First Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
— The Church of the Open Door —

2026 – 2027
Ministries & Activities Guide

No matter who you are or where you are
on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Online Version Notice

Because this is the online version of our Activity Guide, we have removed all phone numbers and email addresses associated with church members to help protect their privacy.

If you would like to be connected with someone from a specific group, please contact the First Congregational main office at 920.733.7393, Option 2, or pick up a printed copy of the Activity Guide at the church.

Thank you for your understanding.

Your First Congregational Staff.

Worship is at the center of our life together as a community of faith – and so much flows out of that sacred center. God has called our congregation into many ministries of service, education, fellowship, and community outreach as we seek to live out our faith and share our journey as followers of Jesus. There are many ways to love God and love your neighbor reflected in these pages. If you see something that resonates with your soul and ignites your spirit, reach out and get connected!

Congregational Life

Our vibrant and diverse congregational life ministries foster true community and nurture faith formation for members of all ages.

ALL-CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

We love to share meals and celebrate together!
Help is needed to prep, serve food, and clean up.
Contact the church office to join the fellowship team!

Rally Sunday (September 13, 2026)
Alternative Christmas Market (ACM) Breakfast (November 22, 2026)
Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast (March 21, 2027)
End-of-Year Picnic (Sunday before Memorial Day weekend)
Service Sunday (First Sunday in June)
Coffee Hour (Sundays following worship)

Service Sunday 2026

Music Ministries

Music is a cherished part of how we worship and celebrate God's gifts. Our music ministries offer many ways to get involved and serve the church and our community. With opportunities for church members of all ages to participate, we have vocal and instrumental programs and seasonal pageants and performances.

The Sanctuary Choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30PM. This choir is open to high school students through adults. **The Lawrence University Scholars** are section leaders in the Sanctuary Choir and sing as a separate chamber choir.

The Children's Choir rehearses on Sundays after worship from 10:30-11:15AM and is open to children in grades 2-6.

Youth Handbells rehearses on Wednesdays from 5:45-6:25PM and is for students in grades 6-12.

Church Family Handbells rehearses for a few weeks in the fall to prepare for a performance in worship in late November.

Summer Music Ministries include opportunities for soloists, instrumentalists, and an "All Call" Summer Choir.

Karma's Mailbox is a folk band comprised of church members who play regularly at church.

Additionally, we welcome instrumentalists to support major choral works, guest musicians in many genres, percussion and brass ensembles, Lawrence University Conservatory faculty, the Fox Valley Flute Choir, and benefit concerts.

For more information or to get involved, contact Nathan Birkholz, Director of Music Ministries, nbirkholz@uccappleton.org

920.851.8097

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries (CYF)

CYF ministries encourage children and youth to explore their developing faith through learning, worship, service, and fellowship—all in a warm and accepting environment. We seek to instill beliefs, offer meaningful forms of service, and create a progressive community for children and youth of all ages.

Childcare
PreK – 5th Grade Sunday School
6th – 12th Grade Youth Groups & Service Activities
9th or 10th Grade Confirmation
Vacation Bible School
Spring Work Weekend
UCC Summer Camps
Summer Youth & Young Adult Service Trip

Contact: Director of Children, Youth, & Family Ministries
Sarah Wilterdink swilterdink@uccappleton.org or 920.540.2576

Communion Preparation

Preparing the elements for Communion is a meaningful way to serve. On the first Sunday of the month, volunteers work in teams of 2-3 to prepare gluten-free bread and juice cups before worship and clean up after worship. Volunteers usually serve 2-4 times a year.

Contact: Barbara Schmidt

Communion Servers

In our church, members often serve one another communion; this is emblematic of our congregational ethos. A team of Communion Servers brings the elements from the chancel throughout the sanctuary. Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month and occasionally during other worship services, and servers sign up to help several times a year. Servers gather with the pastors before worship services to coordinate serving locations and to pray.

Contact: Sara Companik

Flower Committee

"Behold the lilies of the field." Flowers bring beauty and nature into our services to remind us of God's wonderful world.

Our flower ministry gives people an opportunity to donate ($35 per Sunday / $50 if one dozen roses requested) to the flower fund for their own special event, memory or just to show appreciation for our church community. Check for available dates in a binder in the church office.

The Flower Committee purchases the flowers and arranges them on Friday or Saturday.

Contact: Cindi Ritcey Fox

Library Committee

The mission of the FCUCC church library is to provide access to books that encourage education and growth on our spiritual journey, to challenge injustice, and to celebrate a diverse community.

The library is open on Sunday mornings to check out books as well as during office hours during the week. We are always looking for two or three more people to help with hosting the library table on Sunday mornings. It's a one-hour commitment every two or three months. If interested, please contact Mary Sullivan.

Contact: Mary Sullivan

ADULT EDUCATION & FAITH FORMATION

Theology Reading Group

Do you have questions about faith? Would you like a welcoming space to discuss them openly and respectfully with fellow adults? Join the Theology Reading Group, where members select books exploring themes of theology, faith, doubt, social issues, the intersections of church and culture, and similar topics. We engage with these books over several sessions, delving into a variety of topics. Recent discussions have included the historical Jesus, childlike faith, and Johnny Cash's gospel of solidarity with the poor and imprisoned. Join us at Holidays Pub & Grill on the first and third Thursdays from 12:00-1:30PM or connect with us on Zoom. We'd love to have you!

Contact: Steve Hirby

Fire and Faith

Join Pastor Nick September 2, 9, 16, & 23 from 6:30-7:45PM in the labyrinth for a campfire and faith-filled conversations. We will discuss "Spirituality 101" by learning about common misconceptions and important practices in Christian spirituality. Then, we will be "Discerning What God is Doing" through a brief study of the book of Acts. This is a great way to make new connections, enjoy brisk fall weather, and join in on the weeks you are available.

All are welcome to come early or stay late to walk the sacred path of our labyrinth. Our rain day location will be the chapel. Please bring: your own chair, a headlamp for reading, reading glasses if you need them, and an open heart. Dress for fall weather success! All other materials will be provided.

Rain location: the chapel

Chrysalis

First and third Tuesdays of the month, 1:00-2:30 PM
This women's spiritual formation group focuses on community building through book study and prayer. Participants reflect on their spiritual journeys and share their hopes, dreams, ideas, and fears to build bridges in their relationships with others and with God. The first book for Fall 2026 is *Fierce: Women of the Bible and Their Stories of Violence, Mercy, Bravery, Wisdom, Sex, and Salvation* by Alice Connor.

Contacts: Trish Brehm
Sheryl De Hart

Bible Study

Fall 2026 Bible Study with Pastor Katherine
October 14 – November 18
6:30-7:30PM at church; room TBD

Scripture is full of themes that are threaded throughout the text – images, metaphors, and concepts that bubble up repeatedly. For the six weeks of our no-prep fall Bible Study, we'll explore a few of these themes. (A couple are unexpected… bet you didn't see the Chaos Dragon coming!) Participants should bring a Bible and an open mind. No prior knowledge or experience with Bible Study is required and all are welcome!

October 14 - The Public Reading of Scripture
October 21 - The City
October 28 - Water of Life
November 4 - Heaven & Earth
November 11 - Chaos Dragon
November 18 - Justice

Adult Education

The Adult Education committee's purpose is to provide the congregation with thought-provoking opportunities for faith and spiritual growth. The committee meets once a month, either in person or via Zoom. Potential options for discussion include social justice and other current-day issues people are facing, and examination of how our lives and faith are impacted. The group organizes Bible and book study groups along with speakers throughout the year, so watch for programming announcements in the bulletin and email newsletter!

Contact: Mary Dees

Women's Fall Retreat

Enjoy time set apart for spiritual formation and fellowship of all those who identify as women at First Congregational UCC in the beautiful Northwoods. The retreat runs from Friday evening through Sunday morning.

2026 Retreat Dates: September 25 – 27
Theme: Journey of Prayer
Location: Moon Beach in St. Germaine

Contact: Pastor Katherine kwpershey@uccappleton.org
Visit www.ucci.org. to check out the UCC Camps in Wisconsin!

Outdoor Ministries with Pastor Nick

God is in creation, and we are part of God's creation. Just as the psalmist says, our Still Speaking God is still speaking throughout the marvelous creation that surrounds us. When Jesus wanted to commune with God, he went to the garden and to the mountaintops to pray. Spending time in creation helps us understand more concretely while knowing ourselves more thoroughly. We learn to love God and one another anew when we come into closer relationship with the Creator in Creation.

Outdoor Ministry at First Congregational has three main goals: to teach outdoor skills so individuals can recreate on their own, to instill a sense of stewardship with creation, and to have fun in fellowship with one another. Each experience, whether it's fishing, canoeing, or hiking, offers a devotional to achieve these goals. We will always have components of prayer, ecological education, and adventure!

Contact: Pastor Nick nhatch@uccappleton.org

Monthly Sunday Evening Prayer

Pastor Katherine will lead a monthly Evening Prayer group via Zoom. We will convene on Sunday evenings from 7:00-7:30PM, praying liturgies from Celtic and contemplative prayer traditions. We will also take time at the end of our gatherings to share joys and concerns. Participants must register to receive the Zoom link; see the Open Door and e-newsletters for details. Dates include September 20, October 25, November 22, December 20, January 17, February 21, March 21, April 18, and May 16.

Contacts: Pastor Katherine kwpershey@uccappleton.org

SUPPORT & CARE

Faith Ambassadors

Advance care planning is a way to help our loved ones make tough medical decisions for us when we are unable to make them ourselves. Faith Ambassadors are trained to help you fill out your "advanced planning" paperwork. They meet with small groups, families, and individuals on request.

Contacts: Ben Adams

Call-to-Connect

Call-to-Connect is a phone ministry. Originally formed especially for our over-80 members, it has now expanded to include anyone who would like to receive a regular phone call. For those who are unable to attend church in person, this ministry helps maintain the connection with our church family.

Contacts: Jane Boone
Pastor Katherine kwpershey@uccappleton.org

Mental Health Task Force

The Mental Health Task Force meets monthly. Our vision is to confront our fear of mental illness through faith, hope, and love to embrace all God's people. We hope to accomplish this by finding ways to make our church a more welcoming and safer place for people with mental health conditions.

We provide educational opportunities about mental illness and about self-care to maintain our mental wellness. We are actively involved with both the local NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) as well as Samaritan to support them in the work they are doing in the community.

Mental Health Task Force cont.

Because advocacy is important, we network with local and state organizations to remain aware of pending legislative issues regarding mental health.

Contact: Mary Sullivan

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

LGBTQ

Our LGBTQ ministry serves the First Congregational UCC community and beyond. In 2025 we hosted our first and hopefully annual ecumenical Pride in the Sanctuary event and hope to explore other opportunities for fellowship and education in the year ahead.

Contacts: Susan Houston
Pastor Katherine kwpershey@uccappleton.org

Outdoor Fun and Fellowship

We're O.F.F.! Outdoor Fun and Fellowship is an opportunity for us to meet and get to know one another at First Congregational UCC while enjoying the abundance of nature centers, parks, trails, and natural resources in the Fox Cities area. These outings usually take place within one hour of Appleton, and there are activities of various types and skill levels.

Contact: Nancy Brown-Koeller

Wild Women of First Congregational UCC

Looking for a night of fun and fellowship? Women of all ages are invited to join this informal gathering. Have a meal or beverage or both! Great way to meet some new folks in the church or gather with old friends. Wild Women's only agenda is to meet with other women who share your faith and want a night out for some fun. We meet at Stone Arch on the second Tuesday of each month. Please RSVP by email or text.

Contact: Sue O'Neill

Advent in Narnia: December 6, 3:00-5:00PM

Adult Education & CYF are teaming up to create an extra special Advent celebration this year. Consider yourself cordially invited to Advent in Narnia! This fall everyone is encouraged to read *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, a children's book by C.S. Lewis. Copies for CYF families will go home in early October. (If you don't have a chance to read the book, there is also a wonderful movie version.) Then, join us in Narnia — that is, the Fellowship Hall — on December 6 from 3:00-5:00PM.

We'll celebrate with crafts, treats, carols... maybe even a visit from Mr. Tumnus and the White Witch. There will be many opportunities to help with the festivities, so keep an eye out this fall. Members and friends will have an opportunity to purchase copies of Advent in Narnia, a devotional for adults by Heidi Haverkamp.

Outreach Ministries

Our mission and service teams get involved in issues such as education, poverty, hunger, shelter, healthcare, equality, transportation and more at the local, national, and international levels.

LOCAL MISSION PARTNERS

We engage with the local community in a variety of ways through non-profit organizations and projects.

ESTHER: Empowerment, Solidarity, Truth, Hope, Equality, Reform

ESTHER is an interfaith, nonprofit, grassroots organization that builds community and works on justice issues in the Fox Valley and Oshkosh. Task forces are action groups that plan and implement activities and events to evoke positive changes in our community. ESTHER's offices are now located in our CYF building!

- **Immigration**: Addressing issues related to immigration, specifically those affecting the Latino/a population in the Valley
- **Mental Health**: Discussing issues and working for change related to mental health services, the criminal legal system, child welfare, and related topics.
- **Transformational Justice**: Striving to reduce the number of people in county jails and state prisons.
- **Equity and Racial Justice:** Working for equity for gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.
- **Housing Task Force:** Addressing issues of social injustice that impact housing insecurity.

Visit esther-foxvalley.org
Contact: Karen Pfefferle

Community Partnership

The Community Partnership Task Force focuses on increasing community use of our buildings and grounds, and increasing our neighborhood presence, involvement, and service. For example, we have held two Repair Fairs and plan for another in 2027. Repair Fairs encourage a "repair, re-use, keep it out of the landfill" mindset. If you have mending, knives that need sharpening, computer questions, small appliances on the blink, wobbly furniture, or need bike repairs, this is a day to bring them in (and invite your neighbors). To hold these, we need volunteers with fix-it skills. The more fixers we have, the more we can repair. Please contact Chris Brittnacher with questions or to volunteer.

Economic Justice Work Group

This group, formed in the fall of 2023, is led by Dr. Montgomery (Monk) Elmer and Jo Muehl. Their initial and current focus is affordable housing in the Fox Cities.

Why pursue this initiative?

- To provide opportunities for deeper understanding/ exploration of issues and a framework for using our voice to achieve change.
- To create an avenue for church members to respond to God's calling by addressing root causes and advocating for removing systemic barriers.

Contacts: Monk Elmer
Jo Muehl

Habitat For Humanity

Habitat aims to eliminate substandard housing for families by working in partnership to build simple, affordable homes. There is a Faith Build in September where representatives from diverse faith communities work together in solidarity with a family in constructing their home. First Congregational UCC participates by obtaining work crews and providing financial support. Women or men can perform all construction duties. Recruiting for the Faith Build takes place in August or early September.

Website: www.foxcitieshabitat.org
Contact: Tim DeHart

Good Neighbor Teams Through World Relief

World Relief is a global Christian humanitarian organization that partners with local churches and community leaders in the U.S. and abroad to bring hope, healing, and transformation to the most vulnerable. In Appleton, small groups of church members, called a Good Neighbor Team, befriend a newly arriving refugee family for six to 12 months.

Contact: Julie Gamm

E2F (Empty to Full) Pans

Since its founding in 2011, we have provided over 2,700 pans or 22,000 meals of ready-to-cook food, mainly going to Pillars, but also to Apricity and COTS.

Several times a year, on distribution Sunday, volunteers pick up an easy to prepare recipe, grocery list and empty pan. They prepare the recipe and return the full pan the following collection Sunday.

Contact: Cindi MacSwain

LEAVEN

LEAVEN is a local non-profit that empowers people in crisis by providing financial assistance, resource coordination, and case management to guide them toward stability. Since 1987, LEAVEN has served residents of Outagamie County, Calumet County, and northeastern Winnebago County with financial assistance meeting basic needs such as rent, mortgage, utilities, car repairs, childcare, gas vouchers, and bus tickets. LEAVEN services are provided by a small staff and over 100 active volunteers. First Congregational has been a loyal and consistent LEAVEN community partner since 1987 — providing financial support, client referrals, and volunteers (many members and friends of the church presently serve or have served as LEAVEN volunteers.

Website: www.leavenfoxcities.org
Contact: Pat Hirby

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Monthly meetings are held in Common Grounds on the second Monday of the month, 1:00–2:30PM & 6:30–8:00PM.
The Prayer Shawl Ministry group uses the gifts of knitting and crocheting to embrace others with care and to reach out to the wider community. Recently, the group worked with Samaritan Counseling Center and the Center for Grieving Children to provide shawls to children and adults in need of support. Join us to experience God's loving presence at the monthly meetings and build fellowship with each other. Over 1,800 shawls have been given since the program began.

Contact: Carolyn Frederick

Pillars

Pillars provides shelter, support, and solutions to address the housing needs in our community. The organization works to meet the unique needs of specific populations, including families fleeing domestic violence, young adults with mental health challenges, and veterans and others experiencing chronic homelessness.

Each year, Pillars helps hundreds of individuals find stability through its two shelters, a resource center, stable housing programs, and an independent living program for youth facing mental health challenges. It provides over 150 safe, affordable homes, rental units and single residency housing in the Fox Valley, including 45,000+ nights of shelter each year.

First Congregational prepares and serves meals at the Pillars Adult Shelter on the first Thursday of every month. We also provide meals at Pillars Family Shelter the first Sunday of every month. It is a fulfilling and heartwarming experience.

Website: pillarsinc.org
Contact: Jackie Peters

Grow-A-Row

Our Grow-A-Row community garden project provides fresh produce for the St. Joseph's Food Pantry. This program provides locally grown produce directly to food pantry clients, usually the same day it is donated! St. Joe's also shares its food with many other programs, such as the Boys & Girls Club and Loaves & Fishes.

Produce that is grown includes herbs, kale, carrots, peppers, cabbage, squash, beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, Swiss chard, garlic and zucchini.

Volunteers are needed to plant one day in May. During the growing season volunteers are needed to weed, harvest, and deliver produce to the food pantry campus. We take down the garden in October and prep for Winter. If interested in harvesting, simply show up on Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday mornings from 9:00-11:00AM.

Contact: Julie Gamm

From the Lakota Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to the Kerio Valley of Kenya, we support missions that bring opportunity and empowerment to people of all cultures. We show our support through local action, service trips, and financial contributions.

Back Bay Mission

Back Bay Mission is a community ministry of the United Church of Christ, located in Biloxi, MS. It serves the Mississippi Gulf Coast and wider church community by faithful witness for social justice and compassionate service to the poor and marginalized.

First Congregational UCC has a long history of active participation in the Mission. We began taking mission trips to Biloxi on a consistent basis in 1992, and in 2004 we were awarded the Congregational Stewardship Award from The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries for our outstanding support of the mission.

We give ongoing financial support and make an annual mission trip to Biloxi to volunteer at the day shelter for those experiencing homelessness and the food pantry for the food insecure. We restore or build homes to improve the affordable housing situation for those vulnerable to home loss.

2027 Service Trip Dates: April 4 - April 11 (Sign up by February 1)

Website: www.thebackbaymission.org
Contact: Ken Jahnke

Kenya Partnership

Since 1999, First Congregational UCC has experienced a rich and multi-faceted relationship with the African Inland Churches in Kenya, a denomination deeply engaged in social service. Our church has worked with the Kerio Valley District Church Council to improve quality of life in the western region of Kenya. Our UCC Team collaborates with a 7-member team in Kenya. Both teams work together in partnership to educate children through scholarships to go to high school.

Members of First Congregational travel to Kenya regularly, visiting leaders and friends in the area and visiting the Kenya students we support with scholarships. First Congregational also hosts visitors from Kenya to our area whenever the opportunity arises.

Current projects and ministries of our partnership with churches in the Kerio Valley of Kenya include the following:

- Student Scholarship Program for Secondary Students. We are currently providing over 130 scholarships to students from the Kerio Valley to attend High School.
- Soap, sanitary supplies, and dental support for the students who receive scholarships.
- Hosting our Kenyan partners when they visit the U.S.
- Kathryn Kuhn Scholarship for female theological students in Kenya.

Contact: Aimee Eubank

We'd love to have you join our team and possibly even consider traveling to Kenya with us!

Henderson Settlement

We humbly believe that God is blessing the work and outreach of the Henderson Settlement to assist the people in this area of Appalachia. Our focus is on helping to make a long term and sustainable difference in the lives of those with whom we work, to encourage and help them and their families grow spiritually, economically, and socially. There are community and campus projects for volunteers.

Website: hendersonsettlement.com
Contact: LouAnn Graf

JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Alternative Christmas Market

The Alternative Christmas Market provides the congregation and the community with the opportunity to purchase "alternative" gifts (i.e., charitable donations) for the special people on their Christmas lists. Each year, our festive market day raises funds for the church's local, national, and international mission partners. The Market brings fellowship, breakfast, music, and bakery as well.

Date: November 22, 2026
Contacts: JoAnn Shropshire

Turtle Trek

The Turtle Trek began in 2020 and is now an annual event that helps our partners at Re-Member purchase winter fuel for the residents of the Pine Ridge reservation. The Trek is 100 miles over 10 weeks, with walkers raising awareness and inviting sponsorships to help support this vital support.

Dates: August 23 – November 1, 2026
Contact: Eilene Hoft-March

Indigenous Peoples' Allies Committee (IPAC)

Our work toward Indigenous allyship includes discussions, gatherings, education, and work groups. IPAC supports FCUCC through a commitment to study and to provide engaging experiences to learn and preserve the history, cultures, and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples—particularly those nations who lived in this part of Wisconsin.

We also seek out and promote experiences with our Indigenous neighbors that celebrate their presence in the Fox Valley. IPAC meets on the first Monday of most months.

Contact: Barb Weyenberg

College of Menominee Nation (CMN)

Our church is located on the traditional homelands of the Menominee and Ho Chunk national. To honor their stewardship of this land, its water, wildlife, and ecosystems, we support scholarships at CMN for Tribal members and descendants. We also initiate CMN-SI students' engagement with University of Wisconsin School of Limnology Trout Lake Station research.

CMN is one of two tribal colleges in Wisconsin. CMN's flagship campus is in the community of Keshena, on the Menominee Reservation, land that is a portion of the ancient homeland of Menominee People. A satellite CMN campus is in Green Bay. CMN welcomes a diverse student body that includes Native and non-Native students.

College of Menominee Nation Cont.

Degree programs and technical certifications, sustainability research, and student activities are committed to addressing contemporary problems through methodologies that combine modern science and knowledge from the ancients.

CMN's Sustainability Institute (CMN-SI) is committed to the development of sustainable concepts and practices.

Website: www.menominee.edu
Contact: Sandy Gillum

Re-Member, Pine Ridge Reservation

Re-Member is an independent, non-profit organization that serves the Oglala Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation, SD. The organization seeks to "improve the quality of reservation life through relationships, shared resources and volunteer services. Through site visits and cultural immersion, Re-Member continues to develop a growing circle of advocates standing in solidarity with the Indian people of Pine Ridge."

Most years since 2012, a small intergenerational group from First Congregational UCC has traveled to Pine Ridge to work on outreach projects across the reservation. We also have the chance to learn from Tribal representatives and elders the history, culture, and current issues of these people of the plains. If interested in participating, please contact Eilene Hoft-March by March 1, 2027, so that we can set dates for an August or September trip.

Website: www.re-member.org
Contact: Eilene Hoft-March

The church is led by members of the church and the staff who together set the direction of the church and its programs. The church officers, ministry team co-councilors, and chairs of standing committees also serve on the Church Council, the governing board of the Church.

Church Officers

Officers of the church are voted in by the congregation. The moderator serves as head of the Church Council.

Moderator, Cindi Ritcey Fox
Vice Moderator, Mike Radtke
Secretary, Bill Lenz
Treasurer, Jerry Dees
Vice Treasurer, Susan Houston

Worship and Music Team

Together with staff, this team assists in planning Sunday services and coordinates the many volunteers who serve on Sundays. Would you like to serve Communion, join an usher team, read scripture, sing in the choir, greet visitors, arrange flowers for the Sanctuary, or run the AV equipment?

Contacts: Rick Behm
Melissa Fields

Congregational Life and Fellowship Team

Together with staff, this team plans and carries out fellowship events for the congregation, coordinates spiritual care programs, and gives input on other ministries for adults.

Contact: Kevin Clavers

Outreach Ministries

The Outreach Ministries team works to coordinate the church's mission programs, projects, donations, and adult service trips. It is one way we can answer the call to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Members of Outreach Ministry are liaisons with our mission partners which are not-for-profit organizations involved in issues such as education, poverty, hunger, shelter, healthcare, equality and more, at local, national, and international levels. As a team we help support Service Sunday, Rally Sunday, and the Alternative Christmas Market. We welcome new members at any time and are especially looking for those who are interested in increasing neighborhood connections.

Contact: LouAnn Graf
Kim Hanson

Facilities Team

The Facilities Team's purpose is to maintain the grounds, buildings, and all equipment (except for office equipment, computer systems, and media/sound systems or other technology items). They analyze possible future needs and/or improvements to existing property and make recommendations to the church council as appropriate.

Contacts: Jack Vanden Boogard
Art Hage

Children's Ministry Team and Youth Ministry Team

These teams are dedicated to developing a vision for our ministries for children and youth. The teams meet about once a month during the program year to serve as sounding boards for staff, shape curriculum, develop volunteer roles and plan events. If you want to make a difference in the faith journeys of our young members, one of these teams is for you.

Contacts:
Children's Ministry Team, Shari Mitchell
Youth Ministry Team, Emma Slowinski
Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries,
Sarah Wilterdink swilterdink@uccappleton.org

Stewardship Team

This team encourages generous giving of time, talent, and treasure on behalf of the congregation, and it organizes and executes the annual stewardship campaign. If you are interested in the financial health of the church, consider joining this team.

Contacts: Chip Gabbey
Bill Ritcey
Pastor Katherine kwpershey@uccappleton.org

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee looks after the financial health of the church. Its subcommittees include the Gifts, Memorials and Grants (GMG) Committee and the Audit Committee.

GMG reviews grant requests for projects not funded by the church's operating budget and recommends funding from monies available in memorial funds, special gifts and bequests.

Contacts: Treasurer, Jerry Dees
GMG Representative, Sue Detienne

Human Resources Committee

The HR Committee serves as a resource for staff in matters relating to employment at the church and helps to ensure that policies, procedures, and processes are in place to support church staff.

Contact: Chris Danz

Safety Committee

To create and maintain a safe and secure environment so that all who enter the buildings and grounds of First Congregational UCC Church Appleton may worship, work, and seek God's presence with stress-free creativity, curiosity and courage as we follow Jesus Christ into the world to love and serve our neighbors.

Contact: Rick Behm

Technology Committee

This committee provides advice and technical expertise to staff and ministry teams about technology in mission and ministry. The committee advises and recommends support for church audiovisual, software, hardware, and policy needs. Do you like audiovisual, computers, servers, networks, web hosting, and more? This team may be a good fit for you.

Contacts: Ken Jahnke
Dale Hanson

Office Volunteers

Office volunteers assemble church bulletins, prepare mailings, and do other special projects. If you enjoy office work and have a few hours to volunteer, this team may be for you.

Contact: Trish Brehm

Usher Teams

Our Usher Teams are the embodiment of hospitality. They are welcoming and make sure that the church is safe on Sunday mornings. They assist people who may need accommodation as well as help people find a seat.

Contacts: Mark Shropshire
Rick Behm

Co-Pastor, Pastor Katherine Willis Pershey
Co-Pastor, Pastor Nick Hatch
Director of Operational Ministries, Vince Salvia

Administrative Assistant, Sheila VanRooy
Associate Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries, Nick Aliota
AV & Technology Coordinator, Matt Feuerhelm
Bookkeeper, Siri Witt
Custodial Assistant, Pat Metoxen
Custodial Assistant, Tom Ott
Custodial Supervisor, Bart Forseth
Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries, Sarah Wilterdink
Director of Music Ministries, Nathan Birkholz
Office Manager, Zaina Gonzales
Weekend Custodial Assistant, Mark Nickles

Land Covenant

The land now occupied by Appleton, Wisconsin and surrounding areas - including the current site of this church - was the home, hunting, gathering, and farming land of the First Peoples of this territory: the Ho Chunk Nation and the Menominee Nation. Other tribes were forcibly re-located to this region by the actions of colonialism. Despite centuries of reprehensible treatment, the peoples of these sovereign nations are robust and enduring among us.

We are truly saddened by the genocide of their ancestors, the seizure of their lands, and the repression of their cultures and languages. We acknowledge that we benefit from the economic and social legacy left by settler colonialism.

We are grateful that many members of these original Nations have honorably served and defended the United States. We strive to honor their cultures and their insightful stewardship of this land and all creatures on it, recognizing our common interest in protecting its air, water, soils, and web of life for all future generations.

We commit ourselves through study and immersion experiences to learn the history and cultures of these peoples and their traditional knowledge.

First Congregational
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

724 E. South River Street | Appleton, WI 54915
920.733.7393 | uccappleton.org | info@uccappleton.org
Office hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00AM–3:00PM