

Tree of Life Newsletter

First Congregational United Church of Christ
235 S. Kenilworth Avenue – Elmhurst, Illinois 60126



September 2018

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FROM OUR PASTOR

by Rev. Mike Daly

I was so drawn to this article by Nancy Hastings Sehested, a UCC minister, on evangelism that I wanted to share a few paragraphs with you.

God is about the work of saving the lost...like you and me, who regularly lose our way in the treacherous traffic of life. We get lost in the darkness of the death-dealing powers that would hold us. Our salvation is still personal with the Christ who saves us, but it is never private. Our presence here these days is to go public with the subversive, dangerous, and transforming power of Jesus Christ.

It is about evangelism (in the best sense of that word). It is about God's saving, liberating power and grace for us, as well as all people and institutions lost in the hell of abusive and sinful ways. It is about conversion, converting our hearts and minds to Jesus and his ways. It is about dreaming God's impossible dream for our world. It is about our calling to march into hell for a heavenly cause.

Our evangelism will not be evaluated on the basis of quantifiable numbers or additional programming efforts. Our evangelism will be evident by our ability to beguile

Partners in Christ's Service

Minister

Rev. Dr. Michael Daly, Senior Pastor

Christian Education

Martha Mendoza, Minister of CE

Music

Jim Molina, Minister of Music

Church Office Staff

Margaret Bixler, Office Manager
Mary Anne Bixler, Admin. Assistant

Emeritus Minister

Rev. Dr. Ernest H. Huntzinger

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www.youtube.com/elmhurstucc

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the enemy, to dance others into a vision of a more humane world. We will be known by our delight in romancing others into God's vision, God's hope, and God's grace. Our lives will shimmer with Christ's love and others will be smitten!

I really think those thoughts resonate well with the De Colores week and Sunday worship we shared in August! Nearly 80 children, 60 youth and adult leaders! Around 160 for worship on De Colores Sunday! Those numbers are great numbers but even better was the energy and enthusiasm we all experienced in celebration of the living God in our midst. It was a week of God's vision, God's hope, and God's grace. Jesucristo Es el Señor. Well done everyone! I can't wait until next year.

Faithfully, Mike



SAVE THE DATE: Stewardship Sunday is October 21!

FROM OUR MODERATOR

by Mike Hennel, Moderator

Thanks to everyone who helped make this summer's De Colores program a huge success. We had more than 70 participants this year and could not have pulled it off without the dedication of those volunteers who not only assisted with the program's logistics, but with getting the church grounds cleaned up beforehand as well. Thanks to all of you.

While bittersweet, I'm also pleased to announce that after 20 years of service, Margaret Bixler will be retiring and enjoying her golden years with her husband, kids and grandchildren. Margaret has been a rock for our church for so long and we will truly miss her and her ever-vibrant, always smiling, demeanor.

Margaret, our best to you and your husband as you begin your new journey!

Mike Hennel

The Trustees

by Terry Hennen

It has been a very busy spring and summer regarding maintenance of our buildings and grounds. April and May were brutal from a flooding standpoint as we took on water following each of six heavy downpours. This has been a recurring problem for several years now, but we may have found a solution. Larry Meyer discovered that one of our main sump pumps had not been turning on automatically as it should have, due to a mechanical malfunction that was hard to spot. He repaired the broken mechanism in early July and we have now weathered three heavy rains with no seepage. Keep your fingers crossed!

Due to our frequent flooding in the spring, we experienced a serious mold situation in three of Tree Town's classroom walls. We removed the wallboard up to a height of four feet, replaced it with new, and just finished painting it in time for the new school year.

Unfortunately, there was also mold behind (and on) the 8' sink cabinets that were in each room and they were not salvageable. Plans are to replace the two cabinets and countertops in September.

Other recent activity:

- The rooftop air conditioner that cools the parlor and small chapel "died" in mid-July. A new one was installed on August 3, at a cost of \$6,100.
- The pot holes in the parking lot were repaired by a church volunteer. It required 600 pounds of asphalt.
- The church office, Margaret's office and Martha's office have all been re-carpeted. Two of the offices have also been repainted. Thanks to Gail Ogdon for leading this project.
- On Saturday, July 28, we held our Annual Church Clean Up. We had nine volunteers and got a lot done. Thanks go out to Gayle Dawson, Claire Richter, Gail Ogdon, Jan Davis, Brian Brigman, Rev. Daly, Larry Meyer and Mike Hannel.

Many of you have been asking how progress is going regarding the sale and re-construction of our parking lot. I wish I could say we were further along, but it has been an arduous process, interrupted by all the other demands of the church building. There are five of us who comprise the Parking Lot Team: Mike Hannel, Todd Hicks, Nilesh Reshamwala, Rev. Daly and myself. We do have a "Parking Lot Redevelopment Plan" in place with 6 main parts: Preliminary Village Approval; Short-term Financing, Parking Lot Sale; Pre-Construction; Construction; and Fundraising & Celebration. The parking lot redevelopment completion goal is now summer, 2019. We will continue to provide status reports in upcoming newsletters.





Stewardship: Why Is It Important To Give Thanks?

by Rev. Mike Daly

When we were children we were taught to say, "Thank you," for a gift received at birthday parties or Christmas. As children, we were taught to thank the givers. Remember how much fun it was to write thank you cards to grandparents, aunts & uncles, and our parents for the presents they gave us?

Somehow, as we grew up, we might have become more convinced that we earn what we have. It makes sense, considering that we all work to earn money to buy things we need and want. In many ways, as adults, we have become more self-sufficient, unaware that we still receive gifts.

If we only believe that we have earned all we have, how can we be grateful?

If we can only believe that all we have is a gift, how can we not be grateful?

As a Christian community, we express thankfulness as a recognition that all is grace. When the apostle Paul wrote his letters, he usually began with a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the people to whom he was writing. Paul recognized the immense blessing of dedicated people in service to God and neighbor. As a church, we affirm our relationship with an all-loving and gracious God by giving thanks for the multitude of gifts generously bestowed upon us that we can in turn share with the world.

Giving thanks isn't just a matter of being polite; it is a matter of faith. To give thanks with our financial gifts, sharing our time, and sharing our talents, recognizes God as the giver of life and celebrates God's Love.

THE DIACONATE

by Allen Sloma and Bob Kanzler, Co-Chairs



Altar Flowers

Please note that we have had many Sundays where folks have not signed up for flowers. Dedicating altar flowers is a wonderful way to celebrate and honor family and friends. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer. On the Sundays where there is no one signed up, there will be no arrangements purchased.

It is our hope that you will extend a warm invitation to family and friends to join us on Sunday mornings for our 10:00 am worship.

HERITAGE BUNCH

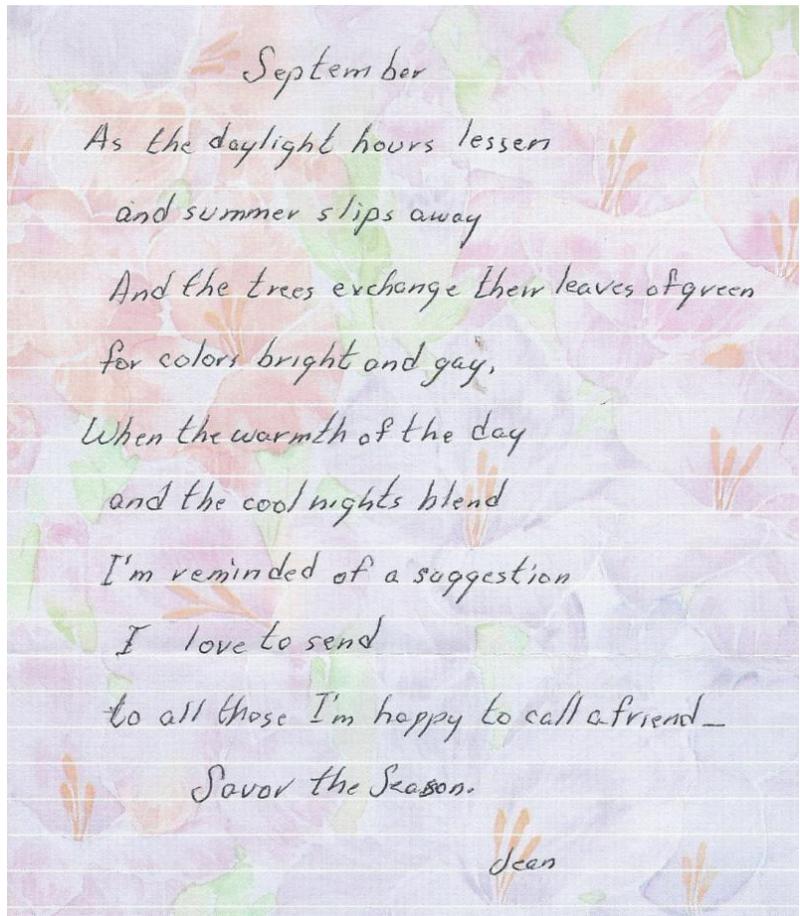
by Jan Davis



Heritage Bunch will meet September 12 and 26 in the parlor from 10-12 noon. Bring a "show and tell" and/or your latest "rose or thorn".

We guarantee to send you home filled with soulful abundance.

SEPTEMBER by Jean Schildbach



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Youth Led Worship Service
Tostada Luncheon
Our youth will be leading us in worship
Sunday, September 9, 2018
10:00 a.m.

With grateful hearts, members of this summer's Mission Work Trip to the U.S. island of Puerto Rico will be sharing their experience. A tostada Luncheon will follow immediately after the church service. Please join us for this festive Sunday.

Sunday School Kicks Off

Sunday, September 16

As the school year begins our Sunday School Ministry continues by supporting families with children.

This year we will have three sacred spaces for children to grow their faith in.

Our Youngest Among Us Room

- Opens at 9:45 a.m. for little ones from infancy to 2nd grade and it's located down the main hallway from the Sanctuary.

3rd to 5th Grade Room

- Meets in room #100 in the main hallway, across from the nursery.

Our Confirmands meet once a month during Sunday School and assist with Communion Sunday the first Sunday of the month.

We look forward to supporting your family as they grow.



Women's Spiritual Growth Gathering

**"Reviving A Sense of Spirituality
In Our Everyday Life"**

**Friday, September 28, 2018
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

We hope you will mark your calendars, plan on bringing a friend, and join us.
Our evening will include delicious appetizers, raffles, and games.

MUSIC

by: **Jim Molina**

As the Music Ministry reflects on the summer we recall many meaningful worship services featuring the choir, soloists, duets, and instrumentals. We hope our music inspired you as well as enriched your Sunday morning experience. We continue to practice and are looking forward to the fall season as we celebrate the love of music in hymns, anthems, and instrumentals.

We ask for your prayers as some of our choir members are facing some difficult challenges with health. The choir continues to be a place of meaningful ministry for all our singers so we pray for their continued health and good will.

THE GREEN TEAM

by **Karen Pachyn, Chair, Green Team**

Sustaining Creation Discussion Series Continues

The Green Team invites you to join us as we continue our Discussion Series on "Sustaining Creation", an eight part video presentation hosted by Rev. Terry Gallagher, an advocate for eco justice. We watched the first four parts of his series last May and will pick up again on Part 5 beginning Sunday, September 9th . This is also Tostada Sunday so we'll grab our tostadas and meet in the Blue Room after the service. There we will enjoy the delicious lunch provided by our youth, watch the video and follow it with an enlightened discussion .This session is the first of four that will continue on September 16, September 23 and September 30 with salad lunches. You don't need to have seen the first four videos to participate, but if you'd like to watch them, you can find them here:

https://sustainingcreation.org/?page_id=65



MISSIONS

Dan Briggs, chair

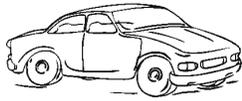
Annual 'Cue for a Cause coming September 2nd!

The registration deadline to compete in the annual 'Cue for a Cause, a barbecue competition benefitting the Elmhurst Walk-In Assistance Network is fast approaching. You must sign up by August 24. Teams will compete in rib, chicken, and sauce categories. Best combined score in all three will be named Grand Champion. The 'Cue is on September 2 in the lot at York and Vallette. For details, rules, and to register, visit the EWAN website at www.ewanet.org.



We are seeking volunteers for the 'Cue as well. Service hours are available for teens! If you would like to volunteer that day follow these links to Sign Up
Genius: <http://signup.com/go/NHZDHFH> for kids seeking service hours,
or <http://signup.com/go/UuRJqRU> for adults who want to help out.

We hope everyone will come out and enjoy the food, music, and fun on the 2nd from 12 noon-8 pm. All proceeds will go towards helping Elmhurst neighbors in need.



Mission Ride

Please call Linda Donahue's cell phone at 630-564-5808 if you need a ride. You can also call the church office at 630-832-2580. Thank you.

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS



September

- | | |
|----|----------------|
| 1 | Dale Stevens |
| 15 | Jonathon Gregg |
| 21 | Joy Vastola |
| 23 | Linda Donahue |
| 26 | Gail Ogdon |
| 29 | Joyce Stevens |



Peggy Bates
Matty Beuke

Clare and Jean Jacobi
Lynn Johansen

Dan Norton
Claire Richter

Craig Bixler	Lu Krass	Mike Robicheau
Robert Cooper	Amy Kritz	Bert Robins
Steve Culliton	Amy Lynch	Kim Rudakas
Wayne Dreyer	Joan Lynch	Basia Rudy
Yvonne Dreyer	Michael Magana	Charlotte Schenk
Katherine Ehrenberger	Maureen McCormick	Mary Strock
Jack Feldman	Dorothy Moncrieff	Jack Thoele
Earleen Graham	Jim Mowers	Emma Underwood
Susan Graybill	Sung Lee Moy	Grace Watry & Family
Bertha Hahn	Lori Myers	Jeanne Warp
Roberta Hilliger	Shirley Myers	Juliet Warren
	Tom Myers	

If you would like someone added to the prayer list, contact Mary Anne Bixler at maryanne.elmhurstucc@yahoo.com or 630-832-2580. Thank you

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

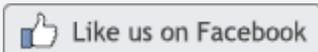
September	Event/Room	Time
2	Communion Sunday Worship Service	10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
6	Choir Practice - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
9	Youth Led Worship Service - Sanctuary	10:00 a.m.
9	Tostada Sunday - Fellowship Hall	11:00 a.m.
9	Sustaining Creation Discussion	11:00 a.m.
11	Missions Meeting - Blue Room	7:00 p.m.
12	Heritage Bunch - Parlor	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
13	Choir Practice - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
16	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
16	Sustaining Creation Discussion	11:00 a.m.

18	Trustees Meeting - Blue Room	6:00 p.m.
20	Choir Practice - Sanctuary	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
23	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
23	Sustaining Creation Discussion	11:00 a.m.
25	Council Meeting - Blue Room	7:00 p.m.
26	Heritage Bunch - Parlor	10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
27	Choir Practice - Sanctuary	11:00 a.m.
28	Women's Spiritual Growth Gathering - Parlor	6:30 p.m.
30	Sunday Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
30	Sustaining Creation Discussion	11:00 a.m.
*Oct.6	<p>SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, OCTOBER 6th, ELMHURST COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME at Elmhurst College. Area UCC churches come together for a lively pregame tailgate party and Elmhurst College football game. Watch for more details.</p> <p>Mike</p>	



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