



A Light in the Country

you shed light on the path to take
Nehemiah 9:12

We are well into the hot, humid days of summer. I often feel more lethargic during these days, but kids and church always revive me! We had so much fun recently at our Summer Bible School. Pastor Alan McNamara (from 1st Congregational UCC in DeKalb) and I donned silly costumes and presented skits each week about Jonah's troubled relationship with God and the people of Nineveh. There are a few pictures in this newsletter to give you an idea of the activities we shared on those nights.

And then I read about the kids that attended the United Church of Christ's recent General Synod. Several leaders of the denomination met with the Youth Delegates. Outgoing General Minister/President Rev. John Dorhauer told the youth, "This is your church, and every generation has to stand up and own it for themselves. I'm proud of every one of you. Create the church you want to be a part of."

The church we attend today is not the church of our childhood. As much as we may wish to stand still and preserve everything "the way its always been," that is not God's way. God continues to create and change, and so must we. God continually breathes life into each of us, our communities, and the world. Stop for a moment, close your eyes, and take a slow deep breath. What have you noticed God creating recently? How has God been nudging you to do something new? Where do you feel pulled to be involved in your church or community? Jonah had a very direct message of what to do but he resisted because he didn't like the people he was supposed to help. I wonder how often we ignore God's messages when they don't fit with our own visions.

In a recent webinar, the participants were asked to consider revising the questions we ask – to set aside fixating on the number of people in the pews or dollars in the offering. Instead, ask what is God up to today? The prophet Nehemiah references God's leading the Israelites through the wilderness: "By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take." Trust in God was necessary while they navigated an uncertain terrain; and so it is for us. I think I'm ready for whatever kind of church God wants us to be - I hope I'm more open than Jonah! I'm ready for the new, the innovative, the continually creating and recreating that is led by the Spirit of God! How exciting!

Pastor Lauri

Blessings,
Pastor Lauri

Monarch caterpillar and milkweed by church front door.

PARTNERING FOR POLLINATORS

Don't miss out on the great (free!) programs held in our Monarch Waystation!

Garden Photography

August 12, 10 – 11 a.m.

Make your photos and videos of plants and pollinators better than ever. Bring your cell phones or cameras for hands-on picture-taking garden activity! Presented by filmmaker Randy Caspersen.

Crafting with Nature

August 19, 10 – 11 a.m.

Create a vine wreath with found natural materials. Presented by independent artist Sue Goudy.

Register at: go.illinois.edu/PartneringForPollinators2023



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

10 -11a.m.

Mayfield's third annual drive - through event to celebrate the animals in our lives.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

CROP WALK

CROP Hunger Walks are interfaith events that build community while raising funds to end hunger in our own community AND around the world. Please let Pastor Lauri know if you are interested in coordinating a Mayfield team or if you'd like more information.

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

DeKalb (Sondra King Memorial) CROP HUNGER WALK

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

SYCAMORE, ILLINOIS

MEET *the* MEMBER!



Diana Swanson

Diana is a native of the East Coast, where she played on the swim and field hockey teams in both high school and college. After graduating from Amherst College, Diana went on to teach Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies as well as British Literature. Retired from Northern Illinois University, she focuses on knitting, promoting the Friends of the Jane Adeny Memorial School for Girls, and encouraging everyone to vote. She is passionate about native plants and the outdoors. Diana leads our Bible Study and is the head gardener for the Mayfield's Monarch Butterfly Waystation.

Diana and her wife Carolyn were drawn to Mayfield because of the openness and friendliness. A member since 2001, Diana says she still finds the congregation to be open and friendly.

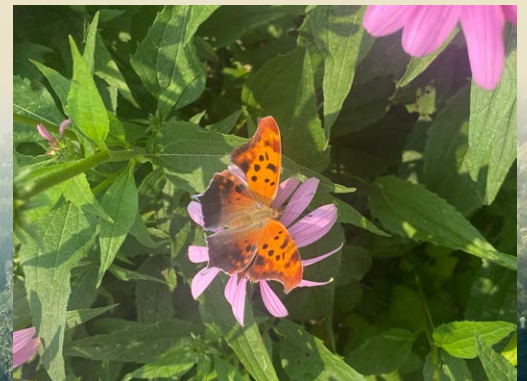
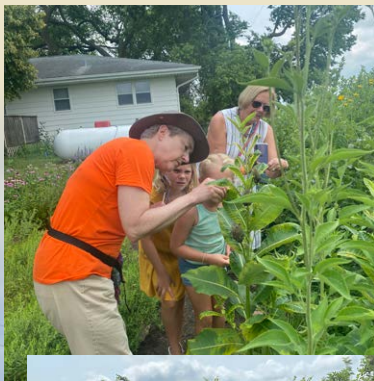
THE MAYFIELD MONARCH WAYSTATION AND THE 15TH ANNUAL DEKALB COUNTY GARDEN WALK

The Mayfield Monarch Waystation was the educational spotlight garden on the 2023 DeKalb County Garden Walk. This was a wonderful opportunity to pursue our church's Creation Stewardship mission and to (re)introduce Mayfield Church, post-pandemic, to many people from around the County.

We welcomed 326 community members to the Waystation on July 15! We shared important information about the benefits to people and to the environment of planting native plants for butterflies and other pollinators, and showed them how beautiful native plants can be in the garden. People asked lots of questions and seemed to enjoy the Waystation.

We also welcomed folks to the church itself, offering information about Mayfield Church and a chance to see the sanctuary and use the facilities. People were happy to receive Waystation water bottles and monarch coasters.

Many thanks to Randy Caspersen, Sue Goudy, Caroline Quinlan, and Diana Swanson for serving as hosts and for weeding and planting since mid-May to prepare the Waystation for the Walk. Many thanks to Pastor Lauri and Moderator Sophia Varcados for organizing and staffing the church's information/welcome table.





Bingo, Butterflies and Brownies!



Week Four
Vacation Bible Camp



Summer Bible School

JONAH, THE WHALE, AND THE WATER

Our intergenerational Summer Bible School has wrapped up! We had a wonderful time filled with skits, songs, water justice presenters, Bible Study, crafts, activities, and stories. One adult commented, "What a great experience! Everything was awesome. Fun, educational, thought-provoking, uplifting."

- Week one we learned about compassion. Heather Edwards from DeKalb County Community Garden demonstrated the role water plays in providing food for our neighbors.
- Week two we learned about resistance and forgiveness. Dean Johnson from DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District explained how the choices each person makes affect the quality of water that we all share.
- Week three we learned about grace. Kurt Thurmaier from the Tanzanian Development Support told us about the school in Africa and how much time (and strength!) it takes to bring water for home use.
- Week four we learned about the need for change. Diana Swanson from the Friends of Jane Adeny Memorial School for Girls in Kenya talked to us about the school and how having easy access to water changes the lives of the girls, their families, and their educational opportunities.

Donating to Mayfield.

Mayfield Church is an important and special place. We worship, make good friends, learn about and care for the natural world and remember those who have come before us, building our church or seeking shelter along a journey.

Be a part of sustaining our church.
Donate today using one of these methods:

1

Drop a donation in the white lattice box in the Mayfield Church Narthex.

2

Donate through Paypal.
The "donate" button is on our website.
You can find us at mayfieldchurchucc.org

3

Use an online **bill pay** through your bank.

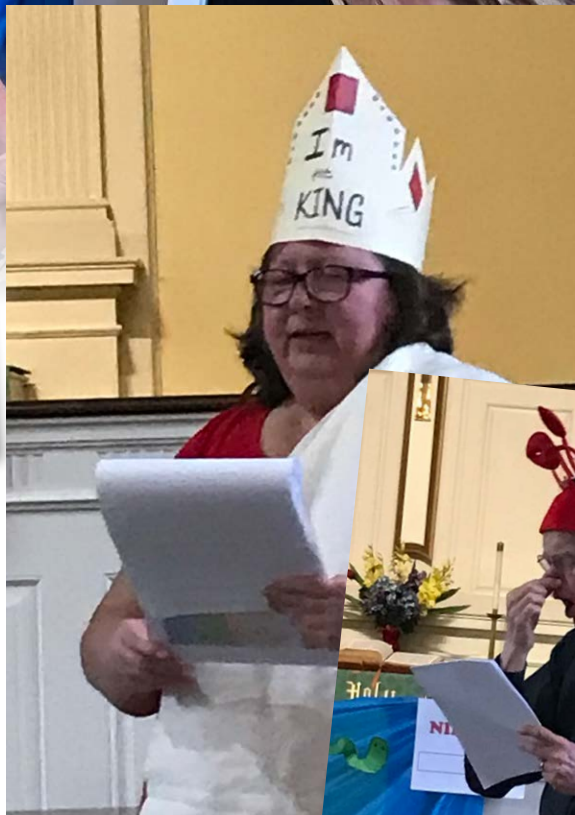
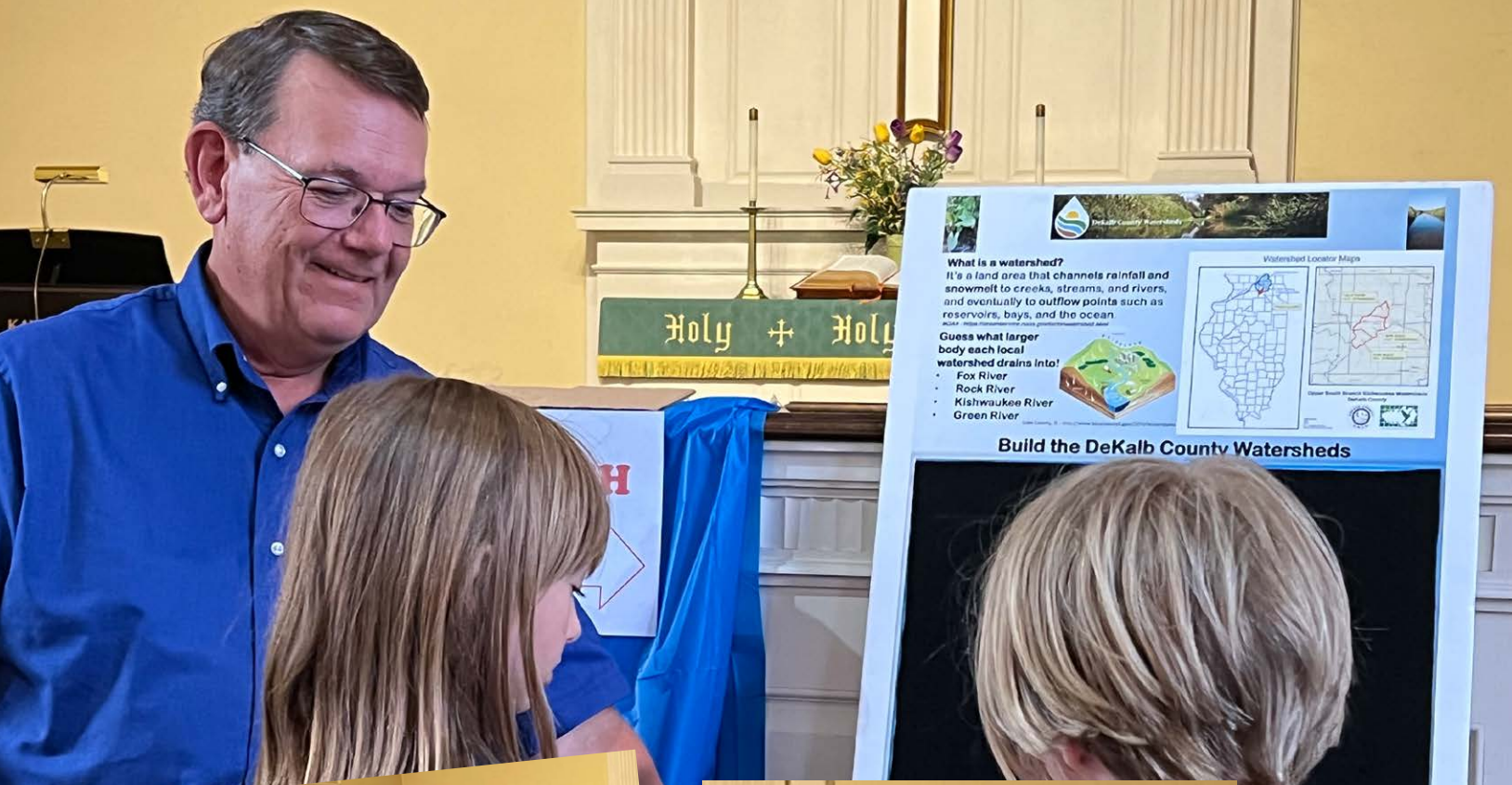
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Make a check out to **Mayfield Church UCC** and mail it to us at **28405 Church Road, Sycamore, IL 60178**

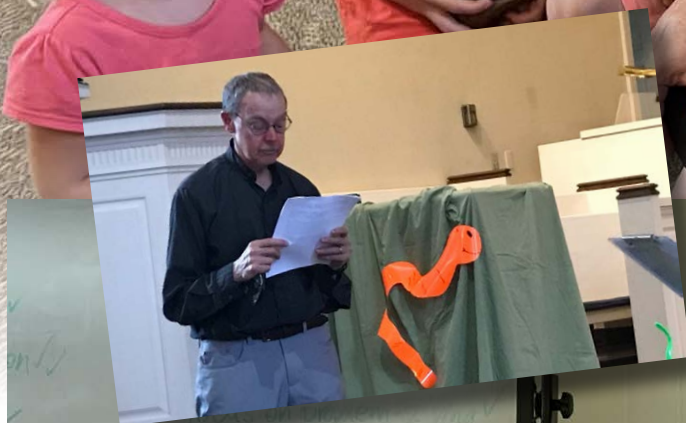
If your donation is for our "Preservation Fund", please indicate so.



Monarch and milkweed by church front door.



Weeks Two and Three
Vacation Bible Camp



Week Four
Vacation Bible Camp

UCC 34TH GENERAL SYNOD HIGHLIGHTS

More information can be found at:

General Synod 34 Highlights -

United Church of Christ (ucc.org)

www.ucc.org/general-synod-34-highlights/

All United Church of Christ members were invited to gather at the 34th General Synod in Indianapolis from June 30 through July 4, 2023. Each UCC Conference sent delegates to vote on business and resolutions. While we cannot include everything that happened during Synod, here are some of the highlights:

The General Synod's **theme** was from Revelation 21:5 — "Behold, I am making everything new."

New leader elected – Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson was elected as General Minister and President, the first woman and the first black woman to lead our denomination.

The future General Synod **meetings frequency** was changed from every two years to every three years; the change will take effect following General Synod 35 which will meet in Kansas City, MO on July 11-15, 2025.

Youth @ Synod: **What brings young people to the UCC?** by Renee DeLuca. UCC leaders met with the youth attending Synod to field their questions. During one session, outgoing General Minister/President Rev. John Dorhauer told them, "This is your church, and every generation has to stand up and own it for themselves. I'm proud of every one of you. Create the church you want to be a part of." Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson asked for advice on bringing more young people to the UCC, and the overwhelming response was the use of social media. Read more at [Youth @ Synod: What brings young people to the UCC? - United Church of Christ](#)

Voting resolutions and results:

Committee 1: Abortion is healthcare, General Synod says.

Committee 2: Delegates vote to pursue reparative acts for Native Boarding Schools.

Committee 3: Synod takes stand for digital justice, calls for increased accessibility.

Committee 4: Synod delegates pass resolution of witness on electrification.

Committee 5: Delegates call on churches to commit to harm reduction advocacy.

Committee 6: 'Hope is a verb': Synod calls for turning 'Guns to Gardens'.

Committee 7: In narrow vote, Synod supports reparation efforts for Hawaiian language revitalization.

Committee 8: Delegates reject resolution on plant-based living.

Committee 9: Synod delegates call for reduction in single-use plastics and overall plastic pollution.

Committee 10: Synod takes stand for public school educators, academic freedom and equity efforts in schools.

Committee 11: Delegates call for study, developing reparations for African Americans.

Committee 12: After debate about wording, Synod declares 'prolonged solitary confinement' as torture.

Committee 13: Synod overwhelmingly affirms dignity of trans and nonbinary persons.

Committee 14: Synod delegates call on congregations to declare and create 'white supremacy free zones'

Rev. Thompson spoke about the hope she sees springing forth within the UCC:

"Here is the place where we have seen the Spirit of God poured forth among us in many ways. Here is the place where we continue to identify the many accomplishments of the ancestors. Here is where we honor the resilience of those who came before us, took risk and oftentimes did more with less than we currently have. And here is the place we identify as now, as we ponder the call of God to be salt and light to the world."

AUGUST CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
Worship 10a Communion in person and FaceBook Live						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live						Waystation Pollinators & Partners 10-11am
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live	Deacons 6pm			Council 6:30p		Waystation Pollinators & Partners 10-11am
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2	Pastor Vacation Aug 20-Sep 2

Reports from Council meeting – July 2023, ZOOM

Diane Hance, Clerk

Pastor: Time report was submitted. Vacation time Sunday, August 20 through Saturday, September 2. Upcoming events were reviewed. Christian Ed resumes for children on Sept 10, adult Bible study resumes in Sept. Update on VBS with First Congregational in DeKalb given.

Deacons: July 2 Fourth of July potluck and bingo was enjoyed. Ordinary times for deacons. Working on Pulpit supply.

Trustees: Various maintenance items around the church discussed and projects completed. Removal of arborvitae trees on corners of church building to be reviewed.

Stewardship: Mayfield Preservation Fund report was given. Quilt raffle plans are in the works, culminating November 19. Everyone is needed to help sell tickets. Discussion on Service for Service program and how we can all be involved in promoting Mayfield.

Treasurer: No report.

Moderator: Clean up is almost complete – need help removing big items in the basement. Event planning and staffing were discussed.

Clerk: In - person attendance averages given. Facebook Live averages five viewers at time of service and up to 30 - 40 views in the weeks to follow.

Mission: "UCC Strengthen the church" offering in August.

August Sermons and Scripture

August 6

Free Food

Matthew 14:13-21
Isaiah 55:1-5

August 13

What are you doing here?

I Kings 19:9-18

August 20

Rev. Amy Johnson

(Pastor Lauri on vacation)

August 27

Rev. Amy Johnson

(Pastor Lauri on vacation)

VACATION

Pastor Lauri will be on vacation from Sunday, August 20 through Saturday, September 2. Please contact a Deacon or Sophia with any pastoral needs.



Frog craft lead by Dawn Carlson!



Contact Pastor Lauri

(815) 757- 5917 (cell)
PastorLauri@MayfieldChurchUCC.org

You can also find her at 10 a.m.
worship at Mayfield or on Facebook Live.

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Mayfield Congregational Church - United Church of Christ

Visit Mayfield:

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