

December 2022



THE BELL TOWER



**The First Congregational Church, Spencerport UCC
65 Church Street Spencerport, NY 14559**



December Newsletter 2022

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

~Desmond Tutu

It was the year 1675 in Bedford, England. John Bunyan, a Puritan preacher, found himself, incarcerated, in the Bedford County Jail. Religious persecution had resurfaced in England; and sanctions had been placed on independent churches. As a result, all those unauthorized preachers and parishioners who had not been solidified by the Church of England were in danger of being penalized. Bunyan was a part of the unauthorized group. Therefore, he was found himself serving a 12-year-prison sentence. To make matters worse, his young pregnant wife and children were left to fend for themselves. Sitting in the Bedford County Jail, day in and day out, was torment and torture for Bunyan. He described the separation from his wife and children as, "The parting...hath oft been to me in this [prison cell] as the pulling the flesh from my bones."

But soon Bunyan came to the realization that his 12-year-prison sentence just may have been a blessing in disguise. Because in Bunyan's dark-dim cell, there was a small desk, that leaned against the wall, right underneath the window. In addition to bringing him meals, regularly, his wife would bring him writing utensils and paper. And day in and day out Bunyan would sit at that desk thinking, imagining, and writing. It was at that desk that Bunyan penned some of the greatest pieces of literature that our libraries have been blessed to shelve. Among those great pieces of literature that he wrote was a book entitled, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which is an allegory to the Christian life. By the year 1692 there were 100,000 copies already in print.

Furthermore, *The Pilgrim's Progress* had a major influence on the works of Mark Twain, C.S. Lewis, Charles Dickens, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, just to name a few. For John Bunyan, on the surface, what happened to him, appeared to be a barrier; but it turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

A blessing in disguise is defined as "an apparent misfortune that eventually has good results." It is my prayer that during this holiday season, that things which appear, on the surface to be burdens and barriers to you, would turn out to be blessings in disguise. That is my holiday prayer, my holiday hope, and my holiday wish--for you.

In this Season of Hope!

Pastor Michael L. Sloan



CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

Sunday, December 11th Following worship will be the Church Christmas Brunch.

December 2022



COUNCIL AND BOARDS MEETINGS

Tuesday, December 20th @ 6:30 PM
HYBRID: IN-PERSON & ZOOM



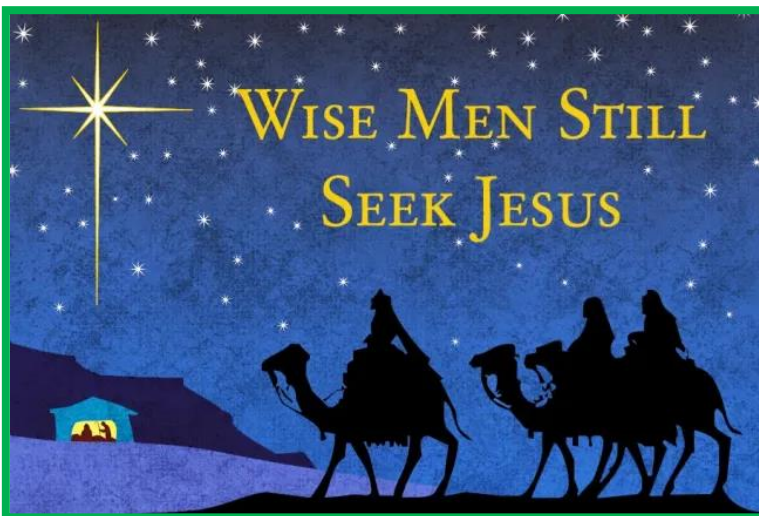
**FINANCE BOARD
ZOOM MEETING**

Wednesday, December 14th
@ 7:00 PM Via Zoom



ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

Annual Reports are due to the office by December 11th



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 4:30 PM
Matthew 2:1-12



Dori's Music School Recital
Friday December 2nd at 6:30 pm. The church is invited to attend the recital will be in the Sanctuary.

BREAKFAST CLUB



DECEMBER DATES/LOCATIONS

December 6th - Slayton Place
(26 Slayton Ave. Spencerport)

December 13th - TBD

December 20th - Theo's Restaurant
(1174 Brooks Ave.)

December 27th - Johnny d's Restaurant
(2139 North Union St.)

MONTHLY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

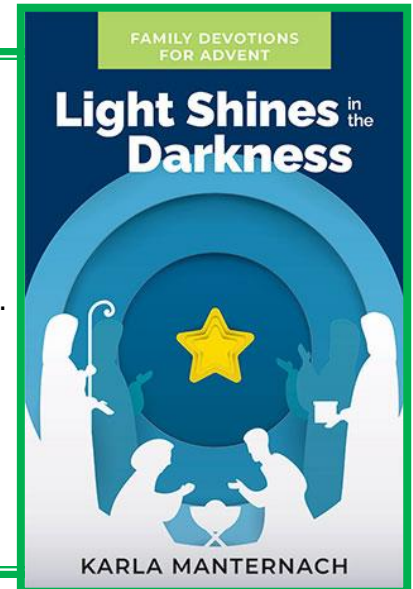
Let's celebrate each other! We would like to start including special dates in The Bell Tower Monthly Newsletter. Please send us your Anniversary or Birthday (without year) included in the monthly newsletter, please contact the office at (585) 352- 3448 or admin@spencerportucc.org.



*Anniversaries
and Birthdays*

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

"Light Shines in the Darkness" are available. They are located by the elevator on the first floor or on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like a copy sent to you, please contact the church office @ admin@spencerportucc.org or call at (585) 352-3448.



"WARM FUZZY TREE"



Help decorate our "WARM FUZZY TREE" with hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, socks, long underwear and slippers for all ages and sizes (Please No Wrapping). We will be collecting these items to help others in our area who because of your giving will be warmer.

December 2022



UPCOMING DATES:



Christmas Party:

Saturday, December 3rd @
Johnny D's @ 11:30 am



Set- up for Christmas Brunch:

Saturday, December 10th @ 8:30 am



**2022 CHRISTMAS
POINSETTIA PLANT
ORDER DEADLINE NOVEMBER 27th**

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM THE OFFICE FOR DECEMBER

For the week of December 5th, the office will be open
Tuesday 6th -Thursday 8th 10:00 am-1:00 pm.
The week of December 12th, the office will be closed, Paula will be available
by calling the office, email or if needed via Zoom
Tuesday 13th – Thursday 15th From 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

**WOMEN'S GUILD IS HAVING
A BOOK SALE!**

Women's Guild will be hosting a Book Sale
in April 2023 and we would like your books.

If you have books you need to clean out to make room for new books you can drop
them off at the church Monday thru Friday from 9AM to 2PM or on Sunday morning.

OR

Call the church office (585-352-3448/ M-F 9-2) to arrange to have them picked up.



Upcoming dates for Sunday School:

- 11/27 Sunday school
- 12/11 Sunday school followed by Christmas brunch
- 12/24 4:30 pm Christmas Eve Family Service
- 1/8 Sunday school
- 1/20 Sunday school – Mr. Len to start art project with the children

**** Helpers in Sunday School classroom are needed. If able to help on a Sunday, there is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall****



Shoebboxes are due back December 11. They will be delivered to Coldwater House where we hope to make the Christmas Holidays a little merrier for the residents. Please wrap your box and label it for a boy or girl and the age range. We are making boxes for children ages infant – 12 years old. I am sure the Moms would welcome a small remembrance if you would like to include something for them.

We are continuing our efforts to recruit and hire a new Christian Education Coordinator.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Christian Education Board!

Marion Morton, Len Ippolito and Sue Bagley

RACS PROGRAM UPDATE

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE ANNOUNCED

First Congregational Church - UCC Spencerport is engaged in an ongoing effort to support the needs of students in K-5 at Rochester Academy Charter School (RACS). RACS is a free Charter School (K-12) with students from all over Monroe County. It boasts a high school graduation rate of 94%.

Heather Eyesman, Elementary school Principal, indicates many of the children attending this school do not have appropriate winter wear for our cold Rochester winters.

In response to this need, First Congregational Church is pleased to announce our community-wide collection of warm winter gear for the children. This includes new or gently used coats, jackets, hats, gloves, scarves and boots in children's sizes 6 - 16.

Mike Montesalvo, owner of Lamont Trophies and Sporting Goods, responded to our plea and generously donated 100 pairs of children's mittens. Mike acknowledged there are so many needs in the community this time of year and he was very happy to support our endeavor.

Additionally, Davison Foundation has graciously donated \$2500 to support the effort.

The generous residents of Spencerport and neighboring communities are being asked to consider this project when evaluating their Holiday donations. Collection boxes are located at the following businesses in the Spencerport area:

Aire Serve, [14 Amity St.](#)

Hartsfield Hometown Garage, [164 Lyell Ave.](#)

Tops Friendly Markets, [27 Slayton Ave.](#)

Mary Lobene Hunt Realty, [85 So. Union St.](#)

[Union St.](#) Coffee House, [123 So. Union St.](#)

Wolf Mechanical, [5353 West Ridge Rd.](#)

School supplies are also an ongoing need for the school. Donations of supplies can be dropped off at these collection points too.

First Congregational Church wishes our community Happy Holidays and asks God's continued blessings on you and your families.



December 2022

CHRISTIAN ACTION



The Christmas Fund 2022 for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund – Christmas Eve Offering

Join with others in the United Church of Christ to bring good news and great joy to those who have who have given so much to our church.

... “[The Magi] set out and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.” Matthew 2: 9-10

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

This year, we rejoice at the opening of possibilities for gathering and worshipping together again, as we anticipate the good news of great joy at Christmas. Still, challenges remain for many of our pastoral leaders who continue to experience loss of income as congregations struggle with budget shortfalls.

Please show your continued gratitude for our active and retired UCC clergy who need our support by encouraging your congregation to give generously to the Christmas Fund this year.

Food Shelf



Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf

Thank you for your continuing and generous support to the Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf. A special thanks to those

of you who donated Thanksgiving Turkeys!

This month the following items are especially needed:

Cake Mix, Hamburger Helper, Rice, Jell-o, Pudding, Canned Fruit, Baked Beans, Muffin Mix, Pasta, Toothpaste, and Toothbrushes

Cash donations can be sent to Dick Gallagher, the Food Shelf Treasurer at: 425 Ogden Parma Townline Road, Spencerport, NY, 14559.

A bin is available in the Fellowship Hall to drop off your donations.

If you know of anyone residing in the Spencerport School District, in need of food, they can call 397-0290.

Questions or concerns: contact Melanie Ippolito at 352-3891

The Food Shelf is in constant need of sturdy corrugated boxes to pack food for delivery to clients.

Size: Approximately 12X8 -18X12, with or without lids. Please save any suitable boxes you might have and leave them underneath the table where the donation bin is located in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you!



DECEMBER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

GREETERS:

4 – Karen Eysaman
11 – Jan Elliott
18 – Betty Anne Riley
24 – TBD
25 – NO SERVICE

COFFEE HOUR:

4 – Lunch Bunch
11 – Christmas Brunch
18 – TBD
24 – TBD
25 – NO SERVICE

USHERS:

4 – Jan Elliott
11 – Ginny & Lynn Worden
18 – TBD
24 – Karen Eysaman
25 – NO SERVICE

LAY READERS:

4 – TBD
11 – TBD
18 – Gwendolyn Tappenden
24 – TBD
25 – NO SERVICE

**USHERS, GREETERS, LAY READERS,
HELPING HANDS AND COFFEE HOUR
HELP NEEDED:**

If you are interested in volunteering your time, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall or you can call the office at 352-3448.

Thank You!



Church Office hours:

Monday- Friday: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Pastor: Rev. Michael L. Sloan, D. Min.

Office Hours:

Tuesday – Thursday 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Office Intern (RACS Program): Renee Murphy

Monday – Thursday 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm &

3 Friday's a Month 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

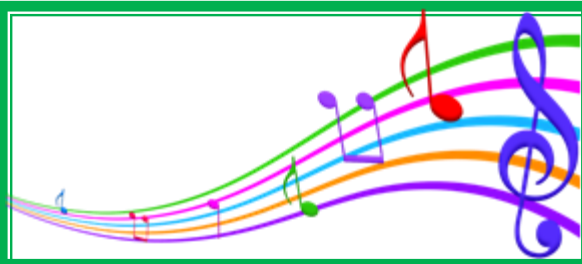
**JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
IS DECEMBER 14TH**

If you would like to submit an article for The December Newsletter, please email the church office at admin@spencerportucc.org, by November 16th.

Thank you!

December 2022

FCC
MUSIC MINISTRY
VETERANS DAY PROGRAM
NOVEMBER 12, 2022



THURSDAYS @ 7PM
& SUNDAYS @ 9AM


Special Thank You!

A Special Thank You to the Women's Guild, Especially the Dedicated Dinner Crew and the many other volunteers, & Everyone that made the night so special, The DeFenders Band, Darcy Colby, Lindsey Williams and FCC Choir, The Entire FCC Music Ministry and Many others to numerous to mention. ~Thank You!



December 2022

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SPENCERPORT UCC
DECEMBER 2022**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				7:00 pm - Choir Rehearsal	6 pm – Recital – Dori Music School (Church Invited)	WG – Christmas Party @ 11:30 Meet & Noon -Order - @ Johnny D's
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00 am – Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am –Worship/Penny Jar LUNCH BUNCH (Following Service)	*Office Closed*	9:00 am– Breakfast Club @ Slayton Place (26 Slayton Ave.) Office hours: 10 am – 1 pm	7:00 pm – Zoom Finance Board Meeting Office hours: 10 am – 1 pm	7:00 pm – Choir Rehearsal Office hours: 10 am – 1 pm	*Office Closed*	WG – 8:30 am Set-up for Christmas Brunch
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:00 am - Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am-Worship Christmas Brunch	*Office Closed* 8 pm Task Force Meeting	9:00 am– Breakfast Club @ TBD Physical Office Closed- Paula Available by Email	December Newsletter Deadline  Physical Office Closed- Paula Available by Email	7:00 pm - Choir Rehearsal Physical Office Closed- Paula Available by Email	*Office Closed*	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:00 am - Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am-Worship		9:00 am– Breakfast Club @Theo's Restaurant (1174 Brooks Ave.) 6:30/7:00 pm – Council/Boards Meeting	6:30 pm Monthly Staff Meeting	7:00 pm - Choir Rehearsal		4:30 pm- Christmas Eve Family Service
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
NO SERVICE	*Office Closed*	9:00 am– Breakfast Club @ Johnny d's (2139 North Union St.)		7:00 pm - Choir Rehearsal		

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
65 Church Street
Spencerport, NY 14559-1311**



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday Worship: 10:00 am
Telephone: (585) 352-3448
Web site: www.spencerportucc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SpencerportUCC
Pastor: Rev. Michael Sloan (1-309-262-6543 - cell)
E-mail: pastor@spencerportucc.org
Administrative Assistant: Paula Jackson
Office Hours: 9:00 am-2:00 pm – Monday-Friday
E-mail: admin@spencerportucc.org
Office Intern (RACS Program): Renee Murphy
Music Director: Darcy Colby
E-mail: musicdirector@spencerportucc.org**



Accompanist: Lindsey Williams