

March 2018

NorthWestWord

Northwest Association Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 21

First Congregational UCC

Eau Claire WI

registration

More information to follow in April

Wisconsin Conference Annual Meeting

June 8-10

More information

Transitions



Congregational UCC in Mellen Dedicates New Church Building

The Congregational Church in Mellen celebrated their new church building at a wonderful service of dedication on February 24, 2018. Their old building couldn't be made handicapped accessible nor remodeled to fit their space needs, so the church was torn down and a new building was erected. The new church was built to serve the congregation as well as the neighboring community.

We celebrate the retirement from licensed ministry of Ed Stigen, Roger Hofer, Keane Foster and Julie Garber. We have been blessed to have been served by these dedicated and faithful ministers.

We welcome Jill Christopherson as newly licensed into ministry for the Northwest Association.



Do you have the
Church Life APP?
Find it in the App Store -



SHARING BRINGS JOY.
Support **One Great Hour of Sharing.**

How can one person change the world?

How can one person change the world? Sponsor a child . . . Plant a tree . . . Rebuild a home . . . Visit a prisoner . . . Be a mentor . . . Teach . . . Serve a meal . . . Bring water to the desert . . . Pray . . . Donate . . . the opportunities are endless. And they're all right here. What part of our world is waiting for you to make a difference?



GLRYE - More information

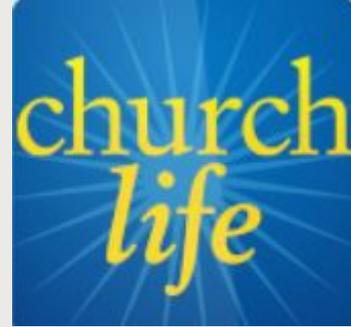


First Congregational UCC, Menomonie.
Friday, March 23, 2018 at 6:30

Join us for this live, spoken word performance by Rev. Bert Marshall. Marshall is a storyteller, singer and songwriter and actor who performs the entire Gospel of Mark as a remarkable storytelling experience. This is a chance to connect with the story as it was originally told— orally and in person.

Simple meal served at 5:30 pm. Vegetarian and GF available.

Trinity UCC, LaCrosse



April 4th - 6th
Unite to End Racism

The Wisconsin Council of Churches invites you to join us in a transformational journey, beginning this April. We are sponsoring bus departures from four cities to events taking place in Washington DC on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Unite to End Racism is both a rally and a call to action, organized by the National Council of Churches with partners the National African American Clergy Network, Conference of National Black Churches, Sojourners, Franciscan Action Network, Churches Uniting in Christ, and Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, and its member communions.

Unite to End Racism Rally: Buses will depart **Madison, Milwaukee, Appleton and Eau Claire** on April 3rd to travel overnight to Washington DC. On April 4th we will join people from around the nation for an Interfaith Service of Prayer and Preparation at the Lincoln Memorial and a Rally on the National Mall. At the end of the day, buses will return, driving overnight to arrive back to their home cities.

Cost: \$250 plus most meals on your own.

Registration deadline March 1 Extended
For more information and registration

From First Congregational UCC,
River Falls

A Veterans Gathering with lunch will be held Sunday, March 18 following second service (11:30 am) in the Fellowship

**"The Core of Christianity:
Adult Lenten Study"**

On 2018 Adult Lenten Study continues on Wednesday evenings. Community dinner and playroom will be provided at no cost. We will share a meal at 5:30 p.m. and the study will be from 6:15-7:15 p.m. There is NO COST to participate! Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall or contact the office so that we can prepare food and study materials.

The Mission Statement of
Community UCC

OUR CUCC MISSION:

The mission of this church: we are united in spirit and inspired by God's grace. We welcome all, love all and seek justice for all.

Hall. Convened by the Mission Education Committee, all veterans and active duty members are warmly invited to attend. A County Service Officer has been invited to join us to answer questions about veterans' service benefits, and the Gathering will be a great opportunity for all veterans in the congregation to meet one another.

Holy Land Tour in 2019-Pastor Chris is leading a pilgrimage to Israel and Palestine in the spring of 2019. Emphasis will be two fold. One is the traditional Holy Land tour to visit and learn more about the Bible (Jerusalem, Bethlehem, River Jordan, etc). Second is to better understand how the Christian, Jewish and Muslim stories all intersect in this region and how this history unfolds today. Use the sign-up sheet to register interest or contact Pastor Chris directly to be on the mailing list for this trip. A final meeting to get more information and sign up for the trip will be Sunday, March 25 at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

First Congregational UCC,
Wisconsin Rapids

*2018 Blanket Sunday
Kindness, Sharing, Caring through a Blanket*

Once again our church will be participating in Blanket Sunday on February 11th. True to our deepest roots in Christian faith we will be joining over 8,000 congregations across the world to raise funds for those in great need.

Blanket Sunday not only raises funds for blankets but also tents, food, and emergency equipment in the wake of disasters, as we have just witnessed in Puerto Rico and Texas. Wells are dug to provide clean drinking water and supplies are given to clean and rebuild homes and schools. World wide educational opportunities are established and funded for women and children to realize their potential and provide for their families.

St. Paul's UCC, Wausau

Nekoosa



The **Nekoosa United Church of Christ** will hold its **Fourteenth Annual Quilt Show** on Saturday, March 10, 2018, from 10am until

4pm. You are invite to the quilt show *and* have the opportunity to enter item(s) in it. Set up will be on Friday, March 9th. You may drop off your entries any time on Friday after 9 am, but before 4pm. Entries may be picked up immediately after 4pm on Saturday the 10th.

This is a free event to enter or attend. A free-will offering will be accepted at the door. Our



"A Silent Talk with God"

... Do you have someone or something you especially want to pray for or just need some time for quiet reflection. Our sanctuary is open every Thursday from 7:00 to 8:00 pm.

Please come in!!

St. Paul's Lenten Food Drive & "Penny War"

February 18th – March 25th

To Support St. Paul's UCC Food Pantry which is open 9am-Noon;
The 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month.

How It Works:

- ◆ We are going to conduct a six-week long Lenten Food Drive and "Penny War" in the Sunday School Classrooms to raise money and food for those bearing the cross of poverty this Lenten Season. It will begin on Sunday, February 14th and conclude on Easter Sunday, March 27th, 2016.
- ◆ Sunday School Students are asked to bring in change to place in their classroom containers, along with specific food items identified in the attached scavenger hunt list. The money and food items will count toward individual classroom totals.

Point System:

Each Scavenger Hunt Food Item = Add 10 Points

Each Cent = Add 1 Point

*Completion of the Food Scavenger Hunt = 5000 Points

*Duplicate Scavenger Hunt Items will still get 10 Points added to the 5000 when completed

- ◆ Dollar bills (\$1-\$20), nickels, dimes, and quarters can be donated also. These totals will boost each classroom total. Please do NOT send donations for this fundraiser in your church envelopes - Only loose money will be accepted.

Point System:

Each Nickel = Add 5 Points

Each Dime = Add 10 Points

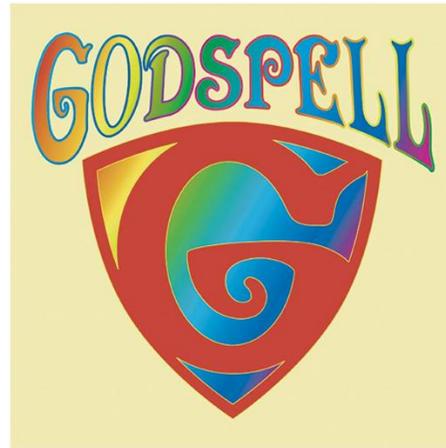
Each Quarter = Add 25 Points

Each Dollar Bill = Add the Amount of the Bill

(\$1=100pts, \$5=500pts, \$10=1000pts)

- ◆ Each classroom that completes the scavenger hunt list will be rewarded. The classroom with the highest point total will get a special surprise!

Thank you so much for any contribution your family can make to benefit this great cause this Lenten Season!



Saturday, March 31

2 p.m. & 7 p.m.

All Are Welcome – Free Will Offering
**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**
420 Wilson Avenue, Menomonie

GODSPELL

Conceived and Originally Directed by JOHN-MICHAEL TEBELAK
MUSIC AND NEW LYRICS BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

Originally Produced on the New York Stage 67
EDGAR LAMOREY / USTAGE 67/ENCLAVE / ANDREW HERRER

GODSPELL-2012 REVISED VERSION

Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.MTIShows.com

Be careful who you hate.

It could be someone you love.

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Matthew 22:36-40

"Shared cost" Health insurance information

and a response from Rev. Wayne Drucek

Dear clergy and lay leaders of the Wisconsin Conference UCC,

Many years ago, the Wisconsin Conference created a "shared cost" Health Insurance program that allowed small congregations to provide full health benefits at reduced rates. This was made possible by generous subsidies from our larger congregations. It has been a beautiful covenantal ministry, unique only to the Wisconsin Conference, and a blessing to many of our pastors' families and their congregations.

Over the past several years this "shared cost" system has become difficult to maintain. We have fewer and fewer large congregations and an increasing demand from congregations who qualify for subsidizing. In fact, last year 70% of the subsidy pool came from congregations that do not have a pastor participating in the insurance program, but contributed their per capita amount as a faithful commitment to the Wider Church. In recent years, because of the strain on local church budgets, several congregations that were deeply loyal to this program have opted out. Unfortunately, as participation decreases, the collective burden on the remaining "subsidizing" congregations increases. This has brought us to the painful

acknowledgment that the "shared cost" program is not sustainable long-term.

In December our Wisconsin Conference UCC Board of Directors voted to discontinue the shared cost program at the end of 2019. Beginning in 2020 the Pension Boards will directly bill all churches that have clergy or staff enrolled in the UCC Health Insurance (for the full amount of each particular plan). Our intent is to sustain the shared cost program through 2019, thereby giving clergy and congregations ample time to prepare for this transition. We encourage all contributing congregations to prayerfully consider continuing your participation through 2019.

This decision also affects those retirees who purchase supplemental health insurance through the Pension Boards. For years the shared cost insurance pool also provided a 20% discount for retiree supplemental plans. In 2017 our Board of Directors reduced the retiree discount to 15%, and this year it is 10%. In 2019 the discount will be set at 5%, and in 2020 it will end. Many of our retirees continue to appreciate the UCC Insurance program and will remain in it, while others have found cost effective alternatives that provide similar benefits.

We are well aware that such a change prompts anxiety, uncertainty, and surely some disappointment over the ending of a program that has been so valuable. We know this decision will impact some of our smaller congregations in particular, and we commit to helping you navigate through this challenge. We also know many congregations will experience significant relief on stressed budgets. Our intent is to provide plenty of time and sufficient information prior to this change, so that congregations and clergy can engage in careful conversations about future health insurance options.

We are taking the following steps to make this transition as smooth as possible:

- Beginning in January of 2019, we will make available Plans B and C to all UCC Insurance participants, in addition to plan A (currently the only option). Plans B and C offer alternative premium and deductible levels.
- During the week of September 24-28, 2018 we will host regional insurance meetings, at which time UCC Pension Board staff will present information on the various plans, address questions, and provide further contact information for ongoing guidance.
- By summer 2018 we will provide a resource booklet that helps guide clergy and lay leaders through negotiations around health insurance benefits.
- Over the next few years, Conference Staff will advocate for the fullest possible benefit package during conversations with church leaders about changing plans or providers.
- The Wisconsin Conference Insurance Committee will continue monitoring the development of the ACA (Affordable Care Act) and will provide contacts for comparing alternative insurance options.
- As we draw the shared cost program to a close, we will make available short term grant opportunities for those congregations and clergy who face challenging increases.

If you have questions or concerns about this decision, your Conference Minister welcomes your calls or emails. In the coming months our Finance Team - Vicki Graff and Tracy Hauge - will continue to assist you on specific questions regarding your insurance plan.

Please know that we care deeply about the wellness of our pastors, and that we encourage our congregations to continue providing health insurance as a fundamental benefit of the clergy package.

In Christ,

Rev. Franz Rigert
Conference Minister
frigert@wcucc.org
608-846-7880

Rev. Kerri Parker
Conference Board Chair

From Rev Wayne Drucek:
Wisconsin Conference UCC Clergy:

By now you should all know the Conference plans for discontinuing the Shared Cost health care program. Pension Board reps will be meeting with clergy in September to talk about consequences and options. In a brief conversation with Franz I was assured that retired clergy would be included.

For some of us retired clergy, as well as working clergy on Medicare, who have stayed with the PB Medicare plan, the thought of change is daunting, at least it is to me.

I am wondering if there would be any interest in "piggy backing" on the Conference/PB meeting in September and organizing a specific gathering just for retired clergy and those working clergy who are on Medicare and have remained in the Conference plan? I don't know exactly what it would look like, but I am thinking of having reps from several Medicare Supplement plans present so that we could compare and contrast, if that is even possible.

I am willing to do some of the leg work on this should there be enough interest and work with the Conference to check out possibilities.

If this sounds like something you'd be interested in, please message me on Facebook, or email me at **retired.rev@outlook.com**.

Wayne Drucek

North West Association Pulpit Supply List March, 2018

also available on the NW Association website

Churches should be fair and forthright in agreeing upon honorarium and travel expenses for persons they invite to provide pulpit supply. The WI Conference Division of Church and Ministry suggests a minimum of \$125 plus mileage reimbursed at the IRS current rate; for 2018, that would be 54.5 cents per mile. Where a church has two points and two services, you should consider a minimum of \$175 plus mileage.

Conference staff persons serve the local congregations in a variety of ways in the normal performance of their duties. Honoraria are not accepted, and travel costs are covered by the Conference travel budget. Except in emergencies, Conference staff cannot provide pulpit supply; however, the staff welcomes opportunities to preach for special occasions or to meet with

members of the congregation.

Please note: Persons licensed to the NW Association and ordained pastors are authorized to administer the Sacraments.

EAU CLAIRE TO TWIN CITIES AREA:

Rev. Elizabeth Hazel, 1060 Marian Lane, Park Falls, WI 54552 (will drive 3 hours)
715-744-2373 morrinhazel@pctcnet.net

Rev. Carol J. Heckmann, 1789 County Road EE, White Bear Lake, MN 55110
651-269-4950 cj.heckmann@yahoo.com

Rev. Jeanny House, 1342 Glenn Place #2, Eau Claire, WI 54703
715-577-5542 jeannyh@fastmail.fm

Rev. Sandee Kosmo, 3214 Chasewood Lane, Eau Claire, 54701
715-834-2112 skosmo14@msn.com

Rev. Norm Luecke, street address: 301 Alvey St, Bruce, WI 54819
925-639-1652 normluecke@yahoo.com (Available June-Sept: willing to travel 2 hours.)

Stephen P. Ottman, 733 First Street, Plum City 54761
715-647-3501 h 715-495-2017 cell s_ottman@hotmail.com

Rev. Charles Wolfe, 715-441-7362 chaswolfe411@gmail.com

LA CROSSE AREA:

Rev. Tom Uphaus, 2650 N Pine Creek Rd, La Crescent, MN 55947 507-895-2152
tuphaus@acegroup.cc

SUPERIOR-ASHLAND AREA:

Deanne Allen, 14240 S. Riverside Road, Cable, WI 54821
715-798-5097 woodyspirit@gmail.com

*Bill Handy, 715-682-0168

Rev. Elizabeth Hazel, 1060 Marian Lane, Park Falls, WI 54552 (will travel 3 hours)
715-744-2373 morrinhazel@pctcnet.net

Rev. Donald B. King, W7995 Perkinstown Ave., Medford, WI 54451
715-785-7635 sdking@tds.net

Rev. Norm Luecke, street address: 301 Alvey St, Bruce, WI 54819
925-639-1652 normluecke@yahoo.com (Available June-Sept: willing to travel 2 hours.)

Rev Bob Rice, 5695 Hunter Cove, Conover, WI 54519
405-642-6118 robertsrice@msn.com (Eagle River area)

John Tomkins, 61475 W. Delta Rd. Iron River, WI 54847
715-372-4543 johnval@reagan.com

WAUSAU AREA:

Rev. Dale Bishop, 511 Sundstein Rd., Eagle River, WI 54521

715-479-1152 dbishop511@frontier.com

Rev. Wayne C. Drucek, 1811 Perry Drive, Schofield, WI 54476

715-355-8895 home 715-212-8376 cell harleyrev@gmail.com

Rev. Elizabeth Hazel, 1060 Marian Lane, Park Falls, WI 54552, (will travel 3 hours)

715-744-2373 morrinhazel@pctcnet.net

Rev. Donald B. King, W7995 Perkinstown Ave. Medford, WI 54451

715-785-7635 sdking@tds.net

Rev. Norm Luecke, street address: 301 Alvey St, Bruce, WI 54819

925-639-1652 normluecke@yahoo.com (Available June-Sept: willing to travel 2 hours.)

Rev. James Mohr, 35 Hewett St., Neillsville WI 54456,

715-743-7626 jmohr13@outlook.com *Note: I would be available to drive

to any place South of Wausau, East of La Crosse, and Southeast of Eau Claire.

Rev Bob Rice, 5695 Hunter Cove, Conover, WI 54519

405-642-6118 robertsrice@msn.com (Eagle River area)

Susan Stein, 3321 16th Street South, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

608-515-4491 synergize10@hotmail.com

Rev. Pat Tucker, 511 Sundstein Rd., Eagle River, WI 54521

715-479-1152 ptucker511@frontier.com

Mary Wright, 7010 Evergreen Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

bmw@tznet.com 715-325-3602



Northwest Wisconsin Association UCC

Connect with us

