

Welcome, Visitors!

Information about our church and ministries is available on the Welcome Table near the main doors. Standing nearby are church members who will be happy to answer your questions. Interested in joining the church? Our next Membership Exploration will be January 19, 2019.

For the convenience of those who need to leave the Sanctuary during worship, the service is video broadcast in the Chapel, Upper Lounge and Nursery.

Large-print bulletins are available. Please ask the ushers for a copy.

Children in Worship

Child care for infants and toddlers is available in the Children, Youth and Family Center. The Family Worship Area is open during service for children ages 3-10.

Sensory Boxes

First Congregational offers Sensory Boxes for any of our friends on the autism spectrum – adult or child. These boxes are filled with “fidgets” galore, headphones and much more. Please let us know if you or a loved one needs one of these tools.

Donating to First Congregational UCC

If you are enrolled in automatic contributions, you may still participate in the weekly offering by submitting a Giving Card, found in the pews. We encourage members and friends of First Congregational to assist us in planning our budget by pledging each year. Pledge cards are available in the pews and may be placed in the offering plates at any time.

Online Streaming and Podcasting Now Available!

Audio and video recordings of our sermons and a written transcript are accessible from www.firstcongoappleton.org/sermons.

WATCH LIVE: You can watch a live stream of First Congo services on YouTube at tinyurl.com/ybtlv9c6 or on Facebook at tinyurl.com/yayd8cud.

Online Documents and Information

Official documents of First Congregational and links to announcements, news and other information reside on our website. Visit www.firstcongoappleton.org to connect with First Congregational in a variety of ways: an electronic version of *The Open Door* newsletter, social media, blogs and more.

December 30 Highlights at First Congregational

- Today:** **Best Wishes to Our Kenya Mission Trip Partners**
 Alternative Christmas Market Update p. 8
 Puerto Rico Trip Donations p. 10
- OFFICE CLOSED: New Year's Day**
- January 3:** **Carroll University Chamber Singers to Perform Concert p. 9**
January 6: **High School Students At Pillars**
January 9: **Children's Choir and Youth Handbells Rehearsals Resume p. 9**
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Flowers

Cindi Ritcey Fox designed this morning's sanctuary flower arrangement.

Communion

We celebrate communion the first Sunday of each month. Our communion elements are gluten-free; however, they are made in a facility that also processes wheat products.

Baptism

Our next scheduled 2019 Baptism Sunday dates are: January 13, February 17, March 10, April 28 and May 19. If you would like to be baptized or have a child baptized, please request a baptism registration form from the church office or download and print one from www.firstcongoappleton.org/worship/baptism. Please return baptism registration forms to the church office a month ahead of your desired baptism date.

Members in Service This Week

Friday, December 28	9:00 AM
Bulletin Assemblers	Judy Hinden, Trish Brehm
Sunday, December 30	10:30 AM
Main Door Greeter	Karen Crawford
Bridge Greeters	
Welcome Desk	Sue Ahrens
Lay Readers	Kris Henke
Usher Team Captain	Pat Nelson
Multi-Media – audio	Rick Behm
Multi-Media – video	Kris Behm

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

December 30, 2018

10:30 AM

Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.

Our door is open to you at whatever point you are in your journey of faith.

PRELUDE

(Please sign the registration form on the end of the pew, pass it down the row, and then return it, that all may know the names of those sharing in worship today. Prayer request cards are collected at the ends of the pews as well.)

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

*WELCOME AND GREETING

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Through lush farmland and bleak alleys,

People: Comes good news of great joy!

Leader: Through empty wants and desperate needs,

People: Blazes a star to light our way.

Leader: Through pounding turmoil and frantic fear,

People: Sounds an angel chorus:

All: Glory to God in the highest; peace to God's people on earth!

Leader: Receive the news! Follow the star! Heed the angels!

People: Through song and silence, word and wonder, let us make our way to Bethlehem.

Leader: Let us worship the Holy One who beckons in an infant's cry.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #158

Good Christians All, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

*OPENING PRAYER (Please join hands or link arms)

THE LORD'S PRAYER (In unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

(During the hymn, the prayer request cards will be collected. After the Children's Sermon, the children may go to the Family Worship Area or return to the pews to worship with their families.)

CAROL-SING

See Christmas and Epiphany carols and hymns #133 – 170.

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

PRAYER HYMN #153

What Child Is This, Who Laid to Rest?

GREENSLEEVES

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

A MUSICAL OFFERING

A Few More Years Shall Roll

LEOMINSTER

In 1842, Rev. Horatius Bonar specifically wrote this hymn was for the new year.

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host:

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 1:1-17 (NT p. 1)

MEDITATION

Rev. Kathryn Kuhn

*CLOSING HYMN #83

God of our Life, Through All the Circling Years

SANDON

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

TODAY'S MUSICIANS

Jon D. Riehle, *organist*

Upcoming Worship Schedule

January 6, 2019

Epiphany Sunday

8:45 and 10:30 AM

"A Royal Visit"

Rev. Nick Hatch

Scripture reading: Matthew 2:1-23

Music: 8:45 AM - Sanctuary Choir

10:30 AM - LU Music Scholars

Members in Service Next Week

Friday, January 4, 2019	9:00 AM	
Bulletin Assemblers	Cathy Houst, Trish Brehm	
Sunday, January 6, 2019	8:45 AM	10:30 AM
Main Door Greeter	Chris Hammerstad	Sue Ahrens
Bridge Greeters	Travis Hammerstad	
Welcome Desk	LouAnn Graf	
Lay Readers	Michael Weaver	Janet Scheibe
Usher Team Captains	Dennis Korth	Mike Spurlock and Jeff Schang
Multi-Media – audio		
Multi-Media – video		

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF OUR FAITH COMMUNITY

Members of our church family benefit from our prayers, support, and words of encouragement as they celebrate special times or struggle with difficulties in their lives. Please keep these people in your prayers and greet them with a loving word when you see them.

If you are in the hospital, please let the church know, as we are not always notified. In cases of a pastoral emergency, please call (920) 810-2600.

All who are affected by violence
David Adams and family
Debbie Adams' brother Jim
Jill Anthony's neighbors, John and
Katie
Jill Anthony's sister and brother-in-law
Katie Behl
Judy Burdick, Megan Burdick-Grade's
mother
Olive Bopp
Barb Boren
Dick Casperson
John Cawthon
Dena Collier
Jim Edwards
Margitta Furnner
Brenda Gabrielson
Esther Gehrt
Ken Geiger
Ivo Geurts
Nanette Geurts, and her aunt, Maureen
Linda Glancey, Lane Pittner's mother
Mary Guenther
Maggie Hendrick
For the health of Ken Hocking
Mark Holly, nephew of Patricia Streur
Ron Huebner
Dan Huth
Immigrants/refugees seeking a better life

Tami Johnson and her sister, Colleen
Our Kenyan partners and students
Lorraine Malin, mother of Jane Malin
Betty Masaros
Our country's military around the world
Rick Kramer, Richard Miller's son-in law
Baby Nora
Ellie Olson
Families and children of Palestine
Connie Radtke
Steve Reinkober, brother of Chris Brittnacher
Don Roehrborn
Tom Rued
Gladys Schmidt, mother of John and Tim
Schmidt
Jim Schwantes
Amanda Spindler
Syrian refugees/Syrians affected by violence
Gloria Tate
Beverly Trombla
Jean Van Wagenin
Our veterans and their families
Mya Wardle, Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter
Jennifer Wild
Elden Willing
The Wittwer Family
Kim, cousin of Ellen Wittwer
7-Year-Old with Stage 4 Cancer

THE OPEN DOOR

December 30, 2018

Volume 18, Issue 50

Pastor's Message

Happy New Year



How will you greet the new year? Are you someone who makes resolutions or sets goals for the year to come, or do you take time to reflect on the blessings and unfulfilled hopes of the past year?

The poetry of Jan Richardson often helps me see things from a new perspective. This year, her words lure me away from the pressure to make promises I can't or won't keep, or to dwell too long on the past – but instead to view the time to come as a blessing already prepared for me, if I will just let myself enjoy the welcome embrace of God's. I share her words with you here, so that you, too, might find joy in remembering you are loved just as you are, and in God's eyes you are always enough.

BLESSING THE THRESHOLD

This blessing
has been waiting for you
for a long time.

While you have been
making your way here,
this blessing has been
gathering itself,
making ready,
biding its time,
praying.

This blessing has been
polishing the door,
oiling the hinges,
sweeping the steps,

lighting candles
in the windows.

This blessing has been
setting the table
as it hums a tune
from an old song
it knows,
something about
a spiraling road
and bread
and grace.

All this time
it has kept an eye

on the horizon,
watching,
keeping vigil,
hardly aware of how
it was leaning itself
in your direction.

And now that
you are here,
this blessing
can hardly believe

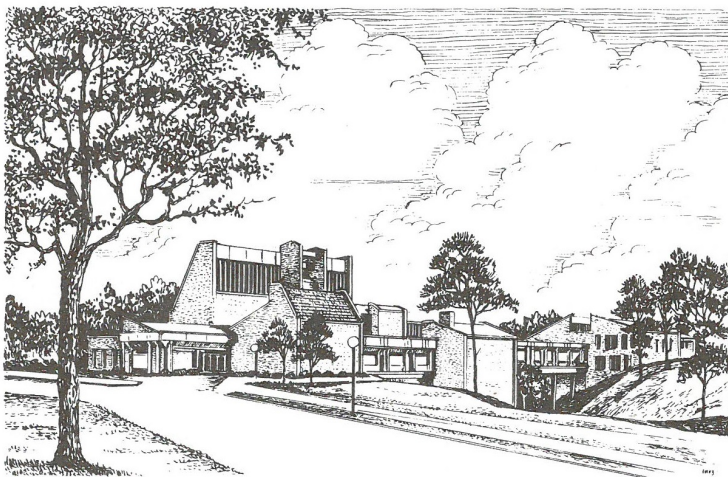
its good fortune
that you have finally
arrived,
that it can drop
everything at last
to fling its arms wide
to you, crying
welcome,
welcome,
welcome.

—Jan Richardson

Peace to you and may the year to come reveal its blessings in every way you are most in need of them.

Your friend and fellow traveler on life's journey,

Pastor Kathryn



*First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ*

Appleton, Wisconsin

*Happy New Year
from your friends and family
at First Congregational United Church of Christ, Appleton*

Congregational Life

*Embracing God, welcoming others,
knowing ourselves.*

Serving Meals at Pillars

Thursday, January 29 – Saturday, February 2

The holiday season reminds us how much we all have to be thankful for. We have another opportunity this winter to open our hearts and hands to those in our community who are in need.

Pillars Adult Shelter (formerly Fox Valley Warming Shelter) provides homeless adults a hot evening meal and a safe place to sleep. Our congregation prepared and served meals there for over 10 years.

We will provide the evening meal for shelter guests for five nights, January 29 - February 2. Past participants found this to be a rewarding experience. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex for January 29 - February 2, 2019. Contact Amy Lewis at (920) 205-1091 for more information.

Alternative Christmas Market Update

The 26th Alternative Christmas Market was a success again this year, raising more than \$11,533 in donations to help people in need close to home and around the world.

Thanks to the volunteers who gave their time to organize, set up, and host the many tables and stations at the Market. Thanks to the volunteers who made

breakfast and baked goods and to the musicians who sang carols.

Thanks to the shoppers who gave more than 95 gifts. Thanks to anyone who helped in large and small ways: the Market is a significant event in the life this church because you are a part of it.

Stewardship

*Putting faith into action with our time,
passion, skills and financial gifts.*

Stewardship Campaign Update

The 2019 “What Shall We Bring?” Stewardship Campaign is winding down. In addition to fully funding the upcoming church budget, we encourage all members who not have made a formal pledge last year to do so to strengthen their connection and relationship to our church family.

Our goal is to have at least a total of **320** pledging families and individuals – the most recent count is **283**.

Our faith is strong and we are confident to reach our goal, but we are asking that you make your commitment *soon*.

We are grateful for all the support so far, and look forward to many others stepping forward to support our beloved First Congo’s the life and mission.

With blessings and joy to you all,
Your Stewardship Team.

Worship and Music

*A diverse community practicing faith,
finding spiritual connection and experiencing
the Holy through artful sound.*

Carroll University Chamber Singers to Perform Concert

Thursday, January 3

Start the new year with an evening of great choral music. On Thursday, January 3, the Carroll University Chamber Singers will perform a 7:30 PM concert hosted at our church. All are welcome to this free-admission event.

Children's Choir and Youth Handbells Notice

Wednesday, January 9

Our First Congregational Children's Choir (grades 2-6), resumes on Wednesday, January 9 from 4:30-5:30 PM. New singers are welcome as we prepare for the Intergenerational Musical. For new registrations, RSVP to John Albrecht at (920) 733-7393 or jalbrecht@firstcongoappleton.org. Also, Youth Handbells will resume rehearsing that day too at 5:45 PM.

Youth and Families

Faith, fun and service.

Wilderness Ministry 2019

Four incredible wilderness ministry trips are now open for registration. Two trips

are for First Congo congregation members only and two trips originate through Moon Beach, our UCCI camp up north. If you are an adult or a youth interested in canoeing the Boundary Waters or Backpacking Isle Royale, now is the time to register. All details and forms are now available on the church website. Click on **Full Menu**, under **Children, Youth and Families** click on **Wilderness Ministry**. Please return applications to Pastor Nick and contact him with any questions at nhatch@firstcongoappleton.org.

Middle School 2019 Mission Trip Info Meeting

January 9, 7:45-8:15 PM

Come hear all about our Moon Beach trip. Registration materials will be available.

High School 2019 Mission Trip Info Meeting

January 16, 7:30-8:45 PM

If you plan to join us on the Detroit, mission trip this summer, please attend this important meeting. We'll go over all the details of the trip and you'll be able to sign up for the March fundraiser. Registration materials will be available.

Mission and Service

*Building relationships, serving others,
pursuing justice.*

General Synod 32 Volunteering

Sign up online during January 2019

Your help is key to the success of the Wisconsin Conference hosting the 32nd General Synod of the UCC at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee.

Over 3,000 people are expected to attend and we need 300 to 400 volunteers to assist the Local Arrangements Committee over this five-day event.

You can experience the wider United Church of Christ and to learn about our denomination and ministries we are engaged in on behalf of Jesus Christ.

For more information check out wcucc.org/synodvolunteer.

Puerto Rico Trip Donation

You have the opportunity to make a direct impact on Puerto Rican families. In March, a team from First Congo will travel to Puerto Rico and help rebuild homes. A special need we have become aware of for appliances.

While there are disaster funds for rebuilding homes, there are not funds available for needed stoves, refrigerators and hot water heaters. Our special resources fund - your donations - will enable many families to have those needed appliances.

Your donation will be matched by Mission and Service Claire Gehin Fund up to \$ 5,000. Every dollar counts and will make a difference. Our team will take your donations and matching funds along with us to Puerto Rico in March and they will be dispersed by the disaster

coordinating team there. The donation is NOT for the mission trip volunteers.

It will provide much needed appliances or other essentials for Puerto Rican families. Checks can be made out to First Congregational (FCUCC) with Puerto Rico fund in the memo. Thank You.

Administration

A Gift of Stocks

Stocks are a great alternative for your charitable giving. If you are interested in donating stocks to First Congo, please ask your broker to contact John Hanson or Joan Walber at PDI Financial Group, (920) 739-2303 to transfer the gift to First Congregational UCC, Appleton's account with Pershing LLC.

First Congregational UCC's account number is #7HB099410 and Pershing's DTC number is #0443.

Please be mindful when planning your gift that the church is charged a transaction fee. Please contact the church office for more information, (920) 733-7393 or info@firstcongoappleton.org.

Are You a Snowbird?

If you will be leaving the area for an extended period, please contact the office at (920) 733-7393 or info@firstcongoappleton.org to update your information. We can activate an alternate address for you until you return.

Calendar for Sunday, December 30 – Saturday, January 5

Sunday, December 30	
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Worship – <i>Sanctuary</i>
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Child Care – <i>Infant Room, Toddler Room, Nursery, 4-year-old Room</i>
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	First Things First AA Meeting – <i>North Fellowship Hall, River Room, Common Grounds</i>
Monday, December 31	
All Day	New Year's Eve (Office open)
Tuesday, January 1	
All Day	Church Office Closed
7:45 PM – 8:45 PM	Fireside AA Group - <i>Common Grounds</i>
Wednesday, January 2	
12:15 PM – 1:00 PM	Loving Acceptance Meditation Group - <i>Upper Lounge</i>
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Pizza Suppers - <i>South Fellowship Hall</i>
6:30 PM – 7:30 PM	Confirmation Class – <i>Chapel</i>
6:30 PM – 7:30 PM	Middle School Classes – <i>Scripture Tent, Theater, Art/Kitchen</i>
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Church Mice – <i>East Conference Room</i>
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal – <i>Choir room, Sanctuary</i>
Thursday, January 3	
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	ADRC StrongBodies - <i>South Fellowship Hall</i>
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	AA – Search for Serenity Group – <i>Common Grounds</i>
12:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Clergy Development Meeting – <i>Upper Lounge</i>
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Theology Discussion Group – <i>Atlas Coffee Mill and Café on Water Street, Appleton</i>
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	TnT- SOAR Fox Cities – <i>South Fellowship Hall</i>
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Fox Valley 94 AA – <i>Common Grounds</i>

7:30 PM – 8:30 PM	Carroll University Chambers Singers Concert – <i>Sanctuary</i>
Friday, January 4	
All Day	Kenya Mission Trip – <i>Friday, January 4 – Saturday, January 19</i>
7:00 PM – 8:45 PM	N.A. – <i>Common Grounds</i>
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Al-Anon – <i>Upper Lounge</i>
Saturday, January 5	
All Day	Kenya Mission Trip – <i>Friday, January 4 – Saturday, January 19</i>
1:00 PM – 4:30 PM	Troop 8 Eagle Scout Ceremony – <i>Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Kitchen</i>
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Fox Valley 94 AA – <i>Common Grounds</i>

Theology Discussion Group

Thursday, January 3, 2019 • Noon

Meeting at Atlas Waterfront Cafe
and Gathering Room

(425 W. Water St. #100, Appleton)

The Theology Discussion Group will start Elaine Pagels' "Why Religion?: A Personal Story."

The first meeting will discuss the introduction and Chapter 1: "Why Religion?"

New participants are welcome.

For more information, please contact
Steve Hirby, steve@hirby.org or (920) 809-2573.

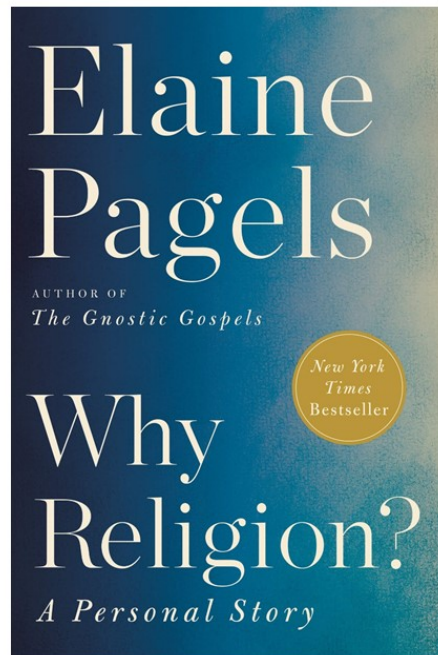


Photo: www.amazon.com

The Ministry

Reverend Dr. Stephen P. Savides, Senior Pastor
Reverend Nicholas J. Hatch, Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries
Reverend Kathryn Kuhn, Pastor for Congregational Care and Missions
Reverend Maynard E. Beemer, Pastor Emeritus
John M. Albrecht, Director for Music Ministries
Jon D. Riehle, Organist
Colleen Berry, Director for Christian Education
Joel Morien, Director for Youth Ministries
Jennifer DeWitt, CYF Coordinator
Carolyn Frederick, Office Manager and Administrative Assistant
Jane Malin, Administrative Assistant
Siri Witt, Bookkeeper
Jonathan Steffen, Technology Coordinator
Bart Forseth, Custodial Supervisor
Theresa Iacullo, Infant/Toddler Child Care Provider
Cassidy Behm, Infant/Toddler Child Care Provider
Tom Ott, Custodial Assistant
Mary Lou Cliff, Custodial Assistant

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