

SEPTEMBER 2021

Volume 36 - Issue 9

The Congregational COLUMNS

A Triumphant Return of VBS

August 9-13, 2021



Vacation Bible School was back in full force this summer, and the church was filled with excitement and enthusiasm from our young attendees. Their energy was awesome, and the week included food, fellowship, and fun for all! Our VBS experience took place in person from August 9th-13th, and 43 kids, 15 teen helpers, and 10 adult helpers had a blast with the Rocky Railway theme. Throughout the week, the activities helped the kids explore God's goodness and celebrated that "Jesus' power pulls us through" all of the ups and downs of life. They were encouraged to experience God in new and creative ways...side by side with their peers.

Each day, our 4K – entering 6th grade VBS attendees moved from station to station with their crews, which allowed them to get to know their fellow Crew Members on a deeper level. Every station was designed to reinforce the Bible message in a hands-on, interactive way, with the goal to keep everyone engaged in the lesson. The 4K and 5K children were grouped together for developmentally appropriate activities, while the 1st through 6th graders were assigned their groups to make the experience as fun as possible.

At the Imagination Station, the kids were able to experiment with "Sciency-fun gizmos" that incorporated the daily Bible message, and then took the gizmos home to share the learned lesson with their parents. The children were also active participants in the daily Bible story at Bible Adventures, which was followed by thought-provoking discussions. At KidVid Cinema, our attendees "met" five real kids who are trusting Jesus' power in all of their circumstances. Next, our attendees were able to run, jump, and play through fun games that reinforced the daily Bible verse at Loco Motion Games. One of the favorite stations each year is Sing & Play Express, and this year was no exception! The kids sang and danced to a mix of classic worship and more contemporary songs, and there are so many smiles and so much energy in the room! Finally, at Chew Chew Snacks, one crew prepared and served delicious treats that connected to the day's theme, and all of the crews enjoyed the snack time together in the Social Hall.

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THE COLUMNS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN WAUWATOSA

Worship & Discovery

Women's Ministry

Tuesdays, September 7, 14, 21 & 28
at 7:30^{am}

Starting in September the women will begin meeting in the Friendship Lounge, Tuesdays at 7:30^{am} for an hour. The group will begin a study of the attributes of God using the devotional "None Else," which will be provided. All are invited. Contact Pat Reddy with any questions.

Adult Learning Hour

Sundays, September 19 & 26, 8:45^{am}

Adult Learning resumes on Sunday, September 19, at 8:45^{am} in LL2. Please bring your Bible as we begin a study of the Gospel of John. You need not attend every week or stay the full hour to be part of the group. All are welcome to join us as you are able.

Casual Worship

SATURDAY
UNDER THE STEEPLE

Suspended until further notice.



Operating Statement Summary

Year to Date as of July 2021

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge base received	54.0%	57.0%
Pledge Income	\$270,410	\$303,074
Total Income	\$361,713	\$407,142
Total Expense	\$294,083	\$322,631
Net Income	\$67,630	\$84,511

Detailed financials available at office.

CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

A monthly newsletter produced by the First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa to keep members and the community up to date on activities at the church.

www.FirstChurchTosa.org

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JUST FOR YOUTH

September 2021



Sunday School

Sunday, September 12, 19, and 26
for ages 3 – 5th grade

Children will begin in church with their families during 10 am worship. They will be dismissed to Sunday School during the service.

Junior Choir

Sunday, September 19
for grades 2-8
Meet at 9:00 in LL4
Children usually sing once a month.

Covenant Class

Starting in October for 9th graders
Group meets at 8:30 am in the Library.

Pilgrim Fellowship (PF)

Sunday, September 12, 19 and 26
for grades 6 – 12

Teens will begin in church with their families during 10 am worship and will be dismissed to PF during the service.

Ultimate Kick-Off Event

Date TBD

VBS continued from page 1



The “ROCKY RAILWAY” theme was extremely relevant to all who attended and participated, from the awesome decorations in the Social Hall, stairwell, and Bible Adventures’ room, to the questions posed at the Imagination Station. Each daily mascot was based on a real animal that God created to thrive and survive in their unique habitat. On Monday, Ramsey the bighorn sheep was our mascot and we learned that “Jesus’ power helps us do hard things”. On Tuesday, the children learned that “Jesus’ power gives us hope” through the story of Paul encouraging others in a storm and shipwreck. Wednesday’s mascot was Sierra the mountain lion, and the children learned the story of Peter and John as they travelled the land teaching people about Jesus...and ultimately, that “Jesus’ power helps us be bold.” On Thursday, Finn the rainbow trout taught that “Jesus’ power lets us live forever” through His sacrifice on the cross. Friday’s mascot, Lawrence Elk, shared the theme of “Jesus’ power helping us be good friends” through the stories of Zacchaeus and Lazarus. What cool Bible stories to wrap up this great week. This week of VBS was an incredible blessing... for the kids, teens, and adults alike!

The memories that were made mean so much more coming from those involved, so I wanted to share a handful of testimonials:

“I loved to sing the songs!” – Mabel Raddemann

“I liked the fun, happy and carefree environment. Imagination station’s trinket was connected to the day’s lesson.” – Nadia Ruggini

“I liked going downstairs where you get to make stuff.” – Bennett Sterbin

“The gizmos were my favorite part.” – Jude Raddemann

“I loved the songs. I play my CD in the house and car and only skip the songs I don’t like. Mrs. Miles didn’t like them either.” – Bud Ruggini

“I enjoyed dancing and singing altogether, as it has been a long time since we were able to do that.” – Addison McVoy-Holtz

“I enjoyed being able to travel with my crew and having the chance to get to know more kids than were in my small group. It’s a welcoming VBS, definitely not an exclusive club.” – Emmy Ruggini

“Learning, singing, and dancing to grow closer to God was great.” – Maura McVoy-Holtz

“I loved all of it!” – Easton Hornung

“My favorite part of VBS was we had fun every single day! We played so many games and did a lot of fun activities, but while doing everything, we got to hang out with our friends!” – Sienna Hornung



OneHope27: We Purchased a Property!

The mission of OneHope27 is to bring hope to kids and families involved in foster care in Milwaukee County through support and connection with the church and the community around them. One of the organization's projects is to open a support home that will connect moms in crisis with mentoring programs, peer team building, life skills classes, and low-cost housing in the heart of the city.

In early 2022, OneHope27 hopes to open a support home that will help moms thrive and reunify with their children more quickly and successfully.

Carrie Sgarlata reports that they are thrilled to have found a great home! This will be an all- hands-on-deck project getting this home ready to open. Cleaning, remodeling, and purchasing

items for the home will all be areas of need. In June, our church youth were busy serving at the house. They cleaned, helped with much needed yard work, and painted the basement. We are so proud of our kids for spending an entire week helping to support this important mission.

How can you help? Below is a list of NEW items we need for the house. If you would like to purchase any of these items or make a monetary donation, please take a look. Items and donations can be dropped off at church.

Questions? Please contact Carrie Sgarlata at carriesgarlata@gmail.com. Thanks in advance for your support and generous spirit.

- Carrie Sgarlata

OneHope27 Support House Wish List (NEW items only, please)

Items	Number Needed		
Twin sheet sets.....	6	Hand towels.....	12
Twin comforters/quilts ...	6	Wash cloths.....	12
Twin mattress pads	6	Kitchen towels.....	8
Bath towels.....	12	Dish sets.....	12 settings
		Large plates, small plates, bowls	
		Drinking glasses (large)	24
		Small/juice glasses	12
		Silverware (forks, knives, spoons)	12 settings

Geezers Can Be Geysers!

Did you know that about 17 members play in "The Geezer Band?" Currently, about 13 men and one cheeky woman rehearse every Thursday at First Church – for two hours. None of them are what you'd call "young."

The band members know each other from various big bands or dance bands. Many of them play in several bands or at places like Organ Piper Pizza. So, somehow, they just came together because they are musicians and want to keep playing together. I think I named them the Geezer Band, but I'm not sure that they didn't start calling themselves by that name.

Yes, they can be "geysers." A geyser is a spring characterized by intermittent discharges of water ejected turbulently and accompanied by steam. Though "older" they are MUSICIANS, and don't you forget it! And when they finally arrive in time to get set up, greet, and acknowledge each other's presence, and warm up, it is time to start!

That is when a finger or two will point up, or a hand will be raised so that the other geezers will hear the number of the piece they wish to play first. But they are considerate. They share. Once they get going, they encourage each other

to select a piece to play. It's usually big band music from the '40s and '50s.

Gee willikers! You should hear them! They are so dynamic and so nice – even to Judy who comes half of the time to keep me company, and me! For example, Fran Rundel, the one woman who plays such a wonderful trumpet with the band, even brought Judy and me a tambourine and a set of maracas for us to play during a couple of the numbers. She makes sure we have a chance to use them by requesting two Hispanic tunes so we can join in.

Well, when my time comes, I go right into the middle of the musicians' circle and perform quite a bit, dance and even shake a bit. Not for long, because I get quite tired. But I too, am a Geezer and I am proud of it . . . and I want you to know that all of us geezers can really be geysers! I invite you to join the crowd!

So, do you think we should celebrate being geezers? Maybe we could have a "Geezers are Geysers Day!" When? Any ideas? Please, not in June though. That's busy enough.

- Lorrie Greco (wife of band member Tony Greco)

Search Committee Update

As First Congregational Church prepares for a significant leadership transition, the Council and Search Committee desire to give every member and faithful supporter of this church an opportunity to reflect on this transition. As such, the Search Committee has engaged the services of Dr. Gerry Brannon Krupp, Senior Consultant with Design Group International.

Dr. Krupp will be facilitating a series of small group conversations (approximately 10 attendees per session) to assist in this effort. There will be two venues for participation: 1) in-person following the Sunday worship service and 2) through scheduled Zoom meetings. Each session will last approximately one hour.

Dr. Krupp's accomplishments include 35 years of ministry experience and education, including a Doctor of

Ministry and Master of Divinity. He is especially passionate about helping congregations through transitional change and helping them recapture hope for their future. He is an engaging, thoughtful communicator who will provide steady and objective presence for leading the small group conversations.

The Search Committee will send more information to the congregation regarding scheduled dates and how to sign up for conversations. We look forward to Dr. Krupp's guidance and invite members to take advantage of this opportunity to reflect and give feedback.

- Peggy Griffith



SATURDAY UNDER THE STEEPLE UPDATE

Over the past two years, Saturday Under the Steeple has provided a welcoming environment for members of First Church, people from the community, guest musicians and lay presenters to gather in worship. The 4 pm Saturday service is designed for members and non-members who prefer an intimate setting or appreciate this opportunity to fit worship into a busy weekend schedule.

After much consideration, we have decided to put this service on hold for an undetermined amount of time. During the transition, as we anticipate an interim ministry

and search for a senior minister, we feel our energies can be put to better use in supporting the two Sunday worship services. Our hope is to move forward with full ministerial support and direction as well as membership involvement if First Church Saturday would like Saturday Under the Steeple to continue.

Thanks so much for the support and involvement with what we still feel is a worthwhile and necessary vehicle for sharing the good news to our local community at large.

- Patty Reddy and Peggy Griffith

Purls of Wisdom

FCC's knitting and crocheting group, "Purls of Wisdom," is back! We will meet the first Saturday of the month from 10 am to 12 noon, in the Lounge, starting October 2nd. The Care Board has an active prayer shawl ministry that provides shawls to church members, family or friends who are in need of extra comfort.

Would you like to help with this creative mission? Please consider knitting or crocheting a prayer shawl on your own or stop by our "Purls of Wisdom" knitting group. We share patterns, other service project ideas, and fellowship. Don't know how to knit but would like to learn? Stop on by, we would love to teach you.

We thank our gracious knitters and crocheters for their beautiful gifts of prayerful love. For those receiving a prayer shawl, it can offer a warm hug and support; a private place to relax and renew; or something to hold on to when things seem to be drifting away.

- Margie Idzikowski



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