



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

**The Pilgrim Broadcaster Newsletter**  
**March 2024**

The poinsettia orders are due, the poinsettia orders are due. Finally one of the office staff said, "Pastor Sara, you keep saying poinsettia orders, but we are actually ordering Easter Lilies." If that wasn't enough, I commented in conversation that we were getting ready for Advent. Excuse me, but it is Lent. My physical space is being swiftly carried through each day to arrive at the doorstep of Ash Wednesday, however, my mind is still holding the slowly growing Christ child. Perhaps I am not ready to toddle on through Lent to stumble to the feet of Jesus. Sit and rest, the presence of Christ will find us.



*"One day, while flipping through the New Testament, I came upon the familiar story of Mary and Martha. Jesus came to Mary's house for a visit. There was a lot of fuss and flurry in the kitchen, and Mary's sister Martha got completely wound up in it and missed the point of everything. Mary, on the other hand, gathered as disciples around Jesus. The Bible says that she sat at his feet, fixed her listening heart upon him. As I read the story, odd things happened. I felt tears on my face as I was swept up by the fresh, pure wonder of what Mary had done. I felt drawn to her as if she were my lost sister. I understood that what I was seeing was the posture of waiting. I was seeing the prayer of the cocoon. This sitting at the feet of the Divine with an attentive and loving heart is a posture we all long to assume, whether we recognize that longing or not. Our longing for it is deep and universal. Mary is the lost sister. She's the lost and beautiful part within each of us, the contemplative that sits in the divine presence with a fully tuned heart. The posture of Mary is the still prayer of waiting that transforms us in unseen ways. When we, like Mary, sit in a pool of divine presence, our hearts full and attentive in the midst of our darkness and pain, we're praying ourselves into new creatures; we're dwelling in the cocoon. And sometimes, the moment rises inside us like a sound, and we can almost hear God's heart beating next to us."*

These words of Susan Monk Kidd in her book, *When the Heart Waits*, reveals to us the power of being in the presence of the Divine. As we are at the feet of Jesus in the moment of the crucifixion on the cross, may we spin our cocoon of transformation that one day, we may break free from the binds of death to live in full communion with the Resurrected Christ.

*Pastor Sara*

# Lessons for Lent

**February 18**—First Sunday in Lent: Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Matthew 22: 1-14

**February 25**—Second Sunday in Lent: Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15: 1-3; 11b-32

**March 3**—Third Sunday in Lent: Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52                      \*Communion Service

**March 10**—Fourth Sunday in Lent: Parable of the Talents

Matthew 25: 14-30

**March 17**—Fifth Sunday in Lent: Parable of the Rich Man

Luke 12: 13-21

## ~HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE~

**March 24**—Sixth Sunday in Lent: Palm Sunday

Mark 11: 1-11

**March 28**—Maundy Thursday: The Last Supper (7pm service)

Mark 14: 22-25                      \*Communion Service

**March 31**—Easter Resurrection Sunday—Worship 10 am

Reading—Mark 16: 1-8



*All services streamed live on YouTube at "Fort Atkinson United Church of Christ."*

*Videos are also available later at the same site to view at your leisure.*

## Helper Schedule for March

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Reader	Tech Support	Sunday School
Mar 3	Donald & Nancy Hoepfner	Joe & Eunice Ann Slaney	Chris Reed	Kurt Wesemann	Jennifer Nowotny
Mar 10	Roger & Marsha Anderson	Mary Beyerly Bob Rose	Bob Rose	Kevin Becker	Sydney Wesemann
Mar 17	Amy Elvekrog	Larry & Mary Narkis	Heidi Siefkes	Bob Buell	Troy Hartman
Mar 24 Palm Sunday	Linda & Jeff Glendon	Mike Rankin Pat Jung	Eunice Ann Slaney	Kurt Wesemann	Sydney Wesemann
Mar 28 Maundy Thursday	Julie Ankomeus	Chris Reed Rich Frame	David Stedman	Bob Buell	
Mar 31 Easter	Paul & Sandy Hankowitz	Chad Klauer Carol Maasz	Sharon Wisch	Kevin Becker	Sydney Wesemann

## Meet Henry

\*Henry Harrell started February as our new office manager. He is originally from Northern Indiana where he grew up on a family farm raising sheep, pigs, goats, and dairy cows. He then attended Purdue University majoring in Agribusiness and participated in the Purdue Varsity Glee Club. He has worked in several different industries since graduating but in the past couple of years found his passion doing Wedding DJing.



# FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

Twenty three volunteers assisted during January at the Food Pantry and helped provide groceries to **264 families** in need.

Monetary donations to the Food Pantry totaled \$2,280.

**Thank you** to all who volunteered, gave of your time, and donated to the Food Pantry. The wonderful generosity of our congregation is a special blessing to those needing a helping hand.



Thanks again to our lovely couples in the Newlywed Game that were able to share with us their love and laughs.



CLEANLINESS  
IS NEXT TO  
Godliness

## “Survey Says”

The results are in from the Summer Service Time Survey. We received 72 surveys over 3 weeks.

8:30—32

9:00—21

10:00—17

Additional times—2

After discussion with the Council, it has been decided that our summer worship time will be **8:30**.

This time change will be in affect from **June 2, through September 1**.

Thank you for all that took the time to fill out the survey.

Sandra Czech, Moderator 2024



## It's time to clean!

Do you like to clean, organize, downsize, or socialize? We have an opportunity for you!

We have 3 classrooms off the office, 3 Sunday School rooms downstairs, and the Sunday School's storeroom. They are filled to the brim and need a little (maybe a lot) of TLC. There is a lot of ground to cover, so it may take a few sessions to get it accomplished.

Upcoming dates will be decided once we see what needs to be done.

**Mark your calendar for March 13th 9:15. Hope to see you then!**

Sandra Czech, Moderator 2024

**Remember to LIKE us on FACEBOOK!**

We hope you will also **SHARE** our Facebook posts with friends & family!



## Winter Retreat

A group of church friends gathered at Daycholah Center on the shores of Green Lake for a weekend of Laughter, Rest, Spiritual Renewal and delicious food. Our time together included a service project for the camp where a group built a new fishing dock, and the other group cleaned out an art room. We will be planning another retreat in September. Please consider this wonderful weekend away.



## Council Highlights – February 2024

- **New Church Year!** New Moderator Sandy Czech started our year welcoming new Council members Chris Spangler, Jeff Woods and Matt Eske. They join Vice-Moderator Rich Frame, Past-Moderator Chad Klauer, Council member Mary Beyerly, and officers Loren Gray, Charlie Knapp, Nancy Onufer and Pastor Sara. Sandy has plans for a great and productive 2024!
- **New Office Manager!** Henry Harrell began as our new Office Manager on 2/13/24. He is a Purdue University graduate and has previously worked in the agriculture business. He is thorough, a self-starter and is enjoying this new challenge. He also works as an event DJ on the weekends! Stop by the office between 9:00 and 2:30 Monday – Thursday to say hello!
- **Childcare Center:** Heidi Yngsdal, Director, works closely with Council. Currently she is looking to hire several teachers to cover all the classrooms and hours of operation.
- **All Church Meeting:** Moderator Sandy Czech will hold a meeting for Ministry and committee members immediately after worship on Sunday, March 3. She will focus on welcoming new members and upcoming plans for this year.
- **Church Safety:** The church has recently acquired a second AED and updated first aid kits. These are located outside of the sanctuary and Plymouth Hall. A first aid kit is in the office manager's office. Hopefully this equipment will never be needed!
- **Survey Says!** After a survey of worshipers regarding the summer service time, it was determined that beginning Sunday, June 2 the time will be 8:30 AM throughout the summer. We will go back to 10:00 AM beginning on Sunday, September 8, 2024. Thanks to all who completed the survey!

**Complete Council Minutes are available in the church office.**

## Important Dates Approaching

- ♦ **March 3rd:** All Ministry Meeting following service
- ♦ **March 13th:** 9:15 AM cleaning of the Church Classrooms
- ♦ **March 24th:** Nurture will be hosting a light reception for Palm Sunday

### Choir Dates:

- ♦ **March 6, 13, 20, 27:** 7:00 PM Rehearsal
- ♦ **March 28:** 6:15 PM Rehearsal prior to the 7 PM Service

### Bells Rehearsal Dates:

- ♦ **March 7, 14, 21:** 6:00 PM Rehearsal time

## Holy Week Schedule

### Palm Sunday

March 24th, 10am Worship

### Maundy Thursday

Thursday, March 28th: 7pm Worship with Communion

### Easter Sunday

March 31st, 10am Worship

## Confirmation 2024

Please join us for **Confirmation Sunday** on **April 21st at 10 am!** We will share this time to celebrate our 2024 Confirmands as they begin their journey of faith as members of the congregation.

### **NEW** Church Office Hours

*Moving forward, our church office will be open*

9:00am—2:30pm, Monday thru Thursday.

**The office will be closed on Fridays.**

Outside of these hours, messages can be left on the office voicemail or by sending an email.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC**

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