



# Community UCC

*We're worth our words*

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A Just Peace, Progressive, LGBTQ Open & Affirming Congregation

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### Letter from Leah

Dear Community,

On Transfiguration Sunday, I reminded you that Jesus never defeats the empire and so we ought not expect someone to magically arrive and defeat the empire we are facing in 2020 America. That was not an easy sermon to preach – it's hard to say the thing that you know to be true and wish weren't. That sermon didn't leave you hopeless, though. Rather, it left you, CUCC, with a resurrection moment and a vision for the future. The resurrection moment is this: the transfiguration story ends with Jesus telling the disciples (including us) to "Get up (literally: be raised) and don't be afraid." The vision for the future is this: Raimundo Panikkar says, "The future will not be a new, big Tower of Power. Our hope in the future is...well-trodden paths from house-to-house." That must be the thing that saves us.

Just so we're clear, I am not imagining this "well-trodden paths" literally. No, we're not dispensing with big sanctuary worship in favor of house church. No, we're not all getting rid of our cars in favor of walking everywhere. No, we're not starting a new walking group that's going to hike to every CUCC members house until the path in the grass from house to house is clear. As a congregation, throughout the whole of our common life together, we're cultivating relationships between one another, caring for our children, and serving both the poor and poor in spirit – that's how we make the well-trodden paths between one another. And, as a congregation, especially in this Lenten season, we're focusing on deepening our spiritual practices – that's how we make the well-trodden paths to God. Love of God and neighbor in the same measure we love ourselves are the two commandments we are called to keep above all others. They must be our guiding light in these shadow time. As I said on Transfiguration Sunday, it is the only way we survive when the empire is sure to win.

Blessings,



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## Moderator Musings

I went through about a five-year phase of taking on a Lenten fast. I was in my mid- and late-twenties, working my way through graduate school and the slow, seemingly endless procession of gray days that was and is winter in Chicago. I guess that I liked the idea of leavening suffering with suffering. One year I turned my back on sweets for the season. One year it was alcohol. For three years in a row I gave up coffee.

I don't fast during Lent anymore. My desire for voluntary (and rather arbitrary) self-deprivation seems to have ended at exactly the same time that Sophia, the first of our daughters, came screaming into the world. By the time numbers two and three, Charlotte and Beatrice, arrived, the thought that saying no to a Thin Mint brought me closer to God didn't even cross my mind. My Lenten energies were focused elsewhere. I have not looked back.

There is no right or wrong way for us to observe Lent. But I would like to suggest that during this Lenten season at CUCC, whether or not we take on fasts, we all look around the church for opportunities to contribute our time and our significant creative energies, that we reflect on the needs that we see and the talents we possess, and see if there might be a match. In worship on March 1, we heard from Julie McClure, co-chair of Children and Family Ministry, about the opportunities that exist to help our Sunday School program thrive. In sum, they could use more shepherds and also volunteers to lead Sunday School during the summer months. There will be no shortage of other opportunities. In coming weeks we will hear from other ministry leads.

To the extent that Lent is a time for personal reflection and inventory taking, it can also be a time to think about the needs of the Church. There is no need to rush to answers. Lent is long for a reason. But I hope that each of us will at least sit with the question. And ponder it over a few cups of coffee.

Warm wishes,  
Jon

## Pastoral Letter: That They May All Be One

Dear Partners in Christ:

The vision of a body united –in purpose, in mission, in vision – is one that inspired the birth of our denomination. All of our spiritual impulses reverberate in an effort to call us into a more perfect union. Throughout our shared history as a people of faith and as a part of the Body of Christ, we have challenged ourselves to widen the circle of inclusion. Widening the circle has always come with growth pains as we shed old skins and welcome those whom we had previously thought unwelcome. And, with each new articulation of a more fully expressed Body of Christ we have realized new joy. Through it all we remain focused on the call to be one and committed to meeting the challenges inherent in that call.

We are now living in and through a season when the threats to unity are legion. Talk of walls that mark refugees as threats, labels like ‘terrorist’ that attach too easily to Muslims, overt racial bias that normalizes fear and hatred, a pandemic of abuse to women with the trigger reflex to forgive the men who author that abuse have turned America into a land many of us no longer recognize and that too many of us are finding harder and harder to reconcile with our faith.

Now more than ever, the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ is seeking to partner with anyone committed to unifying the human community. The gospel mandate to love our neighbor as we love ourselves resonates deep within us. It calls for the better angels among and within us to always resist impulses to hate, to condemn, to vilify, or to castigate. In such a time as this, the United Church of Christ’s call to fulfill the prayer of Jesus, that they may all be one, stands as an urgent mandate to disciples who envision a just world for all.

United with you in God’s service,



The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer  
General Minister and President



[https://www.ucc.org/a\\_pastoral\\_letter\\_01282019](https://www.ucc.org/a_pastoral_letter_01282019)

## Jubilee Café Oversight Committee: A CUCC Constitutional Change Under Mission

Dear members of CUCC.

The Church Life Board requested that a group be formed to provide regular oversight for Jubilee Café. A small group of Jubilee Café regular volunteers (Roger Wade, Peg Wade, Tom Ward, Johnell Bentz, Anna Barnes, and Pastor Leah) met and wrote this plan for a Jubilee Café Oversight Committee. After the group met, their proposal was presented to the Church Life Board who approved it. Because the formation of this group requires a constitutional change, a special congregational meeting will be held immediately following worship on March 29. The sole purpose of this meeting is the presentation, and hopefully approval of, this constitutional change. The addition to the constitution appears below, in bold and highlighted in yellow. Underneath the constitutional item is additional information about the purpose and scope of the Jubilee Café Oversight Committee. Please take time to read both. Several folks who wrote this plan will be available after church on March 15 to answer any questions you may have in anticipation of the special congregational meeting on March 29. If you have questions but cannot attend on March 15, feel free to ask any of the folks who helped craft this plan. Thanks!

For the CUCC constitution:

Areas of responsibility of the Mission Team include:

- Wider Church Ministry
- Mission/Just Peace
- **Jubilee Café Oversight**

For your information (not to be added to the Constitution):

The Jubilee Café Oversight Committee (JCOC) is a sub-committee the Mission Team and will be appointed by current JCOC members in consultation with the Nominations Committee. The JCOC will meet at least quarterly throughout the year. Each member of the board will serve a term of 2 years. The JCOC will be comprised of at least 6 people:

1. A certified food manager at Jubilee Café,
2. A CUCC member/friend who has been active in volunteering for Jubilee Café,
3. A regular guest at Jubilee Café (non CUCC member/friend),
4. A regular volunteer at Jubilee Café (non CUCC member/friend),
5. A person from one of our community partners,
6. A CUCC pastor will serve in an ex-officio role (non-voting).

Specifically, the board will have these responsibilities:

1. Prepare and submit a written budget annually. From its inception, Jubilee Café has raised and used its own funds to pay for operations. Jubilee Café's funds are separate from the general operating budget of CUCC. Therefore, the JCOC will be responsible for submitting an annual budget and approaching the CLB if additional funds are required throughout the year. This may differ from how other sub-committees function within our structure.

2. Conduct day to day and annual operational evaluation.
3. Develop, maintain, and evaluate community partnerships.
4. Assist the CLB, Personnel Committee, and Head of Staff with the hiring and supervision of staff.
5. Assist with fundraising for Jubilee Café.
6. Serve as the vision keepers for Jubilee Café, assuring that our ethos of treating each guest with respect and dignity is maintained and evaluating offers from community partners and CUCCers.

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## Jubilee Café

Jubilee Café continues to serve a free meal each Monday throughout the year, and we need you to volunteer! Sign up here, <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090e45a5ae2caa8-volunteer12>, or go to our Facebook page, Jubilee Café CUCC.

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

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## Health and Wellness Team

### April is National Donate Life Month

According to the U.S. Government's website, <https://www.organdonor.gov/>, 95% of US adults support organ donation, but only 58% are actually signed up as donors.

Have YOU registered as an organ donor? Do you have questions to be addressed before you register?

CUCC's newly re-formed Health and Wellness committee wishes to remedy that. A special program is being planned for Sunday, April 26, from 11:30AM – 12:30PM with a guest speaker from the Illinois Secretary of State's Office. Elizabeth Hager, Regional Coordinator of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program will speak on Illinois' "Life Goes On" program. She will also provide informational brochures and fact sheets and answer your questions about donation.

Mark your calendars, bring your friends, and plan to attend this informative program.





## Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for these CUCC events!  
Sunday, March 1 - Tuesday, March 31

**Sunday, March 1, 11:30am, Tour YMCA Photography Exhibit on Homelessness**

**Friday, March 6, 9:30am, World Day of Prayer, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 708 W. Main, Urbana**

**Saturday, March 7, 8:00am-5:00pm, Mental Health First Aid Training, Fellowship Hall**

**Saturday, March 7, 2:00pm-5:00pm, Individuals Together, Brain Escape**

**Sunday, March 8, 02:00am, Daylight Savings Time begins – set clocks ahead 1 hour**

**Sunday, March 8, 10:15am, Service of Commissioning for Linda Morgan as Faith Community Nurse**

**Tuesday, March 24, 4:00pm-5:00pm, Canteen Run, Kitchen**

**Tuesday, March 24, 6:30pm, Church Life Board Meeting, Conference Room**

**Sunday, March 29, Immediately following worship, Special Congregational Meeting, Sanctuary**

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## Daylight Savings Time Begins Sunday, March 8 at 2:00am



Remember to turn your clocks forward 1 hour on Saturday before retiring for the evening. It is also a good time to check the batteries in your smoke detectors.

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## All Church Adult Mission Trip -- Save the Date!

August 1-8, all CUCC adults are invited to travel to Biloxi, Mississippi to spend a week working at the United Church of Christ's historic Back Bay Mission. Mission trips at Back Bay Mission are some of the best service-learning experiences in the United States. During our week on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, we'll have the chance to serve in three of the Mission's ministries, learn about the work Back Bay does on the Coast, explore how we can deepen the work we do in our community, and grow in both faith and fellowship. We are still determining cost but think the trip will be in the \$350 range with individuals paying for 4 meals out of pocket. (Financial assistance is available, see Pastor Leah.)

You can reserve a spot by signing up in the Parlor and paying a \$50 non-refundable registration fee. Place a check in the offering plate and mark "Back Bay mission trip" in the memo line. We can take up to 30 people on this trip. It will be a life changer. Save the date today!



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## Tenor and Alto Church Section Leader Positions Available

Community United Church of Christ (CUCC) is seeking one tenor and one alto section leader for rehearsals and services from September 2019-May 2020. Full details can be found on CUCC's website at <https://community-ucc.org/section-leader-openings>. Please contact Music Director Kathy Lee to schedule an audition or discuss the position further: K.Kew.Lee@gmail.com, 203-605-3830.

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## Worship Team Seeking Volunteers

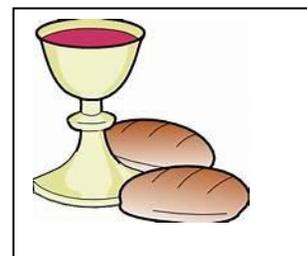
The Worship Team will be looking for lots of help during the Lenten season! As we are reading *Becoming Bread*, bread will clearly be an important symbol to contemplate. Toward that end, we are looking for:

Bakers from the congregation to provide three loaves of bread for Communion each of the following Sundays (March 1, 15, 22, 29, and April 5). We will also be looking for Communion helpers each of those dates.

Help before service April 5 (Passion Sunday) to change the sanctuary dressing.

Help April 9 (Maundy Thursday) for set up of stations (10:30 a.m.) and take down of stations (evening, exact time to be announced).

Help April 10 (Good Friday) to change the sanctuary dressing (8:30 p.m.)



We invite you to join us and are very grateful for your help and participation in worship. Please talk to, call, text or email Chase Skye at 217-778-0867 or [chaseskye7@gmail.com](mailto:chaseskye7@gmail.com) or Susan Pawlicki at 217-637-6106 or [spawlicki2@hotmail.com](mailto:spawlicki2@hotmail.com) if you can help. Thanks!

## Faith Community Nurse Commissioning

Community United Church of Christ, Champaign, and the Eastern Association of the Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ invite you to a Service of Commissioning for Linda Morgan as Faith Community Nurse at 10:15am on Sunday, March 8, 2020 at Community UCC in Champaign. A reception will follow. Linda has served as the Faith Community Nurse at CUCC since 2002 and we are thrilled to move into this new season of ministry together.



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## Pub Theology Update

Pub Theology is reading and discussing, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond. Amazon's review includes these words: In *Evicted*, Princeton sociologist and MacArthur "Genius" Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they each struggle to keep a roof over their heads. Hailed as "wrenching and revelatory" (*The Nation*), "vivid and unsettling" (*New York Review of Books*), *Evicted* transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of twenty-first-century America's most devastating problems.

We meet on Mondays at 7:15pm in the Parlor for about 75 minutes. Get a copy of the book and come join us. Any questions can be directed to Tom Ward.

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## "Individuals Together" – A Place for YOU to Belong

Individuals Together (IT), CUCC's newest social group, had 6 folks gather for a Jazz Happy Hour at the Blackbird Bar in February. Note that there were 2 "newbies" who joined us. We now have 11 members who attend.



IT is a group for persons who live alone, either part time or full time, no matter your age or circumstances. We have decided to take turns planning our monthly social events, so that everyone has a chance to plan their favorite activity. If you haven't joined us yet, we hope to see you soon. We KNOW there are more of you out there!

### Upcoming events include:

**March 7:** 2PM at Brainstorm Escapes at 61 E. University Ave. We will be testing our problem-solving skills in the Abstract Larceny Escape Room.

**April 18:** 3-6 PM in CUCC Fellowship Hall. We will be watching a movie titled "Return to Me". (Hint: It's National Donate Life Month).

If you have questions about the group or any of our activities, please contact Linda Morgan, Faith Community Nurse at 217.352.6375 or 217.649.3778.

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## Springside Dinners

The date for the Springside Dinners this year will be **Sunday, May 3rd**. The dinners provide a venue for getting to know members of the congregation in an informal setting. Please consider participating, the dinners are a lot of fun.

The Springside dinners follow a few simple rules. The dinners all take place on the same night, in this case May 3rd, and run from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. A certain number of congregation members offer to host a dinner in their home and to prepare a dinner entrée. Once the number of interested participants has been determined a committee assigns 5-8 participants to each host. The host then contacts the participants to let them know the location of the dinner and ask the participants to bring something to contribute to the dinner (appetizer, bread, salad, vegetable, dessert). Childcare is provided at the church from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. (including dinner, usually pizza). One last rule, *no church business is to be discussed*; the purpose of the dinners is to have time to learn more about individuals in our congregation and to have fun.

The dinners are open to all church members, visitors, college students and youth group members.

If you would like to participate, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office no later than **Sunday, April 19, 2020**. You can also email the required information listed below to Peg Wade at [peg.wade@comcast.net](mailto:peg.wade@comcast.net) There will also be forms available on one of the tables in the parlor during March. If you have questions about the dinners, please contact Peg at the email address above or at 369-0474.

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### Springside Dinner Participation Form

I am interested in attending the **Springside Dinner on May 3, 2020 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.** (If you want to attend the dinner with a partner, spouse or friend please only fill out one form and list both names.)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary or other restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Need transportation \_\_\_\_\_ Can provide transportation \_\_\_\_\_

Need Childcare (please list names and ages of children): \_\_\_\_\_

Am willing to host a dinner in my/our home: yes\_\_\_\_ (can host \_\_\_\_ number of guests, including hosts)

Other comments:

**Return Date for this Form: No Later than Sunday, April 19, 2020**

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## Get Your New CUCC Travel Mug!

Take your love of CUCC on the go with a shiny new "We're worth our words" logo travel mug for only \$10. You can pay by cash or check in the offering plate or directly to the office (please clearly mark that your payment is for the mug) and then take your new mug from the display in the old entryway across from the Parlor door.

Hungry? We're selling our "Recipes for Success" cookbooks for \$10 as well--you can pay in the same way.



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## Check out CCC'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 NB2016ucc. Or stop by the library in person and see what we have to offer!

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## Church Women United – 2020 Quadrennial Assembly – June 11-14, 2020

The 2020 Church Women United gathering is scheduled for June 11-14, 2020 and will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. Final registration is due May 20, 2020. Access registration forms at <https://www.churchwomenunited.net> (both online registration and printable registration forms are available from this link). This year's theme is *CWW 2020 Vision, A Proud Past with A Clear Future*.

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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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## **For your Information: How does the SECURE Act impact you?**

On January 1st, the SECURE Act became law. The law, which had bipartisan support, makes some changes to tax-deferred retirement accounts such as traditional IRAs and rollover IRAs.

### **What's NEW?**

- **Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) age increased to 72.**

Taxpayers are now given another 1½ years to defer withdrawals from certain retirement accounts. This means, you could potentially let your IRA grow even more before tapping into it.

- **You can contribute to a Traditional IRA as long as you work.**

Previously, the cutoff was set to 70½. SECURE removes this restriction, because folks are working and living longer.

- **The "stretch" IRA is over.**

The SECURE Act eliminates the option letting non-spouse IRA beneficiaries to “stretch” required minimum distributions from an inherited account out over their life expectancy. The new law requires all funds to be distributed to non-spouse beneficiaries within 10 years.

### **What's STILL THE SAME?**

- **Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) age is still 70½.**

Because a QCD is not taxable income, some individuals may save on taxes even if they are not itemizing.

- **It is easy to name a charity as a beneficiary.**

Naming Community United Church of Christ, or another charitable institution, as a beneficiary of a qualified retirement account is easy and does not require a lawyer. Simply fill out a beneficiary designation form and submit it to the financial institution. And finally, please let the Financial Secretary know you have done so.

The bill is long, and certainly more complex than can be explained in one article; the above information was shared as a summary from Chicago Theological Seminary. As always, you should reach out to your attorney or tax professional if you have questions about how the SECURE Act will impact you, your family, and your wishes.

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#### **Contact CUCC:**

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