

CARE PASSIONATELY

Sustainable Living Tip—Nowadays a large segment of our population buys drinking water in plastic bottles. Experts tell us that bottled water is no cleaner, or safer, or healthier than municipal tap water. In the interest of reducing the negative impact of plastics upon our environment, why not make the change back to environmentally friendly & safe tap water instead. Save a number of the plastic bottles you have purchased. By keeping them properly cleaned, they can be re-filled with tap water and re-used many times over before disposing of them for recycling. And furthermore the money you save will begin to count up over a period of time. ~Brought to you by the Mission Education Committee

COMMUNITY EVENT

Life in the Spirit Seminar—Saturday, January 26, from 8:00 am to 4:45 pm at St. Bridget's Church. There will be praise and worship, talks and testimonies, small group discussions, and private prayer and mass at 5:00 pm. For more information and to register, contact Mary Joan Sutton at 715-441-9699.



FINANCIAL

Treasurer's Report

	Dec 31, 2018
General Fund Income	\$ 467,694.31
General Fund Expenses	467,312.81
Net Income	\$ 381.50

A full accounting of all income and expenses is available in the church office

*A new budget will be approved at the February 3rd Annual Meeting.

E-Giving—It is quick, easy & safe. It is designed to help both you with your home budgeting & financing of church ministries which continue even when you are away. Contact Missy (missy@firstchurchrf.org) with questions. If you give electronically, please use the e-giving bookmark in the pew as the offering plate goes by.

Pledge Sheets for 2019—Please be sure to return your 2019 financial pledge sheets to ensure our church is financially healthy. Without the generous support of church members & friends, we cannot continue to provide the mission & ministry we do. Church pledging supports everything we do from confirmation to Sunday School, bell choir & chancel choir, Wednesday Meals and Wednesday School, a place to worship & a place to grow, mission in our community & mission to the larger world.

The Discipleship Committee ask you to prayerfully consider the following three things:

- * If you do not pledge, start this year
- * If you do pledge, increase your pledge, even slightly
- * If you tithe, thank you, you have met the biblical standard of generosity

Pledge sheets were dedicated at the annual Giving Thanks Meal on Sun, Nov 11. If you have not yet returned your pledge sheet, please do so either through the mail, the offering plate or the church office. Please return them as soon as possible so the Trustees can finalize the 2019 church budget. May God bless you and us together as we seek to be God's faithful and generous people.

~The Discipleship Committee

JANUARY 13, 2019

No matter who you are. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!

As Jesus' courageous disciples, living God's grace, we strive to...

WORSHIP FAITHFULLY

Sunday Volunteers Needed

Liturgists for: Feb 10, 17, 24

Welcomers for: Jan 20, 27; Feb 3, 10, 17, 24

Coffee Fellowship for: Jan 20; Feb 3, 10, 17

The sign-up sheets are on the back table. Thank you!

Church Office Hours—The church office hours between Labor Day and Memorial Day are: Mon-Thurs: 8:30 am-4:00 pm; Friday: 8:30 am-Noon

WELCOME OPENLY

Annual Meeting—The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be **Sun, February 3**

following the late 10:30 am worship service in the Fellowship Hall. In addition to the regular business of reports and elected officers, many of our church teams and committees will be presenting 3 minute snapshots of their work last year and goals for 2019. Lunch is served and childcare is available. Please sign up!

Annual Reports Due—All Committees, please submit your Annual Reports, preferably electronically, by **January 14** to Missy Luedtke at missy@firstchurchrf.org. Thank you!

Men's Group—Meets every other Tuesday in the Youth Room for coffee, treats, conversation and fellowship. Our next gathering is **Tues, Jan 22 at 8:00 am**. Join us!

New to Church?—Are you a first time visitor? Please stop at the welcome table in the gathering area to receive a special welcome gift from us!

WELCOME OPENLY

Family Meals—Join us each Wednesday night for a healthy, home cooked family meal in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$7 per person with a max of \$30 per family. **Please sign up by Tuesday at noon** so we have enough food. Please also sign up to help set, serve or clean up. Whether you are single, a couple or have a minivan full, join us as a church family each **Wednesday from 5:15 to 6:15 pm**.

Jan 16—Parmesan crusted chicken, rice, salad

Jan 23—Beef stroganoff, noodles, salad

Jan 30—Boneless BBQ ribs, mac 'n cheese, vegetable

Shrimp Boil!—Join us for our annual Shrimp Boil on **Sunday, January 27** following the late worship service at noon. Come enjoy a wonderful meal of shrimp, coleslaw, bread & king cake (and hot dogs for non-shrimp eaters!). All the proceeds go to our UCC partners at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi which will host our mission team this March. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$7 for those under 12. Tickets must be purchased ahead of time so we have enough shrimp for everyone to enjoy.

Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age

Join us for a special screening of the award winning film Screenagers in the church Fellowship Hall On **Wednesday, January 16th at 6:30 pm**. The film demonstrates the messy struggles families encounter over social media, video games and academics. The film offers helpful solutions on how we can help our kids navigate the digital world. Geared for teens and parents, all are welcome to attend and popcorn will be available. Check out the website with lots of helpful advice. <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/>

January Book Group Meeting—The book group's next meeting will be **Tues, Jan 22 at 3:00 pm at the church** to discuss **The Deal of a Lifetime** by Fredrik Backman (fiction). This novella is about a man's life, sacrifice and memory. Seven copies of the book are available in the church office. Please share since copies are limited.

SIGN UP

SIGN UP

Get Your Tickets

SIGN UP

WELCOME OPENLY

A World of Peoples on the Move: The Response of Europe's Religious Communities to the Refugee Crisis **A Learning Community Gathering Held on Tuesday, January 22 at 6:30 pm**

Reverend Dirk Ficca is a Senior Advisor to the Church of Sweden's Europe-wide initiative supporting the response of religious communities and their affiliated humanitarian organizations to the crisis of displaced persons. His extensive work there the past two years has provided him unique understandings of the complex social, political, and cultural dynamics of coming to grips with "the other" as we, too, face one of the most defining challenges of this century. The response of religious communities to the migration crisis is profoundly important for U.S. religious communities, including our own.

With a lifetime of international, multi-faith experience and extensive "on-the-ground" work like that he has launched with the Twin Cities Social Cohesion Initiative, we are pleased to welcome Reverend Ficca to our third Learning Community Gathering Tues, Jan 22 in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to join us for this unique evening.

=====

Cribbage Night—The group meets on the second Monday at the church. Players are asked to donate \$2 & the group decides which charity. Playing time starts at **7:00 pm**. All players & abilities welcome. The winner of the Dec game was Bob Johnson. The group donated \$198 to the Giving Tree. The next game will be **January 14**.

50th Anniversary Party—You are invited to an Open House celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Bobbie and Jim Kuhn on **Saturday, February 23 from 1-4 pm** in the church Fellowship Hall. They respectfully ask for no gifts.

GROW SPIRITUALLY

Adult Forum—The forum meets Sundays 9:00–10:00 am.
Jan 13: *The Other Apocalypse: The Book of Daniel*, Evelyn Purdy—The forum will discuss the authorship, historical context, and imagery in the Old Testament Book of Daniel. Special attention will be on the image of the multi-metal statue in Daniel, chapter 2. Come and learn about this dramatic book of the Bible.

Jan 20: *Back Bay Mission*, Carol Merriman—In March a group of people from First Congregational will go to Biloxi, Mississippi to Back Bay Mission, an organization affiliated by the UCC. The forum will provide an overview of the Mission's work with homeless and low-income folks on the Gulf Coast. Come to learn about this work and how the experience at Back Bay is an opportunities to serve others as well as learn more about ourselves and the world.

Jan 27: *The Wisconsin Council of Churches*, The Rev. Kerri Parker—The WI Council of Churches is composed of church bodies representing 18 Christian denominations. Together the participating church bodies work together to foster church unity, peacemaking, and social and economic justice. Come to learn about the WCC from the Executive Director, The Rev. Kerri Parker.

Feb 3: *The Doctrine of Discovery*, Jeff Ryan—Delegates at the Annual Meeting of the WI Conference directed congregations to study the Doctrine of Discovery during 2018-19. The Doctrine of Discovery is comprised of decisions made by colonizing powers to claim lands beyond their own borders. The implementation of these decisions have often denied human rights to indigenous people. Come to learn about this important issue. Jeff Ryan, a local expert and high school teacher in Prescott will be the presenter.

Tuesday Bible Study meets on **Tuesdays from 1:00–2:30 pm**. Beginning **January 8**, the group will begin discussing *Christian Basics: A Primer for Pilgrims* by Dorothy and Gabriel Fackre. The book is available in the church office for \$17.00. Participants do not need to commit to attending every week. For more information, contact Stacy Myers.

SERVE GENEROUSLY

Back Bay Mission Wish List—They are in need of items for their personal hygiene kit. **Our group will take the items with them when they go on the mission trip in March.**

Hand towel (16x28)
Wash cloth
Wide tooth comb
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
Plastic soap container
Deodorant (men or women)
Razor (men or women)
Men's jeans—waist size 32 or 34 (new or gently used)
There is a box in the gathering area. Thank you!

=====

Save Your Family Fresh Receipts!-ARC gets \$1,000 for every \$150,000 in receipts, so every dollar counts. ARC is the agency funded by local churches to help address the immediate needs of people in our community (rent, utility, gas, repair help). A box for receipts is on the back table.

Simpson Shelter Needs: Cereal; Bath towels-gently used or new; Coffee (ground preferred), tea, hot cocoa; New thermals for men & women-all sizes; New waterproof hats & gloves for men & women; New bras-all sizes; New women's underwear-sizes 5 & 6; New boxer shorts-all sizes; New white t-shirts-all sizes; Disposable shaving razors & shaving cream; Hand & foot warmers; Travel size soap, shampoo, conditioner, body wash & lotion; New white socks for men & women. There is a box in the gathering area. Thank you!

CARE PASSIONATELY

Prayer List—If you have people you wish to add to the church prayer list, please use the blue "I Wish" pew cards & put in the church office or the offering plate. If you wish to receive the weekly prayer list via email, contact the office.

Care Givers Program—An opportunity to serve members through an outreach program that pairs members providing visitors to those unable to be with us regularly in worship or activities. If you are interested in volunteering, have questions or are aware of anyone that would benefit from this, contact Jan Hansen at 715-821-4008.

Meal Ministry—Ever had a death in the family? How about something joyous & life changing like the birth of a baby? As a congregation we are called to 'care passionately' for one another & one of the ways we would like to do that is through a "Meal Ministry." A small stipend to help pay for food may be available. If you are interested, please contact the church office.

Thinking of You Cards—Please use them to send a note to someone who is ill, grieving or you just haven't seen in a while. Place them in the offering plate & we will deliver them. This is one of the ways we care for one another.

=====

Among Friends, located here at church, provides a social respite for individuals with dementia & their caregivers. We are open 9 am-3 pm every Tuesday. Please contact Norma Revels 715-293-2561 or Bonnie Jones-Witthuhn 715-307-1182 if you are interested in knowing more.

Among Friends Gift Received—Among Friends provides a safe environment for clients to be cared for allowing their caregivers some precious time to attend to other things. As one caregiver told Norma Revels, the program director, 'this program has been a God send for our family.' People in the community are taking note of this program. We recently received word of a \$1,000 donation to Among Friends from a community member to help maintain this needed program. Congratulations Among Friends and keep up this needed ministry to our community!