



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
May 2024



Friends in Christ:

I used to have a “Little Zen Calendar,” on my desk—one of those page-a-day deals that gave me a new (and often cryptic) saying every day of the week. Most days would come and go, but occasionally something would strike me and then I held onto the page. One day was greeted by the words Shunryu Suzuki, the monk who helped popularize Zen Buddhism in the United States:

“Things are always changing, so nothing can be yours.”

This is a good example of what one person calls “ChristZen,” a mix of Eastern and Western wisdom that is meant to transform our lives. While the above words are pure Zen in outlook, our Christian tradition holds a similar view. Nothing is ours—all that we “possess” we really hold in trust as gifts from God. And so, one of our common Christian callings is to be wise stewards—caretakers—of those gifts.

Nothing is ours. We are to be stewards of the earth, taking care of this fragile and threatened planet so that it can be passed on to future generations. We are stewards of our church property, which we received from other faithful people and which we care for so that others will benefit. We are stewards of our children—gifts, not possessions—raising them into full, independent adulthood.

In this rapidly changing world, nothing is ours. And we are, by God’s grace, stewards of everything.

Peace,

Bill

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2024 News from Christian Education



THE GRAND FINALE!

Our last day of Sunday School and celebration **Ice Cream Social** will be on **Sunday, May 19th**. This marks the end of our school year. Come and have ice cream for breakfast served to you by the Board of Christian Education! Have a fun and safe summer break!!

Youth Group will meet for the last time this year at the Presbyterian church on **Sunday, May 19th from 4-5:30.**



Children's Choir will share for the last time this year during worship on **Sunday, May 19th.**

Childcare will be provided through the summer for worship from 10:00-11:30.



GOODBYE

May 19th will be my last Sunday serving as your Director of Children's Christian Education programming. Yes, I will officially be retiring! As is custom of one who has served a church (in any capacity) I will step away for a while to let you reestablish yourselves with new programming *and* to reexamine my own next moves as retired clergy. I have LOVED serving you and this church for the last five years and found it a very fruitful and fulfilling time in my ministry. Thank you! Thank you for allowing me to serve you, Christ, and the church in this place. I will pray for your faithful future endeavors. Blessings, Rev. Ann Molsberry

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE REV. ANN MOLSBERRY

This spring, Ann Molsberry will retire as our Director of Children's Programs. Ann has done an excellent job both of keeping the Christian Education program going through the height of the pandemic and of guiding its development and growth in recent years.



Please join us in Rockwood Hall after worship on Sunday, May 19, as we give thanks for all that Ann has done in her career and at Congregational UCC.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SEEKS NEW DIRECTOR

This spring, Ann Molsberry will retire as our Director of Children's Programs. Ann has done an excellent job both of keeping the Christian Education program going through the height of the pandemic and of guiding its development and growth in recent years.



The Board of Christian Education is beginning the search for a new Director who can build on the strong foundation that Ann established. As the search begins, the Board is looking for a Congregational UCC parent to join the search team. If you are interested or know someone you would like to recommend, please talk to Sally Strang or Bill Lovin.

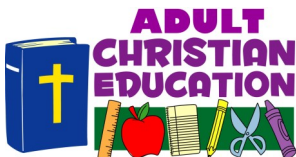
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE RECOGNITION

Every year we recognize the high school graduates in our congregation. This year Sylvia Woolums is graduating from City High on June 2. She has been active in swimming, soccer, orchestra, drama club, and yearbook during her high school years. She has been working at The Hobby Corner and giving child care at our church. She starts her apprenticeship to become a licensed Electrician this summer in Fort Myers, Florida.

The Diaconate has a book available in Rockwood Hall in which you can share your thoughts and good wishes with Sylvia. We will recognize her during worship on May 12.



WILLS and PLANNED GIVING



On Sunday, May 12, at 9:15 a.m., the Stewardship Board is sponsoring an Adult Education session exploring the use of wills as a method of planned giving. Many people like to include a gift to their church or to charities in their wills. Unfortunately, a majority of individuals die without a will, leaving decisions of probate to the state.

Darrel Morf, an attorney from Cedar Rapids with great experience in teaching about the importance of making a will, will lead this session. Darrel is also a life-long friend of Church and Sue Dayton. Please join us for a lively discussion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

PENTECOST SUNDAY—MAY 19—Wear Red!

We will celebrate Pentecost on Sunday, May 19. This day completes the long arc from Ash Wednesday through Easter resurrection to the coming of the Holy Spirit to the followers of Christ—a journey “from ashes to fire.” Pentecost marks God’s gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church and our morning will be a spirited time together. The traditional color for Pentecost is red. We invite everyone to please consider wearing “flame colors”—red, orange, yellow—to worship on Sunday, May 19.



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING WILL BE RECEIVED ON PENTECOST SUNDAY—MAY 19



What does church mean to you? Mission? Compassion? Community? Praise? Prayer? Peace? There are as many different answers as there are people. But the value at the heart of every answer is the same: Love. The church is love.

Each year we receive a special offering that helps the church’s love to grow and thrive. The “Strengthen the Church” offering grows the United Church of Christ’s future by supporting new and renewing churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership development—especially among women and people of color. It also funds the “Stillspeaking” Ministry, spreading the message of God’s extravagant welcome, reaching out especially to those who have felt there is no room for them within Christianity and the church.

On Sunday, May 19 —Pentecost Sunday—we will receive this offering. Your generous gift will help the UCC create vibrant church communities of extravagant welcome.

HOPE LODGE: Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be Monday, May 13. If you would like to participate, see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall for the March dinner. If you have questions, contact Sue Dayton, cdayton7@mchsi.com



SUNDAY MORNING OPPORTUNITIES



The Deacons are always looking for people to participate in the activities on Sunday mornings. Some of these

activities are serving as a greeter, being an usher, and hosting the hospitality after the worship service. The people who have signed up on the sheets in Rockwood Hall are often reminded of their commitment during the week prior to serving. Please make sure to update your information with

Jenn if you have moved or changed phone numbers or email addresses so you can be contacted. The Deacons will have future articles in the newsletter outlining the responsibilities of these opportunities to serve. It is a fun way to interact with our worshippers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



WOMEN'S LUNCH—May 16th

The May 16th women's lunch will meet at Thai Spice in Iowa City. Please call or Text Martha Ann Crawford at 319-855-8340 to reserve a seat at the table.

MEN'S BREAKFAST—MAY 18

The May Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 18, at the Waterfront Hy-Vee. All Congregational UCC men who eat breakfast are invited. This is a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. Join us!



SAVE THE DATES!—ALL CHURCH GATHERINGS

The Membership Board is looking ahead to a couple of much-loved congregational events and we want you to be a part of them. Mark your calendars now and look for more information in the months ahead about:

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC—Sunday, June 23, in City Park

PROGRESSIVE DINNER—Saturday, October 5, at lots of locations



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

AGAPE CAFÉ BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

Saturday, May 4



The 31st annual Agape Café fundraiser taking place on May 4th, 2024 between 8:00 am-11:00am. The fundraiser will be held at Old Brick Church, 26 E Market St, Iowa City. Please join them for a breakfast meal and a morning of visiting with our community.

Since 1993, the Café has provided a safe and comfortable environment for anyone who walks through their doors. That service comes irrespective of their race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, or cultural background. Their patrons come from all walks of life. Many face homelessness and food insecurity. Agape Café gives guests a place to sit down and eat a free, restaurant-style, hot breakfast. They do this every Wednesday morning between 7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m. throughout the year.

Our mission is to serve our community with respect and dignity through food and kindness. And that mission is possible because of the generosity of the community it serves. Congregational UCC has provided important financial support to the Café in recent years. Come to breakfast and see what a difference we make.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

GOTTA WEAR SHADES

As Earth Month began, things were looking up. Congregational UCC members joined a thousand others on the Pentecrest to watch the eclipse. Even with the glasses, you might recognize a few.



CONGREGATIONAL UCC MEMBERS CELEBRATE AT THE TABLE TO TABLE DINNER

For many years, we have given financial support to the Table to Table program. And some of our members volunteer their time in helping the T2T's food recovery effort. CUCC members joined with others from the Iowa City area in celebrating this important work on Wednesday, April 24. A splendid time was had by all.



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Chamber Singers of Iowa City presents



Treat yourself and your loved ones to the grand finale of the season, a powerful performance of Mendelssohn's masterpiece, *Elijah*. Sunday, May 12. 3:00 pm. Concert Hall, Voxman Music Building.

Composed in the mid-1800s, *Elijah* tells the dramatic story of the prophet Elijah, bringing to life themes of faith, perseverance, and hope. Mendelssohn's stunning oratorio has captivated audiences for generations with its soaring melodies, powerful choruses, and intimate arias.

Immerse yourself in the timeless beauty of this beloved work, featuring soloists **Brian Banion**, Bass-Baritone, **Jessica Pray Patel**, Soprano, **Élise DesChamps**, Alto, **Colin Wilson**, Tenor, **Esther Puderbaugh**, Soprano and a guest orchestra. The performance will be conducted by Dr. David Puderbaugh.

Tickets are just \$16, and students are admitted free. Don't miss this opportunity to experience the uplifting power of choral music at its finest. Secure your seats today and celebrate Mom with a truly unforgettable afternoon!



THE COMMUNITY ACTION POVERTY SIMULATION (CAPS)

Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families living in Johnson County. But unless you've experienced it, poverty is difficult to truly understand. The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) bridges the gap from misconception to understanding. CAPS is an interactive and immersive experience that puts you in the shoes of a person just trying to get by in a community like ours. Facilitated by HACAP staff, this simulation will give you a sense of what it might be like to experience poverty for one month.

Join many others on **May 9th from 6-8 at St Andrew Presbyterian Church** to learn about the effects of poverty on our community and how you can make a difference. Staff from local agencies like Johnson County Social Services, North Liberty Community Food Pantry, DVIP, CommUnity, Johnson County Affordable Housing Coalition, and others will be on hand to guide you through the experience and answer questions about local resources available.

Sign up to participate in the experience [HERE](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

FREE LUNCH PROGRAM NEWS

Providing Good Food and Hospitality since 1983



Our church served 157 lunches at the Free Lunch Program on Monday, April 29, 2024.

Thank you so much to all who volunteered by donating food: Dianne Atkins, Chuck & Sue Dayton, Bill Dickinson, Diane Duncan-Goldsmith, Randee Fieselmann, Carson Fixmer, Betsy Henson, Donna Hirst, Cynthia Kemp, Linda Muston, Connie Parsons, Rebecca Weatherford.

Additional thanks to Bill Dickinson, John Fieselmann, Carson Fixmer, Betsy Henson, Kathi Koegle, Edie Roberts and Rick Ruppert for their valuable onsite support.

Our next scheduled serving date is Monday, July 29, 2024! *Vicki Thoma*

NEW T-SHIRTS ARE COMING IN JUNE!



In order to expand our outreach efforts, to show that all are welcome here, we have created new t-shirts! They are a soft gray, 100% cotton, with the UCC logo on the front and Congregational Church, Iowa City on the back. The Membership Committee hopes you will wear these shirts around town and to our picnic.

If we order 50, the cost is \$16 per shirt.

Order forms will include: name, phone number, and requested sizes.

Checks can be made out to the church. Deadline for orders is May 18.

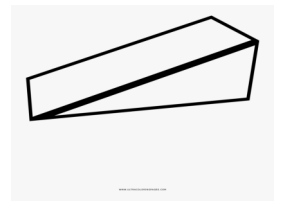
For more information, call or text Martha Ann Crawford, at 319-855-8340.

Forms will be available the next 3 Sundays.



NEED TO BORROW A ONE-STEP WOODEN RAMP FOR YOUR CHURCH

EVENT? There is one available in the office to borrow. Others may borrow if the need arises. Please contact Jenn Harden if you would like to use it. The Wolken's have another ramp used for the Progressive Dinner.



CHURCH CALENDAR

May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 - 9:00 Church School breakfast - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service with communion - 4:00 Confirmation Class	6	7 -CE Meeting, 6:30pm -Mission Board, 7:00pm	8	9	10	11
12 -9:00 Church school breakfast - 9:15 Christian Education - Choir Rehearsal - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service	13	14	15	16 - Women's Lunch @ Thai Spice in Iowa City at 11:45 am	17	18 - Men's Breakfast @ Waterfront HyVee, 8:00 am - Confirmation prayer retreat, 2-4pm
19 - 9:00 Church School breakfast - 9:00 Choir - 9:15 Christian Education - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service	20	21 - Membership Board, 5:30pm - Deacons meeting, 7pm - Trustees, 7pm - Stewardship, 7pm	22	23	24	25
26 - 9:00 Choir - Children's Church During Worship - 10:15 Worship Service	27 Memorial Day— CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	28 - Council Meeting, 7pm	29	30	31	

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATING MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 5/5 Ed Leighton-Dick
- 5/13 Allan Hogue
- 5/14 Edie Roberts
- 5/15 Elizabeth Groff
- 5/16 Gloria Hanson
Barbara Sisley
- 5/17 Dylan Beerends
- 5/19 John Rauer
- 5/20 Janet Williams
Betsy Henson
- 5/22 Karen Smith
Courtney Nelson
- 5/24 Kathy Thede-Reynolds
Megan Carnes
Hannah Leighton-Dick
- 5/27 Cynthia Kemp
- 5/28 Robyn Wood Groff
- 5/30 Oscar Hill
- 5/31 David Dowling



FRIENDLY REMINDER!

The deadline to submit items for the June newsletter will be
Wednesday, May 22nd.



MONDAY, MAY 27: The church office will be closed in observance of Memorial Day.

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
30 North Clinton Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER



CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 319-337-4301

Visit our Web Site: www.uccic.org

Pastor:

Dir of Church School

Music Director

Organist

Children's Music Director

Office Manager

Financial Secretary

Custodians:

The Rev. William Lovin

Rev. Ann Molsberry

Dr. Chris Nakielski

Bill Crouch

Majesty Constable

Jenn Harden

Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

Douglas Herrera

Claudia Landaverde

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Contact the Office

For up to date announcements, check us out on Facebook.