
THE EPISTLE

Volume 24 Issue 8

September 26, 2019

Dear Members & Friends of First Church:

I can't tell you how often I listened to my parents, teachers, and folks along life's way use the phrase, "It's the little things that count."

In Jesus' worldview, it is the little things that count. In the Gospel of Luke, "The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!' The Lord replied, 'If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you'" (Luke 17:5-6, *Common English Bible*). But then Jesus follows this statement about mustard-seed faith with a parable, as he so often does, that doesn't seem to have much to do with faith at all (Read Luke 17:5-10). When the servant comes in from a hard day's work, does the master thank the servant for doing what the servant was paid to do? No, the master says, "It's time to eat. Prepare my meal."



October 2019

We tend to think of faith as a matter of belief and trust. But in his parable of the dutiful servants, it seems to me that Jesus is expanding our notion of faith. If the story of the dutiful servants is a story that is meant to increase our faith, then perhaps Jesus is saying that faith is not some extraordinary act of credibility, nor is it even a deep sense of trust. Faith can mean simply getting on with your life, performing your daily tasks, trying to live your life in a way that pleases Christ. In short, faith is doing the little things in life that count.

I've had the privilege of watching all of you practice your faith. When there has been a death in our community, you didn't show up with a theological argument about the afterlife. You showed up with a casserole, made with your own hands, as a tangible, everyday expression of your love and care, yes, but also as a visible, tangible expression of your faith in the way of Jesus Christ.

When somebody is going through trouble, you ask them what you can do to help. And sometimes, even when they don't ask, you do show up and clean up the kitchen, or empty the bedpans, or put some flowers in the vase. You do this not only so that they will know that they are not alone during this time of trouble, but also so they might know that Jesus has actually produced a life that cares about the needs of others.

With Jesus, it truly is the little things in life that count toward increasing one's faith.



Faithfully Yours in Christ Jesus,
Pastor Greg Rupright



SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MESSAGES

(bold font indicates key scripture text(s) for the Message)

OCTOBER 6th

Worldwide Communion Sunday

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; Psalm 37:1-9;

2 Timothy 1:1-14; **Luke 17:5-10**

Intergenerational Message: "Who Are the People Who Have
Connected Us to Our Faith?"

Shared by the Sunday School, Pastor Greg Rupright &
Assistant Pastor Katrina Macaluso

October 13th

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c; **Psalm 111**;

2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19

Message: "It's About God"

October 20th

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 121;

2 Timothy 3:14—4:5; **Luke 18:1-8**

Message: "Keep At It!"

October 27th

Reformation/Reconciliation Sunday

Joel 2:23-32; Psalm 84:1-7;

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14

Message: Assistant Pastor Katrina Macaluso, Liturgist & Preacher

CHURCH NEWS

BECOMING A CHURCH MEMBER



Some people who have been attending First Church on a regular basis have asked to become members of the church. I would like to set a date to both discuss what it means to be a member of First Church as well as to set a Membership Sunday. If you are interested in becoming a member of First Church, please speak to or contact me at 585-223-0224 or revgregrup.ucc@gmail.com.

Thank you. Pastor Greg

PASTOR'S VACATION

Pastor Greg will be on vacation from Thursday, October 24th through and including Tuesday, October 29th. Assistant Pastor Katrina Macaluso will be the liturgist and preacher on Sunday, October 27th and will be available for pastoral emergencies: 585-766-0355; pastor.katrina.ucc@gmail.com



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Sunday, October 6th at 3:00 P.M., there will be a Blessing of the Animals Service in our church parking lot. In celebration of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and ecology, we invite you to bring your pets to share in this special Blessing of the Animals. All types of pets are welcome!



Each animal will receive a special blessing. A time of remembrance will honor our animal family members who are no longer physically present with us. We ask that all animals are appropriately leashed or contained. If it rains, this Service will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the church.



ALL HALLOWS' EVE SERVICE

Children, youth, and all ages are invited to attend a short **All Hallows' Eve Service at 5:00 P.M. on Saturday, October 26th**. Listen to scary stories from the Bible about The Witch of Endor, The Valley of Dry Bones & The War in Heaven and then enjoy some ghostly goodies and games after the Service.



SUNDAY & WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY GROUPS

No one wants to see a church die. And yet, far too many churches are dying. In his book, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive*, Dr. Thom Rainer has helped churches grow, reverse the trends of decline, and has autopsied those that have died. The chapters are short and conclude with scripture and discussion questions.



Bible Study

Sunday Group: The 11:00 A.M. Sunday Morning Group meets in the Snow Room on the following dates: October 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th.

Wednesday Group: The 11:00 A.M. Wednesday Morning Group meets in the Snow on the following dates: October 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th. Please let Pastor Greg know if you will be attending so that he can order a book for you.

All are welcome!

GRIEFSHARE SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

GriefShare is a faith-based support group for those recovering from the loss of a loved one or friend. The GriefShare Support Group meets in the Upper Fellowship Hall of First Congregational United Church of Christ, 26 East Church Street, Fairport, NY.

Please note the following 7:00 P.M. Thursday meeting dates: October 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st; November 7th, 14th, 21st; December 5th & 12.

Beverages will be served. *All are welcome!*



OUR FAVORITE HYMNS

We are dedicating our new hymnals on Sunday, **October 13**, with a Hymn Sing.

Please let us know your favorites so we can include them in our special service. You can place your ideas in the new Suggestion Box mounted on the wall in Fellowship Hall to the right of the stairwell to Upper Fellowship Hall (former library area). There also is a sheet on the rolling bulletin board where you can note your favorites.



Thank you for your participation!

BIG “THANK YOU!” FOR THE WONDERFUL CHURCH PICNIC



A BIG THANK YOU! goes to Brian Sherry for coordinating the set-up and break-down of the September 15th Church Picnic, not to mention the delicious pulled pork. A BIG THANK YOU! also goes to all our members and friends who provided other foods and helped with the set-up and break-down of the picnic. **THIS YEAR’S PICNIC WAS A REAL SUCCESS & A LOT OF FUN! AND THE KIDS HAD A GREAT TIME TOO! YEAH!!!**

MEMORIAL DEDICATION

Following the Service on Sunday, October 13th, the congregation is invited to exit out the handicap accessible ramp door, by the Snow Room, for the dedication of the viburnum shrub and memorial plaque in loving memory of Daniel Utter.



A SERVICE FOR HEALING & WHOLENESS

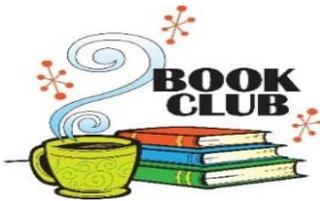
There will be a Service for Healing & Wholeness in the Snow Room on Sunday, October 20th at 10:45 A.M. All are welcome!

EASTMAN ORGAN COMMUNITY CONCERT

We will be hosting an Eastman Organ Community Concert here in our Sanctuary on Sunday, October 27 at 3:30pm. Reception to follow. The concert series features short recitals by Eastman School of Music organ students as part of the school's ongoing commitment to bring outstanding organ music to the community. The concert is free and open to the public; a free-will offering will benefit the Eastman Organ Department student travel fund.



FIRST CHURCH BOOK CLUB 2019-2020



First Church book club meets in Fellowship Hall from **1:00-2:30** on the last Monday of the month. Below is the complete schedule for the upcoming year. We do not meet in December. (*Note: In May we will meet on the 3rd, not the last, Monday, due to the Memorial Day holiday.) All are welcome to attend.

I am happy to announce that on November 18th we will have as a guest speaker Rev. Julie Cicora author of the book, *All I Can Do Is Pray: Discovering the Power of Prayer*. This book can be ordered at Barnes & Noble, or online at Amazon.com.

September 30	<i>Maisie Dobbs</i> by Jacqueline Winspear	Leader – Sharon Barmore
October 28	<i>Major Pettigrew's Last Stand</i> by Helen Simonson	Leader – Muriel Gabbey
November 18	<i>All I Can Do Is Pray</i> by Julie Cicora	Rev. Julie Cicora, guest author /speaker
December	No Book Club - Wishing all a Merry Christmas blessed with love!	
January 27	<i>Educated: A memoir</i> by Tara Westover	Leader- Donna Parker
February 24	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i> by Delia Owens	Leader- Paula Pentoney
March 30	<i>Before We Were Yours</i> by Lisa Wingate	Leader- Irene Utter
April 27	<i>Behold the Dreamers</i> by Imbolo Mbue	Leader- Mary Duncan
May 18*	<i>Carnegie's Maid</i> by Marie Benedict (*Note: 3 rd Monday)	Leader- Jean Wilson
June 29	Planning meeting for 2020-2021	

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"Unity in Christ"

THE EPISTLE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHURCH FUNDRAISER **Saturday, November 2, 2019**

The Trustees will be holding a dinner/auction fundraiser to support youth programs and marketing activities under the direction of our new Assistant Minister, Katrina Macaluso. As you know, Katrina's compensation is being funded from the Endowment. The monies from this event will provide a budget with which she can work to accomplish our goals of building a vibrant growing youth program and attracting new members. Everyone is encouraged not only to attend but to invite friends and family. We look forward to a night of fun and fellowship.

Location: Monroe Golf Club, 155 Golf Ave., Pittsford, NY
Time: Cocktails: 5-6pm Dinner: 6-7pm Auction: 7-9pm
Dinner buffet: Chicken French, pasta, salad, bread, tea, coffee, cookies
Tickets: \$35/person (to cover the food cost), available at the Church office starting 9/23
Goal: \$10,000 from 100+attendees

We need volunteers for various activities and donations of auction items. The following committees need your help. Please contact one of the following to volunteer:

Publicity/tickets/invitations.....Kelly Weidman
 Auction process/managementJim Franzen, Joe Charles & David Coon
 Accounting/proceeds managementBrian Sherry
 Auction items/ coordination with venueGeorge Dorr & David Mosher

Examples of auction items

Bake a fancy decorated special occasion cake	Wine
Round of golf at a local club	Oriental rugs
Make a piece of furniture or keepsake item to order	Sports equipment and memorabilia
Stay at a condo or lake house	Tools
Dinner at your home for 4 or provide a takeout meal	Electronics
Original artwork	Computer repair or lessons
Quality glass or china	Boat outing and picnic on the canal or a lake
Antique or collector's items of high quality	Day of snow skiing at an area ski slope
Music lessons	Gift cards from local merchants
	Help to seniors such as yard clean up, leaf raking, etc.

MISSIONS

STEP UP FOR SENIORS WALK

The 7th Annual Step Up for Seniors Walk will take place at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, September 29th at the Fairport Baptist Homes, 4646 Nine Mile Point Road, Fairport, NY where the walk will start and finish. Check-in begins at 9:00 A.M.



Pastor Greg Rupright is forming a First Congregational United Church of Christ (FCUCC) Walk Team. You can sponsor Pastor Greg or sign-up to join the Walk Team and then get your own sponsors.

To sponsor any person on our FCUCC Walk Team make check payable to: "Fairport Baptist Homes Foundation."

The Step Up for Seniors Walk Sign-Up Form is on the rolling board in the Fellowship Hall.

CIRCLE NEWS

MORNING CIRCLE

Morning Circle, with Evening Circle as our guests, will meet on October 8th at 10:00 in Fellowship Hall. Bill Poray of the Perinton Historical Society will be our speaker.



The \$100 that we raised with a "White Elephant" sale in September is being donated to Honor Flight in honor of veterans Ray Anderson and Doug Jones who have already participated in the trip to Washington.

EVENING CIRCLE

Evening Circle is having a combined meeting with Morning Circle on Tuesday, October 8 at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall. Our speaker is Bill Poray from Perinton Historical Society. Bring a bag lunch and stay for lunch. Beverage and a dessert will be provided. Guests are always welcome, so bring a friend and join us.

Please note the different day and time.

Invitations from our Neighbors

ECUMENICAL SPEAKERS & WORKSHOPS ON RACISM

October 2nd from 7:00-8:30 P.M.
U.S. Bishop's Letter Against Racism with Father Bob Werth
at Church of the Assumption, Fairport, NY.

October 9th, 16th & 23rd from 7:30-8:30 P.M.
More Guest Speakers at Church of the Assumption,
Rooms 5 & 6 below church.

October 30th & Nov. 6th from 7:30-8:30 P.M.
More Guest Speakers at Resurrection Church,
Emmaus Hall.



WORKSHOP - RACISM AND WHITE PRIVILEGE 101

Sunday 11/03/19 – 5:00-8:00 pm
Simple meal at 4:00 pm

Location: St. Luke's Episcopal Church
77 Country Corner Lane
Fairport, NY

Alan Dailey (UCC Minister) and William Wilkinson (Presbyterian Minister) will lead a discussion of how racism and white privilege affects us all. In an effort to break down racial barriers, this three-hour workshop will offer opportunities for self-reflection and bring awareness that can extend beyond our physical walls into the wider community. A simple meal will be served beforehand. No charge. Youth Groups are encouraged to attend. Signup sheets have been distributed to your church. For further information or questions, contact David Prener at dprener@rochester.rr.com.

If you would like to attend this workshop on November 3rd please sign up on the Community "Upcoming Events" bulletin board, located next to the kitchen door.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

THANK YOU

Thanks to our great congregation for all of your cards, prayers, and food during my recovery. I really appreciated it. Thank you – Thank you – Thank you!

~Harriet Breckenridge



LIGHT THE NIGHT



Thanks to Diana DeBruycker for keeping the steeple lights burning bright in September in celebration of her 5th great-grandchild, Greyson Dale.

Thank you to Mary and Bill Stevens for keeping the steeple lights burning bright during the month of October in memory of Gordon and Louise Seaman.



REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Charlotte Jackson, Fairport Baptist Home

Gerry Hammond

Mary Lou Woodhouse

Marge Brooks, Heathwood



Next “Epistle” Deadline is
(The “Third Thursday”)
October 17, 2019



Frequently our church will take photos or videos of members, including children and youth, involved in church related activities. These photos and videos may be used in church-produced publications, on our website or on social media including but not limited to Facebook. If you do not wish to have photos or videos of yourself or your child used, please see Vicki Sherry in the church office to sign an exclusion form.

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Church Service Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Church Office Hours: 9:00-3:30
Monday through Friday (Monday-Thursday in July and August)

Rev. Gregory J. Rupright, Pastor
Rev. Dr. John N. Cedarleaf, Pastor Emeritus
Katrina Macaluso, Assistant Pastor for Youth Education & Family Ministries
Administrative Assistant: Vicki Sherry
Church Moderator: Doug Strong
Organist: Beatrice Benedict
Director of Music Ministries: Heather Watras
Business Administrator: Sue Brooks
Wedding Coordinator: Betty Shamblen
Sunday School Teacher: Yaliza Frank



First Congregational United Church of Christ
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