

NOVEMBER 2019

Newsletter

Ozaukee Congregational Church
News & updates from our church for our community

Opportunities to Connect and Encourage

HELLO! HAPPY NOVEMBER!

This a great time of the year! We went through the calendar at Council last week and it was amazing to see all that is coming up at OCC in the next couple months as we get into the holiday season. The Harvest Potluck, Thanksgiving Day service, Friendsgiving, Grafton Christmas Parade, Christmas Lessons & Carols with the MSO, Kids' Pageant, Christmas Day Open House...there is just a lot going on!

With all the activities in the next couple months, we talked about inviting OCC's neighbors, those who live in close proximity to the church. We want to be good neighbors to those around us and we want them to know they're welcome with us. You may also have neighbors or friends you might want to invite, and that would be great! However, I don't know if the first question to ask is, "Who should I invite to OCC?" When it comes to inviting friends and neighbors to church, or when it comes to sharing the love of God with those around us, maybe the first question to ask is, "Who is someone in my life that I could encourage? Who around me needs a friend? Who is a person to whom God might have me reach out? For whom could I be praying?"

These are important questions to ask, not so we can invite someone to church, but because they take the focus off of us and give us the opportunity to care for others. Maybe asking these questions will result in you inviting someone to church, but they might result in God using you to encourage someone else in another way. Or maybe asking them will result in God using someone else to encourage you!

Whatever the case, this season of the year gives us the opportunity to connect with those around us in a positive way, in a way that gives and receives the love of God, and I hope the activities at OCC provide an opportunity for that to happen.

Take a look at the OCC calendar for the next couple months. I hope there are many things on it that will bless and encourage you, and I pray God would use what we do to bless and encourage those around us.

See you Sunday!

Jeff

HAPPENINGS

Harvest Potluck
November 17

Happy Thanksgiving
November 28

Friendsgiving
November 28

Christmas Parade
November 30

Lessons & Carols
December 8

 **CLICK HERE**

Click to view this month's video message from Jeff on YouTube.

You can also find the video by searching Ozaukee Congregational Church on YouTube or Facebook!

From Your Moderator

“REJOICE ALWAYS, PRAY CONTINUALLY, GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES; FOR THIS IS GOD’S WILL FOR YOU IN CHRIST JESUS”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

I just returned from a walk in our neighborhood on this sunny fall day, and enjoyed and marveled at God’s beautiful creations for which I am thankful: colorful trees, honking Canada geese, nut-gathering squirrels, cooler temperatures, warm sun and gorgeous blue sky. At this time of year, with Thanksgiving Day on the horizon, I am reminded that we should remember all that we are thankful for in life. We gather with our family and friends at Thanksgiving, hopefully enjoying our togetherness, but sometimes failing to remind ourselves of what we are thankful for. Some of us may be going through tough times and may be in a spot where it is hard to see the things for which we are thankful. On any given day we all have tough times, but if we can stop and quiet ourselves, remember and be grateful for God’s love for us, and thank God for the things we do have.....Him, faith, family, friends, health, pets, caring relationships, and many more, we may find ourselves in a better place.

I am thankful for the great church we have in OCC, for the care we have for each other, and the wonderful leadership we have in Jeff. At last week’s Church Council meeting we had a lot to go over, but we joked and laughed throughout! I am thankful that we have a committed group of smart, talented and fun people to lead our congregation with joyful hearts. Ozaukee Congregational Church is thriving with a congregation full of wonderful people who give to others in many ways through laughter, caring, time, talents and monetary gifts. I am thankful for OCC.

Did you know that research shows that gratitude and thankfulness are good for the human soul? In fact, data cited in a Forbes article shows that gratitude promotes good manners, makes it easier to build new relationships, improves both physical and psychological health, and might even help you sleep better.

So this Thanksgiving (and always), ask yourself, “ For what am I thankful?” Hey, you never know, you might feel better and even sleep better!

I am thankful for each and every one of you.

Happy November and Happiest of Thanksgivings,

Stacey

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The prayer shawl knitters and crocheters are active and would welcome new members to meet, usually on the fourth Sunday of the month in Fellowship Hall.

Suggestions for shawl recipients are welcome. There are no restrictions: persons of all ages and faiths are eligible.

If you know of a relative, a friend, a friend of a friend – anyone – who may have health issues, suffered a loss, needs spiritual comfort, or is celebrating a joyous or special event, please contact Barbara Read, any group member, or the church office.



From The Trustees

TAX TIPS BY RIP PRETAT

As you may have heard, taxes are one of two certainties in this world. The other certainty may be ultimately unavoidable, but is softened considerably by a belief in everlasting life thereafter. If only there was a way to soften the blow of the tax certainty as well!

As it happens, there are several strategies to do so while, at the same time, doing good through charitable causes. Today, we will focus on Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD). Those over the age of 70 are aware that they must take Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) from their retirement accounts. However, not all may be aware of the tax-saving strategy of using the above mentioned QCD. Instead of making charitable contributions by check or cash, you make your charitable contributions from your IRA directly to a charitable organization. This reduces your taxable income even if you take the standard deduction rather than itemizing, resulting in lower federal and state income taxes. Depending on your tax bracket, this move could also result in the lowering of the taxable amount of your Social Security and might also lower your Medicare premiums in future years. Other possible benefits include an increase in the amount of deductible medical expense or a reduction in the amount of Net Investment Income Tax owed.

Use of this strategy is pretty much a no brainer if you are eligible. Don't have an IRA? Rollover some or all of your 401(k)/403(b) to a traditional IRA and you will be eligible for a QCD in the following tax year. Prefer to write multiple checks over a period of time to make your charitable gifts? Several brokerage firms allow you to write checks of any amount to multiple charities throughout the year directly from your IRA. One caveat to remember - a contribution from your IRA to a donor-advised fund or private foundation will not qualify as a QCD. The contribution must be made directly to a qualifying charity (like OCC!).



Thank You, Lord!

Friendsgiving 2019

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH

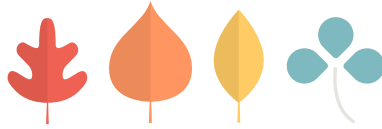
OCC's twist on Thanksgiving Dinner! We'll gather together at noon on November 28, following the morning worship service. More info & sign-ups will be available November 10th. See June or Sue Ann or email the church office with questions. Join us - there's no reason to spend Thanksgiving alone!

Dick Buchman Memorial Webpage & Service

Please visit occhurch.org/media to see a memorial webpage honoring the life and ministry of Dick Buchman, OCC's founding minister, who passed away peacefully on September 16th.

A memorial service in celebration of Dick's life will be held on Saturday, November 30th, at 3:00 PM at First Congregational Church, 1511 Church Street, Wauwatosa, WI. Family will greet friends following the service.





Children's Ministry

We are having a great fall with your kids in Joyous Journey! Thanks for entrusting them to us. We are looking forward to a great holiday season and we would love for you to join us. There are a number of things on the calendar that are great for families, but here are four in particular in which we'd love for you and your kids to participate!

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

BEGINNING NOVEMBER 14TH

If you have not yet signed up for bell ringing, please consider doing this with 2nd-5th graders. You can sign-up for a 2 hour slot on a Thursday, Friday, or Saturday beginning November 14th, or you can share a slot with another family. It is a great opportunity for you and your kids to be involved together.

Gingerbread Houses

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

Join us on December 14th from 10am-noon for our annual Gingerbread Houses event! Parents and kids, or grandparents and kids come together for a couple hours to build and decorate gingerbread houses. Everyone is welcome!

Grafton Christmas Parade

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH

OCC participated in the parade last year and it was a great time! We need people to help pass out bracelets and candy canes, or you and your kids can ride in the back of the truck and wave. It is a great family event!

Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22ND

We are looking forward to our Kids' Christmas Pageant happening on Sunday, December 22nd at both services. We have been working on lines and songs and are anticipating a great performance. Thank you for allowing your kids to participate!

Look for sign-up sheets in Fellowship Hall this Sunday!

Happenings

Midweek Bible Study

TUESDAYS @ 7-8:15PM IN THE YOUTH ROOM & WEDNESDAYS @ 10:30-11:45AM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

Nov. 5-6 Ecclesiastes 9

Nov. 12-13 Ecclesiastes 10

Nov. 19-20 Ecclesiastes 11

Nov. 26-27 Thanksgiving week hiatus

Dec. 3-4 Ecclesiastes 12

Dec. 10-11 Isaiah 9:1-7

Dec. 17-18 John 1:1-16

Dec. 25-26 Christmas week hiatus

Jan. 1-2 New Year's hiatus

Jan. 8-9 Bible Study is back! :)

To receive text reminders and alerts on Midweek Bible Study, just text @midweekb to 81010.

November Women's Fellowship Outing

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST

Women's Fellowship group will meet on Thursday, Nov 21. We will be exploring IKEA and having lunch there - try the Swedish pancakes. If you plan to buy anything, please bring a shopping bag, or you will have to purchase one. Meet for car pooling at Bed, Bath & Beyond lot by 9:30 am. Any questions, call Pat J on her cell at 262-492-5652.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the OCC calendar of events is updated in real time? Anyone can see it any time—in both month-view and list-view. Just go to occhurch.org/calendar.

Did you know that we have a little free library in the northeast corner of Fellowship Hall? Take a book or leave a book—or both!

Sheepshead!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH

Join us from 7-9pm in Fellowship Hall. Contact Rob Fredrickson to sign up!

Harvest Potluck



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH @ 5:30PM

Join us on Sunday, November 17, at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. An open mic during and following dinner will feature OCC's incredible talent and will be emceed by Bob Smith and Ed Wrathall. Karaoke machine compliments of Matt Partridge. Bring your favorite fall dishes - and talent - and join in the fun!!! Sign-up sheets for both food and talent are in Fellowship Hall.

Grafton Christmas Parade

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH

We are glad for the opportunity for OCC to participate again in the Grafton Christmas Parade and we would love for you to be a part of it! The parade is happening this year on Saturday, November 30th at 11:00am and we need some people to carry an OCC banner, others to walk alongside the truck and pass out OCC bracelets, and even some just to ride in the back of the truck and wave! Look for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall this Sunday!



OCC Seasonal Activities

2019

November 3	Treats for Eats, 9 & 10:45am
November 8 & 9	WCA Fall Youth Retreat
November 14	Salvation Army Bell Ringing begins
November 17	Harvest Potluck with "Open Mic," 5:30pm
November 28	Thanksgiving Worship, 10am Friendsgiving Meal, 12pm
November 30	Grafton Christmas Parade, 10:30am
December 8	Bella Musik, 9am Lessons & Carols with MSO, 10:45am
December 13	Youth Christmas Party
December 14	Gingerbread Houses, 10am
December 15	Bake Sale, 9 & 10:45am
December 22	Bake Sale, 9 & 10:45am Christmas Pageant, 9 & 10:45am
December 24	Christmas Eve Services
December 25	Christmas Day Open House, 3pm
January 11	OCC Holiday Party @ Fire Ridge, 5:30pm



Youth Ministry

GRADES 6-12 (UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

To receive text reminders and alerts regarding youth ministry activities, just text @youthocc to 81010.



MP3 Youth Group

SUNDAYS @ 9-10AM IN THE YOUTH ROOM

- Nov. 3: Ephesians 2:1-10, We are God's handiwork.
- Nov. 10: Psalm 145, God is great; God is good.
- Nov. 17: No MP3. Jeff is away; Rob is preaching.
- Nov. 24: Psalm 136, God's steadfast love endures forever.
- Dec. 1: No MP3. Thanksgiving weekend.
- Dec. 8: Luke 1:26-38, An angel visits Mary.
- Dec. 15: Matthew 1:18-25, An angel appears to Joseph in a dream.
- Dec. 22: No MP3. Christmas Pageant during both services!
- Dec. 29: No MP3. Winter break & Mexico Mission Trip.

Confirmation Class

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH @ 4:30-6PM IN THE YOUTH ROOM

This month: Christianity, the Bible, & Jesus
Project due: Book report on the Gospel of Mark (300-600 words)
Also bring: Your Confirmation folder, including the handouts from last time!
You're invited: The OCC Harvest Potluck & Open Mic Night starts at 5:30 on the 17th in Fellowship Hall. You and your family are invited! You can join the fun at 6:00, right after Confirmation!

WCA Fall Youth Retreat

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH @ 6PM THROUGH SATURDAY @ 12:30PM

Pizza, discussions, games, and a community service project! It'll all be happening at Fox River Congregational Church in Pewaukee. Only \$15 if you RSVP by Nov. 4. Email wca youth@gmail.com or text Rev. Julie Sheridan-Smith at 414-588-8693

Tri-Y Christmas Party

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN TOSA

This will be the next of our new tri-church youth events—"Tri-Youth" or "Tri-Y" if you like—uniting 6th-12th graders from OCC, Tosa, and North Shore! Expect some zany Christmas games and treats, plus the "Blind Gift Exchange!"

Agape Table

FREE DINNER & CONVERSATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

November 13 @ 6pm : Ma Fischer's in Milwaukee
December 11 @ 6pm: Memorial Union in Madison

If you, or someone you love, would like to be in the "GroupMe" loop on this, please make sure to let Rob know.



Volunteer Opportunities

Questions? Want to sign up to serve?
Contact Rob: rcf474@gmail.com or
414-688-8991.

Hope House Food Pantry

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH
@ 9:20AM-12:40PM

Adults and youth welcome! Sign up with Rob!

Family Sharing

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH
@ 5:15-7PM

Adults and youth welcome! Contact Rob to sign up!

Benevolence Box Wish List

The wooden box in Fellowship Hall stands ready to receive your donations of...

- Plastic Sendik's bags (Hope House)
- Paper handle bags (Family Sharing)
- Empty laundry jugs (Family Sharing)
- Toiletries (Guest House & MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary)

October was an action-packed month! Many thanks to...

- ...those who prepared and served dinner for over 100 hungry souls at Hephatha Lutheran on October 4!
- ...everyone who came to the October 5 paper shredding event, benefiting Family Sharing!
- ...those who came to the Tri-Y event on October 6 and packed hygiene bags for the MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary!
- ...Karen Gventer, Ryan Gventer, and Anne Scannell who sorted books at Next Door on October 7!
- ...everyone who helped host the WCA Fall Summit here at OCC on October 12!
- ...those who volunteered at Hope House on October 19!
- ...everyone who lent a hand at the OCC Fall Work Day on October 19!
- ...all who helped assemble hygiene kits for World Vision on October 26!
- ...those who volunteered at Family Sharing on October 28!

Book Sorting at Next Door

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH
@ 3:30-5:30PM

Adults and youth welcome! Contact Rob to sign up, or if you have any questions.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

THURSDAYS, FRIDAYS, &
SATURDAYS STARTING
NOVEMBER 14

Our shifts will be 10-noon, noon-2, and 2-4 on each ringing day, at the Grafton Pick 'n Save. A clipboard is on the table in Fellowship Hall, and slots are already starting to be claimed! Take a look, pick a shift or two that will be good for you, and sign up!

Treats for Eats for UNICEF

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Bring a batch of sweet treats to share after either worship service—OR, just show up and bring your sweet tooth! It's free, but cash donations for UNICEF will be accepted.





OCC Council Members

As we move forward in our journey, let us remember to ...

“covenant together, of our own free will, to love God and to enjoy God forever, to walk in God’s ways, known and to be made known, to study the life and the teachings of Jesus Christ, to live and work together in unity and peace, and to care for those whom God has given us to love.”

Jeff Larson	Senior Minister	469-236-4222	jeff@occhurch.org
Rob Fredrickson	Assoc. Minister	414-688-8991	rcf474@gmail.com
Dick Dieffenbach	Treasurer	262-375-3536	dick@dieffenbach.com
Stacey Murray	Moderator	262-853-6507	stacey.murray@sbcglobal.net
Craig Campbell	Moderator-Elect	262-339-8984	craigcampbell@wi.rr.com
Rebekah Barsch	Past Moderator	262-377-1813	rbbarsch@gmail.com
Sue Ann Walczak	Clerk	262-442-8365	sueann0110@gmail.com
Linda Krieg	Benevolence	571-286-6208	lindakrieg2@gmail.com
Bob Hinson	Benevolence	262-512-9277	rhinson@wi.rr.com
Sue Peksa	Christian Ed.	414-217-2981	dkb4ds@gmail.com
Mary Campbell	Deacons	262-339-8984	marycampbell@wi.rr.com
George Scannell	Facility	262-510-6869	gascannell@gmail.com
Sonja Coster	Membership/Events	414-732-1261	sonjacoster54@gmail.com
Rachelle Peters	Membership/Events	262-376-9332	rachelle.peters@gmail.com
Ed Wrathall	Stewardship	262-618-2700	ewrathall@wi.rr.com
June Burkeen	Trustees	414-581-5475	junebird@aol.com
Tim Nolan	Nominating Committee	414-595-7433	nolantj13@gmail.com