

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
31 W. Milwaukee Ave.
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

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Email: officefortucc@gmail.com
Church Website: www.fortfcc.org
Moderator (Chad Klauer):
klauercc@gmail.com
Rev. Dr. Sara Rabe, Pastor
Email: revsarafortucc@gmail.com



Schedule of Important Dates for May

- **Saturday, May 6**
8 am—Church Clean-Up Day
- **Sunday, May 7**
10 am Worship
Graduation Sunday
Potluck following worship
- **Thursday, May 11**
1:30 pm—Lend-A-Hand Meeting
- **Sunday, May 14**
10 am Worship
Mother's Day Reception after Worship
- **Tuesday, May 16**
5:30 pm Moderator's Meeting
6 pm Council Meeting
- **Wednesday, May 17**
9 am—Quilt Ministry Meeting
- **Sunday, May 21**
Confirmation Sunday
Reception following Worship
- **Sunday, May 28**
Pentecost
10 am Worship

Summer Dartball! Just for fun—Come join us for some summer fun with the Summer Dartball League! We will meet on the first and third Mondays & Wednesdays at 6:30 pm beginning in June!

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023

Save the Date for
Graduation Sunday on MAY 7! Help us celebrate our 2023 graduates with a potluck lunch after worship!



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
31 W. MILWAUKEE AVENUE, FORT ATKINSON, WI 53538

The Pilgrim Broadcaster Monthly Newsletter

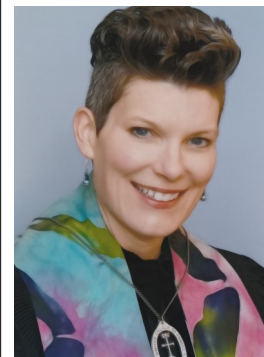
MAY 2023

April showers bring May flowers. Springtime brings restoration, vitality and joy. We have celebrated the Resurrection of Christ by continuing to revel in the Eastertide moments. God is working to make all things new. God works day and night to be steadfast in abiding love. Allowing our spirit to play openly provides opportunities to be open to God's love. The following is an article from Krista Ridlinger-Grosse about the benefits of play:

Our family recently got a dog....or let me rephrase that: I recently got a dog. Our newest addition – named Kobe (not after beef but after basketball) – is an almost six-month ball of endless energy. This morning, as we did our morning walk in (ahem) the rain, I noticed Kobe jumping from the curb to puddle...curb to puddle.... and literally splashing in whatever pool of water he could find. I had to laugh through my annoyed, cold self as I witnessed such uninhibited joy it was play.

When was the last time you played? According to Dr. Stuart Brown, a psychiatrist and founder of the National Institute for Play, play is defined as engaging in an activity for enjoyment, rather than for a serious or practical reason. Play has seven properties:

*it is apparently purposeless;
it is voluntary;
there is an inherent attraction to it;
while doing it there is freedom from time;
it diminishes the consciousness of self;
it has improvisational potential (open, not rigid); and
it has a continuation desire which makes you want to do it more.*



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Science has demonstrated that play offers valuable benefits in children and is equally important in adults. Play has been shown to reduce stress, increase happiness and joy, and allow for more adaptive coping through challenging situations. In professional settings, play increases learning, productivity and job satisfaction. Relationships are enhanced by play through increased bonding and communication. Thus, studies have shown that play isn't just about imagination; it is about rest and rejuvenation. It shapes our brain; fosters joy, creativity and innovation; and it is essential to our health.

Take a look at your day and ask yourself, did I play today? During the hustle of your busy life, did you take time to experience uninhibited joy? Whether it's participating in a board game with family, coloring a picture, playing tennis with friends or watching a movie – playfulness can be defined as anything that brings you pleasure and is unattached to an outcome. For me, it may have been a cold walk with Kobe, but it stopped me in my tracks, made me smile and feel just a bit better about standing in the rain.

Experience the joy of new life and new hope. "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." Proverbs 22: 6-9

Blessings on new beginnings,

Pastor Sara



The Church Office will be closed on Monday, May 29, in Observance of Memorial Day

Worship Helper Schedule for May

| Date | Greeters | Ushers | Lay Reader | Tech Support |
|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| May 7 | Susan & William Black | Tom & Patty Sehnert | Donna Abel | Bob Buell |
| May 14 | Paul & Sandi Hankowitz | Barb & Gary Vorpahl | Bob Ehrike | Kurt Wesemann |
| May 21 | Marsha & Roger Anderson | Sydney Wesemann & Trent Topel | Jo Ann Rose | Kevin Becker |
| May 28 | E.G. Becker | Heidi & Mike Siefkes | Charlie Knapp | Bob Buell |

Pentecost Sunday
May 28

10 AM Worship



SUMMER FELLOWSHIP: We are seeking volunteers to offer occasional post-worship fellowship over the summer months. Similar to the previous "Lemonade on the Lawn" events, you can sign up to bring treats (baked goods, fruit, cheese and crackers, etc.) to serve along with lemonade (mix provided) in the narthex. Check the bulletin board in the narthex for the sign-up sheet!



Church News.

Council Highlights – April 2023

Your 2023 Council met on April 18, 2023.

Record Retention Policy: Carol Maasz presented a proposed draft of a record retention policy. Pastor Sara has created a task force to look at our current and past records along with solutions on future management. The council approved moving forward with the draft policy and implementation.

Sanctuary Soft Nursery: The soft nursery has been completed and is being enjoyed by happy kids!

Werthmann Room Updates: The new furniture has been ordered and the renovation will start in May.

Memorial Committee: The Memorial Committee met and will begin updates on the pamphlet, memorial book, and funds.

Congregation Retreat: Pastor Sara has suggested that a retreat be put together for our members. It will be at Daychola UCC camp in Ripon. Reservation dates are September 8-10. A brochure is available with more information. It will be a wonderful weekend for fun and fellowship!

Church Potluck: The first potluck since the pandemic has been scheduled for May 7th! Please bring your favorite dish! Sign up in the Narthex.

Confirmation: Due to illness, confirmation has been rescheduled to May 21st. On that date we will also greet new members and celebrate a baptism.

Complete Council Minutes can be reviewed in the church office.

MAY BIRTHDAYS!

Happy Birthday and Many Blessings!

- Dorothy Peich..... 1
- Mariah Allard 3
- Susan Simonson 3
- Kristin Klatt..... 4
- Carol Maasz 5
- Nathan Vaughn 6
- Ruth Hammiller..... 6
- Gary Shackelford 8
- John Klatt 10
- Robert Ehrike 10
- Connie Barbian..... 14
- Bob Abel..... 15
- Terry Teipner 16
- Marvin Olsen..... 20
- Mary Ann Ehrike..... 21
- Bev Wittenwyler..... 22
- David Firari 22



Thank you to the Alleluia Sound High School Choir & Vibrations Handbell Choir for



their performance at First Congregational UCC—Fort Atkinson on April 21st at 7:30 pm.

The group enjoyed a supper provided through the gracious efforts of Lend-A-Hand before their performance, which marked the start of their 51st Annual Tour and travel to three other performance destinations. The group is directed by Ann Tucker, Director



of Music, and accompanied by Danielle Caioli. Members of the community were invited to this free performance which was open to the public. Thank you!



 UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



Inspiration for Life

**First Congregational
Retreat
September 8-10, 2023
Daycholah Center
UCC**

**Ripon, WI
\$210—2 nights, 5
meals
Faith experiences
Registration is due
June 4, 2023 with
\$100 deposit
Per person**

Come join us for a wonderful end-of-summer retreat at Daycholah Center on the southeast shore of beautiful Green Lake! Enjoy a weekend of relaxation, along with many fun and inspirational activities. This sacred place is the ancestral homeland of the Menomonie, Ojibwa and Ho Chunk Nations.

We'll nestle into the comfortable accommodations of Oak Mound Lodge, where most guest rooms accommodate two or three people in twin-size beds, while there are two rooms that each have four beds. All bedrooms have bathrooms directly accessible—some with a private bath and some sharing a bath between two bedrooms.



Sample Retreat Schedule—
TBD

Friday, September 8

3 pm—Check-in and Explore
5:30 pm - Dinner
Sunset and Vespers
Movie night, conversation,
afterhours

Saturday, September 9

8 am—Breakfast
Devotions
Service Project
Soul Collage Activity

12:30 pm—Lunch
Siesta—Quiet Time
Walking, birding, fishing,
golfing, etc.
Devotional, Bible Study

5:30—Dinner
Sunset and Vespers
Bonfire/Game Night
Afterhours

Sunday, September 10

8 am—Breakfast
Worship Service
11 am—Departure

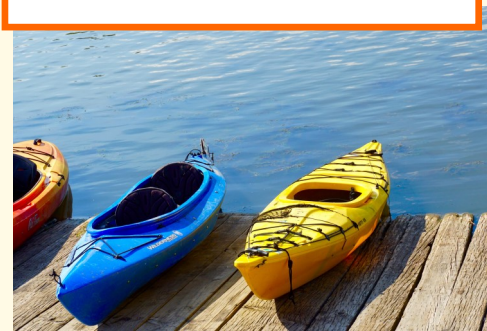
Activities may include nature walks, birding, golf, fishing, service projects, Bible study, arts/crafts, music, games, worship and more! Our programming and schedule will be based on the make-up of the group and input from those who register. All ages are welcome; minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

We need a minimum of 25 people, with a registration deposit of \$100 per person, due by Sunday, June 4. The total maximum cost per person is projected to be \$210, including two nights lodging and five meals. We don't want cost to keep anyone from attending the retreat. If you have several family members who want to participate or if it will be a financial hardship, please speak to Pastor Sara.

Registration slips are available in the church narthex and the church office. Please complete the registration slip and include with your check for the \$100/per person deposit. Drop it into the offering plate or deliver to the church office by Sunday, June 4th to reserve your spot at this exciting retreat opportunity!

Daycholah Center: <https://ucc.org/daycholah-center/>

W1010 Spring Grove Rd, Ripon, WI 54971



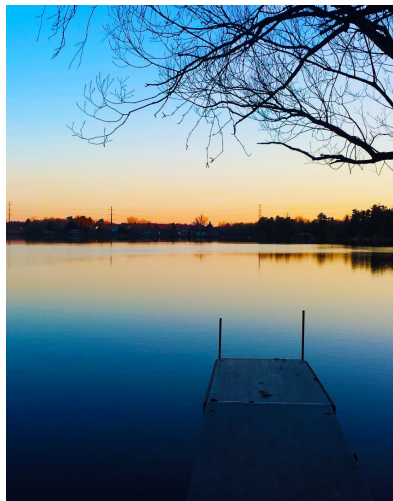
Volunteer Thanks!

Our heartfelt thanks to those who generously volunteered to offer Coffee Fellowship over the past several months! We've received a lot of positive feedback about the revival of this fellowship opportunity that had been paused due to the pandemic. Volunteers who recently offered their time and energy to serve coffee, lemonade and some yummy treats include: Clarice & Pete Fernelius, Nancy Onufer, Judy Wittenwyler, Eunice Ann & Joe Slaney, Patty Sehnert & Margaret Majors. Thanks again! We appreciate you and your service to others!



RETURN TO SACRED GROUND — UCC 2023 Camps & Retreats

The **2023 Camps & Events Catalog is here and available** to anyone interested in a Camp, Retreat, or any one of a myriad of experiences offered through the *United Church Camps Outdoor Ministry*. There is something for everyone! Whether you are interested in a Family Retreat, a summer camp for youth, an AweSum Family Camp, a Fishing Camp or Art experience among many other offerings, United Church Camps, Inc. (UCCI) will offer you warm hospitality and welcoming spaces. UCCI offers year-round camps, retreats and events at three one-of-a-kind camp locations: Moon Beach in the Northwoods, Cedar Valley in Southeastern Wisconsin and Daycholah Center on Green Lake. All provide comfortable accommodations and the opportunity to meet in a beautiful, natural setting and experience a meaningful, outdoor ministry experience. There are also many opportunities for adults to explore their creative spirits with classes in painting, mixed media, Stained Glass, as well as youth faith formation, retreats and conferences.



Stop by the church office and pick up a catalog to find more about all that UCCI has to offer!

UPDATE: You will soon be receiving a **Church Membership Directory Update Form**. Please take a few minutes to update your information/family information to help us create a more accurate directory of our members! More information will be coming your way on May 7th, when the forms will be distributed. Thank you!



Thank you ❤️

From Pastor Sara— Dear Congregation,

With humble gratitude my heart is full of joy in remembering the Installation Sunday. I give thanks for the ways each and every one of you contributed to the making of that moment. It was a moment that we prepared for. A special thank you to Sandy Reinhold who worked very hard on the beautiful bulletins and invitations. She worked behind the scenes making arrangements and we thank her. From the Search Committee, Council, worship participants, choirs, ushers and greeters/sound, Lend-A-Hand and all who had joy in their hearts, I share an expression of gratitude.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



Job Opportunity
Church Organist/Pianist

\$75 per hour · Sunday services · Choir rehearsals
· Special services
920-563-4802

Sunday, April 30, was a day of celebration that marked the occasion of the Installation Service for Pastor Sara Rabe, our full-time, settled pastor! The Service was attended by Rev. Rachel Bauman, the Associate Conference Minister of the Southwest Association, and Rev. Kelly Volk, Pastor of Washington Reformation UCC and Committee on Ministry Representative. It was also attended by many ecumenical members of our community, and many others who contributed to the occasion in word and song, as greeters, musicians and presenters and technical experts. Mike Rankin served as Preacher for this special service. It was a time of celebration for Pastor Sara's family as well, and even the youngest members of our congregation who had a part in the service as they presented symbols of our faith.

We are especially thankful to the Pastor Search Committee, who spent many months prayerfully selecting a candidate for approval, gathering input from the congregation and developing a local Church Profile, eventually reviewing the UCC Ministerial Profiles of 22 candidates.

As a result of the search that began over a year and a half ago, Pastor Sara Rabe was officially and unanimously voted our full-time, Settled Pastor on January 22, and officially installed on April 30. We are ever thankful to have Pastor Sara's leadership, her insight, her gentle but strong manner and so many other qualities that demonstrate her love of God and her understanding of his Word. God was still speaking, and we listened!

