



Easter is meant to be a symbol of hope, renewal, and new life.
Janine di Giovanni

EASTER SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 25, Palm Sunday Annual Easter Egg Hunt at 8117 Compton Road-West Ide Park/Oberle Driveway. ALL children ages toddler to 10 are invited to come and hunt for eggs! Time is 1:00 pm SHARP!!! If you are late you'll miss it! Plan on arriving at 12:30pm. Parents please bring a brunch item to share.

Maundy Thursday March 29th -6pm Simple Supper provided by Congregational Care Ministries.

Maundy Thursday worship-7:30pm

Good Friday Tenebrae worship service-7:30pm

Easter Sunday

6:00am Sunrise Service

9:00am Traditional Easter Service

10:47am Blended Contemporary Easter Service

Church Visioning: Thank you for all that attended and gave voice to your hopes and dreams for our life together at First Congregational United Church of Christ. For those of you who were not able to attend, please take five to ten minutes to visit this link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc9C1eom_KR5dlppW-kGZANA9sGjCDRN-SEtZdDzPv9aOoFPQ/viewform and give us your feedback! Every voice, every opinion matters!

Our second set of Visioning Sessions will focus on the challenges and barriers we may face in striving to be fully the church God calls us to be. How do we work through change and plan for change as a church? Dates are Sunday April 29th after church at 11:00am and Wednesday March 2nd at 7:00pm. Lunch will be provided-\$5.00 per person.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MARCH 2018

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"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing". Attributed to Edmund Burke circa 1920's temperance movement.

I was stunned when Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris went on a shooting spree in Columbine High School Colorado now almost thirty years ago. I believe we all were. It seemed so senseless. How had these young men become so far gone down the road of isolation and hate?

Parkland, Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Orlando, Sandy Hook... churches, schools, college campuses, country music concerts all have become the last resting place of men, women and children who started their day going to church, to class, to dance and enjoying their favorite singers amongst friends.

What was once unimaginable has become frequent news.

I am not here to provoke an attack on the right to bear arms, to own a handgun or a rifle to hunt, to have for home protection, or to use recreationally at the range. But I am here asking- what are common sense boundaries for the kind of weaponry that the public has to purchase? Does a 19 year old who is not a member of the police force or armed services ever need to own an AR-15 under any circumstance? How about an RPG? A Mac-10? Why is there resistance by politicians for stricter universal background checks?

It goes far beyond gun laws and manufacturers. How are our communities caring and tending to the needs of those with mental and behavioral health risks? How are we living together in community? How does 24/7 media coverage impact mass shooting events are covered and seek to copycat? And maybe the question that most matters here in this church periodical... what does one who seeks to follow Jesus to the cross, through the midst of human suffering and violence, have to say to us as disciples about how we should react to violence in our time?

I am here to confess. I confess that I am disgusted that I have not spoken and acted sooner. I am wondering why it took me so long, as I anguished over the shooting of six and seven year old children, (first and second grade boys and girls) as they went to their primary school in Sandy Hook... and still I did nothing but pray. I prayed for families, victims, shooters. We held vigils. I asked God, " Why Lord? Why does such evil exist among humankind?" And as these seventeen kids died in Florida with their teachers three years later the only question I had left from God was: How long, Scott, how long will you remain silent in the face of such violence?

I may not be able to change politicians' minds. And I know that I do not possess all the answers, not by a mile, but I do know this... too much innocent blood has been spilled on my watch. To that end, beyond vigils I will pledge to try and work with our own civic leaders and population to speak about ways to care for all those living in our communities without exception in faith, in hope, and love... that 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth" prayer I speak might also be the prayer I live.

What can we do?

On Sunday, March 18th we will have a Community Response to Mass Shootings Public Forum- 4:00pm to 5:30pm in the Sanctuary and Parlor. We will have civic and religious leaders to participate in an open panel about the issues of violence in our nation and in our communities.

On Saturday, March 24th please consider joining my wife and I for the march for *Our Lives* inspired by the surviving students of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School at 11:00am at the Daley Plaza Chicago as part of your Lenten Journey. Please let me know if you'd like to attend that we might organize car pooling and or commuter transportation.

Pastor Scott



YOUTH MINISTRIES

YOUTH MINISTRY...

Making a joyful noise in and around the city of Madison, Wisconsin on our **Youth Winter Retreat** this past weekend serving meals and hot drinks to many who are living outside, near the Veterans museum and the Capitol building. Thank you to our new friends at Michelangelo's coffee shop in downtown Madison for helping us serve throughout the night. We walked through the UW campus, found a great igloo while hiking up Bascom Hill and found ourselves grateful to enjoy fun and fellowship while sharing in service and outreach. Fun and fellowship continued the following day with snowboarding, skiing, and tubing at Cascade Mountain.

TEAM TRIVIA NIGHT TICKETS GO ON SALE SUNDAY, MARCH 4TH IN FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR \$25 A TICKET & TABLES OF EIGHT.

Sunday, March 4th & 11th
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP 6:30-8:30 pm.

Saturday, March 10th, 8 am- 5 pm.
Mental Health Workshop training in Fellowship Hall. Sign up with Dena Provenzano and Megan Ruschke today.

Sunday, March 11th, 10:45 am- 12:30 pm in the Parlor.
STRESSED OUT! How to help children and families manage stress. Sponsored by Parent Education.

Sunday, March 18th, 5:30pm-8 pm in the church kitchen.
SPRING FLING! Come out & make a cultural meal and enjoy dinner together. Don't miss some special little guests who will be joining us. Parent help is needed.

Sunday, March 25th, 2-7 pm,
NIGHT MINISTRY SERVICE & OUTREACH.
Please meet in the kitchen at 2:00 pm to prepare a meal then head to the city to serve our friends with The Night Ministry of Chicago.

SAVE THE DATE:
Team Trivia Night
Friday, April 13th, Doors open at 6:00 pm. Event begins at 7:00 pm. Proceeds benefitting Youth & Adult Mission Trip 2018 to Houston, Texas.

CONFIRMATION DATES:
Sunday, March 4th, 9:30 am- 3:00 pm. Visit to Trinity UCC in Chicago.
Friday, March 16th, an evening visit to the Synagogue in Lombard.
Saturday, March 17th, an afternoon visit to the Mosque in Darien.

SAVE THE DATE:
Confirmation retreat to Tower Hill, April 21-22.

Please reach out with any questions,

Dena Provenzano
Director of Youth Ministry

THE PILGRIM



MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Maundy Thursday is MARCH 29 this year and before the 7:30 pm service a simple supper of huge baked potatoes and all the goodies will be served in Fellowship Hall at 6:00pm. All are invited to join us in fellowship before the service.

Women's Fellowship - Ladies of the Morning and Evening

We're going out for Breakfast! Friday, March 2 at 9:30 AM at Honey-Jam Cafe Downers Grove, 3000 Oak Grove Dr. DG 60515, 630/963-2233, honeyjamcafe.com. If you plan on coming please email or call me. It is nice to have some idea of how big a table to get.

Two weeks later we'll stay at the church for **Stitch and Chat** in the Parlor, Friday, March 16, from about 9:30-11:30 AM. You don't need to bring anything to stitch, but can just hang out and chat. This is a very casual gathering. Come if and when you can, even if for only a few minutes. Questions? Contact me, Peggy Gutzke -Home: 630/971-1382 Cell:630/632-3014 peggy.gutzke@gmail.com

Building and Grounds

Thanks to some generous donors, the Parlor kitchenette will be remodeled during March. Upgrade will include new backsplash, countertop, sink and faucet. Existing cabinet doors and frame will be painted and outfitted with new hinges and hardware. Three new square tables will be purchased and new shades will be installed on the two west windows. These shades will match those installed on the west and north facing windows on levels 3-6. This is a joint project with Outreach to create a friendly gathering place for members and guests on Sunday mornings.

Securing bids to repair front Curtiss Street steps (weather permitting) and polish the interior Terrazzo stairs and floors before Easter.

New exterior security cameras should be installed by May 1.

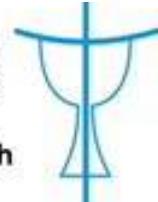


Join the First Congregational Church
of Downers Grove for a

FUNdraiser

Valid All Day

Must present a flyer upon
purchase and 10% will go
directly to the
First Congregational Church
of Downers Grove



March 6, 2018

Uncle Bub's 1325 Cass Ave. Westmont, IL 60559
www.unclebubs.com



Caring for Creation



Fasting from Carbon during the Lenten Season

Lent is a season to slow down and reflect on our lives. For some, it is a time to make a sacrifice by giving up an activity, food or drink. For others, it may mean taking on new, positive actions.

In an interesting and earth-friendly 'twist' on Lent, the New England Regional Environmental Ministries (NERM) offers an Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast. The goal of the carbon fast is to help Christians be more mindful of climate change and the ways we all contribute to it in our daily lives. Over the Lenten season, individuals can sign up to receive NERM's daily e-mails. The e-mails provide a carbon-related issue to contemplate and a corresponding action you can take.

For example, the Contemplation for Day 7 is:

Bring to mind a voluntary choice you have freely made to constrain yourself from some action you very much wanted to take, but you realized would (even in some small way) harm creation. How do you understand that choice? How do you frame it? Was it a sacrifice? Do you regard it as befriending a new discipline or commitment? Even in a small way, do you experience yourself as called by God to do this?

And the Action for Day 7 is:

Avoid eating meat and cheese one day a week during the rest of lent (and beyond if you feel called). If everyone in the U.S. did this, it would be the equivalent of taking 7.6 million cars off the road for an equivalent time. Read The Meat Eater's Guide for a concise, yet detailed explanation and other suggestions.

Already doing this or feeling ambitious? Eating locally requires fewer fossil fuels to transport your food, eating seasonally requires less energy for refrigeration, eating organically helps restore soil ecosystems that pull carbon out of the atmosphere.

If you'd like to sign-up for Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast e-mails, go to <https://www.macucc.org/carbonfast>.



THE PILGRIM

ART & SOUL PRESENTS

ELMHURST COLLEGE JAZZ BAND



Please join us Sunday, March 4, 2018 at 3:00PM for a free-will offering concert by the nationally recognized and internationally traveled Elmhurst College Jazz Band, under the direction of Doug Beach.

The concert is sponsored by the First Congregational United Church of Christ's Art & Soul ministry. There will be light refreshments following the concert.

First Congregational United Church of Christ is located at 1047 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove – across the street from the Downers Grove Public Library.

Questions? Call the church office at 630-968-0358.



EASTER FLOWERS

Would you like to see our sanctuary in full bloom? Help us bring new life by sharing a spring plant with us! We'll do the work. Just fill out the blank below, attach your payment for \$12.50 (for each plant purchased) and bring/send it to the church office by **Sunday, March 25th**. We'll take care of the rest and arrange the plants for **Easter services on April 1st**.

Your name and the name of your loved ones will appear in the bulletin.

PLEASE CHECK ONE

I would like to take my flower home after worship on Easter.

(We order a variety of plants; however, it is first come, first served if you wish to take your plant[s] home.)

I would like to leave my flower for distribution to our homebound members and friends.

What a wonderful way to remember dear ones at this time of year!

Your Name:

(Please PRINT clearly)

Telephone Number/E-mail:

Name of Loved One whose memory flowers are given:

(Please PRINT clearly)



 **TEAM TRIVIA NIGHT**
"FORM A TEAM AND PICK YOUR THEME"



It is time to get creative. Every table picks their own theme and decorates to match that theme. Bring your own appetizers and desserts to share.

April 13th from 7-10pm
Doors open at 6pm
American Legion,
4000 Saratoga Ave
Downers Grove

Questions? Call 630-968-0358
Sponsored by Youth/Mission & Outreach at
First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC)

Church Visioning Sessions

Come share your voice as we dream and imagine our future with God!

First Congregational Church

Session two: Sunday, April 29th -11am
Session two Alternative: Wednesday, May 2nd -7pm

\$5.00 for lunch/dinner per person





THE PILGRIM

First Congregational United Church of Christ

6th ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Sunday, March 25th - 1:00 pm Sharp!

WHO: Toddlers –10 years old welcome
Family & Friends! *Helpers welcome for Set up.*

LOCATION: West Ide Park
8117 Compton Rd., Woodridge

SPONSORED BY:
The Oberle's

ADULTS BRING:

A brunch item to share and your camera to capture all the fun! Coffee, Juice and Candy provided



COME: 12:30 pm

HUNT: begins promptly at 1:00 pm *Hunters take only 3-4 minutes to gather the 2000+ eggs! If you're 2 minutes late you've missed it!*

HUNTERS BRING: a bag or basket for collecting eggs, after the hunt you'll open your eggs, put the candy in your basket to take home, and then snap the egg back together and leave it for us for next year!

RAIN, SHINE, and/or SNOW EVENT!

Only A **MAJOR STORM** cancels – DRESS FOR THE WEATHER - OUTDOOR EVENT! Just show up a few minutes early to find your age group and get ready to HUNT!



Why take Mental Health First Aid?

- Recognize if a friend, family member, or colleague is struggling
- Learn how to talk to someone who is in need
- Make a positive change by helping someone onto the right road
- Respond with the same empathy and respect to mental illness as you would with cancer

***Everyone deserves to
be able to live, laugh, and love.***

Free CEUs Available



Join us for this FREE class
Saturday, March 10, 8am-5pm
First Congregational United Church of Christ
1047 Curtiss Street, Downers Grove
For more details or to register contact Megan
(630)390-4302, lockett.megan24@gmail.com

LIVE MUSIC Every Friday Since 1970!

TWO WAY STREET COFFEE HOUSE

1047 Curtiss Street • Downers Grove, Illinois 60515 (across from the Public Library)
www.twowaystreet.org • 630-969-9720



ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

Friday	March 2	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKERS — CD Release — Original songs inspired by classic hillbilly, country-duo, & old-time musical traditions. Entertaining Wisconsin duo Nikki Grossman (fiddle, guitar, vocals) & Joe Hart (guitar, mandolin, vocals). Fun!
Friday	March 9	¹ COSY SHERIDAN with CHARLIE KOCH — One of the era's finest, most thoughtful singer-songwriters. "...frank, feisty, sublimely & devilishly funny." (Cornell Folksong Society). 11 CDs! Plus excellent bass & harmonies by Charlie Koch!
Friday	March 16	KERRY PATRICK CLARK — "A musical Norman Rockwell." From Ohio, an award-winning, nationally #1 charted singer-songwriter-guitarist and storyteller. Former member of The New Christy Minstrels. 7 solo CDs!
Friday	March 23	¹ ALICE HOWE — With a soulful, impeccably tuned voice and well-crafted poetry, this Boston singer-songwriter is "a gem...at once of the moment and timeless, personal and universal" (Mark Walton, <i>Americana UK</i>).
Friday	March 30	MATTHEW MICHAEL & CHRISTINA MARIE — Fresh, young duo from rural Illinois with thought-provoking lyrics and rich styles. Voices and strings recall Gillian Welch and The Milk Carton Kids colored with blues and jazz, hope & healing.
Friday	April 6	TIM GRIMM & JON BROOKS — Two acclaimed singer-songwriters on a blockbuster Midwestern tour! Renaissance man, actor & hayfarmer Grimm joins Canadian NPR Mountain Stage & Kerrville-winner Brooks bringing insight, finesse & fun!
Friday	April 13	ESCAPING PAVEMENT — "The most dynamic Americana group out of Detroit," the duo of Emily Burns and Aaron Markovitz masterfully blends and blurs the lines of bluegrass, folk, and Americana. Hi-energy guitars, mandolin, uke & voices!
Friday	April 20	LIL' REV — Milwaukee's Marc Revenson is a prize-winning instrumentalist and blues harmonica champion! Goodtime music: old time, country blues, rags, originals, sing-alongs. Vocals, guitar, mandolin, banjo, uke, dulcimer! New CDs!
Friday	April 27	LEE MURDOCK — Broadly acknowledged as "the premier interpreter of songs and tales about the Great Lakes," his work is an anthem to the people who live, work, and play along the freshwater highways of North America.

¹Featured on WFMT 98.7 "Folkstage" with Rich Warren. ²Featured on WDCB 90.9 "Folk Festival" with Lilli Kuzma.

Saturdays Mar 10, Apr 14 8:00pm	Old Time Barn Dance — Reels, squares, line dancing, waltzes and more, plus the music of our great live band. Fun for the whole family! All dances taught and called by our expert leaders. No experience, costume or partner needed. Plank Road Folk Music Society is co-sponsor.
2 nd Tuesday, 7-9pm Mar 13, Apr 10, May 8	2nd Tuesday Song Circle — BYOS (Bring Your Own Songs) . Monthly opportunity to informally & acoustically perform your new songs or covers for the circle. Plank Road Folk Music Society co-sponsors.
Saturdays, 2-4pm Mar 3 & 17, Apr 7 & 21 May 5 & 19	Sing-Around — Our popular song fests where beginners and experienced musicians can learn and/or share songs. Listeners and singers welcome too! Songbooks provided. Plank Road Folk Music Society co-sponsors. First and third Saturday afternoons of every month at 2:00 pm.
4 th Saturdays, 2-4pm Mar 24, Apr 28 May 26, Jun 23	Country/Western Sing-Around — Similar to our "regular" Sing-Around, but with a bit more "twang"! Beginners and experienced musicians can learn and/or share country/western and bluegrass songs. Listeners and singers welcome too! Songbooks provided. Plank Road Folk Music Society co-sponsors.
Thursdays Mar 29, Apr 26, May 31 7:00-9:30pm	LAST THURSDAY! — Monthly open mike for high school & college age students. Last Thursday of every month. Music, poetry, any performance art -- 10 min. max. Signups begin 7pm -- first come, first served. Info at twowaystreet.org , on Facebook, or call 630-699-2973.

Live entertainment is featured every Friday night beginning at 8:15. Doors open by 7:30. \$10.00 donation requested. Beverages and snacks available. The Two Way Street Coffee House is a not-for-profit community project of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Downers Grove. Member: Plank Road Folk Music Society, Fox Valley Folklore Society, Old Town School of Folk Music, Aural Tradition, Folk Alliance International. For current entertainment listings and updates, booking and other information, visit us on the web at www.twowaystreet.org and on Facebook.



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UNITED IN GOD'S LOVE

THE PILGRIM MARCH 2018 EDITION

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