

Applications may be made from now until September 30, 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 given the church 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 houses, cottages, and a few hotels as well as dormitory type residences run by many denominations – all surrounding a public green, performance and lecture spaces, restaurants and shops. The Chautauqua season runs every summer for nine weeks. Each week has a different theme but there are 4 pillars that are key throughout the summer: **Arts, Education, Religion and Recreation**. Check it out at <https://www.chq.org/>

There is a weekly theme that ties together some of the activities – some themes for 2027: The American Constitution; Applied Ethics in the Age of AI; United We Swing with Wynton Marsalis; Exploration and Confluence with National Geographic; Amna Nawaz and Friends – storytellers; Pulitzer prizes; On Living Well with Dr. Sanjay Gupta; Turning Roots Into Rock – with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

The days are yours to plan as much or as little as you want. They can start with yoga, kayaking, meditation and/or enjoying breakfast with housemates. There is an ecumenical Christian service in the open Amphitheater at 9:15. The days can fill quickly with opportunities to play (including a camp for kids) and choices from lectures, plays, classes, and concerts. There is also ample space for conversation, for rest, and for thoughtful reflection on our faith and spiritual practices, our communities, and our cultures.

Carol Sowle, our grant recipient for this year says: Chautauqua has been on my bucket list since a college history class introduced me to Utopias in America. I jumped at the chance to go to Chautauqua to hear the Ken Burns and Jeffrey Rosen lectures in week six. The lectures did not disappoint. They were everything and more than I expected. Sitting in the midst of 4,000+ people enhanced the expectations. Spirit abounded. It was truly a highlight, one I will remember. And more was to come.

Chautauqua is indeed an awesome place. Steeped in history. Dressed in beauty. Fully alive. There is so much to do there, and I wanted to do it all. But I also I also wanted to relax, to just be and sit, to soak up the ambiance, the vibe of Chautauqua. I wanted to take in what this place had to say to me

Linda Lupton has this to say: I was the fortunate recipient of the Grant in 2025. It was a fabulous experience, way more to do than I even thought possible. Highlights for me were staying in the UCC Mayflower House and visiting with the residents there, the UCC services, learning about the literary society, and of course, sharing it with my friend, Karen Walker. I enjoyed it so much I applied to teach sign language this year and was accepted. The second visit was even better because of the success of teaching, knowing how to navigate the experience and grounds, sharing the week with Pastor Sarah and her family, and again, spending time with friend, Karen.”

Earlier winner Cindy Cox said: “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 info will be shared throughout September at church, particularly on September 6.

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 at least one person every year while the funds last – spreading it as widely as possible. This could also be 2 people, a family or a group – depending on the finances and circumstances! 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 comfortable making your own plans for the trip with advice from the team

Funding: For traveling in the year 2027, the amounts of the grant will be at least \$2600 for one person, \$4350 for 2 people, or \$5600 for more. The funds are 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. 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 denomination housing accommodations open in early January – in order to reserve these 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. Reservations in other accommodations – such as hotels and rented condos or houses are arranged through standard reservation sites. There is a lot of advice and information available at <https://www.chq.org/>.

This will be discussed at church and in the epistles throughout the month of September. This is a lot to digest but worth the effort! Feel free to reach out to anyone on the Chautauqua team for more information – we have all been to Chautauqua and are excited to share tips and insights to smooth the way for first time travelers there. Hope to see you there! Karen Walker, Linda Lupton, Carol Sowle, Pastor Sarah Lund.

APPLICATION FORM – FOR THE CHAUTAUQUA GRANT FOR 2027

**Please complete and mail to the church or put in the labeled box in the Narthex
by September 30, 2026**

To be eligible for the grant, the primary applicant:

- Must be a member of FCC for 2 years before the date of the trip
- Must not have attended Chautauqua Institute within the last 5 years
- Must be comfortable making your own plans for the trip with advice from the team

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