


# The Messenger



The Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ  
132 N. Main Street, PO Box 231  
Angola, NY 14006  
716-549-2115

Phone 716-549-2115 E-mail [ucc\\_angola@verizon.net](mailto:ucc_angola@verizon.net)  
Website: [www.christchurchangola.com](http://www.christchurchangola.com)



## Scheduled to Serve in February

Head Usher—Jean Galfo

### Ushers

02/02 Joan Blais, Carol Ann Obrochta  
Gayl Weinheimer, JonnyAnn Roach

02/09 Bill Ludwig, Jessica Ludwig

02/16 Carrie Ward-Marcynski, Eric Marcynski

02/23 Paul Becker, Rob Ingrassia

### Greeter

Marjorie McCarthy

Marcia Whittemore

Gayl Weinheimer

Donna Nagel

### Reader

Carol Ann Obrochta

Jessica Ludwig

Ronda Marvel

Bob Fuerst

### Counters

02/02 Michelle Becker, JonnyAnn Roach

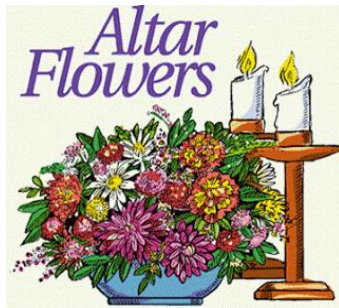
02/09 Laurie Ludwig, Jessica Ludwig

02/16 Judy Strade, Annette Reynolds

02/23 Darlene DePasquale, Marcia Whittemore

## ALTAR FLOWERS

We would like to thank January Altar Flower Dedicators:



Judy & Fred Strade

The Donners

David & Nancy Volker

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 our January Bulletin Dedication:



Judy & Fred Strade gave this  
month's bulletins to the Glory of  
God and In Loving Memory of  
their son,  
Daniel T. Strade.

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...*

“Open the Eyes of my Heart, Lord...”  
Ephesians 1:18

One of the rituals I have when I write is putting my headphones on and turning the music up, drowning out all of the “extra” noise around me. I have done this for years, and this was a long-standing argument with my parents when I was growing up. They never understood how I could focus on my homework *and* listen to music at the same time. I can’t explain it, but it worked then...and it still works now...sort of.

Recently I was working on a paper, a playlist of random Christian music playing in my headphones, typing away, when a song that I hadn’t heard in a long time came on, “*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart. I want to see you. I want to see you.*” I tried to stay focused, to continue typing, but before long, I was singing along, totally immersed in the song.

There are so many things in our lives that can distract us from seeking and seeing God. Events in our personal lives and in our world can cause our view of God to become blurred and unfocused. Anxieties and agendas overwhelm us, take over our hearts, worries and the busy-ness of life cause us to turn our focus elsewhere.

As followers of Jesus, our hearts and eyes are to be fixed on Jesus, and all who Jesus is. This song becomes a prayer for us, that we may see who Jesus as he truly is; His love and grace given freely for each of us. Jesus opens our hearts and His holy spirit comes into our lives transforming us; changing our hearts to be more like him.

“*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart, I want to see You, I want to see You...*” This song also becomes a prayer, a reminder for us, that there is work to be done. We are called as disciples of Jesus to open our

eyes and our hearts to see and experience our community, our world, with “new” eyes; eyes that see both wholeness *and* brokenness, eyes that see beauty and blessings along with struggles challenges.

As we pray for God to open our eyes, may we see both the fullness and the emptiness in the lives of God’s people around us. Living out our call to serve others, those immediately visible and those that we don’t automatically see, we are reminded to ask, “who is God calling us to serve?”

There is a hymn in our hymnal with a similar title, “Open our eyes, Lord.” The lyrics go like this:

*Open our eyes, Lord,  
we want to see Jesus,  
to reach out and touch him,  
and say that we love him.  
Open our ears, Lord,  
and help us to listen.  
Open our eyes, Lord,  
we want to see Jesus.*

“*Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen,*” ...this is our prayer as we continue to discern who God is calling us to be and to serve. As God’s beloved people, seeking and seeing God first, we ask that God guides us to love more deeply and widely.

In this month where love is celebrated in so many ways, let us remember to celebrate the love that has been so freely given to us by our awesome and unfailing God. Let us be moved and inspired by the Holy Spirit to send that love out into the world.

In Jesus’ love,  
Pastor Jen

## Conversation Hearts

**"...blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."**

**~Luke 11:28**

I love those Valentine Conversation Heart candies that are found in the stores this time of year. They even found their way to store shelves before we lit the Christ candle on our Advent Wreath. But, nonetheless, I have always loved them and treat myself to a couple each year. (Not too many, Ms. Judy!)

While many candy companies have made their own versions of these Valentine's confections, according to the Necco candy company, their conversation hearts are the most popular Valentine's candy. I'm not sure chocolate confectioners would agree, but that research will have to wait for another time.

The history of these candies is quite interesting. The concept for these candies, with their sayings printed on one side, goes way back to when Abraham Lincoln was president.

Besides the sweet taste of these candies, I love the little sayings that are found on them; "Be Mine!" "Kiss Me!" "Sure!" Sure, some of the phrases have changed today, but their sweet little messages always make me smile.

God sends us conversation hearts, too! The sweet messages we find in scripture remind us of God's love for us:

**BE MINE** – God reminds us that we belong to him as his beloved children.

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life."

~John 3:16

**ALL MINE** – God loves us and keeps us, we are never alone.

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never die. No one can snatch them away from me. What my Father has given me is greater than everything, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care. The Father and I are one.” ~John 10:27-30

**TRUE LOVE** – God loves us with true love as only God can.

“I appeared to them<sup>[a]</sup> from far away. People of Israel, I have always loved you, so I continue to show you my constant love.” ~Jeremiah 31:3

**LOVE ME** – God wants us to love back!

“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind’; and ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’” ~Luke 10:27

**I'M SURE** – God's love is never-ending, always steadfast and true!

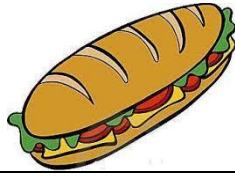
“Do not be worried and upset,” Jesus told them. “Believe in God and believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am.” ~John 14: 1-3

**SWEET TALK** – God's Word is God's love letter to us.

“How sweet is the taste of your instructions—sweeter even than honey! ~Psalm 119:103

**BE GOOD** – God tells us how we can show love to others.

“If you love me, you will obey my commandments.” ~John 14:15



### **SUB SALE**

Sub Sale is Wednesday, February 5th - Subs must be pre-ordered and pre-paid by Friday, Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>, and can be picked up on Wednesday 02/05/25. Please support this fundraiser. Order forms are available at the church.

**Thank you** to everyone who helps and supports our Sub Sales!

### **J.O.Y. Fellowship**

Once again this year we will be pre-selling Hospice Bouquets. Orders will be taken till February 09, 2025 and delivery will be the week of March 4, 2025. They will be \$14 for standard and \$35 for Tribute bouquets. We are asking for payment at the time of ordering to make it easier on everyone. We will be meeting Sunday, February 2nd following worship. Please look at attending if you are looking for fellowship events such as movie night, supper club, etc.

### **News from Becker's Bistro:**

#### **"Crockpot Cook-off" Sunday- Feb. 09, 2025**

Join us for are annual crockpot cook-off. Please make your favorite soup or crockpot recipe.

Entries will be judged and winners announced. Please sign-up in Updyke Hall.




## LENT - RE-LENT - RE-TURN

ASH WEDNESDAY

March 05, 2025

WORSHIP 6:30 pm

LAKESHORE ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES



*"Rebuild My Church"*

**Lenten Lunch Series**

Wednesday, March 12th- 12:00 PM First Church of Evans 7431 Erie Rd, Derby, NY 14047	Wednesday, March 19th- 12:00 PM Holy Cross Lutheran Church 633 Church St. Farnham NY 14061
Wednesday, March 26th- 12:00 PM Most Precious Blood 22 Prospect St. Angola, NY	Wednesday, April 2nd- 12:00 PM Parish of Our Lady PNCC 10708 Brant Angola Rd, Brant, NY 14027
Wednesday, April 9th- 12:00 PM First Congregation United Church 132 N Main St, Angola, NY 14006	

*Lunch to follow the service. Free will offering will be collected for Friendship Corner.*





## **Sunday School News!**

January has been busy for the children and staff. The children's program was on January 12<sup>th</sup>. All the children did a great job and thank you to all our teachers for all their work with the children!

Please continue to sign your children in and out. The book will be located on the shelf outside the church office. The Safety Committee requires the information. Thank you for doing this.

The Nursery needs help during worship when babies and young children are in attendance. The 3 & 4 year old class is in need of a parent or church member to help when their weekly number is up. The Nursery also needs parental supervision during coffee hour. Please see Michelle if you are able to help.

We would like to announce our new Church School Superintendent, Tiffany Hurd and would like to thank Cherryl Vincent-Becker for all you did as Church School Superintendent.

God Bless,

Cherryl Vincent-Becker

## **TRUSTEES REPORT**

Happy New Year! What a successful church year we had – we are blessed! We hope that everyone enjoyed the holiday festivities, music and decorations that many people contributed to.

Trustee meeting was held on 1-14-2025 from 4-6:30pm. Usual business, financials and reports were discussed and accepted.

Future projects and events discussed: safety class and CPR; missions (birthday kits); Lent program and Strawberry Social!

Head Usher list for 2025 completed; Trustee and Liaison positions appointed and need to be voted for acceptance at Congregational Meeting on 1-19-2025.

As we all have felt the financial increases in our personal lives (groceries, insurances and utilities) so has the church and these need to be addressed moving forward in 2025.

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream” C.S. Lewis  
Peace, Jean Galfo

As a Christian, I am always trying to make a better path between my Lord God and myself. I can identify with this poem because of the things I have gone through recently! I now include in my daily prayers that I can learn to let go of what's troubling me and let God take over!

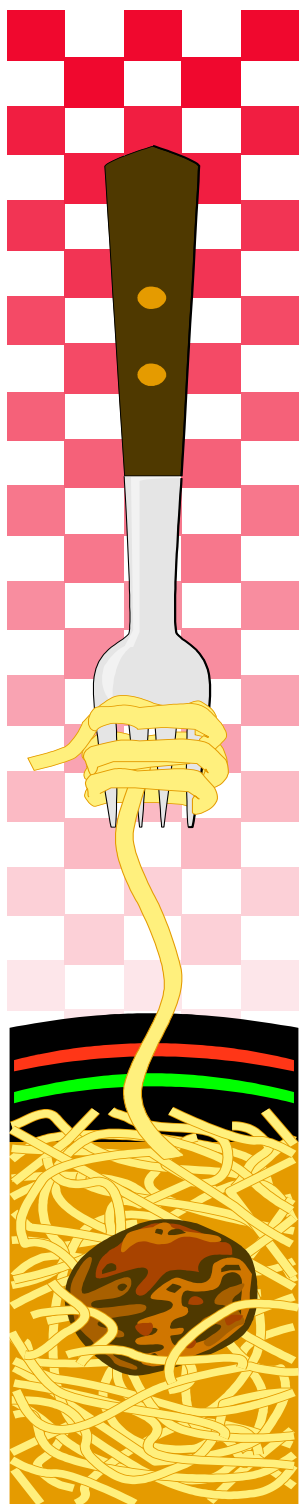
### **Broken dreams**

**As a children bring their broken toys  
With tears for us to mend,  
I brought my broken dreams to God  
because He was my friend.  
But, then instead of leaving Him  
In peace to work alone,  
I hung around and tried to help  
With ways that were my own.  
At last I snatched them back  
and cried  
“How can you be so slow?”  
“My child, “ He said  
“What could I do?  
you never did let go.”**

**Author Unknown**

### **ANNUAL REPORT BOOKLET**

The extensive comprehensive Annual Report Booklet is available on the table in the Narthex. If you would like a copy and cannot pick one up at the Church, call the office at 716-549-2115 and ask that a copy be mailed to your home.



**First Congregational UCC  
132 N. Main Street  
Angola, NY 14006  
716-549-2115**

**SPAGHETTI DINNER**  
Sunday, February 16, 2025

11:30AM-4:30PM or to sold out

**Dine-in or Take-out**

Includes: Spaghetti, Meatballs,  
Salad, Bread & Butter and Dessert

**\$ 15.00 / person**  
**Pre-Sale Tickets call Michelle at**  
**716-549-2115**

**I AM A HOSPICE SPRING  
BOUQUET SALE COORDINATOR!**



**Contact me to pre-order your flowers.**

**\$14**

*Mixed Bouquet*

**\$35**

*Tribute Bouquet*

First Congregational UCC  
132 N. Main St., Angola, NY 14006  
716-549-2115  
Michelle Becker  
Orders taken till February 9, 2025  
Pick Up: March 4, 2025 from 11-2pm  
Or delivery available upon request for shut-ins.



## **HAM & SCALLOPED POTATO DINNER**

**Sunday, March 09, 2025**

**11:30 AM - 4:30 PM or sold out**

**First Congregational UCC**

**132 N. Main Street**

**Angola, NY 14006**

**716-549-2115**

**Dine-In or Take-Out Available**

**Includes: Ham, scalloped potatoes, vegetable,  
roll and dessert**

**\$ 15.00 / person**

**Pre-sale encouraged Mon-Fri 9am-1pm**

**at the church office**

**Or call 716-549-2115**

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

TIME VALUE MAIL  
Mailed on February 03, 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 716-725-2157, Michelle in the Church Office 716-549-2115,  
or Deaconess Darlene DePasquale at 716-549-1331

### **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 February 12, 2025**
  - **There is PLENTY of room for your article!!!**