

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

31 W. Milwaukee Ave.  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

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**Moderator (Chad Klauer):** klauercc@gmail.com



## 2023-2024 Men's Dartball Schedule

**Men's Dartball!** First Congregational Church—UCC will again be part of the Jefferson County Church Dartball League. The updated schedule for 2023-2024 will soon be updated on the Jefferson County-website (<http://dartball.x10host.com>)



Open Dartball Practice Night will be held at 7 pm on Wednesday, September 6 in Plymouth Hall. Anyone who is interested in giving Dartball a try is invited to attend. No experience necessary—everyone is welcome!

The regular season begins on Tuesday, September 19, at 7 pm. We will compete against St. Mark's Lutheran Church (Jefferson) here at First Congregational Church—UCC in Plymouth Hall. This year's Team Captain is Larry Narkis (larrynarkis1969@gmail.com). Be sure to check out the Jefferson County Church Dartball Facebook page at **Jefferson County Church Dartball**.

## FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



## The Pilgrim Broadcaster SEPTEMBER 2023 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### A Message from Pastor Sara:

The first day of school is on the horizon. The supplies are ready and the backpacks nearly ready to go out the door for another beginning. New shoes, a new shirt, we are ready, and there is no other feeling like the first day of school. There are some butterflies of excitement yet nerves. There is joy of a reunion with friends and the anticipation of making new friends. Summer days are numbered.

Times of transition can bring excitement and pleasant emotion. I can imagine that excitement in the fluttering hearts of those disciples whom Jesus called to say, "follow me." They left their careers, their jobs. They sacrificed time with their families to learn and grow from Jesus as they followed him to new awakenings and adventures.

In this season of learning, we too can ride the thrill of new awareness and adventures to take on new risks of opportunities that allow us to grow and be challenged in our faith and our way of thinking. Many weeks ahead will provide opportunities for learning and growing. We invite your attentiveness, with minds sharp to hear new ways that God is calling us. Jesus has called us to say, "come and follow me." Our hands are raised to say, "Pick me, Pick me!" Ready, set GO!

Blessings,  
Pastor Sara



## Lend-A-Hand News

**Lend-a-Hand** is a service ministry of our church. We spread cheer and caring by sending greeting and 'thinking of you' cards throughout the year. Our primary focus is to help in times of loss by organizing, preparing, and serving funeral meals. All proceeds from our activities are used to support our church and community outreach. **But Lend-a-Hand has a problem:** our members are getting older! Many are no longer able to provide food for funeral meals or help with set-up, serving, and clean-up. We are very grateful for the help we receive from those who are not members of **Lend-a-Hand**, but we could certainly use more help with our mission.

We have a few monthly meetings to plan activities and enjoy fellowship. For funerals, **Lend-a-Hand** members are asked to provide a dish for the funeral and/or help with set-up, serving or clean-up.

To answer any questions you may have, **we invite you to be our guest at a monthly meeting**, as announced in the Sunday bulletins. Please say **yes** if invited to a meeting! If you feel unable to make a commitment to membership at



this time or are not a "meeting person," would you consider becoming a **Friend of Lend-a-Hand**? You would be called, when needed, to provide a dish or to work at an event. Food prepared for funerals may be left in the kitchen the evening or the morning before the service. **Lend-a-Hand is an Equal Opportunity Organization!** Men are most welcome to join us in our mission.

Lend-a-Hand will have its **first meeting of the year on Thursday September 14th, a potluck meeting starting at 12:30 pm. Please bring a dish to share.** We will discuss setting up for the new year and have wonderful time of fellowship. Won't you consider joining **Lend-a-Hand** in its Mission to serve our Family of Faith and our community?

**Hope to see you soon!**



The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, September 4th** in Observance of Labor Day.

### Coffee Fellowship

Sign up now for a date to host coffee fellowship during worship. As a host, you'll set up the coffee makers, start them in time for the coffee to be ready when worship lets out, and clean and put away the coffee makers afterward. If you wish, you may also offer cookies or another snack, but this isn't a requirement. Sign up to share a date with a friend if you'd like. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the narthex. Thank you!

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### Sunday, September 3

8:30 am Worship

#### Monday, September 4

Labor Day—Office Closed

#### Wednesday, September 6

7 pm Men's Open Dartball Night—Plymouth Hall

#### Thursday, September 7

6 pm Facilities Meeting

#### Friday, September 8

Church Retreat Begins, 3 pm

#### Saturday, September 9

Church Retreat—  
Daycholah Center, Ripon

#### Sunday, September 10

**10 am Worship is back**

Last day of Retreat

#### Monday, September 11

Peanut Production Resumes

#### Tuesday, September 12

7 pm Men's Dartball

#### Wednesday, September 13

Choir Rehearsal

#### Thursday, September 14

12:30 pm Lend-A-Hand Fall Potluck

6 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

#### Friday, September 15

Wedding Rehearsal

#### Saturday, September 16

Kraus/Hartman Wedding

#### Sunday, September 17

10 am Worship—Communion

**Rally Sunday**—First Day of Confirmation & Sunday School

#### Tuesday, September 19

2 pm Church Relations

5:30 pm Moderator's Mtg.

6 pm Council Meeting

7 pm Men's Dartball

#### Wednesday, September 20

9 am Prayer Quilt Ministry

7 pm Choir Practice

#### Thursday, September 21

6 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

#### Sunday, September 24

10 am Worship Service

#### Monday, September 25

8 am Peanut Production

9 am Broadcaster Deadline

#### Tuesday, September 26

7 pm Men's Dartball

#### Wednesday, September 27

7 pm Choir Practice

#### Thursday, September 28

6 pm Bell Choir



# SAFETY



The church **Safety Committee** has been busy meeting during the spring and summer months. Our goal

was to review the **Emergency Procedures Manual** for the church and make any updates as needed. This has now been accomplished. We also reviewed the **Safety Procedures handouts** that are placed in the hymnal holders in each pew. Several changes have been made to the handouts and new ones will be placed in the pews in the next several weeks.

The committee also discussed the idea of providing some type of review and/or training for the congregation to go along with the handouts. After much discussion, we came up with these dates:

- 1) **Sunday, October 8th** after the **10am** service, an Officer from the Fort Atkinson Police Department will give a short presentation on unsafe/armed intruder. This event will take place in Plymouth Hall.
- 2) **Sunday, October 15th** after the 10am service, we will review the Fire /Tornado Severe Weather /Unsafe Intruder procedures from the Sanctuary.
- 3) **Saturday, October 20th at 10am** , several members of the Fort Atkinson Fire Department EMS will be in Plymouth Hall **to provide training in CPR and the use of an AED.** This is only going to be basic training in CPR and no test or certification will be offered. There will be a sign-up sheet in narthex about a month before so we have some idea of the number of members interested in this training.

There is no cost for any of the training, and we hope as many members of the congregation as possible will attend. Thank you!



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Ethan Teipner .....	1
Sean Teipner .....	1
Egann Stack-Vaughn.....	3
Nevaeh Becker .....	4
Jenna Topel .....	5
Christopher May .....	8
Rick Brietzke .....	9
Alison Townsend .....	11
Julie Korback.....	12
Nancy Onufer .....	14
Virginia Ison .....	14
Amy Cloute .....	15
Anthony Ehrike .....	16
Graham Dunlap .....	16
Hayden Kincaid .....	16
Jacob Pitzner .....	17
Heidi Miller .....	18
Cody Kruse .....	19
Corey Watters .....	19
Vincent Cox .....	19
Mary Narkis .....	20
Brandon Wisch.....	22
Susan Woods.....	23
Kim Ehlers .....	24
Jens Housley .....	25
David Stedman.....	26

## DAMASCUS PROJECT

When we look for the best tools to prepare local congregations to be the Church of the future, we instantly think of the **Damascus Project**, the rich educational ministry shared by the Minnesota & Wisconsin conferences of the United Church of Christ. This online learning community helps our conferences expand their capacity for faithful and courageous leadership while connecting people in meaningful, caring relationships where wisdom and knowledge are shared freely.

For lay people, the **Damascus Project offers learning opportunities** designed to enrich the life of faith, build leadership skills and, in some cases, explore authorized ministry. Clergy find space in the Damascus Project for peer support, re-imagination of their ministries and professional development. The Damascus Project provides participants a reminder that they are not alone in their questions or challenges – they are part of the wider family we call the United Church of Christ.

**The Damascus Project is especially well-suited to serve the needs of small congregations**, where the trend toward part-time pastorates, coupled with the shortage of authorized ministers, often requires creative thinking when it comes to filling the pulpit. A small congregation in northern Wisconsin posed this ques-

tion to its members: “Does anybody feel the Spirit calling?” A couple raised their hands. Today, they are developing their ministry and leadership skills through the Damascus Project.

The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Perdew, director of the Damascus Project, is committed to providing high-quality learning at a reasonable cost and on a flexible schedule. Registration for courses starting in September is open. Help us spread the word by sharing this information within your congregation. Interested?

**Email the Rev. Dr. Stephanie Perdew, director of the Damascus Project, at [Stephanie@the-damascus-project.org](mailto:Stephanie@the-damascus-project.org) or go to [the-Damascus-project.org](http://the-Damascus-project.org).**

It is not easy to be the Church these days. We all need safe places where we can question, explore and build skills, where we can draw on the wisdom of others and share our hopes for Christ’s Church, and where we can deepen faith. It is a gift to be in this ministry together, and we personally invite you to explore the Damascus Project and become part of this special community of mutual support and faith enrichment.

In faith,

The Rev. Shari Presternon  
Conference Minister  
Minnesota Conference—UCC  
&  
The Rev Franz Rigert  
Conference Minister

## DAMASCUS PROJECT

The Damascus Project offers professional development opportunities for UCC clergy and theological study and leadership training for lay people. Read on to see what's on tap for 2023-2024.

### COMING IN FALL 2023

#### Ministry Studies

**Sunday by Sunday: Weekly Preaching & Worship Leadership** Sept 5—Oct 31, With Zoom sessions on Sept 5 and 19 and October 10 and 25

Participants will consider the “Four Pages of the Sermon” and learn a prayerful approach to sermon preparation and worship planning.

#### Faith Foundations

**Introduction to Theology & Introduction to Old Testament**—Sept 11—Dec 15, with Zoom sessions on Thursday evenings.

Learners will receive a six-week introduction to theology that exposes them to a range of thinking about God and eight weeks' instruction in the Old Testament that provides a deep dive into some of its narratives.

#### Leadership Matters Series

**Church Post-Doom: The Future of Spirituality and Congregational Life**—6:30 to 8:30 pm, October 3

Many of us grapple today with a sense of foreboding stemming from the climate crisis and other threats to human flourishing. Futurist the Rev. Cameron Trimble will offer practical strategies for congregations seeking to find the Good News beyond these threats as they imagine their role in building a more just world.

**Interested? Email the Rev. Dr. Stephanie Perdew, Director of the Damascus Project, at [Stephanie@the-damascus-project.org](mailto:Stephanie@the-damascus-project.org) or go to [the-damascus-project-org](http://the-damascus-project-org).**

## Church Council MEETING

### Council Highlights – September 2023

After a July summer break, your Council met on August 15, 2023. Below are the highlights.

**Summer Worship Time Change:** The worship service time change to 8:30 am this summer has shown very little change in attendance compared to summer 2022. It has allowed worshippers to enjoy a few more Sunday summer hours. The regular 10 am worship time will resume on September 10th.

**Safety Committee:** The committee has completed an updated Safety Brochure and handout. Safety events will start on 10/8 with an intruder class. The training is followed by a fire/tornado drill on 10/15 and CPR/AED training on 10/21. Thanks to the Safety Committee for these important updates and training opportunities.

**Rally Sunday on September 17:** Rally Sunday begins a new year with Confirmation, Sunday School and the new narrative lectionary. The children's “Quiet Room” in the back of the Sanctuary will be cleaned and arranged for Sunday School, which will be held in coordination with the worship service.

**Building Usage:** Council had a discussion regarding use of our church building for both members, non-members and outside organizations. Moderator Chad Klauer will review our current policy and the discussion will continue next month.

**Fall Cleaning:** Several areas in the church need to be cleaned out and organized, particularly the storage areas. The Council will work on getting a group together to tackle this task.

**Complete Council Minutes** are available in the Church Office.

### Helper Schedule for September

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Reader	Tech Support
September 3	Susan Simonson/ Bill Wild	Donna Abel/David Stedman	David Stedman	Kevin Becker
<b>September 10—10 AM</b>	Kurt & Sydney Wesemann	Judy Brown/ Linda Fromader	Sharon Wisch	Bob Buell
September 17	John & Jane Wilmet	Jo Ann and Bob Rose	Sarah Brietzke	Kurt Wesemann
September 24	Sharyl Baranek & Rich Frame	Jane & John Wilmet	Jo Ann Rose	Kevin Becker





**VOLUNTEERS  
Needed for  
MEALS ON WHEELS  
September 4–29, 2023**

As you may know, “**Meals on Wheels**” is a community-supported program in Fort Atkinson that delivers a noon meal to elderly, homebound residents or to those who may find it difficult to prepare meals. The meals are prepared by the kitchen staff of Fort Memorial Hospital, and then delivered by volunteers from nine different churches that take turns throughout the year.

### **How can you help?**

September is one of the months that our church provides volunteer drivers to deliver meals, Monday through Friday at 11:00 am, with delivery taking about one hour. The volunteers for the day will pick up the meals from Door #15, which is south of the Ambulance Entrance of the hospital on McMillen Street, along with the Schedule for each route and Driving Directions. After delivery, the empty food containers are returned to the same location at the hospital.

During the past few months, **Meals on Wheels** has delivered about 120-140 meals per week to our clients; therefore, we have two routes in the city. It is helpful to have two people for each route. If you can just drive, we can pair you up with someone who can do the extra walking.

### **So, please, give it some thought!**

We need volunteers from September 4–29, 2023 . You will be richly rewarded as you participate in this outreach mission of our church that has been an ongoing project for almost 50 years. Our clients are most appreciative of this service and are grateful to you for donating your time to help.

**If you wish to volunteer, please call Mary Ellen Miller at 920-563-9085.**



September 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Our first meeting this fall will be held on **Wednesday, September 20, at 9 am.** Prayer Quilts is an exciting ministry that abounds in opportunities for growth in personal and group prayer, for fellowship, and for ministry to those in need of love and caring.

The purpose of Prayer Quilts is to promote prayer through the making of quilts. As each knot is tied, a silent prayer is said for someone in special need who then receives the completed quilt — a wonderful gift of love. You need not be a quilter, knitter or even know how to sew to get involved in this ministry.

Sound interesting? Need more information? Please join us at our next meeting! New members are always welcome, and we invite you to join us for friendship, fellowship and the opportunity to be part of this important ministry.

### **JOB OPPORTUNITY Church Organist/Pianist**

First Congregational Church—  
UCC has an exciting opportunity  
for a **Church Organist/Pianist!**

For more  
information, call the church office  
at **(920) 563-4802.**



## FIRST DAYS!!

September 17th is the First Day of **Sunday School** and **Confirmation Class!**

**Confirmation will begin at 8:30 am** with a **parent/student meeting** in the Werthmann Room.

**Sunday School** will meet in the **room off the Sanctuary** during the sermon time of the worship service. We will be using a brand new curriculum, **“Picture the Bible.”**

A day of new beginnings as we start a new year of learning!

- Pastor Sara



## CONFIRMATION CLASS 2023-2024

**On Sunday, September 17**, we will hold our first Confirmation meeting/class of the new year, and will welcome six new Confirmands and their families! Listed below are just a few of the words we will be learning more about as we begin this exciting journey of discovery:

### **Discernment:**

Perceiving or recognizing, as in perceiving or recognizing the will of God.

**Confirmation:** The rite of the church in which a person affirms their baptism. A time of faith exploration and formation.

**Faith:** Belief and trust in God.

**Witness:** A person who sees and can give a firsthand account of something.

Our group of young people will begin their travel on the road to affirming their own faith on their personal journey as they look at what discipleship means. We are thrilled for them and offer our support, love and care on the pathway to following Christ.

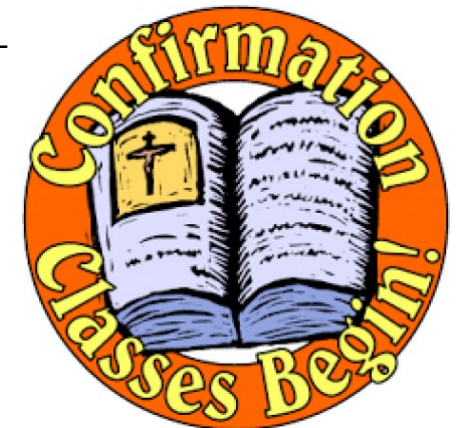
**September 17**—Parent Meeting & Class: Intro

**October 8**—Class

The full list of dates and topics has been distributed and will be also be available at our first class.

Blessings,

*Pastor Sara*



## Save the Date! Polka Worship October 29th, 2023 ~ 10am



Join in a toe-tapping worship service like you've never experienced before! **The Dave Austin Polka Band** will join us again this fall and will lead the music during worship. Bring your neighbors, friends and family for a worship service that is sure put a smile on your face! A Potluck with brats will follow worship! Prepare to get your Polka on!

Dear Friends,

Sincere thanks for your prayers during my recent surgeries and recovery over the summer. I am truly grateful for your support and the beautiful prayer quilt I received, along with each and every prayer tied into the quilt. Thank you! In gratitude,  
- Sandy Reinhold

