



First Congregational Church

Different Paths. Same Journey.

**Annual Report
for
Annual Meeting of 2010**

**April 10, 2011
12:00 p.m.**

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
160th ANNUAL MEETING - APRIL 10, 2011**

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Jessie Fuller

Susan Grant

Robert Haase

Clifford Larson

Mary Wildman

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN – April 25, 2010

Moderator Maria Talin called the 159th Annual Meeting of First Congregational Church to order at 12:00 noon.

Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder led us in prayer, using the prayer they offered at the opening of Tuesday's session of the Wisconsin State Assembly, at the invitation of Rep. Gordon Hintz. The prayer was offered in honor of civil rights leader Dorothy Height and Gaylord Nelson, founder of Earth Day.

The Annual Reports booklet with reports of Officers and Ministry Groups for the 2009-2010 year was distributed. Minutes of the 2009 Annual Meeting and the Congregational Meeting of May 17, 2009, were approved as printed.

Election of Officers and Ministry Group Members

Slate of officers and nominations to various ministry groups for 2010-2011 was distributed. Motion made/seconded (Thatcher Peterson/Lurton Blassingame) to elect those nominated. Motion carried. Officers and Ministry Groups members for 2010-2011 are:

Officers: Maria Talin, Moderator; _____, Moderator-Elect;
Mary Beth Bossert, Treasurer; Susan Coghill, Clerk

Worship Ministry Group: Dave Elbing, Kathy Chapman, Carl Chapman,
Corinne Saidla, Jack Frohn

Music Ministry Group: Susan Leonard, Cathy Wille, Jim Grine, Barb Ziblut, *Pat Inch*

Church School Ministry Group: Lorie Hadel, Corinne Saidla, McKenna Hadel,
Val Williams, Jeff Sauerberg, Sarah Kaprelian

Youth Ministry Group: Terry Thomas, Rebecca Briski, Tracie Schlaak,
Stacey Otto, Lillian Heft, Kristin Hartman

Adult Education Ministry Group: David Jones, Jennifer Norden, Gordon Hintz,
Bethany Jorenby, Cheryl Hentz, Barb Strand, Vicki Sheehan

Benevolence Ministry Group: Ann Marshall, Deanie Minniear, Nancy Norgord,
Anne Romond, Chris Tower, Sue Elbing, John Sheehan

Social Concerns Ministry Group: *Lydia Sanders*

New Member Development Ministry Group: Carolyn Blassingame, Cynthia Thorpe,
Dorry Wilner, Lorie Yaste-Zajicek, Becky Gratz, Ron Harrell,
Joe Wiedenmeier, Cheryl Hentz, Lee Fenandael

Fellowship Ministry Group: Chris Baganz, Tom Hallquist, Amy Smith, Kitty Day,
Vonnie Cushman, Karen Bowen

Finance Ministry Group: Kathy Jameson (Ex Officio), Eric Kropp, Mary Beth Bossert
(Treasurer), Dennis Kavanaugh, Chris Laufer, *John Oman, Sr.*

Stewardship Ministry Group: Corinne Saidla, Mary Beth Bossert, Dorry Wilner,
Jeff Puhlmann-Becker, Maria Talin, Jack Frohn (plus Finance MG Liaison)

Personnel Ministry Group: Cyndi DeVoe, Jeff Puhlmann-Becker, Lurton Blassingame,
Cynthia Thorpe, Howard Blades

Building and Grounds Ministry Group: Eric Braun, John Oman Jr., Dennis Rioux,
Bruce Thomas, *Gary Wilner*

Landscape Committee: Eric Kropp, Jen Stellpflug, Lisa Wesenberg, Dorry Wilner,
Carolyn Blassingame

Memorial Committee: Ann Marshall, Maria Talin, Dorothy Unger, Deanie Minniear,
Dixie Laehn

Pastor/Congregation Relations Committee: Maria Talin (Moderator), Liz Kaprelian,
Tracie Schlaak, Tom Zak, Dennis Kavanaugh, Shelly Rutz

Teaching and Learning Coordinator/Congregation Relations Committee:
Lorie Hadel, Chris Laufer, Deb Nelson, Bruce Abraham, Bethany Jorenby
(plus Moderator-Elect)

Library Committee: Carol Ann Henkle, Joyce Frohn

Women's Fellowship Representative to Ministry Council: Karen LaBorde

Names in italics are new members. Moderator-elect will be elected at a future meeting.

Co-Pastors' Compensation

Jeff Puhlmann-Becker, Facilitator of Personnel Ministry Group, distributed the Proposed 2010 Compensation package for the co-pastors. There was no increase during 2009; an increase of about 2% is proposed for 2010. Motion made/seconded (Thatcher Peterson/Lurton Blassingame) to approve the Co-Pastors' Compensation as presented. Motion carried.

Moderator Maria Talin expressed thanks to the Ministry Groups and new officers for their good work in the past year. Special thanks to Treasurer Mary Beth Bossert for her work on church finances. Many people are serving our church in these challenging and rewarding times.

Co-Pastors Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder:

Ralph led us in a time of remembrance for those who died in the last year.

Thanks expressed to church staff, officers and Ministry Groups, especially Jeff Puhlmann-Becker for his services during last year's sabbatical.

Carol announced a special workshop on May 4, facilitated by Cathy Wille, on Leadership during these challenging times. Centennial of our Sanctuary to be celebrated during 2011 (actual dedication was January 1912). Sanctuary will be painted this summer in advance of Centennial events.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Beth Bossert commented on financial statements in report booklet. A budget deficit in 2010 is projected. Transfer of some funds to Oshkosh Area Community Foundation is underway.

Highlights of 2009 at FCC: Power Point presentation by Jodi Braun, narrated by Maria Talin.

Some highlights: Adoption of Open and Affirming statement, beginning Stephen Ministry program, increased visibility of FCC in the community, use of our building by Emmaus Catholic Community, move toward developing "Mission-Based Budget" and year-round Stewardship efforts, generous offerings for Haiti – WINR – Habitat; Taizé services. Also staff profiles.

"We are grateful for the past and look forward to the future."

100th Anniversary: Dennis Rioux, Building & Grounds MG, presented the need to patch and paint the sanctuary, replace carpeting and make repairs to the tower. This work is planned for Summer 2010, so that the sanctuary will be in good condition for our 100th Anniversary celebrations. Some funds are available from reserves for this project; additional funding will be sought from the congregation.

Dennis also acknowledged Jackson Medley for his many years (at least a decade) on Building & Grounds. Jackson was especially helpful with elevator issues.

Following the benediction, the meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Susan Coghill
Church Clerk

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

June 20, 2010

The meeting was called to order by moderator, Maria Talin at 10:27 a.m. It was determined that a quorum was present.

The purpose of the meeting was to present the name of Jen Morden from the Nominating committee to be elected for a one-year term as Moderator-Elect.

The moderator asked if there were any other nominations from the congregation for this office. None were offered.

A motion was made by Heidie Burnett and seconded by Jack Frohn to accept Jen Norden as Moderator-Elect. Motion passed unanimously..

Meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Ann Marshall, Secretary Pro-tem

REPORTS OF THE MODERATOR, MODERATOR ELECT, AND THE MINISTRY COUNCIL

As I finish up my term as Moderator of FCC I look back with gratitude for a congregation that is so willing to take on the tasks that are required to keep First Congregational active and relevant in today's world. Our commitment to remain a presence in downtown Oshkosh and reach out to the community has manifested itself in many ways; both in our physical structure and in programs of outreach to others.

FCC is celebrating its centennial year and has arrived at this milestone with a sanctuary facelift. Many thanks to our buildings and grounds ministry group for organizing a much needed sprucing up with new plaster, paint and carpeting. In addition the pews have been repaired and the choir room and side entrance are all looking great and the original pulpit is in place. Many thanks to those you have contributed to keep our church looking its best. We can proudly know we are entering our next hundred years with a building that is both welcoming and beautiful.

This year brought a number of personnel changes with Kay Quinney-Burnard's departure in June. An evaluation of the position progressed to the splitting of Lay Ministry Coordinator into two positions. We also had a change of administrative assistant with Diane Gibson's departure. With every change challenges present themselves as well as great opportunities.

Treasurer Mary Beth Bossert and the finance committee have been working to transition our assets to management under the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation. This is a huge change for FCC and should provide a new level of investment expertise and options for giving well into the future.

We at FCC are struggling with the same financial issues that are plaguing many churches during this fiscally troubling time. We are again ending this year with a deficit. Although that is certainly troubling we are fortunate to have substantial assets. Recognizing that this trend of deficits is not sustainable indefinitely a group has been organized. "*MONEY MATTERS: Meeting the challenge of sustaining our church in a changing world.*" This group is comprised of the Finance Ministry Group, Treasurer and representatives from Personnel and Benevolence, myself as Moderator, Moderator-Elect Jen Norden, facilitator Jodi Braun and Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder. This group is looking at our demographics, giving trends and anything that may address changes we need to consider in our giving and/or spending. This group plans to create opportunities for congregational input and some vision setting for our church as we look forward to what FCC may look like in the coming years.

First Congregational Church has continued to share its resources with the community both in terms of financial help through our benevolence giving, special offerings and outreach. FCC has giving support to the establishment of a Mosque in Oshkosh, a warming shelter, the creation of an Esther chapter and the newly formed social justice group. This is in addition to the many individual and ongoing group activities sponsored by our congregation.

We have built on what has come before – the previous one hundred years. And I think we have done a great job. The challenge is to keep our mission relevant and faith focused.

What will the next hundred years look like?

Respectfully submitted, Maria Talin, Moderator

REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

Members received by:

Confirmation	5
Affirmation	1
Reaffirmation	9
Letter of Transfer	<u>11</u>
	26

Members lost by:

Letter of Transfer	6
Death	5
Resignation	7
Ministry Council Action	<u>71</u>
	89

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – March 15, 2011: 505

Members received by Confirmation:

Molly Margaret Doherty
Frank David Heft
Nicole Ann Wojahn

Kevin Michael Frank
Sarah Lynn Kaprelian

Members received by Affirmation of Faith:

Lee Fenendael

Members received by Reaffirmation:

Al Ackerman
Crystal Mueller Boehler
Karl Boehler
Jennet Brooks
John Brooks

Amanda Hammond
Christopher Hammond
Ben Zinth
Samantha Zinth

Members received by Letter of Transfer:

Cavin Burnard
Maurene Christensen
Marilyn Fulcher
Kristine Haffeman
Ethan Kargus
Renee Larson
Mary Martin
Paul Martin *

Kathryn Rust
Nick Schneider
Brian Tokoph
Carol Williams

* Member of Winnebago
Presbytery, Friend of FCC

Members lost by Letter of Transfer:

Cavin Burnard
Amanda Prellwitz
Eric Quinney-Burnard

Kay Quinney-Burnard
Nadine Sommerfield
Richard Sommerfield

Members lost by Death:

Jessie Fuller
Susan Grant
Robert Haase

Clifford Larson
Mary Wildman

Members lost by Resignation:

Christopher Bauknecht
Andy Coghill-Behrends
Tim Coghill
Arthur Darken

Erik Leiter
Nicole Leiter
Jacquie Nonweiler

Members lost by Action of Ministry Council:

Renee Bates
Bruce Black
Becky Brillon
Kim Clabots
Bruce Darken
Kari Darken-Thompson
Kathy DeKarske
Nancy Lou Dodge
Brian Dujardin
Jill Dujardin
Aaron Dyer
Jeff Dyer
Joshua Dyer
Sara Niendorf Fotakis
Sally Gillespie
Lynn Halliburton
Chris Hallquist
Anita Harris
Jason Hochstein
Michele Hochstein
Wendy Anne Hocking
K.T. Kinsey
Paul Klemp
Jim Kurczek
Sharon Kurczek
Aaron Linenthal
Ed Linenthal
Ulla Linenthal
Mary Lohuis
Rose Mansell
Tim Mansell
Nancy Marks
Patrick McCain
Peter McCain
Cory Mendes
Joe Nadeau
Sandy Nadeau

Eric Niendorf
Nancy Nonweiler
Bob Paulson
Jim Paulson
Kris Paulson
Thomas Paulson
Diane Poe
Aerique Quella
Hilary Quella
Cory Roberts
Emily Roberts
Melissa Roberts
Michelle Robl
Kurt Rolfes
Mike Rost
Tenny Rupnick
Hope Schonscheck
Kyle Schultz
Kay Schuster
Bethany Sheveland
Chad Sheveland
Dick Spiczenski
Melissa Stinnett
Nou Thor
Patrick Tribbey
David Trickel
Marlene Trickel
Debra Troxell
Sarah Wright
Jonathan Yackel
Lisa Yackel
Ben Yapp
Kathy Yapp
Tom Yapp

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT
Calendar Year 2010
Presented at the Annual Meeting, April 10, 2011

Chris Laufer, the Finance Ministry Group Facilitator, thoroughly covered the investment changes for First Congregational Church in 2010. As he explained, we have done very well with our investments thus far, and hope to continue.

Perhaps the biggest news on the financial front at FCC, for 2010 and into the future, is the static nature of pledging. In 2010 we did collect 100+% of pledges (totaling \$286,320.99) which is wonderful. However, we still sustained a \$25,927.85 budget deficit for 2010. Although this was lower than budgeted, it is still a major concern for our future at FCC. We simply cannot sustain these types of deficits for several years and continue to function as the vibrant spiritual community that we have been and are currently. To add to the dilemma, pledging for 2011 was down over \$8,000. Although the current economic climate explains this, it is another area of concern.

To that end, we have formed the Ad hoc committee, "Money Matters," to address the changes in our world, country, community, and church in terms of giving and the sustain ability of our spiritual community in these turbulent times. We expect to have a clearer mission for our committee shortly and invite ALL interested participants to help us move forward.

In 2011, we look to start exploring additional ways of giving including planned giving through estate planning and starting acorn funds for specific purposes. Our goal is to propel FCC into the next hundred years of church life with a bright financial future.

Mary Beth Bossert
Treasurer

**First Congregational Church
BALANCE SHEET STATEMENT**

Fiscal Year 2010

ASSETS

Total Cash & Money Markets	95,542.07
Current Receivables	690.00
Prepaid Insurance & Expenses	0.00
Mutual Funds	369,359.47
OACF General Fund	511,817.55
OACF Endowment Fund	25,000.00
OACF Marquart Maintenance Fund	25,021.10
OACF Manser Memorial Fund	55,983.37
OACF Triss Fund	131,229.89
CD Old Natl Bank-Drebus/Redfd	<u>1,500.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1,216,143.45</u>

LIABILITIES/CAPITAL FUNDS

Current Liabilities	48,074.15
Maintenance Reserve Fund	37,763.47
Memorials	13,676.54
New Century Fund	138,791.72
Undesignated Reserve Fund	252,665.73
OACF General Fund	509,500.59
OACF General Fund Interest Income	2,316.96
OACF Endowment Fund	25,000.00
OACF Endowment Interest Income	(0.00)
OACF Triss Fund	105,000.00
OACF Triss Fund Interest Income	26,229.89
OACF Manser Memorial Fund	55,708.78
OACF Manser Memorial Interest Income	274.59
OACF Marquart Maint. Fund	25,000.00
OACF Marquart Maint. Interest Income	21.10
Centennial Celebration Fund	2,047.78
Current Surplus (Deficit)	<u>(25,927.85)</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES/CAPITAL FUNDS	<u>1,216,143.45</u>

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
INCOME & EXPENSE STATEMENT
Fiscal Year 2010

Description	2010 Y-T-D	2010 Budget	2011 Budget
INCOME			
Contributions	286,320.99	283,160.00	277,928.00
Other Contributions	15,299.00	17,000.00	17,000.00
Plate Income	5,488.15	5,000.00	5,000.00
Interest & Dividend Income	16,745.05	21,000.00	25,000.00
Rent Income	2,465.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Miscellaneous Income	31.89	0.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	326,350.08	327,160.00	325,928.00
EXPENSES			
Co-Pastors' Salary/Benefits	86,097.06	87,225.64	88,118.00
Staff Salaries/Expenses	150,851.39	155,016.76	160,400.00
Administrative & Office	13,658.94	14,720.00	13,800.00
Building	36,182.14	41,350.00	40,900.00
Finance Ministry Group	768.04	925.00	925.00
Personnel Ministry Group	711.08	0.00	0.00
Buildings & Grounds	2,265.10	2,000.00	2,000.00
Maintenance Reserve	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Fellowship Ministry Group	1,227.39	1,400.00	1,400.00
Church School	3,481.87	4,277.00	4,761.00
Youth Ministry Group	751.67	1,500.00	1,500.00
Adult Education	482.20	750.00	750.00
Music Ministry Group	3,197.61	3,713.00	3,713.00
Worship Ministry Group	1,513.82	2,710.00	2,710.00
Benevolence Ministry Group	45,306.00	45,306.00	44,468.00
New Member Ministry Group	2,052.70	3,250.00	3,250.00
Social Justice Ministry Group	147.87	300.00	300.00
Ministry Council	716.17	750.00	750.00
Stephen Ministry Group	866.88	1,000.00	1,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSE	(352,277.93)	368,193.40	(372,745.00)
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	(25,927.85)	(41,033.40)	(46,817.00)

REPORT OF THE WORSHIP MINISTRY GROUP

We recently reviewed and updated the mission of our group. That mission is to meet with and work with our Pastors to:

- Evaluate worship services.
- Coordinate and support the teams that are part of our responsibility....ushers, communion servers, scripture readers, and acolytes....and encourage participation of all members and friends of FCC.
- Plan worship that is creative, diverse way that touches the mind, spirit, and heart.
- Work in partnership with the Music Ministry Group.

Although it is critical that at least one of the Pastors attend each meeting, we have told them that, based on their busy schedules, it is not mandatory that they both attend all meetings. We also agreed that we would not have a meeting if there was no business to discuss. We are currently meeting 9-10 times/year.

We are very pleased with the suggestions made by Ralph and Carol and by the creativity they have displayed in the diversification they present in worship services. Since the feedback from the congregation has been very positive we will continue to proceed in the same direction.

Dave Elbing
Worship Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE MUSIC MINISTRY GROUP

The mission of the music ministry group is to enrich the music ministry of the church by supporting our music staff and think creatively about how music can be part of the life of the congregation.

We are pleased to have such talented musicians in Joanne Peterson, Christina Conn and Patrick Meyer. They are truly gifted and serve our congregation with warmth and devotion. We are especially appreciative of the leadership that Joanne provides as the head of staff for the music program. We are excited about the new Youth choir that Christina continues to build and Patrick's hope to expand the bell choir to three octaves of bells.

We have served as a clearing house for constructive feedback regarding the music program. We actively support special community musical events by supervising the use of our sanctuary and musical instruments. Our joint Taize service with the ECC was well received and opportunities for future services are being planned.

We are looking forward to the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the sanctuary and the important contribution that music has made to the worship life of the congregation and the community.

I am grateful for the committed members of the ministry group and am pleased to have served as facilitator for this past year.

Cathleen Starck Wille
Music Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE NURTURE MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

In October, 2010 the Lay Ministry Coordinator Position (previously held by Kay Quinney-Burnard and a 20-hour/wk position) was modified and changed to 2 staff positions: Nurture Ministries Coordinator (a 10-hour/wk staff position) and Lay Ministry Coordinator (a 8-hour/wk staff position). Ginnie Sherer (Nurture Ministries Coordinator) and Tina Haffeman (Lay Ministry Coordinator) were hired in October 2011 to fill these two staff positions.

Nurture Ministries at First Congregational Church currently encompasses the following ministries of the church:

- Stephen Ministry
- Visitation Ministry
- Flower Delivery Ministry
- Meal Delivery Ministry
- Prayer Shawl and Pillow Ministry
- Prayer Circle
- Fellowship Ministry

The Nurture Ministries Coordinator provides staff support to these ministries. The Coordinator attends meetings of the Fellowship Ministry Group as a means of providing staff support. The facilitator of this ministry group will be providing a separate report about this ministry group.

Stephen Ministry and Visitation Ministry are coordinated directly by the Nurture Ministries Coordinator. Referrals to these ministries most often come from Carol and Ralph with the Nurture Ministries Coordinator making the determination which ministry might be the best fit for the individual who has care needs. The Nurture Ministries Coordinator is responsible for matching the persons serving in these ministry areas with the individual needing care.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry continues to be lead by Ginnie Sherer, Dick Oelschlager and Cynthia Thorpe-Kavanaugh. They provide training and on-going education for this ministry and lead the monthly Supportivision groups. Supportivision is a peer supervision/support group that provides support and oversight to those involved in this lay ministry program. The focus of Supportivision is the enhancement of the Stephen Minister's skills so that the Stephen Minister is able to provide the best care possible to the care receiver the Stephen Minister is matched with. Members of Stephen Ministry report that Supportivision is key to the health of this ministry as it provides Stephen Ministers with a "sounding board" to help them in their care giving relationships.

In January, 2011, a second group of 5 trainees were commissioned to serve in this ministry. Thus, since inception, 12 people have been trained by Stephen Leaders to provide lay ministry care to people in the FCC congregation. To date, 12 individuals have been matched with Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers meet with their care receivers for approximately 1 hour per week. Stephen Minister provide hundreds of hours of lay ministry care to FCC each year, in addition to the hours of pastoral care that are provided by co-pastors, Carol and Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder.

Visitation Ministry

Visitation Ministry has been a vital service to those homebound members of FCC. Volunteers are assigned one person to visit monthly. Currently there are 14 volunteers who are visiting 13 homebound members of the congregation.

Members of the Visitation Ministry have been invited to some of the on-going training that is provided to Stephen Ministers. It is hoped that this can continue in an effort to provide added information/education to visitors that might be helpful to them in their care giving role to homebound members.

Flower Delivery Ministry

Volunteers in the Flower Delivery Ministry group deliver Sunday's alter flowers to a "shut in" as needed. Currently there are 10 people who assist in delivering flowers. Rebecca Robe is the person who coordinates the schedule for this ministry.

Meal Ministry

Meal Ministry is coordinated by four volunteers from the congregation: Andrea Schneider, Jodi Braun, Vicki Sheehan and Kathy Chapman. Each coordinator takes lead responsibility for contacting people to deliver meals to those that need them. There is a list of approximately 32 volunteers that can be called to prepare meals for home delivery. Youth have also contributed to this ministry by making meals and freezing them so that someone can deliver them to someone who is needs a meal. Persons served by this ministry are most commonly people who are recovering from surgery or illness.

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 visits to shut-ins.

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. Evelyn Bowerman provides coordination for this ministry. She edits the website information for the circle and sends emails to members of the pray circle when new prayer requests are added. Currently 20 people participate in raising others' concerns in prayer via the pray circle.

Peace,
Ginnie Scherer

REPORT OF FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY GROUP

The Fellowship Ministry Group continues its activities in support of the fellowship of the congregation.

The committee has worked on our traditional activities including pumpkin carving/trunk-o-treat, Hanging of the Greens and the upcoming Easter Breakfast on April 24th. Also a huge success this year for the group was the Kickoff - Cookout Coffee Hour. There seems to be a theme that all of our activities have included food.

The Fellowship Ministry group has also rearranged Coffee Hour. The lounge has been given a new look with table and chair seating.

We would like to sincerely thank everyone who has helped with our activities. We are a small group and are so blessed to be supported by the congregation.

Amy Smith,
Facilitator

REPORT OF THE BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY GROUP

Members: Sue Elbing, Ann Marshall, Deanie Minniear, Nancy Norgord, Anne Romond John Sheehan, Jack Talin and Chris Tower.

This group determines where to donate allocated church funds in the broader community and world. It also selects the projects, agencies, and organizations to receive our "special offerings". The congregation decided many years ago to designate 16% of pledged income for charitable giving. FCC has historically been and continues to be a caring, giving church.

Part of the benevolence money is used in support of the two denominations to which FCC belongs: the United Church of Christ and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Both organizations offer many services to their member churches and support national and international missions and disaster relief efforts. Pastor Ralph preached on two occasions during the past year on the reasons why we belong to two denominations and the benefits FCC receives from them. We sent some NACCC dollars to a long time "friend" of FCC, the Mazahua Mission in Mexico. We donated some of the UCC dollars to the "Pine Ridge Camp Scholarship Fund" to enable children from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation (where we have gone on two mission trips) to participate in a camping week at Pilgrim Center.

In 2010 we continued to support specific local programs: "Project Power" jointly sponsored by the Christine Anne Center and ADVOCAP and the "Unmet Needs" program at the Boys and Girls Club with \$2000 each. This was the final year of a three year grant. Parent Connection, under the auspices of Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin, was chosen to be the recipient of the next three year grant. This agency is a parent education and support program designed to encourage, strengthen and support families. You may see them in this building on some Tuesday evenings when they are offering a group-based family education program for parents and their children.

Locally, financial support was also given to:

- Oshkosh Self-Sufficiency Project - purchased socks and underwear to be distributed through St. Vincent's de Paul.
 - Hygiene Kits to be used in areas where natural disasters have occurred.
 - Solutions Center - an emergency homeless shelter in Fond du Lac that takes in homeless Oshkosh residents if emergency beds are not available here.
 - FCC Ministers' Discretionary Fund.
 - Samaritan Counseling Center
 - Hair Care program for residents of Bethel Home who are on the medical assistance program.
 - Funds for Fines Program - ADVOCAC
 - Zero Interest Loan Program - WINR
 - Moving Assistance Fund - ARC

The special offerings this past year included.

- Special collection of toilet paper and personal hygiene items for "Help the Homeless Campaign".
- Easter offering for "One Great Hour of Sharing" totaled approximately \$900.
- Thanksgiving offering for the "Health Club" at the Boys and Girls Club was over \$950
- Christmas offering for "Neighbors in Need" amounted to over \$850

Thank you for your generous giving. If you know of a local service or agency that could benefit from FCC benevolence dollars, please let us know.

Ann Marshall, Facilitator

REPORT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY GROUP

The Social Justice Ministry Group was founded in July of 2010 to help replace the Social Concerns Ministry Group that had been founded in 2005.

Initial members of the group were John and Jone Oman, Ron and Jody Harrell, Dorry Wilner, Evelyn Bowerman, Ted Balsler, Leah Foerster, Lydia Sanders, Sue Elbing and Carol Dibiasio-Snyder. Ron served as chairperson and Jody was the secretary.

At the July 2010 organizational meeting, the SJMG formulated its purpose/mission statement:

This 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.

Most subsequent meetings 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. Speakers who enlightened the group included Cecil Streeeter (PALS program), Tina Haffeman and Brian Tokoph (ESTHER), Oshkosh Community Gardens director Nick Schneider, and Dr. Liz Cannon, LGBTQ Resource Center, Director Social Justice Program, and Center for Equity and Diversity at UW Oshkosh. For its February meeting the group traveled to the Ahmadiyya Community Mosque, received a tour and utilized the community room.

Although new, the group was quite active in its first few months. After brainstorming activities at its first two meetings, members helped out with the Tinsel Tree project and spearheaded the Day of Abundance gift day (despite a snowstorm that moved it back a week). Leah Foerster began publishing a monthly "Olive Branch" which highlighted social justice issues in and around Oshkosh, and group members assisted with the November 21 Servapalooza Day. In January the group passed a resolution suggesting that FCC establish an ESTHER Core Team affiliated with Oshkosh ESTHER to function under the umbrella of the Social Justice Ministry Group. Ministry Council later adopted the resolution. The Core Team's purpose is to identify social justice issues in our community, develop leadership for action, and analyze and define practices of faith to improve the human condition. Spring-time activities for the group will include exploring the possibility of renting and working up some garden plots at the Community Gardens to raise food for the Oshkosh Area Community Food Pantry.

Ron Harrell, Chair

REPORT OF THE NEW MEMBER DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY GROUP

We began the year by reviewing and reaffirming the ministry group's mission statement.

During 2010, the New Member Development (NMD) Ministry Group continued its work with Blue Door Consulting to implement the second year of a three year strategic plan - a type of marketing/outreach program - for First Congregational Church, that encompasses our overall public relations, marketing and promotional awareness goals within the community. The first leg of that journey was to showcase our culture in all marketing materials - be they weekly bulletins, new brochures, the church web site, etc. That was largely implemented and discussed in last year's annual report, but there were some things that continued into this past year, as well. The second leg of this plan focused heavily on technology (i.e., spearheading the creation of and conversion to a new look and format for the FCC web site, etc. More on the web site later in this report.).

Along those same lines, the look of the weekly e-news changed this past year to be more consistent with the overall look of the church's web site design, templates, and other materials.

We continued what we began in 2009 and that was to recognize and emphasize the importance of creating a warm, welcoming and hospitable atmosphere for both our current members and guests. One way of doing that is to continue recruiting greeters for Sunday morning worship services, and connectors for after the visit. If anyone is interested in

serving as a greeter or connector, they can either sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin boards outside the church office in the entryway area, or they can contact Cynthia in the church office or one of the members of the NMD ministry group.

The New Member Development MG worked with staff during this past year to change and improve the process for visitor tracking and follow-up, as well as the creation of a visitor database in the LOGOS system.

In spring 2010, some of the group's members participated in a several week online webcast program on hospitality and how to make one's church more inviting and exciting. Some of those things are being looked at to incorporate into our church or have already begun being implemented, including making the building more easily accessible for handicapped, timeliness in following up with visitors, etc.

As a result of the things learned from that online session, we facilitated two separate Adult Ed sessions where we sought input from people attending on what they thought we could do to be more attractive, hospitable and welcoming to newcomers. This included a review of FCC's physical structures and layout in relation to being warm, inviting and welcoming.

This past year, the group began contributing articles to the Oshkosh Northwestern's Community Newsroom. These no-cost articles appear in both online and hard copy format, and feature different events going on at the church that might be of interest to non-members in the community. Roughly 15 to 20 articles were submitted during the year and several visitors to the church this past year commented they'd learned of us through those articles. Some of those visits resulted in new members joining our church family.

We have made certain that photos of new members get taken and are displayed in the Lounge for at least six (6) months to ensure that people have ample opportunity to see who the new members are, so that if they see and recognize them they might give them a personal welcome.

As mentioned earlier, through our work with Blue Door Consulting and tremendous effort on the part of Pastor Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder and Joe Wiedenmeier, FCC's new web site was developed and rolled out in February 2011. It incorporates FCC's new logo and new templates, and is much more interactive and user-friendly, has many new components, and is designed so that, in time, designated persons from the various ministry groups or other persons within the church will be able to log in and maintain their own material. That will free up staff time, and allow the various sections of the web site to be updated more frequently, and with greater consistency. Before that happens though, the ministry group has discussed and recommended that a "class" be held to instruct those persons in how to place their material online and in what format so that the web site maintains a consistent look throughout, etc.

A member questionnaire was distributed at one of the church services in March or April and members were asked to fill it out, asking them to tell a little about themselves and what drew them to FCC. An additional question was asked as to whether they'd be interested and willing to have their stories told online and in promotional materials. Response was large and encouraging. Those new and existing member stories have been and will continue to be developed. We also asked members of various ministry groups to complete surveys but to date, we haven't received them from any groups other than New Member Development. We plan to continue to make this effort as everyone has interesting stories to share about why this is their church home and since ministry group members make up the church leadership, it would be nice to have their stories out there among the first.

New brochures were distributed to high-tourist traffic areas around town, such as the Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, airport, etc.

On the subject of brochures, new acrylic brochure racks for pews were ordered and installed - they look great and we have had several compliments on them

Several new member classes were held throughout the year - resulting in some new folks joining us also. Some of those new members, again, learned of our new member classes from the newspaper articles. It should be noted that we changed our process from having "periodic" new member classes to making them a regularly scheduled event, held five times yearly. This informal process to learn about FCC is usually held in the Lounge, with Pastors Ralph and Carol, some staff members, and members of the New Member Development MG present. Snacks and beverages are served in an inviting atmosphere and people hear a short history of the church, and learn from others what makes the church special to them.

A short tour of the building is also offered.

A Fellowship Friend/New Members Social was held on March 5 and about 20-25 people turned out. Sue Heft and her family did a beautiful job of preparing some tasty items and setting up, as did some of the NMD group members. A great time was had by all.

We have been working on the design and placement for a new banner for outside building on Algoma Boulevard, but have run into some problems with city bureaucracy. Carol, Cynthia and Brenda Haines from Blue Door Consulting will be meeting with the city again in the near future to try coming up with a solution that meets their requirements and at the same time our needs and desires.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Hentz
Member, New Member Development Ministry Group

REPORT OF THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS MINISTRY GROUP

Membership: Eric Braun, Jackson Medley, John Oman, Jr., Dennis Rioux, Bruce Thomas, Gary Wilner

A number of renovation projects were undertaken in anticipation of the sanctuary's one hundredth anniversary. With the approval of the Ministry Council, the B&GMG engaged the services of Laib Restoration as general contractor for work in the choir room, narthex, tower stairwell and sanctuary. In the choir room, new ceiling mounted lights and flooring were installed and repairs were made to the walls along with a fresh coat of paint for all surfaces. In the narthex, the old ceiling tile was removed and a new plaster ceiling was installed and repairs were made to the walls with a fresh coat of paint for all surfaces. A similar program of repairs was completed for the tower stairwell which had suffered a good deal of damage from the old leaking roof. Here again, the old ceiling tiles were removed, repairs were made to walls, and a fresh coat of paint applied. The carpet on the stairs was also removed and it was determined it would be best to leave the treads bare for the time being.

The most ambitious work occurred in the sanctuary. The plaster below the chair rail which was rough and discolored due to age and water leaks was scraped and a new layer of plaster was applied. Other plaster damage, due again mostly to leaks in the roof and mostly localized to the balcony area, was repaired as needed, and a new ceiling was installed in the old Pastor's Study currently used as the handicapped entrance. Old speakers and wires were removed from some of the walls and chandeliers to improve the appearance of the sanctuary. New electrical outlets were installed at the base of the organ case for use with the rear projection video screen in order to reduce the reliance on extension cords (tripping hazards). New paint was applied to all surfaces. The pews were removed and repaired while new carpeting was installed.

Dennis Rioux
Building and Grounds Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE FINANCE MINISTRY GROUP

Membership: Chris Laufer, Mary Beth Bossert, Eric Kropp, John Oman, Sr, Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder

Over the past several years, our church's assets have grown, now standing at \$1,200,000. So too, has the responsibility for managing our assets properly. This year, we enlisted the help of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation (OACF). We feel this offers us several advantages. With the involvement of professional money managers and a more aggressive allocation of 60% stocks and 40% bonds, we expect to see a higher rate of return. Investing with the OACF makes higher-yield institutional funds available to us - funds we would not have access to on our own. The resources of the OACF are available to us for assistance with planned giving, estate planning, and increasing the exposure of FCC to a larger pool of potential donors in the Oshkosh community.

Some FAQ:

Does investing with the OACF mean we still have access to our church's money?

Yes, the OACF invests the money for us, but it is still our money and can be withdrawn at any time. If, however, a

donation is made to the OACF naming FCC as the beneficiary, the OACF retains those assets. In other words, if it is donated to FCC, it belongs to FCC. If it is donated to the OACF, it belongs to the OACF.

How are our investments doing?

Since our initial deposit of \$463,000 in July 2010, our general fund has grown to \$531,474, an increase of 14.7%, largely due to robust growth in the stock market.

What does the OACF charge for its fee?

The OACF charges an annual administrative fee of 0.65%, charged quarterly on the account's market value, and an investment management fee of 0.60%, for a total of 1.25% per fiscal year. Since the OACF works with eleven separate money managers, each charging their own fees on their own schedule, month-to-month investment fees will vary, but the fee will equal 1.25% per fiscal year.

While we have been fortunate with stock market returns this year, it is important to note we have operated at a deficit for the past 3 years. This year, we covered our \$25,000 deficit from our reserves. Sound financial management in previous years has allowed us to prepare for difficult economic times, but this practice is neither responsible nor sustainable. The Ministry Council has been working to reduce our expenses and we have recently convened an ad hoc group consisting of members from Finance, Personnel, and Benevolence to come up with long-term solutions.

Chris Laufer
Chair, Finance Ministry Group

REPORT OF THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Stewardship, in these difficult financial times, can be a hard subject to explore. This year the committee spent considerable time discussing what stewardship means and how that message gets conveyed to the congregation.

This year's campaign coincided with messages from the pulpit and also church school curriculum in collaboration with UCC's message of giving. Video testimonies in which a number of our members considered why giving was important to them were viewed on several Sundays.

The Stewardship Committee this year produced a brochure titled, Generosity: It's Heart Work! This was done with much input from the committee and a lot of technical work by Jeff Puhlman-Becker and his son Matt. Thank you! The goal was to focus on six areas of our life together as a congregation: Encouraging, Sharing, Welcoming, Honoring, Caring and Gathering. Through words, scripture and photos, the brochure is an inspiring snapshot of our life at FCC and beyond its doors.

Stewardship Committee
Maria Talin, Chair

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee works with the staff, on behalf of the congregation, to find and hire the right people to fill the ministry needs of our congregation, to support our staff in their work, to advocate with them and on their behalf to review and improve work conditions, and to recommend fair, just, and realistic compensation. Ours is a joyous and rewarding task, primarily because of the wonderful staff we have in our midst!

This year was a more active year than many in recent memory. We are fortunate that we have dedicated staff who have served among us with great devotion and passion for many years. Turnover on our staff is typically quite low. However, in 2010 we interviewed and hired to fill three positions:

- The Gifts and Talents Coordinator position was left unfilled when Kay Quinney-Burnard moved to New England. After much discussion with various stakeholders we split Kay's work into two positions. It was a rare gift to find one person who could accomplish the diverse tasks of this position as well as Kay did!

- o We split the *gifts and talents* work – the coordination of the volunteer efforts – into one position. Tina Haffeman, our new Lay Ministries Coordinator, has been a wonderful, energetic gift to us as she has settled into her position and has come to know the members of our congregation. She is very persuasive and successful in recruiting for the variety of needs of the church!
- o Then we split the *nurture ministries* part of Kay's previous position to a new Nurture Ministries Coordinator. Ginnie Sherer is the perfect fit for this position! Ginnie, along with several other members of our congregation, was instrumental in starting the Stephen's Ministry at our church. Ginnie served as the interim after Kay left to help support this new ministry area in our church. So, when Ginnie expressed interest in applying for the new Nurture Ministry Coordinator, it was an obvious and easy choice for us to call her to this position!
- In December 2010 Diane Gibson suddenly resigned to pursue a new opportunity and accept a new position with another organization. Throughout Advent we were blessed with many volunteers – and a staff who pitched in to accomplish all of the secretarial tasks – to carry us through while we advertised, interviewed, and hired a new Office Administrator. Much to our delight we found Cynthia Hunt! We hired her the week of Christmas – and she has definitely been a gift to our congregation and staff. She is a whirlwind in the office with her high energy and organizational skills which support our staff and the ministry of this church so well.
- We also worked with Sandie and Carol to help secure individuals to provide coverage for the variety of things that Sandie does in her position while she is on Sabbatical this spring and into the summer. Once again, we were reminded how much our staff do on our behalf as we listed all of the things that Sandie does – and as we tried to find the right people to fill the needs!

Earlier in this report I mentioned the many dedicated staff who continue to serve with and among us – and what a blessing they are to our common life! Every staff member – from the people we see every week (like Ralph, Carol, Sandie, and Joanne) to the staff that many of us rarely see (like Steve, our building manager, Theresa, our Nursery Care provider, and Kevin, the young man who opens the church every Sunday morning, makes our coffee, and attends to the many details when we gather) we are truly blessed by each of these people who serve with and among us.

For the gifts our staff bring to our common life we are most blessed and grateful!

The Personnel Ministry Group
 Cyndi DeVoe
 Cynthia Thorpe-Kavanaugh
 Howard Blades
 Jeff Puhlmann-Becker, Facilitator
 Lurton Blassingame

REPORT ON THE USE OF THE BUILDING

First Congregational Church facilities are used regularly by a number of groups from the Oshkosh Community. These groups include Emmaus Ecumenical Catholic Communion (EECC) the ZEN Buddha Group; 1st Presbyterian Church; PEO; Parent Connection Nurturing Program; Oshkosh Area Community Pantry; Christine Ann Center; Oshkosh Diversity Council; Oshkosh Reading Club; Reading Connection; Wisconsin Interfaith Needs Response (WINR); Parents, Family, & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG); the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community; United States Census Bureau; The Oshkosh Diversity Council; Americorps; Habitat for Humanity; University of Wisconsin Oshkosh; Community Blood Center; Webster Stanley Middle School; Eau Claire Women's Choir; and Oshkosh Food COOP. Church members have hosted family events at the church.

Cynthia Hunt
 Office Administrator

REPORT OF THE ADULT EDUCATION MINISTRY GROUP for 2010-11 SESSION

Members: Bethany Jorenby, Cheryl Hentz, David Jones, Barbara Strand, Gordon Hintz, John Brooks, Val Williams, and Rebecca Briskie.

Facilitators: Bethany Jorenby and Cheryl Hentz

We met in the summer to brainstorm ideas for various adult education sessions. Because attendance had dropped off in the past year or so we had already polled congregants to find out the kinds of things they were looking for in the Adult Ed sessions. Because only a small number of people had responded to the poll, we also asked people via Tidings, E-news and Sunday bulletins to email us ideas of what they'd like to see. Then, building on that, we put together a very ambitious and full schedule of topics for the year. We also tried to tie the topics in with the worship topic for each Sunday, which at times was difficult because of people's schedules and so forth. But we thought it might make for a more "fluid" overall worship experience each week.

The presentations, even if some of them tied in rather loosely with the worship message, have been - for the most part - very well-attended and people have spoken positively about them. Some of the topics already held or still scheduled for the remainder of this year include: Hospitality; stewardship and the financial health of FCC; emergency preparedness; community health improvement; elder care issues; the city's proposed warming shelter; recycling and being kind to Mother Earth; worship practices by other faiths; domestic abuse, social justice; and insider's look at the civil rights movement; and living joyfully. Certain Sundays had no adult ed presentation because those were Together Sundays. In addition, newspapers were provided every Sunday by David Jones, and the Sunday Morning Yarn Group met at 9:00 a.m.

We also offered an ongoing Bible Study, led by Bethany, on Tuesday evenings, which had an average attendance of 6 to 10 people. Rather than just studying the Bible, the group watched various DVD series on different Bible topics, then discussed the material. There is interest from the regular members to make this an ongoing thing, so when one series is finished, the next one will start. It should be noted that every session is designed to be stand-alone, so that 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.

For our upcoming year, we still have several topics left over from this year that we were unable to get to, plus we may be sending out another survey to see what people are again interested in having during Sunday morning Adult Ed, so that we can continue to explore how to better meet the needs of our congregation in this area.

Cheryl Hentz
Adult Education Ministry Group Co-Facilitator

REPORT OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY GROUP

The youth ministry group is comprised of the following church members: Sandie Miller-Schreiter, Rebecca Briski, Terry Thomas, Vickie Sheehan and Stacey Otto. The group meets monthly to plan events for the youth of the FCC and discover ways to make the youth feel welcome and accepted in the church family.

This year, we have held events for th two age groups; middle and high-schoolers and 3rd through 5th graders. The middle and high schoolers have enjoyed events such as baking for the church bazaar, ringing bells for the Salvation Army and a Packer tailgate party. As always, the lock-ins are popular with this age group, and we have held two with themes of joyful living and letting your light shine.

The 3rd and 5th grade group meets regularly and have held events including making Christmas crafts, baking dog treats for the animal shelter and swimming at the YMCA. This group is supported by Dorry Wilner, Corinne Saidla and Sarah Kaprelian with help from Sandie Miller-Schreiter.

The youth ministry group also organizes the annual mission trip. In 2010, the mission trip was an intergenerational trip to south Dakota. The mission trip in 2011 will be in Rockford Illinois. Fundraising continues to help with the costs of the trip.

We thank the members of the youth ministry group, the youth of the FCC and their parents for making the group successful. We welcome suggestions and new members.

Rebecca A. Briski
Youth Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL MINISTRY GROUP

Members: Lorie Hadel, McKenna Hadel, Jeff Sauerberg, Sarah Kaprelian, Val Williams, and Corinne Saidla.

The Church School Ministry Group began preparations for the 2010-2011 church school year by recruiting teachers. Group members made personal phone calls to potential teachers and shepherds. Volunteers for the "Kid Vid" series during the summer and childcare were also recruited.

Vacation Bible School was held jointly with First Presbyterian Church. The theme this year was Seasons of the Church Year. VBS was held at First Congregation and was attended by about 40 children.

The rotation format continues to be used for students in second through sixth grade. The preschool, kindergarten/first grade, middle school and high school continue the classroom approach. The same topics were used for the rotations as they were for the worship services. This seems to have been a good format.

The group continues to review Middle School curriculum for the 2011-2012 year. The group is looking for curriculum that is a good match theologically and is user friendly.

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

The group did some revamping of the Church School rooms by using cloth and other materials to make the rooms more inviting to the children.

The group continues to schedule Toy Washes. This year the middle school and high school kids assisted with the toy wash which went well.

The group continues to work on incorporating the Holy Conversations of welcoming and caring into our ministry.

Corinne Saidla
Church School Ministry Group Facilitator

REPORT OF THE CHURCH LIBRARY

It's been more than year since we moved to the lounge. More people are reading our books. But we still need more books to be checked out. We are running out of room in some areas. We usually add at least 5 books a week to the library. We have more than 4,000 items in our computer catalog, although that does include some items in the archives. Please check and see if you have overdue books.

Joyce Frohn and Carol Henkle
Church Librarians

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

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. 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. When appropriate, the family is consulted when use of their relative's memorial is being considered. Usually the money goes toward projects that will pay a lasting tribute.

In 2010 over \$25,500 of memorial money was contributed to the Centennial Fund. We now enjoy a 100 year old sanctuary that has been refreshed and renewed. Family members were contacted and all were glad to have the memory of their loved ones honored in this way. One other project, new table coverings for the bell choir, was funded.

Please let one of the memorial committee members know if you have suggestions for uses of memorial funds. We will be glad to consider your requests.

Ann Marshall,
Facilitator

REPORT OF WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP 2010

The purpose of Women's Fellowship is to provide charitable giving, benevolence, and social events both in and outside of the church. All women of the church are members of the organization even if they are not active. Women's Fellowship is governed by a board which over sees these activities.

In 2010 Women's Fellowship sent twenty flower bouquets to members who were hospitalized overnight. In addition 87 cards were sent out to acknowledge various occasions in our members lives. Sunday flowers were given twice during the year from the Choate Memorial fund. To honor our amazing staff at First Congregational Church, a Christmas check was sent to the Hope & Care Center in the staff's name. The Back to School Fair was also a recipient of Women's Fellowship's charitable giving.

In April of 2010 the board hosted the after church coffee hour. Then in October the annual FCC Fest was held. This all church fund raiser made \$2375.00 from the event. The last social event of the year was the November Gallery Walk. Many different exhibitors showed their work as well as the church showed off the newly remodeled sanctuary. White chicken chili was also sold with proceeds going to Women's Fellowship fund for a new kitchen.

From the Fest the Church received: \$100 for the library
\$300 for the church school
\$500 for the sanctuary
\$675 for Women's Fellowship Kitchen Fund

As the budget allows, some paper and cleaning supplies are also bought for the kitchen and the lounge throughout the year.

Karen LaBorde
Women's Fellowship President

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE MINISTER

Dear friends and partners in ministry:

Grace and hope to you in the spirit of Jesus Christ. Thank you for the opportunity to be included in your congregation's annual report. I am grateful to be able to share with you the ways in which your local church is connected to many wider ministries through our four Associations, the Wisconsin Conference, United Church of Christ, and a variety of UCC and ecumenical partners.

2010 was a year of planning for significant changes in the way the Conference and Associations carry out our mission to provide spiritual growth and leadership development for laity; support our pastoral leaders; form and renew congregations; and serve as a point of connection for extending the mission of the local church. The 2010 Annual Meeting approved a new model for structure and staffing.

The changes include moving from individually staffed Association offices to a unified staff with shared responsibilities; creating a unified financial accounting system; and a common database; and the closing of the four regional Association offices. Many of these changes will take place by July 1, 2011, and the remainder will be completed by the end of 2011. The changes are difficult, and I invite your continuing prayers for all of us who are working on shaping a new form for our ministry and especially for those whose jobs are changing or being eliminated. Our goal continues to be to provide the best possible service in support of your ministry, and the most faithful witness to the transforming love of Christ, and we look to the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help us.

Partnerships have long been important to the Wisconsin Conference, and our partnerships in Germany were a particular focus in 2010. The growing Gospel choir partnership brought the Westend Gospel Singers of Eberswalde, Germany to Wisconsin for a retreat and concert tour. In the summer, Wisconsin delegates and the choir and bell choir from Greendale Community Church visited Goerlitz and Reichenbach in eastern Germany to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Louis Eduard Nollau, one of the founders of the Evangelical Synod of North America, a predecessor of the UCC. In November 12 German visitors attended a Nollau event at Eden Seminary, St. Louis and then toured sites in Wisconsin.

Lay Academy continues to grow and provide opportunities for growth in faith and formation in ministry to many in our congregations. More than 400 persons have now participated in the program. The significant growth in our educational ministry in the past year has been in online, web-based programs. Our online UCC polity course even included a participant in Germany. What marvelous possibilities as well as challenges come from the incredible growth in communication technology.

One of the richest resources for ministry that we have is found in our two outdoor ministry sites at Pilgrim Center and Moon Beach Camp. 2010 was the first full year of the new Ley Chapel at Pilgrim, and its beauty and practicality greatly enhance ministry at that site. Moon Beach completed its shoreline maintenance and "makeover" camps have allowed many remodeling projects. Camps and retreats were full, and both camps have continued to extend their ministries to camps for persons with specialized needs. Thank you for your support of these vital ministries. They are one of our best ways of expressing the theme of the "hospitality" of a "still speaking" God.

Our two new congregations continue to grow in their ministries, and we are grateful for Grace United Church of Christ, now fully chartered as a congregation in the Southeast Association and for La Viña del Señor, the Latino congregation in Waukesha. We continue to seek new locations for the planting of UCC congregations, and we have begun intentional partnerships with several congregations for renewal.

A highlight for the 2010 Annual Meeting was the Rev. Mitri Raheb, pastor of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Palestine/Israel and a leader in the Palestinian community, and we were also honored by Bishop Bruce Burnside of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America share in celebrating communion as an expression of our Formula of Agreement between the UCC and the ELCA. Please look for information on our website (wcucc.org) for the 2011 meeting.

There is much more I could share with you, and our complete Annual Reports will be out prior to the June 2011 Annual Meeting. Let me close by thanking you for your faith and your ministry. I am especially grateful for the leadership of our pastors and for their faithfulness in preaching and in pastoral work. As congregations, you have continued to be generous and faithful in your sharing of gifts for wider ministry through Our Church's Wider Ministry ("OCWM"). In 2010 Wisconsin Conference congregations gave the greatest amount to basic OCWM of all Conferences in the UCC. Thank you!

Finally, I want you to join me in expressing thanks to our staff. The past year has been stressful, and we continue to live into challenging transitions, but all continue to serve our churches and to work together with grace and hope. Next year when I report to you, we will not look like we look now, but in faith we know that forms change, but that a loving and transforming God is faithful in all situations, and we trust that it is not what the church looks like that matters so much as our mission of pointing people to what Christ looks like in and for our world.

With great hope and with the joy of serving as your partner in ministry.

David S. Moyer
Conference Minister

REPORT OF THE CO-PASTORS

We look over the past year and at the various reports printed here from our church's life together and we are filled with deep gratitude for the blessings of serving along side you in ministry! First Congregational Church is a remarkable group of people and we thank God for each of you and the spiritual journey we travel in our shared life here. Generous. Caring. Thoughtful. Creative. Spiritual. Faithful. These are all words that describe the members and friends that make up this faith community. Thank you for your part in making FCC a vital and strong congregation!

Monumental shifts in culture, finances, family patterns, work situations, technology, politics, global movements, provide unprecedented challenges to the churches of our nation. It is not completely clear how the church needs to respond to these shifts and dynamics. It is certainly clear the church of yesterday cannot be all that it needs to be for the church of today and into the future. We particularly experience this in the finances of the church, but it is far from limited to this area. It is both an unsettling time and an exciting time. We have an opportunity to retool, to dream, to problem-solve and to dare new things as we move into the future. Being "church" today and tomorrow requires courage and prayer as we seek God's guidance, wisdom and vision.

We thank all those who have provided such excellent leadership over the past year. Thank you to our officers: Moderator, Maria Talin; Jennifer Norden, Moderator-Elect; Mary Beth Bossert, Treasurer; and Sue Coghill, Clerk, along with all the members of Ministry Groups, Committees, Women's Fellowship and the best church staff in town! That staff went through several changes this year as we said "thank you" and "good-bye" to Kay Quinney-Burnard and Diane Gibson. We then welcomed Ginnie Sherer, Tina Haffeman and Cynthia Hunt. They join the wonderful group of Theresa Brewer, Rebecca Briski, Christina Conn, Steve Hafemeister, Kathy Jameson, Patrick Meyer, Sandie Miller-Schreiter, Joanne Peterson, and Joe Weidenmeier.

Using a newly published worship and education resource called "Faith Practices" we have sought to integrate our worship and education more deeply around themes such as Hospitality, Generosity, Living Joyfully, and Keeping Sabbath. We experimented with occasional Sundays called *Together Sundays* in which worship and education were even more closely intertwined at the beginning or end of each theme. These included a Sunday that started with a southern breakfast in Fellowship Hall; another with Singer-Songwriter Bryan Sirchio; a morning of service in the community called *Servapalooza*, and our Annual Christmas Pageant in which everyone had a part to play!

Looking forward to the 100th anniversary of the sanctuary (2011), the congregation accomplished major repairs and renovation of the sanctuary, narthex and tower stairwell – over \$100,000 worth of much-needed work. About half the funds were raised from the congregation, and the church used established funds for the rest. The result – a sparkling sanctuary ready to host centennial events this coming year. Many thanks to the Building and Grounds Ministry Group, especially Dennis Rioux, for their great leadership in this project.

The year, like all years, included baptisms, weddings, Confirmation and funerals as we feel the turning of the seasons of the year, the church year and each life. We have had the privilege of serving First Congregational Church for 23 years now. We look back with appreciation and ahead with anticipation.

Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder
Co-Pastors

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

Thanks to the friends and members of this church much has happened this year to nurture the faith of the children, youth and adults of this church. The ministry includes, shepherds and teachers for the church school, filling clip boards, sending in the Festival Foods receipts, chaperoning a mission trip, supplying popcorn, chaperoning youth events, presenting at an adult education presentation, lining up adult education speakers, washing the toys for the childcare rooms, providing childcare and so much more!! Thank you to the many who have supported the teaching and learning ministries of the church.

From March 18 - July 12, 2011 I am away because you have blessed me with a Sabbatical. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for this opportunity to study and rest. The four months I'm away includes not only my sabbatical time but also some vacation and continuing education time. The focus of my Sabbatical will be on how to help parents nurture their children's faith. I plan to attend several conferences, visit some churches on Sunday mornings to experience their church schools. I look forward to telling you more about it when I return.

While I am away the Adult Ed Ministry group, the Youth ministry group, the Church School ministry group, Terry Thomas (covering the mission trip) and Vicki Sheehan, our part-time interim Church School Coordinator are covering parts of my work. Thank you so much for your addition ministry during this time.

Theresa Brewer, our Child Care Coordinator, has been on staff for over three years now. Thank you Theresa and the adult volunteers that provide care in the nursery and toddler rooms. Having a staff person to be with our children each week during the Church school year has brought consistency to the Nursery and help make it a warm and welcoming place to our youngest.

This year we created multi-generational learning time by having Together Sundays that meet at 9:30. The Together Sundays included a hospitality Sunday, Servaplooza - we went out into the community and served, Christmas Pageant and living joyfully with Bryan Sirchio.

Pumpkin Caroling and Christmas caroling was shared with Ginnie Sherer and Christina Conn. We had nice sized groups for both events. These events bring joy to both the singers and our home-bound friends/members.

We offered an Inter-generational mission trip to Pine Ridge, South Dakota in August of 2010. Seven adults and seven youth served the Lakota people August 7-13, 2010 by painting, building wheelchair ramps and skirting trailers.

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 LAY MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

I began my position as FCC Lay Ministry Coordinator in mid-Oct. 2011. It has been lovely getting to know the staff and congregation. I have found the vitality and sense of mission at FCC to be remarkable and feel quite fortunate to be here.

Thank you to the over 90 persons who have served on twelve Ministry Groups and other committees during the last year. These servants are at the heart of so much good work done at FCC. (Please see individual Ministry Group reports.)

As of this writing, the nominating process is in full swing to gather new Ministry Group members for 2011 – 2012. Members of the nominating committee are Cynthia Thorpe, Karen Bowen, Gary Wilner, Stacey Otto, Kay Sanders, Jen Norden, and Tina Haffeman. A list of Ministry Groups and their new membership will be available at the annual meeting.

Everyone who attended a new member class took the spiritual gifts inventory.

Ginnie Sherer, and I worked with the New Member Ministry Group on the New Member/Fellowship Friend event that was held on March 5th. (See Ginnie's report.)

I look forward to continuing the work with all Ministry Groups throughout the coming year.

Tina Haffeman
Lay Ministries Coordinator

REPORT OF THE WEDDING COORDINATOR

The position of Wedding Coordinator was a new addition in 2009. The job description of this position is to glorify by:

- Acting as a liaison between the church and couples planning to marry in the church.
- Overseeing the details of church wedding from beginning to end.
- Ensuring the church's wedding and building usage policies are understood and followed.

In 2010, I met coordinated wedding for four couples as well as a couple with Emmaus Ecumenical Catholic Community. I believe that the sanctuary renovations will attract couples to saying their vows at FCC.

Rebecca A. Briski
Wedding Coordinator

REPORT OF THE CHANCEL CHOIR DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST

The Chancel Choir sings regularly from September through May.

Regular Chancel Choir members were Terry Thomas, Bridget Thorpe-Kavanaugh, Bethany Estrada, Nancy Lloyd, Karen LaBorde, Judy DeBroux, Pat Dwyer-Hallquist, Darcy Duffy, Vernice Haase, Carol Niendorf, Jacki Mueller, Cathy Wille, Ed Schneider, Patrick Meyer, George Coghill, Doug Henkle, Eric Kropp, Thatcher Peterson, and Art Wille.

Both Christina Conn, our Angel Choir Director, and Briget Duffy, provided competent and musical substitution for the Choir Director and Organist throughout the year. Kathleen McGregor substituted during summer absences. The Choir performed John Harmon's *The Seven Last Words* at Easter time and Advent anthems, *Emmanuel, God with Us*, by Robert Young.

Participants in special music events and summer services included:

Jim Grine, Ed Schneider, Lisa Zemlock, Matt Key, Brian Key, Ron Olson, Pat Dwyer-Hallquist, Molly Schlaak, Ellie Thomas, Laurel Sanders, Noah Bossert, Jacob Oxley, Christina Conn, Dr. Mary Thornton, Max Bossert, Kiera Robe, Joe Wiedenmeier, Miyoko Grine Fisher, Yukiko Grine, Steven Schani, Jody Harrell, Christopher Alt, Cathy Wille, Tanya Paulson, Joyce Andrews, Claric Drummond, Kristin Masarik, Ruby Salbego, Matty Key, Joel Thomas, George Coghill, Stan Kline, Dr. Emily Helvering, Molly Schlack, Alice Rioux, Zoe Bossert, Martha Becker

Joanne Peterson
Chancel Choir Director & Organist

REPORT OF THE HANDBELL CHOIR DIRECTOR

The thing that stands out this year for our bell choir was the transition from primarily a two octave choir to a three octave choir. This was done by experimenting with Sunday evening rehearsals in the summer months for those who couldn't make our Wednesday night practices. As it turned out, those Sunday night practices became the norm for the second half of the year.

This opened the 6 PM slot on Wednesday evening to pursue the development of our new ringers in forming a chime choir. This is a beginning group that is learning how to read music and build on their playing skills sets. Parents are encouraged to participate in this activity with their children, because playing handbells (and chimes) is an activity enjoyed by all generations.

Our group of ringers still strives to do something with the chancel choir and Angel choirs. All these groups combined their efforts to commemorate Earth Day in performing "For the Beauty of the Earth". Nice job everyone!

At this point, I would like to recognize the great loss of one of our ringers. Shirley Schuhart was a friend and fellow ringer for over 30 years. She was always there to help a fellow ringer and to help raise the bar in bell performances and have fun in the process. She will be greatly missed.

This year we did acquire some new equipment. The new table coverings were received from memorial funds and new portable lighting was purchased from the handbell fund.

Things that need our attention in 2011:

Both our handbells and chimes need a complete overhaul. There are cracked clappers and hand guards, inner workings need adjusting, and bells need to be resurfaced. Most of this is covered by Malmark's lifetime warranty. According to Malmark, this process should be done every six to ten years, depending on how much they are used.

At this point in time, there is no funding for the refurbishing of the bells and chimes. The cost can run as high \$2,000. A special fund needs to be established to set monies aside each month over that six to ten year period.

Roster of ringers (first half): Barbara Ziblut, Sue Coghill, Harry Koster, Shirley Schuhart, Pat Nichols, Andrea Schneider, Pat Hallquist, & Kiera Robe.

Roster of Ringers (second half): Tony Hengst, Thom Hadel, Barbara Ziblut, Leah Shutte (UW-O), Danny Shierl (UW-O), Laura Ann Day, Pat Nichols, Karen Devendorf (UW-O), Pat Hallquist, & Kiera Robe.

Substitute Ringers: Cara Davis, Deb Madel, and Kathryn Duffy.

There is still room for more ringers to join our group. Practice for the adult choir is Sunday at 6 PM and for our beginning chime choir, 6 PM on Wednesday.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick W. Meyer, Handbell Choir Director

REPORT OF THE ANGEL CHOIR DIRECTOR

This year's Angel Choir members are Alice Rioux, Elizabeth Frohn-Hengst, Claire Veard, Talia Sheehan, Martha Becker, Anna Wiedman, Sianna Robe, and McKenna Haedl. Angel Choir has been accompanied by Ellie Thomas and Bridget Duffy on piano this year and the choir has even accompanied themselves with percussion instruments! During Advent, the Angel Choir combined with the brand-new Middle School Choir on a piece that was half in French and half in English. All three of our Middle School Choir members have younger sisters in Angel Choir and it was a neat collaboration opportunity.

Our tradition of pumpkin caroling and Christmas caroling continued this year and we were blessed to have Sue Heft put on a delicious meal for us in December before we went to spread some holiday cheer to folks who aren't able to make it in to church. Sandy Miller-Schreiter and Ginnie Sherer also helped coordinate both caroling events by organizing a list of people and figuring out our caroling routes. We will wrap up our singing season the week after Mother's Day with a song that celebrates spring and all of God's wonderful blessings that time of year!

Middle School Choir

Our fledgling choir consists of Ellen Otto, Mariah Kretz and Kiera Robe. These three brave young women will sing twice this year; once with the Angel Choir and once in the spring. Our goals for next year are to grow our choir to 8 people and to find a perfect name for our ensemble as "middle school choir" is just our working title this year.

Christina Conn
Angel Choir Director

REPORT OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT CHOIRS

We have two Liturgical Movement Choirs at the First Congregational Church. The youngest choir = Faith in Motion, consists of girls and boys ranging from second grade through fifth grade. At Christmas this year we had 11 little girls but no boys. In the past, we have had up to 5 boys. Hopefully we can get the boys involved in the future. The older choir = Dancing Spirit, consists of teenage girls from Middle School through High School. At present, we have 7 dancers.

The calendar for 2010:

January 3rd = Dancing Spirit helped to serve communion by dancing "Let U Break Bread"
February 7th = Faith in Motion danced the "Gaelic Benediction"
February 21st = Faith in Motion put the Alleluias to bed until Easter
April 4th = Dancing Spirit and Faith in Motion brought in the Alleluias
May 9th = Dancing Spirit danced for all Mothers doing Cline Dion "Because You Love Me"
December 19th = Faith in Motion and Dancing Spirit danced to open the Christmas pageant doing Charlotte Church's song "Ding Dong! Merrily on High". We had 15 dancers for this performance.

It was a good year for both movement choirs. Hopefully, we can get boys back.

As always, it is a pleasure for me to work with the youth of FCC.

Missy Allen
Liturgical Movement Choirs Director