

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
31 W. MILWAUKEE AVE., FORT ATKINSON, WI 53538

October 2026
First Congregational UCC Broadcaster



Throughout this season of ordinary time, we have been navel gazing our belief in Jesus Christ. We are grappling with the question, why do we follow Jesus. The journey to answering this question causes us to rediscover who Jesus is, (and who he is not). Faith is a choice. We choose our faith; it does not choose us. We may think that we mustn't question what we were told to believe because in questioning it, we may be seen as questioning God. We may not want to raise suspicion about certain tenants of what we are told, because in doing so, we may risk being punished. These assumptions could not be further from the truth. Jesus challenges the existing belief system about the Jewish Torah which consists of old laws and brings them to new light with meaning and truth for our time. One example was when he was questioned for healing on the sabbath. His response, "The Sabbath was made for humanity, not humanity for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27) Do not get in a rut that it creates blinders for failing to see the work of God.

Having faith is a choice. It is an ever evolving, and growing experience. What we believe can change through time. This is acceptable and welcomed by God. Questioning old belief systems allows the Spirit of God to work and speak in new ways. Following Jesus is to be open to challenge as we see how Jesus works. When we see this, it causes us to align our actions and beliefs toward this lifelong journey. It is there we will find a deeper meaning in our connection with Jesus and who he is for our life.

Thanks be to God for the Freedom to Choose!

Pastor Sara

Aging and Disability Center Event

On Sept. 23rd, the Outreach Ministry hosted a gathering outlining support services offered by the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Jefferson County and Jefferson County Veterans Service Office. Speaking were ADRC supervisor Erika Holmes and Veterans Service Officer Brandie Hanson.



Council Highlights – September 2026

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare: Congratulations to Moderator Linda Glendon and her Team for a very successful auction and closing of the Childcare Center! The auction netted over $14,000 after selling the contents of the Center. **The Council will review and approve any new people requesting space in the lower level of our church.**

TDS & Church Security Changes: TDS has completed the wiring into the church to update our telephone system. The project should be completed soon! The changed security system project has been approved and will begin soon. The church building will be locked during the week. Cameras will be installed and a keypad will be used for admittance. More information to come!

Usher & Communion Team Training: Chris Reed has scheduled training for ushers on October 4 and communion servers on October 18. If you have served either one of these teams, please attend these informative trainings.

Ministry Reports:

- **Outreach:** Representatives from ADRC will present information regarding their services on 9/23/26. If additional information is needed, contact them at 920-674-8734.
- **Church Relations:** Plans are being made to create a pictorial church directory.
- **Nurture:** Gospellers concert and potluck was a success!
- **Stewardship:** Coming soon! More information to follow!

NEW Members

On Sept. 27th, First Congregational UCC welcomed two new members: Bill Trewyn and Nancy Haugen, pictured with Pastor Sara. After worship, the Church Relations Ministry hosted coffee hour with some autumn treats.





“Good Grief: What Good Grief: What A Gift!”

Stewardship is about much more than money. It is about recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God—our time, our talents, our resources, our relationships and our opportunities to serve.

Like the characters in Peanuts, we sometimes focus so much on what is going wrong that we overlook the blessings right in front of us. Throughout our stewardship campaign, we will look at stewardship through the familiar, sometimes humorous, and always surprisingly insightful perspective of Charles Schulz’s beloved characters. We will discover that generosity isn’t simply about giving something away. It’s about responding with gratitude to the gifts we have already received.



Stewardship Sunday this year will be on November 15th.

Time and Talent Sheets and Pledge Cards for 2027 will be distributed and mailed several weeks in advance of Stewardship Sunday, and we ask that you prayerfully consider how you can support the missions of First Congregational United Church of Christ. Watch for more “Good Grief: What A Gift!” activities and messages throughout our stewardship campaign. Together, let’s celebrate the gifts God has given us and discover new ways to share those gifts with others.

Childcare Supplies Auction



Aug. 27th was very busy at First Congregational UCC, as it was pickup day for items sold in the Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare Center’s online auction!

Founded by the congregation in 1969, the nondenominational daycare center closed in June due to decreasing class sizes and financial losses.



After furious bidding wars as the clock ticked down to the auction’s end Tuesday evening, everything from cubbies, furniture and arts and crafts to scooters, trikes, sensory tables, toys, books, games, appliances and office supplies went out the door.

A Special Thank-You to the Meals on Wheels Volunteers!

A **"Special Thank-You"** is extended to the following **Meals on Wheels volunteers** who helped to deliver **427 warm meals** during the month of **September!** Without their cooperativeness and eagerness to serve others, our church would not be able to participate in this program that reaches out to some of the elderly and home-bound in our community.

In grateful appreciation of your service and spirit, we thank:

- **Marsha & Roger Anderson**
- **Sarah Brietzke**
- **Connie Czech**
- **Nathan Fjelstad**
- **Jane Fossum**
- **Elaine Hulstein**
- **Sarah Johnsen**
- **Ann & Dave Lueder**
- **Carol & Brett Maasz**
- **Mary Ellen & John Miller**
- **Sandra Mittelstadt**
- **Mary & Larry Narkis**
- **Tom Sehnert**
- **Eunice Ann & Joe Slaney**
- **Chris Spangler**
- **Lynn & David Stedman**
- **Doreen Wendlandt.**

Remember – **February, 2027,** will be the next month that our church is responsible for supplying volunteers for "Meals on Wheels." If you have any questions about the program or would like to volunteer, please contact Mary Ellen Miller (563-9085) or the church office.

Polka Worship- Um Pa Pa!

October 25, 2026

10am worship



Join in the toe tapping service like you have never experienced before.

The Dave Austin Polka Band will be leading the music during worship Bring neighbors, friends and family for a worship service that is sure to create a smile!!

Helper Schedule				
Date	**Greeters**	**Ushers**	**Lay Reader**	**Tech Support**
Oct 4	**Dave & Ann Lueder**	**Roger & Marsha Anderson**	**Justin Frey**	**Bob Buell**
Oct 11	**Sandy Mittelstadt**	**David & Lynn Klug Stedman**	**Susan Woods**	**Kevin Becker**
Oct 18	**Jeff & Susan Woods**	**Brenda & Chris Reed**	**Eunice Ann Slaney**	**Bob Buell**
Oct 25	**Heidi & Michael Siefkes**	**Amy Elvekrog and Ruth Hammiller**	**Bridget Trewyn**	**Kurt Wesemann**



Pumpkin Saving Time

The Worship Ministries members are asking for unused pumpkins and gourds to use for our Fall Harvest Celebration and Stewardship Sunday in November. Please start bringing your unused items starting November 1st and leave in the Burr Oak room. Thank you!

Wisconsin Gospellers

"Jubilation" best described the feeling of the Sept. 13th worship service. The Wisconsin Gospellers performed beautiful, inspiring music with a revival atmosphere. Affiliated with the Wisconsin Conference UCC, the choir was founded in 2007 by Fritz West in response to an invitation from the West End Gospel Singers in Eberswalde, Germany. The choir members came from throughout the state to rehearse Saturday. Following dinner at the church, they stayed overnight with members of the hosting Outreach Ministry and then performed Sunday. A potluck followed the service.



A Notice from your Creation Care Team:
Here is an opportunity for all of us to help our Mother Earth!!

Appliance & Electronics Recycling Events

Saturday, October 17, 8-11 a.m., Jefferson County Fair Park; enter from Spangler Rd.

Note: Gates may close earlier than posted times depending on turnout.

$10 per vehicle (cash only)

ACCEPTED ELECTRONICS

Computers (desktop, laptop & notebook), Computer Accessories (keyboards, mice, hard drives, scanners, speakers & other devices), Monitors, TVs, DVDs, VCRs, Fax Machines, Stereos, Calculators, iPads, Camcorders, Shredders, Tablets, Cameras,
Copiers, Game Consoles, E-Readers, Electric Motors, Modems, Printers (desktops, 3-D & combos), Handheld Electronics, Microwaves, Cellphones, Adding Machines, Vacuums, Scanners, Monitors, Toasters, Solar Panels, Inverters

FREON AND APPLIANCES

Refrigerators (mini & regular), freezers (chest & upright), dishwashers, air conditioners,
water heaters, dehumidifiers

Fall Retreat!

Sixteen members of First Congregational United Church of Christ participated in the church's annual fall retreat Sept. 18-20. It took place at Daycholah Center, the Wisconsin UCC conference center overlooking Green Lake near Ripon. "Prayer in the Wild" was the theme of the Friday-through-Sunday stay, led by Pastor Sara. It featured hiking, vespers, crafts, campfires, meditation and other inspirational and relaxing activities.



Food Pantry Needs October



- **Canned Corn**
- **Chili**
- **Beets**
- **Hamburger Helper**
- **Spaghetti Sauce**
- **Sweet Cereal**

Thank you for your continued support!

SAVE THE DATES

- Oct. 20 - Council Meeting 6 p.m.
- Oct. 25 - Polka Sunday
- Nov. 1 - All Saints Sunday
- Nov. 15 - Stewardship Sunday
- Nov. 28 - Hanging of the Greens 9 a.m.
- Nov. 29 - First Sunday of Advent

The sign-up sheet to host coffee fellowship for Sundays from October through November is posted in the narthex. Please consider offering a few hours of your time to host this enjoyable social opportunity following our weekly worship service. Contact any member of Church Relations Ministry if you need orientation to the coffee makers and supplies. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE!

Fort Atkinson Chamber of Commerce

WINTER MARKET

Saturday, December 5, 2026

Our church will again be a venue for the Winter Market 2026! We will be featuring our Congregational Peanuts, Cheese, Soup & More Mixes, Luncheon and Raffle Baskets.

There are opportunities to volunteer for this church fund raising event. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Nancy Onufer at 920-691-6106, email nancyonufer@gmail.com or contact Henry at the church office.

More information to come!

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First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ