

**The**

# Congregator

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## FCUCC IS BUSY IN MARCH - DON'T MISS OUT!

First Congregational United Church of Christ (FCUCC) is buzzing with activity. The program calendar is packed with exciting events and activities this month. The first exciting activity is the Adult Zumba class that began on Thursday, March 3rd at 7:00 pm. Classes are on a drop in basis every week and are \$5 per person, payable to the instructor. Everyone is welcome. See Karen for more information.



Next is our Fourth Annual Prayer-A-Thon on Ash Wednesday, March 9th. This is an event where we accept prayers from the congregation, community and Upward families and lift them up continuously for 12 hours. More information can be found on page 3.

Upward Basketball and Cheerleading will be finishing their last game on Saturday March 12th. If you haven't been to a game, it's not too late. Games are held from 8:00 in the morning with the final game at 5:00. What an



awesome season we have had! We have been blessed with 370 children in this year's program. Please see information on page 3 regarding the need for the Upward Celebration.

On March 13th, the Worship and Church Growth Teams have combined talents and have a thought provoking and exciting worship service planned. This is a service you won't want to miss.

We are only half-way through the calendar and we still aren't done yet! On Wednesday, March 16th the Upward Celebration Event will be held. We are expecting in excess of 1,200 people! What an exciting time to be part of such an inspiring program. More surprises and excitement are planned this year, including a very inspirational message.



For those looking to Spring Clean, or pick up some much needed items, the Mom 2 Mom sale will be on Saturday, March 19th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The Sister Circle is running the event this year. They are always looking for volunteers to help set up, run and clean-up from this activity. See Jamie Zannetti for more information.



Tracy Loomis has scheduled a 3 vs. 3 basketball tournament for high school boys on March 19th from 4 to 8 pm. See Tracy for more details.



The Boy Scouts will be holding their lock-in event in the church on March 25th. We are excited to be able to accommodate their event.



Saturday, March 26th, at 6:00 pm the choir will be holding their Second Annual Dinner. Once again the French Chefs will be preparing an elegant meal for your dining pleasure. The cost for the event is \$25 per person or \$45 per couple. This year the choir is offering an opportunity to purchase a table of 10 for \$200. There is a limit of 5 tables to be purchased, so book yours quickly. A cash bar and live music is planned for this elegant event. See the enclosed flyer for more information.

The activity continues with the start of a men's ministry group Brother Square which will meet Sunday, March 27th at 8:30 am in the gym for an inspiring breakfast meeting. The mission of the group is to build solid foundations together in faith, family and fellowship.

On March 30th we are proud to have an Autism basketball team holding their practice and games in the gym.

Don't miss out on any of the excitement! There will be more to come.

**Jake says . . .**

***Here's more about spelling "church."***

Last month we spent a page together considering the phenomenon we call church. A few styles were thumb-nailed briefly.

Our Church Profile nearly is finished as I am writing this page, and likely we will be transitioning to our search process as you are reading this page. We've passed the mid-point in our transition period!

Now let's think about a couple of new images for church. The first image is the notion of an airplane. Everyone on a plane is going in the same direction, the plane has a single destination, and there is little discussion about options (except for choosing chips or nuts with one's Coke). The second image of the church is that of an airport. Everyone is going somewhere. The airport stays in one place, serving as a hub for flights in a variety of directions to a variety of destinations at a variety of distances for a variety of purposes, with a common goal "to go somewhere."

Everyone happily going in the same direction to the same place in the same way is very comfortable. It tends to feel quite cozy/Christian/focused/loving. Hold on a minute! How many people are ready to get on the same plane at the same moment to go to the same place? The monorail/monotone church has very little opportunity to receive new members, and very little to attract or to offer. After a short stop at Donothington, the joint destination is Dullsville. The church pattern is anxious shrink.

Churches following a New Testament model, sending out people in different directions at different times to accomplish different missions, are churches that develop the most new Christians (and are growing). These churches provide maximum opportunities for people to enter into church life through groups, projects, and activities. For FCUCC, the model might be five or six mission (umbrella) emphases, each coordinating three or four specific ministry teams. For instance, the Evangelism Mission Emphasis might have a Welcome Ministry Team (greeters, Welcome Center), a Contact Ministry Team (community awareness, relating to groups using our facility), and a How-to Ministry Team (events, info to share faith easily). A Worship Mission Emphasis might include a Liturgy Ministry Team (traditional/blended/contemporary), a Music Ministry Team (FCUCC chamber orchestra?), and a Special Ministry Teams (mini-dramas, liturgical dance, sound/video). More people will have new opportunities to use their gifts. Fewer people will be burned out, and our collective ministry will be coordinated effectively.

We should choose our mission style before we call a new pastor. We are well on the way with a new constitution and bylaws. Being proactive in our mission work will confirm for pastor candidates that our church profile is credible and FCUCC is credible. Even more significant, what Grand Blanc sees FCUCC doing in a transition period is a powerful witness to who and why we are. Most of all, our Lord will see and know, and God always does miracles with committed faith!

Let's be God's church while we are searching!



## UPWARD CELEBRATION

The Upward Celebration Event will be Wednesday, March 16th in the CLC gym. The Upward Team is looking for volunteers to help facilitate this event. They need volunteers to help set-up and tear down, as well as donations of baked goods. We are expecting over 1,200 people to attend this event. If you are interested in volunteering or supplying baked goods, please see Mike Sly.

### *Thank You*

We would like to thank Dottie Fletcher, Kathy Rolfe and all of the Care and Nurture team for remembering us during Jack's recovery. We have appreciated all of the cards and thoughtfulness.

*~Jack and Libby Anderson*

## THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING!

How often do you hear that? The church would like to thank all of the families who are enrolled in the Kroger's and Meijer's Community Rewards programs. Just by shopping at these two stores and being enrolled in their programs the church has received, this quarter, a combined total of \$243.82.

We have only 17 members enrolled at Kroger in the Community Rewards Program, which earned \$136.87 in one quarter. Imagine if everyone who shops there were enrolled... For information how to enroll, see the church website at [www.uccgrandblanc.org](http://www.uccgrandblanc.org).

## Family

Everything needs a strong foundation to survive. Brother Square Men's Ministry wants to reflect that in their ministry by building stronger foundations together in faith, family and fellowship.

The group will begin their first book study on "How We Can Live a More Godly Life," based on the book "Being God's Man by Resisting the World," on Sunday, March 27th at 8:30 am. The time will allow us to fellowship together and grow stronger as brothers in Christ. Coffee and breakfast will be served. Please RSVP to the church office, so that we know how much food is needed 810-695-0550 ext 22.

Faith

Fellowship

## Foundation

### FOURTH ANNUAL PRAYER-A-THON

The 4th Annual Prayer-a-thon will be held on Ash Wednesday March 9, 2011 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Please join us for some time of meditation and prayer.

In order to have continual prayer, we would like people to sign up for a specific hour. If you cannot stay for the entire hour, stay as long as you can. If you have not signed up and wish to do so or you have any questions, please contact Karen in the church office.

*"Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all."*

*~Ephesians 6:18*

## SHARE GROUP

The SHARE Group will be holding a work day at the church on Monday, March 7th at 10 am. They will be painting cabinets and cubbies for the Learning House in the Fellowship Hall. They will work until noon and have lunch together. Everyone is invited to come and help. Bring your own brush, roller, paint pan and drop cloth if you have one.

### SAVE THE DATE

THE FELLOWSHIP TEAM IS PLANNING  
A HAWAIIAN LUAU  
IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER  
SATURDAY, MAY 14TH  
JOIN US FOR A  
PIG ROAST DINNER  
MUSIC & COCKTAILS  
\$20/PERSON  
CASH BAR  
HAWAIIAN ATTIRE REQUESTED

### DON'T MISS OUT!

We have a special thought provoking worship service arranged for you on Sunday, March 13th. This unique service will set us in motion to plan for the future of First Congregational United Church of Christ.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
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**LEARNING HOUSE DIRECTOR**  
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**CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER DIRECTOR**  
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**APPLYING BIBLE PRINCIPLES**

Although we realize that we are only here on this earth for a relatively short time, most of us avoid thinking about the inevitable. Somehow, it is as though we think we'll live forever. Well, in a sense, that's true - we will live forever, only not here. The chapters of our memory book of life which we write each day are but a prelude to our life in eternity.

It's important, therefore, to consider how this impacts our use of the funds and possessions which God has given to us. As we have seen repeatedly, God owns everything. He has never relinquished His title deed to the world. We are stewards who are responsible to use His resources wisely. And part of that usage includes giving to the Lord's work, particularly here at First

Congregational United Church of Christ (FCUCC).

Some Christians are saving all that they can for the eventual "rainy day," to the exclusion of giving to God as they should, or as God has prospered them. The only problem is that for many of them, their "rainy day" never comes, because their life ends much sooner than they anticipated. Then the words of an anonymous poet thunder across time and eternity:

Not, how did he die?

But, how did he live?

Not, what did he gain?

But, what did he give?

These are the merits

To measure the worth

Or a man as man,

Regardless of birth.

It's true that we cannot "take it with us." It's also true that once we stand on the threshold of eternity, our giving here and now should be a priority in our lives? Or as someone said, "You can't take your money with you, but you can send it on ahead."

It's not what you'd do with a million

Should riches ever be your lot;

But what are you doing at present

With the dollar and quarter

you've got?