

# First UCC Happenings



## SEPTEMBER 2020



Early this year we entered into a season like none ever experienced before. We entered a season of distancing ourselves from people, crowds, work, stores, and pretty much everything and everyone. I pray that during this time of distancing the one person you have not separated from, but grown closer to is Christ!

In these days when we are evaluating the need to leave the confines and safety of our homes, many may also be evaluating other things as well. For some, quarantine has renewed commitments to eat better, or to exercise, while for others it has brought about an intentionality to reach out to those whom we love, or maybe it is embracing technology, like Zoom calls, in order to see the faces of those we care for so deeply.

While we have probably spent more time at home than we ever have, perhaps you have looked around at things you'd like to upgrade, repair, clean, etc. Ownership of a home comes with a lot of responsibility, as does ownership of your faith. Recently, we have been receiving messages on what it's like to own your faith. Is it borrowed from our parents, do we rent it by coming to church as a payment, and so on. Has your faith cost you anything? Has it changed you whatsoever?

I encourage you, whether you attend in person, or online, to begin to watch and share our online worship services as a resource for encouragement during these troubled times. They may not be shot with a fancy camera or effects, but we're getting better and once you get past that packaging, it's really all about Christ anyway.

As good as it is to see some faces in worship again, it is equally encouraging to see who is watching online. Moving forward...if there is any way I, or our staff, can continue to serve you during this "new norm," please reach out to us, join us in person, or online as we learn the ever important reasons why it's imperative to own our faith for that is what will continue to sustain us during these times.

~Rev. Ed Lilley



## **From the Director of Music**

**Diane Drury**

### YouTube Evensong

On Thursday, Sept. 3, I will be sending out an e-mail with the words, as well as a YouTube link to this month's Evensong. I hope, by using a format more people are able to access and that can be accessed at any time, that more people will be able to participate. It truly only lasts less than 15 minutes, but is a wonderful way to bring a hectic day to a peaceful close.

### Zoom Hymn Sing

This month I will be doing the Zoom Hymn Sing from 7 – 7:30 pm (social time starts at 6:45 pm) on Thursday, Sept. 17. I am moving to a 30-minute format because 30 minutes is what Zoom allows for our free accounts, and 30 minutes is going to be an important meeting time duration we will need to remember. Anyone with requests, please email me at [toccatagirl@aol.com](mailto:toccatagirl@aol.com) by 4 pm on Wed., Sept. 16.

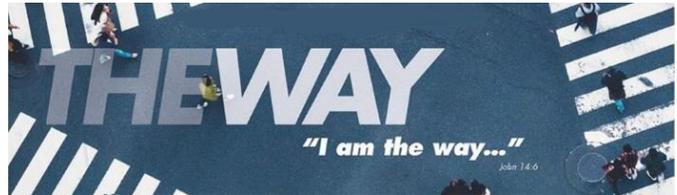
### Virtual Choir Rehearsals and Recordings

During September I will be emailing our choir members with YouTube recordings of rehearsals to watch to prepare us to make recordings for anthems for the month of September. I would love to include more people in the virtual choir recordings, so if you want me to record you privately, please let me know. I just need you to really be ready and know your part before we record because in-person recording sessions must be very short.

### 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual Ring in the Season Concert to Launch Dec. 1

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our annual Ring in the Season Holiday Benefit Concert for Habitat for Humanity. Of course, like most concerts during this pandemic, we will be moving things into a virtual format. After much consideration of the different ways we could do this, I have decided to use YouTube to create a playlist of videos posted of all the different musical groups from the various churches that will participate. On Tues., Dec. 1, I will send out e-mails to everyone to share with family and friends (and to the participating churches as well), for people to enjoy. I will ask folks to send donations directly to Habitat so that we do not have to handle any collection of funds. It will be an unusual kind of concert, but I hope that it lifts everyone's holiday spirits, while benefitting our long-time friends at Habitat for Humanity Peninsula & Greater Williamsburg. Another positive feature of this format is that anyone who wants to watch the concert can do so at a time that is convenient for them. In addition, people can create a Watch Party and watch the videos at the same time, while texting back and forth with family and friends.

On a side note, August, 2020, marks my 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as Organist/Choir Director at First UCC.



## PLAIN GIVING

By Janice MacLean

*And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.*

Luke 6:19

Whatever it was that brought a multitude to the plain where Jesus is preaching, they heard what you have heard – an invitation to a new way of being in the world. They heard teachings that invited them into a new consciousness and a transformed awareness.

I invite you to recall a time when something deep in you called you to give more. Take time in this moment to search inside yourself and remember what it felt like to step outside your own ego and fear and open your heart to something bigger.

These invitations come to us throughout life. Sometimes we are led to them from a place of deep suffering or hardship. Sometimes Jesus' profound love transforms us. Sometimes we choose to journey toward wholeness and accept the challenges and gifts that come along with way.

*From These Days, February 17, 2019*



## First UCC Weekly Offering

	July 26	\$ 936.00	Aug 2	\$ 2,177.00	
Aug 9	\$ 1,190.00	Aug 16	\$ 924.00	Aug 23	\$ 3,114.50

Thank you to all who have practiced stewardship through your gifts during this challenging time. Prayerfully consider your tithing to support the ministries and staff of First UCC. Thank you!



## Treasurer's Report as of 08/23/2020

General Operating Checking Account Balance	\$ 20,818.23
Breakdown:	
Bills to be paid through 09/02/2020	\$ 2,552.75
Mission & Evangelism Balance	\$ 3,087.35
General Fund Balance	\$ 14,835.98
UCC Local Mission Grant Balance	\$ 342.15
Reserve Fund Balance	\$ 1,007.47



**Outdoor Workday:** Saturday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 12pm. Help us complete the landscaping for the playground and clean up the lot from tropical storm debris.

**Deacon Ordination:** Sunday, Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> during worship.



## Church-Wide Prayer: Pray with us each day at noon

### September 1-15:

**Lord our God**, we thank you that you come to help us with your power and might. We thank you that you come to us in our suffering and strengthen us in all we must endure on earth. You help us so that what is good and full of light comes more and more to us and to all people. We thank you and pray that your power, coming from the invisible world into the visible, may continue its quiet working in us until the day when everyone can see Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and into all eternity. Amen.

### September 16-30:

**Lord our God**, we thank you for allowing us to come to you and to stand before your face. We thank you for helping us throughout our life on earth, for strengthening our faith in you and our trust in all you do. Bless us and give us courage. May your light shine out among the peoples so that they recognize your will. May your light shine out so that your name may be praised and we can rejoice in the new time you give us. For you will be at work and you will accomplish it. Even when we do not know what will become of our time, you know what our time needs, and you will carry out your will. You will let your name be honored. You will bring your kingdom, and you will change everything for the good. Amen.



I'm excited to announce that we will be resuming Sunday School/Bible Study online this fall! We will meet via Zoom (to which you can also simply call in using your phone) on Wednesday evenings at 7pm beginning on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>. One week before, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will have a "practice run" for about half an hour where we will socialize and (re)familiarize ourselves with the Zoom program. If you are interested in attending, please send me a message on Facebook, or contact me via phone or e-mail. I look forward to teaching and learning with you!

~Courtney Phillips

# Wider Missions & Outreach

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 4th, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through [ucc.org/justice](http://ucc.org/justice), our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

Thank you so much for your generosity to the Forrest Elementary students. They were very appreciative of our contribution to their drive for supplies.

~Carol Diehl & Pat Kline

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Austin Drischler

4 Eileen Sanderson

12 Jeff Rountree

18 Jordan Wilhite

19 Marissa Bocklet

22 Faye Jones

23 Ernie Hook

24 Diane Drury

29 Julie Gates



If you have a birthday and it's not on the list, please let us know so we can correct our records.

## *September Anniversaries*

September 24  
Wayne and Dana Lawson

If you have an anniversary in  
September, October or November,  
please let us know,  
so we can correct our records.



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**TOGETHER**      Worshipping God  
Growing Spiritually  
Serving Others

**Indoor worship services  
Sundays at 10:30am**

**Church Workday  
Sat. Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> 8am-12pm  
Deacon Ordination Sun.  
Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> during Worship**