



*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you,
you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*
John 15:5

**64th Annual Meeting of the
Wisconsin Conference UCC
April 10-11, 2026
Green Lake Conference Center**

Welcome to Annual Meeting for 2026

Thank you for joining us on the beautiful shores of Green Lake for the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference UCC. This year's theme, *Cultivating Community: Rooted in Christ and Bearing Fruit*, invites us to deepen our connections with one another and strengthen the shared ministry that unites our congregations across Wisconsin. Grounded in Christ, we are reminded that the vitality of the Church grows through relationships, through listening, learning, and supporting one another in faithful ministry. As we gather, we celebrate the many ways our congregations bear fruit in their communities and explore how we can collaborate more fully to expand our impact for justice, compassion, and renewal. Together, guided by the Holy Spirit, may we nurture a vibrant network of ministry, sharing wisdom, resources, and hope so that our churches continue to grow, serve, and bear good fruit for the sake of the world.

Annual Meeting Sponsors

Thank you to the following individuals who have generously contributed to the operating costs of the Annual Meeting:

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Vicki Warren

Holly Whitcomb

Bill Whitford

As of March 18

Updated list:



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Our First Responder: Jan Doleschal
(414) 708-7024

Thank you to all the volunteers who made the Annual Meeting possible!

Planning Committee

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe
The Rev. Lois Buchholz
Dr. Sheila Feay-Shaw
The Rev. Moira Finley
The Rev. Bob Gross
The Rev. Teresa Howell-Smith
Sue Kaiser
The Rev. David Kohls
The Rev. James Langreder
Carol Merriman
The Rev. Franz Rigert
The Rev. Emma Sancomb
The Rev. Patrick Schultz
Sandra Thompson

Volunteer Management

The Rev. Jeannie Douglas

Arts Committee

Dr. Sheila Feay-Shaw
The Rev. Bob Gross
Sue Kaiser
Dr. Steven Shaw

Worship Committee

The Rev. Jane Anderson
The Rev. Rachel Bauman
The Rev. Daniel Cooperrider
The Rev. Nicole Herda
The Rev. Andra Moran

Musicians

The Rev. Christopher Grundy
The Rev. Nathan Holst
The Rev. Andra Moran
The Rev. Jacob Nault
The Rev. Bryan Sirchio
Wisconsin Gospellers

Exhibition Management

The Rev. Phil Schneider

Volunteer Management

The Rev. Jeannie Douglas

Audio Visual Tech

The Rev. Laura Hawkins
Anne Tennes

PowerPoint Creation

Laura Scruton

Hospitality, Registration, Usher and other volunteers will be announced in the slides during the meeting.

General Information

Description of Art Installations

This year's art installation for the annual conference meeting is intended to highlight both the scripture from John 15, "I am the vine; you are the branches", as well as the conference theme 'Cultivating Community'. Since many of our Wisconsin churches include people who farm or garden, the arts committee wanted to utilize the seasons of our growing year to help illustrate the journey of our faith work.

In winter, grape vines may look like they are not active, but much is happening underground with nutrients being stored in the woody body of the vines and sent to the root system. While people may not see God's work within the vine, that work is important to the health and vitality of the coming seasons.

In Spring, the vines begin to show growth through the budding of leaves and fruit. The leaves will provide nourishment through photosynthesis so that the fruit which blooms will ripen with rich flavor. The beauty of the fruits of our ministries is sustained and thrives through the wealth of our gifts and talents.

During summer, the ministries that have been nurtured are in full bloom with the evidence of our handiwork visible all around us. We begin to harvest some of the fruits that are ready to be shared using what is needed for our own faith development, and moving beyond our church walls into our surrounding communities.

In the fall, we harvest and celebrate what God has granted to us as sustenance for the coming year, allowing some ideas which we have always done a certain way or which have not born fruit to fall away. As winter begins again, we prepare to prune away the old wood which will allow for new growth to emerge after the time of rest has passed and to renew our faith that God is at work in and through us all.

These ideas illustrate the cycle of grape vines, but just as we recognize and celebrate human diversity in our churches, we recognize that more than grapes are represented through the vines and branches. Plants that grow on vines which die off each year, must be replanted for a new season of growth. This process of choosing what to replant allows for change that can nurture new blooms, new fruits and new growth of

members and ministries. The strength and nourishment to sustain our work as the church, from one growing season to the next, happens because God is still speaking.

Business Meetings

Business Meetings are scheduled for Friday, April 10, from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and Saturday, April 11, from 1:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m. Business items requiring a vote will be presented during Friday’s meeting with an opportunity for questions and answers. Voting will take place during the second business meeting on Saturday, April 11. Please refer to the Business Meeting agendas on pages 29 and 30 of this guidebook. Voting procedures will be explained and instructions given during the meeting.

Evaluation

We value your feedback! Please complete the online Annual Meeting evaluation:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/wcucc-am-2026>



Exhibit Hall

The Exhibit Hall is located in Staughton Hall (lower level of Pillsbury) and will be open during the following times:

Friday, April 10: 11:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 11: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Coffee, tea and water will be available during open hours.

To view a full list of exhibitors, visit our website at www.wcucc.org/exhibitors.

First-Time Attendees

First-time attendees are encouraged to attend the First-Time Attendee Orientation Lunch on Friday, April 10. Attendees should go through the lunch line in the Kraft Centre Dining Room at 12:00 p.m. and proceed to the Mitchell Dining Room (a private dining room inside the Kraft Dining Room) for a short introduction to the meeting.

Golf Carts

Golf carts are available for those needing a ride between locations. Look for informational signs and drivers wearing yellow vests. Drivers will circle between Pillsbury, Roger Williams, Bauer, Kern, and Kraft during the following dates and times:

Friday, April 10: 10:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 11: 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Meals

All meals will take place in the Kraft Center Dining Room and meal tickets will be required for entry. All meal tickets had to be purchased by April 2. No tickets will be sold during the meeting.

Offerings

Friday’s offering will support “For Goodness Sake,” a vision for providing services to people, ending homelessness in the Chippewa Valley. For Goodness Sake funds strategic interventions that prevent homelessness and ensure long-term stability through housing solutions. Through its grants, For Goodness Sake encourages innovation and collaboration among non-profits working on housing stability.

Saturday’s offering will support the Racial Justice work of the Wisconsin Conference and the United Church of Christ. Our congregations, staff, and board of directors unite in working to understand and address systemic racism in our country. We’re added in this work by leaders like the Rev. Dr. Velda Love, Racial Justice Minister for the National Ministries of the UCC. Your contributions to this offering will further our Racial Justice commitments. With your support, we can create resources and provide education on anti-

racism. We can encourage and promote meaningful, insightful conversations within our congregations and communities. Your contributions can empower the next generation of advocates.

Text “WCUCC” to 73256 to give using your mobile device, or use the QR code below. This number will never send unsolicited texts to you. To cancel further messages, text STOP. If you need assistance with text giving, text HELP. Standard text message and data rates may apply. Privacy Policy - <https://legal.acst.com/privacy-policy>. Terms of Service - <https://legal.acst.com/terms-service-use>.



Photographs & Video Recording

The Wisconsin Conference UCC is photographing and video recording portions of the meeting. These photographs and video recordings may be used in publications or on the website. If you do not want to appear in a recording or have your photo used, please inform the Wisconsin Conference staff on site. Personal videotaping during Annual Meeting events is not allowed.

Registration

Please visit the registration desk upon arrival to collect your name badge and meeting materials. You will be required to wear your name badge during the meeting.

Registration Desk Hours and Locations:

Friday, April 10: 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Kraft Centre Lobby

Saturday, April 11: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Pillsbury Hall Foyer

Special Seating

Seating is available in Pillsbury for wheelchairs and those that have chemical sensitivities. Look for signs.

Racial Justice Lunch

The Prophetic Bridge: Crossing the Racial Divide through Dialogue

How are we called to be with one another? In a time marked by division and noise, people of faith are seeking ways to move beyond rhetoric and help co-create communities where all truly belong. For more than twenty years, Antiracism Community of Transformation has accompanied groups committed to reaching across differences and building authentic relationships. In this lunchtime workshop, participants will engage in a facilitated dialogue exploring how and why identities such as race, class, and nation of origin continue to divide us, and what it might take to more deeply and courageously engage those we have learned to perceive as Other.

Historical Committee Breakfast

The Conference Historical Committee invites you to join us in the tower room for breakfast on Saturday morning. In addition to honoring ordination and historic congregational anniversaries, we will enjoy a brief presentation by Rev. Jan Davis, "The Story of our Camps." Jan and Patricia Goldberg have been collecting and organizing materials about the Conference's camping program over the years, and we will get a glimpse of their discoveries.

United Theological Seminary (UTS) Alum Breakfast

We invite all UTS alumni and friends to gather for breakfast on Saturday, April 11 at 7:30 a.m. in the breakout room just off the Mitchell Dining Room. Join us to share a meal, connect, and enjoy some great UTS giveaways. We look forward to seeing you there.

Annual Meeting 2027

April 9-10, 2027, at Green Lake Conference Center.

Schedule-At-A-Glance

Friday, April 10

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Registration open	Kraft Centre lobby
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Golf cart driver training	Kraft driveway
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Free time	GLCC Property
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Exhibit Hall open	Staughton Hall
9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Usher/Hospitality Training	Roblee Lounge - Pillsbury
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Gathering music	Pillsbury
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Opening worship with the Rev. Daniel Cooperrider/Offering #1 “For Goodness Sake”	Pillsbury
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Business Meeting 1	Pillsbury (see page29)
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Break (Exhibit hall)	Staughton Hall
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	First-Time Attendee Orientation Lunch <i>Go through lunch line at 12:00 p.m.</i>	Mitchell Dining Room - Kraft
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Racial Justice Lunch - <i>Experiencing an Antiracism Dialogue Circle: What an Antiracism Dialogue Circle LOOKS and FEELS like</i>	Tower Dining Room - Kraft
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH	Kraft Centre Dining Room
1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.	<i>State of the Conference - The Rev. Franz Rigert</i>	Pillsbury
1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Transition time/Visit exhibits	Staughton Hall
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Wellness Hour 1/Break	
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Wellness: UCCI Arts & Crafts project	Pillsbury
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Wellness: Walk with John Helt	Meet outside Pillsbury
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Wellness: Meditation with Rachel Bauman	McGarvey meeting room: Roger Williams
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Wellness: Poetry Workshop with Julie Kramer	Crystal meeting room: Roger Williams
2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Transition time	
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Workshop session #1	Bauer Hall (see pages 12-15)
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Workshop session #2	Bauer Hall (see pages 15-19)
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	DINNER	Kraft Centre Dining Room
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	Plenary Session: Celebrations	Pillsbury
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Welcome Reception OR Bad River Documentary viewing with Q&A in Pillsbury	Staughton Hall or Pillsbury

Saturday, April 11

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	BREAKFAST	Kraft Centre Dining Room
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Historical Committee “The Story of Our Camps” breakfast - speaker Jan Davis	Tower Dining Room Kraft Centre
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	United (UTS) Seminary Alum Breakfast	Mitchell Dining Room Kraft Centre
8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Usher Training/Communion Training/Hospitality Training	Roblee Lounge - Pillsbury
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Pillsbury Hall Foyer

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Visit the Exhibit Hall	Staughton Hall
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open	Staughton Hall
9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Gathering music - Wisconsin Gospellers	Pillsbury
9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Opening Worship	Pillsbury
10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.	Keynote Address - Dr. Edith Guffey	Pillsbury
10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Transition time/Visit exhibits	Staughton Hall
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Wellness Hour 2 /Break (Exhibit Hall)	Various locations/Staughton Hall
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Wellness: Walk with Jeremy Hylen	Meet outside Pillsbury
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Wellness: Poetry Workshop with Julie Kramer	Crystal Meeting Room/Roger Williams
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH	Kraft Centre Dining Room
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Members-in-Discernment Lunch	Tower Dining Room - Kraft
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Catalyst Lunch	Mitchell Dining Room - Kraft
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Business Meeting 2	Pillsbury (see page 28)
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Transition time/Visit Exhibits	Bauer and Staughton Hall
2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Workshop Session #3	Bauer
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Closing Worship - the Rev. Nicole Herda and Offering #2 (Racial justice initiatives)	Pillsbury
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting/Dinner Please go through the line and meet in Tower	Tower Dining Room Kraft Centre Dining Room
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	DINNER	Kraft Centre Dining Room

Save the Date!

Annual Meeting
April 9-10, 2027
Green Lake Conference Center

Special Thanks to Our Musicians!

The **Rev. Christopher Grundy** is a songwriter, performer, recording artist, seminary professor, ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, and author of *Recovering Communion in a Violent World*. He currently serves as Academic Dean at Eden Theological Seminary which is fun, but it is also a very serious job. Christopher has a fantastic family and enjoys hanging with his wacky and adoring bandmates. When they are together, they laugh a lot. You can find his music on all streaming platforms (Spotify, Apple Music, etc.).

The **Rev. Nathan Holst** (he/they) is a musician, organizer, and pastor at St John's UCC on Madeline Island. They often play *Godzilla Tag* with their spouse and two young kids. One of their favorite things is jumping into Lake Superior or a deep well of musical improv.



Jacob, Andra, Bryan, Nathan and Christopher

The **Rev. Andra Moran** is a recording artist, writer, and worship pastor at The Bridge at Woodmont Christian Church in Nashville, Tenn. She is the author of *Brim: Creative Overflow in Worship Design*, and her studio albums are widely available. Please note that her songs are sung most often on Sundays.

The **Rev. Jacob Nault** is a songwriter, musician, and nerd who pastors Union-Congregational Church in Waupun. He also contributes music and liturgy to the board of UCC Disabilities Ministries. He loves specialty black coffee, smart homes, afternoon naps, and his fiancée, Saraphena.

The **Rev. Bryan Sirchio** is a songwriter, recording artist, producer, podcaster, and author of *The Six Marks of Progressive Christian Worship Music*. He serves as the pastor of McFarland UCC. Bryan is the founder and leader of the Convergence Music Project and wrangled Andra, Richard and Christopher into coming alongside him for its launch in 2010. Bryan's songs are beloved by many, and tackle nuanced theological perspectives with beauty, depth and heart. In addition to his work as a singer/songwriter, there are generations of children and their families who know every word to his kids albums, including "Bugs for Lunch," which teaches stories and concepts from the Bible through catchy melodies. Yuck, yuck, yuck. IYKYK.

The **Wisconsin Gospellers** will perform on Saturday at 9:15 a.m. in Pillsbury Hall. The Wisconsin Gospellers choir was founded in 2007 by Fritz West, with Martin Ulrich as musical director. Since that time, they've understood themselves as being called to share God's Good News through gospel music. Regular rehearsals and performances build bridges between communities across Wisconsin. They also support the partnership between the UCC and Germany's Union of Evangelical Churches (UEK), having participated in eight cross-cultural exchanges with German choirs.



Workshop Session Times and Locations

For workshops in Bauer Hall, when entering the building from the circle driveway, the Morehouse rooms are to your left, Beaty is straight ahead, and the other rooms are to the right down the hall. See map on page 67.

Workshop Locations: Friday, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Full workshop descriptions start on page 12

Renewing Our Preaching	Morehouse A (Bauer)
Ministering to Anxious Kids	Morehouse B (Bauer)
Grow Your Church: A Game Engaging the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Churches	Morehouse C (Bauer)
Healthy Conversations	Beaty (Bauer)
Dinner Church	Boddie (Bauer)
Navigating the ONA Process	Ladue (Bauer)
From Roots to Fruit: Nurturing Belonging and Curiosity at Camp	Lightbody (Bauer)

Workshop Locations: Friday, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Full workshop descriptions start on page 15

Cultivating an Aging Community in Grace	Morehouse A (Bauer)
Enhance your Faith and Ministry - for Lay Leaders	Morehouse B (Bauer)
Biases: A Loving Look	Morehouse C (Bauer)
Listening From the Heart: Bereaved Palestinians and Israelis Move Toward Reconciliation and Healing	Beaty (Bauer)
How You Can Be Immigrant Welcoming in 2026	Boddie (Bauer)
Beyond Acknowledgement - Developing Allyship with our Indigenous Neighbors	Ladue (Bauer)
Supporting our Transgender Brothers and Sisters	Lightbody (Bauer)

Workshop Sessions, Saturday, 2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Full workshop descriptions start on page 21

Using a Stages and Gates Process to Move from Vision to Implementation	Morehouse A (Bauer)
Starting a Dementia Day Program in Your Community	Morehouse B (Bauer)
Growing In the Way of Christ: Picture the Bible's KidLit	Morehouse C (Bauer)
What Does an Elephant have to do with Bullying	Beaty (Bauer)
Abiding in the Vine: Nurturing Resilient Leaders in Christ's Community	Boddie (Bauer)
Leadership for Cultivating Community: Nurturing Meaningful Ministries	Ladue (Bauer)
Day-by-Day Memory Cafe: Cultivating Community with Those Living with Memory Loss	Lightbody (Bauer)
Keynote Q&A with Dr. Edith Guffey	Pillsbury

Detailed Schedule

Friday, April 10

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Kraft Centre Lobby
8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Free time	GLCC property
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Golf cart driver training	Kraft Driveway
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open: <i>Coffee and water are available</i>	Staughton Hall
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Usher/Hospitality Training	Roblee Lounge - Pillsbury
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Gathering Music	Pillsbury
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Opening Worship and Offering #1 with the Rev. Daniel Cooperrider	Pillsbury

Daniel Cooperrider is a writer, ecotheologian, and pastor in the United Church of Christ. Daniel is co-founder and Convening Pastor of Flicker Wild Church, an outdoor spiritual community. Daniel is the author of Speak with the Earth and It Will Teach You: A Field Guide to the Bible, Gold Winner in the 2023 Nautilus Book Awards, and Live Each Season as It Passes: Re-Earthing Spiritual Practice (forthcoming, May 2026). Daniel and family are based on the edge of the Driftless area in Madison and in the Northwoods of Wisconsin.

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Business Meeting 1: See page 29	Pillsbury
11:30 p.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Break (Exhibit Hall)	Staughton Hall
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	First-Time Attendee Orientation Lunch <i>Go through lunch line at 12:00 p.m.</i>	Mitchell Dining Room - Kraft Centre
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Racial Justice Lunch - The Prophetic Bridge: Crossing the Racial Divide through Dialogue	Tower Dining Room - Kraft Centre

The ACT Circle brings us together to focus on “race” as an organizing principle and the ways it has shaped us and the ways we relate to others. In dialogue, through critical thinking and empowering each other to effect social change, we build understanding and commitment to un-do the internal and external structures that have shaped us.

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH	Kraft Centre Dining Room
1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	State of the Conference The Rev. Franz Rigert	Pillsbury

Conference Minister Franz Rigert will present his annual State of the Conference address entitled *Life in the Vineyard*. Using the metaphor from John 15:5 Franz will focus on several themes: spiritual rootedness, connecting to Christ, cultivating community, and bearing fruit. Franz will highlight several new initiatives in our conference life and celebrate vitality and resilience of our congregations in these challenging times.



The Rev. Franz Rigert has deep roots in Wisconsin, having been raised in Delavan, where his father served the Congregational United Church of Christ for over 30 years. In the fall of 2014 Franz was called to serve as the Wisconsin Conference Minister for the United Church of Christ. Prior to joining the Wisconsin Conference staff, he served at Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Grafton for almost 20 years.

1:45 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Transition Time/Visit Exhibits	Staughton Hall
2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Wellness Hour #1/Break	
	UCCI Arts & Crafts Project	Pillsbury
	Walk with John Helt	Meet outside Pillsbury
	Meditation with Rachel Bauman	McGarvey Meeting Room in Roger Williams
	Poetry Workshop with Julie Kramer	Crystal Meeting Room in Roger Williams
2:45 p.m. - 3:00 pm.m	Transition Time	Head to Bauer Hall
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 pm.m	Workshop Session #1	Bauer Hall
Renewing Our Preaching		Morehouse A (Bauer)
The Rev. Dr. Phil Hobson		

Preaching is especially challenging in times of injustice, polarization, and constant news overload, when proclaiming God’s good news in Jesus Christ week after week can feel exhausting. This interactive workshop for lay, licensed, and ordained preachers at any stage of ministry focuses on the process of sermon development, exploring how to exegete not only scripture, but also ourselves, our ministry contexts, and the world around us. Participants will also consider how engaging church members in conversation and Bible study around preaching texts can enrich both sermons and congregational life, drawing on insights from 25 years of preaching experience and the Doctor of Ministry in Preaching program at Chicago Theological Seminary.



The Rev. Dr. Phil Hobson graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary in 1997, and was ordained by the North Texas Association in 2000. He served urban, suburban, and rural congregations in Texas, Michigan, and New York before coming to Salem UCC in Verona in 2023. He graduated from CTS again in 2019 with a Doctor of Ministry in Preaching degree. He loves singing, reading, tabletop roleplaying games, and good pizza.

Ministering to Anxious Kids
The Rev. Chris Myers

Morehouse B (Bauer)

Building on the ground breaking work of author Jonathan Haidt whose book *Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*, this workshop will inform and equip churches to better understand some of the challenges young people are facing today and what we as faith communities can do about it.



The Rev. Chris Myers is a pastor at First Congregational UCC in River Falls, Wisconsin on the scenic "West Coast" of Wisconsin along the beautiful shores of the Kinnic River where he has served for over 23 years. He chairs of the Wisconsin Conference Ministerial Oversight Team. Originally from the New York City area, he has found his people in small town Wisconsin and relishes opportunities to learn, serve, explore this beautiful part of the world.

Grow Your Church:

A Game Engaging the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Churches
The Rev. Bob Ullman and the Rev. Sandy Graham

Morehouse C (Bauer)

For years, the United Church of Christ, through MESA, has guided clergy with the Marks of Ministry, and now the national church has responded to congregations by introducing the Marks of Faithful and Vital Local Churches. This workshop introduces *Grow Your Church*, an engaging, conversation-based game designed to help congregations explore these Marks through relationship-building and meaningful dialogue, whether around a boardroom table or a shared meal. Join the Supportive Ministries Team to experience the game firsthand and discover how church vitality and faithfulness are rooted in both internal practices and external community engagement—and measured by far more than numbers.



The Rev. Bob Ullman has been retired from parish ministry for 10 years. During that time he has been part of the Conference's Supportive Ministries Team since its inception as a response to the COVID disruption in 2020. In addition, he co-chairs the Conference's Creation Care Team with the Rev. John Helt, is a Community of Practice facilitator, and a Coach.

Sandra Graham, MDiv, PhD is a retired UCC clergywoman and retired psychologist and professor. She is a member of Christ UCC in Milwaukee. She is a part of the Supportive Ministries Team as well as an organizing member of the UMAT team for the

Wisconsin Conference.



Healthy Conversations

The Rev. Jennifer L. Czarnota and the Rev. Robert Koepke

Beaty (Bauer)

Are you interested in bridging division with loving conversations? Understanding the perspective of others? Finding ways to have healthy conversations across divides? This might be the workshop for you! We live in a divisive culture, where too many interpersonal interactions become attempts to "win" an argument and too few conversations bring us to greater understanding of our beautifully diverse community. In this *Healthy Conversations* workshop, the Conflict Transformation Team will lead participants in a review of active listening skills. This workshop will include information, practical application in the congregational setting and opportunity to practice. Participants will leave this workshop with an improved ability to understand and

respond to those whose perspectives differ. The members of the Conflict Transformation Team are convinced that we bear fruit in Christ when we communicate effectively with all branches of the Christian family tree.



The Rev. Jennifer Czarnota, a graduate of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, has been serving as a pastor in the ELCA and UCC for over 26 years. She has been a member of the Conflict Transformation Team of the Wisconsin Conference UCC for the past five years. She is a trained mediator through Lombard-Mennonite Peace Institute and the Winnebago Conflict Resolution Team. She enjoys helping congregations find the opportunities for growth through conflicted situations.

The Rev. Robert Koepcke is a second-career pastor after serving in nursing homes as a custodian, nursing assistant and administrator. As a pastor, Robert has held a variety of positions in both the United Methodist and United Church of Christ, including as a campus minister and an intentional interim pastor. This experience plus degrees in religion and communications have taught him to “seek first to understand” with close and curious attention.



Dinner Church **The Rev. Dr. Colie Bettivia**

Boddie (Bauer)

Dinner Church is a once-a-month, weeknight worship experience where congregants pray, eat, and worship together at the same table, building deeper relationships, nourishing bodies, and encountering the Holy in shared community. This workshop invites participants to experience a “mini” Dinner Church alongside members of the congregation who help lead it, offering a firsthand sense of how worship and meal intertwine. Through storytelling, reflection, and Q&A, the session will explore what has been learned through this practice and how recognizing God’s presence in shared meals can deepen faith, community, and the ways we gather with others.



The Rev. Dr. Colie Bettivia is the Lead Pastor of Grace Congregational UCC in Two Rivers. She began there in 2013 and has served in a variety of pastoral times over the years (she's been installed three times in the same congregation!). Colie has a Master of Divinity and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary. Her doctoral dissertation research was on Millennials in church and is titled: "Hello, We're Here! Active Participation in Traditional Church Congregations by Those in the Millennial Generation." She lives in Two Rivers with her husband, Tobin, and their young son, Lincoln.

Navigating the ONA Process **Steve Jones**

Ladue (Bauer)

This workshop provides practical guidance for churches at any stage of the Open and Affirming (ONA) process. Participants will learn clear procedures, best practices, and actionable steps to move forward with ONA designation, whether just beginning, mid-process, or refining existing efforts. The session equips congregations with the tools and confidence needed to navigate the ONA journey thoughtfully, inclusively, and effectively.

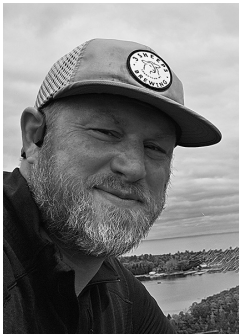
Steve Jones is a long-time member of the Wisconsin Conference ONA Team. He is an active member of Union Congregational UCC in Green Bay.



From Roots to Fruit: Nurturing Belonging and Curiosity at Camp
The Rev. Jeremy Hysten and Naomi Enders

Lightbody (Bauer)

This interactive workshop offers a camp-inspired experience grounded in John 15, exploring how belonging, teamwork, curiosity, and compassion help us stay connected to Jesus and one another to bear fruit in our lives and communities. Through rotating, hands-on learning stations, participants engage in simple yet meaningful activities that demonstrate how camp welcomes everyone, builds strong teams, nurtures creativity, and teaches love and empathy in action. Drawing on stories and images from camp, the session highlights how faith is formed through connection, shared work, and loving community, and invites participants to join us this summer in helping children root themselves in Christ and grow together.



The Rev. Jeremy Hysten is the pastor at St. Paul's U.C.C. in Sheboygan, and during the summer he is the Summer Camp Director at the Daycholah Center. When he is not having adventures with his spouse Laurie, daughter Hannah, and faithful therapy dog Frankie, you can find him hiking, reading, cooking, or brewing.

Naomi Enders has been part of the Daycholah Center program team for the past two years, serving as the leader of faith formation. She is now in the role of Assistant Director of Camp and Youth Programming, where she looks forward to continuing to support campers and staff in building meaningful experiences and community. Naomi earned her bachelor's degree in Outdoor Recreation Leadership and Management from Northern Michigan University. She brings a strong background in program leadership and a passion for outdoor ministry to her camp role. Born and raised in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, she has a lifelong love of the outdoors and enjoys hiking, kayaking, and spending time with her family.



4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Workshop Session #2

Bauer Hall

Cultivating an Aging Community in Grace - Part 1
Cathy Wille (moderator), and the Revs. Emma Sancomb,
Christina Schoenwetter, Chris Myers, and Julia Burkey

Morehouse A (Bauer)

As people live longer due to advances in medical care, congregations are increasingly called to respond to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of an aging population, even as many churches feel pressure to focus primarily on attracting younger members. This workshop explores how congregations can cultivate meaningful community with and among older adults by intentionally adapting ministries and practices that honor elders as vital members of the church. Through a panel of UCC leaders and practitioners, participants will hear concrete examples of senior-focused ministries, including memory cafés, friendship-based programs, theological reflection on aging, and senior living communities, and will gain insights and inspiration for nurturing aging communities with grace in their own congregational settings.

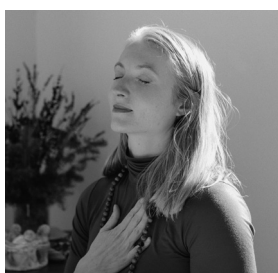


Cathy Wille has served as a high school biology teacher for 18 years and as a licensed professional counselor in the Samaritan network of counseling centers for 24 years. While there she developed a Clergy and Congregation Care Program. She has helped establish and been part of the Communities of Practice both as co-administrator and facilitator in the Wisconsin Conference, providing facilitator trainings in Wisconsin and for COMPASS as part of the MESA team. She is serving on the Supportive Ministry Team and co-facilitates the Wisconsin Conference Older Adult Ministry team.



The Rev. Emma Sancomb serves as the Director of Spiritual Care at Cedar Community in West Bend. Emma has a deep commitment to honoring the sacred stories of each individual she interacts with. In addition to cultivating sacred and creative space, she chairs Cedar Community's Ethics Committee, participates in the Wisconsin Older Adult Ministry and the Council for Health and Human Services Ministries (CHHSM). She is passionate about creating spaces where meaning, dignity, and connection can flourish; especially in seasons of transition, loss, and end of life.

The Rev. Christina Schoenwetter serves as the Associate Pastor of Engagement at St. John's UCC in Monroe. Her ministry centers on nurturing relationships, fostering connection across generations, and creating spaces where people can bring their whole selves. She also serves as a chaplain at SSM Health Monroe and on the executive board for Family Promise of Green County. A graduate of CTS in Chicago with a concentration in chaplaincy, Christina brings a deep love for ritual, storytelling, and pastoral presence to her work. She serves on the Catalyst Committee, the Older Adult Ministries Team, and the Unified Members in Discernment Team (UMAT), where she supports members-in-discernment in developing their portfolios.



The Rev. Dr. Julia Burkey is senior pastor at Orchard Ridge UCC and works with a group in her congregation who she calls her "council of elders" on a program called "Wayfinding: The Soul Tasks of Aging, Toward a Theology of the Elder Years," which meets monthly in a mini-retreat like setting, meant to build community and trust as people engage the spiritual and psychological challenges of aging, replenish the soul and connect each one to the peace that passes understanding. Julia and her spouse the Rev. Daniel Cooperrider co-founded Flicker Wild Church. Julia is also passionate about social justice and also loves working with ORUCC's

Immigration Justice Team.

The Rev. Chris Myers is a pastor at First Congregational UCC in River Falls on the scenic 'West Coast' of Wisconsin along the beautiful shores of the Kinnic River where he has served for over 23 years. He chairs of the Wisconsin Conference Ministerial Oversight Team. Originally from the New York City area he has found his people in small town Wisconsin and relishes opportunities to learn, serve, explore this beautiful part of the world.



Enhance your Faith and Ministry - for Lay Leaders
Bonnie Andrews

Morehouse B (Bauer)

Join lay leaders from around the Conference as together we grow in faith and our call to lay ministry. The Conference currently has three Communities of Practice with lay leaders; come and hear how these groups are cultivating community and faith. Hear from current COP members during this "Taste and See" and consider joining a new group forming in the fall.



Bonnie Andrews is active in her local church, Bethel Bethany in Milwaukee, and in the Wisconsin Conference as a facilitator for Five Practices, Appreciative Inquiry, and Community of Practice. She serves on the Supportive Ministries team, co-chaired the Local Arrangements Committee for General Synod 32 in Milwaukee, and is a Master Gardener volunteer.

**Biases: A Loving Look
The Rev. Dr. Okogyeamon**

Morehouse C (Bauer)

Each of us approaches the world out of our own experience and background, which color the ways we understand other people, cultures, and demographic groups. Learn how to identify your own biases, where they come from, and how to look around or through them to see people as they are and not as we expect them to be. Presented by the Rev. Dr. Okogyeamon (Pastor, St Paul's - Ellsworth) and the Wisconsin Conference Racial Justice Team. Advance reading is requested so that all participants might have the most meaningful experience (copies available at the registration desk or the table for the Racial Justice Ministry Team).

Okogyeamon (Pastor Herbert) serves as the full-time pastor at St Paul's UCC, Ellsworth, previously serving in the Minnesota Conference (2010-2023). He has served on UCC national committees. Currently serves on the Wisconsin Conference Racial Justice Ministry Team. He holds a BA (History) from University of Notre Dame, MA (English/TESL) from University of California (UCLA), a PhD (Cultural Studies) from University of California (Santa Cruz), and a MDiv (Contextual Theology) from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.



He is a life-long educator, K-12 teacher, higher education associate professor, seminary (adjunct faculty). His main area of interest is that of contextual theology and cultural studies (anthropology, sociology, cross-cultural communication). He also has five and half years of overseas teaching experience, East Pakistan (Bangladesh) teaching in a village (Bandura-Hashnabad) and a city (Dacca) school.

"Okogyeamon," a Ghanaian ancestral Akan name, given in a 1998 naming ceremony in Accra, means, He who awakens a village in danger. That name he uses as his preferred "call name." Okogyeamon seeks to embody his name through his antiracism teaching, workshops, and preaching. Rev. Dr. Okogyeamon lives in Red Wing, Minnesota—25 miles from St Paul's UCC, Ellsworth, where he pastors.

**Listening From the Heart: Bereaved Palestinians and Israelis
Move Toward Reconciliation and Healing
Tracy Ablar**

Beaty (Bauer)

This workshop is grounded in the work of the Parents Circle–Family Forum, which unites bereaved Palestinian and Israeli families who choose dialogue, shared humanity, and peace amid ongoing violence. Developed by American Friends of the Parents Circle, *Listening from the Heart* equips participants with tools to foster empathy, bridge divides, and engage in respectful, inclusive dialogue around the conflict and other deeply polarized issues. Participants will engage in some listening activities, hear a personal exchange between a Palestinian and an Israeli, and then have time to process and reflect with each other. This is a shortened version of a 90-minute program that the Palestine Justice Working Group will be offering to congregations during 2026.



Tracy Ablar is a member of the Wisconsin Conference Palestine Justice Working Group. She's spent the last 35 years in our conference, where she's worked locally at her home church, Pilgrim UCC in Fond du Lac, and in statewide efforts, including youth and camp ministries. Tracy is also a "2000-something" graduate of the Wisconsin Conference Lay Academy. Tracy currently works as the Peace, Justice, and Integrity of Creation Coordinator for the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes. She is a charisma carrier of their mission. This role found her at the most opportune time in her life and she feels she has become her best, God-given self in a profession that allows her—and requires her—to advocate her Christian values,

respond to those whose faith life or human dignity are threatened, and to care for all of creation. Tracy and her husband, Mike, have six sensational daughters and five really cool grandchildren.

How You Can Be Immigrant Welcoming in 2026

Boddie (Bauer)

Nancy Kraft and Beth Miller

How do we rise to the challenge and accept responsibility to help people fleeing persecution in their quest to seek safety and to worship freely? In this session Nancy Kraft will share practical strategies and a plan of action on how this small, rural church rose to the challenge, took on the responsibility, and operationalized this important and critical work of becoming an immigrant welcoming congregation, while Beth Miller will discuss how St. Paul's UCC has been on a twelve-year journey in welcoming primarily Hispanic immigrants which began with a food pantry. "Getting to know them, their needs and becoming a part of each other's lives. Being a small rural church, we also have become part of a community network of individuals and organizations with similar immigrant concerns. This has been an unexpected and incredible process for our Mission Committee and St. Paul's UCC members... a process in which we have not only made a difference in the lives of the immigrant community but also enriched our own lives. My goal is to communicate the importance of relationship development and ways we can do that therefore becoming truly welcoming and inclusive."



Nancy Kraft is the president of the Ladysmith Congregational UCC Church council, a position she has held for the past five years. As a former professor of education at the University of Kansas, she challenged her graduate-level students to examine educational issues within the larger cultural, historical, political, and socioeconomic context within which schools and education are situated. Upon moving back to Wisconsin in 2008, her grounding in critical theory has shaped her work as a grant-writer for two non-profit organizations to help the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals and families in up to 39 Wisconsin counties to seek economic security and a better quality of life. In her spare time, she does volunteer grant-writing for other non-profits, on which she also serves as a board member.

Prior to retiring to Wisconsin from Hartford, Connecticut, in 2011, Beth Miller was most recently Director of Academic Advising at the University of St. Joseph, West Hartford, Connecticut. Through her church, she did volunteer work with the settlement of immigrants from Kosovo. Prior to that, she worked as a therapist with the Counseling Ministry of South Florida (Samaritan Center) doing extensive post Hurricane Andrew disaster response counseling as well as work with Puerto Rican and Mexican farm workers in the Homestead area, South Dade County, and she was a counselor at a college in the Chicago suburbs. She is a member of the Chilton Public Library Hispanic Advisory Board and she and her church Mission Committee are involved in numerous library/community activities promoting increased understanding and acceptance of all.



Beyond Acknowledgement - Developing Allyship with our Indigenous Neighbors

Ladue (Bauer)

Eilene Hoft-March, Barb Weyenberg, Philip E. Gabrielson, and Jerry Dees

Following the UCC Synod's repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery, Mark Charles challenged congregations: "Now what are you going to do about it?" This workshop explores practical ways to move beyond acknowledgment toward meaningful allyship with Indigenous communities. Participants will learn how to engage with the unique histories, cultures, and issues of local Native Nations; study principles of allyship; invite Native Elders to speak and guide congregational relationships; participate respectfully in Indigenous events; deepen understanding of Indigenous spirituality; and confront the complex history between Christian churches and Indigenous Peoples, including boarding schools, forced adoptions, and legal challenges. The session

FRIDAY

will also offer guidance on forming an Indigenous Peoples Allies Committee to sustain ongoing education, relationships, and advocacy within congregations.

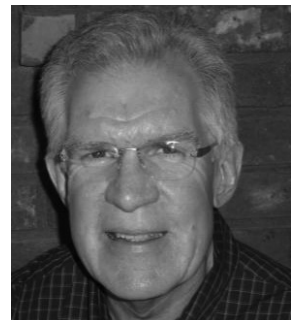


Eilene Hoft-March has been a member of First Congregational UCC - Appleton since 1998. She has led a number of church-sponsored service trips to the Pine Ridge (Oglala Lakota) reservation and is a founding member of FCUCC Appleton's Indigenous Peoples' Allies Committee (IPAC).

Barb Weyenberg has been a member of First Congregational UCC - Appleton and the IPAC committee since 2022. She developed a passion for understanding Indigenous people and cultures through her high school and college years over 50 years ago. She has continued to learn about Indigenous people through post graduate coursework, workshops, cultural experiences, and most importantly through honest communication contacts with former Indigenous students and their families over the past 30 years.



Philip E. Gabrielson has a lifelong interest in Native American culture. He was the ELCA South Central Synod's Peace Task Force Chair from 1988 to 1990 and a ELCA South Central Synod Bishop's representative to the Wisconsin Legislatures Apology statement to the Sac/Fox Nation for the 1832 Massacre at BadAxe in May of 1990. He served on the Wisconsin Conference UCC Northeast Association Executive board from 2019 to 2025. He is a founding member of the Indigenous Peoples Allies Committee at First Congregational UCC - Appleton, from 2018 to the present.



Jerry Dees is a long-time member of First Congregational UCC - Appleton, serving on a number of committees over the years and is currently treasurer. He continues to learn about Indigenous history, culture and issues and co-leads IPAC with the other members on this panel.

**Supporting our Transgender Brothers and Sisters
Conference ONA Team**

Lightbody (Bauer)

This workshop explores the challenges that transgender individuals often face in society today and provides practical approaches for offering support, affirmation, and understanding. Participants will learn strategies to create inclusive and welcoming spaces, recognize barriers and stressors, and respond with empathy and respect in personal, community, and congregational settings.

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	DINNER	Kraft Centre Dining Room
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	Plenary Session: Celebrations	Pillsbury
7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.	Welcome Reception OR Bad River Documentary with Q&A	Staughton Hall Pillsbury

Saturday, April 11

7:30 a.m.- 8:30 a.m.	BREAKFAST	Kraft Centre Dining Room
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Historical Committee "The Story of Our Camps" Breakfast. Speaker: Jan Davis	Tower Dining Room Kraft Centre
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	United (UTS) Seminary Alum Breakfast	Mitchell Dining Room Kraft Centre
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Usher/Communion/ Hospitality Training	Roblee Lounge (Pillsbury)
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Registration Open	Pillsbury Hall Foyer
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Open <i>Coffee and Water Available</i>	Staughton Hall
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Visit the Exhibit Hall	Staughton Hall
9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Gathering Music - Wisconsin Gospellers	Pillsbury
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Opening Worship	Pillsbury
10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Keynote Address: Dr. Edith Guffey <i>Cultivating Community by Building Bridges</i>	Pillsbury

Over the years, many have heard the question, “Who’s missing from the table?” While our hearts long for full inclusion of all, we sometimes struggle to embody that sentiment. Wishing won’t make it so; even prayer, while personally encouraging, isn’t a magic wand. What are the challenges, and what can we do to take concrete steps toward fulfilling our vision of a table where everyone has a seat?

Dr. Edith Guffey (pronouns she/her) served the United Church of Christ for over 30 years. Guffey served first as the Secretary of the denomination, then as the Associate General Minister, always focusing primarily on the organization’s internal operations and serving as the Administrator of the General Synod from 1995 to 2011. Following her years in the national offices, Guffey served as the Conference Minister of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference, retiring in 2021. Guffey says she was first attracted to the UCC when she discovered a church that connected faith with justice and considered advocacy as both a legitimate and necessary expression of faith.



10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Transition Time/Break (Exhibit Hall)	Staughton Hall
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Wellness: Poetry Workshop with Julie Kramer	Crystal Meeting Room: Roger Williams
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Wellness: Walk with Jeremy Hylan	Meet outside Pillsbury
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH	Kraft Centre Dining Room

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.	Members-In-Discernment Lunch	Tower Dining Room
12:00 p.m.- 1:00 p.m.	Catalyst Lunch	Mitchell Dining Room
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Business Meeting 2 - See page 30	Pillsbury
2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Transition Time/Visit Exhibit Hall <i>Coffee and snacks available</i>	Staughton Hall

2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Workshop Session #3	Bauer
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Using a Stages and Gates Process to Move from Vision to Implementation **Morehouse A (Bauer)**
Nancy Brown-Koeller

Many churches struggle to move beyond visioning, long-range planning, or consultant recommendations, possessing mission statements and goals without clear action plans. This presentation explores how a modified stage gate process—a project management approach that breaks large projects into stages with decision points—can help congregations turn vision into action. Using a case study from First Congregational, participants will see how teams focused on Grounds, Buildings, Community Partnerships, and Finance used defined roles, deliverables, timelines, and communication plans to navigate challenges, engage the congregation, and implement a renovation plan aligned with the church’s mission and vision while increasing neighborhood and community engagement.

Nancy Brown-Koeller is a member of First Congregational UCC in Appleton where she is involved in Outreach Ministries and Church Council activities. She is also a founder and long-term president of a trails advocacy group in Shawano. Before volunteering full-time, she worked for a Fortune 200 company in consumer and marketing research, project management, and training, achieving a Legacy in Marketing award for developing Older Adult Sensitivity Training and a Lifetime Achievement award for establishing an in-house resource network for employees caring for aging parents. Nancy and her husband John enjoy biking and exploring national parks.



Starting a Dementia Day Program in Your Community **Morehouse B (Bauer)**
The Rev. Chris Myers

Every community in Wisconsin has families struggling to care for those with dementia and Alzheimers. At this workshop you will learn how one church started a program to help families and individuals dealing with memory issues. Among Friends is a twice-a-week social respite program at First Congregational Church in River Falls offering safe, affordable and loving care for those suffering from memory issues. It gives care givers a needed break and provides an engaging day to participants full of mental, physical and social stimulation. Participants will learn how the program began and how they can start one in their own community.



The Rev. Chris Myers is a pastor at First Congregational UCC in River Falls on the scenic "West Coast" of Wisconsin along the beautiful shores of the Kinnic River where he has served for over 23 years. He chairs of the Wisconsin Conference Ministerial Oversight Team. Originally from the New York City area, he has found his people in small town Wisconsin and relishes opportunities to learn, serve, explore this beautiful part of the world.

Growing In the Way of Christ: Picture the Bible's KidLit
Stacy Johnson Myers

Morehouse C (Bauer)

Vital, faithful communities rooted in Christ nurture faith formation and spiritual growth for people of all ages through meaningful educational experiences that spark curiosity, invite questions, and embody God's love and grace in ways that are real and lasting. This workshop introduces Picture the Bible's KidLit, a comprehensive and flexible faith formation resource that is both pedagogically and theologically strong, linking biblical and contemporary stories with art, creative projects, and prayer to foster deep conversation at the intersection of life and faith. While designed primarily for children, KidLit also supports rich multigenerational learning, and participants will explore the importance of biblical literacy, the role of art and literature in interpretation, and engage in an interactive KidLit experience.

The Rev. Dr. Stacy Johnson Myers holds a M.Div. from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and a Ph.D. from the Joint Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary/Northwestern University Program in Religious and Theological Studies. She serves First Congregational Church in River Falls as the Minister of Christian Education, and is the author of Picture the Bible, published by The Pilgrim Press. Stacy is passionate about education and the intersection of biblical literacy and interpretation, fine art and children's literature.



What Does an Elephant have to do with Bullying
The Rev. Bev Davis

Beaty (Bauer)

Many of us carry the lasting effects of childhood bullying, often unnoticed until later in life. In this interactive workshop, inspired by a transformative dream featuring a gentle, wise elephant, participants will explore the long-term impact of being bullied, learn to recognize the signs, and discuss how to respond if someone else is being targeted. Attendees will leave with practical tools and simple strategies to support those experiencing bullying and begin their own journey of healing.



The Rev. Bev Davis is an avid "observer of life," a graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary and an ordained pastor in the UCC. Bev has served a small UCC congregation in north central Wisconsin, and served as a hospice chaplain in Milwaukee. Until recently, Bev was serving as an Interim Pastor to Zwingli UCC in Monticello. She also is an author of a series of "children's books for all ages," which address bullying and marginalization as we journey through the life of "Great Gray," an Indian Elephant, born a little less than perfect. In addition, Bev has been developing a worship plan entitled, "The Power of the Parables." This interactive program is tailored to the Alzheimer's/Dementia community, Wisconsin Conference facilities and church communities. As a parish intern, Bev designed a program entitled, "Consider the Lilies," a Church wide study of plants, gardens and flowers in the Bible. This fruitful program culminates in the planning and planting a meaningful Memory Garden. Bev's Creation Station, is also available to congregations that want to CREATE! A former interior designer, Bev is a true believer in the importance involving the senses in a worship and everyday life. Creators Must Create.

Abiding in the Vine: Nurturing Resilient Leaders in Christ's Community
The Rev. Jeannie Douglas

Boddie (Bauer)

In John 15, Jesus reminds us that fruitfulness begins with abiding—remaining connected to the true source of life. For clergy and lay leaders, this promise can be both comforting and challenging, especially in seasons of transition, cultural change, or spiritual fatigue, when we care for others while quietly running dry. This

interactive workshop invites ministry leaders to explore practical ways of staying rooted in Christ through spiritual grounding, authentic relationships, and sustainable leadership practices. Through guided reflection, small-group conversation, and coaching-based tools, participants will cultivate renewal, resilience, and deeper connection, leaving with spiritually grounded strategies, renewed hope, and practical approaches for sustaining healthy ministry and nurturing congregational life so that leadership and community alike may bear good fruit.

The Rev. Jeannie Douglas is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and a trained Intentional Interim Minister who has served congregations in the Wisconsin Conference continuously since 2007. Throughout her years of interim ministry, she has walked alongside churches in seasons of transition, offering steady leadership, pastoral care, and practical guidance during times of change. As a certified leadership coach, Rev. Douglas brings a compassionate, insight-driven approach to ministry leadership. She has taught leadership coaching courses, mentored colleagues, and supported pastors and lay leaders as they navigate burnout, overwhelm, and questions of vocational discernment. Her work is shaped by a deep understanding of the emotional and spiritual realities of ministry and a commitment to sustainable, grace-filled leadership. Rev. Douglas has a particular heart for those who carry the weight of leadership—especially pastors and lay leaders who often serve others while neglecting their own well-being. Her ministry centers on helping leaders remain rooted in Christ, connected to community, and supported in bearing good fruit with faithfulness and hope.



Leadership for Cultivating Community: Nurturing Meaningful Ministries Ladue (Bauer)
Dr. Steven Shaw

Churches, like any organization, face challenges around identity, structure, and engagement, and leaders can find the path forward unclear and discouraging at times. This interactive workshop invites church leaders to explore how to create conditions for meaningful ministry and community life by considering key questions: What drives people’s engagement or withdrawal in sustaining a church? How do the dynamics of a living faith community parallel cultivating crops in a farming ecosystem? And what leadership approaches help a congregation discover its core values and foster participation in ministries that matter? Drawing on the insights of Dr. Margaret J. Wheatley, the Rev. Dr. Susan Beaumont, and the Rev. Dr. Sarah B. Drummond, participants will gain practical and reflective tools for nurturing healthy, engaged, and purpose-driven church communities.



Dr. Steven Shaw, a retired educator, has participated in public school and church leadership teams over the past 35 years. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Washington - Seattle, which included studies in leadership development and organizational change. His specific research interests have explored how people learn and find meaning through collaborative partnerships. Steven is currently the Moderator of Plymouth Church UCC of Milwaukee and serves on the Arts Committee for the Wisconsin Conference UCC Annual Meeting.

Day-by-Day Memory Cafe:
Cultivating Community with Those Living with Memory Loss Part 2 Lightbody (Bauer)
The Rev. Christina Shoenwetter, Pam Wyss, and Sharon Streiff

Day-by-Day Memory Cafe is a ministry and community program that creates a welcoming, stigma-free space for people living with memory loss and their care partners to connect, create, and belong. Rooted in hospitality and relationship-building, the cafe offers monthly gatherings filled with art, music, movement, storytelling, and shared refreshments. This workshop will explore how St. John’s United Church of Christ in Monroe launched

and is sustaining a Memory Café as a living expression of remaining connected to the vine by nurturing connection with some of our most isolated neighbors. Attendees of the workshop will learn practical steps for starting a Memory Café, building community partnerships, engaging volunteers, and caring for both participants and caregivers. We will reflect on how this ministry bears fruit in spiritual growth, community vitality, and compassionate outreach.



*The **Rev. Christina Schoenwetter** serves as the Associate Pastor of Engagement at St. John's United Church of Christ in Monroe, where her ministry centers on nurturing relationships, fostering meaningful connection across generations, and creating spaces where people can bring their whole selves. As an extension of her ministry, she also serves as a chaplain at SSM Health Monroe and on the executive board for Family Promise of Green County. A graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary with a concentration in chaplaincy, Christina brings a deep love for ritual, storytelling, and pastoral presence to her work. Her conference work includes serving on the Catalyst Grant Committee, the Older Adult Ministries Team, and the Unified Members in Discernment Team (UMAT), where she supports members-in-discernment in developing their portfolios.*

***Pamela (Pam) Wyss** joined St. John's United Church of Christ 38 years ago after marrying her husband, Randy. Together, they raised three daughters while operating their family dairy farm, which is now partnered with one of their adult children. Alongside her work on the farm, Pam gained professional experience as a human resources manager and accounting assistant. Born and raised in Monroe, Pam has long been active in her community. She participated in 4-H and served on the county fair board, was elected to three terms on the Monroe School Board, and held an officer role with the Green County Cheese Days festival for 16 years. Pam enjoys spending time with her grandsons, gathering with family and friends, singing in the church choir and other vocal groups, and supporting projects that strengthen both the community and the church.*



***Sharon Streiff** grew up attending a small United Church of Christ congregation in York, Pennsylvania. After marrying her husband, Steve, in 1969, she moved to Wisconsin, where the couple raised their three children and became active in numerous community and nonprofit organizations. Together, they also worked to promote Swiss culture in the region. Sharon additionally served on the board of the New Glarus Nursing Home. After 16 years as a registered nurse, Sharon transitioned to a new career and retired in 2009 as a Senior Purchasing Agent for a local mail-order company. Following her move from New Glarus to Monroe in 1982, Sharon joined St. John's United Church of Christ, where she has been deeply involved in congregational life. She has served as Council President, assisted with confirmation, taught Sunday School, and participated in various committees. As a current member of the Mission Committee, Sharon has helped organize initiatives such as sewing dresses for girls in Africa, the Equal Exchange Project, and the Day-by-Day Memory Café.*

Keynote Q & A
Dr. Edith Guffey

Pillsbury

Join us for an engaging and interactive Q&A session with Dr. Edith Guffey, following her keynote address (See page 20). This workshop offers participants the opportunity to delve deeper into the themes of her keynote address, ask questions, and explore practical applications for ministry, leadership, and faith formation. Through

thoughtful dialogue and reflection, attendees will gain new insights, inspiration, and tools to carry forward into their own congregations and personal spiritual journeys.

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Transition Time, Snacks in Pillsbury Lobby Pillsbury

**4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Closing Worship with the Rev. Nicole Herda
and Offering #2 Pillsbury**

The Rev. Nicole Herda serves with St. Peter’s UCC in Kiel. She is Jacob Herda’s mom and guardian, Robert Herda’s spouse, Rev. Kim and Fay Henning’s daughter, a Miracle League of the Lakeshore baseball coach, Lakeland University Ulrich Scholar, and Eden Theological Seminary alum.

**5:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting/Dinner Tower Dining Room
Go through line and meet in Tower Kraft Centre**

5:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at GLCC Kraft Centre Dining Room

2026 Annual Meeting Procedural Guide

1. Voting membership consists of ordained ministers of the Conference and two (2) lay delegates from each local church, plus one (1) for each additional 500 members or major fraction thereof, beyond the first 500, and also such lay persons, not delegates from their local church, who are at the time serving as an officer of the Conference, a member of the Board of Directors, or as Chairperson of a Commission, Council, or Standing Committee designated in this connection; and all commissioned or licensed workers or ministers engaged in full-time church service, and all full-time Directors of Christian Education who have been certified by the UCC through its appropriate agency and by an Association of the Conference.
2. A quorum for a Conference meeting shall consist of Representatives, either ordained ministers or lay delegates, from at least one-third of the constituent churches of the Conference, provided that such ministers and local churches have full standing in the United Church of Christ.
3. A simple majority is required for transaction of all business unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution. One such exception which requires a two-thirds vote is an overture to General Synod (Constitution, Article VII, D).
4. Only registered voting delegates situated within the bar of the house may vote. The bar of the house this year includes the entire seating area in Pillsbury Hall.
5. All motions regarding budgetary items or financial commitments beyond the budget must be referred first to the Business Committee.
6. Subject to waiver by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote, no resolution or other action, except elections, matters of procedures and amenities shall be voted upon unless a recommendation that the same be presented for vote shall have been adopted by the Business Committee.
7. Discussion on any motion shall be limited to five (5) consecutive minutes per presenter and two (2) minutes to each of the other speakers. A delegate who has spoken shall not speak a second time on the same question as long as any delegate who has not spoken on that question desires to speak. Please always identify yourself and your church.
8. All major motions and amendments shall be placed in writing by the mover and immediately delivered to the presiding Moderator. Please see an usher for a sheet on which you can print major motions. Please print and include your name, church name, and church location.
9. Friendly motions and amendments to amendments are not permitted.
10. Nominations may be made from the floor for any office or posted at the time of the election providing the nominee has consented to serve if elected.
11. The Secretary's Minutes will not be read and approved at the opening of each succeeding session, but will be read and approved by a Committee of three persons authorized by the Board of Directors.
12. Procedures shall follow Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, except as modified by this Procedural Guide.
13. According to our polity, the actions taken speak only for those assembled here, but should be held in the highest regard by every local church (Constitution, Article V).

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, chair

Robert's Rules Reduced

(for use by the Wisconsin Conference UCC)

The following motions, adapted from Robert's rules of Order, should be sufficient for Conference business. Any motion takes precedence over those listed below it in the table. However, once an undebatable motion has been made and seconded, the Chair will normally not recognize other speakers until the vote has been taken.

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?	Amend-able?	Action
To adjourn (recess)	No	Majority	No	“Adjourn” ends the entire meeting. “Recess” is to a specified hour.
The order of the day	No	Majority	No	Forces an immediate return to the established agenda.
To suspend the rules	No	2/3	No	Suspends the stated rules or order or agenda for a specified purpose.
To table	No	Majority	No	Lays aside the main motion and any motions pertaining to it until taken from table.
The previous question	No	2/3	No	Forces immediate vote on motion to refer, amend, and the main motion to which they pertain.
To limit debate	No	2/3	No	Limits duration of debate on a particular motion.
To refer	Yes	Majority	Yes	Refers matter to a committee or other specified group.
To amend	Yes	Majority	No	Amends main motion by “adding,” “deleting,” or “substituting.” “Amendments to amendments” will not be recognized by the Chair.
The main question	Yes	Majority*	Yes	Opens a new subject to debate. In order only when no other motion is on the floor. *Overtures to General Synod require 2/3 vote.
To take from table	No	Majority	No	Reopens debate on a matter previously tabled. Will be accepted only when no other motion is on the floor.
To reconsider	No	Majority	No	Reopens debate on a matter voted upon earlier in the meeting. Must be made by one who voted with the prevailing side. Will be accepted only when no other motion is on the floor.

Main motions and amendments to main motions must be presented to the Chair in writing at the time they are made.

2025-26 Board of Directors

Officers

Chair:	The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe
Vice Chair:	The Rev. Dr. Sara Rabe
Secretary:	The Rev. Dr. Leslie Schenk
Treasurer:	Andy Lyke
Conference Minister:	The Rev. Franz Rigert

Eastern Region

The Rev. Jeffrey Dodson
Thomas Kolb
Marilyn Kostrzak

Southern Region

Amy Drewa
George Adams
The Rev. Ann Beaty

Northern Region

The Rev. Michael Southcombe
Stephen Ottman
Robert Reinertson

At-Large Members

The Rev. Elizabeth Hazel
The Rev. Gayle Tucker
The Rev. Leanne Rose

2026 General Synod Delegates

Jane Anderson
Rachel Bauman
David Bowles
Esperanza deJesus Bowles
Jeannie Douglas
Kathleen Gloff
Bob Gross
Lisa Hart
Rowan Hildebrandt

Gail Holmes
Shannon Joshi
Dawn Kay
Oli Kobliska
Elliott Luedke
Kelly Mundell
Kevin Mundell
Kate O'Brien
Kerri Parker

Beth Petzke
Jeff Pommerening
Asafa Rakotojoelinandrasana
Franz Rigert, associate delegate
Naomi Seiler
Wayne Shannon
Joshua Simon
Michael Southcombe
Tara Tetzlaff



2026 Business Meeting 1 Agenda

Friday, April 10, 2026

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Welcome and Statement of Quorum

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Call to Order

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Approval of Agenda, Rules, and Voice & Vote

The Rev. Ann Beaty, Board Secretary

2025 Financial Update, Leadership Forward and Wisconsin Foundation Updates

The Rev. Andrew Warner, Conference Staff

Renewing the Call for Conference Minister, Rev. Franz Rigert and Q&A

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Hello from the Catalyst Team

The Rev. Michael Whiteley

Update on “Declaration for a Just Peace Between Palestine and Israel” Resolution, and Q&A

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Palestine Justice Working Group

Civil Rights Tour Presentation

The Rev. Josh Simon, Sophie Moldenhauer, Sarah Pundt and the Rev. Kim Henning

Presentation of Scholarships

The Rev. Rachel Bauman, Associate Conference Minister

Newly Retired Clergy and Newly Settled Clergy

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Recognition of Churches Participating in OCWM and 5 for 5

The Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister

Staff Introductions

The Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister

Announcements

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Parliamentarian: The Rev. Michael Southcombe

Assistant Secretary: The Rev. Ann Beaty



2025 Business Meeting 2 Agenda

Saturday, April 11, 2026

1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Welcome and Call to Order

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Re-Election Vote for Conference Minister, Rev. Franz Rigert

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

Justice Moments

Lisa Hart

Greetings From our German Partners

Wolfram Syben and Sophie Moldenhauer

Time of Remembrance

Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister

Installation of New Leaders

Lisa Hart

Moderator's Moment, Transition of Gavel

The Rev. RaeAnn Beebe, Chair

2027 Annual Meeting Preview

Rev. Sara Rabe, Vice Chair

Motion to Adjourn Following the Closing Worship & Installation of New Leaders

The Rev. Sara Rabe, Vice Chair

Speakout (as time allows)

Parliamentarian: Rev. Michael Southcombe

Assistant Secretary: Ann Beaty

2025 Statement of Activity & 2026 Budget

The 2026 budget reflects the consolidation of the ministry of the associations with the conference. On the revenue side, we added membership dues (formerly association dues) and a 5% draw from accumulated association reserves. On the expense side, we added association costs like the Committee on the Ministry, association mission commitments and support for United Church Camps Scholarships. The 2025 annual meeting adopted the budget for 2026. We will consider a proposed 2027 budget at a virtual meeting in the fall.

	2025 Actual	2026 Budget
Revenues		
Contributions	\$ 114,380.43	\$ 58,564.00
Contributions for Previous Year	\$ 33,246.82	
OCWM Wisconsin Impact Contributions	\$ 1,223,685.25	\$ 1,277,750.00
Strengthen the Church Revenue	\$ 22,860.56	\$ 25,000.00
Membership Dues		\$ 177,000.00
Donated Services	\$ 58.00	
Conference Investments	\$ 82,138.75	\$ 83,000.00
Program Fees and Registrations	\$ 105,240.00	\$ 58,000.00
Common Services Revenue	\$ 135,957.05	\$ 110,000.00
WI Foundation Grants	\$ 309,023.38	\$ 350,000.00
Other	\$ 5,978.49	\$ 460,000.00
Total Revenues	\$ 1,954,470.29	\$ 2,139,314.00
Expenses		
Staff Compensation	\$ 994,654.46	\$ 1,049,939.00
Basic Operations	\$ 207,533.26	\$ 211,100.00
Program - General		
Program Expense	\$ 38,391.64	\$ 5,000.00
Youth Ministry		\$ 6,000.00
Regional & Affinity Gatherings		\$ 16,500.00
New Initiatives	\$ 2,665.00	\$ 10,000.00
Annual Meeting	\$ 41,207.51	\$ 37,500.00
Catalyst Grants and Shift Coaching	\$ 50,237.16	\$ 51,026.75
Ministerial Support		
Clergy Retreats		\$ 6,250.00
Church & Ministry General	\$ 9,449.15	\$ 30,500.00
Ministerial Support	\$ 15,425.53	\$ 15,000.00
Communities of Practice	\$ 36,541.96	\$ 40,000.00
Seminary Debt Reduction	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
MID Scholarships	\$ 7,442.00	\$ 18,000.00
Annual Meeting MID Scholarships	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Wider Church Ministries		
General Synod	\$ 28,460.59	\$ 20,000.00
Damascus	\$ 17,130.06	\$ 15,000.00
General Partnerships	\$ 22,613.78	\$ 93,500.00
United Church Camps INC	\$ 130,000.00	\$ 160,000.00
National Setting Support	\$ 275,000.00	\$ 256,000.00

WI Council of Churches	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Council of Health and Human Services	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 31,000.00
Depreciation Daycholah Expense	\$ 30,512.88	\$ 30,000.00
Total Expenses	\$ 1,911,666.54	\$ 2,153,815.75
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	\$ 2,586,544.17	\$ 2,629,347.92
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ 42,803.75	\$ (14,501.75)
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$ 2,629,347.92	\$ 2,614,846.17

2026 Salaries and Housing of Conference Ministerial Staff

At the Annual Meeting of our Conference in 1973, the delegates requested that the salaries and housing of each of the Conference Ministerial Staff be listed on a separate sheet in the packet. The following information is offered in response to that request:

Staff Position 2026	Salary 2025 & Housing	Social Security Benefit-7.65%	Total
Conference Minister	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 9,562.50	\$ 134,562.50
Associate Conference Minister	\$ 78,000.00	\$ 5,967.00	\$ 83,967.00
Associate Conference Minister	\$ 87,000.00	\$ 6,655.50	\$ 93,655.50
Associate Conference Minister	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 6,502.50	\$ 91,502.50
Associate Conference Minister	\$ 68,500.00	\$ 5,125.50	\$ 73,625.50
Foundation President (Part-time)	\$ 62,300.00	\$ 4,765.95	\$ 67,065.95

In addition to the salaries, housing, and Social Security listed above, each staff person working at least half time receives 14% of salary basis in payments to a pension plan. Benefits include enrollment in the Conference Group Health Plan or health insurance reimbursement, Disability insurance, and a Group Term Life Insurance policy.

Wisconsin Conference General Operating Fund Balance Sheet

	12/31/2025	12/31/2024
Assets		
Cash Accounts	\$ 166,710.07	\$ 59,894.15
Investments & CD's	\$ 83,821.11	\$ 91,746.55
Receivables	\$ 78,020.54	\$ 83,853.62
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 48,195.78	\$ 29,405.83
Property	\$ 2,289,071.16	\$ 2,346,213.56
Total Assets	\$ 2,665,818.66	\$ 2,611,113.71
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ -	\$ 3,629.88
Payroll Liabilities	\$ 20,117.98	\$ 20,939.66
Prepaid Revenue	\$ 10,178.26	\$ -
Accrued Expenses		
Missions Payable	\$ 809.00	\$ -
Total Liabilities	\$ 31,105.24	\$ 24,569.54
Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$ 2,634,713.42	\$ 2,586,544.17
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 2,665,818.66	\$ 2,611,113.71



Wisconsin Foundation

United Church of Christ

Growing Ministry through Generosity

The Wisconsin Conference UCC formed the Wisconsin Foundation UCC on the model of a community foundation. Community foundations exist to support the growth and vitality of nonprofit organizations, essentially serving as a philanthropic engine.

Community foundations operate out of the logic of cooperation and covenant. Organizations combine their invested resources, allowing them to get better investment advice at a lower cost.

The Wisconsin Foundation UCC holds funds for congregations and closely related organizations (“agency funds”) that support those organizations. The foundation’s own funds generally support the Wisconsin Conference, the Damascus Project, and a small number of other charitable causes. For example, several closed congregations created legacy funds at the foundation to continue their impact in the communities they served.

Please contact Rev. Andrew Warner if you would like to discuss moving your investments into the foundation.

	12/31/2024	12/31/2025
Agency Funds	\$ 6,313,326.67	\$ 10,351,289.35
Foundation Funds		
Foundation Operating Fund	\$ 57,559.66	\$ 67,720.37
Foundation Ministry Fund	\$ 228,487.64	\$ 251,871.28
Church Vitality Fund	\$ 5,243,417.25	\$ 5,779,725.02
New Initiative Funds		\$ 35,218.68
Sarah Hand Ministerial Excellence Fund	\$ 19,026.99	\$ 20,988.92
Ministerial Assistance Fund	\$ 92,473.13	\$ 102,842.13
Church and Ministry Fund		\$ 8,078.78
MID Scholarship Fund FDN	\$ 168,271.11	\$ 462,928.36
Rural and Small Town Ministry Fund FDN	\$ 511,404.93	\$ 260,480.63
Foundation Social Service Fund	\$ 32,643.35	\$ 36,017.08
Brown Deer UCC Social Justice Fund	\$ 11,821.29	\$ 69,481.70
Roger Wentz Catalyst Grant Fund		\$ 217,346.45
Global Partnerships		\$ 12,736.45

Northeast Association Legacy Fund		\$ 301,002.93
Northwest Association Legacy Fund		\$ 73,784.62
Southwest Association Legacy Fund		\$ 56,888.76
Jane Ilgen Literacy Fund	\$ 45,783.06	\$ 50,489.14
Hancock UCC Legacy Fund		\$ 17,882.71
Waldemar Stroetz Fund		\$ 59,415.86
Neenah Impact Fund		\$ 112,144.98
Immanuel UCC Impact Fund		\$ 66,418.37
Washington County Impact Fund	\$ 219,008.37	\$ 239,193.98
UCC Impact Fund	\$ 224,184.20	\$ 248,075.57
St. John's Impact Fund	\$ 227,852.83	\$ 256,242.77
United Christian Church of Campbellsport Legacy Fund	\$ 171,977.79	\$ 182,747.02
Calvary UCC of Twin Lakes Legacy Fund	\$ 424,186.84	\$ 423,477.82
Ebenezer Cemetery Operating Fund	\$ 1,740.08	
Ebenezer Cemetery Endowment	\$ 505,556.46	\$ 575,241.65
Ebenezer Memorial Fund	\$ 22,022.15	\$ 24,375.11
Great Lakes Region Grant	\$ 19,648.10	\$ 19,569.62
Great Lakes Region Youth Event	\$ 9,271.18	\$ 9,523.96
Network for Wider Church Youth Ministry	\$ 1,244.64	\$ 6,071.54
Kairos Climate Fund	\$ 1,409.61	\$ 2,204.78
Ken and Carol Peters Camp Scholarship Fund	\$ 48,425.88	\$ 68,024.99
Thomas Warner Scholarship Fund		\$ 36,362.99
Damascus Project Operating Fund	\$ 35,087.62	\$ 78,805.00
Damascus Project Lilly Grant	\$ 465,467.04	\$ 327,372.08
Damascus Project Reserve Fund	\$ 180,242.46	\$ 300,667.30
Total	\$ 15,281,540.33	\$ 21,212,708.75

LEADERSHIP FORWARD



Our churches face daunting obstacles and exciting opportunities, requiring creative and adaptable leaders who are grounded in our faith. The future of our churches depends on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in partnership with the visionary leadership of gifted lay people and pastors.

Congregations and individuals across the Wisconsin Conference responded to these challenges by making a commitment to the **Leadership Forward Campaign**. As of April 30, we've received over \$1,169,000 in support for the campaign from a combination of congregations and individuals.

- We can develop the next generation of aspiring lay leaders who will ensure the future vitality of our congregations. **Together**, this campaign supports our online education and training programs through the Damascus Project.
- We can encourage innovation in our congregations that will cultivate new forms of ministry and advance our social justice work. **Together**, this campaign will greatly expand our Catalyst Grant capacity.
- We can ensure that those who have faithfully served our congregations are cared for in times of financial distress. **Together**, and through our partnership with the Pension Boards, this campaign provides lifegiving ministerial assistance.

Please consider making a pledge or commitment to the campaign if you have not done so already. Many congregations and individuals chose to make a 5-year pledge. Together we can strengthen every local congregation.

Congregational Gifts and Pledges

Bethel Bethany UCC of Milwaukee
Brookfield Congregational Church UCC
Community UCC of Middleton
Congregational UCC of Delavan
Congregational UCC of Whitewater
Ebenezer UCC of Sheboygan
Emmanuel UCC of Dousman
Emmanuel UCC Of Oshkosh
Evangelical & Reformed UCC of Waukesha
First Congregational UCC of Fort Atkinson
First Congregational UCC of Lake Geneva
First Congregational UCC of Madison
First Congregational UCC of Menomonie

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
First Congregational UCC of Owen
First Congregational UCC of Sheboygan
First Congregational UCC of Wisconsin Rapid
First Congregational UCC of Platteville
First Congregational UCC Of Plymouth
First Congregational UCC of River Falls
First Congregational UCC of Tomah
First Congregational UCC of Wisconsin Rapids
First UCC of Belleville
First UCC of Green Bay
Greendale Community UCC
Hope UCC of Cochrane
Immanuel UCC of Darlington
Nekoosa UCC
Our Saviors UCC of Germantown
Plymouth Congregational UCC of Dodgeville
Plymouth Congregational UCC of Madison
Salem UCC of Plymouth
Salem UCC of Wayne
Salem Plankroad UCC of Plymouth
Somers Community UCC in honor of Howard "Howie" Gloff
St. James UCC of Newton
St. Johns UCC of Black Creek
St. Johns UCC of Fountain City
St. Johns UCC of Merton
St. Johns UCC of Monroe
St. Lukes UCC of South Milwaukee
St. Marks UCC of Cleveland
St. Martins UCC of Fredonia
St. Peters UCC of Kiel
St. Stephens UCC of Merrill
Swiss UCC of New Glarus
Union UCC of Green Bay
UCC of Mukwonago
Zwingli UCC Of Paoli

Gifts from Closed Congregations

Calvary UCC of Twin Lakes
First Congregational UCC of De Pere
Peace UCC of Dorchester
St. Johns UCC of Hartford
St. Stephens UCC of Juneau
United Christian Church of Campbellsport



Celebrating OCWM Wisconsin Impact Champions

The Wisconsin Conference UCC celebrates the generosity of our congregations to our common mission and ministry. We want to especially recognize congregations who make a leading contribution to our Christian movement. The following churches gave either more than 5% of their local expenses or more than \$9,000 to OCWM Wisconsin Impact (formerly, OCWM Basic Support).

Brookfield Congregational Church UCC
Christ Congregational UCC of Clintonville
Congregational UCC of Conrath
Congregational UCC of Mineral Point
Congregational UCC of Neenah
Congregational UCC of Amery
Delta UCC of Mason
Ebenezer UCC of Sheboygan
Emerald Grove UCC
Emmanuel UCC of Oskosh
First Congregational Church UCC
First Congregational Church UCC
First Congregational UCC of Baraboo
First Congregational UCC of Eau Claire
First Congregational UCC of Janesville
First Congregational UCC of Bloomer
First Congregational UCC of Appleton
First Congregational UCC of Eagle River
First Congregational UCC of La Crosse
First Congregational UCC of Madison
First Congregational UCC of New London
First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
First Congregational UCC of Oshkosh
First Congregational UCC of Owen
First Congregational UCC of Rhinelander
First Congregational UCC of River Falls
First Congregational UCC of Sheboygan
First Congregational UCC of South Milwaukee
First Congregational UCC of Tomah
First Congregational UCC of Waukesha
First Evangelical & Reformed UCC of Lowell
Grace Congregational UCC
Greendale Community United Church of Christ
Immanuel UCC of Darlington
Memorial United Church of Christ of Fitchburg
Middleton Community Church UCC
Namekagon Congregational UCC (Earl)
Nekoosa United Church of Christ, Inc.

Orchard Ridge UCC
Our Saviour's UCC
Peace UCC of Kewaskum
Peace UCC of Marinette
Pilgrim UCC of Fond Du Lac
Pilgrim UCC of Grafton
Plymouth Congregational UCC of Madison
Raymond Community Church UCC of Franksville
Salem Plankroad UCC of Plymouth
Salem UCC of Plymouth
Salem UCC of Verona
Salem UCC of Wayne
Saron United Church of Christ of Sheboygan Falls
St John UCC of Appleton
St John's UCC of Arpin
St John's UCC of Black Creek
St John's UCC of Humbird
St John's UCC of Merton
St John's UCC of Monroe
St John's UCC of Prescott
St John's UCC of Random Lake
St Martins UCC (Fillmore)
St Paul's UCC of Ellsworth
St Paul's UCC of Malone
St Paul's UCC of Wausau
St Peter's UCC of Kiel
Swiss United Church of Christ
Truax Congregational UCC
Union Congregational UCC of Green Bay
Union-Congregational UCC of Waupun
United Church of Christ
United Church of Christ of Mazomanie
United Church of Christ of Neillsville
United Church of Christ of Pittsville
United Church of Christ of Williams Bay
Washington Reformation UCC of Monticello
Zwingli UCC of Monticello
Zwingli UCC of Paoli



Celebrating Strengthen the Church Champions

The Wisconsin Conference UCC celebrates the generosity of our congregations to the Strengthen the Church Offering. Together, our gifts support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. We especially recognize congregations who make a leading contribution to this offering. The following churches lead the conference in gifts per person in worship (\$10 or more per person) or in the total given to STC (\$500 or more).

Brookfield Congregational Church UCC
Congregational UCC
Congregational UCC
Congregational UCC
Delta UCC of Mason
Ebenezer UCC of Sheboygan
Emmanuel UCC of Dousman
First Congregational Church of Ripon UCC
First Congregational Church UCC
First Congregational UCC
First Congregational UCC
First Congregational UCC of La Crosse
First Congregational UCC of Madison
First Congregational UCC of Platteville
First Congregational UCC of Sheboygan
Grace Congregational UCC
Grace United Church of Christ
Peace UCC of Manitowoc
Peace UCC of Schofield
Peace UCC of Stevens Point

Pilgrim UCC of Grafton
Salem UCC of Plymouth
Salem UCC of Wayne
Saron United Church of Christ of Sheboygan Falls
St James UCC of Newton
St John's UCC of Humbird
St John's UCC of Merton
St John's UCC of Monroe
St John's UCC of Random Lake
St John's UCC of Sheboygan
St Mark's UCC of Cleveland
St Stephens UCC of Merrill
Trinity UCC of Brookfield
Union Congregational UCC of Green Bay
United Church of Christ of McFarland
United Church Of Christ of Mukwonago
United Church of Christ of Pittsville
United Church of Christ of Williams Bay
United Church of Christ of Windsor

“5 for 5” Churches in the Wisconsin Conference

We celebrate with deep thanksgiving our 5 for 5 congregations! 5 for 5 churches are those that fully support Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM), giving to Basic Support as well as all four Special Mission Offerings. Special Mission Offering dates are: Neighbors in Need is on World Communion Sunday, The Christmas Fund is the Fourth Sunday of Advent, One Great Hour of Sharing is the Fourth Sunday in Lent, and Strengthen the Church is on Pentecost Sunday.



Bethel UCC of Elkhart Lake
Bethlehem UCC
Brookfield Congregational Church UCC
Christ Church UCC of Milwaukee
Christ Congregational UCC of Clintonville
Church of Peace UCC of Fond Du Lac
Congregational UCC of Brodhead
Congregational UCC of Ladysmith
Congregational UCC of Sparta
Conrath Congregational Church
Delta UCC
Ebenezer UCC of Chilton
Ebenezer UCC of Sheboygan
Ely Memorial UCC
Emanuel Church of Hales Corners
Emmanuel UCC of Dousman
Evangelical & Reformed UCC
Faith United Church Of Christ Of Antigo
Faith United Church of Christ of Slinger
First Congregational UCC of Baraboo
First Congregational UCC of Bloomer
First Congregational UCC of Boscobel
First Congregational UCC of East Troy
First Congregational UCC of Eau Claire
First Congregational UCC of Elkhorn
First Congregational UCC of Fort Atkinson
First Congregational UCC of Hartland
First Congregational UCC of Janesville
First Congregational UCC of La Crosse
First Congregational UCC of Lake Geneva
First Congregational UCC of Lake Mills
First Congregational UCC of Madison
First Congregational UCC of New London
First Congregational UCC of Owen
First Congregational UCC of Platteville
First Congregational UCC Of Plymouth
First Congregational UCC of Ripon UCC
First Congregational UCC Of Sheboygan

Memorial United Church of Christ of Fitchburg
Namekagon Congregational UCC
Nekoosa United Church Of Christ, Inc.
Our Shepherd UCC of Howards Grove
Parkside Community UCC
Peace UCC of Brillion
Peace UCC Of Kewaskum
Peace UCC of Schofield
Peace UCC of Shawano
Peace UCC of Stevens Point
Pilgrim UCC of Grafton
Plymouth Congregational UCC of Madison
Raymond Community Church UCC
Redeemer UCC
Saint James UCC
Saint Johns UCC Of Appleton
Saint Johns UCC of Elkhart Lake
Saint Johns UCC of La Crosse
Saint Johns UCC Of Merrilan
Saint Johns UCC of Merton
Saint Johns UCC of Monroe
Saint Johns UCC of New Holstein
Saint Johns UCC of Prescott
Saint Johns UCC of Random Lake
Saint Johns UCC of Sheboygan
Saint Marks UCC
Saint Pauls UCC of Ellsworth
Saint Pauls UCC of Erin
Saint Pauls UCC Of Oshkosh
Saint Pauls UCC Of Wausau
Saint Peters UCC
Saint Stephens UCC of Merrill
Salem Plankroad UCC
Salem UCC of Plymouth
Salem UCC of Verona
Salem UCC of Wayne
Saron United Church of Christ
Truax Congregational UCC

First Congregational UCC of South Milwaukee
First Congregational UCC of Tomah
First Congregational UCC of Watertown
First Congregational UCC of Waukesha
First Congregational UCC of Wisconsin Rapids
First Evangelical & Reformed UCC of Lowell
First UCC of Belleville
Grace Congregational UCC of Two Rivers
Grace United Church of Wausau
Immanuel UCC of Darlington
Immanuel UCC of Kaukauna
McFarland UCC

Union Congregational UCC of Green Bay
Union Grove Congregational UCC
Union-Congregational Church of Waupun
United Church of Christ of Elcho
United Church of Christ of Mukwonago
United Church of Christ of Neillsville
United Church of Christ of Pittsville
United Church of Christ of Prescott
United Church of Christ of Williams Bay
United Church of Christ of Windsor
Washington Reformation UCC
Zwingli UCC of Monticello

Welcome Our Newly Settled Pastors



The Rev. Benjamin Barlow
First Congregational UCC
Janesville



The Rev. Brad Brookins
Mazomanie UCC
Mazomanie



The Rev. Tisha Brown
Zwingli UCC
Mt. Vernon



The Rev. Dana Caldwell
Immanuel UCC
Darlington



The Rev. Susan Grade
First Congregational UCC
Rhineland



The Rev. Tim Grade
First Congregational UCC
Rhineland



Michael Hammond
Plymouth UCC
Dodgenville



The Rev. Laura Hawkins
Olivet Congregational UCC
Columbus



The Rev. Dr. Amy Nyland
St. Pauls UCC
Menomonee Falls

Newly Settled Pastors, continued



The Rev. John Pethtel
First Congregational UCC
Milton



The Rev. James Schleif
First Congregational UCC
Port Washington



The Rev. Peter Strobel
Zwingli UCC
Monticello

Join a Christian Education/Faith Formation Community of Practice

The Christian Education/Faith Formation Commission of the Wisconsin Conference offers a Communities of Practice (COP) program for educators as a parallel to the successful COP program for pastors in our conference. Lay volunteer or paid staff involved in Sunday school, youth group, or overall education/faith formation are supported and enriched by involvement in a COP with others practicing ministry in similar ways.

Groups will:

- be composed of about six Christian educators/youth leaders from throughout the Wisconsin Conference;
- have a trained facilitator who has experience in Christian education/faith formation ministry;
- meet every four to six weeks for three hours at a day/time that is reasonable for those involved;
- meet at a central location when possible, or groups may choose to use technology to meet remotely.

If you, or the faith formation leader/staff at your church, would appreciate the support of a network of Christian education/faith formation peers, these groups are for you. COP groups for 2026-2027 will start in September. For more information, go to wcucc.org/COP-CEFF, or contact Lisa Hart at lhart@wcucc.org.

We value your feedback!

Please complete the online Annual Meeting evaluation:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/wcucc-am-2026>



2026 Scholarship Award Winners

First Congregational Church-McDowell Scholarship: Lesley Buelow

The First Congregational Church-McDowell Scholarship was established in 1988 by Florence and Vilas Bohlman and First Congregational UCC, Boscobel, in memory of Mrs. Bohlman's parents, Ross and Vere McDowell. The scholarship is presented annually to a seminarian and member in discernment of one of the four Associations whose devotion to the church and commitment to parish ministry offer exceptional promise for service to the Word in congregational life.



Lesley Buelow is a student at Chicago Theological Seminary pursuing her M.Div. degree with a concentration in Chaplaincy. She is set to graduate in just a couple of weeks, on April 24, 2026, at which point she will work to complete the Ordination process. She is currently a Licensed Minister in the Wisconsin Conference working as a 1/4-time Intentional Interim with Raymond Community Church UCC in Franksville and is blessed daily to have been called to that position. In her spare time, Lesley loves to read, watch Hallmark movies and spend time with her husband, Ed.

Carl H. Zeyher Award: Lisa Hart

The Carl H. Zeyher Award scholarship was established by the late Helen Zeyher and her family in memory of husband and father, the Rev. Carl H. Zeyher, who was ordained by the Evangelical Synod of North America at New Braunfels, Texas, in 1925 and served faithfully in congregations of the Synod, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and the United Church of Christ, in Texas, Minnesota, Virginia, Connecticut, and Wisconsin until his retirement. The Award is presented annually to a member in discernment and a seminarian whose devotion to word and deed reflect the ways in which Carl H. Zeyher served as a pastor among us.

Lisa Hart, a Commissioned Minister of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, is the Associate Conference Minister for Faith Formation and Justice Ministries, as well as the Executive Associate to the Conference Minister. She joined the Wisconsin Conference Staff in January 2006 after working in faith formation and youth ministry in the local church setting. Lisa is a member in discernment, preparing for ordination after serving 12 years as a commissioned minister in the United Church of Christ. She lives in Fitchburg with her husband, Chuck, and is a member of Salem UCC in Verona.



Myrtle I. Baker Scholarship Award: Ann Larrabee

The Myrtle I. Baker scholarship was established in 1982 in honor of the Rev. Myrtle I. Baker, who in 1933 was the first ordained woman to serve congregations in the Wisconsin Conference. She served as minister of First Congregational UCC in Boscobel and the Congregational UCC at Steuben, from 1955 until her retirement in 1977. The scholarship was presented to the Wisconsin Conference by Florence M. Bohlman, a lay leader of the church at Boscobel. The scholarship is presented annually to a member in discernment who exhibits the character, love for the church and the pastoral qualities that marked the life and ministry of Myrtle I. Baker.



Ann Larrabee has been a member of Grace United Church of Christ in Wausau since 2001. She graduated from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in 2020 and has been serving Grace UCC since 2023 as a licensed pastor. She is a published writer, mother of six, grandmother of six, an avid reader and constant knitter.

Time of Remembrance

The **Rev. John Sheild** died on April 16, 2025. He was born on January 19, 1931, to Mary (nee Crissman) and Rexford Sheild in Salem, S.D. and was raised by his loving parents in this small rural community. Following his graduation in 1949, he entered the University of South Dakota where he set the school record in the two-mile, was in the Army ROTC, and graduated in 1953 with an English degree and commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. It was during his college years that he met Rev. Robert Midgley, the Pastor of the Congregational Church in Vermillion, S.D. Through Rev. Midgley's encouragement and because of his work with A Christian Ministry in the National Parks at Yellowstone National Park during several summers, John decided to make ministry his life work. John attended Andover Newton Theological School from 1953 to 1957 and graduated with a Master of Divinity. It was during seminary that he met the love of his life, Jean Powers, and her two sons, Tom and Steve. They were married on July 12, 1958, and moved to Redfield, S.D., where John had been called to be pastor of the First Congregational Church. Pete and Carolyn were born during this pastorate. In 1966, the family moved to Madison, Wis., where John was called to be the Associate Pastor of Lake Edge United Church of Christ and reunited with Rev. Midgley. Following Jean's retirement in 1992 from 20 years of teaching elementary school in Madison and his own retirement in 1993, they enjoyed traveling, watching Badger games, gardening, and serving on the National Advisory Council of A Christian Ministry in the National Parks. Their greatest joy came from family gatherings and celebrations when love, hugs, and stories were shared.

Janet Snyder, wife of the Rev. Bob Snyder, died May 19, 2025, at age 90. Jan was born and raised in Bremen, Ind. She married Lyle Shenefield, and they raised two children, Lisa and Jay. Jan received a Music Education degree from Indiana University. In 1965, after a polite divorce, and with her children in tow, Jan moved to Phoenix, to begin a 40-year career in elementary education curricula. Jan received two post-graduate degrees in Choral Direction and in Organ Performance. In 1970, Jan married Bob Snyder. Upon retiring from career responsibilities in 1992, Bob entered the Graduation Theological Union in Berkeley, to complete his M.Div. He was then called to a church in Hales Corners in 1994, and Jan and Bob moved to Wisconsin. Once settled in Hales Corners, Jan continued using her skills in music and education. She accepted the position of organist in numerous churches while continuing to teach as a full-time and substitute teacher in various school districts in the area. Jan lived her life with an appreciation for her blessings and she shared them as often as she could with all who were a part of her life. Music was deep in her soul, and she always felt it was God's way of talking to us. To the end, Jan was positive in her outlook on life, never passing up an opportunity to be kind to others and encourage them along on their life journeys.

The **Rev. Charles S. Yoak** of Amery, Wisconsin, died on May 23, 2025 at Amery Memory Care where he has been residing for three years. Chuck was born November 21, 1937 in Kentucky, the son of the Rev. Robert N. D. Yoak and Louise S. Yoak. He grew up mostly in Iowa, attending high school and college there. He graduated from Avoca High School in 1955 and Grinnell College in 1959. He was the youngest licensed pastor in the state of Iowa and served a small local Congregational church all of the time he was in college. Chuck graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary, a part of the federated schools of the University of Chicago with a Bachelor of Divinity in 1964. He served pastorates in Chicago (while still a student), and later, in Omaha and Anamosa, Iowa. He then, in 1968 left the trajectory of continuous ministerial service. Subsequently, Chuck pursued a variety of career interests: journalism; sports editor of the Cedar Rapids Gazette; cab driver; professional boxer; and farmer to name a few. Chuck married Judith L. Crist in 1959 and had two children, Amy and Scott. He later married Marilyn Ames and raised two step sons Robert and Todd. At a later time, Chuck married Marilyn Tishleder. Chuck held standing in the Wisconsin Conference Northwest Association at the time of his death.

Judith Ann St. Martin (née Stoia), husband of the Rev. Peter St. Martin, died May 30, 2025. Judy was born in Kearny, New Jersey, on Oct. 17, 1954. Though minister's wife and Navy chaplain's wife were roles imposed upon her, she made them her own, embracing them as opportunities for spreading grace and compassion. At

worship, she moved pews each week to connect with parishioners, getting to know all of them on a deeper level. Known for her baking, Judy's cookies, whoopie pies, peanut butter balls, cakes and other sweet treats found their way into the hands of Marines and Sailors in the field, parishioners at church gatherings, hairdressers, doctors, dentists, neighbors and countless others to whom she wished to show gratitude and love. Judy was an avid and talented quilter whose hands were rarely still. She lovingly and meticulously created quilts for family and friends, but she also generously donated hundreds of quilts to organizations supporting breast cancer patients, the homeless and orphaned children, wrapping others in warmth and care through her craft.

The **Rev. Jean Mary Wallenfang**, 72, died on May 27, 2025. Jean was born on Aug. 8, 1952, in New London, Wis., the oldest child of Clyde and Marion (Flunker) Wallenfang. After high school, Jean attended UW–Stevens Point, graduating with a degree in education with an emphasis in drama. Music continued to be an integral part of her life; she sang for church services, weddings, and funerals. After college, Jean moved to Green Bay, where she became a member of the First Congregational UCC. Jean directed the Fidget Choir. For many years, Jean was involved with the Wisconsin Conference UCC. During those years, she met Judy Holcomb, who would become her lifelong best friend. Jean had many fond memories assisting Judy, the director of Moon Beach Camp. It was at Moon Beach that she felt God's calling. During her summer as interim director at the UCC camp in western Pennsylvania, she discovered she could preach after filling in as minister for a small church. In 1991, with the support of the Green Bay UCC, Jean attended the United Theological Seminary in St. Paul, earning her M.Div. degree in 1994. Jean served two churches in Granada and Fairmont, Minn.. Later, Jean accepted a call to serve the UCC of Williams Bay. She was very proud of her 1950 brick house, making changes that made it her "piece of heaven on Earth." Jean, along with her sister Pam, spent many hours in the backyard creating a peaceful patio with a view. This view genuinely inspired the sermons she brought to her parishioners. After retiring from the Williams Bay church in August 2018, Judy and her friend Jean ventured to Alaska to celebrate retirement. It was during this trip that Judy noticed the onset of Jean's dementia, and she was diagnosed with Waldenström Macroglobulinemia. For the last five years, Jean lived the best life possible at Our House Senior Living in Janesville, with the caring love of Pam and Judy, as well as the wonderful assisted living care team. She entered heaven listening to "I Am Here, Lord" with Pam by her side.

Tammy S. Whitford, wife of Pastor Bill Whitford, died June 4, 2025. She was born on Nov. 12, 1957, in Marshfield, Wis., the daughter of Allen and Thora Mae Millard. She attended Milton College and graduated in 1980. In 1995, she married William Whitford. She worked at a variety of companies, including Armstrong Chemical in Janesville, Plastomeric in Waukesha, Beloit Corporation Research in Rockton, and later at Glacier's Edge Council Office and St. Peter's Lutheran Church, both in Janesville. She retired in 2015. Tammy was a leader and member of First Congregational UCC Church in Milton for much of her life. She was an active Scout leader and enjoyed her time with youth of all ages, even the adults. She loved music, especially playing with the bell choir at church. Tammy was a big Wisconsin Badger and Green Bay Packers fan. Tammy lived with end-stage kidney disease and received frequent dialysis treatments for 16 years. Her strong, stubborn spirit kept her body going long after it should have failed. Her love for children and for animals, for her church and her God, made her strong. She leaves behind a legacy of love, kindness, and recipes for amazing baked treats.

Jean P. Sheild, widow of the Rev. John Sheild, died July 1, 2025. Jean was born on Aug. 31, 1922, to Celia (nee Marshall) and Cyrus Jordan in Newton, Mass. She graduated from Middlebury College (1943), majoring in French. After college, she moved to Washington, D.C. and worked in the Signal Corps. In 1944, she married Thomas Powers prior to his deployment to the Pacific Theater as a U.S. Navy pilot. After the war, they returned to Newton where their two sons were born, Tom in 1948, and Steve in 1950. Jean's life was upended in 1952 when her husband died suddenly from a brain tumor. Jean and the boys moved in with her parents, and she returned to school, earning a Master's in Education from Boston University. She taught third grade in Newton for two years. In 1958, Jean married John Sheild and the family moved to Redfield, S.D., where John became the pastor of the First Congregational Church (UCC). Jean and John added two children to the family. In 1966, they moved to Madison, when John was called to be the Associate Pastor at Lake Edge UCC. Jean was soon

hired by the Madison School District, teaching third and fourth grade at Orchard Ridge Elementary School until 1992. In 1978, she and her class were instrumental in getting Senate Bill 731 passed by the state legislature which mandated Braille markings in Wisconsin elevators. Jean had many interests. She loved to travel and enjoyed trips to France, Alaska, Norway, Holland and Israel, as well as many National Parks. She appreciated the beauty of nature and savored being near the ocean, especially Cape Cod. She was an avid biker and cross-country skier. She loved reading and playing cards. She was a dedicated volunteer at Olbrich Gardens for 25 years. Above all, she valued her faith and family.

The **Rev. Micah M. Schlobohm**, 67, of Stevens Point, died unexpectedly on 13 July, 2025, in Kansas City, where she was attending the General Synod meeting of the UCC. Micah was born on 29 Sept. 1957 to Helen (Anderson) and Harold M. Schlobohm, living in Monon, Ind. While attending Carroll College, Micah went to Nome, Alaska, on a mission trip, fell in love with it and stayed 10 years. During that time she began raising and racing Alaska Huskies, having as many as 36 at one time. Micah finished college at Metropolitan State University and graduated from United Seminary in New Brighton, Minn., and was ordained a minister in 1995 and in the UCC in 2006. Micah and her partner Claude were together for 35 years having had a private ceremony in 1990 and a public one in 1995. Micah served UCC churches as Interim Pastor in Delavan, Hancock, Sparta, Stratford, Tomah, Wisconsin Rapids, and Wild Rose United Methodist before becoming a settled pastor for Hancock UCC and Peace UCC in Stevens Point the last three years of her life. She was active in the wider church serving on ONA and various other committees, and as secretary for the Wisconsin Conference UCC.

Stephen Alan Gould, age 80, loving husband and best friend of Susan (Davis), died on Aug. 1, 2025. He was born on September 27, 1944, in East Aurora, New York, the third child of M. Irwin Gould and Lillian B. Gould. At the age of 10, the family moved to suburban St. Louis. Upon graduation from Ladue High School, he enrolled at Wabash College where he earned an AB in German Language. At Wabash, he was a member of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity and the Delta Phi Alpha German Honorary Society. Following graduation, he was awarded a National Defense Education Act Fellowship to attend the University of Nebraska where he earned his M.A. and Ph.D in German Language and Literature. Dr. Gould began his extraordinary 42-year career at Lakeland University in 1970 as an instructor of German language and literature. A gifted teacher with a sharp intellect, a wry sense of humor, and his ever-present pipe, he quickly earned the admiration of students and colleagues alike. Within a decade, he would leave the classroom to take on a series of challenges developing evening and off-campus programming for working adults. Under his leadership those programs eventually enabled thousands of adult learners to earn their bachelor's degrees. From 1991 to 1993 he served as the Provost and Dean of Lakeland University–Japan and was then elected as the 14th President of Lakeland University until his retirement in 2012. But beyond numbers and buildings, Stephen was a scholar, a philosopher, a literary mind, and above all, a deeply human leader. His devotion to the liberal arts and to Lakeland's mission was evident in everything he did. Above all else, Steve cherished time with his family and friends, traveling, and learning more about life through literature and sailing on his boat, Prime Time.

Mary Runge, wife of the Rev. Dick Runge, died Aug. 28, 2025. Mary was born in Green Bay to Ephraim Cook and Grace Behling (née Bishop). She grew up in Green Bay and graduated from Preble High School before attending the UW–Madison, where she earned her degree in Nursing. During her time there, Mary was a talented musician, playing flute and piccolo in the marching band, an early reflection of her lifelong love of music and joy in making music, often with her husband and three daughters. Later in life she went on to get her Executive MBA at UW–Milwaukee. Mary dedicated her career to compassion, innovation, and care as a pioneer in the hospice movement. Over the course of her life's work, she served as an executive leader for multiple hospice organizations, guiding programs through times of growth and transition, shaping policies and practices that ensured dignity, comfort, and peace for patients and their families. She was a tireless advocate for expanding access to hospice services and a respected mentor who inspired countless colleagues and caregivers. Her leadership helped establish hospice as an integral part of healthcare in Wisconsin and beyond. Outside

of her professional life, Mary embraced every day with energy and joy. She loved bicycling, traveling, and savoring simple pleasures like the perfect pairing of a chocolate chip cookie and a glass of pinot noir. She was known for her quick wit, warm laugh, and generous spirit, qualities that made everyone feel welcome in her presence. Mary will be remembered for her warmth, wisdom, sense of humor, and her lifelong dedication to easing the suffering of others. She leaves behind a legacy of love, strength, and service that continues in her family and in the countless lives touched by her work.

The **Rev. Dr. Milton Staskal**, died Sept. 1, 2025. He was born on April 7, 1938, on a farm between Fennimore and Boscobel, in the midst of a “once in a century” snow storm, the middle son of Magnus and Dorthea (Stenner) Staskal. He graduated from Elmhurst College in Illinois with majors in psychology and religion (1959). He married Gertrude (Trudy) Barbara Oechsle of Fennimore on June 5, 1959. He attended Mission House Seminary, graduating in 1962. Milton served UCC congregations in Farmersville, Ohio, Germantown, New London and Kewaskum. Both Milt and Trudy were always very active in the communities in which they lived. For three years he was the Personnel Director and Assistant Chaplain at Cedar Lake Community in West Bend. Concurrently, for 14 years, beginning in 1979, he was a very successful advertising salesman establishing the sales record for his company and the national sales record for the industry, achieving this working only part-time. During this combined/shared experience he felt called to serve struggling congregations between permanent pastors and beginning in 1991 received extensive training and became an Accredited Intentional Interim Ministry Specialist and served in 13 congregations around the country. In 2000 semi-retirement found Milton and Trudy settled in New London as he worked as a “tethered interim pastor” from which he retired in 2009. He kept busy with long/short term pulpit supply in various congregations until full retirement in 2018. Milton’s special interests included fishing (Lake Michigan and Wolf River), reading, playing dominoes and traveling. Milton was an astute investor. As a result, Milt and Trudy were able to endow a named scholarship at his seminary; establish a “mission” endowment fund at their local congregation; were the major donor for the New London Public Library Capital Campaign; donated over 1000 large print books to the New London Library, creating one of the largest large print collections in northeast Wisconsin; provided a large matching fund for the camping/outdoor ministry program of the Wisconsin Conference UCC; funded several Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity houses, challenge matching funds for establishing the Mission of Hope House Endowment Fund, New London and other major charities focusing on serving people who found themselves having “fallen through the cracks” of social programs.

The **Rev. Phillips Clark Sweet** died Sept. 11, 2025. He was born Dec. 5, 1937, in Franklin, New Hampshire, to Ruth Clark and Phillips Bennett Sweet. Phil grew up in Swanzey Center, New Hampshire, graduating from Keene High School. Phil went on to graduate from The Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina, a military college he loved. He served two years in the Army, one of those in Korea where he volunteered in orphanages. It was there he decided to become a minister. He attended Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, Mass. Phil and Sharon met at Camp Jened, Hunter, New York, a camp serving handicapped children and adults. In four day’s time they were engaged. After marrying they began raising a family, first in Newton, then in Minnesota where Phil served two rural churches on the prairie, in Campbell and Tintah. While there, he did an exchange ministry of six months in Cowdenbeath, Scotland, with his young family. In 1970 the Sweets moved to Sturgeon Bay, with Phil accepting the call to serve Hope UCC. A second ministerial exchange happened in 1975, this time in Glasgow, Scotland. He was inquisitive and loved learning, graduating in 1978 with a D.Min. from Chicago Theological Seminary and later graduating from NW Technical College in the diesel mechanic program. He loved canoeing the Boundary Waters of Minnesota, taking youth groups and adult groups every year, and also planning many family trips. He led youth and adult work camps at Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, Mississippi, for many years. A 1996 trek in the Himalayas with 20 Hope Church members and friends was a highlight of his career. Phil retired from Hope Church in 1998, eager to be a student at The Carpenter’s Boat Shop in Pemaquid, Maine. Living in Maine for two years brought him back to his New England roots. In retirement he hiked the Appalachian Trail and three times El Camino De Santiago in Spain. In the words of his favorite children’s story, “It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day” when Phil left us.

The **Rev. Gene Ellis Krueger** died on Oct. 2, 2025. He was born on Dec. 21, 1931, to Herman and Helen Krueger. He grew up in the town of Pine River near Merrill, Wis., and he graduated from Merrill High School in 1949. He went on to Mission House and Seminary in Sheboygan (now Lakeland University), and he was ordained in his home church, St. Stephens UCC, in 1956. He was called to a yoked congregation: St. Paul and St. Luke UCC in Alma and Hope UCC in Cochrane, where he enjoyed life next to the Mississippi. It was there that he met and married the love of his life, Gwen Ruben, in 1966. They had a daughter, Sarah, in 1968, and in 1970, they were called to Zion UCC in Sheboygan. Gene was the youth minister, and he touched many young lives through his work there. Another daughter, Leah, completed their family in 1975. In 1978, he was called to Faith UCC in Antigo, where he remained until he retired in 1997. He believed in helping others, and he started a food pantry ministry while he was there. In retirement, Gene also helped serve at Ebenezer UCC in Stratford, while becoming a member of the First Congregational Church at Redgranite. He extended his ministry to the Redgranite Correctional Institution, and he was a member of Habitat for Humanity. He and his wife moved to Bella Vista 4 years ago, and it was his joy to have one last garden in the community gardens on the same block. Gene believed that all people deserve love and acceptance, and he made every person he met feel important and loved. He believed in the power of prayer in action, and he was able to be a positive force in many lives and causes.

Gary Arthur Gilbert, born on Jan. 28, 1941, died on Oct. 24, 2025, at the age of 84, in Altoona, IA, surrounded by his children. Gary was known for his vibrant, larger-than-life personality, leaving a lasting impression on everyone he met. Throughout his life, he was deeply involved in his community and pursued various passions that reflected his dynamic character. Gary's career began in sales, which suited him perfectly. In time, he moved his family to Phelps where he owned and operated the Holiday Lodge. It was here that Gary discovered his love for cooking, a hobby he cherished and shared with many. Life took a meaningful turn when he followed his love for the lord, becoming a lay minister and serving his congregation at First Congregational UCC in Three Lakes with dedication and love until his retirement. Gary's commitment to service was also evident through his time with the National Guard, where he embraced the responsibilities and military camaraderie. Gary also loved golfing, reading, participating in community theater, music, and fishing. Each hobby allowed him to connect with friends and enjoy life's simple pleasures. Gary's legacy is marked by his love of family, passionate spirit, and the relationships with those around him. His memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew him.

The **Rev. Russell Knoth** died on Nov. 12, 2025. Russ was born May 26, 1946 in Michigan City, Ind., to James and June Knoth. He married Rose Marie Weller June 12, 1970. Russ graduated from Lakeland College in Sheboygan, then attended Eden Seminary in St. Louis which led to his ordination as a minister in the UCC. It was at seminary that Russ met his wife of fifty-five years. He served the UCC in Bourbon, Ind., West Bend, Osseo and Menomonee Falls. It was his last church, St. Paul's UCC in Menomonee Falls, that he spent twenty-six and a half years doing what he loved to do, leading worship services, and officiating at many baptisms, weddings and funerals. Russ loved volunteering for the Menomonee Falls Police Department which he did for thirty-five years, enjoying ride-alongs with the police on duty, giving them a listening ear, occasionally performing their weddings, baptizing their babies, and helping them in their final moments. He also volunteered for the Menomonee Falls and Germantown Fire Department, living every little boy's dream of riding in the fire truck. Anyone who knows Russ knows that he had two other interests. One was model railroading. He spent many hours building and running his railroad, enjoying constructing his buildings from scratch, and making his own scenery, including his own trees. His other love was the study of history, spending many hours reading and listening to lectures.

Anne D. Simpson, widow of the Rev. Robert Simpson, died Dec. 2, 2025. She was born in Minneapolis in 1935 to Edwin Noyes Dodge and Anne Winton Dodge. Anne attended Miss Porter's School and Smith College. In 1955, she married James H. Leslie with whom she had 3 children. In 1972 Anne married the Rev. Robert Simpson. They lived in St. Paul where he was co-pastor of Macalester Plymouth Church. Four years later they

moved to Amery, Wis., where they ran a farm, Bob did interim ministry, and Anne received a Lay Diploma from United Theological Seminary. She taught Christian Education for many years. Anne and Bob retired to Grand Marais, Minn., in 1993 and soon after, Bob was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. In 2005, they moved to the Twin Cities. Anne and Bob co-authored the book "Through the Wilderness of Alzheimer's: A Guide in Two Voices." Anne contributed to several poetry anthologies, wrote a curriculum for churches and advocated for families living with dementia, and then published a book on aging entitled "Do you feel as old as you are?", which was based on conversations with her granddaughter. Anne had three children: Laura (Rob) Self, Kate Christianson, and Jim (Norma) Leslie. Anne also had three stepsons: Leslie Simpson, Wayne (Barb) Simpson, and Mark Simpson. Anne is survived by 33 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Sydney Baldwin, wife of Conference staff member Mark Baldwin, died at home on Jan. 20, 2026, 17 months after receiving a diagnosis of ALS, which she met with characteristic wit and determination to keep living her own way. Sydney was born to Joseph and Barbara Lyon of Hudson, Ohio, on Aug. 23, 1954. She attended the University of Idaho and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she completed a bachelor of fine arts with an emphasis on drawing and painting. After graduation, she worked as a graphic designer at a Chicago publishing company, where she met her future husband, Mark. They were married for 42 years. She created comfortable homes wherever they lived as Mark's career in news took them around the country, before they settled in Rockford, Ill. They were dedicated members of the churches they belonged to in each community, occasionally as Lutherans but most comfortably as Episcopalians. Along the way, they had three daughters: Hannah, Mary, and Jane, raised in a menagerie that included at various times Labradors, cats, Whippets, a schipperke, a pony, parakeets, a cockatiel, several fish and hamsters, and a flock of chickens. She cultivated gardens and friendships in every home, welcoming neighbors and friends, fellow dog lovers and horse people into her life. Two weeks after receiving her ALS diagnosis, her Rockford home overflowed with cherished friends and family celebrating her 70th birthday. Sydney was always funny, sharp and observant. Upon meeting one of her caregivers with Northern Illinois Hospice for the first time, she said, "You know I'm dying, right?"

The **Rev. Gerald O'Connor**, father of the late Rev. Kathryn Kuhn, died on Jan. 30, 2026. Jerry was born in Chicago, on Aug. 31, 1935. He was the son of Richard and Mildred (Urlaub) O'Connor. He received his B.A. from Elmhurst College in 1958. He graduated from Eden Theological Seminary in 1962 and was ordained at St. Stephan's UCC in Chicago. Jerry was married to Barbara J. Hofmeister for 55 years. Jerry served many congregations over the years, beginning with St. Lucas UCC and First Congregational UCC in St. Louis, followed by St. John UCC and East Congregational UCC in Grand Rapids, Mich.; St. Paul UCC in Middletown, Ohio; St. Paul UCC in Cincinnati; Gwinnett Community UCC in Atlanta; and Emmanuel UCC in Bartlett, Ill.. Following his first retirement in 1998, he accepted a call in 2001 to become Chaplain at Plymouth Harbor Retirement Community in Sarasota, Fla., where he served for 15 years. In 2016, Jerry and Barbara moved from Florida to West Bend to make their home at Cedar Community where their daughter, the Rev. Kathryn Kuhn, was on staff. They were active members of Peace UCC in Kewaskum. Jerry had a passion for art in its many forms and participated in photography, drawing, watercolor and oil painting, as well as many crafts. He was an avid collector of pens and curator of office/art supplies of all kinds. And books. And music. He loved playing, singing and listening to piano, pipe organ, large choirs, and classical works for orchestra.

The **Rev. Catherine "Robin" Reed** died Feb. 10, 2026. Robin was born on March 25, 1936, in Michigan to Catherine Bradford (Robinson) Reed and Clyde Laverne Reed. On the day she was born, a nest of robin's eggs hatched outside her nursery window. Her father began calling her his "little robin" and the name remained with her for life. A lifelong learner with an inquisitive and discerning mind, Robin earned a degree in Education from Eastern Michigan University, followed by an M.Div. from Western Theological Seminary in Michigan. Her intellectual curiosity shaped her life; she loved theological, political and thoughtful conversations. Adventurous at heart, Robin even obtained a pilot's license for yachting—one of her many unique accomplishments. She was a published author, contributing to several travel magazines and sharing her love of exploration with others. Robin was married for 25 years to William Robert Surridge. Together they raised three children: Catherine

Bradford Surridge (Kollath), Scott William Surridge, and Robert Reed Surridge. During those years, Robin was an avid gardner, devoted teacher and a creative home maker. Her motto was “There is always room for one more.” She fed the neighborhood as the house became a hub of activity for the children and their friends. In her second career, Robin answered a call to ministry, serving as one of the first ordained women in the Reformed Church of America and the UCC. Her ministry took her from Albany, New York, to Seattle, and many communities in between. She approached her work with courage, compassion, and conviction, breaking barriers for women in ministry and advocating passionately for social justice. During these years, she shared her life with her beloved partner, Ronald Hosking, who was warmly known and loved as “Grandpa Ron.” Robin is survived by her children: Catherine Kollath; Scott and Andrea Surridge; and Bob and Angie Surridge; as well as seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. She will be remembered for her adventurous spirit, her sharp mind, her unwavering faith, and her deep and abiding love for her family. Her legacy lives on in the lives she nurtured, the barriers she helped dismantle, and the many hearts she welcomed with grace.

The **Rev. Ann Wahlers** died on Feb. 21, 2026. She was born on Dec. 7, 1936, in Neenah, the daughter of Irwin and Beatrice (Darling) Pearson. Ann’s love of nature and God’s creation led her throughout her life; beginning as a child on the shores of Lake Winnebago, to many years at a wonderful, holy place on Enterprise Lake outside of Antigo, to the beauty of the Pacific Northwest and the ocean which caressed the shores, to the astounding spiritual peace of Boom Lake. She loved all of the creatures, including the many dogs that walked with her on the journey, including her accredited therapy dog, Hodie the Hodag. Following the granting of an M.Div. from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, Ann was ordained at the First Congregational UCC in Grand Marais, Minn. on Sept. 24, 1989. While serving in Minnesota she served as the chair of the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Conference of the UCC. After studying in the doctoral program of the seminary with an emphasis on pastoral counseling she moved to the State of Washington and served a small church in the Pacific Northwest prior to returning to Wisconsin and a pastorate at Faith United Church UCC in Antigo. Ann later moved to serve Ely Memorial Church, Land O Lakes and Phelps Congregational Church UCC. Ann then retired from full time parish ministry but remained active in the Northwest Association (NWA) and the Wisconsin Conference UCC serving as chair of the NWA Division on Church and Ministry, facilitating retreats, providing pulpit supply and serving as interim minister with the First Congregational UCC of Eagle River.

Gwen Krueger, widow of the Rev. Gene Krueger, died on March 13, 2026. Gwen was born on Aug. 21, 1939, to Bill and Edith Ruben. Gwen graduated from Waukesha High School, and she moved to Alma, Wis., to go to Normal Teacher’s College, where she had wonderful adventures with her dear friend, Bev. It was there that she met Gene, and they married in 1966. Gwen supported Gene in his occupation of ministering to UCC congregations. After Gene’s retirement, the two decided to move to their land in Dakota, Wis., and they lived at Woodsong, enjoying all of the birds and other woodland animals that graced their home until they moved to Bella Vista in Oshkosh. After Gene’s passing in October, Gwen relocated to Edenbrook for a few months prior to her death. The event that changed all of their lives happened on October 27, 1986, when a devastating car accident left Gwen handicapped for the rest of her life. However, she was tough. She fought and laughed through physical therapy enough to be able to do her classic “waddle,” and she did not give up trying to push to help herself. In fact, people would kindly chastise her family to have them help her, but they would defer to the fact that she would yell at them if they did. Gwen eventually made it home, and her family was given the gift of 40 more years of her love, which she often showed through her cooking, from hams to her signature Special K bars.

We honor these Wisconsin ministers as they celebrate Ordination anniversaries in 2025

Those who have served over 50 years in ministry

George Schowalter	1955	David McBride	1972
Howard Kusler	1956	Bob Meyer	1972
Daniel Winger	1957	Steven Hecky	1972
Bob Horst	1957	Art Wille	1972
Del Permann	1960	Don Baumann	1972
Roger Brooks	1960	Jim Mohr	1972
Arlan Schlundt	1960	Tom Uphaus	1972
Donald Minnick	1961	Dave Moyer	1972
Ron Segedy	1961	David Ostendorf	1972
John Eyster	1962	Mike Heath	1972
Fred Trost	1962	Edward Freese	1973
Ramon Hunt	1962	Lynn Larson	1973
Keith Farnham	1963	Stephen Gifford	1973
Daniel Jonas	1963	Tim Kehl	1973
Ralph Schultz	1963	Norm Luecke	1973
Beryl Melcher	1963	Kendell Nordstrom	1973
Max Rigert	1963	Dale Stohre	1973
Jake Close	1963	John McFadden	1973
Stephen Rohloff	1964	Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder	1974
Howard Bowman	1967	Bill Kesting	1974
Stephen Davidson	1968	Fritz West	1974
Jim Burd	1968	Mark Stahlhut	1974
Bill Wineke	1970	David Jerger	1974
David Strang	1970	Michael Bausch	1974
Bob Mutton	1970	Lawrence Balleine	1975
Earl Eckhart	1970	Thomas Fritz	1975
David Rumpf	1970	Keith Weiland	1975
David Yochum	1970	Christopher Currier	1975
Gerry Bertsch	1970	David Anderman	1975
Paul Quackenbush	1971	Roger Mealiff	1975
Charles Wolfe	1971	Stephen Welch	1975
James Curt Anderson	1971		

Those celebrating 50 years in ministry

Alice Anderman	Wayne Lura
Stephen Davis	Richard Manny
W Dow Edgerton	William McIntyre
James Gorman	John Tschudy
Howard Hunt	James Werner

Those celebrating 45 years in ministry

Carol Adams
Sandra Graham
James McKenzie
Richard Pleva

Peter St. Martin
Joanne Thomson
Janet Wollam

Those celebrtating 40 years in ministry

Donald Fox
James Hoppert
Virginia Pych
Doris Ruben

Karla Schmidt
Lisa Schoenwetter
Diana Shaw
Jill Sneed Bobholz

Those celebrating 35 years in ministry

Winton Boyd
Melinda Feller
Elizabeth Hazel
Scott McLeod

Curtis Miller
Wayne Shannon
Bonnie Van Overbeke

Those celebrating 30 years in ministry

Lisa Bodenheim
Denise Cole
Marlea Gilbert
Kathleen Krostal
Colleen Kwong

Christopher Myers
Stephanie Perdew
Matthew Sauer
Richard Vincent
Annette Wolf

Those celebrating 25 years in ministry

Jeannie Douglas
Laura Hawkins
Julie Jennings
Sara Rabe

Philip Schneider
Patrick Schultz
Shawn Stapleton

Those celebrating 20 years in ministry

Sandra Godich
Jerry Hancock
Eldonna Hazen
Alexander Liberatore
Christie Mandas

Lynn Martin
Jessica Taft
Nancy Taylor
Vicki Warren
Burt Williams

Those celebrating 15 years in ministry

RaeAnn Beebe
Michael Bober
Daniel Cooperrider
Kathleen Remund

Stephen Stepp
Wesley Wassell
Reno Wright
Laura Yurs

Those celebrating 10 years in ministry

Nathan Athorp
Raul Bermudez
Pastor Okogyeamon Perkins
Asafa Rajaofera

James Schleif
Jennifer Seaich
Susan Shands

Those celebrating 5 years in ministry

Shelby Jeidy
Daniel Krueger

Leanne Rose
Emma Sancomb

We give thanks for these Ordinations in the Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ

Those celebrating ordinations in the past year

Amanda Edwards
Derek Elkins
Carly Gaeth
Bridget Hill

Randall Koppenhaver
Jakob Kröner
Michael Whiteley

“Ordination is the rite whereby the United Church of Christ, through an Association in cooperation with the person and a local church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member who God has called to ordained ministry, and sets that person apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. By this rite ordained ministerial standing and status as an Ordained Ministerial Partner is conferred and authorization given to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.” - (Constitutional Provision #22 of the United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry)

Churches Celebrating Anniversaries in 2025

190 Years

Union Congregational UCC of Green Bay

185 Years

First Congregational UCC of Oconomowoc
Plymouth UCC of Milwaukee
Congregational UCC of Delavan

180 Years

Emerald Grove UCC of Janesville
First Congregational UCC of Genoa City
St Paul's UCC of Malone

175 Years

Congregational UCC of Neenah
Grace Congregational UCC of Two Rivers

170 Years

Congregational UCC of Brodhead
First Congregational UCC of Eau Claire
St Mark's UCC of Cleveland

165 Years

First Congregational UCC of Menomonie
St Martins UCC of Fillmore

160 Years

Evangelical & Reformed UCC of Waukesha

155 Years

St John's UCC of Black Creek
Hope UCC of Sturgeon Bay
United Church of Christ of Pittsville

150 Years

Bethel UCC of Fond Du Lac
First Congregational UCC of Rhinelander
Grace UCC of Wausau

145 Years

Congregational UCC of Amery
United Church of Christ of Neillsville
Emmanuel UCC of Oshkosh

135 Years

Community UCC of Medford

130 Years

First Congregational UCC of Owen

125 Years

Bethel-Bethany UCC of Milwaukee

115 Years

St John's UCC of La Pointe
United Church Of Christ of Elcho
United Church Of Christ of Kempster

90 Years

Middleton Community Church UCC

70 Years

Brookfield Congregational Church UCC
Orchard Ridge UCC

65 Years

Bethany UCC of Oshkosh

20 Years

Grace UCC of Milwaukee

Conflict Transformation Team **a ministry of the** **Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ**

If conflict transformation services may be helpful in your individual congregation, please contact your Associate Conference Minister for further information.

Who We Are:

- a cohort of lay and clergy persons trained in conflict transformation practices
- trained through the Lombard Mennonite Peace Institute
- gathered by the Wisconsin Conference
- for the purpose of assisting congregations and leaders of the Wisconsin Conference to bring transformation out of conflicted situations.

What We Do:

When engaged to explore solutions for a particular congregation, we send out a team of two neutral facilitators for a 2-hour initial consultation (mileage reimbursement is the only cost for the first two hours). Based on that consultation, we put together a plan (with the congregational leadership) for further work, which may include facilitated conversations, workshops for the leadership or the entire congregation or training involving conflict transformation. Once a plan and costs are agreed upon, we schedule our work with your congregation.

Services Offered:

- Facilitated conversations between conflicted parties
- Facilitating the creation of a relational covenant
- 3-hour workshops for up to 30 people. Topics are determined during the initial consultation, but may include: core values, personality types, healthy communication skills, leading through transition, understanding conflict
- Conflict Transformation Skills for Churches (8-hour workshop), including all of the above topics.

As a ministry of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ, whose mission is to equip, resource and support our local churches:

- Our services are engaged through the Associate Conference Ministers, who are kept apprised of our work with the congregation.
- The Wisconsin Conference and its Associations support the training and administration needs of this ministry.

Costs:

- Facilitated conversation: \$120 per hour*
- Workshops: \$300 for each 3-hour workshop*
- Conflict Transformation Skills for Congregations (8-hour workshop) \$750*

*Note: these costs include two facilitators.

Mileage reimbursement, travel accommodations (as needed), books and supplies have an additional cost. The Wisconsin Conference office will send an invoice to the church following completion of the services.

Contact Info: Rev. Jane Anderson, janderson@wcucc.org.



Training and classes for every need in the UCC!



Check out our upcoming courses!

About Us

The Damascus Project is the regional theological education program of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Conferences UCC. We offer confirmation classes, clergy and lay training, and theological studies via the Damascus Project Learning Network and Zoom, aiming to meet the Church's current needs and prepare individuals for ministry today.

Classes and Events for:

Clergy Required Education

Leadership Skills

Faith Foundations

Ministry Skills

And more!



<https://thedamascusproject.org/>

Apply for a Catalyst Grant by June 30, 2026

Catalyst's mission is to resource and encourage vital and innovative ministries that transform lives. June 30 is the next deadline for both short-term and long-term grant applications. Catalyst accepts applications four times per year.



The Catalyst Team works to spur, spark and stimulate innovation and creativity throughout the Wisconsin Conference by providing grant funding to congregations.

We are seeking opportunities to support initiatives in congregations that:

- Transform lives through community-based initiatives
- Stretch or deepen a congregation's commitment to working for justice
- Expand a congregation's ideas about what constitutes ministry, who their members are and what their role is in their local community

To learn more, check out our website: <https://wcucc.org/catalyst>.

Catalyst Luncheon at Annual Meeting
Saturday, April 11
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Mitchell Dining Room

“The best thing I’ve done for my mental health and spiritual growth in a long time.”

Communities of Practice Peer Learning Groups

Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ
www.wcucc.org then Growing in Faith/Communities of Practice

Clergy Communities of Practice

Don’t go it alone! Communities of Practice (COP) groups provide the sustenance that your ministry needs in order to be effective well into the future. COP groups are designed to be peer learning groups, focused both on the practice of ministry and your growth in your role as a pastoral minister.

COP groups are facilitated by a “seasoned pastor,” but rely on the wisdom and experience of the whole group in caring for and supporting one another. All of the facilitators are either seasoned, respected pastors or therapists who are lay leaders in UCC congregations, and who have expertise in group dynamics and leadership. There are groups organized by geographic area as well as by specialty, such as pastors nearing retirement, licensed pastors, or newly ordained pastors.

For more information, **contact Jane Anderson** at (920) 540-2586 or email her at janderson@wcucc.org. There is also information and registration on the Wisconsin Conference website at wcucc.org **under the Growing in Faith tab.**

Fee: \$250. The fee is intended to be paid by your congregation, and is included in new call agreements/covenants. No one will be kept out of a Community of Practice because of inability to pay. Please apply for a scholarship using the form available online, or speak to Jane.

LISTENING FROM THE HEART TO BEREAVED PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS



The Wisconsin Conference UCC Palestine Justice Working Group invites you to attend one or more free ZOOM workshops. To sign up for the April 20 6:30 – 8:00 pm Workshop: tinyurl.com/ListeningRegistrationApril
For more info and future workshop dates:
wcucc.org/Palestine-Justice-Working-Group

Listening from the Heart
Bringing peace education to your community

This workshop is deeply rooted in the painful and loving work of the Parents Circle-Family Forum (parents.circlefriends.org) which brings together bereaved Palestinian and Israeli family members to share their grief and humanity amid ongoing, brutal war. In the Workshop you will video of Palestinian and Israeli sharing their stories. The Workshop will equip participants with the tools to foster empathy, bridge divides, build respectful communication skills, and create inclusive spaces for difficult conversations. Come prepared to listen with an open heart and engage in difficult but meaningful conversations with others from the Wisconsin Conference UCC. Workshops are not recorded.

Save the Date!

Annual Meeting
April 9-10, 2027
Green Lake Conference Center



**MANAGING RISK
SO YOU CAN FOCUS
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The United Church of Christ and the United Church of Canada invite you to:

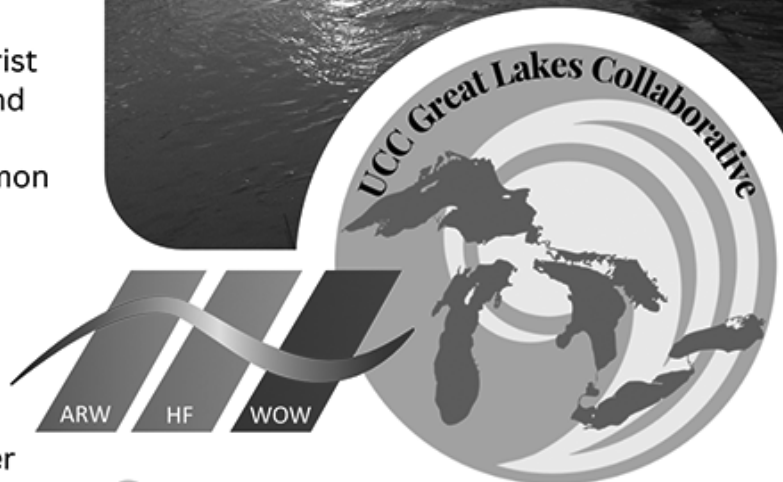
THE GREAT LAKES COLLABORATIVE RETREAT 2026

At Waters' Edge: Sacred Relations

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of "the fierce urgency of now." With deep divisions in this moment -- political, racial and historical -- guided by Indigenous wisdom, a group from the United Church of Canada and United Church of Christ will gather at the edge of the Grand River near Paris, Ontario, to build sacred relations around the common waters of our Great Lakes region.

This is the moment to **cross boundaries** and **come together**, caring for one another and all of **God's creation**.

With **Adrian Jacobs**, Senior Leader for Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation, Christian Reformed Church in North America



**SUNDAY, AUGUST 23RD 4:00 PM -
TUESDAY AUGUST 25TH 11:00 AM 2026**



Five Oaks Retreat Centre,
1 Bthel Road., Paris, Ontario,
CANADA, N3L 3E3
<https://fiveoaks.on.ca/>

COST \$150 CDN double
occupancy OR \$250 CDN
single occupancy (limited
availability)

Contact Lisa Hart for more information: lhart@wcucc.org



St. John United Church of Christ

2111 Church St, New Holstein, WI 53061



Proud Supporter of Full Circle Community Closet



2014 Wisconsin Ave
New Holstein, WI 53061

www.fullcirclecommunitycloset.com

A thrift shop focused on kids' clothes and gear founded by a full-time substitute teacher in 2024, Full Circle's mission is threefold: accessibility, affordability, and sustainability. With 501(c)(3) status, all donations are tax deductible with profits invested directly back into the community they serve, showing us that an operation does not have to be big to have a big impact. If you have a desire to support their cause or start a similar operation in your community, please reach out via email at fullcirclecloset@gmail.com or phone (920) 827-6244.

You can also follow them on Facebook!



CAMP REWIND



AT DAYCHOLAH CENTER

AUGUST 2-6

W1010 Spring Grove Rd., Ripon, WI 54971

Rewind. Relax. Relive the Fun.

An adult-only vintage camp experience
Unplug, unwind, and enjoy classic summer camp
activities in a relaxed lakeside setting.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Camp activities at your own pace
- Sunrise & sunset yoga
- Kayaking, games, bonfires & more
- Late-night campfires with elevated "grown-up" smores
- Creative adult crafts
- Mixology or cooking class
- Throwback dance & evening bar



Secure your spot today
Register: ucc.org/events/camp-rewind/

Contact:

 daycholahcenter@ucc.org

 920-745-4746

Storm Procedures

GLCC has two storm sirens:

1. **Lightning Siren:** Set off by Lawsonia or lightning strike. Siren has a tone that rises and falls, rises and falls. Lightning is a thunder storm's worse killer. Stay indoors and away from electrical appliances when storms are overhead. If you are caught outside, stay well away from the tallest conductor of electricity. (Trees, poles, etc...)
2. **Tornado Siren:** Set off by the county in the event of a Tornado. Siren is steady, just like city tornado sirens or old air raid sirens. Take cover in the following places:
 - Children's Center: Move to Lone Tree Lodge, 1st floor hallway
 - Roger Williams Inn: Back of Staughton Hall (Pacific Southwest)/ Hallway by Snackery
 - Kern: Interior hallways and West Service hallway
 - Bauer: Interior hallways and West Service hallway
 - Lone Tree Lodge: First floor hallway
 - Boathouse: RWI storm locations
 - Campers and cabins: RWI storm locations, Conwell House basement, or camp utility/bathroom buildings if there is not enough time to move to RWI
 - Kraft Centre: Basement office suite area or hallways
 - Dining Room: Basement, Kitchen, Dish Room, or Interior hallway. For safety, keep away from equipment.
 - Robbins Student Center: CYC back hallway or RWI if time permits

In the event of severe weather, Guest Services has a list to call and notify. The Safety Department notifies campers and cabins.

A Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Watch means that the weather is favorable for severe conditions. In the event of a Watch, keep informed by listening to the radio: **WRPN 1600AM** or **Berlin 1090AM**, and keep an eye on weather conditions. Sirens will **not** blow if a **watch** has been issued, but GLCC staff will try to notify all guests.

A Severe Thunderstorm or Tornado Warning means a storm is in the area and you need to take cover. Severe Thunderstorms contain high winds and lightning and can produce Tornados. The Tornado siren will blow if a Tornado Warning has been issued. The lightening siren will blow if Lawsonia is open, or if lightning strikes in the area.

These procedures and shelter areas are suggestions. Every situation is different, and common sense and good judgment need to be used when taking shelter from a storm.

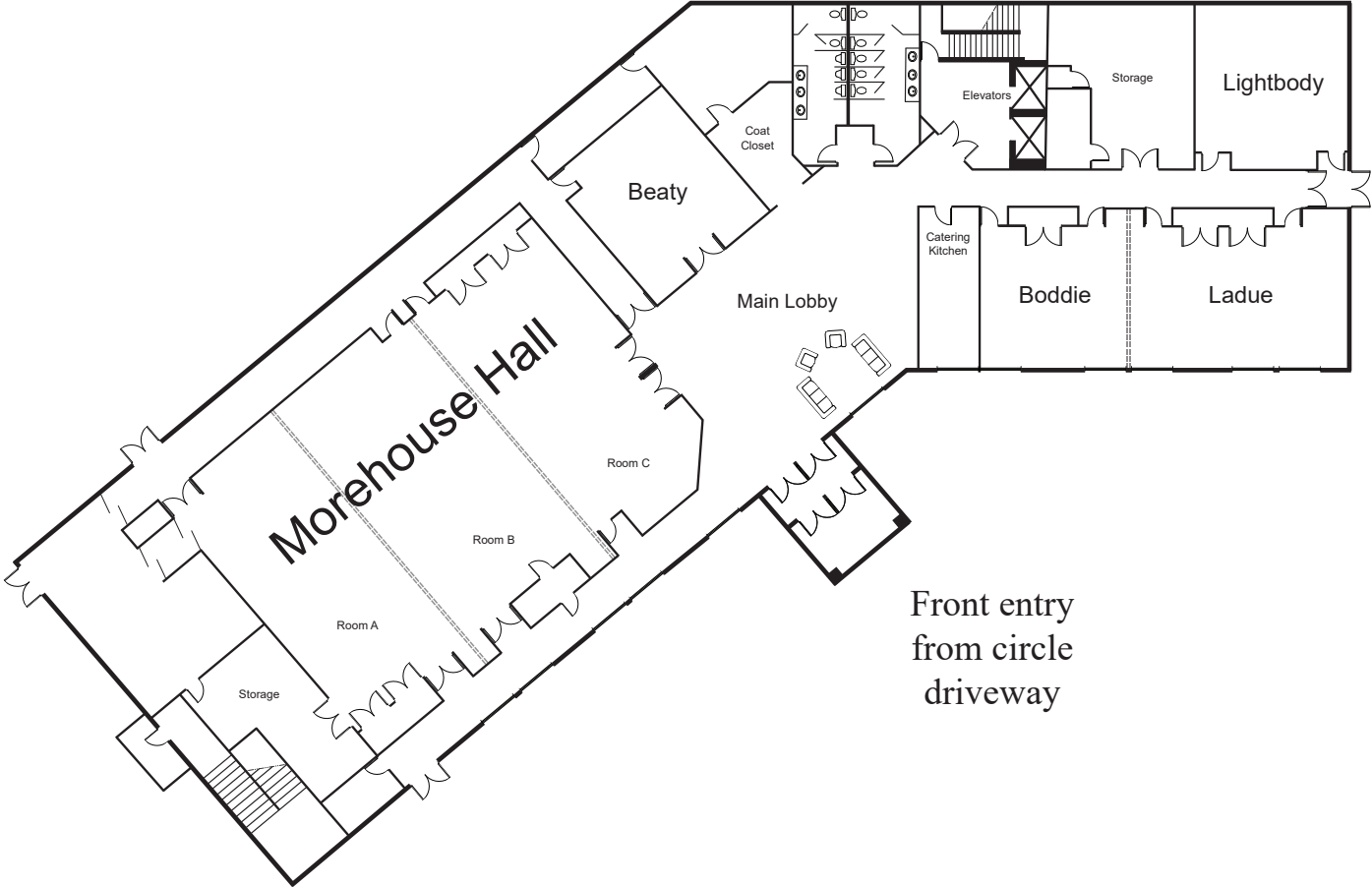
We value your feedback!

Please complete the online Annual Meeting evaluation:

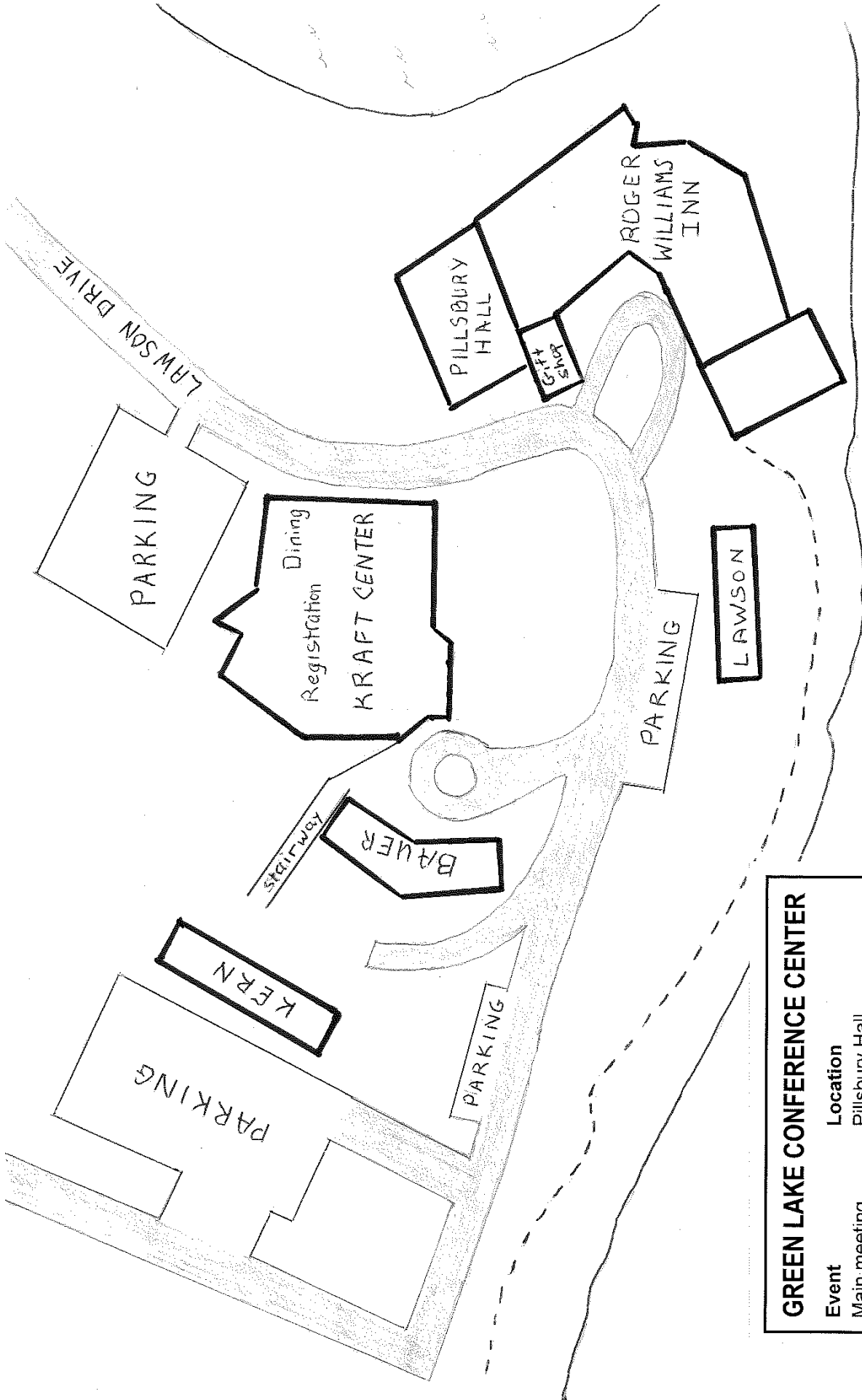
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/wcucc-am-2026>



Workshop Meeting Room Locations: Bauer Lodge



**Our First Responder: Jan Doleschal
(414) 708-7024**



Green Lake

GREEN LAKE CONFERENCE CENTER	
Event	Location
Main meeting	Pillsbury Hall
Exhibits	Lakeview (below Pillsbury)
Breakout sessions	Bauer and Kern
Workshops	Bauer and Kern
Dining	Kraft Center Dining Room
Walking path	-----