

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

January
2023

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

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

Hello and New Year's Blessings to each of you!

I can barely believe it is already 2023! I pray for love, light and gratitude to abound in your lives, and I look forward to connecting more (in person and via cards/the Call/etc.) with each of you in 2023!

It occurred to me, what better way to start the new year than with the words of poet Mary Oliver?! :)

Mornings at Blackwater

For years, every morning, I drank from Blackwater Pond.
It was flavored with oak leaves and also, no doubt, the feet of ducks.
And always it assuaged me from the dry bowl of the very far past.
What I want to say is that the past is the past,
and the present is what your life is, and you are capable
of choosing what that will be, darling citizen.
So come to the pond, or the river of your imagination,
or the harbor of your longing, and put your lips to the world.
And live
your life.



The Lord bless you, and keep you; The Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. –Numbers 6:24-26

Pastor Erin

Important Decisions at Annual Meeting

The 144th Annual Meeting of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Rapid City, South Dakota will be held in the church fellowship hall following worship on **Sunday, January 29, 2023**. This meeting will include the election of Officers and Department Members and the adoption of the budget for 2023. All members and friends of the congregation are encouraged to participate in this important meeting. Local church autonomy and lay control of decisions is a hallmark of our church's style of governing ourselves.

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in this important meeting as we continue to make history together.



BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

Message from Your Moderator by Chuck Rounds

It is hard to believe that I am writing the moderator's report for January 2023 already. I guess it's true - time flies when you're having fun.

Your church board met on December 20th. The Stewardship and Budget Department gave a report that shows we will be within our budget for the year. They are currently working on the budget for 2023 and we hope that we have the pledges that will allow the church to function normally. The Building and Grounds Department explained why the sanctuary was so chilly on the 11th. The new boilers were not the problem as they seem to be working fine but there was a problem with the air handlers that has been corrected. The number of covid and flu cases have shown a significant increase and as a result our "school nurse" board member has suggested that our signs on the door recommending masks be changed to ask that anyone with a cold or other respiratory problem wear a mask.

The nominating committee members are the three at-large members of the board. They are **Becky Fisher**, **Carol Boyles** and **Alicia Sutliff-Benusis**. The nominating committee will find people to replace those whose term on a department has expired. Please consider serving on a department. If there is a particular department that appeals to you, just tell a nominating committee member or any board member that you would like to serve on that department. The members of the 2023 departments and the church officers will be elected at the 144th Annual Meeting on **January 29, 2023**.

The Christmas season has been a very busy time for everyone. The Christmas Eve service was well attended and there were many who are not regular attendees of our services. Hopefully some of them will choose to worship with us on a regular basis.

The coming year will again be an unsettled time in our congregation. We hope to call a pastor, and we still

have to deal with covid and other viruses so it is even more important that we demonstrate that "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

Department of Ministries

The Department of Ministries will be selling grocery cards in the Fellowship Hall following worship on **January 8**. Please stop by and pick yours up to help Church Response.

The Church Response grocery cart item for **January** is **canned meat**.



Annual Reports

All officers, departments, fellowships, and boards of the church are requested to submit their annual reports to the church office no later than **Friday, January 14, 2023**.

The church email address is: **office@rcfirstucc.com**.

Please write your reports in the form of a summary and keep the information as concise as possible. A short, bulleted list would be desirable and appreciated. Thank you.



It's time to take down the tree

Epiphany, or the 12th Day of Christmas, is January 6. A new season means new decorations for our sanctuary.



We will be taking down the Christmas tree and storing it away on **Saturday, January 7 at 9:00am**. Anyone who is able to help with these chores is encouraged to participate. The work should be completed in a short amount of time if there are enough volunteers. Thank you for your help!

New Member Class



CALLING ALL THOSE INTERESTED in First Congregational UCC New Members Class

On **Sunday, January 8th, 2023 from 12:30-2:30pm**, Pastor Erin will be offering a Membership Class for anyone interested in learning more about our church and/or in becoming a new member.

Please feel free to call the church office this week to get signed up (unless you already are signed up)! We will meet in the classroom across from the library. It's exciting to continue to learn and grow together as an ever-widening church family circle.

Adult Forum

The next Adult Forum will be on **Sunday, January 15 at 10:45am** in the Fellowship Hall. **Darryl Reineke** from Westhills Village will be the guest speaker.

Good Morning Circle

Good Morning Circle is a group of women that gathers at **9:30am on the 3rd Wednesday of most months**. We have a short program, a sweet treat, a short business meeting, and lots of conversation.

The Circle is a part of the larger Women's Fellowship group, and we support many church projects as well as local and international programs. **Our January meeting will be on January 18 at 9:30am.**

We welcome any women who are interested in attending. **If you need a ride, or have any questions, please call Sybil Rounds and arrangements will be made.**

Memoir Writing Group

The Memoir Writing group's next meeting will be **Thursday, January 26 at 1:30pm** in the church parlor.

Anyone interested in sharing or hearing stories is welcome to join us. For more information, contact **Mary Keithahn**.

Westhills Communion

Pastor Erin is serving Communion in the **Aspen Room** at **Westhills Village** on the **first Wednesday of each month at 10:00am**. The next

Communion service will be on **Wednesday, February 1**. All are welcome to join.



There recently was a scammer pretending to be our **Pastor Erin Erickson**. Some church members have received a request from the scammer via text messages. The message asks the recipient to reply to her via text as she is in a meeting and cannot be reached by phone. Do not click on the text message. Delete it and choose the "Report" option, if available.

Email is another common method scammers use to make fake requests. **No one from our church will ever request you to purchase gift cards (i.e. Apple gift cards) or ask for money.**

Please let the church office know if you receive any suspicious text or email message. Thank you.

Fellowship Hour Help

Coffee hosts are needed for coffee hour in **January**. Easy instructions are posted. 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!**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Happily, we made it through another year, enjoying our Sunday School, making new friends, and continuing to learn about Bible Scriptures.

Included in the Christmas season's activities were:

Advent Artwork Fair

We made fun Christmas creations as we munched down on Appetizers for Advent.



Advent Candle Lighters

Families were involved with each week of Advent, lighting the candles and participating in the Advent readings.



Christmas Eve 4:00pm Service

The children participated in a live Nativity service, helping to reenact the Christmas story, wearing Biblical-times costumes of our choice.

We look forward to resuming our monthly **Adult Forum** speakers on **January, 15 at 10:45am** with our guest speaker, **Darryl Reineke**, from Westhills Village. The Adult Forum takes place on the third Sunday of the each month.

The **Church Chat** and **Spiritual Practices** groups, which meet on the **first and third Tuesdays at 11:30am and 12:30pm** respectively, have been well attended.



Church Chat's next meeting will be on **January 17 at 11:30am**.



Spiritual Practices' next meeting will be on **January 17 at 12:30pm**.

Our weekly **Confirmation Class** continues, which is led by **Pastor Erin**.

We have increased the number of children participating in Sunday School, and love to see each of them each week!

On **Sunday, January 29**, the Sunday school children will sing during the worship service following the Children's Message.



Book Reading Awards will be presented after the children sing on **January 29**.

We sadly say good-bye to **Kathleen Batchelder** and **Sharon Darrow**, as they complete their successful three-year term on the Department of Education. We all appreciate their time and talent.

Many thanks to **Lynn Grauman**, **Jane Glover** and **Nic and Courtney Strampe** for their dedication and time as they continue to serve on this department.

We hope to welcome **Reva Ortega** and **Dawn Erk** to join our festivities, as we look forward to another year of growing with Christ and our UCC children!

Patti Arneson, Department of Education Chairperson

MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Christmas Cantata on December 18 and the Christmas Eve services. Your dedication of time and talent to these services made our celebration of the Christmas season complete.



THANK YOU

My UCC family,
Thank you for your love, support, prayers and memorials
Blessings to all,
Robin Eddy and family

Thank you to everyone who brought appetizers to share at our first ever *Appetizers and Art for Advent* event on December 11. Thanks, too, to the organizers and those who helped in the kitchen and at the art tables. Everyone's efforts greatly contributed to the success of the event.

We wish to share our gratitude for the cookies that were baked with love and delivered to our home over the Christmas holiday.

Bruce and Tish Wilkinson

A **big** thank you to the Christmas cookie elves who baked dozens of cookies, packaged them, and delivered them to **34** shut-in members and friends. This tradition has been a blessing for all who are involved. Thank you, elves. You are greatly appreciated!

Women's Fellowship

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Toy Drive in December. It was very successful. A letter is posted on the community bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall from Youth and Family Services expressing their thanks.

Sue Maynard

Thank you to Women's Fellowship and the Hopeful Crafters for purchasing a new phone system for the church. The old system was becoming increasingly antiquated. The new system was recently installed. It includes wireless handsets, headsets and an answering system.



Member News and Notes

Prayer Concerns

Our sympathy and prayers are with those who have recently lost loved ones:

Robin Eddy following the death of her husband, **Todd Eddy**, on December 4th in Rapid City. Family members who will miss him include sons, **Travis (Lita)**, **Trent (CC)**, and **Ryan (Maddy)** and granddaughters, **Riley and Dylan**. Services were held at First Congregational Church on December 9th with Pastor Erin Erickson officiating.

A memorial for Todd Eddy has been established at the church.

Randy and Becky Fisher and family following the death of Randy's sister, **Colette Theel**, on December 29th in Rapid City. A Vigil Service is scheduled at 6:00pm on January 5th at Blessed Sacrament Church. Visitation will begin at 5:00pm. A Christian Funeral Mass will be at 10:00am on January 6 at the church.



Please hold the following members and friends in your prayers:

Harold and Cam Miller are leaving soon for continued cancer treatment. They are having their mail forwarded. Therefore, cards and letters may be mailed to their home address which can be found in the church directory.

Rev. Jill Kundtz is scheduled undergo spinal cord procedure on January 18, **Kay Daugherty's** brother-in-law, **Doug Reeves**, is struggling with health concerns, **Clair Maynard** as he recovers from his recent health intervention, **Deb Tompkins' sister, Sherry**, who is facing serious health issues, **Michael Myers** who now is cancer free and will start radiation, **Leroy Olsen** who has major health concerns and **Pastor Dorotea Yucra's** daughter, **Sarvia**, whose health struggles continue.

Those we continue to pray for in our congregation include: **Lee Boyles**, **Joan Dyrdahl** and **Deb Tompkins**.

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**, **Maralee Dennis**, **Vivian Dittmer**, **Wes Humke**, **Bob Jonas**, **Eunice Johnson**, **Chuck Knowlton**, **Merrie Miller**, **Marrelyce Seaman**, **Lorraine Slocum**, **Helen Snyder** and **Elena Van Pelt**.

Birthdays

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

January 1	Karen Boehrs
	Layne Mortensen
January 2	Donald Gustin
January 3	Cindy Ledford
January 7	Kathy Dannenbring
January 9	Olivia Diedtrich
January 12	Lindsay Wathen
January 13	Gabriella Golden
January 14	Jeannette Hill
January 15	Beth Benusis
January 16	Kyle Grauman
January 18	Ronald Hill
January 19	Ron Comley
	Chuck Knowlton
January 20	Velma Speck
January 21	Adam Koehn
January 22	Luke Deurmier
January 23	Harold Miller
January 24	Robin Eddy
January 25	Carol Boyles
January 26	Salina Petit
January 31	Kim Nearhood

CALENDAR

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



Friday, January 6

- 10:00am: Water Color Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Saturday, January 7

- 9:00am: Christmas Tree Takedown

Sunday, January 8

- 9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
- 10:30am Fellowship Hour
- 10:45am: Dept. of Education Meeting
- 12:30pm New Member Class

Monday, January 9

- 5:00pm: PEO/BR Meeting—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, January 10

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

Wednesday, January 11

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

Thursday, January 12

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

Friday, January 13

- 10:00am: Water Color Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Community Conversations—Parlor
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, January 15

- 9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
- 10:30am Fellowship Hour
- 10:45am: Adult Forum

Tuesday, January 17

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

Wednesday, January 18

- 9:30am: Good Morning Circle Meeting
- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, January 20

- 10:00am: Water Color Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, January 22

- 9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour
- 12:30pm: SDPB Community Conversations/
Pat Lebrun—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, January 24

- 1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, January 25

- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Thursday, January 26

- 1:30pm: Memoir Writing Group Meeting

Friday, January 27

- 10:00am: Water Color Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, January 29

- 9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available
- 10:30am: Fellowship Hour/
144th Annual Meeting
- 3:00pm: Black Hills Chamber Society
Concert

Tuesday, January 31

- 1:00pm: Craft Day

Wednesday, February 1

- 10:00am: Communion at Westhills
- 7:00pm: Choir Practice

Friday, February 3

- 10:00am: Water Color Painting Group
- 1:00pm: Stained Glass Group

Sunday, February 5

- 9:30am: Worship Service/Nursery available



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Rapid City SD 57701

We Need Your Help!

The church staff appreciates all the work our church family does on behalf of our church and community. We are a very busy and devoted group! As a result, the church office receives a multitude of requests from a great number of groups, departments, committees and organizations for their items, events, articles and etc. to be placed in a variety of calendars and publications.

Our goal is to have your information published completely and accurately. **Therefore, it is our hope that any request be submitted on paper or preferably by email.**

A table and chair has been set up in the office with paper and writing materials that you may require to submit any request.

Also, please notify the office if an event you have submitted for the church calendar changes or cancels.

Thank you for helping us do the best job possible for our church.

The church office email address is: **office@rcfirstucc.com**

