

APRIL 2023

Volume 38 - Issue 4

The Congregational COLUMNS

Anticipating Holy Week and Easter

- by Rev. Julie Sheridan-Smith

I do want to repeat an invitation to what we hope will be a deeply moving Holy Week, beginning on Palm Sunday as Jesus enters the city to shouts of praise, accompanied by our Choir, Jubilation Ringers and Children's Choir. Come upstairs for fellowship and Hot Cross Buns and a few "Make and Take" items for all ages.

You are invited to our own Upper Room on Thursday, April 6, 6:30-7:30pm, for a Maundy Thursday meal, fellowship, music, and communion as we remember Jesus' commandment that we are to love one another. If you plan to attend, please sign up at the Gathering Table in the Atrium, or RSVP online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054CA8AF2DA5F94-2023>.

On Good Friday (7pm in the Nave) we are "shaped by darkness" as we begin worship with a version of Jesus' prayer in the garden from *Jesus Christ Superstar's* "Gethsemane." Then hear through scripture the journey to the cross, and then the closing of the tomb as the lights darken during a Tenebrae service.

Easter morning we are awakened by our glorious organ, choir, and brass quintet to new shouts of "He is Risen!" as we peer into the empty tomb and begin again to be "shaped by resurrection life." Please invite others to join you in any of these special times.

I am grateful for the prayers that many of you offered as a beginning to our Lenten season and found God's shaping in your responses to The Lord's Prayer sessions, the Shaped by Serving Saturday and the playfulness that accompanied the Wednesday Church and Chow evening.

As we move further into April, we can look forward to our guest preacher, John Griffith, on April 16 and invite you to join in a "Games and Grub" event at 11:30am. Hosted by Markie Anderson and Eric Pfenning, there will be board games for all ages. We will have games available here at the church, but you are welcome to bring a favorite game of your own.

Please find me on Sundays after church during Coffee Fellowship at a "Let's Talk About It" table. I'm interested to hear your thoughts or questions raised about our lesson that day, or faith-related topics or books you'd like to gather for group discussion. We want to know if there is something you would like to offer to the community and how we can help equip these things to happen! And, as always, I will be glad to meet you for coffee or in the Office anytime!

Looking ahead: May 6, the Wisconsin Congregational Association meeting will be held here at First Church. Come hear our speaker, Beth McCaw, from Dubuque Theological Seminary on "The Church in Flight." Check in is at 8:30am with a continental breakfast. The session, "Checking our Current Altitude and Prepared for Landing," is at 9am, followed by lunch at noon and the Business Meeting and Updates at 1pm. Closing Worship is at 2pm. You can find information and a flyer in the Atrium or go to <https://www.wiscongregational.net/annual-meeting>

AND! If you are interested in helping to host the continental breakfast or lunch, please contact me.

THE COLUMNS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN WAUWATOSA

Worship & Discovery

Women's Ministry

*Tuesdays, April 4, 11, 18 & 25
from 8-9^{am}*

Women's Ministry meets in the Friendship Lounge. Study is *The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible* by Cheri Fuller.

Men's Ministry

*Wednesdays, April 5, 12, 19 & 26
at 9:00^{am}*

Meet in the Lounge for a study of the Beatitudes - the blessings that came from the Sermon on the Mount delivered by Jesus Christ and recorded in Matthew 5:3-12.

Adult Learning Hour

Sundays, April 2, 16, 23 & 30 at 8:45^{am}

The group will meet in Room 107. Topic is understanding the liturgical year.

Save the Dates

Kids & Youth - Coming Attractions

Children & Youth Sunday: June 4th

Mission Trip: June 25th - July 1th

Hosanna Industries, Inc. in Pittsburgh, PA

Wisconsin Congregational Association (WCA) Summer Camp:

July 9th - 15th

Mt. Morris Camp & Conference Center in Wautoma, WI

Vacation Bible School (VBS): August 7th - 11th

First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa

JUST FOR YOUTH
April 2023



Sunday School

Sunday, April 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30 for ages 3 - 5th grade

Children will begin in church with their families during 10^{am} worship & dismissed to Sunday School during the service.

Junior Choir

Sunday, April 2, 23, & 30 for Kindergarten - 8th grade • Meet at 9:15 in LL4.

Covenant Class

Sunday, April 2 & 16 for 9th graders • Group meets at 8:30^{am} in 107.

Pilgrim Fellowship (PF)

Sunday, April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 for grades 6 - 12

Teens will begin in church with their families during 10^{am} worship and dismissed during the service.

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.

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Operating Statement Summary

Year to Date as of February 2023

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge Base Rec'd	17 %	17%
Pledge Income	\$85,325	\$84,150
Total Income	\$162,848	\$152,793
Total Expense	\$84,079	\$71,169
Net Income	\$78,769	\$81,624

Detailed financials available in the office.

Join Us on the Journey!

Holy Week & Easter

Palm Sunday Service

The Triumphal Entry

Sunday, April 2nd

8am – Worship/Communion in the Chapel

10am – Worship/Communion in the Nave

11^{am} – Hot Cross Buns at Coffee Fellowship in the Social Hall

11:15^{am}-1^{pm} – “Make & Take” Easter Craft

Maundy Thursday

Shaped by Love: The Last Supper

Thursday, April 6th

6:30^{pm} – in the Social Hall

Dinner, fellowship, singing, and communion for all ages.

Good Friday

Shaped by Darkness: The Tenebrae

Friday, April 7th

7:00^{pm} – in the Nave

A moving rendition of “Gethsemane,”
and a journey through scripture to the cross.

EASTER

He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Sunday, April 9th

10^{am} – Worship in the Nave

With the FCC Choir, Jubilation Ringers, & Brass Ensemble

8:30^{am} and 11^{am} – Easter Continental Breakfast in the Lounge

9:45^{am} – Easter Egg Hunt on Ridge Court

2023 Easter Special Offering

The funds collected from this year's Easter Special Offering will support two important missions of First Church: Tosa Community Food Pantry and the Congregational Church of Myanmar.

Tosa Community Food Pantry has served those in need in the Wauwatosa area for 40 years. Supported by First Church, other local churches and countless local organizations, the pantry distributes food to low-income and needy families in and around Wauwatosa. The pantry has played a critical role in supporting families affected by the pandemic and the loss of employment. It serves an average of 125 families each month and over 3,000 individuals each year. Our financial support allows the volunteers to buy non-perishable items to supplement the food received through food drives and donations.

First Church has been a driving force to support the Congregational Church of Myanmar. Faced with the challenge of living in a non-Christian country, ravaged by turmoil and unrest, Rev. Elvis Sa Do, his wife Rev. Naw Pale Say, and other volunteers work to spread the Gospel. In a country where thousands of children are without schools, the church has created Grace Children's Ministry to provide education and health care to needy and orphaned children. They also provide food, clothing, welfare and care to their mission families.

Please give generously to support these two important missions of First Church.

FCC Education Scholarship

The Board of Stewardship & Benevolence is now accepting scholarship applications from our 2023 high school graduating seniors. First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa has established The FCC Scholarship to benefit deserving student members of our Church who plan to attend college and who have been active in Church activities and volunteerism. Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$300/year, renewable for 4 continuous years, for a maximum of \$1,200 for each student awarded a scholarship.

Please contact Marianne King in the Office to request an application. Email the Office at marianne@firstchurchtosa.org or call (414)258-7375. Completed applications should be returned to the Office by April 30th. The Scholarship Committee will reach out to set up meetings with the applicants in May. Recipients will be announced on Education Sunday, June 4th.

NACCC Annual Meeting Comes to Milwaukee

The Daring Endeavor of Being Church is the theme for the 69th Annual Meeting & Conference of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. The event, hosted by the Wisconsin Congregational Association, is scheduled for **June 24-27** at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel. Sessions may also be viewed virtually.

If you're interested in serving as an AMC volunteer, there is a sign-up sheet on the Gathering Table in the Atrium.

Featured speakers include:

The Rev. Justin Berkobien currently serves at Oneonta Congregational Church in South Pasadena, CA. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Theology from Fuller Seminary, where he is also pursuing a Doctor of Ministry Degree. He writes a weekly devotional blog and works as a stage/screen performer.

The Rev. Meredith McNabb is the Associate Director of Education for Lake Institute on Faith and Giving at Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. Meredith is an ordained Methodist clergy person, and she previously served as Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence. She and her family live in Indianapolis.

The Rev. Debie Thomas is the author of *Into the Mess and Other Jesus Stories: Reflections on the Life of Christ*. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *The Christian Century*. Currently, she serves as the Minister for Lifelong Formation at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto, CA.

Go to <https://www.naccc.org/events/2023-annual-meeting-conference/> to register.



Italian Dinner/Auction a Social and Fundraising Success

On behalf of the Fellowship Committee of First Congregational Church, we would like to thank you all who attended or offered generous donations to the Italian Dinner/Auction fundraiser held on February 25, 2023. Your commitment to helping One Hope 27 and Hosanna Industries' mission program is sincerely appreciated.

The funds raised by this event will go to One Hope 27, which brings hope to kids and families involved in Milwaukee County foster care through the support of and relationships with churches and the community around them. Also, funding will support Hosanna Industries' mission program, a faith based organization in Pennsylvania with which our FCC Youth Mission kids have teamed up with to improve and repair homes for needy households.

With the help of donors, we were able to raise over \$8,000. These funds will allow us to continue to support Milwaukee County foster care, help impoverished Pennsylvania families improve their neighborhoods, as well as significantly affect children and youth's lives in our own community.

Also, a big thank you to the many volunteers that helped make the evening so special. The collaborative efforts from John Sgarata and culinary crew, hardworking FCC youth volunteers, adult volunteers, magical musicians and the Fellowship Committee created a very special evening of fellowship and fun.



A VERY Satisfying Chili Cook-Off and Dessert Bake-Off

On Sunday, March 19th, the church was filled with an amazing aroma coming from the treats that awaited in the Social Hall. Seven chili and 9 dessert contestants offered delicious entries to the FCC Chili Cook-Off and Dessert Bake-Off. Nearly 60 guests were treated to a variety of chilis and toppings and desserts ranging from a frozen strawberry "popcycle" cake to delightful classics.

Congratulations to our winners:

Chili Cook-Off

First Place: Markie Anderson and Eric Pfenning

Second Place: Jennifer Wakefield

Third Place – Tie: Nick Galfano and Kate Galfano

Dessert Bake-Off

First Place: Caleb Wakefield

Second Place: Elizabeth Carger

Third Place: The Rondeau Family

Thank you to the Fellowship Committee, the Creative Cooks, and all who joined in to make it wonderful social event!



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In This Issue

1
Anticipating Holy Week and Easter

2
Worship & Discovery
Kids & Youth - Coming Attractions
Just for Youth

3
Join Us on the Journey!
Holy Week & Easter
2023 Easter Special Offering
FCC Education Scholarship
NACCC Annual Meeting Comes
to Milwaukee

4
Italian Dinner/Auction a Social
and Fundraising Success

5
A VERY *Satisfying* Chili Cook-Off
and Dessert Bake-Off

