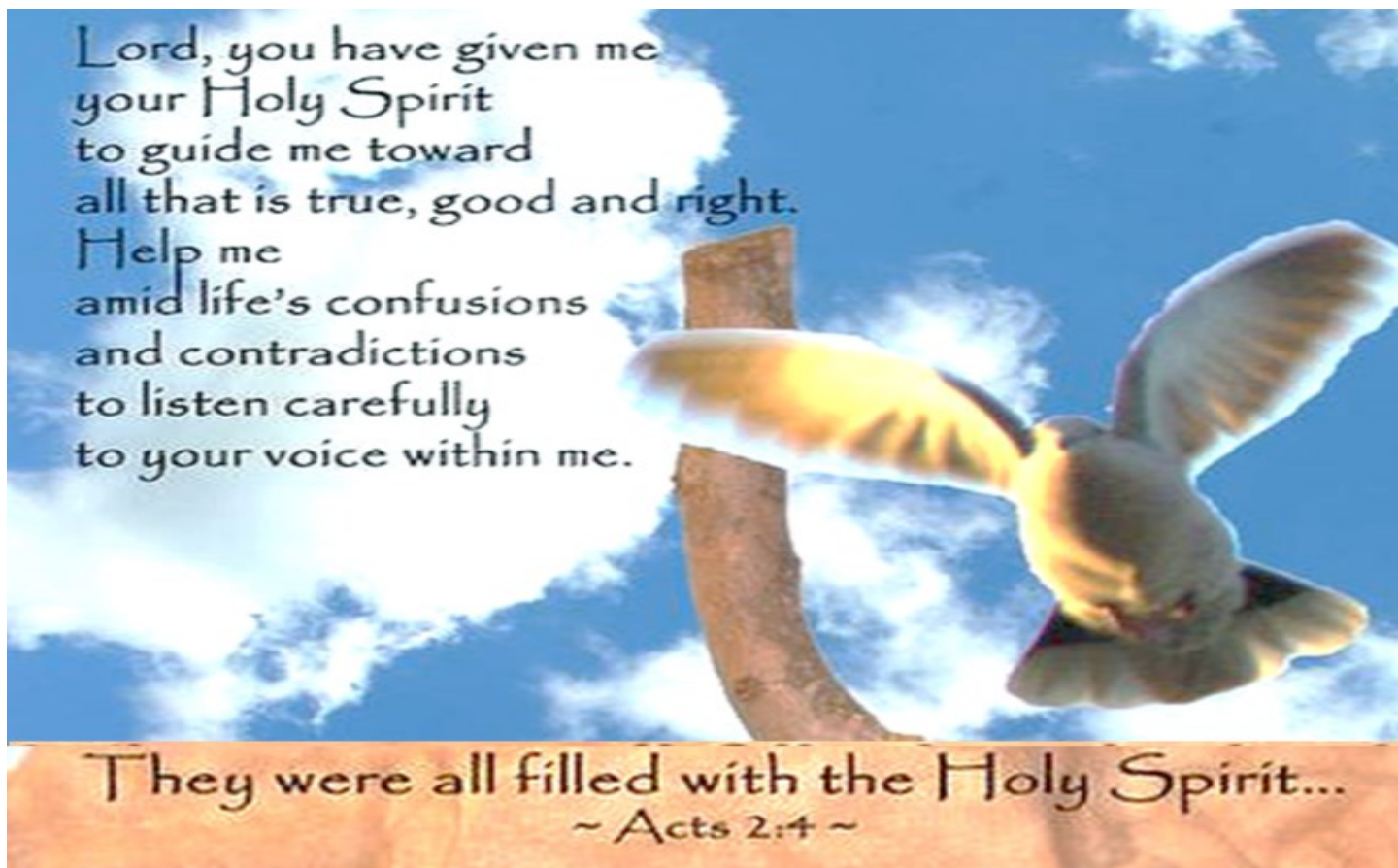


June / July 2020 Branches Newsletter



*May we accept the truth of the situation even if that sometimes means accepting uncertainty.
Trust in the Lord that HE will bring all things to completion when the time is right.*

SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICE

9:00 A.M.



First Congregational United Church of Christ

To engage and Inspire All Generations to Connect with God through Love and Service

815 S. Concord Rd. Oconomowoc, WI 53066 -0273

Phone: 262.567.4461

Fax: 262.567.5533

Email: uccoffice@oconomowocucc.org

www.oconomowocucc.org

Pastoral Ponderings

In the words of American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr

"Humor is a prelude to faith and laughter is the beginning of prayer."

This week's lectionary reading is from Genesis 18:1-15. It is the story of the three messengers who visit Abraham and Sarah and announce to them that even though they are very old that they will have son by this time next year. Now Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years old at the time. Sarah laughed when she heard the news. Yet God would fulfill his promise to Abraham of having many, many descendants. One year later, they named the child, Isaac, which in Hebrew means laughter.

Reading this story raised some questions for me in. For example, I hear about God walking with us through the valley of the shadow or even of God crying with us in times of mourning. But, does God ever laugh?

Are there other places where the Bible speaks about laughter? Are there any liturgical Sundays during which we are encouraged to laugh in church. I have seen many different pictures of Jesus. But only once, have I ever seen a picture of Jesus laughing.



Here I have listed below the places in the Old Testament where we read about laughter.

14 Bible Verses about Joy in the Old Testament

The ancient Psalms are filled with expressions of human emotions, some of which are great joy. Many personify the earth to imply that nature itself rejoices. So when we laugh, we are laughing along with the earth!

1. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones." — Proverbs 17:22
2. "Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy." — Psalm 47:1
3. "God has a smile on His face." — Psalm 42:5
4. "God, who sits in Heaven, laughs!" — Psalm 2:4
5. "He that is of a merry heart has a continual feast." — Proverbs 15:15
6. "I commend mirth." — Ecclesiastes 8:15
7. "I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow." — Jeremiah 31:13
8. "Let the shield exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy." — Psalm 96:12
9. "Let your heart be merry." — Judges 19:6
10. "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break into joyous song and sing praises." — Psalm 98:4
11. "The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy; The meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy." — Psalm 65:12-13
12. "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them." — Psalm 126:2
13. "You have turned my mourning into dancing; You have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy." — Psalm 30:11
14. "You shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and hills before you shall burst into song, and the trees of the field shall clap their hands." — Isaiah 55:12

8 Bible Verses About Joy in the New Testament

Notice that the verses about Christ and his coming speak emphatically of joy. This is why many of the Christmas carols have the word "joy" in them: Christ brings joy!

1. "Although you have not seen Jesus, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy." — Peter 1:8
2. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh!" — Luke 6:21
3. "But in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed." — Peter 4:13

8 Bible Verses About Joy in the New Testament *(continued)*

4. "I have said these things to you," Jesus said to his disciples, "so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." — John 15:11
5. "The angel said to Mary: You will have joy and many will rejoice at the birth of your son." — Luke 1:14
6. "The angels said to the shepherds: Do not be afraid, for see — I am bringing good news of great joy for all the people." — Luke 2:10
7. "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." — Matthew 18:3
8. "When the wise men saw that the star had stopped over the place where the Christ child lay, they were overwhelmed with joy." — Matthew 2:10

Holy Laughter — *A few churches use laughter for inner healing.*

Here is what Rev. John and Pattie Chappell recommend you do: *"When you are feeling discouraged or have hurts that need healing, close your eyes, force yourself to raise your head, and begin praising the Lord in tongues or English for a minute or two. Then begin saying 'Hee, hee, ha, ha, ho, ho!' and repeat it several times. If you cooperate with the Holy Spirit, this will usually release a flow of holy laughter. If that doesn't work, try saying, 'Ho, ha, hee, hee' or 'ho, ho, hee, hee, ha, ha! This is not being silly. It is being spiritual! God takes the 'foolish things of the world to confound the wise.' These words are holy words, heavily anointed by the Holy Spirit, and amazingly effective. To the natural mind, this 'method' is so absurd, so ridiculous, but it will usually produce holy laughter in anyone. God's methods bear fruit."*

Laughter Sunday

Recently there has been a liturgical reclamation of what is known as "Laughter Sunday," "Holy Humor Sunday" or "Lighten Up Sunday".



Sometimes it is observed during Eastertide. Early Orthodox churches gathered on the Monday after Easter to tell stories, jokes and anecdotes. To this day in Slavic regions Christians gather the day after Easter for folk dancing and feasting in the churchyard. This was a time of celebrating the big joke that God pulled on Satan. It is known as Bright Monday, White Monday, and Emmaus Day in various countries. It is also called Risus Paschalis" — God's Joke, the Easter Laugh.

Whenever "Laughter Sunday" is celebrated, and by whatever name, it is characterized by joking around, singing, dancing. And it reminds participants that God is a God of laughter as well as of sorrow — much as God is Lord of the valleys as well as the mountain tops (Genesis 21:1-6).

Even though we have been quarantined for the last twelve weeks, we have seen countless protests on the evening news, and we have seen many friends and neighbors lose their jobs, this article is a simple reminder to take time to laugh. Laughing helps us maintain our health; and it is scriptural. So when you feel down or closed in, take a moment and simply laugh, because God will have the final word. — *Pastor Dave*



Congregational Meeting – Sunday, June 14

The meeting will immediately follow the 9 a.m. Worship Service

The purpose of this spring meeting is to provide opportunities for communication and updates from the various Ministries, Project Groups, Committees and Leadership team with the members of the congregation.

For those of you who opt not to join us in the Sanctuary physically, you can participate from home by access our live stream through the Zoom app. [CLICK HERE](#) Enter Member ID: 669742497 Password: 011715 or call in on your phone to participate with the 9a.m. worship. Dial 1-312-626-6799

Youth News

Vacation Bible School



Join us this summer for a virtual Vacation Bible School, “Kids Under Construction”. **The second Sunday of each month** you will receive an email with video links, games and activity suggestions to do at home. All participants will also receive a bag filled with material to help build/design these activities.

This will be a fun and engaging opportunity to strengthen your children’s faith while building it together at home. Please [click here](#) to register your child today! We hope you will join us on our “construction site”! If you have any questions, please contact Amy Drewa at amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org

Mission Trip



Our 2020 Summer Youth Mission Trip has been revamped to a local community mission trip which will be held July 26 – August 1. There will be 35 participants that will be staying at our church and working at our job site at Zachariah’s Acres.

Please keep them in your prayers for a spiritual and meaningful experience. We hope you will be able to join us for our Mission Sunday which will be held on August 16 during the 9 a.m. service.

Confirmation

Congratulations to our two new members, Megan Haak and Sophie Dempsey on their Confirmation!!!

May God continue to bless and guide you and your faith journey.



Youth Group Activities!

Junior Youth (3-4 grades)
Middle School Youth (5-8 grades)
High School Youth (9-12 grades)

Our three different youth groups have enjoyed our weekly online Zoom gatherings. They enjoyed it so much they requested we continue through the summer. Due to summer typically being pretty busy we will meet every second and fourth Sunday of each month.

This time together allows the youth to strengthen their relationships with their “church friends”, explore their faith during this odd time and have fun! We hope you will continue to join us through the summer and look forward to seeing all of you!





Hearts & Hands Preschool

June Summer Fun as Begun



Pictures of our June class playing and walking on our beautiful property!

After closing our doors on March 14th due to the Coronavirus, we once again have kids in the classroom for our June Summer Fun class! New procedures were put in place for daily health screening for all staff and children, new cleaning procedures, no shoes while in the classroom, teaching kids social distancing, and spending the majority of class outside! What a blessing it is to hear the laughter of the kids and see their beautiful faces once again!

August Friday Fun Class

"Down on the Farm" starts August 7th. Runs every Friday through August 28th from 9am - 11am. The class is open to all children ages 2.5-4 years old. Class limit is 10 children. See our website for registration info.

To get the latest information on what the preschool is up to, follow us on Instagram. Like us on Facebook! Every comment, share, or like on social media allows us to be seen by more people!

Website

www.heartsandhandspreschool.org

Instagram

hearts_hands_preschool

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/heartsandhandssoconomowoc/>

Contact Cindy Meckl

themeckls@gmail.com or 262-567-2558

Sunday School News!

Over the summer we will be very busy planning and gearing up for our 2020/2021 Sunday School year!

As our rotation model was a great success, we will continue with that model. There may also be other small changes to our program which we will be adjusting and informing you by September. We look forward to having our classrooms filled with children, youth and many volunteers putting together the pieces of their faith puzzles! Watch your emails for more information and volunteer opportunities.



Graduation Sunday—June 14

Please join us as we celebrate and recognize our 2020 graduates! We are very proud and excited to honor our high school and college graduates during the 9 a.m. worship.

Mission & Outreach



Singing Collection

Every time we worship, loose coins in the offering are donated to a Mission Partner. The coins in the metal plates make a “joyful noise,” so we call this our Singing Collection.

June - Lake Area Free Clinic

The Lake Area Free Clinic’s core purpose is to meet the widest range of health care needs of the economically challenged that it is able to support by providing free medical and reduced fee dental services.

Lake Area Free Clinic serves residents of Waukesha County and the Oconomowoc School District who are uninsured with a household income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level. *Many of these individuals work full-time, but are either not offered health insurance, or cannot afford the premiums.* The need remains: It is estimated there are 16,000 Waukesha County adults who are medically uninsured

July - Christmas Fund

For decades, the Christmas Fund — formerly known as "Veterans of the Cross" — has helped provide supplemental monies for pension and health insurance premiums to low-income retirees.

Your offering provides gift checks to hundreds of annuitants, but one of the unique aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy, lay church employees, and their surviving spouses/partners—the funds do not support programs or institutions, but people.

You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering.

Thank You to UCC's Community of Caring

LakeWalk for Cancer

Bill Seymour would like to thank all those who contributed to and/or walked as part of “Heal Team 7” during the Virtual LakeWalk for Cancer. Over \$250 was raised in support of local cancer patients.

Protective Masks



The staff at Orthopaedic Associates of Wisconsin would like to thank all those who contributed to and/or crafted the fabric masks. The donation of masks were put to great use. The masks were dispensed to the patients that were seen allowing the inventory of PPE devices to be maintained for office staff.

There are SO MANY who are assisting in this urgent need for face coverings. Thank you for sharing your time and talents!

If you are in need of one yourself, or know of someone who is, please contact Jennifer at the church office (262) 567-4461 or email her at jennifer@oconomowocucc.org. Jennifer will coordinate with our sewing team to get you what you need. **May you stay safe and healthy!**

Rain
or Shine

3rd Annual Bald Eagle Car Show

Saturday, August 22, 2020

10 am - 2 pm

First Congregational UCC Grounds

9 am cars & bikes arrive

Food • Beer • Music • Raffles



**Bikers
Welcome**



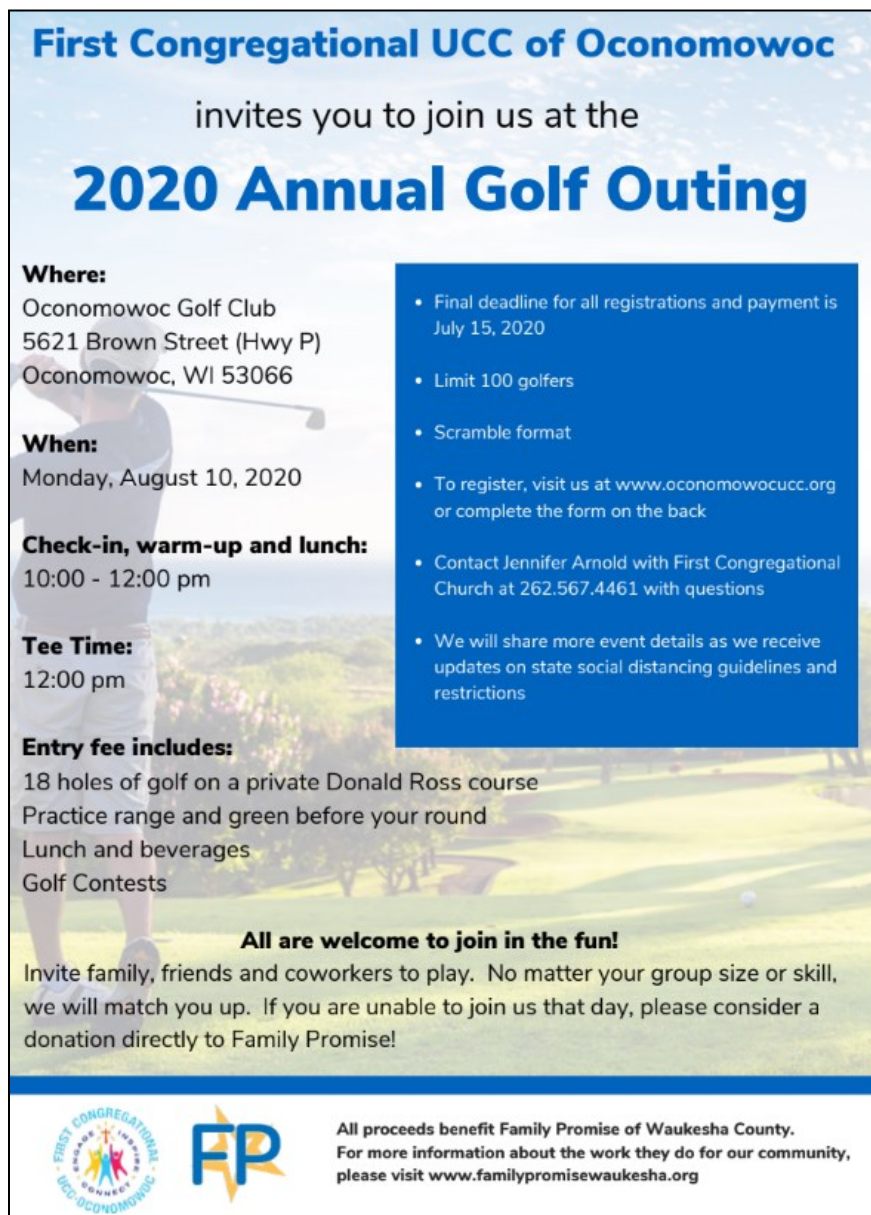
*Fundraiser for
Youth Mission Trips
in memory of
Rich Behling
"The Bald Eagle"*

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
815 S. Concord Road, Ocon., WI 53066
www.oconomowocucc.org • 262-567-4461
amydrewa@oconomowocucc.org

Sponsored by



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First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
invites you to join us at the
2020 Annual Golf Outing

Where:
Oconomowoc Golf Club
5621 Brown Street (Hwy P)
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

When:
Monday, August 10, 2020

Check-in, warm-up and lunch:
10:00 - 12:00 pm

Tee Time:
12:00 pm

Entry fee includes:
18 holes of golf on a private Donald Ross course
Practice range and green before your round
Lunch and beverages
Golf Contests

All are welcome to join in the fun!
Invite family, friends and coworkers to play. No matter your group size or skill, we will match you up. If you are unable to join us that day, please consider a donation directly to Family Promise!

- Final deadline for all registrations and payment is July 15, 2020
- Limit 100 golfers
- Scramble format
- To register, visit us at www.oconomowocucc.org or complete the form on the back
- Contact Jennifer Arnold with First Congregational Church at 262.567.4461 with questions
- We will share more event details as we receive updates on state social distancing guidelines and restrictions

FP

All proceeds benefit Family Promise of Waukesha County.
For more information about the work they do for our community, please visit www.familypromisewaukesha.org

Golf Outing 2020 ***Monday, August 10***

Our church is providing an opportunity for golfers of all abilities to enjoy a great day of golf, food, games and FUN! We are pleased to offer this wonderful day at the beautiful Oconomowoc Golf Club, a private course designed by premier course architect Donald Ross. All proceeds of the day will provide for the Mission and Ministry of Family Promise of Waukesha County who serve homeless families.

The need is great this year as many families are especially stressed financially and emotionally this year. There is also the issue of churches such as ours not being able to provide a safe environment for overnight guests because of social distancing needs.

The format will need to change, as it will not be possible to have a sit down dinner this year. We will not be asking for gift baskets to be raffled during the event. This will be more of a golf focused event and less of a social event.

We will be limiting golf to approximately 100 golfers, first come first served. The idea is that we will work with leadership of Family Promise and seek to involve all of the 28 support and host churches that support Family Promise in the golf outing this year. Our intention is to solicit sponsors and golfers from the Family Promise community. with sponsors and auction items.

We are very fortunate that our reserved date is August 10th, because this is at the end of summer and hopefully the coronavirus concerns will be worked out by that time. This is a one year commitment and our intent is to go back to a more traditional outing in 2021. Please use either the golf outing registration on the next page or go to the church website www.oconomowocucc.org to sign up. There is also an option to pay online as well as information on sponsorship opportunities.



First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc and Family Promise of Waukesha County



Golf Outing Registration

Golf Registration

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ # of total registrations at \$125 per golfer (\$130 if paid by credit card) = total \$ _____

Premium Package Perk (Package includes 3 mulligans, 10 raffle tickets, and a chance to win a golf shop gift certificate.)

Name: _____ #of packages _____

Name: _____ #of packages _____

Name: _____ #of packages _____

Name: _____ #of packages _____

_____ Total # of Premium Packages at \$20 per package = total \$ _____

Sponsorship Opportunity (Special recognition will be made for all sponsors.)

Hole sponsor \$125 _____ Par sponsor \$250 _____

Birdie sponsor \$500 _____ Eagle sponsor \$1,000 _____

Ace sponsor \$2,000 (includes four golfers at N/CI) _____

Sponsor Name: _____ Contact Person: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

- * Limit 100 golfers, scramble format
- * Ace sponsorship level includes four golfers at no additional charge. All other sponsorship levels do not include golf registration.
- * Final payment for all registrations and sponsorships is due by July 15, 2020. Please make checks payable to: First Congregational UCC with "Golf Outing" for the memo. Mail to: 815 S. Concord Rd., Oconomowoc, WI 53066.
- * Proceeds to benefit Family Promise of Waukesha County.

Accepting Rummage Sale Donations



The unfinished space is available for rummage drop off. We have a new procedure in place. Please call the church office and ask Jennifer to open the outside door to gain access to the unfinished space. You can enter the church directly through that door. When dropping off items please keep the aisles clear for fire safety. We ask that you move as far into the space as you can and stack things neatly and safely.

When you're done dropping off your rummage items, please let Jennifer know she can lock the door again.

We do not know when an in-person sale will take place. It could be in the fall or next spring. In the meantime, we'll be posting some items online to try to bring in additional funds this summer and clear some space for more rummage arrivals.

Thank you very much for supporting the church in this way! If you have any questions, please contact Jill Riemann at 262-719-3823.

Home is Where the Heart is Porch-traits

Missing out on ways to commemorate events due to Covid-19? This is a fun and candid way to document a moment in time when we were all "safer at home," and you can help others at the same time!

Rebecca Seymour is partnering with Family Promise of Waukesha County on a fundraising opportunity to help families in their homes, especially during this time of uncertainty as we deal with COVID19. For a minimum \$20 donation to Family Promise, she will come to your home to take a couple of "porch-traits" (a photo of your family outside on your front porch or in front of your home). Using a long lens on her camera, Rebecca will be able to maintain a safe distance and spend a few minutes helping you to set up how you want your photo.

In a few days you will receive 1-2 edited photos through email. Rebecca will be scheduling photos for our church family members through the month of June. Photos should be taken during the day and weather permitting.

To set up a 15 minute appointment, please contact her at wrkseymour@sbcglobal.net or 262-751-9142 cell. Thank you for your support of Family Promise!



Outdoor Worship

2020 dates for outdoor worship are June 28, July 26, and August 23.

Each worship will begin at 5:45 p.m. with some gathering music and the service beginning at 6 p.m. It will be held in the Pavilion located at the end of the upper parking lot. Bring your family, blankets

Lawn Mowing

We need volunteers to mow the church property. If you are willing to help with this necessary task, please call Mike Hoff to schedule. To use the "Z" turn mower you must be at least 18 years old and you must be trained (training provided by Mike Hoff, when needed). Mike can be reached at 262-567-7471 (Home) or 262-490-4479 (Cell) after 3 PM except Thursdays.



Food Pantry Sundays - First Sunday of Every Month



You are invited to bring items for the Food Pantry and put them in the baskets at the entrance to the sanctuary. The baskets are then brought to the altar during the offering. These donations are delivered to the Oconomowoc Food Pantry during the week. Items that the Food Pantry accepts are: Non-perishable food items; Baby items: diapers, wipes, baby food, formula; Personal hygiene items - soap, shampoo, tampons, sanitary pads, deodorant, toothpaste, laundry detergent, toilet paper.

Did you know that the Oconomowoc Food Pantry is a non-profit organization. It is run by volunteers with no paid staff and receives no government subsidies. 100% of your donations go to servicing those in need.

Here are the collection dates through the end of the year so you can mark your calendars:

July 5

August 2

September 6

October 4

November 1

December 6

Scrip Gift Cards

***Need supplies for those spring projects?
Or gifts for Father's Day, Graduation or Birthdays?***

All kinds of Scrip gift cards are available for purchase. If we don't have what you need we can special order and have it within a few days too! Scrip cards are a great way to get your purchases and help the Church. Profits from the sale of these cards support our youth programs! *Stop in the church office during the week.*

Branches Deadlines - 2020

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Articles Due</u>	<u>Released</u>
Aug	July 15	July 31
Sept	Aug 19	Aug 28
Oct	Sept 16	Sept 25
Nov	Oct 21	Oct 30
Dec/Jan	Nov 11	Nov 20

Please send events/announcements to:
Jennifer at Jennifer@oconomowocucc.org

A Reminder to Help the Ronald McDonald House

It's easy and it costs nothing other than a small amount of time. All you need to do is save the pull tabs from your beverage cans and then bring them to church to deposit them in the large container outside the office door. When the container is full, the tabs will be taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Wauwatosa where families of children requiring treatment at Children's Hospital can stay while the child receives treatment. The actual cost of a room is \$50 - \$100/day, but the cost to a family is at most \$25/day or may be nothing if they cannot afford to pay.



Grocery Store Receipts

Please place your Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly (Hartland & Oconomowoc) and Sentry (Golf Road in Delafield) receipts in the folder on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall.





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Fax: 262.567.5533

Email: uccoffice@oconomowoccucc.org

www.oconomowoccucc.org

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Staying Connected ...

Pastor Dave Schnepf pastordaveschnepf@gmail.com
Amy Drewa, Dir. of Ed. & Youth amydrewa@oconomowoccucc.org
Jennifer Arnold, Admin. Assistant jennifer@oconomowoccucc.org
Cindy Meckl, Hearts & Hands Preschool themeckls@gmail.com

Branches

June/July 2020



Summer Services:

9:00 a.m.

Memorial Day - Labor Day

Upcoming Events:

June 14	Graduation Sunday
June 14	Congregational Meeting Following 9am Worship
June 21	Father's Day
July 3, 6	Office Closed—Observing July 4th
July 15	August Branch Articles due
August 10	Annual Golf Outing
August 22	Annual Bald Eagle Car Show

Outdoor Worship: June 28, July 26, August 23 @ 5:45 pm