



JANUARY 2024

**In the beginning...**

Join us each Sunday of January at Noon for a Bible Study relating to the book of Genesis.

No reading is required. Each week is a new perspective so join in on any, or all, of the Sundays.

After worship you can enjoy some Coffee & Conversation in Fellowship Hall, then head on down to the Lounge. Bring a beverage if you'd like.

This study is being offered by Pastor Dave and Rick Olsen (glad to have you back Rick).



**Family Fellowship Night**  
January 7, 2024  
at 5 p.m.

Potluck and game night!

*Hope to see you there!*



**JANUARY 15TH**

*Prayers for continued healing :*

Janet Danczyk  
Barb Musgrove  
Linda Olsen  
Tom Barczak  
Joyce Thompson  
Rick Olsen



We want to continue to keep Elaine Kitchin, and her family in our prayers, **with the loss of her mother, Elizabeth Ripp**, who died this past month.

**Open Mic Night!  
Wednesdays**

**January 24, February 28, March 27  
6pm in the sanctuary**

Open Mic Night is an all-ages event where participants share music, poetry and storytelling. This will be open to the public, part of our community outreach, and a way to share our beautiful space with our neighbors.

Diane & Lisa will organize and host these events. We are partnering with Foundry Hall to help promote the event. To schedule your performance please email Diane & Lisa at:

[dianeandlisa@owlsnestmusic.com](mailto:dianeandlisa@owlsnestmusic.com)

Come share your talents!



**Adopt-a Days**  
from the last few months.

**For Bob Sollman**, a good man and a very dear friend, given by John & Sue Gillett.

**In celebration of Pastor Frey's** Installation, given by Women's Fellowship.

**Giving thanks** for all that God provides for us, by Women's Fellowship.

**December 6th**, in honor of our grandson Kye's 2nd birthday, given by Karen & Tom Ruesink.

**In grateful appreciation** for the thoughts, prayers, meals, and visits during Art's recovery. Given by Kris & Art Ayers.

## Council Meeting Highlight

Many of you know, the Council meets almost every month, the 4th Tuesday of the month. Council is composed of chairs of the church's various Boards and Committees, who bring reports of their activities, as well as issues, concerns that affect our wider church community. Anyone is welcome to attend, though only designated Council members can vote in the meeting.

One BIG issue that will be affecting our church: our lack of adequate funds. Like many other churches currently, our church has "shrunk" (members who have passed, or moved). We're down from membership of over 300 when I joined over 30 years ago, now to under 200.

Though we sold the parsonage, and invested the profit, the interest earned on investments comes nowhere close to what we have lost in our annual giving income. Especially as we are now going to have to substantially tap those investments to pay our staff salaries and bills. The trustees have looked at ways to reduce our bills; outside of setting our temps lower in winter, etc., the options are not many. (i.e., cheaper phone, Internet, etc.) **SO...** each board /committee has been asked to brainstorm ideas on how WE, the Church, are going to turn this around, to be presented at the January Council meeting. Then, (hopefully) in February, we want to broaden these discussions to the wider church membership; and gather additional ideas.

The idea is not to lay blame-- again, the position we're in is very common to most churches right now. So how can WE solve it? Put your thinking caps on, and/or share your thoughts with Dea Bishop, our Moderator, or any of chairpersons of boards/committees within the church.



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## ONA Update

We have been working with TS Lettering & Graphics in South Haven on designing a flag with the following image, to be displayed on the side of our building facing Phoenix St. This outward display is part of our ONA covenant in letting the public know we are open and affirming. This image is an official UCC symbol and was selected by many of you. Thank you.

The cost for this project will be \$275, for the purchase and installation of one flag (plus one extra). If you would like to contribute, please make your check payable to First Congregational UCC and include ONA on the memo line.

Thank you for helping the community see our light shine!

### - The ONA Committee

Nancy Nelson  
Marcia Claggett  
Joyce Hagen-McIntosh  
P.J. Lindemann  
Jeff Reber  
Diane Ritchie  
Ted Guimond  
Diane & Lisa Van Deurzen-Otey



The Food Pantry recently received donations from Baseline Middle School. Here are some of the students who helped organize the event.

## MEMORIALS

These are memorials that church has received...

**In loving memory  
of Bob Sollman**

Bonnie Deke  
Chuck & Nancy Garber  
Art & Kris Ayers  
Joe & Lynda Warshawsky

### From the Church Treasurer

In giving to the church, we want to make sure that your wonderful gift is credited to you and not someone else.

Please do not use previous years envelopes. The packets are numbered in correlation to your name. That numbered envelope can change each year. When the financial counters put your donation into the computer they usually use the envelope number.

**GIVING STATEMENTS of 2023** will be available by January 21st.

## We appreciate

Sometimes a member wants to share their appreciation, a thank you note, or a special celebration, with the congregation, but that type of news is for the monthly newsletter, not the weekly bulletin. The main purpose of the weekly bulletin insert is to help keep people informed of upcoming activities/schedule, special collections, and those people needing special prayers. If by chance the weekly bulletin happens to have space, they may get put in, but no guarantees.

The church office appreciates getting correspondence, and actually would encourage you to share it. This also includes pictures. Deadline to share with the office is by the 15th of each month.

We do have a way for it to appear in the weekly bulletin; through the **Adopt-a-Day program**. This was a program the Trustees came up with that would allow people to share a celebration, or memory of someone, along with a donation to help defray the church's daily cost to run the church.

To participate you can find cards on the north bulletin board in the Narthex to fill out and place in the offering plate. Your request is then printed in the next bulletin, or kept to put in near the specific date.



## Birthdays

01/01 David Veenstra  
01/04 Theresa Gleason  
01/07 David Daugherty  
01/08 Kris Ayers  
01/08 Cathy Siler  
01/12 Alice Warfield  
01/21 Philip Rood  
01/22 Terry Tatsch  
01/22 Joseph Nelson  
01/23 Tony Martorano  
01/27 Bonnie Deke

## Anniversaries

01/04 Art & Kris Ayers, 50th  
01/27 Scott & Ann Raue





# DIANE VAN DEURZEN & LISA OTEY

*Love Songs for Everyone*



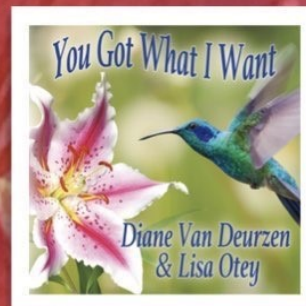
FRIDAY

FEB. 9

6pm

**\$10**

*at the door*



**First Congregational UCC**

**651 Phoenix St.**

**South Haven**

**Info (520)370-5912**

