



January 2021 Newsletter

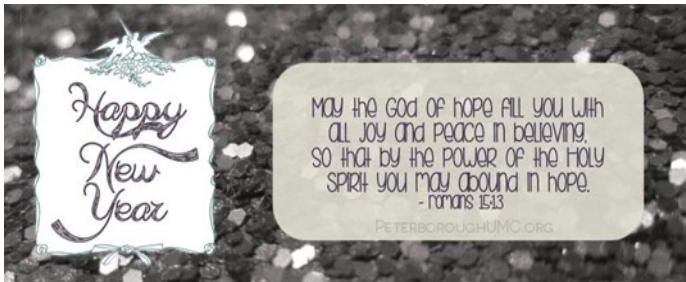
Come join us for Worship on Sunday mornings at uccmedford.org/media

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 brothers and sisters in Christ,

As we turn our faces to the new year and our backs to the *old*...we still can't help but remember where we've been; (not too many places other than home?) what we have been doing; (great things or nothing?) and how we intend to do better. (New Years resolutions, anyone?)

How will we use our time in the coming days? Someone has suggested that we should start the new year by putting on our "Sunday" faces...you know, the ones we used to bring with us into the church building in the "good old days." I would add that we should do our best NOT to dwell on what we do not have but, to focus on what we DO HAVE and what we CAN DO...starting right now.

I sincerely want you to know that I miss those "good old days," too...I miss every one of you!
If the walls inside the church building could speak, they would be saying the same thing!

Just so you know: we will continue to worship online until the WI Conference UCC, along with the WI Council of Churches and our own Church Council agree that it is safe to gather together again. When that time comes, we want to be able to sing and pray again, *out loud*; to be able to safely share Holy Communion and "pass the peace;" to be able to gather in the Fellowship Hall for coffee hour. We want our children to be safe in Sunday School and we want to be able to celebrate with Ben, Zeke, Toryn and Audrey as they are confirmed! We want to be able to be together, in person, for all meetings and to be able to invite AA, Al Anon, NA and EDA to return for their meetings upstairs.

Meanwhile, as per the Church Council's decision, we will not be gathering for any reason in the church building other than recording weekly services, taking care of secretarial duties, cleaning the building and watering plants. Those of us who carry out those responsibilities are: Mike, Jerry, Pam, John, Gail and I. We are safely distanced and masked following the CDC guidelines.

Our outreach into the community has not been totally discontinued. There are some among us who have faithfully kept our Blessing Box full and have donated to the efforts of Community Mission with Jesus; who have gathered and delivered coats to the Kiwanis Club boxes, even though we have not been a "distribution point" this year. The Five Practices Team is working on a 2021 "mission" to assist the needy in Medford.

What plans do you have? What resolutions? Think of one now and ask for God's help to accomplish it in this new year. Then, listen for the ways in which God will speak to you personally and as the "church." Little do we know about what we will be doing at this time next year! God knows it very well. Always has.

Author, Patrick Overton, once wrote: "When we walk to the edge of all the light we have and take a step into the darkness of the unknown; we must believe that one of two things will happen:
There will be something solid to stand on, or God will teach us to fly."

Please pray with me: Great and Gracious God, we offer you our thanks and praise for teaching us to “fly” this past year! We lift our prayers for each of the hurting and the grieving ones among us and ask you help as we step into your New Year with the intent to care for each other as you would have us care. Nudge us to embrace a greater commitment to keeping ourselves and all those around us safe. Let us endure the masking and the distancing, for as long as necessary...all the while, praying in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Contemporary English Version "Everything Has Its Time"

3 Everything on earth has its own time and its own season. 2 There is a time for birth and death, planting and reaping, 3 for killing and healing, destroying and building, 4 for crying and laughing, weeping and dancing, 5 for throwing stones and gathering stones, embracing and parting. 6 There is a time for finding and losing, keeping and giving, 7 for tearing and sewing, listening and speaking. 8 There is also a time for love and hate, for war and peace.

God bless us one and all in this new time... 2021,

Pastor Mary L

Lets get together “virtually”! Save these dates:



Zoom Faith Formation Time with Children, Sundays at 9:30

Zoom Coffee and Conversation, Sundays at 10

Zoom Office Hours (Pastor MJ) Thursdays, 10-12

Zoom Cerebration, Tuesdays at 6:30, beginning, Jan 5-Feb 16

Zoom Church Council Meeting, Jan.14 at 5

Zoom Page Turners, Jan 18:6:30

Zoom CUCC Annual Meeting, 10:30, Jan. 31

Feeling Generous? If you feel so moved, Taylor County Supportive Housing is in need of donations for a future homeless shelter in Medford. (monetary and other needs. Ask Pastor how to donate items.)



Did you know that if you order on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), you can pick a non-profit organization to receive a portion of your purchase at no extra cost to you? Go to smile.amazon.com

next time you place an order. Taylor County Supportive Housing is one of the numerous “non-profits” that you can choose.



COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST COUNCIL MINUTES December 10, 2020

OPENING Randi H. called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and Pastor Mary Jo led the group in a prayer of guidance.

PRESENT Mike G.-P., Jerry G.-P., Scott K., Randy H., Pastor MJ, Mark J., Pam O.

ABSENT Paula J., Gloria C., Anna G., Joyce P.

CONSENT AGENDA

SECRETARY'S REPORT The minutes from the November 2020 meeting were emailed prior to the meeting for preview per the Consent Agenda method. Scott K. made a motion to accept the minutes. Pam O. seconded the motion. Motion passed without discussion.

TREASURER'S REPORT The November 2020 Treasurer's Reports were emailed prior to the meeting for preview per the Consent Agenda method. Jerry G.-P. made motion to accept the report. Mark J. seconded the motion. Motion passed without discussion.

PASTOR'S REPORT The November 2020 Pastor Reports were distributed to the Council Members for review. Scott K. made a motion to accept the October report. Pam O. seconded the motion. Motion passed without discussion.

GROUP AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

No report this month.

FIVE PRACTICES

Next meeting Tuesday, December 15, 2021 at 6:30 pm via Zoom

Advent Bags delivered to members by Five Practice Team members on prior to Thanksgiving.

The Christmas Eve radio service is scheduled for 6:00 pm. Candlelight Guild is paying for the broadcast: Thanks from the Council to the Candlelight Guild.

CHRISTIAN ED

- Pastor M.J. reported that we will be continuing the Sunday morning Faith Formation sessions.

Pastor M.J. will contact Christian Ed to ask if they will be giving Christmas gifts to our Sunday School students.

Need to get new sizes of the Confirmands to see if T-shirts still fit them. Plan to give their bags to them at Christmas.

CANDLELIGHT GUILD

- No report this month.

Randi H. will send a thank you card to the Guild for paying for the Christmas Eve service broadcast.

OLD BUSINESS

None discussed

NEW BUSINESS

Six QuikTrip Scrip Cards expire - \$120. Decided to put those cards in the Blessing Box one at a time.

Randi H. brought up the fact that we need three Council Members this year and we are continuing to look for potential members.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 14, 2020 at 5 p.m. via ZOOM.

CLOSED SESSION After reciting the Lord's Prayer, the Council members went directly into Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT Pam O. made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Scott K. seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Pam O., Recording Secretary

Dear UCCI Friends and Family –

No ditty today ... just straight up thanks and gratitude! Thanks that the United Church Camps, Inc. (UCCI) "Keep the Fires Burning" - Matching Gift Campaign is experiencing amazing support and response!

It's worth noting a few factoids:

- The UCCI Board is 100% behind this campaign and have given over \$20,000 on their own!
- The non-furloughed UCCI Staff is 100% behind this campaign ... and several of the furloughed folks have given too!
- Giving Tuesday netted over \$10,000 in one day!
- We are over halfway to our \$200,000 match and on target to hit our mark of \$400,000 by the end of the year!
- Numerous people have donated in memory of loved ones and MANY are giving donations to UCCI as Christmas gifts! Hint hint
- Several churches and Associations are converting money they would have used for Scholarship in 2020 to a gift for the campaign!

You get the picture. People are generous and we are grateful. This matching gift campaign was made possible by the generosity of a retired couple that believes in the ministry found at Cedar Valley, Moon Beach, and Pilgrim Center. We are thankful for their vision and for your support.

Peace,

Glenn

Lakeland University Offers Outstanding Scholarship Opportunity



Are you looking for ways to get involved in a religious studies community during your time at college? Do you have a passion to speak out for justice in our communities and world? Lakeland University offers a full-tuition scholarship competition opportunity to students with these interests; it's called our Ulrich Scholars Scholarship Program. The Ulrich Scholarship is named after the long-time and beloved Lakeland Professor of Philosophy and Religion, Reinhard Ulrich.

Each year, nine Ulrich Scholars earn a \$20,000 per year scholarship to attend Lakeland University. We also offer one student a full-tuition award. Students who receive these awards major or minor in Religion, participate in Ulrich Scholars events throughout the year (including lectures, retreats, community service, and visits to various religious communities), and lead a social justice initiative on or off campus in their junior or senior years.

If this sounds interesting, we would love to have you learn more about the Ulrich Scholars Program. You may apply for the opportunity at lakeland.edu/portal. The full-tuition competition is set to take place on January 29, 2021. Applicants must submit their materials by January 22, 2021.

Don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about this opportunity! Contact Dr. Karl Kuhn at kuhnka@lakeland.edu or admissions@lakeland.edu.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, lives are literally changed daily. Your support provides clean water, food, medicines, shelter, healthcare, education and so much more. In 2018, the OGHS offering was just under \$2 million. An additional \$1.5 million was given to the United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries in support of specific disaster relief efforts.



You can find OGHS on the web: www.ucc.org/oghs, and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

1. **What is One Great Hour of Sharing®?** One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.
2. **Who participates in One Great Hour of Sharing?** Several Christian denominations - *American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and Church World Service* work together to develop common promotional materials thereby sharing ideas, costs, and a commitment to faithful service. Each denomination receives and manages its respective OGHS offering.
3. **How is the United Church of Christ's offering used?** 60 percent of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives, including annual support for missionaries. Currently, there are 2 OGHS supported missionaries and 1 Global Mission Intern working in disaster relief, health care, education, sustainable agricultural development, and refugee support. The offering also funds disaster preparedness and response, and disaster-related volunteer initiatives in the U.S.
4. **Where and how are OGHS funds shared?** The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs in the world. Specifically, we support sustainable development and refugee needs internationally and provide disaster relief and immigration assistance in the United States. The United Church of Christ responds as a member of organizations such as Church World Service and the ACT Alliance. We also support the direct mission efforts of churches and church-based organizations that the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have direct partnerships with through Global Ministries. Nearly one-fifth of the UCC's OGHS offering is shared through Church World Service to support refugee, and disaster programs worldwide.
5. **How many dollars are given to the UCC's OGHS offering?** In 2018, the OGHS offering received just under \$2 million. Nearly sixty-five percent of UCC congregations participate annually.
6. **What percentage of OGHS donations are used directly for the mission?** On average, of every dollar given to One Great Hour of Sharing, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming; and 5 cents for interpretation materials. The associated administrative costs are paid by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission National Basic Support.
7. **How are decisions made to fund the various projects?** Most of the expenditures are put into the budget to support long-term sustainable development. All funding is reviewed and monitored by a leadership committee that also reviews grant requests for long-term disaster rehabilitation initiatives.
8. **How can I contribute to One Great Hour of Sharing?** *The OGHS special mission offering is received through local UCC congregations and all UCC members are encouraged to participate in this way. Local churches should forward their gifts to their conference office and all gifts are then forwarded to the United Church of Christ, Financial Services 6th Floor, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100.*

For more information, contact our office at oghs@ucc.org or at 216-736-3215.

NEED FOOD? * If you know of anyone who would benefit from a little help with groceries?
Please share this information:

***Indianhead Food Pantry** is open Tues, Wed- Friday from 9-2. Please wear a mask.
Food is being distributed by drive-up only. Address: 508 S 8th St (across from “Brass Rail”)

The Blessing Box outside our church’s back door has non-perishable food: open 24/7

Keep in mind that the temperatures will soon fall below freezing when you donate items
for the Blessing Box. Thank you!



Wear your commitment to justice on your sleeve.
Perfect for justice rallies, demonstrations or any
time to show others the UCC's commitment to a
just world for all.

Click here
to [order](#)

Frontline Faith



Dear UCCI Family –

The Sound of Music is one of my favorite Julie Andrews films. Andrews character Maria sings the Rodgers and Hammerstein song “My Favorite Things” to the Von Trapp children after they’re frightened by a thunderstorm in the middle of the night. This pandemic is the ultimate thunderstorm in the middle of the night! United Church Camps, Inc. (UCCI) doing business as Cedar Valley, Moon Beach, and Pilgrim Center had some beautiful momentum and sunny skies building as we entered 2020. We were coming off a successful Campital Campaign, expanding our ministry at Cedar Valley, and enjoying all-time highs of registrations. Then the great storm of 2020 ... worldwide pandemic. While we are proud to report that no one was infected, nor did anyone die, as a result of our decisions to suspend operations, the economic fallout has been rough.

So, with an apology to Rodgers and Hammerstein ... here’s hoping you find a little comfort in this little ditty:

Moon Beach’s sunsets and warm fires glowing
Fun things to do there in spite of the snowing
Deer, loons, and eagles all prancing about
These are a few of my favorite things
Night Owl gaming ... “And Me’s” a playing
Quilting and crafting and gaga pit gaming
Waterfront sailing and kayaks abound
PC is where all these fun things are found
Artistry programs and labyrinth walking
Plenty of spaces for painting and talking
Quiet reflection and friends all around
The Valley of Cedar is where they are found
When the world stops
When the hope fades
When I’m feeling scared
I simply remember our say-ca-red space
And then I don’t feel so bad!

Thank you for your continued support ... keep us in your heart ... wear your mask ... we will be together again soon!

Peace,

Glenn

Glenn Svetnicka – Executive Director UCCI

glenn@ucci.org



SAVE THE DATE

July 11-18, 2021

Click below for more information



General Synod 2021 will be taking place entirely online. Read a [welcome message](#) from Synod leadership, check out the [General Synod website](#), and mark your calendar for July 11-18, 2021, for General Synod! Registration opens January 1.

GIVE PLUS⁺

YOUR CHURCH GIVING APP

With GivePlus, you can quickly and easily give to your church using your smartphone. Enjoy the convenience of making credit or debit card donations as a guest user, or create an account to set up recurring donations and view your giving history. Either way, GivePlus offers a safe, secure way to make one-time or recurring contributions to your church. GivePlus is free to use and available for download at the App Store. If you have questions or would like to learn more, search our FAQs and check out our user guides below

FAQS



[Search now](#)

HOW TO



[Learn Now](#)



Go to the Apple
or Google Play and



Store

search "give plus church":click above to download

Newsfeeds

United Church News

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/UnitedChurchOfChrist>

Disaster Updates

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/disasterupdates>

Global Ministries News

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/globalministries>

Daily Bible Readings and Daily Devotional

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/uccdailydevotional>

Weekly Seeds

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/WeeklySeeds>

Generosity Forward

[Sign up](#) for the Generosity Forward Newsletter to ensure you don't miss future issues.

Scrip cards

Please give me a call (Mike) at 715-223-9403 or Pastor at 715-351-0450 to make arrangements for pick-up during this challenging time.

Shopping?

Why not use SCRIP?

SCRIP cards make nice gifts.

Our Church gets a percentage of the cost of each SCRIP card purchased.

Call the Church office, 715-748-3391 to order SCRIP. Arby's \$140.00, Foreman's \$90.00, Subway \$80.00, County Market \$1800.00, Wal-Mart \$250.00 Hardees, Fleet Farm \$75.00.



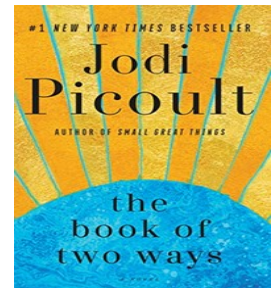
PAGE TURNERS

Our December/January read is "the book of two ways"; Jodi Picoult. Page turners will be meeting via Zoom on 01/18/2021 at 6:30 pm. Click on book to download

Click below to join Book club Gathering

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89508864018?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89508864018?pwd=eWtxYnRiRDeraMFFeUVaa3RWMohTUT09#success)

[pwd=eWtxYnRiRDeraMFFeUVaa3RWMohTUT09#success](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89508864018?pwd=eWtxYnRiRDeraMFFeUVaa3RWMohTUT09#success)



Dear friends,

OUR Mission Statement:

As an open-minded and inclusive community of faith, Community United Church of Christ, Medford, WI, welcomes everyone as Jesus would.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are the church – an open and affirming community in which diversity is celebrated as an asset and fully embraced into our life, leadership, ministry, community, worship, rites, sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings without qualification or discrimination because of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, or sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

It is our mission to serve, to pray, to love, and to hold true to these words:

“No matter who you are and where you are on your life’s journey, you are welcome here.”

LET US PRAY...

For those with health concerns: friends and family; those anticipating medical testing; those at home recovering from surgery; for those who are suffering with the flu; those traveling; those serving our country here and abroad; leaders of our communities; our President, Medford faith communities, those who lives have been affected by fires, flood and hurricanes; those who have been separated from us by distance or difference of opinion; those who are grieving the loss of loved ones; the hungry and the homeless, that caring people will help them.

Prayer for a Happy New Year

May the Lord make my New Year a happy one...
Not by shielding me from sorrow and pain, but by strengthening me to bear it if it comes.
Not by making my path easy, but by making me sturdy enough to tread any path.
Not by taking hardship from me, but by taking all cowardice and fear from my heart as I meet hardships.
Not by granting me unbroken sunshine, but by keeping my face bright even in the shadows.
Not by making my life always pleasant, but by showing me where men and His cause need me most and by making me zealous to be there and to help ...
God, make my year a happy one

Click below to watch service

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfX4nda-CIY&feature=youtu.be>

Click below for coffee hour 10:00 Sundays

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83105711931?pwd=MGM5SDJGZzJydDZUSUpheTloYmJlUT09#success>

Be careful who you hate.

It could be someone you love.



Matthew 22:36-40

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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

President- Randi Hirt (2021)
Vice President- Joyce Peterson (2021)
Recording Secretary- Pam Ouimette (2023)
Financial Sec.- Jerry Goen-Penney (2023)
Treasurer- Scott Knoff (2022)
Gloria Christensen (2022)
Mark Jensen (2022)
Anna Grube (2021)
Paula Johnson (2023)



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

DECEMBER FINANCES:

As of 12-31-2020
Income \$ 10,935.00
Expenses \$ 5,705.61

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 <i>Zoom : Time w/ children,9:30 Coffee: 10</i>	4	5 <i>Cerebration "In Braving the Wilderness" via Zoom at 630pm</i>	6	7 <i>Pastors Zoom office hours 10-12</i>	8	9
10 <i>Zooms : Time w/ children,9:30 Coffee: 10</i>	11	12 <i>Cerebration "In Braving the Wilderness" via Zoom at 630pm</i>	13	14 <i>Pastors Zoom office hours 10-12 Council 500pm via Zoom</i>	15	16
17 <i>Zooms : Time w/ children,9:30 Coffee: 10</i>	18 <i>Page Turners via Zoom at 630pm</i>	19 <i>Cerebration "In Braving the Wilderness" via Zoom at 630pm</i>	20	21 <i>Pastors Zoom office hours 10-12</i>	22	23
24 <i>Zooms : Time w/ children,9:30 Coffee: 10</i>	25	26 <i>Cerebration "In Braving the Wilderness" via Zoom at 630pm</i>	27	28 <i>Pastors Zoom office hours 10-12</i>	29	30
31 <i>Zooms : Time w/ children,9:30 Coffee: 10 Annual meeting via Zoom at 10:00</i>						

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



Open and Affirming

“No matter who you are or
where you are on your life’s
journey, you are welcome
here.”



**Due to the Covid-19 pandemic
please be sure to check your
options in the calendar for
Worship and Sunday school
etc. Also you can listen to
Pastor’s sermons by clicking
below or by going to
uccmedford.org**