



William E. Kapp  
Pastor

## *First United Church of Christ Inc.*

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## January 2015

Dear Members and Friends of First UCC,

When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to be dedicated at the temple they encountered an elderly prophet named Anna, who for many years had been living in the temple. Our tradition has paid scant attention to Anna. And yet, Anna's role in Luke's narrative is critical. For unlike Simeon, she didn't simply offer a blessing to Jesus' family, but also began to speak about the child to a much larger audience. The text does not say that Anna told everyone about Jesus. She was specific and strategic in speaking with "all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem."

To better understand who these people would have been and why they would be seeking "the redemption of Jerusalem," we need to take a look at the historical context in which the author of Luke situated this story. While many of us have not heard of Anna, we certainly remember the words we hear each year on Christmas Eve that say, "In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered" (Luke 2:1). During the two generations before Jesus' birth, Rome had expanded its empire into the eastern Mediterranean, brutally conquering, enslaving, and suppressing the Hebrew people. Rome had appointed Herod as "King of the Judeans" and shrewdly used the temple in Jerusalem to consolidate and manage the Roman occupation.

Now with that history, let's look again at this elderly prophet who had been living and practicing in the temple for all of those years. Why might the author of Luke note the specific time she had been there? Because it signals that Anna was present in the temple before the Roman occupation. Anna embodied the living memory of the Jewish people's freedom and self-rule. When Anna spoke about the child to "all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem," she was carefully speaking to those Jews who were still seeking to resist, create alternatives to, or overthrow Rome's occupation. And she did this in the temple, the site Herod had used to solidify Roman rule in the region. She was organizing from the temple, the symbolic and administrative heart of Rome's brutal occupation.

Both Anna and Simeon are the first in Luke's gospel to see and understand that Jesus' coming points the Jewish people back toward covenant ways of life that had been disrupted by Rome. But Anna is the only one who cleverly reached out. Through these conversations she laid the groundwork for the adult Jesus' message to take root. To all who were fed up with Rome's manipulation of their sacred commitments, Anna spread the word of God's redemption. And through her strategic action, Anna renewed hope that God's covenant way of life would not be swallowed whole by Rome.

In our own time and place, what are the challenges we face as we endeavor to live out God's covenant? Who are our Anna's whose living memory and savvy action bring hope and fiery determination? How are we being called to spread the hopeful news of God's promised redemption?

With the Greatest of Hope!  
Pastor Bill

## Sunday School News

From Margaret McFarlane

Classes will resume on January 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:10 a.m. We will celebrate January birthdays.

Thank you to Dana Gee and family for painting the outlines for windows that we decorate for the Christmas season. Thanks to the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who helped paint them. They look wonderful!

We had a total of 75 carolers on November 30<sup>th</sup>! Thanks to all the students, parents, and staff who helped brighten the holidays for those at Maplewood Village and The Pines.

Thanks to all who contributed to our Harvest Home Table! We appreciate the wonderful donations! We had 210 pounds of donations.

The students did a wonderful job on the Christmas program. They deserve lots of praise for their hard work! Thanks to the staff, parents, and Pastor Bill for helping make the program a reality.

The Sunday School choir will sing on January 18<sup>th</sup> at the 10:30 service.

We are planning a bowling party on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00-2:30 p.m., at the Riviera Bowl. The price is \$2.00 per bowler (spectators are free). The Sunday School will pay the balance.

Looking ahead: there will be no Sunday School on February 1<sup>st</sup>, due to the Annual Meeting.

As a fundraiser, the Sunday School will continue to sell Culver's gift cards. There are order forms in the library or e-mail your order to:

**mmcfarlane1219@gmail.com**



### Check It Out ...

The following books have been added to the Sunday School Library:

***“God Keeps You Safe”***

***“God Knows You”***

***“A Night Like No Other”***

In honor of our new Sunday School Staff for 2014-2015:

***“Song Of The Stars”***



*In honor of Kiana Litscher*



## **Music At First Church**

From Dennis Kahn, Music Director

Happy New Year to all! Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas have come and gone. In addition to all the music for Christmas and Advent, some members of First Choir participated in the ecumenical choir for the Thanksgiving Eve service. We had a wonderful turnout for the Music Festival, and music played an important part of our celebration of Christmas. However, we must remember that Christmas signifies a start and much more celebrating is to come! With that in mind, First Choir continues to celebrate Christmas, approach Lent and look towards the Easter season.

I want to say how much I appreciate everyone who has contributed their efforts and talents to music at First Church. Whether you have been at it for years or just recently joined our efforts, your willingness to help us glorify God is greatly appreciated.

As you consider resolutions for the New Year, perhaps one could be “bringing your voice” to our music ministry. Please call me at 370-6000 if you would like to discuss joining us!

First Choir rehearses Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m.

## **A “To-Do List” For 2015**

TO DO		DATE:		
		FINISH BY:		
		TOPIC:		
No.	TASKS	DATE	ERRANDS	DATE
01				
02				

### **Monday: Wash Day**

Lord, help me wash away all my selfishness and vanity so I may serve you with perfect humility through the week ahead.

### **Tuesday: Ironing Day**

Dear Lord, help me iron out all the wrinkles of prejudice I have collected through the years so that I may see the beauty in others.

### **Wednesday: Mending Day**

O God, help me mend my ways so I will not set a bad example for others.

### **Thursday: Cleaning Day**

Lord Jesus, help me to dust out all the many faults I have been hiding in the secret corners of my heart.

### **Friday: Shopping Day**

O God, give me the grace to shop wisely so I may purchase eternal happiness for myself and all others in need of love.

### **Saturday: Cooking Day**

Help me, my Savior, to brew a big kettle of brotherly love and serve it with clean, sweet bread of human kindness.

### **Sunday: The Lord's Day**

O God, I have prepared my house for you. Please help me so I may spend the day and the rest of my life in your presence.

***A pat on the back, a tip of  
the hat,  
and a great big THANK  
YOU to:***

***Those who assisted with  
H.E.L.P.***

The H.E.L.P. (Help Excite Little People) project was, again, a great success! The toys and teen items were made available to approximately 60 adults. Many thanks for all the wonderful donations. We had a nice variety of good, used toys, and many brand new things. As always, the monetary donations were appreciated and were used to buy batteries and items for teens. My sincere thanks to all the “elves” who helped with publicity, cleaned toys, repaired items, or helped during the distribution:

Rod & Carol Hehenberger  
Ed & Rita Larsen  
Pastor Bill  
Tom & Amanda McFarlane  
Cathy Brewer  
Chris Garcia  
Duane & Dianna Woerpel  
Donna & Micki Cruse  
Debbie Tschudy  
Lucinda Gruber & Friends at Maplewood  
Village  
Sandy Schlender  
Charmaine Carter  
Sharal Steuber  
Patsy Hering  
Liz Bongard  
George Mangus  
Millie Larsen

Thank you all for making the holidays brighter for our Sauk Prairie children!

Margaret McFarlane,  
H.E.L.P. Coordinator



***Those who helped make it  
Christmas at First U.C.C.***

Dennis Kahn, Kristy Litscher, and First Choir; all guest musicians and vocalists; all who helped with decorating the Church; Margaret McFarlane for planning and directing the Sunday School program and for her work as coordinator of our H.E.L.P. project; our Sunday School teachers and assistants; ushers and communion servers; Advent candle lighters; our snow shoveling “elves”, and last but not least, Chris, our custodian. Your time, talents, and efforts during this season are **GREATLY APPRECIATED!**



## Annual Meeting Preview

As stipulated by our Constitution, we are to gather as a congregation on the first Sunday in February -- this year the 1<sup>st</sup> -- for an Annual Meeting. Business to be conducted includes a review of 2014, plans for our future, adoption of the 2015 budget, and election of Finance Committee and Consistory members. The February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will begin immediately following our 9 a.m. worship service. Our 8 a.m. WRPQ-740AM and 99.7FM radio broadcasts will be pre-recorded.

## 2015 Annual Report

Copies of the **2015 Annual Report** will be available in the back of Church beginning Sunday, January 18. If you would like a copy of the report mailed to you, please call the Church office.



## Undecorating Party

All are invited to help with our annual "undecorating" party at church on Saturday, January 10, beginning at 9:00 a.m. If you have any questions, please call Tammie Huerth at (608)963-4311.



## **\*\*Members-In-Ministry\*\***

Do you have 1 to 2 hours a month available for visits to home shut-ins and nursing home residents of our "Church family?" We would welcome any new team members. If interested, please contact Pastor Bill or Liz Bongard or the Church office.

## Membership

Liz Bongard, Chair, 643-6391  
Emily Fuchs, 643-8085  
Larry & Nettie Gander, 643-3625  
Rod & Carol Hehenberger, 643-4946  
Donna Kaufman, 643-8401  
Evelyn Koenig, 643-0242  
Verda McFarlane, 643-3046  
Donna Seitz, 643-6341  
Sharal Steuber, 643-3943

## CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE YTD Through November 2014

**Actual Expenses: \$200,548.40**  
**Actual Income: \$167,061.70**  
**Net Ordinary Income: - \$33,486.70**

# Thank You

## FROM THE HEART

### From Lucinda Gruber

A special thank-you to our Sunday School for caroling at Maplewood Village on Sunday, November 30. It was beautiful! and appreciated by all of the residents!!





## With Appreciation


### From Christian Fellowship:


A special thank you to **Rose Kleinert, Rita Larsen, Debbie Tschudy, and Kari Larsen** for the wonderful treats and refreshments for Coffee Fellowship Sunday, December 7. It was greatly appreciated. Thank you for hosting.

A special thank you to everyone who donated the delicious treats and beautiful crafts for sale Sunday, December 14. We had so many beautiful, festive, delicious, items to sell. The wonderful attendance at the 10:30 service really helped also. With the help of our wonderful members we were able to raise over \$500 that we will put toward some new flooring in our church dining and kitchen area. We have not looked at new flooring yet, but just starting to raise the money now. Our members really come through when we need you!!! Blessings to you all!!

 **Attention Ushers, Communion Servers, and New Members:** If you want to be added or deleted from the 2015 schedules, please contact the Church office by January 9<sup>th</sup>.

 We continue to **collect new and gently-used clothes and diapers** for children ages newborn through 5 years. Please place your items in the bassinette in the back of church. Our donations have been very appreciated by the families who have received them!!

 We acknowledge 1<sup>st</sup> **anniversaries;** anniversaries ending in 5 or 0; and all over 50. Please let us know if we missed your **birthday** on the birthday calendar or your **wedding anniversary!**

 **How About Sponsoring A Radio Broadcast or Our Newsletter?** If you would like to remember or honor a family member or friend by sponsoring a Sunday morning worship service radio broadcast or our monthly newsletter, please call the Church office. The cost of sponsoring a radio broadcast is \$75.00, and the cost of sponsoring a monthly *SCOOP* is \$50 (cost of paper and postage).

 If you use **Facebook**, please think about being “our friend” at First United Church of Christ-Sauk City.

***“Enjoy the little things in life - for one day you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.”***

## CONSISTORY MEETING MINUTES

First United Church of Christ  
December 18, 2014

Present: Pastor Bill, Tom Litscher (president), Deb Tschudy, Tim Homar, Amanda McFarlane, Theresa Grimes and Rose Kleinert

Opening Prayer: Pastor Bill

Pastor Bill's Report: (1) Salvation Army bell ringing has been taking place at Piggly Wiggly through Advent. (2) Pastor Bill will be making visits and serving communion to the shut-ins, nursing homes and assisted living residences during the holiday season. (3) Pulpit exchange will be Sunday, January 18.

Secretaries Report: Motion to approve by Amanda, second by Deb, motion carried.

Approval of Financial Reports and invoices: Financial statements to be reviewed in January.

Committee Reports:

Sunday School/Church Youth Program: (1) 75 students went Caroling at Maplewood and The Pines on November 30. (2) \$260 was raised for UNICEF, and 210 pounds of food was donated to Harvest Home. (3) There will be no Sunday School or Confirmation classes held on December 21 and December 28. (4) Upcoming confirmation events are Madison Campus Ministry and Youth retreat at the Wilderness.

Members in Ministry: Weekly visits and communion are being made to shut-ins, nursing homes, and hospitals.

Christian Fellowship: (1) In lieu of a December meeting, Christian Fellowship Committee donated their time to H.E.L.P. Toy washing. (2) Christmas craft and bake sale raised \$500. (3) Coffee Fellowship scheduled for January 18 and February 22.

Stewardship Committee: (1) No meeting in December. (2) Gospel singers, Journey Bound, will be performing on Sunday, February 22.

Finance: Meeting to be held in January.

Building and Maintenance: (1) Snow removal.

Long Range Strategic Planning: (1) Church Survey sent out; a table at the back of church will be set up for questions/answers during December.

On-Going Business: (1) Offering schedule for 2015. (2) Committee(s) review. (3) 2015 Annual Meeting preparations.

New Business:

**Next Consistory meeting: Second Thursday, January 8, at 6:30 p.m.**

Motion to adjourn by Amanda, second by Theresa, motion carried.

Closing prayer from Pastor Bill – Lord's Prayer





## Memorials Report

Memorials were received in November in loving memory of:

Ted Harris



## Radio Ministry

We thank the December sponsors of our 8:00 a.m. Sunday worship service radio broadcasts:

Theo Nelson & Family, In loving memory of Hugh Nelson  
Mark & Rhonda Pierick and Krystal & Kyle Carlson, In loving memory of Diane Richards  
Steve & Marcy Thurwachter,  
In loving memory of Merton Moely  
Emily Fuchs and Rose Kleinert,  
In loving memory of Lyle Kleinert and David Kleinert

## ♥ January Anniversaries In Our Church Family ♥

Duane & Dianna Woerpel, 55 years on January 9  
John & Pat Shelby, 50 years on January 16  
Thomas & Marilyn O'Donnell, 53 years on January 27  
Matt & Kay Roherty, 20 years on January 28

Greetings to all those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in January!  
Please let us know if we missed your special day!

## Ushers

<u>8:00</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>10:30</u>	<u>8:00</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>10:30</u>
Nadene Litscher	Bill Steckelberg		Laura Kapp	Ben Kapp	
Mark & Rhonda Pierick	Jamie & Karen Wittwer		Jake McCaulley	Jacob Kapp	
			Diane Bensenberg	Dave & Shirlee Lendved	

## January 4, 2014 Communion Servers

<u>8:00</u>	<u>10:30</u>
Herman Tschudy, Chair	Amanda McFarlane
Pam Alwin	Tom McFarlane
Galen Alwin	Bill Steckelberg
Debbie Tschudy	Dianna Woerpel

Pastor Bill Kapp Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday: 8:00-Noon; Saturday: 8:00-10:00 a.m. and by appointment; E-mail: bill\_kapp@ucc-saukcity.org  
Office phone: 643-8387; Home phone: 370-2249

Cindy Baker Hours: Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m.–Noon  
Church Secretary Office phone: 643-8387; E-mail: office@ucc-saukcity.org