



# The Messenger

## 2025

The Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ  
132 N. Main Street, PO Box 231  
Angola, NY 14006

Phone 716-549-2115 E-mail: [ucc\\_angola@verizon.net](mailto:ucc_angola@verizon.net)

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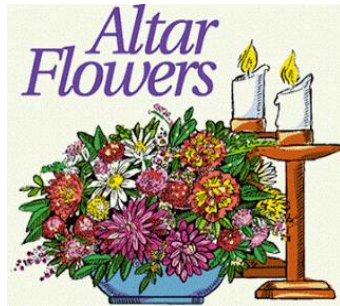
## Scheduled to Serve in December

Head Usher—Kurt Weinheimer

<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>
12/07 JonnyAnn Roach, Carol Ann Obrochta Joan Blais, Michelle Becker	Sally Needham	Randy Addison
12/14 Laurie Ludwig, Bill Ludwig	Gayl Weinheimer	Jessica Ludwig
12/21 Gayl Weinheimer, Jean Galfo	Marjorie McCarthy	Jean Galfo
12/24 Jean Galfo, Carol Ann Obrochta 6:30 PM		Carol Ann Obrochta
12/24 Carrie Ward-Marcynski, Eric Marcynski 10:30 PM		JonnyAnn Roach/ Carrie Ward-Marcynski
12/28 JonnyAnn Roach, Michelle Becker	Marcia Whittemore	Carrie Ward-Marcynski
<u>Counters</u>		
12/07 Michelle Becker, Jessica Ludwig		
12/14 Judy Strade, Judy Fuerst		
12/21 Darlene DePasquale, Marcia Whittemore		
12/28 Sue Weinheimer, John MacPherson		

## ALTAR FLOWERS

We would like to thank November Altar Flower Dedicators:



Michelle Becker  
Ludwig Family  
Donner & Mazur Family  
Miriam & Tony Oster  
Ed Gerecke & Dorene Shores  
Jean & Tony Galfo  
Gayl Weinheimer

If you are interested in dedicating Altar Flowers, the cost is \$20.00, please see the sign-up in the Narthex or call Michelle in the office 716-549-2115.

## We would like to thank November Bulletin Dedication:



Ronda Marvel gave this month's bulletins to the  
Glory of God, and In honor of Susan Doherty's  
birthday, All of the blessings received, In Honor of  
all my blessings received from my wonderful  
family, friends and church family.

If you are interested in dedicating Bulletins, the cost is \$50.00, please see the sign-up in the Narthex or call Michelle in the office 716-549-2115.

## From the Pastor:

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*  
~Jeremiah 29:11

I have mentioned it in church...Advent is on its way. And yet, now that it's here, I don't know how we got here so quickly! Advent is the beginning of the church year. It's an exciting, and busy, time in our church year as we prepare for the holiday season.

Advent marks an important time on the church calendar, the beginning of the church year. I always found it interesting that the "New Year" on the church calendar and on the secular calendar fall about a month apart. Advent is one of my favorite times of the church year. I enjoy the preparation, the idea of getting ready. But what exactly are we getting ready for?

The answer that most of us would likely default to is "Christmas," or "Jesus' birth." But a little deeper dive into that question. Last year as I was sitting in our creche display with one of our kids, I was asked, "How many times is Jesus going to be born?" Hmmm...

It really got me thinking. We know the story of Jesus' life...Jesus was born, lived, died and was resurrected, and yet here we find ourselves in the season of Advent, waiting for Jesus to be "born again."

But as I thought about it some more, it made more sense to me—we're waiting, we're preparing for re-birth; not in a physical sense, but in a spiritual one. As we prepare for the new (church) year, we are preparing for our spiritual new year. Advent and preparing for Christmas provide us an opportunity to look back over the past year and reflect on the spiritual practices we participate in. What worked and what didn't? What new practices might we try?

It may sound like a tall order, now, in the busy-ness and, at times chaos, of the holidays and end of the year deadlines. We might find ourselves thinking, "When will I have time to reflect on anything?? I have so much to do!"

And yet, Advent is a great time to take time—to make time, even if just a few minutes each day—to intentionally spend time with God and then to breathe in the Spirit; to listen and respond. I find that when something is really important to us, we will make the time. When we make the time to breathe and reflect, we will be calmer and less anxious, more prepared to take on the day, the season

with confidence. When we make the time to put God first, (not suggesting we neglect the rest of our lives), we will find ourselves making better decisions and feeling braver, more peaceful, and more prepared for whatever December has to throw at us.

May you find hope, peace, joy and love in the Advent season and the year to come!

Peace,  
Pastor Jen



## Advent Bible Study and Potluck

Join us as we prepare our hearts and mind for Christmas as we  
***“Unwrap Advent”***

Focusing on scripture, we will explore different themes of Advent using a multi-sensory approach.

We will meet on  
Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> and *Wednesday*, December 17<sup>th</sup>  
at 5:30 PM.

Invite a friend! Come for one night or all of them!  
Sign-up sheets are located in Updyke Hall.

## **132 NORTH**

Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 6:30pm  
Come and enjoy music, scripture and fellowship downstairs!





## Sunday School News!

Who has more fun than our Sunday School kids? That's right- no one. This past Sunday we had a handful of kiddos hang around for an hour or so after church to help tidy up their respective classrooms downstairs. We are always looking for projects to get the kids lending a hand around the church, if you think of anything that needs doing, please let us know.

We enjoy watching the kids retain the stories taught to them each week. The teachers have been coordinating fun activities and crafts each week to involve and engage each kid in class.

We plan to do a kids night during their Winter Break! Stay tuned for more details on that.



Best wishes, warmest regards!  
Tiffany Hurd

### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

*Your Church Choir be doing a fun morning of Christmas caroling at the Evans Senior Center on Sturgeon Point Rd. in Derby on Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30am. It is free and open to everyone to come enjoy the sounds of Christmas Carols.*

### **EVANGOLA COMMUNITY THEATER**

On Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> - Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting “Christmas Castaway’s”. The performances will be at 7:30pm each night and on Saturday a 3pm matinee. We will have concessions again- bag of chips for \$1.00 or bottle of water or candy bars for \$2.00 each. This will help fund our next Community Dinner.

### **UCC CHRISTMAS FUND**

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund: Remembering those who serve our church.

Helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to lower-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy or lay church employees in need, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to hundreds of annuitants; administered by the Pension Boards.

Donations can be sent into church, mailed directly to The Pension Boards- United Church of Christ Christmas Fund, 75 Remittance Dr., Suite 1637, Chicago, IL 60675, or a secure online donation site: [www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org).

*Christmas Fund Special Mission Offering – December 21, 2025*

### **GIVING ENVELOPES**

The new Giving Envelopes should arrive in your mailbox soon. Keep in mind that the extra white envelopes should be returned to the church office if you do not need to use them. There will also be a special letter with the envelopes. Please remember that the early January envelope is to be used to cover the cost of the envelope system. The cost for the year is \$24.00 per member.

## **BUDGET DISTRIBUTION AND PLEDGE CARDS**

During the October meeting when the budget for 2026 was presented, we are proud to say we were able to present a balanced budget once again for this upcoming year. Thank you to the Finance Committee, which consists of Eric Marcynski, Tiffany Hurd, Judy Strade, Rob Ingrassia, Ronda Marvel, Pastor Jen Mazur, JonnyAnn Roach, Mary Jo Maracle, Cherryl Vincent-Becker and Michelle Becker. Last month everyone received his or her pledge cards. Please take time to fill them out and send them into the office if you haven't already. Additional pledge cards are available in the back of the Sanctuary. We are off to a great start with receiving pledge cards back, let's keep it going so we meet 100% of our goals for 2026!

### **The Friendship Fridge**



We are starting something exciting this fall; the Friendship Fridge!

- ☺ Have you ever been grocery shopping and find a great deal, but you don't need the "extra" in your fridge?
- ☺ Maybe you only needed 4 eggs and don't want the other 8 to go to waste.
- ☺ Did your zucchini harvest grow a bit wild but will spoil before you can use it all?

The Friendship Fridge is a place where you can bring your "extras" to be a blessing to others.

There are just a few considerations to keep in mind:

- ✓ Items cannot be past the expiration date.
- ✓ Items should be un-opened.
- ✓ As yummy as your left-overs might be, we cannot accept them in the Friendship Fridge.

The refrigerator will be located in the front hall of the church by the Main Street entrance. If you have any questions, please see Pastor Jen, Manni or Tom McMullen.



***MEMORIAL STARS:*** Once again this year, we will pause to remember loved ones lost (recently and not so recently) by hanging stars in their memory on two evergreen trees in the sanctuary. This meaningful remembrance will take place during the 10 a.m. worship service on ***Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.***

### **HANGING OF THE GREENS**

You are all invited to come and help decorate the church for Christmas at the **HANGING OF THE GREENS** event **on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**. The evening will start with a light supper at 6p.m., and then Kurt Weinheimer will coordinate the various aspects of decorating which take place throughout the church. It is a wonderful fellowship time. Please join us. If you can't make Friday we will be setting up the Nativity sets on Sunday, Dec. 14th following worship in the parlor.

### **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:**

**Date TBD,  
Committee Reports due to Michelle by January 4<sup>th</sup>.**



## *The Angel Fund*

Since its inception several years ago, the Angel Fund has been able to brighten the holidays for many families through anonymous gifts and help throughout the year. While a lot of the work the Angel Fund does happens at Christmas time, it is used throughout the year to help when crisis and challenging times come up.

*Our Angel Fund is funded through the generosity of our congregation.*

If you would like to make a donation, please send it in to the church office.

Should you have any questions about the Angel Fund, or know of someone in need of assistance, please contact Kurt Weinheimer.



## **SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING** **AT ANGOLA TOPS!**

THANK YOU TO THE Bell Ringing Volunteers who signed up to ring the bell for Christmas this year. If you are still interested in ringing the bell this year, call the church office to sign up. Dates are Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> from 10am-7pm. There are still time slots available if you would like to sign-up.

## **TRUSTEES REPORT**

Trustee meeting was held on November 11, 2025 from 4-6:30pm. Happy Veteran's Day!

We opened with prayer, round table discussion, finances reviewed, bills to pay – usual business conducted.

Ali Ludwig was hired for housekeeping; Mission for Quarter 1 2026 will be “IGY6” Veteran's Awareness

Rental property was discussed; voted to remove first row of pews to allow more space for kids and music; Finance was discussed with 13 pledge cards received to date; discussed Covenantal Share/Per Capita and what is expected by UCC and give more information to congregation at the Congregational Meeting in January.

Many future events discussed! Community Dinner on 11/14; poinsettia sales 11/19-11/23; LSACC Thanksgiving Service 11/23; Memorial Star Service and Mystery Bingo 11/30; Advent Prayer Vigil out front 12/1; Evangola Community Theater 12/3-12/6 (5 performances), need church liaisons; Salvation Army Bell Ringing 12/4, 12/5, 12/11; Village Tree Lighting and hot chocolate at church 12/5; Hanging of Greens and lite dinner 12/2; Christmas in the Village 12/13; Walk thru Bethlehem 12/17, set-up on 12/14; 132 NORTH Service 12/18; Poinsettia tree set-up 12/19 and Christmas Eve Services 12/24.

“With this being said” many volunteers are needed. Please help out we have a busy Advent Season!!!

A Thanksgiving thought “Gratitude turns what we have into enough!”

Your Board wishes everyone a Happy and Safe Thanksgiving!  
Peace ~ Jean Galfo

## **SUNDAY COUNTER VOLUNTEERS**

It's that time of year when we will be working on scheduling our Sunday Counter Volunteers for 2026. We are in need of some new volunteers, if you are interested in becoming one; please see Michelle Becker. This is a great way to meet members of the congregation. We would like to thank all of our counters past and present. We greatly appreciate all of your dedication to our church. There is no prior experience needed, you will be counting our Sunday offering.

**Evangola++  
COMMUNITY  
THEATER**

Presents  
**Christmas  
Castaways**  
*by Patricia Middleton*

A tropical Christmas one-act with Caribbean caroling!

Wed. Dec. 3 through Sat. Dec. 6  
7:30 PM

Matinee show on Sat. Dec. 6  
3 PM

Updyke Hall at the First  
Congregational United  
Church of Christ (UCC)  
132 N. Main Street in Angola

Tickets \$10 general admission

Check out our Facebook  
Evangola Community Theater



*The Evans Senior Center  
invites you to enjoy...*

**SOUNDS  
of the  
SEASON**

Concerts  
are FREE!  
Everyone  
welcome!

Wed. 12/3 @ 10:30am: First Cong. Church Choir

Wed. 12/10 @ 9:30am-2pm: Annual Christmas Party  
*(feat. piano music & Lake Shore High School Jazz Band)*  
Pre-sale tickets available at the Senior Center until 12/7.  
Ticket includes lunch, entertainment & door prizes.

Wed. 12/17 @ 10:30am: Guitar Quartet

Tue. 12/30 @ 10:30am: Judy Driscoll's Student Piano Recital

Lunch served daily at noon. Cost is \$3.50/person.  
Pre-registration required for lunch. Call (716) 947-0974

Evans Senior Center | 999 STURGEON POINT ROAD, DERBY

*The Friends of the Village, Inc. Proudly Presents the*

**26<sup>th</sup> Annual**

**Christmas**

in the **VILLAGE OF ANGOLA**

**Saturday, December 13, 2025**

**Hot Breakfast with Santa 9AM-11AM**

**Craft Show 9AM-2PM**

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
132 North Main Street, Village of Angola

**Fun for the whole family!**

<p><b>Fire Truck Rides</b></p> <p><b>Children's Magician</b></p> <p><b>Letters to Santa</b></p> <p><b>Children's Crafts</b></p> <p><b>Children's Bingo</b></p>	<p><b>Balloon Artist</b></p> <p><b>Hot Cocoa &amp; Cider Stations</b></p> <p><b>Face Painters</b></p> <p><b>Temporary Tattoos</b></p> <p><b>Christmas Cartoons</b></p>	<p><b>Ornament Making</b></p> <p><b>Photo Stand-Ins</b></p> <p><b>Christmas Movie</b></p> <p><b>Horse &amp; Wagon Rides</b></p>
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*\* Subject to Change Without Notice*





### December Activities & Worship Schedule

Sunday, November 30 <sup>th</sup>	-	Worship/ Memorial Star/ Mystery Bingo
Monday, December 1 <sup>st</sup>	-	Advent Prayer Vigil at 6:30pm
Wednesday, December 3 <sup>rd</sup>	-	Christmas Caroling at Evans Senior Center At 10:30am
Thursday, December 4 <sup>th</sup>	-	Bible Study at 5:30pm
December 3 <sup>rd</sup> -December 6 <sup>th</sup>	-	Evangola Community Theater "Christmas Castaways" at 7:30pm except Saturday 3pm & 7:30pm
Thursday, December 4 <sup>th</sup>	-	Salvation Army Kettle Drive 10-7pm
Friday, December 5 <sup>th</sup>	-	Salvation Army Kettle Drive 10-7pm
	-	Tree Lighting, caroling and hot chocolate & cookies to follow
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	-	Worship/ JOY Fellowship Meeting
Tuesday, December 9 <sup>th</sup>	-	Trustee meeting 4pm
Wednesday, December 10 <sup>th</sup>	-	Newsletter Deadline for January
Thursday, December 11 <sup>th</sup>	-	Salvation Army Kettle Drive
	-	LSACC Clergy Meeting at 3:30pm
	-	Bible Study at 5:30pm
Friday, December 12 <sup>th</sup>	-	Hanging of Greens & Lite Dinner 6pm
Saturday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>	-	Christmas in the Village 9-2pm, Breakfast with Santa, craft vendors and music from our own "Gang of Scoundrels" church band at First Congregational UCC
Wednesday, Dec. 17th-19th	-	Bethlehem Advent Prayer Walk
	-	Bible Study at 5:30pm
Thursday, December 18 <sup>th</sup>	-	132 NORTH Vespers at 6:30pm
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	-	Christmas Eve Service, 6:30pm (Communion at 6:00pm) and 10:30pm Candlelight service
Wednesday, December 31 <sup>st</sup>	-	New Year's Eve



The magic of Christmas is not  
in the presents but in His presence.  
May you have the gift of faith this Christmas and many  
blessings throughout the New Year.



First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
132 North Main Street  
P O Box 231  
Angola, New York 14006-0231

**Address Service Requested**

TIME VALUE MAIL  
Mailed on December 01, 2025  
**Please deliver promptly.**

**Sunday Worship- 10:00 AM**

**Sunday School – 10:00 AM**

OFFICE HOURS: MON., TUES., THURS., FRI., 9:00am-1:00pm

For **Emergency Pastoral Services**, please call  
Pastor Jen Mazur at 716-264-7026 or Michelle in the Church Office  
716-549-2115 or 716-262-6171.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of this church shall be to bring together followers of Jesus Christ,  
to live and preach His gospel, to celebrate the sacraments  
and to be a beacon and model of faith for all.

- **The Next Newsletter deadline is December 10, 2025**
  - **There is PLENTY of room for your article!!!**