

## The Church Mouse - April 2020

First Congregational United Church of Christ 715-479-8501

Pastor Jane Courtright: [pastorjane@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:pastorjane@eagleriverucc.org)

Editor: Nan Pophal

Email for Nan (Office Manager) & the Church Office: [office@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:office@eagleriverucc.org)

Email for Amy Mehlhoff (Assistant Office Manager) [amy@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:amy@eagleriverucc.org)

Email for Sharon Breit: [youthministry@eagleriverucc.org](mailto:youthministry@eagleriverucc.org)

Home Page: [www.eagleriverucc.org](http://www.eagleriverucc.org)



Pastor's Corner

March 25, 2020

***"Grace to you and peace, from God, our creator, and Jesus, our Christ."***

You may remember that during a baptism service at our church, I quoted one of my favorite theologians Frederick Buechner, who wrote this for a baby about to be baptized: **"Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid."** Buechner's words seem appropriate right now as we are in the midst of Coronavirus.

A Seasons of the Spirit Taize style song conveys God's promise:

*Don't be afraid ... my love is stronger ... my love is stronger than your fear.*

*Don't be afraid ... my love is stronger ... my love is stronger than your fear.*

I'm sure that you are just as concerned as I am about the Coronavirus and its effects on our lives, families, friends, and church. Experts believe that a large percentage of us will eventually catch the virus. This is the reality of an epidemic. With no preventive medicine or cure, governments are doing their best to "flatten its reproductive curve." Another expert believes that if all Americans could stay six feet apart for two weeks, the virus could be halted. PLEASE STAY AT HOME IF AT ALL POSSIBLE!

Gwendolyn Brooks wrote in a poem: **"We are each other's business. We are each other's magnitude and bond."** This is First Congregational United Church of Christ to me. Crucial to our identity, especially evident in a crisis, is our willingness to care for each other. One of the most important things we can do is continue to communicate with one another. Might be a good time for you to pick up your phone, write a note or letter or arrange or join a computer or phone conference call. This can be a strategic time to deepen relationships with family, friends or neighbors. As Council President Barb Helmick writes in this newsletter, many of you are helping with communication and other areas. Bless you! Our church had donated money to organizations working to provide food to students and others in the community: the Vilas Food Pantry, Northland Pines and FORK (Feed Our Rural Kids). You may wish to do so as well. The need is great!

Please don't forget: your continued financial giving is essential to our church! Regular. Faithful. Please do not let it slide. We have many ministries and people to support. Everything leans on our collective generosity. Currently, the best way to do this is to mail your offering or pledge to the church.

Also, donated blood is a need and necessary resource. They are doing this with appointments with extreme safety, but as one worker told me, "There is no substitute for human blood!" Walk-ins are discouraged. Please call ahead: 800-280-4102. Rhinelander and Woodruff are locations.

There are some things we can all do:

- Pray for God to help scientists to discover a vaccine and cure quickly.
- Pray for our church: that we will not allow the coronavirus to quarantine our faith.
- Pray for medical personnel, police, firefighters and other workers in our community.
- Act responsibly: wash your hands, stay at home if possible, etc.      Respect the space of others.

Pastor Jane

**“Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God, we open our doors and hearts to all in service and love, as modeled by Jesus Christ.”**  
**(Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Eagle River, WI)**

Greetings!

As I write this (March 25th) we are living in the new — but temporary — reality brought about by COVID-19. While that reality changes daily, one thing remains constant: the need to socially isolate from others to avoid both catching and spreading this deadly virus.

Our church is obviously impacted. But my heart is filled with joy by how so many of you have responded to this crisis, continuing to serve God and share his love by reaching out to others in our church family and in the community. I feel your embrace as surely as if we were physically together sharing a friendly smile or a warm hug.

There is not much I can share with you in this article that I have not already done in churchwide emails. But since some do not have access to those emails, I'll repeat what I've shared in those communications here.

- Pastor Jane and Amy Mehlhoff, with assistance from Dave Ward, are working together to determine how best to video Pastor Jane delivering her sermon and perhaps even an entire service.
- Pastor Jane is also trying to determine a way to share communion with the congregation. One option, once we can distribute video to all, is for her to bless the bread and juice and offer the words of remembrance, then we, at home partake of our own bread and juice. Pastor Jane is hoping to be able to offer this by the first Sunday in April (Palm Sunday, April 5th). Stay tuned for more information.
- The warnings and cautions regarding social distancing and self-isolation continue. Please do all you can to take care of yourself and others in our community by heeding them. Can you imagine what a joyous day it will be when we are again all able to worship together? I want you all there!
- Along that line, if **you are a snowbird reading this from afar**, please take heed of requests made by Vilas County that you NOT return to the Eagle River area unless your primary residence is here. And if you do return to the area, you are asked to self-quarantine for at least 14 days.
- The Church Council, voted by email to support Northland Pines School District, Feed our Rural Kids (FORK), and the Vilas Food Pantry by donating \$500 to each from the Maggie Ball Mission Fund. These organizations are working to ensure that students and people in need do not go hungry during this critical time.
- A big THANK YOU to **Bernie and Marlyn Hupperts, Phil and Mickey Jensen, Carlton and Barb Schroeder, Joy Turpin, Kamie Kolb, Keenan and Patti Roberts, Trisha Moore, Tobi Johannsen, Linda Cole, Sandra Mettler, and Nancy Diepenbrock**. They have been actively reaching out to our church family, asking about their needs and concerns, and offering support in many ways. Some are offering to pick up and deliver groceries and prescriptions if needed. **Scott Preisler** has also offered to assist in the latter effort. Please, if you have any needs or concerns, or just want someone to talk to, please do not hesitate to contact one of these people.
- **Patti Roberts** is touching our hearts with words of wisdom, comfort and humor via her “Sheltering Thoughts.” Thank you, Patti, for proposing this ministry and for making it happen.
- **Tom Helmich** is sharing encouraging memes from Facebook with Amy Mehlhoff so she can add them to our church Facebook page. Thank you, Tom, for making this your ministry.
- Thank you, **Amy Mehlhoff** for all your technological help and for being available at a moment's notice to send out congregational messages and sermons and responding — as always — to any computer issues. I'm so glad you're a member of our team.
- **Nan Pophal** continues to support Pastor Jane and the Church Council. Thank you, Nan.
- Lastly, thanks to **Pastor Jane** for providing spiritual leadership and support through this very challenging time.

Please take care of yourselves, reach out to others as you feel comfortable, pray often, and never lose faith. God is always with us, and he will see us through these times. Blessings!

Barbara Helmick, Church Council President

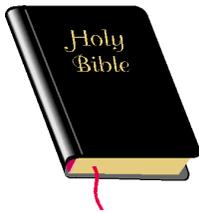
# APRIL CHOIR SCHEDULE

to be announced!



April 5th: Palm Sunday  
April 9th: Maundy Thursday  
April 10th: GOOD FRIDAY  
April 12th: EASTER SUNDAY

**NO IN CHURCH**  
**SERVICES DUE TO THE**  
**CORONAVIRUS**  
**PANDEMIC**



## APRIL SCRIPTURE READINGS

April 5, PALM SUNDAY, 6th Sunday in Lent

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Mathew 21:1-11

Matthew 26:14-27 or Matthew 27:11-54

April 12, EASTER SUNDAY

Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2 14-24

Col. 3:1-4

John 20: 1-18

April 19, Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a. 22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

April 26, Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35



## RELAY FOR LIFE DAFFODIL SALES 2020

A resounding THANK YOU to all who sold or purchased daffodils in this year's Relay fundraiser! Of all the North - woods' teams, 205 bundles were sold for a profit to Relay of \$1,670.75! Of those 205 bundles, TEAM UCC, we of First Congregational, the United Caring Characters, sold 105 (up from 21 over last year) which contributed \$831.30 to our missions of supporting those who struggle with cancer. The blooms were beautiful and fragrant and truly raised spirits during this time of calm and chaos in our lives.

Again, THANK YOU SO MUCH!



**The Relay for Life Spring Cheese**  
**Sale has been**  
**CANCELLED!**

*See you in the fall, just in time for the holidays!*

## Oh, God, I'm Spinning Out: A Prayer

There is so much I do not know  
There is so much I cannot see  
There is so much I cannot control.

In the moments I feel powerless, I will take a deep breath trusting that I am tasked only with doing my part, not the whole.  
In the moments I feel unsure, I will take a deep breath trusting that there is no depth I can fall out of reach of the Spirit that holds me close.  
What I do know is that my life and love and worth extend far beyond my work.  
What I can see is that spring follows every winter and new life pokes out from cold ground.  
What I can control is my breath and the love I inject into a world so clearly lacking it.  
"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love."  
Remember: Care, Caution and Calm.  
And keep the faith!

~~Rev. Dr. Hannah Adams Ingram~~



## ***GREETINGS to my FAITH FORMATION KIDS!***

On February 24th I fell down and dislocated my right shoulder. I HAVE HAD MY ARM IN A SLING AND IT IS VERY PAINFUL! I sure miss your smiling faces. I'm sorry to hear that we may not have an Easter service this year.



So, let me tell you an Easter story about candy eggs.

Sometime ago, a town held an Easter egg hunt for its children. The children were told that among the eggs hidden, were twelve gold, foil-wrapped Easter eggs. Whoever found any of these eggs would receive a special prize.

Of course, all of the children searched with all their might. Everyone found plain eggs, and a few children found the gold eggs.

There were two little boys who saw a gold egg at the same time. Both boys knew the other had seen the egg. This created a problem because they both wanted that egg. They looked at each other and at the egg. Finally the boy who was just a little bit older reached for the egg and put it in the younger boy's basket. The youngest boy was happy and ran off to get his special prize.

The older boy was a little sad that he couldn't keep the egg for himself. But he knew he had made someone else happy and that felt good. He knew he had shared something special.

Easter will soon be here and a time to remember how special it was for Jesus to share his life with us. Jesus went to the cross and died for his people with a lot of pain. But Jesus also rose again to share his life and promise of eternal life for us. What a great job of sharing that was!

*Here is a prayer for you to say at night ....*

Dear God,

Thank you for your son Jesus. We like to read about him in our bibles. He taught his disciples about you. He healed people who were sick. He taught his disciples to love all peoples. He died on the cross and came back to life. Help us to remember all the things he did for us. Amen.

***In closing, I have an assignment for you. Starting on April 1st, please read the story of HOLY WEEK with your parent (s) by reading Matthew 26—Matthew 28:1-10.***

Love and hugs,  
Sharon R. Breit, Christian Education Director



For....

**The world, as all are dealing with  
the coronavirus.**

***We'll ALL get through this together!***

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April 3 Marilyn Dunphy  
April 5 David Holperin  
Gene Yahr  
April 7 Jeff Collins  
April 8 Connie Hill  
April 9 Matthew Kaitchuck  
April 10 Abby Thompson  
April 14 Peg Rieckman  
April 16 Davany Fox  
April 19 Vickie Brown  
April 21 Roger Lauritzen  
Helen Welch  
April 23 Larry George  
Kay Scharpf  
April 23 Jean Haack  
April 24 Landon Fox  
Noah Wittkopf  
April 25 Chuck Kemp  
April 29 Mike Farrell  
May 3 Pat Fox  
Sally Kemp  
May 7 Barb Pevytoe  
May 8 Dan Holperin  
Lori Hunter  
May 10 Ayla Shepherdson

Do you or someone in your family have a birthday in April/early May that isn't listed? Call the church office and we'll add you to our list.  
*You don't have to reveal your birth year. Thank you!*



Our 2020 Relay Event, scheduled for Saturday, May 16th, has been **CANCELLED**

due to the coronavirus and all its trickle down effects. The planning team will determine whether or not to reschedule the event for later in the year or create a virtual celebration instead.

Will keep you posted!

Thank you for being such staunch supporters of our Relay for Life of the Northwoods.

Be well, be safe!

*Joy Turpin*

*Thank You!*

The family of Kay Stroud would like thank everyone for their love and comfort when she was able to attend church and at her passing. Special thanks to Pastor Jane for her visits with Kay since she became pastor. Hugs also to Marilyn Preisler, Lizzie and Ken Lynch for their special friendships with mom. You could be there when I couldn't.  
Sandy and Bruce Kaitchuck and Family

To Our Church Family,

**“You’ve got to stay strong to be strong in tough times.”**



*If you know of someone who would benefit from a call, visit, or card, please let the pastor know.*

## TWO FROGS

Two frogs fell into a deep cream bowl.  
One was an optimistic soul,  
But the other took a gloomy view.  
We shall drown he cried, with more ado!  
So with a last despairing cry,  
He flung up his legs and said, “Goodbye!”

Said the frog with a merry grin,  
I can't get out, but I won't give in.  
I'll just swim around till my strength is spent,  
Then I will die the more content.

Bravely she swam till it did seem,  
Her struggling began to churn the cream.  
On top of the butter at last she stepped,  
And out of the bowl at last she leapt!

What of the moral? Tis easily found,  
“If you can't get out ... keep swimming around!”



~~ from Pastor Jane ~~

**Nights at the Reading Round Table UCC Book Group**  
**FUTURE DATE TO BE DETERMINED**

**“The Girl with Glass Feet” by Ali Shaw**

Strange things are happening on the remote and snowbound archipelago of St. Hauda’s Land. Magical winged creatures flit around the icy bog land, albino animals hide themselves in the snow glazed woods, and Ida Maclaird is slowly turning into glass. Ida is an outsider in these parts who has only visited the islands once before. Yet during that one fateful visit the glass transformation began to take hold, and now she has returned in search of a cure. “The Girl with Glass Feet” is a love story to treasure, “crafted with elegance and swept by passionate magic and the yearning for connection. A rare pleasure.”

**THANK YOU’S From “A New Year of Giving” recipients....**

**Wild Instincts Team, Rhinelander:** *“Thank you and Barb Helmick for thinking of us for your January giving campaign.”*

**Okoa Toto Children’s Home:** *“Thank you so much for your generous contribution of \$100 for Okoa Toto, Inc. Your donation will change the lives of children in Kenya as they experience their safe and nurturing home and get the education they need to live a successful life. The home has been built and the children moved into the home in December. They started school on January 6, 2020. We appreciate your support and the impact your gift will make on these children.”*

**Caritas Eagle River:** *“Thank you for your recent donation of \$100 to Caritas. Your donation will help many needy people in our area. We are open each Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. serving an average of twelve clients per session. We have helped clients with necessary expenses such as registration or repairs for their automobiles, utility bills, prescription drugs and food. No less importantly, we give our clients a warm inviting place to have a cup of coffee and a cookie.”*

**Chick-A-Dee Farm, Inc.** *“I take great pleasure in thanking you for your donation to Chick a Dee Acres Farm of \$100.00. This donation will be placed into our activities fund. The activities fund provides fees for our clients to attend classes and other activities that we conduct out in the community. Our operation is totally supported by donations like yours, volunteer workers and fundraisers. This will help you understand why your donation is so greatly appreciated.” Timothy R. Bogeman, CEO/President*

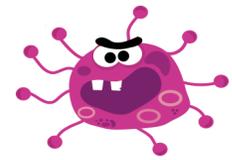
**Kalmar Senior Center** *“THANK YOU! Your gift of \$100 to the Senior ER Volunteer Enterprises, Inc. (S.E.R.V.E.) is helping us fund the list of items not covered by our insurance when the roof collapsed in February 2019. Thank you for making our work possible.”*

**FLOWER MINISTRY...**



*“Dear UCC, On behalf of all of our residents at Milestone —— THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! Your generosity with your flowers brightens our dining room tables and resident’s hearts. We have used them in informal flower arranging “classes” so residents could create an arrangement for their apartments and have used them on our tables to brighten everyone’s day. Your generous gifts of flowers are so truly appreciated. Many thanks!” Shelly Fisher, Life Enrichment Coordinator, Milestone Senior Living*

**College Student...** *“Thank you Zipperer Trust Scholarship and UCC for your support through my college career. I couldn’t have done it without you being in my corner. Wish me luck on my last semester! Thank you!” Molly Korinek*



## KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's COVID-19

**FACT 1: Disease can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.** People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or Spreading COVID-19.

**FACT 2: The risk of getting COVID-19 in the U.S. is currently low.** Some people who have traveled to places where many people have gotten sick with COVID-19 may be monitored by health officials to protect their health and the health of other people in the community.

**FACT 3: Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.**

**FACT 4: You can stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:**

**FEVER, COUGH, SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

Seek medical advice if you develop symptoms **AND** have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or live in or have recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room. Tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.

**FACT 5: There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.**

- ◆ **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, going to the bathroom, and before eating or preparing food.**
- ◆ **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- ◆ **Stay home when you are sick.**
- ◆ **Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.**

Source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Disease  
Distributed by Tammi Boers, Assistant Director/Deputy Health Officer, Vilas County Health Dept.  
715-479-3757 taboer@vilascountywi.gov <https://health.vilascountywi.gov>

**First Congregational UCC Contact People - 2020**

**Rev. Jane Courtright Church: 715-479-8501 Cell phone: 309-502-9037**

Church emails: Nan - office@eagleriverucc.org

HOME PAGE - [www.eagleriverucc.org](http://www.eagleriverucc.org)

Office Mgr. - Nan Pophal, 715-479-9882

Assistant Office Manager - Amy Mehlhoff, 801-425-5214

Clerk - Marilyn Preisler, 715-479-4331

Director of Christian Education: Sharon Breit, 715-477-2163 youth ministry@eagleriverucc.org

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

**President: Barbara Helmick 920-412-4782**

**Vice President: Mark Johannsen 920-475-7576**

**Carlton Schroeder: 715-272-1837 Molly Jaeger: 715-479-4505 Bernie Hupperts: 715-479-9468**

**Trisha Moore: 715-617-1102 Shirley Thompson: 715-479-8753**

Pastor Parish Relations Committee - Donna DePape, 715-617-1710

Women's Fellowship - Linda Sanborn, 715-479-8091

Sanctuary Arts Group (SAG) - Mickey Jensen, 715-479-7504

Performing Arts Music - Bernie Hupperts, 715-479-9468

Director of Music - Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078

Organists/pianists - Linda Brainard, 715-479-5043; Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078,

Norma Yaeger, 715-477-1984