

## Lay Coordinator \* June/July 2009

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Nancy L. Potter  
nancypotter@gmail.com  
16 Cornerstone Way #12  
Fitchburg WI 53711

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There was an article about myself and my cracker business in a Madison paper recently. Later, I had someone come up to me at church and say, "I read the article about you Nancy and I learned things about you that I never knew!" Pastor Sara Thiessen of **Paoli Zwingli** suggested that when they do their next church directory they consider putting in more than just member's contact information but their hobbies and interests as well. What a great idea to build up a community. Better than learning new things about each other through the newspaper, don't you think?!



Folks at **Fitchburg Memorial** are going to work hard this summer; they plan to walk to Bethlehem by Christmas! Together members will need to log 6300 miles of exercise (walking, running, biking) to get there by the holidays! Keep on walking Memorial!

In addition to logging exercise miles, **Fitchburg Memorial** proudly took home the Amazing Grace trophy from the competition in Madison this spring that had nine different teams of youth from 5 Madison area churches compete in an Amazing Grace Race!

Speaking of youth, congratulations to the youth of **Verona Salem UCC**! They raised \$2,306 from their pie auction to pay for their mission trips! Pie auction day included more than sweet treats, they also made a pie video based on American Idol and everyone had a ball! They do not however, have a monopoly on great pie-**Columbus Olivet** will hold their Annual Pie Auction and Ice Cream Social July 12. **Monroe St John's** will hold their Ice Cream Social July 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Paoli Zwingli** recently celebrated Rural Life Sunday with an altar garnished with beautiful flowers and vegetables, a blessing of the garden tools and implements and a potluck afterwards.

On Wednesday evenings this summer, **Platteville First Congregational** will hold a seven-week series, *First Light-Jesus and the Kingdom of God* based on DVD segments highlighting Marcus Borg and Dominic Crossan travels in the Holy Land exploring the life and ministry of Jesus.

Sunday, June 7 will be Polka Sunday at **Sauk City First Congregational**; the Bob Klinger Polka Band will provide the music at both of their worship services.

Gardening continues to grow in our churches! **Belleville First UCC** is joining with their local Methodist Church to plant a food pantry garden. **Madison Community of Hope** has started up their Kids in the Garden Sessions. And **Monticello Washington Reformation UCC** has joined with **Madison First Congregational** and **Paoli Zwingli** in their Food Resource Bank Project that raises funds to feed the poor in Cambodia.

The confirmands at **Monticello Zwingli** write their own Personal Creed/Statement of Faith as part of their confirmation studies. Student Paul Fenner writes, *"I believe the church and its people have a role to play in the community and the world. The church has a mission to serve God and people. The church can be a leader in peace and a servant to the earth. We need to protect the earth and God's creations. I believe God has a plan for me; I just have to keep listening and learning."* Thank you Paul, our youth have much to teach us.

**Windsor UCC** has begun a Stephen's Ministry. This program helps to train and organize some of their members to provide quality care and thus expand the caring ministry that their pastor already does. There will be 50 hours of training for the new Stephen Ministers and they make a two-year commitment to train and serve.

**Monticello Zwingli** will hold their Annual Variety Show Sunday, June 14 at 2:00.

Lets go staple-less! New Glarus Swiss UCC has quit using a staple on their newsletter because the post office said that a staple made the newsletter "nonmachinable" and this added .17 to the cost of mailing each one! Since I receive all of the newsletters of the Southwest Association every month, I know there are still a lot of staples out there, consider going staple-less!



In response to much of the news lately, Pastor Jim Iliff of Middleton Community UCC points us to the words of James 1:14-17. *What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.* Pastor Jim continues, "One of the blessings and responsibilities of human existence is that we are stewards of God's good creation. We've been entrusted with gifts, skills, talents and wisdom, intelligence and discernment to act on behalf of others and for the benefit of all creation. Prayer has a place in such an understanding of the world, but it doesn't do away with our need to act."

**Go and serve, with actions and prayer.**

**Nancy**