

Established 1856

# Talk of the Tower

You are welcome at First Congregational U.C.C., wherever you are on your spiritual journey.

**GOD'S  
PEOPLE  
GATHER**



January 25, 2012

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

Mark 1:21-28  
8:30 a.m. Adult Education Forum/Trinity  
9:00 a.m. Communion Stations Lower Level  
9:15 a.m. Chancel Choir  
10:00 a.m.  
† Worship, Food for Pets  
10:15 a.m. Children dismissed to Sunday School  
Communion Stations, Lower Level  
11:00 a.m. Fellowship  
11:15 a.m. Youth Choir

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Isaiah 40:21-31  
9:15 a.m. Chancel Choir  
10:00 a.m.  
† Worship, First Communion, Care 'n Share  
11:00 a.m. Fellowship  
Souper Bowl of Caring  
11:15 a.m. Youth Choir

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Mark 1: 40-45  
9:15 a.m. Youth, Chancel Choirs  
10:00 a.m.  
† Worship  
10:15 a.m. Children dismissed to Sunday School  
11:15 a.m. Hazardous Waste Recycling Forum

## IN THIS EDITION

- JONAH Forum.....page 3  
Safely dispose of medication
- Feed My Starving Children.....page 5  
A mission trip with feeding and climbing
- Tools for Caregivers.....page 7  
Help is at hand

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### SO, WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE TRINITY?

Sunday, January 29  
8:30 a.m. - Ingram Hall

On January 29 we welcome Rev. Dr. David S. Moyer, former member of our congregation, now the Conference Minister for the Wisconsin Conference UCC. Rev. Moyer has served in the Wisconsin Conference for three decades. As the pastoral leader of the Wisconsin Conference since 2001, he brings gifts of vision, leader-

ship, friendship, humor, hard work, and love for the church.

The Trinity is at the heart of Christian beliefs and doctrine. As early Christians pursued an understanding of the nature of God, the Trinity was created. After the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE, an important concept was established there, namely that Christ is eternal and of "one substance with the Father" (Nicene Creed).

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: OKORA AND EAU CLAIRE

Families like to find meaningful activities for the entire family. The Eau Claire Winter Sustainability Festival is a great opportunity. On Saturday, February 11 you have two wonderful choices:

1:00 PM to 5:00 PM: Over twenty local vendors share great information about an entire spectrum of sustainable issues like health, food, environment, and energy—all from a teaching perspective. Right in the exhibit areas are activity tables for children K-elementary age. You may browse while your children enjoy science experiments, crafts and activities.

**Silent Auction:** What a great way to support sustainability, bid on a variety of great products and services.

5:00 PM to 7:30 PM: A catered meal and Duck for the Oyster, one of the Midwest's finest dance bands will provide a great experience (and exercise) for children and adults alike. No dance experience is necessary and all the circle and square dances will be taught right there. Tickets for the dinner and dance (\$15 each/children free) are available in the church office or at Just Local Food.

All proceeds from this event will support our Okora Sustainable Community Project. Where we see choices to act for sustainability, Okora must make changes for their survival. Thank you for your support.

Questions? Jill Christopherson at [jillc@firstucceauclaire.org](mailto:jillc@firstucceauclaire.org).

## MONEY AND MINISTRY

Year to date—December 2011	Annual Budget	Actual Year to Date
Revenue	\$531,821	\$295,202
Expenses	\$531,821	\$235,778

## UPDATE FROM STEWARDSHIP

Pledges for 7/1/11–6/30/12	\$472,000
Pledges received December 2011	\$ 77,768
Total pledges received 7/1/11–6/30/2012	\$268,546



## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

Several people have commented on how meaningful one of the benedictions I use fairly commonly has become for them. I received it as a gift from one of our members who was visiting a church in St. Paul and who heard an interim pastor offer this benediction. It certainly is a suitable prayer for those of us who seek to follow Jesus to offer each day.

Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast that which is good. Render to no person evil for evil. Strengthen the faint hearted. Support the weak. Help those who are hurt. Honor all humankind. Love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And as you go on your way, know that God goes before you to guide you, beside you to befriend you, behind you to encourage you, and above you to watch over you. Let God be within you to give you peace – Shalom.

With you in Christ's service,

## PRAYER CONCERNS



Please hold  
Margaret Brown  
The sister of Gail and  
Dave Barnes  
Residents of the village  
of Okora, Uganda

Victims of natural disasters, caregivers of loved ones at home, and all those affected by war and terrorism in your thoughts and prayers this week.

*Please alert the office if you know someone who is ill, is dealing with the loss of a loved one, or is having a difficult time in their life. We try not to miss anyone but sometimes it does happen and we do apologize. And please remember our shut-ins and our nursing home residents with your prayers, a card, a visit or a call.*

## CHURCH VIPS

### Sunday school attendance

Jan 15 – 23    Jan 22 – 42

### Worship attendance

Jan 15 - 283    Jan 22 - 226

**Ushers:** Jan 29 – Craig Falkner, Capt.; Richard Arnold, Steve and Diane Decker, Jeff Herman, Richard Murray, Matt Gundry  
Feb 5 – Dave Pulkrabek, Capt; Suzanne Dow, Glen Schuster, George and Stella Hunter, Will Pooley, Greg Barnes Feb 12 – Corbet Peterson, Capt; Darrell Beeksma, M.O. Brenden, Al Mazorol, Bill and Anne Sather, Jerry Siler, Cherie VanderVoort  
**Liturgists:** Jan 29 – Suzanne Dow Feb 5 – David Barnes Feb 12 - David Lonzarich  
**Tellers:** Jan 29 - Flo Pulse, Dick Murray-Feb 5 – Ann Lamoureux, Jan Proctor Feb 12 - Cherie Vander Voort, Shirley Crouse  
**Greeters:** Jan 29 – Lay Life and Fellowship Feb 5 – Mission Education and Social Concerns Feb 12 - Personnel  
**Nursery/Preschool:** Jan 29 – Jill Radloff, Matt and Jenny Olson, Heath Kampa, Jeanne Herman, Zoe Copa Feb 5 – Pam Braun, Madeline Braun, Scott and Sadie Gunderson, Kelsey Pulkrabek, Jackson Lindquist, Ben Theyerl Feb 12 - tbd

# MISSIONS IN MOTION

## DONORS WELCOME FOR RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE FEBRUARY 20

February brings Valentines Day, Leap Year, and our next Blood Drive from 12:00 to 5:45 p.m. **Monday, February 20.** If you are 16 or older you are invited to give blood. If you have given recently, you will receive a call from our volunteers. You can also call church (715-834-2668) or go online to the Red Cross Blood donation site at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) and sign up. Double red cell donations will be scheduled on the hour. We will also be calling for volunteers for food donations and canteen workers.

Don't be alarmed if you receive both a post card reminder from the regional Blood Cross office and a call from a church volunteer, not necessarily in that order. It is a new Red Cross process. Thank you so much for your support of the Blood Drive!

- First Congregational Blood Drive Committee: Gib and Kathy Magaw, Penny Kolloff and John Urice, Jake and Cherie VanderVoort, Dave and Gail Barnes

## SOUPER BOWL OF CARING FEB. 5

Souper Bowl of Caring is coming up **Feb. 5.** This annual event raises money for the local St. Francis Food Pantry. Middle school students will greet you at the door with a soup kettle to receive your donations to fight hunger in our community.

## SOJOURNER HOUSE SUPPORTED

Thank you very much for your generous donation of \$2892. Your support is very appreciated especially during tough economic times. We thank you again and wish you all a happy New Year. - Sincerely, Sojourner House Staff

## BEACON HOUSE CONTINUES TO SERVE

There was a full house at the Beacon House Family Homeless Shelter last week. The guests included 8 parents, 5 babies under a year, and 10 children under 6.

Special thanks to the generous, caring and enthusiastic people who are always so willing to help—Dave Morley, Leah and Tyler Olson-McBride, Joe Knight,

Mary and Greg Barnes, Kay Peavey, Gloria Schley, Chuck Stokes and Darlene Cornell.

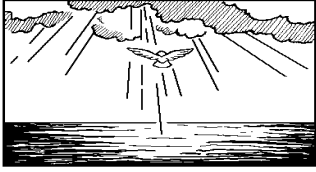
If you are interested in volunteering at the Beacon House as an individual, a family or a group, please contact Darlene at 715-836-6969 for a personal orientation. We will be serving again the week of March 11-17.

## JONAH FORUM ON RECYCLING AND SAFE MEDICATION DISPOSAL:

“What do I do with my outdated or unneeded medication?” “How do I get rid of that old can of paint or insecticide?” Members of the First Congregational UCC congregation have raised these and other related issues to the church's JONAH Core Team and we are responding and will address issues related to the safe disposal of a wide range of items in cooperation with the county's recycling efforts. While most people are sensitive to the need for safe disposal of medications or recycling hazardous household chemicals, many find it difficult to get to the appropriate facility during the limited times available. During the February 12 Forum at 11:15 in the Chapel, we will discuss proposed solutions to help members of the congregation *and* ask for volunteers to assist the Core Team with this important effort. Please join us!



# CONNECT, LEARN,



Those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.

-John 4:14

## LEARNING IN JESUS' NAME

In the



### PRESCHOOL AND K-1: BAPTISM

After Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, God expresses love and praise for his son: "I love him, and he pleases me." (Mark 1: 4-11) God also loves us and is pleased with us. We are God's children, and baptism affirms our relationship with God. When we are baptized, our parents promise to help us learn about and live like Jesus.

Baptism is the theme on January 29 for the preschool and K-1 classes and on February 5 for the preschool class. The K-1 class will not have Sunday School on February 5, which is First Communion Sunday.

### ELEMENTARY: JACOB AND ESAU

2nd grade: Katie Griffith/Katie Lindquist: Use basket weaving to understand how Jacob and Esau were woven together even though they had gone separate ways in developing new nations.

3rd grade: MaryBeth Tusing with Stephanie Herman Gathering Place. Using computers, students make an acrostic of their name to understand what it meant for Jacob to receive the name Israel.

4th/5th grade: Pat Heins with Amy Seipel- Thou Art Taste and experience desert living under the hospitality of Jacob and Esau's mother. Students will make friendship bracelets to understand what happens when they listen to God.

### DROP IN THE BUCKET

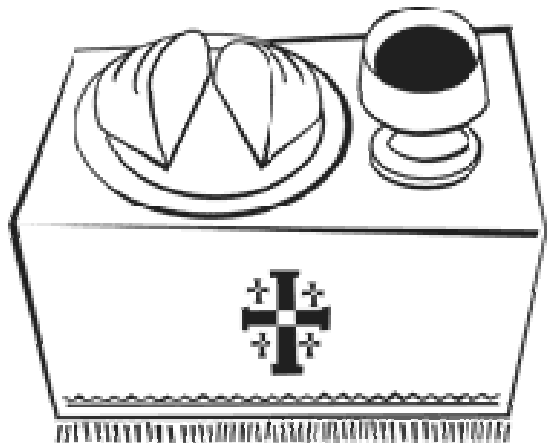
Children love to hear the sound of their money going to a good cause! The January Ragtime Festival beneficiary is Habitat for Humanity. Our Drop in the Bucket donations will support H4H as well. Children connect with the work of the church through their giving.

### FEBRUARY 5 IS FIRST COMMUNION:

Families who may be considering a first communion experience for their children are invited to use the Communion Stations available in the lower level hallways beginning January 29. **NEW!** Children will travel to each station collecting the stamp representing a growing understanding of the sacrament.

Wednesday, February 1, hosts a "question and answer" dinner time beginning at 5:30 PM with Pastor Mark Pirazzini in Ingram Hall. The meal is \$2.00 for each person. Please RSVP by Monday, January 30, to the church office if you will participate in the communion Q&A with Pastor Mark on Wednesday night. Family Worship for the service of Communion takes place Sunday, February 5.

Your children learn from your questions and your interest. Questions? Please contact [dianned@firstucceauclaire.org](mailto:dianned@firstucceauclaire.org) with your questions.



# GROW - IN COMMUNITY



## SMALL GROUP AND FAMILY MINISTRY

### LENTEN BOOK STUDY BEGINS FEB 29

Pastor Mark Pirazzini leads a book study for Lent. Lent is a time when one cleans out the old to prepare for the new, and in that spirit you are invited to join us for this three-session study beginning Feb 29 and finishing on March 14. We are reading Marcus Borg's book, [Speaking Christian: Why Christian Words Have Lost Their Meaning and Power—And How They Can Be Restored.](#) In this time, we have the opportunity to become more deeply acquainted with our language of Christianity. Recover words like salvation,

redemption, and forgiveness. Borg writes, "Christian vocabulary has acquired meanings that are serious distortions of their biblical and traditional meanings."

If ordering your books through the church, deadline is Sunday, February 5. Book cost is \$14.00

**Wednesdays: Feb 29, Mar 7, Mar 14**

**5:15 – 6:45 PM**

**Leader: Rev Dr. Mark Pirazzini**

### COMMON GROUND

Several UWEC Common Ground students and their friends gathered in Chancellor's Hall in December to chat and spend time getting to know one another. Common Ground will now be meeting primarily in the dorms in order to invite other students to join us. The students have been on break and we ask your prayers for our upcoming gatherings as they return for spring semester.

Common Ground is an ecumenical ministry at UWEC which meets Thursdays at 7pm. We seek to follow Christ by building community, promoting peace and justice and growing as compassionate, prayerful and liberating people. With an emphasis on social justice, service, dialogue and asking and exploring questions of faith, Common Ground is in a unique position to connect with students. Find us on facebook at UWEC Common Ground or e-mail: [commonground@uwec.edu](mailto:commonground@uwec.edu). For questions about Common Ground please contact Lloyd Joyal at 715-835-5783 or [joallh@uwec.edu](mailto:joallh@uwec.edu).

### FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN: YOUTH MISSION TRIP TO EGAN, MINNESOTA

Middle and high school students (space for 15) will be volunteering at **Feed My Starving Children** on Saturday, March 10 from 11:30 to 1:30 PM. FMSC is a wonderful experience in itself. These two hours are packed with activity that brings life and health to starving children around the world.

On our way home, we will stop for lunch and spend some time at **Vertical Endeavors**, for a rock climbing experience. Cost is \$15 at Vertical Endeavors plus your rental equipment. Parent Permission will be in the coming weekly family newsletters.

Save the date, feeding and rock climbing all on the same day! [jillc@firststucceauclaire.org](mailto:jillc@firststucceauclaire.org).

#### **Middle School Program Overview:**

- JAN 25: PREPARATION FOR THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING;
- JAN 28: SKIING AT AFTON ALPS
- FEB 1: BAKING COMMUNION BREAD FOR MAR 4.
- FEB 8: ST. FRANCIS FOOD PANTRY.
- FEB 15: VIDEO WORK, YOUTH SUNDAY, MAR 4.
- FEB 22: ASH WEDNESDAY.
- FEB 29: VIDEO WORK, YOUTH SUNDAY, MAR 4.

# OPPORTUNITIES IN MINISTRY

## THE ALTAR GUILD AT WORK

Your Altar Guild purchased four additional hearing assists for the sanctuary in December. The ushers noticed that all of the available assists were being used at Sunday services. This was made possible by your purchase of Christmas cookies in December!

## GREGORY PETERSON - ORGAN RECITAL

Dr. Gregory Peterson will present an organ recital on Sunday February 19 at 2:00 p.m. in the First Congregational UCC sanctuary. Dr. Peterson is Head of the Music Department, Associate Professor and College Organist at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, where he teaches applied organ and church music. He serves as Organist and Cantor to the student congregation, playing for daily and Sunday chapel in the College's Center for Faith and Life.

Dr. Peterson served the historic Old South Church in Boston, Massachusetts as Organist and Minister of Music. He also taught at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota and Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington.

Gregory Peterson has been hailed as an organist with "imagination and verve." His playing is described as "competent and stylish" and "excellent and masterful."

Dr. Peterson was born in Ames, Iowa and grew up in Northfield, Minnesota. He earned the BA degree in music at Luther College, He holds the MM degree from Yale University in the Institute of Sacred Music and the DMA degree in organ performance and pedagogy from the University of Iowa.

The concert is sponsored by the Chippewa Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and is open to the public. A freewill offering will be taken.

## Waiting to blossom

A 1979 song called "The Rose" (written by Amanda McBroom and made popular by Bette Midler) encourages listeners to keep the faith, even when the source of our hope isn't visible.

In the depths of winter, we especially need the reminder that beneath mounds of snow lie seeds already being prepared to burst forth "with the sun's love" into springtime flowers.

When you're in the cold depths of despair, grief, illness or other struggles, remember the deeply buried seed. Beyond your view, God's love is already tending that seed, readying it to blossom into healing, new friendship, joy and life.



## IN THE CONGREGATION

◆ Jaxson Douglas Norvold, son of Phil and Heather Norvold was baptized on Sunday, January 22.

## FROM THE OFFICE

◆ Looking for a fun place to be on Thursday afternoons? Would you like to talk on the phone, make copies, prepare materials, and do surprise projects that land on your desk? The office needs a volunteer receptionist on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Contact Jan Smith at 715-834-2668 or [jans@firstucceaclaire.org](mailto:jans@firstucceaclaire.org).

## WISH LIST

- 19" dolls that stand and clothes to fit
- Working toy registers that open and close
- Residential style carpet cleaner (\$90)
- Recessed Track lighting for How Great Thou Art room to display art downstairs
- Art room stools
- Non-decorative floor and table lamps (CFL bulb ready) for Sunday school rooms



## PRIMETIME POSTINGS

### FEBRUARY PRIMETIME FRIENDS...HEAR ABOUT OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

February is Presidents' Month and Wednesday, February 15, we will have the opportunity to hear about our very first President, George Washington. Our speaker is Lynn Coulson, a state trooper from Durand who has studied the founding father and has great admiration for him. Lynn dresses the part and brings 18<sup>th</sup> century items to show during his presentation. Plus we will enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by Darlene Cornell. So make your reservation by Monday, February 13.

### POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS: AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Are you a caregiver? Chances are you may not think of yourself that way. If you provide care for a family member or a friend or neighbor, you are a caregiver. This program is offered by the Aging & Disability Resource Center and by Dove Healthcare and will cover these topics:

#### Taking care of YOU

Identifying and reducing personal stress

Communicating feelings, needs and concerns and communicating in challenging situations

Caregiver transitions

Learning from our emotions

Setting goals and so much more!



This series will be offered on Tuesdays, February 7, 14, 21, 2012 at Dove

Healthcare-West on Truax Blvd. from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (A light lunch is provided). Cost is \$20 and includes The Caregiver Helpbook and materials. To register or for more information, call the Aging & Disability Resource Center at 715-839-4735 by Friday, February 4, 2012.

### FINDING YOUR VOICE

I have a new book called "The Long View: An Elderwoman's Book of Wisdom" by Donna Sinclair. It is a collection of daily meditation for elder women, although she says "I will be pleased if younger women listen in. They might want to know if there is a life as an elder woman." Donna Sinclair believes that one of the important tasks for elder women is speaking out. Here is her entry for January 4 titled "Elder Voice".

"Becoming an elder has nothing to do with wanting to be one, or seeking the role. You can't run for eldership. Elders arise out of the community by unconscious consensus. And I think it is not the whole community that does this. It is merely a sizable portion of a certain segment: the environmental group, or the churchgoers, the political junkies or the poetry readers. Some of these groups are smaller than others. I am not the most knowledgeable, nor even the most committed in any of these areas. I am passionate though; and most of the time, I listen. Preferably before I pronounce. Some elders are extroverted and speak out easily. Some are introverted and don't. In the end, to be an elder is to say what needs saying, whether or not it is comfortable to do so."

First Congregational U.C.C.  
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**Joining Our Neighbors, Advancing Hope**  
*People of faith gathered for the common good.*

**JONAH: 11x15 Campaign** February 20 launches this new effort to reduce incarceration levels in Wisconsin by half, bringing incarceration to the 1995 levels of 11,000 individuals. The goal is to achieve this by the year 2015. Although the prison population has doubled in these past years, there is no corresponding rise in the state's crime rate. The cost of Corrections in Wisconsin has risen from under \$200 million per year in 1990 to more than \$1.3 billion in 2011.

The good news is that alternatives to incarceration are being proven effective every day in our county. Alternatives nearly all result in markedly lowered recidivism rates, are more likely to restore the offender to health, especially those suffering from mental illness and/or addictions, and save taxpayers a great deal of money.

To join this effort to reduce our prison population, contact one of the core team members for task force information. Paul Savides at [psavides@wwt.net](mailto:psavides@wwt.net)

## TALK OF THE TOWER...

is a publication for members and friends of First Congregational United Church of Christ, Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Editor: Jan Smith Senior Minister: Rev. Dr. Mark X. Pirazzini

**Next deadline: 10 a.m., Monday, February 13, 2012**

Put items (as short as possible) in the "in" basket in the church office, fax to 715-834-0674 or e-mail to [jans@firstucceauclaire.org](mailto:jans@firstucceauclaire.org)



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Judy Lies, Organist

Sarah Olson, Children's Choir Director

Meredith Pirazzini, Youth Choirs Accompanist

Dianne Dow, Elementary Education Coordinator

Pam Braun, Primary Education Coordinator

# NO-SEW FLEECE SCARF



Winter is a difficult time for people in need, so make this scarf to help someone stay warm.

## What you need:

- Medium-weight polar fleece, 60" standard width (a 9" portion will make one scarf)
- Scissors
- An adult to help

## What you do:














1. Cut a piece of medium-weight polar fleece to the size of 60" x 9". Cut the fabric across its width so the material is stretchy.
2. Trim off the edge binding. To add "fringe" along each end, make a 6"-long cut every half inch.
3. For curly fringe, pull each strand and then let go sharply. Another attractive option is to tie an over-hand knot at the top of each strip.
4. Donate your scarf to a local group that helps people in need. For greater impact, encourage your Sunday school classmates or other friends to make scarves, too.



# A caring disciple

In Acts 9, Peter tells of a woman who lived in Joppa. She performed good works and helped the poor. Solve the puzzle below to reveal this disciple's two names.

**Instructions:** Cross out the letters that spell each object and write the remaining letter on the blank.

___ adcltne			
___ rohmtae			
___ srgbape			
___ rbieda			
___ pehtshred			
___ rdhaenlca			
___ fadoo			
Her name in Greek			
___ pdeesh			
___ dchilnero			
___ drove			
___ acehtr			
___ sarcos			
___ nusoinm			

Answers: Tabitha, Dorcas

