



February 2011

CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

A newsletter of First Congregational Church - Wauwatosa

2011 ASP Italian Auction and Dinner

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Marc & Val Blazich enjoyed the festivities at last year's ASP Dinner & Auction.



It is hard to believe that Valentine's Day is fast approaching. Choosing February 12th as the date to host this year's ASP Italian Dinner and Auction seemed like a good fit. Although some people associate February 14th with romantic love, I have always viewed it as a fun day for everyone. As a child, it was the highlight of my year to bring home my Valentine mailbox from school. I spent hours lovingly creating this shoebox masterpiece. It had to be perfect. Racing home after our classroom Valentine party, I would dump the mailbox contents onto the living room floor the minute I ran through the door.

I then spent hours sifting through the mound of cards reading the fun and silly sayings. After I had read every card at least ten times, I would place the box and its contents in a place of honor in my room. There it would remain for months. It always made me feel good to look at it. When bored or blue, all I had to do was go to the box and read the cards. Instantly my spirits were lifted. Although, giving or receiving a valentine is such a simple thing,

it has a way of making us smile. It doesn't take much to give one, yet it is a small act of showing love, not in a romantic way, but in a simple and uncomplicated way.

We as a church will soon have an opportunity to send a valentine to our teens and the Mission Trip Team. By purchasing a ticket to the Italian Dinner and Auction, making a donation of an auction item, or just giving an encouraging word, you send a Valentine - a strong and powerful message of love that will remain imprinted on the hearts of our youth. They will keep it in a safe place as they prepare for their journey and then will carry it with them to the

families they will serve in Appalachia.

At last year's fundraiser Dinner and Auction, the teens were overwhelmed with the generosity and the support of so many of you. The love and support you showed to them was evident in their words and actions in Appalachia. They took these notes of love from you that you imprinted on their hearts and shared them with the people who most needed them. Please join us again this year in sending another big message of love from our congregation. "Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." *John 3:18*

—Carla Cummings

High School
MISSION TRIP
Italian Dinner
& Auction

"Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action"
- John 3:18 NRSV 1

SATURDAY February 12th

At First Congregational Church in the Social Hall

5:30^{pm} Silent Auction Begins- Special Music Presentation

6:30^{pm} Dinner - Italian Bread with Roasted Garlic and Red Peppers, Sausage Stuffed Mushroom Caps, Anti-Pasta Salad, Lasagna Bolognese & Trapanese Prepared by Chef John Spariata and Culinary Crew

8:00^{pm} Voice Auction

TICKETS
\$20 per person
\$10 tax deductible
On sales beginning
Sunday, January 9th
limited seating available
FOR MORE INFO CALL
414-258-7375

Please join us for this special fundraising event benefitting the 2011 Summer High School Mission Trip to Appalachia

The Definition of Love



A wise teacher of mine once told me that we can't really say "we hate" because we really don't know what "love" is. Love and hate are two sides of the same coin. Whether we love or we hate, we are connected to the object of that love or hate. If we weren't connected, we wouldn't have the energy to expend on either state. Love and hate are both words we use on a fairly casual basis. They are words spoken, used and abused in the culture that surrounds us.

According to numerous sources in the web, the word "love" is found in the Bible somewhere between 202 and 558 times (depending on the translation). The English word "love" has many different meanings. It can have affectionate, benevolent, strong liking, romantic, or sexual (eros) implications. The Hebrew word *ahab*, most commonly used in the Old Testament, had a similar range of meanings.

Two different Greek words are translated as "love" in the New Testament, and they have more specific meanings than our English word "love." *Agapao* (verb) and *agape* (noun). This is the "Christian love" of the Bible. It means affection, benevolence, goodwill, high esteem and concern for the welfare of the one loved. It is deliberate, purposeful love rather than emotional or impulsive love. Almost all of the New Testament references to love are *agapao* or *agape* in the original Greek. *Phileo* (verb). This means to love in an impulsive and emotional way. It is seldom used in the Bible, in this way. Philadelphia is a related word meaning the love of brothers or sisters (e.g., [Romans 12:10](#)). It is often translated "brotherly love." (www.answers.com)

From the definition above, we can see that Christian love is about far more than romance, sentimentality, kindness or charity for those less fortunate. Christian love at its best is but a small reflection of the depth and steadfastness of God's unconditional love for us. This is what my teacher was talking about when he made the statement about hate and love. With our own best efforts, we can't come close to loving like God does. Words fail us when we try to describe our experiences, those moments, when we somehow are clear in God's love for us. And yet, God, revealed in Jesus, commanded us to love one another as he has loved us. Seems nothing short of impossible, doesn't it?

It seems to me that the only way we can begin to love, is to first let ourselves be loved by God. To be loved by God means to risk transformation, letting go and finding ourselves in uncharted territory... uncharted for us, but not for God. We cannot share God's love if we don't know something of it.

I don't know about you, but I like to know where I am going. I like my GPS. I am very intentional about when I use my GPS, making sure it's programmed, has a good signal and that the sound is loud enough so I can hear the directions.

Our spiritual lives are a lot like that. We have to make sure we are tuned in, have a good signal and that we can hear. As Christians, we do those things in prayer of all forms. Just as I can decide with my GPS if I want to risk getting lost and go it alone, so I can with prayer and God. My experience, generally, is that going it alone, with my GPS or without God, is not a good choice. For God's love, the *agape* love defined above, to grow, we each need to choose, whether we will turn to God in prayer as individuals and as a Christian community. The reality is that this is not a one-time decision. It's an every day of our lives decision.

With Valentine's Day upon us, I encourage each of you to stop and observe how you use the words "love" and "hate"; if you spend time each day with the One who loves more than we can imagine; if you are or could be more intentional about spending time; and, if the risk is worth it. The people in the church, the community of Wauwatosa, our state, the nation and our world need people like us, to take the risk of being loved by God.

—Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski, M.S., M.F.T., Minister of Family Life and Christian Formation



Congregational
COLUMNS

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Breakfast with the Girls

**Saturday, February 5
9 AM in Friendship Lounge**

We hope you'll join us on Saturday, February 5, 9 AM in Friendship Lounge as Ann Phillips shares with us how the garden at the Ronald McDonald House in Wauwatosa began.

The Wisconsin Arborist Association chose Ann as the 2010 recipient of the International Society of Arboriculture Gold Leaf Award. She and a group of master gardeners



have taken on the task of maintaining the Ronald McDonald House 'Secret Garden,' a walled private garden that provides a wonderful respite for families and children. Learn how the project progressed over the years and what the plans for the future are.

Please sign up at the Gathering Table in the Atrium. Donation: \$5. Breakfast treats, and guests, are always welcome.

—Jennifer Wakefield

'New' Member Take on an 'Old' Church Tradition

As a relatively new member of the church community, I wanted to share my impressions of this past December 12th at church with you, and how the loving efforts and varied talents of so many of our members came together in such a beautifully orchestrated event.

We baked some cookies for the shut-ins and dropped them off on the way to Sunday Symposium and worship. My son, Elijah, and I came back to church about an hour before the concert to help pack up the cookie boxes. We enjoyed pleasant conversation with the other cookie packers and also heard about a few people they knew who needed prayer. We prayed for them. Besides colorful goodies, into each cookie box was placed a handmade Christmas card crafted by the children during Sunday School. One of the women brought handmade Christmas ornaments that children had made at the afternoon Christmas Workshop back on December 5th. Each was carefully wrapped in a decorated bag and fastened to the top of each cookie box. We finished packing about 40 boxes just in time for the Christmas Concert where the Jubilation Ringers lifted us to new heights with their unique talents, the Junior Choir warmed us with their innocent voices, and the Choir of First Church gave another spectacular performance. Some of those songs actually resonated in all four chambers of my heart.

After the concert, members took a box or two of cookies to deliver to the shut-ins. Elijah and I had the opportunity to make a few deliveries. I also grabbed a handful of those adorable church mouse ornaments made by our PF youth group, and delivered those to the shut-ins, too. We were greeted very warmly and often by a teary-eyed individual who was so grateful for the thought and a visit from church members. We were very blessed by those experiences.

This was one of the highlights of the season for us. I encourage all of you to look forward with great anticipation to this event next December – whether you are a part of the baking, the crafting, the singing, the visiting, or simply soaking it in your spirit – be involved.

—Therese Ramseyer

Faith and Film



**Faith and Film
Shadowlands (1994)
Wednesday, February 16, 6 PM**

Based on the play by William Nicholson, *Shadowlands* tells the true story of the love affair between novelist and noted Christian scholar C.S. Lewis and Jewish-American poet, Joy Gresham. Author of the successful *Chronicles of Narnia* series,

Lewis is a confirmed bachelor and academic dedicated to pondering the great issues of life and religion. To his

great surprise, Lewis develops a late-in-life friendship with a young American woman and her little boy. Lewis agrees to a platonic marriage so Gresham can obtain British citizenship, a plan that goes awry as a committed and loving relationship develops between the two. When the prospect of a happy life together is overshadowed by the discovery that Gresham has cancer, Lewis' own religious beliefs are tested. Directed by Richard Attenborough and starring Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger. Released in 1994. 130 minutes. Rated PG.

—Marianne King

(We are staying with the 6 PM movie time for the winter months.)

February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9 AM Retired Men's Club of Tosa 7 PM Boy Scouts, Quilters Anonymous	2 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 5:30 PM Bd/Stewardship & Benevolences 6 PM Debtors Anonymous	3 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks, @CH - Hymn Sing 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh. 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	4 9 AM Harmony Singers	5 9 AM Breakfast with the Girls
6 8 AM Worship in the Chapel/ Communion 9 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids, Junior Choir reh. 9:15 AM Cherub Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Communion/Children in Church/Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class I	7 12:30 PM Heritage Garden Club 8 PM AA	8 12 PM Circle 7 5 PM Music by the Lake Auditions 7 PM Bd/Deacons, Boy Scouts	9 6:30 AM Men's Ministry 7 AM Women's Ministry 9 AM Cream City Rug Club 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 4:30 PM Personnel 6 PM Debtors Anonymous	10 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh. 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	11 9 AM Harmony Singers 10 AM @CH - Hug-a-Tot	12 10 AM Bach Competition Auditions 5:30 PM ASP 2011 Mission Trip Dinner & Auction
13 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 9 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids, Junior Choir reh. 9:15 AM Cherub Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Children in Church/Sunday School/Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class II 6:30 PM Ulster Project	14 9 AM @CH - Suburban Retired Men's Club 11:30 AM 20th Century Club 5:30 PM Faith Finders (dinner at 5 PM) 7 PM Bd/Trustees 8 PM AA	15 9 AM Retired Men's Club of Tosa 2 PM @CH - Alzheimer's Support Group 7 PM Boy Scouts, Historic Heights Book Club, Tosa Quilters	16 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 6 PM Faith & Film, Debtors Anonymous	17 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh. 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	18 9 AM Harmony Singers	19
20 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 9 AM Sunday Symposium, Discovery Kids, Junior Choir reh. 9:15 AM Cherub Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Cherub Choir/Children in Church/Sunday School/Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class I 3 PM MacDowell Club 5 PM Jr. PF 6 PM Jr./Sr. PF Supper 6:30 PM Sr. PF	21 10:30 AM @CH - Sing-a-Long w/ Marj 8 PM AA	22 9 AM Retired Men's Club of Tosa Bd 7 PM Church Council, Boy Scouts	23 6:30 AM Men's Ministry 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 12 PM Senior Women/ Circle 12 6 PM Debtors Anonymous 6:30 PM Master Gardeners	24 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh. 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	25 9 AM Harmony Singers	26
27 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 9 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids, Junior Choir reh., Jubilation Ringers reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Jubilation Ringers/Children in Church/Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class II	28 9 AM @CH - Suburban Retired Men's Club, Suburban Women's Club of Tosa Bd 8 PM AA					

Discovery Kids

•Sunday, February 6, 13, 20, 27 - 9 AM in LL5
 Kids enjoy this special time of additional activities, led by Sarah DeYoung, before their traditional Sunday School at 10 AM. Those who rehearse with the Junior and/or Cherub Choirs will join them after practice. Older youth are invited to help lead.

Sunday School

•Sunday, February 6, 13, 20, 27 - Regular Sunday School - ages 3 thru 8th grade

PF Schedule

•Sunday, February 20
 Jr. PF - 5 - 6 PM
 Jr./Sr. PF Supper - 6 PM in the Social Hall (\$3/person)
 Sr. PF - 6:30 PM

We are going to plan our food drive, which will take place on Wednesday, March 16. We will plan the food drive schedule and responsibilities including a time line, students' roles, and we'll also determine the recipient(s) of our food drive. Game time will follow.

Sign up in the Atrium or e-mail me at toniawallner@yahoo.com if you plan on coming.

Faith Finders

•Monday, February 14, 5:30 PM in the Social Hall

1st through 5th graders are invited for a night of fun activities celebrating Valentine's Day! Bring a friend or two with you! Supper (tacos) will be served at 5 PM at a cost of \$3 per person. Programming follows from 5:30 - 6:30 PM.



—Tonia Wallner, Director of Children & Youth

Thank You for Your Support!

On behalf of many children and their families, I thank each of you who gave gifts to foster children through the Children's Service Society Giving Tree this past Christmas. Thank you all so much for blessing the children. Your love and support is wonderful and does more than any of us really knows.

Blessings to you all in the New Year!

—Therese Ramseyer, Elijah Ramseyer and "the kids"

Discovery Adults

•**Sunday, February 6, 9 AM**

Sunday Symposium in the Lounge

The Perfect Gift with Joan Carey - We have all been given special tools to bring the news of Christ's love to the world. They are called charisms or spiritual gifts. Have you discovered yours? Are you using them? Come and hear one person's story of discovery and openness to God's call.

Family Life Cycle Series in the Parlor

Help for the Exhausted Parent with Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski

•**Sunday, February 13, 9 AM**

Sunday Symposium in the Lounge

Is Education Reform Possible? with Dr. Robert Solsrud, Headmaster, Brookfield Academy - Ideas have consequences. Enjoy listening to an educational success story in your own back yard. Dr. Solstrud will chronicle the history of American education as a backdrop to the genesis of Brookfield Academy - an independent school founded on the ideals of freedom and personal responsibility.

Family Life Cycle Series in the Parlor

Helping Your Teen/Tween Deal with Daily Pressures with Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski

•**Sunday, February 20, 9 AM**

Sunday Symposium in the Lounge

Domestic Violence: What Every Christian Should Know with Angela Mancuso of Sojourner Family Peace Center

•**Sunday, February 27, 9 AM**

Sunday Symposium in the Lounge

TBD

Family Life Cycle Series in the Parlor

Caring for People with Alzheimer's with Rev. Jan Kwiatkowski

Operating Statement Summary

Year-to-date as of December 2010

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge Base Received	96.1%	99.6%
Pledge Income	\$743,979	\$801,388
Total Income	\$865,136	\$905,228
Total Expense	\$803,823	\$836,794
Net Income	\$61,313	\$68,434

Detailed financials are available at the office.

Volunteer Opportunities at CH

- Sunday Morning Worship Services**
Escort residents to and from Chapel, 10 - 11:30 AM
- Baking Group**
Assist residents with baking, Wednesdays, 9:30 - 11:30 AM
- Monthly Hymn Sing**
Escort residents to the Chapel and assist them with singing hymns, first Thursday of the month, 10 AM
- Sing-a-Long with Marj**
Escort residents to the Chapel and assist them with singing, third Monday of the month, 10:30 AM
- Hug-a-Tot**
Bring your child(ren) or grandchild(ren) to play with other youth, second Friday of the month, 10 AM
- To volunteer, or for additional information, contact Cindy Conkey or Lorene Halvorson at Congregational Home, 262-781-0550.

The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of the Columns is Friday, February 11 at noon.
Please email articles to Anne Callen at callena@firstchurchtosa.org.
Hard copy may be brought to the church office and left in the Columns mailbox.

Lectionary Readings

Texts Used in Worship

February 6 Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany
Old Testament Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
Psalmody Psalm 112:1-10
New Testament 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
Gospel Matthew 5:13-20

February 13 Sixth Sunday After the Epiphany
Old Testament Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalmody Psalm 119:1-8
Old Testament 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Gospel Matthew 5:21-37

February 20 Seventh Sunday After the Epiphany
Old Testament Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
Psalmody Psalm 119:33-40
New Testament 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23
Gospel Matthew 5:38-48

February 27 Eighth Sunday After the Epiphany
Old Testament Isaiah 49:8-16a
Psalmody Psalm 131
New Testament 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Gospel Matthew 6:24-34

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