

The Church Mouse - May 2020

First Congregational United Church of Christ 715-479-8501

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Pastor's Corner

May 2020



Beloved Church Family and Friends,

Easter Sunday and Season are so different this Coronavirus year! I sometimes feel that Easter has not arrived for me yet it seems more of a process this year. Maybe that's the importance of Easter Season and the post-resurrection stories. How about you?

So many things are different about ministry and church right now! I find myself preparing to officiate at the very small, family-only graveside funeral service of Elaine Storzer. I will drive to the Eagle River Cemetery by myself (I usually ride in the company of funeral director (s) and others.) I will be talking to the family by phone (I usually gather with as many family as possible to share stories of the loved one.) I will be wearing a face mask and all of us will stay 6' or more from one another, to protect all from the Coronavirus. (Usually there are many hugs and handshakes.)

As the weeks go past, I wonder, "How is your mental and spiritual health?" As we look back, it seems that the first week of Coronavirus was "kind of fun," like having a "snow day." The second week, many of us were upbeat, thinking, "O.K. We can do this" However by the third and fourth weeks, many attitudes were "This needs to be over. NOW." And now, we may find ourselves praying to God, "REALLY?! How long, O Lord? I am EXHAUSTED."

I have read and heard many suggestions for pastors to get through this time,
and I'll share some (briefly) with you:

- ◆ Everyday, morning and evening, write down things for which you are thankful.
- ◆ Watch less news (especially cable news) where money is made by creating fear and division. Better days are coming, but not overnight!
- ◆ Think of this Coronavirus time as a marathon, not a sprint. Consider your pace in light of that.
- ◆ Take a day off — a Sabbath. If possible, shut everything down (the door to your home office, Zoom and other social media communications). Many people are expressing "Zoom Fatigue." These are the great resources, but don't overdo!
- ◆ Start dreaming about the future. What will be nice and familiar again? What will be different?

And always, May the Peace of our Risen Christ be with YOU!!

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!

Hoping that you are all staying safe and healthy in these historic days of Covid-19. Personally, I am going a little stir-crazy and missing church and interaction with friends there and elsewhere. At least spring may finally be here! That means more sunshine, warmer temperatures and TIME OUTSIDE — definitely an improvement from my perspective.

There is good news to share with all of you.

First, so many of you have been keeping up with your pledges to the church, even though we have not been able to meet weekly. That is so important, because our bills and financial commitments have NOT gone away because of Covid-19. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Many of you also responded generously to my recent letter informing you that the church’s Local Missions/Melody of Compassion Fund was in desperate need of help. This fund is used to help members, friends and community residents with immediate short-term needs (food, gasoline, money for prescriptions, etc.). As a result, the balance in this fund jumped from zero to \$1,820 (as of April 27).

Normally, the Local Missions/Melody of Compassion fund is supported by the loose change offering on Sundays. But since we have not been worshipping at church, no change was being collected, and the fund ran dry. We truly have a generous congregation. Thank you so much for helping to re-establish this fund. I hope you will continue to contribute as you are able. You are awesome!

The final financial news I have for you: First Congregational UCC applied for and received a \$20,100 forgivable Payroll Protection Plan loan. This money is to be used for specific purposes: primarily payroll as the name implies, with a smaller portion available for utilities. Special thanks to Mark Johannsen for researching this loan program and to Paula Hendrickson for handling the application process and all the necessary paperwork.

Finally, as most of you are aware, Gov. Tony Evers has extended his Safer at Home directive to Tuesday, May 26th. It is not known what will happen after that, including how soon we might be able to resume worshipping together in our beautiful sanctuary.

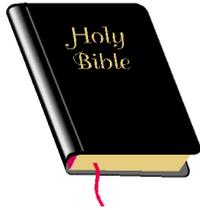
The Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ recently urged caution against acting too quickly and offered “A Model for Returning to Church” in stages. Pastor Jane and your Church Council will be studying the Conference recommendations closely as we determine the best course of action moving forward.

Stay safe. Stay well. Take time each day to feel God’s loving presence in your life and to share that love with others — from a safe social distance, of course.

Barbara Helmick,
Church Council President

CHOIR SCHEDULE

?????



MAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

May 3	Acts 2:42-47	Psalm 23	1 Peter 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
May 10	Acts 7:55-60	Ps 31:1-5, 15-16	1 Peter 2:2-10	John 14:1-14
May 17	Acts 17:22-31	Ps 66:8-20	1 Peter 3:13-22	John 14:15-21
May 24	Acts 1:6-14	Ps 68:1-10, 32-35	1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11	John 17:1-11
May 31	Acts 2:1-21	Ps 104:24-34, 35b	1 Cor. 12:3b-13	<i>or Acts 2:1-21 John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39</i>



MONDAY, MAY 25, 2020

Memorial Day emerged from the shadows of the Civil War and was first observed in the South. Before the close of the war, a group of women decorated the graves of those who had died in that war. A few years later, in 1868, May 30th was set aside as a day for placing flowers on the graves of soldiers throughout the United States.

The day was known as "Decoration Day" for more than a century until it was changed by federal law. In 1968 the law went into effect, renaming the day "Memorial Day" and moving it to the last Monday in May.



MAY 31, 2020

Land of the winds, and fires of the earth,
before we turn cold and hard and blunt and brittle
with apathy, agitate our spirits.

Feed us with the flames of love and laughter that
burn for us in others.

Surprise them again. Surprise us again.

Surprise the earth again

by rising

and rising

and rising

within our bodies,

within our senses,

within our faith.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP
Until we meet again — Stay safe! Stay healthy!



Although our physical Relay, scheduled for May 16th at the World Championship Derby Complex has been suspended, our leadership team is working at developing a plan for a virtual/online Relay experience in its stead. Our focus is on keeping relationships going, keeping our Relay family socially and emotionally connected.

At this point, it will be a series of fairly short “vignettes of hope” including (but not limited to) an inspirational video. A special prayer, Faith Webb singing the National Anthem, and the music of Brett & Frisk. We’re hoping to air the first piece on our original date, May 16th. You will be able to access the links by going to: www.relayforlife.org/northwoodswi

Much later this year, we’re hoping to have a Luminaria Ceremony, of sorts, more visible out in the community. We are selling luminaria to this end, and all the illuminated lanterns will be able to be viewed and messages heard, via YouTube. This will be in addition to having them placed, perhaps in Riverside Park (not sure of location yet), so people can drive by (or walk over) and see them in person. If you would like to purchase luminaria, please send me an email. joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com or give me a call (715)479-6560. That would be a great way to honor your loved ones, and support Relay.

We may have suspended our physical event, but we want all our survivors, caregivers, volunteers, honoraries, and supportive community members to know we continue to hold them close and have not abandoned our commitment to fighting cancer. At this time, more than ever, we’re leaning into this year’s theme: ***Living Hope***. We are a hopeful people.

I will keep you posted as our planning progresses.

Most sincerely,
Joy Turpin



From Mary E. Norton (CENSUS/PFLD FED) mary.e.norton@2020census.gov
“The U.S. Census Bureau is hiring now for people to work with the 2020 Census count. The wage in Vilas and Oneida Counties is \$19 per hour plus mileage. Apply online at www.2020census.gov/jobs The Census Bureau is an equal opportunity employer. These temporary positions have flexible hours and paid training. Persons hired can earn extra income while helping their communities.”

Your assistance in reaching potential applicants for Census jobs in this time of social distancing and reduced public movement is important. Since many offices, libraries, and chambers may be closed and/or reducing contact with the public, we are reaching out to the leaders in our Northwoods communities to inform and encourage people to apply for Census positions.

***Don't be afraid to try something you don't think you can do.
You may surprise yourself and you'll probably enjoy it.***

FAITH FORMATION KIDS "CAN BE LIKE DANDELIONS"

By Sharon R. Breit, Christian Education Director



We are beginning to see many signs of spring. Spring is a beautiful time of the year. The trees are growing leaves. Some flowers are peaking up through the cold ground. And green grass is appearing. BUT ... some other things are popping up everywhere. Can you guess what I'm talking about? DANDELIONS!!! I used to think they were so pretty when I was a kid and picked many a bouquet for my mother.

Can you believe that some people do not like dandelions? They try everything to get rid of them — they spray, run them over with the lawn mower and even try to dig them up. But those dandelions are really stubborn. They just keep growing and they even like to creep over in other people's lawns. We see these little yellow happy flowers all over the place.

Maybe we should be more like dandelions. We can pop up in places where we can be helpful and true like Jesus was. When we are honest, or helpful, or kind, we are a Christian popping up like a dandelion. Try to find a place to be a dandelion during this time. Hopefully we are able to get outside in the fresh air and enjoy God's world. And if you see some of those happy yellow flowers — pick some — they were made by God as well as the other flowers.

Dear God, There are many places where we can show by our actions that we follow in Jesus' footsteps. Guide us, and show us where we can be dandelions.

A collection of thoughts from 3-year-old preschool classes.

"It took long, long, long days to build the ark. It had a lot of stairs. They used wood from the forest. It took 7 days to build. They had 2 side places for the animals. Bricks helped, too! They had a grass and a flower place."

"I think it took 50 days to build. They brought pudding, apples, pears, grapes, bananas, cheese, grass, carrots, seeds, olives, plums, peaches, hay, chocolate milk, water and juice."

"Noah's family played games together on the ark. They took naps with the animals. And they played fetch and ate peanuts."

"It took 4 days to build the ark. Noah's family packed cereal, pancakes, waffles, bacon, eggs, rice, popsicles, chocolate, and spaghetti! Beans and milk, too."

"Noah's family played hockey, soccer, and hide-and-seek with the animals! They also enjoyed fun with playdough, blocks and ABC games."

"Noah's family slept on the top part of the ark. The sun came out and dried up the water. And the animals went back to the zoo!"

"Noah's family packed chicken nuggets, hay, dog food, hamburgers, watermelon, French fries, chocolate milk, and cookies on the ark! They played ring-around-the-rosie with the animals! Noah's family slept with the baby animals and fed them coconuts!"



***Spring has sprung — the grass has riz.....
I wonder where the flowers iz????***



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May 3	Pat Fox
	Sally Kemp
May 7	Barb Pevytoe
May 8	Dan Holperin
	Lori Hunter
May 10	Ayla Shepherdson
May 12	Larry Mattes
May 14	Bernice Gilbert
	Nikki Manta
May 16	Dillon Gagliano
	Barb Schroeder
May 18	Shirley Thompson
May 21	Barb Stadler
	Matthew Towne
May 24	Doug Breit
	Rod Pevytoe
May 26	Mark Deditz
May 27	Sue Anderson
May 31	Nan Pophal
June 6	Pamme Williams
June 8	Emily Klopp
June 9	Nan Andrews

Do you or someone in your family have a birthday in May/early June 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!*

To Our Church Family,

We can begin reaching out to others by sharing a smile, an encouraging word, a chance to laugh.



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



This is my church

It is composed of people just like me.

It will be friendly if I am.

It will do a great work if I work.

It will make generous gifts to many causes if I am generous.

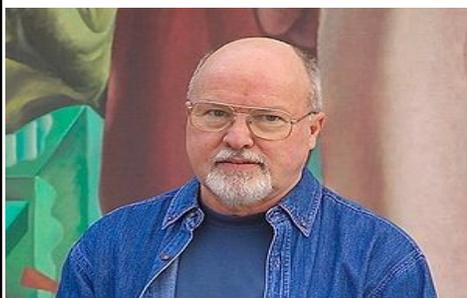
It will bring others into fellowship if I bring them.

Its seats will be filled if I fill them.

It will be a church of loyalty and love, of faith and service if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these.

Therefore, with God's help, I dedicate myself to the task of being

all these things I want my church to be.



WHAT: Meditations by "Richard Rohr"

from the Center for Action and Contemplation

Richard Rohr, OFM, (born 1943) is an American author, spiritual writer, and Franciscan friar based in Albuquerque, NM. He was ordained to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church in 1970. He has been called "one of the most popular spirituality authors and speakers in the world." I am always surprised to discover how many people I know, including members of First Congregational UCC, read meditations by Richard Rohr nearly every day! Whether you are already familiar with, or would like to

be introduced to Father Rohr, you are invited to join our discussion group.

WHEN: May 4 - 25, on Mondays from 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Richard Rohr's short meditations are available via email, every day from Monday-Saturday. Please sign up for our group: pastorjane@eagleriverucc.org or text or phone me: 309-502-9037. I will forward the first meditations to you — there is a link included that allows you to sign up for the meditations to be sent to you directly. Read them each day, save them, take notes; then each Monday our group will have a Zoom discussion covering the previous week! If you have problems receiving emails or participating in Zoom meetings, please let me know — there are alternate ways for you to join in! Please sign up ASAP.

WHERE: Your own living room, kitchen, deck or patio (weather permitting!).

We are exploring other topics for future study/discussion group meetings, whether on Zoom or in the church! Included are "Wisdom in Ecclesiastes," "Racial Justice" and "To Bless the Space Between Us" and "Creeds of Belief Statements of Faith." If you have other ideas, please let Pastor Jane know!



Book Lovers

Our regular book group, aka **“Reading Knights of the Round Table”** has not been able to meet for the last two months no surprise there! It got me wondering what folks are choosing to read during this period of social distancing and seclusion.

Personally, I have had some difficulty even settling down to read and it is harder to find books that draw me in. I don't know about the rest of you and am interested to hear your experiences and what you are reading. Would you consider sending me an email or a note listing perhaps your top 1 to 4 books you've read in the past two months and any comments you might want to share? I will happily put together a list for all of us to share.

Donna De Pape spindle257@gmail.com



Mother's Day: May 10th

*“Some are kissing mothers and some are scolding mothers,
but it is love just the same,
and most mothers kiss and scold together.”*

— Pearl S. Buck —

Children embracing their moms

“Once, I had to wear a brace on my knee, so my mom helped me by carrying books or heavy items. Also, she retrieved things when I couldn't reach them.”

“Dear God, thank you for the nicest mom in the world.”

“My mom is funny when she says ‘hey is for horses’ when we say, ‘hey, mom.’”

“My mom is the best mom because she'd never trade me in for \$10,999,000!”

“An exciting time with my mom is when we are without my dad and brother.”

“When my mom laughs sometimes she snorts.”

“My mom has very good cooking. She makes the bet oatmeal cookies.”

“Her cooking is great --- she makes the best Jell-O.”

“When I had strep throat she stayed home with me instead of going to a birthday party.”



“Snowbirds” — —

Keep us up-to-date on your address changes as you return to the north from your winter home!



Seasonal allergies : Nip them in the bud! Spring means flower buds and blooming trees and if you're one of the millions of people who have seasonal allergies, it also means sneezing, congestion, a runny nose and other bothersome symptoms. Before you settle for plastic flowers and artificial turf, try simple strategies to keep season allergies under control.

To reduce your exposure to the things that trigger your allergy signs and symptoms

- ◆ Stay indoors on dry, windy days. The best time to go outside is after a good rain which helps clear air pollen.
- ◆ Delegate lawn mowing, weed pulling and other gardening chores that stir up allergens.
- ◆ Remove clothes you've worn outside and shower to rinse pollen from your skin and hair.
- ◆ Don't hang laundry outside; pollen can stick to sheets and towels.
- ◆ Wear a pollen mask if you do outside chores.
- ◆ Check your local TV or radio station, local newspaper or the internet for pollen forecasts or current levels.
- ◆ If high pollen counts are forecasted, start taking allergy medications before your symptoms start.
- ◆ Close doors and windows at night or any other time when pollen counts are high.
- ◆ Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen counts are highest.

Several types of nonprescription medications can help ease allergy symptoms, including ...

- ◆ **Oral antihistamines** that can help relieve sneezing, itching, a runny nose and watery eyes. Examples include Claritin, Alavert, Zyrtec Allergy and Allegra Allergy.
- ◆ **Decongestants**, such as Sudafed and Afrinol can provide temporary relief from nasal stuffiness. Also available in nasal sprays are Afrin and Neo-Synephrine. Only use nasal decongestants for a few days in a row. Longer term use of decongestant nasal sprays can actually worsen symptoms.
- ◆ **Nasal spray.** Cromolyn sodium nasal spray can ease allergy symptoms and doesn't have serious side effects, though it's most effective when you begin using it before your symptoms start.
- ◆ **Combination medications.** Some allergy medications combine an antihistamine with a decongestant --- Claritin-D and Allegra-D.

Rinsing your nasal passages with saline solution (nasal irrigation) is a quick, inexpensive and effective way to relieve nasal congestion. Rinsing directly flushes out mucus and allergens from your nose. If you have bad seasonal allergies, your doctor may recommend that you have skin tests or blood tests to find out exactly what triggers your symptoms. For some people, allergy shots can also be a good option.

Mayo Clinic Resources

First Congregational UCC Contact People - 2020

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

CHURCH COUNCIL

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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