

First Congregational United Church of Christ

February 25, 2024



Welcome to The Church of the Open Door.

Our door is open to you at whatever point you are in your journey of faith.

TODAY AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC, APPLETON

9:25AM-12:00PM	Childcare – <i>Childcare Room</i>
9:30-10:30AM	Sunday Worship – <i>Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge</i>
9:30-10:30AM	Children's Ministry – <i>CYF Wing</i>
10:30-11:45AM	Children's Choir/Musical Rehearsal – <i>Choir Room, Sanctuary</i>
10:30-11:30AM	Youth Trip Q&A Session – <i>MS Youth Room</i>
10:45-11:45AM	Small Group for Parents – <i>HS Youth Room</i>
10:45AM-12:00PM	Lenten Study: Chapter 2 – <i>Upper Lounge</i>
4:15-5:15PM	LU Music Scholars' Rehearsal – <i>Choir Room, Sanctuary</i>
7:00-8:00PM	First Things First AA Meeting – <i>Fellowship Hall, Common Grounds</i>
7:00-8:00PM	AL ANON – <i>Chapel / Alateen – Upper Lounge</i>

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 for ALL infants and toddlers. Please see an usher for directions to the Childcare Room.

Communion: The sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. Communion elements are gluten free. 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 Leigh Grube.

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

Online Streaming and Podcasting are available on [Facebook: FCUCCAppleton](#) or [Youtube: First Congregational UCC Appleton](#).

Open Door Announcements can be shared by emailing opendoor@uccappleton.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.

Sunday School: Our PreK - 5th graders begin in worship. After the children's message, they walk together to the CYF wing for our Children's Ministry Program. Youth gather on Wednesday evenings.



THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 25, 2024 9:30 AM
Second Sunday in Lent

PRELUDE

Leoni (The God of Abraham Praise)

Hebrew tune adapted by Meyer Lyon
Setting by Richard Proulx (1937-2010)

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

Return to Me (Based on Joel 2:12-13)

Richard Proulx

Sanctuary Choir

**Please Rise in Body or Spirit*

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (in unison)

One: Gather together to worship God!

All: We gather to reunite with God's purposes.

One: Gather together to walk with Christ!

All: We gather to make our way to the cross.

One: Gather together as disciples committed to a hope-filled life!

All: We gather to live in the richness of faithful community and praise The One who love us all!

***OPENING HYMN #2**

The God of Abraham Praise

LEONI

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(During the sermon, the prayer request cards will be collected. After the Children's Sermon, the children will follow their teachers to the CYF building.)

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 8:31-38

Dave Frederick

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my

sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

SERMON *“The Bridge of the Cross”*

Pastor Nick Hatch

*HYMN #43

Christians, Lift Up Your Hearts

SALVE FESTA DIES

Refrains: All
St. 1 & 2: Choir
St. 3 & 4: All

OFFERING

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

It Is Well with My Soul (When Peace Like a River)

VILLE DU HAVRE

Text by H. Spafford; Tune by P. Bliss
Arr. Rene Clausen (b. 1953)

This late 19th century hymn was born out of tragedy, after the author lost his four young daughters in a transatlantic ocean liner accident. He was inspired to offer these words of hope (even “when sorrows like sea billows roll”) set to music by a family friend. The tune is named after the ship on which the daughters had travelled.

Sanctuary Choir

*DOXOLOGY

All: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

(You are welcome to submit your prayer requests throughout the week to the church office, or email to a pastor for confidentiality.)

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us pray.

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.**

*CLOSING HYMN (see bulletin pages 5 & 6)

Standing on the Promises

PROMISES

*BENEDICTION in Unison

One: You walk with us, God of Strength;

All: You are steadfast in your love and grace.

One: You bear our burdens with us;

All: You call forth the best of our being. We give you thanks and praise for the gift of your presence on the journey to Jerusalem.

POSTLUDE

Salve festa dies (Christians, Lift Up Your Hearts) Tune by Ralph Vaughan Williams
Setting by Dave Mackie

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*

THANK YOU TO TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Nicholas J. Hatch

Pastor Mary Jo Laabs

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*

Sanctuary Choir

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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Standing on the Promises



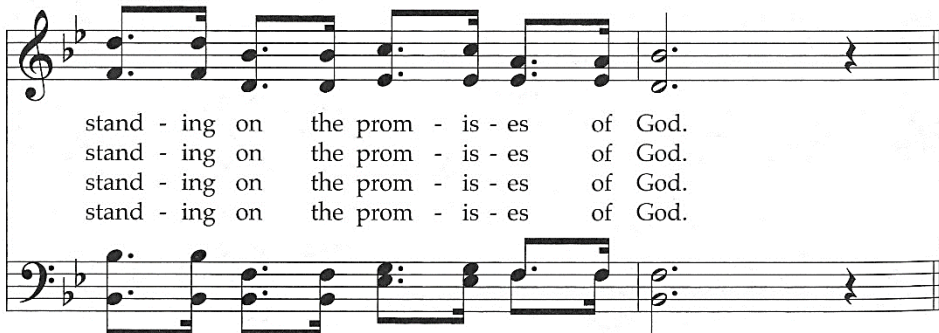
1 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ my king,
2 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail,
3 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ the Lord,
4 Stand - ing on the prom - is - es I can - not fall,



through e - ter - nal a - ges let his prais - es ring;
when the howl - ing storms of doubt and fear as - sail,
bound to him e - ter - nal - ly by love's strong cord,
lis - tening ev - ery mo - ment to the Spir - it's call,



glo - ry in the high - est, I will shout and sing,
by the liv - ing Word of God I shall pre - vail,
o - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,
rest - ing in my Sav - ior as my all in all,



stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Refrain

Stand - ing, stand - ing,
stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God my Sav - ior;

stand - ing, stand - ing,
stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

I'm stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY LOCATIONS FOR TODAY

Upstairs, to the left	Upstairs, to the right	Downstairs
Childcare Room Infants & Toddlers	Nursery	Little Angel's Room Preschoolers
Theater 2nd/3rd Graders	Art Kitchen 4th/5th Graders	Science Room
Scripture Tent K/1st Graders		Middle School Room

USHER TEAMS & AUDIO & VIDEO

FEBRUARY USHERS: TEAM 1 Dennis Korth, Gale Korth, Kim Hanson, Dale Hanson, Jim Thaldorf, Carol Valeri, Sue Wisneski, Logan LaViolette, Luke LaViolette
 MARCH USHERS: TEAM 5
 AUDIO & VIDEO: Tim Hanna, Rod Reynolds, Matt Feuerhelm

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

"Whose House" Pastor Mary Jo Laabs John 2:13-22
 Musicians: Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organ*; Sanctuary Choir

ON THE CALENDAR

Sunday, March 24	9:30AM	Palm Sunday Worship & Children's Ministry
	10:30AM	Annual Youth-Led Pancake Brunch
	Easter Lily Delivery to Church Members on your way home	
Thursday, March 28	7:00PM	Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service with Communion
Sunday, March 31	8:45AM & 10:30AM	Easter Sunday Worship - No Children's Ministry on Easter - Easter Egg Hunt between services

WORSHIP NOTES (space for your personal notes/thoughts)

Joys and Concerns of Our Faith Community

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

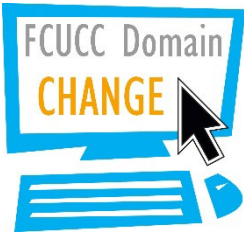
Please call the church office if you have a prayer request: 920-733-7393

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

Sue Ahrens	Jean Jepson
Bruce Anderson	Kathy Lannoye
David Andrus & Family	Nancy Kandler
Jill Anthony, her sister & her nephew	Helen McKean's daughter, Larri Jacquart
Katie Behl and her sister, Barbara	Richard Miller's son-in law, Rick Kramer
Don Brittnacher	Our friends in Kerio Valley, Kenya
Chris Brittnacher's brother, Steve Reinkober	Stephen Otto's brother, Gerald
Karen Crawford's niece, Lori	Gretchen Revie
Beth Detienne's mother	Larry Schiedermayer
Erstad's family friend, Silas, and his family	Frank and Pat Severin
The family of Dottie Hawley as they grieve her passing into eternal life.	Mike Seymour's mom, Debbie
David Galow	Kinsley Tarr
Art Gandler	Gloria Tate
Ken Geiger	Jack Thiel
Margaret Hankwitz	Peter Thiel
Judy Hanson	James Totzke
JoAnn Helms	Jean Van Wagenin
Shirley Hoft	Brian and Lecia Wardle's daughter, Mya
Misty Hofman	Diane White
Joan Jenson's son, John	Those living with mental illnesses.

The Open Door Announcements

For more information on these announcements and other events, please visit our website, weekly e-newsletters, and social media.



Domain Update: We have officially changed our domain name and website address from firstcongoappleton.org to **uccappleton.org**
All church employee emails now end in @uccappleton.org (no longer end in @firstcongoappleton.org)

The Small Group for Parents is using a new format in which we go through discussion questions related to the Scripture reading from the Sunday service (no prep required!)! The group meets in the High School Room every Sunday from 10:45-11:30AM. Feel free to join at any point – we’d love to have you! Come as you are able and get to know other parents in the church. For parents with kids participating in the Children’s Musical/Children’s Choir, we meet during rehearsals. For all other kids, CHILDCARE IS AVAILABLE in the childcare room. Any questions, contact Jackie Burton at burton.jackiem@gmail.com.

Cabin Fever Craft Circle ~ Ladies! Come Craft with Us! Saturday, **March 2**, 1:00-5:00PM in the FCUCC Upper Lounge.

- Bring whatever project you’re working on!
- Feel free to bring a snack to share!
- Come join us for fellowship & fun!
- No need to register – Just come on out!
- Let’s get CRAFTY!

Questions? Email Debra at dawest@centurytel.net

Membership Exploration Gathering: Are you new to First Congregational and want to learn more about our faith community? Would you like to find a place to ask your questions of faith and call your faith home? Then join Pastor Katherine and Pastor Nick after worship Sunday, **May 5**, 2023 (11:00AM-12:00PM) in the Upper Lounge. We’ll be talking about our journeys of faith. We will share about this church, our theology, and get to know one another. We hope to listen to the story of your spiritual journey and the questions that have guided you to seek new answers. Please RSVP for the new Membership Exploration Gathering by signing up on the sheet in the narthex or by contacting the front office at info@uccappleton.org. New members will be introduced in worship on Sunday, May 19.

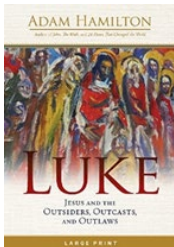
First Wednesday Dinners: Join us on Wednesday, **March 6** for our next monthly meal in the Fellowship Hall. Serving is from 6:00-6:30PM. EVERYONE is welcome for these meals. You don't have to be involved in Wednesday night activities. There is no advance registration. There is no cost -- though a free will offering is very much appreciated. The schedule and menu through spring is:

March 6 - Lentil soup and bread

April 3 - The return of "Hot Dogs on the Run"

May 1 - Salad Extravaganza

Mark your calendars! See you there!



Lent Book Study: The Adult Education committee invites you to a book study: *"Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts and Outlaws,"* by Adam Hamilton. **Sundays during Lent from 10:45AM -12:00PM** and running through March 24 in the FCUCC Upper Lounge and Zoom. (One chapter per meeting.) Mary Jo Dees and Pastor Mary Jo will lead the discussion. **"Used" Books are \$8.50.** Sign up in the church office.

WISDOM and Partners Host End the Lockdowns Community Forum in Green Bay: on Thursday, **March 7, 2024**, from 6:00-8:00PM at St. Norbert College (Mulva Library) 400

3rd Street, De Pere, WI 54115. Join us to meet Green Bay elected officials, learn about WISDOM's End the Lockdowns Campaign and provide input on transformational justice priorities in Wisconsin. This event follows successful events in Milwaukee and Madison with elected officials.



WISDOM's **End the Lockdowns Campaign** seeks to:

- Raise awareness on the detrimental effects of lockdowns to people who are incarcerated in Wisconsin's prisons and their loved ones.
- Build grassroots support urging Governor Tony Evers to use his authority to take action.



The campaign aims to close prisons, reduce the prison population, and reinvest spending into community resources that decrease crime and strengthen communities.

Register to attend the event in advance at:

<https://bit.ly/greenbayendthelockdowns>. If you would like to

participate in **car-pooling** from the Fox Cities to attend this event, please leave a message at **<https://esther-foxvalley.org/tjtf>.**

For inquiries about the event, you can email WISDOM Transformational Justice Campaign Coordinator Mark Rice at **ricemark@gmail.com.**



NOAAH's Needs:

1. A mother who has no job/housing needs clothing and diapers for her 3-month-old.
2. A developmentally disabled 14-year-old Native American child has been in care for 64 months and is currently placed out of state away from her parents. She is asking for a reborn/realistic baby doll but hasn't specified what she would like the baby to look like. You can find the doll on Amazon (Babeside).
3. Men's clothing is needed. Sizes: jacket/tops: 5-6XL; shoes: 15 wide; pants/sweatpants: 3XL. A gift card would be appropriate, so he can go out with his home consultant.
4. New couch, bed sheets for a queen-size bed, and a coffee table.
5. A family needs a dresser.
6. And still requesting \$350 for driving school.
7. There are numerous families living in one household. The family is low income and has had a lot of moving due to family loss. They are trying to get re-established and get their own place and are looking for two queen bedframes with mattresses.

Please contact Barb Mincheff at 920-832-5515 for pickup/delivery. Thank you, Sue Ahrens.

Update from the Kenya Travelers: While in Kenya two weeks ago, we met Brian, his mom and dad. Brian has completed his chemo, and his hair is slowly growing back. He will have follow-up appointments throughout this year. He had a brief setback in January with stomach issues. When we met him at school, he had a huge smile and was very happy to be back at school! Mildred talked with his head teacher and health staff at his school, coordinating special foods for Brian as he regains strength and immunity. His dad and mom traveled many hours to meet us and share their thanks for funding Brian's chemo treatments. It was an emotional day of hugs and tears. We share their thanks, spoken from the heart - your gifts to pay for chemotherapy saved Brian's life. It has impacted not only Brian and his family but the whole community. Please continue to pray for Brian. Bwana asifiwe! Praise God!



Brian Chirchir Kiptoo



Thank you for supporting our youth fundraiser (for their Youth Mission Trip in July) by purchasing Kwik Trip cards for car washes, groceries, and gas! Available in the narthex after worship. Every card purchase helps!



Women's Retreat Update & Announcing the Date of the Women's 2024 Fall Retreat-September 27-29, 2024 at Moon Beach Camp!

FCUCC has held weekend women's retreats for over 25 years. We have 25-30 women attending at Moon Beach or Daycholah Center. Several women decided to review how important these retreats are to women and to the church and what format they suggest for the future. A survey was sent to women who have been at a retreat. They said the weekend retreats are personally very important. They provide a downtime, spiritual experience, and they love being in nature. They find it a safe place to express opinions and concerns in one on one and in small and large groups. They feel the retreats are important in the life of the church. Women get to know others better and have learned more about church life and have become more involved in volunteering and educational classes.

We asked what format they preferred and where to hold the retreats. Yearly they prefer one weekend retreat at a church camp in a similar format. They were not interested in having two per year. The camp facilities and food are good and the cost of under \$200 is reasonable. Many prefer Moon Beach Camp in St. Germain over Daycholah Center in Green Lake as they have a heartfelt personal connection to the camp. Others prefer Daycholah Center as it is much closer.

We asked how they feel about adding a yearly one-day retreat at the church. They feel it should have a different format, suggesting it be a learning experience with a fun atmosphere. They hope other women would attend as it is a shorter time commitment and less expensive. We did hold a day retreat on Saturday, February 10, 2024 and it was well received and attended by over 40 women. We recommend repeating this in future years.

Mark your calendar- this fall's retreat will be September 27-29, 2024, at Moon Beach. There should be better weather than in late October. We feel lucky to have this weekend as most are reserved by groups on a yearly recurring basis. In the future we can look into going to Daycholah Center some years if the camps could allow us to keep the same date. (Cedar Valley Camp near West Bend will not accommodate our large group in the format of our retreats. It is also more expensive.)





Great Lakes Regional UCC Youth Event

at Augustana College in IL, July 16-20, with a bonding adventure the day before and after with just FCUCC youth.

Staying in dorm rooms, we'll worship, work (service projects on site), and wonder with youth from the neighboring states.

Chaperones needed!

Voluntary Parent Q&A Session: Sunday, February 25 in-person in the CYF Theater, or via Zoom. Email Sarah questions any other time, too!

Grades Incoming 9th - Outgoing 12th
7 & 8th Grade IF there's enough interest to bring a middle school group.

Bring friends from outside our church!

Max cost of \$350 per youth.

Initial Commitment Form will be available shortly and is due by April 1.



Easter Flowers Donation Form

Donations support this special season's display, and help fund the sanctuary flowers throughout the year.

Your Name _____

Amount _____ (\$25 suggested)

Please word the following as you would like it to appear in the Easter bulletin:

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

In celebration of _____

Drop this form in the offering plate or return it to the church office by Monday, March 18, 2024.

Make checks out to FCUCC and in the memo field write "Easter Flowers."

This Week's Schedule

Monday, February 26

6:30-8:30PM

Fox Valley Flute Choir - *Sanctuary*

Tuesday, February 27

9:00-10:00AM

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

11:00AM-12:00PM

Staff Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

6:00-7:30PM

Council Meeting - *Upper Lounge*

6:30-7:30PM

Living Sober AA Group - *Common Grounds*

7:45-8:45PM

Fireside AA Group - *Common Grounds*

Wednesday, February 28

12:15-1:00PM

Loving Acceptance Meditation Group - *Upper Lounge*

5:30-8:30PM

Childcare - *Childcare Room*

5:45-6:25PM

Youth Handbells - *Amistad Room*

6:30-7:30PM

MS Youth Group - *MS Youth Room*

6:30-7:30PM

HS Youth Group Hang Out with a Purpose - *HS Youth Room*

6:30-7:30PM

Bible Study of Romans: Part 2, Lesson 2 - *Zoom only*

7:00-8:30PM

Sanctuary Choir - *Sanctuary, Choir Room*

7:30-8:30PM

Youth Trip Leadership Team - *HS Youth Room*

Thursday, February 29

9:00-10:00AM

Strong Bodies - *Fellowship Hall*

12:00-1:00PM

AA - Search for Serenity Group - *Common Grounds*

7:00-8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA - *Common Grounds*

Friday, March 1

7:00-8:00PM

Al-Anon - *Upper Lounge*

7:00-8:30PM

N.A - *Common Grounds*

Saturday, March 2

1:00-5:00PM

Cabin Fever Craft Circle - *Upper Lounge*

7:00-8:00PM

Fox Valley 94 AA - *Common Grounds*

Sunday, March 3

9:25AM-12:00PM

Childcare - *Childcare Room*

9:30-10:30AM

Sunday Worship with Communion - *Chapel, Sanctuary, Upper Lounge*

9:30-10:30AM

Children's Ministry - *CYF Wing*

10:30-11:45AM

Children's Choir/Musical Rehearsal - *Choir Room*

10:30-11:00AM

Kwik Trip Fundraising - *Narthex*

10:45-11:45AM

Small Group for Parents - *CYF High School Room*

10:45AM-12:00PM

Lenten Study: Chapter 3 - *Upper Lounge*

6:00-8:00PM

First Things First AA Meeting - *Fellowship Hall, Common Grounds*

7:00-8:00PM

AL ANON - *Chapel / Alateen - Upper Lounge*

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, soil, 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.



We are "The Church of the Open Door," a welcoming and inclusive Christian community.
No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.



—The Church of the Open Door—

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

724 E. South River Street | Appleton, WI 54915

920.733.7393 | uccappleton.org

Office hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00AM – 3:00PM