



# Congregational Connections

Monthly E-Newsletter of First Congregational Church, UCC | Port Washington, Wisconsin | August 2021

## AUGUST VACCINATION (AND AUGUST RETURN)

It is already the closing month of summer. I'm glad it has five Sundays; maybe it will seem to stretch the summer out just a little bit longer. The McLeod household has finished up our own summer vacation get-away, and I believe, seen the last of the summer family visitors from out of state. I know other families are feeling the press of the coming school season with the ramping up of kid's activities, team sports and wondering what new teachers and new classes will bring. Certainly, we've all seen the "back-to-school" retail promotions that have begun in the stores, and even though I'm not taking any classes I still have the urge to stock up on pens, paper and other school supplies.

Unfortunately, as we try to get back to the regular events of the end of summer and beginning of fall, the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic is still very much present all around us and throughout the world. I want to encourage anyone who has not yet received a Covid-19 vaccination to please go and get yourself vaccinated. I understand that there may be reasons some people can't be vaccinated, but for your health and the health of those around you, more of us need to be vaccinated. I have been vaccinated and everyone in my family has been vaccinated. If you want life to return to some version of "normal" you can be vaccinated too. The rise of the Delta variant puts all of us at risk, and the best way to fight it is through increased vaccination rates.

I am hopeful that even with a few people remaining vaccine hesitant, there are enough positive signs on the horizon that we're just about ready to get back to a version of "normal" in the church. The Reopening Team and the Council are meeting this month to make some decisions about what that will look like.

*(continued on next page)*

## ...AUGUST continued...

I'm praying that the pandemic indications will be turning towards fewer infections and fewer hospitalizations here in our county, our state, the country, and the world. I want to return to having congregational singing, and choral anthems; I want to hear the kid's laughter in Church School and to being able to share fellowship time with all of you. I want luncheons and classes and retreats and service opportunities, and mission projects! But we aren't going to be able to do it if we are endangering the lives of participants because Covid-19 variants are running wild. Let's get back to doing what the church does best. Do what you can to increase the percentage of the fully vaccinated in Ozaukee County.

Courage and Peace,  
Pastor Scott



## REOPENING TEAM UPDATES

Hello everyone! Happy Summer! Our in-person worship has been going very well. It's so great to see everyone! We've had between 20 and 30 every week which is about normal for the summer months anyway. We have continued to work on plans to move forward with more reopening. There are two proposals before the Church Council that include adding singing back into worship and also moving toward full reopening for the program year. We are watching current trends to see if or how that will affect our planning. We are still strongly suggesting that anyone who is unvaccinated but attends services to continue to wear a mask for their own protection. Vaccination seems to be the best prevention of the spread of Covid-19 or at least the cases seem generally milder. If you are not vaccinated but wish to be and need assistance, contact the church office and help will be provided. If you are not sure that vaccination is right for you, please contact your health care provider. We are all anxious to get back to normal. Looking forward to seeing all of you soon.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!  
Phil Stepanski, Reopening Team Chair

## WORSHIP WITH US!

During the summer months, from Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day Weekend, we have one service on Sunday mornings at 9:00.

## CLICK AWAY!

Remember to be on the lookout for orange text throughout this e-newsletter. The orange text is linked up to other documents or web pages that you might find helpful and interesting.

## CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEXT E-NEWSLETTER

If you have any celebrations, concerns/prayer requests or other contributions that you would like us to include in a future e-newsletter, let us know. Please email us 7-10 days before the first day of the month.



## REMEMBERING JANE SUDDENDORF

On Sunday, July 25th almost 40 people gathered on the church patio for a "Hymn Sing" in memory of Jane Suddendorf who passed away on July 4th. Jane had been a faithful member of the church choir for 30 years and singing the songs of faith she loved so deeply seemed a fitting response to the grief of those who knew and loved her. The group sang songs from all the seasons of the church year, and many were able to share brief stories of how Jane had touched their lives. A group of choir members shared an a cappella closing song, "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" which was beautiful, especially considering they hadn't been able to sing together since March 2020 due to the pandemic. When the singing had come to a close, we were able to go into Fellowship Hall and continue our time together with ice cream refreshments provided by the Church School Leadership Team. It was a meaningful and comforting way to remember Jane Suddendorf together.

Special thanks to the small team that assembled to plan and implement our communal response to the sadness and grief of Jane's death: Brett and Jennifer Dimmer, Cathy Jones, Don and Susan Niederfrank, Mike and Jane Spalding, along with Pastor Scott and Amy Gilhooly. Thank you to Pru Palecek for leading the hymns on the piano. Thank you to Bill Bond and Mike Dimmer for lending us their pop-up tents that helped provide shade on a rather hot afternoon. Thanks also go to the Church School Leadership Team for allowing the Hymn Sing event to share in fellowship and refreshments of Church School's already planned Ice Cream Social. Jennifer Dimmer and Tina Olson and other members of the team were great hosts in the kind of gathering that we haven't been able to have for the previous 18 months.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

# FAMILY SUNDAY FUN DAYS!

*Brought to you by our Church School Leadership Team*



## KICKBALL & SMORES

Sunday evening, August 22 6:00 p.m.

We will play kickball and other games in the church parking lot and enjoy a campfire and smores after the games.

*A great chance to join Pastor Scott and church families for fun and fellowship!  
Feel free to bring neighbors and friends! More details will be emailed as this event gets closer.*

## PLAYTIME & COFFEE ON JULY 11TH



*Thank you to the Roehrig Family for providing breakfast refreshments and to Savannah Anderson for picking up the coffee!*

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL & POOL NIGHT ON JULY 25TH



*Thank you to Jennifer Dimmer and Tina Olson for facilitating the event and to the Olson family for providing the ice cream and toppings!*



# LECTIONARY SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR AUGUST WORSHIP

## **August 1: Ephesians 4:1-16 and John 6:24-35**

An image of the church knit together as one body challenges us to live a connected life and grow together in truth and love nourished by the Bread of Life. There are many forms of ministry and many different gifts that each of us receives. No one is to be all things to all people, nor masters of everything. Instead, God invests talents, gifts, and graces in each one of us, and challenges us to use those to build up the church and community.

## **August 8: Ephesians 4:25-5:2 and John 6:35, 41-51**

Reminded by the letter writer that we are members of one another, and our welfare is inextricably linked, we are challenged and inspired to live as imitators of God, nourished and sustained by the Bread of Life. Anger is a universal human emotion. It is not always a negative emotion; sometimes, it inspires positive action. However, it can also eat away at us. The advice not to let the sun set on our anger is good advice, for it encourages us to deal with that anger and not to let it fester.

## **August 15: Ephesians 5:15-20 and John 6:51-58**

The author of the letter to the church in Ephesus offers concrete guidance on living a life shaped by the gospel of Jesus, the Bread, and invites us to consider how we spend our time so who we are and how we live is in alignment. The letter makes comparisons between life in the Spirit, and life in the world – that is, life in accordance with God’s way as opposed to life focused on self and things of the current world. We are encouraged to be filled with God’s Spirit, to sing and make praise with heart and voice.

## **August 22: Ephesians 6:10-20 and John 6:56-69**

This morning we come to the end of the letter to the Ephesians with encouragement to stand firm in love and prayer clothed in truth, righteousness, and peace. The author knows the people in the early church do not have the means to confront the power of Rome. But what they do have is something more important. Armed with truth, righteousness, a readiness to proclaim the gospel of peace, we too can confront all that this world can throw at us.

## **August 29: James 1:17-27 and Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

As we open the letter of James, we are challenged to find connections between what we believe and say about God and the actions we take each day. The letter of James reminds us of the perpetual biblical imperative to care for the orphans and widows. James then tells us to be people who do not just hear God’s word, but people who do God’s word.



*Thank you to the Kylee Olson and her piano instructor, one of our pianists, Sherri Melichar, for providing special music on Sunday morning, July 11.*



## TEASEL INFESTATION REMOVAL IN CREEKSIDE COMMONS

A huge thank you to one of our members who also happens to be a master gardener, Jane Spalding, for noticing the infestation of invasive teasel weed growing along the banks of Creekside Commons. Jane immediately began cutting down the 8 foot specimens before they went to seed. We thank Mike Spalding, Craig Modahl, Susan Niederfrank, and Pastor Scott for helping complete the job. You can now see Sauk Creek again!

We also thank Mike Dimmer for bringing his trailer and to Bill Bond and Eric Olson for helping to haul it all to the city yard!





## CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Pastor Scott is excited to begin this year's Confirmation program next month. Parents of 8th graders, please be on the lookout for more information in the coming weeks. If you would like, you may email Scott at [pastorscott@portucc.com](mailto:pastorscott@portucc.com) to confirm that your child will be participating.



## LIGHTHOUSE FIESTA

**An Update from Erica Brooks, Lighthouse Director**

Please save the date for our back to school event, a Fiesta, on Sunday, September 12, from 6-8pm. This is going to be a time for youth and their families to learn more about Lighthouse and receive information for the upcoming school year. We will have games, prizes, and of course food!



## THURSDAY MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

Every Thursday morning at 8:00 a.m., a dedicated group of gentlemen from the church gather at The Beacon restaurant, which is located downtown on the first floor of The Harborview hotel. The Thursday Morning Men's Breakfast Group is open to all the men of the church. Everyone places their own order and pays their own bill. It is a great way to spend an hour (or two) and begin your day.

If you are interested in attending, you are welcome to join the group, or you can send Ken Matthews, group facilitator, an email if you have questions ([k0matthews76@gmail.com](mailto:k0matthews76@gmail.com)).



## SPECIAL THANKS

To Phil Stepanski and Tracy Bretl for purchasing and printing nametags.



Thanks to Mike and Jane Spalding for creating wooden stands for the new nametags.



We'd like to thank Bill Bond, Claude Zimmerman, and Joe Mueller for completing additional window work in the church sanctuary.



# Church Team Spotlight

## OUR JUSTICE TEAM

Since re-grouping in Summer 2020, the Friends for Justice at First Congregational (a.k.a. Justice Team) have been meeting monthly via Zoom, usually on the second Monday at 4:00 p.m. The Team developed a Facebook page and [webpage](#) on the church website. The webpage contains team-recommended readings related to racial justice. In January 2021, team members participated in the first interfaith Ozaukee County Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, with excerpts from King's *Letter from Birmingham Jail*.

Currently, we are planning a study series for this Fall, based on the UCC-developed curriculum *Sacred Conversations to End Racism*. The 8-week series will be held in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 beginning September 14th through November 2nd. The church Reopening Team is working with us to assure that we are following health guidelines related to COVID-19 for this in-person gathering. The weekly sessions will be interactive, co-facilitated by Reverend Laura McLeod (Pastor Scott's wife) and Pastor Andre Pirtle, a chaplain and community activist from Milwaukee. Reverend Laura is a UCC-certified facilitator for *Sacred Conversations*. There is limited capacity and pre-registration will be required. Early registration will be open to church members and friends and we look forward to strong participation from First Congregational Church. However, the series will be free and open to the public. Please contact Louise Mollinger at [Lamollinger@gmail.com](mailto:Lamollinger@gmail.com) if you would like to register or if you have any questions.

The work of the Justice Team is guided by its stated purpose:

*"But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream"*  
(Amos 5:24)

*Responding to God's will expressed in the prophet Amos' words and Jesus' call to love our neighbors as ourselves, we seek to encourage and facilitate learning and action in our congregation that furthers a just society and world.*



# SAVE THE DATES

SACRED CONVERSATIONS  
TO **END** RACISM



*Navigating Diverse Narratives and Relationships on a Lifelong Journey of Understanding*

## **An 8-session Weekly Study Series**

## **SACRED CONVERSATIONS TO END RACISM**

Racial Justice through the Lens of God's Invitation to Love Your Neighbor and Do Justice

### **Tuesday Evenings**

September 14, 21, 28; October 5, 12, 19, 26; November 2

**6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

in Fellowship Hall

Facilitators:

**Reverend Laura McLeod**, Senior Pastor of Brookfield Congregational UCC, Brookfield, WI;  
certified facilitator through national UCC for Sacred Conversations to End Racism

**Pastor Andre Pirtle**, Campus Student Ministry Chaplain, Milwaukee, WI; community organizer;  
serves with Streetlife ministries and Dispensa de la Paz food pantry in Milwaukee.

Sponsored by:

Friends for Justice of First Congregational Church and First Congregational Church

Pre-registration will be required due to limited capacity.

CDC guidelines related to COVID-19 will be followed. Contact Louise Mollinger at [Lamollinger@gmail.com](mailto:Lamollinger@gmail.com) if you would like to register or if you have any questions.

# AUGUST CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>Tenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship Service with Communion 9am  AA 3pm	2	3	4	<b>5</b> Men's Breakfast The Beacon 8am	6	7
<b>8</b> <b>Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship Service 9am  AA 3pm	9  Justice Team 4pm (Zoom) Reopening Team 7pm (Zoom)	10	11	<b>12</b> Men's Breakfast The Beacon 8am  Church Council 7pm (Zoom)	13	14
<b>15</b> <b>Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship Service 9am  AA 3pm	16	17	18	<b>19</b> Men's Breakfast The Beacon 8am	20	21
<b>22</b> <b>Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship Service 9am  AA 3pm  SUNDAY FUN DAY Kickball & Smores 6pm	23	24	25	<b>26</b> Men's Breakfast The Beacon 8am	27	28
<b>29</b> <b>Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost</b> Worship Service 9am  AA 3pm	30	31				



## AUGUST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 - Connor Cowen      | 17 - Kelly Schowalter |
| 2 - Shane Stimac      | 19 - Drue Nelson      |
| Carter Schlehle       | 21 - Andrew Arthur    |
| 4 - Matt Schlehle     | 22 - Shandy Roehrig   |
| Pru Palecek           | Lucas Schneider       |
| 5 - Jessica Jacque    | Lori MacRae           |
| Kyle Guschl           | Colin Kohl            |
| 6 - Joshua Jacque     | Chloe Rychtik         |
| 7 - Reese Kasza-James | 23 - Will Pradel      |
| 8 - Lenys Walden      | 24 - Hope Gilhooly    |
| Brady Calder          | Julie Schlehle        |
| Jodi Cowen            | 25 - William Kincaid  |
| Jeanne Kasza          | 26 - Ella Hoffmann    |
| 9 - Marcus Karrels    | Logan Schuessler      |
| Justin Schuessler     | 27 - Sean Gilhooly    |
| 11 - Paul Ehrlich     | Ella Gilhooly         |
| 12 - Kierstin Cira    | Anthony Nau           |
| 13 - Neil Johnson     | Emily Mitchell        |
| 14 - Doug McManus     | 29 - Jerry Packard    |
| 16 - Ken Matthews     |                       |

## AUGUST WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 - Lyle and Bev Falk
- 6 - Terry and Kathy Bretl
- 8 - Don and Ginny Laubenstein
- Chad and Miriam Mitchell
- 11 - Mark and Lori MacRae
- Matt and Sarah Riemer
- 16 - Dennis and Heather Brede
- 18 - Craig and Carolyn Heatwole
- 20 - Jason and Melissa Bergin
- 23 - Tim and Kierstin Cira
- John and Janet Zausch
- Dale and Pru Palecek
- 28 - Jeanne Kasza and Anthony James
- 30 - Tom and Lu Keagy

## CHURCH INFORMATION

First Congregational Church  
131 North Webster Street  
Port Washington, WI 53074  
(262) 284-2022

email - [office@portucc.org](mailto:office@portucc.org)  
website - [portucc.org](http://portucc.org)



Summer Church Office Hours  
Tuesday - Friday mornings from 8:30 - 11:30

### Office Staff Emails

Rev. Dr. Scott McLeod, Pastor - [pastorscott@portucc.org](mailto:pastorscott@portucc.org)  
Amy Gilhooly, Communications Director - [amyg@portucc.org](mailto:amyg@portucc.org)  
Beckie Perez, Office Manager - [office@portucc.org](mailto:office@portucc.org)  
Lorraine Halls, Financial Administrator - [lorraine@portucc.org](mailto:lorraine@portucc.org)

## STAY CONNECTED

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"First Congregational Church, Port Washington, WI"

Subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#)  
"First Congregational Church of Port Washington"

Receive our E-Blasts (emails)  
*Please let us know if you have a new email address*

Check out the church website - [portucc.org](http://portucc.org)

## PAYPAL REMINDER

PayPal is an easy way to give to the church to pay your pledge and/or make an extra financial gift. You can find the PayPal button on the home page of the church website ([portucc.org](http://portucc.org)) or use this QR code. Thank you!

