

e-Communigram

Volume 63, Issue 2 – February 1 –February 29, 2024 Just Peace, Progressive, LGBTQ Open & Affirming Congregation

Letters from Leah

Thank you, thank you, thank you for a wonderful Annual Meeting. It felt good to again be in Fellowship Hall (this time with gorgeous new carpet underfoot) to celebrate and deliberate. It also felt good to be able to have folks there remotely – thank you for your patience with the tech issues. Our dedicated tech team did discover the problem which puts us in a good place for next time. Thank you to everyone who made that meeting possible. And, thank you to all of you for contributing your time, talent, and treasure to the mission and ministry of our Community.

With January behind us, we can turn our attention to the season of Lent. It arrives early this year, starting on Wednesday, February 14, aka Valentine's Day. This year's theme from our friends at A Sanctified Art (ASA), is Wandering Heart: Figuring out Faith with Peter. In Peter, Jesus' most famous disciple, we see someone both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. In following his journey, the story of Jesus unfolds through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us. The folks from ASA say, "As we were studying Peter's faith journey, the lyrics of "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" came to mind. It's as if Peter himself wrote this song. And so, for each step in Peter's journey, we have selected a phrase from this hymn." We'll make this Lenten journey "binding our wandering hearts to God."

"In this series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows. We want to affirm that wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps searching and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls. This Lent, we will look for ourselves in the

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steppingstones of Peter's story. We will reflect on the stages of our own faith journeys as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing."

For the Lenten season, each household will receive a journal with meditations, art, poetry, and writing prompts for the season, plus – new this year – a QR code to a song for the week. In fact, ASA has put together a playlist for Lent on Spotify. Follow it here: <u>https://open.spotify.com/playlist/52W0wpdsHncQFYPLFZInHg?si=206da68a407342ef</u>. It's an eclectic mix of music tied together by the season's theme which you will enjoy. Back to Top

Every day during Lent, we will post a daily meditation with instructions for Centering, a Question for reflection, and Prayer on CUCC's Facebook page. You can always go to the website to see what's current on the FB page. Use this daily prompt to reflect on your own and learn from others.

Worship for the season, and beyond, will be rich with word, song, and imagery. Here's the schedule: Wednesday, February 14 – Ash Wednesday, "Tune My Heart"

- 11:45-1:05 Ashes to Go: Receive the Imposition of Ashes and Communion from Pastor Leah on corner of 6th and Daniel, or for inclement weather, on the porch of the 6th Street door.
- 7 pm Ash Wednesday worship includes all our favorite Lent songs from The Many and new liturgy.

Sunday, February 18 – Lent 1, Luke 5:1-11 "Jesus Sought Me"

Jesus sought out the disciples, seeks us still, and in doing so, formed a community. As a community, we are called to tether one another's hearts to love.

Sunday, February 25 – Lent 2, Matthew 14:22-33 "Rescue Me from Danger"

How many of us were raised in, still live in, our work in environments where asking for help is a reason for shame? Peter's need for rescue is met with love.

Sunday, March 3 – Lent 4, Matthew 16:13-20 "Praise the Mount" – COMUNION SUNDAY

- What experiences have you had that have prompted unbridled joy? Praise? We've seen the criticism of joy and enthusiasm in recent days – how might our faith counter this criticism?

Sunday, March 10 – Lent 5, Matthew 16:21-23 "I'm Fixed Upon It"

- What if the unraveling of the very cord that binds us together becomes the most important thing in our journey?

Sunday, March 17 – Lent 6, Matthew 18:15-22 "Teach Me"

What don't you know yet? How might we get more comfortable in the not knowing?

Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday, John 12:12-26 "Songs of Loudest Praise"

It's the day of being in the now-now-yet and that begs the question: what are we still not understanding about Jesus?
When have we realized something in hindsight?

Friday, March 29 – Good Friday, 7 pm Tenebrae Worship "Streams of Mercy, Prone to Leave the God I Love" Sunday, March 31—Easter Sunday, Breakfast and Worship, Luke 24:1-12 "And I Hope" Sunday, April 7—Easter 2, John 21:1-19 "Here's My Heart

Blessings,

Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser



Ashes to Go

Lent begins Wednesday, February 14, 2024. Receive the Imposition of Ashes and Communion from Pastor Leah on the corner of 6th and Daniel, or for inclement weather, on the porch of the 6th Street door.



Moderator Musings

Hello CUCCers!

Since I know some of you well, some of you a little, and some of you not at all, I thought I'd start off my first Communigram submission as moderator with a little introduction.

Hi, I'm Julie McClure. I'm married to Andy, who you will see in the pew with me occasionally. We have two kids. Our daughter Addison is 19 and a freshman at University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Our son Devan is almost 17 (on Thursday!) and is a junior at Centennial. I grew up in Normal, came to U of I for school, and have been in C-U ever since! Once upon a time I was an elementary school teacher, but now I'm the Managing Editor for Smile Politely.



Andy and I found ourselves at CUCC in 2017, a time when we were actively seeking a church that better aligned with our values. I'm pretty sure Andy and I became members in 2018, though I will admit those couple of years right before the pandemic are a bit fuzzy. Before beginning this moderator journey, I served as a Children and Family Ministry Leader.

With each passing year, I am more and more grateful to call CUCC my church home. The warmth and care that radiates through every worship service, act of service, social gathering, and conversation is life-giving, and (as outgoing moderator Johnalene described during the annual meeting) lifesaving. It's thrilling to see our church beginning 2024 on such solid footing, and I'm excited to see how this year in the life of CUCC will take shape. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of it.

Warm Regards, Julie McClure, Moderator

Music Director



Notes from Your Music Director

You may notice that the CUCC choir is focusing February's anthems on two styles in the month of February. We are featuring many pieces by Black composers and arrangements of spirituals in celebration of Black History Month. Additionally, we are honoring Alice Parker, the beloved American composer who died at the age of 98 in December 2023, by revisiting some of her works.

As always, all are welcome in the CUCC choir. Come join us on a Wednesday night at 7PM! Kathy Kew Lee she/her

Music Director, Community United Church of Christ music@community-ucc.org 203-605-3830

Beautify the Worship Space for Easter

As Ash Wednesday and the Lenten season quickly approaches it is time to think about ordering flowers to beautify the worship space for Easter Resurrection Worship. Order forms to purchase Lilies, Hyacinths, Tulips, or Daffodils will be in the worship bulletins February 4, 11, 18, and 25. February 25 is the deadline to place your order for Easter Flowers. Please make checks payable to CUCC with Easter Flowers noted on the memo line.

Narcan Training at CUCC

Over 100,000 people die from opioid overdose every year in this country. And, yet, when administered, Naloxone (also called Narcan and Evzio) effectively reverses 93% of overdoses. That's amazing news. Moreover, it is incredibly safe. Think of Naloxone like you do an AED machine and Narcan training like another First Aid measure or CPR.

We are hosting a Naloxone training on **Sunday, February 4, 2024**, following worship. It will be taught by CUPHD and take 20-30 minutes.

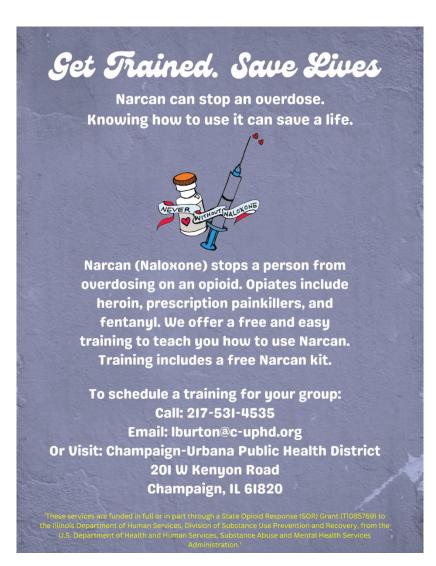
This is the first of a series of training courses to better equip our congregation and Jubilee Cafe volunteers to love our neighbors in tangible ways.

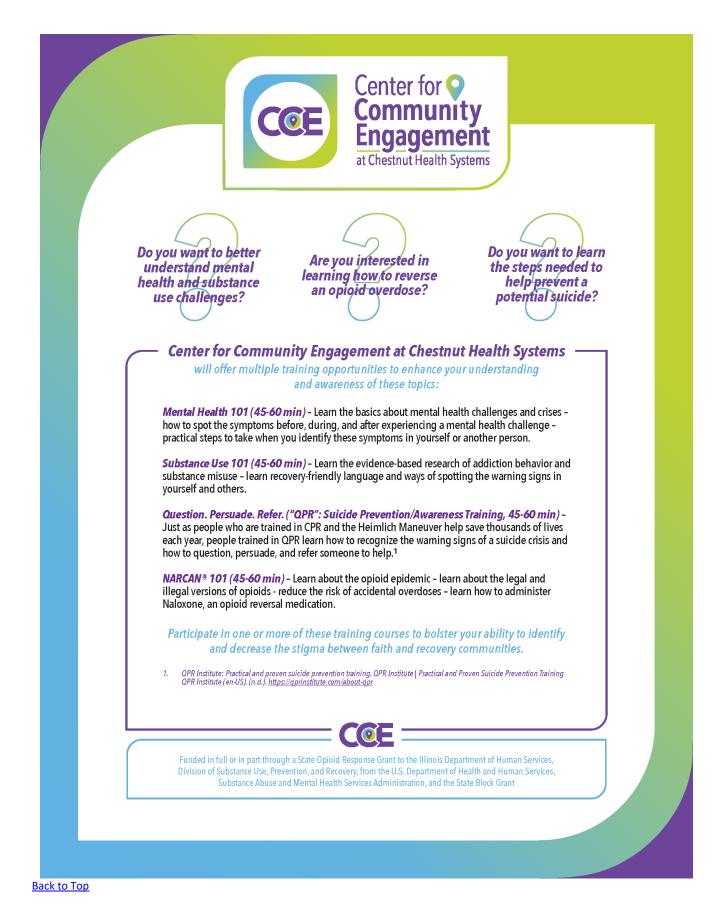
Additional trainings will include

- Mental Health 101 where we will learn the basics about mental health challenges and crises – how to spot the symptoms before, during, and after experiencing a mental health challenge, and practical steps to take when you identify these symptoms;

- Substance Use 101 where we will learn the evidence-based research of addiction behavior and substance misuse – learn recovery-friendly language and ways of spotting the warning signs;

- "QPR" (Question. Persuade. Refer.) Suicide Prevention/Awareness Training where we will learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.





Interfaith Conference

Friday, February 23 and Saturday, February 24



The Interfaith Conference is scheduled for Friday, February 23 and Saturday, February 24. Naida Bolz-Weber is the keynote speaker this year and the Conference theme is "Living Shamelessly". Pastor Leah Robberts-Mosser is Bolz-Weber's conversation partner at the Friday Forum at 12pm February 23. Find the conference schedule at: https://diversity.illinois.edu/diversity-campusculture/illinois-interfaith-conference/2024-2/schedule/

Nadia Bolz-Weber is an ordained Lutheran Pastor, founder of House for All Sinners & Saints in Denver, Co, the creator and host of The Confessional and the author of three NYT bestselling memoirs: Pastrix; The Cranky, Beautiful Faith Of A Sinner & Saint (2013 and re-released in

2021), Accidental Saints; Finding God In All The Wrong People (2015) and SHAMELESS; A Sexual Reformation (2019). She writes and speaks about personal failings, recovery, grace, faith, and really whatever the hell else she wants to. She

always sits in the corner with the other weirdoes. Subscribe to The Corners to receive her writing in your inbox weekly. https://nadiabolzweber.com/

Register for the Interfaith Conference at: https://forms.illinois.edu/sec/279285963

All Church Game Night

A few of us at Retiree's Lunch decided it would be fun to plan an all-church Game Night. It will be Friday, February 16th, beginning at 6:30 p.m. and continuing until 8:30ish downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. We plan to make this really simple and easy - we will have hot water, tea bags, hot chocolate available and a pitcher of cold water. You are welcome to bring any other non-alcoholic drink you would like and/or a snack to share. We will have several games there from which to choose or feel free to bring your favorite game. Mark your calendars and plan to have some fun! Questions? See Jeanne Ward, Chase Skye, Becky Sheridan or Peg Wade.



Campus Ministry Queering Faith 7.0



Campus Ministry is excited to welcome Flamy Grant to be our QF 7 speaker! Queering Faith 7 will be held in the main sanctuary Friday, April 12. Award-winning and Billboard-charting artist Flamy Grant is a shame-slaving, hip-swaying, singingsongwriting drag queen from western North Carolina. Her 2022 debut record, Bible Belt Baby, reached the #1 spot on the iTunes Christian Charts (the first drag performer to achieve this

feat) and was nominated for Best Pop Album at the San Diego Music Awards. She is a winner of the 2023



Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk Competition and a 2023 QueerX Award nominee for Best Drag Artist and has been featured in Rolling Stone, Entertainment Weekly, People, and more. Her music has nearly half a million streams on Spotify, Apple, and Amazon music. A powerhouse vocalist and intrepid songwriter who blends folk, gospel, and roots, Flamy drags you into a therapeutic, theatrical mix of storytelling and song.

Raise Right

Valentine's Day is just around the corner. Considering a gift card for your special someone? Why not purchase it from Raise Right helping both CUCC and yourself at the same time.

To create a **Raise Right** account, go to the https://www.raiseright.com and click on the "signup" button to begin the process of "Joining" an existing program and then enter Community United Church of Christ's enrollment code number: 279D2C266L1L9 to complete the process.

If you encounter any problems during your enrollment process, call 1-800-727-4715, option 3 for assistance or contact Jen Robbennolt at Jennifer.robbennolt@gmail.com.

The previous Raise Right Tips have been collected into one document and are attached here for your reference.



John Bandy Center

"Seeking Authentic Spirituality using Myers-Briggs" March 2, 2024 10:00 am to 3 p.m.



Myers-Briggs Typological Instrument (MBTI) is an internationally recognized psychological assessment instrument used for self-awareness. Knowing our

typological preferences can help us find the spiritual practices that work best for each of us. We do not all resonate with the same spiritual activities. Our goal in the workshop is for you to learn about your own preferences and what spiritual practices may be most helpful to your own spiritual journey.

We have space for 15 people but ...

- We have only 7 instruments for those who have not completed the MBTI in the past. So, if you have not completed the MBTI, you will need to sign up asap! Participants who sign up for the workshop who have not taken the MBTI will get it from Jan and must complete and return it to her several days prior to the workshop.
- If you have already completed Myers-Briggs in the past and have your results, you are welcome to join the workshop without redoing it. Eight spaces are available for participants who know their MBTI scores and can share them with the instructor prior to the workshop.

Jan Hiland is a certified Myers-Briggs instructor and has used and taught it extensively during her working years both in the USA and abroad. She has conducted this Spirituality Workshop in other churches. Please join us for a wonderful day, Saturday, March 2nd, from 10 to 3, in the Fellowship Hall. There is no charge for the workshop. We'll be eating lunch together during the workshop so be sure to bring your own lunch. We will welcome food for sharing.

This workshop is sponsored by The John Bandy Center for Spirituality and Faith.

Curious to know more? This month's display in the parlor features resources related to personality types—come check them out!

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Jubilee Cafe

Jubilee Café has returned to in person dining, and this requires many additional volunteers to make Jubilee Café run smoothly. If you would be willing to volunteer, anyone older than 14 is welcome to come and help at Jubilee Café. There are still many open slots on many of the Monday nights volunteer list. Please look at the list and consider volunteering. If you are willing to volunteer, go to the sign-up link at https://tinyurl.com/mry8wbum contact Johnell at johnell.bentz@gmail.com, for more information.

Date	Meals Served
1/1/2024	30
1/8/2024	56
1/15/2024	57
1/22/2024	46
1/29/2024	76
Meals Served	265





County Continuum of Service Providers to the Homeless. Guests who were unsheltered this past Wednesday could talk with a trained volunteer. This volunteer asked basic demographic information. This is done in conjunction with a sheltered count and this information can be used to secure more federal money for our community. We were glad that my sweet friend Nathan Alexander was here to conduct those surveys (see pics...our guests loved Nathan's earrings). Our guests were eager to talk to him. Many of them said that, absolutely, they would answer questions because they want to be helpful. Our guests' willingness to make a difference, even though it meant being personally vulnerable, gave me hope tonight. This evening we served 21 heat at home meals, 12 vegetarian, and 43 meat meals. Our hot meal was a savory brioche bread pudding studded with ham or faux ham, gouda, kale, and lemon zest. Our side dish was mixed veg. Dessert options were chocolate or vanilla cupcakes. #fromtheground

January 29, 2024 -- Tonight at Jubilee Cafe CUCC we participated in the follow up to the Point In Time Count for the Champaign

Community UCC, Champaign, IL





Upcoming One-Time Events Mark your calendars for these CUCC events! Thursday, February 1 – Thursday, February 29



Thursday, February 1, 7:00am: Men's Breakfast at Urbana Garden Family Restaurant

- Sunday, February 4, 10:15am: Traditional Hybrid Worship, Epiphany 5
- Sunday, February 4, 11;30am: Narcan Training
- Sunday, February 4, 1:00pm 3:30pm: OWL Class for Older Adults
- Thursday, February 8, 8:30am: Just 4 Fun BFEFFAS group breakfast at Perkins
- Sunday, February 11, 10:15am: Traditional Hybrid Worship, Transfiguration of our Lord
- Wednesday, February 14, 11:45am-1:05pm: Ashes and Communion to Go on corner of 6th and Daniel
- Wednesday, February 14, 7:00pm: Ash Wednesday Worship
- Friday, February 16, 6:30pm-8:30pm: Church Game Night
- Sunday, February 18, 10:15am: Traditional Hybrid Worship, Lent 1
- Tuesday, February 20, 11:30am: CUCC Retiree's Monthly Lunch Gathering at Just Yokin', Champaign
- Tuesday, February 20, 6:30pm: CUCC CLB Monthly Meeting
- Friday, February 23, 12:00pm: Friday Forum + Conversation Café: Fireside Chat with Nadia Bolz-Webber, Latzer Hall, University YMCA
- Friday, February 23, 6:30pm 8:30pm: Interfaith Conference "Living Shamelessly" with Nadia Bolz-Weber, Gregory Hall, University YMCA
- Saturday, February 24, 9:30am-4:30pm: Interfaith Conference, University YMCA
- Sunday, February 25, 10:15am: Traditional Hybrid Worship, Lent 2
- Monday, February 26, 9:00am: Articles for March eCommunigram due







Be sure to check CUCC Facebook page for updates.

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Mission Ministry



Alternative Advent Market

We're grateful for a successful Alternative Advent Market! In total, we raised \$591 for the UP Center, \$581 for The Well Experience, \$556 for The Trauma Resilience Initiative/Bend the Arc, and \$591 for Caminos. Those amounts include some of our budgeted Mission funds along with all of your donations. Your donations alone totaled \$1,529!! The Well Experience has already received all of their gifts (before the blessing during the worship service on 1/21/24) since many of the items were winter hats and gloves, and they were greatly needed and appreciated during the cold weather. We'll soon take the other items to the organizations. Your

donations and your participation in the Market ARE making a positive impact! We can't thank you enough for this success and look forward to having a similar event in December 2024!

Christmas Fund

We received \$775 toward the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund. As a reminder, this money goes toward emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas 'thank you' gift checks to lower-income retirees. This successful offering means we fulfilled our goal to go '5 for 5' for UCC offerings! Great job, Community!



Lent Project

We look forward to sharing more about our Lenten project very soon.

-- Jeanne and Kristy

Men's Breakfast



The Men of CUCC meet the first Thursday of each month for breakfast. Join us at 7:00am on **February 1** for breakfast. We would love to see you at Urbana Family Garden Restaurant. Anyone who identifies as a man is welcome.

~Tom Ward Urbana, IL <u>wardt508@comcast.net</u>

Just 4 Fun BREFFAS



Nine folks gathered at Perkins on Wednesday, January 10 for fellowship and fun. Everyone is invited **Thursday, February 8 @ 8:30 a.m.** for our monthly gathering at Perkins. If you would please RSVP if you're coming, it will help us know how many tables are needed. RSVP by texting or calling and leaving a message for Rocio at <u>217-418-06185</u>. Remember you're still welcome whether you RSVP or not. Orders will be placed by 8:45.



Individuals Together

Five folks from the Individuals Together group braved the cold weather Saturday night to see "The Wizard of Oz" at the Virginia Theater. There is a reason this show is a classic. We all enjoyed it!

We are still gathering the details for our February activity. Stay tuned!

Individuals Together is CUCC's social group for persons who live alone, either part-time or full-time, for any reason. You are welcome to attend any of our activities as you are able. If you wish to be added to our email list, please contact Linda Morgan at 217-649-3778.

Young Adult Fellowship Group



The group is using GroupMe for communicating and event planning. If you would like to join the Young Adult Fellowship Group, here is a link and QR Code for the Young Adult Fellowship GroupMe: <u>https://rb.gy/cnrhs</u>



Contact Emma Smith at <u>inkliizii1@gmail.com</u> if you have any questions.

CUCC Retiree's Monthly Lunch Group



We had 17 attendees at our January 16th lunch at Bunny's in Urbana. It was fun to have such a large turnout on a really cold day - must have been lots of cabin fever!

Our February lunch will be on **Tuesday, February 20th, 11:30 a.m**. at Just Yokin' in Champaign (at the Crossing), so you can order off the breakfast or lunch menus. An email will be sent out to remind you of the date and location. As always, you don't have to be retired to join us - all are welcome! If you would like to be added to the email list, please contact Peg Wade at: 217-369-0474 or peg.wade@comcast.net



Worship Ministry



Liturgy is defined as the work of the people, the community gathered for worship. This is one of the reasons Liturgists, Greeters, Ushers, the Choir, and others participate in the leadership of worship. Worship is not just the pastor's role. Many voices add richness to the worship experience for all.

To sign-up online, scan the QR Code or go to https://tinyurl.com/cuccgul

A paper copy of the sign-up sheets for February and March can also be found in the Parlor.

OWL Sexuality Education for Older Adults Schedule

Classes will take place in the parlor from 1 pm-3:30 pm on seven Sundays starting in January through June.

- February 4You, as a Sexual Being; The Sexual Body
- March 3 Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity; Intimacy
- March 17 Sexual Consent & Boundaries; Family Matters
- April 14 Sexuality & Loss; Reframing Sexuality, Disability, & Chronic Illness
- May 5 Body Image; Dating as an Older Adult
- June 2 Safer Sex; Sex Play Beyond Basics

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Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteel Opportainties								
CUCC Team	Opportunity	Contact	Contact Info	Online Sign-Up				
Worship Team	Technical Help	Office Manager	info@community-ucc.org					
	Liturgist, Usher,	Office Manager	info@community-ucc.org	https://www.signupgenius.co				
	Greeter			m/go/60B0B4EAAAC2AA1FD0				
				<u>-worship</u>				
Prayer Team	Team Member	Office Manager	Info@community-ucc.org					
Children's Ministry	Event Planner/Leader	Brin Schuler	mailto: ringwen4@gmail.com					
	Meal Prep, Cook,			https://tinyurl.com/JubileeCa				
Jubilee Café	Clean-up	Johnell Bentz	johnell.bentz@gmail.com	<u>fe-Volunteer</u>				



Zoom Meetings

Event	Day	Time	Meeting ID	Passcode	Join Zoom Meeting	Dial by Your
						Location
Worship	Sun	10:15AM	391 847 803	788969	https://zoom.us/j/391847803?pwd=Z	+1 312 626 6799
					mNvaHJYZm1uUUQrdTNBd2NRZThDZz	US (Chicago)
					<u>09</u>	
Daytime Meeting	Any	Anytime	815 146 054	697698	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81514605	+1 312 626 6799 US
					4?pwd=UmMwdW01ZFBmV0hpZmxrR	(Chicago)
					WNIUmhwdz09	
Youth Group	Sun	1:30PM	402 056 418	578953	https://zoom.us/j/402056418?pwd=Sk	+1 312 626 6799
(6 th -12 th grade)					IXaFBUMIBZQ0lvNTFUNVhWeVF0QT0	US (Chicago)
					<u>9</u>	
Evening Worship & Other	Any	6:30PM	847 5319	675757	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84753197	+1 312 626 6799 US
Gatherings			7334		334?pwd=ZENQVDNjY0RQMWxNVXRj	(Chicago)
					d2w3WDFVZz09	
Choir	Wed	7:00PM	326 389 912	854849	https://zoom.us/j/326389912?pwd=ZE	+1 312 626 6799 US
					xZVWZqRkI4dFRvZEgrckVmQkY2Zz09	(Chicago)



Contact CUCC: 805 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, IL. 61820 | 217-344-5091 | www.community-ucc.org | email: <u>info@community-ucc.org</u> Office Hours: Monday - Thursday | 9am - 3pm