

## August 2017 Pastor's Page

As August approaches, I can hardly believe that 2/3 of Minnesota's unofficial days of summer (between Memorial Day and Labor Day) have already come and gone. I hope that you and your family have been enjoying the "dog days of summer" during July with some fun activities like boating, swimming, camping, cycling, or just lounging in the shade. I'm sure you've still got plenty of those activities planned in August, so I pray that the weather cooperates and that you play safely.

Even as we hope for a few more unstructured days or weekends to come, plans are beginning for the inevitable return to school schedules and Sunday School opportunities. If you have children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews—young or old—please be sure that our Christian Education Coordinator, Cheryl Ashland, is aware so that we can plan for their attendance in the fall. Look for more information about Sunday School and our August session of Vacation Bible School elsewhere in this newsletter!

If summer finds you with some extra moments available for reading, I challenge you to read ahead on our Bible passages for Sundays in August. Our epistle readings will come from Paul's Letter to the Romans, chapters 14-16, while our gospel readings will also cover chapters 14-16 in Matthew. The first two gospel readings highlight miraculous events from Jesus' ministry, while the other two (as well as the first Sunday in September) recall great declarations made about Jesus in addition to his own teachings about the importance of his mission with us on earth.

I hope that you enjoyed our shared outdoor service at Sylvania Park with St. John's UCC, as I don't think we could have ordered better weather to be under the trees enjoying God's wonderful creation. We will have another opportunity to share in UCC worship with our neighbors on August 13, when St. John's hosts a combined service (also at 9:30) while I am away for my second week of National Guard Annual Training, this time in Wisconsin. A third opportunity for shared worship, hosted by First Congregational UCC, is in the works to provide pulpit supply for Pastor Abel when he gets an opportunity for a vacation yet this summer. It is a blessing to both UCC congregations to have each other to lean on if either pastor needs to be absent!

As you enjoy all the sunshine, warmth, community festivals, and county fairs that August has to offer, I pray that you look for God at work around you. The breezes, the lapping waves, the singing birds, and even the rain remind us that God is still creating and blessing the world. Listen closely, pause to be still, and know the peace that Christ offers in your life today, tomorrow, and always.

Yours through the communion of the Holy Spirit,

*Rev. Cory Germain*