

DECEMBER 2021

Volume 36 - Issue 12

The Congregational COLUMNS

Reflection with Gratitude!



THE COLUMNS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN WAUWATOSA



Worship & Discovery

Women's Ministry

*Tuesdays, December 7, 14, & 21
at 7:30^{am}*

Women's Ministry meets in the Friendship Lounge, Tuesdays at 7:30am for an hour. The group is studying the attributes of God using the devotional "None Else," which will be provided. All are invited. Contact Pat Reddy with any questions.

Men's Ministry

*Second and Fourth Wednesdays,
December 8 & 22 at 7:00^{am}*

Meet in Room 107 for the DVD Series, "The History of Christianity: From the Disciples to the Dawn of the Reformation."

Men's Bible Study

*First & Third Wednesdays,
December 1 & 15 at 7:00^{am}*

Men's Bible Study meets at 7am on Wednesday mornings. Join us in Room 107 for interesting studies and good conversation.

Adult Learning Hour

*Sundays, December 5, 12, & 19
at 8:45^{am}*

Adult Learning is held at 8:45am in LL2. Please bring your Bible as we study 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.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 30, 2022

**Immediately following a shortened
10^{am} Worship**

The Annual Meeting will propose the 2022 budget for approval, vote on the slate of Board and Committee nominees and update the congregation about church projects.

Operating Statement Summary

Year to Date as of October 2021

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge base received	79.0%	77.0%
Pledge Income	\$394,574	\$409,935
Total Income	\$506,198	\$529,206
Total Expense	\$426,506	\$468,765
Net Income	\$79,693	\$60,441

Detailed financials available at office.

Year End On-line Giving

We want to remind members that First Church offers secure, online giving. This may be set up by going to the church's website (firstchurchtosa.org) and clicking on the Giving icon to log in or set up your account.

If you plan on making an online contribution for 2021 and want it included on your year-end statement, please make your contribution by Tuesday, December 28th. There is typically a 3-day lag between the time you enter your contribution and when the funds are received by the church.

If you have any questions, please contact the church 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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Like us on Facebook!

Off the Top of My Head

By Rev. William S. Trump, *Senior Minister*

One night at the end of a special Saturday night worship service, a thunderstorm unleashed a bolt of lightning that plunged the church into darkness. With the congregation seated in total darkness, the pastor felt his way to the kitchen to find some candles. The pastor handed out the candles to everyone present. Persons lit their candles in much the same way as our church does on Christmas Eve, each person lighting the candle of the person next to them. The worshipers then made their way through the church's winding hallways to the front door.

Peering out, they could see the rain coming down in sheets. Looking around they realized that the entire city was in darkness. There in the darkness they stood, a little band of Christians, each clutching a light, not sure whether to venture out into the storm or stay inside the church in hopes that the storm would soon blow over."

There in the darkness the light of truth struck the pastor. In this most dramatic way, he realized what it means to be the "light of the world." This is the temptation we face every day. It is easy to

play it safe and be a good Christian in church. It is a lot harder to venture out in faith into the storms of the world.

It is my sincere belief that as First Church enters a new chapter in its history that we will continue to make a difference, not only in the lives of our members, youth, and children, but also make a difference in our community and the world. It has been my sincere honor to work with you over the last nine years in ministry. You have welcomed me into your families as we have shared both joys and sorrows and I thank you for that privilege.

I pray that you will continue to let your light shine and make this world a brighter place.

With Love,

- Bill



Introducing Elle Dannecker

First Church welcomes Elle Dannecker, the FCC Choir's new soprano section leader. Elle is a 6th-12th grade choir director and 3rd-6th grade general music teacher at Golda Meir School in Milwaukee and represents the school on the Milwaukee Children's Choir Board of Directors. She is music director for Golda Meir School's Fall Musical and a member of Chant Claire, an auditioned community choir in Milwaukee. Elle graduated with highest honors from St. Norbert College in 2019 and earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education. As a student, Elle founded and directed Knightingales, an auditioned, SSAA cappella ensemble* from 2016-2019, and belonged to three separate auditioned choirs in the St. Norbert Community. Previously, Elle has been the soprano section leader of First United Presbyterian Church in De Pere, Wisconsin, and The St. Norbert Abbey in De Pere, Wisconsin. She has also sung as a member of the Old St. Joseph's choir in De Pere, and The Basilica of St. Josaphat's choir in Milwaukee.



*Ensemble composed of two distinct Soprano (S) sections and two distinct Alto (A) sections.

JUST FOR YOUTH December 2021



Sunday School

Sunday, December 5, 12, & 19 for ages 3 – 5th grade
Children will begin in church with their families during 10^{am} worship and dismissed to Sunday School during the service.

Junior Choir

Sunday, December 5, 12, & 19 for Kindergarten - 8th grade
Meet at 9:15 in LL4. Children sing on Sunday, December 19.

Covenant Class

December 5 & 19 for 9th graders Group meets at 8:30^{am} in 107.

Pilgrim Fellowship (PF)

Sunday, December 5, 12, & 19 for grades 6 – 12
Teens will begin in church with their families during 10^{am} worship and dismissed to PF during the service.

Breakfast with Jesus

This First Church tradition is back after many years, and we are excited to celebrate children on December 12th at 9^{am}! Our families with young children are invited to this event, and they can wear their pajamas, bring their favorite stuffed animal, and enjoy a light breakfast and Christmas cheer.

Care Board Reaches Out

As with every other aspect of our lives, the pandemic has presented some unique challenges to the Board of Congregational Care. Our board members made a special effort to support our prayer ministry activities this past year: sending cards to those included in the Caring Corner, providing food to people in need, and sending the Journeying Through Grief series of booklets to church members who have lost a loved one. Senior members of First Church have been particularly isolated during COVID, so members of the Care Board reached out to them by writing personal notes or giving them a phone call. The monthly Communion & Chat service at Harwood Place, facilitated by the Care Board, keeps us connected with church members who reside there. Special thanks to the Congregational Care Board -- Anne Callen, Martha Golz, Jackie Hipke, Connie Little, Janet Schalmo, and Fallon Schloemer -- for their hard work and enthusiasm during a difficult year.

- Jackie Hipke, Chair

End of Year Info for Pledgers

The Board of Stewardship, Benevolence and Church Relations is very gratified by the many Pledge Cards that have been turned in for 2022. We encourage those who haven't yet done so to bring or mail your card to the church Office as soon as possible. The Budget & Finance Committee, which has begun planning for the 2022 budget, can work more efficiently if they have a clear idea of what amount of income we can anticipate.

As 2021 winds down, we want to make sure we apply your pledge checks to the correct year. If you plan to donate toward your 2022 pledge this month, please write 2022 in the memo line.

You are welcome to combine your pledge contribution with a donation to the Christmas Special Offering, but please indicate on your check the amount you would like to go toward each.

Any contributions to your 2021 pledge must be delivered to the church Office no later than noon on Friday, December 31, to be included on your year-end statement.

You will receive your year-end statement in early January. Please call the Office at (414) 258-7375 if you have any questions.

Many churches have faced a financial crisis in the past year. We thank all of you who have made sure that First Church has been able to meet its operating budget and increase our financial support of important organizations helping those in need, such as Sojourner Truth House of Peace, Milwaukee Rescue Mission, and the Tosa Food Pantry.

Board of Stewardship, Benevolence and Church Relations-
Ann Steinmetz Harris (Chair), Fred Kingsley, J C Moore, Bobby Russ,
Will Schoyer, Randy Sitzberger

Christmas Special Offering Introduces Two *New* Missions

This year, the Board of Stewardship, Benevolence and Church Relations has selected two, new missions and one long-time friend as beneficiaries of the Special Christmas Offering: Happy Life Children's Home in Kenya, Panamerican Institute in Mexico, and the Milwaukee Rescue Mission. Each of these organizations continues to lift up their communities in many ways.

Happy Life Children's Home, Kenya

The Happy Life Mission is a non-profit Christian organization whose main vision is to give hope to abandoned children in Kenya through its three-fold ministry:



- Provides a Rescue mission for over 150 vulnerable and abandoned children and effort to provide a "forever family" for each of them through local adoption.
- Provision of quality Christian education to nearly 400 children who have not been adopted, as well as other children in the wider community.
- Provision of comprehensive pediatric medical care and maternity services through Jesse Kay Children's Hospital.

Happy Life is based on the belief that God has a plan for each of these children, to give them hope and a future, according to Jeremiah 29:11. Directors Jim and Sharon Powell have been good friends of the National Association for Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) for many years.

Panamerican Institute, Mexico

Panamerican Institute is a mission school founded by the late Congregational minister, Rev. Edgar S. Welty, in the early 1960s and is located in Tijuana, Mexico, south of San Diego, California.



Its operation depends 100% on donations. Panamerican Institute provides technical education to students from poor families in Tijuana. The Institute been part of NACCC for many years and is focused on keeping kids at school, working towards a better future. Contributions enable the mission to provide hope for a better life for their students and their families, creating a better Christian community.

Milwaukee Rescue Mission

The Rescue Mission's core values are love, dignity, community, and missional integrity. It offers practical assistance such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as transformative programs that help hurting people get off the streets and turn their lives around permanently. The mission offers short- and long-term assistance, education, pastoral care, help in overcoming substance abuse, job training and much more. Last year it provided over 365,000 meals and more than 70,000 nights of shelter.



We hope you will support these charities with a special offering this Christmas season.

Board of Stewardship, Benevolence and Church Relations-
Ann Steinmetz Harris (Chair), Fred Kingsley, J C Moore, Bobby Russ,
Will Schoyer, Randy Sitzberger

Christmas at First Church

Special Christmas Coffee Fellowship

Hosted by Ddg Wakefield & Friends

Sunday, December 5th ~ 11^{am} in the Social Hall

Breakfast with Jesus

Sunday, December 12th ~ 9^{am} in the Social Hall

Christmas Workshop ~ 3^{pm}

followed by **Pizza Supper ~ 5^{pm}**

Sunday, December 12th ~ in the Social Hall

Workshop cost: \$5 per child for all crafts

Supper cost: \$5 for adults, \$2 for children under 12

Circle 7 Christmas Gathering

Tuesday, December 14th ~ 12:30^{pm}

in the Friendship Lounge

Christmas Sunday Service

Sunday, December 19th ~ 10^{am} in the Nave

Christmas Brunch & Retirement Party for Rev. Trump

Sunday, December 19th ~ 11^{am} in the Social Hall

Brunch cost: \$5 per adult; \$2 per child 12 and under;
children under 4 eat free

Christmas Eve Services

Friday, December 24th in the Nave

Family Service & PF Play ~ 4^{pm}

Candlelight Lessons & Carols ~ 10^{pm}

The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa
1511 Church Street
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Christmas at First Church

The Board of Deacons is accepting donations toward the purchase of holiday decorations for the church. Fill out this form or look for the form in Sunday's Order of Worship, and return it with your check (made out to FCC) to the Office.

Dedications will printed in the 4^{pm} & 10^{pm} Christmas Eve Orders for Worship.



Your Name(s) _____

In honor of: _____

(and/or)

In memory of: _____

Amount: \$ _____