

The Messenger



A Newsletter of the
Genesee 1st Congregational, United Church of Christ, Inc.

June, 2021 - Special Edition

Volume 16, Number 1.5

From the Pastor

Blessing of Animals – Coming this fall!

As autumn arrives, people in various places may notice something odd. A procession of animals, everything from dogs and cats to hamsters and even horses, is led to churches for a special ceremony called “The Blessing of the Animals.” This custom is conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi’s love for all creatures.

St. Francis, whose feast day is October 4th, loved the larks flying about his hilltop town. St. Francis wrote a *Canticle of the Creatures*, an ode to God’s living things. “All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures.”

That there are today over 62 million cats in the U.S. attests to the continuing affection we have for our furry, feathered or finned friends. We’ve even had a cat called Socks in the White House. Other popular presidential pets range from Abraham Lincoln’s Fido to Lyndon Johnson’s beagles, named Him and Her.

For single householders, a pet can be a true companion. Many people arrive home from work to find a furry friend overjoyed at their return. Many a senior has a lap filled with a purring fellow creature.

The bond between person and animal is like no other relationship, because the communication between fellow creatures is at its most basic. Eye-to-eye, a man and his dog, or a woman and her cat, are two creatures of love. Because God is the Creator of all living beings, Church is the place where the bond of creation is celebrated.

Coming this fall at Genesee First Congregational UCC, we will celebrate our Blessing of the Animals. I am looking for volunteers to help me form a small ministry team to plan this program. It will be held outdoors. Our Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. As a quest arrives they will be asked to fill out a registration card. At 10:00 we will share in a short time of worship. Our parade of pets will follow. After the parade the families will bring their pets forward for a time of blessing for the entire family.

Refreshments for our two and four legged friends will be served. A piddle park will be provided. We will also invite several of our local businesses, which serve the needs of animals, such as a veterinarian, a trainer, pet stores, etc. These local merchants will be invited to join us, not with the intention of making money, but to answer questions and to help owners with the care of their pet.

Please bring your pet and join us. This is a wonderful opportunity for outreach. Invite your neighbors who love their pets who do not attend church. This will be a wonderful way to introduce them to Genesee First Congregational Church. In order for this new program to be a success, we will need volunteers. Please speak with Pastor Dave if you would be willing to volunteer.

Some people criticize the amount and cost of care given to pets. People are more important, they say. Care for poor people instead of poodles. And certainly our needy fellow humans should not be neglected.

However, I believe every creature is important. The love we give to a pet, and receive from a pet, can draw us more deeply into the larger circle of life, into the wonder of our common relationship to our Creator. Mark your calendars and join us for this wonderful day.

Pastor Dave

e-mail: pastrordaveschnepf@gmail.com

(c) 618-402-2041

EXPLORE GOD’S WORD DAILY

Copies of the devotional booklet: “*The Upper Room*” for May-June, 2021 are available. Call the church office at 262-968-3849 to get your copy. On every page is an inspirational reading and accompanying Bible verse for each day.

Welcome to the June, 2021 Special Edition of the Messenger. Our first in-person worship was on Sunday, May 2, 10:30 AM. At 9:00 AM, a “zoom” service is broadcast from the Hartland UCC. Here is the link to that service.

SUNDAY, 9 AM (VIRTUAL SERVICE) Join us as early as 8:30 AM.

To Join the group via Computer or tablet or smartphone, click on the following link or copy into your browser.

<https://zoom.us/j/396301165> Password = 365422

You may also join by going to <https://zoom.us> and click on the “JOIN A MEETING”

heading at the top of the webpage.

When prompted, enter:

- Meeting ID: 396 301 165
- Password: 365422

To join meeting by phone (Audio only)

- Call 1-312-626-6799
- and enter when prompted:
 - o Meeting ID: 396 301 165
 - o Password: 365422

Communion on the 1st Sunday of the month

On Sunday, May 2, (10:30 AM service) we went back to an in-person communion. The communion elements are handed out in individual containers. The communion trays are NOT passed. We encourage you to do what you need to do to make the experience meaningful to you. Communion, which you can do “virtually” is also available at the 9 AM “zoom” service.

Lectionary Bible Study

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The group is currently studying the book of Mark. It is held every Wednesday, at 10 AM. Like the “zoom” service, it is a “virtual” event for those in Genesee. It is broadcast live from Hartland, UCC. (Capitol Dr. at Church St.) You are welcome to participate live in Hartland. Or, you may join the group via Computer or tablet or smartphone: copy the following link into your browser. <https://zoom.us/j/324446460>

You may also join by going to <https://zoom.us> and click on the “JOIN A MEETING” heading at the top of the webpage.

When prompted, enter:

- Meeting ID: 324 446 460
- Password: 789656

To join meeting by phone (Audio only)

- Call 1-312-626-6799
 - and enter when prompted:
 - o Meeting ID: 324 446 460
 - o Password: 789656
-

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS in a “VIRTUAL” world

For those of you attending the 10:30 AM in-person service, COVID-19 restrictions prohibit us from passing the collection plates. A specially decorated collection box is placed on the table at the back of the worship space, giving you the opportunity to make your offering before or after the service. Those of you attending only the virtual zoom service at 9 AM can still take advantage of your great, God given, opportunity to make an offering. Make checks out to “Genesee 1st Congregational, United Church of Christ” OR, if you prefer, just “Genesee Church.” Send them to the church office – GENESEE CHURCH / W306 S5075 Church St. / Mukwonago, WI 53149-9732. Our treasurer, Angela, picks them up on a weekly basis. OR You can mail your check direct to Angela: Angela Williams / W956 Miramar Rd. / East Troy, WI. 53120.

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Events Calendar

JUNE - JULY events

Listed here are the dates of meetings, holidays and events in June and July. All dates are correct at the time of publication. All events are at the Ed. Center, unless otherwise noted. Virtual “Zoom” worship Services are 9 AM each Sunday morning – broadcast from Hartland UCC. Lectionary Bible study (via “Zoom”) is each Wednesday, 10 AM. For “zoom” LINKS see this page. In-person services will be each Sunday, at 10:30 AM, throughout the month of June.

JUNE

- SU 6** 10:30 AM – in-person service, w/ communion
77th Anniversary of D-Day
- MO 14** **FLAG DAY**
- TU 15** 5:30 PM: Executive Board (live)
- TH 17** 5:30 PM: Outreach (live)
- SU 20** **FATHER’S DAY**
Newsletter copy for July-August edition due
Summer Solstice (summer begins),
10:32 PM CDT
- FR 25** 64th Anniversary of the U.C.C.

JULY

- SU 4** **INDEPENDENCE DAY**
10:30 AM – in-person service, w/ communion
- SU 18** Newsletter copy for August special edition due
- TU 20** 5:30 PM: Executive Board (live)
52nd Anniversary of first Moon landing
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Invitation to Confirmation

There are three ways to become a member of our church. First, you may transfer your membership from another congregation. This is simply accomplished through requesting the pastor to send a letter asking that your membership be transferred to Genesee First Congregational UCC. Second, if you have never belonged to another church, you may make a profession of faith. The third way to become a member of the church is through Confirmation.

When you were young, you were possibly baptized as an infant. Your parents, sponsors and even the congregation made promises to help you mature as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Now that you are older, you are offered an opportunity to make a public profession of faith for yourself. This is the meaning behind the rite of confirmation. Confirmation is a time to publicly celebrate your profession of faith whereby you become an adult member of the church.

Confirmation is an extended time of instruction during which a youth who is in the eighth or ninth year of school is eligible to attend. We study topics such as the Bible, Church, Sacraments, God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. In addition, we have fun too. In order to help us learn about our own faith we will attend the worship services of people from other faith traditions also. These might include: Judaism, Islam, or even Hinduism. At the end of the course, you will be asked to compose a statement of your own beliefs that you will present before the congregation. This will be your profession of faith. Afterwards, you will be asked to kneel as you receive the rite of confirmation.

If there is sufficient interest, I would be willing to offer and teach a confirmation class. However, the decision to become a member of the congregation is an important decision and so I ask that you give your decision to participate in confirmation a high priority.

Our classes would begin in the fall after Labor Day. We would celebrate your confirmation on Pentecost Sunday in 2022. Please speak with Pastor Dave if you have any questions, or if you are interested in attending class this fall.

Blessings,
Pastor Dave Schnepf

MESSENGER AVAILABLE VIA E-MAIL

If you are not receiving your newsletter via e-mail, and you have an e-mail address, send an e-mail to: geneseechurch@wi.twcbc.com and the secretary will get you on the e-mail list. Also, let us know if your e-mail address changes by sending an e-mail using your new e-mail address. Thank you for helping us save mailing costs.

Mother's Day Flower and Bake Sale Fundraiser - update

Thanks to all who supported our Mother's Day Flower and Bake Sale Fundraiser in May. Our sale gave us the opportunity to reach out to our family, our neighbors and friends while supporting the life and missions of the church.

We appreciated our "call for volunteer bakers" back in March so we could create a Bakery Sale pre-order list which Mary Ann Ludtke and Rhea headed up. And thanks to Sue Fleming who coordinated the flower sale order form with Shady Lane Nurseries. Our special addition was the pallet of Miracle Gro Potting Mix procured by Ron Kingery --- Thanks Ron! Also, thanks to our volunteers who baked goodies, unloaded and sorted flower orders and turned in orders.

Every little bit helped when it came to additional monies raised for the event. We received a few cash donations including the plant delivery truck fee of \$95. Thanks to everyone who donated additional baked goods and plants which were sold on pre-order pick up day, Saturday, May 8th. We also welcomed our church neighbors to our sale who came and bought a few goodies. It was great to see so many people again!

Thanks again for spreading joy through the sale of beautiful flowers and homemade baked goods while supporting the life of the church!

\$983 = Plant pre-orders
\$426 = Bakery pre-orders

\$390 = Potting Mix bags sold
\$212 = Bake Sale items sold the day of Order pick up
\$118 = Extra plants donated back and sold the day of Order pick up
\$45 = cash donations

\$2174 = TOTAL revenue earned from fundraiser

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

A special thank-you to everyone who contributed to the "Strengthen the Church" offering. The amount collected so far is \$35.00! This offering provides grants to help small, struggling churches or new churches with extra funds to do God's work in their communities. Whether it is to support youth retreats, send a minister to a needed conference, help with technological upgrades, open a food pantry or begin a community meal program, UCC church conferences assist by awarding the "Strengthen the Church" grants. Thank you for helping others.

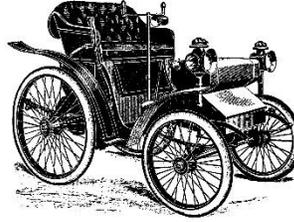
SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Thank you to all who completed the church survey to help us know what to put in the church profile. They were very helpful. The Search Committee has been meeting via "zoom" and we have put the finishing touches on the profile. It has been sent to the Conference for review. They will look it over and give us any feedback. The profile should be ready for "publication" for interested clergy very soon. Then we wait to be contacted by any clergy interested in the job. The Committee will review prospects and take appropriate action, but this all must remain confidential. We will report to all of you when there is anything we need to share, but you will probably not hear much until then. Please pray for God to send the right person to us.

OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Dave: Wednesdays: 1 – 4 PM
 Thursdays: 9 AM – 4 PM

Scott Burdette, secretary:
 Wednesdays and Thursdays: 2 – 4 PM.



SAVE THE DATE!

10th Annual Car Show
Saturday, September 11

A FINAL NOTE 🎵

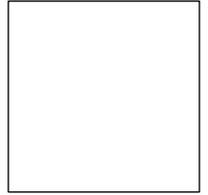
The deadline for the July-August, 2021 edition is Sunday, June 20. The deadline for the August special edition is Sunday, July 18. To submit an article, event information, or to receive your newsletter via e-mail, send e-mail to: geneseechurch@wi.twcbc.com

Articles submitted in person need to be typed or written legibly.

Scott W. Burdette

GENESEE 1ST CONGREGATIONAL
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NEWSLETTER JUN 2021
TIME VALUE MAIL
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



10:30 AM, in-person service
– at the Ed. Center

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...and more!