

January, 2018

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January seems to be a bitter-sweet time of year. We say good bye to the nostalgia and familiar comfort and joy of the Christmas season, and we say hello to a brand-new year of possibilities. The hustle and bustle of the holidays is over and we are left asking ourselves, “Ok, now what?”

This is a natural question to be asking in January. After all, this is a time of new beginnings – a time when many people set goals and resolutions. For some, this is a chance to reflect on the previous year and identify ways to improve themselves, their place in life or something they are not pleased with. And often, this time is approached with regret. Regret for the things we’ve done, but mostly, regret for the things we didn’t do. And this kind of regret can often be a self-defeating cycle.

We can think of past failures, and feel that we are doomed to repeat them. We can think of our sins, and begin to feel they are inescapable. We can dwell on the ways in which we have strayed from God, and feel that we are too far to come back. We can look at our place in life and lose hope that it will ever improve. We can look back on our tragedies and sufferings and believe that they will last forever.

In these ways, I believe we can really relate to our Jewish ancestors who were in captivity in Babylon. Their country was taken from them, they were forced to move, everything they loved was stripped away, their Temple was destroyed, it appeared that God had abandoned them, and many of their loved ones had died in the fight against Babylon. This must have been a tragic time for them, but it is during this time, that God’s words through the prophet Isaiah, could clearly be heard.

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland” (Isaiah 43:18-19).

I would suggest that this is an invitation for us as well. The Bible says that “anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17) The Bible also tells us that, “in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). These are great reasons for us to rejoice in our new beginnings. We do not need to dwell on our pasts – because God is not dwelling on them. We do not need to fear for our future – because God is working for our good in the present. May these promises bring us hope and joy as we face a new year.

In Christ,

*Pastor Kevin.*

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**Ministers: The People of the Church † Pastor: Kevin Clark**

*FCC associates with sister churches in the Wis. Congregational Association & National Association of Congregational Christian Churches*

## Church Council / Staff

Moderator- Rae-Ellen Preuss .....262-594-2740  
 Moderator Elect- Jim Schuett .....414-257-1860  
 Treasurer-Claire Albrecht .....262-844-2603  
 Secretary-Joanne Himebauch .....262-363-8144  
 Budget & Finance-Prakash Mathew .....262-436-4025  
 Property & Grounds-Bob Brandemuehl .262-662-3436  
 Worship-Tom Rowntree .....262-534-5168  
 Congregational Care-Cindy Wendlandt .262-441-7444  
 Missions-Deb Maske .....262-363-4484  
 Christian Education-Pat Parr .....262-806-2243

### Staff

Organist/Choir Director-Marni Wiggins....262-521-1406  
 Office Admin. - Judi Weyer .....262-363-7249

### Pastor

Kevin Clark.....262-975-1026



Wil Manion ..... 1/12  
 Pat Parr ..... 1/12  
 Connie Porter ..... 1/14  
 Warren Kufalk..... 1/28

*Please drop a note to the church office to have your birthday or anniversary included here.*



### Backpack Program

We are happy to report that we sent each of our families a \$30 gift card to Pick N Save. This will give them the opportunity to buy something extra for the holidays that we are unable to supply in their weekly backpacks. Please keep our families in your prayers that they are drawn closer to our merciful God. Thank you.

Beth Petersen

## Servant Schedule

Date	Refresh.	Ushers	Nursery	Liturgist	Sunday School
1/7	Missions				Linda G
1/14				Prakash M	Claire A
1/21	White Elephant				Joanne H
1/28	Women's Fellowship				Joanne H
2/4					Linda G

Notice: Photographs taken at church events are included in the newsletter, on our website and our Facebook page. If you would prefer not to have your photo posted to any of these forums, please contact the church office.

Articles for the February Newsletter are due in the office by 8:00 am on Friday, Jan. 26

### Stewardship @ 12/22/17

	Income	Expenses	Over (Short)
Offering	140,018.44	118,315.83	21,702.61
Other Income	6,503.29		
Total	146,521.73	118,315.83	28,205.90
	<b>12/3</b>	<b>12/10</b>	<b>12/17</b>
Attendance	73	88	76

## CONTACT US

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[rev.kevinclark@gmail.com](mailto:rev.kevinclark@gmail.com)

Marni Wiggins  
 Organist/Choir Director.....[marnilynn@mac.com](mailto:marnilynn@mac.com)

Prayer Chain .....[prayer@fccweb.net](mailto:prayer@fccweb.net)

C.A.R.E. Ministry .....[care@fccweb.net](mailto:care@fccweb.net)

# Council Corner



Oh my goodness! Where has 2017 gone. Just last year I was beginning my term as Moderator elect.....and here we are!

I am looking forward to serving as your Moderator this year. We have a busy year planned as we continue the work of our church.

I welcome our new members to the Council team: Pat Parr will serve as the director of Christian Education; Cindy Wendlandt will serve as our director of Congregational Care; and Bob Brandemuehl will serve as director of Property and Grounds.

Claire Albrecht is the Treasurer and Jim Schuett is the new Moderator elect. All other directors are continuing to serve in the position that they worked in last year. I look forward to working with all of our Council as we strive to do the Lord's will.

Please feel free to contact any of these people if you have a concern about their area of directorship. And, I am also happy to answer any questions or hear of your concerns. My phone number is printed in the directory and also in the newsletter.

As we indicated at the November 5th business meeting, I am holding Listening sessions in January, February and early March. The purpose is to understand the financial situation of the church. Two dates are set in January: the 14th and the 28th...both on Sundays, right after church.

We are beginning the first session with an explanation of our energy loan and the possibilities of paying it off. Our former Treasurer, Jean Brocker, has graciously agreed to provide a proposal and answer question that day.

Please plan to attend as many of the sessions as possible, so that you can make an informed decision at the annual meeting on March 11th.

We tabled the motion to pay off the energy loan until the March meeting. It will be on the agenda at that meeting.

Rae-Ellen Preuss, Moderator

Happy New Year from Your Missions Team!

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support of all of our projects during this past year.

We especially want to thank you for supporting us in our year-end project to help the Mission School of Hope with our Stock the Pond Campaign. Your purchases of gift cards, donations and many prayers for the program are all blessings to the school. The campaign runs through December 31st, so we won't know a final total of the amount raised until after that. We'll be announcing the grand total on January 7th. Praise be to God for all we have been able to do for the school!

If you would like to help us with our ongoing support of the Mission School of Hope, or any other projects or disbursements we will be doing throughout the year, you may simply designate any desired amount directed to "Missions" on your regular offering envelope. We will then be able use those offerings to help support the school as well as any missions projects. Thank you!

Linda Garasimowicz



Prayer Chain Ministry Our church is growing! Praise God!!! This was an answer to a prayer. Yes, I can personally say that I prayed that our church would grow and flourish. This was an answer to a prayer. Would you like to get involved with a powerful Ministry that our church has to offer and be called a PRAYER WARRIOR? If your answer is yes, just email [prayer@fccweb.net](mailto:prayer@fccweb.net) and we'll see to it that your name is added to our growing list of Prayer Warriors. As an explanation of how it works; people send their prayer requests to [prayer@fccweb.net](mailto:prayer@fccweb.net) and the prayer request is sent out to the Prayer Chain via email. These are also sent through the mail for those that request it. When an update comes in, that is also sent out to see how our prayers are being answered. Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers and answering. Praise God!

Beth Petersen



## Fellowship Activities!! Save the Dates!

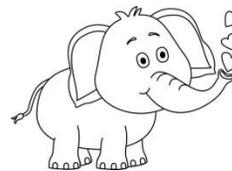
As we say goodbye to 2017 I'd like to extend a huge Thank you to Bonnie Geiser for her many years as President of Women's fellowship at FCC.

Thank you to all who had baked/bought treats and to all those who helped serve and clean up for the Celebration of Music in November!!

We held our annual bake sale on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> and as always your generosity is very much appreciated. We collected \$219.50 which is used for help pay for the Upper Room devotionals, birthday gifts for our church shut ins, and other projects that we do throughout the year.

Women's Fellowship is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month in the lounge. Christmas blessings to all!

Sue Roberts



We hope you can join us for a couple of Fellowship activities in the upcoming year! Mark your calendars for **Sunday, January 21** for the **annual White Elephant gift exchange and potluck**. Please bring a wrapped item to exchange. Don't need that White Elephant that's been taking up space in your home? Bring it to our party. Please sign up on the Communications Table to bring something to the potluck, too.



Back by popular demand, we will be having our **Sweet Treats** Fellowship event on **Sunday, February 18** in honor of Valentine's Day right after worship. Sign up to bring something sweet (preferably with chocolate) and / or an appetizer to share.

Joanne Himebauch

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH • MUKWONAGO

231 ROBERTS DRIVE  
MUKWONAGO, WISCONSIN 53149-1129

## ❄️ January, 2018 ❄️

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>2</b> 8:00 Men's Breakfast 10:00 Made With Love 4:30 Conf. /Youth Grp. 6:30 Chair	<b>3</b> 6:30 pm Council	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Front Porch	<b>8</b> Pastor's Day Off 6:30 Scouts	<b>9</b> 4:30 Conf. /Youth Grp. 6:30 Chair	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Listening Session	<b>15</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>16</b> 10:00 Made With Love 12:30 Women's Fellow. 4:30 Conf. /Youth Grp. 6:30 Chair 6:30 Scouts Cmte.	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 6:00 IMOP Mtg.	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 White Elephant Potluck 1:00 Linden Ridge	<b>22</b> Pastor's Day Off 6:30 Scouts	<b>23</b> 10:00 Made With Love 4:30 Conf. /Youth Grp. 6:30 Chair	<b>24</b> 6:30 Missions	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Articles Due	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:00 Bible Study 10:00 Worship 11:00 Listening Session	<b>29</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>30</b> 10:00 Made With Love 4:30 Conf. /Youth Grp. 6:30 Chair	<b>31</b>			