

# Official First Congregational UCC Newsletter



April 9, 2024

## This Upcoming Sunday

The pastor wishes to meet with new members after church to officially welcome them.

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## In Memory

We lost some dear members of the church family over the past month and we will remember them with all the heart and faithfulness that makes 1st Congregational such a loving and supportive community. All Glory be to God.

**Charles “Bud” Sharp**

**Judy Harmon**

**Diana Smith**



*Let us walk confidently into the future, knowing that God is up to something amazing!*

## You're Invited

Let's Share the Love of Church Together!

Submitted by Pastor Lesa

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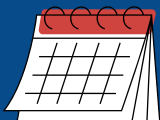
*Guess what? We've got something amazing going on here, and I can't help but think about all the folks out there who could use a bit of what we've got. Yep, I'm talking about that warm feeling you get when you walk through our doors, the sense of belonging, and the joy of community.*

*But you know what would make it even better? Sharing it! That's right, we've got an open invitation policy, and I want to encourage every one of you to spread the word.*

*Think about your friends, neighbors, coworkers—anyone who could use a little extra love and support. Maybe they're going through a tough time, searching for something more, or just looking for a friendly face. Whatever it is, we've got it here, and it's time to let them know.*

*So, here's the plan: reach out, extend the invite, and let them know they're welcome here anytime. Whether it's for Sunday service, a community event, or just a chat over coffee, every invitation counts.*

*continued...*



## Upcoming Meetings and Events

- **Baby Shower!** for Khama and Maxine - after church on April 28
- **Prayer Service:** 9 AM Saturdays
- **Church Leadership Meeting** will be held after service on April 21 and May 19
- **Bible Study** will be held on April 17 and April 24
- **Book Club Gathering** will be held April 18 @1:30pm in the conference room.
- **Bring Boost or Ensure** for our Seniors on the 4th Sunday of every month.
- **Outreach Committee** meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9 @4:30pm in the small meeting room.
- **Trustee Meeting** will be held Saturday, April 20 @10:00am in the conference room
- **Finance and Stewardship Committee Meeting** will be held on Thursday, April 19 @6:15pm in the conference room.
- **Board of Christian Education Committee Meeting** will be held on April 8 @7:00pm in the conference room
- **Deacons and A.M. Deacons Committee Meeting** will be held on the second Sunday of each month after service.

*continued...*

*Let's be the kind of church that throws the doors wide open and says, "Come on in, there's room for everyone!" Together, we can make a difference in someone's life and show them what it means to be part of a loving and supportive community.*

*So, what are you waiting for? Let's spread the word and share the love of First Congregational church together!*



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The Congregation would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the people who are working diligently behind the scenes. **Barb, Anne, Mary Alice, Pat, Libby, Jonnell, June and all the committees on Church Council...** the list goes on... Your time and hard work are very much appreciated!

And Thank you **Carly Shank** for managing the Congregation's Facebook account!

*Thank you!*

# April Birthdays!



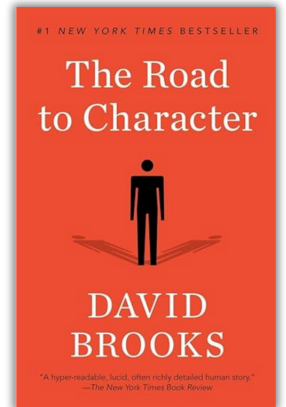
- April 1 Walter Calderon
- April 4 Noah Matthew Mayland
- April 5 Ms. Sara Davis
- April 14 Mr David Moreland
- April 15 Mr. Audie Prange
- April 16 Mr. William R. Maxey
- April 17 Amelia Jo and Vivian Rose Suter
- April 19 Trinity Meyer
- April 21 Mrs. Barb Peterson
- April 27 Mr. Erik Welch
- April 28 Ms. June Eagan
- April 28 Victoria James
- April 29 Mr. Todd Davis



# BOOK CLUB

**DON'T MISS OUT!**

The next Book Club Gathering is April 18 at 1:30pm in the conference room. We will be reading "The Road to Character" by David Brooks.



Contact Jan Fouts with questions:  
janf4215@gmail.com

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# LITURGICAL DANCERS

**WE WANT YOU!**



Calling All Women And Liturgical Dancers Ages 7 Years And Up To Minister For Women's Day Worship Service In Late May.

Contact the front office for details.

# Be The Hands And The Feet Of Jesus

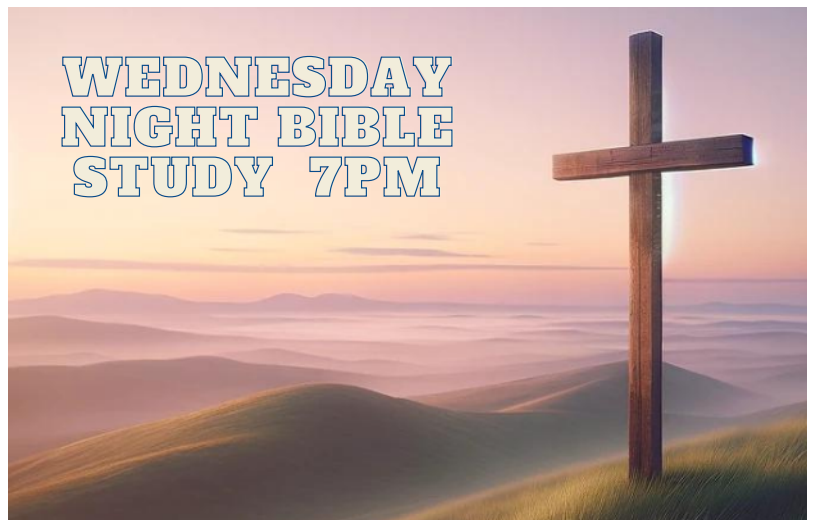
Join Our Outreach  
Committee!



Our Outreach Team meets and expands the four walls of our church. We currently have partnerships with Butler Elementary and Franklin Middle School and are looking for volunteers to raise the awareness of who we are and the passion we have to help our fellow neighbor.

- Are you ready to do God's work?
- Do you have an idea of how we could be a blessing to others?

Contact the front office to get involved.



Join others in faith and fellowship each Wednesday night for bible study facilitated by Steve Fouts. All are invited! We synchronize our topics with Lesa's sermons each week to "drill down" in faith and give you the space for your mind and spirit to be quenched. We'd love to see you there! April Bible Study Dates: **4/17** and **4/24**

### There are 3 ways to participate in bible study

- In Person: Parlor Room at First Congregational
- By Zoom:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9689345427>
- By Phone:
  - Call 1 (312) 626-6799
  - Enter: 9689345427
  - Press "#"
  - Press "#" again.

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## Special thanks to Clarence for the Crock Pot!



## Contact Us

*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ*

*Pastor: Rev. Dr. Lesa Branham*

Street Address:

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Phone: (217) 546-7170

Email:

firstconuccspfil@gmail.com

Website:

www.firstuccspringfield.com

*Meet with Pastor Lesa by  
appointment. Contact her at  
(217) 415-8083 or  
pastorlesa223@gmail.com*



# YOU!



**Interested in joining our team or  
know someone who is interested  
in working for the church?**

**\*\* We will be releasing job  
openings soon for office manager  
and musician positions.\*\***

Contact the front office for  
details.

## Festival of Unity

### The Story of a Church Community

By Steve Fouts

*Once upon a time, people from all around the countryside made a special trip to the city every year for a unique celebration called the Festival of Unity. They brought with them gifts to place under a giant tree in the city center. This tradition was not just about giving presents; it was a way for everyone to come together and share joy.*

*However, this year, something unexpected happened. The city's power went out early in the morning, knocking out all the traffic lights. As families and friends started heading into the city, cars and buses got stuck in huge jams. Traffic was a mess, and soon, people started getting upset and arguing. The peaceful and happy vibe of the Festival of Unity was hard to find among the chaos.*

*The city turned into a noisy, stressful place with cars honking and people getting more and more frustrated. But the real issue wasn't just the traffic or the lack of lights; it was how everyone was forgetting to be kind to each other. They lost sight of the reason they were there.*

*What was needed was some clever thinking and teamwork. Like a team working together to win a game, fixing this situation needed everyone to chip in. Some folks stepped up to direct traffic, while others organized groups to help people move smoothly in and out of the main celebration area.*

*Gradually, things started to get better. When the power finally came back, and the city lights turned on again, a sense of relief spread. Even more meaningful was how people remembered to treat each other with kindness and patience. Around the giant tree, as they placed their gifts, a feeling of togetherness wrapped around them of Unity.*

**Prayer:** *No matter what the challenges are our church faces, we can never forget why we are all here - to be available for the hand of God to bring us back together when we are forlorn. Amen*