



# THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## United Church of Christ

### June 2026



#### SABBATICAL NEWS AND MORE

Friends in Christ—

During the month of June, I will be taking the third of three one month “mini-sabbaticals.” I will be using this month to continue some writing about preaching that I began two years ago. The vital ministry and mission that we all have at Congregational UCC means that I have little time for such writing during the rest of the year. So I appreciate this opportunity.

The summer months always bring a change of pace. This month, we will hold and take part in some traditional June activities. We’re not really slowing down and there are many chances to enjoy the good things that June offers us as we worship and work and play together.

On June 14, we will begin our observance of Pride Week. You’ll be able to preview plans, posters, tee shirts, signs and giveaways that will be part of the Congregational United Church of Christ of Iowa City parade vehicle and booth. There will be special refreshments in keeping with the Pride theme. Then we’ll join with others in the Pride Parade and Festival on Saturday, June 20.

In the afternoon of June 28, we’ll gather in City Park for our annual church picnic. This is a relaxed, beginning-of-summer event that brings people of all ages together for conversation, laughter, and, of course, food. Bring games, bring musical instruments, bring your friends, and we’ll have a great time.

I’ll be back at the church on July 1, and on Sunday, July 5, we’ll mark our nation’s semiquincentennial and the end of the Iowa City Jazz Festival with a jazz worship service as our friends from the Dick Watson Quartet join us to provide the music.

A month with many opportunities is here! I look forward to moving through it with everyone.

Peace,

Bill

#### SABBATICAL GUEST PREACHERS

While Bill is on sabbatical in June, four guest ministers fill the pulpit on Sunday mornings. They will provide a mix of familiar and new voices. Worship with us in June for a month of inspiring preaching.

June 7	The Rev. Libby Conley
June 14	The Rev. Bruce Williams
June 21	The Rev. Bob Molsberry
June 28	The Rev. Mary Hubard





# Church School

**“You are the light of the world.”  
Matthew 5:14**

## May 3 Sunday School

May was an especially busy month for our Church school families. We were delighted to see our friends in between recitals, end of year concerts and the beginning of softball/camping season. On the Sunday pictured, we were inspired by the Sermon On the Mount and discussed our calling as the “light of the world” and the kind of lasting impressions we can make by our actions. In our interactions with others, we strive to be welcoming, kind and helpful. We concluded our time together by making cyanotypes. We placed small objects from nature on pretreated light-sensitive fabric and exposed them to sunlight. The objects left a lasting impression, creating a beautiful artifact to remind us that small acts can leave a lasting impression.

**Sunday, June 7**  
Nursery 10:00-11:30

**Sunday, June 14**  
Nursery 10:00-11:30

**Saturday, June 20 Pride Parade & Booth**  
**Sunday, June 21 Father’s Day**  
Nursery 10:00-11:30

**Sunday, June 28**  
Nursery 10:00-11:30  
**Church Picnic @City Park 4-7 PM**

*There will be no formal Sunday School or Children’s Church this summer break during worship. Nursery care will be available each Sunday and Hope or Rachel will be available for impromptu art & music.*

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Vacation Bible School Monday-  
Wednesday August 17-19 5-8 PM**

# Thank you

Thank you so much to those who provided breakfast for Church School throughout the year. It was always a wonderful, welcoming surprise for all of our students & teachers!



A HUGE heartfelt thank you to our volunteer Sunday School teachers who faithfully & enthusiastically serve our children: Tina Koepnick, Sally Strang, Bea Hicks, Virginia Simone and Nadia Spragg.

We couldn’t do it without you!

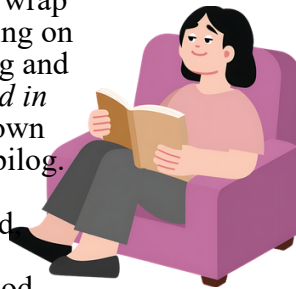
# CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



**SUNDAY, JUNE 7 —  
STREETS CLOSED DURING IOWA ARTS FESTIVAL**  
Spring and summer bring great festivals to Iowa City—and close off some of the streets! Sunday, June 7, is the final day of the Iowa Arts Festival. Clinton, Dubuque, and Linn Streets will be closed between College and Jefferson Streets. Access to the church will be available from Jefferson Street and from Clinton Street coming from the north. Join us for worship at 10:15 a.m., but plan on a slightly longer walk.

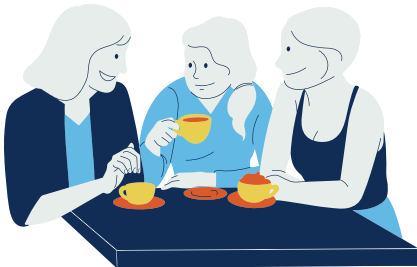
## **WOMEN'S READING GROUP— FINAL SPRING SESSION, JUNE 13**

The Women's Reading Group will wrap up for the spring with a final meeting on Saturday, June 13. They are reading and discussing *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* by Barbara Brown Taylor, Chapters 11, 12, and the Epilog. They will meet from 10-11 am in Rockwood Hall. If you're interested contact Marsha Lowe or Rebecca Weatherford or sign-up in Rockwood Hall.



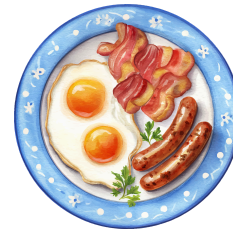
## **SALAD POTLUCK-- JUNE 13**

You are all invited to a potluck salad lunch on Saturday, June 13th at 11:15 am in Rockwood Hall. Bring a salad; bring a friend. Placesettings, rolls and beverages will be provided. Come join us for this fellowship time. No RSVP needed. Questions? Contact Marsha Lowe or Rebecca Weatherford.



## **WOMEN'S LUNCH-JUNE 18**

On June 18th, at 11:45 am, women's lunch will meet at, Monica's. Please call or Text Martha Ann Crawford at 319-855-8340 to reserve a seat at the table.



## **MEN'S BREAKFAST—JUNE 20**

The May Men's Breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 20th, at the Waterfront Hy-Vee. All Congregational UCC men who eat breakfast are invited. This is a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. Join us!

**We need your help! The Mission Board LGBTQ+ Subcommittee is looking for someone with a pickup truck or van to transport materials to and from our Ped Mall church booth on Saturday, June 20 for the Iowa City Pride Festival.**

The vehicle is needed from 9:00-10:00 a.m. to transport materials from the church to our downtown booth, and from 4:00-5:00 p.m. to return everything to the church for unloading. If you are interested, the truck driver is also welcome to drive the parade route with us and carry passengers in the back! If you or any friends with a truck or van can help us, please contact Rebecca Weatherford or Julie Wittig.

Thank you.



## CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MISSION BOARD MEMBERS INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE WITH THEM AND OTHER CHURCH MEMBERS AT THE IOWA CITY PRIDE FESTIVAL EVENTS ON SATURDAY, JUNE 20.

Join members of the Mission Board in the Pride Parade at noon and/or at our Pride Booth on the Ped Mall from noon to 4 p.m. Last year, more than 40 members of the congregation, including friends and family, participated and enjoyed the celebration. This year, we welcome everyone to join us as we proudly show love and support for our LGBTQ+ community. We also celebrate the historic inclusive commitment of our denomination and congregation, where all are welcome. Sign-up sheets for parade participants and booth volunteers are posted in Rockwood Hall. More details will be shared closer to June 20. For more information, please reach out to any member of the Mission Board LGBTQ+ Subcommittee: Dianne Atkins, Martha Ann Crawford, Carson Fixmer, Dean Logan, Linda Muston, Hope Spragg, Rebecca Weatherford or Julie Wittig.



### SPRING SPECIAL MUSIC SUNDAY--MAY 31ST

Eighteen musicians joined our choir on May 31st to present Gabriel Faure's Requiem. It was the final Special Music Sunday performance for Dr. Christopher Nakielski, our Music Director, who will be leaving us after serving the church for two three-year periods. The Bloesch Music Fund allowed him the extra funding to provide the appropriate chamber music ensemble to present this wonderful performance of a much-loved sacred music work. The Bloesch Fund was established in 1991 in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of Dr. Richard Bloesch, who then conducted the choir for an additional twenty years. Continued donations to the Fund from church members and others allow us to supplement our annual music budget when hiring musicians for our Special Music Sundays. Our current Music Director, with oversight from the Music Committee, may call upon the Bloesch fund for \$1,200 to \$1,500 annually.

*Thank You*

## CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ALL CHURCH PICNIC—SUNDAY, JUNE 28

Summer is here and it's time for the Church Picnic. Bring your family, bring your friends, and join us on Sunday, June 28, at Shelter 6 in Lower City Park from 4-7 p.m. This is a different shelter than we have used in recent years. It is near the entrance to lower City Park, just past the Riverside Stage. Restrooms and parking are near the shelter. Our Membership Board will provide drinks and dessert. Please bring a dish to share and your own plates and tableware. You're welcome to bring games and play equipment, musical instruments, lawn chairs, and anything else that will make for a happy gathering. And if you have a UCC Pride T-shirt, the Membership Board invites you to wear it!



AND WHILE YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT  
FOOD: SAVE THE DATE FOR THE  
PROGRESSIVE DINNER, Saturday, October 17.

# CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO THE STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING ON PENTECOST SUNDAY—MAY 24.

We received over \$1,000.00. The “Strengthen the Church” offering grows the United Church of Christ’s future by supporting new and renewing churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership development—especially among women and people of color. It also funds the “Stillspeaking” Ministry, spreading the message of God’s extravagant welcome, reaching out especially to those who have felt there is no room for them within Christianity and the church. Your generous gifts will help the UCC create vibrant church communities of extravagant welcome.



*Thank you!*

## GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR

Nametags help newer members and friends trying to put names and faces together. And—admit it—they help long-timers know who the new people are as well. They are available on the board outside of the sanctuary. Please wear them. And if you’d like one, please contact the church office.



## VISITATION COMMITTEE

The Membership Board is forming a group of volunteers who would be willing to occasionally contact/visit church members who are homebound or would enjoy a visit. If you are interested see the sign-up sheet in Rockwood Hall.

## HOPE LODGE

Thanks to those who helped with the May Hope Lodge dinner: Dianne Atkins and Andy Bertolatus, Rebecca Weatherford, Sally Strang, Jane Kinney, Linda Muston, Chuck and Sue Dayton. Our next Hope Lodge dinner will be July 13th.

The American Cancer Society Hope Lodge, which opened in 2008, offers 28 guest rooms located near treatment centers in the area. The program provides a free home away from home for cancer patients and their caregivers. More than just a roof over their heads, it’s a nurturing community that helps patients access the care they need. Each Hope Lodge community offers a supportive, homelike environment where guests can share a meal, join in the evening’s activities, or unwind in their own private room. Patients staying at a Hope Lodge must be in active cancer treatment.



# CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



## CONFIRMATION 2026

In a joyful worship service on Sunday, May 17, we confirmed three youth and welcomed them into full membership in our congregation. They are Renn Morton, Peter Spragg, and Lily Lewis.

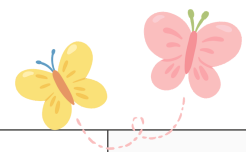


## CONGREGATIONAL UCC HOSTS RAINBOW GRADUATION FOR SECOND TIME

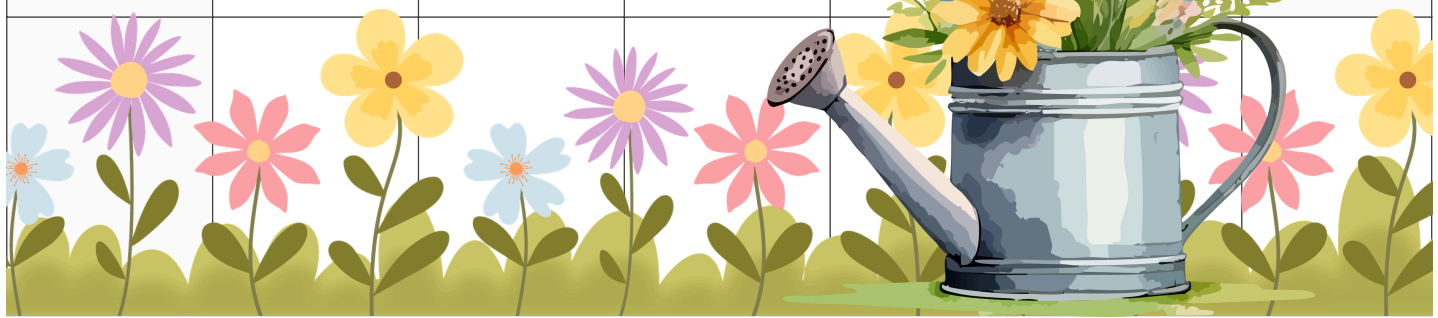
The Mission Board LGBTQ+ Subcommittee once again hosted the Pride Alliance Center Rainbow Graduation Celebration at the church on May 1. The University of Iowa previously sponsored this event, but had to eliminate official support and recognition to be in compliance with state law restricting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts in education. This year's ceremony honored 13 graduates in the sanctuary, followed by a reception in Rockwood Hall. Many members generously provided refreshments for the reception and attended the graduation to support the Rainbow Graduates. It was a joyous day for all involved. Thank you to everyone who helped welcome and support the graduates, their friends and their families.



# JUNE 2026



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>DEACON OF THE MONTH:</b> <b>Erin Brown</b>	1	2 Yoga 11:00 am Mission 7:00 pm	3	4 Prairie Piffari 6:30 PM	5	6
	7 9:00 Choir 9:15 Church School for Children & Youth 10:15 Worship	8	9 Yoga 11:00 am	10	11 Prairie Piffari 6:30 PM	12
14 10:15 Worship	15	16 Yoga 11:00 am Membership 5:30 pm Trustees 7:00pm	17	18 Women's Lunch@ Monica's 11:45 am Prairie Piffari 6:30 PM	19  Church Office Closed	20 Men's Breakfast 8 AM Pride Parade Noon
21 10:15 Worship	22 Please submit items for the July Newsletter by Today	23 Yoga 11:00 am	24	25 Prairie Piffari 6:30 PM	26	27
28 10:15 Worship Church Picnic	29 Serving Free Lunch	30 Yoga 11:00 am				



## CHURCH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CELEBRATING JUNE BIRTHDAYS

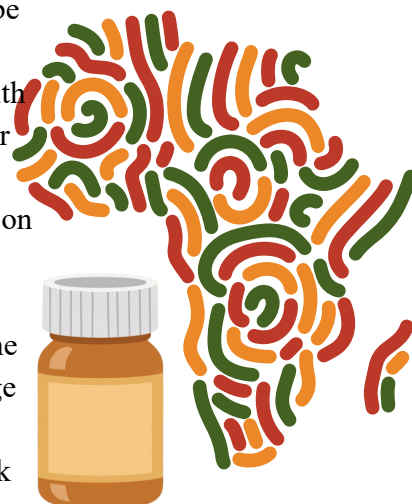


**Please submit items for the July Newsletter by July 22nd.~**

#### **SENDING USED MEDICINE BOTTLES TO AFRICA FOR REUSE IN CLINICS—IMPORTANT REQUEST**

1. Please donate only orange bottles; other colors should be recycled. Caps can be any color.
2. Bottles must have labels and all adhesive removed. Sticky bottles or bottles with residue should be recycled. I can't use them. If this is difficult for you, consider finding a partner who can help you prep the bottles.
3. Bottles should be washed in warm, soapy water. We don't want to inflict harm on individuals who could come into contact with foreign medicine.

100 Grannies, a local environmental activist group, is sending used plastic medicine bottles to Africa to assist clinics in distributing medication. Donna Hirst is in charge of this project and would be pleased to have participation from members of our congregation. For more information contact [donna-hirst@uiowa.edu](mailto:donna-hirst@uiowa.edu). She will pick up bottles on Sundays. Thank you for your assistance.



**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
30 North Clinton Street  
Iowa City, Iowa 52245-1700**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**June 2026  
NEWSLETTER**



### **CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION**

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Phone: 319-337-4301

Visit our Web Site: [www.uccic.org](http://www.uccic.org)

**Pastor: The Rev. William Lovin**

Director of CE: Hope Spragg

Music Director: Dr. Chris Nakielski

Organist: Bill Crouch

Children's Choir Director: Rachel Burchett

Office Manager: Nancy LeaVesseur

Financial Manager: Sharyn Huriaux Reitz

Sexton: Douglas Herrera

Custodian: Claudia Landaverde

**[uccirev@uccic.org](mailto:uccirev@uccic.org)**

[hope.spragg@gmail.com](mailto:hope.spragg@gmail.com)

[c.nakielski@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:c.nakielski@cornellcollege.edu)

Contact the Office

[rburchett.mtbc@gmail.com](mailto:rburchett.mtbc@gmail.com)

[uccicadmin@uccic.org](mailto:uccicadmin@uccic.org)

[sharynreitz@gmail.com](mailto:sharynreitz@gmail.com)

Contact the Office

Contact the Office

For up to date announcements, check us out on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UCCofIC>