

## FIRST SERVICE OF APRIL IN THE SANCTUARY

A reminder that the first service of each month is held in the Sanctuary. Join us Sunday morning, April 7, at 8:00. Our other services will continue to be held in Fellowship Hall until our elevator is fixed. See *page 5* for an elevator update. Thank you for your continued patience!

.....

## APRIL 7 - PASTOR SCOTT'S LAST SUNDAY

*+Farewell Luncheon* 

Pastor Scott's last Sunday is April 7. During the 10:00 service, we will release Pastor Scott of his ties to First Congregational Church through a Liturgy of Farewell. The Liturgy of Farewell is a meaningful tradition within the United Church of Christ, providing a structured way for congregations and pastors to mark the end of their time together. This liturgy allows for a mutual expression of gratitude, forgiveness, and acknowledgment of the pastor's service and contributions. This ceremony is not just an ending, but also a celebration of new beginnings, as both pastor and congregation look forward to the paths that lie ahead. The farewell service is a poignant reminder that while roles and relationships may change, the bonds of faith and fellowship continue to unite and strengthen all involved. Please plan to stay for a Farewell Luncheon after the 10:00 service. Sub sandwiches, chips, and cake will be served. You are invited to bring a side salad if you would like.

.....

## FAREWELL TO PASTOR SCOTT AND NEXT STEPS

As we enter a time of pastoral transition, we want to provide as much information as possible and lay out our next steps. Please see the following pages:

- Page 3 - Goodbye Note from Pastor Scott
- Page 4 - Transition Terminology & Exit Interview
- Page 5 - Guest Leadership on April 14, 21, and 28
- Page 6 - Transition Updates from Church Council, including Interim Plans

## WORSHIP WITH US

We celebrate two Sunday morning worship services at 8:00 and 10:00. Nursery care is available at the 10:00 service.

## HOLY COMMUNION

The first Sunday morning of each month we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Communion is open to all who seek to follow in the way of Christ, both children and adults.

## LINKED UP

Be on the lookout for orange text - it's linked up to documents and web pages that you might find helpful or interesting.

## SUBMIT INFO FOR THE NEWSLETTER

If you have a celebration, prayer request, or other contribution for the newsletter, please email us 7-10 days before the first day of the month.

## SAYING GOODBYE - A NOTE FROM PASTOR SCOTT

The time for my departure has come. I really hate having to say “goodbye”. I’m going to miss you and the Port Washington community. Just today as I drove into town, I realized how much I am going to miss the view of Lake Michigan as I drive down Grand Avenue on the way to church. I’m going to miss coffee at Java Dock and lunch at Dockside Deli or at The Steerage. I’m going to miss running over to the Niederkorn Library in the afternoon to write or to read, or when the weather is nice to sit near the creek of the church’s Creekside Commons, or move up to Upper Lake Park for a walk.

I’m going to miss this congregation of talented, intelligent, loving, dedicated, and faithful folks. A church with incredible musicians who bring their gifts of praise to every single worship service—piano, organ, handbell, and voice (never mind the Christmas and Easter Brass)! What a joy it has been to worship with all of you! I’m going to miss the Wednesday Lunch group and the large Confirmation Classes. I’m going to miss Chris Fraser’s laugh from the back of the sanctuary when I do something silly during worship. I’m going to miss Mike Spalding selecting hymns (what a gift that has been!) and having an actual “staff” to help get things done around the church! There is so much I will miss about being your pastor here at FCC in Port Washington. Of course, it is the people of this congregation that I will miss most of all.

Saying “farewell” has already begun as some folks knew they wouldn’t be able to be present near my last couple of weeks. And I’m thankful that I have been able to make pastoral visits to others, saying goodbye even as I brought Lenten and Easter communion. I have been trying to make sure that there is information ready for the new interim pastor to pick up and continue without missing anything too important. It is one thing I can do to help ease my sadness—trying to make sure the church will be fine without me.

As we say goodbye, it is important to remember the ethical boundaries that need to be maintained. You are probably familiar with at least one portion of the Ordained Minister’s Code. The Code includes the following ethical guideline: “I will not, upon my termination and departure from a ministry position, interfere with or intrude upon the ministry of my successor. I will not perform pastoral services within a parish or for a member of a parish without the consent of the pastor of that parish. I will deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and successor.” The Ordained Minister’s Code was created in reaction to real experience when pastors do not pay close attention to boundaries of personal and professional ethics. Our tendency is to think, “Oh, this doesn’t pertain to me!” But it does.

I leave you with one last word; from Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:13-14, **“Keep alert; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”** In the transition that is now upon all of you, keep alert for the movement of God’s Spirit. God is at work here! Be attentive to the push and pull of the Spirit’s call. Be brave—these are not easy times to be a mainline church. Be strong—you have so many gifts, talents, and abilities—now is the time to use them all. And of course, love one another! Love is difficult work. It requires forgiveness. It calls for mercy. But when love reigns supreme—healing and vitality will follow. God bless you, now and forever. Amen.

## TRANSITION TERMINOLOGY AND INFORMATION

**Transition Period** – There are two major phases the church will move through during a transition period: the congregational self-study, often led by an interim minister, that leads to the development of a Local Church Profile followed by the search for, nomination of, and election of a settled minister.

**Pulpit Supply** – Wisconsin Conference UCC maintains a list of interested guest ministers available temporarily on a week-to-week basis. Our church compensates the clergy member for the specific Sunday morning they preach.

**Interim Minister** – Within the United Church of Christ, interim ministry is understood to be the specialized, time-limited pastoral ministry provided to a local congregation during a pastoral vacancy. During the interim period, in addition to performing the usual pastoral role, the interim also helps the church focus on issues of identity and mission in specific and intentional ways, as it evaluates its past and present plans for its future. The ethical norm throughout the UCC is that those doing interim ministry are not candidates for the settled position. Because of the unique situation of each congregation, the length of the interim ministry period varies greatly, but is common to last 12-18 months.

**Search and Call Process** – The work to find a minister to be called to provide settled ministerial leadership through a Search Committee. Search and Call takes considerable time and thoughtfulness, with prayerful attention to both logistical detail and the movement of God's Spirit. It is expected that authorized ministers and local congregations work closely with Conferences and Associations while engaged in Search and Call.

**Settled Minister** – Clergy person we call to serve our church. Settled Ministry has no predetermined end-date and is meant to mature in partnership over time between a pastor and a congregation.



## EXIT INTERVIEW ON APRIL 4 - A TIME FOR MUTUAL REFLECTION

As Pastor Scott prepares to embark on a new chapter, our church leadership is taking a moment to reflect on the journey we've shared by participating in an Exit Interview on Thursday evening, April 4. The Exit Interview is not just a formality, but a heartfelt exchange between Pastor Scott and the Church Council, along with the Pastor Parish Relations Team. This process is a thoughtful review of the pastor's tenure and examines the growth and challenges faced by our congregation. It's an opportunity to celebrate our collective achievements, acknowledge the work still to be done, and offer affirmations to both Pastor Scott and our church family. This Exit Interview is a testament to our commitment to continuous reflection and improvement, ensuring that our church remains a safe, vibrant, and nurturing community for all. Thursday, April 4, will be Pastor Scott's last day in the office before his last worship services on April 7.

## GUEST LEADERSHIP FOR OUR SUNDAY SERVICES IN APRIL

After Pastor Scott's last Sunday, we plan to utilize Pulpit Supply for the remainder of the month. It is our hope to have an interim minister in place starting in May.

Rev. Bob Wells and Rev. Jim Gorman will be our guest leaders. Please join us in giving them a hearty welcome!

**APRIL 14**



### REV. BOB WELLS

Bob Wells is currently serving as a full time chaplain at Cedar Community in West Bend. Ordained in 1986, initially serving for 14 years in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Bob began serving churches in the United Church of Christ in 2009. He and his wife, Jean, celebrated their 23rd anniversary on Easter Sunday. They are blessed with two beautiful "kids", David and Mary, who are both in college.

**APRIL 21 & 28**



### REV. JIM GORMAN

Jim Gorman has served two congregations in Wisconsin as a full time pastor. He and his wife Sally have lived in Wisconsin for 40 years. Jim began his ministry in Chicago after graduating from Eden Seminary. He was drafted in the Army and served in the Washington D.C. area where he met his wife. He and Sally have two grown children and two grandchildren. Jim paints in oils and watercolors and loves teaching his grandchildren how to paint. He has been retired for 10 years and served several congregations as an interim pastor.



## UP-TO-DATE ELEVATOR NEWS

On Wednesday, March 27, Otis Elevator Company helped the Property Team determine that two control boards have failed. One controls the calling of the elevator carriage to the different levels, and one controls the door motors. One of the control boards is able to be repaired and the other is on order.



# TRANSITION UPDATES

FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Dear Members and Friends,

We would like to provide you with a few updates as we enter this time of transition:

1. We are working on selecting an interim minister to provide continuity in worship, pastoral care, and program oversight. Rev. Jane Anderson, Associate Conference Minister of the Southeast Association Wisconsin Conference UCC, is assisting us.
2. The interim selection process has about twelve steps in the UCC's guide to "Welcoming the Interim Pastor". We are currently working on steps nine and ten, a clarification of responsibilities and compensation. Once we fully secure our interim minister, we look forward to sharing information about this clergy person.
3. After the interim minister is in place, we will initiate a Search and Call process for a new pastor. We will invite all of you to be part of a self-study that will identify our church's pastoral needs. A Search Committee will develop a Church Profile to be shared with potential candidates.
4. Our Conference office will advertise our vacancy among UCC clergy across the country. Our Search Committee will read ministerial profiles, screen candidates, conduct interviews, check references, and eventually select a candidate who will be recommended to the entire congregation.

The UCC Conference strongly recommends that the church not move ahead with the selection of a Search Committee until transition decisions are made and ongoing pastoral coverage is assured for the following reasons:

- Moving ahead too rapidly does not allow "space for members to adjust to and deal with a complex variety of emotions related to the previous pastorate".
- Moving ahead too rapidly does not allow our congregation to utilize the specialized talents/training of the interim minister we choose. This time allows us to know ourselves better and gain a more solid sense of the qualities we seek in a settled minister if we pause to learn from our intentional interim time.
- Moving ahead too rapidly leads to premature closure of a renewal process that might enable the congregation to explore dramatic new opportunities for mission and service.

We are keeping a running list of those who have offered to be part of the Search Committee and appreciate their interest.

We drafted this update so you can trust that we are taking steps to ensure the stability and vitality of our future. We will keep you informed on a regular basis and plan to share "Transition Updates" every month.

In closing, we'd like to express gratitude for Pastor Scott's ministry. Please keep Scott and his family in your prayers, and we appreciate that he will be praying for us in return.

Sincerely, Your Church Council

PAGE 6