



Wisconsin Congregationalist

A Publication of the
Wisconsin Congregational Association



The Moderator's Message

"Although churches be distinct, and therefore may not be confounded one with another, and equal, and therefore have not dominion one over another; yet all the churches ought to preserve church communion one with another, because they are all united unto Christ... ." – Cambridge Platform XV.I

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." – Hebrews 10:25

Greetings beloved in Christ! How exciting that we have an opportunity to host the gathering of gatherings – the NACCC Annual Meeting! Brothers and sisters of The Way will gather with us in Milwaukee this month to fellowship, offer counsel (through the business sessions), and learn together, but perhaps most exciting is the opportunity to worship together. The delegates and guests, pastors and laity, will gather at the Wyndham Hotel, near Mitchell Field in Milwaukee, June 27-30, and the host committee has been busy preparing for their arrival.

By now you have undoubtedly heard of the need for volunteers to help make this event a success. To date, we have received great response, and to those who have already stepped forward to give of their time and talent, thank you. Thanks especially to the Rev. Sue LeFeber of North Shore Congregational Church and Mr. Jim Benz of FCC-Wauwatosa, who have devoted so much energy to leading the Host Committee. Thanks also to Carrie Dahm, whose titles at the NACCC office in Oak Creek are too numerous to list on one business card. Carrie has put in long hours, as she does every year, to ensure that the event is both edifying and efficient in its execution.

And to that end, there is still a need for volunteers. We are asking that churches of the Wisconsin Congregational Association participate in the 10 a.m. worship service Sunday, June 28, and that they volunteer individuals to help usher, serve communion, and take the offering. The Rev. Karl Schimpf of North Shore Congregational Church is leading and coordinating the service, and said he hopes to see 1,000 Congregationalists gathered to worship God. How thrilling it would be if our WCA churches turned out in such strong numbers that we would top the Rev. Schimpf's ambitious goal! And remember, Sunday is a day when your active WCA congregation can stay and enjoy the fellowship without having to pay any registration fee.

So, I ask that you not ignore this great opportunity. Let's show the NACCC that we truly care about one another by hosting a meeting that sets a new standard for all gatherings that follow.

May grace and peace abound with you and within your congregation. I remain:

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Shawn P. Stapleton, Senior Minister, FCC-Kenosha

Directory of WCA Member Churches

Please take a moment to visit our website and view the online Directory of Churches at <http://www.wiscongregational.net/directory.pdf> - If any of your contact information has changed, please send corrections to office@fccweb.net

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Minister's Fellowship Meetings 2009-2010

September 9	First Cong'l Community Church, Roscoe
October 5-6	Retreat at Mt. Morris Camp
November 11	Second Congregational Church, Beloit
December 9	Heritage Congregational Church, Madison
January 13	North Shore Cong'l Church, Fox Point
February 10	Faith Community, Franklin (tentative)
March 10	First Congregational Church, Wauwatosa
April	No Meeting, WCA Annual Meeting
May 12	First Congregational Church, Rochester

September 20th - will be the service of installation for Barry Szymanski at First Congregational Church, Wauwatosa

Congratulations to Karen Stubblefield who celebrating 10 years at Gridley Congregational Church, Beloit and Steven Peay for the 27th anniversary of his ordination.

Wisconsin Congregational Theological Society 2009-2010

September 17, 2009: Hillary H. V. Bowser

November 19, 2009: Thomas Richard

January 21, 2010: Shawn Stapleton

March 25, 2010: Kevin Clark

May 20, 2010: Doug Gray



A "New Thing" that needs your help!

June 13, 2009 (June 20, rain date) 8 am- 2 pm

Last June on a misty Saturday morning, some members of St. Jacobi Congregational Church set off to Oak Creek for a clean-up day on the grounds of the National Association office. We had a wonderful time pulling record-setting weeds, painting and doing general landscape clean-up (chainsaws buzzing!) but there is much more to be done!

You are invited to get out your gardening gloves and old sneakers! This year, we hope to gather members of area WCA churches to join us for another wonderful summer morning at the National Office! We need help with general yard work, trimming bushes and trees, and many other tasks. We need to get ready to put our best face forward for the NACCC Annual Meeting in late June!

The last time you saw a chainsaw was it in a scary movie? If you would like to help out but yard work is not your strength please contact me! We can use your help keeping workers fueled and hydrated, or running errands!

Don't miss this great opportunity for fellowship and fun in the Congregational Way! Join us on June 13, 2009 from 8am - 2pm. We have a rain date set for June 20, 2009. Our efforts are greatly appreciated by the busy staff of the NACCC office. It's an opportunity to get to know our friends throughout the WCA community and it's great to spend a day outdoors!

With questions or to sign up, please contact:

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Some history of 2nd Congregational Church, Beloit, in celebration of its 1859 founding

The following information is taken from an original typed carbon copy of a write-up credited to Nellie Myers. The document is on carbon paper with Beloit Public Library letterhead noted at the top of each page.



Dr. H.P. Higley, Pastor
2nd Cong. Church Beloit
from 1866 - 1899

“Beloit, Wis., Oct. 9, 1909

“The first fifty years... The life of the young people in Second Cong. Church.

“To tell the story of the young people of the Second Congregational Church is, it seems, only to tell the history of the church from a slightly different point of view. It is the story of that church condition in which new ideas, big plans, unusual things are dared. Sometimes they do not materialize but there is always surprise (and) enthusiasm. It is the story of the age of ‘try again.’ The sign of decay in a young people’s society, if not the failure of its undertakings, but less spontaneity in its attempts.

“Those were the good days still in the memory of some of our older church members now. Then, the young people shared equally with the older ones in the prayer meetings, in the financial support, and in the socials and picnics of the whole church. In 1872 or 1873, a young people’s society was organized following a revival during which a large number of young people, 30 or 40, had joined the church. This society was the outgrowth of Dr. H.P. Higley’s efforts to keep the church children from backsliding. The meetings were held Friday evening of each week at Dr. Higley’s home, usually directed by him.

“The members were young men, young women, boys and girls. ‘Some of us were rather young for such a step,’ writes one of these little girls, who is here this very minute. ‘I well remember,’ she continues, ‘the first meeting held at Dr. Higley’s house soon after we joined the church, at which each one of us in turn told how we were faring in the Christian life, and how keenly I felt that there must be something very wrong with my Christian experience because, unlike all the others, I had nothing to tell of doubts and dismay.’

“Another of those little girls, of twelve years or there about, remembers how disturbed she was when she had gone to the prayer meeting with her sister and some of the older girls and Dr. Higley called upon her to pray. The only words she could whisper were ‘Our dear Father,’ which pitiful little prayer was surely heard. The meetings were made up of testimonies and prayers and singing. ‘Sweet hour of prayer’ was ever a favorite, dragged along in sweet rendition, so some say. Most testimonies I am told were completed by, ‘I pray that I be ever found faithful,’ not tritally (*sic*) but sincerely spoken. So this early young people’s society had for its main purpose the encouragement of spirituality among the young people. “Occasionally special collections were taken for some missionary cause appealing to their sympathy. The little chapel organ seems to have been bought by them.

“Then after ten years or so of this interesting pioneer society, the group of young people with Dr. Higley, decided that a more thoro (*sic*) organization was needed for active and aggressive work. A meeting for making plans to form a Young People’s Society of Christian Endeavor was held at the Ritscher home on Fourth Street.

From several authorities, I have heard the tale of the squeaky rocking chair in which Mr. Ernst Fluekiger found himself; of his amusingly uncomfortable face, of the suppressed giggles of the rest in the midst of the seriousness of the occasion. ‘For,’ one who was present writes, ‘Dr. Higley always had a solemn reverent way of conducting a meeting or of talking of sacred things, and we all felt a kind of awe in his presence, much as we loved him, so perhaps you can imagine how perfectly ridiculous it was to hear that rocker groan every few minutes, and how embarrassed Ernst was, for in those days he was so shy, it was a wonder that he came at all.’ And I tell this only to prove that young people are alike everywhere, every time.

“Formal organization of the Second Cong. Young People’s Soc. Of Christian Endeavor took place in the chapel of the church, April 22, 1883, one year after the first society was founded by Frances Clarke, and one of the first in Wisconsin. The constitution was adopted, the pledge was signed by twenty-nine of those present, which number grew to ninety-one active, and thirty-seven associate, within one year. The pledge was simple and shorter than the present Christian Endeavor pledge—just this—‘Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength, I will try to learn to do God’s will. By daily prayer and reading of the Bible, I will seek light and strength, I will not be ashamed to go right or to speak for Jesus.’ Four committees were chosen...”*

**(Note: The four committees were designated as the “Prayer Meeting,” “Lookout,” “Social” and “Flower” Committees.)*

“From now on, the C.E. meetings were held on Sunday evenings for three-quarters of an hour before evening service. They were held in the lecture room at the back of the old church, not called the ‘chapel’ until rebuilt later. There was a very narrow entry-way between the lecture room and the church, where the young men persisted in tarrying to the front church door for evening service. In this lecture room, there was the little cabinet organ to lead the young folks’ singing. A small red nite box hanging on the wall near the door, received the missionary contributions amounting to about \$5 a month. As a sort of prelude meeting in those early days of C.E., one of the married members, Mrs. Grinnell, used to invite the young people to her home on Fourth Street for the late Sunday afternoons to prepare for the evening meeting, stay for lunch, then go up the hill to church.