



Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ

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Yorkville, IL 60560
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Web Page: www.yorkvilleuucc.org
FB: [@yorkvilleuucc](https://www.facebook.com/yorkvilleuucc)

Office Hours: Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Worship & Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.

Our Staff

<u>Minister</u>	Rev. Mark S. Gregory
<u>Building Manager</u>	Mary Ellen Anderson
<u>Christian Education Director</u>	Barbara Thurlby
<u>Administrative Assistant</u>	Liz Cronshaw
<u>Chancel Choir Director</u>	Doug Trumble
<u>Children's Choir Director</u>	Sondra Shatters
<u>Organist</u>	Tina Andersen
<u>Pianist</u>	Lori Runkle
<u>Childcare Attendants</u>	Trevor Farbisz
	Halle Jones
	Dana Malinowski
	Mariela Olvera
	Brett Rhodes
<u>Custodians</u>	Tim & Laurie Strong
<u>Sextons</u>	Steve Redmon
	Mike Obenauer

Our Shepherds

<u>Chairperson</u>	Sandy deRidder
<u>Vice Chairperson</u>	Aaron Shatters
<u>Recording Secretary</u>	Sue Kimes
<u>Operations: Personnel</u>	Kathy Farren
<u>Operations: Bldg. & Grds</u>	Tony Houle
<u>Operations: Finance</u>	Tim Andrus
<u>Information Services</u>	Diane Stablein
<u>Christian Education: Adult</u>	
<u>Christian Education: Youth</u>	Sarah Pottinger
<u>Worship: Serving</u>	Lori Redmon
<u>Worship: Preparation</u>	Pam Hamblin
<u>Church Family: Caring</u>	Mary Ann Doetschman
<u>Church Family: Fellowship</u>	Jeff Kline/Laurie Houle
<u>Service: Missions</u>	June Davis
<u>Outreach/Welcoming</u>	Gere' Ryerson

The Happenings



God is our
refuge & strength
an ever-present
help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear...

Psalm 46:1-2



What is “normal”?

Amid the “Stay-at-home” orders from our state governors, we hear a lot of folks talking about “opening things up” and “getting back to normal”. But what is “normal”? Some would say it is going back to the life we were living before the virus struck so many.

I got to thinking about the people of Israel. After the great famine in Egypt that occurred about 1750 B.C.E, Pharaoh owned just about all the land in Egypt, thus most of the people, including the descendants of Joseph and his brothers (the sons of Israel), became slaves. And they lived as slaves and were treated as slaves for almost 450 years.

And then God sent Moses and Aaron to lead the descendants of Joseph and his brothers to freedom. When they left Egypt, the celebration must have been wild, and the people eternally grateful for God’s help in setting them free, as well as excited about their new life as free human beings.

But the story of the Exodus tells us that not too long after leaving Egypt, they came to Marah, an oasis in the desert. But the water at Marah was bitter and the people could not drink it. Moses called out to God, and God instructed Moses to toss a piece of wood into the water, and the water immediately turned sweet. Then God made a covenant with the people, saying “If you will listen carefully to the voice of your God, and do what is right in God’s sight, and give heed to God’s commandments and keep God’s statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases (hardships) that I brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord who heals you.”

But just a few days later, the people grow hungry, and they begin to complain against Moses and Aaron, and thus against God (Moses & Aaron were acting on God’s direction): If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us into this wilderness to kill this WHOLE assembly with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3; emphasis mine)

The people of Israel were longing to go back to their normal life, the one they had lived for 450 years as slaves. In that old life they had been beaten, abused, and overworked. Many died or were killed by the overseers. But they knew that life, it was familiar, it was their “normal life”, and so they wanted to go back to their “normal life”, even if that was not what was truly best for them. As Jeremiah would later tell the Israelites, God knew the plans God had for them, plans for their welfare and not for harm, plans for a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

But this new life, this life in the wilderness, it was not “normal”. So, they were ready to turn back, and go back to being slaves, being abused, being treated like property, rather than human beings. Back to a life that was not good for them, physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

What is “normal”? I guess we could say that “normal” is what we know, what we have become accustomed to, what is familiar. But sometimes “normal” is not in our best interests. Sometimes “normal” can be harmful, even deadly.

The people of Israel, after 40 years in the wilderness, walked into the land of Canaan, “a land flowing with milk and honey” as our scriptures tell us. They thrived in that land for over 500 years. But to get there, they had to, for a period of time, let go of their “old normal”, their “being slaves normal”, and embrace a “new normal”, a “wilderness normal”.

In my 65 years on planet earth, I've come to realize that sometimes what is "normal" can actually lead us away from the abundant life Jesus came to bring us – and the abundance Jesus spoke about had nothing to do with possessions or wealth. It was far more than that. Which is why Jesus was always talking about having eyes to see and ears to hear, when he was teaching about changing what was "normal" in 1st Century Palestine – like treating sick people and lame people as sinners; like treating women and children as property, rather than the children of God they are. There comes a time for all of us, when we need to open our eyes, our hearts, our minds, and our souls, to embracing a "new normal". Because God is always leading us into new places, new missions, new lives, a new earth.

None of us likes being shut down and shut in. And I don't believe for a minute that God caused this virus, for any reason. But I do believe God can use this time to teach us things we need to know, awaken us to things we need to pay attention to, inspire us to change things that need to be changed. Just as Jesus first followers changed things after his resurrection.

My faith in God tells me that God will see us through this wilderness and out the other side of it, if we listen to God, put our trust in God, and if we listen to the "messengers" God has sent us (the scientists and medical experts, the governors who are leading us with care and caution). God will lead us into a future with hope.

One last thing. I have no doubt that when we come out on the other side of Covid -19, none of us will ever be able to go back to the life we were living and planning before the virus struck. Things will no more be the same for any of us, than life in the Promised land for the people of Israel was the same as their life in Egypt. Some of us will have lost people we know and love. Some of us will find our plans for our future will have to change. Some of us may be looking for new jobs. Some of us may be a little poorer financially. Some of us may not be moving anywhere soon. Like the people of Israel, we will be facing a new beginning, another new "normal".

So, what is "normal"? Amid this pandemic, I am finding that the only "normal" I can count on never changing is that God loves me, and God wants only what is best for me. And if I trust that, and embrace that, "and do what is right in God's sight, and give heed to God's commandments and keep God's statutes" (in other words, try to live my life the way God wants me to live), God will lead me (and you too) into what is best for me (and best for you), even if I (you) might think the "old normal", the old life and old plans, was better.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Mark

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart... - Jeremiah 29:11-13



Our Annual Meeting, originally scheduled for May 17, 2020, has been tentatively rescheduled for June 14, 2020. We will keep you posted about this important meeting date as we receive updates on when we can resume in church worship, meetings and events. In the meantime, the leadership board is continuing to work on the budget for the new fiscal year as well as filling any open shepherd leadership positions.

Sandy deRidder SLT Chairperson



I have always thought that I counted my blessings on a regular basis, but in retrospect, I'm not sure if I really gave it the time or effort that this action truly deserves. Since the COVID-19 Pandemic has entered our lives, I have learned what "counting your blessings" really means. Each morning, while I'm enjoying my coffee, I set aside all of my worries about the virus, and I thank God for each of my blessings. My first blessing is that my family and friends are well. Then I begin on the long list of blessings, such as knowing that we have a home and enough food to eat, that there are teams of medical professionals fighting to save lives and find a cure, and that there are workers on every level helping to supply us with the essentials of life. I could fill a novel with all these and many more blessings and I thank God for each and everyone one of them daily. Included in my list of blessings is knowing that I have a church family who will be there when this is over, once again worshipping together in our beautiful sanctuary. In the meantime, I'm so grateful to Pastor Mark for keeping us spiritually connected with his streaming sermons each Sunday. In addition to Pastor Mark, I want to thank Tina Andersen for bringing the beauty of music to these services and for Lori Redmon and Diane Stablein for being there to record and distribute these Sunday services. Also, I'm beyond grateful that Pastor Mark is staying with us for another few months as we work on transitioning to an interim pastor.

Moving from all the blessings of our spiritual needs to our physical church home, I want to give a big thank you to Art Prochaska for his tireless work and many hours spent as project manager on our roof replacement as well as to the entire Building & Grounds team for all the work they have done and continue to do to keep our church building a safe and beautiful place of worship. I can hardly wait to worship under the new roof and skylights once again. I also want to thank Lea Ann Skogsberg for leading the capital funding project to collect the dollars needed for this project as well as the money required to purchase a new projector system.

Speaking of the new projector, we have ordered a new projector system that will bring clarity and color once again to our big screen. Thank you to the media team, Pastor Mark, Diane Stablein, Lori Redmon and Steve Redmon for bringing this project to closure. But in addition, I want to thank each and every one of you for your incredible monetary donations. Because of you, we raised all the money needed in a very short period of time for these projects. You are a phenomenal congregation who consistently show your love for our church through monetary donations, time and talents.

Other church blessings go to our CE Director Barb Thurlby and her team for ensuring the kids remain connected to life with God while being apart from one another. She continues on a daily basis to interact with them through innovative technology, which the kids find very entertaining and educational. Also, thank you to our other staff members for doing everything they can to keep our church functioning and safe: Admin Liz Cronshaw, Building & Grounds manager, Mary Ellen Anderson, custodians, Tim & Laurie Strong and our Sextons, Steve Redmon and Mike Obenauer. Another huge blessing is for all the shepherds on the leadership team. Each and every one of them continue to do their part to keep their ministries connected and to plan for our future. They are true leaders who continually give in countless ways. It's hard to express in words the gratitude I personally have for each one of our amazing shepherds.

Another thing besides “counting blessings” to help us through this unprecedented crisis is faith. “

Having faith does not mean trusting God to stop the storm but it means trusting Him to strengthen us as we walk through the storm. Just Believe”.

Trust God, hold fast to your hope and keep your faith because God never fails.

Stay safe and stay well,

Respectfully submitted with love,

Sandy deRidder

SLT Chairperson

Building and Grounds

Office Hours Tuesday – Thursday 8:00 am – 2:30 pm

Mary Ellen Anderson: 630-674-4345

Bldmgr@yorkvilleucc.org



Spring moves us to do outdoor maintenance. The Building and Grounds committee have two workdays planned for May. We are planning to paint the lower west side of the church. That means we need to power wash, replace some boards, cover the windows for protection and then spray paint the siding. If you are available to help for any part of the time, it would be greatly appreciated.

Saturday, May 2nd 9-3 pm
Saturday, May 16th 9-3 pm

Garden work has also started. Fred Anderson weeded the front gardens, Laurie Strong weeded by the corner sign area and Doug Clevenger weeded the walkway to the Labyrinth. Jeff Farren, Ben & Regina Moe and Diane Dillow are marking areas in the Labyrinth garden that need to be weeded. You will find on the “Giving Tree” tags asking for donations to purchase mulch for the church gardens. The daffodils that Andy Hamblin and Fred planted last fall are really pretty in the front garden.

If you have the time, you should come by and walk the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth was the theme for a recent Sunday School lesson. Yes, we have been sharing a weekly lesson with our kids though Facebook and emails. We encourage the children to make their own Labyrinth with chalk on their driveways or come by the church and walk the Labyrinth here in our backyard.

We have two serious areas where we continue to take in water after heavy rains. Art Prochaska is continuing as our project manager while we address these two concerns.

One is in the sound room where we continue to have a serious leak. We have discovered that there is damage to our stone wing wall. Art is getting estimates for mason work to correct this problem.

The second area of concern is in the north hallway near the exit door. We hope to do a water test to see if it is a roof problem or a siding problem. If it is a flat roof problem, we have an estimate for \$5,300 to replace that flat roof section. At this time, we are not sure if it is a roof or siding problem and so we are doing a water test.

We are still collecting aluminum cans for recycle. We would appreciate your contribution. Drop off your cans by the garage. The cash from recycling will be used by B & G for expenses.

Missions Ministry

One of YCUCC 5 for 5 Offerings, OGHS – One Great Hour of Sharing was collected during the month of March 2020. Our final total was \$199.00.

Strengthen the Church will be our next 5 for 5 Offering collected on May 31st. This offering furthers the work of our conference and the national UCC as we work together to strengthen and renew existing congregations, fund leadership development and provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults. Enclosed in this mailed newsletter are special envelopes for this offering. You can mail it or put in the mailbox at church. If you do not have a special envelope, you can use any envelope you'd like to!



Thank you all that sent Birthday Cards to my Mother-in-Law, Edith Gunn, for her 100th Birthday! She truly enjoyed each and every one of them. Last count was 80. She was thrilled. The mailman in this small community said he has never delivered so much mail to one person in his life. With all of the Covid-19 going on we were unable to be together. She is saving all her cards so that when we are able to get together again, we will share them again. She is staying with her daughter thru the duration of the virus so at least she was with family for her Birthday, otherwise she still lives alone. She enjoyed a day of more cards, flowers, gifts, lots of phone calls, beeping cars going by, and a family van that drove by with "Happy 100th Birthday Gram" on the side. All and all a GREAT 100th for her, so much so she was quite tired by the end of the day. Again, thank you so much for sharing the love. I have a wonderful church family and appreciate you all.

God Bless, Nancy Kolowski



Giving Updates

You may have noticed on the church website that there is now a new item on the black main menu bar: "Online Donation". If you click on this button, it takes you directly to the Continue to Give webpage for our church (you may see a page that comes up with green background that says "Continue to Give", but it will be replaced by a page with a red banner with Yorkville Congregation United Church of Christ in the upper left). You can make your offering to the church securely via credit card using this service.

Note that there is a \$5 minimum to make the donation.

We've also been including the direct link when posting the weekly service online:

https://www.continuetogive.com/4864057/donation_prompt

If you'd like to set up continuing giving through automatic bank deductions, directions and the form can be found here:

<http://yorkvilleucc.org/mt-content/uploads/2019/12/e-giving-form-2019revised.pdf>

You can continue to mail your offering to the church. We'd like to thank everyone for their continued giving through this difficult and trying time.

New Projector Update

Part of the campaign to raise funds for the roof replacement included funds for projector replacement. As a quick update, a new laser projector, lens and mount have been ordered! The projector is targeted to be shipped May 12th, barring any unforeseen issues. When we are all finally able to worship together again, hopefully you will be greeted by bright new images on the screen! Thanks to everyone who has supported this part of the project.

Stewardship Thought...

Our relationships with others are a gift from God and a measure of our stewardship for God.

At Home – providing Christian education for our children, living and growing together as a family.

At Work – showing our fellow workers the example of Christian behavior and supportive caring.

In Church – participating with others in worship, projects, etc., and forming friendships.

Let us hold onto the above thoughts and pray for everyone during these COVID-19 days.

Online Service Updates

Hello Church Family!

We are continuing to post our Sunday services online via Facebook, the church website, and on our YouTube channel. The services are available each week by 10am Sunday morning. In the upcoming weeks, we will also post a link to the "Order of Worship" so you can follow along with the service. Included in this document will be the words to the hymns being played so you can sing along at home. As per the request of viewers, Tina will also sing along to some of the music to guide us through. If you are interested in playing or singing a piece of music as part of the service, let the church office know and either Pastor Mark, Tina or I will contact you. Rest assured that in the process of recording the service, social distancing is adhered to. We remain at least six feet apart at all times and there are only 3 or 4 of us in attendance.

COMING SOON: Look for information in your email regarding an online hymn sing currently being organized! (If you do not currently receive the all church emails and would like to, send your email information to adminasst@yorkvilleucc.org)

As a reminder, here is how to access the service via each source:

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/yorkvilleucc/videos/?ref=page_internal
or

1. Go to our Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ Facebook page.
2. Click on the videos tab on the left side of the home page.
3. Scroll down to select the appropriate sermon date.
4. Click the arrow to view the sermon video.

Website: <http://yorkvilleucc.org/media/>
or

1. Go to our YorkvilleUCC.org home page.
2. Click on the Worship/Media Tab.
3. Scroll down to select the appropriate sermon date.
4. Click the arrow to view the sermon video.

YouTube.com: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=yorkville+congregational+united+church+of+christ

1. Go to the search bar.
2. Type in "Yorkville Congregational United Church of Christ".
3. Click on the channel.
4. Select the appropriate sermon date.
5. Click the arrow to view the sermon video.

I thank you all for your feedback and hope you and your family remain safe and well!

Lori Redmon
Worship Serving Shepherd

Stephen Ministry

Versatile, Helpful, Meaningful



One Stephen Minister may be ministering to a grieving widower.

Another Stephen Minister may be praying with a patient before surgery.

Another may be offering empathy and support to a single mother.

Yet another may be sharing encouraging words to a young man in jail.

Still another may be bringing a friendly smile to a homebound person.

Bearing one another's burdens through Christ's Love

For more information, contact LouAnn Hoffman or Carrie DeFuss



Those Grieving:

The McIntyre Family, The Inukai Family

Those in Cancer Treatment:

Andrea Andres	Sue Monahan	Kylie Brewick's sister-in-law's mom - leukemia
Tommy Marcum	Pat Rogers	
Michelle Meyers	Pearl Undesser	

Health Concerns:

Bill Andersen	Joe Duran	Bob Johnston	Andrea Prochaska
Michelle Atwood	Gail Fisher	Diana Lee	Dale Prochaska
Myrah Baldwin	Mary Freeman	Mazie Marshall	Larry Rezash
Lynn Belcher	David Hembree	Joanne O'Brien	Walter Scott
McKenzie Brewick	Karen Hess	Doug Pierce	Marcus Schulz
Earl Bushnell	Carlene Hudgins	Macayla Poch	Bob Stout
Jim Dirst	Cliff Jahp	Debbie Potempa	

General Concerns:

Brian Homerding	The people who work on the
Ruth Prince	front lines of the virus - doctors,
Michelle Terri	nurses, healthcare workers,
Fred & Marie Wayne	nursing home workers, first
	responders.

Homebound/Assisted Living:

Jim Follmer	Dorothy Sanderson
Andrea Prochaska	



Staff Sgt. Ryan Strong, son of Tim & Laurie Strong

May Birthdays

Justin Sartori	01	Matt Strong	10
Kris Schoenfelder	02	Emily Gawne	11
Brian Bazan	03	Kaitlin Mulligan	12
Paul Myers	03	Lea Ann Skogsberg	13
Jim Shalek	03	Zachary Seibel	14
Brad Schroder	05	Jerry Engelhardt	16
Barb Thurlby	05	Barbara Hofmann	18
Bonnie Havelka	06	Joyce Pratt	19
Ashlynn McLeod	06	Natalie Culberson	22
Kristen Langston	07	Michelle Prentice-Leslie	23
Robbie Strandell	07	Megan Rhodes-Johnson	23
Salli Walden	08	Chandler Cathey	25
Anne Engelhardt	09	Max Morello	28
Jamie McLeod	09	Bret Reifsteck	28
Gere Ryerson	09	Carol Seibel Falato	29
Vanessa Strandell	10		

May Anniversaries

5/2	Terry & Christine Keith	5 years
5/5	Wayne & Dolores Cruise	71 years
5/11	Art & Andrea Prochaska	35 years
5/11	Tyler & Krista Wilson	1 years
5/12	Dan & Julie Gette	30 years
5/18	Jeff & Diane Dillow	42 years
5/25	Keith & Terri Frisk	35 years
5/28	Duane & Salli Walden	15 years

Altar Guild

May, 2020
Sue Kimes & Nancy Kolowski
June, 2020
Jill Mickelson & Joanne Vitek



Fourth Sunday of Easter

WHITE
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10
Powerful Witness

Fifth Sunday of Easter

WHITE
Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14
Enduring Witness

Sixth Sunday of Easter

WHITE
Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21
Witness of Love

Seventh Sunday of Easter

WHITE
Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11
Spirit of Witness

Pentecost Sunday

RED
Acts 2:1-21 or Num 11:24-30
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
1 Cor 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23 or John 7:37-39

Date	Greeters	Liturgists	Guardians
5/3	TBD	TBD	Jeff Kline
5/10	TBD	TBD	Lee Kinkade
5/17	TBD	TBD	Brian Bazan
5/24	TBD	TBD	Fred Dickson
5/31	TBD	TBD	Jeff Farren

Our Mission Statement

*To live as Jesus lived: Love without Judgement, Welcome without Exception,
Serve with Compassion, Teach by Example.*

Our Vision Statement

God's community of unconditional love, made real for everyone, everywhere.

Open & Affirming Covenant

YCUCC is an open and affirming congregation that seeks to meet each child of God—persons from the full diversity of creation including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical and intellectual ability, age, race, nationality, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing and family structure—where they are on life's journey as together we seek to transform all our lives through Christ's Gospel.

Watch our church services on the internet!!

Facebook: [Click here](#) OR

1. Go to our YCUCC Facebook page.
2. Click on the videos tab on the left side of the home page.
3. Scroll down to select the appropriate sermon date.
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