



Congregational Connections

Monthly E-Newsletter of First Congregational Church, UCC | Port Washington, Wisconsin | February 2023

FEBRUARY - THE SHORTEST MONTH OF THE YEAR

When I was in elementary school I had a joke book with illustrations, and the one I remember clearly had a drawing of a small alarm clock being thrown out of a second-story window with the caption, "Why did the boy throw the clock out the window? He wanted to see time fly." It is not a great joke, but I am often reminded of it when I reflect on how time does tend to fly past so quickly.

This month I will be attending an overnight retreat with some clergy colleagues who have become friends through a program called "Companions in Ministry". The group was formed two years ago to encourage mutual support and dialogue across ecumenical boundaries and has been very helpful to me as I began my ministry with all of you here in Port. Unfortunately, this retreat, scheduled long ago at the start, marks the end of the program.

How quickly two years has passed! Two years ago I was just in my second month of being your pastor. The pandemic was still lasting so much longer than was imagined possible, we were still only offering virtual worship. Time has moved so quickly in those two years, yet doesn't that episode of our time together seem so long ago?

We have started planning ways to celebrate our church's 125th Anniversary this year. 125 years is a long time-- how the world has changed since the Dennett families felt the spiritual calling to create a Christian community that could be more open to people and ideas. Yet, as our doors were opening in 1898, the church in which I grew up in Connecticut would have been celebrating its 180th Anniversary. In 2017 I was fortunate to go to Germany for the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. And some of the churches we visited had been in existence for 300 years before the wave of reformation came to their city in 1517.

How time does fly. Make the most of the time we have this month, *(continued on next page)*

the shortest month of the year. There is so much happening around the congregation and so much for which we can be grateful. Worship, fellowship, church school, adult study, anniversaries marking our past, plans for our future, and so much more. Come and see! Peace, Pastor Scott



JOIN US FOR OUR 125th ANNIVERSARY PLANNING

Our 125th Anniversary Planning Team will meet next on Sunday, February 5. Please join us in the library after the 10:00 service. We brainstormed a long list of possibilities at our January meeting. It's not too late to add your thoughts and/or participation to our efforts as we decide on events/themes for the year April 2023 - April 2024. Any questions? Please contact Jane Spalding, jvrspalding@gmail.com or Pastor Scott.



TAKE A LOOK AT VARIOUS PAGES OF INTEREST!

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new! Church Fundraiser -
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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.

CLICK AWAY

If you are reading this newsletter online, be on the lookout for orange text - it's linked up to documents and web pages that you might find helpful or interesting.

CONTRIBUTE TO 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.

ADULT SERIES THIS LENT: "GROWING SPIRITUALLY"

First Congregational Church, UCC presents

"GROWING SPIRITUALLY"

A 10-Week Lenten Book Study

February 22nd - April 26th

Wednesday Evenings from 7:00-8:30

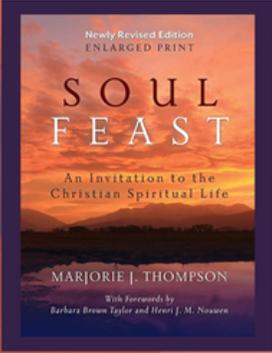
Co-led by the Revs. Scott McLeod and Don Niederfrank

based on the book

SOUL FEAST

An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life

BY MARJORIE J. THOMPSON



A Lenten Book Study will be starting up this month co-led by Scott McLeod and Don Niederfrank. It will be a 10-session study of the exceptional book, "Soul Feast" by Marjorie J. Thompson. The central image behind the book's title is of a great banquet table upon which is spread all the glorious spiritual foods our souls crave. The spiritual food and drink were developed from generations of seekers and their experience in finding the divine over 2,000 years. These items of spiritual nourishment are right there for us to take, yet, sadly, we seem blind to the feast before us, and instead make do with a few crumbs falling from the table, which we hope to catch to sustain ourselves. Thompson hopes to open the eyes of modern Christians like us that we might see the feast that is set before us. A feast of rich spiritual food that will nourish us and strengthen us. Thompson writes,

"This book aims to help us find and partake of food and drink for the spirit. The resources we will explore are drawn from our full Christian heritage. None of the practices are new, but some have been lost to our knowledge and other require adaptations. Our current spiritual hunger is partly due to being out of touch with classic practices that could feed us. When we are severed from our roots, we are like plants without nourishment. To fruitfully appropriate classic disciplines, we need to be willing to engage "traditions" creatively."

Participants will read a chapter before attending each week. The group will explore and discuss a "classic" Christian spiritual practice to taste and see if we find it nourishing! The weekly sessions will be less interested in giving you information about the spiritual life than in giving you the tools to engage the spiritual life. If this sounds interesting to you, please check out the book, "Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life" (Newly Revised Edition) by Marjorie J. Thompson. Books are available in the church office for \$14, or you can order on your own. The group will begin meeting on February 22, and each Wednesday evening thereafter, from 7:00 to 8:30 following the Vesper Service. The study sessions continue throughout the season of Lent and finish up on the last Wednesday of April.

LENT BEGINS FEBRUARY 26 - HERE IS A PREVIEW OF THE SEASON AHEAD!

The Season of Lent in 2023 begins on the last Sunday of February. Lent is a liturgical season spent in the wilderness, a place that feels both familiar and dreaded after the recent pandemic. While we might emphasize the loneliness and desolation of the wilderness, wilderness times are not just empty and barren. Just as a wilderness can be teeming with life, our wilderness times can also surprise us with the life they hold. Our lives can also feel clarifying and renewed as we find within ourselves new awareness.

We begin in the familiar landscape of the wilderness with the tempter's questions to Jesus. As the weeks of Lent come and go, our growing awareness shifts from Jesus to Nicodemus' assurance of God's deep care and self-giving love in the winds of change and new birth. We continue to find a new awareness of ourselves in the questions asked of and by the Samaritan woman and by the one born blind in the gospel of John. If we didn't notice it before, we begin to notice that there are companions in the wilderness who encourage our survival.

Just before we enter Jerusalem on a road paved with branches and cloaks, we find ourselves in the wilderness of grief, asking harrowing questions of God and ourselves. At that tomb, we hear a call to unbind each other. No one asks these questions alone, but we share in the dream of what new life will be after all that has happened. It is vision and hope that we join the chorus of voices that cry for justice on Palm/Passion Sunday. Here, we realize how much we have changed and continue the transformation beyond the cross to the empty tomb. Easter arrives dressed in white and gold and a flurry of Alleluias. It is a feast for our senses when Mary becomes the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus. Thomas uses his hands to proclaim his faith, and two see the risen Christ when bread is broken and shared. We come into our senses as we consider life that continues beyond the tomb, beyond doubt, beyond trials.



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE, FEBRUARY 22 AT 6:30 P.M.

The Season of Lent begins on the last Wednesday of the month, February 22. You are invited to begin the season with our Ash Wednesday Worship Service at 6:30 p.m. Together we can set out on our forty-day journey toward Easter in the sanctuary with a moving and meaningful evening service. Ash Wednesday worship is a simple, yet profound service of scripture, song, prayers, and the imposition of ashes as a sign of our frail humanity. It is a worship service in which we acknowledge our faults and failings, in order that we might truly experience God's acceptance and overflowing love.



NEW MEMBERS CLASSES ON FEBRUARY 12 & 19 - JOIN US!

Everyone who is considering joining the church is invited to come to our two new members classes; Sunday, February 12, and Sunday, February 19, both classes will follow the 10:00 worship service. These new member classes are an opportunity to get to know one another a little better, learn about our local church and ministry, as well as learn more about the wider United Church of Christ. The February 12 class will focus on learning more about our denomination, the United Church of Christ (UCC), the "wider" church beyond Port Washington and the February 19 class will focus on our local church's past, present, and future. On February 19 there is also a church Fellowship soup and salad potluck after worship, so the class will be invited to enjoy the meal and then have an abbreviated class.

We will be inviting some of our current church leadership to attend the sessions so that we might all get to know one another better and everyone can help answer questions that our newer folks might have. Those who would like to become new members will be invited to join the church on Sunday morning, February 26, during the 10:00 worship service. We are so excited to welcome people into our fellowship; we hope you will consider formally becoming a part of our faith community!



FRIENDS FOR JUSTICE OPPORTUNITIES

The Friends for Justice Team would like to share some opportunities to continue our involvement with racial justice. Here are dates for the *Ozaukee County Talks about Race Series* at W.J. Niederkorn Library, 316 W. Grand Avenue, Port Washington:

- Tuesday, February 2, 6:30-7:45 p.m. - PW High School Multicultural Advisory Committee Student Presentation
- Friday, February 10, 9:30 a.m. - Book Discussion: "How the Word is Passed" by Clint Smith
- Thursday, February 16, 5:45 p.m. - Movie: "Till"

Also, every month on the Second Thursday at 11:00 a.m., join the virtual monthly meetings of the Wisconsin Conference UCC Racial Justice Task Force (dates are February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, please contact the church for the Zoom link)

Submitted by Friends for Justice Team Members Louise Mollinger and David Franks

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

As always, we invite 4K-7th graders to Church School on the second Sunday morning of every month at 10:00. On Sunday, February 12, our Church School kids will be rolling up their sleeves for our annual Mac & Cheese fundraiser! All children are welcome to help as we measure, pour, and mix our way through this fun activity! Older children provide quality control while our younger participants help with the gathering and preparing of the ingredients. See the next page for further information.

Looking ahead, please note that due to Easter and Mother's Day both landing on a Church School Sunday, we are going to instead hold our class on April 30. This will be our last Church School of the program year.



Church School on January 8.

COME TO CHURCH SCHOOL AND STAY TO SING!



Children's Choir singing at our Family Service on January 22.

Sherri Melichar, our Children's Choir Director, invites all children to stay after Church School and the 10:00 service to rehearse upcoming songs. Parents can enjoy Fellowship Hour while Sherri and the children are upstairs in the sanctuary. Plan for them to rehearse for about 30-45 minutes. Children's Choir does not rehearse on Monday evenings at this time. The Children's Choir also rehearses if there is a fifth Sunday, after the 10:00 service. The Children's Choir performs on the fourth Sunday of each month during the 10:00 Family Service.

LOOKING AHEAD

2/12 - Church School, Mac & Cheese Fundraiser

2/26 - Family Service (including Children's Choir) at 10:00

3/12 - Church School

3/19 - Family Service (including Children's Choir) at 10:00

4/23 - Family Service (including Children's Choir) at 10:00

4/30 - Church School

NURSERY CARE

Every Sunday morning during the 10:00 service we provide Nursery Care for children newborn through elementary. Care is mostly provided by our 8th grade Confirmation students and their families. Please note that the current nursery location is in the Gilomen Room across from the restrooms.

First Congregational Church, UCC
Church School Program
3rd Annual

Mac & Cheese Fundraiser

- Super Bowl Sunday -
February 12th

8"x8" Pans of Ready-to-Bake Mac & Cheese
\$15 Regular, \$20 with Chicken

Pre-order online. Pick up and pay after 10:00 service on 2/12.
Funds go toward Church School budget.

Our Church School program will be holding their annual Mac & Cheese Fundraiser on February 12. Pans of ready-to-bake Mac & Cheese will be for sale for \$15 a regular pan or \$20 with chicken. [Click here](#) to reserve your pan(s) online or call the church office for assistance. Pick up and payment (cash or a check made out to FCC) will occur after the 10:00 service that day. Proceeds will be used to support the Church School budget for 2023.

A pan of Mac & Cheese would be the perfect addition to your Super Bowl parties, or for a warm, no-fuss dinner on a cold February night. Please consider supporting our Church School students as they earn the funds to support our learning throughout this coming year. Thank you!

[CLICK HERE FOR THE PRE-ORDER FORM](#)



A REMINDER FROM THE PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS TEAM

Hello from the Pastor Parish Relations (PPR) Team!

Our team came together several months ago to be a sounding board for Pastor Scott and for members of the congregation. We meet monthly or every other month depending on issues that might come up. Our meetings are a safe place to discuss challenges for the church and to discuss feedback we are hearing from church members. We are hoping that we can facilitate robust communication that will help Pastor Scott and our church to be successful. Please email us if you have concerns or ideas to share - portuccppr@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Your Pastor Parish Relations Team

Doug McManus, Joe Mueller, Sarah Riemer, Shandy Roehrig, and Pam Zeman

INVITATIONS FROM OUR FELLOWSHIP TEAM

The Fellowship team has a few things planned for the rest of the program year and we are excited to have you join us (see below)! This month, on Sunday February 19, we will be having a Soup and Salad Potluck Lunch. You are welcome to bring soup, salad and/or dessert and stay after the 10:00 service for fellowship and a meal. Don't have time to prepare something? There is always plenty of food. Come and join us!



Looking Ahead:

Sunday, February 19 - Soup and Salad Potluck Lunch

Sunday, March 12 - Spring Card Making Workshop

Sunday, April 2 - Palm Sunday - Cinnamon Rolls served after both services

Sunday, May 21 - End of the Program Year Luncheon - subs & salads served

Please contact me if you would like more information about the Fellowship Team. Thank you for your support. We hope you can join us!

Jennifer Dimmer, Fellowship Team Representative on Church Council



THRIVE TEAM BEGINS THE EXAMEN(ED) CHURCH PROGRAM

The introductory gathering of the Examen(ed) Church and the Thrive Team from our church took place on January 21 at Marquette. Terry McManus, Louise Mollinger, Karl Pradel, Scott Symes, and Gary and Meg Tackes carpooled into Milwaukee for the breakfast meeting. They met with leaders of the program and other Thrive Teams from the greater-Milwaukee area. An outline of the next 18 to 24 months was presented. Each month the members of the team will be sent resources via email that are intended to deepen their experience of spiritual reflection as well as guiding them through the steps of the program. The Thrive Team is planning to meet monthly, (their next meeting here in Port will be on February 13) using the materials that Marquette has introduced and they will gather with the other Thrive Teams at Marquette again on April 21. Right now the Thrive Team is engaged with "Phase One" of the program which involves being instructed in and practicing both personal and group reflection using the Examen of Ignatius of Loyola. They will share the fruits of their experience with the congregation. Soon they will begin "Phase Two" which involves educational workshops covering topics relevant for church thriving: understanding and adapting to the church's context in today's culture, clarifying our local church's mission and values, and deepening Christian practices. Eventually the team will move into "Phase Three" which has the Thrive Team, church leadership and the congregation discerning potential responses to the months of reflection on church experience, identity, and the program themes. Finally, in "Phase Four" the Thrive Team would help lead the congregation in assessing the experience and identifying elements of the process the church might sustain moving forward. The team is excited about the months ahead.



THEMES FOR WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

February 5: Isaiah 58:1-12 Matthew 5:13-20

5th Sunday after Epiphany, Communion Sunday

With Isaiah we learn what it means to practice righteousness and restore beauty in community, and we are named by Jesus as salt and light. How can we extend the reach of God's realm?

February 12: Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Matthew 5:21-37

6th Sunday after Epiphany, Chancel Choir/Church School

With the people of Israel, we look toward the land of promise and hear the clear message that God's way leads to life, while Jesus' questions in the Sermon on the Mount encourage us to look deep into our hearts and investigate what is true for us.

February 19: Exodus 24:12-18 Matthew 17:1-9

Transfiguration Sunday, Handbell Choir

The Season after the Epiphany closes with extraordinary sacred encounters on ordinary mountains, and we are invited to carry God's glory and mystery as we enter the Season of Lent.

Wednesday, February 22: Psalm 51:1-17,

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Ash Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Worship

The wilderness can be scary and intimidating. It can seem empty and lifeless, but as it was for the people of Israel, it can be a place where we are forever changed. It can be in the wilderness where we come to know God in those seasons of our lives that feel empty, barren, and even frightening.

February 26: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7 Matthew 4:1-11

First Sunday in Lent Family Sunday

Into the Wilderness Lent begins in an untamed garden and the wilderness where curiosity invites us to seek new insight into God's goodness in this time and place.





Church Council Team Spotlight

OUR PROPERTY TEAM - BECOMING “AWARE” OF BUILDING MAINTENANCE & REPAIR NEEDS

Our Property Team wishes to highlight ongoing concerns of the maintenance of our beautiful church building, and the plans to deal with them. In October and November members of the Capital Campaign Planning Team invited members and friends of the church to participate in an “Awareness Campaign”. The purposes were threefold: 1) to invite people to come together for fellowship and support after pastoral transition and global pandemic; 2) to hear from people about their experiences with the church; what they enjoyed about the church’s ministry, and their hopes, dreams and fears for the congregation in the present and future; 3) to present materials about the repair and maintenance needs of our church building.

There was a report in last month’s newsletter on the feedback that was received from our members and friends during the Awareness Campaign meetings, but now is the time to report on the issues that our church faces with our church building. The Property Team has been working diligently in seeking solutions to the ongoing maintenance issues we face, but some of the repair needs of the church go far beyond what can be done with just an annual maintenance budget.

The repair needs of the church in order of priority are: 1) repair of stained-glass windows in the sanctuary; 2) repair of exterior of sanctuary window arches; 3) drainage control on the Patio doors to Fellowship Hall; 4) Repair of Exterior clear glass windows; 5) Roof Replacement and Siding Repair.

The first priority is the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. The 3 beautiful windows facing Webster Street were originally installed in 1970 and moved to their current location when the sanctuary was enlarged in 1998. Twenty-five years later the wooden sills at the base of the windows are rotting and the lower panels of glass are beginning to slide down exposing gaps in the glass. The Southeast Corner of the sanctuary has another window that is in need of repair as the stained glass has bowed out of the frame. Estimates on these repairs have been sought from several different companies and are in the \$24,000 to \$26,000 range.

The second item and next on the priority list is the Exterior Sanctuary Window Arches. Because these arches are on the outside of the building and not as readily visible from the street,

(continued on the next page)

BECOMING AWARE continued...

it would be easy to overlook them. But if the repair work is not done, it could lead to water getting into the building and the costs to repair that damage could really begin to multiply. If we take care of it now, the total estimate is \$2,200.

The third item we need to be aware of and make sure to address is the problem of water getting into Fellowship Hall from both of the entrance doors off of the patio. When the rain blows from the south, we are almost guaranteed to have water coming onto the floor of the Hall. Over the years various solutions have been attempted to minimize further damage to the floors. At the Awareness Campaign meetings, the proposal was to install a gutter on that roof, costing between \$6,018 to \$6,600. However, after more investigation and brainstorming, the latest solution may be less costly. Property Team will keep us updated!

Fourth on the list of priorities is the need to repair or replace many of our exterior clear glass windows. Most of the windows around the church need attention. Some can be repaired with caulk and paint, others need epoxy and may need to be clad with aluminum. Many of the windows do not have combination storm windows. To make necessary repairs on the windows is estimated to cost \$22,000 and installing combination storm windows would be an additional \$3,300. Total estimated costs are in the \$25,300 to \$27,830 range.

The final item we talked about in the Awareness Campaign meetings, and fifth on the list of priorities, is by far the most expensive. The Property Team wants us to know that while our roof is currently in decent condition (there are no leaks that we know of) and the flat roof areas are in good condition, we need to plan for the shingled roof to be replaced in the next 3 to 5 years. The roof replacement, along with flashing and soffit repairs, plus repairs to the shakes and siding is estimated to be \$274,000 if we were to do it sooner and grows to \$315,000 if we wait to do it later, due to inflation.

All of these items for repair will need to be addressed at some point, but we don't have to do it all at once (unless we choose to). The members of the church will ultimately have to make a decision about how to proceed and will vote on any plans that are proposed. The feedback received at the meetings was generally in favor of trying to take care of the highest priority items first, raising the funds through member's financial pledges in addition to their annual giving to the church. Holding special fundraising events for the projects was also lifted as probably necessary.

The Capital Campaign Planning Team will be meeting in February to discuss further plans on how to address these repair needs of the church as well as to discuss possible strategies on how to raise the necessary funds. When the team is ready to bring a plan forward, they will bring it first to the Church Council, and with their suggestions and approval, will then bring it to a Congregational meeting. As always, it will be the members of the church who have the final say on whether to move forward with these building repairs.

WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUMMARY

The Winter Congregational Meeting was held following worship on Sunday, January 29. Following the call to order by Moderator Jacque, Pastor Scott's opening prayer, and the approval of minutes from the recent Fall Congregational Meeting in November 2022, Phil Stepanski, Financial Administrator, presented the 2023 Church Budget. Phil invited everyone to look through the budget and noted that the numbers had really not changed much since the proposed budget was presented to the church back in November. While the church ended 2022 with a \$28,587 deficit, this was a significant improvement from the anticipated \$83,761 approved last year. The proposed 2023 budget has a deficit of \$53,739. Phil praised the work of the Stewardship Team in their fall campaign, and announced that we received 95 pledges totaling \$162,314 which includes 10 new pledges, 52 increased pledges, 26 that remained the same, and 5 that decreased their giving. Phil then asked if there were any questions. The members present asked about the potential for rental income from the space previously rented by Port Pre-School. For instance, could the space be used for individual fundraising events or a series of events? The answer was that, yes, the space could be used for individual fundraising events, but that Council had been focused on trying to find already existing non-profit groups who might be looking for space. If this search is unsuccessful, than other uses for the space would need to be pursued. With no other questions, Ken Matthews made a motion to approve the 2023 Church Budget as presented, knowing that we could adjust things if necessary at our next Congregational meeting in June. The motion was unanimously approved. Jennifer Dimmer then encouraged church folks to use Scrip/RaiseRight gift cards as an easy way to help raise money for church, Shandy Roehrig reminded everyone of the Church School Mac & Cheese Fundraiser on Feb. 12, Pastor Scott gave a closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned. If you would like to look at the 2023 Budget that was approved, please [click here](#). Thanks to the members of Church Council and to Phil Stepanski for their work on the budget.



TUESDAY NIGHT YOGA CLASS AT CHURCH WELCOMES EVERYONE

Last month a new Yoga Class led by Dawn Stacey, a licensed yoga instructor and PTA began meeting on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 pm. The classes have been going well and have attracted 10-12 participants each week. It is exciting to see another one of those pre-Covid regular activities of the church return with enthusiasm! This is a great opportunity to give yoga a try, or to restart on your regular yoga practice: all levels are welcome and encouraged to give it a try! Dawn has been teaching yoga for over a decade and has previously taught classes at ZuZu Pedals, Saukville YMCA and the Port Washington Rec Center. Dawn's personal approach to yoga features a focus on the student's discovery of greater ease in their body through movement, breath, and meditation. She teaches a slow alignment-based class with options to build poses throughout the class and a guided meditation at the end. Classes are from 6:00—7:00 on Tuesday evenings and cost \$12, which is payable to Dawn via check, cash or Venmo. Dawn has mats available for new students who don't have a personal mat, and she invites everyone to arrive 10 minutes early for personal setup. See you on Tuesday nights!

JANUARY PHOTOS



*Soup and Salad
Potluck Lunch on
January 22.*



Lighthouse group assembling 150 Birthday Kits on January 22.

RAISERIGHT - GIFT CARD FUNDRAISING FOR OUR CHURCH

**We raised
over \$560 for
the church in
2022!**



**NEXT FCC ORDER
IS FEBRUARY 12**

**This is an
ongoing program,
orders for gift
cards are placed
every month.**

Through our gift card fundraising program, also called Scrip fundraising, by a company called RaiseRight, the church can raise money when members and friends use retail gift cards to pay for everyday purchases (like gas and groceries), instead of paying by credit card, cash, or check.

There are a ton of options and hundreds of gift cards you can purchase from retail stores, online merchants, restaurants, gas stations, entertainment, even flights and travel purchases; and each can be turned into a small percentage of money that will go directly to our church. You have options to buy eGift cards (available immediately), physical gift cards, and reloadable gift cards. For every gift card purchased, earnings are up to 20%, with an average earning of 6% that goes to the church. The earnings come from the gift card brand you are purchasing - their way of supporting organizations and communities like ours. You do not pay anything extra, for example, if you buy a \$50 gift card, you pay \$50.

Jennifer Dimmer and Rhonda Thompson, our church Scrip/Raise Right Coordinators, place orders the second Sunday of every month. Please order online or drop off your order form with payment by Sunday, **February 12**. The gift cards will be available at the church for pick up starting on Sunday, **February 19**. To enroll and place an order, head to the company website, RaiseRight.com/enroll. Our church enrollment code is **P8I47VHNX56H**. Or, you can complete the **paper form**, write out a check to the church, and turn in both to the church office.

As always, don't hesitate to reach out. Please contact the church office and we will connect you with Jennifer and Rhonda. Thank you!

**With a little bit of
pre-planning, you can help
fundraise for the church and do
your shopping with gift cards.**

**By purchasing gift cards,
a small percentage
is returned to the church.**

LIGHTHOUSE EVENTS



Our church partners with four other churches: Grand Avenue United Methodist Church, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Living Hope Lutheran Church, and Parkside Community United Church of Christ, all located in Port Washington and Saukville, to support our joint ecumenical initiative, Lighthouse Youth Ministry.

Lighthouse welcomes all middle school and high school youth to join the group anytime you are able! Here is the February activity:

Skiing/Snow Tubing at Sunburst - Sunday , February 26, 1:00-5:00

Come enjoy an afternoon of winter fun with friends as we hit the slopes together! We will meet at Lighthouse (513 W. Grand Ave. in Port) and carpool to Sunburst in Kewaskum. Students can choose between snow tubing, skiing, or snowboarding and Lighthouse will cover the rental/lift costs. Please come dressed for the weather and bring along money for snacks if you would like.



Thank you for all of the Birthday Kit Donations!

We want to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated supplies for the birthday kits! All five congregations rose to the challenge and helped us assemble 150 kits. The kits have been distributed to both the Port Washington and Saukville food pantries and were received with great appreciation!

Plastic Egg Donations Needed for Upcoming Project

Lighthouse youth will be doing an "Egg My Yard" fundraiser for Easter (look for more details to come in the March newsletter). To help us prepare for this fundraiser, we are looking for anyone with plastic Easter eggs that you no longer use. You may drop off your eggs at church anytime this month. Thank you!



Have questions or want to RSVP to any of these events?

Please contact Lighthouse Director Christin Flucke at (262) 483-9582 or email christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org

Also, stay up to date on any schedule changes as well as event reminders by joining the Lighthouse message group on the Remind app.

Simply text "pwseym" to 81010 and follow the directions to join if you haven't already!



CHURCH CHOIRS

A reminder that our choirs always welcome new faces!

Children's Choir rehearses second and fifth Sunday mornings at 11:00, and performs on the 4th Sunday of every month.

Chancel Choir rehearses 6:30-7:30 on Monday evenings, and performs on the second and fifth Sunday of every month.

Handbell Choir rehearses 7:00-8:00 on Wednesday evenings, and performs on the third Sunday of every month.



WEDNESDAY LUNCH GROUP

You are invited to come to church on Wednesdays at noon for lunch and Bible study. The group meets in the Dennett Room and everyone brings their own bag lunch and beverage. After they eat together, the group reads through the Bible passages that will be used in worship on the next Sunday. Pastor Scott provides some Biblical background materials and some questions for discussion and then the conversation begins. You don't need to be a Bible scholar to participate, just a curiosity to explore and reflect on the text. The conversation is always interesting and there is usually laughter and sharing of stories, opinions and an insight or two. Give it a try, there is always room for more around the table!



THURSDAY MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

Every Thursday morning at 8:00, a dedicated group of gentlemen from the church gather at The Beacon restaurant, which is located downtown on the first floor of The Harborview hotel. The Thursday Men's Breakfast Group is open to all the men of the church. Everyone places their own order and pays their own bill. It is a great way to spend an hour (or two) and begin your day. You are welcome to join the group at any time!



FELLOWSHIP HOUR ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

We host a Fellowship Hour following our 8:00 service on the first Sunday of each month, and following our 10:00 service on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit with other families and friends in the church. Please make an effort to introduce yourself to people you haven't met. Help newcomers to feel that, wherever they are on life's journey, they are welcome here. If you have any questions, please speak to Jennifer Dimmer, our Fellowship Team Representative on Church Council.

GREEN EGGS AND HAM CHURCH FUNDRAISING EVENT ON MARCH 4

Green Eggs & Ham Breakfast here at First Congregational Church



A Church Fundraiser Celebrating Dr. Seuss's Birthday
Menu of Pancakes and Ham

Saturday morning, March 4, 8:00 - 11:00
in our Fellowship Hall

Church Council Representatives, Jennifer Dimmer and Jodi Cowen, will be co-chairing the church's first Green Eggs and Ham Breakfast with proceeds supporting the Church Budget. Join us as we have some great fun and breakfast! More details to come. Please contact the church office if you would like to be involved in planning and/or helping the morning of the event. Thanks!

SUNDAY SERVERS - ONLINE SIGN-UP

We continue to utilize the online SignUpGenius tool to allow for easier scheduling of our Sunday morning servers. Below are the areas we need your participation. Simply click on the links and choose which Sundays you would like to serve. Sign up once, or as many times as you'd like! Together we can fill in all the gaps. If you have any questions, please reach out to Beckie in the church office.



You may click the button to see all of the Sunday Servers sign-ups or click below to view the individual sign-ups.

USHERS

Greet congregants, hand out service bulletins, and collect the offering at the 8:00 or 10:00 Sunday morning worship service

ACOLYTES

5th, 6th, and 7th graders are invited to light the altar candles just before the start of every 10:00 worship service

WORSHIP LEADERS

Help Pastor Scott lead the congregation in responsive readings, unison prayers, and scriptures during the 8:00 or 10:00 worship service

NURSERY CAREGIVERS

Watch over children newborn through elementary in our nursery (currently in the Gilomen Room) during the 10:00 service. The 8th grade Confirmation Class will still be helping, but with a smaller class, we need some additional help. Please note, 8th graders and high schoolers must be accompanied by a parent

FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS

Serve coffee and provide simple treats following the 10:00 service on the second and fourth Sundays - two families preferred

APPROVED DECEMBER 2022 CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

(The December Minutes were approved at the January 8, 2023 Church Council meeting.)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Church Council Minutes December 8, 2022

Call to Order by Jason Jacque @ 6:34

Pastor Scott, Jason Jacque, Phil Stepanski, Bill Bond, Mike Spalding, Eric Olson, Jennifer Dimmer, Shandy Roehrig, Kathy Bretl, and Rhonda Thompson.

Opening Meditation – Jennifer read a section of a book called Barrington Bunny. In the book Barrington doesn't realize what a gift's he has until he is told by a wolf. The wolf tells him his gift is free with no strings attached.

Approval of the Minutes – November 2022 -Mike motions to approve the November minutes and Jennifer seconds the motion. The minutes are approved.

Monthly Budget Review / 2023 Budget Status (Phil) – In the Budget vs Actual report shows that we're \$52,000 short, but feels like we will not end that far off. He paid Lighthouse \$2500 and several donations have come in for the next \$2500. The church's wider mission is still outstanding around \$7000. Phil added a line to the Account Balance report for the balance remaining on the Raise Right Home Depot gift card (originally used to purchase paint for Pre-School classrooms). Kathy will look into filing our tax exempt number with Home Depot. Phil has updated the tax exempt status certificate. Another change to the report is the addition of line Memorial and Special Gifts for better tracking. The report amounts don't match, but there is more money than reported and will get corrected. The Budget vs Actual report needs to be updated with new information. The anticipated amount for Minister's Health/Dental Insurance is going to be wrong. The payment made in December (for January coverage) reflects the increase, but at time wasn't changed in the anticipated amount. The large amount change is due to anticipated rate increase now calculated and adjusted for 2023 and will be in the amount of \$29,552. The Christmas Tree sale expense total is \$19,441.52. As of Monday December 5th deposits totaled \$22,396 for a profit of \$2954.48. Last year there were a total of 97 pledges and this year 71 have been collected for a total of \$135,618. Of the 71, 39 increased the amount, 25 stayed same, four are new, and only three decreased. We are short \$31,182 to reach the \$168,800 that was budgeted.

Pastor's Moment (Pastor Scott) – Communion will be served to some of the shut ins. A Care Team member assists with the communion at the visit. The cookie exchange went well and allowed for cookies to be delivered as well.

Old Business

Awareness Campaign update – (Pastor Scott) - The sixth and last meeting was held just before Thanksgiving. Half of the twelve meetings were cancelled, but 52 people attended. The meetings that were held went well. A common theme among the meetings was the warmth and welcome feeling as well as an affection for the people and the programs offered. Looking to the future brought about more uncertainty than clarity. The needs of the building were mentioned. Most attendees were not shocked, gave feeling of it is what it is, and were going to have to do something. Pastor Scott is hoping to meet as a team to discuss and share any last information and finalize with a report for the January newsletter.

Building maintenance updates – (Bill) – Jenny/Natural Concepts Landscape, LLC, has increased the contracted snow removal beyond the two inch mark, two dollars from \$50 to \$52 each time the lot is cleared. After some confusion last year we have been informed that Webster street sidewalk needs to be included for shoveling/clearing. In an effort to reduce

(continued on the next page)

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES continued...

costs pest control will be treated as needed and routine spraying will be eliminated. Bill is hoping weed control could be done by a member. Meeting with Jon Crain the city arborist to discuss the creekside erosion. Bill is asking for sanctuary catalogs for the handrail. The boiler room was unusually loud one Saturday morning, despite running fine now. Just in case they are plan to have J&H come to take a look. Bill is wondering about chair terms and if it's okay to continue on. He will be able to continue.

Stewardship (Jodi) - Phil wrapped up the budget with stewardship numbers (see above notes). The average is up about \$400. Jodi via her email said reminder phone calls will happen next week after Phil updates them with the list of those that have not turned in their pledge. Thanks to Amy and Pastor Scott for sending out the reminders. Thank you cards will go out in January.

Rental Space update – (Pastor Scott) -There is no update, the market has been slow.

Associate Moderator position -Once again Pastor Scott was turned down. However another name was thrown in the hat and he has reached out.

“The Examen(ed) Church” – (Pastor Scott) - The start date is January 21. Gary and Meg Tackes, Karl Pradel, Scott Symes, Louise Mollinger, and Terry McManus have agreed to join the team with possibly two others that have committed yet. Others are welcome to join. We are one of six churches starting in January.

Additional Team Updates – (Shandy, Eric, Jennifer, Mike, Ken) – The Church School gift a child program went really well for eight children. They're hoping to do it again next year. In January the Church School class will be making the thank you cards for stewardship and gift a child. In February they plan to do the mac and cheese fundraiser to raise money for the church school budget. The food drive will continue in the new year. The advent workshop went well with cookie exchange. A few new faces were present. January will be another event (card, chili). Mike has a sign up sheet for communion servers.

New Business

Any other new business to come before the Council? - A fundraising idea for next year is a wood gnome and wreath craft workshop to sell with Christmas trees. Bill will take photos to share.

-Request to discuss combining 8 am and 10 am services. The discussion came up at one of the awareness campaign meetings. It is hard for members to see the empty pews. There are many factors, like ride share availability, to consider before eliminating or combining for one service time. Having two services allow for two different kinds of service. Maybe combining on occasion for a special event Sunday. Otherwise promoting ways to develop fellowship. Changing now in the middle of the program year might not be a good idea. Being open to new possibilities and discussion might be needed, but right now it's more important to get people in the door. This is something the council should open to the congregation to have a vote if and when a plan is developed.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment at 8:16pm

PROPERTY TEAM MEETING MINUTES

December 2022 Property Team Minutes

IN OUR PRAYERS

Jim Blumenberg. Roberta's husband, Jim, was hospitalized for several days in January with difficulty breathing, he is back home now, but prayers are welcome.

Alice Ruffin. Alice had hip replacement surgery early in January that went well and Alice is making steady progress with physical therapy.

Bruce Laabs, Sr. Bruce continues to be on palliative care at Ellen's Home here in Port Washington.

Carl Anderson. Savannah Anderson's father, Carl, was hospitalized on Christmas Day for breathing difficulty due to a heart condition. He is home doing better and would appreciate prayers.

Betty Bollinger. Betty continues to make progress after falling and breaking her hip on Christmas Eve. Betty is doing rehab work at Cedarburg Health Services and hopes to return to Harbor Club later this month.

Bridget Bretl had surgery late in January to remove a small, benign tumor that was effecting her eye-sight and causing headaches. Surgery went well and she hopes to be back to work in a couple of weeks.

Brenda Shupe. Brenda is recovering from back pain due to a fall in December, and bronchitis this past month.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Sherrie and Mike Dimmer. Mike and Sherrie are grandparents again, their youngest son, Evan, and his wife, Katie, welcomed a son, Parker Mitchell Dimmer on January 2. Parker was born a month premature, but he is now at home and doing well.

To Jim and Karen McKenzie who were married at church on January 21. Rev. Don Niederfrank officiated the ceremony.

To Family Promise of Ozaukee County who celebrated the opening of our community's new shelter for families and individuals experiencing homelessness. You might be interested to know that church member, Jeanne Mantsch, was a founding member of the Ozaukee Chapter. We thank Jeanne for continuing to lead numerous initiatives over the years to support Family Promise.

To Grace Wilsnack, Kylee Olson, and Simon Gilhooly who participated in WSDA (Wisconsin Choral Director's Association) All-State Choirs the weekend of January 13-14 in Appleton.

SPECIAL THANKS

To David Franks, Kitchie Allen, Karl Pradel, Jeff Ulicki, Jane Spalding, Don Niederfrank, Gary Tackes, and the Confirmation Class for serving as Worship Leaders in January.

To Don Niederfrank, Jeanne Mantsch, Gary Tackes, Joe and Bev Mueller, Mike and Jane Spalding, Mike and Sherrie Dimmer, and Peter and Becky Chandler for serving as Ushers in January.

To the Riemer and Thompson families for providing Nursery Care in January.

To Shandy Roehrig and family for providing Fellowship Hour in January.

To Jennifer Dimmer, Jane Spalding, Dawn Guschl, and Bill Bond for serving Communion in January.

To the Fellowship Team for hosting a chili potluck lunch on January 22, and to all those who contributed a pot of chili, side, and dessert.

To everyone who donated birthday items to create Birthday Kits, a project of Lighthouse Youth Ministry. Youth from our church joined others at Lighthouse on January 22 to create 150 kits which will be delivered to the food pantries in Port Washington and Saukville.

To Rev. Don Niederfrank for leading worship services on January 22 while Pastor Scott was on vacation.

To Jane Spalding and Joe Mueller for leading our Wednesday Lunch Group on January 18 and 25 while Pastor Scott was on vacation.

To Congregational Care Team member, Meg Tackes, who sent out birthday and anniversary cards to our friends and members in January.

To Rhonda Thompson and Jennifer Dimmer who oversee the Scrip/Raise Right fundraising initiative for our church—members and friends who have signed up for the program raised almost \$600 for the church last year!

To Pam Marquardt for knitting over 100 colorful hats which will be distributed to various organizations in our community, and to Barb Bahr for cleaning the hats at her business, Harborview Cleaners.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

- 3 - Tyson Blum
- 4 - Abigail Clements
Brady Fleischmann
Gary Bria
Wally Wilsnack
- 5 - Kai-i Tien
- 8 - Susan Joplin
- 9 - Craig Modahl
John Norman
- 10 - Claude Zimmerman
Payton Yellen
- 12 - Sarah Bloemer
- 13 - Lilyan Kunsmann
- 14 - Jackie Oleson
Beckie Perez
Amy Wilsnack
Dennis Brede
- 15 - Claire Rychtik
Matt Riemer
Amy Laabs
- 16 - Julie Calder
Nicholas Sanem
Benjamin Sanem
- 17 - Jane Spalding
- 19 - Jonas Cira
- 20 - Miles Stimac
- 22 - Brook Holmes
- 24 - Dani Peiffer
- 25 - Scarlett Melichar
- 28 - Sydney White



FEBRUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 14- Patrick and Kay Rego

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

FEBRUARY 2023 CALENDAR

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
			1 9:30 am Congregational Care Team 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm	2 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon 6:30 pm Executive Team	3	4
5 <i>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8 am/10 am Worship Communion Service 9 am Fellowship Hour Nursery Care 11:15 am Church 125 th Anniversary Planning	6 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga	8 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	9 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon 6 pm Knellsville 4-H Club 6:30 pm Church Council	10	11
12 <i>Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8 am/10 am Worship Service 10 am Church School Mac 'n Cheese Fundraiser Nursery Care Chancel Choir 11 am Fellowship Hour New Member Class 12 pm Zausch Baptism	13 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	14 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga	15 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	16 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon	17	18
19 <i>Transfiguration Sunday</i> 8 am/10am Worship Service 10 am Handbell Choir Nursery Care 11 am Soup & Salad Potluck Lunch New Member Class	20 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00 pm Confirmation Class	21 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga	22 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7-8:30 pm Lenten Book Study 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	23 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon 1 pm Property Team	24	25
26 <i>First Sunday in Lent</i> 8 am Worship Service 10 am Family Service New Members Children's Choir Nursery Care 11 am Fellowship Hour 1 pm Lighthouse to Sunburst	27 6:30 pm Chancel Choir	28 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga				

CHURCH INFORMATION

First Congregational Church - *United Church of Christ*
131 North Webster Street
Port Washington, WI 53074
(262) 284-2022
website - portucc.org, email - office@portucc.org



Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday mornings from 8:30 - Noon

Pastor Scott's Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays, and by appointment

Financial Administrator Phil's Office Hours

Mondays from 4:30 - 6:30

Office Staff

Rev. Dr. Scott McLeod, Pastor - pastorscott@portucc.org

Amy Gilhooly, Communications Director - amyg@portucc.org

Beckie Perez, Office Manager - office@portucc.org

Phil Stepanski, Financial Administrator - phil@portucc.org

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Check out the church website - portucc.org

ONLINE GIVING WITH PAYPAL

PayPal is an easy way to give to the church to pay your pledge and/or make an extra financial gift. You can find the **PayPal** button on the home page of the church website (portucc.org) or use this QR code. Thank you!

