



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

April 2026
First Congregational UCC Broadcaster

It was early on the first day of the week when Mary visited the tomb to where they had laid Jesus. It was in the garden she heard the voice of Jesus and recognized him. Her heart leapt with great joy. Jesus was alive!!



What if Mary had slept in? What if she had not bothered to go at all? Mary could not have a sleeper kind of faith and despite her grief and sadness she got out of bed, fixed her hair, got dressed and went out to find comfort and solace in being near Jesus. In doing this she received the greatest gift of the presence of Christ.

As a youth growing up and navigating all the emotions of disappointment, heartache, and peer pressure my mom would ask what was wrong, acknowledge it's emotion, and then tell me, "It's time to get busy." She was not a therapist, but her advice seemed to work. Getting busy doing something with my hands helped sort through what was going through my heart. Sifting through all that was going through in my heart, helped me think about it differently in my head.

In a culture where busy is all we know, possibly approaching our tasks in prayerful action will help us navigate when we are down and out. The presence of Christ comes to us in the garden while weeding the creeping Charlie. The brightest insight may come in folding the towels. The songs of joy may come in washing the dish. When we get up and face the day being open to what may be revealed to us, the Easter moment of resurrection can happen. Our hearts can leap for joy when we are awake to the Spirit's leading.

Enliven the sleepy faith, a new day has dawned, Christ is Alive. There is still goodness in this life to be discovered! Thanks be to God.

Easter Blessings

Pastor Sara

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 **402 warm meals** during the month of **February!** 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 homebound in our community.

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

Marsha & Roger Anderson

Sarah Brietzke

Nathan Fjelstad

Elaine Hulstein

Sarah Johnsen

Craig King

Ann & Dave Lueder

Mary Ellen & John Miller

Sandra Mittelstadt

Mary & Larry Narkis

Lynne Slack

Eunice Ann, Joe & Grayson Slaney

Chris Spangler

Lynn & David Stedman

Doreen Wendlandt



Thank you,
Volunteers!

Remember – **September, 2026**, 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.

Earth Day April 22nd, 2026: “Our Power, Our Planet”.

This year’s theme focuses on the idea that environmental progress is driven by the action of ordinary people, faith groups, and communities rather than just policy makers. It’s a rallying cry to show that our everyday choices have the power to protect the earth. This marks the 56th anniversary of Earth Day, a time to celebrate and raise awareness about environmental issues. Founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, the 1970 debut marked the start of the modern environmental movement. In 1990, Earth Day went global. Join us this April as we reclaim our power to make a difference!

On Earth Day we are hosting a spring cleanup event along the Glacial River Trail, Fort Atkinson. We hope you can join us!

**EARTH DAY GLACIAL RIVER TRAIL CLEANUP
FROM BEHIND ACE HARDWARE TO ROTARY PARK DEPOT**
Meet in the public parking lot at the corner of Madison Ave./North Main St.
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

April 22, 2026 6:00-8:00 pm
(Rain Date: Sat, April 25, at 10:00 am)

We will supply Green Core Trash bags. Bring gloves, a grabber tool, and a bucket. Wear bright or reflective clothing. Questions? Call the Church Office (920) 563-4802

Sustainability Display: From 4/12-4/26 our team will display some of the sustainable products we use. In line with this year’s theme “Our Power, Our Planet”, we want to highlight how our small, daily household choices- like the products we choose-give us the power to protect God’s creation. The power for change doesn’t just belong to our leaders, it’s right here in our church, our homes, and our communities. If you have suggestions for eco-friendly products we should include, please let us know. We hope you can take a few minutes to review the information.

The Power of Recycling: Next time you’re out, take a moment to enjoy the bench under the Burr Oak Tree. Thanks to the Fort Atkinson Lions, the Trex Company, and your hard work with our plastic recycling project, we have added another bench! The bench project is a perfect example of “Our Power” in action-turning waste into a community resource. Especially thank you to Nancy Onufer for transporting all the plastic. We will continue to collect plastic as we “pay it forward” for even more benches for our community.

Get Involved: As people of faith, we are called to be stewards of the earth. When we choose sustainable products, recycle our plastic, or spend time cleaning the Glacial River Trail, we are exercising Our Power to protect Our Planet. Our Creation Care Team is dedicated to turning that power into action. If you would like to help us safeguard God’s creation, please contact the church office, Pastor Sara, or any committee member. You can find our meeting dates in the bulletin, or simply just show up to a meeting to learn more. We are always looking for new ideas on how to better care for creation in our church, homes, and community. Whether it’s through **Recycling, Reducing** our consumption, **Reusing** what we have, or our upcoming community cleanup, every small act is a testament to our gratitude for God’s creation.

5 in 1 Special Mission Campaign

Nearly 1,590 UCC churches are 5 for 5 churches, and we are one of them!

This means our church fully supports Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) along with five special mission offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, Church World Service Blankets, and the Christmas Fund.

These offerings allow congregations and individuals to meet people at points of critical need in their lives. Through your prayers and donations, needs can be met for all five of these special missions.

From April 15th to May 5th, Outreach Ministry is asking for your support during the 5 in 1 campaign. Donations may be made in the pew envelopes marked 5 in 1. There will be a form in the envelope that allows you to indicate how you would like your donation to be used. For church members viewing Live Stream, donations can be mailed or dropped off at the church office. Please be sure to designate your donation for 5 in 1 or specify if you want to support one specific mission. Although we highlight these special missions during the next few weeks, donations can be made at any time throughout the year.

However you choose to support these missions, your giving is greatly appreciated, no matter the amount. Thank you for being a blessing to others in their time of need!

Outreach Ministry

Pastor Sara Summer Home Visit Opportunity

Summer days are approaching and time spent visiting is a unique opportunity and characteristic of the enjoyment of summertime. Pastor Sara is eagerly willing to visit the homes of church members during the summer months. Please call the church office or email Pastor Sara and she would enjoy visiting you in your home.

revsarafortucc@gmail.com

Helper Schedule

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Reader	Tech Support
Apr. 2 Maundy Thursday	Mary Ellen Miller	Jeff & Susan Woods	Sarah Brietzke	Kurt Wesemann
Apr. 5 Easter Sunday	Judy Brown	Sharyl Beranek and Amy Elvekrog	Heidi Siefkes	Kurt Wesemann
Apr. 12	Jeff & Linda Glendon	Pat Jung and Chri Spangler	Ruth Hammiller	Kevin Becker
Apr. 19	Jane Winiarski	Jeff & Susan Woods	Mary Narkis	Bob Buell
Apr. 26	Deidre Osborne	Sue & Bob Buell	Terry Teipner	Kurt Wesemann

The Food Pantry items needed:

Canned Beets
Sauerkraut
Chilli with Beans
Canned Fruit
Boxed Potatoes



ATTENTION BAKERS

Bakers are needed to “pull out all the stops” for our celebration meal on April 19. We need elevated cakes and bars for this event. This is an opportunity to try a fancy new recipe or make a decadent favorite. Contact Lynn Klug-Stedman or Ann Olsen if you can bake for this special event.

Urgent hygiene supply drive a big success!

Many thanks to all of you who donated so graciously! We had a large number of items donated. We were delighted to deliver your donations to the Fort Atkinson school district. The district staff accepting the six large boxes were positively astonished by your generosity!!! It is estimated that over 100 students will use these supplies. Thank you for responding so quickly and so abundantly!

SAVE THE DATES

April 9 - Lend-A-Hand Meeting 1 PM

April 16 - Church Relations Meeting 10 AM

April 19 - Organ Dedication and Nurture hoting Luncheon

April 21 - Council Meeting 6 PM

April 22 - Earth Day Cleanup 6 PM

Please join your Creation Care Team at 6 pm on April 22nd to clean up a section of the Glacial River Bike Trail. Details and sign-up sheet are in the narthex.

April 23 - Creation Care Meeting 11 AM

In honor of Earth Day our Creation Care Team will display an assortment of eco-friendly products and ideas in the narthex April 12 - April 26.

Nurture Fireside Outing

Nurture has booked seats to see “The Million Dollar Quartet” at the Fireside on June 26. Please sign up in the Narthex if you would like to attend. This is a preliminary signup to help determine the number of seats needed. There will be a final signup for meal with payment of \$84.50 in May.

Save the Date

April 19, 2026- Organ Dedication

With gratitude to Congregational UCC in Whitewater for their gift, we will dedicate the new organ to our Sanctuary during the Ten O’Clock worship. Jayne Lubke, along with Allen Organ Company representative Dean Rosco will be featuring the organ and all it’s glory! Nurture will be providing fellowship after worship in light of the celebration.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC

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Church Email: officefortucc@gmail.com

Moderator: Linda Glendon jlglendon@tds.net

Rev.Dr. Sara Rabe: revsarafortucc@gmail.com

Church’s Website: www.fortfcc.org

**First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

