

JUNE 2023

Volume 38 - Issue 6

The Congregational COLUMNS

“A single sunbeam is enough to
drive away many shadows.”

- St. Francis of Assisi

Many look forward to summer, not only for the warmth and sunshine that can both ease and raise our spirits - but because our lives seem to take on a different cadence. For some families, there are graduations to be celebrated, summer jobs, internships, and camps to be scheduled. Also, there might be trips to the lake or woods, baseball games, soccer games, concerts in the park, farmer's markets, and tending our own gardens. The world and its cares do not disappear but perhaps we look at them from a different angle?

And the cadence of life here at First Church changes as well ... but does not stop, because God's Spirit is always in our midst! So, let's talk summer. June begins with Children and Youth Sunday, a celebration for us, all capped off with a bit of ice cream. And speaking of celebrations, June 11 will be a "Celebration Sunday" during which we will note the various ministries of the church through some special music from the Jubilation Ringers and FCC Choir. June 18 our Sunday morning moves to one service at 9 am, enjoying the shared musical gifts of others while the choirs "sabbath" through summer. Then mid-summer, our setting will change when we move up to the Social Hall while work will be done on our Chancel.

There are wonderful "specials" throughout the summer: July 2 we will enjoy a "Hymn Sing!" Come, choose hymns, and we will follow each one with a story and history about that hymn. August 6 will be a different kind of "Hymn Sing." We would love to hear from YOU about a hymn that had some impact on you. If you are willing to speak or would like to write a brief reflection about this, please contact me with these by July 25. Music has the power to move our spirit, and how wonderful to share this together!! And please make note—we will make bag lunches for St. Vincent after church during the Coffee Fellowship on June 18, July 16, August 20. This is a great outreach for all ages! IF you wish to donate items for those lunches, see the sign-up sheet in the Atrium or call the Office.

Two book sessions are planned to talk about *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World: The New Shape of the Church in our Time* – **after 10 am worship** on June 4, we discuss Part I (pages 3-46), and July 23 we discuss Part II (pages 47-108). Order/acquire a book for yourself. Please note: there will be several/but limited copies in the Office to borrow. If you are interested, but the summer dates don't work, we will do another round of discussions again later.

Some have commented that they hadn't been able to join the Lenten series on the Lord's Prayer. (Need a summer book?) We are kicking around the idea of doing another discussion session on that book, also. Let me know if you are interested, and we will set a date. (There are a few copies in the Office to purchase).

I am incredibly excited for the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches meeting in Brookfield June 24-27. Wonderful speakers, and workshops that will encourage, inspire, and educate! There are social gatherings and worship we that hope you join. Sunday, June 25, let's worship together with people from Congregational churches all over the US. And the speakers and workshops on Sunday are FREE for Wisconsinites!!

continued on back page

THE COLUMNS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
IN WAUWATOSA

Worship & Discovery

Women's Ministry

*Tuesdays, June 6, 13, 20 & 27
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, June 7, 14, 21 & 28
at 9:00^{am}*

Come join the Men's Ministry at 9 o'clock every Wednesday morning in the Lounge. We meet to listen to a Groundwork discussion then have lively discussions ourselves. Groundwork is a web-based Bible study series covering many

aspects of biblical topics. Each web session is 25-35 minutes. Follow-up conversations last as long as we talk! The current series on the "7 Deadly Sins" lasts through June 14. We are certainly an informal group and welcome anyone and everyone wanting to delve into the Bible and join in conversation. We also set up Zoom sessions for those out of towners, those not able to attend in person, and members of FCC South (Florida) or any other warm weather retreat! If you want to be added to our mailing list, let Bill Edens, Hank Collis, or Jim Harris know. Thanks. And we'll see you on Wednesday (any Wednesday)!

Adult Learning Hour

Adult Learning is on summer hiatus and will return in the fall.

Atrium Table and the Book with Green Pages

In the Atrium you may have noticed a high-top table, known as the Gathering Table. If you have stopped to take a look, you are aware it contains a great deal of information about church, outside organizations, devotionals, a flower sign-up board, and a three-ring binder with green pages. The flower sign-up and the binder are important to the Board of Deacons and our Office staff. Some may not be aware that the flower board and binder are there for you, the members of this church. In particular, the flower sign-up board and the green pages in the 3-ring binder offer us all opportunities to serve in the worship of God. Would you consider one of these?

Flowers: Flowers are needed for the front of the church each Sunday. Might you have someone you wish to remember, or honor with an arrangement of flowers? We have a number of Sundays open in the months ahead. The sign-up board, perched on the Gathering Table in the Atrium, lists open dates available to you. A deacon will contact you to coordinate your chosen Sunday, along with the dedication you desire in the Order of Worship.

If you would like to assist with a Sunday service, the ring binder with the blue pages lists openings available each Sunday.

Greeters: If you have never greeted this is a wonderful way to get to know those coming into service... and for them to get to know you. Arrive at church a little early and take your place at the main entrance to the Nave. The job is easy if you know how to smile and say "hello." Your children are always welcome. Sign-up at the Gathering Table.

Ushers: Every Sunday four ushers are needed to hand out the Order of Worship before service and collect the offering during the service. Did you know that this can be done by a family or a group of friends? Consider ushering on a Sunday in the months ahead; maybe recruit a couple others to help you? Sign up at the Gathering Table.

Liturgist: Each week a liturgist assists with the opening of the service and reading of the Scripture. It is an honor to be able to assist in this way, and YES, you can sign up for a Sunday at the Gathering Table. The Office will provide you with readings on the Thursday prior to the service.

When you sign-up to serve on a Sunday, you will be reminded by the Office or Deacons, and instructions provided. Your participation is greatly appreciated by the Board of Deacons, and we thank all of you in advance for any and all of the ways you choose to serve God and this church.

- Patty Reddy, Chair

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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Operating Statement Summary

Year to Date as of April 2023

	Current Year	Prior Year
Pledge Base Rec'd	33.0%	31.0%
Pledge Income	\$165,248	\$145,830
Total Income	\$266,894	\$243,527
Total Expense	\$192,4	\$146,999
Net Income	\$74,479	\$96,527

Detailed financials available in the office

Support Our College Scholarship Recipients

Our Children, Youth & Education Sunday is June 4, 2023. Each year, the Board of Benevolence, Stewardship and Church Relations takes a moment to share some information about the Education Sunday Special Offering.

In 2016, the Board decided to designate a portion of the Special Offering to support college scholarships for children of First Church members. The scholarships are open to graduating high school seniors and are renewable for up to four years. The scholarship is awarded to students who have participated in First Church youth programs, supported the church as volunteers and served as role models for our younger children.

The scholarship is \$300. First Church will issue nine renewal scholarships and we have received impressive applications and letters of recommendation for this year's new scholarships potentials. The remainder of the Special Offering will be reserved for instances in which a church member expresses an interest in pursuing a church vocation.

Scholarships help these young adult members leave our community and discover their interests and talents, hone their skills in those areas and further our mission of serving God.

This year, in addition to the renewal scholarships for current college students, we are awarding new scholarships to graduating high school seniors. If you have not filled out your application, please do, and send ASAP. Thank you to those that have. We will be in touch shortly to set interviews and finalize the awarding process.

We know the congregation will share our joy, pride, and enthusiasm in hearing what our young adult members are doing with their unique skills and talents in service to God in their new communities. We hope you will continue to support these members with a donation to the Education Sunday Special Offering.

Blessings,

Your Board of Benevolence, Stewardship and Church Relations,

Deb Hayden Fred Kingsley Sharon Raymond
Bobby Russ Kristin Stern Dylan Thomas



A Little Makes a Big Difference

This June, the Board of Benevolence continues our new outreach with the St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) Southside Meal Program. On Sunday, June 18th, we will make bag

lunches for delivery to the SVDP Meal Site at 931 W. Madison Street. (We also need a few volunteers for delivery of the lunches when convenient.) Anyone interested in helping can gather in the Social Hall during Coffee Fellowship to assemble 75 bag lunches. As we learned at the May event, many hands make quick work!

You can also help by occasionally donating supplies, such as bread, Cuties, bananas, apples or fruit cups, bottles of water, bars or cookies, or a salty snack. Food donations should be delivered to the 2nd Floor Kitchen no later than Thursday, June 15th. Watch for a sign-up sheet in the Atrium and on 'Sign up Genius' via link through our E-blast.

A small investment of your time can have a big impact on the community.

If you have any questions or want more information, please reach out to Debbie Hayden, project coordinator, at dclayden@gmail.com



Join in a Summer Book Discussion!

Are you worn out by suggestions for how churches can re-energize their congregations? Solve all their problems? Author Alan Roxburgh, internationally renowned scholar, and leader, makes a case for turning back to the Holy Spirit in his book, *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World: The New Shape of the Church in Our Time*.

Join us for a two-part discussion of Roxburgh's book. Part 1 is June 4 at 11:15 am; Part 2 is July 23 at 10:15 am. First Congregational Church is enjoying a deepening engagement in church life! This book will encourage discussion around an ongoing movement within a "post-Christian culture" and what has contributed to this. It also offers practices that help us enter "more deeply into the stories of the Bible, our own stories, and the lives of our neighbors."

If you would like to join the discussion or have any questions related to the book and discussions, please contact Rev. Julie – julie@firstchurchtosa.org or 414.258.7375.

If you have difficulty obtaining a book, hard copy or Kindle version, please contact the Office.





Summer Sunday School

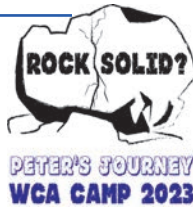
**Begins Sunday, June 11th
for ages 3 – entering 6th grade**

Children who have completed grades 6 and up are encouraged to remain in church with their families.



WCA Camp

The Wisconsin Congregational Association (WCA) summer camp will be held at Mt. Morris Camp & Conference Center, located near Wautoma, WI, from Sunday, July 9-Saturday, July 15. Camp is for youth who have completed grades 3 through 12. Our theme this year is titled: Rock Solid? Peter's Journey.



Who can come to camp?

- **Mini Kamp** – completing grades 3-5 in the spring of 2023.
- **Junior High** – completing grades 6-8 in the spring of 2023.
- **Senior High** – completing grades 9-12 in the spring of 2023.

You don't have to be an official Congregationalist to come to camp! Friends from other denominational backgrounds are always welcome. However, please understand that this is a Christian camp, and the program and activities will reflect that tradition.

What do you do at camp?

- **Faith** – worship & singing, small group discussion, campfires, cabin devotions, Bible study, communion, personal reflection
- **Fellowship** – star-gazing, nature hikes, organized activities, free time, games, random dancing, deck party
- **Fun** – swimming, volleyball, ropes course, arts & crafts, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, disc golf

What will we learn?

The apostle Peter walked on water, and then sank like a stone. Jesus called him “the Rock”, and a moment later called him a “stumbling block”. Peter experienced strong faith and paralyzing doubt – just like us. He was courageous one minute and cowardly the next – just like us. He was loyal to his friends, but not without limits – just like us. Was Peter “rock solid”? Are we? God did amazing things through Peter, despite his faults – and God can do great and amazing things through us, too! Our WCA Camp program will focus on Peter's journey – and ours.

Who will lead us?

This summer's camp is blessed with a tremendous leadership team:
Julie Sheridan-Smith and Alaina Schmitt – *Minikamp Directors*
Rob Fredrickson – *Junior High Director*
Bo Wilkinson – *Senior High Director*
Tonia Wallner – *Camp Administrator*

Pilgrim Fellowship

It has been a successful year of food, fellowship, and fun for our middle and high school teens. We will try to meet once a month this summer so that we can stay connected, and we will hold our meetings out on Ridge Court. Look for e-mails from Tonia to find dates that will work for our busy youth.

Children, Youth & Education Sunday

June 4th during the 10:00^{am} worship service

Our Sunday School classes will be preparing special presentations to share with the congregation, and they are looking forward to sharing this wonderful day with all of you. Our Junior Choir will sing, and our middle and high school youth will serve as readers, ushers, and greeters. We will be celebrating another successful year of youth programming as we move on to the summer ahead. Our youth are asked to arrive at least 15 minutes early on the 4th, and there will also be a rehearsal for the Sunday School classes immediately after worship on Sunday, May 21st. On Sunday, May 28th, there is NO Sunday School.

Join us on Ridge Court following this special worship service for our annual Ice Cream Social.

Enjoy a wide variety of ice cream novelties.

Summer Sunday School begins on June 11th. Summer Sunday School is for children ages 3 through entering 6th grade, so those who have completed grades 6 and up will to remain in church with their families. Looking ahead, Rally Sunday will take place on September 10th. I will reach out to those who have taught Sunday School in the past. I would also like to invite anyone interested in teaching for the first time, or if you would like to lend a hand with our youth, please contact me: tonia@firstchurchtosa.org

FCC Mission Trip

We are excited to return to Pennsylvania to serve those in need! We will again be working with Hosanna Industries and will improve the homes (and lives!) of people in the Jonestown area.

**Our team will head out on Sunday morning, June 25th
and return home on Saturday, July 1st.**

We are heading out to be the helping hands and open hearts that God has called us to be, and I know that we will have a positive impact on all of those we serve!

Confirmation Class of 2023

This year, Rev. Sheridan-Smith and Tonia worked with a wonderful pair of teens, starting with a retreat focused on group bonding, answering the questions “Who Is God?” and “Who Am I?”, and getting more comfortable with the Bible. Throughout the year, time was spent discussing the sacraments, prayer, stewardship, and discipleship. Our Covenant teens also learned the history of Christianity, Congregationalism, and First Church during the last months of the Covenant year. The final phase of the journey involved each Confirmand writing a personal faith statement, and their mentors were part of this important process. The statements are incredible, and the teens shared their faith in such a thoughtful and genuine way.

Confirmation Sunday was held on May 21st, and we wanted to introduce you to these awesome young people and have you get to know them better. Here are some thoughts about each of our new Confirmands, written by their parents and mentors.

Meghan Jeide, daughter of **Matt and Susan Jeide**

Words cannot describe how proud we are of Meghan on this special day. As we reflect on Meghan’s growth here at First Congregational Church, we smile, if not laugh, at an early memory of Meghan “enthusiastically” performing the role as the gold star in FCC’s Christmas pageant. From there she grew and was super excited to receive her 3rd grade Bible. She went to bed each night reading a new section from her Bible. She even inquired if her youth Bible was part of her school’s AR reading! Meghan’s heart of gold continues to shine as brightly as her pageant star costume. A freshman at Brookfield Academy, Meghan excels in the classroom and is a 3-star varsity athlete. She is currently in the midst of her high school soccer season. We, along with her siblings, dogs, grandparents, cousins, and family are thrilled to be a part of Meghan’s faith journey. Keep the star brilliantly lit, Megs. We love you!

From **Rick Nowacki**, Mentor – It was a surprise and an honor when my niece Meghan asked me to be her mentor. After the requisite jokes about how many people she asked before she got down the list to me, I happily agreed. While I’ve known Megs since just about Day 1, I’ve learned a lot about her through the mentorship process. She is a mature, focused, and thoughtful young lady. She’s a strong student and a multi-sport athlete at Brookfield Academy, where she earned a spot on the varsity girls’ soccer team as a freshman. Meghan has three siblings, two older and one younger, and lots of nearby cousins. Being one of the “middles” can be challenging, but she has a quiet confidence about her that really became evident to me over these past months as her mentor. I truly believe Meghan understands the significance of Confirmation and is ready for the responsibilities that come with membership in the Church. I’m grateful for the opportunity to have been a small part of that this year.

Andrew Michael Welch, son of **Kenneth and Kate Welch**

Andrew Michael Welch, also known as Drew or “the boy”, is finishing his freshman year at Golda Meir school in Milwaukee. He has been involved with scouting since he was 6, and now belongs to Troop 47, based here at the church. Drew is working toward his

first-class rank and needs to learn to swim to do so! He loves music, and started out by playing string bass, but switched to percussion after enjoying a class in world drumming at music camp. Drew has been an enthusiastic member of the STEM Club at school as a mechanic, as well as the drone team, working toward being a pilot. He loves helping his dad and other family members and has

been known to schlep shingles, paint windows, and pretty much anything else he can do that will let him climb a ladder or hang out on a roof. This has proven helpful when he helped with the mission project! Drew has also been enjoying his soldering kit, fixing broken headphones and other electronics around the house.

From **Jane Boyd**, Mentor – Drew has been a delight to work with. He is extremely insightful, ready to help at a moment’s notice, eager to learn about the workings of the Church and what it means to be an active, contributing member. I’ve watched him grow through Sunday School, Faith Finders, Vacation Bible School (both as a participant and teen helper), adding his voice to the junior choir, Pilgrim Fellowship, and participating as part of the yearly Mission Trip through Hosanna Industries. We will be fortunate to have Drew as a member of this Church.



Drew, Rich Raymonds and Meghan in the steeple.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

2023



August 7th-11th 9:00-12:00

Launch kids on a cosmic quest where they'll have a blast shining Jesus' light to the world. Stellar rockets kids on an out-of-this-world adventure that's light years of faith-building fun.

Look for more information in the coming months, as well as registration forms.

The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa
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In This Issue

- 1
Message from Julie
- 2
Worship & Discovery
Atrium Table and the Book
with Green Pages
- 3
Support Our College
Scholarship Recipients
A Little Makes a Big Difference
Join in a Summer Book Discussion!
- 4
Just for Youth
- 5
Confirmation Class of 2023
- Insert
VBS Registration Form

continued from front page

If you're interested in registering, you can use the QR code or the following link to the Wisconsin-only web page: <https://www.naccc.org/events/wisconsin-at-naccc/>

Check out other articles in this and future issues of the Columns about activities for children and youth during the summer. With so many opportunities between camp, mission trip, VBS we will be adding a family style Lock In! (Yes, an overnight at church, like a tiny "family camp" on August 11-12).

Yes, the cadence may change for many of you in summer, but we hope to enjoy some of these times together!

In closing, I offer a translation of Matthew 11:28-30. It is taken from an indigenous translation of the New Testament as Jesus says:

Come close to my side, you whose hearts are on the ground, you who are pushed down and worn out, and I will refresh you. Follow my teachings and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest from your troubled thoughts. Walk side by side with me and I will share in your heavy load and make it light.

May this be true for you,

- Julie



Restoration of the steeple.



Name of child(ren) _____ Grade _____

Grade _____

Grade _____

Address *City* *State* *Zip*

Email _____

Allergies/Health _____

Parent Name (s) _____ Home Phone(s) (_____) _____

Cell Phone(s) _____ Work Phone(s) (_____) _____

Emergency Contact _____ Emergency Phone (_____) _____

Cost: \$10.00/first child; \$5.00/each additional child; \$20/maximum per family

☐ Yes, I am interested in helping out during VBS. *Please check all areas of interest.*
☐ teaching ☐ science/imagination ☐ games ☐ where needed

☐ While volunteering, I will need childcare for my children not yet old enough to participate in VBS.

How did you hear about our Vacation Bible School Program?

☐ I belong to the church ☐ I am a guest of _____

☐ Other _____

Photographic Release

I, (print) _____
give consent for any photograph(s) of my child(ren) to be used for promotional purposes.

Signed: _____