



First Congregational Church
Different Paths. Same Journey.

Annual Report
for
Annual Meeting of 2014

January 25, 2015

10:00 a.m.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
164th ANNUAL MEETING - January 25, 2015

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Harriett Clendening

Marilyn Fulcher

*Members lost by death since the
Annual Meeting, May 2014*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN – May 4, 2014

Moderator Pat Blades called the 163rd Annual Meeting of First Congregational Church to order. The meeting was held as part of the morning worship service. Throughout the service, power point slides illustrated the worship and agenda items.

Pat Blades led the Call to Worship and the call to order for the Annual Meeting.

Clerk Susan Coghill confirmed the presence of a quorum.

The Annual Report booklet with reports of the Officers and Ministry Groups for the 2013-2014 year was distributed. Reports and minutes were approved as printed in the booklet.

Moderator Blades highlighted some of the projects described in the reports as evidence of the congregation's commitment to *Diversity ... Social Justice ... Caring for each other ... Life-long learning ... Generosity*. She noted that these are not "just words," but represent our Core Values. She thanked those completing terms of service to Ministry Groups and welcomed new members to the Ministry Groups.

She expressed appreciation to Art and Cathy Wille who led the strategic planning process Appreciative Inquiry this spring, noting "The best days are still ahead for 1st Congregational Church."

Treasurer Jeff Puhlmann-Becker presented the 2014 Budget, as approved by the Ministry Council. Jeff pointed out line item changes made so the budget accurately portrays our income and expenses.

Co-Pastors Compensation: As is our custom, Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder were excused from the meeting for discussion of their compensation. On behalf of the Personnel Ministry Group Jeff Puhlmann-Becker presented the Co-pastors' Compensation Package. Two motions presented by the ministry group:

Moved that the congregation adopt the pastors' compensation package and benefits as presented by the Personnel Ministry Group. Motion carried.

Moved that the congregation, at the request of the co-pastors, designate \$12,000 (each) of their compensation to housing. Motion carried.

Election of Officers and Ministry Group Members: Moderator-elect Cathy Wille expressed appreciation to Ginnie Sherer, Lay Ministry staff, for her work on the "FCC Draft" and the successful nominations process. Thank you to Nominations Committee members Maria Talin, Kay Sanders, Cheryl Hentz.

The slate of new and continuing leadership for the coming year was distributed. There were no additional nominations. On behalf of the Nominations Committee, Cathy Wille moved that the clerk cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. Moderator Pat Blades called for adoption of the motion by voice vote: "Amen." Pat handed to gavel to newly-elected moderator Cathy Wille.

See below for complete list of those elected to leadership for 2014-2015.

Celebrating the Table of the Lord: Pat Blades and Cathy Wille joined Ralph and Carol to invite the congregation to the Communion Table. During Communion, the names of those who died in the last year were shown on the screen.

Core Values and Dream Statement: Art and Cathy Wille described the strategic planning process – *Appreciative Inquiry* - they led this spring at the invitation of the Ministry Council. Joining in leadership on "AI" was the Futuring Committee: Bruce Abraham, Martha Becker, Jodi Braun, Lori Mackey, Kiera Robe, Amy Smith, Lorie Yaste-Zajicek, and Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder.

Appreciative Inquiry process is based on these steps:

Discovery – identifying the best of **what is** and **what has been**

Dream – identifying **what might be**

Design – identifying **what should be**

Destiny – identifying **what will be**

Step #1: To begin the process, information was gathered in one-to-one interviews conducted through the congregation by 18 interviewers.

Step #2: Then, on April 12, a gathering of members read through the interview responses to identify our congregation's **Core Values**: Dynamic Theology ... Teaching and Learning for our Life Long Spiritual Journey ... Acting on Conviction ... Caring Connections ... Embracing Differences ... Generosity. The group developed the following **Dream Statement**:

First Congregational Church is a caring, compassionate community with a dynamic spiritual environment that values life-long learning and creates joy, generosity, service and exploration.

As a welcoming and diverse community of faith, we commit to love God, ourselves, and others by more fully ministering to and within creation.

Step #3: The next step in the AI process is for Ministry Groups to use the Dream Statement to develop goals this summer to guide their work for the next several years.

Step #4: Goals will be shared at an All-Church Celebration in the fall.

Kitchen Renovation Project: Ralph introduced Stan Ziblut who has agreed to lead the campaign to raise funds for renovation of the kitchen, as recommended by the Ministry Council. The 1960s kitchen is in need of extensive renewal to make it usable for our present activities. Thanks to Womens Fellowship, about \$135,000 has been secured for the project, expected to cost about \$200,000. The campaign for the remaining \$65,000 begins immediately, to be completed by May 31, 2014.

Report of the Co-Pastors: Carol and Ralph expressed their appreciation for FCC – they feel blessed to be co-pastors for the congregation. They thanked the fine staff with which they work and presented a bouquet of flowers to retiring moderator Pat Blades with thanks for her leadership this past year.

There being no further business, Cathy Wille declared the meeting adjourned at the close of the Benediction.

Susan Coghill
Church Clerk

First Congregational Church Leadership – 2014-2015

Elected May 4, 2014

<u>Officers:</u>	Moderator	Cathy Wille
	Moderator-elect	Gary Wilner
	Clerk	Susan Coghill
	Treasurer	Jeff Puhlmann-Becker

Ministry Group members: *(names in italics are new members)*

Worship: Mary Martin, Pat Nichols, Corinne Saidla, *Judy DeBroux, David Janssen, Shelly Maxwell, Jen Norden*

Music: James Grine, Vernice Haase, Gretchen Herrmann, Doug Pire, *Dellora Vogt, Susy Vette, Mike Wertel*

Social Justice: Paula Allen, Ted Balsler, Jody Harrell, Ron Harrell, Amy Smith, Brian Tokoph, Terry Wesenberg, Anne Wesenberg, Dorry Wilner, *Jaci Mueller, Val Williams*

Benevolence: Mary Bauknecht, Vicki Drabrandt, Len Herricks, John Nichols, Cheryl Pagel, Anne Ruby, Maria Talin, Mary Wiedenmeier, *Eric Kropp*

New Member Development: Carolyn Blassingame, Lee Fenendael, Becky Gratz, Cheryl Hentz, Phyllis Thompson, Cynthia Thorpe, Dorry Wilner, Lorie Yaste-Zajicek, *Tom Hallquist, Sarah Jaschob*

Adult Education: Cheryl Hentz, David Jones, Jim Paulson, Nick Schneider, *Steve Barney, Paula Veard*

Church School: Jennifer Boos, Lorie Hadel, McKenna Hadel, Corinne Saidla, Val Williams, *Sara Arndt, Pat Hallquist, Samantha Zinth*

Youth: Mary Herricks, Stacey Otto, Paula Seeley, *Max Bossert, Amy Brazale, Mark Herrmann, Breanna Kluz, Kristin Kluz, Vanessa Frank*

Finance: Lurton Blassingame, Mike Duffy, Len Herricks, Jim Hoffman, Jeff Puhlmann-Becker (Treasurer), *Mary Beth Bossert, Phillip Vette Moseley*

Personnel: Howard Blades, Lurton Blassingame, Cyndi DeVoe, Jeff Puhlmann-Becker, *Cheryl Hentz, Dennis Kavanaugh, Ann Marshall*

Buildings and Grounds: John Oman Jr., Dave Ruby, Gary Wilner, *Carl Chapman, Dick Oelschlager, Dennis Rioux, Jack Talin, Eric Kropp, Pat Nichols*

Retiring Ministry Group members:

Moderator: Pat Blades

Adult Education: Ted Balsler, Bethany Jorenby

Benevolence: Ann Marshall

Buildings and Grounds: Dave Seeley, Bruce Thomas

Church School: Jennifer Burgess

Finance: John Oman, Sr.

Music: Lynn Fulcher, Pat Inch, Cathy Wille

Social Justice: John Oman, Sr., Jone Oman

Worship: Bethany Estrada, Paula Veard, Jack Frohn

First Congregational Church, Oshkosh, Wisconsin
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
July 27, 2014

At 10:32 A.M., following the worship service, Moderator Cathleen Wille called the meeting to order. A quorum was present. The purpose of the meeting was to seek ratification of a motion made by the Ministry Council at its previous meeting.

Pastor Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder presented a brief history and status of the project. A summary copy was provided to the congregation along with the printed motion (shown as page 2 of this document.) Brief discussion followed.

The ratification motion was presented as follows:

Motion: To authorize the Ministry Council and the Finance Ministry Group to use up to \$50,000 from investment funds, in addition to donations already received, to complete the Kitchen Renovation project.

Thatcher Peterson moved for ratification. All votes were in favor of ratification.

The Moderator expressed her desire that the renovation project not be done with the focus on up-grading the kitchen, but with the conscious intent to use it as a tool for expanding the ministry of the church.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary E. Wilner, Acting Church Clerk

(HANDOUT)

Kitchen Renovation History

2008 . . . Women's Fellowship initiates seriously looking at replacing our 50+ year old kitchen

Needed: \$200,000

Women's Fellowship Commits **\$30,000** to begin the project

2010 KITCHEN MATCH FUND: \$50,000, ANONYMOUS DONOR FROM FCC

FROM THEN TO MAY 4, 2014:

42 HOUSEHOLDS	\$ 17,290
WF FUND RAISING	\$ 4,335
MEMORIALS	\$ 15,936
BEQUESTS	<u>\$ 17,500</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 55,061

THAT BROUGHT THE FUND UP TO \$135,061

MAY 2014 CAMPAIGN

66 HOUSEHOLDS

DONATIONS	\$17,305
PLEDGED	<u>\$ 5,150</u>
TOTAL:	\$22,455

SUMMARY: ABOUT 100 HOUSEHOLDS, OTHER MISCELLANEOUS SMALL GIFTS, MEMORIAL GIFTS, BEQUESTS, AND THE \$50,000 DONATION: **\$127,455** FROM OUR CONGREGATION. **WITH WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP \$30,000:**

\$157,516

SO . . . APPROXIMATELY **\$43,000** REMAINING.

TO ALLOW FOR CHANGES IN PRICING FROM 2009, UNEXPECTED COSTS OF PROJECT: \$50,000

MOTION: To authorize the Ministry Council and the Finance Ministry Group to use up to \$50,000 from investment funds, in addition to donations already received, to complete the Kitchen Renovation project.

First Congregational Church, Oshkosh WI

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

October 12, 2014

The meeting of the congregation was called to order at the close of the worship service by Moderator Cathy Wille. The required quorum was present. Purpose of the meeting was to amend the church constitution and to elect a moderator-elect.

Moderator Wille described the proposed change to the constitution: changing the date of the annual meeting from late April to late January. The change is recommended by the Ministry Council to facilitate the organization of Ministry Groups as well as the nominating process. The change in timing of the meeting would also link the stewardship campaign and financial planning with the program year.

Motion made (Thatcher Peterson): To amend *Article VII MEETINGS, Section 1 Annual Meeting* of the First Congregational Church Constitution to read:

The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held on a Sunday in January. The Minister(s), the Moderator, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, the Clerk, all ministry groups and committees, and all organizations associated with the church shall present a written report at the annual meeting of the congregation. The reports shall become the property of the church and shall be placed on file with the Clerk.

Motion seconded and carried.

Moderator Wille introduced Lorie Yaste-Zajicek as the nominee for the position of Moderator-Elect, now vacant due to the resignation of Gary Wilner.

Motion made (Thatcher Peterson) to elect Lorie Yaste-Zajicek to the position of Moderator-elect. Motion seconded and carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Susan Coghill, Church Clerk

REPORT OF THE MODERATOR 2014

This is supposed to be my Annual Report, but because of the changes we made when we amended our constitution at our special congregational meeting to move the Annual Meeting to January, this will be a One-half Year Report. And who would have known that this report would be historical for another reason. After 27 years, this document will report that our beloved pastors, Carol and Ralph will be retiring before I write the next Annual Report. These next months will be a time of sadness and anticipation. And we are to know that we are not alone as God is with us as are our sisters and brothers who are members and friends of FCC, UCC, NACCC, as well as the folks in the Oshkosh community.

These past six months have really prepared us for the journey ahead as we completed and celebrated our new Dream Statement. Each of the Ministry Groups has set goals for themselves that will help to keep this church vibrant and relevant in a changing community and society. The Appreciative Inquiry process helped us recognize all the positive aspects of our church and now we will be able to build on those qualities and gifts.

FCC is aware of the changing demographics of our community and the changes in the world of the understanding of Christendom and what that all means in terms of church attendance and in the area of church giving. While FCC is very fortunate to still have a very strong financial foundation and strong reserves, there will be a need to continue to be mindful of how we educate our members and friends about the mission of the church and the cost of that ministry.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank our excellent staff and thank them all for the “obvious” contributions they make and the abundant “behind the scenes” activities which make our spiritual lives so rich and fruitful at FCC. Thank you to Carol, Ralph, Sandie, Joanne, Christina, Ginnie, Cynthia, Joe, David, Doug, Max, Ben, Theresa, and Kathy for all the gifts and talents they share with the congregation.

The Ministry Council looks forward to working with the congregation this year as we face the challenges and joy. We can all take the opportunity to remind each other that God is with us all the time and especially at these times, we know that God and God’s wisdom will have the opportunity to break into our lives if we all allow that to happen. For which we give thanks and praise.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Wille

Moderator

REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – March 25, 2014: 455

Changes in Membership:

Members received by:

Members lost by:

Affirmation	4	Death	2
Letter of Transfer	5	Removal by Clerk	3
Reaffirmation	20		
Reinstatement	3		
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	32		5

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – December 31, 2014: 482

Members received by Affirmation of Faith:

Sarah Jaschob	Terry Kindl
Chad Jaschob	Linda Kindl

Members received by Letter of Transfer:

Nancy Dirlam	Mike Tendick
Linda Geiger	Deb Tendick
David Geiger	

Members received by Reaffirmation of Faith:

Sam Barnhart	Eric Kropp
Elise Barnhart	Jenna Larson
George Coghill	Ricky Leichtfuss
Dave Elbing	David Leichtfuss
Sue Elbing	Helen Leichtfuss
Allyson Ford	Nicole Lieske
Michael Ford	Jean Narel
Jim Grine	John Nichols
Mark Herrmann	Bob Poeschl
Gretchen Herrmann	Len Tews

Members Received by Reinstatement:

Nicole Leiter
Erik Leiter
Lorie Yaste-Zajicek

Members Lost by Death:

Harriett Clendening
Marilyn Fulcher

Members Lost by Removal by Clerk:

John Thompson (Died in 2013)
Grace Meyer (Died in 2012)
Kay Kennard (Transferred earlier)

TREASURER'S REPORT

No report available at time of printing

Jeff Puhlmann-Becker

Treasurer

Budget 2015 not available at time of printing

2014 Balance Sheet not available at time of printing.

REPORT OF THE WORSHIP MINISTRY GROUP(2014)

2014 was a very uneventful year for the Worship Ministry Group which is positive. Things are going well, we are using Cynthia's time and talent more now in the recruitment of both Communion team members and Scripture readers (we are having a Youth read on the second Sunday of each month)- thanks Cynthia for your assistance.

We will need to address the need to find some more members of the group- several are not going to return for the 2015 calendar year for various reasons- thanks to Dave Ebling for your nine years of service, Mary Martin for your couple of years, and Pat Nichols for your couple of years as well. We worked on the Provocative Propositions- we came up with several items to work on during the next several years and we will figure out what to work on this year.

Ralph and Carol continue to have very thought provoking sermons week after week that keep us coming back for more.

Corinne Saidla- Facilitator

MUSIC MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014

2014 was a quiet year for the Music Ministry, including a change of leadership as Cathy Wille turned the facilitator position over to Gretchen Herrmann. (Thank you Cathy for your many years of dedicated work keeping the Music Ministry group finely tuned and well organized.) We appreciate all that Cathy has done and continues to do for First Congregational Church.

The purpose of the Music Ministry Group is to enrich the music ministry of the church by supporting our music staff, and thinking creatively about how music can be part of the life of the church. This year we collaborated on creating a NEW vision for what the music at FCC can be about, motivated by the congregation-wide Appreciate Inquiry process. Our "Dream Statement" - our vision for what can be - follows:

Music Ministry Dream Statement

Purpose

Building on the solid foundation of our excellent choir, leader, keyboardists and instrumentalists, the Music Ministry at FCC helps enrich the worship experience with memorable music.

Following our vision...

We open and grow our ministry beyond the church walls through a coordinated effort to engage all with music created by our own members as well as guest musicians, to share a variety of styles and genres. Music is a celebration, with a bright and energetic feeling, vibrant and infused with diversity.

In our dream...

...Full participation by all ages is experienced, including the addition of a regular and committed youth music group to celebrate the talents of our young people. A young person takes on a leadership role by joining the Music Ministry. Our childrens' Angel Choir grows and the Bell Choir rings joyously once again!

...We add to our worship experience through the addition of folk, jazz, gospel, praise, and other spiritually-rich genre. Cantors and instrumentalists regularly lead the congregation in song and help introduce new music so that each of us wants to lift our voices.

...Our space is filled with inspiring sound as we welcome community choirs and musical groups to join together for packed-house concerts. The Messiah is brought back to our community as we collaborate with area musicians. The symphony brings beautiful music to our space. Interfaith celebrations help teach us about each other's traditions, and bring us closer together.

...We carry on our rich tradition of treasured classical music and hymns, balanced with an ear to what is “relevant” and new, to attract an even larger and wider community, young and old, who feel inspired by our rich musical offerings. Our completed vision will build on all of the beauty we already have; a dynamic, rich, spiritual celebration of God’s gifts and the creative force working within our congregation. The music at FCC will help us all feel the presence of God in this place, and also deep within each one of us.

.....

As always, we continue to help recruit volunteers for the various music groups, and work to keep the musical instruments updated and in good shape. In addition we provide constructive feedback, help manage the music budget, help sponsor and provide support for musical events and fill music staff vacancies if/when needed.

We continue to have numerous requests to hold concerts and recitals in our sanctuary, from congregation members and community musicians. We are blessed to have wonderful instruments and space to provide these opportunities, and we appreciate the support from the congregation to help bring wonderful music to Oshkosh.

We are pleased to have a solid, talented staff in the capable direction of Joanne Peterson, with Christina Conn (with special thanks to Kelsey Tarbet who filled in for Christina during her pregnancy leave). We are sincerely grateful to Pastors Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder for continued direction, love and support of our music program.

We are grateful to the many volunteers that give of their time and talents to be part of the music groups and to the music ministry. It is truly a blessing to our whole congregation to have so many gifted people committed to making worship meaningful with the art of beautiful music.

We look forward to continuing our traditions in 2015 while nurturing the vision of our Dream Statement, as we begin to explore what comes next for the music at First Congregational Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Herrmann, Music Ministry Facilitator

REPORT OF NURTURE MINISTRIES AND INTERIM LAY MINISTRY COORDINATOR

Nurture Ministries at First Congregational Church continues to encompass the caring ministries of the church: Stephen Ministry; Visitation Ministry; Flower Delivery Ministry; Meal Delivery Ministry; Prayer Shawl and Pillow Ministry; Prayer Circle and Coffee Hour.

Stephen Ministry/Visitation Ministry

Stephen Ministry and Visitation Ministry are coordinated directly by the Nurture Ministries Coordinator. Referrals to these ministries most often come from co-pastors, Carol and Ralph. The Nurture Ministries Coordinator is responsible for matching the persons serving in these ministry areas with the individual needing care.

Stephen Ministry continues to be led by Ginnie Sherer, Sue Coghill, Dick Oelschlager and Cynthia Thorpe. The leaders' provide training and on-going education for this ministry. They also lead the monthly Supportivision group. Supportivision is a peer supervision/support group that provides support and oversight to those involved in this lay ministry program. It is a vital and key component to this ministry as it provides Stephen Ministers with regular peer and leader support to help the Stephen Minister grow their caring gifts. It also helps to ensure that care receivers are given the best possible care while participating in this ministry. During 2014 two new Stephen Ministers were trained and commissioned to serve in this ministry.

Presently, there were 8 ministers that provided care to 6 individuals. We find that we are serving individuals on in long term relationships with Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers meet one-on-one with their care receivers for approximately 1 hour per week. This has led to hundreds of hours of lay ministry care being provided over the past year.

Stephen Ministry also provides a series of books about grieving to those that been affected by loss. This is a series of 4 books that are provided to a person over the course of a year. In 2014, 11 individuals were recipients of this book series.

Flower Delivery Ministry

Giving of altar flowers has been encouraged in the past year by putting a sign-up sheet in the narthex. People who give flowers decide whether the flowers will be delivered to someone or taken by the person providing the flowers. Volunteers in the Flower Delivery Ministry group deliver Sunday's altar flowers to people who are unable to attend worship services, recovering from hospitalization or have experienced a loss or crisis. Currently there are 6 people who assist in delivering flowers. In 2014, altar flowers were delivered to people about 70% of the time. About 16 individuals received flowers on a rotating basis as they are unable to join us for worship services. This meant that these individuals receive flowers about 2-3 times per year.

Meal Ministry

Meal Ministry is coordinated by volunteers from the congregation. During 2014 Meal Coordinators have included: Andrea Schneider, Jodi Braun, Sue Coghill and Sue Verzal. Each coordinator takes lead responsibility for a two month period of time. Their role is to arrange for people to deliver meals to those that need them following hospitalization, illness, injury or a loss in their family. It has become more uncommon that the offer of meals is accepted. Those who do accept the offer it is very much appreciated. There are over 30 volunteers that can be called by the coordinators to prepare meals for home delivery. Andrea Schneider and Sue Coghill have discontinued coordination. It would be helpful to have 2 new coordinators in this ministry.

Prayer Shawl and Pillow Ministry

Pray Shawl and Pillow Ministry is coordinated by Sue Coghill. Volunteers in this ministry make shawls and pillows that can be delivered to people who are ill, recovering from surgery or are homebound. These items are distributed primarily by Carol and Ralph during pastoral care visits.

Prayer Circle

The prayer circle allows those with the gift of intercession to serve others at FCC by praying for concerns that are submitted. Prayers are listed on a password protected website that members of the pray circle access from their home computers. There is also a phone chain for members of the prayer circle that do not have access to the Internet. Currently about 20 people participate in raising other's concerns in prayer via the pray circle. Cynthia Hunt enters concerns on the Prayer Circle during the week; Ginnie Sherer enters concerns on weekends.

Lay Ministry Coordination

As Interim Lay Ministries Coordinator my primary focus has been to work assist with the nomination process and attend new member meetings.

At the Annual meeting in May, 2014 new people were added to each ministry group. It was wonderful to see youth being added to ministry groups!

The Annual Meeting date was changed at a congregational meeting in Fall 2014. As a result of this, the timeframe for the nomination process has changed. In November the Ministry Council appointed a nomination committee: Lorie Yaste-Zajicek (moderator-elect); Art Wille; Cynthia Thorpe and Ann Marshall. They met once in November to begin discussions about the nomination process.

The Talents and Interest Survey that was part of the 2014 Stewardship campaign was tremendously helpful in understanding interests of those that completed the survey. Out of this came information about people who are willing to serve on Ministry Groups and committees of the church. People also indicated interest in getting involved in other ministries of the church. In 2015 I plan to work on getting people connected in areas that may be new to them.

We are fortunate at FCC to have so many people who are willing to come forward to serve others in our faith community and in our wider world. We have over 100 people actively serving on committees and/or give of their time to usher, provide child care, teach church school, serve communion, read scripture during worship services or sing in the choir. Thus, it is no surprise that we are thought of as a vibrant church that reflects the example of Jesus in our community.

To aid in the New Member classes and the Learn about First Congregational Church classes, I developed a PowerPoint presentation that is now regularly used in these classes. This gives staff a routine script to follow in these classes, ensuring that we cover the same material during each class. The PowerPoint contains many pictures of the life at FCC, highlighting the active community of faith that we are.

Ginnie Sherer

2014 REPORT OF THE BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY GROUP

Members: Maria Talin, Facilitator, Mary Wiedenmeier, Anne Ruby, Len Herricks, John Nichols, Vicki Drabrant, Mary Bauknecht, Cheryl Pagel, Eric Kropp and staff liaison, Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder

Benevolence: an inclination to do good; kindness; a kindly, charitable act or gift:

The Benevolence Ministry Group of First Congregational Church determines which local groups would benefit from giving by our congregation. 12% of pledged income is allocated to benevolence. In 2014 that figure was \$33,806. This was divided as follows:

United Church of Christ Support - \$24,355 total divided as follows:

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	21,355
Northeast Wisconsin Association Dues	1,800
UCC Ministerial Health Insurance Subsidy	1,200

Local financial support – \$9,457 total given to:

Anti-Bullying Campaign (ABC) for yarn	700
Samaritan Counseling Ctr-teen screen	2,000
Take 5 Club	500
Family Services-Parent Connection	500
Community Back to School Fair	500
Ministers' Discretionary Fund	1,211
Animal Ministries	500
Winnebago Literacy Council	500
Oshkosh Shoreline Restoration	500
Youth Mission Trip	500
Tri-County Dental	2,000
Supplement Kid's Habitat House	40

Special Offerings:

Easter-One Great Hour of Sharing	1,151
Thanksgiving – Oshkosh Area Com Pantry	1,239
Christmas-Christine Ann Center	627

Partner Fund:

Habitat for Humanity Interfaith Build	2,000
Day by Day Warming Shelter	1,870

Kid's Habitat House collection: 460

Benevolence Ministry Group participated in this year's Appreciative Inquiry Process. As a result the following goals were created:

- (1) **Tell the story.** Engage the congregation with education and communication on how benevolence funds are set aside and used in the church's wider mission and locally.
- (2) **New ways to support.** Find new ways to support individuals and groups with awards, grants, scholarships, mission. Link donating and giving.
- (3) **Rebrand.** New name, new look.

Submitted by Maria Talin, Facilitator

REPORT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY GROUP 2014

Members of the group were Paula Allen, Ron and Jody Harrell, Dorry Wilner, Brian Tokopf, Anne and Terry Wesenberg, Val Williams, Jaci Mueller, Amy Smith and Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder.

Jody and Paula served as chairpersons. Ron was the group's Ministry Council representative.

Social Justice Ministry Group emphasizes faith in action by raising awareness of and providing hands-on opportunities for bringing justice to our community and beyond. The Social Justice Ministry Group may work in partnership and coordination with other groups such as the Benevolence Ministry Group, the Adult Education Ministry Group, the Mission Team and groups beyond First Congregational Church as well. Under its umbrella is the Esther Core Team that was formed in 2011.

Our new Provocative Proposal developed this year is: *Social Justice Ministry Group is fully committed to learning, and educating our group and the congregation about social justice issues. We provide avenues for making change and volunteering in the community.*

Most meetings usually began with a speaker (on a social justice issue), a discussion of activities the group could undertake, and a to-do list for the next month. Ideas for speakers came from group members. Topics covered were:

2014		
January 15th	No speaker	MLK, Social Justice Sunday Discussion
February 19 th	Megan Sawall	Day by Day Volunteer Coordinator/Assistant Operations Manager
March 19 th -	No speaker	Aging Together
April 16th	Terri Green OACP	Oshkosh Area Community Pantry
May 21st	No Speaker	Committee Reorganization
June	No Meeting	
July	Meeting Cancelled	
August 20th	Jeanne Klawitter.	Christine Ann Center
September 17th	No Speaker	Provocative Proposal Work, SJ Sunday planning
October 15th.	No Speaker	Provocative Proposal Work, SJ Sunday planning
November 19th	Elizabeth Williams	Healthy Neighborhoods program-City of Oshkosh

Members helped out with the Christmas in July and Christmas Teen Gift projects. Several members helped with the Martin Luther King and the Oshkosh Freedom Summer Celebration event, sponsored Diversity Discussion and explored the topic of dementia and John McFadden's book. Anne Wesenberg volunteered at World Relief and kept the group aware of needs and activities. In the summer, the group planted and maintained a garden plot at the Community Gardens near the state hospital on Sherman Road raising over 300 pounds of produce for the Oshkosh Area Community Pantry. At least one group member also helped at the urban gardens on Jefferson Street. Produce was donated from there as well, and the gardens allowed people in the Oshkosh Food Desert to have a place to grow their own.

The group planned and carried out Social Justice Sunday Service October 19th and held a Volunteer Fair immediately after worship in Fellowship Hall featuring 15 Oshkosh organizations. The organizations shared volunteering opportunities available for church members.

The group is hoping to resurrect the Olive Branch and plan some activities surrounding John McFadden's book and other concerns.

Looking forward to another meaningful year.

Jody Harrell and the Social Justice Committee.

NEW MEMBER DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY GROUP – 2014

Our report is perhaps a bit shorter this time around because with the change in dates of the annual meeting, we are submitting the report earlier than usual and we just submitted one nine months ago in March. Since the submission of that report, New Member Development has remained very busy. Following are some of the more significant things we did throughout the year:

- We held a very successful Pie Social event in March. This served two purposes: One, to retire some of the t-shirt debt that was still outstanding, and, second, to serve as an after church “Connection” event. The amount raised was \$693.
- Acquired and installed new banners for the different seasons at Algoma Street entrance.
- Posted Visitor parking spots in the newly-done parking lot for church guests to make it easier for them to park, thereby more welcoming.
- Held a “Name Tag Sunday” on Dec. 7, and encouraged all members to wear their tags, offering small incentives for some of those who got “caught” wearing their tags.
- Like all ministry groups, we worked on our “dream statement” and from there developed our “Provocative Propositions.”
- Several of our members participated in two collaborative sessions, held jointly with the worship and music ministry group workgroups to evaluate and explore guests’ “first impressions.” Guests were invited from other churches to attend and provide positive critical feedback on what we could do better.
- We continued with making follow-up calls to visitors and tweaked our greeter scheduling.
- We continued with our project of periodically placing member info on the web site and in the weekly Member Bridge to help existing members get to know each other better, but also to let the community know who goes to FCC, and why.
- Hospitality-related messages continued being placed in the weekly bulletins and Tidings monthly newsletter, sometimes in weekly Member Bridge.
- We also continued to submit articles to the Oshkosh Northwestern’s Community Newsroom highlighting the many different things going on at FCC. Many people find FCC through these no-cost articles, which help spread our message.

New member and LAF (Learn About FCC) were held during the year and a number of new members joined as a result. In the meantime, all members of FCC are encouraged to invite family members or friends to come worship with them, helping to spread the word about our exciting and unique church community.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hentz

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MINISTRY GROUP- 2014

The major accomplishment of the last year was completing the parking lot project. The parking lot was rebuilt and now includes a run-off drain, run-off areas with plantings and a bike rack. The project was challenging due to uncertain material under the existing pavement and the need to bring it up to current standards for run-off. This significantly increased the cost of the project. We are looking forward to seeing the new plantings in the spring and are very grateful to the people who helped with the project.

Dave Elbing joined the church staff as Building Supervisor. He has created an extensive list of projects and has completed a number of critical items. There were many projects inside the building replacing old worn out equipment such as the water heater, refrigerator and addressing plumbing, electrical and heating issues. A project to scrape and paint the storm windows in the church has been started. This will eventually address the coverings over the large stained glass windows. The refinishing of the front doors has started and the floors have received necessary attention.

All this has made for an expensive year. The maintenance budget will end the year well over \$14,000 (budget \$7,500). Much of this expenditure is nonrecurring items but it is difficult to address the needs of our building with this amount. We have requested a \$10,000 in the maintenance budget for 2015. As a committee we will work to understand and communicate the maintenance expenses. We will also look at reducing energy costs by reviewing the monthly costs, understanding our energy usage and pursuing an energy audit.

The big project for 2015 will be remodeling the kitchen. Dave Elbing is the General Contractor for this project and is working with the kitchen remodeling committee. The remodeling work will start in the spring. Although Building and Grounds is not leading this project, we will provide support, as needed, and make sure we transition smoothly from construction to a functioning kitchen. The new refrigerator for this project has already been purchased and installed.

The committee has a number of new members and welcomes the help of others. We will help with the project list and add projects as needed. If you see something that needs to be done or have a suggestion, you can contact the office, Dave Elbing, or a member of Building and Grounds. If interested, we welcome your talents and help on projects. We will keep you up to date on these projects, work days and expenses.

Eric Kropp

FINANCE MINISTRY GROUP REPORT

NO REPORT AVAILABLE AT TIME OF PRINTING

PERSONNEL MINISTRY GROUP

No report available at time of printing.

REPORT ON THE USE OF THE BUILDING 2014

May - December

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During 2014 a host of activities and groups have utilized the First Congregational Church. These are basically broken down into 4 groups below.

Music groups:

Various Recitals, including: Grine-Fisher Recitals; Peterson Recitals; Green Lake Festival of Music; Katie Riemer Piano Concert; Joyce Andrews Recital; Oshkosh North Choirs; Oshkosh Chamber Singers; UW-Eau Claire Singing Statesmen. Madison McCarney Recital.

Civic activities:

ESTHER of Oshkosh; PEO; Christine Ann Center Christmas Gift Program; Senior Center Spanish Classes; Habitat for Humanity Interfaith potluck; Red Cross Blood Drive; Uncommon Grounds - Oshkosh Diversity Group; Adaptive Parents Training, Citizens Climate Lobby; Freedom Summer; League of Women Voters.

Special Interest Activities:

North East Wisconsin Chapter of American Organ Guild; Christ the Child Craft Fair; Oshkosh Community Players; Oshkosh Food Co-op meetings.

Other Religious activities:

Emmaus Ecumenical Catholic Community; FVUUF of Oshkosh.

The building has also hosted a number of congregation member's personal events from baby showers to birthday parties to memorial service luncheons.

Cynthia Hunt
Office Administrator

ADULT EDUCATION MINISTRY GROUP – SUBMITTED FALL 2014

Members: Cheryl Hentz, David Jones, Nick Schneider, Paula Veard, and Jim Paulson

Facilitator: Cheryl Hentz

Staff Liaison: Sandie Miller-Schreiter

This past summer and early fall, as part of our Provocative Propositions (part of the church's Dream Statement efforts) we decided to concentrate on getting more people to attend the Sunday morning Lifelong Learning sessions. We began offering more topics that were part of a series, and we began offering a light snack for those attending. We also began publicizing more of the upcoming presentations on Facebook and in the Community Newsroom of the local newspaper. Even though at the time of this writing it had only been put in place for a month or so, attendance has increased by about 25% to 30%.

There was also some discussion within the group about hosting periodic events during the summer months when there is no regular Sunday morning programming. One suggestion was to hold a movie night – showing a faith-based film, popping popcorn and having a discussion after the film.

We also want to try increasing attendance during the Tuesday Night Faith & Spirituality discussions, now in its 5th year. Average attendance in the past has been 4 to 6 people. There is nothing wrong with a smaller core group, but having more people attend would be desirable. We will be publicizing these “sessions” more, especially after the first of the year. And we are starting to show more DVD series. As a reminder to folks, every session is designed to be stand-alone, so if someone misses a week or joins after a session has already started, there is nothing for them to really catch up on and they can easily join in. We meet at 7pm Tuesday evenings at church and welcome anyone who wishes to broaden their minds about spirituality and what it really means to them. Bring a friend and join us.

This past year we stopped videotaping our Sunday morning Lifelong Learning presentations – something we'd done for 2 or 3 years. It required a large commitment of time and the videos weren't being watched by that many people online. So it was decided to stop this practice. As with anything, it can be revisited in the future if there is a big demand for it.

We always welcome suggestions for possible topics for upcoming sessions – whether for Sunday morning Lifelong Learning, Tuesday Night Faith & Spirituality, or some other special presentation. This year we got a lot of good ideas from various members of the congregation, for which we are grateful. If you have any ideas, please contact facilitator, Cheryl Hentz, or our staff liaison, Sandie Miller-Schreiter. And, as always, we encourage you to attend on a Sunday morning or Tuesday evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hentz

Adult Education Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY GROUP 2014

As we looked at the Appreciative inquiry results, we noticed that service, relationship building, and spiritual development were things that are important to our congregation. These are the things we chose to focus on with our youth.

Besides offering youth group activities we encourage the youth to be involved in the life of the church. We are very pleased that the Worship Ministry Group has a youth aged reader once a month. Ellen Otto and Zoe Bossert, along with Corrine Saidla and Sandie Miller-Schrieter planned the events for the 3-5th grade group. And we continue to look at other ways to involve our youth in the life of the church.

We offered several service opportunities including making Christmas ornaments for the Christmas Pageant, wrapping gifts for the Christine Ann Center, and encouraged the formation of a group to hold the Servapalooza again this year.

We also met once a month with our 3rd through 5th grade youth. We combined several of their events with the Middle and High School youth. We learned about Islam from youth and adults from the Oshkosh Mosque, had swimming event/ beach party, enjoyed a gift making night, and learned about the Oshkosh zoo and the animals there.

We continue to explore what the group can offer to help nurture the spirituality and faith of our youth.

With regards,

The Youth Ministry Group.

REPORT OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL MINISTRY GROUP (2014)

Members: Lorie Hadel, McKenna Hadel, Jen Boos, Sarah Arndt, Val Williams, and Corinne Saidla.

The Church School Ministry Group worked on the Provocative Propositions for the group- goals for 2015 and beyond- we will decide what to work on for 2015. Then the Group members personally called people who are potential teachers and shepherds. Another option for children during the sermon time is a crafts table that is by the piano. We didn't offer "KidVid" again, we had a tough time finding volunteers for Child Care, so we had one paid person and a volunteer.

The "Ready for Worship" program is used for the children who are not ready to stay in the church service during the sermon. It is a good program that uses wooden figures and felt to learn about some of the main stories of the Bible.

The rotation format continues to be used for second through sixth grade. The preschool, kindergarten/first grade, middle school, and high school are classroom style. We are using the "Spark" series for the preschool and kindergarten/first grade classes.

The group assisted with the Christmas pageant ie: assisting with checking costumes in and out, assisting children with getting ready for the pageant.

We are also continuing to do Toy washes three or four times a year. We have been cleaning them one day (on a Thursday) and then putting them away another day (on Sunday). This has been working well.

Corinne Saidla- Facilitator

CHURCH LIBRARY REPORT

We have 2,462 items in our collection, not counting our reference and teacher's shelf books. These books may be checked out of the library but may not leave the building.

It's been a year since we started using the Librarything system and it seems to be working well. Look us up on www.librarything.com. The password and user name are FCCLibrarything.com. You can see what books we have online or you could check out our new print catalogs that go by categories. You can also read reviews of books we have online.

We (Jean and Joyce) have decided to get rid of videos. We still have some books on tape. Check out our movies and music.

The checkout system hasn't changed. Simply stamp the card with the stamper and place the card in the plastic holder. Stamp the date due slip so that you know when to return the book and you're done.

We are open to donations. Please check out our library and our books.

Joyce Frohn

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE - 2014

Members: Dixie Laehn, Ann Marshall, Deanie Minniear, Maria Talin and Dorothy Unger.

Friends and family members often give a monetary gift to the church in memory of a loved one who has died. These gifts are put into a memorial fund account and the money is used to meet needs of the church that fall outside the operations budget. If possible, the family is consulted when use of their relative's memorial is being considered. Usually memorial monies go toward projects that will pay a lasting tribute.

In 2014 the Memorial Committee received two requests. Three new communion chalices were commissioned and purchased to complete the set. Also memorial funds were combined with a gift received from a family in honor of the birthday of a member of the congregation to update sound system equipment used to record events happening in the sanctuary from sermons, to concerts, to First Tuesdays offerings, etc. We have now entered the digital age.

As of November 30, 2014 there is close to \$15,000 in the Memorial Fund account. The committee always welcomes suggestions for use of memorial monies. Contact any member of the committee and your proposal will receive prompt consideration.

Ann Marshall

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP REPORT APRIL – DECEMBER 2014

In this shortened time frame, Women's Fellowship has been very busy. The normal functions of the group are to send cards to members and friends of the church. Nineteen cards were sent, covering get well, sympathy, birth, and thinking of you. In addition, we sent four bouquets to those staying in the hospital overnight. We gave altar flowers twice as a memorial from the Adaline Choate fund. Not only do we give our monetary resources, but we also hosted fellowship hour after church. We try to bring in items that people with special dietary needs are able to eat. Our goal is to encourage more to attend.

Locally, we donated money to the Back to School Fund to help our youth. We also purchased the last of the yarn that was needed to help finish the anti-bullying scarves. This yarn was distributed to make the scarves to local knitters, as well as the Correctional Facility to make mittens and hats.

Since the kitchen renovation is near and dear to Women's Fellowship, we hosted a reception for the Singing Statesmen in November. The monetary donation we received was directed to the kitchen renovation fund. We asked the Music committee to make bars or cookies as well as several of the ladies from our church. We filled out the rest of the menu with items the ladies from our board provided. We decorated the Fellowship Hall and provided the hospitality to the performers as well as guests after the concert.

Once again we assisted with Hanging of the Greens. We are still fine tuning the process, but each year it gets a little better. There is always room for suggestions and more helpers.

Last but not least, we honored our amazing staff. This year we made two donations in honor of our staff. The first was locally to the Webster Auditorium Fund. We made the gift on the matching day in order to increase it's benefit. Then, to recognize our Youth Mission Trip and the needs of another kitchen, we gave money to The Guest House of Milwaukee. The report from the Mission Trip stated the dire need of a kitchen renovation which is something we understand.

Karen Zentner LaBorde

Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ
Rev. Michael E. Obenauer, Interim Conference Minister
2014 Year-End Perspectives

The latest way for the United Church of Christ to express its way of being "Church" is this:

Be the church

Protect the environment.

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

Reject racism.

Fight for the powerless.

Share earthly and spiritual resources.

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.

Pardon me while I write a year-end report for the Wisconsin Conference of a slightly different nature. In a few moments I will give you a compendium of the usual highlights for 2014. While I do that, I respectfully ask you to hold before you at your core the more significant message of the description above of what it means to be the United Church of Christ together. It is this spiritual depth which should inform every move and glimpse of this beloved church, every piece of official data optimally should reflect these theological principles.

In 2014, the Wisconsin Conference marked its mission and ministry with many milestones. Here are a few of the most memorable;

Upon action of the Conference Annual Meeting, the Wisconsin Conference became an Open and Affirming Conference. This followed an impressive study and report process undertaken by local congregations in the Conference. The Conference celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Lay Academy. The Rev. Tisha Brown is in the first months of her tenure as the Lay Academy Director/Minister.

The Campital Funds campaign to benefit Moon Beach and Pilgrim Center is underway in the Conference.

The mission of the Conference to provide quality and timely leadership and consultative support services to local congregations in the areas of search and call, ministerial authorization, conflict management, to offer the potential for health insurance coverage for all ministerial staff serving in congregations throughout the Conference regardless of size or location, and to provide leadership and resources for local church development and renewal as well as communities of practice for authorized ministers was ably carried out and accomplished in 2014.

The Conference through the Office of the General Counsel of the United Church of Christ and by joining forces with ecumenical partners in Wisconsin and other places in the United States successfully defended the constitutionality of the parsonage allowance for authorized ministers.

The Conference hosted the Great Lakes Regional Youth Event at Lakeland College this past summer. Over two hundred youth and adult advisors participated.

In November, delegates from local congregations met at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Wisconsin Rapids to elect the Rev. Franz S. Rigert as the next Conference Minister of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Rev. Rigert begins his ministry January 1, 2015.

The evocative poet, Mary Oliver, asks the significant question, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" This question is begged not only of individuals, but of local congregations and Conferences as well. While the newly elected Conference Minister is well-gifted and poised for leadership, he is only one individual. He needs willing partners in mission and ministry. What will you do with your one wild and precious life?

Thank you for the privilege of serving as Interim Conference Minister for the past 16 months. I pray God's blessings be on your journey together in the future.

With Great Hope,
Rev. Michael E. Obenauer, Interim Conference Minister

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CO-PASTORS, 2014

2014 will prove to be a pivotal year for this congregation. Back in 2005 our congregation took an in-depth look at itself and its mission through the “Holy Conversations” strategic planning process. And again this year we engaged in planning, this time using the “Appreciative Inquiry” methodology. Beginning in January, the Futuring Team under the excellent leadership of Art and Cathy Wille led the congregation through this process that included 125 face-to-face conversations about the mission and future of FCC. The effort culminated with the “Dream Statement” created at the “Congregation Wide Summit” in May. And just as wonderful new ministries grew out of the Holy Conversations process, so too will many as-yet-unknown programs, events, and relationships grow out of the Dream Statement of 2014! Holy Conversations process, so will many as-yet-unknown programs, events, and relationships grow out of the Dream Statement of 2014!

While this time in history is challenging for all churches, FCC has demonstrated through this planning process just what a strong congregation is it, with great lay leadership, an excellent staff and talented and caring people carrying out its many ministries! And as good as these days have been, truly FCC’s “best days” are yet to come.

In worship this year we explored the use of a new lectionary – the Narrative Lectionary – that reminded us of some of the basic stories of the Bible. Our wonderful music program expanded to include some new styles of music: A Sunday of “folk music” led my members of the church, and a guest – John Currier –from Stevens Point; Bryan Sirchio once again led an entire service using his progressive/contemporary Christian music, and the “Joyful Noise” from Beloit helped us debut Rev. Jim Martin’s *If I Had One Day*. There were cinema Sundays – *Les Miserables*, with 9th grader Max Bossert and Carol preaching, and the first screening in Wisconsin of the 2013 documentary, *Sweet Dreams*.

Using the generous gift from the congregation for our 25th anniversary celebration (2013), we spent a month in the summer on the road touring some of this country’s amazing and inspiring National Parks! This was the fulfillment on a long-standing dream of ours, and we are grateful to the congregation for helping to make a dream come true. We are grateful too for the folks who filled the pulpit in our absence – Rev. Gary Miller, Rev. Art Wille and Cathy Wille – along with the church staff who took on additional responsibilities while we were gone.

The congregation this year bid farewell to folks – those who have passed from this life to the next, and those who have moved to other parts of the state and country. At the same time a number of new folks – young families as well as retired folks – have become part of the church family. And the fall brought eight baptisms to our worship times!

The year was an exciting one especially for our LGBTQ friends when in June the ban against same-sex marriages in Wisconsin was declared to be unconstitutional (a decision reaffirmed in the fall). Your Co-Pastors were privileged to officiate at several marriages of couples in the church family and community.

We are so grateful to be part of this great church – now for nearly twenty-seven years! Many thanks are due to the church officers – Moderators Pat Blades and Cathy Wille, Moderator-elect Lorie Yaste-Zjaicek, Clerk Sue Coghill, and Treasurer Jeff Puhlmann-Becker – and to all the lay leaders who share in this ministry with us. And we are grateful too for every member of the church staff who each share the life of the Spirit with the congregation and one another. We – all of us – are blessed by their ministries!

Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING MINISTRIES COORDINATOR
(TLMC) 2014.

Thank you to the many, many people who care about and helped with growing the faith of our children, youth and adults. Chaperones, teachers, shepherds, coordinators of adult education, childcare providers and many more folks have nurtured the faith of others. This dedication to the nurture of others is one of the many reasons I am so blessed to work at this church.

We finished up our first year of offering the OWL's program to our 8th through 10th graders. Our Whole Lives (OWL's) is a sexual education/healthy relationship curriculum developed by the Unitarian/Universalist and the United Church of Christ. Thanks to Doug Pire, Shelly Maxwell, Joe Weidenmeier, Paula Seeley, the facilitators for the group. We will be meeting to determine how we will offer this to our youth again and are considering offering the 4-6th grade curriculum to our children.

This year our youth mission trip was to Milwaukee. We had a small group, two youth and two adults. During our trip we served breakfast at the Guesthouse in Milwaukee (a agency the strives to eliminate homelessness), ate at a soup kitchen, worked in the Guesthouse gardens, sorted clothes for the Guesthouse, distributed flyers to advertise a community meal. This was a small but fantastic mission trip that helped people and helped us to see the world in a different way.

Servapalooza was held on October 26th. After a brief church service folks served our community. Some went out to agencies including Advocap, Christine Ann Center, Salvation Army, the Re:Store. Others did projects here at church for the Red Cross, Day by Day Warming shelter, Oshkosh Area Humane Society, Boys and Girls club and others. Approximately 100 folks from our church helped fill some needs in the community that morning.

We held an intergenerational gratitude event this year on November 23 during the 9:00 hour. Children, youth and adults had an opportunity to count their blessings, think about the abundance in their life and how to use those blessings to serve others.

Theresa Brewer, our Child Care Coordinator, has been on staff for over Sevenyears now. Thank you to Theresa and the volunteers that provide care in the nursery and toddler room. Having a staff person to be with our children each week during the Church School year has brought consistency to our childcare and has helped to make it a warm and welcoming place to our youngest.

Pumpkin Caroling and Christmas caroling was shared with Ginnie Sherer and Christina Conn. These events bring joy to both the singers and the folks we sing to. This year we did our pumpkin caroling at Evergree and sang Christmas carols at East Brooke Manor. It worked well to go to just one place to sing and the residents enjoyed it.

Thank you to all who have participated in the life of the Teaching and Learning Ministries! I look forward to continuing our ministry together in the upcoming year.

With much Gratitude,

Sandie Miller-Schreiter

Teaching and Learning Ministries Coordinator

REPORT OF THE CHANCEL CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST - 2014

The Chancel Choir sings regularly from September through May.

Chancel Choir members (and date of joining) were Douglas Henkle (1972); Carol Niendorf (1972); Vernice Haase (1975); George Goghill (1976); Thatcher Peterson (1982); Ed Schneider (1993); Patricia Hallquist (1996); Karen LaBorde (1998); Jen Stellpflug (2004); Art and Cathy Wille (2005); Bethany Estrada (2005); Eric Kropp (2007); Judy DeBroux (2007); Jaci Mueller (2008); Darcy Duffy (2009) Tony Hengst (2010); Douglas Pire (2011); Paula Allen (2012); Dellora Vogt (2014); and Kelsey Tarbert (2014). Barbara Ziblut joined the choir in 2014, and Kelsey Tarbert and Tony Hengst went into reserve status.

Organ scholarship students, Noah Bossert and Tanya Paulson, substituted for me during the summer worship, along with a former student of mine, Pam Lane. In addition, special music was performed both during the summer and regular church year by Laurel Sanders; Ruby Salbego; Steve & Vivian Hazell; Joe Wiedenmeier; Noah Bossert; Jon Gibson; John Currian; Douglas Pire; Pat Hallquist; Mathew Bragstad; Olivia Stellpflug; Molly Schlaack; Stan Kline; Christina Conn; Martha Becker, Bethany Meyer; Daniel Ballman; Nicole Riordan; Haley Barlass and Joyce Andrews; and the *A Little Encore* Handbell Choir.

The New Horizons brass quartet with Matthew Bragstad and Charlie Bloom on trombones and Matthew Onstad and Jacob Sweum on trumpets provided strong brass accompaniment on Easter Sunday and accompanied the Chancel Choir on K. Lee Scott's anthem, *Festival Easter Hymn on Grafton*.

The Chancel Choir premiered a new anthem, *If I Had One Day* commissioned in memory of Bethany Estrada's mother, Barbara Watts, and composed by James F.D. Martin. Joining the Chancel Choir were members of the group Joyful Noise, a contemporary ensemble of which Barbara Watts was a member.

As special Christmas music, the Chancel Choir performed Buxtehude's *Magnificat*, with Joseph Kerkhoff and Pat Hallquist on violin and Matt Abraham on cello. Lucas Schulz, a UWO student, Maria Talin, and Kristopher and Bridget Duffy-Ulrich joined the choir for this occasion. On Christmas Eve special music was provided by Molly Schlaack; Kiera Robe; Spencer Hadel; Martha Becker; Sydney and Carson Hall; Sianna Robe; Killum and Jedediah Larson-Poeschel; Noah Bossert; the singing quartet of the Duffy sisters, Bridget, Kathleen, Briar, and Kelsey Mapes making four; and the Stellpflug girls—Olivia, Charlotte, Rowen, and Meredith. Jonathan Gibson with his guitar led *Silent Night*. On the Sunday after Christmas, Laurel Sanders, a child of the church, now living in California sang four songs; and Jonathan and Greg Gibson Duet provided the Offertory music.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Peterson

Chancel Choir Director & Organist

REPORT OF THE ANGEL CHOIR DIRECTOR 2014

Fall 2014 Angel Choir members are Elizabeth Frohn-Hengst, Kassie Herring, Maddi Herring, Ethan Moench, Talan Boos, Jedidiah Larsen, Maddi Arndt, Anabel Mitchel and Laehna Mitchel.

2014 Pumpkin and Christmas Caroling events were both a success.

We had enough singers to have one good sized caroling group that spread some holiday cheer.

We look forward to those events every year!

Christina Conn
Angel Choir Director

LITURGICAL MOVEMENT CHOIRS- 2014

March 2, 2014 We performed a jazz dance about the miracles that Jesus performed.

The song was entitled "Jesus Spits" and the 11 girls loved the performance.

March 9, 2014 Both choirs put the ALLELUIAS to bed until Easter

April 13, 2014 The Dancing Spirit choir led the Palm Parade in their beautiful white costumes and performed while congregation finished the parade.

May 18, 2014 The Dancing Spirit performed to the beautiful hymn "God of the Bible"

Fall 2014 I could not teach so we have not had rehearsals or performances.

Missy Allen