



February 2012

CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

A newsletter of First Congregational Church - Wauwatosa

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The Way Forward

Rev. Dr. Thomas Richard, Executive Secretary of the NACCC, led a gathering of the Congregation on January 8th in the Social Hall. There were 107 members in attendance and all were encouraged to actively participate.

The Moderator and Vice Moderator made the following affirmation:

1. We are aware of the issues that have caused conflict as well as those who hurt as a result of it.
2. We sincerely desire to let go of the known and all it represented, and learn from it.
3. We believe that by owning these issues, our congregation can move forward.
4. We are ready and willing to create better vehicles of communication with the congregation.
5. We will more closely honor our congregational tradition of shared leadership.
6. We seek to help our church prepare for a better future.

Vice Moderator Steve Hayes, summarized where we've been, including information gleaned from the "Journeys" sessions and the meetings held in fall.

We then broke into thirteen groups and answered the following questions:

1. What do we need to do differently (new ideas) to better meet our spiritual and personal needs at First Church and better serve our God?
2. What should we continue to do to better meet our spiritual and personal needs at First Church and better serve our God?
3. What talents can you offer the church in support of new programs or ideas?

Each group had a scribe take notes on their discussions, and the information will be compiled and shared with the Church Council.

As we look to the "Journey Forward," Steve Wallner reported on the activities being discussed at the meetings of the GO TEAM. This group was

formed out of the Radical Hospitality session of Journey of Dreams and is working to market FCC to its members and the greater community in the months ahead.

Those present joined together in saying a Litany of Reconciliation and also prayed a prayer for our church in unison. When asked by Dr. Richard if we would like to have other sessions like this, the consensus was a unanimous "yes." It is apparent that members are listening to the opinions of others, hearing what needs to be done to keep the church moving forward, and are also getting to know each other better. It would seem that good things are happening in the new year at First Church!

New Member Session

If you are interested in becoming a member of First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, Pastor Barry will be conducting a New Member Session to discuss membership and our Covenant.

Rather than fix a date at this time, First Church would like to be flexible to your time, if possible. If you would like to join our church, please contact the church office (414-258-7375) with your name, cell, and home phone numbers.

A date will be set when all who wish to become a member of First Congregational can attend this important session with Pastor Barry.

The Christmas Eve Play, put on by Jr. & Sr. High Students, was part of the 4 PM worship service.



Our Baptism - Newness in Life



I have been baptized at our church since 1842. What is the significance of hundreds of baptisms for scores of years?

We look first to Jesus, who began his ministry when

he traveled to John, who was called "The Baptist" and was baptized. John had proclaimed "I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." We are baptized Christians. We have been baptized with water – but our baptism, on another level, is spiritual. The Holy Spirit is with us. Water is the element. The pouring of the water shows cleansing, unity, a sign of membership, and belonging. The elements and the sign only signify the grace that comes directly from our Trinitarian God. That is what the baptized person perceives – a new beginning. Therefore, whether an adult baptism, or an infant baptism where the parents and sponsors/godparents speak on behalf of the child, baptism is a sacrament that ties the person's heart and mind and soul together into the totality of spirituality.

The water is an element of cleansing – of washing – of regeneration. Water is essential to the life of this planet – to help grow plants, animals, and us. Water brings about and sustains life. Jesus uses water as a sign of a deeper presence of God as life. The Psalmist proclaimed

"The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over mighty waters." [Ps. 29:3] The prophet Isaiah tells us that the Lord Himself says "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters." [Isaiah 55:1] Since we all require water to live, we must work together to assure clean drinking water in our communities. All of our water is cleansed and purified before we drink it. Water is a sign of life for our spirituality also. Jesus Himself told us so! In John's Gospel [7:37-38] it is recorded that "On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink.'"

The Congregational Savoy Declaration of Faith states that 'the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Spirit to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongs to, according to the counsel of God's own Will in his appointed time.' [Chap. XXIX, VI] Clearly, from scripture and from Savoy, the sacrament of Baptism has so many levels of understanding – but the key is that through it we know we "walk in the newness of life." [Savoy, Chap. XXIX, I] Communally we acknowledge it when we together pray, "Our Father . . ." and when we so pray, we confirm our covenant with each other at First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa.

*Rev. Barry W. Szmanski, J.D.
Minister of Pastoral Care*

Announcing a Classical Retreat at FCC

Many people try to go on a retreat once a year. A non-religious retreat might be a half-day at the art museum, or the annual vacation with family, traveling with friends, turkey or deer hunting, or ice fishing.

A religious retreat is a combination of communal prayer, talks, optional small group discussion, and a good amount of private prayer time.

The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa is offering a classical retreat on Saturday, February 25, beginning at 9 AM. It is sponsored by the Board of Deacons and Pastor Barry, who is a member of the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides.

The day will start with morning prayer, then continue with a series of short talks based upon scripture, with ample

time for private reflection and prayer.

The entire first and second floor of FCC will be available [with no other activities at the church] so you will be able to find a place to read, think, or pray. It is a 'quiet day.'

There will be snacks throughout the day, and there will be a silent lunch. It is a time to reflect. To ponder. To just be.

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Congregational COLUMNS

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Getting to Know You - Wear Nametags on Sunday

It is no secret that we have been on various "journeys" since last summer. Anyone who travels knows that most trips have some bumps along the way, and one has to deal with them and learn for the future. It is no different for the members of First Church.

One of the more positive aspects of the various sessions that have been held is the over-whelming pleasure members have expressed in getting to know the people in the congregation better. Everyone has enjoyed the small group conversations

and the opportunity to really talk to people who they may have seen for years, and never really spoken with. Now there are names to go with the faces and information about who they are, that was generated during the conversations each week.



Another "change" that seems to be positive is that people are really seeing that greeting one another during the worship service is a wonderful form of hospitality and outreach. It's not something we do only for the benefit of visitors, although

that is very important also. It's a quick way to communicate, to listen, and to look around and see if someone's missing. All of this "sharing" helps us realize that we are all members of one church family. We need to recognize the importance of each of our individual "relatives," and we need to know who they are.

It has become quite clear that we've been operating far too long with the mindset that "I've been a member for 40 years, so everyone knows who I am." In moving forward, let's make the

effort to put on a nametag on Sunday mornings. When you turn to one another in the pew, or visit in the Atrium or at Coffee Hour, people will call you by name and truly recognize who you are. It's bound to make everyone feel like they belong and it may even generate more conversation that will bring us closer together. Give it a try and see how many new friends you can make!

Name tags may be found near the parking lot entrance, in the Narthex, or on the Welcome Table in the Atrium.

Bible Ministry

A new evening Bible Ministry, led by Pat Reddy, will be starting at First Church on Wednesday, February 1, following a Souper Pie Supper, which will begin at 6 PM. We'll start with Paul's Epistle, Philipians. The group will meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 7 - 8:30 PM. Materials needed include: a Bible, and an open heart to be able to learn how God's word in this 2,000 year old letter can be relevant to you today in 2012. The study is open to anyone who is interested. Please sign up on the Gathering Table in the Atrium and consider inviting a friend to join you.

CLASSICAL RETREAT *continued from page two*

While it is a time for devotional silence, that should not be daunting to anyone, nor intimidating, for there will be some activities to break the day, including some optional devotional stretching time [very easy for any age]. February is a month that lends itself to putting oneself in God's hands for a day.

- No gardening.
- No hunting.
- No real need to shop.
- It is either ice fishing or a retreat.
- That is February.

Please sign up at the Gathering Table in the Atrium.

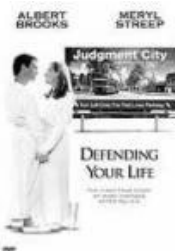
—Rev. Barry W. Szymanski, Minister of Pastoral Care

Movies at First

Faith in Film

Defending Your Life (1991) PG (Runs 122 minutes)

Wednesday, February 29, 6:30 PM



February's film is a comic fantasy designed to lighten up a winter evening. The story revolves around Daniel Miller, a self-obsessed yuppie who crashes his BMW convertible into a bus and finds himself in "Judgment City." At heaven's way station, he meets Julia, the woman of his dreams. Unfortunately, Daniel needs to defend his life on Earth before he can ascend to heaven

with the virtuous Julia. And when he tries to justify the choices he's made, things don't sound too good. Poor Daniel starts to worry that he may not be joining Julia in heaven. Starring Albert Brooks and Meryl Streep.

—Marianne King

Drive-in Movie

Bruce Almighty (2003) PG-13

Friday, February 24, 6 PM



Bruce Almighty is a 2003 fantasy comedy film directed by Tom Shadyac and written by Steve Koren, Mark O'Keefe and Steve Oederkerk. It stars Jim Carrey as Bruce Nolan, a down-on-his-luck TV reporter who complains to God that He isn't doing His job correctly, and is then offered the chance to try being God himself for one week. Morgan Freeman, Jennifer Aniston, Steve Carell,

and Catherine Bell also star while Tony Bennett makes a cameo appearance. \$4 gets you all the pizza, popcorn, and lemonade you can eat. Please sign up at the Gathering Table in the Atrium. Mike & Holly Elwing are your hosts.

February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 6 PM Souper Pie Supper, Debtors Anonymous 7 PM Bible Ministry	2 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks, @CH - Hymn Sing 5:30 PM Bd/Deacons 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh., Yoga w/ Monica Stevens 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	3 8 AM Cook for St. Vincent's 9 AM Harmony Singers 4:15 PM Serve at St. Vincent's	4 9 AM Breakfast with the Girls
5 8 AM Worship in the Chapel/ Communion 8:45 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids 9 AM Junior Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Communion/ Children in Church/PF/ Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class I & II	6 12:30 PM Heritage Garden Club 8 PM AA	7 9 AM Retired Men's Club of Tosa 7 PM Boy Scouts, Quilters Anonymous	8 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 7 PM Bd/Christian Education	9 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh., Yoga w/ Monica Stevens 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	10 9 AM Harmony Singers 10 AM @CH - Hug-a-Tot	11 9 AM Bach Violin Competition Auditions
12 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 8:45 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids 9 AM Junior Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Children in Church/PF/ Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 4 PM @Hart Park - PF Special Event: Curling 6:30 PM Ulster Project	13 9 AM @CH - Suburban Retired Men's Club 12 PM 20th Century Club 5:30 PM Faith Finders (dinner at 5 PM) 7 PM Bd/Trustees 8 PM AA	14 12 PM Circle 7, Wauwatosa Ministers' mtgs. 7 PM Boy Scouts	15 6:30 AM Men's Bible Study 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 6 PM Debtors Anonymous 7:30 PM Bible Ministry	16 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 11:30 AM WDCAC 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh., Yoga w/ Monica Stevens 7 PM WCTS 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	17 9 AM Harmony Singers	18
19 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 8:45 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids 9 AM Junior Choir reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Junior Choir/ Children in Church/PF/ Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship 11:15 AM Covenant Class I & II	20 10:30 AM @CH - Sing-a-Long w/ Marj 7 PM Bd/Fellowship 8 PM AA	21 2 PM @CH - Alzheimer's Support Group 6 PM Music by the Lake 7 PM Boy Scouts, Historic Heights Book Club, Tosa Quilters	22 6:30 AM Men's Ministry 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 10 AM Ash Wednesday Service 11 AM Senior Women/ Circle 12 6 PM Debtors Anonymous 7 PM Ash Wednesday Service	23 9 AM Big Band 10 AM Sidetracks 6:30 PM Jubilation Ringers reh., Yoga w/ Monica Stevens 7:30 PM Choir of First Church reh.	24 9 AM Harmony Singers 6 PM Drive-in Movie	25 9 AM Classical Retreat
26 8 AM Worship in the Chapel 8:45 AM Discovery Adults, Discovery Kids 9 AM Junior Choir reh., Jubilation Ringers reh. 10 AM Worship in the Nave/ Jubilation Ringers/ Children in Church/ Sunday School/ Nursery 11 AM Coffee Fellowship	27 9 AM Suburan Women's Club of Tosa Bd 8 PM AA	28 9 AM Retired Men's Club Bd 7 PM Church Council, Boy Scouts	29 7 AM Women's Ministry 9:30 AM @CH - Baking Group 6 PM Faith in Film, Debtors Anonymous 6:30 PM Master Gardeners			

Discovery Kids

•Sunday, February 5, 12, 19 & 26 - 8:45 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 5, 12, 19 & 26 - Regular Sunday School - ages 3 thru 5th grade
 On Sunday, February 19, there will be a special communion service with Rev. Barry for the first - fifth grade classes in the Chapel during regular Sunday School time.

PF Schedule for February

•Sunday, February 5, 12, 19, & 26
Junior PF meets from 10:15 - 11:30 AM
Senior PF meets from 10:15 - 11:30 AM
 PF meets during the second worship service *each* Sunday beginning at 10:15 AM. Begin in worship with your families. When the youth depart the Nave during the service, come to Friendship Lounge where we'll begin fellowship time together and then split off into two groups. Outings and other special events take place once a month.

PF Special Event: *Curling @Tosa Curling Club (Hart Park) - 4 - 6 PM on February 12th*

The youth will receive a demonstration on how to curl from Mike Elwing. They will then actually get a chance to try curling! We'll follow that up with a delicious homemade supper. See Tonia for mandatory consent forms.

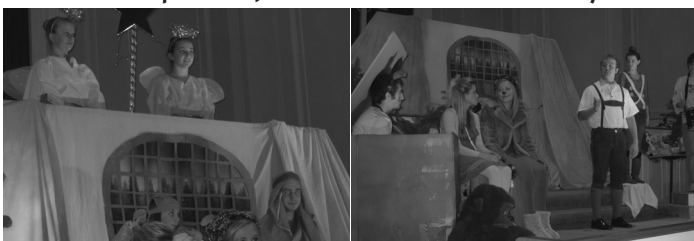
Email me at toniawallner@yahoo.com if you plan on coming.

Faith Finders

•Monday, February 13, 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

More pictures from the PF Christmas Eve Play.



Discovery Adults

Sunday Symposium - 8:45 AM in the Lounge

•Sunday, February 5, 19, 26
TBD

•Sunday, February 12

Led by Dick Buchman - Reinhold Niebuhr has been described as 'the foremost Protestant theologian of the 20th century.' He was also a significant figure in the political history of that era, both in this country and abroad. Both the 'right' and the 'left' have claimed him as their own, and both have had some reason to do that, from time-to-time. Most of the people who are writing about him today did not know him. Dick did, and he has always thanked God for giving him that opportunity. He will share with you some of his memories of one of the most impressive and delightful men he has ever known.

Lectionary Discussion - 8:45 AM in the Chapel

Sunday, February 5, 12, 19, & 26

A discussion of each Sunday's lectionary will take place. Our Sunday School curriculum also follows the adult lectionary so folks of all ages are invited to join in the discussion.

—Jennifer Wakefield

Ash Wednesday - February 22

Worship in the Chapel - 10 AM
 Worship in the Chapel - 7 PM



Operating Statement Summary

Year-to-date as of December 2011

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge Base Received	97.8%	96.1%
Pledge Income	\$667,387	\$743,979
Total Income	\$811,824	\$865,136
Total Expense	\$760,485	\$803,823
Net Income	\$51,339	\$61,312

Detailed financials are available at the office.

Breakfast with the Girls

Saturday, February 4 - 9 AM in Friendship Lounge
Knitting and Crocheting Workshop for the Prayer Shawl Ministry

Love to knit or crochet? Used to knit or crochet years ago and would like to pick it up again? Have always wanted to learn how to knit or crochet? Join together, in fellowship, to make prayer shawls and hats or mittens. Learn about the ministry and share ideas about others who we can reach out to.



Please join us, if:

- You can teach others to knit or crochet
- You want to learn yourself
- You just want to learn about the ministry or have ideas about other ways to serve
- You would like to donate yarn or other supplies
- You have some great patterns.

If you have them, bring:

- size 11 or 13 knitting needles
- M, N, or P crochet hooks
- 3 skeins of bulky yarn.

Sign up at the Gathering Table in the Atrium. Breakfast treats, and guests, are always welcome. *—Jennifer Wakefield*

The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of the Columns is Friday, February 10 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 5 Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany
 Old Testament Isaiah 40:21-31
 Psalmody Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
 New Testament 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
 Gospel Mark 1:29-39

February 12 Sixth Sunday After the Epiphany
 Old Testament 2 Kings 5:1-14
 Psalmody Psalm 30
 Old Testament 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
 Gospel Mark 1:40-45

February 19 Transfiguration Sunday
 Old Testament 2 Kings 2:1-12
 Psalmody Psalm 50:1-6
 New Testament 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
 Gospel Mark 9:2-9

February 22 Ash Wednesday
 Old Testament Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
 Psalmody Psalm 51:1-7
 New Testament 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
 Gospel Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 26 First Sunday in Lent
 Old Testament Genesis 9:8-17
 Psalmody Psalm 25:1-10
 New Testament 1 Peter 3:18-22
 Gospel Mark 1:9-15

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