

Lay Coordinator ★ January 2009

Nancy L. Potter
nlpotter@charter.net
16 Cornerstone Way #12
Fitchburg WI 53711

It is 2009, do you believe it! Annual meeting time, New Year resolutions time- I bet lots of people are working on losing weight and going back to the gym! Don't you wonder how many are putting "a fresh new commitment to my church community" on the top of their list of resolutions?



Platteville First Congregational is holding a series of classes for parents (and others) on "Nurturing the faith we love in the children we love" on four Monday evenings in January.

Thanks for Thanksgiving! Donations and lots of hard work made it possible for **Madison First Congregational** to serve 558 Thanksgiving meals to the Madison community.

Speaking of **Madison First**, their moderator occasionally hosts a Moderator's Coffee in the lounge before a service. This is a chance for members to share their thoughts about the church.

Throughout the first nine months of 2008 **Madison Orchard Ridge** had four explorer teams working to bring recommendations to the leadership team regarding the church's future programming, leadership and facility. They will spend the first weeks of January discussing the team's proposals and will take action at a congregational meeting January 25.

Communication is important. **Monticello Zwingli** held a series of "Dessert First Gatherings" in 2008 where members had a chance to talk about the church. Their gatherings in 2009 will be a time folks can share their faith journey. **Verona Salem** is conducting a similar group of events, "Cottage Meetings" where members will gather together in homes for fellowship and conversation.

The December cookie sale at **Fitchburg Memorial** netted a record-breaking \$2,400 for the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem.

During Advent **Middleton Community UCC** put together Birthday Kits to be distributed through Middleton Outreach Food Pantry so children of struggling families can have a special birthday celebration.

January 1 **Middleton Community UCC** will host a football alternative! They will be holding Winter Break Movie Marathon, four movies back to back with a break for dinner!

Baraboo First Congregational holds Adult Nurture Hour before worship every Sunday. In January their topic of study will be Writings in the Times of the New Testament. In February they will consider Health and Wellness and in March, Food, Glorious Food and Faith. I think I want to attend in March!

Madison Community of Hope, along with Advent Lutheran Church, will host a Harvest of Hope, Winter Farmers' Market and Brunch on Saturday, January 17, 10 am to 2 pm. Come buy products straight from the farmer and enjoy a brunch made from products purchased directly from the participating farmers. Besides the chance to enjoy a good meal and go home with goodies, ten percent of all market proceeds are donated to the Harvest of Hope Fund.

One of my favorite things about reading all of our church newsletters each month is reading the articles that our parish nurses write. **Madison Lake Edge** parish nurse, Peggy Bezruki reminds us that we need a "healthy dose of self-respect if we want to savor the goodness of life. "In the weeks ahead, may we remember to be thankful; grateful to God for the person we are. Perhaps this old saying will help, "*Who we are is God's gift to us, who we become is our gift to God.*" May our eyes be open to the goodness within, shaping a healthy respect so that we may truly see the goodness and beauty everywhere."

At **Paoli Zwingli UCC** a group called Daily Bread meets every first and third Sunday in their "Upper Room" at 8:30 am, before church services, to discuss, to encourage and to learn from each other.

Rev Sara Thiessen from **Paoli Zwingli** quotes Donna Schaper, the author of *The Blessing of Limits* in her newsletter. "The growth model infects all our thinking. It goes to far, which is what cancer does. Church vitality, for example, as opposed to growth, is a much better way of talking about church, We can be vital at just about any number." What an interesting thought.



In the Chapel Chimes, published monthly by **Monticello Zwingli**, they quote a Christian philosopher, Jacques Maritain. "Bread for my myself is a material concern, bread for my neighbor is a spiritual one." In this time of recession, depression and layoffs, let us all remember our neighbors.

Happy New Year, Go and Serve.

Nancy