



# Community UCC

*We're worth our words*

Volume 56, Issue 07 - July 1, 2019

*A Just Peace, Progressive, LGBTQ Open & Affirming Congregation*

## e-Communigram

This month's newsletter features:

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### Letter from Leah

Dear Community,

The summer I turned five, my grandparents loaded us into their RV for a cross-country trek from southern Indiana to California. Pawpaw had sisters there. Aunt Hulda's house was nestled among almond and apricot trees. Her daughter, Mackey, lived in a proper California ranch in the middle of a citrus grove. If I close my eyes and imagine, to this day, I can float in her crystal blue pool and smell the sweet air. Aunt Linda lived in retirement village trailer park in Pismo Beach. Two or three palm trees popped up out of every little plot of landing, making the trailer park seem as magical as Disney Land in my five year old estimation. We also visited Sequoia National Park on that trip. Sequoias can grow as tall as 26 story buildings, with circumferences of up to 113 feet.

Five year old me was awestruck, and my love of trees began: we had tree banners made for our wedding; I wear two bracelets daily, one of redwood beads and another with a tree medallion on them, both reminders of trips, with plenty of tree-gazing, with Pastor Emily Snowden and sister-friend Angela Menke Ballou; I have a tree tattooed on my upper right arm with roots that wrap round; and there is nothing as starkly beautiful as the bare branches of a tree against a winter sky. And I'm not the only one fond of trees. The Psalmist was quite fond of trees too and found within their branches myriad metaphor for our life with God.

Reformed Worship Magazine says, "The book of Psalms begins with metaphor. The righteous, those who are close to God and follow in God's way, are like trees, Psalm 1 says. This message is foundational for understanding the rest of the psalter. It is the referent for psalms of praise and protest, of comfort and dear, of adulation and anger." Throughout this series, we will focus on four Psalms and the tree imagery contained therein. Our series will conclude with the image from Revelation of the Tree of Life which is "for the healing of the nations."

Our first Sunday in this series is this Sunday! **"A Walk Through the Woods: praying the psalms"** runs **July 7-August 4**. Here's what you have to look forward to:

**July 7** – Psalm 1 introduces us to the Tree of Wisdom. It is steady, unflappable, and productive in nourishing ways – wisdom knows what's important. It doesn't get cynical, nor scoffs.

**July 14** – Psalm 26 conjures images of the Tree of Justice. Justice is not for us alone, but for all people. Without justice, there is no foundation for any of us.

**July 21** – Psalm 52 prompts us to consider the Tree of Plenty. The Psalmist reminds us that while others waste and squander, God provides.

**July 28** – Psalm 92: 1-4, 12-15 introduces us to the Tree of Promise. As God’s people, we must remember that we are planted to flourish – our lives should reflect this.

**August 4** – Revelation 22:1-7 features the Tree of Life. Recall that in Revelation, there is an image of the Tree of Life which is “for the healing of the nations.” In these precarious times, it is easy for us to lose focus. As people of God, we must keep maintain focus and remember: this vision is the one we live towards, not the one we see on the news, not the one we see in the headlines, not the one we see on the internet. This vision is the one that gives us life. We are hoping to have special guests and a special focus on this day.....stay tuned for more!

My pagan friends remind me that when I am feeling lost, like I’m spinning or spiraling, that I need to go touch a tree. There’s something about touching this deeply rooted, living thing that tethers us to the present. In doing so, we are invited to be still. When we are still, perhaps we will do as the Psalmist invites us to do: be still and know that I AM God. Throughout July and August, as part of this worship series, you are invited to take weekly (even daily) walks and notice the trees around you. What do they look like? How do they move? How do they grow? What can the trees teach us about this deeply rooted life we have in God?

Happy summer, friends.

Blessings,



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## Mark your calendars for these upcoming CUCC events!



**Thursday, July 4** - CUCC Offices Closed

**Wednesday, July 10** - Just-for-Fun Breakfast, 8:30AM, Perkins in Urbana

**Thursday, July 11** - Men’s Breakfast, 7AM, Urbana Garden Family Restaurant

**Tuesday, July 16** - Retiree’s Monthly Lunch, 11:30AM, Cracker Barrel in Urbana

**Tuesday, July 16**- CLB Meeting, 6:30PM

**Sunday, July 14** - School Kit Sewing Bee, following worship

**Friday, July 19** - Host group from Youth Ambassadors Generation 7 group. We will provide dinner around 6PM.

**Sunday, July 21** - Congregational meeting to discuss elevator, *quorum needed*, following worship in the sanctuary

**Sunday, July 28** - Interfaith Alliance Picnic from 4-6PM, location TBA

**Sunday, August 18** - 10:15am Worship in the Park, Ambucs Park, Jean Driscoll Pavilion | BBQ & Potluck to follow the service.

**Sunday, August 25** - Quad Day | CUCC will be serving hot dogs and bottled water outside the church

## Calling all Musicians!



We are in search of special music for our summer Sundays. Performers of all ages and abilities are encouraged, pieces do not need to meet any particular sacred or stylistic requirements, and solos and small groups are all welcome. The diversity of our summer musical offerings enriches worship and our community. Please add your name to the yellow signup sheet in the Parlor and contact Brian Clark ([bclark87@gmail.com](mailto:bclark87@gmail.com)) to let him know what you will be performing and whether you will need keyboard accompaniment. Alternatively, you can call the CUCC office and ask to be signed up.

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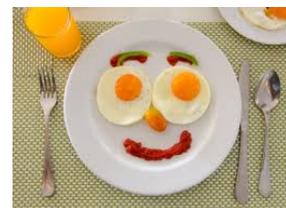
## Newcomers Group is Forming

Whether you've been part of CUCC for a while or are brand new and want to learn more about the church and how to become more involved, we've got an opportunity for you. We are putting together another NewComers group -- 4 sessions that help you learn more about the church, find ways to fill your soul while serving, and build connections with other CUCCers! We usually meet on Sunday afternoons following worship or Sunday evenings. Jeanne Ward, our NewComer coordinator will schedule based on your availability. Please contact Jeanne at 217-840-0668 (cell) or [jeawa@comcast.net](mailto:jeawa@comcast.net) if you are interested or have questions.

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## Just-for-Fun Breakfast | Wednesday, July 10

Everyone is welcome! Please join us at 8:30AM at Perkins on University. Thank you to Ro Arroyave-Jamison for taking over the organization of this monthly breakfast.



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## Church Elevator Update

There will be a short Congregational Meeting on Sunday, July 21st right after church in the Sanctuary. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the church elevator. We will need a quorum of the church membership present for a vote, so please plan to attend this short but important meeting.

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## Summer Worship Help

Summer travel means that we are looking for extra worship support in the form of new greeters, ushers, liturgists, and coffee hosts. Please consider joining our team this summer!

Greeters: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080D49A5A92FA13-greeters>

Liturgists: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0b4aada823a0f94-summer>

You may also contact Alison Anders ([amanders@illinois.edu](mailto:amanders@illinois.edu)) to be added to the Greeter and Liturgist sign-up sheets.

Contact Russ Hougland to serve as an usher: [russ.hougland@gmail.com](mailto:russ.hougland@gmail.com)

Coffee Hosts: email [info@community-ucc.org](mailto:info@community-ucc.org)



## Special Guests on July 19

This summer the 7<sup>th</sup> Generation of the Young Ambassadors program, a faith exchange between youth and young adults of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference United Church of Christ, USA, and youth and young adults of the Wittgenstein Region Evangelical Church of the Union, Germany, has begun. You may remember that Pastor Leah helped plan this exchange as a youth and was one of the Generation 1 participants. She and Rev. Angela Menke-Ballou preached the all generation reunion in Germany this past fall. It just so happens that Generation 7 is traveling from a mission project in Minnesota, back to Indiana, on a Friday, July 19, and needed a place to stop, rest, rejuvenate, and have dinner. CUCC hospitality chairs Peg and Randy were happy to oblige. Please see Peg and Randy's "Hospitality Needs YOU" article further down this page to see how you can help out on July 19 to welcome our international guests and UCC neighbors from next door.

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## From our Director of Youth Ministries

Dear Community,

The youth had a wonderful time in June celebrating Confirmation. We were able to hear statements from six young people who are strong advocates for love and peace in this world. I'm grateful for these young people and for the impact they are already having on our world. Thank you again to all the sponsors who walked alongside the youth during their Confirmation journey. I appreciate you!

We will continue to have Sunday School in July following the Children's Moment.

I hope each and every one of you have a fun and safe summer.

Take care.

Jessica Smiley



## Hospitality Needs YOU!

Here are a few upcoming activities which the Hospitality Team is organizing. Please take a look and see how you might help.

- Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm - CUCC will host 30 folks from the Young Ambassadors Generation 7 Group for dinner. They will be travelling by bus & stopping here to stretch their legs and have dinner with us. We are planning to have a mac & cheese bar. If you would like to help that evening, please contact Randy Musser or Peg Wade.
- Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 10:15am - CUCC's annual Worship in the Park followed by a potluck/cookout. This event will be held at Ambucs Park, Jean Driscoll Pavilion in Urbana. The Hospitality Team will cook burgers & hot dogs (veggie included) and also provide bottled water, condiments, buns & paperware. We invite you to bring a side dish to share.
- Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, beginning right after church - We will once again be cooking hot dogs to hand out with bottles of water to students during Quad Day on campus. We will have several jobs and shifts, so please take a look at the sign-up sheet in the Parlor on the whiteboard and sign up as soon as possible. We need lots of volunteers for this event, but it is always a fun event and a great way to welcome the students back to our neighborhood! Check out the Signup!



## Jubilee Cafe News

Jubilee Cafe continues to serve a free meal each Monday throughout the summer, and we need you to volunteer! Sign up here,



Jubilee Cafe at  
Community United  
Church of Christ

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090e45a5ae2caa8-volunteer12>, or go to our Facebook page, Jubilee Cafe CUCC.

Questions? Contact Johnell Bentz | [Johnell.bentz@gmail.com](mailto:Johnell.bentz@gmail.com) | 217-840-6483, call or text

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## Garage Sale: Save the Date! Saturday, August 3

The CUCC garage sale is only a few weeks away on August 3. Save your gently used, clean items (no clothing please). A sign up for volunteering and information on when to take your items to the Robbenolt house will be coming soon. Talk to Johnell Bentz if you have any questions: [johnell.bentz@gmail.com](mailto:johnell.bentz@gmail.com) or 217-840-6483. The Robbenolts will host the garage sale again this year.



## Church World Service school kit supply collection and sewing bee



On August 4th our kids will be assembling school kits for Church World Service. We are collecting school supplies in a donation box in the foyer. We are hoping to fill 40 kits, and will update the list in the foyer and on the weekly yellow sheet each week.

Plus a school kit bag sewing bee!! Dust off your sewing machines! Construction of the cloth bags for our end-of-summer school kit drive will occur on July 14th after worship. We are accepting donations of kid-friendly cloth (sturdy cotton preferred). If you would like to make bags on your own, we're happy to provide instructions and/or pre-cut fabric. Contact Ilsa Kantola ([ilsa.kantola@gmail.com](mailto:ilsa.kantola@gmail.com)).

- Blunt scissors (rounded tip only)
  - Three 70-count bound notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no loose-leaf or filler paper)
  - 30-centimeter 12" rulers
  - Hand-held pencil sharpeners
  - Large erasers (no pencil cap erasers)
  - New, unsharpened pencils
  - Boxes of 24 crayons (only 24)
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## Welcome to our new Music Director!

After a public search and multiple interviews, we are thrilled to welcome our new Music Director, Kathy Lee, to CUCC! Kathy brings experience and expertise to the role, and as a church member, brings enthusiasm and knowledge that will serve and grow our music program. We are delighted. As you know, Kathy served as seasonal Music Director for us from Lent to mid-June. Her new position will begin in mid-August. Help us in welcoming Kathy to her to role! Congratulations, Kathy!

Thank you to the hiring team – Iris Swanson (choir member), Patrick Keenan (personnel chair), Kristy Brownfield (past moderator/personnel chair), John Murphy(choir member/moderator), Brian Clark (keyboardist), and Pastor Leah (Pastor/head of staff). This team did their work with prayerful consideration and we thank them for their work.

## **Pssst... What's a Parish Associate?**

If you were in worship on June 9<sup>th</sup>, then you heard the news that Pastor Connie will be remaining at CUCC in a new and different capacity, as a Parish Associate. You may have wondered just what parish associates are and what they do. Maybe this will help:

### *What is a Parish Associate?*

In the Presbyterian Church (USA), the parish associate is a minister who serves in a validated (that is, approved by the Presbytery) ministry other than a local congregation such as chaplaincy or who is retired (or semi-retired) but who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular congregation in keeping with his/her ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. The parish associate is NOT an associate pastor. However, he or she is responsible to the lead pastor of the congregation, serving on an "as needed/if available" basis for particular pastoral tasks. The position may be paid or unpaid. Connie's position is unpaid.

### *How did Pastor Connie become a Parish Associate?*

Because she is ordained in the PCUSA and holds dual standing as a minister in the UCC, we had to secure the approval of both the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois and the Eastern Association in order for her to be able to remain in relationship with CUCC. It is unusual for someone who has been serving as one of the pastors in a congregation to be allowed to remain in that same congregation as a parish associate. It is also unusual for the Presbytery to approve someone holding such a position in a congregation of a different denomination. Early in 2019, we began working with the Committees on Ministry (COM) in both denominations to explore the possibility and lay the groundwork so that this could happen, due to what we believed to be out-of-the-ordinary and specialized circumstances. We received positive responses from both COMs fairly quickly, but the action of the Presbytery's COM had to be ratified by a vote on the floor of a stated meeting of the Presbytery itself. That happened at the meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

### *What will she do as a Parish Associate?*

Pastor Connie will be assisting with pastoral care, either as the need arises or in specific designated ways (such as home communion with at-home members several times a year). She will also serve as a worship planning consultant to help Pastor Leah outline and design potential worship series, as requested. She is also available for occasional preaching and/or worship leadership, whenever invited by Pastor Leah. She now has the flexibility to preach for other congregations on occasion or even to take on short-term assignments for the Presbytery (for example, when one pastor leaves a congregation and a few weeks elapse before the interim can come).

However, most of her attention will be directed toward establishing our new Center for Spirituality and Faith using materials from the Bandy collection. Our hope is that, over time, this will become a resource center for the congregation (and perhaps the community), with experiential learning through classes, groups and retreats enlarging our possibilities for adult education and faith formation.

### *What happens next?*

Connie is taking a few weeks to visit other congregations, to help us all with the transition from her old role to her new one. She expects to be back at CUCC most weeks by early fall.

We'll begin work on setting up the Center in July. Several individuals have already indicated their willingness to help. First up is simply clearing out the space, unpacking the materials and starting to process them so they can be used. One of the items rescued from Espresso Royale when it closed was a large shelf that would make a great display area for the Center. However, it needs to be cleaned up and repainted. If you want to help with any of these tasks, please let Connie know—her [connie@community-ucc.org](mailto:connie@community-ucc.org) email will continue to be active.

## Collaborative Church event: September 19-21, Asheville, NC

As our world changes, churches must adapt in order to stay relevant and accessible. The future of church in America looks a lot more like congregations who partner and pair with other groups, organizations, and businesses in their communities who share their values than the stand-alone silo churches of past generations. We certainly know how to collaborate as evidenced with Jubilee Café, and yet, we have lots of old, outdated patterns of practice to unlearn.

New Church Starts, churches that have been founded in the past 15 years, have lots to teach historic congregations like ours about the power of collaboration. Land of the Sky UCC in Asheville, North Carolina, which turns 10 this year, is making their birthday an opportunity to teach others what they have learned first-hand about relevancy and vibrancy in the new century. They are hosting a Collaborative Leadership event September 19-21. The invitation is this: Gather with Progressive Faith Leaders to bear witness to existing collaborative partnerships, engage in conversations and dialogue about the intersection of institutions and movement, and imagine future collaborations for their own context. Speakers will include President and General Minister of the UCC Rev. John Dorhauer. The event includes sessions on the chaos of movements (don't think collaboration is easy!), the nuts and bolts of collaborations, and what collaboration makes possible. The event ends with a session dedicated to small groups making tangible next-step plans. Pastor Leah needs 4 people to attend this workshop with her. There are registration and lodging fees – if cost is a consideration for you, please see Pastor Leah. For more info, see this link – but do not register yourself. We will handle registrations in the office.

[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leadership-in-todays-church-through-the-lens-of-collaboration-tickets-60461328461?fbclid=IwAR23Vgt5MULiECu6kWkEYb3Gy4Izu5itPq1\\_SPOAyP7nua\\_EM5EX7zqW8](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leadership-in-todays-church-through-the-lens-of-collaboration-tickets-60461328461?fbclid=IwAR23Vgt5MULiECu6kWkEYb3Gy4Izu5itPq1_SPOAyP7nua_EM5EX7zqW8)

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## Check out CUCC's Library Inventory from the Comfort of Your Own Couch!

Our library is catalogued online at Library Thing-- [www.librarything.com](http://www.librarything.com). Our username is Community-UCC (or community-ucc-- capitalization doesn't seem to matter). Our password is NB2016cucc. Or stop by the library in person and see what we have to offer!



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## Updates Regarding our Trash & Recycling Dumpsters in the Parking Lot

With the closure of Espresso Royale, CUCC has now taken over the monthly fees associated with the dumpsters in our parking lot. There are a couple of changes worth noting (please forward this to anyone we may have missed who may be responsible for taking out trash/recycling):

Beginning Monday, June 3, the **larger** of the two dumpsters will be used for all recyclables (cardboard, paper, aluminum, plastic, but NO glass). Recyclables will be picked up twice per month. We can now recycle most things here at CUCC. Yay! Everything else deemed trash, including glass, will go in the **smaller** dumpster and the trash will be picked up weekly.

If you want to continue recycling glass, you'll have to take those items home and recycle them with your personal recyclables.



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## Did you miss worship?

Don't fret if you missed worship last week, or even a month ago! Sermons are recorded live each Sunday and can be found at: [www.youtube.com/communityucc](http://www.youtube.com/communityucc). Just give us a couple of days to get the previous Sunday uploaded.

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Contact CUCC:  
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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday | 9am - 3pm