



Little Brown Church of Sunol

United Church of Christ – Congregational
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August 2023 Newsletter

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August-September Calendar

Saturday, August 12 ... International Youth Day

Monday, September 4 ... Labor Day

Saturday, September 23 ... First day of Autumn

What's happening in the UCC

Our denomination has a long history of standing up for marginalized groups and leading the conversation on expanding civil rights, promoting peace, and protecting the environment. Our roots in the denominations that joined hands to become the United Church of Christ included men and women who were in the forefront of movements for self-government, the abolition of slavery, women's rights, political and religious liberty, and indigenous people's rights.

The UCC has also long been in the forefront of defending the rights of members of the LGBTQ community. It continues to stay ahead of the curve by speaking out for members of the non-binary and trans community, even in places where society is less welcoming than in the Bay Area. For example, First Congregational Church, UCC, in Billings, Montana, hosted a Drag Queen Story Hour in June as a direct response to new state legislation that prohibits persons dressed in drag from reading to children at public schools and libraries. The law does not apply to churches, so the Billings church decided to offer the activity during Pride Month. Some small-town churches in the upper Midwest and elsewhere have also taken the lead in bringing Pride activities to their communities.

This takes courage! Even in what seemed like the safe space of the UCC convention in Indianapolis earlier this summer, some of those attending described hurtful encounters with other people at the Convention Center from a different denomination. An incident at the convention led to a public statement by incoming UCC Board chair Julia Gaughan. She said this to the General Synod during its plenary session July 4:

“It has come to our attention that individuals among us have experienced harm and pain while here in Indianapolis, that words of hate have been wielded against our LGBTQIA+ siblings in the Convention Center.” She added, “If one of us has been hurt, then all of us have been hurt, for we are one body.”

Later, leaders of the other denomination apologized.

You can read more news about our national convention here: <https://www.ucc.org/general-synod-34-highlights/>.

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