

First Congregational UCC

COME GROW
with us!



— The Church of the Open Door —
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.

Whoever you are, or wherever you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here!

TODAY AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC, APPLETON

9:30 – 10:30AM Childcare – *Childcare Room*
6:00 – 8:30PM Al Anon – *Chapel*
6:00 – 8:00PM First Things First AA Meeting – *Common Grounds*

We are glad you are here today! You are welcome to worship in person with us in the Sanctuary or watch it livestreamed in the Chapel, Upper Lounge, or Narthex. The Nursery also has livestreaming, on the other end of the building.

Baptisms are held on the third Sunday of each month. To schedule a baptism, contact the church office six weeks before your desired baptism date.

Childcare is available in the summer for ALL infants – 7-year-olds. Please see an usher for directions to the Childcare Room.

Communion is gluten free and served the first Sunday of each month. ALL are welcome to join us!

Donating to First Congregational UCC, Appleton: We have many convenient ways to donate. Giving envelopes are in the pews and may be put in the offering plates, checks can be mailed to the church, you can visit our webpage and click "Give," or you can text FCUCC GIVE to 73256. *Messages and data rates may apply. Message frequency varies. Text HELP to 73256 for help. Text STOP to 73256 to cancel.

Flowers: Today's flowers were arranged by Cindi Ritcey Fox.

Hearing Loop: Need help hearing our service? Ask an usher. They can help get you in the loop!



Land Covenant (new): see page 8

Online Streaming and Podcasting are available on Facebook: FCUCCAppleton or Youtube: First Congregational UCC Appleton.

Open Door Announcements can be shared by emailing opendoor@firstcongoappleton.org or calling the office.

References to God in our worship may at times be gender specific. You are invited to substitute terms that reflect your understanding of the inclusiveness of God.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

September 3, 2023 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:30 AM

Rev. Nicholas J. Hatch, Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries
Pastor Mary Jo Laabs, Interim Associate Minister for Congregational Life and Outreach Ministries

PRELUDE

Legend, Op. 59 No. 9

Antonin Dvořák

Dr. Nathan Birkholz and Dr. Anthony Padilla, *pianists*

WELCOME

Dianne Droster

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

One: God calls us to a feast! The table is set!

All: Here we come from East and West from North and South to gather together at Christ's table of love!

One: God calls us to a a feast! The table is wide!

All: Here – for all! – compassion and grace, love and acceptance, belonging and tenderness are poured out like fine wine!

One: God call us to a feast! The table is open!

All: Here we come to share in the bread, to share our disappointments and hopes, our sorrows and our laughter, our stories and Your story.

One: God calls us to a feast! The table is set!

All: Come let us be the body of Christ together! Come let us worship God!

*OPENING HYMN #311

Let Us Break Bread Together

LET US BREAK BREAD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Dianne Droster

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 24: 28-35

Faye Binsfeld

SERMON *"Pass It On"*

Dianne Droster

* HYMN (see bulletin page 3)

It Only Takes a Spark

PASS IT ON

It Only Takes a Spark 484

If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John 4:11

PASS IT ON Irreg.

Kurt Kaiser, 1969

Kurt Kaiser, 1969

Unison

1. It on - ly takes a spark to get a fire go - ing,
2. What a won - drous time is spring when all the trees are bud - ding,
3. I wish for you, my friend, this hap - pi-ness that I've found,

And soon all those a-round can warm up in its glow-ing.
The birds be-gin to sing, the flow - ers start their bloom-ing,
You can de-pend on Him, it mat - ters not where you're bound.

That's how it is with God's love once you've ex-pe-ri-enced it;
That's how it is with God's love once you've ex-pe-ri-enced it;
I'll shout it from the moun-tain top— I want my world to know;

You spread His love to ev - ery one; You want to pass it on.
You want to sing, it's fresh like spring, You want to pass it on.
The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.

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EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

OFFERING

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

CALL TO THE OFFERING

(During this time, you are invited to a virtual offering. Please visit our webpage and click “Give” to make your weekly offering, or text FCUCC GIVE to 73256).

MUSICAL REFLECTION

The Fairy Garden from *My Mother Goose Suite*
Piano Duet

Maurice Ravel

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO THE TABLE

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

In the United Church of Christ, we practice “open” Communion. This table is open to all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God’s people. All are welcome.

Pastor Mary Jo: Dear friends, the Spirit of God gives life to the world!

All: Life that never ends!

Dianne: Here and now Christ feeds the world!

All: Plenty for all, enough for today!

Pastor Mary Jo: Come to the table of justice and joy.

**All: No one will be turned away! No neighbor in need will go wanting!
Let every creature on God’s good earth offer praise!**

Dianne: How right it is to praise you, gracious God, for in the beginning, when the world was fresh from your hand, you made us neighbors – one people in many kinds – and lavished on us pleasures too many to name or know! For you, we were a sheer delight. For each other, helpers and friends. You entrusted to us your justice and your joy, but we kept them for a few and denied them to many, creating worlds of poverty and pain. We broke each other’s hearts, but you did not reject us.

Pastor Mary Jo: In the fullness of time, you gave us Jesus, full of grace and truth. By his ministry of mercy, you restored us to each other and to you, mending our hearts and repairing the world. By his Spirit you impel us, even now, to be for each other what he is for us – pardon and peace, blessing and delight. For all your gifts, we thank you! With everything that lives under, on, and above the world, we give you glory, and we praise your name!

All: Holy, Holy, Holy, God of Love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the Highest!

Pastor Mary Jo: And now, O God, we remember Jesus. We remember that he forgave our sins.

All: He breathed on us the peace of God.

Dianne: We remember that he called us friends.

All: He taught us to love each other as he loved us.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

WORDS OF REMEMBERING

Dianne: We remember that he feasted with the poor and rich, with strangers and friends.

Pastor Mary Jo: We remember that on the night he was handed over, while at supper with his friends, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "Take and eat, all of you: This is my body, given for you." And when the supper was over, he took a cup filled with wine, gave thanks, and shared it with them, saying: "Take and drink, all of you: This is the seal of the new covenant, my poured-out life. I will drink this cup with you again at the table of God's joy in the New Day that is coming. Whenever you do these things, remember me."

Pastor Mary Jo: Come, Holy Spirit, bless this bread that the earth has given and human hands have made.

All: May it be for all the Bread of Life!

Pastor Mary Jo: Bless also this cup, fruit of the vine and work of human hands.

All: May it be for all the Cup of Peace!

Dianne: Bless us too, that by our eating and drinking we may have love for each other and be servants of Christ's peace.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Andante spianato

Frédéric Chopin

Dr. Anthony Padilla, *piano*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

Dianne: Let us give thanks.

All: We thank you, gracious God for gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die, for peace the world cannot give, for joy in the company of friends and neighbors, for the glory of creation, and for the mission of justice you have made our own. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #386

We Are One in the Spirit

ST. BRENDAN'S

BENEDICTION

Dianne Droster

POSTLUDE

Military March, Op. 51 No. 1

Franz Schubert

Piano Duet

TODAY'S MUSICIANS

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organist and pianist*

Dr. Anthony Padilla, *pianist*

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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Sunday, September 10, 2023, Worship Service

Scripture: Matthew 18:15-20 "The Message"

Sermon: "Need Some Help?"

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs, Preaching

Music: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organist*

Casey Kollman, *soprano*

Joys and Concerns of Our Faith Community

Members of our church family benefit from our prayers, support, and words of encouragement as they celebrate special times or struggle with difficulties in their lives.

Please keep these people in your prayers and greet them with a loving word when you see them.

Please call Pastor Mary Jo at 715-351-0450 or [email her](#) if you have a new joy or concern you would like us to pray for, as well as any questions and other assistance needed.

In cases of a pastoral emergency, please call 920-810-2600.

Jill Anthony, her sister & her nephew
 Katie Behl and her sister, Barbara
 Geraldine Benz
 The family of Gary Bowman as they grieve his passing
 Don Brittnacher
 Chris Brittnacher's brother, Steve Reinkober
 Dick Casperson
 Tim & Sheryl De Hart and their family as they grieve the loss of Sheryl's mother, Florence
 Beth Detienne's mother
 Jim Edwards
 Heidi Mendonca Erstad
 Erstad's family friend, Silas, and his family
 Beck Fritsche
 David Galow
 Art Gandler
 Esther Gehrt's sons, Steve and Ken
 Ken Geiger
 Margaret Hankwitz
 Judy Hanson
 JoAnn Helms
 Shirley Hoft
 Misty Hofman
 Nephew of Phil & Mary Hornseth, Eric Montross
 Jean Jepson

Ray Johnson
 Kathy Lannoye
 Nancy Kandler
 John Koeller, for recovery
 McClory family as their son Bobby recovers from surgery
 Helen McKean's daughter, Larri Jacquart
 Richard Miller's son-in law, Rick Kramer
 Stephen Otto's brother, Gerald
 Anne Planner's brother, Bill Planner
 Gretchen Revie
 Doug Robertson
 Larry Schiedermayer
 Frank and Pat Severin
 Mike Seymour's mom, Debbie
 Paul Siket
 Mark Spindler
 Debra Stoner
 Kinsley Tarr
 Gloria Tate
 Jack Thiel
 Peter Thiel
 James Totzke
 Jean Van Wagenin
 Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter, Mya
 Joe Wells
 Diane White

The Open Door Announcements

Land Covenant

The land now occupied by Appleton, Wisconsin and surrounding areas - including the current



site of First Congregational UCC - was the home, hunting, gathering, and farming land of the First Peoples of this territory: the Ho Chunk Nation and the Menominee Nation. Other tribes were forcibly re-located to this region by the actions of colonialism. Despite centuries of reprehensible treatment, the peoples of these sovereign nations are robust and enduring among us.

We are truly saddened by the genocide of their ancestors, the seizure of their lands, and the repression of their cultures and languages. We acknowledge that we benefit from the economic and social legacy left by settler colonialism.

We are grateful that many members of these original Nations have honorably served and defended the United States. We strive to honor their cultures and their insightful stewardship of this land and all creatures on it, recognizing our common interest in protecting its air, water, soils, and web of life for all future generations.

We commit ourselves through study and immersion experiences to learn the history and cultures of these peoples and their traditional knowledge.

Congregational Life

*Embracing God, welcoming others,
Knowing ourselves*

Join us on Rally Sunday! September 17

- Brunch following Worship (gluten and gluten-free brunch food, too)
- Karma's Mailbox will provide music
- It is a day of new beginnings: Children's Faith Formation, Music Program, Outreach Ministry Opportunities and Congregational Life programming
- Activity Guides will be available!

It's not just brunch! It's the day we rally to welcome back people who have been away (looking at you, Pastor Nick) and kick-off a new program year.

Pick up a new Activity Guide and find out how to plug in at First Congregational. The staff and lay leaders have been planning ways for us to learn, connect and serve. There will also be tours of the buildings at 11:15AM and 11:45AM. See the Music Room, the Theatre, the Science Room (did you know we had a Science Room?) In the Theatre there will be a loop playing videos about how we support some of our Outreach Partners. Be sure to check that out. And enjoy the brunch!



FCUCC Library Open House!

What's happening in the library? What's with all the free books in the Narthex? When will they be finished working on the library? Thanks for your patience as we've worked to refresh the library. Please join us on Sunday, September 10 for our Open House. Check out the updates and check out some books!

AND...Are you looking for a way to get involved at church and meet new people, but you really don't have much time? Come volunteer in the church library. We're looking for a few people to help to check books out of the library. It's Sunday mornings after church (10:30 - 11:15AM). Involves basic computer skills - we'll train you. Volunteer as often as you want - every Sunday or a few times a year. Training sessions will start in early September. For more information or to sign up, contact Mary Sullivan msullivan623@yahoo.com or 920-740-9452.

Worship and Music

*A diverse community practicing faith,
finding spiritual connection and experiencing
the Holy through artful sound.*

Fall Music Start Dates

Our fall program year begins soon, and all are welcome to be part of our ministry through music. Your registrations for Children and Youth can be completed with your CYF registration on-line. Adults can register via e-mail, phone, or in person to John Albrecht at

jalbrecht@firstcongoappleton.org or 920-851-8097.

Start dates for our core groups are:

- Sanctuary Choir - 9/13, 7:00PM
- LU Music Scholars - 9/13, 7:00PM;
First Sunday evening rehearsal on 9/17, 5:30PM
- Youth Handbells - 9/20, 5:45PM
- Children's Choir - 10/1, 10:45 - 11:30AM (Plans for a Spring Musical are in the works, too!)
- Church Family Handbells - 10/22, 10:30AM (Contact Beth Vercoouteren at 920-735-0741)

Thank you, Summer Musicians!

We have enjoyed a wide variety of music from our many volunteer and professional musicians throughout the summer. *Thank you, all!* Sharing their gifts have been: The Fox Valley Flute Choir, including church members Jann Kostecke and Barb Armstrong; Joel Jicha, *bass and composer/arranger*; Jesse Baumgart, *tenor*; Dave Cooley, *guitar and baritone*; Jill Hoover, *soprano*; Chris, Carmen and Ethan Danz, *piano, guitar, vocals*; Karma's Mailbox: Kristine Glenn, *vocals*, Shannon Glenn, *bass and vocals*, Steve Hirby, *banjo and vocals*, Tami Johnson, *12 string guitar and vocals*, Paul Nulton, *guitar and vocals*, John Aaholm, *percussion*, Phil Gabrielson, *harmonica*, joined by Nathan Birkholz, *piano*; Jon Peterson, *guest organist*; Heather Hallett, *soprano*; Shelley Nulton, *guest organist*; Dr Karen Leigh-Post, *mezzo soprano*; Ashleigh Kreider, *soprano*; John Aaholm,

percussion; 27 singers in our "All Call" Summer Choir; John Toussaint, *trumpet*; Noah Harmon, Zach Harmon, Fred Vepel, *jazz trio*; Hillary Reynolds, *vocals and piano*; Jen Kosloski and Meredith, Hazel & Veronica Plamann, *family treble ensemble*; Dr. Stephen Ackert, *guest organist*; Dr. Anthony Padilla, *pianist*; Casey Kollman, *soprano*. Special thanks to our organist, Dr. Nathan Birkholz, for his work as a collaborative pianist, and for sharing music coaching duties with me!

Blessings abound at First Congregational!
John Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

Mission and Service

Building relationships, serving others, pursuing justice

Time to Create a Nourishing Meal for Pillars Thursday, September 7, 2023



Check out the link to sign up!
[Pillars sign up link](#)

We will be making soup and grilled cheese sandwiches. It's a great way to

meet new people and enjoy the fellowship. For questions contact Shelley Nulton, snulton@att.net or 920-202-4419.

Children & Youth

Faith, fun, and service

Pause on Confirmation Class Offering

In determining current and long-term needs, it has been decided to NOT hold a Confirmation class this year. Many factors played into this decision, including the smaller class sizes coming up in the next couple of years. We have seven (7) incoming freshmen, two (2) incoming eighth graders and a dozen (12) incoming seventh graders who are consistently involved in CYF programming. Waiting to hold Confirmation until the 2024-2025 program year will combine this year's freshmen and eighth graders, allowing both groups to have a richer experience with more participants. Our current projected plan is to continue alternating years that Confirmation is offered. We would love if our numbers increased drastically, warranting yearly Confirmation classes, but at this time they do not. We will continue to assess data as well as listen to what our congregation desires.

Full articles and details on other church activities can be found in the September Wide - Open Door Newsletter

This Week's Schedule

Monday, September 4

Labor Day - church office closed

Tuesday, September 5

8:45 - 10:15AM

11:00 - 12:00PM

1:00 - 2:30PM

2:00 - 4:00PM

6:30 - 7:30PM

7:00 - 9:00PM

7:45 - 8:45PM

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

Staff Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

Chrysalis - *Upper Lounge*

Library Committee - *Library*

Living Sober AA Group - *Common Grounds*

Worship and Ministry Team - *Upper Lounge*

Fireside AA Group - *Common Grounds*

Wednesday, September 6

12:15 - 1:00PM

Loving Acceptance Meditation - *Upper Lounge*

Thursday, September 7

8:45 - 10:15AM

12:00 - 1:30PM

12:00 - 1:00PM

6:30 - 7:30PM

7:00 - 8:00PM

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

Theology Discussion Group - *Chefo's Pancake House*

AA - Search for Serenity Group - *Common Grounds*

Fellowship Team - *Upper Lounge*

Fox Valley AA - *Common Grounds*

Friday, September 8

1:30 - 3:00PM

1:30 - 2:30PM

7:00 - 8:30PM

Outreach Ministry/Congregational Life - *Upper Lounge*

Memorial Garden Scattering

Al-Anon - *Upper Lounge* / N.A - *Common Grounds*

Saturday, September 9

7:00 - 8:00PM

Fox Valley AA - *Common Grounds*

Sunday, September 10

9:00AM - 12:00PM

9:30 - 10:30AM

9:30 - 10:30AM

6:00 - 8:30PM

6:00 - 8:00PM

FCUCC Library Open House - *Library*

Childcare - *Childcare Room*

Sunday Worship - *Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge*

AL ANON - *Chapel / Alateen - Upper Lounge*

First Things First AA Meeting - *Commons Grounds*

