

The Treasure Chest

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

United Church of Christ
Fort Pierce

DECEMBER 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



Christmas is right around the corner. I believe that this holiday puts more expectations on us than any other. There is the expectation that we will be joyful and our day will be filled with laughter and love. We are expected to be with family and be thrilled and all get along. We almost expect to have that scene where we all gather around the piano and sing and have all kinds of warm fuzzy feelings. The reality is, many people don't have all this at Christmas. When these things don't happen, we think there

is something wrong. Nothing could be further from the truth. Christmas has nothing to do with everything being perfect. The first Christmas was far from perfect. A couple expecting a child had nowhere to stay and ended up in a dirty smelly barn. The baby was born in the barn and they had the lay him in a feed trough. The only people who came that night were shepherds. Things were not great. The one and only great thing was that we were shown God's love. So, if your Christmas is less than perfect, if you don't feel that "special spirit," it is OKAY. All you really need to know is that God loves you exactly the way you are right now.

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

PASTOR REIF'S OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Reif is usually in the office usually on Wednesdays. 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**.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR & RAFFLE



Saturday, December 14, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

This year's Bazaar has been scaled back and restructured to focus on raffles and a bake sale. One big change is that you'll be able to direct each of your raffle tickets for individual items so you can focus on the items you really want! Volunteers are needed to assemble baskets and to help out the day of the Bazaar. We could also use baked goods, cookies, cakes, etc. If you have questions about baking or volunteering ahead of time or at the Bazaar, please see or call Patricia Bryant at **407-310-6176**. And, if you're not going to be able to attend the Bazaar in person, don't forget to return your raffle tickets to the church by Friday, December 13. Don't miss your chance to win! Bring your friends and tell your neighbors! **SEE YOU THERE!**

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

TARGETED DONATIONS FOR DECEMBER –

Our focus in December will be warm clothing for adults and children.

Don't forget the deadline for November's focus on Toys for Tots is Sunday, December 15.

HURRICANE MILTON/TORNADO RELIEF

The donations from our Hurricane Relief project have been distributed to GraceWay Village, Lakewood Park Church, Lakewood Park Elementary School, CareBag, Inc., American Smoke BBQ, and Do You Give A Ruck, Inc. – organizations that have provided support such as meals, mobile showers, holiday meals & events for students and families, and hands-on clearing debris and tarping roofs. Again, we thank everyone who donated to support this emergency response!

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 17, 2024

Attendance: Joel Reif, Pastor; Carol Sinotte, Moderator; Dickie Brooks, Clerk; Mary Keller, Treasurer; Dick Sinotte, Property; Tomm Mountz, Trustees; Elaine Souza, Memorial; Doug MacWilliam, Deacons; Janis Gonzalez, Music; Patricia Bryant, Church Fellowship; Rachel Spence, Evangelism/IT; and Judy Jones, Member at Large.

Carol called the meeting to order and Joel opened the meeting with a prayer.

Clerk's Report – The minutes of the October 29, 2024, meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report – Mary presented the Treasurer's report which was approved as submitted.

Pastor's Report – Joel reminded that we'll observe All Saint's Day next Sunday (Nov. 24) and our Christmas Eve service will be at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24. Swapping microphones has made an improvement in our current sound system so we discussed not making any changes to that. However, reminding ourselves that we're also interested in the capability to record sermons for online sharing, Joel will bring that interest to his sound system contact for suggestions and pricing.

Deacons – Doug reports that the Deacons will host their annual eggnog and snacks party immediately after the Christmas Eve worship service.

Property – Dick reported no particular issues and thanked Patricia for her work repairing the ramp to the men's side of the shed.

Music – Janis reports she's glad to be back and thanked everyone for their support and the extension of her sick leave benefit. She's working on Advent/Christmas music.

Church Fellowship – Patricia reported the Christmas Bazaar has been scheduled for Saturday, December 14, from 9:00 to noon. Raffle letters have gone out and they're working on putting together the baskets.

Evangelism/IT, Trustees, Memorial, Stewardship, Missions, and Nominating – No reports

Old Business –

The Toys for Tots collection as our November outreach is ongoing. The box should be here this week and we need to announce a reminder in church.

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Judy is planning the monthly Blood Pressure Clinic to begin in January. She's hoping to use the corner of the music room for privacy. This will be available after church to anyone who's worshipping with us that Sunday.

The next Council Meeting will be January 19, 2025.

Joel adjourned the meeting with prayer.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dickie Brooks*

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS



Advent begins on Sunday December 1st. We ask that everyone bring an ornament for the Christmas tree that day. You can take your ornament back home with you after Christmas. Let's make our tree look wonderful.

Our program of special Christmas Music will be during regular worship on Sunday, December 22nd. We will hold a "Longest Night" service on Sunday December 22nd at 11:45 AM. This is a service for anyone who has ever lost a loved one and misses them especially during the holiday season. It is a time to acknowledge our grief and seek some healing. Our Christmas Eve Service will be held on Tuesday December 24th at 4:00 PM. We hope you can be with us for this very special service. After worship, the Deacons will host their annual eggnog party. Plan to stay around for fellowship and yummy holiday treats.



IN OUR PRAYERS

As you read the names of our "In Our Prayers" list below, if you know someone whose name is on the list but they no longer have specific prayer needs – or if there is someone you feel needs to be on the list but is not - please let Doug MacWilliam or Rev. Reif know. Thank you!

Jennifer Gray, Doug MacWilliam, 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, Susanne Colombo, Sandy Martyn, Bob Therrien, Katie Rogers, Torey, Razel Cramer, Janis & John Gonzales, Ronald Powell, Patricia Allen, Terry Fritz, Rus Dunbar, Diane Ware, Chelsy Lawton, Judy Jones, Jamie, Gabriel, Leone Bater, Bob Schwartzfeger, Tomm Mountz, Dick Keller, the family of Paul Pieterofere



BIRTHDAYS

5th Mary Ann Hower
8th Janet Honaker
20th Mary Sternal

ANNIVERSARIES

28th Jim & Roberta Saart

HELP REPLENISH OUR FELLOWSHIP FUNDS!

We are going to replenish our fellowship funds the recycle way! Do you drink your soda or beer out of cans? Save your empty cans and bring them to church! (Any pop tops will go to veterans' organizations) Have questions? See Patricia!

TREASURE COAST NOTARY & WEDDINGS

(Kim Heveron-Hurlbert)

I'm offering free mobile notary services for anyone with legal paperwork requiring a notary's signature. Additionally, I am a licensed wedding officiant. For any couple wishing to be legally married in a civil ceremony in the State of Florida, my services are available at no cost. If interested, please contact me by email at kimberly_hev61@yahoo.com or by phone at (772) 212-5888 (available in St. Lucie, Martin, and Indian River counties).

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.firstcongrp.org

Email
churchoffice@firstcongrp.org

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

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