



United Church of Christ

# The Church Messenger

June 2026

Pastor Karen  
Griswold



## Encouraging Word

### James 1:19

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,”



## THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD



Shepherd of my soul,  
You are with me right now.  
Everything I truly need in You.

When my heart feels unsettled,  
Lead me beside still waters.  
When my thoughts start to race,  
restore my soul.

Quiet the urge to seek peace  
in places that cannot give it.  
Help me not to chase what unsettles me,  
but to rest in what is sure.

Even when I feel uncertain or overlooked,  
You see me.  
You guide me.  
You hold me steady.

Today, I choose to trust Your care  
more than my feelings,  
more than my fears.

You are my Shepherd -  
I lack nothing,



## Serving for June

### Nursery

7  
14  
21 Julie & Olivia Wilcox  
28

### Young People's Moment

7 Nancy Hamilton  
14 Penny Higgins  
21 Carole Wilson  
28

### Junior Church

7 Scott Griswold  
14 Julie & Olivia Wilcox  
21  
28

### Greeting & Announcements

Darry Plank  
**Videotaping**  
Jim Hoffman / Bec Smith

### Sound

7 Ray Etgen  
14 Elisa Lash  
21 Dennis McIntosh  
28 Ed Armentrout



**We all serve with our presence in  
worship. Please join us this Sunday.**



**JUNE**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

- June 2 Tuesday Mornings - prayer
- June 7 8:30 am Deacons Meeting  
Sacrament of Holy Communion  
Finance Team Meeting
- June 8 6:00 pm Pastoral Relations Team meeting
- June 9 9:30 am Tuesday Mornings - prayer  
6:00 pm Church Board Meeting
- June 3 6:00 pm Walk and Talk
- June 10 4:00 pm Serving Our Daily Bread  
6:00 pm Walk and Talk
- June 14 - 18 Mission Trip
- June 16 9:30 am Tuesday Mornings - prayer
- June 17 6:00 pm Walk and Talk
- June 19 July/August Newsletter deadline
- June 21 Education Team Meeting
- June 23 9:30 am Tuesday Mornings  
Newsletter deadline
- June 28 Ruth Hopkins Regional Minister Visits  
Worship & Property Team Meetings  
after Church
- June 30 9:30 am Tuesday Mornings



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 4 Karen Griswold    | 23 Claire Harr     |
| 8 Renay Fullerton   | 23 Sami Van Houten |
| 9 Darin Leach       | 23 Betty Crowe     |
| 12 Gabriel Nelson   | 23 Kolbie Swartz   |
| 16 Rick Harr        | 24 Rob Stephan     |
| 16 Jim Hickman      | 25 Jerry Dillon    |
| 18 Delaney Swartz   | 26 Wade Kauffman   |
| 20 Joann O'Brien    | 27 Trevor Burden   |
| 21 Jim King         | 27 Cyndi McClure   |
| 22 Cassidy Ridenour | 30 Lane Willoby    |

*June Anniversaries*



- 8 Lane & Sarah Willoby
- 9 Ed & Lynn Armentrout
- 12 Rick & Carol Hemphill
- 15 Scott & Gaye Earick
- 27 Phil & Michele Etgen
- 28 Mike & Melissa Loudon
- 28 Tim & Julie Wilcox

**Ongoing Prayer List**

If you have any updates to the prayer list, contact  
Kathy Etgen 937-597-8260 or office@wlucc.org.

Those Dealing with Ongoing Illness or Difficulties

- |                         |                                 |                 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Klara Pedersen          | Rick Fullerton                  | Jamie Thomas    |
| Chuck Buck              | Trudy Bradley                   | Renay Fullerton |
| Marcus Taylor           | Carol Edgecomb                  | James Kaelin    |
| Christina Porter        | Tony Grant                      | Lakyn Parrish   |
| Deb Pattee-Chiles       | Todd Harbour                    |                 |
| Michelle Moffitt-Greene | Andy Smith (Trimble's grandson) |                 |

Our Service Men & Women

- |                |                 |               |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Skyler Heilman | Zech Wilcox     | Michael Ropp* |
| Corey Hartzler | Tracy Harr      | Nick Burden   |
| Samantha Ropp* | Darren McIntosh | James Powell  |

\* Denotes Reserves

**Sharing the Light of Our Faith**

Part one - Pastor Karen taught us about the beginnings of the United Church of Christ & the different influences that have shaped the UCC over time. She shared how the UCC is a church of firsts and taught us about the structure of the UCC denomination. Karen has several available resources if you are interested in learning more.

Part two - We covered our local Church, Nancy Hamilton shared some history and others shared information about various teams and missions of our local church. We have a lot to offer.

Both nights we shared delicious soups, bread, veggies, fruit and dessert. A great time of fun, fellowship and education was shared by about 30 each night.

See pictures on page 8.



"A dad is a compass that guides you through life's adventures."

## For the Journey . . . . a note from Pastor Karen

### *For the Journey...*

June 2026

Greetings,

On Saturday, May 2nd, the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association (SONKA) of the United Church of Christ gathered for its annual Spring Gathering. We were honored to receive words of wisdom from the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, Reverend Karen Georgia Thompson. She reminded us of the vital importance of tending to the care of the soul, noting that when our inner life is not well, it becomes challenging to be fully present and supportive for others.

As we move toward the summer months, I encourage you to be intentional about nurturing your own spirit. You are the one who best understands what restores you. Perhaps it is a silent retreat, additional rest, a quiet walk, or a peaceful drive through nature. Whatever practice speaks to your heart, I urge you to make space for it. In times when the world feels noisy or overwhelming, taking time to recharge is not only beneficial—it is essential.

The SONKA gathering concluded with the shared recitation of Affirmations of Resurrected Life, grounding us in renewal and hope. I share these with you in prayerful hope they will speak to your soul.

Affirmations of the Resurrected Life \*\*

- I am faithful (Ephesians 1:1)
- I am God's child (John 1:12)
- I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
- I am a member of Christ's body (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love & self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:11)
- I have purpose (Ephesians 1:9 & 3:11)
- I am salt and light of the earth (Matthew 5:13-14)
- I am a personal witness of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8)
- I am God's co-worker (2 Corinthians 6:1)
- I am a minister of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17-20)
- I am alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5)
- I am raised up with Christ (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 2:12)
- God's power works through me (Ephesians 3:7)
- I can approach God with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12)
- I can stand firm in the day of evil (Ephesians 6:13)
- I am not alone (Hebrews 13:5)
- I am art of God's kingdom (Revelation 1:6)
- I am a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17)



\*\*They Left the Tomb: Service Prayers for Resurrection Sunday Year A by the Rev. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.

The recent "Sharing the Light of Our Faith" programs spoke to my soul. It was good to revisit the history and polity of the United Church of Christ remembering our roots and celebrating our diverse heritage. What a joy it was to hear about the history and ministries of West Liberty UCC! God is still speaking....let us join together as we listen to God's still speaking voice!

Journey Well Beloved, Journey Well,

Peace, Pastor Karen



Research shows that movement and spending time with others helps improve our mental health. We will be starting a Walk and Talk program on some Wednesdays that we do not have Porch Talk. Everyone is welcome to meet at 6:00pm at the Church. We will walk around the neighborhood. The distance and speed will depend on the desire of the participants. If you prefer to walk and not talk that is perfectly acceptable too! The dates are May 27, June 3, 10, and 17.

## Father's Day

God took the strength of a mountain,  
 The majesty of a tree,  
 The warmth of a summer sun,  
 The calm of a quiet sea,  
 The generous soul of nature,  
 The comforting arm of night,  
 The wisdom of the ages,  
 The power of the eagle's flight,  
 The joy of a morning in spring,  
 The faith of a mustard seed,  
 The patience of eternity,  
 The depth of a family need,  
 Then God combined these qualities,  
 When there was nothing more to add,  
 He knew his masterpiece was complete,  
 And so, he called it Dad.



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## *A Word from Missionary Aide*

Looking for ways to support local outreach during the summer? Stop by the church MISSION CORNER where you will find a list of agencies whose needs don't stop during the summer months.

*God's work never takes a break.*

"Fatherhood is a journey of love, laughter, and learning."



## Missionary Aide News



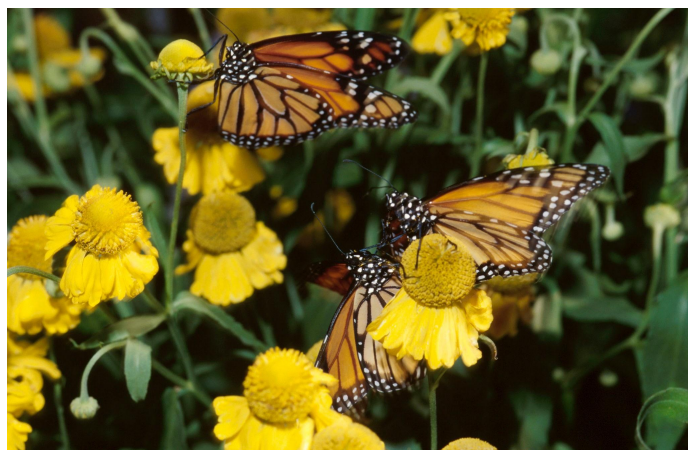
May 7, 2026

Pastor Karen opened our May Spring Salad luncheon/guest day with prayer.

Betty, Lauren, Sandra led us in singing "The Butterfly Song".

Jane welcomed our guest speaker, Marilyn Bowman. Marilyn has owned her greenhouse for many years. She also is an advocate for the Monarch butterfly, as they are close to being on the endangered list. She educated us on "Planting for Pollinators". She gave us interesting facts on butterflies - some migrate approximately 3000 miles to Mexico - some live 2-6 weeks, while others who migrate live 8-9 months. They taste with their feet - they are found globally except in Antarctica. They can fly up to 37 mph. Because they feed on milkweed they are poisonous to birds. Marilyn has found - tropical milkweed that the butterflies love - she gave us some seeds to sow.

Jane had devotions. She chose the pomegranate - a symbol of prosperity, God's Blessing. God instructed that blue, purple, scarlet pomegranates be sewn into the hem of High Priests. Pomegranates have approximately 613 seeds, corresponding to the 613 laws in the Torah, representing a life filled with good deeds.



Short business meeting - motion was made to give \$400 to summer "Ice Cream Social", Betty passed the "flower gavel" to Lauren, next year's President.

10 members, 2 guests enjoyed the day.

The committee for the day was Missionary Aide officers. Meeting closed with the Aide Benediction.

Project for the month - "Blanket Sunday"

Jane Moffitt, Secretary



"A father's wisdom is a treasure that lasts a lifetime."

## Education Team

### Progressive Dinner 5/2:

Three youths and three adults attended the progressive dinner in the home of Tim and Julie Wilcox, Scott & Karen Griswold, Denise and Rob Painter, and Andy and Penny Higgins. Fellowship excellent, food fantastic, games at the Higgins enjoyable.

The education team is looking to have monthly activities for the conformation age youth (middle school to early high school) during the next school year. They will meet after the fifth Sunday breakfast in May to discuss these possible activities with these youth.

### Vacation Bible School and Education Team Meeting for June has been moved:

Thursday June, 25 th 6:00PM to plan details and assignments.

### Big Faith Curriculum for Summer Quarter begin first Sunday in June:

#### June – MVPs (Theme: The Bible Gives Us Examples of Faith)

- 7 Faith of Abraham and Sarah (Hebrews 11:8-12)
- 14 Faith of Isaac, Jacob, Esau (Hebrews 11:30)
- 21 Faith of Moses (Hebrews 11:23-29)
- 28 Faith of Rahab (Hebrews 11:31)

#### July – Use Your Voice (Theme: We Can Tell Others About Our Faith)

- 5 The Disciples Chose Helpers (Acts 6:1-7)
- 12 Lydia Shares Her Faith (Acts 16:11-15)
- 19 Paul and Silas Share Their Faith (Acts 16:16-40)
- 26 Paul Writes to the Philippians (Philippians 4:8-9, 13)

#### August – Welcome Back (Theme: Through Faith We Can Welcome Others)

- 2 David Welcomes Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:1-13)
- 9 A Boy Shares His Lunch (John 6:1-14)
- 16 Jesus Teaches Hospitality (Matthew 25:31-46)
- 23 Believers Share (Acts 4:32-37)
- 30 Paul Experiences Hospitality (Acts 28:7-10)

### Vacation Bible School Registration is Officially open!

Please register your child at your earliest convenience. Should you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please reach out to Autumn Swartz for further information!

#### Registration Link:

<https://www.myvbs.org/west-liberty-ucc-methodist-and-cornerstone-faith-churches-vbs-2025-2026>

