

The Church Mouse - October 2021

First Congregational United Church of Christ 715-479-8501

Interim Pastor: Rev. Gail Irwin pastorgail@eagleriverucc.org
Email for Nan (Office Manager) & the Church Office: office@eagleriverucc.org

Email for Alex Fluegel: alex@eagleriverucc.org

Email for Sharon Breit: youthministry@eagleriverucc.org

Home Page: www.eagleriverucc.org



Pastor's Letter

This is my last newsletter message to you as my interim ministry concludes. This year has gone by quickly and was full of challenges. Many of you rose to those challenges by stepping up to leadership and other ministries with competence, patience and enthusiasm. I am so thankful for the opportunity I've had to be in ministry with your!

My last Sunday will be October 17th. Pastor Tim Shirley will arrive the first of November. In between times, lay leaders and area clergy will assist as needed.

I encourage you, as you welcome a new pastor, to let him know about your gifts and visions and make yourselves available to serve the church in new ways as you are asked.

I also urge you, in this stewardship season, to invest your generous gifts in the future of your church's ministry. One of you said to me recently, "*I see this time as a new start for our church*". Yes! Give your ministry the financial "fuel" it needs to take off with a new pastor.

Saying good-bye is my least favorite part of being an interim pastor. But part of my covenant with every church is to refrain from performing any pastoral duties after my departure (weddings, funerals, counseling). This is not because I will stop caring about you — I really do care about how your future unfolds. But my clear separation allows you to begin forming a bond of trust with your new pastor. I covenant to minimize contact (including on Facebook) for at least a year.

First UCC has been a true adventure, from learning to produce worship on-line to waving palms from our car windows, to befriending tame deer in the streets. Thank you for all the ways you welcomed me, and everything you taught me. I hope you learned something from me, too. You will remain in my prayers!

Pastor Gail

Pastor Gail will be at the Moon Beach Clergy Retreat the evening of October 3rd through the morning of October 5th. She will be in the office Wednesday, October 6th.

Sunday, October 17th

Pastor Gail's last Sunday with us!

Single Unity Service at 9 a.m.

Please plan to attend!

“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)

Council President

I write in a state of hope. I hope that the Search Committee, the Council, and all of the voters who exercised their right to vote, are more than pleased with the outcome. Let us look forward with confidence for a long association with Pastor Tim Shirley as our spiritual leader. Soon we will be able to work directly with him, as he moves to the north and comes to know us. His first Sunday will be November 7th. He will arrive in Eagle River around November 1st.

In addition I am excited to welcome Deb Stolze and Steve Burrill to Council. It will be wonderful to have a full Council with everyone eager to move forward, especially after Gail has a Zoom with all those church leaders who meet. They will be discussing how to move into the full promise of our current Constitution's ministry and teams governance.

November is “hello” to Tim. October 17th will be farewell to Pastor Gail. Gail came to us as our Intentional Interim last October. During this year of her stewardship, she has given our church new life in a difficult time of COVID frustration. Church by its very nature, is group worship and activity, and COVID forced us to virtual worship when Gail began. Eventually the church opened for worship with masks optional and now we are back to masks recommended because of Wisconsin's high risk rating.

As our interim, Gail asked the questions that made us all think of who and where we are and where we hope we're going, individually and together. Her questions have not always put us in comfortable positions, but our answers have helped us clarify who we are as a congregation and as worshippers of Jesus here in this particular United Church of Christ. Pastor Tim will be meeting a congregation on line and in person who have endured two years of adjustment and identification. Gail has helped us with both the adjustment and with discovering who we can be in this new world.

Gail brought Wired Word to a group who wanted to discuss. She helped Sharon produce a lively Christmas Pageant for video. She quickly became intrinsic to all we do as a church, even when we have to knock on the door to get into the building.

Using the old English farewell, it's easy for me to write, “Goodbye and hail, fellow, well-met.”

Council News

Council met twice in September: once to approve the budget carefully balanced by our Finance Committee and then for our regular meeting at which we prepared both for the coming of Pastor Tim at the single service on September 19th followed by our congregational “Call” meeting, and then the September 26th single service followed by the Annual Meeting.

Thanks, all, for attending the Annual Meeting and for your positive actions. If you were there, you heard from Paula Hendrickson that we will have a balanced budget that asks for \$5,000 more in pledges in 2022. You'll hear more about that in the October 24 Laity Service being put together by the Council. The following Sunday, October 31, Pastor Dale Bishop is organizing with consideration of All Saint's Day.

Bernie Hupperts, Council President

We have been informed that several congregation members have received emails that pretend to be coming from Pastor Gail Irwin asking to buy gift cards for the church staff. **THIS IS A SCAM; DO NOT RESPOND.** Please forward the email to alex@eagleriverucc.org and then promptly mark it as spam. We would like to remind everyone to watch out for potential email scams and know that church staff and volunteers will never contact you by email asking for gift cards. If you ever see an email like this, call the sender at the number you have for them, not the one in the email to confirm what they are asking. If you have questions you can reach out to Pastor Gail Irwin Directly at 9920-883-7887 or Alex Fluegel Directly at 715-303-7312.

WE'VE FOUND OUR NEW SERVANT LEADER!

We expect that this will be our last Search Committee update --- thanks be to God!

We'd like our congregation to know how honored we've been to do this work for you. We have no doubt that Pastor (Reverend Dr.) Tim Shirley will be a passionate and dedicated leader for our church family. We feel that he will help us to remain faithful to who we are and what we believe — and at the same time, lead us into our future. We have so much to offer our community — and as your Search Committee, we feel confident that Tim will be a fantastic steward of our generosity and our values, which are so eloquently expressed by our 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.”

Tim's first Sunday with us will be November 7th and he plans to have both an early and late service. We hope you'll plan to come and welcome our new Pastor!

Please also keep Tim in your prayers as he works to prepare for his move from Florida; finding housing up here is no small task at this time in history!

And as always, feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions we might be able to answer.

Trista Langley Tyler (committee chair) jewelry@metalurges-upnorth.com	715-617-1162
Kelli Burrill - kelli.burrill@gmail.com	Kamie Kolb - kamiekolb1@gmail.com
Nancy Diepenbrock - petsx5@gmail.com	Doug Malinsky - doug.malinsky@gmail.com
Pat Fox - wpine2fox@yahoo.com	Patti Roberts - robertsupnorth@hotmail.com
Sandy Kaitchuck - skait85@gmail.com	Krista Wittkopf - copper4811@gmail.com



Key Change

During the week of September 27th, the installation of Phase 4: Building Security, will take place. **Anyone** who has existing keys will need to be reissued new keys as part of this Phase. All key holders should contact Alex Fluegel at 715-303-7312 or alex@eagleriverucc.org to be Issued new keys.

The **Adult Study “Wired Word”** will meet Monday nights, October 4th and 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the Burrill's home. This class partners current events in the news with biblical stories and reflective questions for conversation in an atmosphere of faithful listening. Students receive the lessons a few days in advance by email.

For more information, please contact Bill Marshall at bmarsh68@gmail.com

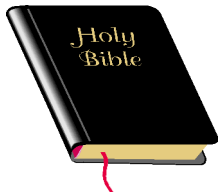


Camcorder operators are needed to film our 7:30 a.m. service! If you attend the early service and are willing to be trained, this mission will help those who are unable to attend to experience worship remotely. The more volunteers we train, the better! Please see Alex or Pastor Gail for more information.

Forgiveness is all-powerful. Forgiveness heals all ills.

What are you grateful for about your church?

Fall is the season when we reflect on gratitude for all our gifts and how we will share those gifts in fulfilling Christ's mission. The Church Council is planning to share a message about gratitude on Sunday, October 24th. During October, you will also be hearing about how you can share financially to support your church's mission. Please prayerfully consider all God has given you, in spiritual and material gifts, and what God is calling you to share in the coming year, as you welcome a new pastor and a new phase of your ministry.



OCTOBER SCRIPTURE READINGS

Oct. 3 - 19th Sunday after Pentecost	Job 1:1,2:1-10 Gen. 2:18-24 & Ps 8	Psalm 26 Heb 1:1-4, 2:5-12 Mk 10:2-16	Enfolding Love
Oct. 10 - 20th Sunday after Pentecost	Job 23:1-9, 16-17 & Ps 22:1-15 Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 & Ps 90:12-17	Heb 4:12-16 Mk 10:17-31	What Must I Do?
Oct. 17 - 21st Sunday after Pentecost	Job 38:1-7 & Ps 104:1-9, 24, 35c Isa 53:4-12 & Ps 91:9-16	Heb 5:1-10 Mk 10:35-45	Great Service
Oct. 24 - 22nd Sunday after Pentecost	Job 42:1-6, 10-17 & Ps 34:1-8 Jer 31:7-9 & Ps 126	Heb 7:23-28 Mk 10:46-52	Take Heart
Oct. 31 - 23rd Sunday after Pentecost	Ruth 1:1-18 & Ps 146 Deut 6:1-9 & Ps 119:1-8	Het 9:11-14 Mk 12:28-34	Wherever You Go

Covid Precautions Update

With children now in school, and the Delta variant pervasive, the Council is continuing with its current Covid precautions.

- * Council strongly recommends mask wearing during worship and other group events in the church building, whether you are vaccinated or not.
- * Please continue to practice social distancing of at least 3 feet between families while seated in pews.
- * Please wear a mask while singing and refrain from holding hands.
- * Please gather outdoors for fellowship following the service.
- * Because masks are not required, those who are unable to wear one are still welcome in worship. However, the more who wear them, the safer we can keep each other and our unvaccinated children.

In addition, we have marked rooms in the building with appropriate capacity for use with seating spaced 6 feet apart. If you use the church for a group meeting, please observe these room capacities for everyone's safety. You have all been gracious and patient through the ups and downs of Covid! Thank you!

You can read recommendations from the Wisconsin Council of Churches here:

[Returning to Church 3.0—Wisconsin Council of Churches \(wichurches.org\)](https://www.wichurches.org)

Make happy those who are near, and those who are far will come.
—Chinese Proverb—

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Oct. 1 Sybil Saltenberger
- Oct. 2 Norda Gromoll
Ruth Hibbard
Iland Shepherdson
- Oct. 3 Tom Dunphy
- Oct. 4 Doreen Boxrud
- Oct. 5 Dick Deaver
Marian Griebenow
- Oct. 8 Diana Deaver
Tom Helmick
- Oct. 10 Doug Malinsky
- Oct. 11 Linda Sanborn
- Oct. 12 Helena Roerdink
- Oct. 15 Joy Turpin
- Oct. 16 Bernie Hupperts
- Oct. 17 Jim Sanborn
- Oct. 20 Ursula Charaf
- Oct. 22 Barbara Loar
- Oct. 29 Miriam Chenault
Gayla Newmeister
- Oct. 31 Jane Shadick
- Nov. 3 Linda Cole
Mary Ann Hansen
- Nov. 6 Marty Pietila
- Nov. 10 Sandra Slagle

Do you or someone in your family have a birthday in October/early November 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.

NATH - Frederick Place— Most Needed!

1. Coffee
 2. Napkins
 3. Liquid dishwasher soap
 4. 13 gallon garbage bags
 5. 30 gallon garbage bags
 6. Clear shoe-box size containers
 7. Kitchen garbage cans
 8. Bathroom garbage cans
 9. Nighttime cold medicine
- Thank you!*

Welcome


to new members

Bill and Carol Marshall

on September 26th.

Bill and Carol moved from Houston, Texas, a year ago. Bill has been assisting with the camcorder at the 7:30 service and is interested in small group Bible study, ushering, etc. Carol's interests are with children and youth, community outreach missions and environmental action.

All coins received in the offering plates are put into the Local Missions/Melody of Compassion Fund and are greatly appreciated. Keep the "melody" ringing!



Welcome to

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday, October 12th, 9 a.m.

*ALL women of the church are welcome!
Bring a friend, bring your neighbor!*

NATH Meal - Monday, October 18th

You can help by donating:

- 15 oz. cans of kidney, black and/or garbanzo beans
- 28 or cans of petit diced or stewed tomatoes
- 8 oz. cans of tomato sauce
- 12 oz. cans of tomato paste
- Chili powder, garlic powder or mince garlic
- Gluten free macaroni

You can help by cooking.

You can help by donating sides: milk/lemonade, bread, dessert.

You can help by delivering the meal on Oct. 18th.

You can also donate cash for meals.

Recipes are available in the hallway at church.

For more information, contact Mary Lou Congdon

mlcongdon@charter.net

Or Susan Krivichi skrivichi@gmail.com

Thank you!



A Lesson for the Faith Formation Kids
from
Sharon R. Breit, Christian Education Director

HALLOWEEN (ALL HALLOWS OR ALL SAINTS EVE)

Halloween or Hallowe'en (a contraction of 'All Hallows' Eve) is a celebration observed in many countries on October 31st. It begins the observance dedicated to remembering the dead, including saints, martyrs, and all the faithful departed.

Halloween traditions may have been influenced by the ancient Celtic harvest festival of Samhain (summer's end). They brought their crops and slaughtered animals to the festival because they believed it would help them ward off evil spirits. In the 8th century, Pope Gregory III decided to transform this holiday into a celebration in honor of All Saints, while the evening before would become All Hallows Eve (later Halloween).

When the Irish migrated to the US, they brought with them a lot of old traditions. A good example of this would be dressing up to ward off evil spirits. During the 16th century, the festival included guising. This involved people going house-to-house in costume (or in disguise) who demanded to be rewarded in exchange for good fortune. Costuming became popular for parties in the US in the early 20th century and trick-or-treating became popular in the US in the 1920's and 1930's.

All Saints Day is celebrated in the church on November 1st. It is a day that we honor all the saints from our Christian history and all of our loved ones who have passed away.

Who are saints? **We are!** God calls a "saint" anyone who trusts in Christ alone.

So when you are trick-or-treating, carving pumpkins, bobbing for apples, or telling scary stories, remember that you are a living saint of God. Remember all the important people in your life who have influenced your faith and thank God for them.

You're just like a pumpkin

A Christian is like being a pumpkin. God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off of you.

"Then He cuts off the top and scoops out all the yucky stuff. He removes the seeds of fear, doubt, despair, hate and greed. Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see."



UCC Knights of the Reading Round Table Book Group



A Planning Meeting was held September 16, 2021. We were a small but enthusiastic group. Aside from considering books, we discussed meeting time. We would like to meet at **6:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month.** However, we would like to hear from anyone who would find that timing difficult. Please email Donna with comments: spindle257@gmail.com

Top recommended books, tentative assignment month, and host:

October 21: Lions of 5th Avenue by Fiona Davis - Donna DePape

November 18: Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Kimmerer - Donna DePape and Susan Krivichi

December 16: movie night -- suggestions?

January 20: Clark and Division by Naomi Hirahara - Susan Krivichi

February 17: 100 Years of Lenni and Margot by Marianne Cronin - Norma Yaeger

March 17:

April 21:

May 19:

Other nominees:

8 Perfect Murders by Peter Swanson

The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead

The little French Bistro by Nina George

Kennedy Debutante by Kerri Maher

One for the Blackbird by Oliver Hawker

Her Every Fear by Peter Swanson

The Little Paris Bookshop by Nina George

The River by Lowen Clausen

Four Winds by Kristin Hannah

The Splendid and the Vile by Eric Larsen

From previous years, a couple of books resurfaced and are listed, too.

The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan Philipp Sendker

White House Chef: Eleven Years, Two Presidents, One Kitchen by Andrew Friedman and Walter

Scheib

Other folks sent in current books they are reading or about to read. Here they are in case others are interested.

Caste by Isabel Wilkerson

Here, Right Matters by Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman

The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander

Premonition by Michael Lewis (Donna's note: I read this book because of a review on the cover. "If he wrote a 700 page book about the history of the staple I would read it." And having read the book I totally agree!!!) The book follows a number of people from various states and agencies who worked on aspects of the response to COVID-19 and the stories are fascinating.

Fall reflections

Once upon a time, there was a little boy who liked to play in great piles of leaves in his yard. But first the leaves had to be gathered into a pile. So the boy would rake and rake and rake. It was great fun to run fast and jump and land right smack in the middle of a huge pile of soft leaves. Every year, this same ritual played out. One fall day, part of the company of angels in heaven sat watching the boy raking and piling and jumping. One of the angle said: "I just don't get it. It all seems like a big waste of time and energy." Then God Said, "Don't you see? That's why I created everything in the first place, so that people could enjoy the beauty of the changing seasons, and frolic and play and enjoy the gift of life." Then Jesus turned, ran, jumped, and landed, laughing and out-stretched in a huge pile of heavenly leaves. "See?"

PHONES AND HEARING AIDS!



We are continuing to collect used cell phones for Hope Phones, a division of Medic Mobile. The deposit box remains in the parlor for you to toss in your unwanted phones, and I will periodically empty it and send the phones on to where they will be cleared of all information and either used for rural healthcare workers worldwide to be able to connect to clinics for emergency care, or recycled responsibly for cash. Alternately the phones will be donated to the Tri County Council where they will likewise be cleared of all previous information and distributed to victims of domestic violence for 911 use only. To date, our congregation has sent 276 phones on to a new and productive life.



Unused hearing aids continue to be collected, too! There is a collection box in the parlor for them as well (batteries welcome) and I will periodically send them on to the Starkey Hearing Foundation (Eden Prairie, MN) where they will be refurbished and distributed free of charge to children and adults in over 100 countries. To date, we have sent 13 hearing aids on to a new life. Seems like a small amount, but think of it! Six (maybe more) people have received the gift of hearing because of us!

SOLES 4 SOULS



CHANGING THE WORLD
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

It has been two years since we did our last Soles4Souls shoe drive. I was really hoping that 2021 was going to be the year we could resurrect the effort, but Covid is rearing its ugly head again, and keeping our church open for such a project seems questionable. That fact, coupled with the fact that I know many of you are “saving” shoes and wanting to get rid of them, I am officially announcing there will be ***no shoe drive this year!***

BUT! Your shoes can still do some good! Soles4Souls is now willing to accept small shipments of *gently used or new shoes*, and mailing them is postage free! I encourage you to box up whatever you have, and send them on to a new life. It’s easy enough to do!

Here’s how:

1. Go to the Soles4Souls website at: www.soles4souls.org
2. Scroll down and look for the box that says “Give Shoes” and click on that. (Don’t click on the “Donate” button unless you want to give money.)
3. On this screen you will be given instructions on how to print a **free shipping label** for your box. You will be asked to create an account with Zappos (a GREAT place to buy shoes on line!) because Zappos is the one footing the bill for the shipping, but you won’t be obligated in any way to purchase from them.
4. Sign up and print the label. Easy peezy!

So keep up the good work, UCC! It takes a village ... and even though we’re small, we’re mighty, and our hearts are in the right place! Send those shoes on, keep the phone and hearing aid donations coming, and thanks for all you do.

Nancy Diepenbrock

Time to Think Stewardship

If we give what's left over, the church neither feeds us spiritually, or anyone else.

If we give "dues," the church will be no more than a club to us.

If sentimental preservation of the past is our reason, then the church will be like a museum.

If we give the same as we always have, we can only expect declining returns.

If we give out of obligation, we will always resent what we have to do.

If we give only because we feel responsible, the church will be a heavy burden.

If we give out of compassion for those whose needs are greater than our own, our needs will seem so much smaller.

If we are thankful, the church will reflect the measure of our gratitude.

If love leads us in selfless giving, the church may well become the place where we discover the joy of Christ's presence.

Flower Calendar (to reserve a Sunday)

Pick your Sunday and put your name on the Flower Calendar that is in the hall next to the elevator. If you want Nan to order flowers, put "order" after your name and they will be ordered from Horant's with the cost of \$30. You are welcome to take them home after the service. Your name will be in the bulletin and the name of the person or event you are celebrating will be listed.

You may also bring flowers from another source and place them on the flower stand next to the piano, put your name on the calendar and let Nan know if you want additional information in the bulletin. Weather permitting, you are also welcome to bring garden flowers, or even an arrangement of wild flowers. Again, put your name on the flower calendar and let Nan know if there's a special person or event involved. What better way to honor anyone or anything than to share flowers with your church family on Sunday.

October openings: 10th, 24th, 31st

September sponsors:

5th: Linda and Leta Cole in loving memory of Noel

12th: Mike and Sandra Mettler in loving memory of Sandra's mom Helen on her birthday

19th: Mary Lou Congdon in honor of grandson starting college, appreciation for church scholarships

26th: Marilyn Preisler in memory of Duane

First Congregational UCC Contact People - 2021-2022

Pastor Gail Irwin Cell: 920-883-7887

Email: pastorgail@eagleriverucc.org

First Congregational UCC, PO Box 1385, Eagle River, WI 54521

Church emails: Nan - office@eagleriverucc.org 715-479-8501

HOME PAGE - www.eagleriverucc.org

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

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

Information & Electronic Technology Director: Alex Fluegel - alex@eagleriverucc.org

CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Bernie Hupperts 715-617-9468

Vice President: Mark Johannsen 920-475-7576

Trisha Moore: 715-617-1102 Cathy Palmer: 715-617-6373

Luke Aschbrenner: 715-358-6579 Deb Stolze: 920-585-0241 Steve Burrill: 715-617-3917

Clerk - Norma Yaeger 715-477-1984

Pastor Parish Relations Committee - Tobi Johannsen 920-450-1402

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

Sanctuary Arts Group (SAG) - Patti Roberts, 715-479-6191

Performing Arts Music - Bernie Hupperts, 715-617-9468

Music Director - Lori Hunter, 715-493-8078

Organists/pianists - Linda Brainard, 715-479-5043; Lori Hunter, Norma Yaeger, 715-477-1984