

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

**November
2022**

First Congregational United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street,
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701
(605) 342-5787 uccoffice@rushmore.com

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

The Call to Worship newsletter is back!

**As in the past, it will be published
by the first Sunday of each month.**

**The Call will be emailed to Mailchimp subscribers
and posted on the church website.**

**Paper copies will be available at the church
and mailed to those who are
not able to attend church in person.**

**Look inside this November issue to learn
about all that is happening at
First Congregational Church!**



BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

Thoughts from Pastor Erin Erickson

Member In Discernment for SD-UCC

Warmest Fall Greetings to each and to all! For those who I have yet to meet in person, my name is Erin Erickson, and I have the true privilege of having been hired to serve as a temporary pastor for First Congregational United Church of Christ until March 31, 2023 (this agreement allows either party to end the agreement with a one month notice and also allows the agreement to be extended if both parties agree).

I was born and raised here in the Black Hills and couldn't be more pleased to be raising (alongside my husband, Noah) our (yes, very large!) blended family in Rapid City as well. In my 44 years on the planet I have spent my 20's, 30's, and so far my 40's in ministry work and thus, have gained a plethora of experience in each of the following ministry roles: International church planter, Children's pastor, Youth & Young Adults pastor, College chaplain, church janitor, 24-hr Elder care, Hospice and Hospital chaplain, Pastor (of a non-denominational church)... and now Temporary pastor here at FCUCC. Spirit continues to inspire, challenge, encourage and humble me each new day. What a gift!

I have been asked to update you on where I am in the process of pursuing ordination in and on behalf of the UCC denomination. I most recently have been granted the ecclesial status of Member in Discernment (MID), by the

SD-COM (Committee on Ministry).

I might liken this to "being officially engaged to become ordained."

The SD-COM and the South Dakota Conference is now working with me, my Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC), and a soon-to-be appointed MID mentor in the process towards said ordination. The next steps are to create a proposal for my "preparation and formation plan" ("Preparation and formation plans set forth the COM's expectations concerning the education and spiritual growth required of the Member in Discernment as they proceed toward authorization" -quoted from ucctcm.org), and to develop my MARKS (Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ) Portfolio, which is intended as a medium for MID's to both integrate and demonstrate their personal, professional, and spiritual formation and preparation for ministry. The process is exciting and feels hopeful! And if you ask me—whether the journey toward ordination takes another year+ or not, having this opportunity of daily gaining more pastoral experience and growth through walking with each/all of you here at First Congregational UCC is a pretty fabulous place to be!

With gratitude and light,

Pastor Erin

Email: pastorerin@rcfirstucc.com

Phone: (605) 342-5787

Message from Your Moderator

by Chuck Rounds

The Call is back! We are very happy that the Call will again be published every month except during the summer months. We are pleased to welcome Laura Switzer back to our staff. She will be working on the Call and other things that we need done.

Since the last Call in August, a lot of things have been happening in our church. Erin Erickson has joined our staff as temporary pastor to help us get through this time with no senior pastor. She has been making visits and serving communion to those who cannot come to services. She has been very helpful getting our fall season off to a good start and has been planning for the holiday seasons. She is beginning a confirmation class and has several signed up for that.

Our Sunday service attendance has slowly been increasing. It is so enjoyable to have the choir back for our services.

The Department of Buildings and Grounds has had a typically busy summer and fall season. Besides the ever-present lawn work this summer, they also supervised the installation of our two new boilers. That is now complete and operational. Our usage of natural gas should decrease with these more efficient boilers. They have also sprayed to eliminate our cactus problem to the east and north of the building. It will take a season or two before we see the effect of the spray.

The department also worked with Rick Bell on a building energy audit. It is now complete. It is interesting and it also discusses the possibilities of installing solar panels on the building to reduce our energy costs while taking advantage of the newly passed bill that would allow a considerable rebate for that expense. If you would like to see the report, contact Dave Ledford or me.

The Department of Ministries served a meal at the mission on September 30th. They continue to serve the meal on the fifth Friday of the month. The department also continues to sell the grocery cards after the Sunday service.

The next few months are busy times in our church with Thanksgiving, Advent, holiday celebrations and the start of confirmation classes. It is a good time to show support for our church by attending worship and special services and encouraging our friends and neighbors to visit the church where “no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

Pastoral Search Committee

by Eileen Rossow

The Pastoral Search Committee has been on the job and working diligently for the past two years. The committee includes **Kathleen Batchelder, Mike Crutcher, Todd Eddy, Alan Glover, Jenny Kozel, Lisa Lyons, Kim Nearhood, Chuck Rounds, Alicia Sutliff -Benusis** and the chair, **Eileen Rossow**.

Please be aware that ALL on this committee have taken this job VERY seriously and volunteered a GREAT deal of time to the process. In 2021, we first worked on creating a Church Profile to be published to give potential pastoral candidates a good idea of what our church is all about. The process of creating the profile took about nine months. It was published in September 2021. If you want to review this profile, it can be found on the church website at www.rcfirstucc.com. We have also published advertisements in a number of religious websites and magazines to expand our search area. Since September 2021, we have received and reviewed many profiles and resumes. Some of the candidates have been contacted for further Zoom interviews. Some have been thanked for their interest and dismissed.

In a UCC church, the process of hiring a new minister is called “calling” a pastor. The potential candidate first submits to the UCC Conference a profile, which is quite an extensive document, and includes education history, work history, references, experience with theological programs, ministry essays, security checks and candidate self-disclosures. The committee reviews each profile, reviews online sermons of the candidate when available, reviews references, and discusses whether we want to pursue the candidate further with a zoom interview or not. After one or two zoom interviews with the candidate, the committee decides

whether they want to invite the candidate to come to our church for a “candidating weekend.” This invitation is a very important step for both the church and the candidate. Both are making a big commitment to finalize the “Call.” During the candidating weekend, the candidate and family come to our church and community to look around, meet our congregation and conduct services on Sunday. At the end of the process, our congregation has a formal meeting in which we vote to call the candidate or not. Our church Policies and Procedures indicate that a two-thirds vote of the members of the church present at a business meeting of the church called for the purpose of electing a minister shall be required for a call to be issued.

As you can see, this process is quite intricate, demanding, time consuming and appropriate. We go through all of these checks and balances in order to guarantee that both the minister and the congregation are making the proper decision for a mutually sustainable long-term relationship. Your Pastoral Search Committee continues to work very diligently in the process of searching, finding and calling our next Senior Minister.

Church Board Meeting Date Change

The Church Board will be changing the date of their November meeting to **November 14 at 5:00pm**.

4 BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

Department of Hospitality by Robin Franson

The Department of Hospitality would like to invite all members of the church and guests for a **POTLUCK** on **Sunday, November 13** after church in the Fellowship Hall. It's a good chance for our members and friends to get together and enjoy good food and conversation! The Department of Hospitality will provide pulled pork and BBQ sandwiches and we ask that everyone bring a side dish to share.

Don't forget! **November 13** (after church) in the Fellowship Hall and bring your favorite dish!

A heads-up---The Department of Hospitality also will be hosting **ADVENT APPETIZERS** on **December 11th** after church and asking our congregation to bring a favorite appetizer, finger food or munchies.

NEWS FROM CHURCH

Open and Affirming

On October 31, 2021 First Congregational voted overwhelmingly to become an ONA (Open and Affirming) congregation. This action affirms who we have always been, and just "puts the welcome mat outside the door." Rapid City First Congregational was recognized at the recent Joint Annual Meeting of the Tri-conference as the only SD congregation that attained this status in 2021.

This is the covenant that we voted to accept: **"First Congregational United Church of Christ, Rapid City, South Dakota is an Open and Affirming (ONA) church, believing that each of us is created in God's image." (Gen.1:26).**

We invite everyone of all ages, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, races, nationalities, ethnicities, economic circumstances, abled or differently abled, faith backgrounds, marital statuses, or cultures to participate actively in our mission as we boldly proclaim "No Matter Who You Are or

Where You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here!"

The ONA committee is part of the Department of Ministries, and has been meeting as necessary. We participated in the Black Hills Pride event at Memorial Park in July, and had many wonderful conversations with people who stopped by our table. The new Pride flag that is displayed in Fellowship Hall was given to the church by Eileen Rossow, and it drew a lot of attention at the event.

Where do we go from here? We will continue to offer our extravagant welcome to all, and the committee will be talking about other programs that are part of the UCC, ie. justice for all and anti-racist designation. We will need to replace Mike Crutcher since he is moving in early November, so if you have a passion for the work of this committee, please let one of us know. **(Carol Boyles, Susie Kelts, Kim Nearhood, Sybil Rounds, Jodie Thuringer)**

May we continue to learn and grow in our faith, treating all as children of God.

Westhills Communion

Please note that Pastor Erin is giving monthly Communion at West Hills Village on the **first Wednesday of each month, at 10:00-11:00 am**. This will be held in the Aspen Room. All are welcome to join.

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Stewardship and Budget is requesting that all Departments of the church to please get their 2023 budget requests in by **December 1st, 2022**. We need to have the requests processed and in place before the Annual Meeting in January.

Fellowship Hour Help

It's never too late! (to learn a new skill!) Many of us have been wanting to learn how to run the dishwasher in the kitchen. Now is your chance! IF you sign up to serve coffee and cookies, OR you choose to sign up for helping wash the dishes after coffee hour....you will be adding a new skill to your resume! You will be given a chance to take Dishwashing 101, or learn to be a Coffee Cadet!

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH

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Dear Friends,

2022 has been another extraordinary year for members and friends of UCC First Congregational Church of Rapid City. Kudos to all who have so faithfully contributed to our church at a time of unprecedented challenges. You have made the life of First Congregational better. We appreciate you.

Because of your faithful stewardship we have been able to make needed updates to the church especially with the new boiler system. This new system will serve First Congregational for decades to come.

We ask you to look ahead to next year with us in faith. Erin Erickson is serving as interim pastor; confirmation classes are being held this year and plans are being made to move forward as a church where all are welcome.

A large majority of the church's income comes through the faithful pledges of our members and friends. Having a clear vision of our future income will help the Stewardship and Budget Department create a responsible budget for 2023. That budget will be shared with the congregation for discussion, comment, and revision in January, prior to the annual Congregational Meeting.

We ask that you faithfully make your pledge to the church for 2023. Please return your pledge card as soon as possible (by mail or in the offering plate. We will bless all our commitments in worship on **December 4th**.

Thank you for your faithful giving during our time of change. Know that your giving will help UCC First Congregational Church of Rapid City to continue its unique and needed mission of spreading love and peace in our community.

Yours in Christ,

The Department of Stewardship and Budget

Pat Lebrun, Harold Miller, Kevin Sandmeier, Scott Schuft, Harlan Stephens, Pat Wheaton



Because it is a welcoming space for renewal and loving support in times of celebration and sorrow.
Now we need to make it last, for this generation and generations to come.
We ask for your financial support and your voice!
We need you to tell the community about our church and its mission of acceptance in this world of barriers and division. There are people who need us as much as we need them!
Give generously and reach out to new families and friends.



Send this back!

Please fill out your pledge card, detach, then mail it back in the self-addressed envelope enclosed.

You can also call or email
1-605-342-5787
www.rcfirstucc.com

Our pledge for 2023

\$

Per week ☐ Per month ☐ Per year ☐

Check ☐ Card ☐ Automatic withdrawal ☐

Names(s)

Address

Email

Phone

First Congregational Church
1200 Clark St.
Rapid City, SD 57701

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Trunk and Treat

We had a successful **TRUNK or TREAT** event on Halloween day with about 125 kids who came to share in the fun. We are hoping that this event will spark some interest for new folks to share in our church for the future. We had 12 volunteers who decorated their trunks, gave out candy and helped give this new idea a try. In

addition to the “trunkers”, we had others who helped with hot chocolate, apple cider, decorated the church with their talented wood working skills (thank you Dave Ledford) and just added helping hands. We couldn’t have made this happen without all their help. KUDOS!

A huge **THANK YOU** to Women’s Fellowship who donated money for

candy and drinks. Another giant round of applause to all our church members who brought in bags of candy to be shared with the children who came to **Trunk or Treat**. We had lots of YUMBO candy to give away. Our bountiful thanks for everyone who participated and assisted in this Halloween project. We have the best church family ever. Please enjoy the pictures we posted!





Department of Education

by Patti Arneson

The Department of Education has had a busy fall! We had a really fun Sunday School kick-off in September and began our weekly Sunday School sessions the next week. We are blessed with wonderful Sunday School teachers, including **Nic and Courtney Strampe, Sharon Darrow** with varied helpers, **Lynn Grauman** and **Alicia Sutliff-Benusis**. **Jane Glover** and **Justin Speck** share in the musical portion of our Sunday School time.

We are excited that **Jenny Kozel** and friends are implementing a new program that we call “Tweens and Teens”, which is a time of sharing during the worship service for middle and high school kids. This same age group will begin their Confirmation class **November 27-April 27** (Palm Sunday), under the guidance of **Pastor Erin**. It is exciting to have a confirmation class in place, since we haven’t had any confirmations since before Covid. If you would be interested in serving as a Confirmation mentor, please contact Pastor Erin.

Our nursery is open each Sunday, during service, for the littlest of littles to come play.

Adult Education Opportunities in November

by Kathleen Batchelder

Church Chat

On **November 1 and November 15, (the first and third Tuesday of each month)** join us in the Church Parlor at **11:30am** to discuss books and topics of importance to our faith journeys. On **November 1**, we will each share something we have read or heard that impacts our lives as Christians. Later in the month, we will begin discussing *The Ragged Company* (by Richard Wagamese) about the homeless population. Copies of the book will be available to borrow, or you can contact **Kathleen Batchelder** to order a copy. Everyone is welcome to join Church Chat conversations.

Spiritual Practice Group

Quiet reading of the Scriptures and prayer are our spiritual practices when we gather in the Church Library. You are welcome to join us at **12:30pm on November 1 and 15 (the first and third Tuesday of each month)**. Bring your Bible and your desire for time with The Holy One. For more information, contact **Kathleen Batchelder**.

Adult Forum

Sunday, November 20—Amber Oldfield will speak about **WAVI** (Working Against Violence). She will share the organizations goals, programs, and impact in our community. Plan to join us in the Fellowship Hall at **10:45am on November 20**. Adult Forum takes place the **third Sunday** of each month. There will be no Adult Forum in December.

MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Prayer Concerns

Our prayers are with **Rev. Dr. Mark Lee** following the death of his partner, **Ivan Loy**, on August 9, in Ft. Collins, Colorado.

Sue Maynard sent this update regarding their trip to Omaha, Nebraska for Clair's health intervention this week. "We want to thank all of the church for your prayers, your cards, and your well wishes. We have wonderful results, thanks to your prayers and the work of the tremendous doctors."

Prayers for recovery for **Leroy Olsen** who has major health concerns.

Keep **Rev. Jill Kundtz** in prayers as she recently had a spinal chord stimulator trial placement.

Prayers for **Joan Dyrda** who had recent surgery, and will be recovering at Pam and Jeff Van Curen's house.

Randy Fisher's sister, Colette Theel, who is battling cancer. **Michael Myers** is fighting the good fight with his cancer. **Pastor Dorotea Yucra's daughter, Sarvia**, who has cervical cancer, has completed her treatment protocols.

Those with health concerns who we continue to pray for in our congregation include: **Lee Boyles, Deb Tompkins, and Jodi Thuringer's dad, Larry.**

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

- **Shirley Baumgartner**
- **Evelyn Bradshaw**
- **Dona Cheney**
- **Vivian Dittmer**
- **Wes Humke**
- **Bob Jonas**
- **Eunice Johnson**
- **Chuck Knowlton**
- **Merrie Miller**
- **Marrelyce Seaman**
- **Lorraine Slocum**
- **Helen Snyder**
- **Elena Van Pelt**

They all appreciate our prayers. Cards would be welcome as well.

Farewell

It was with great sadness that we bid farewell on October 30th to our faithful and longtime church member, **Michael Crutcher**. He is such a wonderful friend to all, and was a hardworking part of our church family. We wish him well in his new endeavors with his family in Indiana.

A Note of Interest

Please note, we are in the process of changing our email addresses in the office. While we will be making the transfer to another email address, the old one will be in existence during this time period. The new email address for the office is **office@rcfirstucc.com**. Please make a note of this, so we don't miss any messages from you !

Church Directories

Copies of the newly updated church directories are available in the Narthex. As always, please notify the church office of any address or phone number changes. 605-342-5787



The following members and friends have **November** birthdays:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| November 3: | Shawn Burke
Elena Koehn |
| November 4: | Melissa Emerson |
| November 9: | Ed Ens
Sydney Schendzielos |
| November 11: | Dave Johnson |
| November 12: | Kevin Long
Dakota Vrooman |
| November 13: | Landon Bartling
Annelise Deyo |
| November 15: | Jill Kundtz
Connie McMacken |
| November 20: | Eva Heinert |
| November 22: | Bruce Tompkins |
| November 23: | Jack Bossen
Mekhi Mann |
| November 29: | Ruth Ann Karlen |
| November 30: | Gianna Grigg
Cat Roskam
Caroline Strampe |

MISSION AND OUTREACH

News from los Guido, Costa Rica

In a recent email, Pastor Dorotea confirmed that Sarvia is recovering from her chemotherapy but is continuing with treatment. We are not sure just what that involves.

Dorotea also shared that for 2 months she (Dorotea) has been having a lot of pain in her left shoulder, and the insurance doctor recommended an x-ray, but they won't have results for 2 months! During her monthly meeting with Lillian Solt who runs the CEDCAS medical clinic, it was arranged for an MRI there, so that will give a lot more information in a more timely manner.

There are new restrictions in place because of new viruses that have put many girls and boys in the hospital, but Dorotea is visiting in family's homes to share the food packages provided with funds from First Congregational. She also brings "la palabra de esperanza" - the word of hope - that she so firmly believes in. There will be no VBS yet, due to the restrictions as well as the health concerns of the church leaders.

Please continue to keep this family and the community of los Guido in your prayers.

Woodchuck Society News

A hearty thank you to the loyal Woodchucks for their hard work this season. Two deliveries have taken place as of the publication deadline. The first was to Gus Craven at Wanblee, and it was smaller than usual (5.5 cords) due to a lack of drivers.

The second went to Louie BlueCoat, north of Eagle Butte, and was 9.2 cords.

We are thankful for the wonderful weather for the deliveries, and for the time spent working together. There will be additional deliveries in the future, and we welcome help with loading and deliveries.

Church Response

Church Response has sent out their request for donations for their Christmas Bazaar to help families in our area who don't have the funds for decorations or gifts. They sell some of the items at the bazaar to help the families, and the items that are not sold are available for families to take what they wish.

Donations can be dropped off at the Church Response office. Donations may also be placed in the grocery cart, and we will see that they are delivered to Church Response.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Love INC

Love INC (Love In the Name of Christ) started in 2001 as a strategy to help churches help people in need. Love INC has helped coordinate thousands of volunteer helping opportunities; connecting people in need with people who can help.

Love INC operates two social enterprises, RISE Furnishings & Décor and Thrive Adventure Retail Store as well as the Life INC program which teaches life skills and builds community relationships through free adult education classes.

Interested in learning more about Love INC of the Black Hills? Check their website loveinonline.com



CALENDAR

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

November



Friday, November 4

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

Saturday, November 5

- 9:00am: Church Bazaar-Fellowship Hall

Sunday, November 6

- 9:30am: Worship Service (in-person and livestreamed)
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour (in-person)
Grocery Card Sale

Tuesday, November 8

- 12:30pm: PEO/BR Meeting
- 1:00pm: Craft Day
- 4:15pm: Trust Board-Parlor

Wednesday, November 9

- 10:00am: Women's Fellowship Executive Board
- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Thursday, November 10

- 10:00: Altar Guild
- 4:30pm: Dept. of Worship
- 6:30pm: Stewardship and Budget

Friday, November 11

- 10:00am: Watercolor Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group
- 2:30pm: Wedding Rehearsal

Saturday, November 12

- 7:30am: Rotary meeting
- 12:00pm: Wedding preparation
- 4:00pm: Wedding

Sunday, November 13

- 9:30am: Worship Service (in-person and livestreamed)
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour (in-person)-
POTLUCK SUNDAY
- 10:45am: Dept. of Education

Monday, November 14

- 5:00pm: Church Board (date and time changed this month only)

Tuesday, November 15

- 11:30am: Church Chat
- 12:30pm: Spiritual Practices-Library
- 1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, November 16

- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, November 18

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

Sunday, November 20

- 9:30am: Worship Service (in-person and livestreamed)
Blanket Sunday
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour (in-person)
- 10:45am: Adult Forum-WAVI
- 3:00pm: Black Hill Chamber Society Concert

Tuesday, November 22

- 1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, November 23

- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, November 25

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

Sunday, November 27

- 9:30am: Worship Service (in-person and livestreamed)
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour (in-person)

Tuesday, November 29

- 1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, November 30

- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, December 2

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

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street
Rapid City SD 57701

BLANKET SUNDAY

Blanket Sunday is November 20th, 2022

We come together as a church to offer our financial gifts in order to purchase blankets to be distributed by Church World Service. These blankets go to places where disasters have occurred, where people are on the move and where basic resources have grown scarce.

Please consider making a donation, and putting it in the offering basket on **November 20th**. You may write a check to the church and write Blanket Sunday in the memo line.

Thank you for your generosity.

