

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

March
2024

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street
Rapid City South Dakota 57701
605-342-5787 office@rcfirstucc.com www.rcfirstucc.com

**Seeking, practicing and sharing
Christ's ministry of inclusive love,
justice and compassion**

Wandering Wonderings from Pastor Erin

*"...not all who wander are lost" ~J.R.R. Tolkien
"Think and wonder, wonder and think." ~Dr. Seuss*

Life is complicated and uncertain. And gorgeous with some things we can count on. It has seasons of struggle and seasons of delight, and sometimes the two blow in and bloom simultaneously. Like now. Maybe always.

*Easter is a holiday of miracles:
It is life from death,
Joy from sorrow,
Celebration from mourning.
Easter reminds us that all is never lost;
That the story continues as long as we are here to tell it.
So gather up your worries—we are going to bury them beneath the ground
And watch them transform into flowers of hope,
Pushing through the earth, reminding us on Easter morning that
Love brings us back to life,
Calls us from sadness, from grief, from anxiety,
Into a world renewed, and alive, and filled with joy
Once again.*

Eastertide Blessings, from my heart to your heart!

I wish you health and peace and healing. I wish you freedom and joy. I wish you grace and beauty and hope. I wish you kindness and ease. I wish you love and warm embrace.

Prayers and Light,



Pastor Erin

*"May you be poor in misfortune,
Rich in Irish blessings,
Slow to make enemies,
Quick to make friends,
But rich or poor, quick or slow,
May you know nothing but,
Happiness from this day forward."*



Holy Week Offerings:

**Monday, March 25th at 12:05pm @ FUMC
(Pastor Erin will be speaking)**

Maundy Thursday service, March 28th, 6:30pm

Good Friday Reflections, March 29th, 12:00pm

Easter Sunday, March 31st

Sunrise service at Eco Park, 6:30am

Worship service, 9:30am



BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

Moderator's Moment

by Susan Kelts

The Church Board met for its monthly meeting on February 20. Here are some of the items that were discussed and/or voted on:

- * Our new boiler was down briefly but was checked by Action Mechanical and all is fine now.
- * Since the request for new or increased pledges was made at the Annual Meeting, there have been some new additions which have helped our budget. Thanks to those who responded!
- * Feedback from parents on the Sunday School curriculum has been positive.
- * There have been requests for a new directory with pictures and that request is being researched.
- * A new member info class will be scheduled for a Sunday in April.
- * Renewed Board approval for Pastor Erin to continue her support for the Hermosa church for another six months.
- * Pastor Erin has been approved for ordination by the SD COM (Committee on Ministry) and our BH UCC Association! A letter has been written to COM in support of this decision. A motion was made, seconded and approved to send this letter.
- * A motions was made, seconded and approved to renew Erin Erickson's call (which has shifted from *designated term* to *settled*), as our pastor to include a 15% increase in compensation upon her ordination.

Department of Ministries by Laura Switzer

The Department of Ministries will be providing a noon meal at the Woyatan Lutheran Church on **Tuesday, March 5** and **would appreciate donations of COOKIES** for the meal. Donations need to be at the church before **11:30am on Tuesday**. We apologize for the short notice and thank you in advance!

The next Cornerstone Mission meal is **Friday, March 29th**. We would love cookie donations and ask that the donations be dropped off in the church kitchen by **March 29th by 4:00pm**.

We continue to support **Church Response** but are no longer offering grocery card sales. There will be a presentation by the new Church Response director, Tina Newman, during the Adult Forum at **10:45am** in the **Fellowship Hall on April 7**, with a special offering for Church Response taken during worship on **April 14**. The food request for this month is **canned meats**. Church Response continues to collect Styrofoam or paper egg cartons, which may be placed in the grocery cart along with food donations. Thank you!

Diversity and Inclusion Committee by Laura Switzer

The committee continues to look for more members who want to help broaden our welcome to all in our community.

Department of Hospitality by Carol Boyles

The Department of Hospitality would like to invite everyone for treats in the Fellowship Hall following worship on St. Patrick's Day.



AND we hope to have a few more folks step up to make coffee hour happen each week. It is so lovely to be served and visit each week.

Congregational Representatives

*"We three Reps of UCC are.....
sharing news from folks near and far,
If you have a thought that's worth
sharing,
We three Reps are here for the Caring!
Call on us, with the concerns you may
"hoard",
And we will take them to the Church
Board!"*

The Three Congregational Reps this year are: **Patti Arneson** (Church Office number 605-342-5787), **Becky Fisher** and **Robin Franson**. Our cell numbers may be found in the Church Directory.

If you have a concern, comment, praise, etc. please see one of us, and we will share items of concern with the Church Board and we will hopefully find some resolution or answers for any and all matters.



Coffee in the Parlor

Join us at **8:45am** for Coffee in the Parlor before church! Have a latte or a fancy coffee, socialize with friends, and make your way into the sanctuary to enjoy the Gathering Music!

Stained Glass Group

Come learn how to create beautiful stained glass works of art. The group meets on **Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm** in the kitchen. For more information, contact **Dave Ledford**.

Easter Lilies

The Altar Guild will be offering Easter lilies to help beautify the sanctuary on Easter morning. Each plant may be purchased for **\$15.00** as a memorial or in honor of loved ones. We will take orders in the Fellowship Hall following worship on **March 10, 17 and 24**.



Please take your lily home after the church service on Easter Sunday.

Good Morning Circle

The Good Morning Circle meets on the **3rd Wednesday each month**. Our next meeting is on **March 20th at 9:30am** in the church parlor. We are a light hearted group that enjoys a good program, morning coffee or tea, and treats. We are proud to carry on the Congregational tradition of women's societies, and support local and national non-profit agencies with our pledges. All women are welcome to join us!

Communion Services

Pastor Erin is serving Communion at **Westhills Village Courtyard** on the **third Wednesday** of each month at **2:00pm**.

Pastor Erin also serves Communion at **St. Martin's Village** on the **fourth Wednesday** of each month at **2:00pm**.

Memoir Writing Group

The Memoir Writing Group will meet on **Thursday, March 28 at 1:30pm**. Anyone interested in sharing or hearing stories is welcome to join us.

Black Hills Chamber Music Society Concert

The Aeolus Quartet will perform at First Congregational Church on **Sunday, March 17 at 3:00pm**. Formed in 2008, the Quartet is comprised of violinists Nicholas Tavani and Rachel Shapiro, violist Caitlin Lynch, and cellist Jia Kim and has been awarded prizes at nearly every major competition in the United States and performed across the globe. They were the 2013-2015 Graduate Resident String Quartet at the Juilliard School and are currently Quartet-in-Residence at Musica Viva NY.

Semi-Annual Rummage Sale

The Spring Rummage Sale has been scheduled for **Friday and Saturday, April 19 and 20**, so start collecting your items to donate. Information will be forthcoming about dates and times

for item drop offs, opportunities to help with this event and etc.



One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering

Jesus teaches that faith calls for action. Sharing our light, as the diverse and colorful expression of God's love here on earth, leads to making blankets, staffing food pantries, cooking meals, building houses and schools, signing petitions for worthy causes, and protesting injustices. A simple song with a simple message—our light is on a light stand, for all to see—shine and share. On any given day, light is shining because we are there through our gifts to OGHS. Your contributions make a difference. Your dollars count. **Share the light.**

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special offering will be taken on **Sunday, March 10**. If you write a check, please make it out to **First Congregational Church** with **OGHS** on the memo line. Thank you for your generous support.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

The Department of Education is grateful to have our new committee members on board with full steam ahead!



We've got a Maundy Thursday Pancake Dinner coming up on **Thursday, March 28th at 5:30**, a Placerville Day on Pentecost Sunday (**May 19th, 12:00pm to 5:00pm**), and our Vacation Bible School planning is well underway with dates scheduled for **June 10th, 11th and 12th from 5:30pm to 8:00pm** (mark your calendars and watch for more information)!

We've enjoyed a fruitful beginning of 2024 with the Wellness Wheel for Adult Education, incredible craft projects for kids, the relaunch of Teens & Tweens programming, and the joyful hearts of happy kiddos learning how to love God and one another well. This Department looks forward to continuing our Lenten season with impactful lessons and loving community.

The final **Wellness Wheel** will be on **Sunday, March 3** with a presentation on Emotional Wellness from **Melanie Palm!** Please join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship.

Thank you so much for supporting the Woyatan Warming Shelter through your donations to our Chili Drive in February. We collected \$300 and nearly 300 cans of food to support families in need in our community!

Adult Christian Education

Midday Meditation

Calling all contemplatives! Each **Monday-Thursday at 11:00am**, a midday meditation (20-minute-sit) will be offered in the hallway near the Sacristy. Please feel free to invite a friend and pop-in whenever your schedule permits. For more information, contact Pastor Erin.



Church Chat



In **March through May, Church Chat** will meet on **second and fourth Mondays from 9:45 to 10:45am**. The group is studying and discussing *The Most Human Human* by Brian Christian. For more information, contact **Becky Fisher or Kathleen Batchelder**. Please join us!

Spiritual Practices

Spiritual Practices is a group of delightful souls who meet to read scripture together and to engage in practices of prayer and meditation. The group is open to all who are interested.

Spiritual disciplines require practice and having a group with whom to practice can strengthen the discipline and the faith it gives.

Spiritual Practices meets on **Tuesday each week at 12:30-1:30pm** (come as often as you'd like). Please consider joining the group in the church library.

For more information, contact **Pastor Erin**.



Church Picture Directory

It has been duly noted by our Congregational Representatives that some folks would like to get a new picture directory done again. It has been ten years since the last one. There is a committee checking into pricing, photographers, printing, and etc.

We also would like to know if there is enough interest with the Congregation to go ahead with this project. We will have a **signup sheet in the Narthex** for interested parties to sign up. If you aren't able to come to church to sign up for this opportunity, email the office of your interest, and we will add you to the list. Our email address is office@rcfirstucc.com.

The photos taken will be available to buy, in package form. Please note, that you are not required to buy a photo package to get your picture in the directory. You may instead, send a picture of your own to the office, and we will print it in the directory. The dates for this directory and more information will be forthcoming, should there be enough interest.



Fellowship Hour Help



Coffee hosts and dishwashers are needed for the coffee hour following worship. Easy instructions are posted for each volunteer opportunity.

Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall on the sheets located next to the cookies if you can help. If you need assistance, indicate it on the sheet and someone will help you. Thank you!

Creative Crafters Crew

The craft people who meet every **Tuesday at 1:00pm** would like to invite everyone who crafts to join us. Knitting, crocheting, embroidering, quilting and card making are all available. We have supplies available at no cost for card making and quilting. We also have teachers available and would love to have people join us.

We also have some people who would like to learn chess, so if you would be willing to teach chess, let us know!



Woodchuck Society News



The group has been busy gathering wood, sawing and splitting. We usually work two mornings a week, **Wednesday and Saturday, nine to noon, weather permitting.**

We are making a difference for our delivery partners on area reservations. Our rule is we come when we can, do as much as we can for as long as we can.

Come check us out!

MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Prayer Concerns

Our sympathy and prayers are with **Harlan Stephens** and family following the death of Harlan's father, **Glenn Stephens**, on February 9 in St. Onge. Services were held in St. Onge on February 15.



Please hold the following members and friends in your prayers:

Lee Boyles has ongoing health concerns.

Kay Daugherty is feeling better than she has in months and is even driving again!

Vivian Dittmer fell and was in the hospital. She now is at Clarkson Mt. View, room number #47, rehabilitating from her fall, while recovering from Covid. As she no longer lives in her apartment, cards may be sent to her daughter, **Terry Brouillette**, at 335 S Canyon Rd B-18 Rapid City, SD 57702. (This is a new address for Terry.)

Jill Kundtz is slowly doing better, but still is having pain, and not back to work yet.

Sid Michaels is cancer FREE!

Sheila Long's mother-in-law, **Ann Long**, is fighting cancer.

Reva Ortega's father, **Gerald Stapert**, who had extensive back surgery this past week.

Jodie Thuringer's father is in Hospice care. Continued prayers for the family are appreciated.

We also pray for those members of our church family who are in care centers or isolated in their homes, including:

Evelyn Bradshaw, Vivian Dittmer, Eunice Johnson, Merrie Miller, Marrelyce Seaman, Dorothy Slingsby, Helen Snyder and Elena Van Pelt

Thank You

Many thanks from Harlan Stephens and the Glenn Stephens family for all of your prayers, support and condolences on Glenn's passing.

March Birthdays

The following members and friends have birthdays in **March**:

March 9: **Coen Grauman**

Bob Moore

March 10: **Eunice Johnson**

Mindy Nickel

March 12: **Chloe Benusis**

March 19: **Terry Brouillette**

Christopher Golden

Jim Wosepka

March 22: **Scott Nielsen**

March 23: **Del Maynard**

March 25: **Amy Richards**

March 28: **Helena Haan**

March 29: **Anna Benusis**

March 30: **Helen Snyder**

March 31: **Kain Cruz**

Sue Maynard

Dorothy Slingsby

Brady Tipton



MARCH CALENDAR

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The calendar changes often, so please check the weekly email and/or online calendar on our church website. Rcfirstucc.com

Friday, March 1

10:00am: Watercolor Painting
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, March 3

8:30am: Coffee in the Parlor
9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour/Wellness Wheel
10:45am: Dept. of Hospitality
10:45am: Dept. of Worship

Monday, March 4

11:00am: Midday Meditation

Tuesday, March 5

9:30am: Woyatan Meal Prep
11:00am: Midday Meditation
11:30am: Serve Woyatan Meal
12:30pm: Spiritual Practices
1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, March 6

11:00am: Midday Meditation
6:00pm: Bell Choir Practice
7:00pm: Choir Practice

Thursday, March 7

11:00am: Midday Meditation

Friday, March 8

10:30am: Watercolor Painting
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, March 10

8:45am: Coffee in the Parlor
9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour
10:45am: Dept. of Educ. Meeting

Monday, March 11

9:45am: Church Chat
11:00am: Midday Meditation
4:30pm: PEO Meeting BR

Tuesday, March 12

11:00am: Midday Meditation
12:30pm: Spiritual Practices
PEO Meeting BF
1:00pm: Craft Day
4:15pm: Trust Board

Wednesday, March 13

10:00am: Women's Fellowship
Board Meeting
11:00am: Midday Meditation
6:00pm: Bell Choir Practice

Thursday, March 14

10:00am: Altar Guild Meeting
11:00am: Midday Meditation
6:30pm: Stewardship and Budget

Friday, March 15

10:00am: Watercolor Painting
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group
1:00pm: PEO Game Day/Barb Knight

Sunday, March 17

8:45am: Coffee in the Parlor
9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour
10:45am: Pastoral/Personnel Meeting
3:00pm: BH Chamber Concert

Monday, March 18

11:00am: Midday Meditation
5:30pm: Church Response Meets

Tuesday, March 19

11:00am: Midday Meditation
12:30pm: Spiritual Practices
1:00pm: Craft Day
7:00pm: Church Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 20

9:30am: Good Morning Circle
11:00am: Midday Meditation
12:00pm: Interfaith Round Table/
Pastor Erin
2:00pm: Communion at Westhills
6:00pm: Bell Choir Practice
7:00pm: Choir Practice

Thursday, March 21

11:00am: Midday Meditation

Friday, March 22

10:00am: Watercolor Painting
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, March 24

8:45am: Coffee in the Parlor
9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour

Monday, March 25

9:45am: Church Chat
11:00am: Midday Meditation
12:00pm: Pastor Erin at First United Methodist Church

Tuesday, March 26

11:00am: Midday Meditation
PEO Meeting BF
12:30pm: Spiritual Practices
1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, March 27

11:00am: Midday Meditation
2:00pm: Communion at St. Martin's Village
6:00pm: Bell Choir Practice
7:00pm: Choir Practice

Maundy Thursday, March 28

11:00am: Midday Meditation
1:30pm: Memoir Writing Group
5:30pm: Pancake Dinner
6:30pm: Maundy Thurs. Worship

Good Friday, March 29

10:00am: Watercolor Painting
12:00pm: Good Friday Reflections
1:00pm: Stained Glass Group
3:30pm: Mission Meal Preparation

Easter Sunday, March 31

6:00am Sunrise Service at Eco Park
8:45am: Coffee in the Parlor
9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
9:45am: Sunday School
10:30am: Fellowship Hour



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