

June / July 2021 Branches Newsletter



9:00 A.M.

Memorial Day - Labor Day



First Congregational United Church of Christ

To engage and Inspire All Generations to Connect with God through Love and Service

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Pastoral Ponderings . . .**Our Relationships**

We do not live isolated lives for we are a social people. We are formed by our relationships with others. From our first contacts with our parents we experience care. As we grow from toddlers, in play groups, to kindergarten we learn to 'play well with others'. Through high school we become independent, but also become practiced in social skills. As young adults we learn what our life's duties and responsibilities are; all acquired through interaction with others.

During our life some acquaintances become close friends. The more intimate the friend, the more we share with that person. And the more we disclose ourselves to others, the more we self-learn about ourselves! This seems like a paradox, because we would not expect to have insight into ourselves by revealing ourselves to another. It is through relationships that we grow.

Even though we interact with people, and acquaintances, most of us have few really close friends. Loving friends remain devoted to us over the years and hold many of our cherished secrets. During our close friendships we have trusted them. We are comfortable with intimate friends.

What takes place during is that from infancy God offers us life lessons. We learn what it means to be cared for – so we can care for others. We learn from the responsibilities undertaken by our parents and teachers what it means to be responsible – so we can be responsible for others. We learn from trusting others what it means to have faith – so we can be trustworthy to others. When we our expectations in others are met – then we can provide hope to others.

As we mature our awareness that God desires friendship with us becomes clearer. What helps us form a relationship with the divine is built upon what we have learned through our associations with our families, friends, acquaintances, and even those who dislike us. As our consciousness increases that God is an essential part of who we are, who created us, and what our ultimate end is with God, then we understand what it means to truly be a child of God. That is one of the bricks of a relationship with God. Just as all relationships 'start small' and are nurtured as more energy is put into the relationship, our prayer life intensifies from simply asking God for things, to praying for people, to thanking God, to, ultimately, simply being with God. The prayer that we want to attain to is to 'just sit with God'.

What we learn through trust and faith in others assists our growth in our trust and faith in God. What we have experienced in being loved by others, contributes toward our experience of God's love for us. When we are assured that we can rely upon others, then we can extend that confidence into hope in Jesus' promises.

Does this work for everybody? Not necessarily. We live in an imperfect world. Some infants are abused and they carry those scars with them for life. Many people are betrayed by those who claim they love them. Countless individuals are emotionally, and even physically, battered by their life-partners or spouses. For many of our own reasons we may not want to reveal who we are to another person. Because of our past histories, we may not be able to trust another individual. For over a thousand years theologians stated that all of this is the result of what they termed 'original sin'. Simply put, this is the human condition. But we also know that we share in God's grace. God's love is freely given to us – and, once we have a reservoir of grace, we are to generously pass it on to others. We are not isolated individuals – we share in each others' lives. John Donne, the poet, wrote: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main". Joan Baez sang these lyrics: "No man is an island, No man stands alone, Each man's joy is joy to me, Each man's grief is my own." This phrase was also the basis for lyrics by such musical groups as diverse as Jack's Mannequin, Joan Whiney and Alex Kramer, The Lettermen, and Dennis Brown. So the announcement that we are not islands is not new. It is a truism written and sung about for thousands of years. What it shows is that God created us to be in healthy relationships with each other and that we not be separated from Him – or from anyone else.

-- Submitted for your reflection
Rev Dr. Barry W. Szymanski

We Have So Many Volunteers!!

We can't thank you enough for giving of your time.

To the visual creators, visual runners, sound and tech members.

To the members who help during Sunday worship services.

To all those who teach and do activities with our youth.

To all who volunteer in our music programs.

To all chaperones who go on our mission trips.

To the volunteers who help with all our fundraisers.

To our church officers, ministries, committees, project groups, and coordinators of special events.

To the students and their schoolteachers who collect our donated food and take it to the food pantry.

To the Scrip volunteers and coordinator.

To all who set-up fellowship hall for blood drives, high school testing and many other events.

To all who help with meals, baking, transportation, sending cards, on the prayer chain.

To all who knit prayer shawls.

To all who take care of the gardens, lawns and memorial garden.

To those who take care of our building, i.e. light bulbs and much more.

To those who help in the church office.

And to so many more that give of their time you are not forgotten. Thank You!



Congregational Meeting – Sunday, June 6



The meeting will immediately follow the 9 a.m. Worship Service

The purpose of this spring meeting is to provide opportunities for communication and updates from the various Ministries, Project Groups, Committees and Leadership team with the Congregation members.

For those of you who opt not to join us in the Sanctuary physically, you can participate from home through accessing our live stream with the Zoom app.

Please [click here](#) to access our Congregational Meeting via Zoom.

Or go to the Zoom App, enter Meeting ID: 883 9009 7045 and Passcode: 209822.

If you prefer to call in from your telephone please call +1 312 626 6799 and enter Meeting ID: 883 9009 7045# and Passcode: 209822# when prompted to participate with the 9a.m. worship.

Youth News

Join us for In Person VBS at Compassion Camp! (June 27, July 25 & Aug 22)



This world and community could use a little more compassion. Join us as we explore what it means to have compassion for ourselves, others, and the world **every fourth Sunday in June, July and August from 4 - 6 p.m.**

This is open to all children 3 years old through 4th grade. There will be exciting lessons as we explore different ways of having compassion and engage in interactive games and fun activities on the church grounds. There is **NO** cost for participants. Spread the word and invite all your friends and family. If you're interested, please [click here](#) to register today!

Compassion Camp isn't just for 4th graders and younger! Volunteers are also needed and will be reminded of ways to share more compassion to others and yourself. Youth 5th grade and older are more than welcome to join and help during Compassion Camp. Of course, we will also need plenty of adults. Sometimes looking through the lens of a child/youth will open our eyes to see so much more. If you or your youth is interested in volunteering for any of the sessions, please contact Amy Drewa at amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org.

Godspell Jr.

We are eager to offer a Theater Intensive Summer Program here at First Congregational UCC for ANYONE within our Oconomowoc Community to produce and present Godspell, Jr! Partnering with local artists and professionals, we look forward to giving students entering fifth grade to graduating senior year this opportunity.



In a story that has stood the test of time in many ways, we share that no matter the circumstance or happening, that WE can build a Beautiful City, together, and show an everlasting message of hope through anything.

For more information and to register please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/2021FirstCongUCCSummerTheater>

Godspell Jr. Show Dates

Join us for the production of Godspell Jr.
 July 16 at 7 p.m.
 July 17 at 7 p.m.
 July 18 at 2 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased the day of for \$7 or for \$5 with a food donation to the Food Pantry.

Mission Trip

Please keep our Summer youth mission team in your prayers as they travel to Gatlinburg, TN July 25-31. During their time there they will be the hands and feet of Jesus doing small work projects as well as spreading Christian love to those they encounter. Mark your calendars for August 29 for Mission Sunday to hear about their experiences.



May 16 we held a car wash during and after the 9 a.m. worship service to support the Youth Mission Team. Thank you to all the youth, parents and adults who participated!!!

Youth Group Activity

Our youth came together in May to help transplant plants to make room for a new walkway. Thank you to all the youth, parents and adults who came to help!!!

Over the summer let's continue to stay connected with a monthly game day after church.

Join us June 13, July 11 and August 8 from 10-11 a.m. for a fun outdoor game which will be different each month. We look forward to seeing you!



Sunday School News!

Over the summer we will be busy planning and gearing up for our 2021/2022 Sunday School year! We look forward to having our classrooms filled with children, youth and many volunteers putting together the pieces of their faith puzzles with new lessons and bible stories! Watch your emails in August for more information and volunteer opportunities. Mark your calendars for September 12 which will be Rally Sunday!!!



Graduation Sunday—June 13

In honor of all our graduates, college and high school we will be recognizing you on your accomplishment on June 13 during the 9 a.m. service! Congratulations, we can't wait to recognize you!!!

Mission & 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.

June - Family Promise

Although churches are not hosting families yet due to COVID, Family Promise is still very active in helping families prevent homelessness. They have secured 3 apartments that are hosting 2 families experiencing homelessness with the other apartments for single women who are homeless.

For more information about them, see their website: <https://familypromisewaukesha.org/>
Family Promise has also put together a promotional video that can be viewed [here](#).

July - Lake Area Free Clinic

The Lake Area Free Clinic's core purpose is to meet the widest range of health care needs of the economically challenged that it is able to support by providing free medical and reduced fee dental services.

Lake Area Free Clinic serves residents of Waukesha County and the Oconomowoc School District who are uninsured with a household income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level. *Many of these individuals work full-time, but are either not offered health insurance, or cannot afford the premiums.* The need remains. It is estimated there are 16,000 Waukesha County adults who are medically uninsured.



Grocery Store Receipts Receipts wanted!!!

Please drop off your collected receipts from **Fox Bros.**, **Piggly Wiggly** (Hartland & Oconomowoc) and **Sentry Foods** (Golf Road in Delafield) in the folder on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall. Or bring them to Jennifer in the Church Office. Thank You !



A Reminder to Help the Ronald McDonald House

It's easy and it costs nothing other than a small amount of time. All you need to do is save the pull tabs from your beverage cans and then bring them to church to deposit them in the large container outside the office door. When the container is full, the tabs will be taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Wauwatosa where families of children requiring treatment at Children's Hospital can stay while the child receives treatment. The actual cost of a room is \$50 - \$100/day, but the cost to a family is at most \$25/day or may be nothing if they cannot afford to pay.



In case you are wondering how our pull tabs can help, consider this, in one recent year RMH turned in the tabs that had been collected and received over \$30,000 towards their operating expenses.

Rain
or Shine

4th Annual Bald Eagle Car Show

Saturday, June 19, 2021

10 am - 2 pm

First Congregational UCC Grounds

9 am cars & bikes arrive

Food • Beer • Music • Raffles



**Bikers
Welcome**



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

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
815 S. Concord Road, Ocon., WI 53066
www.oconomowocucc.org • 262-567-4461
Contact: Andy Meckl at 262-720-1876 or TheMeckls@gmail.com

Event Sponsors



Summer Worship Services

Summer services will be similar to recent past few years- a single service at 9:00 am and outdoor Sunday Evening Services on June 27, July 25, & August 22.



- Masks will be optional for those that have been vaccinated
 - Masks are recommended for those who have not been vaccinated
 - Masks are required for those who choose to sing with us during worship
 - Established social distancing restrictions will continue in the sanctuary
 - Fellowship will now be encouraged with masks optional for those fully vaccinated.
- Coffee and Treats will be provided with COVID restrictions as established by CDC.

The three Outdoor Services are tentatively planned to start at 5:45pm.



We are planning the services to include activities before & after. The goal is to celebrate bringing our entire congregation back to church in a safe & fun summer outdoor setting. Think Church Picnic, Kids games, hiking on our prayer walk & a glass of wine on our beautiful 22 acres watching the sun go down. On each of these Sundays there will be a brief Prayer & Song Service led by Karl Kay on Sunday morning for those who want to be in Church Sunday morning. The evening service will include Pastor Barry's Sermon & Message.

Golf Outing 2021 Monday, August 9

The 2021 First Congregational UCC Annual Golf Outing is scheduled for Monday, August 9th! The venue will be the Oconomowoc Golf Club in Oconomowoc, an historic golf course designed by famed architect Donald Ross.

"The Future Begins at Home"

The goal of Family Promise is to help homeless families with children regain and retain their independence. Our church is one of their faith-based partners. We are working together to provide a first-class golf event for you to enjoy and support.

Again, this year, ALL the proceeds from this premier event will go towards Family Promise of Waukesha County. Last year we were able to provide over \$25,000 to aid in their missions. We will exceed that this year, but we need your help to accomplish that goal.

Ways for you to be part of the golf outing: register to golf, register to come for dinner, become a sponsor, donate an "experience" for the live auction and pray for a beautiful summer day!

All the registration and payment forms are available on our church website under the EVENTS tab (located at the top of our homepage) . Or pick up a form from the church office. Register early – there will be a limit of 100 golfers and an additional 50 diners for the evening festivities.

Watch your email for special golf announcements and additional details in the coming weeks!

Click to Register and/or Pay online: [Info/Registration](#) [Sponsorship](#) [Payment](#)



The Future Begins at Home
 All proceeds benefit Family Promise of Waukesha County.
 If you are unable to join us, please consider a donation directly
 to Family Promise! www.familypromisewaukesha.org

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc & Family Promise of Waukesha Co. invite you to our **2021 Annual Golf Outing**

Where:

Oconomowoc Golf Club
5621 Brown Street (Hwy P)
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

When:

Monday, August 9, 2021

Check-in, warm-up and lunch:

10:00 - 11:45 am

Shotgun Start:

12:00 pm

- Limit 100 golfers
- Non golfers are invited to the evening events starting at 5:00 PM. Limit of an additional 50 people.
- To register, visit www.oconomowocucc.org or complete the form on the back and mail in to: First Congregational UCC, 815 S. Concord Road, Oconomowoc, WI 53066
- Final deadline for all registrations, sponsorships, and payments is July 19, 2021
- Questions? Contact Jennifer Arnold with First Congregational Church at 262.567.4461

Entry fee includes:

- 18 holes of golf (scramble format) on a private Donald Ross course
- Practice range and green available before your round
- Box lunch, beverages/snacks on the course, hors d'oeuvres and dinner
- Golf contests, evening entertainment, and program

Cash bar, raffle, live auction, entertainment & program follow the outing.

All are welcome to join in the fun!

Invite family, friends and coworkers to play.

No matter your group size or skill, we will match you up.



Please join me (Luke Edgewood)
for a celebration of a life well lived

Carol Miller

05/13/1950 - 10/02/2020

Sunday, August 1st, 2021

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

11920 W Whitaker Ave
Greenfield WI 53228

Outdoor event tent with tables & seating
A reflective service @ 3:00 pm
Live music all afternoon
Catered food

All are welcome to simply stop in
or stay for the afternoon



Food Pantry First Sundays

Please remember your food donations for the Food Pantry. They can be placed in the baskets at the entrance to the sanctuary or dropped off at the Church office. Donations are delivered to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry.

Baby items: diapers, wipes, baby food, formula;

Personal hygiene items: soap, deodorant, shampoo, tampons/pads, toothpaste, laundry detergent, toilet paper.

Collection dates for Worship Services:

6/6 7/4 8/1 9/5 10/3 11/7 12/5



Scrip Gift Cards

***Need supplies for those spring projects?
Or gifts for Father's Day,
Graduation or Birthdays?***

All kinds of Scrip gift cards are available for purchase. If we don't have what you need we can special order and have it within a few days. Scrip cards are a great way to get your purchases and help the Church. Profits from the sale of these cards support our youth programs! *Stop in the church office during the week or on Sunday after Worship.*



Hearts & Hands Preschool



For more information: e-mail: preschool@oconomowocucc.org

NOW accepting registrations for Fall 2021 classes.

Try out our 3D Virtual Tour! [Click here:](#)



To schedule a private tour, contact Cindy Meckl
262-567-2558 or themeckls@gmail.com.

Know of someone who has a child
aged 2.5 - 4 years old?

Let them know we have a class for them!

August Friday Fun Class God is My Universe

Registration is now open for our August class
which runs from 9-11 am on all of the Friday's in
August (6,13,20, & 27th).

All children ages 2.5-4 years old are invited to join
us. Cost is \$100/child. On-line registration form is
available ([click here](#))



What can you do to help the preschool ...

Share our Facebook and Instagram posts:

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/heartsandhandsconomowoc/>

Contact Cindy Meckl

themeckls@gmail.com or 262-567-2558

Share our website and virtual tour (www.heartsandhandspreschool.org) with anyone who may
be looking for a preschool.

Website

www.heartsandhandspreschool.org

Instagram

hearts_hands_preschool



Look what we found!





Staying Connected ...

Rev Dr. Barry W. Szymanski, Bridge Pastor bws1mp@gmail.com
Amy Drewa, Dir. of Ed. & Youth amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org
Jennifer Arnold, Admin. Assistant jennifer@oconomowocucc.org
Cindy Meckl, Hearts & Hands Preschool thameckls@gmail.com

<u>Upcoming</u>	<u>Events</u>
May 31	Memorial Day, <i>office closed</i>
June 6	Worship with Holy Communion & Spring Congregational Meeting
June 13	Graduation Sunday
June 17	Book Club
June 19	4th Annual "Bald Eagle" Car Show
June 20	Father's Day
June 27	Vacation Bible School 4-6 pm & Outdoor Worship Services at 5:45 pm
July 4	Worship with Holy Communion, Independence Day
July 5	Observance of Independence Day, <i>office closed</i>
July 15	Book Club
July 25	Vacation Bible School 4-6 pm & Outdoor Worship Services at 5:45 pm
August 1	Worship with Holy Communion
August 9	UCC Golf Outing <i>benefiting the Mission of Family Promise</i>
August 22	Vacation Bible School 4-6 pm & Outdoor Worship Services at 5:45 pm