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m. The next meeting will be November 15, 2020 via zoom.

MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS

Well done, people of God!

Despite the pandemic and all the challenges that has brought, our members have lived out once again our belief that "the church is not a building ... the church is the people." And we are people united in our commitment to follow Jesus' Way.

To roughly paraphrase a section of Matthew 25, Jesus told his followers (that's us, folks), "I was hungry, and you fed me..." "My children were hungry and you had compassion on them...". "I had no safe place to call my home and you reminded me that I am still a beloved child of God." "As you did it to the least of these, you did it to me."

The folks at the Catholic Outreach Soup Kitchen were thrilled to receive our November offering! Once again, we stepped up, and collected 156 cans of veggies, 8 packets of mashed potatoes, several boxes of pasta, and a big bag of potatoes. Pretty good, for a "little tiny congregation" like ours! I hope each of you reading this has the joy of knowing you personally have helped feed Jesus, and his children (there are so many families right now whose kids are without food), and reminded many people that even if they are presently homeless, the world is not without sparks of kindness and love. Blessings!

December Food Item : ***Holiday Ballads of Soup and Salads (by SBP of course)***

*Some people call it soup,
And some people call it stew,
But for most it's an essential ingredient
In making holiday foods come true.*

*And then there's salad dressing;
There's ranch and French and blue ...
1,000 Island and Italian,
Let's see what we can do.*

Catholic Outreach has requested donations of CREAMED soups and salad dressings (any kind except the make-it-yourself packets) for December. After all, how on earth can anyone make green bean casserole without cream of mushroom soup? Or creamed spinach without cream of chicken? Or the family favorite layered salad with ranch (or whatever kind of dressing your family uses)?

Right now, most of this stuff is on sale. So, let's put on our masks (and remember, you can just order on-line and go pick it up so you don't even have to risk in-store Co-Vid germs) and see if we can collect at least 100 cans of soup and 50 bottles of dressing for our December food project. We'll be taking the food over to C.O. on Tuesday the 22nd, so let's get cracking!

See Next Page for Remaining Fourth Quarter Projects

MORE MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS

Alternative Gift Campaign, November 22-December 6th

Are you tired of shopping for gifts for items that people don't really want or need? Consider an alternative gift this Christmas season, donation to a good cause in their name. This year Mission and Outreach will be sponsoring our gift drive for the newly established, local social justice group RAW (Right and Wrong). RAW was established by Antonio Clark and Jay Freeman in the wake of the murder of George Floyd. This is a wonderful opportunity to help a newly established local group that is working hard on local justice issues. RAW has asked that our Alternative Christmas gift to them be directed to helping the family of DeAndre Rogers with funeral costs. DeAndre was a young local black man who worked with RAW and tragically died a few weeks ago.

Updated ways to donate: Due to covid we will not have people available after service. You can donate online at www.uccgj.org. Click on the donate box and select Christmas fair as the donation. You can also mail a check to the church. Please put Alternative Christmas fair in the memo box. If you would like the donation note for your Christmas cards you can contact Sally Shell or Beth and we can email them to you. If you need the actual Christmas cards and to have the notes printed out to pick up please contact Beth to make those arrangements.

December Giving Opportunity: Project 1.27

The mission of Project 1.27 is to inspire, recruit and resource churches and families to foster and adopt the kids in their own backyard. In December we collect items needed for the closet. The most needed items are diapers, underwear and pajamas. Since we won't be having a tree in the gathering place these items can be dropped off at the church office during office hours.

The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks. Watch Church Chat for more details about when and how this offering will be received.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/4 Julie Krueger

12/5 Dannie Bowman

12/6 Creta Payne

12/8 Sandi Knudson

12/17 Mary Sealing

12/18 Nancy Spangler

12/22 Sheri Schmidt

12/22 Linda Lee

12/23 Alexa Linakis

12/27 Marie Reed

If we are missing a birthday from our lists, or our list is incorrect, please call the church office at 970-242-0298 or email office@uccgj.org. Thanks!

NOVEMBER 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
November 29	Nov 30	1	2	3	4	5
10:00 Worship		4:30 Mission & Outreach, Zoom	1:30 Congregational Life, Zoom		10:00 Women's Coffee, Zoom	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10:00 Worship		10:00 Worship & Celebration, Zoom			10:00 Women's Coffee, Zoom	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10:00 Worship 11:00 Annual Budget Meeting					10:00 Women's Coffee, Zoom	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
10:00 Worship	Western Association Longest Night Service, 7:00 pm			Church Office Closed for Christmas Eve <i>Christmas Eve Worship on YouTube</i>	Church Office Closed for Christmas Day	
27	28	29	30	31	January 1	Jan 2
10:00 Worship					10:00 Women's Coffee, Zoom	



Go Green! Get your Tower
Chimes via email!



CONTACT US!

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Office Hours During Corona Time:

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www.uccgj.org



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST