

Here's What's Happening at FCC



Early this summer, Jess and I drove up to a church because they were having a huge rummage sale. We are at the age where the words “huge rummage sale” makes us happy.

The church had once been United Methodist but had left the denomination during all the fighting over LGBTQ+ people being fully included in the church. That story is complicated, but the short version is this: Methodists spent years arguing about whether LGBTQ+ clergy could be ordained and whether same-sex couples could be married in their churches. Eventually thousands of congregations left the denomination, and in 2024 the United Methodist Church removed its longstanding bans on LGBTQ+ clergy and same-sex weddings.

What caught my attention that day was not the denomination on the sign anyway. It was another sign. **ALL ARE WELCOME.** Big letters. Warm. Friendly. And I thought, Well, that's nice. Then I walked inside.

At the welcome area were brochures and information about the church, and the more I read, the more I began to think their sign needed one more thing. An asterisk.

ALL ARE WELCOME*

**Terms and conditions apply.*

The farther I read, the smaller “all” started getting. Everybody can come through the door, certainly. But then come the statements about what you are expected to believe. The expectations about what kind of family counts. The policies about who can use the building and for what. Who can lead. Who can marry there. Who really fits.

Suddenly their “All are welcome” started sounding a little like those advertisements where the announcer gets to the end and talks so fast nobody knows what they just agreed to. All are welcome. Certain restrictions apply. See management for details. Offer not valid in all theological jurisdictions.

That bothered me. Not because churches should have no beliefs. Of course churches have beliefs. We do too. But if your welcome has an asterisk, maybe you ought to put the asterisk on the sign. Because if “all” does not actually mean all, just say so.

Rae-Ellen gave me a welcome her cousin had received from Saint Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church in Ohio. That sent me down a rabbit hole trying to figure out where it originated. Eventually I found a version connected to Coventry Cathedral in England. And this welcome felt very different.

It said:

We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down-at-heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers. We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're just browsing, just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury or haven't been to church since Christmas 10 years ago.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit moms, football dads, starving artists, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like organized religion. We're not that keen on it either.

We offer welcome to those who think the Earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because Granny is visiting and wanted to come to the cathedral.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both or neither. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throats as kids or got lost on the Ring Road and wound up here by mistake. We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters and you.

Now that sounds like a church I would like to wander into. Especially the part about people who do not like organized religion. Some days I am not that keen on it either. What I love about it is that nobody sounds like they are doing you a favor by letting you in. It sounds like somebody opening the door and saying, "Oh, there you are. Come in. Bring your questions. Bring your mess. Lord knows the rest of us did. Just come."

After reading it, I wanted to drive back to that other church, point at the sign, and ask, "Have you all read this thing?" Then Jesus started messing with my attitude. Something about loving my neighbor. Apparently even that one.

The better question is not what their sign says. The better question is what ours means. When we say everybody is welcome at FCC, do we mean everybody? Not everybody who eventually becomes like us. Not everybody who believes the right things. Not everybody who knows when to stand, sit, sing, pray, or pretend they know where the bathroom is. Everybody.

Jesus never put an asterisk on his love for us or for the world. And when somebody walks into our church carrying wounds, questions, or absolutely no idea what they believe anymore, I hope they do not find an asterisk. I hope they find us scooting over and saying, "Oh, there you are. We've got room."

Blessings and Peace

Pastor Mark



Please Keep These Loved Ones
in Your Prayers

Those facing illness or health concerns:

- Dorothy C.
- Sue P.
- Rae-Ellen
- Debbie

Those needing ongoing love and support:

- Our shut-ins and all who live with chronic health challenges
- Our church leadership, as they serve and discern
- All who are struggling or in need—seen and unseen
- The Mission School of Hope & Clinic and the communities they care for

*May God's healing, strength,
and peace surround each one.*

**Need Prayer? Send your request to
prayer@fccweb.net**

**Would you like to be part of our
Prayer Chain?**

Please email the church office at
office@fccweb.net to let us know.



"The Shared Table" 2026 Giving Program

"The Shared Table"
Giving Sunday Focus for 2026

**Here is our program
for this year's giving focus.**

Theme: "The Shared Table"

A healthy church operates exactly like a great potluck: everyone has a seat, and everyone brings their unique measure of Time, Talents, Presence, Prayer, and Finances to the mix.

The 3-Week Sermon Series

- **September 6, 2026:** Pulling Up a Chair (Presence & Prayer)

The gift of making space, showing up, and holding the community in prayer.

- **September 13, 2026:** Passing the Plate (Time & Talents)

Using our 168 hours a week to serve one another and pass what we have to our neighbors.

- **September 20, 2026:** Staying Late & Clearing the Table (Finances & The Full Measure)

Pooling our resources, giving what we have, not what we don't have, to keep the lights on and the doors open. **Sunday Potluck**



There will be a potluck on Sunday,
September 20th after Worship.
Hope to see you there!

Church Directory



Would you like to be in the Church Directory? You can fill out the directory form [HERE](#). If you would like to include a photo please email them to office@fccweb.net.

Painting Day October 3rd



Women's Agape Group is asking members of the congregation to help them paint the railings in both stairwells on Saturday October 3rd at 10am. Please bring your own 2-inch paintbrush, small rollers, and trays if you have them. Please sign up at the Communication Table.

Alzheimer's Walk

This year I'll be walking again in the Alzheimer's Walk in Walworth County on Saturday morning, September 19th. The walk takes place in Lake Geneva, along the lake front, for a total of 3 miles. There is also a shorter walk through the historic district of 1 mile.

The walk itself starts at 10 am, but the ceremony starts at 9:40.

I would love for you to join my team and walk with me that day! I'll be walking the lake front route of 3 miles, but if you choose to do the shorter walk, that's fine. We will plan on going to lunch somewhere afterwards.

Another thing you could do is to support my walk by donating to it. Currently, I am a Grand Champion for having raised over \$1,000. My goal is to once again join the Elite Grand Champions club by raising over \$2,500. I'm a little more than \$1,000 from that goal. You can donate to my page and/or join my team by going to my page: [Joanne's Alzheimer's Walk](#) or by grabbing one of the donation sheets on the table in the Narthex. Or... you could just hand me a donation before September 19th.



Hello, church ! This month we are switching over to donating toddler clothes and diapers for the Life Connection in Mukwonago and continuing this drive through November. They said they have plenty of donations for newborns, but virtually nothing for older children. I will transport our donations to them when we have a carload.

For those who wish to continue donating backpacks and small household appliances for The Hope Center, they would greatly appreciate it. I will transport those items to them as well.

Thank you so much for your generosity!

Hope Center Meal October 2nd

We will be serving the meal at the Hope Center on Friday October 2nd. Volunteers and Donations of milk and desserts are needed. Please see the signup sheet in the narthex. Thank you!!

Women's Agape Group Special Event



On Saturday, December 12th at 7:00pm, Grace Notes Orchestra will present a free concert entitled A Journey to Bethlehem Christmas. It, too, will be held at the PAC. Please join us! This is a great way to start off your Christmas season!



Fellowship Ministry and Women's Agape Group is teaming up for a matinee show at the Greenwald Foundation Performing Arts Center on Sunday, November 22nd. The Drowsy Chaperone is being presented by the High School drama department at 2:00pm. We will have lunch first and then gather at the PAC. We are planning to get a block of tickets and sit together. More information to follow.

FOOD FOR FAMILIES



Missions is asking for help with providing items for the Food for Families program. The Church provides groceries to families at Clarendon Avenue School who qualify for free or reduced lunches. Bags of food items are given to the families for a student to take home.

There is a list of needed items for the program next to the bulletin board in the narthex. While family sized or bulk items might be more cost effective when shopping at Costco or Sam's Club, it is difficult for a young student to carry large items. It is also difficult to pack loose items for the students to carry.

There will also be a featured "Food of the Month." For the month of September, we are asking for canned chicken, tuna, or Spam.

The list will help with finding food items that are on sale. Check the expiration dates! Check the size of the package! Check off on your grocery list 1-2 items that could be donated to Food for Families!

Thank you!
Joanne and Janine

Worship This Weekend

We will be worshipping in-person and via Zoom this Sunday at 10:00 am. Visit these links for important information:

[SONG LYRICS](#)

[ORDER OF WORSHIP](#)

To access worship via Zoom, please use the information below:

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM WORSHIP](#)

Phone Number: (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 459 288 4444

Password: 2623637249

Adult Bible Study will meet before church in the large classroom at 9:00. You can access the Bible study via Zoom as well:

[CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM BIBLE STUDY](#)

Phone Number: (312) 626-6799

Meeting ID: 459 288 4444

Password: 2623637249



Sunday's Praise Song Sneak Peak

["What a Beautiful Name It Is"](#) by Hillsong

CONTACT US

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It's Easy to Give to FCC.....

Because we are flexible! There are several ways:

1. The traditional way, by putting your offering in the collection plate during weekly church services. Offering envelopes are available in the church office. Contact us at office@fccweb.net.
2. Bill Pay through your bank account. You can talk to a teller or Customer Service if you have questions about it. If you like to use Bill Pay to pay your monthly bills, you can add FCC to your list of creditors. It's quick and easy.
3. Online. You can give through Tithe.ly or Paypal ([HERE](#)) and click the "Give" Button at the bottom of the page.
4. If you prefer to make lump sum offerings, you can make a Direct Charitable Distribution from your 401(k) or other retirement fund directly to FCC. There are no income taxes on this type of distribution because the money does not come to you; it goes directly to the "charity" of your choice, i.e., FCC. Talk to your financial advisor who can set up Direct Charitable Distributions as often as you wish—monthly, quarterly, annually etc. Making a Direct Charitable Distribution actually makes your money go farther!