

The Treasure Chest

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

United Church of Christ
Fort Pierce

FEBRUARY 2024



3601 Kirby Loop Rd

Fort Pierce, Florida 34981

(772) 465-2082

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

Come Worship With Us ...
Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.
Coffee & Fellowship 11:30 a.m.

Pastor: Rev. Joel Reif



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
a just world for all



PASTOR'S REPORT

This year we have an unusual event. Ash Wednesday is also Valentine's Day. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent which is the 40 days leading up to Easter not counting Sundays. Historically people usually give up something for Lent. This included anything from fasting to more charitable giving, to stopping something you enjoy such as alcohol or sweets or specific foods like meat. This is a reminder of the suffering of Jesus.

Ashes are also placed on the forehead in the shape of a cross. The ashes were from the palms from the previous Palm Sunday that have been burned. While we do not have an Ash Wednesday service, I would still urge you to give some thought to what you might do for Lent. If you want to give up something for Lent maybe some ideas would be: complaining, gossiping, worry, or judging other people.

Another idea for Lent is to do something different. These might include: write one letter or email each day thanking someone for something they have done for you in life, pick someone and pray for them every day until Easter, give compliments to everyone you encounter, or read the entire Gospel of Mark, which is our focus for this liturgical year. Do something for Lent, it will make Easter even more joyous.

See You in Church.

Rev. Joel Reif

LET ME KNOW

Just a reminder to be sure to contact me **IMMEDIATELY** if someone is in the hospital, there has been a death, or in need of a call or visit from me. I would rather have 10 people contact me than miss someone.

Rev. Joel A. Reif

THANK YOU

Cindy and I would like to thank you for the very generous Christmas gift. It was very kind of you and much appreciated. Thank you so much.

Cindy & Rev. Joel Reif

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP



Our first meeting of the year was held on Tuesday, January 16. We discussed the Christmas Bazaar and two possible dates for the Spring Yard Sale, March 16 or April 6. (Note that there will be no clothing sales at this yard sale.) Our next meeting is planned for Tuesday, February 20, at 11:00 a.m.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Toys for Tots – We filled the box to overflowing with toys this year, as well as providing some gift cards and monetary donations. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this outreach that helps to make Christmas joyful for so many disadvantaged children here in St. Lucie County!



Treasure Coast Food Bank – Far too many of our neighbors struggle with providing food for themselves and their families. TCFB serves children, seniors, single parents, working families, veterans, and the homeless. Thank you to everyone who has been donating. Recently, we've been able to take a few sacks and/or boxes each week to the Food Bank. What to donate - almost any non-perishable or "shelf stable" food! Keep up the good work, and if you have questions, feel free to talk to Dickie Brooks.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 7, 2024

Attendance: Joel Reif, Pastor; Carol Sinotte, Moderator; Dickie Brooks, Clerk; Dick Sinotte, Property; Elaine Souza, Memorial; Doug MacWilliam, Deacons; Mary Lyford, Treasurer; Tomm Mountz, Trustees; and Terry Fritz, Church Fellowship.

Joel opened the meeting with a prayer.

Clerk's Report – Dickie submitted the minutes from the November 5, 2023, meeting, which were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report – Mary submitted the report which was approved as submitted. She also noted that the next insurance payment is due. There was a discussion about removing the shed and pavilion from coverage, and possibly raising the deductible. Mary advised she needs to move \$10,000 to checking to cover insurance bills and some repairs which was agreed upon. Dickie made a motion to authorize Mary and one other authorized signer on the bank account to convert up to \$100,000 from the investment account to a CD, probably 6 months but length at their discretion. Terry seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report – Joel reported that there will be a memorial service for George Starkey after worship on Sunday, January 21. On Sunday, January 28, Latrell Harrison who is our UCC Conference Area Minister will be visiting our church. Joel also noted that Easter is early this year, March 31. Ash Wednesday is February 14.

Deacons – Doug reported we had 84 people attending the Christmas Eve service – maybe a record for our church. He's recruiting a few more Deacons to fill in for losses due to health. Tomm Mountz volunteered to serve and everyone thanked him for that.

Property – Dick reported minor repairs to fix a bathroom leak and a more significant leak around the cross window in the front of the sanctuary. That window is scheduled to be re-sealed this coming Wednesday.

Nominating/Evangelism – Under the category of Evangelism, Dickie presented the work that Rachel Spence has been doing on our website and Facebook page. Rachel who has recently become part of our church family has advanced skills in these areas which she has offered to use on our behalf, and her work has already made our online presence much more appealing and informative, and current! She'll continue to manage/develop our social media and internet sites and is working with Dickie to update the newsletter format and presentation next.

Memorial – Elaine will be ordering a 2024 plaque for the Memorial Board and a plaque for George Starkey.

Church Fellowship – Terry reported the next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 16, at 11:00. Primary topic will be scheduling of date for the Spring Yard Sale, and preliminary planning for that event.

Trustees, Music, Stewardship/Missions, and Old Business – No report.

New Business

1. Referring to prior discussions about the quality of our sound system, Joel advised us that his sound system expert from his former church attended worship with us on Christmas Eve and told Joel for our type and level of usage, he wouldn't advise our making any changes.
2. Dickie is going to work with Rachel Spence to investigate a paperless option for people to make contributions to the church. When she has more details, she'll report back to the Council.
3. The Church Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 14, 2024, immediately after worship.

The next Council Meeting will be February 11, 2024.

Joel adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Dickie Brooks

NEW EMAIL PLATFORM



We have recently transitioned to a new platform for sending out bulk emails. This change was necessary due to the major difficulties we were experiencing with our previous system, which resulted in a number of people not receiving our emails. We are confident that this new platform will work consistently and smoothly. In fact, we are excited to announce that our first test of this new system will be to distribute this newsletter.

Thank you for your understanding during this transition period and if you were one who wasn't getting the emails before. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to the office.

A big thank you to Rachel Spence, a new member of our church family, whose skills in the areas of social media and IT support have breathed new life into our website, our Facebook page, and our newsletter format as well as helping facilitate this email platform change.



IN OUR PRAYERS

Jennifer Gray, Doug MacWilliam, Joanne Hower, Bob Evans, Marv Lammers, Greg and Linda Garneau, Charlotte Fritz, Danny Fanning, Joyce Maybury, Joy Hutchins, Sandy Starkey, Tyler Prince, Anita Tuccillo, Bob Charpentir, Scott Burgoyne, Karen Casavant, Justin Archambault, Patty Hills, Becky Miller, Mike and Jody, Jay White, Donna Mariarski, Sandy Maybury, Margaret, Ed Galpen, Ann Marie Colonnese, Emmy Cook and her family, Jay and his family, Susanne Colombo, Sandy Martyn, Bob Therrien, Amelia Joseph, Katie Rogers, Sally Pelillo, Torey, Razel Cramer, Janis & John Gonzales, Shawn Keyte, Ronald Powell, Patricia Allen, Terry Fritz, the family of Sue Schwertfeger, Jim Fritz, Rus Dunbar, Dennis Murphy, the family of Diann Campbell (Holtje), the family of Amber Leonard, the family of George Starkey, the family of Alice Fowler, the family of Barbara Tuzes, the family of Jan Vandersluis, Diane Ware, Chelsy Lawton, the family of Diana Junker



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

7th	Martha Pease
12th	Elizabeth Silvestri
19th	Audrey Embling
20th	Ruth Genova
21st	Chris Duncombe

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

18th	Dick and Mary Keller
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MORE IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- Tuesday, February 20* – Church Fellowship at 11:00 a.m.
- Saturday, April 6th* – Tentative date for the Spring Yard Sale
- Sunday, April 14th* – Annual Church Meeting immediately following worship

Every Friday from 10:30 to 11:30 – Bible Study

PASTOR REIF'S OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Reif is usually in the office either Tuesday or Wednesday. Please call before stopping by the church to make sure he's going to be there. His cell phone is **772-480-3245** if you need to reach him outside of office hours. His email is **jr7618@yahoo.com**.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DEADLINE

The third Sunday of every month. You may drop them off in the newsletter mailbox at the church, or call Elaine Souza (772) 462-2272 or Dickie Brooks (772) 971-1370.

Website
www.firstcongregation.org

Email
churchoffice@firstcongregation.org

Follow us on Facebook

Communion is served
the first Sunday of
each month, and all
are welcome!

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