

A JOYFUL NOISE!

January 2019

Hello My Fellow Travelers,

One of my favorite Christmas hymns is “The Friendly Beast,” better known today as “Jesus Our Brother, Strong and Good.” I learned the song way back in one Sunday School Pageant or another. It is a song about what the animals brought to the manger. Last week Maren Tirabassi, a member of Second Christian Congregational UCC in Kittery, Maine and a really cool author, wrote this poem as a reflection to this song. As the new year begins, and we celebrate Epiphany and the gifts of the Wisemen, I invite you to reflect on what gifts you would bring to the manger.

Aslan, make me a creature of your peace.

When I watch monarchs rest on a flower, let me oppose tear gas against your migrating humans.

When I watch trout sparkle, let me speak up for clean water on reservations and cities like Flint.

When I watch a wolf cull the deer herd, let me speak this truth—

Civilian assault weapons only bring violent, senseless death.

When I watch a beagle play, let me pray for animals so amiable they can be tortured for cosmetic experimentation.

When I watch ... nest-building, remind me of homeless children,

Squirrel gathering — of hungry ones,

Meerkat social grooming — that there are children ashamed of their clothes in school.

When I watch monkey tricks, help me make a sad child laugh.

Christ who taught the beauty of birds and told a parable about the kindness of dogs,

Let me seek wisdom from creatures around me —

Learning from cats to console,

From ancient turtles to slowly understand,

From dogs to love unconditionally.

For it is in shaking the chicken feed or hanging the suet,

Caring for a horse with curry comb, hoof pick, before warming my cold fingers,

Observing penguins parent and dolphins play,

That I am renewed to work again

For justice and peace.

See you along The Way,

Pastor Patty

“The Friendly Beasts,” 12th-century France, current English words, Robert Davis, 1920’s

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Randy Dye
4 Janet Townsend
4 Shannon Townsend
6 Andrew Call
11 Esther Rodriguez
12 Tad Peacock
17 Judy Johnson
18 Jean Voight
19 Mark Weaver
21 Donovan Haase
21 Shirley Kennard
25 Helen Dewey
26 Mary Rodriguez
29 Debra Rafferty
30 Linda Joy
30 Beth Sheets
31 Kelsey Neveu

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 18 Harold & Marsha Case

What is BIG Sunday?

BIG stands for Bring In Groceries; groceries brought in on BIG Sundays are donated to Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN) to help provide a meal to those in need. BIG Sundays are the first Sunday of every month — as are Holy Communion Sundays — and are a great way for us to share the love and feast of communion and community.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Nancy Reynolds	Ruth Blacklock
Pat Forrester	Helen Pickard
Hal Bruning	Eric Atkinson
Harrison UCC	Elisabeth C.
Jerry R.	Les F.

UCC SISTER CHURCH OF THE MONTH

As part of our continuing efforts to work together as a community of faith, in worship we pray for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited to pray this month for the ongoing mission and ministries of Harrison UCC.

FLOWERS

If you would like to supply flowers, please sign up on the sign posted on the bulletin board, and indicate who the flowers honor or memorialize. You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$30 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist.



THANK YOU TO OUR JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

	COFFEE	NURSERY
JAN 6	Deacons	Jo Bahry
JAN 13	Chris Stone	Mary Wulke
JAN 20	Outreach	Barb Brian
JAN 27	Annual Meeting	Pat Schopp

HEAD USHER: Jim Catts

MOVIE AND SNACKS

The Deacons are sponsoring a movie and snacks on January 20th following Coffee Hour. We will show the movie *The Shack*, starring Sam Worthington. We will serve popcorn and lemonade also. Please bring a friend and join us!



CIRCLE I

Circle I will meet Wednesday, January 23 at 1:00 at the church. Chris Jones is the hostess. We will be discussing the success of the Cookie Walk and start planning for the Mother/Daughter Banquet, which is in April.

thank
you!

GIVING TREE CHRISTMAS

A big thank you to everyone who helped with the Giving Tree this Christmas. Your generosity is amazing!

COOKIE WALK

Circle I would like to thank all the bakers, helpers, and shoppers who helped make our Cookie Walk a success. We are able to purchase \$300 worth of items for the Counselor's Closet at Benzie Central and put \$300 in the church kitchen fund.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY CHANGES

After many years as Church Financial Secretary, Mary Rodriguez has resigned. We thank her for her time and dedication to the position.

The Financial Secretary duties have been reassigned to the Church Secretary, Samantha Mullet. That position has been renamed as "Administrative Assistant." If you have any questions concerning your contributions or pledging, contact Sam at the church office, 231-882-4922, Monday—Thursday from 9am to 12noon and Friday from 8:30 to 11:30am.

FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It is hard to believe December is gone and with it, the first trimester of our Sunday School year. After the kick off of our school year on Rally Sunday, we dedicated the first 8 weeks to study the Fruits of the Spirit. From that on, in preparation for Christmas, we based our Sunday lessons on our Christmas program "Christmas Science." This gave us the opportunity to practice our play, and to understand the message we were about to deliver to the rest of the congregation. We have been having fun with new music, games and videos that we use to support our lessons.

Sunday school and Nursery attendance have been good, with an average of 6 and a max of 15 children. Melanie and I enjoy the kids' energy and silliness, and highly appreciate every one of our volunteers. Especially when we have a large group of awesome, creative, smart and super active little ones in our classrooms.

As most of you may know, our Polar Express trip was a great success. Children and adults had a great time, sharing stories, meals, Christmas music, time waiting in line and just spending time together. Among other activities during the first quarter of our year I can mention Trick or Treating for UNICEF, Festival of Trees, Holiday food baskets for families in our community and our Christmas Program.

For the second quarter we are planning an adult class/book discussion of the book "Have a Little Faith" from Mitch Albom. Our youth will have class every other Sunday and will be reading and learning from this book as well. The rest of the classes will continue as they are, but our vision is to be able to separate them by age and grades as soon as possible. I want to thank you for all your support and encourage you to volunteer in our classrooms and activities, to invite your neighbors, kids and grandkids...and great grandkids to come to church and become part of our church family. God bless you all! :)

—Carolina

FROM BAITALPUR, INDIA

I recently had an email from my successor as Director at the hospital in Baitalpur, India, and she enclosed her Director's annual report for 2017/2018. That had been a very busy year for her and the hospital, in terms of patients cared for, fulfilling new government regulations, and improvements to the hospital campus. With the help of the senior doctors at our sister hospitals of Tilda and Mungeli she was able to take time to visit her son and his family who are currently living in New Zealand.

Also in the annual report Dr. Kusum listed hopes and plans for future and gratitude for the support of the Regional Board in India, with the final statement, "Thanks to Global Ministries for the prayer and financial support provided by Dr. Catton's church."

—Ruth Catton

January 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 10:00 Yoga (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 7:00 WAA (Barn)	2 12N AA (Barn) 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	3 9-10:30 AA (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 5:00 MRT (Barn) 7:00 NA (Barn) 7:30 Choir	4 12N LOWV <i>Randy Dye</i> <i>Janet Townsend</i> <i>Shannon Townsend</i>	5
6 10:30 Worship & Church School Christian Education 6-7 ACOA (Barn) <i>Andrew Call</i>	7 12N AA (Barn) 12-5 Bridge Club 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	8 10:00 Yoga (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 7:00 Council 7:00 WAA (Barn)	9 12N AA (Barn) 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	10 9-10:30 AA (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 4:00 Deacons 5:00 MRT (Barn) 7:00 NA (Barn) 7:30 Choir	11 12N LOWV <i>Esther Rodriguez</i>	12 8:30 Men's Breakfast @ Papa J's <i>Tad Peacock</i>
13 10:30 Worship & Church School 6-7 ACOA (Barn)	14 11 Commodities Distribution 12N AA (Barn) 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	15 10:00 Yoga (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 7:00 WAA (Barn)	16 12N AA (Barn) 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	17 9-10:30 AA (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 5:00 MRT (Barn) 7:00 NA (Barn) 7:30 Choir <i>Judy Johnson</i>	18 12N LOWV <i>Jean Voight</i> <i>Harold & Marsha Case</i>	19 Zonta (Barn) <i>Mark Weaver</i>
20 10:30 Worship & Church School 6-7 ACOA (Barn)	21 <i>Office Closed</i> 12N AA (Barn) 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Trustees 5:00 Love, INC 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn) <i>Donovan Haase</i> <i>Shirley Kennard</i>	22 10:00 Yoga (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 7:00 WAA (Barn)	23 12N AA (Barn) 1:00 Circle I 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	24 9-10:30 AA (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 5:00 MRT (Barn) 7:00 NA (Barn) 7:30 Choir	25 12N LOWV <i>Helen Dewey</i>	26 <i>Mary Rodriguez</i>
27 10:30 Worship & Church School Annual Meeting & Potluck 6-7 ACOA (Barn)	28 12N AA (Barn) 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn)	29 10:00 Yoga (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 7:00 WAA (Barn) <i>Deb Rafferty</i>	30 12N AA (Barn) 5:30-6:30 CLT (Barn) 7:00 AA (Barn) <i>Linda Joy</i> <i>Beth Sheets</i>	31 9-10:30 AA (Barn) 12N AA (Barn) 5:00 MRT (Barn) 7:00 NA (Barn) 7:30 Choir <i>Kelsey Neveu</i>		

First Congregational Church
901 Barber Street, P.O. Box 234
Benzonia, MI 49616
Phone: (231) 882-4922

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BENZONIA UCC BENZONIA, MICHIGAN

Patty Higgins.....	Pastor
Chris Stone	Treasurer
Mary Ellen Wagner.....	Organist
Andy Wagner.....	Sound Technician
Rose DuFrane	Custodian
Samantha Mullet.....	Administrative Assistant
Melanie Bredbanner.....	Nursery Staff
Jerry Slater.....	Church Moderator
Carolina Jones	Christian Ed Coordinator

Office Phone: 231-882-4922 Office Hours: M—R 9am—Noon, F 8:30-11:30

Office Email: secretary@benzoniacongregational.org

Our Website: <http://www.benzoniacongregational.org>

Our Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/BenzoniaCongregational