



First Congregational
United Church of Christ

Snapshot Reflections on the Years From 1990 to 2022

Compiled by
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and Janet Pugh
Spring 2023



First Congregational United Church of Christ Madison, Wisconsin

*The Lord hath more truth
and light yet to Break Forth
from God's Holy Word.*

John Robinson 1620





1840 - 1846

Early Foundations

October 4, 1840: Nine women and men form a congregational fellowship.



1846: The first building on Webster Street costs \$1,800. The church bell, installed in 1848, is the first in Madison.



1847 - 1929



1874: an even bigger building on West Washington Avenue

1857: a bigger building on West Washington Avenue





1930 - 1940

1930: Dedication of our building on Breese Terrace



1939: First publication of the **Church Tower**; 35 cents by subscription

1940: First Congregational Church celebrates its first 100 years

- Church Membership: 1750

“But whatever changes may come into the life of the world in the Next Hundred Years – scientific advances, alteration in the map of nations, modifications in the social structure – we may be certain that Christianity will continue to have relevance to life, perhaps a sharpened relevance by the very rigor of the struggle that lies ahead.”

Rev. Alfred Swan, Senior Minister



1941 - 1989

1965: **Dr. Alfred W. Swan** retires from distinguished ministry of 35 years.

1968: Presentations and discussions about **global warming** and understanding **Black history** and civil rights struggles

1969: A young man approaches the church to make **public witness against the Vietnam War** and resist induction into the Army. The congregation votes, “We affirm the responsibility of the church to take its stand on the moral issues involved....”

1972: Carol Toussaint becomes **first woman Moderator** in our church history.

1975: **320 Lathrop** - Emeritus House offers housing for low-income elderly

1980-81: **Sanctuary remodeling** and installation of the Holtkamp organ

1982: **320 Lathrop** remodeling to provide lodging for out-of-town families of UW Hospital patients

1989: **Church utility bill** \$22,200

“Rev. Grogan frequently addressed the philosophical and spiritual aspects of church architecture ... We should seek, in our liturgy and in the arrangement of our furniture and symbols, to draw ourselves together as one body.”

Theodore Reinke, Church Organist, in the Sesquicentennial Chronicle



1990 - 1991

Church Leadership

Clergy: Fritz West

Nayiri Karjian

Moderator:

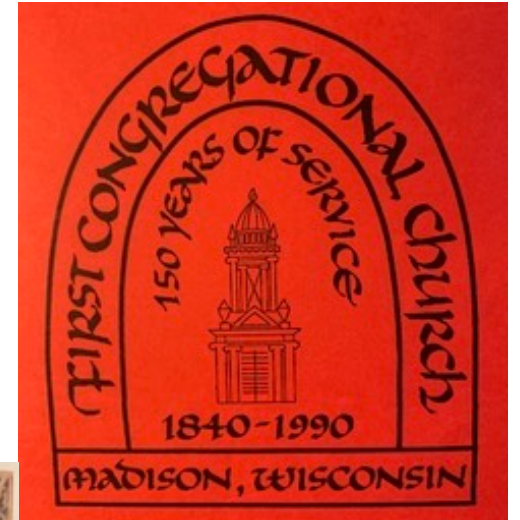
Velma Hamilton

Mari McCarty

303 Lathrop: Congregation votes to lease the house to Madison AIDS Support Network.

1990 First Congregational United Church of Christ celebrates its **Sesquicentennial Anniversary** (150 years.)

Doris Beaty designs a quilt, inspired by stenciling on the rear Sanctuary wall and on the window frames in what is now called the Hearth Room.



"God gives us the power to create [our] future: the freedom to act and the faith to hope. Whatever the future of this church may be, God has given us the power to decide it. I, for one, believe that future is to be lived where we are, on the corner of University Avenue and Breese Terrace.... The Sesquicentennial has turned us toward the future, strengthened by the resources of our past."

Rev. Fritz West, Senior Minister



1991 - 1992

Church Leadership

Clergy: Shirley Funk, Interim

Nayiri Karjian

Moderator:

Mari McCarty

John Cooper

Open and Affirming: New committee considers adoption by the congregation.

University Avenue Daycare Center celebrates its 25th anniversary. At its founding, by church volunteers, this is one of three day care centers in the city.

Salvation Army: Homeless women are accommodated overnight in the narthex as the Salvation Army exceeds its overnight capacity.

Thanksgiving Dinner is served in the church for the first time serving 200 at its inaugural meal.

320 Lathrop: Emeritus House closes.



"During the 17 years that Emeritus House has existed it has housed fifteen elderly women, furnished 12,523 nights of rest for many people, repaid the \$7,000 borrowed from the Foundation to begin the project, improved the property with vinyl siding, a repaired roof, insulation, a screened front porch and contributed \$2,000 to Ecumenical Housing, Inc. for the church."

Emeritus House Committee



1992 - 1993

Church Leadership:

Clergy: Shirley Funk, Interim
Nayiri Karjian

Moderator:
John Cooper
Flora Flygt

Rev. Dr. Alfred Swan dies: He served as Senior Minister from 1930-1965.

Of One Spirit: Congregation votes to begin a capital fund drive to create a more accessible church building.

Open and Affirming: Congregation votes to welcome persons of all sexual orientations into its life and ministry. This action occurs during an interim time - not led by a pastor but led and accomplished by the congregation.

Rev. Paul Kittlaus is called to be Senior Minister.



“One of the "faith" moments we experienced together last year, I believe, was declaring ourselves Open and Affirming! We took a risk in faith affirming God's indiscriminating love to all people, in an unconventional way! And we did well. I think we are called to another moment of “faithing” to become truly open and affirming as we choose to become accessible to all people no matter what the cost! For it cost God big to be accessible to us in Jesus Christ!”

Rev. Nayiri Karjian, Associate Minister



1993 - 1994

Church Leadership:

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Nayiri Karjian

Staff: Joan Shands

Nanci Higgins- Ramsden

Bill Busch

Moderator:

Flora Flygt

Jim Cole

Building Accessibility: work on elevator to the Sanctuary, accessible bathrooms, Garden Entrance to the Sanctuary

Continuing Ministries:

- **303 Lathrop:** Madison AIDS Support Network
- **Overnight shelter** for homeless women in the narthex
- **320 Lathrop:** American Indian Student House
- **Community Meals** at St. Paul's church



"We have come to a day when what has worked in the past may have limited usefulness. We certainly do not expect, unless it is God's miracle, to see people flock to church like they did in the 50s. But we can envision a core of committed people, singles, families, elderly, the young, coming together in Christ's name and for Christ purposes and we can envision a faithful community of ministry at University and Breese Terrace."

Rev. Paul Kittlaus, Senior Minister



1994 - 1995

Church Leadership:

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Nayiri Karjian

Staff: Joan Shands

Nanci Higgins- Ramsden

Bill Busch

Moderator:

Jim Cole

Gloria Green

Dedication of building accessibility improvements (Of One Spirit Capital Campaign)



Wednesday gatherings include evening meal, education, and choir and handbell rehearsals.

303 Lathrop: Madison AIDS Support Network ends lease and moves to a larger facility.

“.... clients, volunteers, board, and staff members are very grateful to First Congregational UCC for providing an office in which we were able to expand and improve our services. We have appreciated all the support and well wishes from your church, and hope that your next tenant will share an equally fruitful partnership. Thank you.”

Madison AIDS Support Network



1995 - 1996

Church Leadership:

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Nayiri Karjian

Staff: Joan Shands

Nanci Higgins- Ramsden

Bill Busch

Moderator:

Gloria Green

Fred Wileman

Outside groups use our building:

Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (Sing-Out Messiah)

American Masters Chorale

Madison Civic Music Association

Madison Folk Music Society

Southern Wisconsin Bluegrass Association

Christmas Eve service changes from 11:00pm to 9:00pm so that sheltering women in the narthex do not find “there is no room at the inn.”

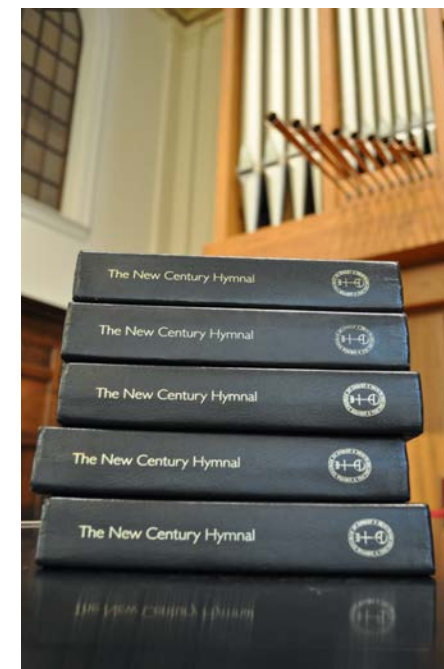
First Congregational Church inaugurates its website.

Computers in the church now on a network

New Century Hymnal

“The congregation adopted and began using the New Century Hymnal. This collection of music and worship resources boldly celebrates diversity of inclusiveness.”

Gloria Green, Moderator





1996 - 1997

Church Leadership:

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Nayiri Karjian

Staff: Joan Shands

Nanci Higgins- Ramsden

Bill Busch

Moderator:

Fred Wileman

Rich Fluechtling

Professional staff expands: The Congregation votes on new full-time positions (an experiment).

- Director of Music Ministries
- Director of Christian Education for Children and Youth

Thanksgiving Dinner serves 400.

Youth Summer Trip to UCC National Youth Event in South Carolina, with a work project in West Virginia.



"I pray that we may continue on this road to renewal together discovering that, in the midst of the renewal of our congregation, we will discover the renewal of our own hearts and minds in the love of God. May our joy be full and our work be yours, O God, giver of all good gifts. Amen."

Rev. Paul Kittlaus, Senior Minister



1997 - 1998

Church Leadership

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Diana Shaw

Staff: Joan Shands

Gayle McFarland

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Rich Fluechtling

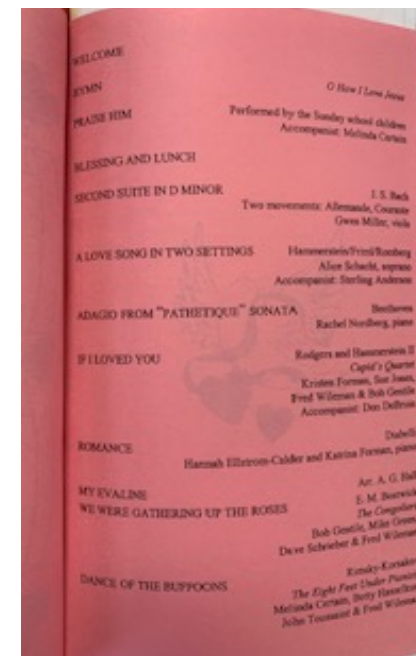
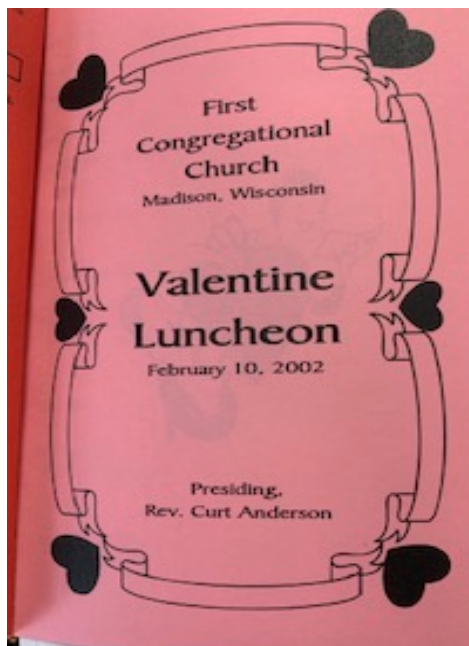
Annette Ellstrom

303 Lathrop: Renovation prepares the **Nancy Denny House** for single parents. Three mothers and their children move in.

Wheelchair accessibility: sanctuary pews modification creates space for wheelchairs.

New Staff: Rev. Diana Shaw, Associate Minister
Don DeBruin, Director of Music Ministries
Gayle McFarland, Director of Christian Education for Children and Youth

Women's Fellowship
sponsors a Valentine's Day
lunch for the congregation.



"Our target date of hiring all three staff by September seemed daunting ... (but) we embark on a new journey with new and revitalized programs using the talents and enthusiasm of a new staff."

Rich Fluechtling, Moderator



1998 -1999

Church Leadership

Clergy: Paul Kittlaus

Diana Shaw

Staff: Joan Shands

Gayle McFarland

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Annette Ellstrom

Janet Pugh

First Congregational UCC Foundation

Board of Directors votes to adopt a socially responsible investment policy.

New **adult** programming:

- Bible and Babcock: lectionary-based discussion and ice cream
- *Texts of Terror*: discussion of Bible stories not commonly studied

Senior High Youth at a work camp in Bloomington, Indiana, building a house

The congregation approves **The New World Campaign** to raise \$500,000 to subsidize program renewal.



“On December 20, 1998, 35 people joined in song to bring the Christmas story alive through the music of William Lloyd Webber. Several people told me that the choir loft had not been that full in years. How true that is I do not know. Nevertheless, it was the most people that I have seen in the choir since I came to Madison in September 1997.”

Don DeBruin, Director of Music Ministries



1999 - 2000

Church Leadership

Clergy: Cheryl Burke, Interim

Diana Shaw

Staff: Joan Shands

Gayle McFarland

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Janet Pugh

Lay Ministry group visits home-bound members weekly.

Church **software is Year2000** compliant.

Three **handbell** and hand chime choirs enhance worship.

Church gatherings:

- Wednesday night Gatherings
- Fall Festival Picnic
- Palm Sunday Brunch
- After-church refreshments

Youth attend **2000 National Youth Event** in Ames, IA and work with Habitat for Humanity in West Virginia.

320 Lathrop: houses a transitional home for boys (collaboration with Sunburst Foundation)



“A new identity is emerging here as new people continue to be drawn by a spirit of love and openness. I am seeing and hearing a hunger for spiritual growth that is both intellectual and heartfelt. Attendance at the gatherings has increased and people are expressing a desire for more opportunities to learn and grow together.”

Rev. Cheryl Burke, Interim Senior Minister



2000 - 2001

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Diana Shaw

Staff: Gayle McFarland

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Janet Pugh

Fred Coleman

Rev. Curt Anderson is called to be Senior Minister.

Joan Shands retires after 15 years as Coordinator for Lay Ministries.

303 Lathrop: Nancy Denny House closes as home for single mothers and children.

2000 church utility bill: \$28,125



“From the annual meeting of 2000 until now, we have welcomed 43 new members. Once again our newest members come from a variety of faith backgrounds. They also come to First Congregational from all parts of the city. Almost to the person however, they tell us that this church’s open and affirming mission statement is what first got their attention! They heard about our statement from our publicity or from word of mouth. But secondly, our newest members returned week after week and eventually joined, because of the church’s hospitality, marvelous music and worship, and ministry to children and youth.”

Rev. Diana Shaw, Associate Minister



2001-2002

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Diana Shaw

Staff: Sara Ator

Kristin Kanitz

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Fred Coleman

Sue Hawk

Sending Forth the Seventy: 84 members give away federal government tax rebates (\$23,094) to 60 charitable organizations (mostly local) as a way of sharing wealth.

320 Lathrop: Orion Transition Home houses adolescent boys.

303 Lathrop: Remodeling facilitates a UW Hospital infant and toddler day care.

University Avenue Discovery Center: new name for University Avenue Day Care Center

Mission Trip to Diocese of San Cristobal in Chiapas, Mexico by eight women

Church delegations (18 members) travel to Chiapas six times between 1998 and 2005.

Bishop Ruiz and others from Chiapas reciprocate with a visit to our church.



September 11, 2001: In the September 16 Tower, “... let us not rush to judgement; let us instead linger in grief and sorrow for the victims. Justice must be done; but first let us care for the victims, protect the vulnerable, stand with those in sorrow and pray for our nation, our government, and our people.”

Rev. Curt Anderson, Senior Minister



2002-2003

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Diana Shaw

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Sue Hawk

Tom Pugh

Con Vivo holds its debut concert in September 2002.



Church Records useful: Historian and Church Office Volunteer John Toussaint recalls an inquiry in 2003 for confirmation of a wedding performed sometime between 1840 and 1845.



Prayers for Peace: Participation in worship with other UCC churches and petitions opposing possible war in the Middle East

“I think it is very important that the church witness for peace in our world. It is very easy for the world to turn to violence – in international relations, in our cities, in schools and prisons, between people and even in families. It seems clear to me that the way of Jesus is the way of justice and peace.”

Rev. Curt Anderson, Senior Minister



2003-2004

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Diana Shaw

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Ann Munkres, Parish Nurse

Moderator:

Tom Pugh

Jane Oman

Youth travel to UCC General Synod in Minneapolis where they box 450 food kits for Twin Cities Second Harvest.

Building Manager Tom Sveum retires after 29 years of tending the church building.

Rev. Diana Shaw retires.

First Communion Program introduces the ritual of communion to second graders.



"... the 12 children who participated in the (communion) classes took their first communion. It was a very rewarding experience for everyone involved."

Jeff Rabe, Director of Christian Education for Children and Youth



2004-2005

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Ree Hale

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Ann Munkres, Parish Nurse

Moderator:

Jane Oman

Betty Hasselkus

Church utility bill: \$31,938

Rev. Ree Hale compiles a list of **women called to ministry** from our congregation, since 1930.

75th Anniversary of
current church building

Summer Musical Jeff Rabe and Don DeBruin lead children and youth for the first musical, *“Through the Roof.”*

*“After the success we had last June with a group of our children performing **Through the Roof**, I can’t think of a better way to spend a week with the church’s younger members, than to do something like this again.”*

Don DeBruin, Director of Music Ministries



1929 Cornerstone at the front of the church.



2005-2006

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock
Staff: Jeff Rabe
Don DeBruin
Moderator:
Betty Hasselkus
Dana Chabot

Rev. Jerry Hancock is ordained to develop the Prison Ministry Project

"We began this ministry thinking that we were bringing God to people in prison, but we found that they were bringing God to us."

Parish Nurse program is discontinued.

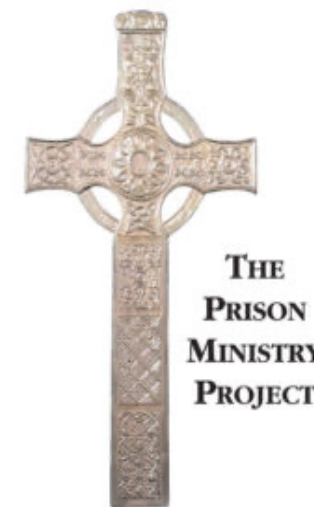
Thanksgiving Dinner serves 300+ meals.

New World Campaign to subsidize program renewal far exceeds its goal.

Prayer Shawl Ministry begins.

"We have had dedicated 56 shawls to date. Shawls have been given to every child baptized here since fall 2005. Shawls have also been given to shut ins, persons with life-threatening illnesses or other traumatic situations. In February 2006 we were able to provide 15 shawls for our new prison ministry. Two groups are formed for fellowship around the making of prayer shawls. One meets evenings twice a month, the other meets one afternoon a month."

Rev. Ree Hale, Interim Associate Minister





2006-2007

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe
Don DeBruin

Moderator:
Dana Chabot
Joanne Lenburg

Rev. Eldonna Hazen is called as half-time Associate Minister.

Foods Resource Bank: Board of Outreach and the Zwingli UCC in Paoli begin a program to help a Paoli farmer grow and sell a crop, the proceeds of which are used to offer agricultural assistance to farmers in the developing world.



Members of the congregation worked to defeat a state constitutional amendment defining marriage to be between a man and a woman. However, the amendment passed. *“It's hard to keep a positive and hopeful outlook when something like this happens; but in the midst of the amendment's victory, I have become more and more convinced that all this amendment will do is delay the day when all people in Wisconsin will have equal marriage rights. I know that day will come. As a church we will continue our position as an open and affirming faith community, actively welcoming all people into participation and leadership in our life together.”*

Rev. Curt Anderson, Senior Minister



2007-2008

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson

Eldonna Hazen

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Joanne Lenburg

Tom Syring

Women's Book Study begins.

Habitat for Humanity house is completed, near McFarland in honor of Marzo Bliss, a long-term congregation member and worker with Habitat.



"We tried to 'extend the walls of the church' by helping keep contact with homebound members of the church."

- Communion taken to members who cannot attend church on Sunday morning
- The Prayer for Daily Use sent to members at home
- CD recordings of the worship service sent
- Webcasting and podcasting the sermon each week

Board of Deacons



2008-2009

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe
Don DeBruin

Moderator:
Tom Syring
Diane Drinkman

Prison Ministry Project becomes an ongoing ministry moving from a three-year pilot project.

Worship exchange with the S.S. Morris Community African Methodist Episcopal Church brings members of both churches together for worship and fellowship.

Thanksgiving Dinner serves 558 meals.

Respite Room in the Student Lounge (now the Hearth Room) offers simultaneous video of the worship service in quiet surroundings.

U.S. Cellular equipment is installed in tower.

Special Needs Committee (now the Accessible Committee) is formed.

Sustainable Travel to Worship



From 2005-2011 our church promoted sustainable travel to worship in May. In 2009 approximately 80 individuals participated: *“We took 280 car-limited trips over the five Sundays in May, reducing by about 583 pounds our carbon dioxide emissions, and reducing car miles traveled by about 700. That’s the distance from Madison to Bismarck, ND!”* **from The Tower**



2009-2010

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Diane Drinkman
Gary Pine

Church utility bill: \$41,993

Members travel to the **Iona Abbey in Scotland**, with Don DeBruin and Diana Shaw, one of several trips for spiritual renewal and bonding.



Habitat for Humanity House is completed on Northport Drive in the Urban Neighborhoods Initiative



“Our church completed and blessed the Hassani home in an existing neighborhood on Northport Drive. This was the second Habitat for Humanity home completed by First Congregational in less than five years.”

Rev. Curt Anderson, Senior Minister



2010-2011

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe
Don DeBruin

Moderator:
Gary Pine
Phil Certain

Church communications:

- Updating of Church website
- Creation of Facebook page

Football parking continues as an important fundraiser.



Steam heating system is found to be under severe distress.

Several project groups discern areas for building and program renewal.

“Giving is not a burden to be coercively imposed by the church or performed in the hopes of insuring an easier afterlife. It is a cheerful task to be undertaken with a lightness of spirit and heartfelt gratitude for the gifts and opportunities God has provided.”

Henry Hempe, Board of Stewardship



2011-2012

Church Leadership

Clergy: Curt Anderson
Eldonna Hazen
Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe
Don DeBruin

Moderator:
Phil Certain
Sue Jones

Liturgical Art in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday



Reach and Renew campaign raises
\$2,171,583, enabling:

- Replacement of heating system
- Installation of air conditioning in sanctuary and dining room
- Contributions to mission and other projects



"What is particularly astonishing about this total is that, except for the extremely generous gift of \$250,000 from the (church) Foundation and one single personal donation of \$100,000, all other gifts were smaller contributions from 176 family units."

Annette Ellstrom, Chair of Reach and Renew Committee



2012-2013

Church Leadership

Clergy: Doug Moore, Interim

Eldonna Hazen

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Sue Jones

Tom Rickner

Boy Scout Troop 2: A 90-year relationship with the Boy Scout Troop 2 ends.

“National Boy Scout action is in conflict with our congregation's open and affirming core value. We have hoped and prayed for more than a decade that this might change. It has not. There was no response to our request for an explicit exception to the national Boy Scout policy that would have allowed Troop 2 to be a publicly open and affirming Troop.”

Rev. Curt Anderson, Senior Minister

Hearing Loop: First Congregational Church is the first church in the area to install an assisted listening system in the Sanctuary and the Chapel.

Rev Curt Anderson retires.

Rev. Doug Moore serves as Interim Minister.

Rev. Eldonna Hazen is called as Senior Minister.



“I can report that the major questions facing a truly healthy church are facing your church. I can report that people in this congregation seem eager and willing to address these questions and to do so with an eye on the greatest good and deepest needs. I can report that there is a fond recognition of the old ways as well as an eager willingness to try new ways.”

Rev. Doug Moore, Interim Senior Minister



2013-2014

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty, Interim

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Tom Rickner

Paul Karch

Reach & Renew: some of the non-building disbursement

- Membership renewal
- Prison Ministry Project
- Ecologically friendly building improvements
- Refurbishment of the Youth Room
- Organ and piano repairs
- Planning begins for other building refurbishment

Prison Ministry hosts Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking*.



“Every Sunday for the past year members have stepped in front of the congregation to share their insight of “Because of Your Generosity.” The Board believes that these comments ... [have] contributed significantly to the turnaround experiences in our church’s financial situation.” **Board of Stewardship**



2014-2015

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty, Interim

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Paul Karch

Associate Minister position becomes full-time for a three-year period.

303 Lathrop: Collaboration with Madison-area Urban Ministry (now JustDane) to establish Healing House.

Launches a year of celebrating the **175th anniversary of our congregation**, including a worship service on October 4, 2015

Rev. Eldonna Hazen

Rev. Franz Rigert, Wisconsin

Conference Minister

Rev. Joanne Thomson, Associate

Conference Minister

Rev. Ann Beaty

Rev. Ron Buford, developer of the UCC

“Still Speaking” campaign



“No church had a larger role in shaping Madison through its ministers, its members, and through its powerful ideals during Madison’s formative years than the First Congregational Church.”

David Mollenhoff, local Madison historian



2015-2016

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Paul Karch

Lyn Macgregor

Rev. Ann Beaty is called to be Associate Minister.

Women in Ministry: the congregation ordains two more women to ministry, sustaining a tradition of nurturing people for ministry.

Wireless connections are added in the Dining Room, the Fellowship Room, the Hearth Room, the Chapel and the Church Office.



From the collection of Betty Hanselken



From the collection of Betty Hanselken

Finally.....the balustrades and steeple repainting is complete.

55 Alive begins in the renovated chapel. *“A lunch and learning program that weaves together art, community, and faith. Geared toward people 55 and older, although all ages are welcome.”*

from our website





2016-2017

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Lyn Macgregor

Casey Newman

Sunday School uses a rotation system in art, music, and cinema to learn about Bible stories.

Special Sunday morning worship is offered for grades 1-6.



Renovation Committee spurs

- Reduction of carbon footprint
- Various repairs and replacements
- Replacement of the front steps
- Creation of a ramp to the church



"I should point out that it is the Congregation's generosity through the Reach and Renew campaign and through annual general budget allocations that make all of this work possible."

Tom Syring



2017-2018

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Casey Newman

Ellsworth Brown

Thanksgiving Dinner serves 700 meals.

Open & Affirming:

- Congregation celebrates 25 years as an Open and Affirming community.
- Outreach, Inc. honors the church with its Special Recognition Award for years of community service within the LGBTQ community in Madison.

Our Building:

- Big move into remodeled space for the church office, chapel, nursery, ministers' offices.
- Pink Kitchen is replaced.



“Perhaps the biggest highlight of the year was moving back into our renovated space in October.... We now have the nursery closer to parents and easier for visitors to find. The ministers’ offices are now accessible. We have a much more usable kitchen on the main level, and more restrooms, including one that is unisex. The Chapel has become an amazing space.”

Rev. Eldonna Hazen, Senior Minister



2018-2019

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Ellsworth Brown

Ruth Benedict

Prison Ministry by the numbers:

125 Restorative Justice graduates

535 prison volunteer visits

2 Odyssey in Prison programs

4 Poetry sessions with American Players Theatre Behind Bars

64 worship services

100 visits to the Dane County Jail

UCC Musicians Association Conference meets at our church.

Don DeBruin is on the board of the association.

303 Lathrop: Healing House,
a collaboration with Madison-
area Urban Ministry
(JustDane) is dedicated.



For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.

Matthew 25: 35-36



2019-2020

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Ruth Benedict

Scott Hackel

Environmental Justice and Action Task Force is created.

Task Force begins evaluation of Church communication.

Handbells refurbishment: the oldest bells date from the 1960s.

Prison Ministry Project:

- Creates 30 video worship services and Restorative Justice on Zoom for locked down prisons.
- Conducts a survey of Restorative Justice graduates and volunteers building an understanding of the impact of Restorative Justice

Sanctuary Worship

moves to YouTube.

Creative solutions
connect us on YouTube.

Boards and

Committees continue
to meet via Zoom.



“In 2020, we are living with and through, unusual times. We are faced with COVID-19 and its ramifications, continued and unnerving racism, and the loud call to BE THE CHURCH. I, and my family, are blessed to be part of this congregation – that holds LOVE as its core value. Thanks for being on this journey. Together, we can AND will, make a difference!”

Rev. Eldonna Hazen, Senior Minister



2020 - 2021

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

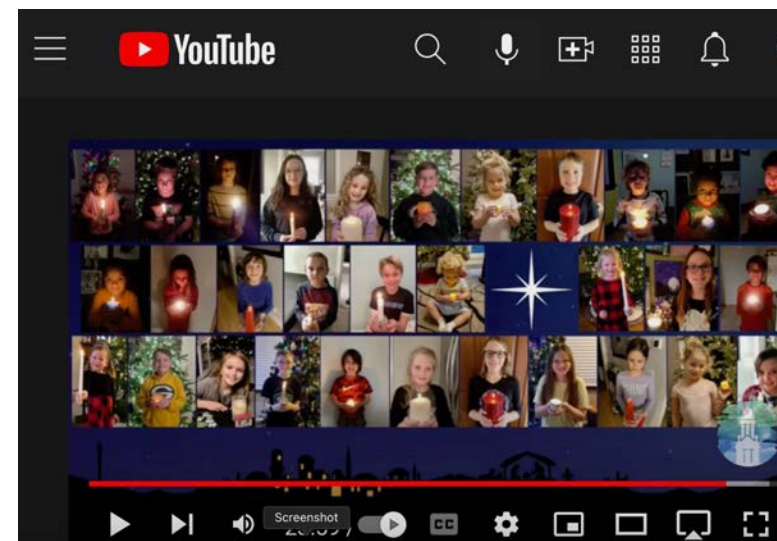
Scott Hackel

Cindy Graham

COVID-19 Committee leads decisions on gathering during the pandemic.

- The Church maintains and pays staff.
- Members contribute pandemic relief checks to assist community members having difficulty finding shelter, transportation, food, and more.

The Christmas Pageant: Youth create a totally ZOOM pageant modeled on The Late Show. The innovative production offers a contemporary perspective of the age-old story, bringing ancient problems and mysteries alive in a modern light.



"I have been incredibly impressed with the faith and resilience of the First Cong community. Of course, we were all disappointed to not consistently see our dear Church family as we had previously been able to do, but this community believed the science, followed the direction to be safer-at-home, and committed to being as engaged as possible as we learned new technology to stay connected Not only did you continue, but many of you even stepped up your contributions – and you made a difference! You showed compassion and courage, and by doing so – gave hope to others and felt hope yourself."

Rev. Eldonna Hazen, Senior Minister



2021-2022

Church Leadership

Clergy: Eldonna Hazen

Ann Beaty

Jerry Hancock

Staff: Jeff Rabe

Don DeBruin

Moderator:

Cindy Graham

Susan Fischer

Solar panels are a reality after years of dreaming, thanks to the leadership of the Environmental Justice Group and the generosity of members of the congregation.

Don DeBruin, Director of Music Ministries retires after 25 years.



“We are under the sun – this congregation, this building, each of us. We are about something new. Thanks be to God.” **From the service dedicating the solar panels**



Praise God for worship times that ground our mission in scripture.

Praise God for sermons and prayers that weave together beautiful music and liturgy.

Praise God for our extraordinary staff and volunteers who create this enriching time of community and learning.





. . . More light and truth to break forth . . .



God is Still Speaking!