

DECEMBER



Life Line

Paul's Perspectives:



**The first Sunday of Advent is this coming December 3rd.
Let me run through the season's highlights:**

The first is the lighting of the Community Christmas Tree – a beautiful spruce tree planted earlier this month. The Lighting event will be on Friday, December 1st at 6:30 pm. Candlelight, Carols, and the Countdown are a great way to initiate this festive season. But also, to top off the evening, the Madrigal Singers from Waterford Union High School will perform at 7:00 pm - as they have for the past many years. These singers are as good and entertaining as they come! Refreshments follow with warm apple cider and Christmas cookies of every kind.

For the four Sundays of Advent, I plan to bring messages that help us understand how God orchestrated the advent (coming) of His Son into the world to bring salvation. First, 12/3 - by "Preludes of Promise". Second, 12/10 - by "Prophets and Predictions". Third, 12/17 - by 'Providential Preparations'. Fourth, 12/24 - by a "Poignant Presentation". The Nativity was never an afterthought, but ordained by God from even before the moment sin entered into the world.

This year Christmas Eve lands on a Sunday evening. So, on Sunday the 24th we will have both morning and evening services. The evening Candlelight service will feature carols, readings, special music by our Choir, Soloists, and Jubilee Band, and the sacred beauty of candlelight moments of meditation and song. In this special time, we will be met with the true spirit of Christmas.

(Emmanuel = Christ with us.)

There is no service on Christmas day, but around the family tree in the morning, the table at mealtime, in your giving and receiving, in your celebrations and remembrances, be aware that Christ is the heart of Christmas. Love and be loved. Pray for Peace on Earth, and share the good tidings with friends, family, and neighbors. Let there be Joy in every corner of the world!!

And then there is the last Sunday of the year - (New Years Eve no less). After the morning service - (which is all about carols of Christmas – no sermon), we will enjoy a potluck luncheon followed by a festive round of 'Robber Bingo'. Everyone brings a gift to put out on a table, it can be any kind of gift - a gag, a white elephant, or a regifted - and who knows where it ends up after a few rounds of cutthroat Robber Bingo. It's a great time for fun and laughter. Laughter – what a good way to end one year and begin the new one!!

I wish you all the merriest of Christmases, and a blessed New Year!

Pastor Paul

DECEMBER 2023



Friday, December 1– The Annual Christmas Tree Lighting at our church will be at 6:30 pm with carols and candlelight. The Waterford Union High School Madrigal Singers will be performing at 7:00 pm. Refreshments will be served following the event. All are welcome!

Sunday, December 3 - Second Sunday in Advent. 10:00 am Worship Hour. Choir singing.

Wednesday, December 6 - “Adopt a Family” unwrapped gifts are due, and need to be dropped off in the church parlor. Please have gift tags taped to each gift. Thank you to everyone who participated in this gift giving.

Sunday, December 10 - Third Sunday in Advent. 10:00 am Worship Hour and Children's Sunday School. Special music by Joni Konecke.

Sunday, December 17 - Fourth Sunday in Advent. Worship is at 10:00 am. Choir singing.

Monday, December 18 - 7:00 pm Church Council Meeting.

Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve (*We will have two services on this day*)
10:00 am Worship Hour and Children's Sunday School.
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Monday, December 25 - MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Sunday, December 31 - New Year's Eve, 10:00 am Worship Hour, Carols and Stories, followed by a Potluck Luncheon and “Robber Bingo”.

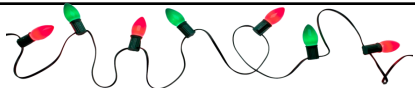
Monday, January 1 - NEW YEAR'S DAY! Happy New Year!



Choir Practice

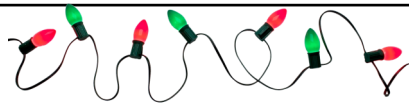
Choir practice will meet each week on Wednesday nights at 7:00 pm.

Please contact Vicki Will, Choir Director, at 262-343-1326, if you would like to join and sing or if you have any questions.



Sunday School

Sunday School will be every 2nd and 4th



Lectionary Readings

12/3 Isaiah 64: 1-9; Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-35

12/10 Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2Peter 3:8-15; Mark 1:1-8

12/17 Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:46-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

12/24 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46-55; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38; Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14, 15-20

12/31 Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

Prayers and Concerns



Victims of Terrorism	Lori Haley - hospice
Victims and volunteers of natural disasters worldwide	Daniel Hays
God's Providence for Israel and the Middle East	Oscar Jacobs
Our Nation's Leaders	Elizabeth Joseph
All military personnel and their families	Audrey Koeper
Casa Bernabe Orphanage	Tom and Lynn Koeper
Ashley Clark	Dan Medkalf
Tom Eckert	Stephanie Mutz
Morton Gall	Matthew Olson
Jill Haubrich	Julie Pagan
	Torin Philips
	Reid Shamus
	Nancy
	Viveca Persson, Agenta's sister



COUNCIL MINUTE HIGHLIGHTS

Pastors Report

- Tree lighting Dec 1 6:30 PM, Madrigals to perform 7PM.
- Christmas Eve services both 10AM and 7PM.
- New Years Eve, there will be potluck with Robber Bingo following 10AM service.
- Pastor reports a lot of good fellowship at the Thanksgiving potluck and a number of encouraging comments made to him at that time.
- Annual meeting scheduled for January 28, 2024.

Treasurer's Report

- Sent Samaritan's Purse \$250 for shipping costs for shoe boxes
- Reserves stand at \$101,670, up 6% to last year
- Attendance average is 34/Sunday, up 5 from last year
- We will use the landscaping fund to pay for the new tree.
- Bought a new lamp for the sanctuary piano. Laura is very happy with it.
- Got a new email account for Sue Beach: missions@lccrochester.com

Fellowship Commission

- Hosted a coffee on November 5 and the Thanksgiving potluck dinner November 19.
- Will host madrigal refreshments on Friday, December 1. Potluck and Robber Bingo on Sunday, December 31.
- There will be communion on Sunday, December 10.
- There will be cookie packing for shut-ins in mid-December, specific date TBD.

Mission Commission

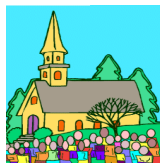
- 53 shoeboxes were packed and sent for Samaritan's Purse – we may be doing a monthly collection for next year's boxes. Melanie Mingus has expressed interest in doing craft projects to include in the boxes.
- We will serve at Love Inc. on November 27 and will serve next year in 3-month rotation.
- Sue Beach has picked up 3 Adopt-a-Families from Love Inc. We will use one \$250 Thrivent gift card for part of those gift purchases. Gifts are to be returned to the church by December 5. Sue Beach will deliver on December 9.
- Sue Beach will access Love Inc's monthly pantry needs from their Facebook page.

Buildings and Grounds

- The new tree is in the ground – a 10 foot beauty. Don and Steve will decorate on Friday. We may need smaller ornaments for this tree. The stump from the old one still needs to be removed and ground leveled.
- A three-man team tidied the church yard two weeks ago and Wayne Jensen cleaned the gutters.
- Steve and Brian will put the outside nativity scene up on Friday, December 1.
- One or two of the church doors will be picked up for refurbishing in early December and the doorways covered with plywood.

Next Council Meeting is Monday, January 15 at 6:30 PM





**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF ROCHESTER**

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Pastor PH. 508-837-4611

*"For where two or three are gathered in my name,
there I am in the midst of them."
Matthew 18:20*

www.fccrochesterwis.org

December 2022



Sun

Mon




Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 6:30 pm Christmas Tree Lighting and Madrigal Singers.	2 
3 10:00 am Church Choir is singing	4	5	6 7:00 pm Choir Practice	7	8	9
10 10:00 am Church Children's Sunday School/ Special music by Joni Konecke	11	12	13 7:00 pm Choir Practice	14	15	16
17 10:00 am Church Choir singing	18 Church Council Meeting @ 6:30 pm	19	20 7:00 pm Choir Practice	21	22	23
24 10:00 am Church Children's Sunday School 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Merry Christmas! 	26	27	28	29	30
31 10:00 am Church followed by a Potluck & Robber's Bingo!						

Pastor Ray's Office Hours are Monday through Wednesday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

First Congregational Church of Rochester
Poinsettia Order Form
2023

Poinsettias are only available in the colors of **red** or **white** this year. The large size Poinsettia (four-quart size) is **\$10.00 per plant**.

Please use the below form to order the number of Poinsettias you would like.

Payment is due by Monday, December 18th.

Please hand your order form and money into the offering plate or the Church Secretary's desk.

Color: Red _____ White _____

Total number of Poinsettia's _____ X \$10.00 = _____

We are planning on having them in the front of the service for **Sunday, Dec. 24th (Christmas Eve)**.

Those who purchase poinsettia(s) can take them home after the Christmas Eve service.

Name: _____

Donor notes: Please indicate who you are honoring with your poinsettia:

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

