

August 2023

THE SHINING LIGHT

Newsletter of the First Congregational United
Church of Christ, Grand Marais, Minnesota

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300 West Second Street
Grand Marais, MN 55604
Rev. Enno Limvere, Settled Pastor



[Photo by Wulan Sari on Unsplash](#)

Prayer for the Month of August

BY REV. ENNO LIMVERE

God of the Universe and the Grasshopper, you are the infinite and unknowable creator of all that is, all that was, and all that will be. You are also the loving Spirit who watches over us, cares for us, and listens. We thank you for this moment right now that you are with us, we are with you, and each and every one of this day. Bless our hearts, minds, and bodies to be nurtured by you. Bless your church and our members so we may show your love in thought, word, and deed. Amen.



Minnesota UCC youth pose at the U.S. Supreme Court after a day of advocacy in D.C.

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Worship in August

August 6, 10th Sunday after Pentecost, we will be exploring the guidance of the United Church of Christ by looking at its motto, “That They May All Be One” from the 17th chapter from the Gospel of John. Formed in 1957, the UCC was a bold experiment with even a bolder vision that all Christians could worship and be a part of one universal church. Many different religious traditions/ denominations came together to form the United Church of Christ in a covenantal experiment.

August 13, 11th Sunday after Pentecost, in our last Sunday of the Covenant series, we will talk about our personal relationship with God. There are many aspects to being a part of the church, God’s family, and creation. We are to have a personal relationship with God, but it isn’t private, and it certainly does ask/require us to be out in the world. We look at two stories, one of Elijah fleeing to a mountaintop and one of Jesus who goes to be refreshed. How do these inform and define our covenant with God?

August 20, 12th Sunday after Pentecost, only one time in all the gospels does Jesus lose an argument with anyone, and it isn’t a Jewish-religious scholar, lawyer, or priest. How does Jesus respond once he knows he has been verbally beaten? Well, let’s just say he is happy about it. This Sunday we will be outside, and a brass quintet will be providing our music.

August 27, 13th Sunday after Pentecost, often when talking about civil disobedience, we look the Henry David Thoreau, or Mahatma Ghandi as those who began the non-violent resistance movement. The story in Exodus tells the story of midwives who disobeyed a Pharaoh’s order for the purpose of thwarting a genocide. One of those who were saved was a baby named Moses.

“That They
May All Be
One”

17th Chapter
from the
Gospel of John



August Board Member Message

BY JENNY DELFS

A few weeks ago, Ann Russ approached me at church and asked if I was free to go on a BWCA trip. I nearly burst out crying because: 1) I was available, 2) it was my birthday weekend, and 3) I really could not think of anything I'd rather do. A true gift.

The trip was lovely. Full of dragonfly escorts, blooming water lilies, loon calls. We had multiple creature sightings: bear, beaver, and moose. Even the hours sitting out thunderstorms were followed by an "up came the sun and dried out all the rain" kind of afternoon. Warm days and cool starry nights. Great meals, birthday cake, real conversation, refreshing swims, a little singing. Carol Bennett, aka the mermaid, saved my glasses when I forgot to remove them before diving into the lake. Ann counted nearly 40 species of birds seen and heard. Peter managed the bear tree with aplomb with the piece of camping equipment you didn't know you needed, a gaffing hook/Bennett Bear Pole. A near perfect way to start my next trip around the sun. Grateful and full.

Part of our route involved canoeing a stream nearly too shallow to pass. On paddle in, it was morning. We were full of hope and happy. We navigated the rocks with aplomb. Communicating, adjusting, grazing through the narrow passageways. It was a game of Tetris. It was fun. It felt easy. On the return trip, we hit the same stream. It was afternoon. The light changed. We were tired and homeward bound. Hard to see the rocks, hard to find a path. We couldn't agree on the way. It seemed impassable. We wondered, "was this the way we came?" "Did we miss the portage?" It was the same stream but different. We had to find a different way. We ended up getting out of the canoes and guiding them through. Surprised at how the same place could feel so different just a few days later. Happy to find out way through somehow. Not in any hurry to try to go that way again soon.

At our recent summer congregational meeting, the vote for a new mission statement failed. I was part of the subcommittee who looked at the old mission statement, wrote up new options, led congregational discussions. I found it a surprisingly fun process. I enjoyed playing with words and getting to know my fellow Board members better. There were interesting conversations about the role of a mission statement in future planning and decision making. It was good to hear what people value about our church, about what is essential. The committee felt we had written something that reflected those conversations. We played our Tetris game well. I was not at the meeting. (I was attending my 40-year HS reunion weekend – another story). I am happy to hear that the conversations there were heartfelt and honest. The light had changed. We had missed some critical questions and ideas. The rocks were different. We were surprised. We got the canoe through the rough bit. Clearly there are conversations that are still needed. It is good to know. Good because this is the real reason of creating a mission statement. We have more work to do. For now, we sit and let the dust settle so we can see clearly enough to find my lost glasses. Maybe revisit this winter.

We are all just walking on another home. Peace.



I would love to live
Like a river flows,
Carried by the surprise
Of its own unfolding

BY
JOHN O'DONOHUE





Pastor's Column

BY ENNO LIMVERE



What a month, July was. Starting it by going to our General Synod in Indianapolis and ending it going to Washington DC with 48 youth to lobby for a better world. I have seen many posts on social media, read articles, and had conversation with friends and family who posit that religion is at best irrelevant and at worst the source of all evil in the world. I do not deny that the church (historical, denominations, and local) supported and, at times, started wars, slavery, and acts of genocide. But it has also stood up to the world powers and gave the least of these, the dispossessed and the broken, hope and a sense of value.

Meeting with pastors and lay-ministers from around the country at General Synod, I cannot help but believe that church and the love of God is a force for good and can repent of the wrongs done in the past to make a better future for all, Christians and non-Christians alike, as well as all living things. Our covenantal church takes seriously the real threat and danger of the global climate emergency we now face. Our covenantal church takes seriously the real identity struggles of the LGBTQA+ community and stands up for them in real and affirming ways. Our covenantal church takes seriously the role that patriarchy and white supremacy has damaged the church, our nation, and the world. We move much too slow on these, but we are marching forward.

Being with 48 youth and 23 adults in DC (3 youth and 3 adults from our community) shows me the power of a committed and passionate group gathered under Christ's name. It was not a trip to entertain and keep the young people happy. We went to the Holocaust Museum and the Museum of African-American History. We discussed the issues facing our world today, what we as a church can do, and what our government (for the people, of the people, and by the people) should be doing to address the challenges of our nation and all living things. We may not have changed DC. However, I saw most of the youth dig in and make a commitment to keep up the struggle and keep going. They did not come back defeated, but inspired and driven to help our nation get things right, through the church and with the wider church's help.

May we continue to listen to the love of God that strives to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

Peace



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES, 7/18/2023

Present: pastor Limvere, Tom Yuhasey, Kevin LeVoir, Bruce R Tyler, Steve Aldrich, Jen Delfs

Unable to attend: Francie Beaster

Guests: Nina McCune, John Bottger

- I. Call to order by TY at 5:01pm
- II. Minutes this month by CW
- III. Mission statement reading by TY
- IV. Joys & Concerns were shared
- V. Question from Enno was brief this month
- VI. Communication agreement reading (with feeling!) by TY

WE ATTEND TO URGENT AND IMMEDIATE BUSINESS/HOUSEKEEPING

VII. We acknowledged that the June minutes have been approved.

VIII. July agenda was approved as presented. Motion by CE, second by JD

IX. Financial report was given by KL. We are still in the Black for the year, but spent a good deal more than received in June. There were no surprise or extraordinary bills. We are up to date on Our Church's Wider Mission, per capital, insurance and Strengthen the Church. Report was approved as submitted. Motion by JD, second by SA.

X. Newsletter article for August: JD volunteered to write.

XI. Date for August BOD meeting: Tuesday, 8/22 at 5pm

WE ATTEND TO OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

XII. Pastor's report was submitted. Pastor Enno continues to be very busy. He's excited the church has a free (as a nonprofit) subscription to Canva for newsletter, bulletin and calendar. This is an interactive calendar. He leaves later this week with youth for Washington, D.C. and will be attending anti racism training. He's pleased to report there are students interested in confirmation class this fall. He would also like help from the congregation with Sunday School (which doesn't have to be on Sunday). If we desire young people to be part of the church then there needs to be something here for them.

We do have program material available so lessons do not have to be created de novo (from scratch).

XIII. Mutual ministry goals

a. Mission statement: After discussion we agreed to wait until 2024 to re-engage the mission statement. We will ask for volunteers from the congregation to participate in the process.

b. Community building: There is singing Wednesday evenings, treats after Sunday service (please sign up) and the next Loaves and Hotdishes will be 5:30pm on 8/15 at the Delfs/Kern home.

c. Outreach. 1. Nursery - Childcare provider is hoping to start in September. B&G Committee suggests we move out anything we want to keep and then ask her which of the remaining furnishings she wants to use and it will be donated to her. 2. Parsonage - A list of needed repairs has been prepared by John Bottger and Pastor Enno. JB states the B&G Committee Will review and prioritize. 3. Sunday announcements - 7/23 BT, 7/30 JD, 8/6 skip, 8/13 CW. The board member doing announcements will also ask people after church to sign up to be greeters, ushers, etc. 4. Memorial fund - tabled until next meeting.

d. Building security - Discussion regarding whether we should have a system and why. We will pursue information about procuring a camera surveillance system. Motion by CW, second by SA. A report on different types was provided by Nina McCune.

e. John Bottger provided an update on the B&G Committee facility plan. He has been contacted by one of the architects who is interested in being involved. There are many factors going into the decision whether to engage outside expertise in creating a facility master plan or to continue fixing things as repairs become necessary. B&G will continue working on this using the church's mission as a guide.

f. Meal for foreign workers was successful. Might we do again before the end of their work season? Pastor Enno also suggests we provide a meal for the Explorers Club on their last day of the summer. He will talk with Food Committee.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- XIV. Church Life brief reports/updates
 - a. Pastoral Relations meets as per contract
 - b. Finance Committee – weekly updates to congregation re actual/ budget. Semiannual pledge update letter just sent out.
 - c. Stewardship Committee – Time and Talent Survey Status- to be a Fall project.
 - d. Children and Youth life/faith formation - Summer Trip to Washington leaves 7/20 for 10 days.
 - e. Memorial Committee - Discuss how to use funds next month. Looking for info on restrictions so we know what is available for any worthy purpose.
 - f. Building and Grounds Team – See previous notes
 - g. Outreach – WOW, collaborations with Arrowhead Indivisible, Climate meeting, Food Shelf- Rooted and Rising – Results of July Fundraiser Bruce reports about \$200 raised which covered the most of the planters (but not the meal)
 - h. Worship Committee – meeting monthly
 - i. Standing Grievance Committee: Delfs, Mattice, Bennett – have not been needed
 - j. Food Team - see previous notes
- XV. WE END TOGETHER
 - a. Review of decisions, tasks assigned

THE END- ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,
 Carol Winter
 7/19/23



TREASURER'S REPORT
 FOR AUGUST NEWSLETTER

The June 2023 (latest fully available information) financial report shows a total income of \$11,378.21 and expenses of 17,099.66 (See Detail Below). This means the Church's expenses were more than income by \$5,721.45.

Income for June 2023	
Pledged Donations	\$ 8,811.15
Non-Pledged Donations	\$ 635.00
Loose Plate Offering	\$ 337.00
Building Use	\$ 253.00
Youth Fund	\$ 240.00
WOW	\$ -
Syrian Relief	\$ -
Income from Outside sources	\$ 1,098.07
Interest Income	\$ 3.99
	\$ 11,378.21
Expenses for June 2023	
Pastor	\$ 7,601.25
Staff	\$ 1,357.46
Business	\$ 1,275.93
Worship	\$ 623.24
Education	\$ 2,779.95
Building and Grounds	\$ 1,459.72
Parsonage	\$ 419.31
Strengthen the Church, Syrian Relief, OCWM, Per Capita	\$ 1,365.50
Loan Principle	\$ 217.30
	\$ 17,099.66
Difference	\$ (5,721.45)

The full report is available in the church office.

- Kevin LeVoir, Treasurer

Reflections from the Washington, D.C. Youth Trip

Hi! My name is Kyla and just this past week, I went on a trip to Washington, DC with the UCC (United Church of Christ). I am from Grand Marais, MN and collectively, there were two other youth and three chaperones that also went on the trip from Grand Marais. For me, the trip was a ton of fun and a good learning experience. Along with UCC churches from all over Minnesota and North Dakota, we got to visit museums and memorials such as the Holocaust Museum, African American Museum, the MLK Memorial, Korean War Memorial, WW2 Memorial, Vietnam Memorial and a few others. Throughout this trip, I learned how to meet new people and build connections. I learned how to talk to senators and congress people such as Amy Klobuchar, Tina Smith and Pete Stauber's legislative aide on issues about Gun Violence Prevention and The Farm Bill.



BY KYLA KNAPPER
Class of 2024
she/her

From this amazing experience that I had with about 70 other youth and chaperones, I realized what it feels like to be heard by congress people and senators. One experience that I had with Tina Smith was when some of my peers were speaking on stories supporting Gun Violence Prevention. The amount of respect and care that Tina Smith put into her responses to us as youth was life changing. At that moment, every single youth that spoke with on the trip felt appreciated and acknowledged. My favorite thing about the trip was the team building and educating others on stories and experiences that we, as youth, have faced throughout our lifetime. I learned how to effectively do lobbying visits with politicians and further expand my knowledge on impactful historical events, like the Holocaust, to prevent issues like that from happening again in the future.

Throughout my time in DC, I have a few things to take away. One is that I am extremely grateful for the donations and fundraisers that allowed me to go on the trip. Another is that as a church and a whole, the sense of community was really powerful/impactful. Last, DC was beautiful and I hope to go on youth trips to learn more about DC and politicians in the future.



BY MJ WHARTON
Class of 2026
she/they

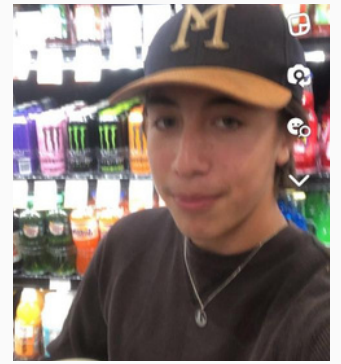
The UCC youth trip to Washington DC was an incredible experience for me. One of the things that I loved about it was the lobbying work we did with state senators and representatives surrounding the Farm Bill and gun violence prevention. Within that process a couple of the youth were able to tell stories about our first-hand experience with the legislation. I had the opportunity to talk about how SNAP and WIC programs have positively impacted my family and community.

My family runs a small farm outside of Grand Marais, and we attend the local market on Thursdays. This is a pretty unique life, but I was able to directly connect with the Farm Bill because of it. My story and the trip in general gave me an avenue to have an impact on this greater issue, and showed me the power I hold as a youth. Overall, this trip gave me new friends, an expanded worldview, and a sense of agency regarding our government. I'm incredibly grateful to all our donors for making this possible for me.

Reflections from the Washington, D.C. Youth Trip, Cont'd

When I first heard there was an opportunity to go to Washington DC I was skeptical on if I wanted to or not. I thought that I would miss out on important things at home, or miss a baseball game or two. But having gone through the whole process of preparing, waiting and finally flying to the nation's capital, I am so glad I decided to go.

Out of maybe 7 or 8 kids in our youth group, only 3 were lucky enough to go on this amazing trip; my sister, my neighbor Mj, and myself. Before we got on the plane to DC, I was under the impression that I would be sticking around those two people for most of the trip, I thought we would be a power trio from Grand Marais. But once I got on the plane and sat at least 3 rows away from either of them, things started to change. I was smack dab in the middle of a group of kids from the Duluth Peace church congregation. Right away, I knew this group of kids were gonna be my good friends throughout this trip. As the days progressed and we went through more and more experiences together, me and these kids from peace church really clicked. I also noticed that the assumption I had made before the trip was way off. My sister and Mj had found their people and I had found mine. But even though we hung out in different groups. Us three still became closer than ever on this trip. I think this was my favorite part of the whole trip. Even with all of the museums, memorials, and important legislature we met. The friends I made on this trip and the things we did together, also the bonds I deepened with existing relationships. Were the best part of the whole experience for me.



BY COLE PEDERSON
Class of 2027
he/him



Sunday School, Confirmation, and Pizza and Social Justice

The school year is just around the corner and time to think about how we can help our young people grow in God's love. Our Pizza and Social Justice group is on pretty solid footing, but we can always have other adults join us. Our Sunday School had one regular student last year that I lead class for who will be starting a confirmation program. It will likely meet on Wednesday nights when there isn't a youth group gathering.

With our Sunday School up in the air, we do have possible children who can join. We just have the right leadership and time for us to gather together. If you are interested in helping put this together or just want to know more information, please talk to Pastor Enno.



Lasagna Love

BY HANNAH MILLER, SHE/THEY

Hello friends,

I'm writing because there's newly a resource on my radar that almost perfectly fits a community need I've either discussed with you, or wanted to! It's a way to wrangle community support for the postpartum period & share meals.

Unlike with MealTrain, Lasagna Love works even if you don't have a community support network established, or know whom to ask for help; you just submit a request for a meal and a community volunteer gets notified.

I'd love to share this resource with expectant families! Per correspondence copied below, there's a need for more volunteers from our area before it really becomes a robust resource for our population.

Could you share this in your networks to rouse participation & volunteers? I feel that many in the current doula cohorts and previous family listening session participants might be interested.

Here's a volunteerinfo/signup link: Your paragraph text

Volunteers agree to make and deliver a meal from their home kitchen and can specify at sign-up how often they'd be willing to get called upon (monthly, one time only, etc) and how far they're willing/able to travel.

Thanks for knowing and sharing,

Hannah Miller, PHN, CLC, LCCE
Parent Child Health Nurse
pronouns: she/they
tel. (218)387-2330 ext 121, mobile(218)370-2074
hannah@sawtoothmountainclinic.org



Loaves and Hotdish Gathering/Potluck



It was so much fun in April and June, let's try it again! Tues Aug 15st @ home of Jenny Delfs and Jeff Kern 401 5th Ave W. Gather 5:30pm. Eat 6 pm. Come when you can, leave when you must. If you can't bring a pot, bring the luck. All are welcome. Construction is happening on 5th Ave so you may have a block or two hike to the house. Please let us know if you need a Jeff shuttle. (218) 370-0979

Heal the Planet

We continue to gather on Tuesdays over the lunch hour for a time of song, poems, reflection, and even dance. We meet at Compass Park (across from Java Moose) at 12:15 pm for a 20 minute time to listen, to love, and heal the planet.





Commentary: How the UCC can avoid ‘glass cliff’ after electing first woman as GMP

by [Courtney Stange-Tregear](#) | published on Jul 25, 2023

The Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear, on behalf of the [Antoinette Brown Society](#) leadership team, reflects on the phenomenon of women in “precarious leadership positions” and what those dynamics might mean for the United Church of Christ as it prepares to be [led by the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson](#).

While there is much to be celebrated about the election of the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson as the UCC’s next General Minister and President, the Antoinette Brown Society’s leadership committee is also aware of the numerous challenges and pitfalls our first female General Minister and President is likely to face.

Some will be specific to this time and place, but also this is a very common occurrence for women in leadership, especially those who represent the “first” in their role. The phenomenon of “first woman” leaders being branded with the decline of their organization is a phenomenon called the “glass cliff.” The term “glass cliff” was coined by researchers Michelle Ryan and Alex Haslam in “The Glass Cliff: Evidence that Women are Over-Represented in Precarious Leadership Positions,” published in 2005. In this groundbreaking study, Ryan and Haslam introduced the concept and the term “glass cliff” to describe the increasingly common occurrence of women being appointed to leadership positions during times of crisis or organizational decline.

When decline inevitably continues or increases with new leadership or even when the life of the organization ends completely, the newly appointed woman at the head of the organization is blamed. In these circumstances, it is far too easy to ignore the pattern of decline which predated her leadership.

Raising awareness

The United Church of Christ is facing significant challenges and decline. Decline in our congregations, decline in membership, decline in financial resources and more.

This trend has existed for decades and far predates the service of Rev. Thompson. Without enough awareness, it will be tempting to blame past and future decline on the new vision, new ideas, new leadership of Rev. Thompson.



cont'd from page 8.

But with awareness, we can do better. The work of leading the United Church of Christ, in this time and place, is immense in scope. There is much work to do, in all settings of the Church. The Antoinette Brown Society leadership committee, as part of our work, hopes to educate the wider Church and community on the glass cliff phenomenon.

Without such awareness, we risk with holding support for brilliant leaders who have been called for such a time as this.

We hope this will lead to more support around female leadership in all settings, and especially the leadership of Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson in her presidency, compassion for her journey and support for the challenges ahead.

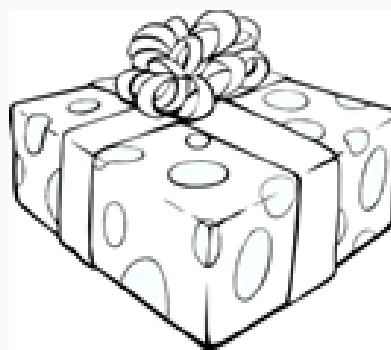
Please join us in prayer for powerful leadership, for our General Minister and President especially and for all the United Church of Christ in all our settings.

The Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear is the chief relationship officer at the United Church of Christ Cornerstone Fund.

Seasons of Our Lives

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.
(Ecclesiastes 3)
Time to Celebrate...*

*8/4 Anders Zimmer
8/6 Kevin LeVoir
8/6 Melissa Wickwire
8/8 Barb Bottger
8/8 Ralph Larsen
8/12 Zachary Smith
8/16 Bob Smith
8/20 Ann Russ
8/22 Jason Zimmer
8/24 Mary Edson
8/26 Rose Arrowsmith*





AUGUST 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30 9:30 AM PICK UP CHOIR 10:30 WORSHIP	31 5:00 ROOTED & RISING 7:00 AL-ANON	01 8:00 - 5:00 EXPLORER'S CLUB 12:15 PM - HEAL THE PLANET 6:30 - 8:00 PM - ZEN MEDITATION	02 8:00 - 5:00 EXPLORER'S CLUB 5:00 PM VOICE FOR CHANGE AT PAVILION	03 10:00 TAI CHI 11:00 BUILDING AND GROUNDS 12:00 WOMEN'S AA	04 7:00 AM - AA 8:00 AM HARBOR WATCH	05
06 9:30 AM PICK UP CHOIR 10:30 WORSHIP	07 5:00 ROOTED & RISING 7:00 AL-ANON	08 9:15 SHERIFF CHAPLAIN MEETING 8:00 - 5:00 EXPLORER'S CLUB 12:15 PM - HEAL THE PLANET 6:30 - 8:00 PM - ZEN MEDITATION	09 8:00 - 5:00 EXPLORER'S CLUB 6:00 SING-ALONG	10 10:00 TAI CHI 12:00 WOMEN'S AA	11 7:00 AM - AA 8:00 AM HARBOR WATCH	12
13 9:30 AM PICK UP CHOIR 10:30 WORSHIP 2:00 CARE CENTER WORSHIP	14 5:00 ROOTED & RISING 7:00 AL-ANON	15 12:15 PM - HEAL THE PLANET 6:30 - 8:00 PM - ZEN MEDITATION	16 6:00 SING ALONG	17 10:00 TAI CHI 12:00 WOMEN'S AA	18 7:00 AM - AA 8:00 AM HARBOR WATCH	19
20 9:30 AM PICK UP CHOIR 10:30 WORSHIP	21 5:00 ROOTED & RISING 7:00 AL-ANON	22 12:15 PM - HEAL THE PLANET 6:30 - 8:00 PM - ZEN MEDITATION	23 6:00 SING ALONG ANTI-RACISM WORK-	24 10:00 TAI CHI 12:00 WOMEN'S AA SHOP FOR MN	25 7:00 AM - AA 8:00 AM HARBOR WATCH CONFERENCE	26 1:00 PM CELEBRATING EVALYNN CARLSON
27 9:30 AM PICK UP CHOIR 10:30 WORSHIP	28 5:00 ROOTED & RISING 7:00 AL-ANON PASTOR ENNO	29 12:15 PM - HEAL THE PLANET 6:30 - 8:00 PM - ZEN MEDITATION ON	30 6:00 SING ALONG VACATION	31	01	02

Mission Statement

First Congregational United Church of Christ is an open, inclusive church that exists to worship God and practice the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome all people of goodwill who seek to share the love of God and honor the diversity of creation in a spirit of tolerance and flexibility. As a Just Peace Church, we invite all who seek the reign of God to join us in reaching out in healing ministry, working for justice, witnessing for peace and striving to overcome all forms of oppression. We recognize two sacraments: Baptism and Communion.

