

*The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer*

*Psalm 18:2*

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**

# THE GUIDE



***January 2020***

**Staff**

**Pastor Brenda Clark**

**Karen McKee**

**Administrative Secretary**

**Jim Davis, Custodian**

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## A Big Welcome to Rev. Brenda Clark

Pastor Brenda was born in Kalamazoo Michigan. She graduated with a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo in 1983. She worked for American National/Old Kent Bank for 17 years and felt called to go back to seminary at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan and graduated from there in 1999. She was ordained into ministry in the year 2000 and has served as a hospice chaplain and pastored churches in Michigan and Pennsylvania for ;nearly 20 years.

Pastor Brenda married Michael Evans in 2005. They have 3 furry babies, Panda--a cat who is 15 years old, Nutmeg a Chiwienner who is 8 and Samantha a Staffordshire/American Pit Bull mix who is 3. Pastor Brenda and Mike look forward to joining you in ministry and getting to know you better.



**FROM PASTOR BRENDA:**

It is a new year—20 years into the “new millennium.” You have a different pastor—I won’t say new because I’ve been in ordained ministry for 20 years this coming Mother’s Day. Things change. Life changes. In fact, one thing you can surely count upon is that there will be change.

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Lockport, Illinois has gone through some significant changes in a very short time and change can be perceived as difficult and challenging. I have several of what I call “life verses” from the Bible. One of them, found in Jeremiah, chapter 29, verse 11 says,

***I say this because I know what I am planning for you,” says the LORD. “I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.***

While we often don’t understand what is happening to us or why, God does. God has plans that will be good for us in the long run, even though they may feel uncomfortable right now. God’s plans will give us hope and a future that will be to our benefit.

So, what do we do now? We get to know each other. We work on ministry together. We prayerfully seek God’s will in our homes, in church, at church meetings. Then we look to see where God is working and follow where God leads us.

It is a new year beginning with a different pastor and God is in control. God will make it work out, as long as we seek God’s will and follow God’s plans.

Blessings—

*Pastor Brenda*





### *Report from your Mission*

Your Mission Team thanks you for your generous support to all of the special offerings that we had in 2019. Almost \$5,000 was given to be God's hands to help those in need.

The gifts from the Giving Tree were welcomed by the Taft School. The gifts went to the children of four families so that they could have a Merry Christmas.

Please don't forget our sponsor child, Markey. He likes getting letters from us. The stamped addressed envelopes are by the sign-up sheet on the mission table.

The year 2020 will bring us new challenges and we hope that you will be there again to support them. We will start the new year with collecting food for the Fish Pantry. In January we ask for breakfast foods and for February canned fruits.



What better way to shop than with Manna Gift Cards.

Pick up your order form on

Sunday, Jan 5

Return the completed form and payment on

Sunday, Jan 12

Pick up your gift cards on

Sunday, Jan 19

Please see Jean or Sue with any questions.

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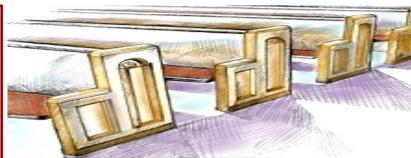
# **C.W.A.**

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S AUXILIARY**

**CWA MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY JAN 8 at 1:00pm**

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# NEWS FROM THE PEWS



## JANUARY

### Birthdays

Olivia Ellingston	Jan 2
Neeka Williamson	Jan 6
Jane Pierson	Jan 7
Mark Onderisin	Jan 9
Betty Wilker	Jan 10
Lee Rajala	Jan 11
Bob Sherman	Jan 11
Matha Hartgrove	Jan 12
Amy Finley-Lines	Jan 16
Judy Rauch	Jan 17
Kelsey Strong	Jan 17

## FEBRUARY

### Birthdays

Emma Dusek	Feb 2
Dee Moyer	Feb 2
Susan Knox	Feb 3
Jared Nienhuis	Feb 5
Nancey Nelson	Feb 8
Cooper Turner	Feb 8
Ron Cronholm	Feb 11
Liliana Terlep	Feb 14
George Manikas Jr.	Feb 15
Larry McCure	Feb 16
Julie Terlep	Feb 22
Roberta Cronholm	Feb 23
Ryan Dusek	Feb 25
Melanie Smazik	Feb 27
Aiden Bean	Feb 28



ATTENDANCE

### Sunday

### Worship

Attendance 9:30

a.m.

December 1 70

December 8 67

December 15 64

December 22 112 Pageant

December 24 67 Christmas Eve



# Craft 'n Chat

**Meets Fridays, January 17th and February 21st**  
**In the parlor, main floor**  
**Doors open at 4:30 p.m.**  
**Carry-out dinner at 6:00 p.m.**

## **About this opportunity—**

This monthly event gathers women in fellowship with the option to work on their hobbies and crafts. The evening is a fun time to visit, share craft ideas, and even make some progress with a project or task. Basic craft supplies, tables, iron, ironing board are available. Participants are welcome to bring their own special materials, sewing machines, supplies, and equipment. Yet, participants are encouraged to come *just to chat!* There is also a dinner option. Carry out orders to one of the local food establishments are collected and delivery is around 6:00 p.m.

Except for dinnertime, the evening's schedule is meant to accommodate each participant. Arrive any time from 4:30 p.m. and stay as long as able. Handicap parking is reserved on the side of the building with a door leading into the parlor. There is also some parking in the front of the building. If parking is full, participants can unload through the parlor door and then park in the back. There are entrances in the front and back of the building.

***Come to chat...and even to craft!***



## January Mission Moment - “All Than We Are”

John 1:29-42



This is the symbol of the United Church of Christ. More than a logo, our symbol imparts the meaning not only of all that we are in the present day as a denomination, but all that we yearn to be in the future.

At the top of the symbol is a crown. By the use of the crown, we remind ourselves that Christ is the ruler, the head of all, greater than any earthly power or authority.

Below the crown is a cross. The cross reminds us of Christ’s suffering in solidarity with the pain of victims of violence in all times and places. For many, the cross is a reminder of the redemptive power of life over death, and salvation over the powers of evil.

Below the cross is an orb divided into three parts, reminding us of Jesus’ command to go out into the world in all directions, witnessing to his life-giving power.

Encircling these symbols are the words “That They May All Be One.” (John 17:21). The words remind us of our history as a union of different Christian traditions. And it calls us to activism in the present. In the UCC, it is our calling to engage in ecumenical relationships that seek to heal the broken unity of the Body of Christ. And the words also call us to the future, to the time envisioned by Christ when “all may be one.”

“Ecumenical relations help us to learn from the spiritual traditions of other churches. They help us to serve the world more effectively in God’s name. They remind us that while we are proud of the diversity of the Protestant traditions that have joined in our united church, there is an even greater diversity in the Body of Christ that can make us whole.”

Thank  
You!



THANK YOU! We would like to thank all 17 children and 3 adults who participated in the pageant. You worked hard and made the pageant a real success. A special thanks to all the adults who worked behind the scenes. Also a very special thank you to Melanie Smazik for her interpretive dance number and to Ann Libs for playing the piano. We received many compliments on the pageant. Thanks again everyone.

Randy Strong and Barb Bonner

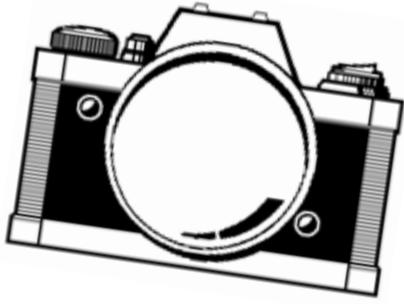
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Thank  
You!



**THANK YOU! THANK YOU!** The Manna Gift Card Program's profit for the year 2019 was a little over \$2,200.00. Many thanks to everyone that participated and purchased gift cards each month. Basically you are not spending any additional money because when you purchase a \$25.00 gift card - you get a \$25.00 gift card and the church still make a profit from it. It is really so easy. So hopefully everyone will get on board with the program and our profit will increase in 2020. We greatly appreciate your participation. Thanks again.

Susan Knox and Jean Law



# Elaine's Birthday



# Advent Wreath



# Choir



# CWA



# Christmas Pageant



# Hanging of the Greens



# Rev. Brenda

