

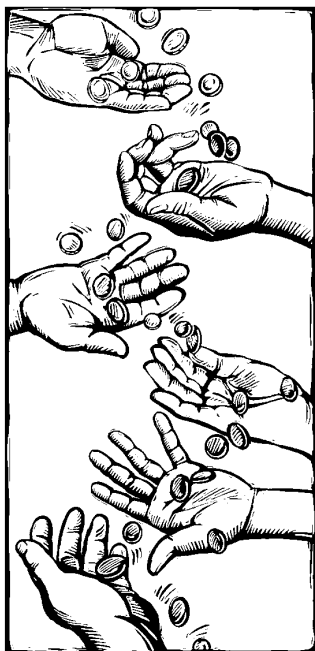
The SPIRE



First Congregational Church of Ripon • 220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971
920-748-5898 • Email: fristucc@dotnet.com • Website: www.riponcongregationalucc.org

October 2008

THE MONTH OF OCTOBER promises to be an exciting month in the life of First Congregational Church. I mean, after all, each and every one of us will be given the opportunity to participate in and make a commitment to the ongoing life and work of a congregation that is 160 years young. I have spent a lot of time thinking about stewardship in the last two weeks because of a letter I've been writing to a congregation I served for 9 years in what seems like a lifetime ago. As I wrote, I kept thinking about how in 1978 a small church reached down and did what we have done here in Ripon. They took bold steps, looking clearly at themselves, and held a capital campaign that asked every member for a commitment to renew the church and change the death march they had been on for 50 years. The people of that church searched their minds and hearts and launched into a bold adventure that brought them new education facilities and an opportunity to minister within their sphere of influence.



**GIVE,
AND
IT
WILL
BE
GIVEN
TO
YOU**

Luke 6:38

I loved being their pastor and walking with them through the terror of crossing into uncharted territory. For six years following their commitment to change, that congregation received new members that were a true rainbow coalition of humanity. The congregation grew to include blacks, Asians, Hispanics, athletes, artists, and nerds. All worshipped the living Christ, bringing their traditions, histories and spiritual gifts to one small church that had become known for how much the membership was willing to sacrifice in terms of time, treasure and talent. The amazing thing was that no one cared what anyone else was doing because each was doing what they could. It was a congregation like ours with a spread of ages, interests, and financial capacities. What made all of this work was a common belief they practiced that we seem to be acquiring consciously: first, that every gift counts, and second, equal gifts are not required but equal sacrifice is. Today, I love being your pastor and I know that if one and all are willing to open our hearts and minds together, our needs as a church will be met. Not only that, but we will see opportunities for new ministry appear month by month.

I trust that when you are called upon, you will find yourself giving generously and that it will be good for you and the church alike.

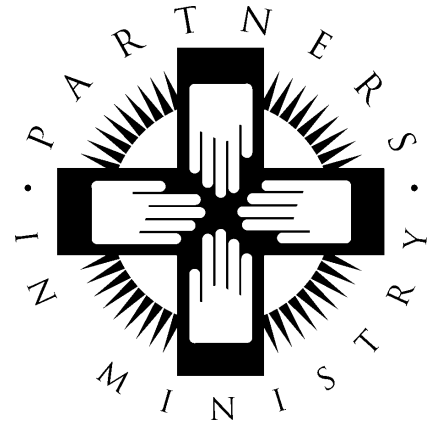
God bless you with grace, peace and joy in giving.

—Jack

Welcome!

We've been anticipating your arrival! It's true, because we believe that every person who comes to join us for fellowship was sent by God. Here at First Congregational Church of Ripon, we want you to experience Christ and be greatly blessed. We look forward to getting to know you and to share with you the marvelous ways God is working in our church. It won't take you long to discover that we are truly a "church family," rich in the relationships that matter most. We grow, worship, serve, laugh, cry, learn and reach out to the world together. We reach out to you, as well. Our doors and hearts are always open.

If you've been thinking, praying, searching, or hoping for a place to belong, we would like, again, to say Welcome! We're glad you found us.



- Pastor Jack Kraaz
- Moderator Jennifer Aither
- Vice-Moderator Janet Vossekul
- Clerk Maria Dietrich
- Treasurer Tim Aither
- Administrative Ass't Diane Falk
- Children's Choir Stephanie Cutler
- Choir Kurt Dietrich/Sarah Hughes
- Christian Ed Dir Jessica Solverud
- Church Maintenance Officer: Mark Alling, Assistant: how about you?
- Fellowship Ministry Sue Loomer
- Finance Rick Coles
- Historian Nedra Martz
- Librarian Lois Ellis
- Men's Group Len Ringstad
- Organists Maria Dietrich & Sarah Hughes
- Outreach Ruth Jones
- PPRC Roger Eddingsaas
- Women's Fellowship Liz Ringstad & Audrey Conant
- Worship Norm Loomer

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

- Jill Chatterson
- Karen Donahue
- Pat Foersterling
- Len Ringstad
- Alysse Zabel



Sincere condolences to Pat Foersterling and family upon the recent passing of Pat's husband, Fred.



Our next newsletter will be for November, 2008. The deadline will be Tuesday, October 21 at noon. Please submit materials to the church office or email to Maria Dietrich at dietch@centurytel.net. Assembly and preparation for mailing will take place on Thursday, October 30 at 1 pm. Please mark your calendars.



Attention: All Church Committees please submit your 2009 budget requests to the Finance Committee by October 21st Cabinet meeting!

Worship Volunteers

Please sign up to volunteer for lector, greeter/ushers, coffee fellowship hosts, flowers and nursery duty. The new permanent location for the sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the entrance to the Fellowship Hall. We still have spots to fill in for the current month and beyond. Thanks in advance for all your help!



Pastor Jack Kraaz
 Office: 920-748-5898
 Fax: 920-748-5182
 Cell: 920-229-5243
 Email: jkraaz@dotnet.com



The CROP Walk is on Sunday, October 12 at 1:30 p.m. It will begin right here at First Congregational Church. There will be a short walk (2 miles) and a longer walk (5 miles). There will be something for everyone. I hope you will consider walking this year and taking a pledge sheet and getting sponsors for the walk. Twenty-five per cent of the raised funds will go to the local Food Pantry to help folks in our community with food and commodities. Seventy-five per cent will go to Church World Service to be distributed to people worldwide who are in need of what they will receive only through this ministry.

When you think about it, it is not a lot to ask. If you cannot walk, please pledge to one of our young people or to one of our older people who will walk that day. The walk will end at our church and we will be offering sundaes that Sunday to all who walk. Whether walking or pledging, let's celebrate together at the conclusion of the walk. I hope we raise enough funds this year to make an even greater impact on our community than in years past.

Walkers can obtain an instruction packet from the church office. You can help by donating to one of the walkers from our church.



Maintenance Officer Needed

Due to John Rohde's recent relocation to California, we are currently without an Assistant Church Maintenance Officer. We are in need of a volunteer to be trained by Mark Alling as soon as possible and to eventually take over for Mark when his two-year term ends in January.

Our bylaws say, "The Church Maintenance Officer and assistant shall oversee the general maintenance of the church facility, repairs and service, reporting to the cabinet on a monthly basis repairs and service calls that have been done, or providing the cabinet with future service or repair call information."

Please contact Jennifer Aither or Pastor Jack if you're willing to help with this important ministry.



This fall's book discussions continue on the third Thursday of each month. All members and friends of the church are invited to join this group. You're welcome to come even if you haven't finished all your reading! Upcoming discussions are:

The Preservationist, David Maine
Thursday, October 23rd at 6:30 p.m.

"Think Life of Pi thousands of years earlier with a much larger cast of characters." This retelling of the Noah's Ark story is a meditation on faith and human foibles.

The Ministry of Special Cases by David Englander

Thursday, November 20th at 6:30 p.m.
Set in Buenos Aires during Argentina's dirty war. "When the nightmare of the disappeared children brings the Poznan family to its knees, they are thrust into the unyielding corridors of the Ministry of Special Cases, a terrifying, byzantine refuge of last resort. Through the devastation of a single family, Englander brilliantly captures the grief of a nation."





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As the last sweet beautiful days of summer rest upon us, we have much to be thankful for! The Christian Education year is off to a smooth start and big things lie ahead of us for the fall! On Sunday, September 21st the Youth Group is having their first event— this month's activity is swimming!!

We will be meeting on Tuesday, October 7th at 7:00pm in the Youth Lounge to discuss our next event. I hope to see everyone there!

As far as reminders go, I have included some announcements below for Sunday School families:

1. If for each child you have in Sunday School you could please bring 20 juice boxes and 2 boxes of crackers or cookies to church to help cover the snack time, it would be much appreciated!!
2. If you know in advance that your son or daughter will not be at Sunday School on a certain Sunday, the Sunday School teachers would really appreciate a call to inform them so they know how many students to plan for as they prepare their weekly material.

Tim and Jennifer Aither: 748-9714

Karen Hoch: 748-9482

Tim Lyke/Marguerite Parks: (Tim) 748-4857

(Marguerite) 748-7079

3. If your son or daughter is in third grade or older and would like to help acolyte or bring offering forward in church on Sunday mornings, we would love to have you participate! A brief training is available, just talk to Mary Lyke or myself!
4. The First Congregational Church is hosting this year's Crop Walk, and it takes place on Oct. 12th. Please come to support the wonderful cause and bring all of your friends!

Also, if any of you would like to check out the link to the video I played in church last Sunday, here is the web address: http://www.godtube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=8cf08faca5dd9ea45513

That's all for now! Enjoy the beautiful weather!

God's richest blessings,

—Jessica Solverud

Half-Day Meditation Workshop

If you are curious about meditation and would like chance to learn about it, please join us for this event. A group of us will travel to Bright Dawn Retreat Center near Plymouth, WI to learn about both sitting and walking meditation practices from a Buddhist monk. The center is located near Kettle Moraine State Park, and, weather permitting, we will walk the trails and climb Parnall Tower as part of the walking meditation session. Arrangements for sharing lunch will be made in the next few weeks, and sign up sheets will be available at Sunday services. This is a good way to learn about another faith tradition that could enrich your own prayer and meditation practices.

Saturday, October 18, 2008

Leave FCC at 8 a.m.

Return to FCC about 1:30 p.m.

Donations to the Bright Dawn Center are encouraged.

A vegetarian pot luck lunch is being organized.

Sing, Sing, Sing!

Do you like to sing? You're welcome to join us in the choirs.

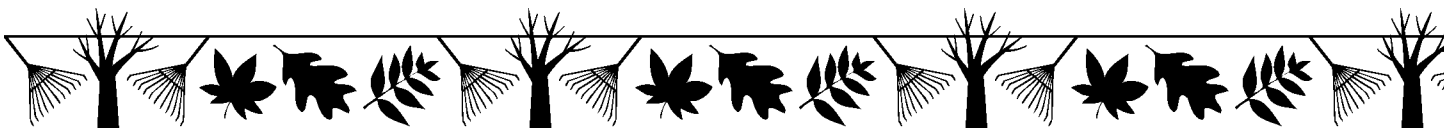
The Youth Choir is conducted by Stephanie Cutler and meets in the chapel on Sundays from 9–9:30 a.m.

The Adult Choir is conducted by Kurt Dietrich and Sarah Hughes and meets in the choir room (in the basement) on Sundays from 9–10 a.m. Adult Choir is open to singers of high school age and above.

OCTOBER 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			4:45–7:30 pm Weight Watchers			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9 am Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship 5:30 pm Adult Bible Study	7:30–8:30 pm Meditation in Chapel	7 pm Youth Group	4:45–7:30 pm Weight Watchers 6:30 pm All-church committee meetings	6:30 pm Worship committee meeting		9–noon Girl Scouts
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9 am Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship 1 pm CROP Walk	6–8 pm Ries Driving School 7:30–8:30 pm Meditation in Chapel	6–8 pm Ries Driving School	4:45–7:30 pm Weight Watchers 6–8 pm Ries Driving School	6–8 pm Ries Driving School		9–noon Girl Scouts
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9 am Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship (led by Tim Lyke) 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	6–8 pm Ries Driving School 7:30–8:30 pm Meditation in Chapel	1 pm Newsletter Deadline 6:30 pm Cabinet 6–8 pm Ries Driving School	4:45–7:30 pm Weight Watchers 6–8 pm Ries Driving School	6–8 pm Ries Driving School		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9 am Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	6–8 pm Ries Driving School 7:30–8:30 pm Meditation in Chapel	6–8 pm Ries Driving School	4:45–7:30 pm Weight Watchers 6–8 pm Ries Driving School	1 pm Newsletter Prep for mailin 6–8 pm Ries Driving School		

The Crossroads Charter School is in our building weekdays 8–4 p.m



Schedule of Morning Worship Volunteers

Thanks
for YOUR
participation

Please try to meet this schedule. If you cannot help on the Sunday assigned...

- Try to switch Sundays with someone else
- Notify the appropriate Worship Committee member
- Notify the church office (748-5898)
- We all appreciate your participation!

LECTORS:

10/5 Jack Kraaz
10/12 TBA
10/19 TBA
10/26 TBA

GREETERS/USHERS:

TBA
TBA
TBA
TBA

COFFEE HOSTS:

TBA
TBA
TBA
TBA

FLOWERS:

TBA
TBA
TBA
TBA

Are you interested in being a Worship Volunteer? Sign up on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall entrance.

First Congregational Church of Ripon

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971

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Enter to Worship—Go Forth to Serve
