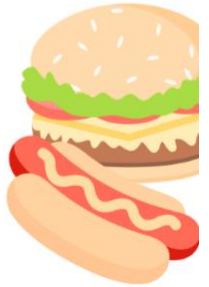
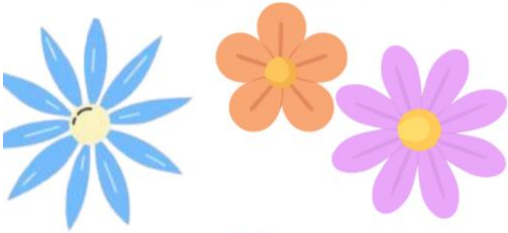


JULY



SUMMER

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER



First United Church of Christ

firstuccincy.org

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No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

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The Pastor's Report

Perhaps you noticed the fine details of food and decorations for the Guild's beautiful meeting of Tea Time last month? Or maybe you were here for the Interfaith Pride service with the amazing banquet of Indian food and the colorful array and participation of religious groups and individuals? A stroll through the meditation garden will evoke life as the peonies, Sweet William, Queen Anne's lace, lamb's ears and more fill our minds, hearts, and souls with colors, textures, and aromas. Music performances from Jimmy and friends this summer have been a heavenly anthem of diversity and genres. The tones astound us. All of this takes time, preparation, intention, and dedication.

I have tossed around the term "Vision 200" to plant the idea that we need to see that I will not be the last pastor here nor is Jimmy the last musician. First UCC will celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2055. I still plan to be playing tennis and swimming, but likely in-between a couple of naps a day. I have no doubt the church will also still be relevant and active at that time. But it will take an openness to Spirit to plan and envision what the Church will be. Jimmy and I have started to meet regularly with our Pastoral Relations team to imagine the future here in our shared ministries of mission, worship, outreach, and education. Along with June Bronnert, Dave Krebs, Christine Guillory, and Sean Rose, I feel we have a nice mix of church leaders to guide us in our discernment of what and where the Spirit is leading First UCC.

With the Pastoral Relations team's blessing, I convinced our Church board to make July 19th a "Sabbath Day Away" for the entire church. We will not meet for worship that day. Instead, we want everyone to think about what makes you a part of First UCC? What has kept you here for the decades you have been coming? Or what drew you here in the past couple of years and why do you remain curious and interested in First UCC? We want everyone to take July 19th and go to a different congregation. Or simply go somewhere for spiritual renewal and rest. But you are to go with the intention of discerning the Spirit and where you affirm that here at First UCC. The following Sunday, July 26th, all will return for the congregational meeting and we will share some of the discoveries we made. Some of our thoughts may simply be reinforced. Or we may return with a

new insight into our covenant with one another. God's gifts will flow especially if we prepare ourselves to receive the gifts of faith, hope, and love.

I have had three sabbaticals in my time at First Church. It always seemed like they came at the right time for the congregation and for me. A sabbatical allowed me to step back and evaluate my ministry here at First UCC and my call to ordained ministry. Was the relationship still vital and healthy? Was covenant with First UCC still meaningful for both the congregation and me? When I returned from each of the sabbaticals, both parties felt renewed and invigorated to continue this journey of faith together. I have no doubt that Jimmy will feel a similar renewal when he returns after Labor Day. He is a significant part of the joy in our time together these days. Worship brings us closer to God, to community, and to one another. Our social media outreach has been a keen way for us to connect with those who would not otherwise have those encounters with church and their own spiritual growth. Jimmy fulfills these roles brilliantly. We could not have imagined this five years ago when we made the commitment to have him come for full-time ministry. What awaits us? We listen, we plan, and we act in fellowship with humble spirits and with faithful hearts.

When you take any Sunday away, I pray that you find yourself missing your church family. When you return after a vacation or simply time away to heal on your own, I know that God is still speaking and is with you. Perhaps it is in partnership with First UCC. Or perhaps you are being called elsewhere. After all of these years here, I realize there is truly a time for every season under God. July is the perfect season to reflect, rest, and respond to God's movement in our lives. I know Jimmy will be blessed in his time away and that we will too. It takes time and intention. What will you notice when we return on July 26th? I look forward to this new time in our life together as a family of faith. Beautiful creations are sure to appear.

In faith, hope, and love,

Dan

July Happenings

July 8 – Sundown Social. After a successful start in June of this occasion, we will again host a gathering of folks of all ages for pizza, salad, desserts, and fellowship. Some will play bingo after the dinner. If you want to simply visit, we will have that as an option, too. Pastor Dan will be present to facilitate for the evening. Thanks to all who help to prepare the food and activity.

July 19 – “Sabbath Day Away.” All are invited to take the Sunday for reflection and time away from First UCC. Both Jimmy and Pastor Dan are away so the Church Board agreed that this summer respite would be a good time for the congregants to reflect on ways that First UCC is their place of worship and life of faith.

July 26 – Congregational Meeting. All groups are invited to submit their plans for the upcoming year. Our church calendar year is now January – December. We will have a budget to present to the congregation and we will discuss some building plans. These include the installation of handicap-accessible doors, parking lot upgrades, building updates, and a new audio/visual system for the church. These will be discussed and voted on at the meeting.



What's the Buzz? – Church Music, Media, and Faith Formation

Around this time last year Dan started bringing up my sabbatical, asking: “when are you taking off? For how long? What does church life look like during that time? Who will cover music, PowerPoint, and socials when you’re away?” All great questions but I remember thinking, I just reached my four-year anniversary and he’s wanting to plan when I’ll be away after my fifth? Before I could speak this out loud, Dan followed up his questions with “it’ll be here before you know it...” Well, he was right. I blinked, and as of July 1st, I have served as First UCC’s Director of Music, Media, and Faith Formation for five years. It is crazy to think that I have been in this position for as long as I was in education at Ursuline Academy. How time flies!

To answer Dan’s initial question, my sabbatical begins Monday, July 13th and I will be away until Tuesday, September 8th. I’m excited to bring two final special music guests to the sanctuary before I leave – Ethan Kuchta on July 5th and Jennie Malone on the 12th. Ethan was first here during our *Les Misérables* service in 2025. His powerful, tenor-baritone voice has been heard in theaters across Ohio and northern Kentucky, and he will perform moving works in our sanctuary that morning. Jennie is a beloved friend who has been to First UCC many times, often with her husband Brian, and her gentle voice will sing me into a wonderful time away.

Covering music while I am gone is a handful of talented musicians we all know and love. Marion Peraza and her son, Eli Webb, will be with us on July 26th. Remember: there is no service at First UCC on July 19th – for more on that, read Pastor Dan’s article. Cellist Bryce Kessler and our beloved Tricia Lenhof rotate Sundays throughout the month of August, with Bryce here on the 2nd, 16th, and 30th, and Tricia on the 9th and 23rd. On Labor Day weekend, we are delighted to have Dave Hawkins leading the music that Sunday, September 6th.

I want to thank Mason and Chris Baldwin for their continued efforts setting up and running Facebook Live and the PowerPoint during services throughout the summer. When the choir returns this fall, we will be needing technology help! Please talk to me, Pastor Dan, or June Bronnert if you would like to help – even on a once-a-month rotation! I also want to thank Sammi Asplan for taking on creating the PowerPoint presentation each week. She will

work with Dan and Kim to ensure the digital display and bulletin match up seamlessly. Thanks again, Mason, Chris, and Sammi!

Although they will not be going entirely inactive while I am away, you will notice a lot less activity on the church's social media accounts and website. Dan and Amy will continue to post Sunrise Salutations every Wednesday, and Dan has said he will make an occasion post as he sees fit. On the website, instead of the main page saying, "Watch Our Latest Service," I will simply direct folks to view our Facebook page for services. In the background, I will continue to download every Sunday worship service and Sunrise Salutation stream, as Facebook deletes them after 30 days. So, no worries there – they will not be lost!

For those wondering about the sound system and new projectors, we are still in the process of finalizing details with the two companies. When the church iPad went missing, Dan and I saw this as an opportunity to look into upgrading the church's livestreaming capabilities. As Dan shared a few weeks ago, the iPad has been a wonderful pilot adventure since COVID, and it is time to invest in a more permanent solution. Once I have new quotes from both companies, the AV/tech committee will meet to talk through bids. The committee consists of myself, Milt Hauck, Sammi Asplan, Bev Bosse, Matt Brenner, and Geralyn Curtis. These wonderful folks will see that progress is made while I am away. It is my hope to have the AV/tech committee share significant updates regarding cost and a timeline at the congregational meeting on July 26th.

I want to end this article with a thank you. It has been an incredible five years of love, growth, change, and many exciting things at First UCC. Countless wonderful memories have been made in my short time here, and I know we have hundreds of thousands of great ones still to make! I am looking forward to my extended time away to relax and refresh, but I am also excited for what's to come when I return in the fall. Thank you, all, for letting me be a small part of church life at First UCC.

Have a great summer!

Jimmy

Please Keep in Prayer

Amanda and family (daughter of Hilda Faulkner)

Blake Webb (friend of Jackie Smith)

Bill Mayer (member)

Carolyn Bruckmann (friend of the church)

Carolyn Hocker (Kelsey George's Grandmother)

Charlene Jones (sister of Jackie Smith)

Charlie (friend of Herb Brookbank)

Chelsea and Sophia (friends of Pam, Hilda Faulkner's friend)

Christi Simmons (friend of Michelle Richards)

Christine White (friend of Jackie Smith)

Cindy & Mark Wolf (friends of the Colding's)

Cody (son-in-law of Suwanna Kirkman)

Daisy (friend of Hannah Steinhard)

Darrell Copenhaver (member)

Darryl P. and Mickey P. (cousins of Bev Bosse)

Dennis & Linda Ernst (cousin of Kim Ogden)

Diane Ripley (friend of the Kirkman's)

Dorothy (aunt of Suwanna Kirkman)

Elaine Lewis (Jackie Smith's granddaughter)

Eric Stacy (friend of the Steinhard's and Sehlhorst's)

Family of George Frazer (neighbor and friend of the Kirkman Family)

Family and friends of Jackie Smith

Family of Terrence Stern-Enzi, "Tt" (co-worker of Gina Kern)

Haley (friend of the Copenhaver's)

Jackie Smith (member)

Jim & Carol Bitzenhofer (members)

John Faulkner (son of Hilda Faulkner)

Karen (friend of Diane Burger)

Katie and family (daughter of Bernice and Terry Morgan, friends of the church)

Laura Hauck (member)

Lucille Isaacs (member)
Lynne (friend of the church)
Marty (nephew of Hilda Faulkner)
Marvin Stamper (employee at C.M. Meyer & Assoc.)
Maryjo O'Brien (friend of Michelle Richards)
Michelle M. (cousin of Bev Bosse)
Nancy Whitaker (member)
Pam and family (friends of Hilda Faulkner)
Pastor Debbie Gamble (friend of Hilda Faulkner and CAIN)
Pat Froehle (member)
Ramon (grandson of Hilda Faulkner)
Ron Cummins (dear friend of Amanda Faulkner)
Sandy Echols (member)
Sharon Kazee (prayer asked from Sandy Echols)
Stephanie (close friend of Mary Day & family)
Stephanie and family (at the loss of Stephanie's mother)
Su H. (friend of Bev Bosse)
Suwanna Kirkman (daughter-in-law of Ron Kirkman)
Teri Lynn Stackhouse (member)
Thomas (nephew of Hilda's friend, Pam)
Tina Maxwell (Sue Bilz' best friend)
Vicki Thorner (Sue Bilz' cousin)
Walt & Bobbie Roberts (uncle & aunt of Suwanna Kirkman)
Whiting Family (cousins of the Krebs Family)



Anniversaries & Birthdays

Anniversaries

- 07/08 – David & Vicki Schaefer
- 07/10 – Darrell & Laura Copenhaver (40th)
- 07/23 – Joe & Sue Bilz

Birthdays

- 07/06 – Jace Runck
- 07/07 – Brennan Newhouse
- 07/07 – Terri Stang
- 07/18 – Scot Armstrong
- 07/21 – Linda Krebs
- 07/25 – Ed Bosse

FYI

Reminder that Pizza with the Pastor is the first Sunday of the month. Dan and Amy will host on July 5th. First-timers always have a seat at the table – simply contact the church office or Pastor Dan or Amy to reserve a spot. Usually there's room for 13, but they can always make room for more.

**First UCC Church Board Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2026 (In-Person & Zoom)**

In attendance: Tom Shelton, Milt Hauck, June Bronert, Bruce Steinhard, Jean Krebs, Gail Bauknecht, Ed Bosse, Bill Henrich, Bev Smith, Sammi Asplan

Treasurer: Christy Meyer (Treasurer)

Pastor: Dan Weyand-Geise

Excused:

- I. **Call to Order** -- Tom called the meeting to order.
- II. **Devotion** -- Pastor Dan asked us to think about women who we looked up to or honored? All members shared about the woman who they were influenced by.
- III. **Treasurer’s Report (Christy):** The April reports were accepted, and approval was given to pay May expenses.

Motion: Bill Second: Bev Accepted: All in favor

Bills –

Motion: Milt Second: Bruce Accepted: All in favor

- IV. **Recording Secretary’s Report (Bruce)** – The April report was accepted with one correction. Brad K. excused.

DOORS - PLEASE SECURE ALL DOORS AFTER ANY GATHERING.

June asked, “Is there a recommendation from the Facilities Committee for solving this issue so we do not have to discuss this again?” They will discuss this at their meeting.

Motion: Milt Second: Bill Accepted: All in favor

V. **Financial Secretary's Report (Jean) – See Packet**

Automatic Doors - \$4,000.00 donation given for the doors

Motion: Bruce

Second: Jean

Accepted: All in favor

VI. **Pastor's Report** – Pastor Dan submitted his report to the Church Board. Report was received.

VII. **Committee Reports**

Endowment – Ed Bosse reported on the Endowment, which showed some growth in the last quarter. Report was received by the Board.

Pastoral Relations – May 26th meeting.

Youth – June still working on getting people together.

Facilities

- Projects list per Ed
- Paving and Lining

Motion: Gail

Second: Bev

Accepted: All in favor

Audit – meeting in June

Mission – Bruce asked about whether we want to continue with Blood Drives at the church. Most members agreed it was time to discontinue.

- **Music (Jean)** – Summer musicians are lined up. Looking forward to another great summer. Jimmy's sabbatical begins July 13.
- **Budget (Jean)** – Congregational meeting July 26. Budget will be presented and discussed.

- **Facilities** – No pictures are needed per the Insurance Company. We might want to have pictures of things for our own church inventory.

IX. Old Business

- **Nominating (Milt)**
- **By-Laws (Bruce and Pastor Dan)** – The Constitution & By-Laws are available by contacting the office, Bruce Steinhard, or Pastor Dan.

X. New Business – Bruce told the members the word “Geminde” on the one stone from the old church meant “Gathered Community.”

XI. Adjournment

Moved: Bill

Seconded: Gail

Accepted: All in Favor

XII. Lord’s Prayer

Submitted by: J. Bruce Steinhard

Recording Secretary



Open & Affirming (ONA) Covenant of First United Church of Christ

We, the members of First United Church of Christ, welcome you...

- ♥ If you are Asian, Black, Brown, Hispanic, Native American, or White;
- ♥ If you are male, female, transgender, or gender non-conforming;
- ♥ If you are 3 years old, 33 years old, or 103 years old;
- ♥ If you are from just down the street, from across the country, or from another part of the globe;
- ♥ If you grew up at Hoffner Church, were confirmed in the Catholic Church, got married in a non-denominational church, worshipped in a synagogue or mosque, or have never attended a religious service;
- ♥ If you are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated, or partnered;
- ♥ If you are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or unsure of your sexuality;
- ♥ If you are a Democrat, Independent or Republican, affiliated with another political party or no party at all;
- ♥ If you have, or have had, addictions, phobias, or a criminal record;
- ♥ If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless;
- ♥ If you were baptized at First UCC, or are worshipping here for the first time;
- ♥ If you attend services every week, once a month, or once a year;
- ♥ If you have typical or atypical skills, no matter your abilities or disabilities;

However the rest of the world describes you, and however you describe yourself: You are a beloved child of God and are welcome at First UCC. Being fully welcome in our community here at First United Church of Christ means that as we keep the love of Christ at the center of all we do, our congregation will:

- ♥ Always seek to affirm the person that you are with loving hearts and open minds.
- ♥ Follow the way of Christ Jesus with you in loving and being loved by both God and neighbor, with the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.
- ♥ Support and encourage you in your ongoing spiritual and religious journey.
- ♥ Love you for the person you are by living out our denomination's promise that

“No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at First United Church of Christ.”

First United Church of Christ

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Kim Ogden, *Pastoral Administrator*

ext. 10

Church Board:

Tom Shelton, *President*

Milt Hauck, *Co-Vice President*

June Bronnert, *Co-Vice President*

Bruce Steinhard, *Recording Secretary*

Jean Krebs, *Financial Secretary*

Christy Meyer, *Church Treasurer*

Sammi Asplan

Gail Bauknecht

Ed Bosse

Bill Henrich

Beverly Smith



“God is still speaking.”

