

The Messenger



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

March – April, 2023

Volume 17, Number 6

Thank You

Dear Friends and Members of First Congregational,

In each of his letters, St. Paul begins his epistles with a formula where he states, “I give thanks to God for all of you.” St. Paul’s statement summarizes my feelings toward all of the friends and members of Genesee church.

I want to express my sincere thanks to you for the generous gift which was given to me toward the end of our worship service last Sunday. As some of you may be aware, Kristi and I will celebrate our 35th wedding anniversary this fall. We are planning to travel to Germany. We both have ancestors who immigrated from Germany. We have wanted to travel to Germany for a long time. We will apply your gift toward a special gift that we will select while traveling.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who attended a reception held in honor of my service among you. I am grateful that so many of you took the time to spend part of your afternoon with us. Even though I knew that my time with you would one day draw toward an end, I will miss seeing all of you on Sunday mornings.

As I began my service to this congregation, I immediately felt the love and support that was freely offered to myself and to my family. Once again, I thank you for your gifts. I will always cherish my ministry with you. I pray for God to bless you, and to walk with you into the future.

Sincerely, Pastor Dave



From the Pastor



Grace and peace to each and every one of you. I am humbled and very honored to be called as your new settled pastor! You all have been in my prayers over the past few weeks and I hope you will pray for me as well as we give each other grace in getting to know one another. I am excited to embark on this journey with you as we honor the beautiful history of First Congregational’s 180 years, and also look to the future as to how we can reach out to the community and grow our congregation. Building community through building relationships is one of my strengths and I hope you will join me in doing so. I feel God was preparing me my entire life for this very moment in time to be your pastor and walk with you on your spiritual journey. I want to be a pastor who extends an extravagant welcome to everyone within our community, creating a place of diversity, healing, and renewal. A place where people can come as they are and know that they belong and are welcome here. I pray that my leadership in this church will be led by the Spirit, causing myself and you to grow out of our comfort zones for the sake of the Gospel. I remain committed to creating a safe place where all of God’s beloved creations are not only welcomed, but affirmed, accepted, and embraced. Rachel Held Evans, one of my favorite authors, wrote this about the church, **“The church is not a group of people who believe all the same things; the church is a group of people caught up in the same story, with Jesus at the center.”** I have strived to live my life with the teachings of Jesus at the center, and my hope is to encourage others to do so as well. May we welcome seekers, believers, those questioning, and all others and truly live out the message of the UCC. “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

I find it very meaningful that we are beginning our journey together during the season of Lent. A time often referred to as “the wilderness.” A time meant for

deep introspection as Christians around the world reflect on the love and sacrifice that our Savior went through before the resurrection on Easter Sunday. Many of you will make personal sacrifices during this time focusing on those long days and personal sacrifices that Jesus made as he set his face toward Jerusalem. My spiritual practices during Lent have evolved over the years. It has been a while since I gave something. Instead, I try to add something: more time in prayer, promises to read scripture daily, setting aside time each day to journal, reading through a book that I find spiritually uplifting, or taking extra time to make calls or visits to those in need of time with a friend. During this season of Lent, may you be encouraged to lighten your load if it be overlaid with excesses that distract; may you be invited into times of spiritual wholeness that come when we are less distracted; and may the Eastertide find you ready to celebrate once again the joy of life overcoming death. May you deepen your relationship with your Savior on this, your journey into the wilderness.

So, as we begin our time together, let us focus on getting to know one another. Even if you have known the person in the pew next to you for years, take the time to slow down and talk. Have a real conversation. Reach out to me! I want to get to know each and every one of you. Come to the church office for a chat or better yet, let's go out for coffee and begin to do exactly what Jesus was so good at, conversing, telling stories, and sharing the love of God. I look forward to being with you on March 12.

Peace and Love!

Pastor Jim

Jim Langreder
teamlangreder@gmail.com
262-309-5086

Reception for Pastor Jim

Sunday, March 12 is Pastor Jim's 1st Sunday service. Please stay for a short welcome reception immediately after the service. Treats and beverages will be provided.

Welcome to the March-April, 2023 edition of the Messenger. We currently meet at 10:30 AM. We share our pastor with the Hartland, UCC. As such, we have the late service (10:30 AM) six months and Hartland gets it the other six months.

On New Year's Day, January 1, we began meeting – at the Education Center. Services will remain at the Education Center through (and including) Sunday, April 9. (Easter Sunday). On, Sunday, April 16, we will go back to the church sanctuary for our services.

During this time, we will continue to have communion on the first Sunday of the month. First Sunday of the month services will remain at the Ed. Center.

By meeting in the Ed. Center, we will (1) be able to conserve on heat – the church still remaining at a 50⁰ minimum and (2) provide a more handicap accessible space during potentially inclement weather. The church steps, landing and parking spaces will continue to be shoveled / plowed during this time.

At 9 AM, a “zoom” service is broadcast from the Hartland UCC. For those of you unable to get to our 10:30 AM service, here is the link to that service.

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

Church Budget Update:

The most recent income and expense figures are highlighted below.

January Income	\$4,186.00
January Expenses	\$6,219.00
Net Total	-\$2,033.00

We continue to be grateful for all the gifts contributed by our members. We pray for God's grace and blessings as we continue to navigate through these challenging times. We value your fellowship. Join us at our Sunday service. Listen to the good word and say “hello!”

“So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.” - Psalms 90:12

Building Rental available

Do you have a large family gathering, wedding, birthday party, etc., but not enough room to host it? Both our Education Center and Church are available to responsible parties. Call the church office at **262-968-3849** for details and a rate schedule.

Church Office Hours

I (Scott Burdette) am usually in the church office from 2 – 4 PM on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The office phone number is **262-968-3849**.

In addition, below are the Rev. Jim Langreder's hours (during a typical week). In emergency, call Pastor Jim at **262-309-5086**.

Monday: Genesee 8 AM – 2:30 PM
Tuesday: Hartland 8 AM – 2:30 PM
Wednesday: Hartland 8 AM – 11 AM
 Genesee 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM
 Hartland 6:30 PM (Bible Study)
Thursday: Genesee 8 AM – 2:30 PM
Friday and Saturday: OFF
Sunday: 8 AM – 12 PM

MARCH - APRIL USHERS

The following teams / individuals are scheduled to usher on Sundays in March and April. Arrive by 10 AM (for the 10:30 AM service), greet people, hand out bulletins, light candles and take collection. Contact Diane to help fill one of the open slots. For the latest update, or if you are unable to fulfill your commitment, please notify Diane Sickels at **262-968-3954**.

March 5	Deacons
March 12	OPEN
March 19	OPEN
March 26	OPEN
April 2	Deacons
April 9	OPEN
April 16	OPEN
April 23	OPEN
April 30	OPEN

Events Calendar

MARCH - APRIL events

Listed here are the dates of meetings, holidays and events in March and April 2023. All dates are correct at the time of publication. All events are at the Ed. Center, unless otherwise noted. First Sunday services are at the Ed. Center with communion.

MARCH

- SU 5** 10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center
w/ communion
Guest Pastor – Rev. Claire Beutler-Cruise
- SU 12** 10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center
1st Sunday with Pastor Jim
Daylight Saving Time Starts
“Spring Ahead” One Hour
- WE 15** 2 PM: Executive Board
- FR 17** **ST. PATRICK'S DAY**
- SU 19** 10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center
Newsletter Copy due for April special edition
Special Offering
One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)
- MO 20** Spring Equinox: 4:24 AM CDT
Spring begins
- SU 26** 10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center

APRIL

- SA 1** **APRIL FOOL'S DAY**
- SU 2** **PALM SUNDAY**
10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center
w/ communion
- TH 6** **MAUNDY THURSDAY**
- FR 7** **GOOD FRIDAY**
Service at Genesee, 7 PM
- SU 9** **EASTER**
10:30 AM service at the Ed. Center
- WE 12** 2 PM: Executive Board
5 PM – Serve at Hope Center
- SA 15** **TAX DAY**
- SU 16** 10:30 AM service at church
- SA 22** **EARTH DAY**
- SU 23** 10:30 AM service at church
Newsletter Copy due for May - June edition

Events Calendar (continued)

FR 28 **ARBOR DAY**

SU 30 10:30 AM service at church

Hope Center – Service dates

We are one of 46 congregations, throughout Waukesha County, who serve the meals at Hope Center on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 5 PM, for the 5:30 PM meal; and we are usually finished by 6:30 PM. Hope Center is located at 502 N. East Av. In Waukesha. A special thank you to everyone who served at Hope Center in past years. Our 2023 service dates are Wednesday April 12 and Friday, June 30. Please put these dates on your 2023 calendar.

Johnny's Tale

Once upon a time, there was a student named Johnny. Johnny was a bright student; whenever asked a question, he could usually think of the correct answer. Johnny had, however, one little problem in that he was somewhat of a non-conformist. In almost every way he was a good student, doing what he was told and respecting the rights of others. Yet, while many other students, too, could find the answers, Johnny often got into trouble by asking too many questions. Johnny wasn't content just to know how things were. He had to know why. Johnny's peers eventually grew to adulthood. They became Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, animal haters and pet owners. They knew what they were and what they stood for: baseball, hotdogs, apple pie and Toyotas. Just don't ask them why.

Johnny also grew up in this "black-and-white" world. He soon grew to realize there were other colors out there. Johnny looked between the two extremes, and beyond. Do you know what he found? Yes, he found the usual shades of gray; but also an incredible rainbow of experiences, all the ways in between!

Now, as Johnny and I both know, the most exciting part of any trip is not the weary arrival at a destination, but the experience of getting there. In times of great joy we can say, along with Martin Luther King Jr., that we have been to the mountain-top! The moment of being there and looking out over the whole valley is well worth the climb. Yet, much greater is the experience of the climb. To climb at all, we have to know how, but to truly know why – even when we slip back a bit – is the greatest experience of all!

Like climbing a mountain or taking a journey, or learning why things work the way they do, most natural processes involve a transition from one state to another. Spring is no exception. As the days lengthen and sunlight warms the earth, birds build nests and flowers bloom. Spring is a transition from the cold black-and-white of Winter to the multi-colored splendor of an earth reawakened in full rebirth. Like night becoming day, is there any time at which we can say, "Now it is Spring and Winter is past?" We, especially us Wisconsinites, may say "Spring is here," and soon find ourselves ankle-deep in another blizzard. Through the transition into Spring, we see rebirth as not a solitary event, but as a slow but sure process.

Another "rebirth" is the ever popular "born again" experience. Jesus did say to Nicodemus, "...no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." (John 3:3) In the book of Acts, we read of the Holy Spirit descending like a dove at Pentecost, filling people with the Spirit of God. Saul was travelling to Damascus, was struck by lightning, saw the light, and turned his life around for the better. Rebirth sounds kind of sudden, doesn't it. Some Christians can give you not only the date, but also the exact hour, minute and location of their rebirth experience. Since much of their understanding of the importance of specific events in their lives is genuine, I do not question the validity of such experiences. But, is the black-and white mountain-top experience all there is to Christian rebirth? No! Furthermore, Jesus puts no time limit on the transition. You can remember your mountain-top experience, but you can't take it with you. You must come down from the mountain and let the rainbow of life experiences form the basis of a solid, everlasting faith.

The "real" Christian is not content just to understand the born-again experience as the answer. In a black-and-white world, where everyone seems to want fast answers, but are not in it for the duration, we must be like Johnny and dare to ask "why?" Like the transition to Spring, we must be born anew through an on-going process of asking questions about the Christian faith. We must color our experience by seeking new perspectives; and becoming excited and Spirit-filled by the finding of new, challenging answers. To become as children and re-view the world from this new perspective, is truly to be born again.

Scott W. Burdette

"All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

- 2 Timothy 3:16

SAVE THE DATE!

Mother's Day Flower and Bake Sale Fundraiser

Flowers and homemade bakery make wonderful gifts for your loved ones, neighbors and yourself! Once again, we will accept pre-order and payment for both flowers and bakery. Order sheets will be available at the end of March. Pick up your beautiful flowers and delicious treats on Saturday morning, May 13 in time for Mother's Day on Sunday, May 14.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Special Offering – Sunday, March 19

Beginning Sunday, March 19, and throughout March and April you have an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of people. Your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing makes an investment in communities worldwide, providing education to boys and girls, empowering communities through vocational training, giving families the skills to support themselves and participating in sustainable solutions that offer dignity to all. Please bring in an extra, special monetary gift on **SUNDAY, MARCH 19** – or any Sunday in March or April. Contribution envelopes will be on the table where you pick up your Sunday bulletin. Thank you, in advance, for your support.

Graduating? Let us know.

Are you, or someone you know, graduating from High School, College, etc. in May or June? Let us know. Call the office at **262-968-3849**. Graduates will be published in the May – June issue.

Pray for Ukraine

On this, the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the United Church of Christ calls on our clergy, our lay leaders, our churches, and all people of faith to pray for peace, to pray for an end to the hostilities that are ravaging the people and land of Ukraine, and to pray for a de-escalation of rhetoric that threatens nuclear options. The war has caused the displacement of 16 million people – Ukrainians and others living or working there; put additional strain on communities in Ukraine and in neighboring countries which have gra-

ciously welcomed those who have fled their homes; and severely reduced the ability of people in countries farther away to access daily needs such as food and fuel – effects which are less obvious. All the while, more weapons are infused, and the threat of greater devastation increases. The UCC has supported people and partners affected by the invasion from the beginning, and a UCC delegation recently visited the region to express solidarity with and encouragement to partners, and to witness the work we have supported.

We offer this prayer and invite you to join us in sharing it as a part of your personal prayer time this weekend, or in an act of public worship when you gather with your community of faith.

Creator God, maker of all that is good.

Comforter God, restorer of peace between all peoples.

Redeemer God, healer of wounds that inflict trauma and chaos:

We turn to you this day crying out for an end to a war that rages across the land of Ukraine, threatens the lives of its inhabitants, and displaces millions of children no longer able to sleep in their beds, attend their schools, or play with their friends.

May your Spirit of peace soften the hearts of the politicians who rattle their sabers and threaten nuclear annihilation.

May your vision of a just world thwart the ambitions of dictators who are thirsty for conquer and lusting for lands over which to rule.

May your hope of shalom engender within our own hearts the call to let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with us.

Help us find the pathway to peace, a Just Peace, built on human rights and equity not just in Ukraine but in every land where bombs and guns are the sounds to which children fall asleep and from which families flee.

You are the source of our peace.

You are the horizon of our hope.

You are the author of our love.

May the promise of your enduring peace, your abiding hope, and your everlasting love sustain us all and bring the promise of a new and better day to the people of Ukraine.

Amen

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Join us on Good Friday, for a 7 PM Good Friday service at the Ed. Center.

Life Changes

As a general “rule of thumb” the average family, in the United States, will move once every five years. When we move, we change our address – and often phone number and e-mail address. We have to let our bank, post office and utility companies know of the change. As a Christian, and a church member, the church should be of premiere importance in these matters. Don’t forget to notify the church. If your address, phone number or simply e-mails change, we are asking that the church office ([262-968-3849](tel:262-968-3849)) be notified of the change. We can’t keep you informed and inspire you, if we can’t find you! Thank you.

A FINAL NOTE

The deadline for the April special edition is Sunday, April 19. The deadline for the May-June edition is Sunday, April 23 . 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

Genesee Church Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

- 1 Hog home
- 4 Go - getters
- 9 Raggedy _____
- 12 Before, in poems
- 13 Bestow
- 14 Previously named
- 15 Goof off (2 wds.)
- 17 Acquired
- 18 Adam's home
- 19 Sergeant's command (2 wds.)
- 21 Renovate
- 23 _____ Waldo Emerson
- 26 Support
- 27 Richard _____ of "Chicago"
- 28 Salsa ingredient
- 32 Spring, e.g.
- 34 _____ hygiene
- 35 Misdeed
- 36 Monstrous giants
- 38 Moderately slow, in music
- 43 Nova _____
- 45 _____ in full
- 46 Football cheer
- 48 Hesitating
- 50 _____ Thurman of "Paycheck"
- 51 Love, in Florence
- 52 Neckline shape
- 53 Guy's partner
- 54 Televised again
- 55 Tricky curve

DOWN

- 1 Urban drainpipe
- 2 Vocation
- 3 Positive replies
- 4 Billy _____ Williams
- 5 Toronto's province
- 6 Rewrote
- 7 Italian city
- 8 Take an oath
- 9 Los _____, California
- 10 Trinity's boyfriend
- 11 Fishing snare
- 16 Blasting substance (abbr.)
- 20 Epic
- 22 Edible grain
- 24 Expert
- 25 Coop dweller
- 28 Extremely
- 29 Association (abbr.)
- 30 Fire _____ (fire chief)
- 31 Actor _____ Guinness
- 32 Singer Frank _____
- 33 Terminate
- 35 Popeye, e.g.
- 37 As yet (2 wds.)
- 39 Rainy mo.
- 40 Innocent
- 41 Prongs
- 42 Margins
- 44 Docile
- 46 Small carpet
- 47 Medical gp.
- 49 Poetic contraction

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12				13						14		
15			16							17		
18					19				20			
21				22			23			24	25	
				26				27				
28	29	30	31				32	33				
34						35						
36				37		38			39	40	41	42
		43			44				45			
46	47			48				49				
50				51						52		
53				54						55		

Answers to previous puzzles In January - February Messenger

T	A	T		I	A	N		G	A	S	E	S
I	D	O		N	N	E		O	L	I	V	E
C	A	N	A	S	T	A		A	G	R	E	E
S	M	E	L	T	E	R		L	E	E	R	S
			E	E	L		S	I	B			
A	S	P		P	O	S	T	E	R	I	O	R
T	O	O	L		P	A	R		A	N	N	E
E	Y	E	O	P	E	N	E	R		C	A	P
				I	R	S		A	I	M		
S	P	I	T	E			A	M	N	E	S	T
C	A	D	E	T			R	E	S	T	O	R
A	L	E	R	T			I	R	E		O	I
M	E	S	S	Y			A	S	S		T	O

E₁ A S T E₂ R † WORD DOKU

			A		S
T		E ₁		R	E ₂
				A	
S	T	E ₂	†		A
R		A	E ₁		†
		R		S	E ₂
		T			E ₁

A WORD-DOKU is solved just like a SUDOKU puzzle.

Every row and column, when complete, will contain every letter of

E₁ A S T E₂ R †

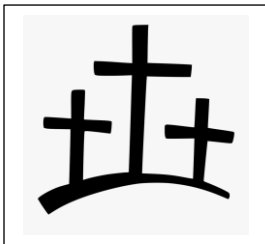
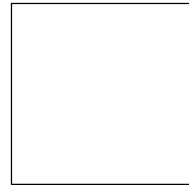
Note: Since EASTER has two E's, they are designated E₁ and E₂.

WINTER WORD SEARCH
Answer

SPRING IS COMING

GENESEE 1ST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, INC.
W306 S5075 CHURCH ST.
MUKWONAGO (GENESEE), WI 53149-9732
262-968-3849 www.geneseechurch.org

NEWSLETTER MAR – APR 2023
TIME VALUE MAIL
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Join us for worship
– at the Ed. Center
10:30 AM, Sunday worship
thru Sunday, April 9
(Easter Sunday)
Worship at the church sanctuary
resumes Sunday, April 16.
1st Sunday of the month:
COMMUNION
at the Ed. Center

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