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Hope

United Church of Christ

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Hello Friends!

With a grateful heart I am back in my office and slowly getting back into my work routine. The past four weeks were relaxing and renewing for my mind, body, and spirit and I thank you for that. August is filling up with good things.

We will begin our new worship series "That's What Friends Are For" on Sunday, August 3. This six week series will explore stories of friendship found in our scriptures and discover how these ancient relationships still are able to connect with our lives and relationships today. Most importantly, we will be invited to discover and connect with how these stories reveal God's character, grace, and how God invites us into mission together. Through scripture, prayer, music and discussion we will explore how friendships shaped by love, loyalty, truth, and even sacrifice point us to the Heart of God. This series seeks to remind us all that God is revealed in and through the most surprising people, places, and circumstances in which we find ourselves. Together we will explore how we are called to live out the Heart of God in community and for community.

Full disclosure about the inspiration for this worship series: A few months ago, Bob mentioned that it would be great to use *You've Got a Friend in Me* by Randy Newman in church sometime. "You know, you could do a series about friendship and use that and so many other great songs." How could I resist? There are so many wonderful stories on this theme it was hard to narrow it down but together we will explore stories of the friendships of King David and Jonathan, Moses and Aaron, Levitical instructions about caring for neighbors, Jesus and the disciples, Paul and his friends in Ephesus, and the stories of how friendships build community that strengthens mission. All of this AND we'll have great music throughout the series. Since God finds surprising ways and surprising people to make Godself known to us, we thought it would be fun to use a few surprising songs to mix into our hymn selections throughout this series. We hope you will find yourself smiling as you sing along! Also, spoiler alert: there will be a dance party during worship on the final day of this series on September 7. Remember to wear your boogie shoes that Sunday!

Thank you all for being such amazing friends and beloved community! God's Spirit is busy at Hope UCC!

With love for you all,
Pastor Santina

**THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR:
DISCOVERING THE SACRED THROUGH FRIENDSHIPS**
A NEW WORSHIP SERIES AT HOPE UCC
AUGUST 3 - SEPTEMBER 14

Together we will explore stories in our sacred texts in which friendships reveal God's character and grace, and how God invites us into mission together. Through scripture, prayer, music and discussion we will explore how friendships shaped by love, loyalty, truth, and even sacrifice point us to the Heart of God.



World Relief Quad Cities Guest Speaker and Information Session Sunday, August 10

We had a pause in our plans to accompany a newly arrived refugee family this spring, however all is back on track now! We will welcome David Hodge, Director of Church Mobilization for World Relief QC, to worship on Sunday August 10. He will speak about what is happening in our community and following worship will provide us with the information we need to finally begin this process. He will have the information about registering, background checks, and processes for our group to begin the accompaniment process. If you are planning to help with this ministry, please plan to attend this Sunday. We are grateful for your patience in getting this ministry started.



Lectionary Bible Study Returns September 9 at 10:00 A.M.

Join us for our weekly discussion and study of the scripture that will be the focus of Sunday worship. We meet weekly in the Conference Room on Tuesdays at 10:00 A.M. for this time of learning, exploration, laughter, and fellowship. Our meeting schedule is every Tuesday at 10 A.M. EXCEPT on the 3rd week of the month (no class the 3rd week!). This is not a 'formal' Bible study. This is a very friendly group where we can ask honest questions about scripture. Sometimes we leave with more questions than when we started, so if that sounds about right to you, please consider joining us!

Please see Pastor Santina if you have any questions or would like more information about the Lectionary study group.

THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR: DISCOVERING THE SACRED THROUGH FRIENDSHIPS



WEEKLY THEMES AND SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS

August 3: The Gift of Friendship & Companionship: Understanding Covenant Loyalty and Emotional Support through Friends - The Story of David and Jonathan's Friendship
1 Samuel 18:1-5, 20:12-17, 41-42

August 10: Widen the Circle of Friendship: Caring for New Friends and Old Friends - The stories of living into God's instructions to care for our neighbors
Guest preacher: David Hodges, Director of Church Mobilization, World Relief Quad Cities
Leviticus 19:9-18, 33-34 and Luke 10:25-37

August 17: Overcoming Our Fears through Friendship - The Story of Moses and Aaron's Friendship
Exodus 4:10-17, 27-31

August 24: Friendship that Transforms – Jesus's Friendship Creates Grace-Filled Community- The Stories of Jesus's friendship with Zaccheus and the Disciples
Luke 19:1-10 and John 15:1-15

August 31: Friendship Creates Strong Mission - The stories of Jesus and his Disciples and Paul and the Ephesians
Ephesians 4:1-7, 14-16 and John 13:3-5, 12-17, 31-35

September 7: Friends Building the Kingdom of God - Together! The story of the Christian Church growing in community and mission
Acts 2:37-47

Hello Hope UCC!!!

What an inspiring and enriching experience it was to attend "Into the Deep" at General Synod 35 in Kansas City, MO! I cherished the opportunity to connect with individuals from across our nation, from engaging in plenary sessions to sharing meals with new friends.

A particular highlight was meeting Rev. Shari Prestemon, our newly elected Associate General Minister & Co-Executive of Global Ministries. Her extensive resume, is as long as the state of Illinois, is matched only by her profound servant heart, and I was deeply impressed by her ability to empower us all. I also had the distinct pleasure of meeting Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, the General Minister and President and Chief Executive Officer of the United Church of Christ. As the first woman and the first woman of African descent to lead the denomination, Rev. Thompson exemplifies humble leadership and a beautiful spiritual soul. I eagerly anticipate further opportunities to connect with these two remarkable women.

The Illinois Conference proudly contributed 55 of the approximately 650 delegates. We participated in votes on 11 resolutions, with all but one passing. You can view all resolutions [HERE](#). Two resolutions generated significant debate:

Proposed Revision to the UCC Constitution and Bylaws: This resolution, which would have changed the election of Associate General Ministers to an appointment by the General Minister and President, did not pass, falling short of the required two-thirds vote. The language "appointed" proved contentious for many delegates. I spoke against it, advocating for a "Call Committee" and synod vote process. I encourage you to read the full story and the proposed resolution [HERE](#) and share your thoughts.

STAR (Small Town And Rural Churches) Resolution: General Synod adopted a resolution recognizing the Small Town and Rural (STAR) Coalition of the United Church of Christ as a Self-Created Group. This resolution also prompted extensive debate. Some delegates voiced concerns about a potential "hidden agenda" to shift the denomination towards a more moderate stance, away from its progressive leanings. What are your reflections on this? You can find a recap of the discussion [HERE](#).

This trip was truly wonderful, and I am deeply grateful to Hope UCC in supporting my faith journey toward ordination.

Thank you sincerely for your support!

Lindsey Svetlick

Links from article:

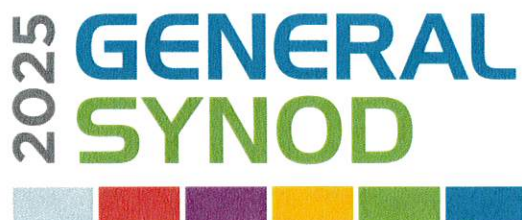
<https://www.ucc.org/shari-prestemon-elected-to-serve-full-term-as-associate-general-minister-co-executive-of-global-ministries/>

<https://www.ucc.org/people/karen-georgia-thompson-officer/>

<https://generalsynod.org/resolutions>

<https://generalsynod.org/news-listings/small-town-and-rural-coalition-resolution-adopted-by-general-synod>

<https://generalsynod.org/news-listings/raising-alarm-about-a-consolidation-of-power-delegates-reject-by-law-change>





That's What Friends Are For:

Learning about the Sacred Traditions of Our Friends with Friends!

Field Trip to Putnam Museum's Sacred Places Exhibit, Sunday August 24 1:30-4:00 P.M.

Join us as we gather with our friends from our Riverside Interfaith Group to visit the Sacred Places exhibition and with one another at the Putnam Museum. We will gather at the museum (carpooling from Hope UCC is available) for interfaith engagement as we view the exhibit. We will then gather with our friends from the other faith communities for conversation and discussion about the exhibit at a small reception. Admission to the museum is \$5 for this event with tickets purchased at the museum ticket counter that afternoon. (Please let Pastor Santina know if financial assistance is needed.) This is a fantastic and informative exhibit and viewing and discussing it with old and new friends from other faith traditions will be a memorable and fun experience. This is an all ages event- our youngest and oldest friends will discover something new and interesting in this adventure. Please let Pastor Santina know if you will be joining us for this field trip!

All Church Service Trip to Feed My Starving Children: Saturday September 20!

We will be going on our annual all ages, all church service trip to pack bags for Feed My Starving Children in Aurora, IL on Saturday, September 20th. We will go to Harner's Bakery and Restaurant to eat before we go to pack the bags. We need you all for this great time together - there is something for everyone to do! Please consider joining us and bringing a friend. See Barb Hawotte to volunteer or get more information. Thank You.



August Birthdays

As always, if you note any inaccuracies or missing birthdays of any friends or members, please do not hesitate to let the office know, and we will correct and update our information in an expeditious, speedy, quick, prompt, swift, and efficient manner.

Larry Ohrberg August 05
Karie Bowman August 08
Ruth Pisman August 08
Josh Powell August 09
James Grafton August 16
Debbie Rottman August 18
Leatha Boyer August 24



Hope UCC Men's Breakfast

*Join us for our monthly
First Saturday gathering at
Deerfield Restaurant in Silvis.
Saturday, August 2
8:00 a.m.*

Hope UCC T-Shirts Available! Get yours in Fellowship Hall \$20 each

Many sizes available but if you don't see yours, please let Lindsey know and we'll get it ordered. Wear your shirt and let everyone know you're part of this wonderful faith community!

August

2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27 10am Worship Service with Communion	28	29	30	31	01	02 Sam-Men's Fellowship at Deerfield Family Restaurant-Silvis
03 10am Worship Service with Communion	04	05 Birthday: Larry Ohlberg	06	07	08 Birthday: Katie Bowman Birthday: Ruth Pisman	09 Birthday: Josh Powell
10 10am Worship Service World Relief Speaker	11	12 12:30pm-Trustees	13	14	15	16 Birthday: James Grafton
17 10am Worship Service	18 Birthday: Debbie Rottman	19	20	21	22	23
24 10am Worship Service 1:30pm Trip to Putnam Museum Birthday: Leatha Boyer	25 2:30pm-Book Club	26	27 11:30am-Visitation Committee 5pm-Church Council	28	29	30
31 10am Worship Service	01	Notes:				