

The Messenger

MAY 2026

The Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ
132 N. Main Street, PO Box 231
Angola, NY 14006
Phone 716-549-2115

E-mail: ucc_angola@verizon.net
Website: www.christchurchangola.com



MEMORIAL DAY(5/25/26)



Scheduled to Serve in May

Head Usher—Rob Ingrassia

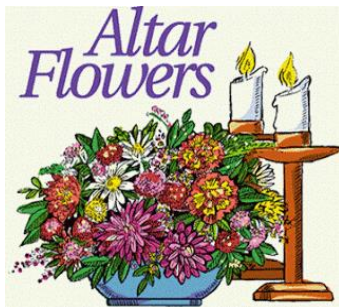
	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>
05/03	Carrie, Emilee and Eric Marcynski Michelle Becker, JonnyAnn Roach	Gayl Weinheimer	Bob Fuerst
05/10	Dale Ketterer, Carol Ann Obrochta	Joan Blais	Kathy Bienias
05/17	Kathy Bienias, Cheryl Vincent-Becker	Donna Nagel	Carrie Ward-Marcynski
05/24	Gayl Weinheimer, Cherryl Vincent-Becker	Marjorie McCarthy	Donna Nagel
05/31	Bill Ludwig, Jessica Ludwig	Laurie Ludwig	Bella Schiefla

Counters

05/03	Michelle Becker, JonnyAnn Roach
05/10	Sue Weinheimer, Judy Strade
05/17	Darlene DePasquale, Chris Beith
05/24	Annette Reynolds, John MacPherson
05/31	Laurie Ludwig, Jessica Ludwig

ALTAR FLOWERS

We would like to thank April Altar Flower Dedicators:



Easter Dedication

Ron Taylor

Miriam & Tony Oster

Nancy Ward

If you are interested in dedicating Altar Flowers, the cost is \$20.00, please see the sign-up in the Narthex or call Michelle in the office 716-549-2115.

We would like to thank April Bulletin Dedication:



Miriam & Tony Oster gave
this month's bulletins to the
Glory of God and with
thankfulness for family &
friends.

If you are interested in dedicating Bulletins, the cost is \$50.00, please see the sign-up in the Narthex or call Michelle in the office 716-549-2115.



More Than *Keeping* the Peace

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

~Matthew 5:9

Turn on the news or scroll through your phone for a few minutes, and it doesn't take long to feel it...the tension, the division, the constant noise of conflict. Communities are polarized, relationships are strained, and even everyday conversations can feel charged. It's easy to respond by withdrawing, staying quiet, or simply trying to keep things from getting worse.

In moments like these, "keeping the peace" can seem like the safest option.

It's easy to believe that peace simply means the absence of conflict. Keep things calm. Avoid tension. Don't rock the boat. Many of us have been taught that "keeping the peace" is the goal.

But our faith calls us to something deeper.

When Jesus says, "Blessed are the peacemakers," he is not inviting passive agreement or polite silence. He is calling us into active, courageous work. There is a difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking...and that difference matters now more than ever.

Peacekeeping avoids conflict. It smooths things over, sometimes at the cost of truth. It can look like staying silent when something needs to be said or stepping back when something needs to be healed. While it may preserve comfort for a moment, it rarely leads to lasting change.

Peacemaking, on the other hand, steps into the tension.

It listens deeply. It speaks truth with love. It seeks understanding, not just agreement. It moves toward reconciliation, even when that path is uncomfortable or costly.

Peacemaking is not about winning, it's about restoring. It reflects the very heart of God.

We see this most clearly in Jesus himself. He did not avoid brokenness; he entered into it. He crossed boundaries, sat with those on the margins, and engaged people in ways that brought healing and wholeness. His peace was not fragile or conditional; it was strong enough to hold both truth and grace together.

After the resurrection, when fear gripped his disciples, Jesus came among them and said, "Peace be with you." And then he sent them out. That matters. The peace of Christ is not something we keep for ourselves...it is something we carry into the world.

And this is where our identity as Easter people becomes essential.

As Easter people, we live in the reality that death does not have the final word, that brokenness can be restored, and that new life is always possible. The resurrection is not just something we celebrate; it shapes how we live. It gives us the courage to step into difficult places, trusting that God is already at work bringing renewal.

Because of Easter, we do not fear conflict or brokenness. We engage it with hope.

We are challenged to step into real-life situations where peace feels far away. It may look like addressing a strained relationship instead of avoiding it. It may mean speaking up for someone who has been overlooked. It could be choosing understanding in a difficult conversation or offering forgiveness when it feels undeserved.

Peacemaking requires courage. It asks us to trust that God is present not only in moments of calm, but also in the middle of conflict and uncertainty.

Throughout history, followers of Christ have taken this call seriously. Francis of Assisi prayed, “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,” and then lived it, moving toward division with humility, compassion, and hope.

That same calling is ours.

In a world where peace can feel fragile, we are not called to withdraw or remain neutral. We are called to engage...to mend what is broken, to seek justice where there is injustice, to bring calm into chaos, and to reflect the reconciling love of God.

So, the question is not simply, “How do I keep the peace?”

The deeper question is, “How is God calling me to make peace?”

As we continue our adventure in this “Great 50 Days of Easter,” move as a *peacemaker*:

Reach out to someone where there has been distance.

Listen before you respond in a difficult conversation.

Speak a word of truth with gentleness instead of staying silent.

Offer forgiveness, or ask for it.

Real peace...the kind that transforms hearts and restores relationships...doesn't happen by accident. It happens when ordinary people, grounded in the hope of the resurrection, step into hard places with extraordinary grace.

And that is holy work.

Peace,

Pastor Jen

BIBLE STUDY

Psalm and a Snack

Psalm and a Snack returns on Sunday, May 3rd after worship.

Psalm and a Snack is a great way to enjoy an informal Scripture study.

Join us for fellowship, scripture, great conversation, and, of course, a snack!

Bible Study

Join us as we dive deeper into God's word!

Our May Bible Study will focus on some of the "little books" of the Bible.

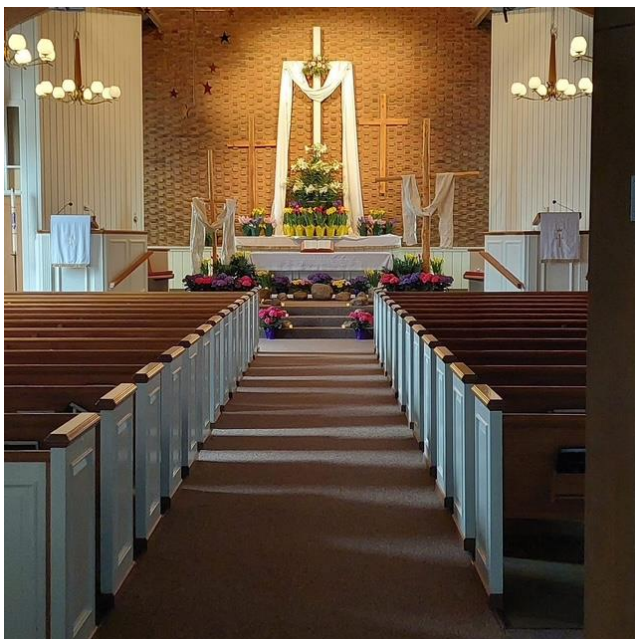
We will gather on Thursday Evenings (May 7, 14, 21, and 28)

at 5:30pm, starting with a pot-luck dinner.

Sign-up in Updyke Hall!

Thank You...

Many thanks are in order for a wonderful Easter Season here at First Congregational. Our gratitude to many people who made Holy Week work. We would like to thank Kurt & Sue Weinheimer, Carol Ann Obrochta and JonnyAnn Roach for the beautiful sanctuary arrangements. Thank you to Pastor Jen Mazur for the creative ways in helping us grow in our faith. Returned this year was "Stations of the Cross" and it was a very powerful, emotional and meaningful part of the Lenten journey for many.





SUB SALE

Thank you to everyone who is helping and supporting our Sub Sale on April 29th! This will be our last sub sale until the Fall, see you then!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

May 03, 2026 will be our Congregational Meeting following worship in Updyke Hall.

SPECIAL FUND DONATIONS

Donations to the Angel Fund, Memorial Fund and David Donner Faith Formation Fund can be made throughout the year. If you are interested in donating to these funds just make a note on your envelope.



May 10th – Happy Mother's Day!
Pancake Breakfast following worship

CHICKEN BARBEQUE

Includes 1/2 chicken, buttered spuds, baked beans,
roll & brownie

Saturday, May 16, 2026

11:30am – 4:30pm/or until sold out
\$15.00

Dine-in, Take-out or Drive-Thru

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC
132 N. MAIN ST., ANGOLA

Pre-sale Tickets call 716-549-2115

**Prepared by Toni & Tony and
In Memory of Stu Imhof and Bob Jakubczak**



COMMUNITY DINNER

Saturday May 30th 2026
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

On the menu:

Roasted Pork Dinner

**An opportunity to meet with friends,
family and other members of the
community**

**Updyke Hall @ First Congregational UCC
132 N. Main St Angola, NY 14006
716-549-2115**

TRUSTEE'S REPORT FOR APRIL

April Trustee Meeting took place on 4/14/2026 from 4:00-6:50pm. Usual Financial reports, Bills to pay and committee reports reviewed.

Events: Ham dinner was all profit (\$1,561) thanks to generous donations to cover expenses.

Front gutter/soffit completed. Friends of the Church covered the \$2,000 deposit, awaiting balance due.

Attendance has been up like 90 on Palm Sunday and 86 on Easter Sunday. There are 3-10 new member possibilities.

An adult safety drill is needed and will be announced. If evacuation is needed the meeting place is Crosby's picnic area.

Lent Bible studies and services were well attended. "Stations of the Cross" was an amazing personal experience, thank you Pastor Jen Mazur. The "daily word" photo on facebook was fun too!

Projects discussed: Heat repair @ rental; millings for driveway (#196); generator progress; community dinner; May 3rd Congregational meeting; VBS and summer Sunday school.

May brings flowers, warmer days and a sense of fresh possibilities

April showers bring May flowers and MUD! 😊

Peace - Jean Galfo

J.O.Y. FELLOWSHIP

Next meeting will be May 17th following worship in the parlor. We are always looking for more people to join. Now that spring has sprung, if you have any ideas for outings or supper club please join us at our next meeting!



Welcome Spring!

The kiddos have been very busy!

And we want to show you!

**Join us Sunday, June 14th after church for a Sunday School Reception
and coffee hour down in 132 North.**

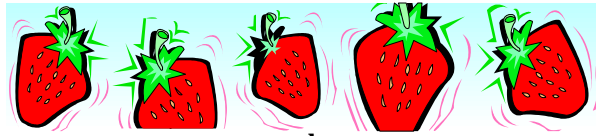
The teachers have been collecting projects from the kids to show you all the fun we've had downstairs this past year.

We are preparing for a fun summer! If you would like to spend some time over the summer hanging with our kids we will be looking for volunteers to give our Sunday school teachers a break. See Tiffany or look for a sign-up sheet.

~ Peace, Tiffany Hurd

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

On Sunday, May 24th we will be receiving the *Strengthen the Church* special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. This offering builds the UCC's future. It funds new congregations and renews existing ones. It supports programs for youth and young adults and nurtures current and future leaders. And it aids the God is Still Speaking Ministry to spread our message of inclusivity. Please give prayerfully.



Let's get Ready for the 54th Strawberry Social 2026!

It's not too early to check your calendars for your availability for helping out on June 11th & 12^h for this year's 54th Strawberry Social. Many hands make less work. The usual booths will need to have volunteers. If you can help in any way, please sign up on the sheets located in the Narthex!

We will also need help on Wednesday, June 10th at noon to set-up booths, tables and chairs, please see Carol Ann or Michelle or contact church office at 716-549-2115.

We are looking for volunteers to help with many areas like the Kid's Korner, food tent, kitchen and making baked goods for the bake sale at the Strawberry Social. Many of our community members look forward to it. There will be sign-up sheets in Updyke Hall. Thank you in advance!

Once again, this year we have entertainment both days, Thursday, June 11th will be music with Tim, Marty & Eric from 3:00-5:00pm, Love Movement Exercise from 5:00-6:00pm and "Gang of Scoundrels" from 6:00-8:00pm. On Friday, June 12th music will be and Mike Skowronski from 3:00-5:00pm "Gang of Scoundrels" from 5:00-8:00pm. Please bring your lawn chairs, appetite and dancing shoes for two great nights.

VACATION BIBLE School News:

We are very excited to announce our
Vacation Bible School Program for 2026 entitled:
"Snowball Mountain Challenge"



The program will run the week of July 27th thru July 30th. We are very excited for this year's Vacation Bible School and can't wait. If you are able, please plan to join us, as many hands help the week run smoothly. Please contact Michelle Becker or Carol Ann Obrochta to offer your help. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex, please consider helping, you will not be disappointed. It is very rewarding to see the smiles on the faces of the children.



A PRAYER OF UNITY SERVICE

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Commemorative ornaments: 3 1/2" double sided
to celebrate 250 years for America
\$10.00 each (Proceeds to Memorial Fund)

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

For Blessings received _____

A Prayer for _____

Other _____

Pre-orders needed and paid for by May 31st

Community Events



Line Dancing here at First Congregational once a month on Wednesday evenings
with Lisa Watkins. If interested please see Jean Galfo.

Think Summer Camp ...Dunkirk

It is not too soon to sign up for church camp at Dunkirk. Our UCC related camp is right on the shores of Lake Erie just west of here. From early spring through early autumn, Dunkirk hosts a variety of camp sessions for children, youth, adults and families.

Each camp includes age-appropriate learning experiences geared toward helping the camper find a relationship with God and neighbor...There are also activities such as talent shows, dances, game nights and campfires---and lots of healthy outdoor recreation on 50 acres of woods and fields, with a swimming pool, volleyball courts, playground, basketball court, four-square pad, Frisbee golf course, ropes course, rock wall for climbing, and archery.

For registration information, check out the Dunkirk website at www.dunkirkcc.com or with Pastor or Donna (a Dunkirk board member) Donner. There are reduced rates for early registration, discounts for first time campers and church scholarships available.

Youth Weekend Camps:

Star Wars Camp: September 18-20 (entering grades 3-9)

Fall Adventure Camp: October 9-11 (entering grades 3-9)

Youth Summer Camps:

Day Camp: June 29-August 14 (grades K-5)

Senior Day Camp: June 29-August 14 (grades 6-8)

Pilgrim: June 28-July 01 Mini and June 28-July 04 Full Week
(entering grades 1-5)

Senior High: June 28-July 04 (entering grades 10-graduates)

Jr. High: Aug. 09-Aug. 15 (entering grades 7-10)

Outdoor Adventure: July 12-18 (entering grades 3-8)

Pioneers: July 26- August 01 (entering grades 3-7)

Swim Camp: August 02-08 (entering grades 3-9)

Soccer: August 02-08 (entering grades 3-9)

Adult and Family Camps:

Women's Weekend: June 05-June 07

Fun after 50: June 15-19

Camp Good Ol' Days: July 19-21

Clergy Retreat: August 17-20

One Piece at a Time Weekend: August 20-23

Women's Wellness & Mindfulness Retreat: September 25-27

Scrapbooking Camp: November 06-08

Friends & Family Camp 1: July 05-11

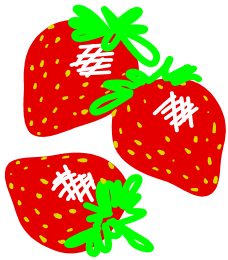
Friends & Family Camp 2: July 19-25

Special Events:

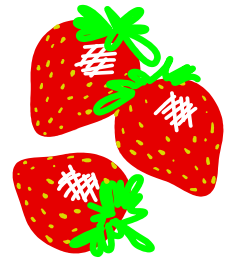
Spring Work Weekend: May 15-19

Halloween Happening: October 17

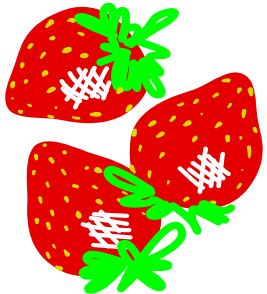
- Fall Work Day: October 24
- Register Online at Dunkirkcc.com
- To Register by phone, call (716) 366-1900



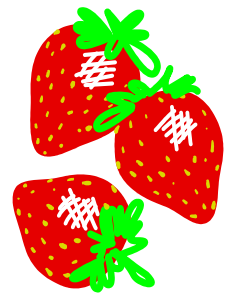
54th Annual Strawberry Social 2026



First Congregational UCC
132 N. Main Street
Angola, NY 14006



Thursday, June 11th 11am-8pm
Friday, June 12th 11am-8pm



Hot dogs, Hamburgers,
Cheeseburgers, Grilled Cheese,
Italian Sausage, French Fries,
Sundaes, Milkshakes, Cones & Strawberry Shortcake, Pop, Water
& Coffee

Bake Sale Inside

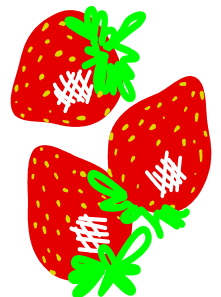
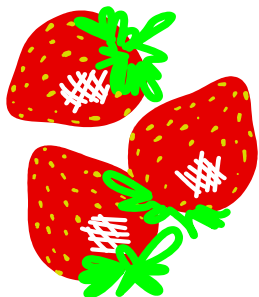
RETURNING THIS YEAR

Dunk Tank 4-8pm

NEW THIS YEAR

Kid's Korner 4-8pm

(Tootsie Pop Toss, Duck Pond, Bean Bag Toss)



Entertainment: Thursday from 3:00-5:00pm Tim, Marty and Eric,
5:00-6:00pm "The Love Movement" Exercise and 6:00-8:00pm
"Gang of Scoundrels" and Friday from 3:00-5:00pm Mike
Skowronski and 5:00-8:00pm "Gang of Scoundrels"

Please Bring Your Lawn Chair

Menu subject to change

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
132 North Main Street
P O Box 231
Angola, New York 14006-0231

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MAIL
Mailed on April 27, 2026
Please deliver promptly.

Sunday Worship- 10:00 AM

Sunday School – 10:00 AM

OFFICE HOURS: MON., TUES., THURS., FRI., 9:00am-1:00pm

For **Emergency Pastoral Services**, please call
Pastor Jen Mazur at 716-725-2157, Michelle in the Church Office 716-549-2115
or 716-262-6171

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of this church shall be to bring together followers of Jesus Christ,
to live and preach His gospel, to celebrate the sacraments and to be a beacon
and model of faith for all.

- **The Next Newsletter deadline is May 13, 2026**