

Chautauqua Grant - Detailed Information

2025 for 2026 season

Applications may be made from now until September 30, see more details below

Have you heard about the Chautauqua Institute? A number of our congregants have attended one or more of its weeklong sessions, many have gone several times. An anonymous member has gifted the church with a grant which will cover modest expenses for someone new to go every year for the next several years! But what is Chautauqua, and why should you be excited about going there?

3 minute video from Chautauqua: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=je3rOMJPPkE>

The Chautauqua Institute is a small, gated community on the shore of Lake Chautauqua, NY. It began as a summer camp for Methodist Sunday School teachers in 1874. It is filled with small houses, cottages, hotels and apartment houses surrounding a public green, performance and lecture spaces, restaurants and shops as well as dormitory type residences run by many denominations. The Chautauqua season runs every summer for nine weeks. Each week has a different theme. Some of the themes in 2026 include **The Future of Food; America at 250; Icons and Instigators: Women Who Change the World; and The Importance of Gathering.** Each week also has an interfaith theme.

The day can start with anything from yoga to kayaking to meditation or enjoying breakfast with housemates. There is an ecumenical Christian service in the Amphitheater (seats 4000) at 9:15. The days are then filled with opportunities to attend lectures, plays, classes, discussions, shows and concerts. Speakers and performers are often nationally known and encourage thoughtful and soulful reflection on ourselves, our faith and spiritual practices, our communities, and our cultures.

Linda Lupton, our 2025 grant recipient, included this in her comments about her experience: "So many fond memories of the UCC services, meeting Canadian friends at the house, concerts, plays, lectures, and just being in the presence of so many welcoming enjoyable people, thoughts and beautiful natural environment. Especially meaningful were the evening piano concerto, Sunday morning worship at the small UCC gathering and later with the HUGE Amphitheater congregation, a play, an opera workshop, George Saunders' lecture and spending time with good friend, Karen Walker. My body, soul and spirit were enriched by this experience. Thanks to FCC for granting me this gift. Can't wait to go back and teach quilting perhaps?"

Cindy Cox, our first grant recipient, included this in her comments about her experience: "I absolutely loved Chautauqua. The speakers were spectacular. My best description of Chautauqua, "Disney for Nerds". I loved every minute of it and hope I can go back. I'm so appreciative of the anonymous donor's extravagant gift, without it there would have been no way I could have afforded such a wonderful week of spiritual renewal!"

We all owe our anonymous friend a huge vote of thanks for making this opportunity more widely available. More will be said through the coming month at church.

To learn more about Chautauqua opportunities and accommodations, please visit <https://www.chq.org/visit/plan-your-visit/2026-season/>

Chautauqua Grant - Application Process 2025 for 2026 Season

Application Process: Our Chautauqua awards team is accepting applications from now until September 30. Application forms are available by the Narthex or on the church website. If you're interested, please fill one out and send it to the church or drop it in the labeled box in the Narthex. The awards team will review the applications, and the winner will be announced by the end of November.

Eligibility requirements: The intent of the grant is to be able to send the equivalent of one person every year while the original funds last. This could also be 2 people every other year, or perhaps a small family or group, occasionally. To be eligible:

- You must be a member of FCC for 2 years before the date of the trip
- You must not have attended Chautauqua Institute within the last 5 years
- You must be able to plan and navigate your specific trip independently

Funding

For traveling in the year 2026, the amounts of the grant would be \$2600 for one person, \$4350 for 2 people, or \$5600 for more. This is meant to cover the vast majority of the expenses (entrance fees, accommodations, food, travel) if handled economically. Additional monies spent are up to the travelers. Two thirds of the money would be provided by year end for making reservations. One third of the money would be provided the week before departure. If the trip must be cancelled for any reason, any money not yet spent on the trip would be expected to be returned to the church.

Reservations for specific weeks and for accommodations open in early January – in order to reserve economical rooms (some of which include shared bathrooms and a shared kitchen), reservations must be made essentially immediately as they fill up very fast. The committee can point to websites but the planning and execution will be left to the travelers.

This will be discussed at church and in the epistles throughout the month of September. Feel free to reach out to anyone on the awards team with any questions. This is a lot to digest but worth the effort!

Good luck! From the Chautauqua awards team: Karen Walker, Gini Coomer, Steve Leatherman, Wendy Baldwin, Linda Lupton, or Pastor Sarah Lund.

APPLICATION FORM – FOR THE CHAUTAUQUA GRANT FOR 2026

Please complete and mail to the church or put in the labeled box in the Narthex

by September 30, 2025

To be eligible for the grant:

- You must be a member of FCC for 2 years before the date of the trip
- You must not have attended Chautauqua Institute within the last 5 years
- You must be able to plan and navigate your specific trip independently

The Chautauqua team, with approval from the Council will select grantee(s) each year

Names of travelers:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip	
Phone # (home)	
Phone # (cell)	
Email	

What year did you join FCC? _____

Have you attended Chautauqua in NY before? Y / N

If so, when was your last visit? _____

Briefly, please tell us what you hope to gain from attending Chautauqua?

If you are selected, would you be willing to share your Chautauqua experience with the Chautauqua Team, with the Board of Worship and Faith, or with the Congregation as a whole?

Y / N