



April 2018 Newsletter

Come join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at 9 am;

510 E. Broadway Ave, Medford, WI 54451

To contact Pastor Mary Jo Laabs, call: 715-351-0450 (cell phone); 715-748-3391 (church office)

Church website: www.uccmedford.org

believe417@gmail.com or cuccofmedford@gmail.com

Dear friends,

We have been truly blessed! The days of Lent and Holy Week have been filled with prayer and praise, snow and rain, more daylight and sunshine, birds twittering; gatherings of our church family and friends and families from all around the neighborhood, the State and beyond! Together, we have witnessed the Sacrament of Baptism as two children warmed our hearts with their excitement and splashing in the water of Baptism!

We have shared the celebration of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday, along with the Sacrament of Holy Communion here in our beautiful sanctuary. Not only here in this place, but in the United Church of Christ everywhere, we practice "open communion," where all who are present are invited to share the sacrament. (No questions asked; no age limits; no requirements.) We shared a Community Good Friday worship service with our brothers and sisters in faith. It was led by the Medford Clergy, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Holway. We have shared delicious soups, had coffee clutches, have eaten pancakes, eggs, sausage, egg-bakes and hot-cross buns. As always, in all ways, all have been welcomed here.

Many thanks to those who have lent a helping hand, who have read, donated food, cooked and served; prepared and served the Sacrament of Holy Communion; those who have set up tables, cleaned and vacuumed, scrubbed and polished the kitchen floor; who have shoveled, spread salt and dirt in the parking lot; who have changed the seasonal décor, watered the plants, made welcome signs and beautiful bulletin boards; who have played piano and have sung inspirational music.

This is the church, my friends! We are blessed to be members and friends of Community United Church of Christ, the "Red Brick Church," here in Medford.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on your life's journey,
you are welcome here at Community United Church of Christ.

You will be warmly welcomed again and again. I guarantee it!

God bless us, one and all,
Pastor Mary Jo

ASK PASTOR MARY JO...

“How old do you have to be to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion?”

This question has recently been raised. There has been a tradition in some of our churches, stemming from the Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational heritage of the United Church of Christ, that only Confirmed persons were to be allowed to take Communion.

Some of our churches acknowledge the practice that, at their parents' discretion, children may be allowed to receive Communion when they are ready. Some of our churches practice “first Communion,” where children of the same age are instructed in Sunday School

and then, receive the Sacrament together for the first time. Other congregations of the United Church of Christ simply uphold the tradition that all are welcome at the Communion Table.

There is, in the National United Church of Christ not ONE specific ruling concerning the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Sacrament, in itself, was instituted by Jesus on that night before he died, and, according to the scriptures: “The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" 1Corinthians 11:23-25

Our Church Council discussed this topic at our March meeting and agreed that if, we say “no matter who you are and where you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here” and if we say “all are welcome at the Communion Table,” then, everyone, of any age or religious affiliation, is invited to share the Sacrament of Holy Communion here at Community United Church of Christ, Medford, WI.

THANK YOU

I am coming up on the last Lay Academy session (year two). it has been such a journey but well worth it. Wonderful speakers, great study sessions amazed by how brilliant these people were. I have never been really good at assignments but I did manage to complete them all . I have learned so much . Challenged my personal beliefs, respect the difference in every body's beliefs even more. I have even more love for the Lord. I grew to love the UCC a whole lot more. Love my church.

Finally I would like to thank the church for the scholarship funds both for year one and year two. Hats off to you all.

Now, Am I going on to year 3 and year 4? I have a lot of thought to work through and prayers on that question. Probably. but not 100% sure.

THANK YOU!,

Michael Goen-Penney

Community United Church of Christ

Soup Supper

510 E Broadway Ave, Medford



Saturday, April 7th

4:00 PM –7:00 PM

Take outs available

Adults—\$8.00

Couples- \$15.00

Children 5-12—\$4.00

Children 4 & under free

**All you can eat
homemade Soup,
Bread, Cheese,
Beverage and
Delicious Desserts!**

Bucket Raffles too!

**All proceeds will go to a new
roof for the Church.**



**Church Council
Meeting minutes
March 13, 2018**

OPENING President Randi H. called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. Pastor Mary Jo led a prayer of guidance.

PRESENT Randi H., Mike G-P, Jerry G-P, Dawn B., Pam O., Anna G., Pastor Mary Jo

GUESTS Holly G., Sandy F.

ABSENT Linda N., Joyce P., Gail P., Sandy K.

SECRETARY'S REPORT The minutes from the February 2018 meeting were emailed prior to tonight's meeting for preview. Correction to February 6 Minutes regarding parsonage furnace repair: "*Joyce P made a motion to pay for furnace repair from Building and Grounds Fund.*" Anna G. made a motion to accept the meeting minutes with the correction. Dawn B. seconded the motion.

TREASURER'S REPORT Mike G-P distributed copies of the February Income and Expenses Reports to Council members for review. Dawn B. expressed concern about the cost of the color printing and the Council members discussed possible ways to cut down on color copies. Jerry G-P. made a motion to accept the report. Anna G. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT Pastor Mary Jo distributed her February Pastor's Report and led us through some of the high points of her monthly activities, including Holy Week events, NWA Association Annual Meeting, Marilyn Scholl's funeral

GROUP AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee Jerry G-P and Gloria C. audited November, December, January, February General Fund checkbook registers for General Fund and SCRIP accounts. No discrepancies were found.

Building and Grounds Jerry G-P reports that Mark J. has been patching furnace room walls and the now looks dry.

Candlelight Guild Dawn B. announced that the Candlelight Guild Soup Supper will take place on April 7, 2018 with proceeds going to the Church Roof Fund.

Communications Team Anna G. brought up the fact that the church's website calendar is in error and reads "busy" for each event on the calendar. Pam O. suggested that the website calendar be fed from the Church Google calendar to resolve this issue. Mike G-P will populate a Church Google calendar and Pam will link to that calendar rather than her personal Google calendar to see if that resolves this issue.

Christian Ed Christian Ed will host Pancake Breakfast on Palm Sunday after the service, and Maizy and Sabrina Johnson will also be baptized on Palm Sunday.

OLD BUSINESS

Raise in Organist Salary Pam O. made a motion to raise organist pay from \$40 to \$50 per service, retroactive from January 1, 2018. Dawn B. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Church Fund-raising Idea The Council further discussed a "Buy a Sheet" Church Roof Fundraiser concept that was initially introduced by Dawn B. at the February Council Meeting. The concept: Members would be invited to purchase a sheet of metal roofing in memory or honor of people or special dates. It was estimated that approximately 200 sheets are required to complete the project and if each sheet could be dedicated at a cost of \$80, we could raise much if not all of the remaining \$16,000+ of the cost. Randi H. to work with B&G to determine total number of metal sheets to complete the project and get that number to Pam O. before the next meeting. Pam O. to write a draft letter to members regarding the fundraiser and present it Council and B&G committee on April 12 for consideration.

NEW BUSINESS

Blessing Box Hollyann G. and Sandy F., 7th Grade Girl Scouts, presented their concept to build, install and maintain a Blessing Box that would be placed at a convenient location outside the church.

The Blessing Box theme would be: "Take what you need. Bring what you can. All are blessed." Contributions to the Box include non-perishable foods, diapers, hygiene products

The girls presented the rationale for the Blessing Box, different design concepts and different logo concepts. The Council Members had the opportunity to ask the girls questions and express any concerns about the concept. Pastor Mary Jo suggested that the girls call Ebenezer UCC in Green Bay to get more information about their Blessing Box. Hollyann and Sandy will present more detailed plans and drawings to Council and B&G Committee at a later date to be determined. Jerry M make a motion to look further at the proposal of a Blessing Box. Anna G. seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Church Promotion Ideas Members discussed ideas about how to create visibility in the community for our church as a UCC church, since many people still refer to us as the Red Brick Church and do not understand our UCC denomination. Ideas included: 1) Updating the motel cards and posters with our new logo and re-attempt distribution. Pam O. to update cards and reattempt distribution. 2) Medford Café placemat advertising, bulletin board poster. No member assignment made. 3) Newspaper display ad with photo of church, our All Are Welcome message, and our website URL. Pam O. to check out costs for display advertising.

Confirmation and Holy Communion Issue Jerry G-P brought a member's concern to the Council regarding our current practice of allowing non-confirmed children participate in the Sacrament. The issue was discussed. Pastor Mary Jo will clarify the current practice with church members during upcoming services.

APRIL MEETING DATE The next meeting will be held at 5:00 pm on Thursday, April 12.

OTHER BUSINESS

New Deposit Slips Mike G-P created a new deposit slip that will clarify the amount of gifts dedicated to different funds.

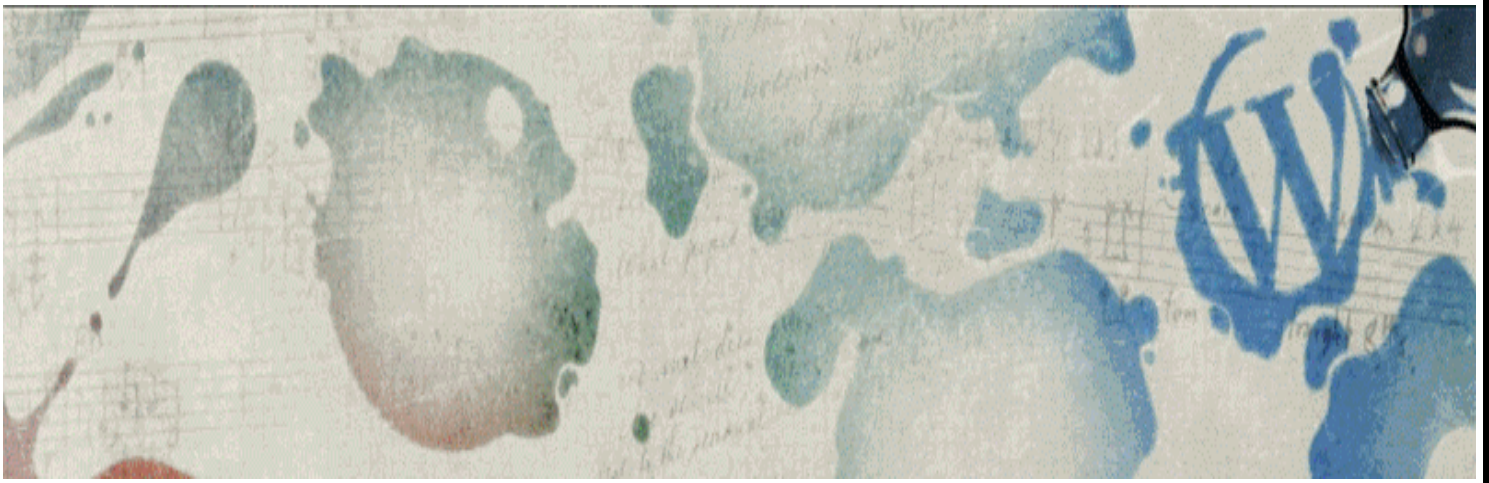
Pew Resurfacing Building and Grounds to contact JD Harris regarding an estimate/suggestions for resurfacing the veneer on the pews.

CLOSED SESSION

After reciting the Lord's Prayer with all in attendance, the Council members went into Closed Session at 7:20 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT Pam O. made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dawn B. seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pam O., Recording Secretary.



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 21, 2018

The Executive Committee of the Northwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference, United Church of Christ invites all churches (pastors, lay delegates, youth, retired clergy, and visitors) to the 56th Annual Meeting of the Association to be held at First Congregational UCC, 310 Broadway Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin on Saturday, April 21st from 9:30am to 3:30pm. The cost is \$10 (\$5 for Confirmation Students and Youth). The registration deadline is Friday, April 13th. An Annual Report will be sent to churches in the coming weeks.

It is with great joy we announce that Dr. Heather Ann Moody will be our keynote speaker. Dr. Moody is an enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin and an assistant professor of American Indian Studies at UW-Eau Claire where she teaches a variety of subjects within the discipline. She has a doctorate in education with an emphasis on teaching and learning. Dr. Moody has presented at national and regional levels on the topic of Native American curriculum. She has lead Domestic Intercultural Immersion experiences to Pine Ridge Reservation and this spring to northern Wisconsin Ojibwa communities. Dr. Moody also serves as a co-advisor for the Inter-Tribal Student Council organization at UW-Eau Claire. Her topic will be Getting to Know Our Neighbors, Past and Present. The Black River Falls, Hock UCC, has been invited to share their ministry and experiences as well. You won't want to miss these presentations!

Tell us your story! We will have an exhibition space available and we invite each church to display examples of how God is using your local congregation to be God's hands and heart in the world. If you are interested in "telling your story" and need some exhibition space, please contact Pam Braun at First Congregational UCC, Ea.

Claire (7158342668) or pamb@firstucceauclaire.org) with any requirement you will need for your exhibition space. We ask that you contact them well in advance of this meeting so everything will be ready for you before the morning of the meeting. Thank you. First Congregational UCC, Eau Claire has a user friendly app that you can download if you are interested (First UCC EC) and if you are planning on coming on Friday evening, you can find a listing of accommodations at go-wisconsin.com/Eau Claire/Hotels. We look forward to seeing you in Eau Claire on April 21st!

Open and Affirming (ONA)

In the coming months, you will be hearing more about Open and Affirming. Below is a brief summary of what Open and Affirming is and answers to some questions you may have.

Open and affirming. Open and Affirming (ONA) is an official designation of congregations and other settings in the Community United Church of Christ (UCC) affirming the full inclusion of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons (LGBT) in the church's life and ministry.



What is the definition of “Open and Affirming” (ONA)? Is it just one issue? An “Open and Affirming” setting of the CUCC (a local church, campus ministry, etc.) means that it has publicly declared that gay, lesbian, & bisexual (GLB) people (or those of all sexual orientations) are welcome in its full life and ministry (e.g. membership, leadership, employment, etc.). It bespeaks a spirit of hospitality and a willingness to live out that welcome in meaningful ways.

Q. What can I expect in an ONA church?

A. A community of faith where you and your family are safe!

Because each congregation in the Community United Church of Christ is independent, and therefore free to make its own decisions, there is a broad diversity of theology and practice in our tradition. In the UCC, there is no hierarchy that can impose uniformity on our churches. Each ONA congregation has independently adopted an Open and Affirming covenant after a journey of dialogue, study and prayer. There are differences between congregations, but generally, an ONA church:

1. is a safe space for open and honest conversation about human sexuality and gender identity.
2. encourages LGBT members to serve in lay and ordained leadership.
3. celebrates same-sex weddings.
4. celebrates the anniversaries of LGBT married and partnered couples.
5. advocates for marriage equality and LGBT civil rights.
6. is willing to host meetings of support groups like PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).
7. advertises that it is a safe space for LGBT and questioning youth.
8. participates as a group in the local LGBT Pride Parade.
9. celebrates ONA Sunday once a year and annually renews its ONA covenant.

MARCH FINANCES:

As of 3-28-2018

Income \$7,904.25

Expenses \$5,683.02

Backpack: program: \$200.10 (final)

APRIL NEWSLETTERS AND BULLETINS

Newsletters were given by Dennis and Linda Neumueller dedicated to all their grandchildren.

Bulletins were given
by Randy and Cindy Blair

*Thank
you*

Fellowship: Christian Ed

ROOF FINANCES

Church roof: \$22610.40

Garage: \$2,313.40

Steeple: \$14,331.78

Shed: \$1,093.24

Total cost of project: \$40,348.82

Balances on hand

CBF: \$2,095.78 as of 3/21/2018
(in Buildings and Grounds)

Buildings and Grounds: \$22,168.10

Total on hand: \$24,283.88

Needed for project: \$16,064.94

HOLY COMMUNION OUTREACH:

If you are unable to partake in Holy Communion during our regular worship service and would like to receive it in your home, hospital, etc., please contact either the Pastor directly: 715-351-0450 or call the church office at 715-748-3391

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST VALUES

LOVE

Right relationships define love. Love is a communal experience enacting love of neighbor, self, and God. Love has a narratable timeline; something happening drawing one out of oneself, and extending self. The community speaks love through a narration of their story including presence to both joy and pain in the midst of loving.

SPIRITUALITY/FAITH

Communities which are connected to something bigger than themselves, and the great cloud of witnesses (past, present, and future), while adding to the Christian story.

COMMUNITY

Gathering body of individuals that speaks to live out the teachings of Jesus Christ. Community means interdependence, connection, honoring of difference, with the equal distribution and sharing of power and resources for all.

JUSTICE

Justice speaks truth to power. Justice is what love looks like in public, and through the eyes of God. Justice creates opportunities for wholeness and health in individuals and communities. Justice is connected to the surrounding community in the building of coalitions and partnerships. Justice is intersectional; so the faith community is also facing outward. Justice ensures the voice of the voiceless and serves the underserved, inviting the tradition and wisdom of voices historically excluded and/or undervalued. Justice repairs the breaches, and restores right relationships. Justice is the equitable allocation of resources for God's beloved children.

CREATIVITY

The ministry takes a bold and innovative approach, and/or applies the old model in a new way to address a particular need within the community

CHURCH BUILDING FUND!

We have done it before. Let's do it again! Save dollar bills that have a C, B or F on them. We are saving for buildings and grounds projects! Roofing project!

About the 3 Great Loves Initiative

3 Great Loves is a denomination wide story telling initiative. Over the span of two years, we will collect and lift up the stories of our local churches and affiliates. We want to hear about the knitting clubs, the food pantries, the community meals, protest, letter writing campaigns and anything else your church or organization may be doing to create a just world for all. Nothing is too small. The work that is already being done is significant and greatly needed. Our hope is that this initiative, we will tell the story of how we are impacting and transforming the world as covenantal partners united in common purpose, vision, and mission.

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” 1 Corinthians 12:12-27



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH (through July)

The suggested offering date is Pentecost Sunday, May 20, 2018.

The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill on its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Most congregations will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 20, 2018.

Why use Scrip, you may ask?



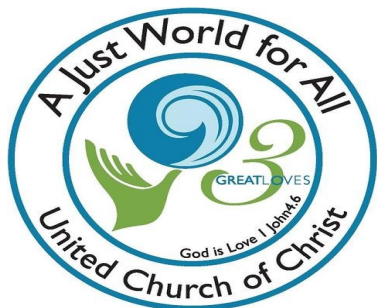
- *Scrip cost you no extra money.
- *Scrip makes it easy to live on a budget.
- *Scrip makes a great gift.
- *Scrip profits go to our Church.
- *We get a percentage of the cost of each Scrip card purchased. Stop in the Church office. The Scrip “volunteer” will be happy to special order other Scrip on Sunday for you. Also Arby’s scrip are

OUR CUCC MISSION:

The mission of this church: we are united in spirit and inspired by God’s grace. We welcome all, love all and seek justice for all.

DIGITAL NEWSLETTER:

You can receive this newsletter by email. If you would like to try the digital option, send an email to: cuccofmedford@gmail.com and ask to be added to the email newsletter list.



Break The Silence Sunday April 22, 2018

A time for the church to learn together about the realities of rape and sexual violence;

about ways to create a community where survivors can share their stories and receive support, hope, and love;

and to prayerfully consider ways in which they can be advocates for change in their communities, and around the world.

Resources for Worship

<http://www.breakthesilencesunday.org>



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Join the Patient Family Advisory Team at Aspirus Medford Hospital & Clinics. Help to improve patient experience. For more information call Volunteer Services at 715-748-8789 or download an application at: www.aspirus.org/MedfordVolunteers.

Page Turners

Our next book is The Second Mrs. Hockaday, by Susan Rivers. We will meet April 3rd at 6pm.



Let us pray...

Greg K, Teri, Judy, Bobbie, Harvey D, Lavern R, Dave K, Betty, Lucille, Shirley, Ginny, Phyllis, Marge, Lil, Gavin R, friends and family members; those anticipating medical testing; those recovering from surgery; those traveling; those serving our country here and abroad; leaders of our communities; our President, Medford faith communities, and our world.



PRAYER

O God, the refugee of the poor,
and the hope of the humble,
the salvation of the needy,
hear us as we pray for those who are worn by illness,
for all who are wronged and oppressed,
and for the weary and heavy-laden,
that they may be strengthened by your grace
and healed by your consolations.
Let the dayspring from on high
visit those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide their feet into the way of peace;
through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

If any questions should ever arise, please feel free to contact any of our Council members.

President- Randi Hirt (2021)

Vice President- Joyce Peterson (2021)

Recording Secretary- Pam Ouimette (2020)

Financial Sec.- Jerry Goen-Penney (2020)

Treasurer- Linda Neumueller (2019)

Dawn Brink (2019)

Sandy Kummer (2019)

Gail Paulson (2020)

Anna Grube (2021)



WE ARE REACHING OUT TO HELP

- Stepping Stones is a non-profit organization that provides free support services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Taylor County.
- The Backpack program sends food home for families in need on the weekends.



CANDLELIGHT GUILD MINUTES

MARCH 13, 2018

Let's Raise the Roof!!

The Candlelight Guild is hosting a Spring Soup Supper on Saturday, April 7th 4:00-7:00 pm. Serving all-you-can-eat homemade soups - Chili, Chicken Dumpling, Creamy Chicken Wild Rice and Taco along with cheese, crackers, rolls and desserts. We are also holding a bucket raffle with the drawing held on April 7th at 7:00 pm. Proceeds from this event will go to the roofing project.

We have a sign-up sheet posted in fellowship hall if you are interested in purchasing soup ingredients, baking or working at this event.

Please join us on Wednesday, April 11th at 5:30 for the next CG meeting.

PEOPLE THAT DONATED FLOWERS

Gloria Christianson in honor of Christiansen's and Rau's (Easter lily)

The Jentzsch Family in Memory of Paul and Hildergard Jentzsch, Audrey Jentzsch, and Sanford Erickson (3 Easter lily's)

The Family of Melvin Brink in memory of Melvin Brink (Easter lily)

Mike and Jerry Goen-Penney in memory of our parents who have passed away (Easter lily and a Begonia)

Dennis and Lori Grambort no in honor of or memory of (Easter Lily)

Mike and Sandy Kummer in memory of ones in heaven (Yellow daisy mum)

John and Gail Paulson in honor of all cancer survivors (Daisy mum)

Corrie Searles in honor of my family (Begonia)

Corrie Searle's in memory of my father (Herb Hall) (Daisy Mum)

Galen Searle's in memory of my grandparents (Katherine Gerstacker, Don Searle's, Betty Searle's) (Daisy mum)

Corrie Searle's in memory of my grandparents (Clarence and Eilien Anderson, Clayton and Betty Hall) (Daisy mum)

All the Searle's family in honor of all the military past and present – who have protected our freedom (Daisy mum)

Roger and Faith Higgins in memory of loved ones (Easter lily)



Thank You

**For your Generosity
And Donating to the
Meals in a Backpack Program**

The SOAR Program now uses their class time to fill backpacks with food to be sent home with elementary children who are in need for additional food for the weekend.

We have expanded our program to the Middle School so we can help more families. We are now services 21 area families with a total 55 children in the Medford area. Your help is greatly appreciated!

If you would like more information about either program please contact Nikki Gripenrog at 715-748-4620 Ext 551 or gripeni@medford.k12.wi.us



April 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Sunrise service 6:42 am Breakfast 745 and worship at 900 Communion	2 Mike 9-1	3 Mike 9-1 B.S. 4pm Page Turners 6pm AA/Alanon 7pm	4 Mike 9-1 EDA 7pm Conf. 4-530	5 Mike 9-1 AA 7pm	6 NA 7pm	7 Soup supper 4-7
8	9 Mike 9-1	10 Mike 9-1 AA/Alanon 7pm	11 Mike 9-1 Guild 530 pm	12 Mike 9-1 Council 5pm wear black AA 7pm	13 NA 7pm	14
15	16 Mike 9-1	17 Mike 9-1 AA/Alanon 7pm	18 Mike 9-1 Conf. 4-530	19 Mike 9-1 AA 7pm	20 NA 7pm	21 NWA Annual meeting 930 to 330pm
22 Last day of Sunday School Break the Silence	23 Mike 9-1	24 Mike 9-1 AA/Alanon 7pm	25 Mike 9-1	26 Mike 9-1 AA 7 pm	27 NA 7 pm	28 Gloria and Marlene, sign classes 9-4
29	30 Mike 9-1 Strengthen the church begins					

Community United Church of Christ
510 E. Broadway Avenue
Medford, Wisconsin 54451



**Wherever you are
on your life's journey,
you are welcome here!**

**Worship:
9 am each Sunday**

*** Holy**

**Communion:
the first Sunday**