



Congregational *Connections*

Monthly E-Newsletter of First Congregational Church, UCC | Port Washington, Wisconsin | January 2023

STARTING OFF THE NEW YEAR

I hope that you enjoyed the Advent and Christmas seasons here at church. There was a lot of ministry going on. But here we are with the new year upon us! Doesn't it sometimes feel like our lives are spent just barely managing to finish one thing before we're quickly off chasing the next event or activity? Am I the only one? The new year is traditionally a time to look ahead, making resolutions and that sort of thing, but it is also a time to review the time that has passed.

In the following pages of our newsletter there is a nice combination of looking forward to 2023 and reviewing what has taken place in 2022. You will see the first stages of planning for our 125th Anniversary Year: certainly a time to celebrate our years of service and mission in Port. At the same time, the Capital Campaign Planning Team is reporting on what took place at the Awareness Campaign meetings in October and November. Interestingly, those Awareness Campaign meetings not only did quite a bit of reflecting on the past, but also looked toward future needs of the church.

You will also read about the Examen(ed) Church program that is about to get started this month. Our church has been accepted into this program sponsored by Marquette University. We have a small team that will receive training and through a spiritual discernment process will help the whole church begin to look toward the directions God is calling our congregation as we move into 2023 and beyond.

And of course, all the reports about what has taken place recently - Church School, Confirmation, Christmas Tree Sale, fellowship events, worship, and more! Focusing on the past and on the future should never allow us to forget about what is happening right now! It is a gift, which is why it is called "the present"! Enjoy the first newsletter of 2023!

Peace,
Scott

1898-2023 - OUR 125th ANNIVERSARY!

2023 will mark our church's 125th anniversary year! In order to mark this important milestone in a variety of ways over the next 12 months, Jane Spalding and Pastor Scott are putting together a team to brainstorm ideas and organize events. Whether you are already interested in the church's story or just want to be part of a short-term, active planning group - we would love your help! Please reach out to Scott or Jane and we'll begin meeting this month. If you have ideas for how we might be able to celebrate this anniversary please let us know, even if you can't serve at this time. We would love input on events and activities that would engage the congregation in remembering this significant anniversary in 2023.



A NOTE ABOUT JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

There will only be 10:00 worship on New Year's Day, Sunday, January 1, and nursery care will not be available. We resume two services on January 8, and will celebrate Communion that day.



SCOTT'S JANUARY VACATION

Scott and Laura McLeod will be headed to Florida after worship on January 15. Long-time friends from back when they lived in Connecticut invited them to stay with them at a family home in Orlando. They are taking several days to drive down and will meet up with their children, who are flying down to join them. They will spend a few days by the pool and a few days at Disney World and then drive home, returning around January 27. The Rev. Don Niederfrank will be providing worship leadership on the Sunday Scott is away (January 22) and there will be emergency pastoral coverage while Scott is out of town. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact the church office and they will connect with the pastor who is on call.

WORSHIP WITH US

We celebrate two Sunday morning worship services at 8:00 and 10:00. Nursery care is available at the 10:00 service.

HOLY COMMUNION

The first Sunday morning of each month we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Communion is open to all who seek to follow in the way of Christ, both children and adults.

CLICK AWAY

If you are reading this newsletter online, be on the lookout for orange text - it's linked up to documents and web pages that you might find helpful or interesting.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER

If you have a celebration, prayer request, or other contribution for the newsletter, please email us 7-10 days before the first day of the month.

YOGA RETURNING TO CHURCH THIS MONTH!

We are excited to announce that yoga will be returning to our church! Prior to the shutdowns caused by Covid-19 in March of 2020, many of you will remember an active yoga class here at church. Beginning this month, a new class is going to get started! Thanks to Susan Niederfrank for reaching out to Dawn Stacey, a yoga instructor and friend of the church, we will be hosting classes on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 beginning January 10. Here is a note from Dawn:

Hello, my name is Dawn Stacey. I am a PTA and a licensed yoga instructor with more than a decade of teaching experience. Over the years I have taught weekly classes at ZuZu Pedals, the Saukville YMCA, and the Port Washington Rec Center. I have taught chair yoga, mixed level classes, students, and athletes. My approach to teaching emphasizes a more personal approach to yoga, with a focus on helping students discover greater ease in their body through moment, breath, and meditation. I teach a slow alignment-based class with options to build poses throughout the class and a guided meditation at the end.

All levels of yogis are welcome and encouraged to come! I will have a few mats available for new students who are without personal mats and for anyone who might forget their mat. Class will be from 6:00-7:00 on Tuesday nights starting January 10. Please arrive 10 minutes early to allow for personal setup. Classes will be \$12 per class and be payable to me via check, cash, or Venmo. Hope to see you on the mat!



A MESSAGE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Thank you to all members and friends who have pledged their financial support for 2023! Our "Beloved" Stewardship Campaign has wrapped up and we wanted to let you know that, unfortunately, we are still short of a balanced budget and many pledges shy of last year's total. If you have not returned your pledge form yet, please consider a gift. Every bit helps! Pledge forms can be printed from the [Stewardship webpage](#), or you can use the [online pledge form](#). We are grateful for everyone's generosity. Happy New Year!

Your Stewardship Team

Jodi Cowen (Chair), Craig Modahl, and Bev Mueller



THREE NEW PIECES OF MUSIC DONATED TO THE CHANCEL CHOIR

You may be interested to know that three new pieces of music were recently donated to the church. Tracy Bretl, Kathy Bretl, and Brett Dimmer each purchased a song for the choir. Tracy's selection was performed back in November, entitled "Still Rolling Stones" and Kathy and Brett's selections were performed on Christmas Eve, "Little Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth" arrangement and "Breath of Heaven" respectively. Warm thank yous to all three individuals on their gifts to the church! The music will be added to the choir library. If you are interested in purchasing music in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact the church office and Brett Dimmer, our Chancel Choir Director, will get in touch with you.



Church Council Team Spotlight

OUR FELLOWSHIP TEAM

The Fellowship Team plans events within the church allowing friends and families to gather together. We have enjoyed soup and salad potluck lunches. And we have already planned a chili potluck lunch and another soup and salad lunch (see calendar below).

We have held craft/card workshops for our birthday card and anniversary card ministry. Attendees also had the opportunity to make cards they could use themselves. The Fellowship Team has also worked together to assist with and serve meals after memorial services.

The Fellowship Team started fundraising for the church with the RaiseRight gift card program. By purchasing gift cards for your own shopping, a small percentage is returned to the church. We started the program here at church back in April 2022 and have approximately ten families signed up. Our ten families have raised over \$560 for the church. This is an ongoing program and orders for gift cards are placed every month. With a little bit of pre-planning, you can also help fundraise for the church and do your shopping with gift cards.

Please contact me if you would like more information about the Fellowship team or any program. Thank you for your support.



Events planned for 2023:

Sunday, January 22 - Chili Potluck Lunch - Bring a pot of chili, a side, or dessert to share

Sunday, February 19 - Soup and Salad Potluck Lunch

Sunday, March 12 - Spring Card Making Workshop

Sunday, April 2 - Palm Sunday - Cinnamon Rolls served after both services

Sunday, May 21 - End of the Program Year Luncheon - subs & salads served

We hope you can join us!

Jennifer Dimmer

Fellowship Team Representative on Church Council

WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 29 AT 10:50 A.M.

All members of the church are invited to attend the Winter Congregational Meeting on January 29 in the Sanctuary, immediately following the 10:00 worship service. The main item of business is to vote to approve our proposed church budget for 2023. As we did for our Fall Congregational Meeting back in November, we plan to encourage wider participation by starting the meeting immediately following the service. The service will be slightly amended to ensure that we begin the meeting promptly at 10:50. Please plan to join us on January 29!



OUR PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS TEAM - READY TO LISTEN!

Happy New Year from the Pastor Parish Relations (PPR) Team!

We thought we would take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and to let folks know the purpose of our team. We came together several months ago to be a sounding board for Pastor Scott and for members of the congregation.

We meet monthly or every other month depending on issues that might come up. Our meetings are a safe place to discuss challenges for the church and to discuss feedback we are hearing from church members. We are hoping that we can facilitate robust communication that will help Pastor Scott and our church to be successful.

Please reach out if you have concerns or ideas to share. You may connect with us by emailing portuccppr@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Your Pastor Parish Relations Team

Doug McManus, Joe Mueller, Sarah Riemer, Shandy Roehrig, and Pam Zeman

THEMES FOR WORSHIP IN JANUARY

We resume two services on January 8 and will celebrate Communion that Sunday. The Season after the Epiphany begins and ends in mystical encounters and words of affirmation: "You are my beloved." These words echo from the heavens at Jesus' Baptism and at Jesus' Transfiguration. As you look at the texts below you will see that we spend quite a bit of time this month with the Prophet Isaiah. The call of Isaiah as well as Jesus' call to the disciples have us reflect on our own call, decision points, and clarifying light. We end the month with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. [Click here](#) for a review of the season of Epiphany.

January 1: Isaiah 60:1-6 Matthew 2:1-12

10:00 Service Only Epiphany Sunday

We begin the new year on a journey. Joining the wise ones as they follow the star that for them will stop over the home of the Holy Family and will cause all of us to wonder about how the world has changed with the coming of "God-Incarnate".

January 8: Isaiah 42:1-9 Matthew 3:13-17

Baptism of Jesus Communion Sunday Chancel Choir Church School

This Sunday we begin with the memory of Christ's baptism where it seems everything has become clear, we find ourselves wondering about what is revealed. Remember, we are celebrating Communion on this 2nd Sunday of the month due to the New Year's holiday.

January 15: Isaiah 49:1-7 John 1:29-42

2nd Sunday after Epiphany Handbell Choir

As God inspires new possibility and redemption in prophets and communities, we hear God calling to us individually with our curiosities and as a community eager to imagine change.

January 22: Isaiah 9:1-4 Matthew 4:12-23

3rd Sunday after Epiphany Family Service Children's Choir

Following the Call As the disciples are called to be fishers of people, we are invited to wonder what is calling us and leading us to find a place to dwell and grow in unity with others in our community.

January 29: Micah 6:1-8 Matthew 5:1-12

4th Sunday after Epiphany Winter Congregational Meeting

This Sunday we begin a three-week series on the Sermon on the Mount. Through Jesus' important teachings we begin to glimpse a re-imagined realm



CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Come one, come all! We invite all 4K-7th graders to Church School on the second Sundays of each month at 10:00. We hope to see you this month on January 8!

Our Church School lesson during the month of January will explore two stories from the book of Matthew. The first story focuses on Peter, Andrew, James and John, and how they followed the call to join Jesus in sharing the word of God. In the second story, Jesus asks a favor of his disciples, and describes how eager the children were to help spread God's love. [Click here](#) to view the two stories.

We will be putting our lessons into action by decorating thank you cards which will be sent by the Stewardship Team following their annual campaign. All children are welcome to join us!



Our Church School group in action on December 11.

COME FOR CHURCH SCHOOL AND STAY TO SING!

Sherri Melichar, our Children's Choir Director, invites all children to stay after Church School and the 10:00 service to rehearse upcoming songs. Parents can enjoy Fellowship Hour while Sherri and the children are upstairs in the sanctuary. Plan for them to rehearse for about 30-45 minutes. Children's Choir does not rehearse on Monday evenings at this time. The Children's Choir also rehearses if there is a fifth Sunday, after the 10:00 service. The Children's Choir performs on the fourth Sunday of each month during the 10:00 Family Service.

LOOKING AHEAD

1/8 - Church School
Thank You Notes

1/22 - Family Service
and Children's Choir
Sings at 10:00 Service

2/12 - Church School

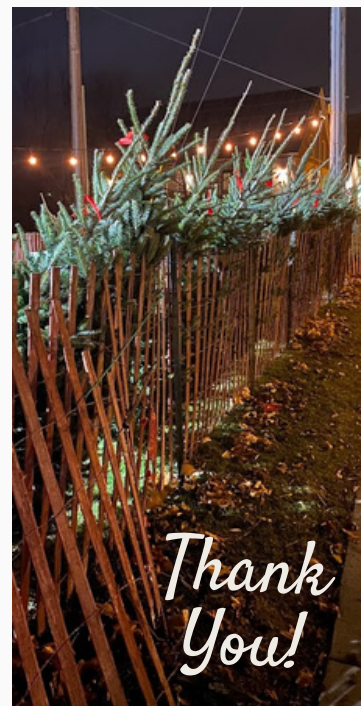
2/26 - Family Service
and Children's Choir
Sings at 10:00 Service

NURSERY CARE


Every Sunday morning during the 10:00 service we provide Nursery Care for children newborn through elementary. Care is mostly provided by our 8th grade Confirmation students and their families. Please note that the current nursery location is in the Gilomen Room across from the restrooms.

OUR 37th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE SALE A SUCCESS

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Christmas Tree Sale another successful one. We especially appreciate the team's efforts - they facilitated the ordering of trees, set up the lot, made regular deposits to the bank, filled in when a shift was not covered, opened the lot each day, and much more! We thank all of the individuals and families who volunteered to sell trees, including our friends who are a part of Knellsville 4-H Club. We know the customers really enjoyed the wooden ornaments, a thank you to the Church School kids and church families who decorated them! Lastly, a shout out to the Blum Family for working their shift in quite the miserable conditions. They might not have sold a tree on the wet and windy night of December 14, but they remained available and undeterred! (An accounting of the funds raised will be available soon.)



SCRIP/RAISERIGHT GIFT CARD FUNDRAISING PROGRAM FOR CHURCH


**NEXT FCC ORDER
IS JANUARY 8TH**

Through our gift card fundraising program, also called Scrip fundraising, by a company called RaiseRight, the church can raise money when members and friends use retail gift cards to pay for everyday purchases (like gas and groceries), instead of paying by credit card, cash, or check. There are a ton of options and hundreds of gift cards you can purchase from retail stores, online merchants, restaurants, gas stations, entertainment, even flights and travel purchases; and each can be turned into a small percentage of money that will go directly to our church. You have options to buy eGift cards (available immediately), physical gift cards, and reloadable gift cards. For every gift card purchased, earnings are up to 20%, with an average earning of 6% that goes to the church. The earnings come from the gift card brand you are purchasing - their way of supporting organizations and communities like ours. You do not pay anything extra, for example, if you buy a \$50 gift card, you pay \$50.

Jennifer Dimmer and Rhonda Thompson, our church Scrip/Raise Right Coordinators, will be placing an order on Sunday, **January 8**. The gift cards will be available at the church for pick up starting on Sunday, **January 15**. You can enroll and place an order ahead of time on the company website, RaiseRight.com/enroll. Our church enrollment code is **P8I47VHNX56H**. Or, you can complete the **paper form** and write out a check to the church and mail it to church or bring it to the office or with you to church on Sunday. Thank you!



CHURCH CHOIRS

A reminder that our choirs always welcome new faces!

Children's Choir rehearses second and fifth Sunday mornings at 11:00, and performs on the 4th Sunday of every month.

Chancel Choir rehearses 6:30-7:30 on Monday evenings, and performs on the second and fifth Sunday of every month.

Handbell Choir rehearses 7:00-8:00 on Wednesday evenings, and performs on the third Sunday of every month.



WEDNESDAY LUNCH GROUP

You are invited to come to church on Wednesdays at noon for lunch and Bible study. The group meets in the Dennett Room and everyone brings their own bag lunch and beverage. After they eat together, the group reads through the Bible passages that will be used in worship on the next Sunday. Pastor Scott provides some Biblical background materials and some questions for discussion and then the conversation begins. You don't need to be a Bible scholar to participate, just a curiosity to explore and reflect on the text. The conversation is always interesting and there is usually laughter and sharing of stories, opinions and an insight or two. Give it a try, there is always room for more around the table!



THURSDAY MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP



Every Thursday morning at 8:00, a dedicated group of gentlemen from the church gather at The Beacon restaurant, which is located downtown on the first floor of The Harborview hotel. The Thursday Men's Breakfast Group is open to all the men of the church. Everyone places their own order and pays their own bill. It is a great way to spend an hour (or two) and begin your day. You are welcome to join the group at any time!



FELLOWSHIP HOUR ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

We host a Fellowship Hour following our 8:00 service on the first Sunday of each month, and following our 10:00 service on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit with other families and friends in the church. Please make an effort to introduce yourself to people you haven't met. Help newcomers to feel that, wherever they are on life's journey, they are welcome here. If you have any questions, please speak to Jennifer Dimmer, our Fellowship Team Representative on Church Council.

SUNDAY SERVERS - ONLINE SIGN-UP

We continue to utilize the online SignUpGenius tool to allow for easier scheduling of our Sunday morning servers. Below are the areas we need your participation. Simply click on the links and choose which Sundays you would like to serve. Sign up once, or as many times as you'd like! Together we can fill in all the gaps. If you have any questions, please reach out to Beckie in the church office.



You may click the button to see all of the Sunday Servers sign-ups or click below to view the individual sign-ups.

USHERS

Greet congregants, hand out service bulletins, and collect the offering at the 8:00 or 10:00 Sunday morning worship service

ACOLYTES

5th, 6th, and 7th graders are invited to light the altar candles just before the start of every 10:00 worship service

WORSHIP LEADERS

Help Pastor Scott lead the congregation in responsive readings, unison prayers, and scriptures during the 8:00 or 10:00 worship service

NURSERY CAREGIVERS

Watch over children newborn through elementary in our nursery (currently in the Gilomen Room) during the 10:00 service. The 8th grade Confirmation Class will still be helping, but with a smaller class, we need some additional help. Please note, 8th graders and high schoolers must be accompanied by a parent

FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS

Serve coffee and provide simple treats following the 10:00 service on the second and fourth Sundays - two families preferred



FREE BUILDING USAGE

A reminder that the Church Council recently approved free church building usage through the end of the program year, as an effort to bring back more activity to our church building. Are you having a family get together and need a larger space? Use Fellowship Hall! Do you need a meeting space? Use the Dennett Room! Contact Beckie in the church office to reserve a date.



HELP LIGHTHOUSE BUILD BIRTHDAY KITS FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

Lighthouse will be collecting items such as cake mix, frosting, candles, etc. to assemble "birthday kits" to donate to our local food pantries. These kits will help ensure that pantry guests can enjoy a birthday celebration on their special day. Please bring in donations to the church entryway by January 15.

CHRISTMAS EVE PAGEANT



CONFIRMATION CLASS CAST & SPECIAL GUEST

Mary: Addie Chandler

Elizabeth: Elaina Perez

Joseph: Andrew Arthur

Shephard: JJ Bergin

Baby Jesus: Porter Katzer, child of Brad and Payton



*Confirmation Class wrapping gifts at Family Promise:
l-r Pastor Scott, Maile Thompson, JJ Bergin,
Andrew Arthur, and (seated) Addie Chandler.*

THE EXAMEN(ED) CHURCH - INVITATION TO JOIN THE THRIVE TEAM



This month we are beginning our participation in the Marquette University sponsored program called, "The Examen(ed) Church". We are joining five other congregations from the greater-Milwaukee area as part of this new endeavor to help our congregation look toward the future.

The first task of the "Examen(ed) Church" was to create a Thrive Team to attend gatherings and to help bring the materials back to the congregation, so that the entire church might learn and grow from the experience. Terry McManus, Louise Mollinger, Karl Pradel, Scott Symes, Gary and Meg Tackes, as well as Pastor Scott, will serve as our Thrive Team. (See below if you would still like to sign-up.) The team will participate in training sessions, workshops, and a series of guided conversations seeking to: clarify the church's mission and values; deepen Christian practice; and enrich our congregation's engagement with the community around us.

Now, if this sounds interesting to you and you would like to participate, **there is still room for one or two more people to join our Thrive Team.** So, if you would like to grow spiritually, if you have been curious about the future of our congregation and to what ministries God is calling us, then this might be a great opportunity for you! Please talk to Pastor Scott by January 15 to get started or learn more about what is required.

Throughout this 18 to 24 month process the congregation will receive updates from the Thrive Team, and there will be occasional events and activities sponsored by the program so the whole church can share in the experience—providing input and feedback. The Thrive Team will be engaged in prayer and spiritual growth through use of Ignatius Loyola's "Daily Examen" which then grows into spiritual discernment work with the entire congregation.

We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in this program, because all the resources, staffing, and support that we will receive in 2023 and 2024 comes to us free of charge because of a grant Marquette received through the Lilly Endowment. The first gathering of the churches takes place on Saturday, January 21, at Marquette. The Thrive Team will be learning more about the program and will report back to the Church next month. Stay tuned for more updates!

REPORT ON THIS PAST FALL'S AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

In October and November, the Capital Campaign Planning Team invited a dozen families to host a series of meetings in their homes or at church for church members and friends. There were several goals for the meetings. The first goal was to simply invite people to come together for fellowship and support after pastoral transition and global pandemic. The second goal was to hear from people about their experiences with the church; what they enjoyed about the church's ministry, and their hopes, dreams and fears for the congregation in the present and future. The third goal was to present materials about the repair and maintenance needs of our church building.

It was called the "Awareness Campaign" because the team hoped to raise the awareness of church members about building issues on the "horizon" that will need to be addressed, as well as to raise awareness of church leaders and get feedback from church members about their feelings on a range of issues. During the two months, out of the scheduled 12 meetings the team planned, only six meetings were able to be held, due to lack of attendance. The team made hundreds of calls, but the pace and busy lives of our church members was clearly an issue in finding suitable dates for meeting. The six meeting that did take place were attended by 52 people from the church.

Each of the meetings followed a similar pattern. Everyone was invited to introduce themselves and to share a favorite memory of their time with the church. Then there was conversation around what folks felt was going well with the church and what they were concerned about - what did they value about the church's ministry in the present and what did they hope would change? The last part of each meeting was a presentation of the building issues that our Property Team has been discussing for the past several years.

The favorite memories that were shared were an inspiring mix of reflections about how the church has touched people's lives in a variety of very positive ways. People recalled moments of insight in meaningful worship, the care and nurture of the congregation through difficult times in their lives. There were funny stories of mishaps that turned out to be blessings in disguise, groups that were especially meaningful and fun, the warm welcome on that "first visit" they received from a stranger that soon became a close friend, the way the Church School had embraced their children, the sense of "family" they feel, even in a diverse group, whenever they are at church. All these stories, and more were uplifting for all who were present to hear.

When conversation shifted to the things that people valued about the church and wanted to hold on to there were several refrains that came up again and again. The strong musical tradition of the church was extremely popular in discussions. The talent of our musicians; our three pianists, the different directors of the Children's Choir, Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir; and the choir members themselves who are so faithful in rehearsal and presentation of music for worship. Everyone agreed how fortunate we are to have all of these musicians as part of our music ministry.

(continued on the next page)

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN REPORT continued...

The office staff was also highlighted as being extremely valuable to the church and vital to the ongoing work of the congregation in almost every meeting. Another area of mutual admiration was the kindness and friendliness of the membership. The value of accepting and affirming everyone was lifted again and again in the meetings. The church members have a diverse range of opinions on every issue, but it is important to make sure everyone knows they are welcome. There were others topics of special value lifted up such as the church school program, the preaching and worship leadership, the fellowship times and the Fellowship Team in general, were all lifted up several times in the meetings.

In discussing the things people were concerned about, it was not too much of a surprise to hear money being perhaps the topic lifted most often. People were worried about the financial needs of the church and deficit budgets. There was anxiety that the church couldn't continue forever with such large deficits year after year. This topic then usually transformed into fear that cuts would be made to the budget in such a way as to hurt the long-term health of the church—cutting the music program or the office staff was seen to be the worst thing to do - “You can't cut your way to growth” was one memorable phrase. The conversation about financial worry, then usually turned into a conversation about reaching out to new people or to trying to reconnect with members who hadn't returned since the pastoral transition or pandemic closures.

Then conversation turned to things we might do in the future. There were ideas about doing outreach events and inviting folks into the church. Perhaps the church could coordinate with the Library to mutually sponsor activities or host things at church. There were ideas about adult education events, such as learning about other world religions, or simply coming together to have fun. There was conversation about the possibility of offering Church School every Sunday instead of once a month. One group discussed the idea of moving back to one worship service on Sunday instead of two, and if that's not possible, then making sure there were more fellowship events, so folks had a chance to see people from the other worship service. Another group discussed highlighting our music program to attract new people, making sure we are reaching out to invite people to events and introducing ourselves to visitors in worship. Each of the meetings talked in some way about how important it continues to be a warm, welcoming, open and affirming congregation for all people.

The last portion of the Awareness Campaign meetings introduced the issues on the horizon that our congregation will need to address for the long-term health of the church building. Next month, in the February “Congregational Connections” newsletter, those needs of the church building will be described in detail. Thank you, once again, to all those who participated in these meetings, whether organizing, leading, hosting or attending one; your help, assistance and sharing are very much appreciated!

LIGHTHOUSE JANUARY EVENTS



Our church partners with four other churches, Grand Avenue United Methodist Church, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Living Hope Lutheran Church, and Parkside Community United Church of Christ, all located in Port Washington and Saukville, to support our joint ecumenical initiative, Lighthouse Youth Ministry.

Lighthouse's Youth Director, Christin Flucke, welcomes all middle school and high school youth to join the group on January 13 & 27



NIGHT GAMES AT GRAND AVENUE CHURCH

Sunday evening, January 8, from 7:00-8:00

Join us Lighthouse as they kick off 2023 with a rousing night of classic games like hide-and-seek, but with the added fun of playing in the dark! Students should be dropped off/picked up from Grand Avenue UMC, which is located right next door to Lighthouse at 505 W. Grand Avenue, Port Washington.

VIDEO GAMES & BIRTHDAY KITS

Sunday evening, January 22,

from 6:30-8:00

Show off your skills and enjoy some friendly competition with a variety of group-friendly video games such as

Mario Kart or Wii Sports. Plus, while you're waiting for your turn to play, the group will be assembling birthday kits to donate to our local food pantries. If you have game systems that can be borrowed for the evening, please let Christin know!



Help Lighthouse spread some birthday joy to those in our community!

Lighthouse will be collecting items such as cake mix, frosting, candles, etc. to assemble "birthday kits" to donate to our local food pantries. These kits will help ensure that pantry guests can enjoy a birthday celebration on their special day. Be on the lookout for the birthday cake collection poster at each church with more details about what items are needed. Please submit all donations by January 15.

LIGHTHOUSE EVENTS FOR WINTER/SPRING 2023:

February 10-12 - Quake Retreat in Wisconsin Dells

Those who have pre-registered will be attending a weekend retreat called *Quake*, hosted at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Live music, speakers, workshops, games, and of course some time to enjoy the waterpark are all included. *(continued on the next page)*

LIGHTHOUSE EVENTS FOR WINTER/SPRING 2023 continued...

Sunday afternoon, February 26, from 1:00-5:00 - Skiing/Snow Tubing at Sunburst

Come enjoy an afternoon of winter fun with friends as we hit the slopes together! We will carpool from Lighthouse and travel to Sunburst in Kewaskum. Students can choose between snow tubing, skiing, or snowboarding and Lighthouse will cover the rental/lift costs.

Sunday evening, March 12, from 6:00-8:00 - Movie Night

Get out of the house/in from the cold and join us for dinner and a movie, complete with popcorn of course!

Sunday evening, March 26, from 7:00-8:00 - Easter Basket Service Project

We will be assembling Easter baskets for children served by Family Promise of Ozaukee County. Our supporting congregations will be asked to help us collect supplies for the month of March and then assemble all of them as a way to share God's love with our neighbors this Easter!

LIGHTHOUSE WILL BE HOSTING AN "EGG MY YARD" FUNDRAISER - Look for more info soon!

"Egg My Yard" Part 1 - Sunday afternoon, April 2, from 4:00-6:00

Meet at Lighthouse HQ to fill the dozens of eggs that were ordered. All supplies will be provided.

"Egg My Yard" Part 2 - Saturday evening, April 8, from 6:30-8:30

Meet at Lighthouse and divide up into teams to go and deliver all the egg orders to peoples' homes.

Sunday, April 23, from 6:30-8:00 - Bowling

Join us for a fun evening of bowling at Harbor Hills. Bowling, shoe rental, and snacks are all included. *Students can be dropped off/picked up directly from Harbor Hills.

Sunday, May 7, (time TBD) - Outdoor Service Project

Help us out as we serve our neighbors and care for God's creation with an outdoor service project.

Sunday evening, May 21, from 7:00-8:00 - School's Out Party

Come and celebrate the end of another crazy school year with all your Lighthouse friends. Food, games, and fun guaranteed!

Have questions or want to RSVP to any of these events?

Please contact Lighthouse Director Christin Flucke at (262) 483-9582

or email christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org

Also, stay up to date on any schedule changes as well as event reminders by joining the Lighthouse message group on the Remind app.

Simply text "pwseym" to 81010 and follow the directions to join if you haven't already!

DECEMBER ACTION PHOTOS



Advent Craft Workshop
& Cookie Exchange
on December 4.



Church friends hard at play in the Nursery.

SPECIAL THANKS

To Ric Probst, Jeanne Mantsch, Jason Jacque, Louise Mollinger, Carolyn Heatwole, Don Niederfrank, and Jennifer Dimmer for serving as Worship Leaders in December.

To Kathy Bretl, Claude Zimmerman, Mike and Jane Spalding, Ryan and Jodi Cowen, Merlin and Janet Behnke, and Joe and Bev Mueller for serving as Ushers in December.

To the Perez, Riemer, and Arthur families for providing Nursery Care in December.

To the Chancel Choir and Jennifer Dimmer for providing Fellowship Hour in December.

To our Christmas Tree Sale Team: David Franks and Louise Mollinger, Joe Rychtik and Scott Symes, with the help of our office staff, for executing yet another successful Christmas Tree Sale. Their time and commitment to our church's largest fundraiser is greatly appreciated!

To all those who signed up for a shift to help sell our Christmas Trees.

To everyone who decorated wooden Christmas ornaments for our customers at the Tree Sale.

To Jennifer Dimmer for leading crafts and card making on December 4.

To all those who contributed cookies for our Christmas Cookie exchange on December 4.

Ongoing thanks to Bill Bond, Joe Mueller, Claude Zimmerman, and Gary Tackes for conducting weekly walk-throughs and coordinating maintenance projects of the church building and grounds.

To the Cowen Family for setting up and decorating the church Christmas tree in the sanctuary.

To Jane Spalding for decorating our sanctuary with Christmas Eve poinsettias and coordinating the Advent journey of our Nativity Scene.

To everyone who took tags to support our Lighthouse fundraiser in December.

Ongoing thanks to Dawn Guschl and Bill Bond for preparing our communion bread each month.

To all those who contributed to the Gift-A-Child initiative from the Church School.

To Jane Spalding for leading a nativity craft for Church School on December 11.

To Becky Chandler for serving as the parent helper at the December 19 Confirmation Class.

To our Christmas Eve Worship Leaders: Members of the Confirmation Class at 5pm: Andrew Arthur, Jackson Bergin, Addie Chandler, Elaina Perez; at 7pm: Ken Matthews and Phil Stepanski; at 9pm: Kitchie Allen, Jeanne Mantsch, and Don Niederfrank. Also, thanks to our Christmas Eve Ushers: 5pm Ralph and Beckie Perez, 7pm Mike and Sherrie Dimmer, 9pm Margaret Niederfrank, Kathy Bretl and Shandy Roehrig.

SPECIAL THANKS continued...

To our Christmas Brass for accompanying hymns at the 7pm worship service: Brett and Jennifer Dimmer, Lydia Clough, and Jamie Karrels.

To our Christmas Trio for singing at the 9pm Christmas Eve Worship: Brett and Jennifer Dimmer, and Tracy Greymont.

To those who donated to our Christmas Giving, supporting the six local service organizations that we support on a regular basis. And to those who purchased a poinsettia to help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas!

Thanks to Ken Matthews for preaching (his 33rd consecutive year!) and leading worship on Sunday morning, Christmas Day, and to Don Niederfrank for assisting Ken.

To Erin Arthur for donating a beautiful wood rocking chair to the nursery.



One of the clothespin nativity scenes made by our Church School kids.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Tina Olson and family. Tina's brother, Joe Kelley, died on December 5 after being in a coma for several weeks. Joe has two sons who are 5-years-old and 22- years-old. A "Celebration of Life" service was held on December 17.

Amy Umhoefer, who had knee replacement surgery on December 23.

Betty Bollinger, who fell at home on Christmas Eve and had hip repair/replacement surgery on Christmas Day.

Bruce Laabs, Sr. Bruce is receiving hospice palliative care at Ellen's Home in Port Washington.

For a speedy recovery to all those who are, or were, sick with Covid or the Flu over the holidays.

Alice Ruffin, who has hip replacement surgery scheduled the first week of the new year.

APPROVED NOVEMBER CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

(The November Minutes were approved at the December 8, 2022 Church Council meeting.)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Church Council Minutes

November 10, 2022

Call to Order by Jason Jacque @ 6:36

Pastor Scott, Jason Jacque, Phil Stepanski, Bill Bond, Mike Spalding, Ken Matthews, Eric Olson, Jennifer Dimmer, Jodi Cowen, Shandy Roehrig and Rhonda Thompson.

Opening Meditation – Eric Olson read a prayer for veterans- A Prayer to feel Honored, A Prayer to be Understood, A Prayer to be Healed, A Prayer to be Rewarded and A Prayer to Know You.

Approval of the Minutes – October 2022 Shandy motions to approve the August minutes with the stated revision and Bill seconds the motion. The minutes are approved.

Monthly Budget Review (Phil) – Phil has the October Statement of Activity as well as Budget vs Actual reports with year to date amounts for review. There were no major transactions. He has made transfers to cover payroll expenses. Mike is questioning how memorial income and spending is shown on the budget when it should be a separate account of it's own. Phil will look into whether or not this is possible in Quickbooks reports.

Pastor's Moment (Pastor Scott)- Congregational Care has highlighted shut ins, reaching out to them. They plan to take communion to the shut ins in December. Pastor Scott has asked another church member to join him and all seem to be enjoying the time together.

Old Business

November 13th Congregational Meeting – Budget Presentation (Phil) – He used the Budget vs Actual 2022 budget with an equation of year to date line numbers through October divided by 10 and multiplied by 12 to come up with 2023 Budget. As of the meeting 14 pledges came in with a total of \$26,920- eight of which increased their amount, five stayed same and one was a new pledge. Phil would like to use this budget format (with few discussed adjustments from Team leader amounts) at the Congregational meeting. In the past most of the budgets did not balance and had negative balances. A paying tenant could make the budget balance or even positive. Phil will make changes and email the updated 2023 budget to us. Pastor Scott is hoping to have a membership count by December 31 which then will be factored into the 2023 budget.

Awareness Campaign update – (Pastor Scott) – The few meetings that have been held have gone well and productive, but several have been cancelled. There are a few November meetings left for anyone that would like to attend.

Building maintenance updates – (Bill) -The window repair guy was here to look at windows. The Heatwole window was not made with repairs in mind so the quote is to replace it. Pastor Scott suggests that Property Team look at church supply catalogs for a handrail option. Property Team is trying to cut back on light and heat by asking whatever is not being used get turned off. Security lighting needs to be adjusted as they seem to be on at all hours of the day and it's being looked into. Property Team plans to cancel some existing contracts in hopes of saving money and bringing down the annual payments.

Stewardship (Jodi) – Materials were sent. Huge thank you to Beckie, Amy and Pastor Scott. Everything is on the website. The committee will be given names of those that have not

(continued on the next page)

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES continued...

turned in their pledge so they can make gentle reminder notices the first few weeks of December. The church school kids will make the thank you cards that will go out to those that respond to their pledge request.

Rental Space update – (Pastor Scott) – Nothing new to report. If council would like to take on a more active roll in finding a new tenant help is welcome. Jodi will talk with Karen about photo listing and post the listing at work.

Associate Moderator position – Pastor Scott has reached out to a member and they are considering it.

“The Examen(ed) Church” – (Pastor Scott) – The deadline is November 18. Pastor Scott has started the application. Pastor Scott is hopeful for the acceptance.

Additional Team Updates – (Shandy, Eric, Jennifer, Mike, Ken) – Church School and Outreach have prepped for the Christmas gift drive. At this point they have adopted five children, but if more are needed they will try to get more. Fellowship is hosting an advent workshop on December 4 with a cookie exchange. The first soup and salad was reasonably attended. Mike says Usher guidelines have been updated, but the online sign up is not completed and has more empty slots than filled. The guidelines are located in the book by bell and will be emailed to anyone that has shown interest in ushering. Maybe we can ask Amy if she can put another announcement out for sign ups. Ken will be starting with the staff review process the first part of December and hopes to finish before the end of the year.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment - Meeting is adjourned at 8:20pm

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PROPERTY TEAM UPDATES AND MEETING MINUTES

Our Property Team is an active church team comprised of a handful of folks from the church. The team keeps a close eye on our church and works to maintain all aspects of our church building and grounds. The team would like to share their minutes, as well as their current to-do list with the church:

November 2022 Property Team Minutes

Ongoing Property Team To-Do List

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GENEROUS END-OF-YEAR GIVING

Thank you to all those who contributed to our December special giving opportunities! We received \$155 for the UCC Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross, which helps support retired and disabled clergy and lay employees of the church. We also received donations of \$1,775 for our church's financial support of Lighthouse Youth Ministry. During December, we were also invited to direct special gifts toward six local service organizations that we support on a regular basis. The Food Pantry received \$555, Balance received \$205, Advocates received \$245, Family Promise received \$444, Habitat of Ozaukee County received \$195, and Ozaukee Family Services received \$195. Altogether, in the month of December, we raised a total of \$3,769 for local and national groups to support their work. Thanks to all of you for being so generous!

JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



- 1- Donna Yellen
- 2- Mark Pasten
- 3 - Bruce Laabs, Jr.
- 5 - Ned Huwatschek
Ruth McLeod
- 6- Julie Eslinger
- 7 - Christa Karrels
- 8 - Lynda Ward
Chris Fraser
- 9- Emil Schneider
Brayden Thompson
- 12 - Dick Webb
Karl Pradel
Simon Gilhooly
- 15- Carolyn Heatwole
- 16- Matthew Dimmer
- 20- Andrea Brieze
- 21- Henry McLeod
Brian Verheyen
Kendra Gonzales
- 24- Susan Niederfrank
- 25- Claire Chmielewski
- 28- Elaina Perez
Ben Andrey
- 29- Peyton Rychtik
Collette Olson
- 30- Austin Lemke
- 31- Cheri Farnsworth



JANUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- 17- Jim and Dawn Clements
- 19- Jeff and Holly Ternes
- 21- John and Debbie Arndt



*Please contact Beckie Perez, at
office@portucc.org, if you would like to
add a Birthday or Anniversary.*

JANUARY 2023 CALENDAR

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
1 <i>First Sunday after Christmas</i> Happy New Year! 10 am Worship Service	2 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	3 9:30 am Staff Meeting	4 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	5 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon 6:30 pm Executive Team	6	7
8 <i>The Baptism of Christ</i> 8 am/10am Worship Communion Service 10 am Chancel Choir, Church School, Nursery 11 am Fellowship Hour Children's Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Lighthouse Youth Group - Games	9 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	10 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga	11 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Pastor Parish Relations Team	12 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon 6 pm Knellsville 4-H Club 6:30 pm Church Council	13	14 1:00 pm Girl Scouts
15 <i>Second Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8 am/10am Worship Service Handbells Nursery 1 pm PW Pride	16 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	17 9:30 am Staff Meeting 5:45 pm Girl Scouts 6 pm Yoga	18 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	19 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon	20	21 McKenzie Wedding
22 <i>Third Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8 am Worship Service 10 am Family Service Children's Choir Nursery 11 am Chili Potluck Lunch 6:30 pm Lighthouse Youth Group - Video Games & B-day Kits	23 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	24 9:30 am Staff Meeting 6 pm Yoga	25 12 pm Wednesday Lunch Group 7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal	26 8 am Men's Breakfast – The Beacon	27 1 pm Property Team	28
29 <i>Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8 am/10am Worship Service Chancel Choir Nursery 11 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 10:50 am Winter Congregational Meeting	30 6:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Confirmation Class	31 9:30 am Staff 6 pm Yoga				

CHURCH INFORMATION

First Congregational Church - *United Church of Christ*
131 North Webster Street
Port Washington, WI 53074
(262) 284-2022
website - portucc.org, email - office@portucc.org



Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday mornings from 8:30 - Noon

Pastor Scott's Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays, and by appointment

Financial Administrator Phil's Office Hours

Mondays from 4:30 - 6:30

Office Staff

Rev. Dr. Scott McLeod, Pastor - pastorscott@portucc.org

Amy Gilhooly, Communications Director - amyg@portucc.org

Beckie Perez, Office Manager - office@portucc.org

Phil Stepanski, Financial Administrator - phil@portucc.org

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ONLINE GIVING WITH PAYPAL

PayPal is an easy way to give to the church to pay your pledge and/or make an extra financial gift. You can find the **PayPal** button on the home page of the church website (portucc.org) or use this QR code. Thank you!

