

# FIRST CHURCH CONNECTION

First Congregational UCC of Onekama,  
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## 2025

### Pastoral Ponderings

Advent and adventure come from the same root. It means something is coming and in the case of adventure, it means one is going out to meet something that is coming and is anticipating new experiences. What is coming in Advent, of course, as we begin the church year is Christmas, the birthday of the Christ Child. I think it would be wonderful if we also thought of this time of preparation as a time of adventure!

My sermon series throughout Advent this year will be focused on the question “What Child Is This? Beyond the Lullaby.” The themes are as follows— Advent 1: King of Kings (Hope); Advent 2: The Silent Word (Peace); Advent 3: Son of Mary (Joy); Advent 4: Enthroned by Love (Love); Christmas Eve: “The Babe” and Sunday After Christmas: “This, This, . . .” I hope you can join us each Sunday for each new advent-ure! Advent starts on November 30<sup>th</sup> this year.

November special *event-ures* also include the Christmas in Onekama Artisan Fair at the school from 10-3 on Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and on Sunday the “Celebration of Lights” Lighting of the town Christmas tree, November 23<sup>rd</sup>; and the **FREE Community Thanksgiving Dinner** at the church from 2-4, open to the public on November 27<sup>th</sup> (Gluten free offerings will be available).

Also, Santa and Mrs. Claus (we KNOW who you are!) will be returning to the Farr Center from 11-1 on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> courtesy of the Jr. Clio Club.

My prayer for all of us this Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas season is that we can somehow find the peace of Christ in our hearts.

With Love—*Pastor Alison*



## ***FALL IS HERE!***

Stretch, Strength, and Balance Classes has resumed in our Newly-Renovated Fellowship Hall Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30 to 4:30 – Please also note that your mat and weights will have to be brought with you each time you come—we have no place to store them.

The 26-class session will end December 18, 2025. .  
Checks may be made out to Tonya Evans.  
Drop-ins are always welcome for \$5 per class.

### **Class Description:**

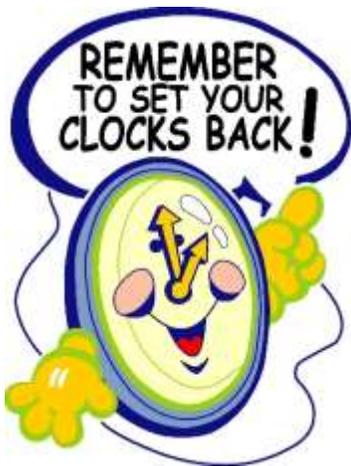
A strong core, flexibility and balance are your most important assets regardless of your fitness level. This class incorporates core strength training, light weight training upper and lower body workouts, stretching and balance practice for an overall effective yet not so strenuous workout. (Co-ed)



Bring your own weights, and yoga mat or towel for floor exercises. Chair exercises are available as an option to floor exercises.

About the instructor: Tonya Evans is a Physical Therapy Assistant at the Manistee County Medical Care Facility. She helps patients to follow an appropriate exercise program that will increase their strength, endurance, coordination, and range of motion. She has been in the business for 26 years!

Now only will you feel better, the fun, puns, good music and great camaraderie make the time fly! 😊



**So, you are not off time for church on November 2<sup>nd</sup> for our special All-Saints service and welcoming of new and renewing church members!**

## November local food pantry



Collection items are [spaghetti sauce](#). You can drop it off at the back of the sanctuary and we will see it gets to the St. Joseph Church.

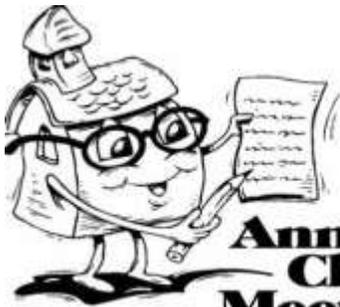
## Christmas Giving Tree



This is one of our favorite outreach activities as we partner with Onekama School to help a family in need. This year the family we are helping consists of a young family with a mom and dad, two girls and two boys. The youngest is 4 and the others are in elementary school. The tree is up and the tags have been hung. Please wrap your gift and put the tag on the outside. You can use gift bags too. Please do not put any names on the gift. Bring your gift back to church by **Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>** and we will dedicate them. They will be delivered to the school on December 1<sup>st</sup>



**Join Pastor Alison and the church community for a **FREE Thanksgiving Dinner** in our newly renovated Fellowship Hall at church from 2-4 pm on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>! (Sign-up sheets to bring items and be crew that day are on the back table in the sanctuary)**



## Annual Church Meeting

***Put this date on your calender!***  
**November 9<sup>th</sup>**

## Following our church service

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to elect officers and approve the annual budget for the coming year, hear the reports of the ministry teams and conduct other church businesses.

At the beginning of our church's Constitution, it is stated that:

“Because this church believes in the priesthood of all believers, it calls each of its congregants to be ministers in its service. To the best of their ability, every congregant is encouraged to serve in one of the church's ministries and/or activities.”

In preparation for this year's Annual Meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry Council invites all members to prayerfully consider serving in one of the positions of leadership in the church.

All officers, except the Moderator, have voting privileges at Ministry Council and congregational meetings. (The Moderator will have a vote in the event of a tie.)

The responsibilities of the Officers are described below:

**Moderator** The Moderator shall preside at the annual meetings, special meetings, and Ministry Council meetings. Working closely with the Pastor, the Moderator shall coordinate the work of the Ministry Council and the standing ministries of the church.

**Vice-Moderator The** Vice-Moderator shall preside at all meetings in which the Moderator is absent. The Vice-Moderator shall be a member of the Pastoral Support Group. Should the moderator resign, the Vice-Moderator shall assume the responsibilities of the Moderator.

**Clerk\*** The Clerk shall attend all business meetings and shall record and file all the minutes of the same, record all changes in church membership, baptisms, marriages, and deaths; issue letters of transfer as authorized; be responsible for giving proper notice of the annual and special meetings, conducting official correspondence, and maintaining these records and files of the church. The Clerk shall be a member of the Ministry Council and serve as its secretary.

\*Lynn Jans, our current Clerk, is open to having someone take over this position.

**Treasurer** (This description of responsibilities is available to those who have experience and interest in this paid position. However, our current Treasurer, Joy Lind, is happy to continue in the job.)

Please contact any member of the Ministry Council if you would like more information about one of the positions or would like to be nominated for a position.

If you are simply interested in sharing your gifts and skills to identify needs, potential problems, and work with others to solve them to improve the church, please attend a Ministry Council meeting. Many voices broaden the discussions and strengthen the decisions.

## **Notice to The Congregation:**

### **Regarding Possible Temporary Term Extensions for Church Officers for 2026:**

The terms for the current Moderator (Bill Sawhill) and Vice-Moderator (Marcia Rogers) expire Dec. 31. 2025. These terms are set by our church's Bylaws as 2-year terms that can be extended once for a total of 4 consecutive years each. At this time, both of these officers are at the end of those 4 years. Both officers have agreed to continue to fill their positions for a third term (2 more years) if there are no nominations at the 2025 Annual Meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>. However, we would need a motion to "suspend the current Bylaws to allow the terms of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator to be extended for 2 more years".

The terms for the Clerk (Lynn Jans) and Treasurer (Joy Lind) are each 1-year terms and can be renewed annually. Nominations will be accepted, but these officers have also agreed to carry on for another term.

The Council needs this time of continuous consistent leadership in order to take the time needed to review and update our Constitution and Bylaws so the changes can be voted on at our Annual Meeting next year in 2026.

## **Community Scarecrow time comes to an end for 2025!**

**Thank you to Lesley & Drake DeCator  
For creating our 1<sup>st</sup> Place winning entry.**

"Come with me , , ,"

Mark 1:17

We have here only 5 loaves and  
2 Fish."

Matthew 14:17



# Community Outreach

**Portager School Pantry** We received a very nice thank you note for our first donation to the Portager Pantry for Onekama Schools' students. They were very appreciative. For our next round, the school would like to replenish their supply of dry shampoo in small purse sizes and stainless-steel water bottles in the 20-24 oz. sizes. There is a collection bin at the back of the sanctuary.

## Monthly 2025 Events & Dates

**Worship** – Every Sunday at 10 a.m.

**Financial Advisory Committee** –will meet again on January 7th, 2026

**Ministry Council** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday each month, this month it will be November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

**Outreach Ministry** – Tuesday November 11 at 1:00pm in the Conversation Corner of fellowship hall.

**Game Night** will meet in the ***fellowship hall*** with potluck on Friday the 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00pm.

**Music & Worship Ministry** – To plan ADVENT Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> after worship.

**Choir Practice** - Sunday afternoons 3:30 to 4:30pm.

**Bible Study** – is on Saturdays in Fellowship Hall (unless otherwise announced) 10-11:30am.

**NEW CHURCH WEBSITE** Go to <http://www.onekamaucc.org/>



Website is up and running!!  
**QR Code for electronic giving**



And see what all the fuss is about!

**CHECK IT**



## **November**

2nd Vickee Sawhill  
9<sup>th</sup> Carol Rackow  
16th Shelly Lyman  
23<sup>rd</sup> Lynn Jans  
30<sup>th</sup> Joy Lind

In the upcoming months, if there is a Sunday that you could help by volunteering, it would be greatly appreciated!

Just send me an email with the date.

**Carol Rackow** – [rackey1992@gmail.com](mailto:rackey1992@gmail.com)

## **October Treasurer Report**

**Income from** Contributions \$8,783.60

**Food Pantry** \$40.00 **Bank savings account interest** \$.73 **Neighbors in Need** \$ 30.00

**Memorial gift** \$100.00 **Miscellaneous Income** \$ 97.00

**Strengthen the Church** \$ 5.00

**Expenses of** \$10,578.87

**Line of credit loan for basement project** is \$3,500.00

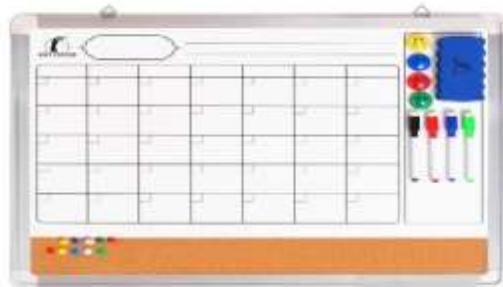
**Line of Credit loan for the parsonage shed** is \$2,979.



Our bell choir has gathered once again. We have returning bell ringers that carpool come from Manistee to join us. Our director this year is Carol Worch. The first performance is November 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Take Note Please:**

**We have three bulletin boards: one in the parlor, one on the landing going downstairs, and one in Fellowship Hall. The one in the Parlor is the bulletin board for our church events and notices only; the one on the stairs is for seasonal announcements by the pastor; and the one in the Hall is for community events. They are being monitored by our minister. We ask if you want to post something please ask Alison or leave it in her mailbox for posting and she will take care of it. She will also keep all the boards updated. Please do not remove anything from the boards. Thank you!**



**Santa  
Returns  
To the Farr  
Center!!!**

**Saturday, December 6th  
From 11am-1pm**

**Come down and be ready for  
the Fire Engine Sleigh!**

Courtesy of Jr. Clio Club

A green Christmas tree with a yellow star on top and colorful ornaments (red, blue, yellow, purple). The tree is decorated with red and white lights.



### **November Birthdays**

6<sup>th</sup> David Stegink

8<sup>th</sup> Peter Barnes

16<sup>th</sup> Linda Ludema

17<sup>th</sup> Margaret Cloutier

19<sup>th</sup> Dan Willson

22<sup>nd</sup> Steve Brooks, Betsy Lyman & Jackie Karnisz

23<sup>rd</sup> Kim Lagerquist

### **Anniversaries**

None we know of!

#### **Steps for viewing Facebook Live -Streamed Services...**

Be sure to like our page on Facebook "First Congregational Church of Onekama".

Find the three dots on a post. Click or touch the dots.

Scroll down and turn on notifications for this post.

You will be notified when the page goes live

### **Church Staff**

Pastor – Rev. Alison Andrea Young

Choir Director – Dan Wilson

Moderator – Bill Sawhill

Vice Moderator - Marcia Rogers

Treasurer & Secretary – Joy Lind

Clerk – Lynn Jans

Pianist – Carolyn Brooks

Choir Accompanist - Kathy Wilson

Bell Choir Director – Carol Worch

Sexton – Carol Rackow