



MAY 2026

# 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

Rite of Confirmation

---

Sunday Funday

---

Capital News

---

Welcoming Ministry

---

Teacher Appreciation

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
OCONOMOWOC**

📍 815 S. Concord Road

📞 262-567-4461

✉️ [uccoffice@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:uccoffice@oconomowocucc.org)



by Pastor Matt

Ever see an aircraft launched from a military carrier at sea? It's a seamless choreography of critical jobs done in a precise order, with precise timing, to get planes in the air on a ridiculously short runway. When I was a kid, I could not launch a glider into the air with my arm anywhere near as fast as the "catapult + full throttle" that launches a fighter jet into a hundred feet of airspace over open water. All kinds of pieces, all at once, to make amazing things happen.

As I write this article, our church life is currently in launch mode. From a blazing Easter celebration on April 5, to the rummage sale, to marking the end of 25 years with Susan Weber as the stellar custodian for a very active church space, to Mental Health Sunday with the Oconomowoc Community Choir who brought us all to a very deep place, to the continuing Bible study on Matthew, to Confirmation coming on May 17, to the end of the year for Hearts and Hands Preschool AND the High School GED classes, to Pentecost, to a month full of choreographed repair and renewal work on our facilities, to the Community Garden reboot, to Sunday worship in Roosevelt Park on the 31st (because repaving), to a congregational meeting on June 7, to our annual Music Celebration on June 14. See what I mean? Launch mode.

True, there are no airplanes being flung out over a heaving sea. Instead, there is a people of the risen Lord being launched by the Holy Spirit into a new season of ministry, sent into a world where Christ-shaped connection with people is more needed than ever, sent with the grace of God working deep within each of us, opening up the resources we need to take the next steps toward wholeness for ourselves, for each other, and for whoever as neighbor comes across our path wounded and shoved to the side of the road.



For each of you, and for us all as church, I pray for the gifts of peace and insight and joy, as Christ walks with us through this time of launching into a new season of ministry. Sometimes it's hard to see the choreography through the chaos. But we are held by hands bigger than we can know. The same Spirit who came as the wind-breath of God on the first Pentecost, is leading us through what looks like a whirlwind. Just know that, with God, all kinds of pieces, all at once, will make amazing things happen.

## Moderator Musings

by Deb Bursinger



### BECOMING WISE

To paraphrase a quote from Socrates, a person can only become wise upon realizing how little he or she truly knows. Due to the stigma surrounding mental health, most of us know little about mental health conditions and how to help ourselves or others when we need assistance to cope with those conditions. Our church's WISE team is hard at work endeavoring to help the congregation become wiser regarding mental health.

The objective of the UCC's WISE certification process is to encourage congregations to become more welcoming, inclusive, and supportive of individuals living with mental health conditions, and to engage in ways to live our commitment to be WISE about mental health.

Many people with mental health conditions may be reluctant to either seek help professionally or speak about it with their pastor or other members of their church. However, an atmosphere of openness and acceptance in a congregation makes members, friends, and visitors more likely to feel safe and free from judgment. This acceptance and sense of safety can help create a place of belonging, where truly everyone, no matter where they are on life's journey, is welcome.

Our WISE team has developed an action plan and goals for 2026 to raise our congregation's awareness regarding mental health. There will be educational opportunities during the year as well as opportunities to engage in activities to enhance our own coping skills. I hope that you take advantage of these opportunities as we undertake this journey to becoming WISE.

I am incredibly grateful for the many individuals who give their time, talents, and energy to support the life and mission of our church. I'd like to take a moment to recognize and celebrate a few groups whose recent efforts have made a meaningful impact:

#### Capital Needs Committee

A huge thank you to our Capital Needs Committee for leading an outstanding campaign that not only met—but exceeded—its initial goal. The improvements we will soon see throughout our church are a direct result of your vision, dedication, and hard work.

Thank you to: Chris Mol, Kit Daily, Bob Johnson, Steve Zimmer, Pat Dempsey, Jason Rheineck, Pastor Matt Schneider-Adams, and Ken Young.

#### Admin Ministry

Our Admin Ministry has been working tirelessly behind the scenes, especially in navigating capital improvements and managing the insurance claim process.

A special shout-out to Tim Schuyler for his persistence and patience in working through the complexities of the claim. Another thank you to Rich Steffens for his exceptional organization and technical expertise in coordinating quotes and contractors. We are grateful for the entire team's dedication to maintaining and improving our church property. Thank you to: Tim Schuyler, Rich Steffens, Dan Moldenhauer, Fred Steinke, Adam Drewa, Cathy Fletcher, and Gene Davenport.

#### Church Staff

We are truly blessed with an amazing church staff who keep everything running smoothly day in and day out. Your commitment, care, and leadership do not go unnoticed.

Thank you to: Pastor Matt, Amy, Karl, Jeanne, Sue, Cindy—and a special thank you to Natalie for helping keep us all moving forward together!



## Capital News

by Chris Mol

In recent years there has been an outpouring of “How To” books. How to do home plumbing, how to organize your house, or how to retire at an early age (hint, make a lot of money). When I first approached the Stewardship Ministry nearly 3-years ago about organizing and running a Capital Needs Campaign, I hadn’t read anything about how to ask a congregation for contributions to fix a church building. What I quickly found out was that we have a number of very smart members who are involved in related businesses who do know what steps it takes to run a campaign. Tapping into their expertise we were able to identify resources, focus and refine our message, and develop both electronic and printed materials to communicate to the congregation the church building needs and costs.

The rest, as they say, is history. The original Capital Needs Campaign goal was \$500,000. Our congregation blew through that number in the first week. So, I suggested a stretch goal of \$600,000. As of the middle of April, we have now have pledges of over \$575,000. Because of our congregation’s extreme generosity, we will have a new parking lot by early June, sanctuary technologic upgrades as soon as final bidding is completed, and additional monies available to pay for a host of building repairs and replacements. To say that I and the Capital Needs Campaign Committee are thankful is a huge understatement. You people are just AWESOME!

So, what is next? A number of members paid their pledge upfront. For those that didn’t, a line toward the bottom of the quarterly statement will note what the total pledge is and how much money has been received toward the fulfillment of that pledge. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact either me or Church Co-Treasurer Bob Frick.

Again, thank you to all heard and felt the call to respond to our church home’s needs. Together, we will prepare our church for the next 50 years of God’s work.

Yours in Christ’s Service,  
The Capital Needs Committee (Chris Mol, Chair)

*Next Branches articles are due*

**Friday, May 15th**

[natalie@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:natalie@oconomowocucc.org)



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, May 12

*(RSVP to Sue Zajac by Monday, 5/4)*

**Turkey Melt** with Cheddar, Tomato and BBQ sauce, with fresh fruit and a cup of chocolate pudding.

**Chicken superfood salad**, chilled, with quinoa, edamame, brown rice, avocado, grilled chicken and roasted garbanzo beans, with a cup of chocolate pudding.

## Tuesday, May 26

*(RSVP to Sue Zajac by Monday, 5/18)*

**Wisconsin Patty Melt** with Cheddar and fried onions, a side of beer mustard, fresh fruit and a peanut butter brownie.

**Salmon BLT Salad**, with chopped iceberg lettuce, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, salmon, lemon and Ranch dressing, with a peanut butter brownie.

### Reserve your spot for a good time!

See Sue Zajac during Fellowship or call/text her 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.

# Caring Connection



Caring Connection is a network of volunteers from our congregation who direct God's healing message to church family members in need. Anyone is invited to participate in this meaningful mission, living out their faith through a variety of caring opportunities. The ways you can help are by sending cards, assisting at funerals, giving a meal, praying, knitting a shawl, delivering flowers at Christmas time, driving members to church and/or visiting those who are home bound or in a retirement community.

This month we are highlighting our Card Ministry Group. A church staff member sends cards from the Church for grief, illness, birthdays (70+), anniversaries (40+), births and thinking of you cards.

Other Caring Connection members send Christmas Cards, birthday and anniversary post cards, sympathy cards at 3, 6 and 12 month intervals following a family death and also thinking of you cards to members who are experiencing health or other issues. Cards are also sent to those that are in retirement communities or are homebound.

The Caring Connection Card Ministry is continuing to direct God's healing message to our Church family.

## Welcoming Ministry

The Welcoming Ministry is all about encouraging Christian fellowship and hospitality among members, friends, and guests of the church. Duties include encouraging members to invite others, and finding members to be Greeters, Hosts for the Welcoming Center and Fellowship hour. The Welcoming Ministry oversees the activities of the Caring Connection and Membership Committees.

Welcoming Ministry members are here to assist you in signing up in person or on Signup Genius for Greeting, Welcome Center and Hosting Fellowship hour. Members who have signed up to host these areas will be reminded via email. Simple instructions for each area are provided by clicking the button below the reminder and are also available in print for each station.

Members hosting Fellowship hour provide their food of choice, be it sweets, fruits or vegetables. Besides coffee and water, apple juice is provided and found in the refrigerator. Serving platters, bowls and utensils are located in the kitchen and should be washed before and after use,

If you like to bake but find it difficult to serve during Fellowship hour alternative arrangements can be made by contacting Barb Bleecker at (262)-269-5663 (talk or text). Monetary donations may also be made toward future Fellowships that can be served by the Welcoming Ministry members.

Welcoming Ministry members are always available to assist as needed especially for those unfamiliar with the responsibilities of each of these duties.

Our Welcoming Ministry goals have been, and will continue to be to:

- monitor, encourage involvement and inform members to be involved with : Fellowship Hour, Greeting, Welcome Center
- monitor and encourage membership involvement in the Welcome Table during Fellowship Hours for visitors and new members
- Continue to make the church “more welcoming” through special requests/monetary donations
  - remove old, heavy, blue and red upholstered stacking chairs and replace with matching Chairs in Fellowship Hall
  - Consider items for purchase that make Fellowship Hall or other areas of the church more welcoming. Membership ideas are encouraged
- Promote and coordinate special meals including, but not limited to, New Member brunches, pot lucks and New Years brunches.
- Promote First Congregational United Church of Christ to the community by coordinating a food booth at the Festival of the Arts in August.
- Organize Christmas decorating and undecorating.
- Organize banners for outside, front of church. Purchase new banners and coordinate seasonal changes.
- Keep kitchen and Fellowship Hall stocked and organized.

Barb Bleecker

Welcoming Ministry chairperson

## 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.



### May Singing Collection

#### Youth Mission Trip

Each summer, our church sends a group of youth on a mission trip. This year, 13 youth and 5 chaperones will be traveling to Costa Rica. These experiences go far beyond a single week, they are a time of service, connection, and growth as participants step into loving their neighbors in tangible ways.

During the week, students serve where help is needed most. Supporting recovery efforts, serving individuals who are unhoused, and partnering with local organizations. Along the way, they build meaningful relationships with those they serve, one another, and God.

These trips leave a lasting impact, with youth returning home with new perspectives, deeper faith, and a stronger sense of purpose.

As we prepare for this summer, we invite you to be part of the journey. While the church provides support, the cost is shared through fundraising, participant contributions, and the generosity of our congregation.

Your gift, no matter the size, helps make this life-changing experience possible. Thank you for supporting our youth as they go out to serve, grow, and share God’s love.



May 3 & June 7

### 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.**



May 21



COME AND JOIN US AT OUR

# BOOK CLUB

June 18



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.**



# Coffee with the Pastor

Tuesdays  
1PM to 3PM

Join us at Roots  
Café. A time for  
conversation,  
connection, and  
community.

All are welcome!



## SUPPORT THE OCONOMOWOC FOOD PANTRY

**First Sunday of the month**

Place donations of unexpired food and toiletries in the baskets.

Donations made during the month may be placed in the blue barrel by  
the coat rack in Fellowship Hall.



Thank you for thinking of your  
neighbors in need.





# THANK YOU! Rummage Sale

The sale was a BIG success due to the efforts of over 160 people. It raised over \$21,500 for the church, thanks to so many of you. It was a beautiful day where our members interacted with many people from our community and showcased our beautiful church, which included freshly painted columns by the office!

## Highlights from the sale:

- Inspired by a generous donation from John Evans of Jane's jewelry collection, we created a one-time only jewelry room which raised over \$2,500! We thank not only John, but Marty Wiley and our new friend, a volunteer from Blue Butterfly and a jewelry expert, Julie Thomas, for making this room come to life.
- Sarah Williams-Berg put together a press release highlighting the jewelry room. Thanks, Sarah!
- Natalie Gruntzel, Carolyn Crom, Cindy Meckl, Rochelle Behling and Deb Schuyler do a great job promoting the event via social media.
- Sue Zajac, Rosie McMickle and Erica Kiser help us distribute yard signs.
- The Dailey family lugs around our heavy, large sandwich board signs for us.
- Deb Bursinger and Krissy Zimmer came forward and worked together to make the Infant Room look great, since we did not have an official Room Ambassador for that space.
- Our Room Ambassadors who have two asterisks next to their names on the list below are second to none! They make each area look so organized. They can't be thanked enough.
- Mickey Kellner, Rob Kellner, Katie Stevens, Karen Short and Lynn Zwaska organize the new donations multiple times per month throughout the year. This makes things SO MUCH easier for when we move items into the rooms they are sold in.
- Mick Van Every comes in nearly every week throughout the school year to work with the students in the alternative high school who need volunteer hours. They organize an over abundance of hangers, etc. and work on special projects.
- Rich Steffens, Fred Steinke, Bob Johnson, Jim Zajac and Bob Frick are always ready to pick up large donated items for us. We also have Dean Koenigs, who doesn't even attend our church, along for large pick ups and Ken Lau specializing in heavy lifting.
- Rich Perschon and Faith Gruss keep us well fed during our large church setups.
- Kathi Welnak and Kathy Frey keep the volunteers well fed and happy on the day of the sale.
- Lois Jackson, Amy Hayes, John Evans, Rochelle Behling, Don and Peg McCullum and Dave and Melva Lupton help offset expenses for the sale.
- We are always very thankful that Randy Bourdo donates a dumpster for the sale. It's a big expense the church doesn't have to cover. :)
- Cheryl Hoff was extremely helpful putting together many new posters to hang throughout the church.
- Rob Kellner will be taking LOADS of metal recycling in for the church. This year he is also going to recycle some electronics and appliances that are past their prime. It's amazing how much of this we generate!



# THANK YOU! Rummage Sale

- In her spare time (haha), Cindy Meckl places items on Marketplace for us and generates extra income. She also keeps things out of landfills by giving things away online that no one comes forward to purchase.
- Laura Slocum became a new Room Ambassador for Artwork and Frames. One of the previous ambassadors for this area recruited her own replacement. Impressive, Rania Dempsey! :)
- We have such a strong group of treasurers. Thanks to Dan Wiley, Jim Zajac and Rich Perschon.
- The church staff is very supportive, encouraging and helpful during this process. We could not do this without Amy and Natalie. Thanks to all!

I can't thank Rosie McMickle, Cindy Meckl, Mick Van Every, Deb Bursinger and Rich Steffens enough for always lending a hand and going WAY ABOVE and BEYOND with each sale. If there is anything that needs to be done, one of them will do it practically on the spot!

Additional business:

- If you helped set up the easels by each entrance, please let us know where we can find the black bags they are stored in. So far they have not surfaced.
- Bring in your yard signs and place them by the church office or right inside the door of the Unfinished Space.
- **We are looking for someone to post 3 collectables on eBay. If you are someone who enjoys that type of thing, please let me know!**
- The unfinished space won't be ready for new rummage to be dropped off until June 1. If you can wait until then, it would be appreciated.

On a personal note, it was fantastic to work with my parents again to prep for this sale. For those of you who don't remember, my father had a serious heart issue right before the fall sale which resulted in double bypass surgery. He was able to be there just about every day for the two weeks leading up to this sale. God is good!

We'll see you all at the next sale on April 24, 2027!

Jill

## RUMMAGE SALE Spring 2025 VOLUNTEER LIST

Laurie Albert  
Annika Anderson\*\*  
Wyatt Anstett  
Mira Baird (student helper)  
Rochelle Behling\*\*  
Esmae Beske  
Tenley Beske  
Barb Bleecker\*\*  
Randy Bourdo\*\*\*  
Deb Bursinger\*\*  
Mike Bursinger  
Kim Caudill  
Lee Cerk\*\*  
Callen Cisweski  
Everett Cisweski  
Augie Crom  
Carolyn Crom\*\*  
Charlie Crom  
Llyod Crom\*\*\*  
Llyod Crom Jr  
Jenny Czerniak (friend)\*\*\*  
Pat Czerniak (friend) \*\*\*  
Brett Dailey\*\*\*  
Kit Dailey\*\*  
Reegan Dailey\*\*  
Ryan Dailey\*\*\*  
Gene Davenport  
Amy Drewa\*\*\*  
Evelynn Drewa  
Grace Drewa  
John Evans\*\*\*  
Pat Evans\*\*  
Dave Ferris  
Kathy Frey\*\*\*  
Russ Frey\*\*\*  
Bob Frick  
Deb Groskopf  
Faith Gruss\*\*\*  
Natalie Gruentzel\*\*\*  
Louisa Haselbeck (student)  
Amy Hayes\*\*\*

Kim Herro  
Mike Herro  
James Hogan  
Maggie Hollis  
Connie Holzmilller  
Kay Hoppe  
Dennis Irvine (St. Vinnys contact)  
Lois Jackson\*\*\*  
Jodie Jens\*\*  
Robin Jens\*\*  
Bob Johnson\*\*\* Gracelyn  
Jordan (student) Mickey  
Kellner\*\*\*  
Rob Kellner\*\*\*  
Erica Kiser  
Karen Klug  
Brian Kirkpatrick  
Kim Kirkpatrick  
Mark Klug  
Dean Koenigs (friend)\*\*\*  
Peg Koenigs (friend)\*\*\*  
Jen Kollath  
Kim Kozinski  
Becky Kruger  
Owen Kuenzi (student)  
John Kyle  
Jaxson Landers (boy scout)  
Karen Lau\*\*  
Ken Lau\*\*\*  
Connie Laufenberg  
Bonnie Laugerman  
Elaine Ludwig\*\*\*  
Dave Lupton  
Melva Lupton  
Don McCollum  
Peg McCollum  
Rosemary McMickle\*\*\*  
Don McNaughton\*\*  
Andy Meckl\*\*  
Cindy Meckl\*\*

Carolyn Meler  
Sandy Meyer  
Evelyn Mieling (student)  
Barb Moeller\*\*  
George Moeller  
Chris Mol  
Dan Moldenhauer  
Evan Moldenhauer  
Sara Moldenhauer  
Bob Northrup  
Ruth Northrup  
Laura O'Connor  
Rich Perschon\*\*\*  
Susan Perschon  
Eric Printz  
Peg Porter  
Vince Pusateri  
Porter Radonski  
Jill Riemann  
Brad Riemann\*\*  
Howie Riemann  
Paige Riemann  
Aari Roberts  
Jean Rosch  
Nathan Rosch (student)  
Daphne Roy  
Barb Rux  
Matt Schneider-Adams  
Heather Scambler  
John Scambler  
Keelie Scambler (student)  
Alyssa Schuyler  
Deb Schuyler\*\*  
Tim Schuyler\*\*  
Brenda Seroka\*\*\*  
Scott Seroka  
Karen Short\*\*\*  
Laura Slocum\*\*  
Andrew Smith  
Finn Smith

Michele Smith  
Nora Smith  
Ruby Smith  
Joyce Stearns  
Brynn Steckbauer  
Connor Steckbauer  
Emily Steckbauer\*\*  
Jered Steckbauer  
Wesley Steckbauer  
Rich Steffens\*\*\*  
Susan Steffens\*\*  
Fred Steinke\*\*\*  
Katie Stevens\*\*\*  
Beth Stone  
Barb Swanson  
Evelyn Theim (student)  
Julie Thomas (friend)\*\*\*  
Steve Torretta  
Joe Trussoni  
Mick VanEvery\*\*\*  
Pam VanEvery\*\*  
Jenny Wallace  
Sue Weber\*\*\*  
Kathi Welnak\*\*\*  
Emily Welnak\*\*  
Willow Welnak\*\*  
Dan Wiley\*\*\*  
Marty Wiley\*\*  
Deanna Williams  
Mike Williams  
Sarah Williams-Berg  
Pat Witkowski  
Art Worner (Jill's dad)\*\*\*  
Sue Worner (Jill's mom)\*\*\*  
Kelly Young  
Jim Zajac\*\*\*  
Sue Zajac\*\*  
Krissy Zimmer\*\*\*  
Steve Zimmer  
Lynn Zwaska\*\*\*

Plus 7 students in the High School Option 2  
Program Plus 6 students from the OHS Beyond 18  
program

\*\*ROOM AMBASSADOR - Our shining stars 🌟

\*\*\*Went ABOVE AND BEYOND



### HUGE SHOUTOUT

*Jill Riemann*

Our AMAZING Rummage Sale Chair!



Rain or  
Shine

# 9th Annual Bald Eagle Car Show



Saturday, June 20, 2026

10a.m. - 2 p.m.

First Congregational UCC Grounds  
815 S. Concord Road, Oconomowoc

9 a.m. cars & bikes arrive

Food · Beer · Music · Raffles



Bikers Welcome



**\$10 Show Car Registration Fee**

**DASH PLAQUE & GOODIE BAG**

CONTACT: Andy Meckl 262-720-1876

EMAIL: TheMeckls@gmail.com

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc

815 S. Concord Road, Ocon., WI 53066

www.oconomowocucc.org



**Fundraiser for  
Youth Mission Trips  
in memory of  
Rich Behling  
"The Bald Eagle"**

## Platinum Sponsors



## Gold Sponsors

Groskopf Construction

Oconomowoc Realty



# Sunday

# FUN DAY

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UCC OCONOMOWOC

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 16**

**1PM – 5PM**

Dinner following at 5PM

*Event Highlights*

**EXCITING GAMES & ACTIVITIES  
CREATIVE CRAFTS  
TASTY TREATS**

Together, we'll explore just how amazing and surprising God's grace truly is.

For ages 3 years old to 8<sup>th</sup> grade

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: [AMYDREWA@OCONOMOWOCUCC.ORG](mailto:AMYDREWA@OCONOMOWOCUCC.ORG)**

**SUNDAY FUNDAY IS MORE THAN AN EVENT, IT'S AN EXPERIENCE  
YOUR KIDS WON'T WANT TO MISS!**

## Youth News

### Sunday School News!

Where did this Sunday School year go? It's hard to believe how quickly the time has passed! This year has been filled with joy, growth, and meaningful moments as we've watched our children and youth build relationships and deepen their faith through a wide variety of Bible stories and lessons.

Together, we've shared laughter, learned new skills, formed friendships, explored big questions, and engaged in thoughtful conversations about what it means to live out our faith. Thank you to everyone students, families, and volunteers who made this Sunday School year so special. Your presence and participation truly made a difference.

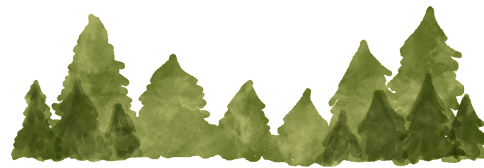
As we wrap up the year, our focus will turn to the comforting and familiar words of Psalm 23, reminding us that the Lord is our Shepherd. While this Psalm offers peace and reassurance, it also invites us to reflect on how God is always guiding, supporting, and walking alongside us. Children and youth (ages 3 through 12th grade) will explore this message through meaningful, age-appropriate activities and discussions.

With May also being Mental Health Awareness Month, we will gently incorporate conversations about emotions, especially those that can sometimes feel overwhelming, and how we can find support through God and through one another. It's an important reminder that we are never alone.

**Please note:** There will be no Sunday School for middle and high school youth on **May 3**, so they can participate in worship and receive Holy Communion, and on **May 17**, as they support their peers during Confirmation Sunday.

Once again, thank you for being part of this incredible year. It is a true blessing to witness the faith and growth of these young people. I look forward to seeing many of you throughout the summer and am already excited for the start of another wonderful Sunday School year on **September 7!**

God's Blessings,  
Amy



### Youth Group Activity

We are very excited for this month's Youth Group event by coming together, getting outdoors and taking a nature hike!!! Join us on **Sunday, May 3 at 11 am**. We will enjoy a quick lunch while listening to Pat Witkowski's experience walking the entire Ice Age Trail. We will then head to a portion of the Ice Age Trail, Brady's Rocks and walk it together! Please RSVP to Amy Drewa at [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org).

Youth are also encouraged to come and support our community Postal Food Drive on Saturday, May 9! Together we will sort and organize food that the postal workers collect on their routes and drop off at the church pavilion. Children, youth, and their families are invited to join us from 1-3 p.m. This is a great way to help our community, come together to have fun as a church family and earn any service hours you may need for school! If you are interested in attending, please email Amy Drewa at [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org) by May 7.

## Youth News



### College & High School Graduates

We are excited to celebrate an incredible milestone with our graduates, both high school and college!

Join us on **June 7 during the 9:30 a.m. service** as we honor and recognize all they have accomplished.

To help us celebrate you/them, please send an email to Amy Drewa at [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org) with the graduate's name, school, future plans, a photo to share on the screens, and whether you/they will be attending the June 7 service.

We are so proud of you and can't wait to celebrate this special moment together!

### UCC Church Camp

Summer will be here before we know it!!! Do you have plans for your kids or grandkids? If not consider church camp! There are options for all ages and interests, including family camps, "& Me" camps, and individual youth experiences through the UCC.

Wisconsin is home to two wonderful UCC camps:

[Moon Beach](#) in St. Germain and [Daycholah](#) in Green Lake. Registration is now open, so be sure to sign up soon before your preferred sessions fill up. Check out the links and register today. Come support our camps, have fun, and make some new friends! We're also grateful to offer scholarships for all youth campers who complete a service log. [Click here](#) to access the form.

If you have any questions, please contact Amy Drewa at [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org).

We hope your family can take part in this meaningful and memorable summer experience!

### Thank you, Teachers!

As we conclude another Sunday School year it is the perfect time to recognize all our amazing volunteers who helped make our Sunday School and Youth programs possible. Each of these individuals brought their time gifts and talents to teach and build relationships with our children and youth. We are so thankful and blessed for everything they have done for our Sunday School and Youth programs this past year! Join us on **May 17** as we recognize each of them!

#### Thank you to:

Rochelle Behling, Randy Bourdo, Deb Bursinger, Darla Corbe, Adam Drewa, Grace Drewa, Kim Herro, Mike Herro, Molly Hogan, Bob Johnson, Leah Laufenberg, Dan Moldenhauer, Sara Moldenhauer, Lexi Printz, Emily Steckbauer, Jered Steckbauer, Jenny Wallace, Emily Welnak, Pat Witkowski, Steve Zimmer, Brooke Zirzow.

### 2026 Youth Mission Team- Plant and Flower Sale

Thank you to everyone who ordered their plants and flowers through our Youth Mission Team Plant Sale! All orders will be ready for pick up on **Friday, May 8 from 12-2 or on Sunday, May 11 after worship.**

However, if either of those timeframes don't work for you, please contact Amy Drewa at [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org) to schedule another time. Again, thank you for your support of our 2026 Youth Mission Trip!

If you forgot to place an order there will be extra plants for sale so please take a look in Fellowship Hall after worship on **Sunday, May 10** or email Amy Drewa.



## Youth News

### Sunday Funday Surprise Party!

Mark your calendars and get ready for an unforgettable afternoon of laughter, joy, and a few delightful surprises because when Jesus is involved, the unexpected is always part of the celebration!

Join us on **Sunday, August 16 from 1:00–5:00 PM**, with dinner to follow at **5:00 PM**, for our Sunday Funday Surprise Party for children 3 years old to 8th grade. Together, we'll explore just how amazing and surprising God's grace truly is.

Throughout the Gospels, especially in Luke, we see Jesus showing up at parties, sharing meals, and turning expectations upside down. His guest list isn't what people expect....it's better. Everyone is welcome, especially those who feel left out, overlooked, or unsure if they belong. And that's the good news we'll celebrate together: God's grace is for everyone.

During this high-energy, joy-filled event, participants will discover:

- Jesus' grace shows up in unexpected ways for unexpected people
- We are invited to share that same grace with others
- God's love reaches even those who feel far away
- Sometimes grace surprises us—and stretches us in the best ways
- Every single person is invited into God's story

But this isn't just something we'll talk about, it's something we'll experience! From creative crafts and interactive games and activities and tasty treats, every moment is designed to bring smiles, spark connection, and make these powerful truths come alive.

Sunday Funday is more than an event, it's an experience your kids won't want to miss. So come ready to celebrate, connect, and be surprised... and stick around for dinner as we continue the fun together. Because with Jesus, there is always more grace, more joy, and more love than we could ever imagine!



### Join the Party a Volunteer!

Our Sunday Funday Surprise Party on **August 16** is shaping up to be an incredible day and we'd love your help to make it happen!

We're looking for friendly, welcoming volunteers to assist with things like leading simple activities, helping with games and crafts, welcoming families, serving food, and making sure everything runs smoothly. You don't need special experience just a willingness to jump in, have fun, and share God's love with our kids.

Whether you can help for part of the day or the whole event, your presence will make a meaningful difference. It truly takes a team to create a space where kids feel seen, included, and celebrated. If you're interested in volunteering (or want to learn more), please reach out to [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org). We'd love to have you be part of this joyful and impactful day!

# HEARTS & HANDS

Celebrating ALL of God's Children

Fall 2026

Learn more here

Fall Registration is NOW Open! We have classes for ages 25 months - 4K!

August Friday Fun class "What's in My Garden" is open for registration!

To sign up for any of our classes, see our website:

<https://www.heartsandhandspreschool.org/programs>



FYI: To register for any of our classes, you will need to download and sign up for our classroom app, Brightwheel.



Our students have been learning about God's creation and how to care for the world around them. By planting flowers, making bird feeders, and picking up litter on our property, the children are putting these lessons into practice. Great job, kids!

## AUGUST FRIDAY FUN 2026

### WHAT IS IN MY GARDEN??

OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN AGES 25 MONTHS - 4 YEARS OLD

Enjoy 3 Fridays full of garden fun!!



REGISTER

August 7, 14 & 21

9-11 AM

Cost: \$90



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Youth Group:** May 3

**Coffee with the Pastor:** May 5 (1PM - 3PM)

**RISE and Cook:** May 6 (5PM)

**Postal Drive:** May 9

**Soles for Jesus:** May 9 (9AM - 11AM)

**Ladies Luncheon:** May 12 (11:15AM)

**Coffee with the Pastor:** May 12 (1PM - 3PM)

**RISE at Whelans:** May 16 (12PM)

**Confirmation Dinner:** May 16

**Rite of Confirmation & Teacher Appreciation:** May 17 (9:30AM)

**Coffee with the Pastor:** May 19 (1PM - 3PM)

**Book Club:** May 21 (1:00PM)

**RISE Hike & Hamburgers:** May 21 (4PM)

**Memorial Day (Office Closed):** May 25

**Ladies Luncheon:** May 26 (11:15AM)

**Coffee with the Pastor:** May 26 (1PM - 3PM)

**Parking Lot Closed for Paving:** May 26 - June 5

FOR MORE INFO VISIT US AT

**[WWW.OCONOMOWOCUCC.ORG](http://WWW.OCONOMOWOCUCC.ORG)**

## **STAY CONNECTED AND FALL INTO CHURCH WITH US**

Rev. Matt Schneider-Adams, Senior Pastor [pastor@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:pastor@oconomowocucc.org)

Amy Drewa, Director of Children & Youth [amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org](mailto:amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org)

Karl Kay, Music Director [karlkay@execpc.com](mailto:karlkay@execpc.com)

Cindy Meckl, Hearts & Hands Preschool [themeckls@gmail.com](mailto:themeckls@gmail.com)