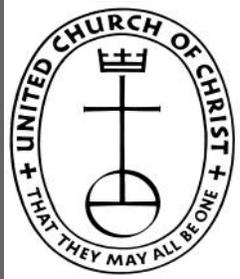


# SHARING THE WORD

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

RICHMOND, MICHIGAN

January 2017



FIRST UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Rev. Denise Griebler  
denisegriebler1stucc@  
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E-mail: firstunitedcc@outlook.com  
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OFFICE HOURS:  
TUESDAY—THURSDAY  
9:00 AM - 12 NOON  
FRIDAY, 9 AM - 3 PM  
Afternoons by appointment  
Pastor Denise is in Richmond on  
Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday

*We are  
a Christian  
community  
called to  
love God,  
love neighbor,  
love self,  
as Jesus taught.*



**D**ear Ones,  
Happy New Year! I pray that 2017 is a year full of blessing for you and for all.

But I confess that I am still in the midst of Christmas - it does last for 12 days, you know! So here is to ponder lest we move on too quickly from the Joy that has come into the world and will be the gift we carry into the New Year. Howard Thurman, an African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader put it this way:

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal the broken,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people,  
to make music in the heart.

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We are headed into a new day with the leadership of a new president. Some of us are excited. Some will wait-and-see. Others are wary and afraid. We will be alright if we keep walking the Christmas road together. Remember the song we sang throughout Advent? "This year, this year, let the Day arrive when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive." Let that prayer guide us through the New Year.

May we be clear about who we are and Whose we are as we

walk the Christmas road through 2017. We may have different ideas about how to accomplish the work of Christmas that Thurman's poem points us toward. That's good! It's going to take all of the creativity and ingenuity we can muster. Just so long as we can agree that God loves us all and wants the best for all. And that how we treat one another and creation is really at the heart of the matter. And that it's good to be happy in one's heart most of the time.

Here's the Good News for the journey: Flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, God is with us! The Babe becomes the Child becomes the Adult and shows us the Way. We are never alone when we walk the Christmas road. Alleluia!

Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year!

Love to all,  
*Pastor Denise*

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## Christmas Poinsettia Surprise

This year as a congregation, (at Mary Alice Busch's urging) we decided to donate the money we would have spent on poinsettia plants for the altar to a great cause: Backpack Blessings. The Richmond schools send home a backpack of food and snacks each Friday for families who are food-insecure. So what is the term, food insecure? It's not being sure that you have enough resources to be sure you can provide food for your family

tomorrow. Or for the weekend.

First UCC joined with First United Methodist Church in supporting this program. So, with happy hearts we placed just two large poinsettia plants alongside the pulpit.

Then on Friday, December 23rd, we received a phone call from Jusko's Greenhouse asking if we could use a few free poinsettia plants for our Christ-

mas Dinner — 57 to be exact!

Thanks to Sharlene and Darrell Haws who immediately rode out to Jusko's to pick up the plants and to Mary Alice who helped unload and place them at the altar, we had the most spectacular Christmas Eve and Christmas morning altar. And then we brought the plants downstairs for the Christmas Dinner!

Blessings by surprise!  
Beautiful!

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## First UCC Annual Meeting Coming Up January 8

Please plan on attending our Annual Congregational meeting. All committees should submit their annual reports by Tuesday, January 3. Also, please submit your Time and

Talent Sheets to the church office for 2017 if you haven't already done so. This is the way we organize volunteers for the new year. Maybe you'd like to try something new this

year. Pastor Denise would like to increase the pool of lay readers — no one is too young, too old or too male to sign up!

# Church Notes

## Gather 'Round the Circle...

Join us Sunday, Jan. 8 for our Sunday Potluck and Song Circle. Bring a friend!

**This month we'll gather on the 2nd Sunday.**

Potluck: 5:30 pm: Bring a dish to pass  
Community singing: 6:30 - 8:00 pm

If you like to eat, tell stories and sing old and new songs . . . this is for you!

## First UCC Annual Meeting Coming Up January 8, 2017...

Please plan on attending. All committees should submit their annual reports by Tuesday, January 3, 2017.

Also, please submit your Time and Talent Sheets to the church office for 2017 if you haven't already done so.

**Due to a parishioner allergy:**

**First United Church of Christ is now a pineapple free zone.** Please refrain from

lotions, gums, fruit snacks, fruit juices perfumes, air fresheners and any other scent or flavoring with pineapple in it.

Please do not bring anything for coffee hour that contains pineapple. This is really serious. Let's all do our best to take care of each other!



## Wider Church Connections...you just may be interested in:

Daily Devotional, emailed to you: <http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/daily-devotional/>

Weekly E-Zine with featured items, resources, worship materials, and justice-action items:

<http://www.ucc.org/news/keeping-you-eposted/>

Information and resources of all kinds from the United Church of Christ: <http://www.ucc.org/>

Newsletter  
**DEADLINE**

January 23

## Have Car, Will Travel? Volunteer Drivers Urgently Needed!



All our "snowbirds" are heading South for the winter! Won't you please help fill in for them? Many of our regular drivers take a couple months

off this time of year, but the need for transportation does not lessen. The Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers program needs drivers who can provide rides for our older and disabled neighbors so that they can get to doctor appointments and essential errands. Just a couple hours of your time can make a huge difference in someone's life. You pick your own area & your

own times. Drive as often or as little as you like in the comfort of your own car. Even one more ride a year might get someone to an appointment that could save their life! **Day-time drivers especially needed!**

Please call Carmen today at 586-757-5551 for more information. Learn more about our work at [www.ivcinfo.org](http://www.ivcinfo.org)



Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you so much for sending your fall Sunday school offerings to our mission team to help buy rice to pack for hungry people. Seventy-eight volunteers packaged almost 15,000 meals. We hope that some of you were able to

come and help, too. We appreciate that you have generous hearts so that you want to help people in our community and around the world.

God loves you and so do we at Trinity Lutheran Church Mission Team.

## Help Keep our Church Grounds Clear From Snow



Our snow shovel is standing by. So, if you can help keep our church grounds safe by shoveling the walkways around the church when the snow flies, please look at the

schedule that is placed on the table in the narthex. Write your name on the arrowed line for the week or weeks that you would like to shovel the snow. Thank you.



# Servers Rotation Schedule—2017



## January 1

Greeters.....Bob & Veronica Chrostowski  
 Ushers.....Joe Burkhart & Karen Eltringham  
 Lay Reader.....Christine Hensch  
 Communion Preparer.....Paulette & Ray T.  
 Communion Servers.....Ron & Kim Schrote

## January 8

Greeters.....Lucia Marshall & Mary Lou V.  
 Ushers.....Rob & Amy Follebout  
 Lay Reader.....Christine Hensch  
 Altar Flowers...

## January 15

Greeters.....Joe B. & Karen E.  
 Ushers.....Ron & Kim Schrote  
 Lay Reader.....Mary Alice Busch  
 Altar Flowers...

## January 22

Greeters.....Amy & Rob Follebout  
 Ushers.....Bob & Veronica Chrostowski  
 Lay Reader.....Kim McCardell  
 Altar Flowers...Bob Chrostowski

## January 29

Greeters.....Pam Green & Joyce Townsend  
 Ushers.....Sharlene Haws & Ray Trombley  
 Lay Reader.....Sue Weinert  
 Altar Flowers...Kim McCardell

## February 5

Greeters.....Sharlene & Darrel Haws  
 Ushers.....Mary Alice & Al Busch  
 Lay Reader.....Lucia Marshall  
 Communion Preparer...Mary Alice Busch  
 Communion Servers.....Karen E. & Joe B.

## First UCC's Weekly Prayer Discipline for January

### "Clip and Keep Reminders"



<p><u>January 1 - 7</u></p> <p>Marjorie Pentzien</p> <p>Christopher, Krista, Hanna &amp; Robbie Plucinski</p> <p>John &amp; Nancy Pollock</p>	<p><u>January 8 - 14</u></p> <p>Gary &amp; Lynda Porrett</p> <p>Glen &amp; Diane Porrett</p> <p>Mike Quinn</p>
<p><u>January 15 - 21</u></p> <p>Robert, Wendy, Drew &amp; Nathan Reindel</p> <p>Robert &amp; Yvonne Reindel</p> <p>Charles Rocker</p>	<p><u>January 22 - 28</u></p> <p>Amy, Adam &amp; Matthew Santo</p> <p>Henry III &amp; Jackie Schroeder</p> <p>Adam &amp; Michelle Schrote</p>

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# Prayers coming your way...

This page in our newsletter shares prayer concerns and prayer opportunities within the life of our family of faith. By actively praying for the concerns presented, we strengthen our congregation, our brother and sister churches, our association and our conference.

If you have prayer concerns you would like to see added to this page, please contact Pastor Denise or call the office at 586-727-3155. Please add the following concerns to your personal prayer time:

## **The prayers of our hearts:**

**Bob Chrostowski (soon to be home from the hospital healing from cellulitis)...Niki & Ryan Schrote (expecting their first child)...Donna & Frank Bartell...Lucile Trombley...Paulette & Ray Trombley...Leona Conner...Chuck & Mary Alice Busch...Joanne & Bud Griebler (Pastor Denise's mom & dad)...Marjorie Pentzien...Bob Reindel...for a new Music & Choir Director for 1st UCC... for our care of the gifts of earth, sky, and water...for our Richmond schools – students, teachers, administrators and staff...gratitude for the leadership of President Obama...for wisdom and compassion to grow in President Trump...for servant leaders...for an end to war and occupation...for refugees and for a willingness for nations, including ours, to welcome them...for all who are in harm's way in the service of justice and peace and freedom...for detained immigrants and all prisoners, for people being released from jail, especially those who have served long sentences...for people suffering from addictions...all who are grieving or lonely, or in broken relationships...for all who suffer from poverty...for hope, peace, joy and love for all in the New Year.**

**And prayers of gratitude for all who helped with the Christmas Tree Sale (especially Rich Weinert who coordinated our efforts). And prayers of gratitude for Sunday school teachers and young people who helped with our do-it-yourself-Christmas pageant. And more prayers of thanks for all who helped with the Christmas Dinner (especially Dave & Ruth Hartwell who organized this year's feast and Hamilton's Bike Shop for donating the bike we were able to give away).**

If you are aware of someone who should be included in our prayers, please call the church office or speak with Pastor Denise.

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## Pastor Denise's Office Hours and Pastoral Care

I plan my week to be in Richmond on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. It's possible that the days may move a bit as I respond to various needs that arise, but for the most part, that's when I'll be in town. If possible, please plan for committees to meet on one of those days or evenings.

Thanks so much! If there are situations that arise in which you'd like pastoral care, please call to let me know. In the old days, hospitals and rehab/nursing facilities used to inform pastors when one of their flock was admitted. That doesn't happen anymore.

You can reach me directly by calling my cell phone – 630-297-1740 or call the church office and leave a message with Helen or on the answering machine. I'm always happy to receive your calls.

Pastor Denise

## Your Church Council

Listed below are your church council members. Please contact any one of them with any questions, comments or concerns.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
Matthew Ball	Council Member	2018
Joe Burkhart	Council Member	2018
Veronica Chrostowski	Council Member	2016
Mark Davis	Treasurer	2017
Karen Eltringham	Council Member	2017
Denise Griebler	Pastor	N/A
Dave Hartwell	Council Member	2017
Terri Houston	Council Member	2016
Kim McCardell	President	2018
Kathi Miller	Secretary	2016
Jackie Waszkiewicz	Financial Secretary	2017
Rich Weinert	Vice President	2017

## First UCC Prayer Chain



Pastor Denise	630-297-1740
Sue Weinert	586-206-1719
Diane Porrett	586-727-1374
Mary Alice Busch	586-727-7009
Paulette Trombley	586-506-5002
Karen Eltringham	586-291-0615
Shelley Champion	586-255-0387
Christine Hensch	810-385-4391
Traci Bartell	586-557-2264
Kim McCardell	586-623-9833

Want to join our prayer chain? Please call the church office at 586-727-3155.

## Adopt-A-Bill Here's How it Works:

- 1) Take an Adopt-A-Bill envelope from the display board in the narthex.
- 2) Pick a bill from the board.
- 3) Place your check (made out to First United Church of Christ) or cash along with the bill in the envelope.
- 4) Place the envelope in the offering plate or mail it to the church.

Every contribution is greatly appreciated and helps to support our church.

We wish a **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to the following members and friends who are celebrating their January birthdays:



- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 06 - Andrew Ball    | 25 - Timothy Fair |
| 15 - Terri Verlinde | 26 - Kathi Miller |
| 17 - Charles Busch  |                   |

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to the children of our church who celebrate a birthday this month:

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 01 - Brendan Weeks | 20 - Kevin Ensley |
| 05 - Savannah Kohn | 20 - Kyle Ensley  |
| 17 - Kaleb Manska  |                   |

We also wish a **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY** to the following members and friends who have January wedding anniversaries:



- |                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| 07 - Dennis & Joyce Dubay       |
| 21 - Jerry & Lynn Dunsmore      |
| 29 - Bob & Veronica Chrostowski |

**BEST  
WISHES  
TO YOU!**

**Call to Care Team:**

Mary Alice Busch...586-727-7009

Bob Chrostowski...586-727-9904 (H) or 586-855-1823 (C)



<b>Attendance and Offerings:</b>	December 25.....21	Dec. 25.....\$1,223.50
	December 24.....52	Dec. 24.....
	December 18.....68	Dec. 18.....\$2,169.50
	December 11.....34	Dec. 11.....\$1,414.00



# Sunday Services

## *Scripture Readings for January*

**January 01 New Year's Day**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13; Psalm 8; Revelation 21:1-6a; Matthew 25:31-46

**January 08 The Baptism of Christ**

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

**January 15 Second Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

**January 22 Third Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

**January 29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

### **Office Hours**

The secretary is in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday from 9 am till 12 noon and Friday 9 am till 3 pm. If you need additional assistance at other times, please send Helen an email at [firstunitedcc@outlook.com](mailto:firstunitedcc@outlook.com) or leave a phone message at the church office: 586-727-3155. Thank you.

### **Mission Statement:**

We are traveling life's road: created by God, guided by Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit and grounded in scripture. We strive to be individuals on a spiritual journey and a community sharing God's love with all.

### **Vision Statement:**

The purpose of this church shall be to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church universal; to render loving service toward humankind; and to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

# January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1  New Year's Day Worship 11 am	2	3 Committee reports due for annual meeting	4	5	6 Welcoming cmts. meets 7 pm	7
8 Worship 11 am Annual Meeting Potluck 5:30 pm Song Circle 6:30 pm	9	10	11	12	13	14 Quilt Guild 10 am
15 Worship 11 am Pastor Denise away	16	17	18	19 Church Council 7 pm	20	21
22 Worship 11 am	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Worship 11 am	30	31				



Return address requested

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
68651 SOUTH FOREST  
RICHMOND, MI 48062

No Matter Who You Are  
Or Where You Are On Life's Journey...  
You Are Welcome Here!

First United Church of Christ • Rev. Denise Griebler • [dgriebler@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dgriebler@sbcglobal.net)  
cell: 630-297-1740 • office: 586-727-3155 • email: [firstunitedcc@outlook.com](mailto:firstunitedcc@outlook.com)