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**First Congregational UCC "At First"**  
**1400 North Elliott Avenue, Glencoe, MN 55336**

**Church phone: 320-864-3855**

***Rev. Dr. Bob Baggott and Rev. Dr. Casey Baggott; Co-Pastors***

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**December 2020**

**"Veterans of the Cross"**

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

We will be receiving "Veteran of the Cross" offering on Sunday, December 20th. But since we not sure from week to week whether we will have live worship that Sunday, you can mail your donation to the church office too.

**Christmas Eve Service**

Please watch weekly emails for announcements about returning to live worship in our sanctuary. If we are still unable to meet for live worship on Christmas Eve, we will provide take-home bags filled with items to help us celebrate together as we watch our online worship service on the church's Facebook page on Christmas Eve at 7:00 pm. The bags will be available for pick-up just inside the west door of the church in weeks to come. Whether we are able to physically gather or not, the gracious spirit that unites Christ's people as one body will bring us together in hope and joy that night!

**Rosette's To Go**

Due to covid 19, First congregational Church Bake Sale has been postponed, but will be selling rosette's. **There will be pre-orders only! \$10.00/Dozen.** Call or text **320-455-3338**, give your name, phone number & number of packages, **by November 28th**. Pick up at church's west door (Elliott Avenue Side) on **Saturday, December 5, 2020 from 8:00-11:00 a.m.** Please bring correct change or check.

**Christmas Rosette Making**

**making will be happening soon!**

All are welcome (but for young children due to risk of burns). Masks and social distancing please.

**Where:** Church Kitchen

**When:** December 1st, 2nd & 3rd (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday after Thanksgiving)

**Time:** 8:30a.m. to noon each day

Thank-you for your support!

## We Extend Our Sympathy and Prayers

to the family of Mickey Beltz. Mickey passed away on November 21st at the age 101. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.

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## On The Job in December

Deacon of the Month: Dan Kottke

In Charge of Altar: Ann Wangerin

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## Trustees Newsletter Report for October 2020

The following business was addressed at the October 14, 2020 meeting of the Board of Trustee's:

- \* Total deposits for September were 4,146. Payments in September from Operating Fund totaled 10,813.
- \* Reviewed church budget for 2020 -2021. A completed budget was brought before the church at the Annual Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Randy Warner, Secretary



## Birthday's!!

4. Jill Alsleben,  
Miriam Jungclaus
7. Lily Ann Kottke
11. Janet Popelka
13. Howard Bulau
15. Desilee Richardson  
Riva Schwarzrock  
Remy Schwarzrock
16. Erin McNellis
18. Mara Gould
19. Peyton Gould, Wyatt Sullivan  
Teal Johnson
20. Tom Winn
28. Kyle Robb
30. McKenzie Patnaude, Sharla Defoe
31. Brenda Benson, Dylan Dahlke



## White Christmas

### Thank-You!!

A big thank you to all those who gave several wonderful gifts and 10 checks totalling \$305.00 to the residents at St. Peter Treatment Center.

Gifts and checks were delivered by Ken and Karen Stenzel.

For many of the residents, your gifts are the only gifts they receive at Christmas – picture there happy faces.

Benevolence/Mission Committee

## ***Pastors' Page:***

### ***No Idea!***

Father Anthony De Mello once told a provocative story about some shipwrecked folks floating on a raft somewhere off the coast of Brazil. As time passed for those poor souls their fear mounted. They reminded one another that the ocean water that surrounded them was, of course, undrinkable, yet they had no other source of water. They anticipated perishing soon, from their unquenchable thirst.

But what the desperate shipwrecked survivors did not know was that the water on which they floated was actually fresh water. A vast river emptied into the sea not far from where the raft was floating. And because of the strong flow of the mighty river, the water was actually drinkable as far as two miles from the point at which that river emptied into the sea. Clean, safe, refreshing, drinkable, and life-sustaining water was right there and readily available to the shipwrecked survivors, but they had no idea. "In the same way," says Father De Mello, "It seems we're surrounded with joy, with happiness, with love. But most people," he concludes, "have no idea."

We Christians are heading into the season of Advent. It's a term that means "coming," and a time when we anticipate the upcoming birth of our messiah, Jesus. While this extraordinary event provides a special demonstration of God's love and care for the world, faithful folk have argued that we should be able now to see God's love made manifest for us in a thousand other ways, as well. They argue that God's grace is so abundant and free-flowing, so available and life-changing, that we all ought to be aware of it and drinking it in all the time.

But maybe we're like the shipwrecked folks on the raft. Though we are surrounded by the very thing we yearn for and require most, we often have no idea it is available to us. We become discouraged, fixated in our belief that what we need and want is unobtainable.

If in this season of pandemic concerns, political wrangling, fears and discontent, you feel a little like a stranded soul afloat on a raft without a drop to drink, then maybe this Advent will serve as a gentle reminder that help is close at hand. Across the years, many have felt desperate, frantic, and hopeless. But the Advent story says that to just such people waiting for rescue, help comes. After all, God's goodness took form long ago and was born into the world, into our very midst, bringing us what we need most!

Do you know anyone in need of an Advent reminder of the presence of love and grace and hope in the world? Maybe in this Advent season we will all be spurred to help someone in need of rescue recognize that they are floating in a sea of God's love. They just had no idea.

We wish you Advent joy!

Pastor Casey and Pastor Bob

**First Congregational United Church of Christmas  
Glencoe, MN 55336**

**Our Website: <http://firstcongochurch.org/>**

**Facebook: [CongoUCC@gmail.com](mailto:CongoUCC@gmail.com)**

**E-Mail: [congoucc@gmail.com](mailto:congoucc@gmail.com)**

**Newsletter Deadline - Third Monday of the Month**

**Merry Christmas!!**

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### **Thank You for Living Generously**

Live Generously! Is the Thrivent tagline on their advertising and their Action Team t-shirts. Sharing from our abundance, which comes from God, is one of the expectations that our God has for us. It goes hand in hand with loving our neighbor as our "self." We are grateful for everyone one was able to share their generosity with coats and winter garb for the Common Cup Coat Drive this fall. As a church member, a Thrivent member, and a United Way Board member, I was able to participate financially, as an Action Team grant writer for Thrivent seed money, and work at setting up the drive and assisting families in picking out coats.

On a very cold day in October, there were moms and their children arriving in long sleeve and/or sweatshirts asking if they could wait inside. Some arrived via Trailblazer buses which waited for their passengers to quickly choose something and return for the trip home. One woman I tried to help came with a friend who told me that they couldn't wear masks because they needed to be able to lip read and talk & sign. There were families, disabled adults, and lots of children in need of warm coats.

Thanks to First Congregational-UCC members we were able to provide 12 new children's coats, 8 youth/adult coats, 2 pair snow pants, 9 knit hats, 9 pairs of gloves, 11 scarves, 1 pair of boots and \$60.25 in cash. Living in MN is not for the weak in mind, soul, or body! For your **GIVING**, we say **THANKS** on behalf of area families, Common Cup, United Way of McLeod County, and First Congregational-UCC, Glencoe.

Jan Mackenthun & Bridget Kienenberger;  
Common Cup Representatives

## A Very Special Christmas

This time of the year should be a time of peace and joy,  
as we recall that special night and that baby boy who was born  
in a manger on that starry night.

For the shepherds and wise men, can you imagine that sight!  
The love they shared could surely be felt.

As one by one they came to the manger and knelt beside the  
babe all wrapped and quiet  
on that very, very, special Christmas night!

By his birth we are given a special love, sent from the Father  
who reigns above.

So enjoy the festivities, food and gifts, too.

But remember his birth was meant especially for you.

Make this Christmas special and share that peace and joy.  
That came about by the birth of that baby boy.

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Please remember our Shut-In's this holiday season.

**First Congregational United Church of Christmas  
Glencoe, MN 55336**

**Our Website: <http://firstcongochurch.org/>**

**Facebook: [CongouCC@gmail.com](https://www.facebook.com/CongouCC@gmail.com)**

**E-Mail: [congoucc@gmail.com](mailto:congoucc@gmail.com)**

**Newsletter Deadline - Third Monday of the Month**

**Merry  
Christmas!!**

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Due to Covid 19, First Congregational Church's annual bake sale has been postponed, but will be selling rosettes.



# **Rosettes To Go**

*preorders only*

\$10/dozen

**Call or text 320-455-3338**

**give your name, phone number, & number of pkgs**

**by November 28, 2020**

Pick up at church's west door (Elliott Avenue side)

**on Saturday, December 5, 2020 8:00-11:00 a.m.**

Please bring correct change or check

**First Congregational Church**  
**1400 Elliott Avenue N**  
**Glencoe MN**





## 2020 Living Nativity

Sat, Dec 12 – 5 to 7 pm

*This Christmas come and visit a “Living Nativity” presented by Glencoe area churches and community volunteers. Drive-thru Oak Leaf Park and view six different scenes depicting the Good News of Jesus’ birth on earth. Hand crafted scenery, live animals, biblical characters, and music will provide a memorable Christmas experience for the whole family!*

**Saturday, December 12th**

**5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Oak Leaf Park, Glencoe, MN**

**Enter from Southern-most Entrance and turn left at Vollmer Field**

**FREE ADMISSION**

**Boy Scouts will accept Donations for MEFS (McLeod Emergency Food Shelf)**

**Cars will also pass thru a “lighted holiday decorations display” by Glencoe Lions Club**

**Event support provided by Thrivent Financial Action Team program**

*(If inclement weather, event will be postponed until Sat, Dec 19)*



These minutes are yet to be approved -  
That won't happen until next year's Annual Meeting.

**First Congregational Church, U.C.C.**  
**Annual Meeting Minutes, October 25, 2020**

The 2019-2020 Annual Meeting was called to order by Moderator, Merlin Mackenthun at 10:00 a.m. Thirty Eight members were in attendance; a quorum was met. The list of attendees is attached to this report.

**Adoption of Agenda** - A motion was made by Ozzie Chapman and seconded by Vickie Schultz, to accept the agenda. Motion passed.

**Acceptance of the 2018-2019 Annual Meeting Minutes** - A motion was made by Jan Mackenthun and seconded by Karen Benson to approve the Minutes of October 28, 2019, as written. Motion passed.

**Review of 2019 Committee Reports** - Moderator Mackenthun asked for additions/corrections from Committees.

**Buildings and Grounds Report - Roger Landon, rep. Dave Stark** - Roger noted that our church had suffered no major incidents over the past year, related to weather. He thanked the Warner Family for their management of the church during the COVID 19 crisis which has requires substantial additional attention. Roger identified the various service providers needed by the church yearly including: electrical, elevator certification, boiler inspection/repairs, plumbing, etc. In 2021 the church will have masonry work done, landscaping, and wooden storm window replacements for the stained glass windows. The mowing crew continues to be the Schrupp family, next door. Neubarth Bros. continues as our snow removal vendor.

**Benevolence Report** - Jim Benson reported that many funds were shorted last year due to low funds. This year they were able to make up for past shortages and are now caught up for 2020. (Generally, gifts are received in this account near the end of the calendar year). The Committee has decided to remove the McLeod County Christmas Fund from this year's list and replace it with the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center. They commented that McLeod County as many donors to their fund. On November 22nd, the White Christmas gifts of personal items, clothing and hygiene supplies, plus checks and cash will be brought to St. Peter by the Ken and Karen Stenzel. (Checks should be written to St. Peter Regional Treatment Center.)

**Trustees Report** - Carmen Kienenberger directed members to Pg. 9, the 2020-2021 Budget Proposal and to Pg. 11, a Narrative Balance Sheet for 2020. The 2018-19 actual budgets came to \$96,552. The 2019-20 actual budgets came to \$97,093. The proposed a budget for 2020-21 at \$73,920. To date this year we have received 18 pledges for a total of \$53,000 which changes the budget's projected total to \$84,920. We have a positive balance of \$147,363.46 due to our not paying a permanent pastors salary for over 5 years as the salary of a pulpit supply minister includes no benefits. With current giving and the excess operating fund, we could support a full-time Pastor, at \$80,000 for 5.45 years. A 3/4 time Pastor, at \$60,000, could be supported for 21 years.

**Presentation and Proposed Action to Adopt the 2020 - 2021 Budget** - Merlin opened the discussion by referring us to Page 11 to review the Narrative Balance Sheet prepared by Kelly Rach, who was not able to attend today's meeting. Carmen, Randy Warner and Merlin fielded questions related to the accounts.

Roger questioned how money for the Housing Allowance will be replenished (approximately \$12,000 year with current balance of \$117,000) and buying a parsonage would be more cost effective. Merlin stated that the Church Council and Trustees have discussed the matter and that, in general, Pastors want to invest in their own home.

The Bruckschen Memorial received earlier this year (\$100,000) was specified only for rebuilding, new buildings or real estate purchases. Interest on this money may be used for charitable projects. If and when our church fails, money left in our memorial accounts and proceeds from the sale of the church, will go back to the MN Chapter of the UCC. Carmen noted that the 2020-21 proposed total budget is for \$84,920. Two additional pledges, totaling \$11,000, have been received since the budget was set. Ozzie Chapman asked about the increase in the Maintenance and Special Projects account from the previous year. It was explained that money is set aside to be available for projected or unexpected bills (boiler repair \$30,000, bathroom divider replacements, stained glass window maintenance, etc.). Bill Curtis made a motion to accept the 2020-2021 budgets as written. Ken Stenzel seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Family Memorials to the Church** - Members are encouraged to talk with the Memorial Committee about gifts they plan to leave to the church and where they can be best used. We currently have over \$500,000 that has stipulations for spending. The church is lacking in current or day-to-day operational dollars. Without operating expenses the church could be shuttered and money given back to the UCC Conference. Sue Bacon asked why the money has to be given back. Pastor Bob said there may be ways to retain a portion but when money is directed to a specific use, the legal expenses to change its use is often not cost effective. The Trustees will review this further. Pastor Bob said our church is "healthy" and we need to be good stewards of the church.

**Prayer of Dedication for the Search and Call Committee - Search** and Call members were asked to stand while Pastor Casey led a prayer for a successful Search & Call process.

**Search and Call Committee Update** - Merlin told members that Pastors Casey and Bob will be working as our Pastors through Easter, 2021. The UCC was instrumental in encouraging Pastors Casey and Bob to take on our temporary Interim Position as they felt they had failed us in the past. Pastor Bob and Casey have met the new UCC Conference people and find them encouraging and helpful. The Search and Call Committee is in the process of updating our profile and working with the new Associate minister.

Pastor Bob commented on a virtual meeting of "Greater MN" churches earlier in the month and how the UCC is listening to churches, such as ours, identifying themselves more as "Rural MN" churches. (i.e. Glencoe vs. Alexandria, Duluth, etc.). Pastor Bob commented on the Damascus Project where someone in the church community, interested in beginning a new career in the ministry could preach while attending school that the church could pay for. The Baggotts are currently working 25 hours per week.

The Search and Call Committee is asking for a full-time minister as we expect to have better luck finding a person who wants full-time work. Pastor Casey and Bob will be assisting us by reviewing the applications and identifying characteristics we may overlook. There could be a possibility to use the Bruckschen money to buy a home for the Pastor or pay their seminary debt. In response to Jim Cox's question, the church would consider a person looking for part-time work.

## **OTHER OLD BUSINESS**

**Nominating Committee Report & Election of Officers, Boards and Committees** - Merlin noted that, due to COVID, board and committee members were asked to let him know if they wanted to be removed from their position. If not, it was the hope that all members will continue on the committees they currently serve. No messages were received. Roger said he would like 1 or 2 more people to work with him on buildings and grounds. He commented that sometime, in the future, he would be moving and wanted to have people at church who knew how the building operated. Mike Dahlke volunteered to join this committee. Ozzie thanked Roger for all his efforts.

On-Line Church - Jim Cox asked if our Facebook Church services are to continue. Yes, it is the church's intention to do so. The entire Warner Family was thanked for their skilled enthusiasm and Jan Mackenthun was thanked for a Thrivent Grant to purchase more video equipment. Pastors Bob and Casey said they would like to see us expand our on-line presence, building a strong internet program. Pastor Bob reported that 60+ people attended the on-line service held today, October 25. He encouraged a larger tech platform.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Thanksgiving Meal amid COVID-19** - The Annual Thanksgiving Meal will be offered this year in a take-out format. Donation slips are available at the back of the church. Good Sheppard and Christ Lutheran churches will be participating again this year with cash donations. The Warner Family will use funds collected to purchase and prepare a basic Thanksgiving meal that will be packaged and available for pick-up from the church on Thanksgiving Day. While there is No Charge for this meal, folks are encouraged to donate an item to the Food Shelf. Barb Magnuson, Jan Mackenthun and the Christian Ed Board are working together to see this project to fruition. People will order their dinners by either texting Kari Warner's cell phone or Carmen and Bridget's landline. A maximum of 150 meals will be available.

A motion was made by Vickie Schultz and seconded by Jan Mackenthun to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bridget Kienenberger