



Maquoketa United
Church of Christ

206 E. Platt St.

Maquoketa Iowa 52060
563-652-4296

info@maquucc.org

Blessings , Church Family and Friends in the name of the Triune God,

May the glory of God's grace, peace, and justice be with you all! I hope this letter finds you all in good health in the heat of our Iowa summer. July has proved to be a very busy month for the United Church of Christ as our biannual General Synod 33 was in session. I was a delegate this year and the justice pieces that came before the plenary floor were intense! The TCM (Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota), our Conference, the Tri Conference Ministry, which consists of 3 Conferences in the national setting of the UCC had 42 voting members attend. The Synod, with the theme Rooted in Love, was a great success and all online through zoom, prerecorded workshops, and an app called Group Me.

There were many times when I had three screens open just to be able to communicate and participate in the voting process! Many of the justice pieces that came before the floor were highly sensitive and I will be sharing those as I process them over time during worship and small groups. The Synod lasted 8 days, July 11 – July 18. Even with all of the technical challenges, the Spirit could be felt and moved among the members participating. One of the keynote speakers at Synod was Valarie Kaur, author and founder of Revolutionary Love Project. Her message is beautiful and compelling, and can be found on Youtube.

In September is the Celebration of Life for Marilyn Deegan on Saturday, Sept. 4th at 3:00 p.m. here in our sanctuary. Following that, there will be music and fellowship at the Maquoketa Art Experience from 5:00-9:00 p.m.

And remember beloveds, if you are in need; reach out to me or the office, I am here for you and only a phone call away.

Shalom!

Pastor Maxx



AUGUST Birthdays

Emma Thiel Manning –	1	Kevin Barker	19
Jane Bentrrott -	2	Jack Tubbs	19
Phyllis Rockwell -	2	Barbara Pestka	22
Shelley LaMar -	5	Will Tubbs	22
Nancy Tabor -	5	Kyla Yappen	26
Coney Francis -	12	Jasmine Francois	27
Bill Schwenker -	14	Sue Mayberry	28
Marta Romer -	18		

Treasure Sale News

Things continue to see off our basement display table. A big thank you to Mary Hayward for her skill of selling over the internet, which brings in nice money!

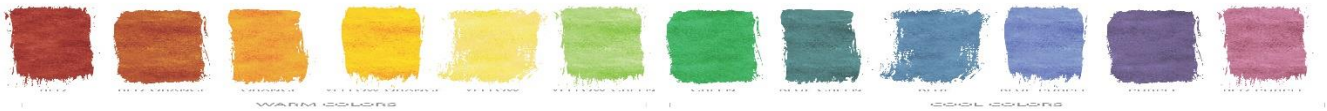
Please continue to bring items. We have many non-church people now donating items.

We look forward to the next sale in September.

Thanks, the Committee,

Geni Carr, Dianne Barker, Karen McClintock and Marie Holst

Color us PROUD!



Sanctuary Success

Hear the drum—we are almost done! There are of course a few details that need to be attended to and not all the bills are in, but we definitely see the light at the end of the tunnel. By our estimation, we have about \$5,000 left in outstanding bills and thanks to all our generous and loyal parishioners, past and present, we will be totally debt free. We were fully expecting that we would have to take advantage of the MSB construction loan that we had negotiated but we are so happy to report that donations have covered all costs with the exception of \$5,000.

Color us PROUD of our wonderful UCC Church!

Stand by for upcoming announcements of celebrations and dedications of the newly renovated Sanctuary!!!

Lin Redling for the Sanctuary Committee

Is Our Church 5 for 5? **Yes!!!**

Being 5 for 5 means that our church is a leader, providing support to **Our Church's Wider Mission** and all four of the Special Mission Offerings. The basic support of Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) provides funding for Conferences and the national ministries of the United Church of Christ.

The four special mission offerings are a part of OCWM and sponsor vital ministries that bring hope to people in the United States and around the world.

1. **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering is collected the fourth Sunday of Lent.
2. **Strengthen the Church** offering is collected on Pentecost Sunday.
3. **Neighbors in Need** offering is collected the first Sunday in October.
4. The **Christmas Fund** offering is collected the Sunday before Christmas.

We thank you for your support in making the Maquoketa United Church of Christ **5 for 5!!!**

Color us PROUD of our wonderful UCC Church!

Stewardship Team: Jim Dean, Marilyn Dean, Karen McClintock

August

2021

Maquoketa
United Church
Of Christ

If you need help while Pastor Maxx is on vacation, please call Sue Sandberg @ 563-652-5213

Service Chairs:
Karen Garien
Bonnie Schwenker

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10 a.m. Worship with Communion	2 <i>10:30 Kaczinski funeral</i>	3	4	5 <i>S-Council</i> 6:30 Centering Prayer	6 <i>12- governance</i>	7
8 10 a.m. Worship	9	10 Pastor Maxx on Vacation	11 9:30 a.m. Women's Fellowship	5 p.m. Council 6:30 Centering Prayer	13	14
15 10 a.m. Worship	16	17	18 <i>9:30 women's fell</i>	19 6:30 Centering Prayer	20	21
22 10 a.m. Worship	23	24 Pastor Maxx Returns	25	26 6:30 Centering Prayer	27	28
29 10 a.m. Worship	30	31		6:30 Centering Prayer		
	<i>6:30 Karate</i>		<i>7 P.A.A. and ALANON</i>	<i>6:30 Karate</i>		



In the News An Update

It was requested that we include something in our newsletter about the resolution of the criminal court case against our former church secretary, Anne Duffy-Doherty. I believe some background might be in order.

Background

"On October 23, 2019, the person working in our church office began a program of withdrawing money from our bank accounts for her own personal expenditures. On Wednesday, August 5, 2020, Maquoketa State Bank alerted Steve Tubbs and Mary Hayward of an overdraft in our checking account. Subsequent investigation showed that this office person had been using several methods of taking church money out of church accounts...." This was a statement included in our 2020 Annual Report.

So you can see there were ten months of activity during which any number of interventions might have taken place which would have completely altered this story. There are several members of our congregation who, understandably, feel slightly responsible for the depth and breadth of the story. This is not to cast blame. Believe me when I say, "We have already blamed ourselves plenty!"

"It is my (Mary Hayward's) personal observation and opinion that over time we as church members have developed habits of nonchalance which created an arena into which someone willing and able to take advantage of us was able to enter." This was also included in the annual report. (For further minutia, please read the complete annual report.)

Every time the matter of this theft comes up and I feel bad, I have to remind myself that I did not take the money. But was I an accomplice?? Was I doing enough checking up? following up? training? mentoring? And because I first ask myself those questions, I can ask the same of each of you. Are you paying enough attention to the work of the church? Are you aware of what is happening around you? Are you familiar with customs, history, plans, policies, procedures?

No Trial

Anne Duffy-Doherty pled guilty to two felony charges for stealing from our church. There was no trial. There was a plea agreement to drop a third charge, providing she did not request a deferred sentence. A deferred sentence allows for the criminal charge to be wiped off a person's record under certain conditions. By pleading guilty to two felonies, Anne gave up the possibility of having the charges taken off her criminal record. She is a convicted felon. This will remain part of her background story for a good long time. She will also be on supervised probation for three years.

I know some of you are disappointed that she does not become personally responsible for the over \$40,000 which she stole from the church bank accounts. Maybe I was not aware last winter when we

were spending time with the police and attorneys, and this surprised me a little also. But the way it was explained to me this summer was that because we had been paying premiums for coverage of "theft by dishonest employee" and have been reimbursed by the insurance company, the insurance company is not considered a victim. The insurance company is now allowed to take whatever actions they feel necessary to recover the money for themselves. And I would have to believe that the conviction of Anne for two felony charges would have some weight in favor of the insurance. I have been reliably informed that insurance companies have whole divisions which focus on this type of recovery.

After the church received the insurance settlement, we did discover that some payroll taxes had not been paid in the correct time periods. At the present time, H&R Block is helping us negotiate this matter. You might remember that immediately after we fired Anne last summer **we hired H&R Block to take care of our payroll**. And every month that no one at our church has to write paychecks, figure taxes, and prepare quarterly reports, I say a giant prayer to the council for approving that system!!!

So, the money which Anne was required to reimburse the church will be available (as it trickles in) to pay the Internal Revenue Service. This amount is somewhere in the \$2,200-\$2,300 range.

I know some of you are also disappointed that Anne was not directed to serve time in prison. You would have to do your own research to find out how often first-time offenders involved in non-violent crimes are sentenced to prison in Iowa. I know some of you would feel better if she were to apologize to us somehow. This might turn up somewhere, I do not know what is included in the definition of "supervised probation".

I have to say that I was very favorably impressed with all of the interactions which I had with the Maquoketa Police Department and Jackson County Attorney's office. They were interested in the facts we offered them, they responded in good time to any question I asked, I felt they treated our case with respect. This has been a horrendous experience for all of us, in many different ways and on many different levels. But we have learned some things, one of them being: this is our business and we need to know our business. Personally, I have a much, much better understanding of the administrative functions of the church. I have more lists, numbers, files, empty folders, and piles of papers than anyone needs.

I will remain grateful for this congregation. Always remember that **in the midst of an international pandemic, our church recovered a fumble and remodeled a sanctuary**. May God Bless You Every One!!!

Mary Hayward

(Note that Mary was church Treasurer at the time the theft was discovered, and continues in that office.)