

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
420 Wilson Ave.
Menomonie, WI 54751
(715) 235-5838

e-mail: office@menomonieucc.org
website: menomonieucc.org

The Bell

July-August 2026



July Activities

Sunday Services: July: 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th

8:30am Contemplative Service

10am Traditional Service (in-person & livestream)

Tuesdays, July 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th

5:30-8pm Revival Roundtable, FH

Friday, July 10th

Carpet Cleaning, no church access

Tuesday, July 14th

4pm Executive Committee, R1

Wednesday, July 15th

9-11am Thursday's Table Meeting, R1

August Activities

Sunday Services: August: 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th

8:30am Contemplative Service (no on August 9th)

10am Traditional Service (in-person & livestream)

Sunday, August 9th, Outdoor Worship

10am Wilson Park; Potluck to follow

Tuesday, August 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th

5:30-8pm Revival Roundtable, FH

Tuesday, August 11th

4pm Executive Committee, R1

Wednesday August 12th – Friday, August 14th

1-4pm Kids Camp

Thursday, August 13th

10am Mission for Peace and Justice, R1

Thursday, August 20th

6pm Council meeting, R1

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9:00am-2:00pm; Friday – closed

Thursday's Table:

Community take-out meal each Thursday 5-6:00pm

Community Meetings:

AA Meetings, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 6:30am

Al-Anon Meetings, Mondays, 6:00pm

NA Meetings, Tuesdays, 7:00pm; Fridays, 7:15pm

LINK TO THE FULL CHURCH CALENDAR

<https://www.menomonieucc.org/monthlycalendar>

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Beloved Children of God:

Summer is here! Officially and in many other ways! According to every calendar in the Northern Hemisphere, it's summer. We recently had the day with the most amount of sunlight. While temperatures were very hot and sticky for a bit, this most recent summer weather has been quite delightful.

"Holy Welcome" is this Sunday's worship theme, which is quite fitting as the Walldogs artists are traveling from near and far to descend upon Menomonie. Between 200-300 artists will participate with "Murals in Menomonie: A Brush with History" and paint 15 murals for the city and surrounding Dunn County area.

Our church will be the "host hub" for the meals, while also serving two ourselves. This is an opportunity to extend an extravagant welcome to all who walk through our doors, artists and volunteers alike. **THANK YOU** for helping make this possible! And go and check out the activities, artists at work, and all the excitement that the Walldogs will bring!

After this week, summer will slow down a bit, right?!?! The Pie Social was June 16 and was another huge success thanks to so many. The outdoor service at Wilson Park will be Sunday, August 9. Summer Kids Camp is August 12-14.

In a world that seems anything but slow, it's up to us to find and make time to "smell the roses" or "seize the day" or "be still and know that I am God." Go for a walk, sit and do nothing, listen to the silence, or enjoy what or who is in front of you.

And, for myself and for many that feels out of sorts with a world that continually seems to put profits over people, we continue the resistance work that Jesus first shown and taught so long, long ago. This will look different for each of us, but this prayer is for us all.

Prayer of Resistance

May the spaces we inhabit be a sanctuary for all, places where we lay down pretense and practice honesty. May the life we lead draw us closer to the heart of God and nearer to the truth of who we are. May we practice gentleness with ourselves and others, honoring the stories we carry and the needs we hold. May our longing for belonging be met in glimpses of the deeper belonging we already have in the heart of God.

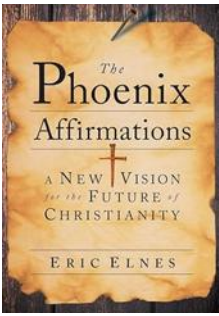
May we create a circle of belonging that includes all.

From "Liturgies for Resisting Empire: Seeking Community, Belonging, and Peace in a Dehumanizing World" by Kat Armas.

Prayers and blessings for you all~

Pastor René

From the Director of Faith Formation



Affirmation Eight --

Walking humbly with God, acknowledging our own shortcomings while honestly seeking to understand and call forth the best in others, including those who consider us their enemies . . .

Every time I read this Affirmation, I think, "Isn't this one of the 12 Steps of A.A.?" It isn't, of course. It's more of a mash-up or a blend of several Steps. You start with humility (Step 1), walking with God (Steps 2, 3, and 11), and then owning one's character defects (basically Steps 4 through 10). I think I could stretch the rest of this Affirmation (*calling forth the best in others, etc.*) into two of the 12 Traditions of A.A.: "Our common welfare should come first" (Tradition 1) and remembering to "place principles before personalities" (Tradition 12).

Last month, on June 12th, I observed 49 years of sobriety. Or as we like to say in A.A., "that's 17,885 'one day at time' days strung together." Believe me, some of them were definitely strung with some thin line. After 49 years, I tend to think that I am pretty good at practicing these Steps and this Affirmation, but it is God who is pretty good at reminding me that I need to keep working on them. The moments that are the hardest to bear are when I realize I have acted from a character defect and someone else is there to bear witness to my flaw. That's probably why seven of the twelve A.A. Steps are devoted to dealing with our shortcomings.

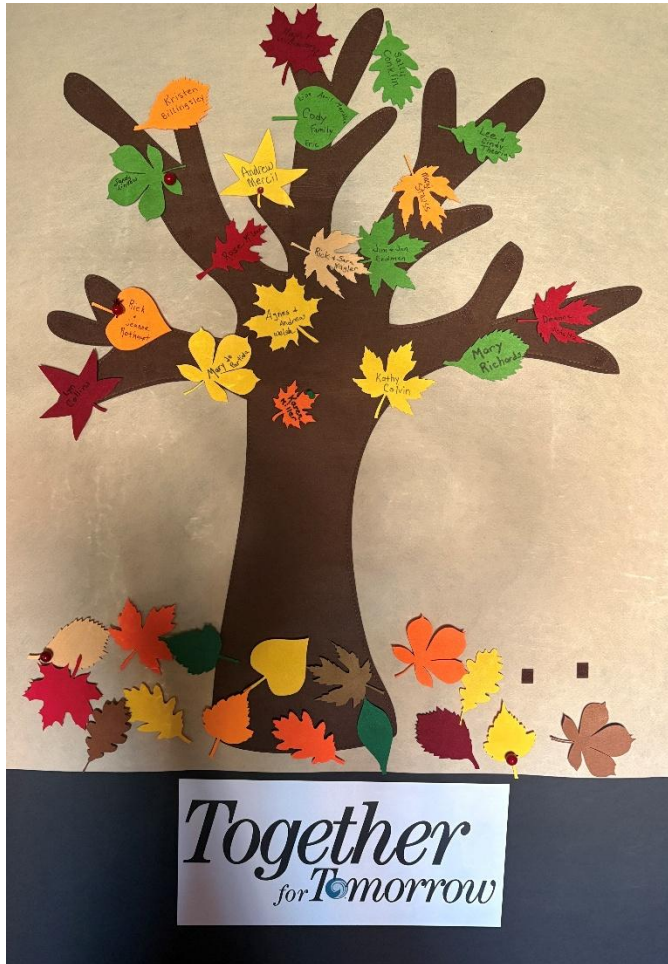
Resentments are a big character defect for most who are addicted to mood altering substances. We are usually quite certain the world has harmed us in irreparable ways. This is not to say that we haven't suffered harm, perhaps extreme harm, at the hands of others. But those of us who are addicts really feed, nourish, and hang onto those resentments; they justify our next drinking binge or hot railing episode. So, the Steps tell us how to get rid of those resentments and the most important lesson I keep learning is how to forgive others who have harmed me! This lesson never seems to end (perhaps I take myself a bit too seriously).

Now I know my profile puts me in the crosshairs of the conservative Christian nationalists' rifle scope. But these Steps, and this Affirmation, ask me to focus on understanding them, identifying their better natures and – are you ready for it – seriously consider how my actions might harm them! This is a big ask so I have taken in additional support by joining the national Braver Angels organization and helping form a local Braver Angels Alliance in Menomonie. If you are interested in travelling on a rough but rewarding path, please join us! And remember, resentments diminish us all.

May you walk on in God's love,

Karen

Together for Tomorrow: The Gift that Keeps on Giving



Our church has a “God given meaning and purpose.” We care for each other and our neighbors (local and world-wide), work for peace and justice, and strive to live Christ’s message of love for one another. Our church provides a vital, progressive Christian message.

Planned Giving (PG) helps make this happen with on-going financial support. One avenue of this support is our PG annual gift to our church from the General Endowment. Thanks to the generosity of many, the endowment has grown to more than \$190,000, allowing Planned Giving to provide a \$7,000 gift that directly supports our annual budget. This is in addition to designated gifts the congregation gives to specific causes, such as Helping Hand. As the Endowment grows, so does our annual gift.

And your gift to the General Endowment continues to support the church, year after year. None of us know what our church will look like in 100 years from now, but it warms my heart to

know that my support to the General Endowment will help provide for this beloved community now, and long after I have died.

Our *Together for Tomorrow* initiative to grow the General Endowment will end on Heritage Sunday. Our Tree of Giving continues to grow, and we are thankful to everyone who has donated. The gifts range from \$20 to \$10,000, and all gifts, of any amount, are greatly appreciated. Some church members have given gifts in honor of people they admire. We humbly request that everyone chips in a one-time gift to support this year’s initiative.

It is easy to give to *Together for Tomorrow*. A check or cash designated to PG, *Together for Tomorrow* can be given at the offering or to the church office. A secure, online gift can be given through our church website: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z4G3/campaign/C-128Z1>.

Our Tree of Giving will continue to grow until Heritage Sunday. Please add your leaf to the tree by giving a gift toward the *Together for Tomorrow* initiative. Thank you!

Jeanne Rothaupt
Planned Giving Chair

July-August Worship Volunteers

	Flowers	Coffee Servers	Readers
July 5 th	Cindy and Lee Theorin	Cindy and Lee Theorin Mary Jean and Leland Nicholls	Lee Theorin
July 12 th Bridge Coffee	Kathy Colvin	Deb Wesolek Kathy Colvin	
July 19 th	Doris Win	Susan and Pinckney Hall	
July 26 th		Bill and Linda Olson	
August 2 nd		Jane Slupe Jane Culbert	Kristen Billingsley
August 9 th Outdoor Service	Kathy Colvin	Outdoor Service Potluck	Sherry Bernick
August 16 th	Sally Conklin		
August 23 rd			
August 30 th			

Signup sheets are by the west entrance & near the coat closet

Announcements

Strengthen the Church Offering - July 19

We will be collecting the Strengthen the Church offering this year on Sunday, July 19. This is one of the UCC special mission offerings as part of Our Church's Wider Mission.

Funds raised through this offering reflect a shared commitment to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations.

With our generosity to this offering, we help build up the Body of Christ. Envelopes will be available on the west entrance table. You may also give online at the menomonieucc.org website, or send or leave a check in the office made with "Strengthen the Church" in the memo line.

Thank you for your continued generosity.

It's July!! You know what that means? TIME TO GO PLASTIC-FREE!!

Take the Challenge! Reduce your use of single use plastic. Once again, during the month of July, we on the Mission for Peace and Justice Committee continue our commitment to Creation Justice actions by encouraging you to make a mindful effort to choose at least one way or one new way to reduce dependence on single use plastics during July. It may become a lifetime habit!

Following are suggestions for action:

- Put reusable grocery and produce bags in your car and have them available to use next time you shop.
- Refuse plastic utensils and straws at drive-throughs or convenience stores. Carry a set of utensils and a reusable straw in your vehicle.
- Bring your own travel mug for drinks and coffee while travelling.
- Bring your own to-go container when eating out.
- Be educated. Read Just Say "Nope" to Plastic, available on the resource table in the west entrance. Go to plasticfreejuly.org to find out what it's all about.

There will be a display in the west entrance with more suggestions and ideas. Stop by! Many people committed to small changes can make a huge difference. Be a part of the solution!!

Carpet Cleaning Friday, July 10

The church will not be accessible on Friday, July 10 as the carpets are being professionally cleaned. The following areas include:

- All offices and classrooms on the Lower Level
- West Entrance & Fellowship Hall
- Parlor, Library, and Sanctuary

To prepare for this, we are asking people to avoid meetings in Rooms 1, 2, and the nursery that week. There will be **NO** meetings allowed on Thursday, July 9.

Contact the church for questions. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

WOODWIND PARK'S
Play it Forward
for
COMMUNITY MEALS

12 PM - 4 PM



MONDAY'S
MEAL

THURSDAY'S
TABLE

TUESDAY'S TABLE WEDNESDAY'S TABLE

SATURDAY, SEPT. 12, 2026

**FREE
ENTRY**

WoodWind Park • Wheeler, WI



CAR SHOW



LIVE MUSIC



DISC GOLF



FOOD & DRINKS

**Dash plaques to the first
50 cars & prizes all day!**



5th Annual
**CAR SHOW
&
CONCERT**

**E7115 1058TH AVE,
WHEELER, WI**

CRAFT SHOW • SILENT AUCTION • YARD GAMES

WOODWINDPARK.COM

INFO@WOODWINDPARK.COM

Play it Forward.

NATURE'S FOREVER CIRCLES OF LIFE



Kids' Club Summer Vacation Bible Camp

WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY,
FRIDAY

AUGUST 12, 13, 14
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Registration open to children ages 6
to 12 years

Learning activities, craft projects,
water-slide, snacks daily

Contact Karen at
dirfaithform@menomonieucc.org
for more information and to register

Need not be a member of First Congregational United Church of Christ to attend. Focus is on exploring topics of science, nature, and environmental care.

Thank You



Thank you for making Fathers Day special for Cairn House. A gift certificate was purchased at Walmart for their cook out on Fathers Day.

The theme for our coffee hour honoring fathers was "Gone Fishing." The cake reflected the theme of the day.

Thank you to all who contributed and helped make these two events special to the dads we were honoring.

Care Ministries Committee

Draft Minutes of Church Council Meeting
First Congregational UCC, Menomonie, WI
June 18, 2026

Roll Call: Naomi Cummings (Membership/Fellowship), Kathy Colvin (Worship), Jan Erdman (Treasurer), Sherry Galetka, (Stewardship), René Mehlberg (Pastor), Rick Nagler (Moderator), Jeanne Rothaupt (Past Moderator), Deanna Schultz (Music), Jill Schwebs (Clerk), Margi Stauss (Care Ministries), Lee Theorin (Property) and Agnes Welsch (Mission). Guest: Andrew Mercil.

The Council was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by the Moderator, Rick. The agenda was approved.

Jeanne offered a reading, “In the Heart, an Ache for Longing”, written by Hagel. She then led us in prayer.

Jeanne moved approval of the consent agenda, including the April 21st minutes, the May Treasurer’s Report, the Deacon Reports and the Pastor’s report. The motion was seconded by Sherry and approved by the Council.

Rene shared a questionnaire about Safe Church, Safe Ministries for the members to fill out. Karen will come and talk with us about them at the next meeting.

The IT Committee is asking for up to \$5,000 from the Capital Campaign to update the networking system and to replace the security camera by the west door. Agnes moved and Deanna seconded the motion. It was approved.

Bylaw changes were proposed by Rick. In Article 1, titled Membership, he proposed reorganizing the sections. Section 5 currently defines “Associate Membership” after sections 3 and 4 define responsibilities.

It will read:

Section 3. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

1. People who hold church membership in another congregation may be received as associate members of this congregation.
2. Associate membership is not intended to alter relations with home churches.

Section 4. PRIVILEGES AND VOTING

1. Only active and associative members may vote on matters affecting the interests of this church.
2. All active and associate members are eligible to hold elected positions in the church.
3. Youth Representatives elected to the Council who have not been received as active or associate members of this church shall be granted special voting privileges in Council matters during their term of Council office.
4. Voting privileges shall be null and void for member and Youth Representatives under legal age on issues which have an age requirement as defined by State of Wisconsin and/or Federal statutes.

Section 5. TERMINATION OF ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

1. The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and practices of the United Church of Christ.
2. In case any member does not communicate with this church or contribute to its support for two (2) successive years, the Council will attempt to contact the member to determine their status before changing the status from active or associate membership to inactive or removing the member from the church membership roll.
3. In case any member continues in persistent breaches of covenant vows in spite of kindly reminders, the Council may change the status of the member from inactive or associate membership to inactive membership or remove the member from the church roll.

Kathy moved the changes in order be made, and Naomi seconded the motion. It was approved.

Rick discussed team building for the Council. This would be for several hours during the day. Thursday, August 20th was proposed. There was discussion with July 30th as the new suggested date. Rick will follow up once he hears back from those needing to check calendars.

The Personnel Committee has drafted a policy regarding staff payment when building closure is required. The policy was discussed.

It will read:

When the Executive Committee has a reason to close the church building, church employees and contract staff who have required scheduled duties to perform at the time, will be paid their usual wage.

Jill moved and Jeanne seconded the motion. Leah and Rick abstained. It was approved.

Follow-up Items

- a. The Church Directory is being printed. We will have it very soon.
- b. The Walldogs event was discussed. Andrew Mercil updated the Council on arrangements. Training is happening. The south parking lot will be blocked off on Tuesday night. The old part of the church will be locked.
- c. Kim Blomquist and Lavonne Solem will do the audit on 6/22-6/24.
- d. Friday July 10th the carpet will be cleaned. Room 1 and 2 will not be available for the two days ahead of that.
- e. Meetings should be scheduled through Oxana and email is best.
- f. Rick & Pastor Rene continue to work on the Behavioral Covenant

Sherry will do the prayer for the next meeting.

Leah moved adjournment. Kathy seconded the motion and we were adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The Benediction was sung.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Schwebs, Clerk