

CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

February 25, 1996

Service of Thanksgiving and Affirmation Planned for Sunday, March 17, 1996

On Sunday, March 17, 1996 the Ecclesiastical Council of the Vicinage will meet at 4:00 to consider the qualifications of Rev. Dr. Steven Peay becoming a Congregational Minister. Following the meeting will be a 7:00 Service of Thanksgiving and Affirmation which everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

For those who are unfamiliar with this process, it can be stated in simpler terms. Steve is already a fully ordained minister and this is an approbation of his ministry. Congregational churches, specifically representatives of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, will determine his suitability to be called by other Congregational Churches. Steve referred to it as a communion with the larger body of churches.

Steve will present his theological positions and explain his Call to ministry. Participants

from member Wisconsin Congregational Association Churches will then vote as to whether or not to make him a "Congregational Minister."

At 7:00, there will be an "Installation" Service of Thanksgiving which is anticipated to be very uplifting and spiritually meaningful. (Technically an associate minister is not "installed.") While Steve was not required to attain the title of "Congregational Minister," it shows a depth of commitment to his Call and the heritage of Congregationalism.

One final note, apparently Steve was very pleased that this service worked out to be on ♣ St. Patrick's Day ♣ So, wear your green and don't miss out on this important service for First Congregational Church and Rev. Peay. ■

Everyday Heroes

The realization that requests for home delivered meals had increased considerably meant that a call went out for more volunteers from First Congregational Church to join the group of drivers. Sixteen church members responded immediately and the other part of the Mobile Meals team, Congregational Home kitchen, generously gave the go-ahead. and Route II was deftly established with the help of coordinators Alice Krebs, Betsy Isenberg, and Michael Skidmore.

The everyday heroes of Route I and Route II are: Janet Jacobs, Alice Dorsch, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Kebbekus, Ken and Barbara Lindl, Jack Hughes, Virginia Hutton, Dale Engstrom, Marion and Gordon Petersen, Jim and Lucy Miyazaki, Fritzi Troller, Don and Arlene Koch, Susan Barth, Don Miesbauer, Dick Koch, Wayne Gusho, Julia Halvorson, Sue Kolaga, Mary York, Ken and Jean Wendt, George Wells, Cathy Kebbekus, Joan Schultz, Ken and Janice Wittig, and Nancy and Tom Winkel. ■

by Sally Wells

Vice Moderator Peter Holtz Energized by Involvement

Peter Holtz – husband and father of four, Manager of Customer Service for Wisconsin Electric, Board Member of Wauwatosa Chamber of Commerce, and member of the Planning and Allocations Committee for United Way – probably has so much extra time on his hands that he decided to accept the nomination for position of Vice Moderator here at First Congregational Church to add a little activity to his life.

Actually, it is Peter's enthusiasm and active commitment that makes him a great person for the position. He and wife Barbara have been members here for approximately 14 years and throughout that time have been very involved. Peter has served on Budget and Finance, Search Committee, and chaired the Board of Trustees and a couple of Stewardship Campaigns. Barb has chaired the Board of Christian Education, served on the original Long-Range Planning Committee, and has taught at the Vacation Bible School and the Family Camp.

With all of this experience, Peter says he believes that the church's involvement in seeing ideas implemented, an enjoyment of the people, creativity, and making the church better, and a sense of challenge. However, he views the process happening at FCC as more of an evolution than change.

With all of this talent, what hopes and dreams does Peter have for FCC and what things would he like to help accomplish? Most impor-

tantly, he said it's marvelous to see the renewed enthusiasm and hope for the church. While he believes Lonnie is a catalyst for that energy, he said the members make it happen and he hopes to keep generating that feeling through the



Peter, Barb, Katie (16), Betsy (14), Tori (10), and Tim (6) Holtz

church. Peter said he wants to work toward greater involvement by members. He believes that there is great potential and a lot of talent in the congregation which could benefit the church as a whole and return the benefit to individuals who get involved. "It is important to feel needed and of value," said Peter. In that same vein, Peter likes seeing all of the new, young members and hopes to get them quickly involved.

As Vice Moderator, Peter will be chairperson for the Budget and Finance Committee as well as the Long-Range Planning Committee, in addition to helping other boards and committees as needed. Long-Range Planning will be having a series of two-day meetings at the end of April asking members to provide their visions and hopes for FCC. Peter says it will be more interactive than focus group meetings and hopefully will help to develop a "Vision" for this church. While the diversity at FCC is positive, "We have

to realize that we can't be everything to all people," said Peter. "It will be of value to develop a focal point."

Peter said that he is really looking forward to his roles in the church over the next few years and the responsibilities stir a lot of emotions. He is excited with the opportunity, a little scared by the great responsibility, and respectful of the heritage and of all those who have come before him. Recently he toured the building from top to bottom with the Board of Trustees - something he has done before. "Seeing the plans for 1916 and looking over the whole building, it's humbling to be a part of all of this - it's a great honor," said Peter.

We wish Peter well with his positions in the church over the next couple of years and give thanks for all of the gifts of time and talent he is sharing. ■

CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

Editor, Beth Linscott
Communications Committee
 Karl Stieghorst - Chairperson,
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 Sandy Rose, Mary York

♦
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♦
 Congregational Columns (USPS 010-493) is published monthly by The First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, 1511 Church St., Wauwatosa, WI 53213-2593, 414/258-7375, Second Class Postage Paid at Milwaukee, WI 53203-9998. Postmaster: Send address changes to Congregational Columns, 1511 Church St., Wauwatosa, WI 53213-2593.
 Vol. 5, Issue 2.

A Word From Lonnie...

You're Creative If You Think You Are

In his excellent book, A Whack On The Side Of The Head, Dr. Roger von Oech the "creativity consultant of Silicon Valley" tells the story that several years ago, a major oil company was concerned about the lack of creative productivity among some of its Research and Development personnel. To deal with this problem, top management brought in a team of psychologists to find out what differentiated the creative R&D people from the less creative ones. The hope was that their findings could be used to stimulate the less creative people.

The psychologists asked the scientists all kinds of questions ranging

from what their educational background was to where they grew up and to what their favorite color was. After three months of study, the psychologists found that the chief factor which separated the two groups was:

The creative people thought they were creative and the less creative people didn't think they were.

As a consequence, the people who thought they were creative allowed themselves to get into a germinal frame of mind and play with their knowledge. The "I'm not creative" people were either too practical or routinized in their thinking.

How about the Research and Development of the church? Churches can have a tendency to think of themselves and their mission in only practical terms. Their machinery can become routinized to where it is a miracle that the Spirit of God has any openness for expression.

This is a creative church and you are a creative people. Let's believe this as we enter into Lent and allow the master creator to create in us something new, faithful and good.

*In Him,
Lonnie*

Lenten 'Soul Food' at First Congregational Church

Ever heard someone say of a meal, "Oh, it will keep body and soul together"? It seems that there is some strong connection between food and spirituality. Even the 'Frugal Gourmet' has written a new book (The Frug Keeps the Feast) which emphasizes the spiritual connection. Not to be outdone here at FCC, we will offer opportunities which will **really** keep body and soul together during Lent.

Wednesday mornings and noons from February 28 through April 3 'soul food' will be served in the Social Hall. The soul food is "Growing in Christ: A Study of the Book of Ephesians," the 'chefs' are our ministers, Revs. Lonnie Richardson and Steven Peay. The menu will be a look at how we can apply the message of Ephesians on Christian life to our own contemporary situation. The topics each week:

February 28
"The Hope to which He has called us"

March 6
"By grace we are God's"

March 13
"Partakers of Divine Nature"

March 20
"A life worthy of the calling"

March 27
"Walking as Christ walked"

April 3
"Being courageous in conflict"

The format each week will center around a brief presentation on one of the six chapters of Paul's letter, time for discussion, and then an opportunity for prayer.

So you can "have it your way" at FCC, we will offer the menu with a hot breakfast at 6:45 a.m. (we'll have you on your way at 7:30!) or you can "brown bag it" at noon

(beverages provided) and on the way to work at 12:45! For additional details, or if you have a question, call the Church office - 978-7375.

Everyone is welcome to us for this fresh serving of 'soul food'—invite a friend or to join you at the

Oh, and don't forget that you get a 'full meal deal' too! Lenten activities for the family begin with a meal at 6:00 p.m. in the Social Hall of the First Congregational Church. Body and soul together.

by Steven Peay

Pilgrim Fellowship Groups Busy with Service Projects and Plans

Have you noticed the clean pews in the nave? Did you see a familiar young face ringing the bell at the mall for the Salvation Army? Did you hear about the extra help the St. Vincent Meals Program is getting? Or did you look at your server at the Pancake Breakfast?

Lately, P.F.'ers have been helping out everywhere. Carrie Payette, program coordinator said that the youth group is trying to schedule a good number of service projects in addition to their regular weekly meetings and fund-raisers. Senior, Junior and Pre-P.F. are all going strong, said Carrie.



Sr. P.F. has a very consistent attendance of 16-20 kids. The group is looking forward to Rally in Green Bay March 9-11 and ahead to Camp and NAPF this summer. The officers of Sr. P.F. also met recently and finished their year-end planning. They will be trying to line up some guest speakers after enjoying visits from Wendy Sue Earle (on In-Care status with First Congregational Church) and Rev. Steve Peay.



Carrie said that the Jr. P.F.'ers are a very strong group of active church members. They recently sang at Congregational Home and will be helping out with the St. Vincent program in March. The Jr. P.F. Rally will be held at North Shore Congregational Church at the end of April. Both Jr. and Sr. P.F. groups would like to thank the congregation for the support they have received with their fund-raisers so far this year.



Finally, Pre-P.F. has been looking at the unconditional love of God and Jesus. Their monthly programs consist of a devotion, singing (with Mary Lou Schowalter) and a short program. It's an informal environment great for preparing the kids for Jr. P.F.



Pancake Breakfast

As a final note to the P.F. update, a big "thank you" to the advisors this year. Carrie, new as the Coordinator of the program, said she wouldn't be able to do it without their help. ■

Moderator's Remarks

In my closing remarks at the Annual Meeting I asked that we all communicate more with each other. This monthly column will be my attempt to follow my own request.

I want to express my thanks and appreciation to all who have accepted committee positions for the coming year. It isn't as easy as it may appear to fill all the many spots that are open. So many times I have heard someone say "we see the same people on the committees." The Nominating Committee and I tried very hard to get new faces on the committees but for many reasons this was not completely possible. So in coming years when asked to do a job, try to stretch yourself a little further and accept a position when possible. It will be worth it.

I have appointed an ad hoc volunteer planning committee and they will be getting things in order for us to do some hands-on work in our church. We hope to have designated Saturday morning work times. Stay tuned for further information.

A sub committee of the Trustees is proceeding with Social Hall refurbishment plans. Things will be moving slowly and deliberately as we want to do it right the first time.

I have also asked the Steeple Committee to keep us all informed on a monthly basis as to their progress. Later, they will have a weekly update. There will be some inconveniences during construction for all of us but it won't be more than the summer months. ■

by Marion Petersen, Moderator

FCC Enjoys Music and Leadership of Soloists

Soloists Gary Back, Roger Jacobi, Dulcy Miller and Patty Kostreva have been with the First Congregational Church Choir a combined total of more than 50 years! That's longevity of soloists that not many choirs can claim. In addition, all have also become members. So - here's a little information about the leaders who help bring such beautiful music to our Worship Service each Sunday.

Gary Back, bass, has been with the choir for eleven years. He is also a School Librarian at West Allis Central High School. Gary said that he is impressed with the level of involvement of members to keep two full choirs going all year long. He attributes this to the leadership and motivation of Lee Jacobi, choir director.

Gary is also involved in Church Street Singers and is a former member of the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus and Chamber Singers. Interestingly enough, Gary - although having graduated with a music degree and teaching music -

didn't start singing until he was over 40. He had only been singing two years when he started at FCC.

Roger Jacobi, tenor, started 20 years ago at the same time as brother Lee. Roger works for Tax Air Freight, Inc., is married (wife Kathryn), and has three children: Julia, 15; Ryan, 12; and Phillip, 7. Roger said he enjoys his work with the choir because the performance standards are very high, especially for a church choir. Some of the other music organizations he has been involved with include the Wisconsin Conservatory Chamber Choir, the Symphony Chorus, and the Bach Chamber Choir Orchestra. Roger said that another reason he has stayed with First Congregational Church is that after performing as a paid soloist at a number of other churches, he really enjoyed the Order of Worship, the congregation and church as a whole here at FCC.

Dulcy Miller, alto, is on her ninth year at FCC. She works as an elementary general music teacher in Oak Creek. She is also a member of Church Street Singers. Dulcy said she really enjoys working with Lee Jacobi and Betty Dethmers. "Lee has a way of teaching while he is also directing us," said Dulcy. She also likes the variety of music and the camaradery.

Patty Kostreva, soprano, is married (husband Mark), has a one-year-old daughter Olivia and is expecting their second child in August. Patty works for Whittier Elementary School in Waukesha as a music teacher. "After singing kids songs all day, it's a nice change of pace to sing good adult music," said Patty. She said she really enjoys working with the other people in the choir.

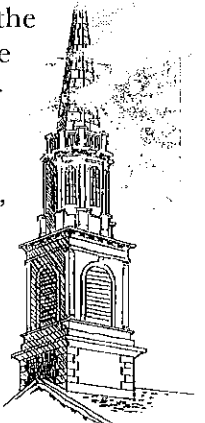
We thank each of these people for their years of leadership and help to keep hearing them for many more years to come. ■

Steeple Committee Continues on Schedule As Fund Raising Goal is Attained

The "Restoring Our Heritage" fund raising campaign has exceeded the goal of \$300,000. Special congratulations are in order for the members of this congregation that rose to the challenge of creating the necessary funding for restoring our church. At the center of the restoration project is the steeple. The steeple committee, along with the Selzer-Orust Company, is progressing on schedule with the restoration project. A building permit is being secured and all details of the project are being carefully reviewed and scheduled for work. It is presently anticipated that the actual restoration work will span a three month period of time. With the interest and enthusiasm of the members of our congregation, the optional lighting of the steeple is being carefully reviewed and added.

We rejoice in the interest and support of this project. As we continue towards the actual restoration work, it is the hope of the steeple committee that our membership continues to take a special interest and pride in the heritage and symbols of our faith. ■

by Gale Tanger



MARCH 1996

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Event notices and reminders may be dropped in the Newsletter mailbox for inclusion in the Calendar.</p>					<p>8:30, 4-15: St. Vincent Meal Program 9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10 am: Artists' Group 6:30: Russ/Ukrain Adoption</p>	<p>8:45 am: Meet to carpool to Habitat for Humanity</p>
<p>8:40, 10:40 am: Chapel Communion 9 & 11 am: Worship Svc., Sunday School, Nursery 10 am: Jr. Choir, Coffee Hr., Primer/Prayer 3:30: Blue/Gold Dinner</p> <p>3</p>	<p>7:00: Bd/Fellowship, Bd/Christian Ed. 8:00: Alcoholics Anon.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>9 am: Retired Men's Club, Bible Study Flwshp. 9:30 am: Communion 7:00: Bd/Deacons, Boy Scouts</p> <p>5</p>	<p>6:45 am: Breakfast 9:30 am: Moms' Group 11 am: Circle 12 12 noon: Lunch 4:45: Pre-PF 6:00: Supper, Jr/Sr PF 6:30: Program 7:30: Communion</p> <p>6</p>	<p>6:45 Pilgrim Choir 7:00: Boy/Cub Scout Roundtable 7:30: Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir</p> <p>7</p>	<p>9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10 am: Artists' Group</p> <p>8</p>	<p>All Day - McDowell Music Club</p> <p>9</p>
<p>9 & 11 am: Worship Svc., Sunday School, Nursery, Jr. Choir, Coffee Hour, Primer/Prayer 6:00: Cov. Class I 7:00: Cov. Class II</p> <p>10</p>	<p>10 am: Senior Women 7:00: Bd/Trustees, Bd/Benevolence 8:00: Alcoholics Anon.</p> <p>11</p>	<p>9 am: Bible Study Flwshp. 9:30 am: Communion 11 am: Tosa Ministerial Association 7:00: Resolve, Boy Scouts</p> <p>12</p>	<p>6:45 am: Breakfast 9:30 am: Moms' Group 11:30 am: DAR 12 noon: Lunch 6:00: Supper, Jr/Sr PF 6:30: Program 7:30: Bd/Stew., Moms, Communion</p> <p>13</p>	<p>6:45 Pilgrim Choir 7:30: Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir</p> <p>14</p>	<p>10 am: Artists' Group 9:15 am: Harmony Singers</p> <p>15</p>	<p>9:00 am: Congregational Care Retreat, "Dealing with Grief and Loss"</p> <p>16</p>
<p>8:15 am: Jr. Choir 9 & 11 am: Worship Svc., (New Members) Sunday School, Nursery 10 am: Coffee Hour, Primer/Prayer 7:00: Peay Installation</p> <p>17</p>	<p>8:00: Alcoholics Anon.</p> <p>18</p>	<p>9 am: Retired Men's Club, Bible Study Flwshp. 9:30 am: Communion 7:00: Boy Scouts 7:30: Quilters</p> <p>19</p>	<p>6:45 am: Breakfast 9:30 am: Moms' Group 12 noon: Lunch 6:00: Supper, Jr/Sr PF 6:30: Program 7:30: Communion</p> <p>20</p>	<p>5:30: Steeple Committee 6:45 Pilgrim Choir 7:30: Handbell Choir, Chancel Choir</p> <p>21</p>	<p>9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10 am: Artists' Group</p> <p>22</p>	<p>7:30-4:30: Young Artists</p> <p>23</p>
<p>24 9 & 11 am: Worship Svc. Sun Schl, Nursery, Primer/Prayer 10 am: Coffee Hr., 9 & 11 am: Worship Svc., 6:00: Cov. I Sun Schl, Nursery 7:00: Cov. II Primer/Prayer Member Orientation</p> <p>-31</p>	<p>8:00: Alcoholics Anon.</p> <p>25</p>	<p>9 am: Retired Men's Board Meeting, Bible Study Flwshp. 9:30 am: Communion 7:00: Church Council Boy Scouts</p> <p>26</p>	<p>6:45 am: Breakfast 9:30 am: Moms' Group 12 noon: Lunch 6:00: Supper, Jr/Sr PF 6:30: Program 7:30: Communion</p> <p>27</p>	<p>6:45 Pilgrim Choir 7:30: Handbell Choir, Chancel Choir</p> <p>28</p>	<p>9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10 am: Artists' Group</p> <p>29</p>	<p>8:45 am: Meet to carpool to Habitat for Humanity 9:00 am: "Dealing with Stress, Crisis, and How to Refer" 12:00: Bd/Cong Care</p> <p>30</p>

Neighborhood Dinners

Earlier this fall, with the assistance of the Board of Christian Fellowship and Ddg Wakefield, a new project to facilitate fellowship among members of our Church Family was launched. Since Lonnie and Mercedes Richardson and/or Steve Peay participate in each group's first dinner, the project also provides an opportunity to get to know them in a small group setting.

Working from her volunteer database, Ddg supplied the names of those willing to host neighborhood dinners to David Karcher of the Board of Christian Fellowship. Potential hosts then received a letter of instructions, two potential dates for their dinner and a list of names of people to invite. The only

criteria to get on an invitation list was having the same zip code as the volunteer hosts. While compiling the lists, Dave Karcher said he and Ddg were surprised to discover the extent to which our membership has grown beyond the boundaries of Wauwatosa.

The hosts select the dinner format (such as potluck) and invite guests from the list supplied. After the first meeting, it is up to the group to decide whether to continue to meet, where to meet and how often.

About four or five groups managed to meet during the Fall. Denise O'Meara hosted the first dinner which was attended by Steve Peay and eight others. Denise says a good

time was had by all. Their group has no plans at this time to meet again.

More groups are planning their first meetings now through Spring. If you are invited to a neighborhood dinner, consider what a wonderful opportunity it would be to meet fellow church members and neighbors you might not otherwise get to know. If you have not yet been invited to a dinner, don't feel neglected! Chances are that no one in your immediate area volunteered to host a dinner. If you would like to be a host, contact Ddg Wakefield at the church office - 258-7375. ■

by René Klumb

The Number of New Members is Building Excitement in First Congregational Church!

Since Rev. Lonnie Richardson began his position as Senior Minister this past summer, one of his initial areas of focus was membership development - and it has really stepped up!

One of the changes is that new members are now received every other month rather than only twice per year. To be sure no one who is interested in membership slips through the cracks, a process has been developed (and is still being refined) to formally welcome visitors and invite them to learn about membership. In addition, Ddg Wakefield's position title has now changed to "Coordinator of Membership," and she is the staff person who oversees much of this responsibility.

When non-members come to a service and sign the pew pad, Margie Idzikowski makes a list of names with addresses and phone numbers if the people have left that information. The visitors then receive a letter from Lonnie. From there, the names are faxed to Julie Strandt, chairperson of the Membership Committee. Julie calls each of the people on the list, then faxes information (relating to whether they may be interested in membership) back to Ddg. If the person returns for another service, Ddg then sends a letter giving them information about the membership classes.

The classes consist of four sessions: "What Brings Us to This Place?" led by Lonnie; "Historic Christian Faith," led by Steve; "A People of

God in Action," led by Lonnie; and "An Invitation and Opportunity," led by Ddg. Ddg and Julie try to attend as many of the classes as possible. Members are received the following month. New members are then invited and encouraged to attend the next all-church dinner. Ddg said the ultimate goal is to get the new members involved!

While Ddg refers to this process as "a work in progress," we have seen a resurgence in the number of new members - especially young new members which is very exciting for the future of this church.

Let's all continue to do our best extending the hand of fellowship to visitors and we'll have a trend that won't end! ■

February 25, 1996

In Brief

Rev. Bob Wilch,

Interim Senior Minister prior to Rev. Richardson, is now serving as the part-time Interim Chaplain at Congregational Home.

The Editor Thanks:

René Klumb and Sally Wells for articles; Lec Jacobi for photography; and the office staff for their assistance.

Attitude

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life.

Attitude, to me is more important than facts.

It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than success, than what other people think or say or do.

It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill.

*It will make or break a company...
a church...a home."*

~ Charles Swindoll

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