GLAD TIDINGS!

May 2025

Gathered by the lake,
we are
Embraced by God
to **grow**
Empowered by Christ
to **care,**
Enriched by the Holy Spirit
to **celebrate**



Congregational United Church of Christ Neenah / Menasha

Hello church!
At our last home Nick and I had a patio with a simple table and chairs surrounded by some beautiful flowerbeds and some pots of flowers. It was "my spot." I loved it. The beds were started by Judy Hipple. Judy and her husband, Jack lived in the house before us for over 50 years. Judy loved flowers. When we first moved in, those flowerbeds around the patio had not been tended to in many years. The first year we simply watched what grew and took every new flower as a gift. The bed had been taken over by two invasive plants, red turtlehead & narrow-leaf evening primrose. So much so that's almost all we saw but for some irises, a large purple peony, an old misshapen lilac bush that we cut way back, and some pink mallow. At the end of last season, I mercilessly thinned out the turtlehead and primrose knowing it would always come back. This year has been full of surprises as a result.

Thinned, weeded, and cultivated we saw several "new to us" flowers make an appearance. A little tending to the garden and now we have a ton of black-eyed Susan (another one of my favorites), one impressive 6' tall mullein plant (I know it's a weed but it's so beautiful that I can't pull it), common eastern fleabane, more pink mallow, some stunning foxglove beardtongue, just a few coral bells, thread leaf coreopsis, one highly coveted wild bergamot plant, and yellow daylilies. That's 9 additional species of plants that laid dormant in the ground due to the invasive turtlehead and primrose (which also as predicted returned with a vengeance and are beautiful). Inspired by Judy's hard work, I added several pots of flowers to enhance my backyard oasis. Yet those pots of flowers on the patio need to be watered every day. They dry out so much faster than the plants in the beds. I enjoyed watching the growth and development of each plant. I deadheaded my red geraniums (another of my favorite flowers) to get more blooms out of them. I also had two different types of basil and thyme, petunias, coleus (Nick's favorite), white creeping geraniums, rosemary, (which I used in my favorite bread recipe), sweet potato vine, spikes, and spider grass. The care and maintenance for my little spot of heaven on earth took time, planning, dedication (those plants are not going to thin and water themselves), and patience.
I needed to be open to new things. Embrace the unexpected. Surrender to what I cannot control and let the beauty reveal itself in due time. The first year I couldn't even tell what I had growing in the beds. I needed to care for what I saw and get to know the beds. The second year I embraced the surprises as they came and enjoyed the ride, adding those pots, and spending my time tending, or just plain sitting, in my garden under an umbrella, enjoying the bunnies, bees, butterflies, birds, and the spiders that make an appearance. This led me to imagine what we

(Continued on next page)

could do in the future. Expand the flower bed a bit this way or that. Put in a path. Perhaps some more shade for the bunnies I consider myself on a first name basis with. I still miss Peter C, Hop-A-Long Harry, Pretty-girl Patti, Baby-boy, Mr. B and Cha-cha (at least that's what I called them).

Ministry is just like inheriting someone else's garden. Whether it is handed down from one generation to the next, or the start of a new pastor at an old church, the experience and requirements for the job are pretty much the same. As I make my way towards the end of my first year serving here, I am taking the time to see what grows in our "church ministry garden." In my second year I imagine we'll add some new pots of ministry and see how everything gets along. What new things would grow well at the church by the lake? What lies dormant in our church mission and ministry that will emerge anew to reveal itself? What new plans will we entertain? This approaching summer may we be open to new things, embrace the unexpected, surrender to what we cannot control, and let the beauty reveal itself in due time. In our gardens it's Mother Nature we are listening too. In the church as a garden, it's the Holy Spirit. May we hear the calls of both as we enjoy the remainder of the 50 great days of Easter, Pentecost, and finally, those long lazy summer days.

Amen and alleluia,





Church office will be Closed

May 26th for Memorial Day



5/03 Kaytie Botten
5/05 Nick Aliota
5/06 Ayanda Crispin
5/10 Linda Stoll
5/11 Laverne Franke
5/13 Bonnie Pozolinski
5/15 Kerry Fox
5/16 Noah C.
Les Woeckner
5/21 Cheryl Humleker
Carol Tschudy
Art Puguh
5/22 Madeline L.
5/23 Carl N.
5/24 Signa Meyers
5/26 Emily Botten
5/27 Chloe Abing
5/28 William E.
Marty Abing

Wedding Anniversaries

May 6th
Paul and Sharon Swatscheno
Diana and Jon Hintz
May 8th
Gay and Wayne Dickson
May 13th
Audra and Dennis Libertoski
May 22nd
Kevin and Stephani Katzman
May 25
Bill and Becky Brown

We would like to wish all a happy birthday or anniversary. If your birthday or anniversary was omitted , or you would rather not have it published, please contact church office.



Pastor Rob will be on vacation May 19th– May 26th . Rev. Jacob Nault will be covering for Pastor Rob. Please contact the church office if you need pastoral assistance**.**



Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers:

Ongoing Prayers:
Jill Rosenthal, Alanna Smith, Crystal Lingenhag, Larry Olson, Shirl Alix, Tiffany Williams, Dar Schuff, Jerry Hupe.

Homebound:
Judy Doornbos in California, Jim Sell, and Carol Wilcox.

CHOIR news

A BIG thanks to our choir for enhancing our Holy Week and Easter services at CUCCNM - and at St. Paul's on Good Friday! Their musical gifts are truly a blessing to us all!

The choir (and I) will be breaking early this year, with Easter being the last service you'll see us until September. On April 23, I will be undergoing an Arthroplasty on my CMC (thumb) joint on my right hand. In June, I'll be having the same surgery on my left hand. For years, I've been experiencing a lot of pain and limited mobility in both thumbs which has become progressively worse over the past several months. That said, I will be out of commission for a while. With serious rehab and OT, I fully expect to be back (better than ever!) this Fall. Thanks in advance for your prayers!

Jill Rosenthal



MINISTRY COUNCIL IS IN NEED OF HELP

We are seeking a dedicated individual to join our Ministry Council as Secretary. This vital role ensures the accurate recording of our monthly council meetings. Responsibilities include taking detailed notes and producing clear meeting minutes. If you possess strong typing skills, excellent listening abilities, and a keen eye for detail, this volunteer opportunity might be a perfect fit for you. To learn more about how you can contribute to our church community, please contact Pastor Rob.



COMMUNITY TABLE
Our next meal is June 17th



SERVICE SUNDAY
SAVE THE DATE
MAY 18th at 9:00am

Choose one of the following projects to do:

BLETZINGER REHAB HOUSE: we will be painting for this local non-profit that treats people with chronic illnesses

LAUNDROMAT: Assist customers at the local laundromat by paying for washing and drying clothing

LEAVEN: Window cleaning

LEOPOLDO BENCH BUILDING

MENASHA'S MARIGOLDS MILE: Preparing the ground for the planting of marigolds in terraces throughout Menasha.

DOTY ISLAND PLANTING: Planting flowers in planter boxes.

BAGS TO BENCHES: Plastic will be sorted for recycling for the next track program. This is a job that can be done while seated.

HOPE FRIDGE: We will make lunches for Hope fridge in Menasha. This is a place to donate food and goods for anyone in need.

Sign up is in the hallway on the Service Hub Board.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO GIVE TO CUCCNM

1.Cash or check in the offering plate or by mailing it to the church.

2. Have your bank send an electronic check. (Bill Pay)

3. Use our QR Code that is linked to our website. Your giving will be taken through Pay Pal were you will use your credit card. *This option charges a fee to the church.*

If you have any questions, please contact Melanie in the church office. office@cuccnm.org or 920-725-4873

Accountant's Corner

	March	Year to Date
Giving Income	$ 22,029	$ 45,760
Interest + Rents	3,500	10,501
Other Income	29	29
Total Income	$ 25,558	$ 56,290
Expenses	24,118	66,677
Expenses	**$ 1,441**	**$ (10,387)**



We were in the **Black** at the end of the month, and in the **Red** for the Year. Thank you to everyone who has contributed**!**

Church Information
1511 Nicolet Blvd.
Neenah Wi 54956
920-725-4873

Website: www.cuccnm.org

Pastor
pastor@cuccnm.org

Church Office
office@cuccnm.org

Christian Education Director
ce@cuccnm.org

Wider Church Contacts:

www.ucc.org
(United Church of Christ)

www.neaucc.org
(Northeast Association)

www.wcucc.org
Wisconsin Conference

LEAVEN
Turning Hardship Into Hope

Ministry of Service highlights a special non-profit offering each month. The special offering for May is LEAVEN. You can donate using the green envelopes in the pew pockets at church or you can also donate on the church website: https://www.cuccnm.org/donate/ or send your check to the church. Financial donations will be matched at 50% from the Good Samaritan Fund. You can give at any time during the year. You can learn more about LEAVEN on their website; https://leavenfoxcities.org/

What does LEAVEN do?
LEAVEN helps ensure that people can meet their most basic needs. They provide financial assistance to those who have no other resources to draw from in order to cancel eviction, prevent utility disconnection, secure affordable housing, repair a vehicle, maintain health insurance, or otherwise address the emergency need of the household.

People turn to LEAVEN for help because of lost wages, unemployment, underemployment, health challenges, family changes, and other uncontrollable events that can cause a downward spiral. Our help is a hand-up during a temporary but often desperate time.

LEAVEN's financial assistance is typically immediate, short-term, and emergency-based.

Who does LEAVEN help?

- LEAVEN helps residents of Outagamie, Calumet, northeastern Winnebago counties and New London residents living in Waupaca County.
- LEAVEN helps people from all walks of life. The clients are diverse in age, ethnicity and culture.
- Some clients suffer a situational crisis (job loss, health issue, divorce) and others have an unexpected expense, causing them to have difficulty meeting their basic needs.

Annually, LEAVEN distributes between $750,000 - $850,000 in direct client assistance. They rely on the support and generosity of our community to meet our annual operational needs. Every dollar counts.

Top 4 Financial Assistance Requests 2025 YTD

Rent = **$106,899** Mortgage = **$12,316**
Car Repair = **$15,892** Security Deposit = **$12,872**



Our last official day of Sunday School was April 27th. But we have some fun family events coming up.

May 18th is Service Sunday, sign up to help in the community! Sign up is in the hallway by the main office.

June 1st: Pop Up Sunday School! During Worship 10:15-11:15. Youth ages 3K-12th grade are invited to come learn from Jeff Rabe, a UCC Director of Children and Youth Ministries from Madison, who will be teaching a workshop at church that day called "The Singular THEY- An Introduction to Better Understand Gender and Gender Identity"



GRADUATION CELEBRATION

We will be celebrating the High School graduates June 1st. Sam A. Maggie B. Drew B. Izzy H. Nolan S. They will receive a blanket, made by our Youth Group, in the colors of their high school.

If you or your child is a member or friend of the church and would like us to celebrate their accomplishment, please let Alanna know at ce@cuccnm.org.



SUMMER CAMP

Hey Campers of ALL ages!

Summer Camp

It is not too late to register for Summer Camp, go to https://ucci.org/ to find the perfect camp for you, your child, or your family. Camp is for ALL ages, so hurry up and register now! If you need help or have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. ce@cuccnm.org

This year is an extra special year for our church at Daycholah Center, Ethan Meylink and Quinn Smith will both be counselors at camp this summer!



Confirmation Sunday

Confirmation Sunday is May 4th. Michael B., Andrew B., Graham E., Lars H., Madeline L., Carl N., Carmen T., will all be confirming their faith in Jesus, God and our church. Please join this great group of young adults as they start their next chapter in their faith.

Thank you to the youth, parents and mentors who made this year not just successful, but a whole lot of fun too!

CINNAMON ROLLS SALE- THANK YOU!



We wanted to say Thank You to all who purchased the delicious Cinnamon Rolls that Jonn LaPrairie and the youth made Sunday, April 27th. They made just over $800.00 for the Faith Development Fund scholarships. Thank you to John LaPrarie and Becky Nichols who work hard to make this a success!

BRAT FRY AND BAKE SALE

Part of the All-Church Fundraiser, on **June 14th**, we will be hosting a Brat Fry and Bake Sale! All proceeds from both go into the Faith Formation Fund, going towards scholarships for Summer Camp, Weekend Retreats, and Youth Mission Trips. We will need help with donations for both the Brat Fry and Bake Sale. Please see the sign up in the hallway or reach out to Alanna.

All youth and families participating in the scholarship awards are encouraged to help at this fundraiser. Your volunteer time can be at any of the 4 events happening that weekend, rummage sale, plant sale, brat fry, or bake sale. Please see the sign up in the hallway at church or reach out to Alanna.

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

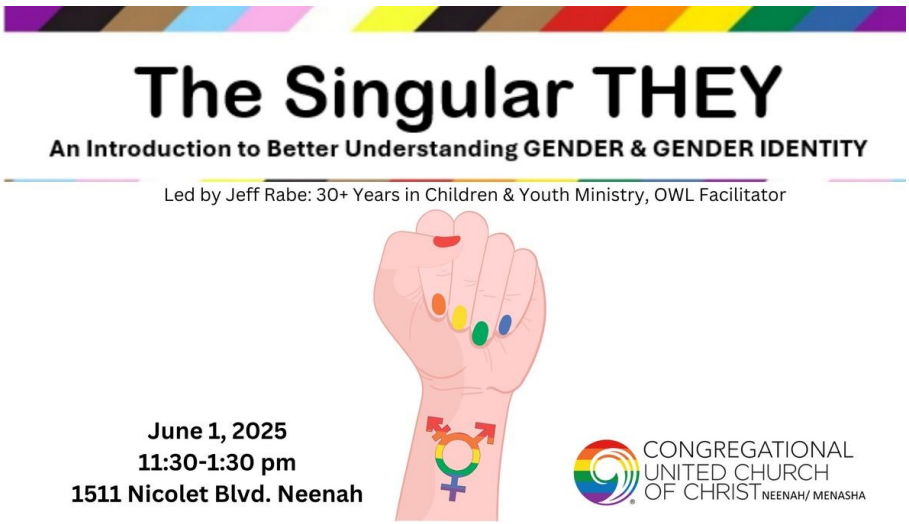
Just a reminder if your child is interested in receiving a camp scholarship a copy of your registration form or receipt must be turned into the Christian Education office by June 1st. If this is not done it will be assumed by the Camp Scholarship sub ministry that your child does not wish to receive a scholarship award. Most scholarships are 50% of camp cost per recipient. Please email the registration to ce@cuccnm.org

Hometown Mission Trip- Cross Generational

Join us in our first Hometown Mission Trip Tuesday, June 10th- Thursday June 12th.
We will be meeting at church at 8:30am to pack a lunch and have a briefing on what you will be doing for the day. You will work a morning shift and an afternoon shift (destination is TBD). We will come together for lunch in a park, and finish the day with a debriefing around 4:00pm at church.
Keep your eye out for a Sign up soon.

Colorado Springs, CO Mission Trip- Summer 2026 for High School Youth

Any youth, currently in 8th grade and up, who are interested in going to the Colorado Springs, CO mission trip **June 13th-20th, 2026** needs to be in touch with Alanna & give their **downpayment by June 10th, 2025.** Please contact Alanna at ce@cuccnm.org. We are very excited to serve the community in Colorado Springs, CO!



The Singular They-An Introduction to Better Understanding GENDER & GENDER IDENTITY
We are excited to welcome Jeff Rabe, on Sunday, June 1st from 12:00-1:30pm, to our church where we will be hosting this wonderful workshop. Childcare will be provided by our very own teenagers. Do you have questions Biological Sex, Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression? Want to learn about Gender Terminology and understand the history of Fluidity? This is a safe space for EVERYONE to come together, listen, learn, and ask tough questions so you can feel comfortable opening your heart, lives and community to ALL.
This is open to the community, please invite your friends, family, and neighbors. Share our Facebook Event. https://www.facebook.com/share/16ATHU5TEQ/



Weekend Fundraiser
Rummage/Plant Sale
Brat-Burger Fry/Bake Sale
June 13 & 14



RUMMAGE SALE: We are gathing the items on the stage in fellowship hall. We will take almost anything (clothes, household, furniture, toys, games, glass, knick-knacks, antiques, beds, towels, etc.) But we won't take TVs, old monitors, printers, or computers or basically, if you have to pay to recycle it – we won't take that item. We need Volunteers to help set up, work the days of the sale, and clean up. If you are interested in helping, please contact Marilyn Kostrzak (920-680-5237 or) and indicate the days/times you are available, along with the tasks you would like to help with.

PLANT SALE: Share Your Extra Plants! Donate to the Plant Sale. On June 12 bring your POTTED PLANTS, LABELED with NAME, COLOR, PERENNIAL or ANNUAL, SHADE or SUN, and approximate HEIGHT. Plants will be sold June 13 & 14. Please contact Mary Liesch for questions.





BRAT/BURGER FRY: Saturday, June 14th from 9 am-2 pm (or until sold out) is our annual Faith Development Fund BRAT/BURGER/ HOTDOG FRY! We will be looking for donations for items needed to make it a successful event. We need items such as condiments, onions, kraut, individual bag chips, hotdog/hamburger buns… For more information contact Connie Regazzi or Mary Janness.

BAKE SALE: We will be looking for donations of baked goods to be sold to help raise funds for the Faith Development Fund. Please contact Alanna Smith for more information. Sign up online: https://signup.com/go/MRrApLB



Volunteer sign-up is on the bulletin board at the church – hallway.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Upon receiving the schedule, please review it to ensure you are available when scheduled. If you are unavailable, please use the contact information to find a replacement for yourself. Please notify the church office **office@cuccnm.org** with the schedule change. Thanks to all for your continued support and service as volunteers! **If you would like to be added to the schedule please contact the church office. We are always looking for substitutes !**

Task	5-4-2025	5-11-2025	5-18-2025	5-25-2025
			Service Sunday	
Liturgist	*Confirmation Mentors*	Sherri Jischke		John Tschudy
Head Usher		Gay Dickson		Sue Dollhopf
Usher 4	*Confirmation Mentors*	Kerry Fox		Wendy Remmel
Usher 2	*Confirmation Mentors*	Alan Gear		Signa Meyers
Usher 3	*Confirmation Mentors*	Marcia Fry		Laurie Kleist
Refreshments	Laurie Kleist	Mary & Ralph Liesch		Scott Olson
Acolyte	CeCe L	TBA		TBA
Singing Bowl	Henry L.	TBA		TBA
Youth Reader		TBA		TBA
Communion Shepherd		TBA		TBA
Communion Prep.	Terri Flesburg			

<u>YOU</u> CAN HELP SERVE!



Ministry of Spiritual Life would like to continue to offer a time for fellowship and snacks after worship each "W" through "Z" to bring in 1 dozen cookies, bars (need not be homemade) or a gallon of juice sometime during the month you are assigned. Label the item "Fellowship" and take to the kitchen freezer/or bring them to the lounge .Your contribution is much appreciated! Watch for your turn to share as your "letter" comes up! Questions contact Terri Flesburg . Here is the schedule:

May: W-Z





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 **6:30 pm** Ministry Council	**2**	**3** **7-8:30pm** Horizon II AA
4 **CONFIRMATION Sunday** **10:15 am** Worship	**5**	**6** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study **12:00–2:00pm** **Bags to Benches**	**7**	**8**	**9** **6:00-8:00 pm** Youth Group	**10** **7-8:30pm** Horizon II AA
11 **10:15 am** Worship	**12**	**13** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**14**	**15** **12:00–2:00pm** **Bags to Benches**	**16**	**17** **7-8:30pm** Horizon II AA
18 **9:00am Service Sunday**	**19**	**20** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**21**	**22** **11:30 am** Grief Group	**23**	**24** **7-8:30pm** Horizon II AA
25 **10:15 am** Worship	**26** **Church office Closed**	**27** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31** **7-8:30pm** Horizon II AA



DISCUSSION GROUP
Tuesdays at 8:30-9:30 am
We meet at Four Seasons Restaurant in Neenah for breakfast and lively discussion about current events and faith trends
1104 South Commercial Street, Neenah
Everyone is Welcome!

NEEDLERS



Share Fellowship and do Needlework
All who like to do (or learn to do) any type of needlework.

Meet Friday May 16th at 1:00pm in the lounge to visit and work on needlework such as knitting, crocheting, etc. Invite your friends and share in the conversation and creation!

Sunday Worship is in person.
Services will be broadcast **live on FB** every Sunday morning and later put on our website.

Click below to find our FB page
https://facebook.com/CongregationalUCCNeenahMenasha/
It will be posted on the church website later in the day.

BOOK CLUB
FIRE KEEPERS DAUGHTER
BY ANGLINE BOULLEY

JUNE 8TH AT SWEET LAIR AFTER CHURCH

BAGS FOR BENCHES



1St Tuesday of the Month and 3rd Thursday of month
May 6th & May 15th
12:00-2:00 PM

Want to be a part of our recycling program and have fun at the same time? Come and fellowship while we and sort plastic bags for our next bench. Questions contact Alanna at ce@cuccnm.org





SAVE THE DATE

SERVICE SUNDAY

MAY 18TH

SEE PAGE 3



Ministry Council

Moderator:
Scott Olson

Vice Moderator:
Signa Meyers

Secretary:

Accountant:
Dave Zernicke

Ministry of Faith Development
Dawn Welling

Ministry of Service:
Mary Janness

Ministry of Spiritual Life
Terri Flesburg

Ministry of Stewardship
Jeff Nichols

At Large:
Sue Dollhopf
Connie Regazzi
Sherri Jischke

Church Historian:
Mowry Smith

Communication Coordinator
Marilyn Kostrzak

Time and Talent Coordinator:

Personnel Committee
Scott Olson
Marilyn Kostrzak

Pastoral Relations Committee
Kerry Fox, Sue Knuth,
Patty Hoehne, Bob Nault

Rev. Rob Van Ess Pastor,
pastor@cuccnm.org
Melanie Nault, Admin. Assistant,
office@cuccnm.org
Alanna Smith, Christian Ed. Dir.,
ce@cuccnm.org

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MAY 4TH
CONFIRMATION

MAY 6TH & 15TH
BAGS TO BENCHES

MAY 18TH
SERVICE SUNDAY

MAY 22ND
GRIEF GROUP

MORE INFORMATION INSIDE