

# Congregational Connections

Monthly E-Newsletter of First Congregational Church, UCC | Port Washington, Wisconsin | March 2021

## WHY LENT? WHY NOW?

Welcome to the new e-news monthly newsletter. We are so glad to be able to provide all our members and friends with helpful news and information which will strengthen our "Lenten Connections" long beyond this current season of Lent! We began our 40 days of Lent, (not including the 6 Sundays) with a Drive-Thru Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 17th. While the ashes are an ancient practice, our UCC churches came to it rather recently. For instance, the UCC's Book of Worship, first published in 1986, says, in the introduction to the Ash Wednesday resources, "While the imposition of ashes is not widely used in the tradition of the United Church of Christ..." No wonder I don't remember doing the ashes when I was a kid!

Easter was the first and original Christian holiday. The earliest followers of Jesus began to worship on Sunday, the first day of the week, because that was the day they recalled Jesus' resurrection. Every time they gathered on a Sunday morning; it was a little Easter. Then, once a year they would celebrate a Great Easter. Over several decades, as the church developed and spread to new cities and towns, (continued on page 2)



Rev. Dr. Scott McLeod  
Pastor, First Congregational Church

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Port Washington, Wisconsin

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The words of our Church Covenant proclaim:  
*Depending upon the teachings and life of Jesus for inspiration and guidance,  
we promise to seek to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength and with all our mind,  
and to love our neighbors as ourselves.*

## WHY LENT? WHY NOW? continued...

a tradition began around baptizing new gentile converts on Easter. To ensure they were ready to join the church, the community developed a 40-day period of preparation for baptism. Just like Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days in preparation for his public ministry, the newly converted were prepared to enter the church membership. Often the whole church would join them in their fasting and special prayerful preparations and instruction, and so by 325 C.E. the liturgical season of Lent was officially recognized.

Because these liturgical seasons were not, strictly speaking, biblically mandated, many of our protestant churches moved away from observing them after the Reformations of the 16th Century. But in the 20th Century ecumenical movements (which gave birth to the United Church of Christ), churches like ours rediscovered their richness and have incorporated them back into our regular seasonal calendar.

I do hope you enjoy the worship services on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening and find them meaningful during this special time of year. I look forward to celebrating Easter next month, April 4th, even if it must remain online only. Hopefully, if the infection rates for Covid-19 continue to fall and the vaccination rates continue to increase, we'll be able to join together in person on a Sunday morning before too long.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Scott



## THIS MONTH'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

### March 7

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

### March 21

Jeremiah 31:31-34

John 12:20-33

### March 14

Numbers 21:4-9

John 3:14-21

### March 28

Mark 11:1-11

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-11

# WELCOME!

Welcome to the first edition of our monthly e-newsletter! We are very excited to offer this publication as a tool to help everyone feel better connected to the life of our church. We will continue to utilize our website, Facebook, and email blasts.

Our hope is that with the addition of an e-newsletter, we can expand on the information we send out. Typically, we have not included personal or sensitive information on the website such as birthdays, concerns, and specific budget information. With the e-newsletter being emailed to just members and friends, and being a few clicks within our website, we feel we can add news and updates that, in the past, we may have only announced on Sunday mornings. This first edition is information packed. We hope you enjoy reading through it!



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MODERATOR

Hi - I'm Jeanne Mantsch, your Moderator. First, I'd like to encourage you to join Pastor Scott and others in the church for the Vesper Worship every Wednesday evening during Lent. These are not prerecorded, but live offerings. If you haven't tuned in yet, give it a try! They are short and resonate with our thoughts with the approach of Easter.

Second, welcome to our new monthly e-newsletter. Having more regular communication with all of you will allow us to remind you of upcoming dates such as birthdays and anniversaries, and we hope, help you to feel closer to one another even though we're physically apart!

## HELP NAME THE NEWSLETTER

We used *Congregational Connections* this time, but would love your ideas for the name of this e-newsletter going forward. Please email Amy Gilhooly, our Communications Director, at [amyg@portucc.org](mailto:amyg@portucc.org), with your suggestion!

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## CLICK AWAY!

Be on the lookout for orange text throughout this e-newsletter. The orange text is linked up to other documents or web pages that you might find helpful and interesting.

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## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday, March 14.

# LENTEN 2021

## CONNECTIONS

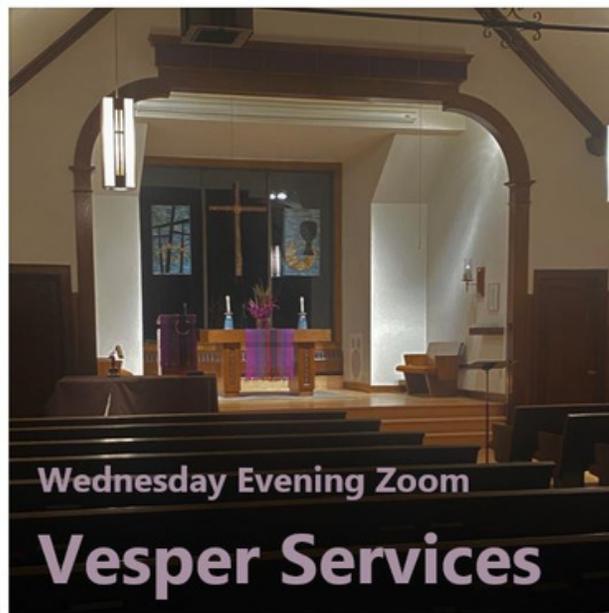
*We invite you to journey through Lent with the church and with one another! We have planned ways for each of us to connect and engage with God, our church community, and the wider community.*

## WEDNESDAY EVENING VESPER WORSHIP DURING LENT

“Vesper” is a Latin word that means evening. Vesper worship comes from the practice of monastic communities and their evening times of prayer and scripture reflection. The season of Lent is the perfect time to gather for a mid-week, evening worship service; and with the continuing pandemic, we will move our worship online via Zoom.

Each Wednesday evening at 7:00, members and friends are invited to connect via Zoom as Pastor Scott leads a brief worship service of prayer, scripture reading and reflection. We hope you will be able to participate and enjoy a “live” experience of worship each week as we move closer to our celebration of Easter. A Zoom link will be emailed out each Wednesday. If you are unable to make it, a link to the recording will be made available by the end of each week.

**FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 3 - MARCH 10 - MARCH 17 - MARCH 24**



## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES

### **PALM SUNDAY**

**Sunday, March 28**

We celebrate Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Drive through the church between 9:00 and 11:00 in the morning to pick up your palm, and also receive a warm cinnamon roll, before or after you view the online service.

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**Thursday, April 1**

The Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service will be a virtual worship service of lessons accompanied by the gradual extinguishing of lights. "Tenebrae" is the Latin term for shadows. This night we remember the shadows lengthening as Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with his disciples, the betrayal, arrest and trial.

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

**Friday, April 2**

Please join us for an online Ecumenical Good Friday worship service. The mood of the service is rather solemn, but there is also hope, as we look forward to the great celebration of Easter. We will lift the story of the passion using readings known as the seven last words. This important worship combines scripture and prayer so we may all hear again "the old, old story of Jesus and his love." Kelly Lemons, Director of A Place to Be Spirituality Center, is coordinating the worship service and our church will be joined by Parkside UCC in Saukville, St. John XXIII, Grand Avenue United Methodist Church and other community churches.

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

**Sunday, April 4**

The moving narrative of Jesus' trials and sufferings recalled during Holy Week makes the glory of Easter morning even more wonderful and triumphant! We hope everyone can join online for our special celebration of Easter. As the women witness the empty tomb and begin the joyful proclamation, "He is risen! He is risen, indeed!"—we too, will know the joy of Jesus' resurrection!

# LENTEN

CONNECTIONS...CONTINUED

## WEEK 3

March 7-13 Let's make Congregational Connections with our church family! You can pick up cards to color, write and send (see next page). We invite everyone to take a moment to reach out to those we miss seeing at church. Whether by phone, email or note - let your church friends know you're thinking of them!

## WEEK 4

March 14-20 Help the Church School kids keep the tradition going of supporting Family Promise of Ozaukee County with a Paper Goods Drive. [Click here](#) for their list of requested items.. Fill a bag and drop off at church!

## WEEK 5

March 21-27 Love Your Neighbor with Easter Gifts - Consider making a financial donation to support a local service organization and/or *One Great Hour of Sharing* in celebration of Easter. (see Easter Giving Form below)

## WEEK 6

March 28-April 3 Plan to drive through the church on Palm Sunday morning, March 28, from 9:00-11:00, for your palm, a warm cinnamon roll and a Holy Week Prayer Guide. In the guide, Pastor Scott will provide a scripture reflection and prayer for each day of Holy Week.

# WEEK 3 – CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS

STARTING MARCH 7



We are very excited about the third week of activities for our Lenten Connections! First off, you are doing one of the activities - reading this new e-Newsletter!

## SENDING CARDS TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our second activity is to send a card to help brighten the day of other church friends. All children and youth, as well as adults, are invited to pick up pre-addressed cards in our Little Free Library to decorate, write and send. If you'd rather not color a card, there are cards with a photo on the front, all you need to do is write a short note and send. The notecards come six in a pack. There is no rush in sending the cards, anytime before Easter works!

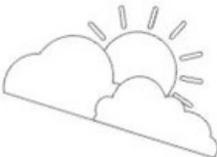
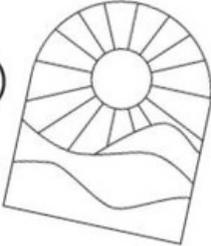


*Green Pack - intended for elementary age kids*

*Blue Pack - intended for middle & high schoolers (and adults)*

*Beige Pack - image already printed, simply write a note*

### CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTIONS CARDS EXAMPLES

<p>Elementary Ages</p> 	<p>Hello FCC Friends</p> 
<p>Middle &amp; High School and Adults</p> 	<p>hello FCC Friends</p> 

# First Congregational Church

# EASTER GIVING

## 2021

In celebration of Easter you are invited to contribute to one of the six community organizations that our church supports on an ongoing basis. Your gift of money will help lift the spirits of those who are in need within our own community. Names of gift givers, along with those who they wish to honor or remember, will be listed in an email sent out on Easter Sunday.

**Contribution to:** *(you may select one or multiple)*

**Advocates** \_\_\_\_\_

**Balance** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Promise** \_\_\_\_\_

**Habitat for Humanity** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ozaukee Family Services** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Food Pantry** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Given By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory Of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**In Honor Of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish for my Easter Giving contribution to remain anonymous)**

You may make your financial gift by utilizing our *new PayPal online giving option!*

Or, you may enclose a check (made out to FCC)

and mail to the church (131 N. Webster Street, Port Washington, WI 53074).

Please either print and complete this form or submit information in an email to [office@portucc.org](mailto:office@portucc.org).

Payment and Form information should be received no later than Wednesday, March 31.





# UPDATES FROM OUR FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

## PayPal:

Good news! We have PayPal up and running to help make giving to the church as easy as can be. Thank you to Joy Bloemer for her help in identifying PayPal as a preferred online giving platform. Please see the next page for more information.

## Financial Overview from January:

Our January received contributions were \$22,930. In 2020 we averaged \$15,000 per month so this is somewhat above that monthly average. This increased amount is due to some people choosing to pay their 2021 contribution in full.

## Payroll Protection Program Loan:

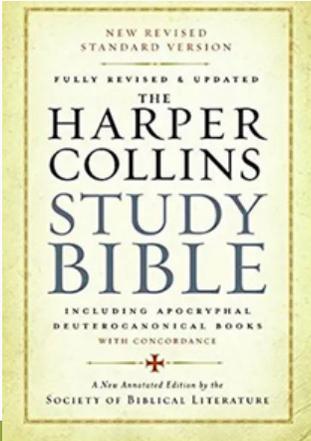
The US Small Business Administration approved our Payroll Protection Program loan request in the amount of \$34,447 and the funds were received at the end of February. After our payroll totals reach this dollar amount, we may apply for loan forgiveness by documenting how the funds were spent. In addition to spending these funds on payroll, they may also be spent on utilities. This is the same amount we received last April in the first CARES Act package and will, once again, help alleviate our budget shortfalls.



# CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

You might be interested to know that Pastor Scott is conducting a Confirmation program for our current 8th graders with the expectation they will be confirmed on May 23rd, Pentecost Sunday. They have been meeting twice a month via Zoom but hope to be able to meet in person soon. Please be thinking of these individuals as they continue their Confirmation journey: Brady Calder, Gabe Chandler, Hope Gilhooly, Cash Mantsch, James Mitchell, Sam Pasten, Carter Schlehlein and Mya Ternes.

The church purchased a New Revised Standard Version Study Bible for each member of the class published by HarperCollins. It offers textual notes, maps and information introducing each of the books of the Bible. Special thanks to Joy Bloemer for handwriting a special nameplate inside the front cover for each student.





## OUR NEW ONLINE GIVING OPTION - PAYPAL!

We are very excited to be introducing PayPal as a quick and easy way for our members and friends to make donations to the church. Many of you may be familiar with and perhaps already use this online giving platform. As we move through the Lenten Season, we would like to encourage everyone to give it a try. If you might have given a donation for “One Great Hour of Sharing” by writing a check or putting some cash in an envelope and putting in the collection plates, this year, try making your donation through PayPal! (Of course, if you don’t want to use PayPal, you may still make a donation the traditional way!)

To get to our church’s PayPal account you can [click here](#) or use the QR code below. It will also be placed on our website and our YouTube channel soon! After you list your donation amount, you will be directed to a secure second page that asks for credit card/debit card information. In the space that asks for an optional message, just write in that you want your donation to be applied to your pledge, or, if your are making an Easter Gift, please indicate one of the six service organizations that our church supports on a regular basis (Advocates, Balance, Family Promise, Habitat for Humanity, Ozaukee Family Services and/or The Food Pantry) or One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS).

We hope that people will use PayPal as a convenient way to support the ministry of our congregation, whether that is one-time special giving or to fulfill or increase pledged giving. If you would like to try PayPal and are having problems, please let us know and we’ll try to walk you through it.

Donate to  
First Congregational Church

\$0.00  
USD

Make this a monthly donation ?

I'd like to add to my donation to help offset the cost of processing

[Donate with PayPal](#)

[Donate with a Debit or Credit Card](#)



## FINANCIAL WEBINAR

Thank you to Jeanne Mantsch, our Moderator, Kathy Bretl, our Treasurer, and Jason Jacque, our Stewardship Committee Chair, for joining Pastor Scott and Lorraine Halls, our Financial Administrator, in attending a virtual webinar hosted by the Wisconsin Conference UCC on "What's Next: Best Practices for Financial Sustainability" at the beginning of February.

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## FELLOWSHIP TEAM COOKIE OUTREACH

A huge shout out to members of the Fellowship Team for baking cookies for Pastor Scott to deliver to houses. Special thanks to Marti DeMario, Terry Sdun and Holly Ternes for their ongoing coordination efforts and cookie baking.

Thanks also to Jennifer Dimmer, Jean Hoffmann, Alice Ruffin, Jane Schwacher, Roberta Blumenburg and Jeanne Mantsch for baking cookies in February. Thank you to Tracy Bretl and Sherrie Dimmer for baking cookies the first week of March.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Many thanks to Amy Umhoefer, RN, for including our church members and friends in COVID-19 vaccine clinic opportunities at her workplace.

We thank Mike and Jane Spalding for cutting and stuffing the paper strips for our Prayer Chains, a part of our Lenten Connections program.

Thank you to Phil Stepanski and Tracy Bretl for changing our Sanctuary windows for Lent.



# First Congregational Church

*An open and inclusive community of faith.*

## AN UPDATE FROM THE REOPENING COMMITTEE

Thank you to all who responded to our survey regarding reopening. We received 117 responses of which 46 left comments and a number left contact information. Pastor Scott is working on contacting anyone who left their information. Please see below for the results of the survey.

If you are reading this e-newsletter soon after it is released, please take a minute to fill out a [second survey](#) about online services and offerings. We are committed to continue online virtual and recorded services and gatherings on a permanent basis. We plan to continue to develop and improve our online virtual offerings. The deadline to respond is **March 9**.

We all are hoping and praying that circumstances will permit in-person activities at some point in the near future. We are committed to continue online virtual and recorded services and gatherings on a permanent basis. In the interest of improving and evolving our virtual church offerings we ask for some input into the level of interest and participation of the congregation.

The ROC was formed in the summer of 2020. Originally there were four of us and we met in person (outside) once and a couple times via Zoom. In January of 2021, the ROC added 5 new members, including Pastor Scott. Having new members and pastoral input is extremely beneficial to the mission and goals of the ROC.

The Wisconsin Council of Churches, a network of Christian churches and faith-based organizations, held a webinar on January 14 called "Holding Our Plans Loosely - Returning to Church 2.0". This webinar is available on their website for anyone interested in viewing. It is just over 60 minutes long. ([www.wichurches.org](http://www.wichurches.org))

The ROC is using these recommendations as our basis for deciding when and how to open. The Wisconsin Council of Churches laid out 3 levels of activity. "Unsafe to Gather", "Make it Safer", and "Safest". Within each category there is criteria regarding vaccination rates, cases per 100K and positive tests. We are using data published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. As of February 25, 2021, the combined data puts us just below the "Make it Safer" category.

The church building has been closed to the public since the middle of March 2020 but has never been completely shut down. Business operations have continued throughout thanks to our dedicated staff.

*(continued on next page)*

*(Reopening, continued...)*

Port Pre-School closed in the spring but resumed operation in the Fall of 2020. They have instituted rules and cleaning protocols specific to their needs. An attorney drafted indemnification documents for the church which the school agreed to and signed.

Where are we right now? The building is still closed to the public. Virtual services will continue and will be a permanent part of our church offerings. Musicians having been adding to those services and that will continue and expand gradually. Special functions will take place only with prior approval, on a case-by-case basis, with the following considerations:

- Number in attendance should be 10 or less.
- Which space is being utilized?
- What is the duration of the function? Less than 30 minutes is recommended.
- Can it be scheduled separately to avoid overlap with any other function?
- Social distancing and masks will be required.

What does the future hold? First, all plans depend on a continued downward trend in COVID-19 infection rates. Any new surges will result in a fall back of activities until the downward trend is re-established. We are all hoping and praying that circumstances will permit in-person gatherings and worship at some point in the coming months. Unfortunately, that will not happen by Easter. In-person small group bible study is likely to be the first step, some time after April 4th. It will be limited to 10 or less each time, will be held in Fellowship Hall, following safety protocols. Based on the survey results, there will be focus on outdoor services when weather permits.

The ROC is considering many things as we look to the future, including capacity for safe distancing, traffic patterns, cleaning protocols, air filtration. The safety of all, especially the most vulnerable among us, is our top priority. Singing will be one of the last things to return.

The Wisconsin Council of Churches published their "Notes on Theology, Ethics and Values".

- Prioritize protecting the life and health of your neighbor.
- Let yourself continue to be provoked by holy experiments.
- Follow the call to love and good deeds, urgently and carefully.
- Prioritizing accessibility honors the diversity and one-ness of Christ's church.
- Take seriously the church's role as community leader.
- Believe in the resilience of the church.

Looking forward to a time we can all be together again,

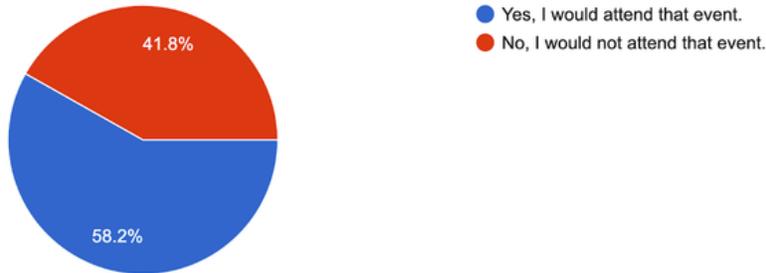
Phil Stepanski

First Congregational Church Reopening Committee Chair  
and Associate Moderator on the Church Council

# Reopening Survey Results – February 2021

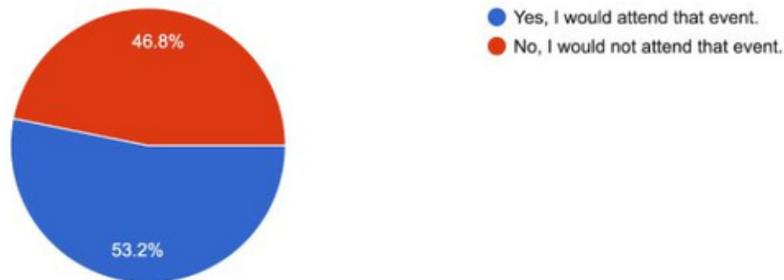
If First Congregational Church began to hold in-person small group gatherings in Fellowship Hall, limited to 10, with proper social distancing and masking.

110 responses



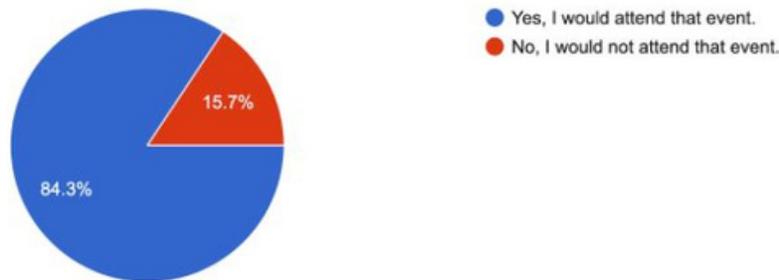
If First Congregational Church held drive-thru Communion distribution.

111 responses



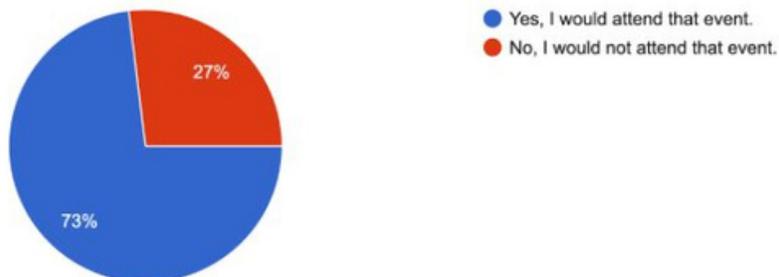
If First Congregational Church held in-person outdoor services (weather permitting).

115 responses



If First Congregational Church held in-person church services by appointment to limit attendance.

115 responses



# Church Council Team Highlight

## OUR LITURGY TEAM

The Liturgy Team exists to assist the pastor in planning and conducting worship services. We call ourselves Liturgy, some churches would call us Worship and Music. Each week, we try to make the sights and sounds in the sanctuary support the mood and message of the specific service.

Dawn Guschl and Bill Bond prepare the bread and juice for communion, and resupply and organize the pew racks. To reflect the current liturgical season (currently Lent), Phil Stepanski and Tracy Bretl climb a tall ladder to exchange the heavy yet delicate stained glass windows in the chancel, and Jane Spalding creates altar flower arrangements. Allen Cottrell polishes the brass candlesticks and candle lighters when needed. Karl Pradel stops by the church each Saturday to maintain our Christ Candle to ensure that it is always lit. I work with music staff and with Pastor Scott on selections of hymns and other music. Our music staff have done amazing things for our virtual worship this year; hopefully a future newsletter can go into some depth on what it takes to produce the music and the videos that have meant so much to us all.

-Mike Spalding  
Liturgy Team Representative  
on the Church Council



*The Christ Candle in the Sanctuary*

## SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to Emma Jacque and Cathy Jones for serving as scripture readers for our online worship service on Sunday, February 28, and to Mark Pasten and Ralph Perez for reading on Sunday, March 5.

Our thanks to Karen Oftedahl for joining our music staff and providing several pieces of special music for our online worship.

# ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (OGHS), part of *Our Church's Wider Mission*, is one of a handful of special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. Traditionally, our church receives this annual offering on Palm Sunday. This year, let's make it One Great **Month** of Sharing (see below to learn how to make a gift)!

The work of OGHS carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

On average, of every dollar given to OGHS, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming; and 5 cents for interpretation materials. The associated administrative costs are paid by gifts to *Our Church's Wider Mission National Basic Support*.

To make a gift, you may mail in a check to the church (OGHS in the memo line) or utilize our [new Pay Pal](#) feature. Please indicate OGHS in the message section on the second page. You can also make a gift directly online at [wcucc.org/oghs](http://wcucc.org/oghs).



*"Nobody hungry,  
nobody thirsty,  
shade from the  
sun, shelter from  
the wind. For the  
Compassionate  
One guides  
them, takes them  
to the best  
springs."*

ISAIAH 49:10



# UCC CHURCH CAMPS

**OUTDOOR MINISTRY**

UNITED CHURCH CAMPS  
OUTDOOR MINISTRY  
ucci.org

**Open & Excited To See You!**

Precautions & Safe Gathering Info at [ucci.org/events](http://ucci.org/events)

MOON BEACH • CAMP AWESUM • PILGRIM CENTER • CEDAR VALLEY

Our congregation is fortunate to have three different church camp locations to camp at and retreat to as part of the United Church Camps in the state of Wisconsin. Pilgrim Center, Moon Beach, and Cedar Valley are outdoor ministry programs associated with the United Church of Christ, the Wisconsin Conference of the UCC, and Outdoor Ministry Association UCC.

You may learn more about all of the camps, retreats, classes and events of the United Church Camps by visiting [ucci.org](http://ucci.org).

Our church offers camp scholarships to individuals and families who sign up for camp. There is also scholarship opportunities through the Southeast Association UCC and UCCi. If you are interested, please contact Amy Gilhooly, Communication Director, at [amyg@portucc.org](mailto:amyg@portucc.org), to she will email you the forms.

## PILGRIM CENTER

IS LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST SHORE OF GREEN LAKE, NEAR RIPON

## MOON BEACH

IS NESTLED IN THE NORTHWOODS, BETWEEN EAGLE RIVER AND ST. GERMAIN ON THE SHORES OF MOON LAKE AND LITTLE SAINT GERMAIN

## CEDAR VALLEY

IS IN THE HEART OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, SURROUNDED BY 100 ACRES OF NATURAL BEAUTY

IGNITE YOUR FIRE, FEED YOUR SOUL,  
BUILD YOUR FAITH... IN NATURE'S SANCTUARY

# ONWARD WITH HOPE

We thank two members of our Church Council, Jeanne Mantsch and Kathy Bretl, who are attending a virtual lecture series "Onward With Hope: Inspiring Courage to Create the World We Want" organized by the Peace and International Issues Committee of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee. The series is held at noon each Tuesday during the month of March.



"Onward With Hope: Inspiring Courage to Create the World We Want."



## JUSTICE TEAM

A reminder to check out the Justice page on our website. The team meets at least once a month, and invites anyone who may be interested to join them!

[www.portucc.org/justice](http://www.portucc.org/justice)



## 3K ENROLLMENT TIME AT PPS

Port Pre-School (PPS) rents classroom spaces within the church Monday through Friday during the school year (this year, they are off on Wednesdays). Port Pre-School was founded by members of our church in 1967. It was the first preschool in the City of Port Washington and has always been non-sectarian and open to the entire community.



Port Pre-School continues to offer a quality preschool program for children three and four years old. Enrollment is open for their 3K program. Your child will enjoy circle time, child-centered play, music and movement, teacher-directed projects, snack time, sharing time and story time! Each child must be 3 years old by September 1. For more information, visit [portpreschool.com](http://portpreschool.com) or call 284-6173.



# First Congregational Church

*An open and inclusive community of faith.*

## CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

### **FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

#### Church Council Minutes

February 11, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 by Jeanne Mantsch.

Those present were Jeanne Mantsch, Phil Stepanski, Pastor Scott McLeod, Lorraine Halls, Kathy Bretl, Savannah Anderson, Mike Spalding, Jason Jacque, Ric Probst, Bill Bond, Jim Clements, Marti DeMario, Eric Olson.

Jeanne presented a suggestion which would allow Church Council minutes to be included in the newsletter that Amy is creating. That is, that Council minutes be approved via email so that they could be included in the monthly e-newsletter on a more timely basis. Moved and seconded, and approved by the Council.

Opening Meditation Kathy Bretl

(Kathy volunteered to do the March Meditation because Jeanne inadvertently skipped right into the business meeting.)

Approval of the Minutes – January 2021

Phil moved, and Marti seconded the motion to approve the January 2021 minutes. The motion was approved by the full Council. Jeanne told the Council that the current approved minutes would be posted in the new monthly e-newsletter being developed by Amy.

Financial Administrator's Report (Lorraine)

Lorraine stated that she will be meeting with our Accountant (Bill Kirchen) next week. She also reported that we applied for and were awarded a 2<sup>nd</sup> PPP loan, with the same forgiveness rules. Lorraine presented the Port Pre-School contract for the coming school year. After some discussion the contract, as presented, was voted on and approved to present to the Port Pre-School folks. Our elevator needed work and the bill came to \$1790.75. A state inspection is also required yearly. This will exceed our budgeted amount. The total cost will be around \$2,800. Repairs are needed to the exterior sculpture. There was a \$2,800 donation earmarked for the repair by the Lenys Walden family. Work will begin when weather permits.



## CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES, continued

### Old Business

#### 2021 Budget (Lorraine)

Lorraine presented the Y.T.D. budget with a projected shortfall of \$25,000 after receipt of our 2nd PPP loan.

#### Window Repair Project Final Report (Jim)

This project has been completed and reported to the congregation at the January congregational meeting by Jim. Thank you, Jim, for handling this tough job.

#### Annual Stewardship Campaign (Jason)

Online Giving – We plan to have Pay Pal in place soon.

Jason reported that hand-written *Thank You* letters have been sent to all members that have pledged.

#### Reopening Committee Report

Phil reported that a survey will be sent out to the Congregation with some reopening questions, results of which will be shared with the Council and the congregation. The Wisconsin Council of Churches hybrid services were discussed. The need for a Wi-Fi boost in Fellowship Hall was discussed as a need for an option for our reopening plan.

#### Christmas Tree Sale Report

The final reporting on this topic showed a revenue of \$7,500 after costs.

Pastoral Care Committee – Phil reported that the committee has several additional members and will be meeting soon.

#### Winter Congregational Meeting Recap

Held at 11:00 am on January 31 via Zoom with 37 participants.

# CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES, continued

## New Business

### Property Committee – Discussion

There has never been a formal structure for this Council committee. Jim is willing to continue as Property Chair but feels unable to direct the work of a team. Since the weekly walk throughs and work began informally, Jeanne recommended contacting Claude Zimmerman and Joe Mueller to discuss their thoughts.

### Pastor's Report (Pastor Scott)

Scott reminded the Council that the first week of Lent is arriving shortly. Planning on “cookie visits” with all congregants (if he doesn't eat all the cookies first). In addition, he will be sharing our Lenten schedule, with giving options for Family Promise and Port Washington Food Pantry.



## Baptism

*Congratulations and a lifetime of blessings to Perry Allen Vandennack, son of Angela and Kallyn, who was baptized into the Christian faith on Sunday, February 21. Pastor Scott conducted the private baptism (his first here at FCC!) in Fellowship Hall.*



# ASH WEDNESDAY +

Thank you to everyone who drove to church to receive the imposition of ashes from Pastor Scott on Ash Wednesday. Check out the action photos that appeared in the Ozaukee Press!



Newspaper Caption:

Even though First Congregational Church in Port Washington isn't holding in-person Sunday services due to the pandemic, church leaders wanted to do something special on Feb. 17 to mark Ash Wednesday, the start of the Lenten season. So they held a drive-through imposition of ashes (lower photo), with the Rev. Scott McLeod distributing ashes as well as Lenten activity packets to roughly 36 people, both congregation members and nonmembers, who drove — or, in two cases, walked — to the church, including (top) Katherine "Kitchie" Allen. McLeod said he is hopeful that the congregation can open its door again soon.



YEARS OF WILDFIRE! YOUTH  
MISSION EVENT

# WILDFIRE! Youth Mission Opportunity

Our church continues to partner with four other churches in Port Washington and Saukville to support our joint ecumenical initiative, Lighthouse Youth Ministry.

Lighthouse is taking a group to Superior, Wisconsin this summer for a mission week called Wildfire!

**When: July 18 - 23, 2021**

**Who: Those who have completed  
7th through 12th grade**

**Cost: \$150.00 per person, covers all costs**

**Registration is open through April 1**

Wildfire! is a week of mission work. Each day the group will begin with worship. Then, it will break into small groups to do mission activities.

The youth will work throughout the Superior, Wisconsin area. Each evening the groups will go out to have a fun outing. All this gives time for youth to bond, work, and create friendships together - all while growing deeper spiritually.

If your child is interested, please contact our church for more information and a registration form. You will need to complete and return the Wildfire Registration Form with the fee by April 1.



# 2020 YEARBOOK REPORT

Every year the national office of the United Church of Christ asks every UCC church throughout the United States to report key numbers surrounding their church to better understand membership, attendance and contributions.

We wanted to share some of the information that we submitted for the 2020 UCC Yearbook Report & Directory:

**Church Membership:** 367 Members

**Confirmands:** 11

**Baptisms:** 4

**Deaths:** 4

**Average Weekly Worship Attendance**

(pre-Covid): 90

**Online Worship:**

-85 videos

(Sunday worship, Gap Chats, etc.)

-11,065 views

-130 views on average



# March Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> Lenten Connections- Week 2 The Food Pantry	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Vesper Service 7pm (Zoom) Reopening Committee 7:30pm (Zoom)	<b>4</b> Executive Committee 7pm (Zoom)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Third Sunday in Lent and Holy Communion Worship Service (Online)	<b>8</b> Lenten Connections- Week 3 Congregational Connections Justice Team 4pm (Zoom)	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Vesper Service 7pm (Zoom)	<b>11</b> Church Council 7pm (Zoom)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Fourth Sunday in Lent Worship Service (Online) Confirmation Class 6pm (Zoom)	<b>15</b> Lenten Connections- Week 4 Family Promise	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Vesper Service 7pm (Zoom)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Fifth Sunday in Lent Worship Service (Online)	<b>22</b> Lenten Connections- Week 5 Love Your Neighbor/Easter Gifts	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Vesper Service 7pm (Zoom)	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Palm Sunday Worship Service (Online) Drive-Thru Palms and Cinnamon Rolls 9-11am Confirmation Class 6pm (Zoom)	<b>29</b> Lenten Connections- Week 6 Holy Week	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>April 1</b> Maundy Thursday	<b>2</b> Good Friday	<b>3</b>

## MARCH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

- 1 - Caitlin Calder
- 3 - Nancy Hinneberg
- 4 - Emma Kasza-James  
Brooke Peiffer  
Caitlin Zozak
- 5 - Dennis Condon  
Chris Wach
- 8 - Amy Gilhooly  
Brad Mueller
- 12 - Hannah Lemke  
Joe Mueller
- 15 - Kayla Melbye  
Dave Eslinger
- 16 - Bridget Bretl  
John Claerbaut
- 17 - Philip Skowbo  
Angelo Lopez
- 18 - Arizona Mantsch
- 22 - Cynthia Zozak
- 23 - Calhan Norman
- 25 - Tim Cira  
John Arndt
- 26 - Dawn Rychtik
- 27 - Darcy McManus
- 29 - Jason Jacque
- 30 - James Johnson  
Rowan Norman

## MARCH WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 - Eric and Jackie Oleson
- 15 - Joe and Dawn Rychtik
- 30 - Heinzl Kunsmann and Kai-i Tien

*Please contact Beckie Perez,  
our Office Administrator, at  
office@portucc.org if you would like to  
add a Birthday or Anniversary.*

*If you have any celebrations,  
concerns, or prayer requests that  
you would like us to include in a  
future e-newsletter, please let us  
know.*



# CHURCH INFORMATION

First Congregational Church  
131 N Webster Street  
Port Washington, WI 53074  
(262) 284-2022  
email - [office@portucc.org](mailto:office@portucc.org)  
website - [portucc.org](http://portucc.org)

Church Office Hours  
Weekdays from 8:30 - 11:30  
(The church is open 8:00 - 3:00 because of Port Pre-School)

Office Staff Emails  
Rev. Dr. Scott McLeod, Pastor - [pastorscott@portucc.org](mailto:pastorscott@portucc.org)  
Amy Gilhooly, Communications Director - [amyg@portucc.org](mailto:amyg@portucc.org)  
Beckie Perez, Office Administrator - [office@portucc.org](mailto:office@portucc.org)  
Lorraine Halls, Financial Administrator - [lorraine@portucc.org](mailto:lorraine@portucc.org)

# STAY CONNECTED

Like us on [Facebook](#) -  
"First Congregational Church, Port Washington, WI"

Subscribe to our [YouTube Channel](#) -  
"First Congregational Church of Port Washington"

Receive our E-Blasts (emails) -  
*Please let us know if you have a new email address*

Check out the church website - [portucc.org](http://portucc.org)