

WORSHIP AND SABBATH

CENTERING PRAYER – The practice of Centering Prayer is rooted in our Christian tradition and invites us into deepening our relationship with God. Centering prayer is a meditative form of silent prayer. By practicing together, we encourage one another in our growing openness to God's work within us and strengthen the bond among us. New participants are welcome. Join us in the Chapel.

Tuesday—4th Jan 26, Feb 23, Mar 23, April 27, May 25

6:00-7:30 PM

Leader: Carla Peterson, 723-1537 (home) 379-1839 (mobile), or carlapeterson@clearwire.net

WOMENSPIRIT—a new worship experience for the Chippewa Valley that celebrates the Divine Feminine within God, within us, and within the world. It is a celebration born from the Biblical stories, engaged in our Judeo-Christian tradition, open to prophetic voices, and shaped by experience. For men and women, dis-cover the Biblical stories and historical traditions that claim the belovedness of women and the feminine images of God.

2nd and 4th Thursday beginning February 11th, 7:00—8:00 p.m.

Leader: Lynn Scott, Sabbath Way, LLC, 832-9639

Hosted by Hope United Methodist Church

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Dates, times and contact information are listed with the event description. Registration for all events may be accomplished by calling the church office at 715-834-2668 or by emailing lynns@firstucceauclaire.org.

Registration costs are paid by cash or check made payable to First Congregational UCC with the event noted on the memo line. Scholarships are available and if needed, please request childcare at the time of registration. We are happy to arrange childcare for you.

First Congregational UCC

310 Broadway Street, Eau Claire, WI 54703
715-834-2668, www.firstucceauclaire.org

BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY

**Spiritual and Educational opportunities
Winter and Spring, 2010**

As you browse these offerings, know that through these relationships, you enter the hospitality of First Congregational UCC. The church is a community made alive by our search together for the visible presence of God in and through one another. Please join us!

ADULT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

There are many types and levels of studies at First Congregational UCC. Beginners are introduced and experienced students challenged. The studies range from 5-12 group members. You may be certain that the studies listed in this *Bread for the Journey* have openings and are ready to welcome you.

BROWN BAG BIBLE STUDY – This is an open Bible Study that enjoys both spontaneous lecture and freewheeling discussion. This drop-in group receives all who come to study the lectionary scripture text over lunch. Come as you are to probe the meaning of the scripture text for the following Sunday. Lists of the texts are available in the church office. No registration is required.

Tuesdays, 12:15-1:15 PM
Leader: Rev. Dr. Mark Pirazzini, 834-2668

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL — Several members from First Congo join a group of inquiring adults each Sunday morning prior to worship (8:30—9:30 a.m.) at Lake Street United Methodist Church. It leaves plenty of time to slide into the pew for worship. Currently they are studying *Saving Paradise* by Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Parker, and will begin a new study around the beginning of February. Explore Christian faith with genuine dialogue and with eyes and hearts that are open. Newcomers welcome at anytime.

Sundays, 8:30—9:30 a.m.
Leader: Lloyd Shepherd Contact: Don Reynolds, 831-0781

CALL AND RESPONSE—Part One—What does it mean to be “called?” How does one recognize a calling? How should one respond? Join us as we read about some well-known and not so well-known calls in the Bible and elsewhere. Reflect upon your own experiences with a calling, and learn about and practice methods of discernment to seek, recognize, and respond to a calling. The group will be limited to ten participants.

Tuesdays, January 12, 19, February 2, 9 6:30—8:00 p.m.
Leader: Paul Savides, 715-875-4203

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FAMILY CENTERED EDUCATION

YOUR FIRST COMMUNION – First Congregational UCC invites children to take communion prior to confirmation, at a time when parents see their children understand this sacrament of the church in an age appropriate way. Family worship provides an environment for children to participate fully on First Communion Sunday, February 7, 2010. In preparation for your child’s First Communion, two events are scheduled to help your family to prepare. See below.

Sunday, February 7 10:00 AM

COMMUNION STATIONS – What does communion mean to you? And, how would my child “understand communion in an age appropriate way?” Sunday, January 31, 11:00 AM in Ingram Hall following worship, you may browse or browse with your children the Communion activity and learning stations set up around Ingram Hall. Discover the many ways to invite questions and develop understanding of this feast of the People of God.

Individual learning stations for adults and children
Sunday, January 31 11:00 AM — 12:00 PM

FIRST COMMUNION Q&A – Wednesday, February 3, 5:30 PM, anyone who is interested may join us for the evening meal. Grab your plate (\$2.00 each) and join us while we eat and discuss communion together. In other sessions, parents have asked questions regarding the theology of communion in other denominations and questions about “what is age appropriate?” This time together is intended to be casual. Registration is requested by January 31.

Wednesday, February 3 5:30 PM—6:30 PM
Leaders: Jill Christopherson with Rev Dr. Mark Pirazzini, 834-2668
Cost: \$2 meal

PRACTICING FAITH—A DAY LONG FAMILY RETREAT
March 6, 2010 See Lenten Season insert for Family Retreat opportunity

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JONAH's Journey—Year Two: JONAH is a congregation based community organizing body active through this congregation for two years, but in Eau Claire for almost four years. Because First Congo is now more familiar with JONAH, there may be new interest in what JONAH is doing. Three forum dates are listed below. Our First Congregational UCC Core Team invites you to come to one, come to all, or contact the Core Team with your interest and questions.

Actions You Want From People You Know: January 31 JONAH actions are determined in an Issues Assembly. Every two years, the issues are reviewed to see if the member congregations have interest to pursue community “problems”. Our Issue Assembly will be held in March, 2010. What does that mean for First Congregational UCC?

Organizing—It's Relational: February 21 We are accustomed to having a position identified and then moved into the community. With Congregation based organizing, it is the value of the faith community that is moved into the community. That means, your concerns are vital to shaping how JONAH acts in the community. Time begins with an introduction to the one on one interview and ends with questions and answers.

Church Parking as an Action: March 21 Our member churches are encouraged to use organizing principles to solve congregational issues. Parking available to Seniors and handicapped members is an issue of justice. Join the First Congregational UCC Core Team to begin an action to resolve the parking limits.

Sunday, Jan 31, Feb 21, March 21 — Chapel
11:15—11:45 AM
Contact: Paul Savides, 875-4203 or psavides@wwt.net

DEAD SEA SCROLLS—Experience this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness one of the greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century – fragments of the earliest known texts of the Bible. The objects of great mystery, intrigue and cultural and spiritual significance – are steeped in scientific, religious, and cultural meaning. Discover rarely seen scrolls, as well as extraordinary 2,000-year-old artifacts of the period, in this original exhibition. This will be the only exhibit of the Scrolls outside of Israel.

Also, you'll see *The Saint John's Bible*, which represents history's *newest* hand-written Bible. A work of art that illuminates the world today, it's the first complete, handwritten and illuminated Bible to be commissioned in 500 years. Introduction by the Museum staff followed by 1-1/2 hour audio tour.

Dates: Wed., May 5 & Sat., June 5th (Choose one) 9:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Location: Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul
Registration Deadline: Monday, April 26
Cost: \$22.00; lunch in the Museum Café is on your own

SCIENCE AND RELIGION—PATHWAYS TO TRUTH

The history of science and religion will be explored to understand how the schism developed and how, in the last two decades, the exponential expansion of scientific knowledge has led to a deeper appreciation of nature's complexity and a shift in scientific thought to reconsider creation in more fundamental terms. Key elements of Judeo-Christian theology and modern scientific thought will be explored to understand whether science and religion can again be unified.

Sundays, 8:30—9:30 a.m. January 10—March 14
First Presbyterian Church, 2022 Rudolph Road, Eau Claire
Registration: Sunday, January 3rd
Cost: \$8.00 for the guide
More information: Handout in the UCC Church office or contact leader John Wagner, 715- 878-4402 or jwagner40@cvtc.edu

LAY ACADEMY: Faith Foundations - Members of First Congregational UCC have discovered that Lay Academy is an experience not duplicated in the local church. At Lay Academy, you would join with students from across Wisconsin for five weekends each year in a wide range of topics pertaining to Christian faith and the church. The first year begins with "How to think Theologically" and ends in the optional second year with "Worship and Sacraments". Outstanding teaching is available from seminary professors, Conference staff and clergy with expertise in a given area.

Application materials and program details are available in the church office. (www.wcucc.org) Scholarship and tuition assistance are available for the application fee of \$50 and yearly tuition of \$400. **Application deadline is June 30, 2010.**

Friday-Saturday, Sept through May, 2010-2011

Application Deadline: June 30, 2010

Location: UCC Conference office in DeForest

Cost: \$450

SOUL WRITING - In our fall "Writing the Sacred" Workshop, the inability to put time aside to journal was identified as an obstacle to a successful journaling experience. Members suggested that we set aside sacred time to engage the inner journey. Our answer is Soul Writing.

Soul Writing is available on the second Sunday of each month from January through May. The Broadway Room will be warmed from 11:15 AM to 12:15 PM with a candle, journal exercises and material. When you are waiting for children, seeking a moment of quiet or wanting a companion for your journey, stop in the Broadway room to discover in writing how God is at work in your life.

Sunday, Jan 10, Feb 14, Mar 14, Apr 11, May 9

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Contact: Kristen Gundry, 877-3730



Most of all, while they thoroughly enjoy themselves, it's no joke to them, and thus not to us, either. Of course, folks this age are bound to have health issues; indeed, the specter of death hangs over the scene like a banshee, occasionally making itself right at home. But the chorus members' insistence on carrying on in the wake of tragedy makes for a climactic concert that's moving and powerful. (Rated PG; 1 hr, 50 min)

April 22

Sugar (2008): An astute, low-key drama, *Sugar* is an engrossing story about a young Dominican man, who comes to the U.S. to play baseball, only to find himself pursuing a different destiny. Miguel is also known as "Sugar" because of his sweet appeal to girls. Miguel's family pins its hopes on his future success as a pitcher for a major league team.

The story, with wonderful cinematography of baseball, is just as much about not playing baseball, and about discovering life after old goals are more or less within reach. (Rated PG-13; 2 hrs)



JUST CINEMA: This series shows provocative films engaging issues of justice for your enjoyment and discussion. Engage interesting and, at times, challenging material viewed the way that it should be—in community. This is offered monthly in the chapel, beginning on Thursday, February 25 at 6:30 PM. The evening includes popcorn and moderated discussion following the film. There is no charge. Child care is provided on request.

February 25

Frozen River – (2008) -- When her husband runs off with the payment for their new home, Ray turns to crime to keep herself and her two sons afloat. A chance encounter with Lila, an equally desperate young Mohawk woman, leads Ray to smuggling illegal immigrants by driving across the frozen Hudson River onto tribal land. But with every trip, Ray finds herself pushed into a more desperate corner than ever before. Leo, with her raw face, beautiful but worn down by life, radiates a weary defiance. *Frozen River* has scenes as tense as any Hollywood thriller, but so grounded in the fully developed characters of these two women that the taut suspense grips the full spectrum of your emotions. (Rated R; 1 hr, 37 min)

March 25

Young at Heart (2007) — The questions start as soon as you know that *Young@Heart* is about a group of singing senior citizens (average age of 80) as they prepare for and then perform a concert with a repertoire consisting of songs by the likes of Coldplay, Sonic Youth, and James Brown. Will the director give in to the temptation to make it schmaltzy and sentimental? Will we be laughing at these oldsters, or with them? The answers: yes, no, and a little of both.

SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCES

The vision for small groups at First Congregational UCC is to create a vibrant context for groups of individuals and families to be active in their own spiritual growth and to be fully integrated within the mission and ministry of the congregation. Meet people, engage the community and deepen your practice—in other words, this is where the rubber meets the road. Small Group and Family Ministries want to know if there is more that we can do to support you in your journey of faith. You may reach the Church at 715-834-2668 or lynns@firstucceauclaire.org

READER'S THEATRE — Engage your love of drama with a small time commitment. Join other drama enthusiasts on Sunday afternoons for potluck fellowship at church or in members' homes followed by a mystery, drama, or comedy script reading. The Readers Theatre resources are researched and selected by Jean Hazelton. A new time will be chosen following holidays. Contact Jean Hazelton for the time and place.

Sunday at 12:30 PM

Contact: Jean Hazelton, 834-2251 or rhazelton2251@charter.net

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY — The love of knitting has been combined with care to form a prayerful ministry that reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace. Many blessings are knitted into every shawl. The knitter begins each shawl with prayers for the recipient. Prayers are continued throughout the creation of the shawl. Don't let your skill level keep you from joining. Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry knit both individually and as a group. When the shawl is completed, it is offered in a final ritual. All are welcome to this ongoing, open group.

Monday (first Monday of each month)

7:00-8:30 PM

Contact Barb Brenden, 832-6795 or Jeanne Fritts, 832-7786

CALL and RESPONSE—Part Two

What would it be like to have a small group of people, gathered in community with you, to practice listening for your call, your vocation, your ministry in daily life? How might we listen together for God's Spirit in order to see the patterns and flow of God's Spirit in our lives? Persons have found these groups—sometimes called "Circles of Trust" or "Group Spiritual Guidance"—to be life-giving, life-affirming, and clarifying to call and purpose. This is a sample of what may become a regular offering.

Call and Response—Part One (offered in January and February) is not a requirement, yet would be a prelude to this time together.

Tuesdays in Lent— March 2,9,16,23 6:30—8:00 p.m.

Leader: Paul Savides, 715-875-4203

PRACTICING FAITH—A DAY LONG FAMILY RETREAT

This time will change your family's life—certainly change your family's practice of faith. Join with other families (parents and children up to the age of 5th grade) as we are led by Rev. Deb Payden, UCC Christian Educator and pastor. The morning is for parents and centers on how we practice faith in the home as a family and the afternoon is for parents and children (K—5th grade) together to build a family ritual of faith. Family time at noon includes lunch, swimming pool, and play area. Child care available the whole day. Location: Holiday Inn Campus, Eau Claire

Saturday, March 6, 2009 9:30—3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$35 per family, lunch included

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, February 24

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE IN LENT - Engage with the scriptures of Lent in an ancient, yet ever-new form of prayer and meditation. Enter more deeply into the heart of the Lenten scriptures and into your own praying heart. Come to one or all these Wednesday morning sessions to practice "holy reading." This practice invites us to grow in spacious prayerfulness with a renewed sense of God's presence.

Wednesdays, February 17—March 31st 9:30—10:30 a.m.

Broadway Room.

Leader: Carla Peterson, 723-1537 (home) 379-1839 (mobile) or carlapeterson@clearwire.net

LENTEN SEASON

February 17—April 4, 2010

Our word "Lent" is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "long," and referring to the lengthening of days in spring when nature struggles for rebirth. Lent invites us to ask "What is the shape of my life?" To whom do I belong?" and we pray with the Psalmist: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Ps. 51)

HOME TONIGHT: INDIVIDUAL BOOK STUDY

This captivating book was created from never-before-published materials of Henri Nouwen that formed the basis of the small workshop inspired by his intimate encounter with Rembrandt's painting of The Prodigal Son. Readers are led to welcome their unique Belovedness through practices of "spiritual listening," journaling, and communing with God, thus connecting personally with the unique, unconditional love of the One who created them. *Home Tonight* is a practical guide—with an exercise ("Practice") at the end of each section—for the inner journey home.

Order by Sunday, January 31st for delivery by Lent

Cost: \$10.00

The whole church is welcome to pick up a Daily Devotional Guide, *From Fear to Love: Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son*. This could be used as a companion to the book and is available in February at the Church. Journey daily with Henri Nouwen during the Lenten season.

HOME TONIGHT: INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

Come gather with others who will be reading this book during Lent. Come for a one-time introduction and invitation to the journey of Lent with "Home Tonight."

Date: Tuesday, February 16

Time: 6:30—8:00 p.m.

Leader: Rev. Dr. Mark Pirazzini, 834-2668

COVENANT GROUPS

Small groups of not more than 10 persons who agree to meet in support of one another in their spiritual life are known as Covenant Groups. They covenant with one another as follows: To create spiritual space in each day and engage in regular prayer, to attend agreed upon Covenant meetings planned for support of one another in a developing and/or continuing prayer life, to remember other group members regularly in prayer, to pray for our church, the larger church, and it's ministry in the world, to pray for and seek one's own personal call to participate in this ministry, to share within the Covenant Group that which is honest to one's thoughts and feelings and to hold in sacred trust that which is shared in the group.

Several Covenant Groups meet monthly within the church. Those listed have space available and would welcome new members.

NEW COVENANT GROUPS— Would you like to belong to a covenant group? Do you long to share in community with others on a regular basis? Would you like to belong in a new way?

"The shelter of belonging empowers you; it confirms in you a stillness and sureness of heart. You are able to endure external pressure and confusion; you are sure of the ground on which you stand."

(O'Donohue)

The people of our congregation in covenant groups say:

"There is warmth in smaller groups"

"I have a deeper acceptance of people who are different from me!"

"When we feel connected to one another, we experience God."

"Church feels more like family because I'm connected to a smaller group of people."

New groups will be forming. There has been interest in a young mother's group, a college age & young adult group, and combined singles/married group. If you are interested in these and any other possibilities, please contact the new Director of Small Groups and Family Ministries.

Contact: Lynn Scott, 834-2668 (lynns@firstucceauclaire.org)

MISSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN – Work at Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is appropriate for children third grade and older, their parents and other adults. If you haven't volunteered at FMSC you are in for a great experience! FMSC is a Christian nonprofit organization with a mission to feed God's starving children, hungry in body and spirit. With amazing efficiency, volunteers pack nutritious meals made of rice, soy, vitamins and dehydrated vegetables. The food is then distributed to starving children in 45 countries—each meal providing all the nutrients a starving child needs for an entire day. We have reserved 15 spots for youth and adult volunteers to pack food from 11:30 to 1:30 PM, on March 20 at the Eagan, MN location. We will arrange to carpool to the cities. The ride home will yield valuable conversation about our call as Christians to feed the hungry.

Saturday

11:30 –1:30 PM (plus transportation time)

March 20

Leader: Jill Christopherson, 834-2668

