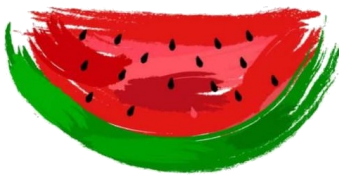


Congregational Clarion

A M E R Y C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C

HELLO
AUGUST



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“We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it’s our garden that is really nurturing us.”

—JENNY UGLOW



“The United Church of Christ is ON THE MOVE”

“That they may all be one.”

The collective body of the United Church of Christ is living into Jesus’ prayer, taking on the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racism and urgency of the crisis that is climate change.

General Minister and President John Dorhauer, in his State of the Church address to our denomination’s national meeting, General Synod on Saturday, July 17. He measured the denomination’s health and vitality by “our ongoing efforts to heed the call of the Holy Spirit and continue to display our courage in the struggle.”

He pointed to examples of unity, welcome, love and justice at every level of the church as the way clergy, congregants, Conference ministers, lay leaders and national staff have answered the call as “agents of transformation” in the mission to which they were called. “Our narrative is not one of decline and diminishment, but of relevance to and in a world that is looking for a body fully committed to a love that seeks a just world for all,” Dorhauer said.

“When they tell the story of the UCC generations from now, it won’t be a story about our size but about our capacity as agents of transformation. They will tell the story of what our love in action did to help build a just world for all.”

Pandemic pivot

He cited the denomination’s responses to the global pandemic as his first example.

“Churches shut down overnight with no time to prepare,” he said. “Funeral services ... suspended or altered in ways that never fully satisfied. Worship services conducted mostly virtually in a world where we all had to do it, but so few of us were prepared to do it right or well. We stopped singing and exchanging signs of peace – experiences virtual worship could not replicate.”

“And yet we aren’t just surviving this. Our mission is thriving in the midst of it. And it is thriving because of pastors and chaplains and caring lay leaders and Conference staff and national-setting employees who adapted because they had to and did whatever was necessary to ensure that the work of love and justice were not compromised even by a global pandemic.

“Reports came in that in many settings, new members were discovering our churches online. College students who went away to school in the fall kept worshipping weekly with their home church. More people were showing up in online services than were coming to the weekly in-person services. Contributions to support the life and mission of the local churches on the whole remained steady. The sacraments and the liturgical rituals of the church, from the Eucharist to ecclesiastical councils to installations and ordinations all found a new home in the virtual spaces we were forced to occupy. “What started out as a ‘we will do this because we don’t have a

(Continued on page 8)



08/01	Brett Johnson	08/16	Brennen Wagner
08/02	Chad Leonard	08/16	Linda Satterlund
08/03	Doug Johnson	08/17	Cheryl Bowman
08/05	Jessica Stoeklen	08/20	Lavone Pratt
08/08	Yvonne Monteith	08/24	David Russo
08/09	Carol Eklund	08/24	Wyatt O'Rourke
08/15	Shirley Johnson	08/27	Bobbie Edin
08/15	Howard Monteith	08/27	Benjamin Pitchford
08/16	Juli Swanson Maukstad		

THE DOG DAYS OF AUGUST

The name of the month was originally a Latin word, Sextilis. In 8th century BC, during the early Medieval period, the month was renamed to August in honor of Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor.

The month of August is often a calm and quiet time of year. It's a time to relax before the school year starts. And, there are plenty of beautiful days to celebrate time with your family and friends. We hope you enjoy this month of peacefulness.

AUGUST IS NATIONAL:

American Artist Appreciation Month
Back to School Month
Family Fun Month
Family Meal Month
Get Ready for Kindergarten Month
Happiness Happens Month
National Back To School Month
National Eye Exam Month
National Immunization Awareness Month
National Inventors Month

Golden Age Manor

220 Scholl Street
 Amery, WI 54001
 (715) 268-7107
 Dave Waterman

Evergreen Village

611 Harriman Avenue
 (715) 268-6640
 Marian Peterson
 Gussie Fennern

Memory Care

215 Birch St. W
 Amery, WI 54001
 Jeanne Murphy
 Bob Holms

Baldwin Care Center

650 Birch St.
 Baldwin, WI 54002
 Mary Monson Apt. 27

Riverbend

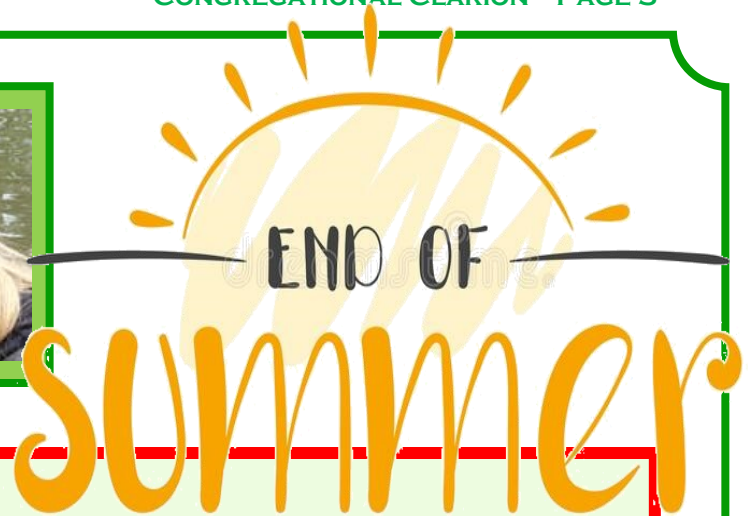
475 Golfview Lane
 715.268.9949
 Beth Sorensen
 Ruth Schafer



MEMBERS AND FRIENDS



FROM Abby Betzold
YOUTH MINISTER



Wednesdays:

August 4th : Summer Youth Group - Service Night 4:30-7pm

August 11th: NO YOUTH GROUP

August 18th: Valley Fair

August 25th: End of Summer Fun Night 4:30 to 7:00 PM

As a reminder: If your child has a fever, is not feeling well or has been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, please have them stay home. Thank you.

Wow! Summer is already nearing an end. Our youth group has been small but mighty throughout summer. We would love to see more kids join us to enjoy our August activities.

This month we will have three Wednesdays with youth activities. **August 4th** we will be working to make tie blankets that the mission team will be gifting to the family of the home they will be working on for Habitat of Humanity.

August 11th we will not be doing youth activities at church as two of our youth, Gabby Moody & Samantha Ross, and I will be on the mission trip to La Crosse. Feel free to provide us with some goodies at our send-off service on August 8th!

August 18th we will be having a fun day at

Valley Fair all day. Many kids look forward to this every year so we anticipate a great turnout!

On our final summer youth night, **August 25th**, we will be celebrating the end of summer and blessing our kids for a new school year ahead.

What a blessing these young, bright people are to our community and congregation. If you know someone in grades 6-12 who would be interested in joining us please contact me. We are always looking to add another smile to our group!

Abby Betzold
abigail.anderson2013@gmail.com
abigailbetzold@gmail.com
715-641-2237

The youth AND the youth director had a great time at Fawn-Doe Rosa Wildlife Educational Park.



Youth Director Contact Information:

Abby Betzold

715.268.7390; ext. 12

715.715.641.2237 (cell)

Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com

FAMILY MEALS ARE BACK!!



In order to purchase the needed amount of food for the Family Table meal, we absolutely must know the number of people who will be eating with us. Therefore, we ask that you call to make reservations at least by Monday, August 16th.

If we have you on our reservation list, it will enable us to call you if, for any reason, the meal needs to be canceled.

Thank you for your cooperation.

The Family Meal Crew

FELLOWSHIP TIME

Fellowship Time is happening after Sunday indoor church services. The following committees and groups have agreed to host our time together!!

August: Mission and Social Concerns

September: Congregational Giving

October: Diaconate

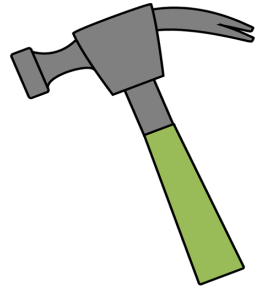
November: Trustees

December: Christian Education

We appreciate all the volunteers who are providing treats and beverages for this much-enjoyed time together after worship.

Please plan on joining us on Sundays after worship for good food and fellowship.

FROM THE 2021 MISSION TEAM



"We go to build our faith, to build a community, to build each other up, and if we build a house while we're at it, all the better." This quote has been used in years past to explain what we do when we set out on this week of mission. This year we are back at it, making it our 21st mission trip. We are going to La Crosse, WI to work on a home for a single mother of two young boys. We'll be putting in a full work day, eating supper together, and enjoying recreation activities in the evening along with worship time and bible study in small groups. Oh, and a whole lot of laughter in the mix. We hope you'll join us for our send-off service, Sunday, August 8th. And please join us for the comeback service on Sunday, August 15th to see pictures and learn about what the mission accomplished. We appreciate prayers for a safe, fun, and successful trip.

And, might we mention, we would never turn down some goodies to keep us going throughout the week or some mail to keep our spirits high. Baked goods & letters can be brought to the church the Sunday of send-off or mailed to:

Amery Congo Mission Team
c/o First Congregational Church
2503 Main St,
La Crosse, WI 54601

Our Team Members Include:

Nyla Anderson

Dave Bowman

Adam Tulkki

Abby Betzold

Bill Faughn

Barry Tulkki

Alek Keller-Betzold

Gabby Moody

Samantha Ross

Sheldon Betzold

Sherry Monson

Cheryl Bowman

Sue Olson

"I have one life and one chance to make it count for something . . . My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference."

—Jimmy Carter

July 13th Council Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Sheldon Betzold: Moderator, Sandy Morris: Clerk, Virginia Orsmy: Treasurer, Garth Schumacher: Interim Pastor, Barry Tulkki: Diaconate, Abby Betzold: Youth Director, Rae Wooldridge: Congregational Giving, Dave Bowman: Trustees

Pastor Garth opened in prayer at 6:15pm

The June meeting minutes were reviewed, Barry motioned to approve the minutes, Sandy seconded and the motion passed.

Treasurer & Financial Secretary Report: Virginia reported that we are going into our usual summer trend line with year-to-date income dipping slightly below year-to-date expenses. Barry motioned to approve the treasurer & financial secretary report, Rae seconded and the motion passed.

Clerk's Report: Sandy reported we had one non-member funeral and a baptism of Emma Dusek in June. Our member count remains at 165.

Youth Director Report: Abby reported that we have had between two and five youth every Wednesday throughout the summer. There have been Faith & Fun Days once a month where the youth have been doing service projects and a fun activity.

Trustees Report: Dave reported on a very busy time for the trustees. Our church phone system after many, many years is needing to be replaced, this is being worked on for a soon fix. The refrigerator needed servicing after not cooling correctly and will need its coils cleaned more regularly. We also had some work done on the garbage disposal to keep it working well after a clog. We will be taking a look at how the kitchen and kitchen storage areas and best used for ourselves and the county meal service as they may need more space. The trustees have put together a church enhancement team to look at capital improvements the church may be needing, they will be ranking these by priority to set future project goals. We have also had a financial planning team put together to look at the best financial practices for our savings, stocks, and other additional funds. Our outdoor space is being discussed for future possibilities of enhancing the space. The trustees continue to work on the Jen Christenson memorial fund that our church is to be a recipient of. Finally, they will be moving their meeting time to the third Sundays of each month at 8:30am.

Christian Education Report: Abby reported that we had a good turnout at the community Vacation Bible School hosted at Our Savior's Lutheran church, many kids from our congregation participated and about 40 kids in all. They will be meeting in August to plan for the upcoming Sunday School year.

Diaconate Report: Barry reported that they are still helping with outdoor worship as well as looking for readers and singers for all worship services. They are continuing to keep in touch with shut-ins. The deacons will also be working on the possibility of having name tags to wear on Sundays.

Congregational Giving Report: Abby reported that we had a meeting in June and decided to meet next in August to discuss the upcoming fall stewardship drive.

Missions & Social Concerns Report: Kate Bevington has requested to resign from the committee, Barry motioned to approve her resignation and Virginia seconded, the motion passed. Council discussed the future of this committee and will be looking for volunteers excited to take on projects this committee does as well as new ideas.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Garth reported that he continues to do worship services and lectionaries. He continues to do home visits as well. Planning to start confirmation back in October. He also noted that he will be taking some time off in September at some point.

Pulpit Committee Report: Abby reported that we met with Pastor Rob McDougall in June to discuss the steps the committee will be taking as we review pastor profiles we receive. We also met as a committee to discuss characteristics to use when ranking any candidates. At this point we are praying for applicants and a good fit.

Old Business: None

New Business: Abby asked about doing a rummage sale and it was decided we will wait until next spring to do one again.

The next meeting will be held September 14th at 6pm.

Barry motioned to adjourn the meeting, Virginia seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

Submitted By: Abby Betzold



(Continued from page 1)

choice' approach became a 'wow, look what the Holy Spirit can do!' attitude," he said.

"This church and the faith that sustains it have revealed themselves in the midst of a global pandemic that altered the landscape of our future."

White racism

Turning to another pandemic, "the persistent and prevalent pandemic of white racism," Dorhauer challenged the body to come together collectively to become anti-racist church. "Is the United Church of Christ, a denomination rooted in white centeredness and still to this day a church that bears all the markings of a body invested in its whiteness, willing to find its courage in the struggle for peace and justice and become a fully anti-racist partner? "There are signs that we are."

Climate change

Turning to a justice issue that "will have more to say about the state of our church than any metric we would otherwise rely on," he spoke about the crisis of climate change. "In his book 'Climate Church, Climate World,' Jim Antal writes: 'To resolve this emergency, God is calling the church to initiate a moral intervention,'" he said.

"Whether we do is another test of our relevance, health, and vitality. We are brokers of hope – God's hope, Christ's hope.

'Clear signs' of vitality, relevance

"At every setting of this church there are clear signs of health, vitality and relevance," he said. "Whether we have the willingness to sustain that will be answered not by our attendance in worship, not by dollars in our offering plates, but by our ongoing efforts to heed to call of the Holy Spirit and continue to display our courage in the struggle. If we apply the kind of endurance, adaptiveness, tenacity, don't-quit-ness to the pandemics of racism and climate change that we just displayed in overcoming COVID – then I say the state of the church is as vital and healthy as it ever has been or ever could be."

"We are a denomination on the move," he said. "The missional impulse to love all, welcome all and seek justice for all is spot on. There is much we have done that we can be proud of – but we have so much more to do to respond faithfully to our call to love in partnership with a still-speaking, still-moving God."

(adapted from article on-line UCC, by Connie Larkman, July 18, 2021)

The Church of Firsts

Since 1957, the United Church of Christ has been the church of firsts, weaving God's message of hope and extravagant welcome with action for justice and peace. Together, we live out our faith in ways that effect change in our communities. The UCC's many "firsts" mean that we have inherited a tradition of acting upon the demands of our faith. When we read in Galatians: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus"—a demand is made upon us. And so we were the first historically white denomination to ordain an African-American, the first to ordain a woman, the first to ordain an openly gay man, and the first Christian church to affirm the right of same-gender couples to marry. We were in the forefront of the anti-slavery movement and the Civil Rights movement. Our response to the demands of our faith is woven into the history of our country.