

The Reverend's Ruminations

As August approaches and my schedule continues to be packed, I can hardly believe that 2/3 of Minnesota's unofficial days of summer have already come and gone. I was certainly hoping to spend a little more time relaxing near a campfire or paddling casually around our area lakes in a kayak!?! I guess there's still time for some of those activities, but if you're like me, when the calendar turns over it often incites a bit of panic in our hearts. I hope that you and your family have been enjoying your summer days during June and July by taking part in your favorite outdoor activities, whether those include the ball diamonds, boating, swimming, camping, playing outside, or just lounging in the shade with a cool drink. Many of us still have plenty of those activities planned in August, including our intrepid "First Congo UCC Adventure Crew," so I pray that the weather cooperates and that you play safely at whatever brings you summertime enjoyment.

Our Christian Education Board, like many others, has taken a brief summer vacation, but will be working hard in August to prepare for the return of Sunday School with opportunities for "children of all ages" (as the circus barkers used to say). Yes, that means EVERYONE is invited to be a part of some form of Christian education at First Congregational UCC. Being a Christian doesn't just mean showing up regularly for worship services; it's a life-long learning and growth process that can be both challenging and fun! If you have children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews, or even neighbors— young or old—who will be participating this year please be sure that our Christian Education Board is aware so that they can plan for attendance in the fall. Volunteers are always needed too—including part-time teachers—so please consider getting involved wherever your gifts might allow. Our adult study class will pick up in September just like the children's classes, so come check it out too!

If the remaining summer finds you with some extra moments available for reading, I challenge you to read ahead on our Bible passages for Sundays in August and beyond. Our epistle readings will cover portions of Colossians, Hebrews, and both 1 & 2 Timothy over the next three months, while our gospel readings will be from Luke's 12th chapter during most of August and then continue on to reach his 23rd chapter by the beginning of Advent (way down the road in December). I suppose by then we'll be lamenting the cold and the increasing pace leading toward the holidays!?!

It has been a blessing for both UCC congregations in Fairmont to have each other to lean on this summer as each pastor squeezes in a little time off. On June 30 we welcomed our brothers and sisters from St. John's UCC, then only two weeks later they hosted many of you while I began pedaling in the Habitat 500; and then two weeks after that we joined together for our annual "Worship in the Park!" I hope perhaps through these three services you have had a chance to meet a fellow UCC-er in the Fairmont area and realize how many similarities we share.

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 in the world around you. The breezes, lapping waves, singing birds, and even the rain remind us that God is still creating and blessing our world. Listen closely, pause to be still, and know the peace that Christ offers in your life today, tomorrow, and always.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Cory Germain

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