



Encouraging Word

John 1:17

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”



God's Grace

*There are moments when I sit with God and realize I don't even have the words anymore.
No clear sentences.
No perfect prayers.
Just a tired heart that still turns toward Him.
I used to think I needed to say everything the right way.
That I had to explain it all, organize it all, make sense of what I was feeling before I brought it to Him.
But I am learning He already understands.
He sees the weight I carry before I speak it.
He knows the thoughts that keep me awake.
He feels the quiet ache I try to hide behind strength.
And still, He welcomes me.
Not with expectation, but with compassion.
So I come as I am.
With the worries I cannot fix.
With the question that keep circling.
With the heaviness I am tired of holding.
And I place it in His hands again.
Not because I suddenly feel strong, but because I know He is.
I am learning that surrender is not losing control.
It is finally releasing what was never mine to carry alone.
And when I let go, even a little, something shifts.
My breathing slows. My thoughts quiet. My heart softens in His presence.
Because He is not overwhelmed by what overwhelms me.
He is steady. He is near. He is already holding what I keep trying to pick back up.
So tonight, I am choosing to trust Him again. With the fear.
With the unknown. With every part of me that feels worn.
I may not have the words. But I have Him.
And that is enough.*

Serving for May

Nursery

3
10
17 Julie & Olivia Wilcox
24
31

Young People's Moment

3 Scott Griswold
10 Penny Higgins
17 Carol & Betty
24
31

Junior Church

3 Scott Griswold
10 Julie & Olivia Wilcox
17
24
31

Greeting & Announcements

Tim Wilcox
Videotaping
Jim Hoffman / Bec Smith

Sound

3 Ray Etgen
10 Ed Armentrout
17 Dennis McIntosh
24 Elisa Lash
31 Dennis McIntosh

Screens

3 Kaylee Powell
10 Brandy Powell
17 Ed Armentrout
24 Kaylee Powell
31 Brandy Powell



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



May

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 2** Youth Progressive Dinner
- May 3 8:30 am** Deacons Meeting
Sacrament of Holy Communion
Finance Team Meeting
- 4:00 - 6:30 pm** Scout Meetings at the Church
- May 5 9:30 am** Tuesday Mornings - prayer
6:00 pm Church Board Meeting
- May 6 6:00 pm** Joe Kay - Stories of Our Faith
- May 7 12:00 noon** Missionary Aide meeting & luncheon
- May 11 6:00 pm** Pastoral Relations team meeting
- May 12 9:30 am** Tuesday Mornings - prayer
- May 13 6:00 pm** Sharing the Light of Our Faith
- May 16 6:00 pm** Small Group at Andy & Bec Smith's
- May 17** Blanket Sunday
Education Team Meeting after Church
5:00-6:30 pm Scout Meetings
- May 19 9:30 am** Tuesday Mornings
Newsletter deadline
- May 20 6:00 pm** Sharing the Light of Our Faith - part 2
- May 24** Melanie Park to shaare about WL
Cares & the Food Pantry
Worship Team Meeting after Church
- May 26 9:30 am** Tuesday Mornings
- May 31** Graduation Sunday
Property Team Meeting after Church
5:00 - 6:30 pm Scout Meetings



- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Tim Wilcox | 14 Braxton Louden |
| 4 Beckett Sullivan | 15 Joe Buck, Sr. |
| 5 Nick Burden | 17 Elisa Lash |
| 5 Jimmy Hoffman | 20 Briley Sullivan |
| 5 Matt McIntosh | 23 Jane Moffitt |
| 8 Rebecca Smith | 24 Cody Flora |
| 11 Kathy Etgen | 25 Sandy Detwiler |
| 12 Alex VanHouten | 29 Rick Fullerton |
| 13 Miranda Etgen | |

May Anniversaries



- 1 Jerry & Bethany Nelson
- 7 Grant & Stephanie Burden
- 9 Bob & Lucille Burden
- 23 Nate & Christy Cook
- 25 Andy & Rebecca Smith
- 28 Doug & Elisa Lash
- 31 Pete & Betty Cook

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) | |

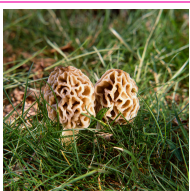
Our Service Men & Women

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

* Denotes Reserves



Julie Wilcox will share a spark moment with us on May 3rd to help us kick off the month and bring awareness of available recources.



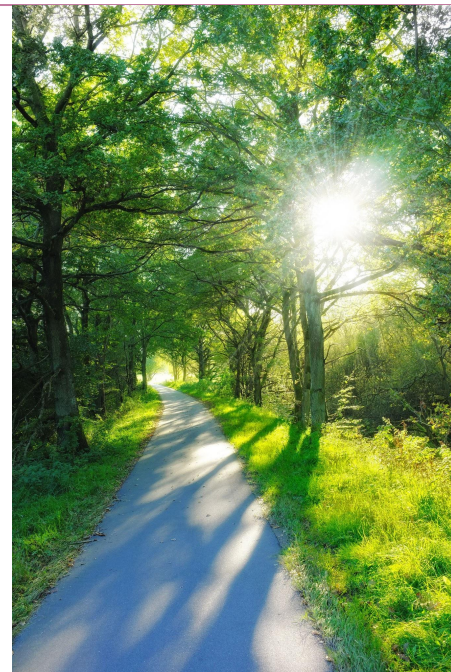
“May the miracles of nature fill your soul with the colors of Joy.”

~~ Maryn Davis

For the Journey a note from Pastor Karen

For the Journey...

May 2026



Dear Friends,

Solitude has its gifts. Quiet, restorative moments—whether spent reading, walking through nature, or gazing at the stars long after sunset—hold a certain beauty. Over time, I have come to appreciate how solitude nurtures calm and inner strength.

Yet I have also learned the deep value of fellowship. There is joy in witnessing the gifts and talents of others at work, in seeing ideas shared freely, and in watching strengths woven together for a common purpose. It is especially joyful to see how the different ministries of the conference, the association, and the local church work together—each bringing unique perspectives, resources, and passions that enrich our shared mission. Collaboration has been a guiding theme for both the Heartland Conference and SONKA (Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association) in recent years, and for good reasons. The familiar saying “better together” continues to prove itself true.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says: “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

On May 2nd from 9am-12pm at David’s UCC in Kettering Ohio our national minister Reverend Karen Georgia Thompson will be the keynote speaker at the SONKA Spring Gathering. She has been an inspiring voice of unity. I look forward to her visit and encourage all to attend in person or on Zoom.

West Liberty UCC continues to move forward in ministry with the theme of collaboration in mind. Thank you for the inspiring work that you all do. As we continue to reach out, loving God and neighbor, let us remember these words from Mother Teresa:

“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.”

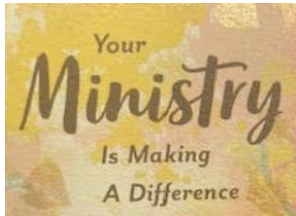


May is Mental Health Awareness Month may we seek the best for one another as we listen and love.

Please let me know if I can be of assistance to you and yours.

Journey Well Beloved - Journey Well,
Pastor Karen

*Look for the new calendar of events on the bulletin board - feel free to snap a picture of it as a reminder.



PASTOR KAREN,
Just wanted to
make sure you knew
how appreciated you are—
not only for all you do,
but for who you are—
a reflection of
the One you serve.

Dear Pastor Karen & Church Family

Thank you for all of your cards, wishes & most importantly, your prayers. The love and compassion that was expressed has lifted by spirit and has had a profound healing effect. I'm waiting for direction from my oncologist, (pending a few tests) but feel that the prognosis will be Good.

Thank you again for your prayers.

In the Love of Christ Jesus
James Kaelin



Dear Church Family,
Thank you so much for the Valentine's bag!
It was very thoughtful of you to think of me. I
have been enjoying all of the goodies (especially
after long days at school :))

Thank you again! ♥
Olivia Wilcox



To Our Church Family,
We just want to say a
grateful thank-you to all our church
family for their many prayers, cards
and visits! It means so much and is
so appreciated. It has been nice
being able to stay included by watching the
service, but hoping to be here now that spring is
here and weather is kinder!

Sincerely,
Joe Buck & family

To the ladies of the Missionary Aide at West
Liberty United Church of Christ,
I would like to thank each of you for assisting
me with paying my rent. I am very grateful



Thank you again,
Diana Definbaugh

Dear West Liberty Church Family
Thank you so much for always thinking of me
for Valentine's Day with a box of goodies! I
hope you are all doing well.



Thanks again,
Mollie Sandford



Dear Members of WL UCC:

Words cannot express how thankful
we were to receive your generous gift of
\$150. Your support means so much to us here at
Lutheran Community Services. Your gift will be used for
the many food programs of LCS. I thoroughly enjoyed
talking to the group. You made me feel welcomed and
warm.

Without support of concerned groups and individuals,
these programs would not be the successes that they have
become. Your awareness and support are blessings to our
community. Again, thank you!

Sincerely,
Kim Collum, Executive Director



Thank you to everyone
who took the time to make a phone
call, send a card or a text message
and prayed time and again for me
as I went through the shingles episode. It warms
my heart to know that you care so much for a
person that mostly attends another church.
God blesses us when we need it most!

Love,
Irene



Dear Ladies of the Church
Thank you for the Valentines bag filled with goodies.
It's nice to have such a caring church family.
Thank you again,
Zechariah Wilcox

Thank you
for all the ways
you make this world
a brighter one.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS , , , , , JOE KAY - STORYTELLING MAY 6th - 6:00 - 8:00 pm



The stories of our faith

Stories are one of our most human and sacred expressions. We connect through story. We share through story. We interpret through story. We build community through story. At night, our brains make up stories to help us make sense of our experiences.

Stories are holy and sacred -- all stories, including yours and mine.

Humans have been telling their stories from the beginning. Cave dwellers painted stories on the walls so important moments would be remembered and those who came later would be reminded of their connection with those who got them there.

Our faith traditions are all grounded in stories as well. Stories of how people struggled with things, got things wrong, but also found some partial answers. Stories of how people experienced God and each other within the constraints of their culture and understanding of things in that time.

How do we access these stories, which are sometimes written in unfamiliar form?
How do we hear what they're trying to tell us?

How do stories work -- others' stories from long ago, our stories from today?

Join us for a fun evening of sharing our stories and contemplating stories – Biblical stories, contemporary stories. Nexus Church UCC pastor Joe Kay was a professional journalist/writer for 40 years. He'll share some thoughts about stories and invite us to experience some of our most familiar stories together with new eyes.



A Word from Missionary Aide



“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Mark 12:31

When disaster strikes, things we take for granted such as food, clothing, shelter, safe water become compromised. Often times, it is the people already suffering poverty that are the most vulnerable. Blankets+, a program of Church World Service, is the outreach project for the month of May. Our partnership with CWS, supports a ministry of hope that helps to “blanket the world in love.” For your convenience, envelopes will be available in the pews.

“Bees, Birds & Butterflies” is the theme for Missionary Aide’s Spring Salad Potluck Luncheon beginning at 12 noon on Thursday May 7th. The meeting is dedicated to Patty Kauffman, Joy Plank, and Vicki Lingrell. Guest speaker, Marilyn Bowman will share ideas on planting for pollinators. All are welcome.



Missionary Aide News

April 9, 2026



The April meeting opened with 8 ladies and 1 guest singing "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love." Carol H had devotions from the book "In the Garden" - she shared "Lilies of the Field" (from the Sermon on the Mount" - Matthew 6:18-29)

Betty introduced one of our speakers, Carol Edgecomb, she makes beautiful cards that she donates, along with stamps, to worthy organizations - they can sell the cards for their work. She already has 416 Christmas cards ready to send out. She gives cards to military "Operation - Write Home".

Betty opened the business meeting - asking ladies for memories of Vicki, she was so involved in all our lives. Minutes were approved, Judy reported \$2,132.19 in our treasury. Motion was made to give \$150 to the Food Pantry, another motion to give Soteria House \$200. Carol reported that the Scouts had collected 600 items for the Food Pantry. Konnor & Harper carried all the items down to the food pantry - lots of up and down stairs! Thanks Boys!

Our project for April - Shelter bags - see the list of needs in the Mission Corner.

Officers for 2026-2027 Pres. Lauren FLora - V Pres. Kathy Etgen - Secretary Jane Moffitt - Treasurer Judy Legge.

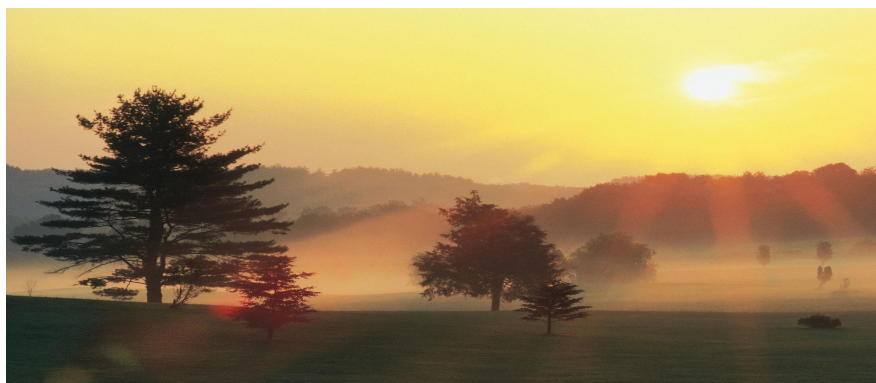
Our second speaker was Jessica Rhine form Soteria House. Soteria House is a violence & sexual assult Crisis Center. They provide refuge to survivors and their children. They educaate on violence prevention, teen dating and violence awareness. Some of their services include support from law enforcement, ER visits, local transportation, all at no cost. There is a list of their needs in the Mission Corner.

Joys and concerns were shared, Pastor Karen led us in prayer. A buffett was enjoyed, Carol H was the committee for the day.



A reminder!! May meeting is a guest day and salad luncheon - 12:00. Marilyn Bowman will be our speaker - "Planting Polinators, Butterflies, Bees & Birds"

Jane Moffitt, Secretary



May Blessings

Embrace this new day. Fill your heart with positivity and purpose.

Have patience, seek peace and always look forward to this wonderful journey.

WHEN YOU REALIZE *EARTH AND HEART* ARE SPELLED WITH THE SAME LETTERS, IT ALL STARTS TO *MAKE SENSE*.



Almighty, gracious, and merciful God, together with all people of goodwill we pray for peace in this world to touch the hearts of all people and grant us thoughts of peace and reconciliation.

Pour into our hearts reverence for the life of every individual; for the life of all peoples, religions, and nations; and for the gift of creation.

Grant that the will for peace may overcome hatred and that vengeance may give way to reconciliation.

Let people know that they are all your children, brothers and sisters on whom you bestow your love, and let all of us live in this love.

Gracious God, make me and all people instruments of your peace. Amen
Bro. David Grateful Living.org

Congratulations

JULIE WILCOX

on being named the
2025 Crisis Intervention Team Health
Professional of the Year
for Logan & Champaign Counties!!



Church DEACONS

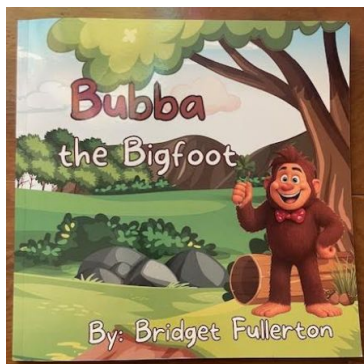
- | | |
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| Julie Wilcox | zechy65@gmail.com |
| Tim Wilcox | zechy65@gmail.com |
| Bill Warner | wswarner60@gmail.com |

*"Develop a lifestyle of being thankful."
Joel Osteen*





Congratulations to Bridget Fullerton on Publishing Her First Childrens Book!



A gentle Sasquatch named Bubba feels alone until he meets Sally the Sloth, who teaches him that true friendship means being accepted just as you are.

Check out the copy Bridget gave to the Church or buy your own copy from Amazon! "Bubba the Bigfoot" by Bridget Fullerton

A heartwarming children's story! Nice work Bridget!!



Sharing the Light of Our Faith

Come learn about the National Church - West Liberty UCC - and how YOU are important in the big picture.

May 13th & May 20th 6:00 pm in the Friendship Hall

A lite meal will be provided each evening.

Come join in the fellowship and learn a little about the Church.



Attention Class of 2026!!

Whether you are graduating Preschool, Kindergarten, High School, or College, we want to recognize you! Please send pictures and graduate information to wluccyouth@yahoo.com by May 15



Not every blessing is loud. Some arrive quietly - like birds at the feeder and peace settling into your soul.

Education Team

For Junior Church the May Theme is Good News:

Children will see that friends of Jesus have the awesome task of sharing the good news. The stories in this unit will explore the many ways that the disciples shared the good news of Jesus in order to grow and expand the church. Children will be introduced to new disciples such as Paul and Timothy and will see that the message of Jesus is meant to be shared.

Leaders are needed for May 17, May 24, May 31.

Leaders for Youth Moments during worship are needed for May 24 & May 31

Please consider signing up today.

Junior Church Summer Quarter Theme is Faith in Action - June's theme: the Bible gives us examples of faith

Easter Service:

We had a great Easter service with the kids this year. The kids did a great job singing during special music and had a great lesson during Youth Moment. They also were able to find all of the easter eggs this year... sorry Lynn! ;) We enjoyed watching them scour the yard for all their treasures! Thanks to all that helped make it a great day for the kids!

Vacation Bible School:

Reminder! VBS will be 7/13-7/17 this year, registration will launch in June. If you are interested in volunteering to be a group leader, supporting decorations or anything else please reach out to Autumn Swartz. We will be changing things up slightly this year and will be doing a service activity through one of our stations each night. We will be asking for donations for these activities ahead of VBS. We will provide more information closer to May and June to request formal support and donations.

Unity Youth:

Our littlest kiddos were able to join together for a fun early Easter celebration! They read a story, had fun snacks, did a craft and played games. The moms had a great couple hours off duty to come together to chat with one another. :) Thanks to Julie and Olivia for organizing and putting this together!



Today I hope that you have a peace that makes you smile, kindness that touches your heart and a blessing that stirs your soul.