



The Voice Newsletter

Of First Congregational Church

A Pilgrim Church for a Pilgrim People

September 2020

Volume 44, Issue 9

SEPTEMBER 20
YOUR CHURCH HAS BEEN AT WORK
BEHIND THE SCENES
WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

PASTOR'S PASSAGE

A few weeks ago, I read an article in a religious periodical that talked about **the components of living** that are important, whether in families or in organizations and Churches. This article outlined the three things the author felt necessary for any organization to grow and flourish.

The first is **power**. As I look at our Church, especially after meeting with our Church Council last week, I see us moving ahead, constantly looking for ways to serve Christ and share the lessons of Jesus with our community. We do that because we have a strong foundation with traditions and commitments learned from the past and brought into our present. God is the power behind all that we do and through worship and service and daily prayer, we are able to do God's work in the world.

The second component for growth and sustenance is **strength**. Whether good times or bad, our Church has stood strong in the midst of all of the turmoil throughout the years. We have stood for what was right when it

came to civil rights, equality in ordination of women, acceptance and affirming of all lifestyles, and the insistence that all are children of God. We have taken the lead in education, not just in our churches, but in schools and universities around the country. We believe in an educated laity as well as clergy and we insist that people use the inspiration of the Holy Spirit within them to find their grounding place in faith.

Finally, the author speaks of **stability**. If ever there was a time in history that we need to hold fast to our beliefs and our commitment to Christ, surely the year 2020 is it. We have been challenged in so many ways this year with the pandemic and all of the issues that have arisen. We face genuine fear with a disease that is so viral that even experts have had to find their way through treatment and experimentation. After all these months, our most educated and profound thinkers are still working on finding a vaccination that will somehow prevent even more deaths. When we think about over 180,000 people dying from this one disease, and thousands of others who will suffer after affects, it is astounding.

Yet still the Church stands tall as a place to bring comfort to those who are grieving and hurting, a support system through our mission programs to assist the hungry and homeless, and a place that provides a time for worship and meditation to clear our minds and soothe our souls. The Church of Jesus Christ has always stood tall and presented a sense of stability when everything around us feels like it's falling apart.

Give thanks with me during this time in our journey as we worship together as a people, whether in person or via streaming. Give thanks to God that we are a part of something great – Christ's Church. It gives us the power, the strength and stability to face whatever life may bring and to do it all in Jesus' name.

BE THE CHURCH!

My Love and Blessings

Joy



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally the human heart than its opposite.” Nelson Mandela

The events in Kenosha last week have brought back the issue of race and policing. In addition the growth of hate groups has been significant. When President Obama was elected, I naively thought that we had completed the long journey of overcoming racism and hatred. Obviously I was wrong. Most Americans however, share the belief in treating all people as God's creations, but there are a number who for a variety of reasons believe that God as ordained only one race as the true race. How sad. Even sadder is that they distort the Bible to try to justify their beliefs.

It is vital that each of use our voice to promote the highest calling of American ideals- “all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights”. It is crucial that our voice is heard and we not allow the haters to speak unfettered. A prominent Protestant minister who emerged as an outspoken foe of Adolf Hitler and spent the last 7 years of Nazi rule in concentration camps shared this most meaningful quote:

“First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out –
Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists and I did not speak out-
Because I was not a Trade Unionist

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out-

Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me- and there was no one left to speak for me.

In a world beset by issues and difficulty, it remains the mission of Christians
to share their love! Gene



DONNA'S DELIBERATIONS

The Council's year began July 1, but our first meeting for this church year was August 19. I gave Council members some assignments to work on which I'll pass on to all the church members for their ideas on these projects after the Council members review the information. This should happen during October. As members of this church, feel free to attend a Council meeting. We meet every third Wednesday of the month at 9:30am. If you have something to present to the Council, let me know so I can put you on the agenda.

The new church logo was approved by the council. We are planning a big reveal for Sunday, September 20. I am proud of the work the branding committee has done since January 1 and of all the work the Council has completed in spite of Covid.

We are still accepting donations of clean clothes, furniture, kitchenware, etc. for the Gifts of Love to be held in November. If you come by in the mornings during the week, Robin can let you in to drop off your "gifts".

We are off to a good church year full of progress and hope for the betterment of our church and community, all in the name of our love for God.

Member Interview

Pat Raymer was willing to let me interview her this month. She grew up here in Beloit with her younger brother along with grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins all around. Her parents were house fixer uppers which meant they moved a lot from fixing one house, selling it and then moving to another one. Pat says with the moves, she went to all the schools on the west side of Beloit except one. Her folks also owned Granger's Grocery store. Although it is someone's home now, the 2-story brick building is still there as you turn onto Madison Road from Liberty. All the family members (dad, mom, Pat, and brother) took their turns working in the grocery store.

When her dad was in his 40s, Mr. Granger saw the new chain grocery stores coming into town. He knew that a small grocery store like his would probably become extinct. He then went to college and became an engineer. Meanwhile, upon graduating high school, Pat moved to Minneapolis and spent a year there going to a secretarial school. When she returned to Beloit, she worked in Iron Works. She also worked many years as the customer service manager for Sears.

During this time, Pat met her husband Tom. They have been married 44 years. Pat grew up Methodist whereas Tom attended First Congregational. Pat began attending here in 1975. She and Tom have a son, granddaughter, and grandson in Texas.

In 1987, Pat began working part time for First Congregational as the secretary. In 1998, she remembers watching the early morning news. It

showed the church burning. She and Tom rushed to the church in time to see the steeple fall. They stood in the park across the street and cried. The church had just bought a new John Deere tractor, which was stored in the garage next to the church. Pat and Rodger Haugen, the custodian, saved it by pushing it across the street away from the fire. Besides working part time as the secretary for the church, Pat also became the Council Treasure. That meant she had an active hand in paying many of the bills for the new church building.

Over the years, Pat has held many leadership positions such as Council Moderator, Council Secretary and Council Treasurer. She was a part of the Women's Guild when it was active. In 2003, Pat became the Executive Administrator for the Society for Learning Unlimited (SLU) with the hard work of lining up speakers and taking care of the business issues. She has worked in that capacity for 18 years to maintain an excellent resource for senior citizens to expand their learning. She continues in this roll and is hoping for a return to spring classes.

On a personal note, Pat loves to sew. She has a sewing room set up in her basement, where she makes small quilts and throws. Her current project is making a Green Bay throw for her son who loves anything to do with that team. She has a green thumb which means she loves to garden and grows many plants for her enjoyment. Another delight is reading.

When Pat was asked what is one of the important things she receives from this church she automatically said, "Peace!" Going to church services gives her "a better outlook on life" and it helps her "face the week". She is especially happy with the streaming of services during this time. Like most of us, she wishes to see membership grow, especially with younger people and children. She also wants to see more church activities for everyone. She has a list of wonderful ideas that in the future we may be able to incorporate into church life.

For now, her goals are to stay healthy, continue connecting with her many good friends, and to enjoy family. One of her bucket list of things to do is taking a steamboat down the Mississippi River. Hopefully one day she'll get to do that. Meanwhile, she loves having any kind of fresh flowers in her house year-round. We know Pat as honest, hardworking, and friendly. She is a great resource of church history and has a willingness to help out where needed. Nothing has slowed this dynamite woman down, and we are grateful for all she does!

Your sister in Christ,

Donna

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Prayer for the Church

Loving and Eternal God, you have abundantly blessed us with the power to reach out and make a difference in the world. We ask that you bless our ministry through our Church and increase our love for one another and our community. Help us honor our history and seek your will as we march into our future in Jesus' name. Amen.

Musings from Max

Hello, folks,

Happy late August! To begin with some MUSICA MAXIMA news, although plans remain flexible because of corona virus concerns, we are working hard to open our season with a flair on Sunday, September 13, 3 pm. I will put the organ through the paces with some large pieces; then Zachary Peterson, violin, will solo in a large baroque Chaconne before a group of us close the program with a festive Bach concerto for two harpsichords and strings. Please come hear us. The second concert of the season will come Sunday, October 11, 3 pm, in which the outstanding Australian soprano will sing music of Mozart and Haydn accompanied by Trevor Stephenson at the fortepiano. Pure delight! Please come.

Our worship music on Sunday mornings is somewhat subdued because it is proving inadvisable to reconvene the choir, and even less wise to have us all sing. Nonetheless, we have been fortunate to have excellent and dedicated musicians to enhance our services, and our faithful friend, Cheryl Kitto, has volunteered to sing for us on many occasions.

Through it all, I feel honored to serve us all, and I will continue to invite talented folks to share their worship music with us.

Faithfully, Max

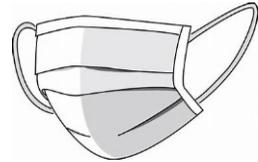


A WORD OF WARNING

Recently, several members and pastors have received emails asking for special favors or for people to purchase gift cards or give money for specific needs. PLEASE DO NOT OPEN OR CLICK ON A LINK . If you receive an e mail or text asking for money for anyone, PLEASE CALL THAT PERSON. DO NOT RESPOND BY COMPUTER OR PHONE TO THE SENDER. Dr. Michael Chittum from our National Office stated this week that every so often, especially during difficult times such as this pandemic, people try to fool people by preying on their generosity as a Christian. Please check with your Pastor or a person from whom the e mail is generated.

To Assure the Safety of all our worshipers We follow The Temporary Dynamics of Worship

- Social Distancing
- Wearing of Masks
- No Communion
- No Congregational Singing
- Offering – please place in the basket
- No Greeting or Fellowship Time



Mission of the Month

Friends of Noah-WI is a volunteer-based animal rescue organization that was founded by Lois and Mert Corwin. It is the largest pet rescue organization in Rock County, Friends of Noah is committed to providing new opportunities for stray and abandoned animals through placement into permanent homes, educating the public, and offering assistance



to pet owners struggling to provide for their pets. See their website for more information <https://www.friendsofnoah-wi.org/>

THANK YOU FOR CARING!



Birthdays

September 15,	Carla Duemer
September 17,	Pat Vinke
September 19,	Dennis Marinelli
September 28,	Angel Fallin
September 29,	Linda Perrigo
September 30,	Jan Lippert

Anniversaries

September 4,	Charles and Prudy Harker
September 26,	Don and Trish Huebschen

September Calendar

- September 2, Al-Anon 10am
- September 6, Worship 10am The Rev. Joy A. Baumgartner, preaching
- September 7, Labor Day—Office closed
- September 9, Staff Meeting 8:30am
Al-Anon 10am
- September 12, Wedding
- September 13, Worship 10am The Rev. Gene Van Galder, preaching
- September 14 Staff Meeting 8:30am
- September 16, Church Council 9:30am
Al-Anon 10am
- September 20, Worship 10am The Rev. Joy A. Baumgartner, preaching
BRANDING REVEAL
- September 21, Staff Meeting 8:30am
- September 23, Al-Anon 10am
- September 27, Worship 10am The Rev Gene Van Galder, preaching
- September 28, Staff Meeting 8:30am
- September 30, Al-Anon 10am





400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

First Congregational Church

801 Bushnell Street

Beloit, WI 53511

608 362 4821 fax 608 362 1967

Pastor: 517 899 6784 Office hours: 8:00 am 12:00 pm

Worship Service Sunday, 10:00 am

Email: info@firstcon.org Website www.firstcon.org



We are especially Thankful for: