

# CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

March 30, 1997

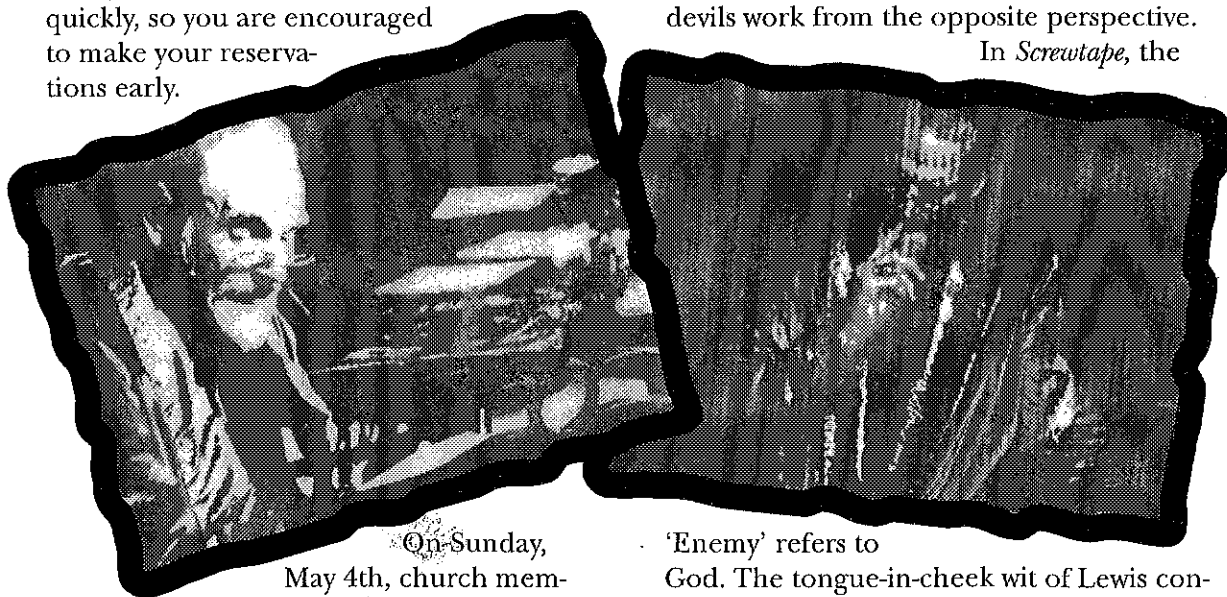
## Ron Smeenge to Present "The Screwtape Letters" and "Pilgrim's Progress" at First Church

On Saturday, May 3, and Sunday, May 4, 1997, First Congregational Church is honored to present performances by Christian dramatist, Ron Smeenge. Saturday, May 3, Smeenge will deliver his performance adapted from the C.S. Lewis book, "The Screwtape Letters," as part of a dinner theatre. The cost of attendance is \$12.50 per person and is limited to 100 reservations. This presentation is expected to fill quickly, so you are encouraged to make your reservations early.

He recommends this presentation for adults only and also urges that one read the (short) book by Lewis to more fully comprehend and appreciate the presentation.

For those unfamiliar with *Screwtape* it is a series of letters from a senior tempter of hell to his young protégé as they try to work their way into the life of a 'patient' (who could be any one of us.) It is a look at how devils work from the opposite perspective.

In *Screwtape*, the



On Sunday, May 4th, church members will be treated to a special service as Smeenge brings John Bunyan's classic allegory, "Pilgrim's Progress," to life, depicting several characters from the story as part of both Sunday worship services.

The play based on Lewis' "Screwtape Letters" is a new production for Smeenge.

'Enemy' refers to God. The tongue-in-cheek wit of Lewis conveys in dramatic and lucid form an insight into the wiles of the devil himself. From the preface of Lewis' book, the following words may also serve as an appropriate preface to the presentation:

*"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to*

*(continued on page 5)*

# Mark and Sue Melby – Actively Involved as Leaders at FCC

Mark and Sue Melby joined First Congregational Church approximately ten years ago. They enjoy the freedom and fellowship of Congregationalism. They also thoroughly enjoy the leadership and educational opportunities Lonnie and Steve have brought to the church. Mark and Sue have been actively involved, accepting leadership roles. Mark is presently a Deacon and Sue, formerly a chairperson of Stewardship, has accepted the chairmanship of Benevolences for the coming church year. Sue's father and his wife, Rod & Cathy Schmidt, and sisters, Karen and Sandra, are also members of the church.

Sue was born and raised in the Tosa area and even though she was not a member of our church, she attended PF meetings. Before joining First Congregational, Mark and Sue were Lutherans. They met in Madison while attending UW. Their romance began in the Dane County Coliseum in 1982. Mark was equipment field manager for the UW hockey team and Sue played clarinet in the marching band. Contact was made when Sue asked for a signature on a hockey puck. Mark and Sue married in 1984.

In 1982, Sue graduated with a B.A. in Marketing and began her first job as a buyer with Kohl's Department Stores. After giving ten years to the retail business, she got her real estate license. Sue is a loan originator with CTX Mortgage in Brookfield. Mark graduated from UW in 1983 with a BA in Communication Arts. He is a customer service representative for Schreiber Specialties in Sussex.

Schreiber's business is dye embossing and foil stamping for the printing industry. Mark's work experience has always been in the printing business, although he enjoys the finishing aspects of the business he is involved in at Schreiber the most.



Sue and Mark Melby

When Sue attended a summer band camp at UW, before becoming a member, she decided she needed to become more physically fit. Being a member of the marching band kept her in shape in college; and today she rises at 5:00 a.m. in order to run the 30 to 35 miles she likes to do each week. Sue also does aerobics and swims at the Highlander. During the summer months she bikes. Mark on the other hand, likes to sleep through Sue's early morning runs and saves his energy for racquetball. During the summer months they play golf and Mark plays on the church softball team. The UW Badgers have two very loyal fans in Mark and Sue.

Together they travel to all the away football games, their goal being to cheer on the Badgers in all the Big Ten University football stadiums - only two more to go. They also have season tickets to all the UW basketball games.

Menomonee Falls has been their home for seven years. Mark and Sue like to 'camp' during the summer in their 25-foot travel trailer visiting Wisconsin State Parks with their two dachshunds, Cally and Hrudey, named after a goaltender for the L.A. Kings. They are active, interesting people. First Congregational is fortunate to have Mark and Sue Melby in their membership. ■

by Sandy Rose

## CONGREGATIONAL COLUMNS

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# April 27 Service to Focus on Worship Through Music

On April 27 the people of First Congregational Church will have an experience of worship that is, at once, both new and old. Last year the congregation was treated to a magnificent presentation of Mozart's *Missa Brevis* sung as a concert piece by our choirs. This April the choirs will present a setting of the liturgy by Haydn, but within the context of the church's communion service. The service will follow the outline found in the Pilgrim Hymnal, but the various responses will be sung by the choir using Haydn's music. While this is new to our experience, it is at once very old.

Christian worship evolved from the service of the synagogue and the experience of the Jewish Passover celebration. The combination of these two gave rise to the traditional Christian emphasis upon worship by means of WORD (the reading of Scripture and preaching) and SACRAMENT (the sharing of the Lord's Supper). The two parts of the LITURGY ("people's work") came to be known as that of the

'Word' or 'Catechumens' (meaning that people preparing for baptism could attend) and that of the 'Eucharist' or 'Faithful' (the first meaning 'thanksgiving' and the second for baptized believers). Or, as someone has characterized Christian worship: "gather the folks, tell the story, break the bread."

While the Puritans placed stress on simplicity in worship, emphasizing readings of Scripture with explanation,) singing only Psalm texts without musical accompaniment, extemporaneous prayer and a very long sermon,) the earliest experiences still had Word and Sacrament as its norm. Later, there would be developments – including the less frequent serving of the Lord's Supper – which would become the common experience of most in Protestant Churches in the United States.

Toward the middle of the nineteenth century there would be a surge of scholarship, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, which would lead to a revival of interest in liturgical study

and worship. The Congregational Church was among those participating in this revival. For example, the formulation of the current hymnal and the redesign of our meeting house's chancel reflect this scholarship. The effect of the 1957 merger, along with other factors, served to slow the effect of this movement in some sectors.

The April 27 service will use a combined choir of approximately 30 voices, along with the organ, two violins, and a cello. Director Lee Jacobi describes the music as 'beautiful' and 'refreshing.' He welcomes the opportunity to have music serve as the backbone of the worship service rather than treating it like a concert piece. It is hoped that this experience of worship will be a positive one for members and friends of our congregation. Together we seek to worship, as the Psalmist writes, "in the beauty of holiness." ■

*Rev. Steven A. Peay, Ph.D.*

## A Word From Lonnie...

### The Source of Your Value

The amount people were willing to pay for items at the estate auction of Jackie Kennedy Onassis surprised many. A worn footstool went for \$33, 350 and a silver tape measure sold for \$48, 875. The first night's highest price was for a walnut tobacco humidor that had belonged to President Kennedy. It sold for \$574, 500. Many items auctioned were common; they became valuable because of whom they had belonged to.

The Bible reminds us of whom we belong to. We belong to the Lord. Whenever you question your worth remember that regardless of how you feel you are still God's person. You are God's creation. You are created in the image of God. Your value is in your connection. Remember who and whose you are and the price God paid for you through Jesus the Christ. ■

*In Him,  
Lonnie*

# Special Easter Offering

Our Easter offering will be split this year and will be given to two missions - one foreign and one domestic. The two missions the Board of Benevolence has chosen are the Honduran Mission and the Hope House of Milwaukee.

Our recent trip to Honduras led us to some great needs of the mission. First and foremost is the need for a full time doctor. On a daily basis, as early as 7 am, young mothers and their children would line up for medical assistance. Every extra hour we can employ the doctor gives 4-5 children the chance to receive the medical attention they so desperately need. Secondly, the need for a dental clinic is also great. They have the space already available to them to set up the clinic. At this time, they have no dental care at all and the Honduran task force feels this would be beneficial if for no other reason than to teach oral hygiene. Lastly, we would like to help them set up a simple lab with equipment such as a microscope and other basic necessities. Medical supply instruments for the doctor like stethoscopes, blood pressure equipment, thermometers, etc. are also needed. All of these things will help the people of the mission and the surrounding neighborhood.

The other half of our Easter offering will be sent to local beneficiary, the Hope House. This organization is a settlement house located on Milwaukee's near south side. It provides shelter, food and basic social services to about 2,000 homeless women, children and men annually. Historically, 30% of their homeless population are children - the innocent victims of homelessness. The Hope House guests, usually staying an average of 12 days, face homelessness due to income problems or they are fleeing a violent and/or domestic abuse situations. Last year, the Hope House had to turn away 119 women and 1,672 men.

Besides providing emergency shelter, the Hope House provides immunizations and well-child care. For preschool children, they provide a daily child-care program. The Youth Education Center at the house provides children with after school tutoring to reinforce their learning and enhance their basic skills.

The Hope House needs financial support for its operation, and donated goods for its guests. They can use toiletries, linens, food, cleaning supplies, school supplies, kitchen items, household items and clothing. Hope House is located at 209 W. Orchard Street. ■

# Health Spot

Attention all sun-worshippers! Heading south for spring break or some leisure time on the beach? **DON'T FORGET YOUR SUN-SCREEN!**

Not only will sunscreens be your allies against future skin cancers - but they can also help prevent skin damages which in turn leads to skin wrinkling, "leathering" and



sagging. As a guide when buying sunscreens or sun blocks, watch for information on sun protection for about four hours. Higher SPF numbers provide longer protection. Then be sure to use the cream or lotion properly, to provide the best protection:



1. Apply enough. Use roughly an ounce of cream or lotion to cover all exposed skin.
2. Rub it on preferably 30 minutes before going out into the sun. This enables the skin to absorb it more fully.
3. Reapply periodically if you're going to be out in the sun for long periods, and reapply after swimming.

But remember, even with sunscreen, unlimited sun-bathing is never advisable. Protect yourself with hats, clothing and sun glasses, and avoid sun during the mid-day hours of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. In years to come you'll be glad you did! ■

*Dr. Roger Laubenheimer*

## Connect with God at First Congregational Church This Easter.

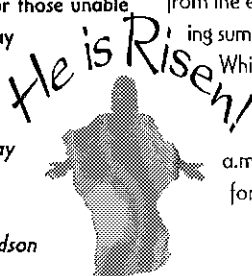
Saturday, March 29 10:00 a.m. for those unable to attend the crowded Easter Sunday services

### Easter Day:

7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service-Rev. Peay  
9:00 & 11:00 Worship

### Easter Message:

From Despair to Hope, Rev. Richardson



## Plan to Attend EASTER BREAKFAST

The Junior High Pilgrim Fellowship will sponsor the 1997 Easter Breakfast. The money they earn from the event will help cover the costs of attending summer camp, July 20-26 at Camp Whitcomb-Mason.

Breakfast will be served 8:00-11:00 a.m. Tickets will be sold at the door: \$4.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children.

# Smeenge Dramatic Presentations (continued)

believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.

Readers are advised to remember that the devil is a liar. Not everything that Screwtape says should be assumed to be true even from his own angle."

## *Pilgrim's Progress*

Ronald C. Smeenge has brought John Bunyan's classic allegory to life in this unique one-person drama more than 120 times. He has presented



this piece at churches/seminars representing more than 24 different denominations. In presenting this 17th century narrative of salvation-as-journey, Smeenge steps into the role of many of its vivid and enduring characters. Second only to the Bible in publication, *Pilgrim's Progress* gave the world a lasting cultural contribution in concretely carved figures like Christian Pilgrim, Faithful, Giant Despair, as well as immediately recognizable settings like Doubting Castle, the Slough of Despond, and Vanity Fair.

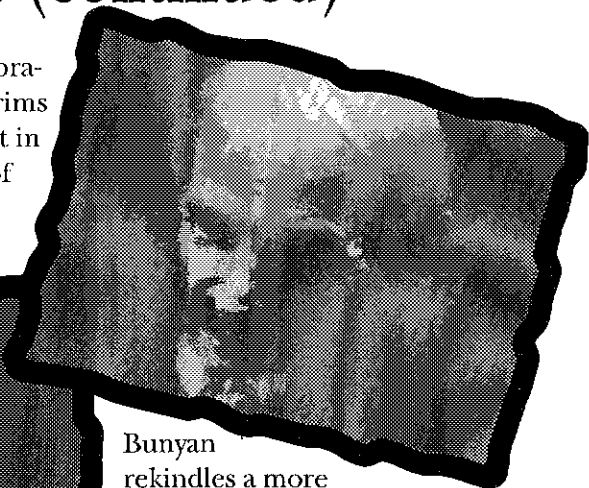
The work not only swept England's reading public but favorably impressed and influenced many leading authors of its own and later centuries. No small achievement for an unschooled itinerant preacher belonging to a religious movement (Congregationalism) so out of favor that he began his writing career in a jail cell!

The recent tercentennial celebration of the publication of *Pilgrim's Progress* has rekindled interest in John Bunyan. A special issue of *Christian History* and symposiums in England and the U.S.



give evidence that our age is taking another look at this Nonconformist preacher and his role in the volatile religious climate of his age.

For Smeenge, a retired minister from Ann Arbor, Michigan, performing



Bunyan rekindles a more personal interest. He first presented excerpts of *Pilgrim's Progress* forty years ago in a senior recital as a speech major at Marion College (now Indiana Wesleyan University.) "This fulfills a long standing dream of reintroducing this classic. Having now experienced some of the ventures Bunyan suggests in the story, I have a new perspective of the allegory," said Smeenge. ■

## Care Board Needs Volunteers

Would you like to volunteer some time to something which gives you a tremendous amount of satisfaction for your efforts? The Congregational Care Board is overflowing with opportunities - Bereavement, Shut-Ins and Prayer Ministries just to name a few. Over the next months, the *Columns* will have articles about many of these caring ministries - this month we'll focus on the St. Vincent's Meal Program.

The first Friday of each month, our church prepares, delivers and serves meals for the St. Vincent program. Meals are served to anywhere from 250-600 people of all ages. The area where help is needed is in serving; 16-20 people are needed each month.

Since so many volunteers are needed each month, it's very helpful when an entire group volunteers for a month. It's also a great family activity because children can be just as helpful as adults with this ministry. Individuals are just as welcome to help, however.

Currently, there are volunteers in place for the next couple months. But as you are planning your Fall schedules, talk to your Girl Scout Troop, Board, Committee, or discussion group about volunteering some time to help with this very worthy project. ■

# APRIL 1997

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9 & 11: Worship Service, Sunday School, Nursery 10:00 am: Coffee Hour, New Member Orientation, Computer Task Force 5:30: Covenant Class I 7:00: Covenant Class II <b>6</b>	10:00 am: Sr. Orchestra 12:00: Heritage Garden Club 7:00: Bd/ Fellowship, Bd/ Christian Ed. 8:00: Alcoholics Anon. <b>7</b>	9:00 am: Retired Men 9:30 am: Staff Commun. 7:00: Bd/ Deacons, Master Singers, Boy Scouts <b>1</b>	11:00: Circle 12 7:00: Weight Loss, Twin Blessed Moms <b>2</b>	2:00: Spirituality Class <b>3</b>	8:30, 4:15: St. Vincent Meal Prep., Serving Singers 9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10:00 am: Artists' Group <b>4</b>	8:45 am: Carpool to Habitat for Humanity <b>5</b>
9 & 11: Worship Service, Sunday School, Nursery 10:00 am: Coffee Hour, New Member Orientation, Computer Task Force 5:30: Covenant Class I 7:00: Covenant Class II <b>6</b>	10:00 am: Sr. Orchestra 12:00: Heritage Garden Club 7:00: Bd/ Fellowship, Bd/ Christian Ed. 8:00: Alcoholics Anon. <b>7</b>	9:00 am: Bible Study Fellowship 9:30 am: Staff Commun. 7:00: Bd/Stewardship, Resolve, Boy Scouts, Master Singers, Tosa Hist. Society <b>8</b>	9:30 am: Young Moms 4:00: Pre PF 6:30: Jr/Sr PF <b>9</b>	12:00: Brown Bag Lunch 2:00: Spirituality Class 6:00 Junior Choir 6:45: Pilgrim Choir 7:00: BS/CS Roundtables, 7:30: Handbell Choir 7:55: Chancel Choir <b>10</b>	9:15: Harmony Singers 10:00 am: Artists' Group <b>11</b>	8:30 am: MacDowell Music Club 9:00 am: Mortarboard Club <b>12</b>
10 & 12: Blood Pressure Screening 9 & 11: Worship Services, Sunday School, Nursery. 10:00 am: Coffee Hour, New Member Orientation <b>13</b>	10 am: Sr. Women, Senior Orchestra 7:00: Bd/ Trustees, Bd/ Benevolence 8:00: Alcoholics Anon. <b>14</b>	9 am: Retired Men's Club, Bible Study Fellowship 9:30 am: Staff Comm. 7:00: Scouts, Resolve, Mstr. Singers, Neighbor. Book 7:30: Bd/Cong. Care, Quilters <b>15</b>	9:00 am: Young Moms 6:30: Jr/Sr PF 7:00: Weight Loss <b>16</b>	6:00: Junior Choir 6:45: Pilgrim Choir 7:30: Handbell Choir 7:55: Chancel Choir <b>17</b>	9:15: Harmony Singers 10:00: Artists' Group <b>18</b>	8:00 am: Resolve <b>19</b>
9 & 11 am: Worship Svc., Sunday School, Nursery 10:00: Coffee Hour, New Member Orientation, Church Choir <b>20</b>	10 am: Senior Orchestra 7:00: Circle 9 8:00: Alcoholics Anon. <b>21</b>	9 am: Retired Men's Club Bible Study Fellowship 9:30: Staff Communion 7:00: Church Council meets at Cong. Home, Master Singers, Boy Scouts <b>22</b>	9:00 am: Young Moms 6:30: Jr/Sr PF <b>23</b>	12:00: Brown Bag Lunch 2:00: Spirituality Class 6:00: Junior Choir 6:45: Pilgrim Choir 7:30: Handbells 7:55: Chancel Choir <b>24</b>	9:15 am: Harmony Singers 10:00: Artists' Group <b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
9 & 11 am: Worship Serv. w/ Special Music, Communion, Sunday School, Nursery 10 am: Coffee Hour, New Member Orientation, Cherub Choir 6:00: Cov. Class I 7:10: Cov. Class II <b>27</b>	10 am: Senior Orchestra 8:00: Alcoholics Anonymous <b>28</b>	9 am: Bible Study Fellowship 9:30: Staff Communion 7:00: Master Singers, Boy Scouts <b>29</b>	9:00 am: Young Moms 6:30: Jr/Sr PF <b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>

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# Patience, Please – Work in Progress

## Social Hall

For the next several weeks the Social Hall will be in a mess of some sort. The windows and heating system are installed and now the ceiling has been removed. Before the new ceiling can be installed the wiring will be updated where necessary. Then the lighting fixtures can be put in place, walls need to be repaired where the old radiators were, and painting will be done. All of these projects need to be coordinated so that they are done in the right order and different workmen are not trying to work in areas at the same time. Finally the floor will be refinished, if necessary, and the new window treatment will be hung.

We hope to have most of the work done before the dinner/theater in early May and the entire project completed by the end of May. Some

groups have been unable to meet in the Social Hall recently and those that have met there have found it to be somewhat inconvenient. This will end soon, thanks for being understanding.

We also need to remember that this is one of the projects that is being funded by the Restore Our Heritage Campaign. If you have chosen to pay for this over the two year period of time, please remember to continue your payments. This is the final project in the very successful campaign.

## Boiler Repairs

Have you noticed a banging sound during the worship service? It's one of the more noticeable aspects, indicative of the many problems with the church boiler. The present boiler in our church was installed in

1954; then converted from an oil/gas system to strictly gas several years ago. Over the past years, maintenance has been deferred on this system and it is now time for some long overdue work. Some safety valves have already been replaced to comply with city codes. In addition, the fire tubes will all be replaced (which should extend the life of the boiler another 20-30 years), the traps need to be replaced (a project Roy will complete himself this summer,) and a new vacuum pump will replace the current pump (currently completely inoperable.)

The total cost for boiler work will total approximately \$15,500, but will help pay for itself through a much more efficient system. It is also the preferred choice to completely replacing the boiler - a project that would cost \$100,000. ■

## Search is On for Person to Fill Children's Ministry Position

The search has begun for someone to fill the Children's Ministry position. This person will be in charge of Sunday School classes, children's worship, and additionally, weekday ministries for children. Rev. Steve Peay sees this position as the last necessary link for a total ministry of complete "Christian Formation."

The philosophy and objectives of Christian Education, as outlined by our Board of Christian Education this past year can be well summarized by some thoughts from William Ellery Channing.

*"The great end in religious instruction, whether in Sunday School or family, is not to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own; not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own;...not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules, which rest on no foundation but our word and will, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment, so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is everlastingly right and good..."*

Currently, the Personnel Committee is looking closely at three possible candidates for the position and hopes to have someone in place by mid-summer. This position is envisioned as a lay ministry position.

As we study the dramatic increase in attendance in the nursery as well as the young Sunday School classes, it appears that throughout the next few years we will be experiencing a dramatic growth in the number of children needing ministry programs. Attendance in the younger classes is approximately double that of the older classes. The timing is perfect to welcome someone into this exciting, growing position. As the search narrows, more news will be provided. ■

# In Brief

## The Weight Loss Group

will resume meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month beginning April 2. The meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Lounge. For those interested in taking a walk, come at 6:30. If weather is conducive, we'll walk outside, otherwise, we'll walk the church halls. This half-hour walk will become an optional part of our regular meetings.

On **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16**, our parish nurse, **Michelle Jackson** will be our guest speaker. Anyone is welcome to come hear Michelle talk about healthy eating, exercise, etc.

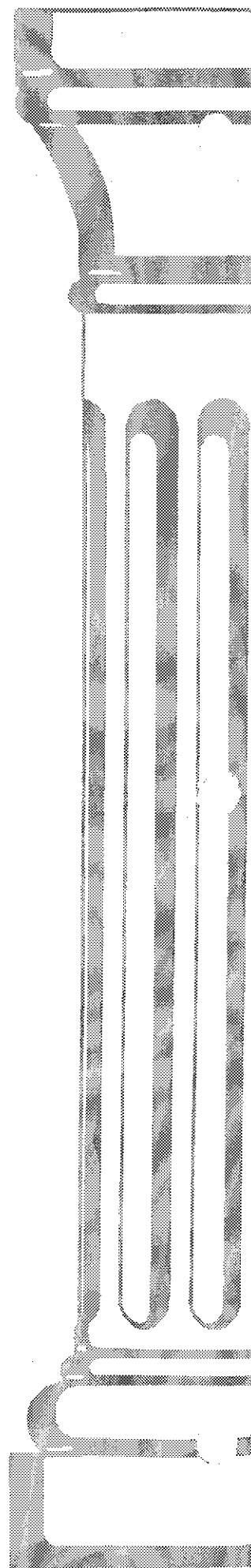
## The Editor Thanks:

Sandy Rose, Mark Boettcher and Stephen Houriet for articles; and the office staff for their assistance.

# Our Church Family

## Ladies

Mark your calendar for April 15 when the Congregational Home Auxiliary will hold its annual Strawberry Luncheon and Fashion Show. For more information, please phone Jan Jacobs, 782-8391.



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