

Prayer List: Family of Bev Denyes, Sarah, Rhonda Silence, Vicki Biggs-Anderson, Family of Paulette Anholm, Mike Carlson, Sally Dunn, All Victims of Gun Violence, Immigrants and Refugees, Countries of Congo Ukraine, Sudan, Israel/Palestine, and Planet Earth.

At home and Care Center: Jean Ljungkull, Nona Smith, Lou Goodell, and Tom Hedstrom.

Measure of our Faithfulness:

The First Congregational UCC adopted a 2024 Budget at the Annual Meeting on 28 January 2024, showing a need for a yearly income of \$175,834.

After Seventeen weeks, the Budget Donations and Income should be \$57,484.19.

After Seventeen weeks of 2024, the actual donations and income reached \$67,290.38.

-Kevin R. LeVoir, Treasurer

This week at the church

Sunday, May 5

9:30 AM – Choir Practice (SA)

10:30 AM - **6th Sunday of Easter** - On this Sunday we will be confirming our newest member, Eliot Zimmer. We will be reading from 1st Corinthians, chapter 13, which is often used at weddings, but was made for the church. As we grow in our membership, let us remember how we are to get along, "Love is patient, love is kind..."

Fellowship to Follow

Monday, May 6

2:00 PM-6:00 PM – Piano Lessons (SA)

3:00 PM-5:00 PM – Food Shelf (LL)

7:00 PM – AI-Anon (FS)

Tuesday, May 7

12:00 PM – Group Music Class (SA)

2:00 PM – Narrative Lectionary Study (ZO)

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons (SA)

7:00 PM - Planetary Healing: One Being at a Time (FS)

Wednesday, May 8

10:00 AM Cook County Ministerial (Trinity)

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons (SA)

5:30 PM - PASJ Leaders Meeting

6:00 PM - Sing-along (N)

Thursday, May 9

10:00 AM – Tai Chi (SH)

12:00 PM – Women's AA (FS)

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons (SA)

3:30-5:30 PM – Cook County Public Health (MR)

5:30 PM - Community Meeting the Architect (SH)

Friday, May 10

7:00 AM – AA (FS)

8:00 AM – Harbor Watch (Java Moose)

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM – Piano Lessons (SA)

7:30 PM – AA (FS)

Saturday, May 11

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM – Piano Lessons

Sunday, May

9:30 AM – Choir Practice (SA)

10:30 AM - **7th Sunday of Easter** – On this Sunday we will be exploring the story of the Sadducees in an argument with Jesus. They challenge Jesus' theology and understanding of resurrection (which they proclaim cannot happen) and they use a woman who married seven brothers to make their point. This isn't a love story, but one of subjugation and ownership. How does Jesus answer this and how do we view this today?

Fellowship to Follow



Pride in Texas

Through the Strengthen the Church Offering, people across the United Church of Christ support the formation of new congregations and the renewal of existing ones, fund new programs for youth and young adults and sponsor leadership development for the whole church.

Faith Church UCC in New Braunfels, TX, received a CASA New and Renewing Church Grant made possible by the Strengthen the Church Offering. The congregation felt called to reach out and support the LGBTQIA Community in their region. They began by hosting the area's first Interfaith Pride Worship Service and later hosted a Drag for a Cause fundraiser for local youth living in an emergency shelter. The public witness of Faith Church UCC rallied the local progressive community.

Before the grant, Faith Church took a "quiet" approach to their community. They did good work, like starting a food pantry, but avoided public stances On Holy Ground Pride in Texas on controversial issues. The grant encouraged the congregation to think beyond their church walls. The congregation began by "coming out" about its values, welcoming people into its congregation and going beyond its wall to share its inclusive faith.

The church faces backlash for its courageous stances. "We received over 1800 negative messages, including threats, when we held Drag for a Cause," Rev. Dr. Carla Cheatham noted. The threats were scary. "But supporters also showed up and outnumbered the hate without returning any evil or malice in their direction. It was a peaceful, loving, powerful event!"

Faith Church UCC became the hub of progressive people in New Braunfels. "We had 13 people join the church the month following the event, and every week, we still hear from members of the progressive, marginalized, and disenfranchised people impacted by our taking a stand."

The Strengthen the Church Offering, helps congregations like Faith Church UCC with renewal initiatives. Together, through this offering, we help congregations live into our call to be a multicultural/multi-racial, accessible to all Christian movement.