



The SPIRE



First Congregational Church of Ripon • 220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971
☎ 920-748-5898 • office@riponcongregationalucc.org • www.riponcongregationalucc.org

July 2018

Dear Church,

Greetings! This is my first opportunity to introduce myself to many of you who read *The Spire*. I started as the intentional, transitional, interim pastor of First Congregational UCC on the day after Pastor Joanna had her final Sunday with you. I join with you in celebrating her pastorate here in Ripon. Her message, her mission, her sense of family, her leadership, her smile, and her connectedness to everyone in this church family will lose none of their influence or meaning in the years to come. Thank you, God, for Pastor Joanna.

And now. What's next?

I have been called to serve as Interim Pastor for the foreseeable future (and maybe some unforeseeable stuff). I will join with the members of the church family to live out our faith: to share and celebrate weekly worship, to focus on mission, and our families, and our community and to walk the walk of discipleship wherever it will lead us.

All the while we will be preparing to prayerfully discern who God has ordained to be the next settled pastor for First Congregational UCC. My ministry is to help you to welcome that person with open arms.

I don't know how long that will take. Neither do your lay leaders. I don't know who that person will be. Neither does our Wisconsin Conference staff. God knows. And you as a faith community will do the work and give the energy and engage in the prayers that are needed to reach that wonderful moment.

Until then ... here I am. Ordained in Massachusetts (go Red Sox!), having served congregations in Massachusetts, Ohio and Wisconsin, having lived in Wisconsin for 35 of the last 40 years (Go Packers!) and having

served as an Interim Pastor and taken a year long Interim Ministry training class ... I am ready to take this journey with you.

I live in Oconomowoc with my wife, Sue. Together we have 7 children and 15 grandchildren. She is a dog person and I am a cat lover, so we have 2 cats and 1 dog living with us in our condo. She is a retired RN who continues to stay very active volunteering with dementia-friendly communities across the state.

I tried to retire from Christian Ministry once. For a little more than a year I worked for the Community Action Coalition (CAC) which serves the needs of those in poverty in Dane, Jefferson and Waukesha counties. I found that despite the tremendous need for such an agency, and despite my personal commitment to such work, I still have a deeply felt call to church ministry. I can better serve the needs of this world as a pastor than as a grant writer.

I continue to serve CAC as a board member and I am a member of the Waukesha County Community Development Block Grant board. These are important, but they are not fully who I am. I am a Christian pastor who is a disciple of Jesus. I am grateful to all of you for walking with me on this faith journey.

If you have needs, questions, concerns, suggestions, mission ideas, worship requests, or a favorite hymn that you want us to sing – give me a call. I am here for you and with you.

—Stephen Welch



Scott Henke and Tony Reilly after a devastating house fire

Julie Johnson, Nancy Winn's daughter Ginger, Dan Mitchell, Chuck Prellwitz, Cody Splittgaber, Father Marcus Cunningham, and all others battling cancer

Our refugee family from the Congo

Our homebound church members

All those caring for aging parents

All who are living with anxiety, depression, or suicidal ideation

Please note: If you wish to see your prayer request listed in next Sunday's bulletin or The Spire, please notify the church office.



... to Liz Ringstad and family upon the death of Liz's son Bob, who passed away on June 13.



Our next newsletter will be for August, 2018 The deadline is Wednesday, July 18, at noon. Please submit materials to the church office, or or email to Maria Dietrich at dietrich.maria@gmail.com. Please mark your calendars.

The Spire can also be viewed at: www.riponcongregationalucc.org (under Media) but for privacy issues the birthdays are not listed online.

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's Office Hours

Pastor Stephen's office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to noon., and Tuesday 12-3 p.m. In addition, appointments can be made for other daytime hours. Pastor is not available in the evening, unless it is an emergency.

Church Office Hours

Pam Nelson-Icenogle is in the office on:
Mondays, 10:30 am-noon
Wednesdays, 10:30 am-12:30 pm
Thursdays & Fridays, 10:30 am-2 pm
Church office: 920-748-5898 or office@riponcongregationalucc.org



- Pastor Stephen Welch
- Moderator Jane Cotter
- Vice-Moderator Dale Both
- Clerk Justus Paul
- Treasurer Andy Lyke
- Office Manager Pam Nelson-Icenogle
- Choir Director Kurt Dietrich
- Christian Education Jeanne Williams
- Finance Rick Coles
- Historian Robin Patzlaff
- Librarian TBA
- Maintenance Officer . Lyle Mathias
- Organists Maria Dietrich,
..... Margaret Draeger
- Outreach Janis Edwards
- PPRC Dale Both
- Womens Fellowship Audrey Conant
& Mary Lyke
- Worship Nancy Coles

Pastor Stephen Welch
Office: 920-748-5898
Cell: 262-490-5585
swwelch48@gmail.com

Rod Freeman – Church Custodian
Cell: 920-896-2152

Let's Stay in Touch

During the past few months a great effort took place to update our church directory and membership list. Our sincere gratitude to Deanna Boone who led that process and devoted countless hours to the task. It now needs to be maintained. In order to do so we need your help.

If there is a change to any of your contact information such as name change, address, phone number or email (for all adults), please contact Office Manager Pam Nelson-Icenogle either by email at office@riponcongregationalucc.org, or by phone at 748-5898. Your cooperation is greatly needed and appreciated.

Deanna also updated our on-line church directory. It is very user friendly and available (exclusively) to all members and friends via a computer or smart phone. The web address is www.instantchurchdirectory.com. You can access the directory once you have established a user name and password. To do so, look for the tab in the upper right corner titled Church Member Sign Up for instructions. Your user name will be your email address that is listed in the directory. If you do not have an email address or need further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me for assistance.

This same directory is available as an app for your smart phone. The name of the app is Instant Church Directory. When downloading the app look for the icon with a yellow/gold background with a white church in the center.

You will notice that the site is lacking many photos. If your profile does not include your photo, Deanna Boone is most willing to take your photo. Just ask her when you see her at church.

Why is this important? First, it is a very easy way for members and friends of the First Congregational Church to stay in touch. I have used it many times. Secondly, when church records are out of date it is costly, as correspondence is returned that must be resent, or was needlessly sent as undeliverable. Not only is this a cost for postage, but manpower hours as well.

Dale Both
Vice Moderator



...to Sas and Billie Jean Manuel upon the birth of baby boy Blaze (who is still in NICU, so your prayers are welcome!), and to Meg Gannon, Jeremy Knaus and Manny upon the birth of their son and little brother Silas Wolf Knaus.

Communion Sunday = Food Pantry

Communion is a special gift we receive the first Sunday of the month. We have designated the First Sunday of the month as a reminder to bring food and put it in the Food Pantry basket in the hall by the Fellowship Hall. If you forget, or would like to bring it more often, the basket is checked regularly and food received is delivered to the Food Pantry. Thank you. — Outreach Committee



Please join us for a free, ecumenical Community Dinner on Tuesday, July 24, from 5–6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Dinners are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month. All are welcome. In addition to a nutritious meal, each household will receive a non-food household item.

Donations of toilet paper would be appreciated to restock the supply that we give to our guests at the monthly Community Dinners. It can be left in the Fellowship Hall.



From the Outreach Committee

Hello again Friends!

Our 'Strengthen the Church' Mission offering went very well. THANK YOU ALL for your selfless generosity! Our total so far this year is \$752! This time last year we had raised \$320, with a final total by June 2017's end, of \$525. Everyone reached deep into their hearts and pockets to help strengthen the UCC nationwide, and that is a blessing!

Each Mission in our 5-5 commitment focuses on an area designated by the National UCC, as a pillar of support needed for a strong, healthy church, able to move forward in God's love for all. Thank you all again for faithfully supporting these important causes.

In keeping with the theme of sharing God's love, I asked Rev Jerry Hancock, (of First Congregational UCC in Madison, and founder/head of the Prison Ministry Project in Wisconsin) if there was a project we could do to help the residents of Fox Lake Corrections. His suggestion for the congregation of First Congo here in Ripon was a Fall collection (to be delivered at Christmastime) of new packages of men's underwear, and/or new men's coats. I know this sounds a bit odd, but the clothes men are given on their release are the same clothes they came into prison wearing. Men change during the years spent in prison, when they have finished their time, they are new and different, walking into a new and different world. Respecting this, and giving them a little boost with new clothes, would be wonderful! We can start this collection now, especially if you see a sale on coats or underwear, bring the items to church during the Sept-Nov time period, that should give us plenty of time to make this a big success. On the same topic, prison, Chaplain

Deborah Mejchar of Fox Lake, who makes all sorts of magic happen for the benefit of all at prison, asked for new or used 'Life Application' Bibles, ASAP. Chaplain suggested these bibles to help men devoted to scripture understand how to reflect these ideals in their daily living. I suggest you leave the bibles on a shelf in the Fellowship Hall closet, I'll keep the volume down by delivering them monthly when I go to Fox Lake for Communion.

If anyone is interested in joining me at prison, let me know, janis.daysofwonder@gmail.com, and we will get you started on this beautiful journey.

Thank you again for your generous giving to the Food Pantry. This area of the state has, unhappily, an abundance of people in need. Everything you share is a message of caring for 'The least of these.' At this time of year, where there is no school breakfast or lunch, children feel the scarcity of what they lack. Parents still work, so think nutritious food easy and fairly quick to prepare. The market has AC and at this time of year it can be pleasant to get out of the heat, and find items that can help make the summer a happy time for all of us.

We have yet to make much progress on the 'Hope Seed' project. I'll keep you posted if anything new sprouts up on the planning end of this. The hope is to send seeds off by summer's end to the southern hemisphere where spring will be just beginning.

Thank you, friends, and Blessings for a safe, happy summer,

Janis Edwards, for the Outreach Committee



Worship Committee

Summer is here and our church is on a new and exciting adventure! We welcomed our transitional pastor Stephen Welch on his first Sunday with a beautiful choir filling our sanctuary with song followed by a delightful luncheon. Please join us on Sundays to hear his message and to receive all the blessings of our Lord and Savior.

The Worship committee will be assisting Stephen in many ways which also includes the committee acting as the PPRC. If you have a need or concern, please let one of the members of the committees know.

To all of our coffee hosts, first the committee says Thank You! Secondly, just a friendly reminder that there are different health issues, allergies, etc, that some of our members and family members have. Please do not think that you have to go out and provide special treats but fruit and cheese is always a hit with maybe something sweet. Remember this is a time for fellowship and what ever you choose to bring is just the little extra that makes this time even more special.

Mark your calendars: **OUTDOOR CHURCH SERVICE** will be on Sunday, August 19th at 10:30 right here at the church. Bring your own chair or there will be chairs set up for you to use. If it rains or is too hot, we'll just have the service in the sanctuary. Whatever the weather brings join us. It's always a good time!

Blessings to all!

Nancy Coles, chair and secretary

Puzzle!

Unscramble these biblical words and phrases, which all have something in common. Then write the circled letters in order on the blanks below.

1. eivn _ _

2. illy fo het elavyl

3. albm fo dgo _ _

4. estmra _ _ _

5. sseju _ _

6. okrc _

7. rdbae fo fiel

8. htigi fo eth dwlro

9. voasir _ _ _

10. dorl _ _ _

11. ishcrf _ _ _

12. ehsprdeh

13. teh dowr _ _ _

14. rncpie fo cepae

What do these have in common?

_____,

Answer: Names of God's Son

Faith Formation - June Report

Vacation Bible School

July 23-27, 9 AM until noon • VBS Picnic Wednesday 5:30 PM

Our Vacation Bible School will use the Global Ministries curriculum Embracing the Fruits of the Spirit. Children will learn about the lives of children in the Caribbean and how they live their faith. Each day's lesson also focuses on a story from the Bible. Miss Kate will lead music activities and there will be plenty of time for crafts and play. Children can be enrolled in VBS by contacting Jeanne Williams. A per child donation of \$20 is recommended to cover the costs of materials and snacks for the week.

Summer Nursery and Outdoor Play Supervision

Mr. Wyatt and Miss Kate are providing childcare throughout the summer after the children's moment in our Sunday service and during the coffee hour time. Children can look forward to learning new group games and enjoying water activities on hot days.

Playground Project Fundraising • Kids are gonna play!!!



During July, the Faith Formation Committee will be fundraising to install a playground on the lawn on the south side of the church building. The playground will serve the children of our church, of the surrounding neighborhood, and of college faculty and staff. The college has agreed to provide an easement to allow construction of the playground.

As of July 1st, donations and pledges totalling approximately 42% of the \$25,600 required for this project have been secured. Pledge cards are available from Jeanne Williams and fundraising events are being planned. Please give as generously as you can to support the families and children of our church and the larger community.

Worship Volunteer Schedule

Date	Lector	Ushers/Greeters	PowerPoint	Coffee Hosts
July 1	Tim Lyke	Rachel & David Minch	Aya Volkmann	Tony Reilly/Scott Henke
July 8	Michele Wittler	Andy & Stephanie Prellwitz	Ben Retzlaff	Dan & Tina Solberg
July 15	Norm Loomer	Billie Jean Manuel/Dale Both	Liz Stanfield	Cal & Janis Edwards
July 22	Stephanie Prellwitz	Jane Cotter/Heffernan-Stanfields	JP Stanfield	Gary & Dawn Scholtens
July 29	Margaret Draeger	Dan Volkmann/Skip Wittler	Xavier Manuel	Kathleen Hones Family
Aug. 5	Rick Coles	Penick-Parks Family	Chloe Capelle	Rachel & David Minch
Aug. 12	Scott Henke	Sasiwo Manuel/Cal Edwards	Aya Volkmann	Lynn & Justus Paul
Aug. 19	Ardis Mitchell	Dan Volkmann/Norm Loomer	Ben Retzlaff	Lyke Family
Aug. 26	Justus Paul	Julie & Lyle Mathias	Liz Stanfield	Tom & Debbi Konecny

Thanks
for your
participation

- Please try to meet this schedule. If you cannot help on the Sunday assigned...
- Please switch Sundays with someone else and then notify the church office (748-5898 or office@riponcongregationalucc.org) of the change.
 - We all appreciate your participation!

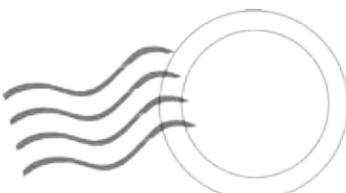
JULY 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	2	3	4 	5 6 pm NA meeting	6	7
8 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	9 6 pm Conversation about border and immigration issues	10 5 pm Sharing the Table, Grace Lutheran Church	11	12 4-5:30 pm Ripon Girl Scout Cadette Troop 6217 Mtg 5 pm Worship Committee 6 pm NA meeting	13	14
15 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	16	17 6:30 pm Cabinet meeting	18 8 am PEO mtg 12 pm Spire deadline	19 6 pm NA meeting	20	21
22 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	23 9 am-12 pm VBS	24 9 am-12 pm VBS 5-6 pm Community Dinner	25 9 am-12 pm VBS 4-5:30 pm Ripon Ripon Girl Scout Cadette Troop 6217 Mtg	26 9 am-12 pm VBS 5 pm VBS Family Potluck 6 pm NA meeting	27 9 am-12 pm VBS	28
29 4:30 am Worship 11:30 am Coffee Fellowship	30	31	1	2 6 pm NA meeting	3	4



Get Connected on Facebook

Want to learn more about what is going on at the church? Wish you could get updates and see photos about community outreach and other church events? It's easy! "Like" us on facebook at www.facebook.com/RiponCongregationalUCC. And check out our blog at www.riponthinkingchurch.blogspot.com.



Paper and ink and postage - oh my! If you're getting a hard copy of this Spire and would prefer an electronic version, please give the church office your email address. Send it to office@riponcongregationalucc.org. Thanks!

First Congregational Church of Ripon

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

220 Ransom Street • Ripon, Wisconsin 54971

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Enter to Worship—Go Forth to Serve
