

Established 1856

Talk of the Tower

You are welcome at First Congregational U.C.C., wherever you are on your spiritual journey.

June 30, 2010

**GOD'S
PEOPLE
GATHER**



WHAT'S HAPPENING

SUNDAY, JULY 4

8:30 a.m.

† Worship, Chapel –

10:15 a.m.

† Community Worship at Owen Park

SUNDAY, JULY 11

Food for Pets

8:30 a.m.

† Worship, Chapel –

10:00 a.m.

† Worship, Sanctuary –

11:00 a.m. Fellowship

SUNDAY, JULY 18

8:30 a.m.

† Worship, Chapel –

10:00 a.m.

† Worship, Sanctuary –

11:00 a.m. Fellowship

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Read a good book lately!

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The time is now



Fourth of July

Community Outdoor Worship Service

Sunday, July 4

10:15 a.m.

Owen Park

First Congregational, First Lutheran, First Baptist,
First Presbyterian, Grace Lutheran, Christ Church
Cathedral

A combined choir from all the churches will sing and
our own Stadpfeiffer Brass Quartet will provide
patriotic music

8:30 worship will be held in the Chapel

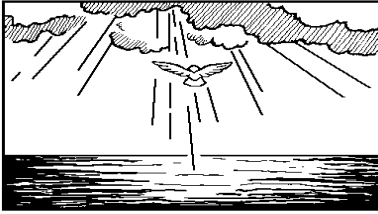
WHEELS OF WELCOME

If transportation and/or parking are a barrier to your coming to church, you will be delighted to hear about a new program at 1st Congregational called Wheels of Welcome. Thanks to our church's Jonah core team, a committee of concerned members has been working on addressing the issues of parking and transportation. This group presented a 3-fold plan to the Church Council on June 17.

Wheels of Welcome seeks to eliminate barriers to church attendance by providing cab service to those coming to worship on Sunday morning or to small group activities at the church during the week. Members need to

call the church office by Friday noon to request a cab for Sunday morning.

Another important part of Wheels of Welcome is to provide "curb ushers" to assist those arriving with walkers, an escort up the ramp or whatever is needed. The Church Council enthusiastically supported the plan and established a fund to pay for the expense of Wheels of Welcome. Donations are welcomed to help this fund grow and memorial gifts can be designated to Wheels of Welcome to insure that all our members can participate actively in the life of our church for as long as possible.



Those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.
- John 4:14

LEARNING IN JESUS' NAME

RENEW: A GREEN VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
Sunday, August 1 thru Thursday, August 5

5:15–7:30 p.m. @ First Baptist First Congo will join with our neighbors First Baptist and Lake Street United Methodist Churches for this year's Vacation Bible School. In RENEW all the activities are fun, hands on and eco-friendly. Based on the Parable of the Sower, the activity areas help children examine how they are planted in the different soils of self, community and world. Children love nature and easily engage this powerful lesson of connection to the earth. Each evening children will take with them a seed that they have planted to transform their world. Each evening begins with a meal at 5:15 (4:45 on Sunday) which the whole family is welcome to attend.



SAVE YOUR ALUMINUM

The Vacation Bible School this year (children age 3-12) focuses on the parable of the Sower. Each year our VBS chooses a mission project. This year children will be challenged to save the environment by recycling products. We will be collecting aluminum cans to recycle. All the proceeds from the recyclable material will be given for the Good Neighbor Project. Please save your cans to support the children in this worthy project.

WISH LIST

Small children's table and chairs

SUNDAY SCHOOL ALL SUMMER

There is supervision and there are activities for children K through 4th grade in the Gathering Place. Summer Sunday School finishes on August 29. Children will enjoy varied lessons and games. There are no activities on Fourth of July or Labor Day.

If you want to volunteer for a Sunday during the summer, please contact Jill Christopherson at jill@firststucceauclaire.org or 715-834-2668.

CONGOKINGDOM RECRUITING FOR SUMMER

We are seeking volunteers to work with our Sunday School children at 10:00.

Leaders may choose from DVD's, lessons, software and games. Materials will be available in the Gathering Place for you to use on Sunday morning. If you want to volunteer for a Sunday during the summer, please contact Jill Christopherson at jill@firststucceauclaire.org or 715-834-2668.

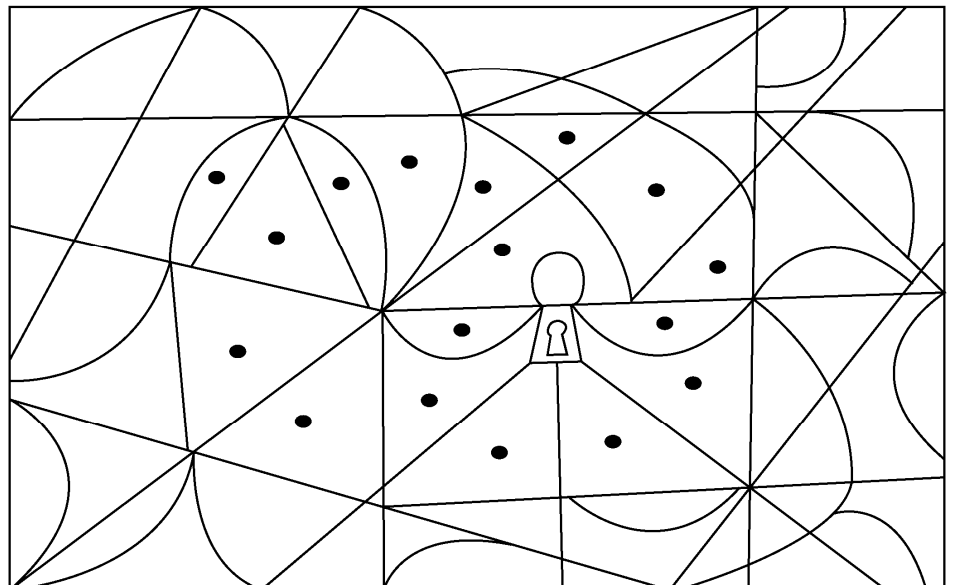
OR

Sign up to help in the nursery, and have fun playing with some sweet young children. Contact Nursery Coordinator Pam Braun@ braunp@att.net or 715-832-2048.

There is no charge for VBS. Look for the registration form included in this edition and more information is available by contacting jans@firststucceauclaire.org.

Coloring Fun!

This is what people might store treasures here on earth in. Choose one color for all the spaces with dots. The other spaces can be colored any color



PRAYER CONCERNS



Trish Tollefson
Richard Myhers
Lois Quale
Juli Murphy
O.E. Giles

Jane Edson
Ron Hetland
The family of Margaret Johnson
The family of Kathryn Elliott
The South Dakota Mission team
Sandy Ayre's mother Jean
Mark Liegel's cousin Carol
Don Ruth's sister Laura
Juanita DeMars' nephew David
All those affected by the Gulf oil disaster
Victims of and responders to natural disasters
Caregivers of loved ones at home
All those affected by war and terrorism

Please alert the office if you know someone who is ill, is dealing with the loss of a loved one, or is having a difficult time in their life. We try not to miss anyone but sometimes it does happen and we do apologize. And please remember our shut-ins and our nursing home residents with your prayers, a card, a visit or a call.

CHURCH VIPS

Sunday school attendance

June 13–11 June 20–9 June 27–10

Worship attendance

June 13–150 June 20–114 June 27–126

Ushers: July 4—Community Worship at Owen Park July 11—Ben Proctor, Capt; Carl Brown, Jane and Chris Lindblad, Gib Magaw, Marv Missman, Linda Pieper, LaMoine Solberg, Jeff Herman July 18—John Baltes, Capt; Lee Fritts, James Hazelton, Bill Krochmalski, Jim Radloff, Jayne Woodruff

Liturgists: July 11—Karen Taylor July 18—Jessie Weber

Tellers: July 11—Debbie Gough, Shirley Crouse July 18—Ruth Verbrugge, Jerry Foote

Greeters: July 11—Finance and Budget July 18—Lay Life and Fellowship

IN MEMORY OF

Memorial gifts received in June

In memory of *Susan Cochrane's father*

Undesignated given by Jill Christopherson

In memory of *Scott Lester's father*

Undesignated given by Jill Christopherson

In memory of *Dorothy Brousseau*

Undesignated given by Nancy and Jim Mortwedt



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gracious words and generous gift on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of my ordination. I was completely surprised, delighted and humbled. Certainly I share your sentiment that we have been blessed with a wonderful "fit" between minister and congregation and that "God has been very good to us, indeed!"

Our Council's letter to me was so kind. It was deeply moving to hear:

We feel so gifted by God to know and to be known by you. Your leadership in this church has been instrumental in our growth... You have helped us clarify who we are and how we intend to be God's people in the world today. You have reminded us that traditional worship is still needed and valued by many and that we need to minister to each other as well to others in the world. You have encouraged us to use our strengths to spread God's hope and love throughout the world. You have enlightened us so that we can better see the relevance of scripture in our lives today. You have guided and supported us in all our efforts.

The Reverend Dr. David Moyer, Conference Minister of the Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ, contributed a beautiful letter which nearly brought me to tears. It is quite something to hear a colleague and friend of 30 years confirm your call to ministry and affirm, with conviction, gifts for ministry which have proven enlightening, if not inspirational, challenging, visionary and perhaps even wise.

Wisely, your staff convened on Monday morning at its usual 11:00 hour to remind me that I am actually human and cared for all the same. This rather light roasting was entirely appropriate, richly deserved and thoroughly delightful.

Meredith and I are looking forward to enjoying your gift to us, a show, food and lodging in the Twin Cities. In all things we give thanks that God brought our household and this household of faith together for mission and ministry. We trust that our future together will continue to be filled with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Faithfully,

OPPORTUNITIES IN MINISTRY

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

If you looking for something challenging or light to read this summer the Library Committee provides these new titles to choose from. Check them out in the library.

CRAZY BOOK A Not-So-Stuffey Dictionary of Biblical Terms—Jacobson, Rolf.

This book introduces the reader to the places, books and people of the Bible. It is also a great introduction to the Bible for all denominations, ages teen to adult. It may seem a bit irreverent to some, but humor is part of the Bible.

THE WILL OF GOD: Answering the Hard Questions—Howell,

James C. Howell strives to answer two questions: 1) What is God's will for me? 2) Why do bad things happen? Suffering happens; "God doesn't cause it so much as God bears it". This is a thought provoking book with questions for discussion provided at the end of every chapter.

STONES INTO SCHOOLS: The continuing story of author Greg Mortenson's humanitarian achievements in the remote villages of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In a world of uncertainty and much unrest, the book offers hope and a future for an almost forgotten society to further education and knowledge.

NO LONGER ALONE: Rising Above Childhood Sexual Abuse

Author Sallie Culbreth, founder of a Christian recovery resource for survivors of childhood abuse, builds on her own experiences with abuse and recovery in helping others to begin to heal. Helpful ideas for self-reflection and group discussion are included at the end of each chapter.

A CHRISTIAN GUIDE TO THE QUR'AN: Building Bridges in Muslim Evangelism—Ghattas, Raouf and Carol.

This is an excellent resource to help Christians understand the Qur'an as it translates the Qur'an into simple terms. Each sura, or chapter, of the Qur'an is given with a commentary to aid in understanding the text as well as to give ideas for evangelism.

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN. - Book of Fiction—Mynheir, Mark.

Any mystery reader would enjoy the twists and turns of this book. The author, a detective in Central Florida, creates an unusual hero.

THE PRODIGAL GOD: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith—Timothy Keller

The Prodigal God focuses on God's prodigal grace toward both sons who today are represented by the irreligious, those turned off by religion, and the morally upright.

INVITATION TO THE JESUS LIFE: Experiments in Christlikeness—Jan Johnson

Transforming behavior through "connecting with God, abiding in Christ and living in terms of the Spirit" is what the author characterizes as "Soul School" to become more Christlike. Challenging questions for discussion and reflection of each chapter are also included.

GOD SEEKERS: Twenty Centuries of Christian Spiritualities—Richard Schmidt

God Seekers, an overview of twenty centuries of Christian spirituality, focuses on thirty-two personalities as exemplars of their times. This is more a reference work than anything else, and is meant to be sampled rather than to be read straight through.

AS WE FORGIVE: Stories of Reconciliation from Rwanda.
Catherine Larson.



IN THE CONGREGATION

A memorial service celebrating the life of Kathryn Elliott, a member since 1959, was held on Wednesday, June 28.

A memorial service celebrating the life of Margaret Johnson, a member since 1968, was held on Thursday, June 29.

FROM THE OFFICE

- Church Leaders: Don't forget that 2009-2010 Annual Reports are due by Friday, July 16.
- The office will be closed on July 5.
- There are temporary summer office volunteer shifts available if you need something to do. While away three hours in a pleasant atmosphere. Duties include answering the phone, greeting visitors, correspondence, and light tasks as assigned. It is also a good place to catch up on your summer reading. Call or e-mail Jan: 715-834-2668 or jans@firstucceauclaire.org.

MISSIONS IN MOTION

SERVICE TO OUR NEIGHBORS

We had great support from the entire church for our June hosting at Beacon House. Extra food purchased by the church for special events and end-of-the year dinners and picnics provided two great meals! In addition, special thanks go to Paul Savides, Julie Weinkauf and Cynthia Horman, Dave Morley, Glen, Pam, Caleb and Luke Schuster, Margi Namejunas and Darlene Cornell for helping with meals or staying overnight. There was a full house this time with parents and many young children. We will have the opportunity to serve again August 8 to 14.



2010-2011 Budget
Approved by the Congregation
June 27, 2010

Pledges		\$489,078
Loose Offering		29,000
Facility Rental		2,500
Easter		3,000
Prior Year Pledges		10,000
Other		1,500
Total Income		\$535,078
Mission Education		\$37,350
Religious Education		10,100
Music		10,350
Service/Worship		3,825
Lay Life/Fellowship		500
Delegate Expense		1,000
Stewardship		1,500
Staff Salaries & Benefits		382,253
Ministerial Program		2,000
Building Maintenance		36,500
Office Supplies		21,000
Utilities		28,500
Search Expense		200
Total Expense		\$535,078
Income less Expense		-

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN
COMMITTEES 2010-2011
APPROVED BY CONGREGATION JUNE 27, 2010

Moderator Elect—three year term

John Urice

Financial Review Committee—three vacancies, each a one year term

Darrell Beeksma Dan Reali Jane Brandvold

Nominating Committee—four vacancies, each a one year term

Darlene Cornell Jane Edson Linda Davenport Dave Morley

Church Council—six vacancies, five a three year term, one a two year term

Annie Bailey Katrinka Bourne Joan Brown Dan Hendrickson Karen McMahon Janna Morley
(2 year term)

Facilities—two vacancies, each a two year term

Gib Magaw Dale Young

Finance & Budget—two vacancies, each a two year term

Susan Cochrane Marcia VanBeek

Lay Life & Fellowship—three vacancies, each a two year term

Tiffany Leighton Giffey Jean Hazelton Anne Sather

Mission Education & Social Concerns—three vacancies, each a two year term

Adrienne Storm Kathy Magaw Kathryn Wahl

Personnel—two vacancies, each a two year term

Tom Bruckner Wendy Richards

Religious Education—three vacancies, each a two year term

Debbie Mickelson

Spiritual Life—three vacancies, each a two year term

Ruth Crouse Peggy Ore Terry Hairrell

Stewardship—three vacancies, each a two year term

Ruth Verbrugge Barbara Arnold Pat Heins



PRIMETIME POSTINGS

CONSIDER AN ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

This information comes from the State Bar of Wisconsin and is important for everyone to consider. If you have already completed an advance directive (either a living will or health care power of attorney), you may want to review it to be sure it continues to express your wishes.

What is an advance directive?

An advance directive is a written instruction that you make while you are mentally competent. The advance directive states how you want health care decisions to be made for you if you become incapacitated. Wisconsin laws recognize two forms of advance directives – the living will and the health care power of attorney.

A living will (Declaration to Physicians) describes the kind of life-sustaining care you would want if injury or illness leaves you in a terminal condition (dying) or a persistent vegetative state (permanent unconsciousness) with no hope of recovery.

With a health care power of attorney, you appoint someone to be your "agent" to make all health care decisions – not just those involving life support – for you if you lose the ability to make decisions for yourself. You also may include a description of your treatment preferences and special desires in this document, to help guide the person making decisions for you. In this document you also may authorize your agent to admit you to a nursing home or community-based residential facility, and you may indicate your wish to donate body parts after death.

Why should I have an advance directive?

An advance directive allows you to make your wishes clear to your family, friends, and health care providers while you are still able to do so. The advance directive helps prevent disagreements among your family members about what treatment you should receive if you are incapacitated.

Should I have both a living will and health care power of attorney?

Perhaps. Some people do not want to ask someone else to decide when and if artificial life support should be withheld. Instead, they want to make those decisions in advance by signing a living will.

A health care power of attorney is more powerful and flexible than a living will. A health care power of attorney can be drafted so that your health care agent has the authority to make a variety of medical decisions for you, as opposed to a living will, which only directs when artificial life support is to be withheld.

What if I have both a living will and a health care power of attorney?

If you have both a living will and a health care power of attorney, be sure they are consistent. If there is any conflict between the two, the health care power of attorney will overrule the living will.

When should I prepare an advance directive?

Now. While most people first think about preparing an advance directive when they are admitted to a hospital or nursing home, it is a good idea to think about doing so now – while your health permits you to do so.



SMALL GROUP AND FAMILY MINISTRY

LEADERS AS STEWARDS, NOT OWNERS

Scene I: We sat on the edge of a step, outside the back door of the community center, looking down over the rolling hills ahead of us; she was from Texas, I was from Tennessee. I had known Janice for four years through church venues and I knew she had the gifts, the passion, and the contagious enthusiasm. So, I asked her: “Would you be willing to co-lead this two-year project that will bring together people who are in need of support, care, challenge, and learning?” She paused. She knew the possibilities; she knew the responsibilities; she knew the challenges. She prayed, talked with her family, and came to say “Yes” to what became an incredible adventure for us and for the Team formed.

Seven months into our meetings, her 13-year old son died in a freak go-kart accident. I traveled to TX for the funeral. One month later, our “small group” Team surrounded her with care, support, love, and compassion. In vulnerable moments, she found courage to be the depth of her self with us.

Six months later, my father died suddenly; within that same year, one of our members lost her job and struggled with her sense of self worth.

Through it all, Janice offered herself in leadership, as a steward with this small group of committed persons, for a project that changed many lives.

Janice was called to lead – not in the best of times, but with

a sense of care for those on the team as we prayed and worshipped each time we met;

with her own appropriate vulnerability that brought honesty from us all;

with humor that reminded us that we were “in this together;”

with a sharing of responsibilities (we often said “we are better together than we are apart”);

with compassion that reminded us of how our humility and our gifts for leadership were woven together;

and,

with a willingness to say “Yes” to leadership.

Scene II: First Congregational UCC, Eau Claire, Small Group and Family Ministries Committee, June 3, 2010.

With engaging dialogue, and a commitment to the future of small groups, the Committee supports and endorses a plan for small groups in the congregation; it calls for both self-initiated and invitational leadership.

Self-initiated = do you have an idea, a topic, a hobby, a passion, for a small group in which you are willing to (co-) lead a group of people into humor, sharing of faith, support, honesty, and discovery? Invitational Leadership = You may be invited to (co-) lead a small group for this coming year (if you have indicated to Lynn Scott you are interested or offered your leadership through the survey in March on small groups).

Consider how you might grow into God, into your authentic self, into being a steward of a small group. Pray about it. Talk with Lynn about possibilities for the 2010-2011 year.

Scene III: Fourteen years later. Though not very often, when I see Janice, the memories of those significant two years still get told in our smiles and our conversations. Her willingness to say “Yes” changed all of our lives.

For conversation about Small Group Ministries, see Lynn Scott, Director of Small Group and Family Ministries. (lynns@firststucceauclaire.org)

First Congregational U.C.C.
310 Broadway St.
Eau Claire, WI 54703

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TALK OF THE TOWER...

is a publication for members and friends of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Editor: Jan Smith Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Mark X. Pirazzini

Next deadline: 10 a.m., Monday July 19, 2010

Put items (as short as possible) in the "in" basket in the church office, fax to 834-0674 or e-mail to jans@firstucceauclaire.org



First Congregational United Church of Christ

310 Broadway St., Eau Claire, WI 54703

Phone: 715-834-2668

Fax: 715-834-0674

Web site: www.firstucceauclaire.org

E-mail: jans@firstucceauclaire.org (office)

pastor@firstucceauclaire.org (minister)

Office hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Staff

Rev. Dr. Mark Pirazzini, Minister

Jill Christopherson, Director of Religious Education

Jan Smith, Church Office Manager

Mary Barnes, Director of Elderlife

Crystal Sals, Financial Secretary

Brent Podhaski, Custodian

Lynn Scott, Director of Small Group & Family Ministry

Dr. Gary Schwartzhoff, Director of Music

Judy Lies, Organist

Denise Theyerl, Youth Choir Director

Meredith Pirazzini, Youth Choirs Accompanist

Pam Braun, Nursery Coordinator

Chad Murray, Youth Coordinator