



Growing in Faith + Spirituality

CHURCH CHATTER

An Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ

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

August 2022



From the Pastor

Growing in faith and Spirituality...



Some questions that I have been pondering:
What have you done to grow your faith this summer?
Have you taken time to walk the Labyrinth?
Have you found time to listen to what God is saying to you?
Have you been to worship,
either in person or online?
Have you given out of your abundance,
so that our community of faith can continue to live into our mission?
Have you caught a firefly?
Have you stopped to smell the flowers?
Have you listened to music at the Lake?
Have you welcomed a new friend?
Have you read a book, or caught a fish,
or experienced a sunset?
What have you been doing this summer?

What have I been doing?

I have been pondering and meditating on how God, through the Holy Spirit, is calling me to help Vermilion United Church of Christ Congregational grow in faith and spirituality. I have been listening and breathing in God's love. I have been reading. I have been playing with my grandkids. I have spent time with my grown children. I have spent some time resting and rejuvenating, and there will be more of that. I have spent time renewing some friendships. I have spent time with God, letting go of hurts and opening myself up to listen. I have been finding and signing up for continuing education classes to help me grow. I have been praying. I have been helping to lead our congregation into new ways as we also find ways to keep some of the old. As I Corinthians 14:26c "Let all things be done for building up." We are called build up the community of faith, the body of Christ as we (Hebrews 13:1-2) "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Pastor Mindy



Moderator's Moment

Hospitality

During the worship service on July 17th, Pastor Mindy's message was on the scripture story of Mary and Martha, two sisters who demonstrate hospitality by welcoming Jesus into their home. This got me thinking: how do I show hospitality to others?

What does the Bible say about hospitality? *Philoxenia* is the Greek word for hospitality that is used in the New Testament. It literally means "Love for Strangers". Each time in the Bible that we are told to practice hospitality, God is commanding us to have and show love for one another. Love, of course, is a central theme of the Bible.

When a person shows hospitality to others, no payment or return favor is expected. Serving others without need for an exchange is a spiritual gift. It is an act that demonstrates Christ-like love to others.

Hospitality can be defined as "the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, and generous way." During His ministry, Jesus and His disciples depended on the hospitality of others as they ministered from town to town. The early Christians also depended on and received hospitality from others. Hospitality was a highly regarded virtue in ancient times.

Hospitality - showing love and caring for others - can certainly be found at our church.... just look around! We are Open and Affirming and welcome **all** people to worship with us. The Community Pantry is housed in our church. We continue to serve at Grace's Kitchen. Our Missions Committee is always hard at work putting our mission funds toward great causes that help those in need. The Sunset Shores Outreach Fund has certainly been a godsend to people in need of financial help. After a long hiatus, coffee hour - a time for fellowship with others - is back after the worship service on Sundays! (A big thank you to Diane Langham and Judy Klucas for getting it back up and running). The list goes on. I'm sure that many of our church members show hospitality to others quite often.

There is an opportunity coming up to show hospitality to others: the Random Acts of Kindness Day/Back to School Festival being held at our church on Sunday, August 14th. This event is for the community and free school supplies will be handed out. There will also be a face painter and snacks, as well. Please help spread the word to families in town!

If you are interested in donating school supplies for the Back to School Festival, please check the list in the eNews of what is needed (or you can call the office to check too!). Monetary donations will be accepted as well. Please note that the deadline for supplies and monetary donations is Sunday, August 7th.

The Bible calls us to pursue hospitality. We should use the gifts that we have received from God to serve others. How can you show God's love to others through hospitality?

Blessings-
Shelly



As a congregation of the United Church of Christ it is important to remind ourselves what we, as a denomination, hold as core beliefs. **What do we believe?**

We believe in the triune God: Creator, resurrected Christ, the sole Head of the church, and the Holy Spirit, who guides and brings about the creative and redemptive work of God in the world.

We believe that each person is unique and valuable. It is the will of God that every person belongs to a family of faith where they have a strong sense of being valued and loved.

We believe that each person is on a spiritual journey and that each of us is at a different stage of that journey.

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We believe that the persistent search for God produces an authentic relationship with God, engendering love, strengthening faith, dissolving guilt, and giving life purpose and direction.

We believe that all of the baptized 'belong body and soul to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' ***No matter who – no matter what – no matter where we are on life's journey – notwithstanding race, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, class or creed – we all belong to God and to one worldwide community of faith.*** All persons baptized – past, present and future – are connected to each other and to God through the sacrament of baptism. We baptize during worship when the community is present because baptism includes the community's promise of 'love, support and care' for the baptized – and we promise that we won't take it back – no matter where your journey leads you.

We believe that all people of faith are invited to join Christ at Christ's table for the sacrament of Communion. Just as many grains of wheat are gathered to make one loaf of bread and many grapes are gathered to make one cup of wine, we, the many people of God, are made one in the body of Christ, the church. The breaking of bread and the pouring of wine reminds us of the costliness of Christ's sacrifice and the discipleship to which we are all called. In the breaking of bread, we remember and celebrate Christ's presence among us along with a 'cloud of witnesses' – our ancestors, family and friends who have gone before us. It is a great mystery; we claim it by faith.

We believe the UCC is called to be a united and uniting church. "That they may all be one." (John 17:21) "In essentials–unity, in nonessentials–diversity, in all things–charity," These UCC mottos survive because they touch core values deep within us. The UCC has no rigid formulation of doctrine or attachment to creeds or structures. Its overarching creed is love. UCC pastors and teachers are known for their commitment to excellence in theological preparation, interpretation of the scripture and justice advocacy. Even so, love and unity in the midst of our diversity are our greatest assets.

We believe that God calls us to be servants in the service of others and to be good stewards of the earth's resources. 'To believe is to care; to care is to do.'

We believe that the UCC is called to be a prophetic church. As in the tradition of the prophets and apostles, God calls the church to speak truth to power, liberate the oppressed, care for the poor and comfort the afflicted.

We believe in the power of peace, and work for nonviolent solutions to local, national, and international problems. We are a people of possibility. In the UCC, members, congregations and structures have the breathing room to explore and to hear ... for after all, God is still speaking,...

Dollars and Sense

It is hard to believe that 2022 is half over!

Moving toward the end of 2022, the Finance Committee presents this information about our financial performance from January-June 2022.

Reflecting: Our budgeted total operating income of \$203,150 is comprised of Giving \$155,000 (76%), Nursery School \$32,850 (16%), Investment \$6,000 (3%), State Street rental \$7,800 (4%), and Building Rental and miscellaneous \$1,500 (<1%).

As of June 30:

Current Giving was \$7,000 *under* budget,
Nursery School *under* budget \$2,270 (keep in mind the school has income June-August), Investment income was \$3,460 *over* budget,
State Street rental was *at* budget Miscellaneous/Building rentals were *over* budget \$160.

Total operating expenses are budgeted at \$270,283 for the year and as of June 30, the total expenses were at 51% of budget. Of the items supported by operating income (wages, benefits, payroll tax liabilities, Diaconate (music and worship), Faith Formation, Finance, Council, Stewardship, Property, Administration, Outreach, DNS, Membership and Technology) 88% are between 44-54% of budget.

On June 30, the year-to-date income to expense is \$-41,948 which is \$8,388 over budget (\$-33,561) for this point in time.

Reviewing:

Who would have guessed that six months into the budget for 2022, inflation would be at 9%? gas would cost \$4-\$5 per gallon? supply chains broken? These issues are not the total cause of a reduction in giving but do influence the results.

Many members have not yet returned to "in church" worship but do participate from their homes. Many others, mostly unknown, worship with live streaming through our website, Facebook (591 viewers) or YouTube (91 subscribers). Although during the service all on-line viewers are given the opportunity to give, few do.

There also appears to be a generational shift in giving, members with a longer history in a church may give out of love and loyalty, while younger generations appear to give for a specific purpose or project and not for the organization.

Re-defining: During the next six months, the Finance committee will explore ways to connect and reach out to our on-line viewers; build relationships with our donors, monitor our expenses, and generate and maintain our church funds.

In addition, the committee is sending a recommendation to Council to form an ad hoc committee representative of our church membership, to develop short- and long-term financial plans and to present these plans to the congregation for approval. Suggested timeline January-June 2023.

We thank you for your continuing support, loyalty, and love for our church.

Finance Committee
Tim Fenton, Peter Hart, Judy Kernell, Rick VanDenBossche
Judy Klucas, Chair

p.s. You should have received the June statements by now. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or concerns.

...from the Gifts Committee

The Gifts Committee is a sub-committee of the Finance Committee. Members are Jim Estle, Judy Kernell, Jim Weber, Jim Innes, and Anne Stock. The committee recently met to determine the use of the money we receive each December from the Dawn Full Foundation. This year the amount was just over \$13,000. The Committee decided to put \$4000 into the Capital/Building Fund and use the rest for 2 projects under property: patching/restriping the parking lot and stripping/waxing the floors in Fellowship Hall, kitchen, DNS rooms, and hallways. If you have any questions, please call any of the above Committee members.

News & Notes

John E. Adkins and his brothers, Andy Aiello, Don Albright and family, Aunt Bette, Les Budinger, Emily, Eben Estle,

Gayle Farschman, Jacob, Nancy Konery, Greg Leidig, Dave Munger, Gretchen Neiding, Pilar Odenheim, Natalie Rhoades,

Valerie Sayre, Sue Reising Smith and family, Carolyn Strittmather, Aaron Urban, Rick Van Den Bossche, Olive Van Detta,

Ginny Wilkes, Zander Woodings, Leah Woodings-Ruble, Vicki Zacher



On Sunday, September 4, we will have a Hymn Sing so let us know your favorite hymns!

Of course, there's no guarantee they will all be included that day (unless we turn it into a 10-hour Hymn-Sing-A-Thon!) but you never know when they'll pop up to fit a liturgical theme throughout the year!

The Altar Committee would like to remind our members of the opportunity to provide altar flowers for Sunday morning worship. If you would like to donate flowers, contact the church office by phone (440-967-5212) or email (vermillionucc@gmail.com).

Please provide the date along with the dedication (in memory of, in honor of, etc.) and who the flowers are given by (individual, family, etc.) The office needs the information for the bulletin by 2pm on Tuesday and the flowers need to be at the church by 10am Sunday morning.

If you need flowers, Julie Wilson (440-752-9931) or Morgen Baker (440-308-6403) will be happy to help! If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Altar Committee - Jane Dean, Karen Howell, Judy Klucas or Diane Langham.

Thank you!

August Happenings

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Property @ 7	Moms Demand Action @ 6	Bible Study 9:30 Diaconate - 7	Missions 5:30 @ Pat's AA - GS	AA - FH	Chalk It Up! Hiroshima Day of Remembrance
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
WORSHIP 10:25 AA - FH	Bridge @ noon AA - FH	United Church Homes Diaconie Award	Bible Study 9:30	Scouts - FH AA - GS	COUNCIL DOCS DUE AA - FH	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
WORSHIP 10:25 Finance @ 9 RAKD 11:30-1:30 AA - FH	AA - FH		COUNCIL @ 7 Office Open 9-12	Scouts - FH AA - GS Office Open 9-12	AA - FH Office Open 9-12	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
WORSHIP 10:25 Rev. Brooker AA - FH	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Bridge @ noon AA - FH	Stewardship/ Membership @ 5:45		Scouts - FH AA - GS	NEWSLETTER AA - FH	
28	29	30	31			
OUTDOOR WORSHIP 10:25 AA - FH	AA - FH					

Birthdays

2	Jerry Kruszynski	11	Christine Ruetenik
	Miranda Lacefield	15	Sally Fox
4	Sophia Flemister	16	Jon Reising
	Megan Toth	19	Dave Eberhard
6	Ginger Cutcher	21	Glenn Coleman
	Annie Rossi	24	Judy Williams
7	AJ Lacefield	25	Danny Lehky
8	Cathy Zimmerman	26	Ian Cutcher
9	Mary Scott Clark	29	Kim McGuinn
10	Madelyn Cleaver	31	Debbie Schwensen
	Kevin Hanley		
	Kalynn Smith		

Anniversaries

4	Dianna & Jon Clark '84
	Kirsten & Michael Hormell 2007
5	Gayle & Ken Farschman '61
6	Morgen & Jake Baker 2011
11	Gara & Jim Jones '68
13	Mindy Quellhorst & Jeff Davis 2016
15	Kim & Steve Lewis '87
	Cindy & Frank Weeks '81
17	Sana & Tom Orphan '95
	Karin & Dave Rathbun '61
19	Karen & Larry Howell '72
	Julie & Brian Wilson '89

CHURCH CHATTER

A PEOPLE OF
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WELCOME



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NAME LABEL