FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH • MUKWONAGO

OCTOBER 30, 2026



Here's What's Happening at FCC



I was scrolling through my phone the other night, which is usually a terrible idea. There is apparently no shortage of people willing to explain why the world is ending, whose fault it is, and why I should be furious about it before breakfast.

Then a seven-second video stopped me. There was a little boy curled up in the corner of a couch, crying like his heart had just broken. His mom walked over, sat beside him, and asked, "What's going on, buddy?" He looked at her through swollen eyes and said: "I'm not little anymore."

That landed harder than I expected. Because I knew exactly what he meant. Something had happened that made him realize he was growing up, and he wasn't ready for it. Frankly, I'm not sure the rest of us are either.

Growing up is a strange business. When you are ten, you cannot wait to be sixteen. When you are sixteen, you cannot wait to be eighteen. When you are eighteen, you cannot wait to be twenty-one. Then somewhere around fifty you start making noises when you stand up and wonder why nobody warned you where this whole thing was headed.

Then somewhere along the way, you realize growing up means leaving things behind you were not ready to leave. A house. A neighborhood. A friendship. A parent who was still alive. Kids who still wanted to crawl into our lap. A time when the people we loved were all still around the table.

We keep growing because that is what human beings do. But that does not mean we stop carrying who we have been. Church has not always helped with that. We have sometimes talked about spiritual growth as if becoming more mature means getting rid of everything that came before. Grow up. Get over it. Move on. Put away childish things. Paul has taken quite a beating with that verse.

Somewhere along the way, church taught a lot of us that growing up in faith meant getting tougher. Less crying. Less questioning. Less need. I am not sure that is growth.

Look at what that mother did. She didn't tell her son he was silly. She didn't say, "Big boys don't cry." She didn't give him three simple steps for embracing adolescence. She pulled that long, growing boy onto her lap, the lap he was beginning to believe he had outgrown, and said: "You know what? You get to keep all the ages you have ever been inside you. They never have to leave. You can keep them as long as you want and visit them in your heart anytime you want."

And there it was. Grace. You do not have to be ashamed of who you were to keep growing. You don't have to throw away the little kid who got scared. Or the teenager who desperately wanted somebody to like them. Or the twenty-something who was making half of it up while trying hard to look like they knew what they were doing. Come to think of it, some of us are still doing that last one.

God has known you through all of it. The scared kid. The awkward teenager. The adult who got things wrong. The person who thought they finally had life figured out and discovered they absolutely did not. God was there for all of it. And I don't believe God looks at those earlier versions of us with embarrassment. I think God has been loving us through the whole thing.

In that little video, you could almost see the relief come over that boy. Then he threw his arms around his mother's neck. Maybe that is what got me.

There are ages of my life I still visit. People I miss. Rooms I can still picture. Voices I can still hear. Things I wish I could do one more time. Maybe you have some of those too. Growing older does not mean pretending those places never mattered. Growing in faith does not mean becoming harder. And grace does not ask us to erase the people we have been. Grace lets us gather them up. The kid who was scared. The teenager who was trying. The adult who got it wrong. The person sitting at the kitchen table this morning with coffee getting cold beside them. All of them are you. All of them are loved. Maybe growing up is not about leaving all of that behind. Maybe some of the things we were taught to outgrow are the very things that keep us human.

So, pour yourself another cup. And if the little kid inside you needs to crawl up on the couch for a while, scoot over. There's still room.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Mark



Please Keep These Loved Ones in Your Prayers

Those facing illness or health concerns:

- Bernie F
- Dorothy C.
- Sue P.
- Rae-Ellen
- Debbie
- Nancy
- Sue R's friend's son
- Jan
- Rick
- Brianna

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.

Sharing Our Abundance, One Gift at a Time



Thanksgiving is a time when we gather around tables, share meals, tell stories, and give thanks for the blessings in our lives. It is also a time to remember that not every table is full. Some of our neighbors are struggling to put food on theirs.

At FCC, we have a beautiful opportunity to turn our gratitude into something more than words. On November 8, 15, and 22, we invite you to bring nonperishable food items to worship and place them on the altar. The food we collect will be donated to the Mukwonago Food Bank to help individuals and families in our community.

There is something powerful about placing food on the altar. We usually think of the altar as a place where we bring our prayers, our joys, our worries, and our gratitude. This Thanksgiving season, we will also bring something that can make a difference in someone else's life.

A can of soup. A box of cereal. A jar of peanut butter. Insignificant things when we look at them individually. But together, they become a reminder of what happens when people care for one another. And isn't that what Thanksgiving should be about? We give thanks to God for what we have, and then we make room at the table for someone else.

You do not need to bring a grocery cart full of food. Bring what you can. Every gift matters, because behind every item is a person saying to a neighbor they may never meet, "You matter. We haven't forgotten you."

We hope that by Thanksgiving Sunday, our altar will be overflowing. Not simply with food, but with the generosity, compassion, and the love of a congregation that understands something important about gratitude.

The best way to give thanks for the blessings we have received is to make sure those blessings do not stop with us.

Let us fill the altar. And in doing so, help fill a few tables beyond our church doors.

HOPE CENTER
HELPING HANDS BUILDING HOPE

Hello, church ! This month we are 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!

Dear Supporting Congregation,

Formerly known as Cooperating Congregations of Waukesha County, Hope Center celebrates over 50 years of service to disadvantaged women, children, and men in Waukesha County. We are grateful for your continued support of our outreach and programming efforts to reduce the poverty-related risks that contribute to homelessness by providing the basic needs of food, clothing, hygiene items, and housewares, all free of charge.

To continue providing these services and items at no cost, we will be hosting our annual fundraising dinner on Thursday, November 19th, 2026, at the Brookfield Conference Center. This year's theme is "Gathering Hope," which focuses on the idea that we are stronger together. When we gather, we can strengthen our community and deepen our collective impact.

If you would, please share this exciting event with your congregation in the following ways:

- Encourage them to attend- Purchase tickets **HERE.**
- Make a gift basket for the silent auction.
- Become a sponsor.

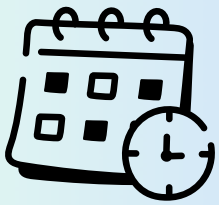
We have enclosed a **flyer** that can be posted on your information board, inserted into your weekly bulletin, or distributed to groups and individuals.

Additionally, if you plan to donate an auction item, please fill out the included **Auction Donation Factsheet** and return it to us with your item(s) no later than Friday, November 6th. We ask that all baskets be valued at a minimum of $100, as this is the most effective value and garners the highest bids. If the value is less than $100, we may combine it with another basket. You can also sponsor a basket by donating $100, and we will make the basket in your name.

If you have any questions, please contact Becky at (262)549-8726, or email at rarnold@hopecenterwi.org.

Thank you,

Becky Arnold
General Manager
Hope Center



Church Business Meeting

Sunday, November 15, 2026
After Worship

Meeting handouts are available on the communication table and online **HERE.**



Thank you for supporting Food for Families. For eight of the families, the plastic bag of food is placed in the student's locker to be taken home on Friday. The family then has food items to help with the weekend when there is no school. One family has asked to pick up the food.

For the month of November, we are asking for donations for the Thanksgiving meal for the families. Food donations include: instant mashed potatoes, canned gravy, can of yams, can of cranberry sauce, and box of stuffing mix. If you are interested in donating a turkey, see Joanne. We will be buying a turkey, vegetables, rolls, and a pumpkin pie.

Thank you!
Joanne and Janine



Worship This Weekend

We will be worshiping in-person and on YouTube.

Visit these links for important information:

YOUTUBE CHANNEL
SONG LYRICS
ORDER OF WORSHIP

Praise PLAYLIST

Sunday's Praise Song Sneak Peak
"You Never Let Go" Matt Redman

CONTACT US

Church Office
262-363-7249
231 Roberts Drive
Mukwonago WI 53149
office@fccweb.net



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!