April 2025

The Good News Herald

Zwingli
United Church of Christ
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A Small Church with a Big and Open Heart!

Check out our Zwingli UCC - Paoli Facebook page! https://www.facebook.com/zwingliuccpaoli

From the Pastor

As we enter the Spring month of April this year, we are still in the Church season of Lent. The Lectionary readings this March have taken us into the wilderness with Jesus to discover:

- ✓ The self-defining power of temptation (as Jesus models how to define our truth as God's beloved people)
- ✓ One description Jesus used for himself was that of a Mother Hen living to protect her vulnerable chicks from the foxes of the world, like King Herod. This makes the church a hen house, with Jesus as our Mother hen!
- ✓ That Jesus is like a patient gardener willing to work with us as individuals, as churches, as societies, to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in our lives and in our world.
- ✓ The great love of God for us when we, like the two brothers, realize that apart from God our lives are empty – and return to our God's Prodigal love and great Grace.

It's been an inspiring (and perhaps challenging) Lent as the Gospel of Luke reveals to us that Jesus was living and teaching during a time of Roman occupation (a time of great suffering for the poor Jewish peasants) and his ministry included speaking truth to power, and his message of truth to unjust power is relevant today as well. In two weeks, we will enter Holy Week, where we will experience the suffering and death of Jesus at the hands of Rome. But we know the end of the story – Easter, Resurrection, Love wins!

Blessings,

Pastor Karla



(image from AVOlution, Inc. FB March 29, 2015)

For Holy Week this year, we will be offering several services and hope you will join us (and invite your friends and family). All of these will be held at Zwingli:

April 13 Palm Sunday, 9:30 am
Join us as we celebrate the triumphal entrance of the Prince of Peace, with palms and songs of celebration!

April 17 Maundy Thursday Holy Communion Service, 6:30 pm
Maundy means 'commandment' and refers to the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples to 'love one another' (John 13:34-35). This service was also the time that Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples, so we too will celebrate communion together.

April 18, Good Friday Tenebrae Service 6:30 pm
We will welcome members of Belleville First UCC for this joint service at Zwingli. Tenebrae is the Latin word meaning 'darkness' and protestants have adapted this traditional medieval Roman Catholic service to experience the story of Jesus' last days through holy readings and the extinguishing of candles.

April 19, Holy Saturday (no service)
While we have no service this day, I will send out a reflection for you (in the Friday email) to ponder on this Holy Day which invites us to silence and prayer following the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

April 20, Easter Sunday 9:30 am
A day of Allelujahs as we celebrate the resurrection, the truth that God's Love always wins over the powers of domination and evil. A day to celebrate the gift of eternal life! Please invite your friends and family to celebrate this day with you, and with Zwingli!

Lord, with palms, water, fire, oils, words, song, bread and wine, we remember Your great love for us. In this week we call holy, give us the grace to follow You from the Upper Room, to Gethsemane, to Calvary, to the empty Tomb. With gratitude for your dying and rising for us, may we proclaim in word and deed the Good News of your saving love.
(https://www.rcmsouth.org/2018/03/29/a-prayer-for-holy-week-2018/)

A Message from the



Zwingli United Church of Christ has been a presence in Paoli for 112 years! The building itself has been a welcoming place for many generations to worship and serve the community and area in the name of Jesus Christ. More importantly, the people of the congregation have celebrated together, ministered together, and grieved together for all these years. Some of you have always been a part of this church and others are newer members. But, all of us value the meaningful worship, spiritual and physical support, and the ways of serving the church offers. In fact, right now there is a very positive, up-beat spirit in the congregation that makes it a very happy place to be a part of! We want this all to continue, of course, far into the future.

However, the church council is concerned about the future of our presence here. A bit over a year ago the church took a leap of faith and decided to increase our pastor to ¾ to full time. This meant that the financial losses year to year that were already happening would be higher. We had hoped that when a settled pastor was called (which has happened and we couldn't be happier!) that giving would increase. That hasn't happened. The attendance at worship has increased, but offerings have not. We have had $4-5,000 deficits each of the first two months of 2025. Our reserves are going down faster than we had anticipated. Another $20,000 has been withdrawn from a CD. Our wonderful pastor and the Council are looking at programs and outreach to bring in some new folks to the congregation, but that takes time.

So, as you can guess, we're asking everyone to consider whether they are able to increase their giving to the ministry of Zwingli. We know that some people are simply not able to do this, and we don't want anyone to feel bad if that's the case. But, we do ask you to weigh the value of the church in your life, what it means to you to have our church here, and see whether you are able to add to the gifts you generously give. We joked at our meeting that we did save a few dollars by not having the heat working on Sunday! But, we all would like to keep the heat and lights on in our beautiful sanctuary for a long time to come!

Thank you for who you are, all you do, and for your consideration of our request.

Petra Streiff, Council President

Financial Report

January income:	$ 3,562.19
January expenses:	$ 8,904.19
	$ 5,342.00
February income:	$ 3,640.81
February expenses:	$ 8,032.77
	$ 4,391.96

PartyGras Fun!

Lots of laughter, great food, and Bingo fun at Zwingli's first Party Gras! We plan to do it again next year!

Party Gras is an adaptation of the French Mardi Gras (which means Fat Tuesday). Also known as Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day or Fat Tuesday, it is a Christian tradition that marks the day before the start of Lent. The name "Shrove Tuesday" comes from the word "shrive," which means to confess one's sins and receive absolution from a priest. It's a day for Christians to prepare their hearts and souls for the penitential season of Lent. It's also a day of preparation and feasting before the 40-day period of fasting and reflection leading up to Easter. The tradition of making pancakes on this day is believed to have originated in medieval England as a way to use up ingredients like eggs, milk, and sugar before Lenten fasting began. At Zwingli we chose to have a delicious potluck!





Click here to watch Jackie shuffle the bingo cards!

Special Service Project in March!



Friends of State Street Family (FSSF) is a Madison volunteer organization serving those who are homeless in downtown Madison. Zwingli has volunteered for this organization in the past - maybe you were part of this? Judy Batker remembers serving with her children and Pastor Sarah so she took charge of leading this project and hopes to continue to find ways for Zwingli to be helpful to the vital ministry they provide to those who need it most. Jackie Schulting knows the founder of FSSF! On Sunday March 23, we put together 139 snack bags for FSSF to give out.

FSSF VP, Beth Maglio, thanks the congregation for your contributions and, in answer to our questions, wrote:

> *"We distribute anywhere from 50-150 snack packs a week. We are an all volunteer organization so our outreach occurs mostly on the weekends. We have a Meal Train sign up https://mealtrain.com/40qwv2 for about 80 meals on Saturdays and 40 on Sundays. When we don't get a donation, we supplement our donated snack bags by adding a sandwich, fruit, etc. When we don't get meal donations, the shopping and prep falls to our outreach team who will also be out visiting our State Street friends for several hours over the weekend. Having packs in reserve is very helpful. We also distribute supplies on Wednesday mornings. The Beacon does not serve breakfast so we offer some snacks as people visit us. Food is an important conversation starter as we are out in the field, but our organization does so much more. I would love to share our mission with your group at some point."*

We plan to invite Beth to give us a Mission Moment and lead an Adult Education after Worship some Sunday -- watch for more information. Meanwhile, we keep their work and the people they serve in our thoughts and prayers. Many thanks to Judy for taking leadership of this project and Sue Bovre for taking the snack bags to FSSF!

Special Guest on Earth Day Sunday, April 27!

We look forward to welcoming a special guest to bring us the message on Sunday, April 27 as we celebrate Earth Day! Pastor Karla is excited that one of her former students who is passionate about environmental justice, especially from a faith perspective, is eager to give us the message that Sunday. Some of you may remember the violinist at Karla's installation -- it was Lizzy who is very musically gifted as well. Lizzy wanted to introduce herself to you:



"My name is Elizabeth Burkhalter, and I am excited to be sharing the message for this year's Earth Day service. I recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Conservation Biology. During my time in college, I had the privilege of serving as a student intern at the campus ministry where Karla served as Campus Minister. There I took on roles such as Director of Service and Coordinator of Worship and Hospitality.

Since August 2021, I've also had the joy of teaching Sunday school at First United Methodist Church in downtown Madison, an experience that has been incredibly rewarding. From April to November 2024, I worked on an organic farm on the north side of Madison and helped care for a multi-ethnic kitchen garden on UW-Madison's campus. I graduated Spring 2024 and now work for UW-Madison at Russell Laboratories.

Through all of these experiences, I've come to realize just how deeply my faith is rooted in my relationship with the natural world. As I reflect on this journey, I'm excited to share how I've found God in nature and how caring for the earth has enriched my spiritual life. I look forward to exploring these themes with you all and celebrating the beauty of God's creation together."

We hope you'll join us on Sunday, April 27 to meet and learn from Lizzy!

Items of Note

April Birthdays

Dave Batker

Patti Richel

Karla Schmidt

Becky Stilwell

Lee Stilwell

April Anniversaries

Patti & Bobb Richel

# # #



Is anyone in your family GRADUATING this Spring?

Please let our pastor know if you have any High School, 8th grade, College (undergrad or grad students) or Tech School graduates so we can schedule a Sunday to celebrate them!



Friendship Time

Join us on Sunday, April 6 as we gather for friendship and refreshments.

(This event occurs on the first Sunday of the month.)



Calling All Singers! We'd like to have special music for Easter Sunday. The songs are either familiar or have familiar tunes.

Short rehearsal: Sunday April 6 after worship!

CHURCH COUNCIL

Minutes of the February 16, 2025, meeting are now available in the wall pockets near the mailboxes.
Contact the church office to request an electronic copy.

Pastoral Care

In case of emergency, Pastor Karla can be reached on her cell (608-572-4557), or by email pastor.zwingliuccpaoli@gmail.com.



Last SW Association Meeting?

Sue Bovre, Louise Brunkow and Petra Streiff attended maybe the last SW Association Meeting in McFarland with Pastor Karla joining in by Zoom. We enjoyed seeing people we know from other churches and activities. The focus of the meeting was the proposed reorganization of our Conference which would dissolve the four associations. The overview of the changes that we were given states, "The dissolution of the four associations and transfer of their ministry to the conference arose out of desire from several association leaders to ensure we used volunteer energy effectively. Finances did not drive this decision and in fact the net outcome will be financially neutral. The needs of ministry, not the reality of money, drove this move."

So, in short, there will no longer be association committees. Instead, there will be affinity groups (theology, musicians, outdoors, camping, etc.) and action groups (Older Adult Ministries, Palestine Just Peace, WISE for Mental Health, etc.) that are conference wide in membership and often meet on-line. The Church and Ministry functions (search and call, ministerial support, congregational support, etc.) will be done on the conference level with representation from each area of the state. We will still have Rev. Rachel Bauman as our staff person for this region (great news!) and we will still have access to other conference staff for particular questions. Our dues that we pay for administrative costs (communication, technology, etc.) will go down a bit and OCWM will continue to support staff salaries and other areas of ministry. This will continue to be decided by each congregation.

This is the short version of the changes. While many things are ready to present to the Conference Annual Meeting in June, there are also things (one being how to distribute grants the have been traditionally decided by associations) that are still to be determined. There will be a vote taken to decide whether to proceed with this change.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Petra, Louise, Sue or Karla and we'll try to find answers for you.

Flicker Wild Church with UCC pastors Daniel Cooperrider and Julia Burkey (Orchard Ridge UCC), invite you to their outdoor worship opportunities

To get on their mailing list or for more information, contact Daniel Cooperrider, Convening Pastor of Flicker Wild Church & author of *Speak with the Earth and It Will Teach You: A Field Guide to the Bible* (Pilgrim Press), Gold Winner in the 2023 Nautilus Book Awards. danielcooperrider.com

