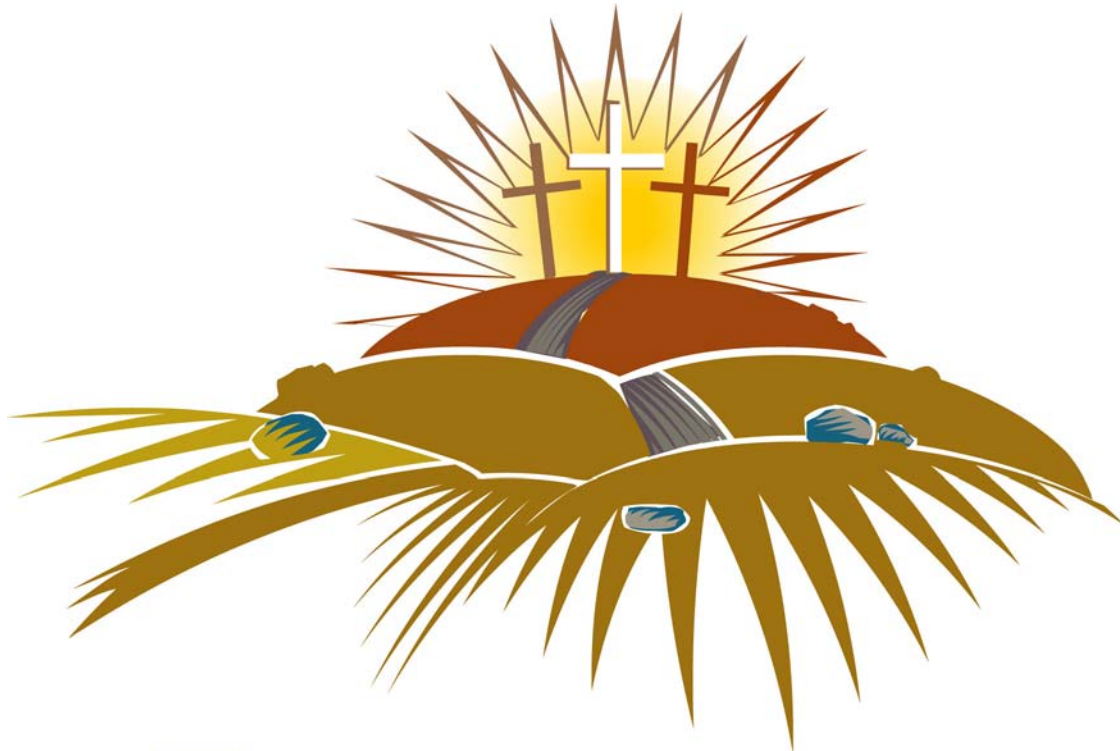




FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

# THE CONGREGATOR

FEBRUARY 11, 2010  
VOLUME 27, ISSUE 3



# LENT

**ASH WEDNESDAY, PRAYER-A-THON  
FEBRUARY 17TH - 7:00 AM TO 7:00 PM**

“Don’t worry about anything, instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4: 6-7

We will begin the Lenten Season with our third annual prayer-a-

thon. On Ash Wednesday, February 17th, church members and friends will be in the sanctuary praying from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.. Prayer requests will be accepted prior to Ash Wednesday. At each hour we will have someone to greet the prayer participants. The greeters will give each participant a prayer sheet containing an opening and closing prayer as well as some thoughts to help you get started.

Prayer concerns submitted by members and friends will be available for you to include in your prayers. You may light one of the candles found on the Communion Table. We invite everyone to come and spend some time in quiet meditation. Prayer participants may sign up for a specific hour in the Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please contact Barb Benson at 694-1867 or Lana Bellah at 695- 9040.

*Jake says . . .*

“Lent is almost here’!”

Our Lenten devotional experience this year offers an opportunity to do something similar to what Jesus might have done during a holy time in his Jewish tradition. Our United Church of Christ is one of many denominations using the Consensus or Common Lectionary - a series of Bible readings for each Sunday. Since each Sunday has a Psalm reading, let’s read and pray our way through this year’s Lenten Psalms. In the schedule of readings, each week shows a Psalm theme. The actual passage is divided into six readings. We might ask ourselves, “What is God saying to me through this Psalm?” Each group of verses has a specific theme. A prayer time after reading and thinking will help to focus the passage. Healthy prayer listens as much as it talks!

Ash Wed. Ps. 51:1-5; Th. cleansing Ps. 51:6-9; Fr. recreation Ps. 51:10-14; St. hope Ps. 51:15-17

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21 Ps. 91:1-2 Safety with God	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-13	14-16
28 Ps. 27:1-2 Benefits of faith	3-4	5-6	7-9a	9b-10	11-12	13-14
7 Ps. 63:1 God preserves God’s own	2	3	4	5-7	8-10	11
14 Ps. 32:1-2 Joy in God’s care	3-4	5	6	7	8-9	10-11
21 Ps. 126:1-3 Seeking God’s restoration	4-6	Ps. 125:1-3	4-5	Ps. 130:1-2	3-4	5-8
28 Ps. 118:1-2 Gratitude for God’s goodness	19-20	21-25	26-29	Ps. 116:1-2	12-16	17-19

Reading one or two verses may seem a bit simple. However, we may ask questions such as, “Will God do the same thing for me that God will do for the king?” (Note Psalm 63:11 - God works with powerful persons who are humble before God.)

Greatness is in faithfulness, not in personal position!  
To put it another way, all of us are equal before God.

Ash Wednesday, our Lenten pilgrimage, and Holy Week in particular, all point toward our challenge to let God be God in our own lives. Letting God lead often creates a situation which is less-familiar for us. We are used to being in charge. Shifting our Lenten emphasis from study to prayer may open doors to new activity by God among us. We likely will find fresh power from God, new closeness with God, and an exciting partnership in God’s service. Resurrection!

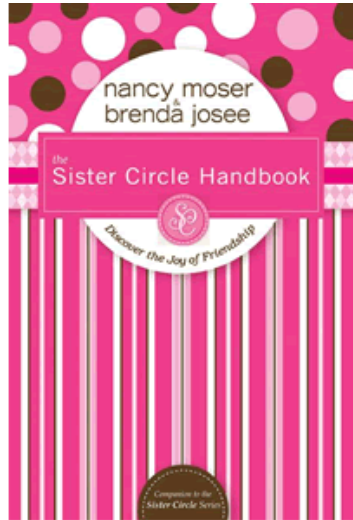


*Peace & Joy!  
Jake*

SISTER CIRCLE

A fresh new exciting women's ministry is forming right here at First Congregational Church and I guarantee you do not want to miss out on all the fun, fellowship, and food!

This group is called the Sister Circle and all women of the church are invited to attend--old, young, professional, mommy...the only qualification for sisterhood is friendship. If you ask women to check their calendars, they probably wouldn't look at many entries with anticipation. Not many of us put "friends" on the calendar—or if we do, we feel guilty. Yet most of us have a circle of friends. But how often do we get together? We usually meet for a



specific reason: a bridal shower, a meeting to plan a school event, an evening of Bunko...but

wouldn't it be nice to have a group of girlfriends whose main reason to get together was to cherish and nourish each other as sisters in Christ?

The Sister Circle is a place where we will talk about our life and faith issues in a warm, supportive atmosphere. Come and get to know this fabulous group of women as we help each other find our purpose, accept our differences, and celebrate our strengths.

Our first meeting will be held on Tuesday March 2<sup>nd</sup> in the gathering room at 7:30 and will meet the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month. We will be reading and discussing *The Sister Circle Handbook*; *Joy of Friendship* by Nancy Moser & Brenda Josee as we begin to form our newly found friendships. Please contact Jamie Zannetti to pick up your book and sign up your children for childcare if needed. If you miss a meeting, don't hesitate to drop in and see what we are all about! Don't miss this opportunity to discover the joy of sisterhood!

**SCOUT  
SUNDAY  
FEBRUARY  
14TH**



STEWARDSHIP

The stewardship campaign for 2010 has not been as successful as was the 2009 campaign.

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Number of Pledges	127	104
Amount Pledged	\$302,975	\$229,975

We have 23 fewer giving units and \$72,097 fewer dollars pledged this year.

In 2009 we had a number of members that did not pledge, but ended up donating over \$50,000. We have no way of knowing how much will be donated this coming year from people that don't pledge. This is why it is so important to turn in your pledge card. If every giving unit would turn in a pledge card, then it would be much easier to determine the spending budget for 2010. Without knowing how much income we are going to have, it makes it very difficult to judge how much money we can spend.

So please, if you haven't turned in a pledge card for 2010, please do so. If you have turned in a pledge card, and you feel that you can increase your pledge, please fill out a new card with the new amount. We really need to be able to keep all of the wonderful activities of this church fully funded.

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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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KAREN J. PALEVICH

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT  
CONGREGATOR IS  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2010**

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**BLANKET SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH**

For more than 60 years, congregations across the U.S. have been responding to Jesus' call to be neighbors to those in need, in partnership with Church World Service. At home and around the world, our congregation is helping impoverished communities with the basic tools they need to sustain themselves and their families.

When disaster strikes, people often need blankets - and much more. They need food, shelter and safe water. As the recovery

process unfolds, they need tools, training and other resources to help them rebuild their lives.

Contributions to Blankets+ means that Church World Service is there for the long haul as families recover from disaster. Church World Services is helping families struggling against grinding poverty as they seek to develop viable sustainable communities and livelihoods.

At its heart, Blankets+ means you. Each year, through your contributions, you the

congregation make this ministry of hope a reality for people in need the world over. Please be generous in your support for Blankets+ this Sunday.

*~Thank You  
Outreach Team*

