



AUGUST 2024

Branches Newsletter



Join us for Worship Sundays at 9:30AM

Engage and **Inspire** all generations to **Connect**
with God through love and service.

Newsletter Highlights

Golf Outing

Outdoor Worship
Service

Mission Ministry
Month

Custodian Corner

Quarterly Statements

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
OCONOMOWOC**

📍 815 S. Concord Road

📞 262-567-4461

✉ uccoffice@oconomowocucc.org



by Pastor Matt

When I was little, we took a family vacation to the north coast of California. One morning my dad and I went out onto a rocky shoreline, about 20 feet above the roiling water. We got our rigs together and cast our lines into the heaving deep blue green. In a couple of minutes, something grabbed my line. It didn't fight like a walleye or a trout. But it took my line and swam slowly out into the open water. My kid-sized fishing rod bent all the way over, then snapped. We figured it was probably a big old Lingcod.



There wasn't much left to do. I helped my dad and took a couple of turns with his reel. Then, I just watched that dark surf crash on the rocks, after the waves had marched across thousands of miles of ocean. And it hit me deep down, how small I was, how small and ordinary any human being is, in the face of oceans and mountains and galaxies.

God shows up in all kinds of majestic things, from sunsets to music to the night sky. When we come face to face with that majesty, a reflex goes off inside us - "OMG" we pray. But the sign of real majesty in our face is that there are no words. The structure our mind gives to the world is cracked open, and we buckle in awe before what we cannot grasp.

This happened for people around Jesus. They could understand the majesty of God in mountains, or in the intense heat or cold of the desert. They could sense God at work in a raging storm, or in the perfect rendering of a passage of Torah. But Jesus was a problem: *Isn't this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?* (John 6:42)

We humans sense God in over-the-top moments, but often overlook the Almighty wrapped in flawed humanity right alongside us.

To the Ephesians, Paul writes: *Speak truth to your neighbors... Don't let the sun go down on your anger... Work so that you something to share with those who need... Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to each other, tenderhearted and forgiving, as God in Christ has forgiven you.* (Ephesians 4)

Some would call these words "weak," or sneer at them as "woke." To me they look like "treating other humans with respect." For Paul they are signs of Christ being within us. No purple mountain majesties. No drop-you-to-your-knees miracle. You wanna see God on earth? Speak truth. Give up arguing, slander, boredom, and self-centeredness. Work so that you have plenty to give away. Forgive. Be happy. Live with God at the center of your life. Love your neighbor as yourself.

As summer deepens, I pray each of us have moments of God being near – as many of the big ones as there can be! But even more, I pray that the quietly majestic moments feed your soul each day. Because it is the flashes of "God-wrapped-in-flawed-humanity" that wash away our sin in the power of redeeming grace, that truly heal us with holy love, that truly shape the world – beginning right where we are.

Moderator Musings

Ministry Focus Months

I often hear from members when I ask them to serve on a Ministry or Committee that they don't know what that group does. To address that lack of knowledge the Leadership Team, after receiving a recommendation from Stewardship Ministry, initiated what are called "Ministry Focus Months". This allows each of these important components of church life to showcase what they do to the rest of the Congregation and allow those who are interested to ask questions and become more involved. What is involved in being the "focus" Ministry or Committee is the following:

- At least once during their month giving a short description of the group's work during Sunday morning announcements.
- Hosting Fellowship Hour one Sunday of their month (preferably the first Sunday of the month).
- Placing a short article in that month's Branches newsletter again reiterating what the group does to further the mission of the church.

Each Ministry or Committee has a month that they have signed up for on a reoccurring, annual basis. Those are:

- January - Leadership
- February - open
- March - Memorial Garden Committee
- April - Hearts and Hands Preschool
- May - Welcoming Ministry
- June - Spirituality Ministry
- July - Golf Outing Committee
- August - Mission Ministry
- September - Education Ministry
- October - Stewardship Ministry
- November - Legacy Committee
- December - open


As you can see there are two months that, as of now, are not called for. If your committee would be interested in becoming a "focus" month please contact me. Like most people, once in awhile it is nice to be considered "special".

Yours in Christ,
Chris Mol
Moderator, First Congregational UCC of
Oconomowoc



Thank you from Don McCollum

Thank you to those of you who took time to write a note to because I was going on an Honor Flight. You can't know how much it meant. My son and I had a glorious time.
As we say in our family, *"We made memories."*





All are invited to have lunch and socialize at Rockwell's Restaurant (Shorehaven north Campus) The 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each Month
Menu Options are \$15 each

Tuesday, August 13

(RSVP to Sue Zajac by Monday 8/5)

Roast Beef & Swiss Wrap: Cold sliced roast beef, Swiss cheese, mayo, lettuce, tomato and onion on a flour tortilla wrap, with fresh fruit and a caramel blondie bar.

Chopped Chicken Salad: Mixed greens, chopped chicken, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, blue cheese crumbles, bacon and candied pecans, with a side of buttermilk ranch dressing and a caramel blondie bar.

Tuesday, August 27

(RSVP to Sue Zajac by Monday 8/19)

Oriental Chicken Salad: Chopped greens, Napa cabbage, pea pods, carrots, cucumbers, grilled chicken, crispy wontons and Sesame Lime dressing, served with an M&M cookie.

Beef Quesadilla: Ground beef and cheese on a grilled tortilla with salsa and sour cream, served with an M&M cookie.

Reserve your spot for a good time!

During Fellowship or call/text Sue Zajac at 414-698-3575. At each meal your cash will be collected by Sue Zajac (or designee) in order to make one payment for the group. Sorry no checks or credit cards—CASH ONLY.

Quarterly Statements

Quarterly Statements are available for pick up in Fellowship Hall after worship. If you have any questions or would like to request your statement be mailed, please reach out to Bob Frick -

bobfrick4733@gmail.com.

Mission and Outreach



Singing Collection

Every time we worship, loose coins in the offering are donated to a Mission Partner. The coins in the metal plates make a “joyful noise,” so we call this our Singing Collection.

August's Singing Collection

Back Bay Mission (BBM) is our August Singing Collection

...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

BBM, in Biloxi, Mississippi, strengthens neighborhoods, seeks justice and transforms lives. Since 1922, it has evolved to address critical needs and acts as an advocate for change. The organization honors its mission daily through programs focused on homeless prevention and providing safe spaces for the unsheltered.

Services include a housing rehabilitation program, emergency rental and utility assistance. BBM also supports the Micah Day Center, which serves the needs of unsheltered (homeless) people. When they come to the Micah Center they can shower, have their laundry done, use the telephone and computer and sign up for services with a case management and consult with representatives of a variety of health services that best fits their needs. BBM also supports a small food pantry within the BBM campus and an offsite soup kitchen, Loaves and fishes, which has a long history of support from BBM.



Our 2024 Youth Mission trip went to Back Bay Mission, if you have any questions, please contact one of the Youth volunteers.



August 4 & September 1

Food Pantry Sundays - First Sunday of Every Month (but welcome anytime)

The first Sunday of every month, you are invited to bring items for the Food Pantry and put them in the baskets at the entrance to the sanctuary. These donations are delivered to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry during the week. Items that the Food Pantry accepts are:

Non-perishables: food items, Baby items - diapers, wipes, baby food, formula;
Personal hygiene items: soap, shampoo, tampons, sanitary pads, deodorant, toothpaste, laundry detergent, toilet paper.

Please be sure before you donate that all perishable items are within their use dates and have not expired.

Mission Ministry Month

Mission is defined as *"the vocation or calling of a religious organization especially a Christian one, to go out into the world and spread its faith"*.

August is Mission Ministry month.

July 14-20 we had 14 members of our church go to Biloxi, Miss to spread the word and learn about serving others.

This is only one of many Missions that our Church is involved in.

We support about 25 missions, locally, statewide, and internationally.

Let's celebrate Mission Month by going out into the world and spreading our Faith.



VOLUNTEER TO BE A

Buddy



The purpose of "Buddies" for new members of our church is to assure that new members feel welcomed for the first months of their membership. We would like Buddies to accompany new members at the time of their being received into the church family on New Member Sunday and take them to and sit with them during Fellowship hours following church services.

Buddies will be available to answer questions and address concerns of new members. They will invite new members to attend church activities and events.

The Buddie's significant role will be to serve as companions for the first six months following New Member Sunday to assure that new members feel welcome and know that they are an important part of our congregation.

To volunteer to be a Buddy, please contact Linda Davis at pldvais.pd@gmail.com or 207-985-9186. It is a wonderful way to get to know new members.



7th Annual Bald Eagle Car Show



THANK YOU to all the friends, family, sponsors, businesses, and car owners who donated either their time, food/beverage, raffle items or financially! Many hands make an event successful!

**We had 205 cars, 49 volunteers, 38 donors, 7 businesses, and 9 sponsors that supported our event!
We profited \$9881!**

All this support is for our Sr. Youth Mission Trip to Biloxi, MS and will keep the *Rich Behling aka Bald Eagle Experience* alive during every Sr. High School summer mission trip for years to come. I'm blessed to have such a supportive church family, along with my family and friends! Thank you for making this event another success!
(Apologies if anyone was missed)

VOLUNTEERS

***Amy Drewa**

Andrew Rauterberg

***Andy Meckl**

Annette Schilling

Barb & George Moeller

Bonnie Laugerman

Braydon Drewa

Cheryl Hoff

David Evans

Daphne Evans

Deb Bursinger

Deb Groskopf

***Easton Meckl**

Eugene Davenport

Faith Gruss

Gary Phillips

Grace Drewa

Gregg Behling

Jake Drahonovsky

***Jason Rheineck**

Jill Riemann

John Schilling

Johnny Dempsey

Karen & Ken Lau

Kirsten Schmidt

Kyle Zastrow

Laurie Albert

Lisa Manthy

Lisa Schmidt

Lois Jackson

Maggie Hollis

Mandi Wiesner

Matt Schneider-Adams

***Mick Van Every**

Nick Krueger

Pam Van Every

Pat Dempsey

Pat Evans

***Rachel Zastrow**

Rania Dempsey

***Rebecca Krueger**

***Rochelle Behling**

Rowen Dailey

Ryan Dailey

Sophie Dempsey

Steve Torretta

Susan Perschon

William Rheineck

Donors

Andy & Cindy Meckl

Annette & John Schilling

Amy & Grace Drewa

Arleen Krueger

Barb & George Moeller

Becca Krueger

Bonnie Laugerman

Connie Laufenberg

Cheryl Hoff

Jason & Melissa Rheineck

Jerry Zellmer

Jill & Brad Riemann

John Evans

Kim & Mike Herro

Kit Dailey

Kristina Higbee

Leah Laufenberg

Lisa Schmidt

Lois Jackson

Missy Garski

Pam & Mick Van Every

Rick & Kim Pinsch

Rochelle Behling

Tom & Lori Hohl

Shelby & Jake Seeger

Sue Zajac

Will Moldenhauer

BUSINESSES

Concord General Store

E.H. Wolf & Sons

FX Window Tinting Auto & Lab

Holz Chevrolet - Watertown

Picnic Basket

Snap-on Tools

Uline

SPONSORS

Dillett Mechanical

FX Window Tinting Auto & Lab

Groskopf Construction

Holz Chevrolet Watertown

Oconomowoc Realty

Sobelmans Pub N Grill

Thrivent Financial

Tip Top Roofing & Construction

Two Tails Grooming Salon

Kind Gestures

Alicia Drahonovsky, Bookkeeper

Bob Frick, Co-Treasure

George Moeller, Co-Treasure

Glenn Welnik

Natalie Gruentzel, Comm Coord.

***COMMITTEE MEMBER**



Pull Tab Donations



Cheryl Hoff and her grandchildren dropped off 6 lbs of pull tabs to the Ronald McDonald House. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. You can always drop off pull tabs outside of the church office or in Fellowship Hall window.



Scrip

Coming soon! Scrip sales will resume Sunday mornings after worship on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month starting on September 9 (Rally Day). Scrip is always available for purchase in the church office during regular office hours. If you want something that is not available, please let Cheryl Hoff know and she will order it if available.



Piggly Wiggly Receipts

Please drop off your Fox Brother's Piggly Wiggly receipts in the basket on the welcome desk or in the church office.

Custodian Corner



Hi All,

Wow, end of second quarter. Seems like summer has just begun. July has always been a slow month as far as building activity. The Oconomowoc Theater Group did livin it up a bit.

I will be working on a few projects in August. If you have something that needs my attention, please put a note in my mailbox. I have certain projects that take priority, but can certainly add others to my list.

September will bring the classrooms back to life, and a more structured schedule.

My motto is:

"Rather do a little all the time, instead of doing a lot once in a while" (meaning - maintaining is where it's at) Time management, Tasks planned, Check list ☒ ed.

Fun fact: Did you know I refer to my custodial closet as my OFFICE?



Hope your summer has been filled with Love, Joy, Family and Friends!

Sue



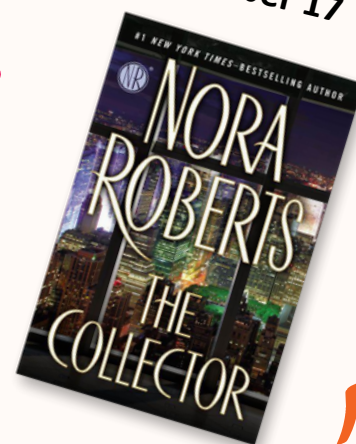
September 19



COME AND JOIN US AT OUR

BOOK CLUB

October 17



Socialize and form friendships by joining us for an immersive experience at Book Club. Book Club gives you a chance to get to know people you may never have had contact with otherwise! We enjoy reading and respectfully discussing a broad range of viewpoints as we seek to grow in our understanding of our Lord and one another. Join us to gain knowledge, creativity and community. Everyone in the Book Club gets a chance to pick a future book of the month. Come help us discover something new!

Join us at 1:00PM in person or Zoom next month. If you prefer Zoom please contact Jean Vercauteren for details.

All are welcome to join for any book and discussion.





MISSION STOCK SHARES

Invest in our 2024 Summer Mission Trip by purchasing a share of stock. Shares are sold in any amount. By purchasing a share, you are helping a participant serve in a way God has called them. They are stepping out of their comfort to serve communities and to bring a helping hand and hope.



Gaining New Relationships and Skills



Life Altering Experience



**SOME GIVE BY GOING;
OTHERS GO BY GIVING!**



Purchase your stocks today
in the Church Office or after
worship in Fellowship Hall.

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc

invites you to join us at the

2024 Annual Golf Outing

to benefit the ministry and mission of First Congregational UCC

Monday, August 12, 2024

Where:

Oconomowoc Golf Club
5621 Brown Street
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Check-In, Warm-Up, Box Lunch:

10:00-11:30 am

Shotgun Start:

11:30 am

Dinner:

6:00 pm

Entry Includes:

18 holes of golf on a private Donald Ross course
Practice range and green available before your round

Box Lunch
Golf Contests
Dinner

Silent Auction; Raffles Prizes and Live Auction

FELLOWSHIP



All are Welcome to join in the fun!

Invite family, friends, neighbors and coworkers to play.
No matter your group size or skill, we will match you up.



**To register: visit us at
oconomowocucc.org, click here, or
complete the form on the next page**

Golf and Dinner Registration

Dinner Choices: Ditka Pork Chop, Dill Sauce Salmon, Baseball Sirloin Steak

GOLF AND DINNER REGISTRATION

(Premium package includes 3 mulligans, 10 raffle tickets, entrance into the Ewald Win a Car Hole in One Contest, and a chance to win a golf shop gift certificate.)

Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____	Premium Package _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____	Premium Package _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____	Premium Package _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____	Premium Package _____

_____ # of Golf/Dinner Registrations @ \$190 + _____ # of Premium Packages @ \$20 = \$ _____

NON-GOLFER DINNER ONLY REGISTRATION

Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____
Name: _____	Phone #: _____	Entrée Choice: _____

_____ # of Dinner Registrations @ \$50 = Dinner Only Total \$ _____

Special Recognition will be made for all Sponsors

Deadline for sponsorship sign-ups and payment is August 1, 2024

Hole Sponsor	\$125 _____	Par Sponsor	\$250 _____
Birdie Sponsor	\$500 _____	Eagle Sponsor	\$1,000 _____
Ace Sponsor \$2,200 _____ (includes foursome, please add names above)			

Sponsor Name: _____	Contact Person: _____
Address: _____	Phone #: _____

Final deadline for all registrations and checks are due by August 1, 2024. Please make checks payable to: First Congregational UCC with "Golf Outing" in the memo and mail to 815 S. Concord Road, Oconomowoc, WI 53066. Or simply pay online at oconomowocucc.org and click on the "Give" button. There is a 3.5% convenience fee if using a credit card.

Youth News



Sunday School News

I can't believe it's that time of year already to get the kids registered for school, pick out that perfect backpack (or clean out the one from last year) and shop for all the supplies they will need for the upcoming year! It's an exciting time of year filled with plenty of to-dos before summer is over and school begins. I'm personally excited because that means another Sunday School year is about to start!

During the month of August, we will be getting our Sunday School classrooms and lessons ready for the start of another wonderful Sunday school year! We're excited for the children and youth to fill our hallways again and to grow in their faith by engaging in some new bible stories and lessons.

All children and youth 2 years old through 12th grade are invited to join us for Sunday School. They can also bring a friend or family member whenever they want throughout the year. Children/youth 2 years old through 4th grade will continue to engage in monthly biblical stories rotating weekly in the art, science, game, and story room. Our 5th – 12th graders will look into a variety of biblical lessons and discover how they can relate to their daily lives. It's going to be an exciting year and we can't wait for you to join us!

To register for Sunday School, [click here!](#)

As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out! We can't wait to see all of you again soon!

Rally Day - September 8

Mark your calendars to join us as we kick off the start of another great Sunday School Year! There will be a special service welcoming everyone back and per our tradition, all 3rd Graders will receive their bibles during worship. Join us after worship for a special fellowship celebration and an Open House of our Sunday School classrooms.

Blessing of Backpacks



August is here! For many families that means school is just around the corner! Shopping for school supplies, books, and fall clothes becomes a part of everyone's schedule. During our Rally Sunday Worship on **Sunday, September 8**, we will celebrate and bless the beginning of another school year. So, students, preschool through adult, bring your backpacks or lunch boxes to worship. During the services we will lift our children and students of all ages through prayer as we begin a new school year.

Teachers, aides, principals, administrators, secretaries, cooks, librarians, janitors, and bus drivers...come to church to be blessed, affirmed in your vocation, and encouraged as you serve children and families in your daily work!

Youth News

Mission Trip



July 14-20, nine youth and five chaperones traveled to Biloxi, Mississippi where they worked and spread God's love to those in the community. This wasn't your typical mission trip of just hammers and nails but more of building relationships and serving those who are unsheltered, providing them with the necessities of survival. This group of very mature young men and women served in a soup kitchen, day center, free choice food pantry, and helped a local family with some home projects.

They served with dignity and respect sharing God's love to all they encountered. This trip was very impactful to our mission team and their experiences will be shared during the worship service on **July 28**. These amazing young individuals and adults proudly and honorably represented our church and as a church family we all should be proud of them. But this trip wouldn't have been possible without all your prayers and financial support. With that, our 2024 Mission Team thanks all of you for that and can't wait to see you on **July 28**!



HEARTS & HANDS

Celebrating ALL of God's Children

Start of the School Year

The regular school year starts **Wednesday, September 4th** with our largest number of families EVER!!

Friday Fun Class



August Friday Fun class starts **Friday, August 2nd**. The theme this year is "Into the Woods". We cannot wait to have kids back in the classroom!

We are completely full for our fall class schedule except for our Friday Fun Program! The Friday Fun program is open to kids ages 25 months - 4 years old and runs from 9-11 on most Fridays throughout the school year. To find out more about this program, see our website: heartsandhandspreschool.org



Kid's Fest

Come join us at Kid's Fest, **Tuesday, August 6th at Fowler Park**. Once again, we are a sponsor of this FREE-FUN-FAMILY event!

Sharing Blessings

Another fiscal year has closed and blessings abound! Here is a list of financial blessings since we opened in 2005:



Preschool has given:

- Church member discounts (20% off of tuition) - \$8,108.20
- Scholarships - \$19,916.25
- Tithing (10% of tuition received is given back to church) - \$77,398.60

So as you can see, as of the end of this fiscal year, we have given back over \$100,000 (\$105,423.05 to be exact)!

Church members continue to bless us through donations and singing collections. We have received a total of **\$27,984.18** for which we are so grateful!



Celebrating 20 years

Speaking of blessings, this school year we enter our 20th year of Hearts & Hands!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Rev Charles Lowder Memorial Service: August 4
after worship

Outdoor Worship Service: August 11- Hymn Sing Service
Inside (9:30AM), Outdoor Worship Service
with Potluck (5:30PM Gathering, 6:00PM Service)

Golf Outing: August 12

Ladies Luncheon: August 13 (11:15AM)

Work Saturday: August 17 (10:00AM - 11:30AM)

Ladies Luncheon: August 27 (11:15AM)

Hearts & Hands Preschool Open House: August 28
(4:00PM - 8:00PM)



September articles are due no later than **Thursday, August 15**
to Natalie Gruentzel - natalie@oconomowocucc.org

STAY CONNECTED AND FALL INTO CHURCH WITH US

Rev. Matt Schneider-Adams, Senior Pastor pastor@oconomowocucc.org

Amy Drewa, Director of Children & Youth amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org

Karl Kay, Music Director karl@execpc.com

Cindy Meckl, Hearts & Hands Preschool themeckls@gmail.com

FOR MORE INFO VISIT US AT
WWW.OCONOMOWOCUCC.ORG