

THE CALLER

December
2015

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Our mission is to create and nurture a family of Faith to do God's work,
modeling the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Pastor Marrison's Musings ~

In preparing liturgy, prayers, and sermons I spend time reviewing the worship resources on my shelves as well as those I find online. As I have worked on worship planning for Advent, I keep coming back to the following prayer.

Gentle God, as we contemplate the dizzying contrasts of the past year, guide us to concentrate on the golden moments that illuminated our lives; the challenging hikes through your awe-inspiring wilderness, glimpses of exhilarating wildlife, quiet conversations, shared laughter, shared tears, warm embraces, and fish tacos. Thank you for including us in your crazy creation. – Susan Hodge-Parker

Advent marks the arrival of the new liturgical year. As we prepare for the birth of Christ, it is only natural to look back a bit at the year that has passed. It has been filled with so many blessings, even in the midst of challenges. It has been a wonderful year in the life of mission and ministry of The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Corning.

But there is more. In this time of waiting and watching for the coming of the Christ child, we also look forward. We try to look beyond the stretch of our vision to contemplate the developments to come. We imagine the possibilities of the ramifications the birth represents. We look forward in hope, peace, joy, love, and promise the light of Christ brings.

And maybe chili instead of fish tacos.

Pastor Marrison



"The Caller" is published by the
**First Congregational
 United Church of Christ**

171 West Pulteney Street
 Corning, NY 14830

*No matter who you are
 or where you are on life's
 journey, **you are welcome here!!***



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**UNITED CHURCH
 OF CHRIST**

God is still speaking.

Dates to Remember:

<i>Crafting Bee</i>	<i>Dec. 4</i>
<i>Hanging the Greens</i>	<i>Dec. 4</i>
<i>Make Ahead Meals</i>	<i>Dec. 5</i>
<i>Women's Fellowship</i>	<i>Dec. 9</i>
<i>Pageant Dress Rehearsal</i>	<i>Dec. 12</i>
<i>Christmas Pageant</i>	<i>Dec. 13</i>
<i>Advisory Revisioning Mtg.</i>	<i>Dec. 15</i>
<i>Parents' Morning Out</i>	<i>Dec. 19</i>
<i>Christmas Fund Offering</i>	<i>Dec. 20</i>
<i>Christmas Eve Worship</i>	<i>Dec. 24</i>
<i>Annual Meeting</i>	<i>Jan. 24</i>

News from Trustees

ROOF PROJECT UPDATE

By the time you read the December Caller, our roof project should be completed. The entire flat portion of our roof has been given a new layer of a white PVC material that should give us many years of service. Trustees have been impressed with the detail work along the edges and especially around the atrium. Six new drains have been added bringing water off the roof in an efficient manner. A new fan by the sky light will be installed in the kitchen and will be properly sealed before the entire project is completed.

WOMEN'S BATHROOM SINK – The sink that was damaged during the roof project is in the process of being replaced. The key is finding a matching sink to the one installed about 15 years ago. Hale Roofing will handle the details.

BUDGETING - Budgeting for next year is underway. If you have not returned your pledge card yet, please either mail it to the office or better yet, bring it to the next worship service and place it in the collection plate. If you do not have a card, there are extras in the Narthex or call the church office and one will be mailed to you. Trustees greatly appreciate the generosity of our congregation for the many times you have been asked to give this past year. Whether it was for an additional 4th year of the capital campaign, support for the wider United Church of Christ, gifts to support important programs in our community in the name of our retiring Treasurer, as well as monthly Deacon offerings, you have been most generous. Thank you all.

*The church office will be closed
 Thursday., December 24th,
 Friday, December 25th. and
 Friday, January 1st, 2016.*



The Newsletter Deadline for
 January's *Caller* will be
Friday, December 18th. Thanks!

The December Deacon's Offering— The Christmas Fund



The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is the primary source of annual income for the work of the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, one of the corporations comprising the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ. You can honor the Christ Child during this season by bringing gifts that will be used to support and honor those who have served, and are serving, this beloved church. Your gifts will truly represent the incarnational nature of the church at its best.

Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants.

The Christmas Fund provides a lifeline of hope to many lower-income active and retired clergy and lay employees in the United Church of Christ. Due to the lingering effects of the economic recession, there have been many instances in which gifts from the Christmas Fund have made a critical difference in the lives of people living literally on the edge.

*We will be holding the offering for the Christmas Fund on **Sunday, Dec 20th.***

The 2016 Flower Chart



Please sign up to give Sunday altar flowers. The chart is posted in the Fellowship Hall on the North hallway wall. The cost of the flowers will remain at \$25.00. The flowers can be given to honor or in memory of a special person, celebrate a special event, wedding, birthday, anniversary, or any other occasion you wish.

Many thanks to everyone who has signed up in the past and for signing up in 2016.

- Joyce Nelson, Flower Chair

Equal Exchange Sale



This congregation supports fair wages to people across the globe by purchasing fair trade coffee for coffee hour and other church events.

This year we are combining our mission for fair trade with a youth group fundraiser. The youth are raising money for the UCC National Youth Event in Florida in July 2016.



During coffee hour in late November and early December, youth will be available with a catalog of fair trade items – everything from coffee, to chocolate, to jewelry, to pottery.

If you order from a youth directly, the group will get 40% of the profits. There is also an option to order online and the items can be shipped directly to a recipient. In that case the profit is 25%.
<http://fundraiser.equalexchange.coop/>



Revisioning: Governance and Mission December 15

The Advisory Committee invites all church members and friends to attend our December Advisory Board meeting

December 15th, 7 PM in Fellowship Hall.

The main agenda will be to discuss the mission of the church and the governance structure.

The visioning includes some of the work already done in the last year or so. By picking up the conversation where we left off in the Spring, we hope to encourage a fresh look at how this church can remain vital in its mission and ministry for years to come.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Receipts through October : \$158,874

Expenses paid through July 2015:

Dishwasher	4,350
Windows (100%)	52,427
Sidewalk replacement	10,900
Paint/painting supplies	229
Painter (windows)	1,000
Back entrance door	6,960
Paint for back door	64
Architectural fees (2014)	<u>1,031</u>

Total expenses: \$76,961

Cash on hand available for other projects: \$81,913*

(We anticipate the roof cost to be about \$52,000)

Thank you to everyone who has either completed their pledge, is continuing to pay on their pledge, and to those that have pledged to the 4th year of the capital campaign.

As a reminder – the Capital Campaign began on January 1, 2014 and concludes on December 31, 2017 for those that have made a 4th year pledge. It concludes on December 2016 for those making a 3 year pledge

OTHER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROJECTS –

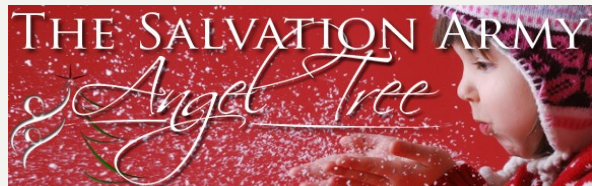
As we come to the end of our roof project, Trustees have discussed what projects to tackle next. We decided to work on Brisco Lounge over the winter. This is a project we can do on our own. It needs to be given a fresh coat of paint first and then a decision made about window treatments and furniture. Other projects to be tackled as we have the funds to do so include the parking lot (a fair weather project), flooring throughout the entrance area, hallway and Fellowship Hall and Music Room; pew cushion replacement; folding door replacement; kitchen updates, etc. If you would like to help paint Brisco Lounge, please contact Jim Nelson or Judy Garrett.



Thank you for supporting my Minister-in-Training experience at FCUCC in partial fulfillment of my seminary program. Here is a short report on my work since September. I continue my duties as Faith Formation Coordinator, working primarily with children and our Youth Group. I am promoting fundraising efforts to send our youth to the National Youth Event 2016. I helped to move seven loads of belongings of Isaiah's family with my pickup truck. I facilitated two Wednesday evening workshops. I visit shut-ins an average of once per week.

I am networking with residents and staff at Brookdale Assisted Living Community. I am leading worship there at 2:30 pm on Thursday, December 17 and presenting a Victorian Christmas at 2:00 pm on Saturday, December 19 in nineteenth-century costume. I invite you to go with me as I minister to the Brookdale community.

Glad tidings of comfort and joy,
Patricia



The Salvation Army Angel Giving Tree

Buy a gift for a needy local child this Christmas and help make their holiday season brighter!

If you took a tag from Our Salvation Army Angel Tree, please return your wrapped gift with the tag securely attached to church by

Sunday, December 6th.

If you have any questions, please contact
Joyce Nelson (607)962-8945.
With Thanks, The Deacons



christian education



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

This year's Christmas pageant during worship is "The Friendly Beasts," the Christmas story as seen through the eyes of the animals. All children a welcome to participate. There are speaking and non-speaking parts. Rehearsals are during worship on November 29 and December 6 with a Saturday rehearsal on December 5 from 10 to noon. Scripts are available in the narthex. The children will sing The Friendly Beasts with the congregation at the end of the pageant. Here is a good link to practice the hymn with your children and grandchildren: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1a5gm9Yc5E>

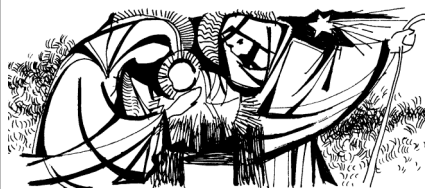
Rehearsals for children are: On Sundays November 22—December 6th after Kinder Tinder during worship.

DRESS REHEARSAL: Saturday, December 12th at 9am.

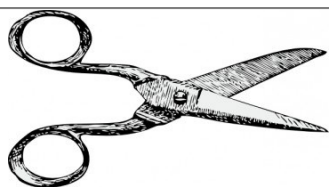
Please plan to arrive at church no later than 9:15am on Sunday, December 13.



Rainbow hand printing in the Youth Room will be available after worship on December 13th for those who missed the October service.



Whether your household has one person or ten people, take home a copy of the Advent booklet *Reasons for the Season*, available in the narthex, to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ with daily devotions, prayers, activities, and conversation starters.



A Crafting Bee for The Friendly Beasts Christmas Pageant Friday, December 4, at 10 am.

We have plenty of sheep costumes, but we need a few more animal costumes. Costumes will be simple but dramatic. Minimum sewing required. Bring your sewing machine and thread if you prefer. All patterns, materials, supplies, and refreshments will be provided. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office to offer to help. The Friendly Beasts thank you!



The first-ever Make-Ahead Meals Cooking Group will cook together in the church kitchen Saturday, December 5, starting at 9 am.

The purpose of Make-Ahead Meals is to enjoy fellowship, to gain cooking skills, and to take home nutritious meals to freeze and reheat. No cooking experience is required. We will prepare one complete holiday dinner. Your cost depends on the number of servings you order for the meal. Registration and advance payment is due by Wednesday, December 2. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office. Specify the number of servings and any dietary restrictions. Registrants will be advised what storage containers to bring. Contact Patricia Edgecomb at 279-6849 for more information.

ADVENT 2015 ~ FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

Sunday, November 29th
 Friday, December 4th, 5pm
 Sunday, December 6th
 Sunday, December 13th
 Sunday, December 20th

First Sunday of Advent
 Hanging the Greens
 Bell Choir Performance
 Christmas Pageant
 Choir Presentation

Christmas Eve Service

Gathering Music 7:00 p.m., Worship at 7:30 p.m.
Cookie Reception to follow.

Sunday, December 27th
 Sunday, January 3rd

Christmas Stories & Carols
 Epiphany Celebration



YOUTH

The Youth Group needs pots!

6" gardening pots, that is. The Youth Group will sell potted daffodils and tulips for indoor blooming around Easter. You can increase their margin by donating 6" plastic, clay, or ceramic gardening pots and indoor potting mix (please, no soil) to the labeled box under the coat rack. **The Youth Group thanks you!**

December 19 is Parents' Morning Out, 9am-noon!



Let the Youth Group give you a morning on your own as a fundraiser for NYE 2016. The Youth Group, with adult supervision, will provide babysitting service on Saturday, December 19, at the church from 9 am to noon. Children will enjoy holiday crafts and activities. Cost is \$10 per child or \$25 per family. Pick up a postcard and invite your friends to share this win-win morning. Reservations are required by Friday, December 18th as enrollment is limited.



Patricia Edgecomb will lead worship at
Brookdale Assisted Living Community
Thursday, December 17th at 2:30 pm
 and present a Victorian Christmas
Saturday, December 19 at 2:00 pm
 in nineteenth-century costume.

She invites you to go with her as she ministers to the Brookdale community.



From the Mailbag....



A gift has been given to a family who doesn't have enough to eat. That family will now have plenty to eat so their children can grow up to be healthy and strong. You are making a difference for another child in the world.

*Kinder Tinder Kids at UCC Corning,
Thank you so much for donating a cow to a family in need. Thank you all so much for adding your money to the COW over the years. Know that there is a family in need that will grow stronger because of you.*

Love from Faith the Cow

You're invited to our wedding!

Patricia Edgecomb and Michael Kapusta

invite our FCUCC church family, including children, to celebrate our wedding ceremony on

**Sunday, December 27, at 2:00 pm
at First Presbyterian Church of Elmira.**



An old-fashioned barn dance reception with a live band and caller immediately follows at the church, so dress casually and wear comfortable shoes. In lieu of gifts,

we invite you to bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

We also appreciate potted houseplants and herbs.

First Presbyterian Church, is located at 1054 W. Clinton Street, Elmira.



A note of thanksgiving ~

In June after my mother died, the first request I made to the deacons and the church was to take Christmas Eve off. On a typical year, I don't head to New England until early Christmas morning. The five hundred mile trip takes me at least nine hours. Often I barely arrive in time for Christmas evening dinner. As a pastor, I accepted this possibility. One of these years, I hope family might come to me, but this is not the year. As many of you know, the first

holidays can be quite difficult after a loved one has died. I knew even in the first days after my mother's death that I would need to be sitting next to my father in the pews at the First Congregational Church of Durham where I grew up and was nurtured for the call that became my vocation. The rare request was understood and granted. I will be away December 23rd through January 1st.

I want to thank all of you for your support, understanding, and love over the last six months. I am leaving you in the capable hands of Rev. Gary McCaslin. I have every confidence that Christmas Eve will be amazing as it is every year. Know that I will be with you in spirit.

In Christ, Rev. Mairaine C. Kettell



1 st	Bethany Kowalik	13 th	John Madison
4 th	David Tennent		Bob Walker
8 th	Pearl Cooper	17 th	Andrew Kowalik
8 th	Marian Cooper	21 st	Frances Allis
8 th	Richard Tomb	25 th	Jesus
11 th	Eleanor Cicerchi		



Church Events



*Hanging the
Greens*
**Friday, December 4th,
5-7pm
Chili & Cornbread!**



**The Friendly Beasts
Sunday, December 13th,
during worship**

Sunday, December 6th



The Bell Choir will
Ring For Christmas
during worship!

Sunday, December 20, 2015

The First Congregational United Church Choir will
present a selection of music all written by
John Rutter.

*Come join us for beautiful music
and Christmas cheer!*

*Christmas
Eve Service*

Rev. Gary McEaster preaching
**Gathering Music 7:00 p.m.,
Worship at 7:30 p.m.
Cookie Reception to follow.**



Recipe: **Women's Fellowship
Cookie Packing!**

Ingredients: **December 9th, 11:30am**

Lunch will be served! Please bring 2-3
dozen cookies to pack for our shut-ins -

Make It: 3 dozen if you'd like to participate
in the exchange).

*Anyone from the congregation may
also donate cookies.
Just place them in the kitchen before the 9th!*



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for
Sunday, January 24th.

It's never too early to start working on
your annual reports!

Please have them turned into the office by
Tuesday, January 12th!

Thanks!!



Community Events



The Southeast Steuben County Library Presents Christmas Gift Tag Mini Albums

Saturday, December 5th, 1-3pm

Join us for a fun workshop on creating your very own gift tag mini albums suitable for gift giving.



Quarterly Crafting

Saturday, December 12th, 4-6pm

Paper Beads and String Christmas Trees

Make a string Christmas tree or paper beads, or choose from the multitude of materials to make something uniquely your own. As always, there will be music, veggies, pizza and dessert, as well as relaxed conversation. Come create with us!

The Corning Museum of Glass

Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 5, and

Sunday, December 6, from 9 am until 5 pm.

Free admission for everyone! You can eat breakfast or lunch with Santa, make an ornament, purchase one-of-a-kind handmade glass gifts, or decorate a holiday cookie. Come explore a weekend of holiday cheer and happenings.



Heritage Village Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 12th, 10am– 4pm

Heritage Village, formerly known as the Benjamin Patterson Inn, Pulteney Street, Corning will be the site of a Holiday Open House with free admission. There will be attic treasures for sale, a cookie sale, gift shop boutique with handmade crafts, raffles, holiday decorating, face painting, hearth cooking, blacksmith demonstrations, children's activities, music, a magic show and Santa!



Christmas Dinner













Christmas Day Dinner

First Presbyterian Church, Corning is sponsoring a free Christmas Day dinner. Offered as an alternative to the many persons who would otherwise be alone that day, the invitation is open to anyone in the community.

Join them at noon for fellowship, dinner and entertainment. Transportation will be provided for those needing assistance. Reservations appreciated by calling their office at 937-5419.



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Deacon's Mtg. 7:00pm	2	3 6:00pm Bells 7:00 AA 7:15pm Choir	4 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am Crafting Bee 10am Hanging the Greens 5pm 	5 Make-Ahead Meals 9am 7:00pm AA
6 10:00am Worship & Communion Bell Choir  4:00 Ev. Spir. Group 5-7pm Youth Group 5:30pm Strings 7:00pm Brassworks	7 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am	8 Trustee's Mtg. 7:00pm	9 Women's Fellowship Lunch & Cookie Exchange 11:30 am 	10 6:00pm Bells 7:00 AA 7:15pm Choir	11 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am	12 Christian Ed. Mtg. after 9am pageant rehearsal 7:00pm AA
13 10:00am Worship Christmas Pageant  5-7pm Youth Group 5:30pm Strings 7:00pm Brassworks	14 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am	15 Revisioning Mtg. 7:00pm	16 Community Office Hours at Soulful Cup 3-5pm Theology on Tap Hand & Foot 5-7pm 	17 6:00pm Bells 7:00 AA 7:15pm Choir	18 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am Caller article 	19 7:00pm AA Parents' Morning Out, 9am-noon
20 10:00am Worship Choir Presentation Christmas Fund Offering 5-7pm Youth Group 5:30pm Strings 7:00pm Brass- works 	21 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am Nami 7:00pm	22	23 Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE  7:00pm	24 Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE  7:00pm	25 	26 7:00pm AA
27 10:00am Worship 5-7pm Youth Group 5:30pm Strings 7:00pm Brassworks	28 Bone Builders 9:30-10:30am	29	30	31	<div>   </div> <p><i>The office will be closed December 24 & 25th for Christmas and December 31st & January 1st for New Year's.</i></p>	

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