

The Church Mouse - August 2020

First Congregational United Church of Christ 715-479-8501

Pastor Jane Courtright: pastorjane@eagleriverucc.org

Editor: Nan Pophal

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

Email for Amy Mehlhoff (Info Tech) amy@eagleriverucc.org

Email for Sharon Breit: youthministry@eagleriverucc.org

Home Page: www.eagleriverucc.org



Dear Sister & Brothers in Christ,

A poignant moment: my last Pastor's Corner at First Congregational UCC! I want to thank all of you for the many ways you allowed me to be your pastor during this past year.

And what a year it has been! (*Do I hear an Amen?*)

I have many faces and memories to take as Dave and I relocate to the Quad Cities in Illinois/Iowa. I remember the fun and creativity as many of you entered the contest to name the fish in my office aquarium. It was also wonderful to join with the children during Faith Formation on Wednesdays after school — working with Sharon Breit and Louise Krus was always an adventure! I was honored to officiate at Baptisms, at the special water font located in the back of the sanctuary. What special children and congregational love! I was invited into families as we planned a Memorial Service in the church. I wore a facemask to the cemetery to officiate at a small graveside service!

Advent and Christmas were especially beautiful and meaningful this past season as our musicians, choir and SAG group outdid themselves! Thank you to those of you who shared your homes, meals and friendships! Day by day, church staff keep things running! In addition to Sharon Breit, children's ministry and Christian Education, thanks also to Nan who is *always* there to assist and more, to Amy who has been so essential during this Pandemic; to Lori, our talented Music Director; to Norma and Linda, our pianists; and to Ed, our faithful custodian. A special thanks to Paula Hendrickson. One letter cannot allow me to list all of my thank yous!

The UCC ministerial "gang" met nearly every Wednesday at Friendship House (until the Coronavirus, then we met on Zoom!) Thank you to that group for wonderful friendship and support! The church has excellent leadership -- thank you to all; especially Barb Helmick, Mark and Tobi Johannsen and Donna De Pape. We shared well run, productive and fun church meetings in the Conference Room and later at Zoom meetings! We shared many small group Zoom meetings, phone conversations, Riverside Park meetings and gatherings at the lot across from the church.

First Congregational UCC has so many positives: You are faithful, friendly, welcoming, intelligent and fun, creative and willing! You truly strive to live out your Mission Statement: "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." God is with you and I as we walk into our future full of hope and possibility! I leave with you my love and one of my favorite Bible passages: "Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (*Isaiah 43:18,19*)

Blessings and Peace in this Challenging Time, **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)

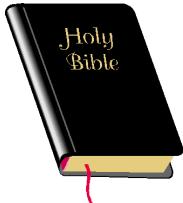
Members and Friends of First Congregational UCC, Eagle River

Just a quick update on a few matters:

1. Pastor Jane's last day with us is Aug. 17. She leads her last virtual worship service for us on Sunday, Aug. 16.
2. The Rev. Topher Mehlhoff and the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Rhinelander have graciously agreed to provide "virtual" pulpit supply beginning Sunday, Aug. 23. The Rhinelander UCC streams its online Sunday worship service at 9 a.m. Our members will be able to participate by watching it live at that time or accessing it online at another time afterward. We will provide more details as we get closer to Aug. 23rd. **A big THANK YOU TO Rev. Mehlhoff and the Rhinelander congregation for their assistance during this time.**
3. Council continues to search for an interim pastor, however it may be difficult to find one quickly. Covid-19 is likely limiting the number of pastors looking for positions — interim or otherwise.
4. We also will be reaching out to arrange for pastoral care while we are without a pastor. I will share more on those efforts soon.
5. Pastor Jane's departure and the immediate issues that needed to be addressed as a result have limited Council's efforts to discuss reopening the church for Sunday services. I know that some of you really want this to happen; while others are not quite ready to return to the sanctuary. Please know that ensuring the health and safety of our congregation are key to any decisions regarding reopening.

Stay safe. Stay well

Barbara Helmick
Church Council President



AUGUST SCRIPTURE READINGS

August 2 - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Gen 32:22-31 & Ps 17:1-7, 15 Isa 55:1-5 & Ps 145:8-9, 14-21
Rom 9:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21

August 9 - Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Gen 37:1-4, 12-28 & Ps 105:1-6, 16-22,45b I Kings 19:9-18 & Ps 85:8-13
Rom 10:5-15 Matthew 14:22-33

August 16 - Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Gen 45:1-15 & Ps 133 Isa 56:1,6-8 & Ps 67
Rom 11:1-2a,29-32 Matthew 15:(10-20), 21-28

August 23 - Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Ex 1:8-2:10 & Ps 124 Isa 51:1-6 and Ps 138 Rom 12:1-8 Matt 16:13-20

August 30 - Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Ex 3:1-15 & Ps 105:1-6, 23-26,45b Jer 15:15-21 & Ps 26:1-8
Rom 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28

Wisconsin Conference Racial Justice Resources

People of faith and communities across the United States have been deeply affected by the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the many other killings that reveal systemic racism in our institutional lives. Included in this email are reactions and resources for our churches as we begin to confront the past and present trauma of racism among our sisters and brothers. Please utilize them as you feel called to do so and know that our Wisconsin Conference is responding to God's call to engage conversation on race and engagement in racial justice work.

- August 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m. "Youth Lead Now: Equipping Young Leaders for Social Change," with guest speaker Samantha Fuentes, a survivor of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, in February 2018 and leader in the March for Our Lives movement that emerged from that horrific event.
- Examining racial terrorism in Minnesota history. We will revisit the injustices done to Indigenous peoples in Minnesota as well as the lynching of three black men in Duluth in 1920.

On "Not Rocking the Boat"

A Statement from The Alliance for Justice, Ho Chunk Nation

All minorities in this country know the meaning of "do not rock the boat."

Mainstream society has a story: "this country has been good to us." To say, "this country has not been good to us" — that would be rocking the boat. Let us say the words: "This country has not been good to us." This is how it looks to members of affected communities. The status quo ... mainstream culture, with all its requirements, criterion and standards, is a ploy, a smoke screen to justify a system that is not working. Chaos, turmoil and social upheaval where there is no beginning and no end, just more empty words and no solutions in sight. This scenario has been played out over and over again in this country's history and will continue to do so as long as all of us do nothing about the predicament we are in.

This is how it looks to members of affected communities: We are not "enlightened people" according to the status quo. Perhaps, if we keep a low profile we will not be targeted by the white minority. Maybe they will leave us alone as long as we "color inside the lines."

This is how it looks to us: Despite all the reverence directed to the principles of the Founding Fathers and your country's "great founding ideals, values and standards" carved into stone like the Ten Commandments — when we read those words we recognize them for the apparitions, phantom, and ghosts that they really are. You keep missing the mark and situations such as the killing of George Floyd, a black citizen, keep coming to the front page.

So this is where the principles of your Western thinking have really gotten us. This country — with its laws, policies and philosophies — make us minorities fall short of white privilege and below your country's status quo.

We have been offered a path that leads nowhere. So ... how do we stand up and be counted? How do we change things so that this will not continue? Do we continue our peripheral involvement and stay in our armchairs, let things play out because it is the norm and the way it is supposed to be. "Don't rock the boat." This is what got us here in the first place, and to resort to the old adage will not be enough this time around.

Jesus overturned the tables and chased the status quo out of His Father's temple. This was not armchair activism. The outcome of this was His demise on the cross.

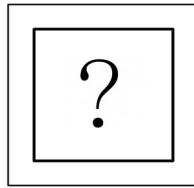
A place to begin? Confessing some frank truths.

- Racism is alive and well in this country and not letting up.
- This country is built on racism.
- Demands for justice for people of color will be likely met with more laws and policies against them.

We pray for the conscience of your nation. We pray for the conscience of our Church. We pray that The Alliance for Justice will continue to address the wrongs that have been perpetrated through the Church throughout history, and we pray that together we will right some of these wrongs. Amen.

Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ

A Message for the Faith Formation Kids
By Sharon R. Breit, Christian Education Director



Did you ever wonder what God looks like? Actually, no one has ever seen God so no one really knows what He looks like. In the bible, people saw God in many different ways. Moses met God in the burning bush. The Hebrews followed the God who looked like a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire. When Jesus was baptized, God came down from heaven looking like a dove. But God doesn't always look like a bush, a fire, or a dove. God chooses to look like these things at special times to help people understand him better.

People think about God in different ways, too. Jesus called God "father" and many people think of God as a loving father. When we think of God as a "father," it means that He loves us, protects us, and cares for us.

God is a spirit. He doesn't have a body like you and I have. God is invisible, like the wind, but we know it's there. We can feel it on our skin and we can see what the wind does. Sometimes it causes ripples across the lake, or it causes trees to bend. We can't see God, but we can feel his presence. We can see what God does by looking at the wonderful people we have in our lives and our church community. All of you are a "picture" of God.

Let's pray:

***Dear God, we may not be able to see you,
but we know you are with us and that you love us.
We love you, too, and thank you for all your blessings.
Amen.***



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God made you Beautiful
So shine



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

August 1	Holly Farrell
August 3	Nancy Smart
August 4	Lily Tyler
August 5	Kathy Breitzman
	Jill Brunstad
	Debbie Preuhs
August 7	Linda Brainard
	Sam Welhoefer
August 8	Mark Holperin
August 11	Jo Langley
August 12	Joe Knowles
August 16	Julie Carlson
August 17	Pam Marion
August 18	Woody Chenault
	Tucker Wittkopf
August 21	Royce Remme
August 24	Ken Fox
	Pat Mayo
August 25	Diane Gagliano
August 29	Ken Lynch
August 30	Deb Lauritzen
Sept. 2	Carol Burgy
	Marilyn Preisler
Sept. 3	Gregg Nesbitt
Sept. 4	Molly Korinek
Sept. 7	Jane Eaton-Nyman
	Joe Turpin
Sept. 9	Colyn Carter
	Grace Wittkopf

Do you or someone in your family have a birthday in August/September 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,

"There is no faster shortcut to a person's heart than loaning that person your ears."



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

Meditation & Music

***continues on Wednesdays, through
August 16th, noon to 1:00 p.m.***

The sanctuary welcomes you with flowers, lit candles, and beautiful music provided by our talented musicians: Lori Hunter, Linda Brainard and Norma Yaeger.

Masks are required and must be worn, available for those in need of one. Seating is limited for social distancing. Sanitizers are available upon entry. You may stay for the hour or leave when you want to. Entry and exits are directed and escorted.

Sponsored by the Sanctuary Arts Group
Mickey Jensen, Patti Roberts
Molly Jaeger, Donna De Pape and Ken Lynch

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

No matter their mental health challenge.

No matter their immigration status.

No matter their sexual orientation.

No matter their economic status.

No matter their gender identity.

No matter their disability.

No matter their religion.

No matter their race.

Love your neighbor. No exceptions.

UCC 3 Great Loves



Hay Fever, also called **allergic rhinitis**, is caused by an allergic response to outdoor or indoor allergens, such as pollen, dust mites, or tiny flecks of skin and saliva shed by cats, dogs and other animals with fur or feathers (pet dander).

Seasonal factors: Your hay fever signs and symptoms may start or worsen at a particular time of year. Triggers include:

- Tree pollen, common in early spring
- Grass pollen, common in late spring and summer
- Ragweed pollen, common in fall
- Dust mites, cockroaches and dander from pets can be bothersome year around; symptoms might worsen in the winter when houses are closed up
- Spores from indoor and outdoor fungi and molds are considered both seasonal and perennial

Hay fever or common cold?

Signs and symptoms can be similar, so it can be difficult to tell which one you have.

Condition	Signs, symptoms	Onset	Duration
Hay fever	Runny nose with thin, watery discharge, no fever	Immediately after exposure to allergens	As long as you're exposed to allergens
Common cold	Runny nose with watery or thick yellow discharge, body aches, low grade fever	One to three days after exposure to a cold virus	Three to seven days

When to see a doctor ...

See you doctor if:

- You can't find relief from your hay fever symptoms
- Allergy medications don't provide relief or cause annoying side effects
- You have another condition that can worsen hay fever symptoms, such as nasal polyps, asthma or frequent sinus infections

Mayo Clinic Health

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

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

Info Tech - 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

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

Norma Yaeger, 715-477-1984