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# “At First”

## First Congregational UCC

1400 North Elliott Avenue, Glencoe, MN 55336

Church Phone: 320-864-3855

*Adam Thompson; Pastor*

*Church Website: [firstcongochurch.org](http://firstcongochurch.org)*

*Facebook Page: First Congregational Church, Glencoe*

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September 2023

### Sunday School Kick-Off

#### **Ice Cream Social – September 24th**

Join in as we celebrate the start of Sunday School! Ice cream, toppings and fixings will be in abundant supply as we congregate to share our summer experiences and look forward to new adventures together.

All you'll need to do is show up in the Fellowship Hall after church with well wishes for our youth. Be there – or be square!

### For The Annual Report

In preparation for the Church's upcoming Annual Meeting, I ask that you review your personal information in last year's Annual Report and let me know if you have any changes (i.e. address, phone, email, etc.).

Also, let me know if you want to be removed or if you want to remove a family member who has moved on.

If I have your birthday date wrong in the newsletter or Sunday announcements, let me know!

**Your help is greatly appreciated! Please call me on Tuesdays or Wednesdays if you have any changes, if I am not in the office, please leave a voice mail.**

Thanks! Wendy

### A Special Thank-You!

On behalf of the Staff and Board of Directors of Common Cup Ministry we thank you for your generous donation of \$190.45 made to this organization.

Your offering will bless those we serve throughout McLeod County and will be applied towards the purchasing of school supplies for the 2023-2024 school year.

Be Bonte, RN, Director of CCM

### Confirmation Kick-Off

is set for **Sunday, September 17th** during **Worship Service**.

Our Confirmands this year are **Ethan Lehmann & Jaxen Mueller**



### Gift of Love

When you share Christ through your gifts of love, not only do you enter the process through which God blesses your life, but you also become the means of grace through which God blesses someone else.

**Wedding**

Congratulations to **Alyson Winn & Benjamin Lagergren**. They were married at First Congregational on August 12th. Pastor Penny Entringer and Pastor Adam Thompson officiated.

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**Student Loans**

The Student Loan Committee of First Congregational Church would like to remind members that there are currently funds available for student loans. Students must be a member of the church. They can borrow up to \$2000.00 per year with a maximum amount of \$4000.00 per person. Loans must be repaid after the student graduates. **Contact the Church office @ 864-3855.**

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**On the Job in September**

**Deacon: Scott Salmela**

**Altar: Ann Wangerin**



**Happy Birthday!!**

- 1. Kyle Giesler
- 5. Jesse Dahlke
- 8. Katherine Jones
- 9. Lon Roach  
River Rowan
- 11. Chris Marsh
- 15. Samantha Schilling  
Samantha Graupmann
- 16. Victoria Schultz
- 22. Shirley Steele
- 26. Daniel Rach



**Neighbors In Need**

Neighbors In Need provides us a way to respond to God's call. Our gifts to this all-church offering reach poor people in the neighborhoods and communities where they live. Your generous support of **Neighbor's In Need** supports the UCC's domestic ministries of justice and compassion.

Offerings goes towards the work of the Council for American Indian Ministry and supports justice advocacy and direct service projects, including the UCC's Hunger Action Ministry, poverty reduction efforts, just-peace programs, and community grants.

**We will receive the Neighbor's in Need offering on Sunday, October 1, 2023**

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**Lost & Found**

The following items have been left at church. If you are missing a black Women's summer coat or a Men's blue long sleeve zip up lightweight sweatshirt. Please ask a Deacon or call church office at 320-864-3855.

## **Pastor's Page:**

Where, oh, where ...

Where, oh, where, did the summer go? I always ask this question right about now, I would think by now I'd be used to it flying by but every year...just like that, it's over. While, I do love the summer months and all that comes with them, I'm really a fall kinda guy. I love the cooler temperatures, the beauty of the changing leaves, and getting back into the rhythms of life that seem to vanish during June, July, and August.

I also love returning to the rhythms of church life that come with September. This being my third journey into the program year with you, the wonderful folks at First Congregational, I have eagerly been looking forward to all that the Holy Spirit has in store for us this year. I wait with excitement for the renewed fellowship found during coffee hour, a fresh new confirmation class, Sunday School, and children's sermons. Not to mention the anticipation of the Holiday's and our joint efforts with our UCC neighbors that have proved to be fruitful and faithful. But most of all, I come with enthusiasm and a readiness to serve our loving God alongside God's loving people, and I hope you feel the same.

On that note, I am interested in hearing from all of you, how is it that the Holy Spirit is present in your lives? What, in the rhythm of the church, is working well, and what could use attention? How can I or the church better serve you, the members and friends, and/or the community? Is there something you feel called to in the church or with our mission partners? I promise that if you let me know, you won't find yourself on a committee...just like that. God speaks to all of us, and I would love to hear how God is speaking to you!

As we move from the wilds of summer to the rhythms of fall, it is my hope that we, as a church and as part of the One Body of Christ, do so in a spirit of gratitude and generosity, that we see one another with eye's full of love and hearts full of compassion, and worship, share, and serve with the wonderous gift's we have been given by God.

Peace,

Pastor Adam



**Pastor Adam's Office Hours At Church** are Mondays 9am-5pm, Wednesdays 12pm-5pm, and Sundays after worship till 4pm. Thursdays at home from 9am-3pm. Contact Pastor Adam by phone 320-864-3855 during office hours or by cell 952-239-5893 and by email at [pastor@firstcongochurch.org](mailto:pastor@firstcongochurch.org)



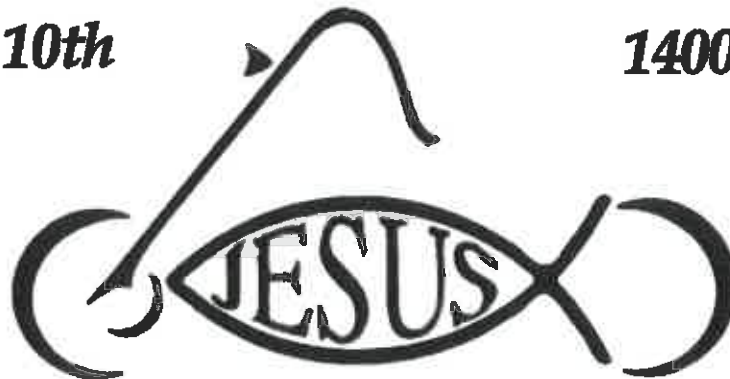
### Collecting Warm Coats for Common Cup

It's time to begin collecting warm, new or gently used coats (sizes newborn - 16/18 youth, men/women especially XL and up, no wool coats please) boots, snow pants and waterproof mittens to be distributed to residents of all ages throughout McLeod County. Bring your donations to church and let's fill up the coat rack! We'll be collecting through the first two weeks of October so you have plenty of time to see what fits, what needs to be replaced, and find some special clearance deals at stores! Q's Contact Bridget (864-5651).

## *Motorcycle Ministries Ride*

***Sunday, Sept 10th***  
***11am - 3'ish***

***1400 Elliott Ave N***  
***Glencoe, MN***



***First  
Congregational***



***All Riders Welcome!***

## Abundance

By Lee Hull Moses

At first glance, Jonah seems an odd choice for a reflection on stewardship. There is no offering of gifts here, no passing the plate, no mention of money at all. Missing is the imagery of the overflowing baskets of first fruits in Deuteronomy 26, or the quiet generosity of the widow in Luke 21. Jonah, as we'll see, isn't even a particularly generous person, quite the opposite, in fact. And yet, this little story of a reluctant prophet has much to offer as we discover the joy of sharing God's abundant grace.

What Jonah learns – or more accurately, what we can learn from Jonah, as the ending of the book leaves the prophet's own transformation up to our imaginations – is that God's justice is not a zero-sum game; more for other people doesn't mean less for me. There is plenty of God's grace to go around, enough for all the Ninevites and Jonah too. "Should I not be concerned about Nineveh?" God asks (4:11), as Jonah sulks, but the obvious truth is that God has been concerned about Jonah all along. Even when Jonah is running away from God, God provides what he needs: safety in the storm, a rescue from the depths of the sea. The abundance of God's grace is that there is enough; no one needs to be left out.

We live today in a culture that is bent on scarcity; we have believed the narrative that there is not enough to go around, and so we should hang on tight to what we have. We're convinced that if *you* get something good, that means there will be less available for *me*. Perhaps the greatest gift the church can give the world right now is to bear witness to God's abundance. The story of Jonah – along with the rest of the Biblical witness – convinces us that there is enough – enough of God's care, enough of God's grace, enough of God's love.

This move from scarcity to abundance is essential in a culture of generosity. A stewardship campaign with the message "if we don't increase our pledges, we won't be able to pay the electric bill next year!" speaks from a mindset of scarcity and does little to inspire generosity. Instead, "Imagine the good work we can do in our community when we share what we have!" comes from an understanding of abundance and invites people to participate from a place of joy and gratitude.

### Reflection

In what ways does your congregation operate within a mindset of scarcity? In what ways do you practice abundance? What could your congregation do if you really took seriously the abundance of God's grace? How would lives be transformed? What might happen if we oriented our whole lives and our whole ministry toward the abundance of God's grace?





# Stewardship for Kids!

## My Talents

Write or draw in the space below:

What do you know how to do? What are you good at? What do you **love** to do?


## Sharing My Talents

Write or draw in the space below:

How can you use your talents to help, comfort, or support other people?



# September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fr1	Sat
Deacon of the Month: Scott Salmela  Altar: Ann Wangerin					1	2
3 9:15 am Online Worship Service	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 9:15 am Communion Worship Service 11:00am Motorcycle Ministerial Ride	11	12	13 10:00 am GSL Area Ministerial Assoc	14	15	16
17 9:15 am Worship Service Confirmation Kick-Off Stewardship Kick-Off	18	19	20 Noon - Trustees's Meeting 7:00 pm Church Council Meeting	21	22	23
24 9:15 am Worship Service Sunday School Kick-Off Deacon's Meeting	25	26	27 10:00 am UCC Clergy Coop	28	29	30
						

# **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

## **Church Council Minutes**

**August 16, 2023**

### **Attending:**

**Members Present** – Jan Willand, Kari Warner, Carmen Kienenberger, Stan Hoof, Bridget Kienenberger, Jim Cox, Troy Lehmann

**Also Present:** Pastor Adam Thompson

1. **Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order by Stan at 7:00 pm
2. **Opening Prayer** – given by Pastor Adam
3. **Motion to Approve** July 26th meeting minutes – Carmen K moved to approve, Troy gave the second, motion passed.

#### **4. Pastor's Report:**

Alyson and Ben had their wedding on 8/12, Pastor Adam co-officiated with Pastor Penny Entringer

Sailing with the Confirmands has been postponed until 8/27/23.

Confirmation happenings: Pastor is working on a schedule, asking parents to review, see if any conflicts will arise.

A service project idea is to build a 'little free library' with the Confirmands.

Classes for Pastor start on 9/11/23, they are: Grief and Loss, History II and Scripture and it's Witness

His office schedule won't change, it will stay Monday (9-5), Wednesday (12-8) and Sunday (8-4).

Confirmation classes start 9/17/23.

Labor Day Weekend – online only service set for September 3rd.

Pastor asked how people thought the last song that's being done on the projector/screen is going and the consensus is that we like it but would love to have the music/notes to go with it. Pastor will work on that.

Tom Rakow is retiring (Silver Lake pastor) so Pastor Adam will be standing in as president of the UCC Cooperative for their first meeting on 9/13/23.

The new sign (to replace the one on 13th street headed north) is ready to be hung as well.

5. **Trustee's Report:** July 23 pledges was \$4108 with the total offering for the month being \$4312.00 Paid pledges on the year so far are \$73,646 with total offering at \$75,800. Some CDs have come due also, so the following CDs have been moved to a 5.25% interest rate for 3 months: \$25K in operating fund, \$26K Miska (Buildings & Grounds fund) and \$75K Keisling Fund (also Buildings & Grounds fund).

The upstairs toilet has been discussed with Brian Nagel, as Carmen K has called him.

Foster Heating from Hutchinson has walked through the building with Mike Dahlke and Mike have him the blueprints as they are talking about new boilers/AC.

Carmen K has called Carr Tuck-pointing (out of IA) and they will come up and check out the building to see if any work needs to be done.

6. **Christian Education:** Had a planning meeting on 9/13/23. Not a great turnout, expectations are limited. No one has committed to doing preschool classes. Amy Smith has agreed to do the Alex & Julian class, but not every week/time. The Story will be the curriculum for all ages. 2 classes are planned, a pre-K class and a youth class.
7. **The confirmation 'lounge' area** will possibly move to the music room downstairs so that the two Sunday School classes can be next to each other upstairs. Post-Confirmands will be asked to help lead/help classes and leaders to keep them involved. New Kickoff Sunday date: 9/23/23. Clean and reset of Classrooms is set for 8/27/23.
8. **Deacon's Report:** The Brat Stand will be run by FCUCC on 8/25 and 8/26, all slots for help are filled. Deacons will plan on having a meeting soon as well.
9. **Deaconesses:** are surviving, thanks to everyone who helps set up the communion table, takes it down, etc.
10. **Other Business:** Bridget informed the council that over \$900 was raised for the Common Cup Back to School Fundraiser! 235 kids in Glencoe will get school supplies, and 300 in Hutchinson. Thank you to everyone who donated to this worthwhile cause!



11. **Old Business:** The heating system has been covered and we are waiting on two different bids. The 'reorganization of leadership' proposal has some new language and has been typed up. Any new questions, suggestions, edits, different scenarios and ideas were discussed. **Please bring any notes/suggestions about reorganization to the September meeting.**
12. **SLS:** We are coming up on a year that we've been using them. Do we want to continue with SLS or dump them? More discussion at next meeting.

Next meeting scheduled for 9/20/23

Jan Willand moved to close the meeting, Bridget gave the second. Meeting adjourned.

Notes submitted by Kari Warner

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**Church Council Minutes - July 26, 2023**

**Attending:**

Members Present - Jan Willand, Kari Warner, Carmen Kienenberger, Stan Hoof, Bridget Kienenberger,  
Jim Cox, Pastor Adam Thompson

Members Absent: Troy Lehmann

1. **Call To Order** – The meeting was called to order by Stan at 7:00 pm.
2. **Opening Prayer** - Our opening prayer was given by Pastor Adam.
3. **Motion to Approve June 21st meeting minutes** - Approved as written (Carmen - Jim)
4. **Pastor's Report**
  - The "Son"Shine Church Service at Baylor Park begins at 10:30 am. with five UCC churches participating. A potluck meal follows the service.
  - The church will not have a large Mission Trip this year. Two smaller venues will take items place, including:
    - ✓ **August 2** – Frisbee Golf Event at Baylor Park, 7:00 pm. Bongards Church youth will also participate.
    - ✓ **August 13** – Sailing on Lake Waconia, after church. Bring life jackets, if available.
  - License Renewal - Pastor Adam's license renewal has been approved for another year.
  - A group of UCC Pastors have begun meeting monthly to share ideas and support. The group includes churches and pastors from Hutchinson, Gaylord, Glencoe, NYA, Plato and Chaska.
  - The CCLI Church Copyright license has been approved for our church to begin streaming content.
  - A Leadership Structure design proposal was distributed. Pastor Adam asked that members review the layout and bring forward any comments. The proposal would entail fewer committees with shared responsibilities. A special meeting will be held after church on August 6th to introduce the concept. The final design would be voted on at the Annual Meeting. The Constitution will be updated to reflect these changes.

**5. Committee Reports**

• **Trustees**

Pledges Received  
June, 2023 \$ 4,325  
June, 2022 \$ 7,912

Pledges Received YTD  
June, 2023 \$ 69,538  
June, 2022 \$ 97,035

Jim Benson attended the last Trustees meeting for clarification about services provided by Ameriprise Financial vs. Security Bank products. Kelly provided a chart that identified the current rates of our accounts. A similar report will be presented at the Annual Meeting to improve on details.

- **Christian Education** - Bridget proposed the Book "The Story for Kids", (Discover the Bible from beginning to End), which provides lessons and discussion points. Trading cards, always a hit, of people in the Bible are part of the curriculum. A meeting is scheduled for August 13th to gather volunteers to help teach the class. Two students, Alex Forcier and Julian Huitt are anticipated to attend.
- **Deacons** – Bridget noted that the Deacons made a \$200 contribution to the School Supply Drive, making it possible to obtain the Women's Fellowship matching grant. Jim expressed some hesitation to Pastor Adam's question about the Deaconesses and Deacons collaborating in the proposed Worship and Welcome Team.
- **Deaconesses** – Jan expressed thanks to those who have been helping with the alter upkeep. Pastor Adam commented that he is providing communion to the homebound and/or living in senior facilities.

- **Other –**

- ✓ **Stewardship and Benevolence Meeting** – Pastor Adam met earlier in the day with the committee members and discussed ways to get donation envelopes to those not in attendance. It was agreed that we will download and print UCC materials for the five donation requests and place the special envelopes in member offering books, at the appropriate months before distribution in the winter.
- ✓ **Common Cup School Supply Drive** – Bridget reported that 20 older student laptop backpacks were ordered and on their way. Remaining dollars will be used to purchase flash drives, dry erase markers and 2-pocket folders. The deadline to donate has been extended.
- ✓ **Building/Grounds Issues** – Pastor Adam has received several messages from Ann regarding maintenance needs in the Fellowship Hall and outdoors. Carmen also received a call and responded with the following actions
  - **Lighting Issues** - Kyle Osmek (AKO) will add the ballast issue to his list but can't guarantee when due to his high work volume. He also has the emergency exit signs on his list.
  - **Weeds** – Stan, Shirley Westall and Carmen met earlier in the week to pull/remove the most egregious ones.
  - **Fellowship Hall Entrance Railing** – Dan Kottke removed the broken screws and corrected the problem.
  - **Carpet Stains** – Ann would like to have a carpet cleaning machine purchased for the church. She also volunteered to bring hers from home and charge the church for its use. Pastor Adam approved this option, believing the rental of a similar unit would be more costly. Carmen noted that there a few spots by the serving tables and this is all that needs to be done at this time.
  - **Early Distribution of Minutes** - Jim asked if we could get the Church Council meeting minutes sent out in a more timely fashion. Bridget said that we don't distribute them until they have been approved, which occurs at the following meeting. We discussed sending them out with the word DRAFT ONLY.

## 6. OLD BUSINESS

- **Update on Heating System Repairs** – Mike hasn't received any offers to provide inspections or bids on our building's system.
- **Proposed Changes In Church Committee Structures** – This topic was covered under Pastor Adam's Report.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

- **SLS – Trustees Discussion** - The Trustees discussed the merits of keeping SLS as our accountant or going back to our old system and implementing the QuickBook accounting program. Pastor Adam will make some inquiries and report back to the Board.

## 8. MOTION TO ADJOURN

- A motioned was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. Motion carried unanimously. Pastor Adam provided a closing prayer.

**Next Meeting**  
Wednesday, August 16th, 7pm, Fellowship Hall