



The Caller

First Congregational United Church of Christ January 2025



MUSINGS ALONG THE WAY

Dear Friends,

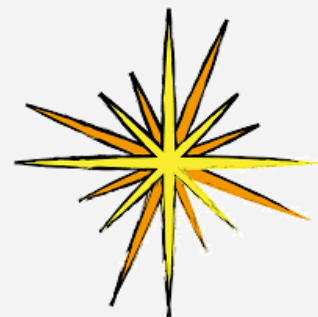
In my January 2024 *Musings Along the Way* (Pastor's Pondering), I shared a prayer for our church—if God would grant us one wish, it would be for an increase in our attendance. So, did our desire come true? Well, it's hard to tell. We've definitely welcomed new faces in worship, received new members, and added younger families with children, which has been such a gift to our Sunday School and the Children's Moment. But as I mentioned before, it's important to remember that growth isn't just about numbers. Sometimes, there are intangible blessings that aren't necessarily quantifiable—like stronger relationships, deeper engagement in worship and prayer, and greater love for God and neighbors, which don't necessarily show up on a chart.

While it may be tough to know for sure, I'd like to believe we've seen some positive shifts recently, though perhaps intangible. I don't mean to sound selective—we all gave our best last year. But it's been deeply encouraging to witness the dedication and faithfulness with which our ministry teams, choirs, and administration board have served our church with their time and talents. And let's not forget our beautiful new church website! It's a significant upgrade and truly helps us connect with the broader world—especially the digital world. I've heard several people share that they "stumbled" onto our site and decided to check us out. That's an exciting way to welcome newcomers!

Looking back, I am grateful for the ways God has blessed us this past year—both in tangible and intangible ways. As we embark upon this new year, I pray that God's Spirit will continue to inspire us to new and greater heights of service, guiding and leading us forward for the edification of the church and the furtherance of God's realm in the world. Our job is simple but essential: to remain faithful to God and to the ministries with which we've been entrusted.

(cont. on page 2)

Our mission is to create and nurture a family of faith to do God's work, modeling the gospel of Jesus Christ.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Pondering.....	1-2
Birthdays.....	3
Team Reports.....	3-7
Calendar.....	8

The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Corning, NY believes we are all made in the image of God and we are called to celebrate our God-given identities regardless of age, class, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical ability, marital status, race, ethnicity, or mental ability. Jesus calls us to love each other as we are loved by God, and we welcome, affirm, and support all people into our full life and ministry.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!



“The Caller” is published by the
First Congregational
United Church of Christ
171 West Pulteney Street
Corning, NY 14830

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or where you are on life’s
journey, you are welcome here!!*



Office hours:

Thurs./Fri.: 9:00 a.m. - noon

Pastor: Rev. Henry Pascual
Pastor’s e-mail: pastor@corningucc.org
Pastor’s phone: (908)801-7007
Church Phone: (607)962-7423
E-mail: office@corningucc.org
Web: www.corningucc.org
Facebook.com/FCUCCC
Instagram: @corningucc
Secretary: Brenda Passmore

Office hours

Church Office: Brenda is in the office on Thursday and Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m. – noon. Please leave a message if she’s not there to answer the phone, and she will return your call.

Pastor Henry’s Office Hours:

Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
His visitations are scheduled on
Tues. - Fri. afternoons. **Mondays and Saturdays are his days off.**

BE THE CHURCH

*Protect the environment. Care for the poor.
Forgive often. Reject racism.
Fight for the powerless.
Share earthly and spiritual resources.
Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life.*



The deadline for submitting articles for “*The Caller*” is the 25th of each month.

(continued from page 1)

While our dedication plays a crucial role, we understand that it is ultimately God who blesses our efforts and brings forth growth. We thank the Lord of the Harvest for all the blessings we have received this past year and eagerly anticipate even greater fruit from our labors in the year ahead!

Happy New Year to all!
Yours for the Journey,
Pastor Henry

P.S. Thank you for the generous cash gift—
a tangible reminder of your love, care, and support!



Looking for help?

If you are sick, have a problem, or just want to talk with the Pastor or one of our Tender Loving Care (TLC) Responders, or if you know someone who does, please contact the church office. You can call and leave a message at 607-962-7423, or email office@uccorning.org. The office voice mail is checked regularly, and the pastor can be reached directly at pastor@uccorning.org.





Message from the Church and Family Life Team

Some years ago, the Church and Family Life Team organized a series of informal dinners (six to eight people) in members' homes.

The gatherings were a chance to enjoy good fellowship on these soon to be long winter evenings. We would like you to consider hosting a simple meal by signing up in Fellowship Hall for a night of your choosing beginning mid-January.

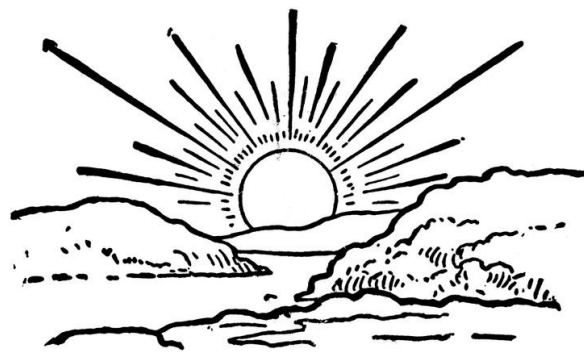
If you have any questions, please call Margo Brown 607 725-0264.

Church and Family Life Team:
Tom Wilkinson, Des Pascual,
John and Margo Brown

January Birthdays

5 th	Sue McMaster
6 th	Jill VanDewoestine
7 th	Tom Wilkinson
10 th	Lucille Gorton
14 ^h	Matthew Reif
15 th	Diane Legendre
19 th	Marilyn Fais
22 nd	Angela Allis
24 th	Steve Grinnell
	Rev. Henry Pascual
	Gwen Zimmermann
27 th	Mary Daly
29 th	Josh Wilken

Happy Birthday!



Warming Tree

The Warming Tree is in Fellowship Hall. Please bring scarves, mittens, socks, hats (homemade or bought) and place them under the tree.

They will be donated to elementary schools.

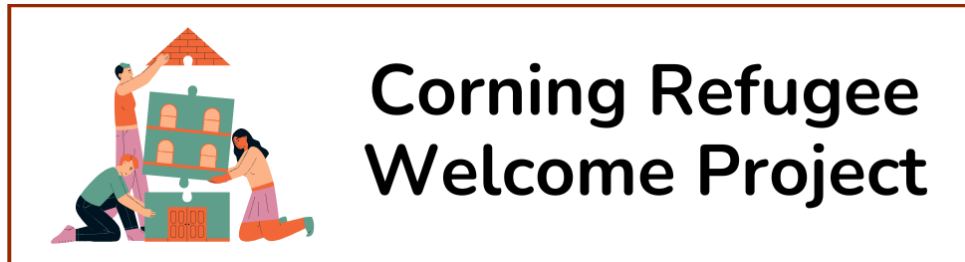


Mid Day Fellowship Meeting
Tuesday January 14, 2025 @11:30 am
in Fellowship Hall.

Please bring a bag lunch.
We will make plans for 2025!
Everyone is invited.

Mission and Outreach

January Mission: Corning Refugee Welcome Project



Please support the Corning Refugee Welcome Project as we welcome a displaced family into a new home. Together we can build a bridge to a better future. At First Congregational United Church of Christ, we have been moved by news of people displaced by wars, violence, and political unrest around the world. With millions forced to flee their homes, we have been inspired to find a way to create a bridge to safety for a displaced family.

Our interest led us to Welcome Corps. Welcome Corps is a national program that offers a clear blueprint for community-based action to support refugees for a critical three-month transition period. The program provides directions and resources to help groups organize themselves to provide the kinds of support refugees need to settle into a new community. All participating refugee families and individuals may work in the U.S., and the goal of the program is to help them become independent.

Following the Welcome Corps model, our congregation has joined with other churches and individuals in the community to apply to host a family, and our application has been approved. Fundraising is underway, with a goal to secure \$12,000 to assist with living expenses.

Your gift to the Corning Refugee Welcome Program will be held in an account of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Corning NY. All funds will be used to assist the family we sponsor with expenses such as housing, transportation, health care, and household goods. Any funds left after our sponsorship period ends will be donated to Welcome Corps or used to support another family.

To receive updates on our activities or to volunteer to help us welcome newcomers to our community, sign up [here](#).

To donate to our efforts, send your check payable to
 First Congregational United Church of Christ,
 171 West Pulteney Street, Corning, NY 14830.
 Please write "Refugee Welcome Project" on the memo line.

You can also donate online. There's a donation link on the homepage of our website www.corningucc.org.

Thank you for your support!

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

Mark Your Calendars
for the Annual
Financial Meeting:

Sunday, January 26th
after worship

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and approve the Financial Budget for 2025. Please plan to remain after worship to help approve the spending of our funds.

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Message from the Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPR)

In January, for several Sundays we will include an insert in the bulletin which will provide an opportunity for you to comment on Pastor Henry's sermons. The following is a list of questions to ponder as you sit in worship.

Pastor Henry is very interested in your feedback about his sermons. Since really honest feedback is most often anonymous, do not feel obligated to identify yourself.

1. What was the sermon about? Please answer this question with a phrase or a single sentence.
2. On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 did not feed me spiritually and 5 did feel me spiritually), What would have been necessary to better feed your Spirit?
3. On the same scale of 1 to 5, how meaningful did you find the sermon and worship experience? What would have made it more meaningful?
4. On the same scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the style of delivery of the sermon? Is the sermon presented clearly, convincing, and understandably?
5. Is there anything the pastor did/said that revealed his passion for the text/sermon? Was there anything he said that detracted from your sense that the pastor was committed to the message?

Get Your Good Neighbor Directory!

This past fall, we gathered a list of “good neighbors” in our church community who are willing to help others with a variety of tasks. These included things like assistance with simple errands, rides to appointments, computer help, and occasional meals.

We’re delighted to report that our directory is ready to share! Copies will be distributed at church.

If you are unable to get to church, or if you haven’t received your copy, please notify the church office. We would be happy to mail one to you.

Yours in service,

Margo Brown, Bruce Graf, and Pam Walker



The new January/February 2025 edition of The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide is available in the narthex in both the regular and enlarged size. Please help yourself.



The new 2025 Flower Chart is hanging on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Please sign up to give Sunday altar flowers. The flowers can be given to honor or in memory of a special person, celebrate a special event, wedding, birthday, anniversary, or any other occasion you wish.

Many thanks to everyone who has signed up in the past and for signing up in 2024.



Thank you to all those who volunteered to help usher in 2024:

Pauletta O'Donnell, Margo & John Brown, Diane Haskins, Lynn Decher, Ed Lewis, Rachel Hofstetter, Joyce Nelson, Bruce Graf, Tom Wilkinson, Star Bright, and Bob Cooper

Some volunteered for an entire month and others for specific Sundays. Everyone's help was appreciated by the Worship Team. We hope you will consider ushering in 2025. New recruits are always welcome. Contact Judy Garrett at 607-542-0953 if you would like to help in 2025. Every age group is welcome.

Join Us for a Multicultural Potluck Lunch
Sunday, January 12, following worship

As we launch the Corning Refugee Welcome Project to host a family seeking to start a new life, safe from war, violence and intolerance elsewhere in the world, we are reminded that all of our families sought a better life in this country at some point in our history. We are a community and a congregation made up of many cultures.

On Sunday, January 12, we will celebrate our varied cultural traditions with a potluck luncheon following worship.

Bring a dish to pass that represents your family's culinary roots.

Whether your origins are in colonial America or Cologne, Idaho or Ireland, Kentucky or Korea, you've probably had special recipes that you prepare for special occasions.

Please join us to share your traditions with your church family.

A sign-up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall.

You can indicate what you plan to bring. We will also have note cards for you to share the name of your dish and any ingredients of concern for those with allergies or food sensitivities. If you're undecided, simply let us know that you plan to come.

If you like, you can submit a digital image of people or keepsakes that highlight your family's roots.

Let's celebrate our families' journeys together!



Our church calendar changes all the time, so please check our website www.corningucc.org under the Calendar/Events tab for the most up-to-date version.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 10am - Worship - in 7pm - Corning Brass	30 8am - Cleaning Service 9:30am - Bone Builders	31 7pm - Chorus of the	1 7pm - Choir	2 9am - Office Hours 7pm - Choir	3 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Bone Builders @	4 6:30pm - AA
5 10am - Worship - in 7pm - Corning Brass	6 8am - Cleaning Service 9:30am - Bone Builders	7 7pm - Chorus of the	8 11:30am - Books	9 9am - Office Hours 6pm - Bell Choir 7pm - Choir	10 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Bone Builders @	11 Memorial Service 6:30pm - AA
12 10am - Worship - in 11am - Multicultural 7pm - Corning Brass	13 8am - Cleaning Service 9:30am - Bone Builders	14 11:30am - Mid Day 1pm - Scottish American 6:30pm - Zoom 7pm - Chorus of the	15 11:30am - Books 7pm - Choir	16 9am - Corning Area Aging 9am - Office Hours	17 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Bone Builders @	18 12pm - Twin Tiers Five 6:30pm - AA
19 10am - Worship - in 2pm - Refugee 7pm - Corning Brass	20 8am - Cleaning Service 9:30am - Bone Builders	21 7pm - Chorus of the	22 11:30am - Books 6pm - Bell Choir 7pm - Choir	23 9am - Office Hours 7pm - Women's Chorale	24 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Bone Builders @	25 9am - Caller deadline 6:30pm - AA
26 10am - Worship - in 11am - Annual Financial 7pm - Corning Brass	27 8am - Cleaning Service 9:30am - Bone Builders	28 6:30pm - Membership 7pm - Chorus of the	29 11:30am - Books 6pm - Bell Choir 7pm - Choir	30 9am - Office Hours 7pm - Women's Chorale	31 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Bone Builders @	1 1pm - Women's Chorale 6:30pm - AA

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