

Messenger



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

May – June, 2021

Volume 16, Number 1

IN-PERSON WORSHIP BEGINS ON SUNDAY, MAY 2

Dear Friends and Members of First Congregational Church of Genesee,

I am sending this pastoral epistle to share an important announcement with you. **Starting Sunday, May 2, we will return to worship in person in the church sanctuary. Our service will begin at 10:30 am.** The service at Hartland will begin in person the same morning at 9:00. If you still prefer the virtual worship service, you can connect to the 9:00 am service via Zoom through the Hartland webpage at ucchartland.com and then click on the highlighted link. We will not be “zooming” the services from Genesee’s Ed Building at this time. However, we wanted to continue to provide access to Zoom services so that anyone, including our homebound and nursing home residents, may continue to enjoy worship.

We believe that enough people have received the vaccination and the Covid infection rates will have declined enough by May for us to gather in person for worship. However, there will be a few changes that we ask you to follow for everyone’s safety.

We will be worshipping in the Ed Building, at least to start. Everyone is asked to wear a mask. If you forget to bring your mask to church, then we will provide one for you. We encourage everyone to apply hand sanitizer after you arrive to kill all germs and viruses on our hands.

You will also see some changes in our liturgy. We will not sing hymns because singing, more than talking, increases the spread of Covid. We may not provide bulletins; all information will be projected on a large screen. Offering plates will be left in the rear of the sanctuary and will not be passed. The Communion elements will be handed out in individual containers; the Communion trays will not be passed.

Everyone will be asked to practice social distancing. Please space the folding chairs at least 6 feet apart from anyone, or any “pods” that are not part of your immediate household. Please do not bring any food or drink with you. Please do not gather after the service in the narthex without distancing. The pastor will not stand at the door and shake your hand as you leave.

Until it is safe for **everyone** to gather again, we have some requests of you. If you have a temperature, if you have any symptoms of Covid, or if your immune system is compromised, please stay home.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact our moderator Michael Whiteley (mike@mikewhiteley.com) or our interim pastor, Dave Schnepf (pastordaveschnepf@gmail.com).

It is our hope and prayer that, as we take this step of faith, we will also give proper respect to all that science has recently discovered. In addition, please give prayerful thought to returning to worship. Some of you have stayed away, but now it is time to return to worship and to support our beloved congregation.

Blessings to all,
Pastor Dave Schnepf

Welcome to the May / June, 2021 Edition of the Messenger. As you've already seen, on page 1, our first in-person worship will be on Sunday, May 2, 10:30 AM. At 9:00 AM, a "zoom" service will be 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 are going back to an in-person communion. The communion elements will be handed out in individual containers. The communion trays will not be passed. We encourage you to do what you need to do to make the experience meaningful to you. The 9 AM "zoom" service will have a "virtual" communion.

Lectionary Bible Study

This is your opportunity to learn about the Bible scripture for the upcoming Sunday. Starting in April 28, 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. To 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. They will be placed on a table as you enter the service, 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.

Events Calendar

MAY - JUNE events

Listed here are the dates of meetings, holidays and events in May and June. 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 May and June.

MAY

- SU 2** 10:30 AM – in-person service, w/ communion
- WE 5** **CINCO de MAYO**
- FR 7** Drop off your bakery at the Ed. Center.
- SA 8** 9 AM – Noon: Pick-up bakery and flower orders at the Ed. Center.
- SU 9** **MOTHER'S DAY**
- TU 11** 5:30 PM: Executive Board (live)
- SU 23** **PENTECOST SUNDAY**
Newsletter copy for June special edition due
Strengthen the Church offering
- MO 31** **MEMORIAL DAY**

JUNE

- SU 6** 10:30 AM – in-person service, w/ communion
- MO 14** **FLAG DAY**
- TU 15** 5:30 PM: Executive Board (live)
- SU 20** **FATHER'S DAY**
Newsletter copy for July-August edition due
- FR 25** 64th Anniversary of the U.C.C.

JULY

- SU 4** **INDEPENDENCE DAY**
10:30 AM – in-person service, w/ communion

Pastoral Ponderings

In the words of American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr
“Humor is a prelude to faith and laughter is the beginning of prayer.”

This weeks’ lectionary reading is from Genesis 18:1-15. It is the story of the three messengers who visit Abraham and Sarah and announce to them that even though they are very old that they will have son by this time next year. Now Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years old at the time. Sarah laughed when she heard the news. Yet God would fulfill his promise to Abraham of having many, many descendants. One year later, they named the child, Isaac, which in Hebrew means laughter.

Reading this story raised some questions for me in. For example, I hear about God walking with us through the valley of the shadow or even of God crying with us in times of mourning. But, does God ever laugh?

Are there other places where the Bible speaks about laughter? Are there any liturgical Sundays during which we are encouraged to laugh in church. I have seen many different pictures of Jesus. But only once, have I ever seen a picture of Jesus laughing.

Here I have listed below the places in the Old Testament where we read about laughter.

14 Bible Verses about Joy in the Old Testament

The ancient Psalms are filled with expressions of human emotions, some of which are great joy. Many personify the earth to imply that nature itself rejoices. So when we laugh, we are laughing along with the earth!

1. “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones.” — Proverbs 17:22
2. “Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.” — Psalm 47:1
3. “God has a smile on His face.” — Psalm 42:5
4. “God, who sits in Heaven, laughs!” — Psalm 2:4
5. “He that is of a merry heart has a continual feast.” — Proverbs 15:15
6. “I commend mirth.” — Ecclesiastes 8:15
7. “I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.” — Jeremiah 31:13
8. “Let the shield exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy.” — Psalm 96:12
9. “Let your heart be merry.” — Judges 19:6
10. “Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break into joyous song and sing praises.” — Psalm 98:4
11. “The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy; The meadows

clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy.” — Psalm 65:12-13

12. “Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them.” — Psalm 126:2
13. “You have turned my mourning into dancing; You have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.” — Psalm 30:11
14. “You shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and hills before you shall burst into song, and the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” — Isaiah 55:12

8 Bible Verses About Joy in the New Testament

Notice that the verses about Christ and his coming speak emphatically of joy. This is why many of the Christmas carols have the word “joy” in them: Christ brings joy!

1. “Although you have not seen Jesus, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy.” — Peter 1:8
2. “Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh!” — Luke 6:21
3. “But in so far as you are sharing Christ’s sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.” — Peter 4:13
4. “I have said these things to you,” Jesus said to his disciples, “so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.” — John 15:11
5. “The angel said to Mary: You will have joy and many will rejoice at the birth of your son.” — Luke 1:14
6. “The angels said to the shepherds: Do not be afraid, for see – I am bringing good news of great joy for all the people.” — Luke 2:10
7. “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” — Matthew 18:3
8. “When the wise men saw that the star had stopped over the place where the Christ child lay, they were overwhelmed with joy.” — Matthew 2:10

Holy Laughter

A few churches use laughter for inner healing.

Here is what Rev. John and Pattie Chappell recommend you do: *“When you are feeling discouraged or have hurts that need healing, close your eyes, force yourself to raise your head, and begin praising the Lord in tongues or English for a minute or two. Then begin saying ‘Hee, hee, ha, ha, ho, ho!’ and repeat it several times. If you cooperate with the Holy Spirit, this will usually release a flow of holy laughter. If that doesn’t work, try saying, ‘Ho,*

ha, hee, hee' or 'ho, ho, hee, hee, ha, ha! This is not being silly. It is being spiritual! God takes the "foolish things of the world to confound the wise." These words are holy words, heavily anointed by the Holy Spirit, and amazingly effective. To the natural mind, this "method" is so absurd, so ridiculous, but it will usually produce holy laughter in anyone. God's methods bear fruit."

Laughter Sunday

Recently there has been a liturgical reclamation of what is known as "Laughter Sunday," "Holy Humor Sunday" or "Lighten Up Sunday".

Sometimes it is observed during Eastertide. Early Orthodox churches gathered on the Monday after Easter to tell stories, jokes and anecdotes. To this day in Slavic regions Christians gather the day after Easter for folk dancing and feasting in the churchyard. This was a time of celebrating the big joke that God pulled on Satan. It is known as Bright Monday, White Monday, and Emmaus Day in various countries. It is also called Risus Paschalis" – God's Joke, the Easter Laugh.

Whenever "Laughter Sunday" is celebrated, and by whatever name, it is characterized by joking around, singing, dancing. And it reminds participants that God is a God of laughter as well as of sorrow – much as God is Lord of the valleys as well as the mountain tops (Genesis 21:1-6).

Even though we have been quarantined for the last year, we have seen countless protests on the evening news, and we have seen many friends and neighbors lose their jobs, this article is a simple reminder to take time to laugh. Laughing helps us maintain our health; and it is scriptural. So when you feel down or closed in, take a moment and simply laugh, because God will have the final word.

Pastor Dave

pastordaveschnepf@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.

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY

We are looking for person(s) to step up and clean the Ed. Center and church. You can choose to do it one time, a month long span, or longer(?). Just let us know by calling the office number. Notify the office at **262-968-3849** if you would like to accept this great opportunity, or know of anyone who would be willing to help "Get 'er done."

FLOWER AND BAKE SALE – PICK-UP INSTRUCTIONS

Pick up your order Saturday, May 8th, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Noon)

Mother's Day Flower & Bake Sale Fundraiser orders will be ready!

Drive up to the Church Education Center from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (noon). We'll load your order in your car for you!

More Bakery, flowers & vouchers for sale on Saturday! 1st come, 1st serve!

Questions about your order or pick up times? Sue Fleming is happy to help! **262-470-6572**

Thanks for everyone that ordered.

Notes from a Jigsaw Puzzle

- A theology of commitment

"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it...."

- 1 Corinthians 12-27 (RSV)

On a lazy Sunday afternoon, it is a delight to relax in front of a table and assemble a Jigsaw Puzzle.

In many ways, the church is like those jigsaw puzzles, the individual members like the diverse pieces, When we assemble on Sunday morning, or work together on a project, we link together to become the complete puzzle – showing what the church is. The first thing to do when getting ready to assemble a puzzle is to open the box and assume all the pieces are there. ["box sealed to prevent missing pieces"] Like those puzzle pieces, God has already provide us with everything we need for the church. All materials, finances, services are already within our grasp. "Ask, and it will be given you; ..." (Matthew 7: 1 – RSV) Every church member is an important piece of the puzzle.

Unlike an actual puzzle, it may be unrealistic to assume that all church members will be there on a particular Sunday. But, enough of us must be there for the church to give an effective witness to the outside world. If an outsider took a snapshot, would they see enough of the picture, that day, to know who we are? To fit in, you must be there.

When preparing to assemble a jigsaw puzzle, make sure the table you're working on is big enough. For the church to be vital and active in the community, it

is important that every member will, from time to time, initiate or participate in a project. But, no member should attempt such assembly without being able to commit the necessary time and resources. Try, first, a smaller puzzle; or gather some help (expand the table).

You can look at the puzzle pieces too intensely and lose perspective. Don't give up! An extra pair of eyes can be useful. If nothing seems to fit together, come back to it later or ask someone else for their perspective.

Unlike a jigsaw puzzle, there may not be enough time, even in this life, to fit all the pieces together. We, the church, are not called to solve all the world's problems. We ARE called to get involved. Find the pieces that you CAN fit together. No matter how long you've searched for a certain piece, and not found it, it's there somewhere. First fit the other pieces together; and that piece will become obvious (to you or someone else). Discover how the various people in the congregation may connect to the church body. Keep a knowledge of their special talents at hand. Never set anyone aside. You can be working with pieces of the right colors, but that don't all fit together. Only the right pieces can get your limited attention now. Those other pieces will soon be needed.

Finally, unlike puzzle pieces, people in the church can have more connections to others than would ever be possible in a 2-D jigsaw puzzle. Nevertheless, there will be some members you simply cannot connect to. No puzzle piece is an island. Connect to those you can. Together, we are more than just individual pieces. Together we make a beautiful picture. Together, we are the church! Now, where did that piece go?

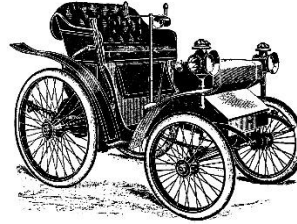
Scott W. Burdette - one lazy Sunday afternoon

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill on its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

On Sunday, May 23 we have the opportunity to support the Strengthen the Church offering. Please give an extra, special monetary gift that Sunday. Mark your check or cash envelope, "Strengthen the Church," or simply "STC." Thank you for your support.



SAVE THE DATE!

10th Annual Car Show
Saturday, September 11

IN MEMORIAM

Take a moment to remember **Jonathan Sayles**, brother of Ed Sayles and uncle of Lindsay Sayles. Jonathan passed away on Saturday, April 17. Keep the Sayles family, Ed & Diane and Lindsay in your prayers during this time of their loss.



WHY GO TO CHURCH ?

- Karn Arnold

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote: "I've gone for 30 years now, and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons, but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column. Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

When you are DOWN to nothing, God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL, YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL! B. I. B L. E. simply means: Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!

FLOWER AND BAKE SALE

Missed the pre-order for the Flower & Bake Sale Fundraiser?

\$25 Flower vouchers available for sale at the 1st in-person worship service on Sunday, May 2nd

- Vouchers good at Shady Lane Nurseries in Menomonee Falls until June 30, 2021. All profits go towards our fundraiser.

SALE on Saturday, May 8th and Sunday, May 9th after worship – 1st come 1st serve!

Saturday, May 8th, 9:00 AM -12:00 PM (noon) and Sunday after the 10:30 AM worship service.

Delicious homemade bakery:

- Coffee cakes, muffins, mini sweet breads, brownies, cupcakes, etc.

Flowers:

- **Annuals-Partial flats:** (6 to 12 plants each) Moss Roses, Tall Yellow Marigolds, Blue Salvia, Dreamland Zinnia, White Alyssum
- **Annuals-4.5" pots:** Vinca Vines, Sweet Potato Vines, Dracaena Spikes, Million Bells.
- *Questions?* Leave a message for Mary Ann: 414-828-1234 or Rhea: 262-617-8512.

\$25 Flower Vouchers:

- For Shady Lane Nurseries in Menomonee Falls. Shop everything they have to offer! Valid until June 30, 2021.

SIGN BOARD MESSAGES

The following were actual messages seen on church sign boards.

- We need sin control, not gun control.
- Many who seek God at the eleventh hour, die at 10:30.
- Need home improvement? Bring your family to church.

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.

A FINAL NOTE 🎵

The deadline for the June special edition is Sunday, May 23. The deadline for the July-August, 2021 edition is Sunday, June 20. 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



Puzzle Changers

ACROSS

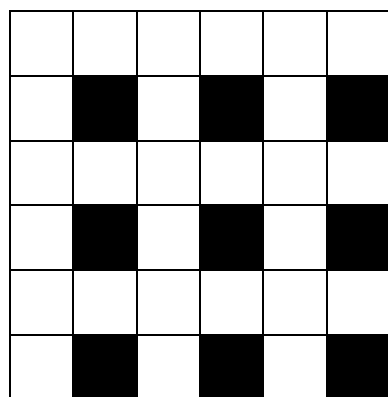
- 1 Hurt
- 5 Make a selection
- 8 Frank
- 12 Legal hold
- 13 Bad grade
- 14 Gambling city
- 15 School groups (abbr.)
- 16 Became more profound
- 18 That woman
- 19 River mouths
- 20 House locations
- 22 Large antelope
- 25 Boston time zone (abbr.)
- 26 Food allotment
- 28 Knife feature
- 31 Australian dog
- 32 Witty reply
- 34 Chaps
- 35 Poetic work
- 36 Big, hairy spider
- 41 India's Mother _____
- 42 Pen point
- 43 Abnormally sensitive
- 46 Linger
- 47 Little piggies
- 48 Self
- 49 Broadcasts
- 50 Egg on
- 51 High explosive (abbr.)
- 52 Scottish loch

DOWN

- 1 First Greek letter
- 2 Used footnotes
- 3 Listened to
- 4 Printer's measures
- 5 Most bizarre
- 6 Rinds
- 7 Wobble
- 8 Unrefined metals
- 9 Writing instrument
- 10 Compass direction (abbr.)
- 11 Drift off
- 17 Rose Bowl city
- 19 AWOL soldier
- 21 Make over
- 22 Card game
- 23 Yule drink
- 24 One, in Havana
- 27 Hue
- 28 Sis's sibling
- 29 Directed
- 30 Ingested
- 33 Archer's goal
- 34 Team's symbol
- 37 Royal rule
- 38 Loosen laces
- 39 Those who fib
- 40 Chasm
- 41 Try out
- 43 One _____ time (2 wds.)
- 44 Toss
- 45 Rebel general
- 46 _____ Juan

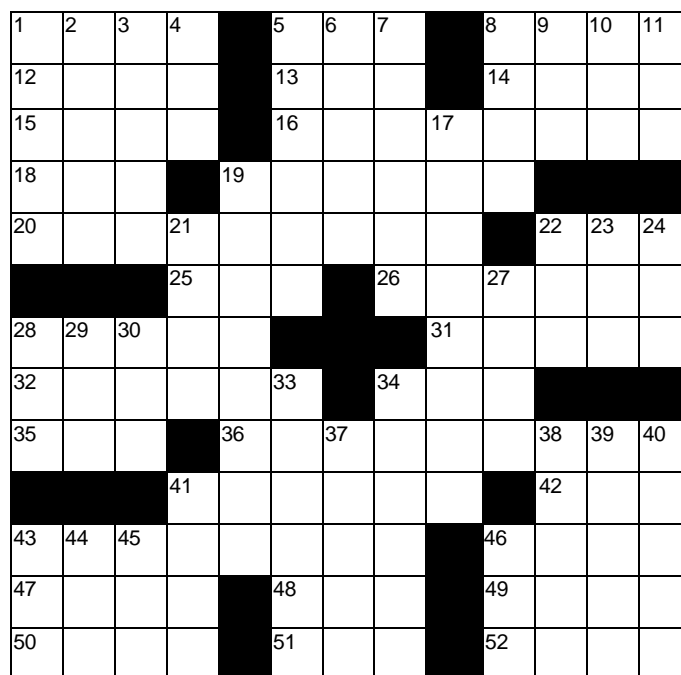
CROSS MIX

In the puzzle below, anagram each of the six groups of letters to form a 6-letter word. Place the six words into the diagram so that the words read across and down in crossword fashion.



- AEBDGR
- AEOCLR
- AODGNR
- EOBRKN
- EOUGHN
- EOUYGL

Genesee Church Crossword Puzzle



Answers to previous puzzles In March-April Messenger

S	A	G	A	S		O	N	E		S	T	Y	
C	R	A	T	E		C	E	O		E	R	A	
A	I	S	L	E		T	A	N	T	R	U	M	
N	A	P	A		T	A	T		A	G	E	S	
				S	T	O	N	E	A	G	E		
A	G	R	E	E	M	E	N	T		A	G	O	
R	E	E	S	E					O	W	N	E	D
E	T	C		N	O	M	I	N	A	T	E	D	
			R	E	S	T	O	R	E	R			
A	L	E	S		H	U	E		R	O	S	E	
M	E	A	S	L	E	S		T	I	G	E	R	
M	A	T		I	R	S		S	O	L	A	R	
O	D	E		E	S	E		P	R	E	S	S	

PALM SUNDAY WORD-DOKU

M	P	D	L	N	Y	S	A	U
A	U	Y	D	S	M	L	P	N
N	S	L	A	U	P	D	M	Y
Y	L	A	M	P	U	N	D	S
U	D	S	Y	A	N	M	L	P
P	N	M	S	L	D	Y	U	A
S	M	P	N	D	A	U	Y	L
L	Y	U	P	M	S	A	N	D
D	A	N	U	Y	L	P	S	M

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MUKWONAGO (GENESEE), WI 53149-9732
262-968-3849 www.geneseechurch.org

NEWSLETTER MAY / JUN 2021
TIME VALUE MAIL
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



9 AM, Sunday
Virtual Worship (Hartland, UCC)
(see Page 2 for LINK)
10:30 AM, Sunday
In-person worship - Ed. Center

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..and more!

Plus:

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