

Lay Coordinator ★ December 2009

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Advent is here, a time of waiting, a time of expectations, a time of holiday cookie sales, pageants, carols and holiday cheer. Don't you just love it!



Lots of holiday cookie sales are happening- two of my favorites, **New Glarus Swiss UCC** has their sale Saturday, December 5, 8:00 to 1:00 and **Fitchburg Memorial UCC** has theirs Saturday, December 12.

Everyone is welcome to join those at **Columbus Olivet** Saturday, December 12 in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck meal and then a good game of Dominoes. I have heard from lots of folks lately that Dominoes has been enjoying a real resurgence of popularity. What a great Christmas gift idea for the family!

I get so many good book ideas when I check out the Library News in the **Madison Lake Edge** newsletter! Books coming up for discussion are *Day after Night* by Anita Diamant, *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows, *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness at the Fair that Changed America* by Eric Larson and *Half Broke Horses* by Jeannette Walls.

Madison Community of Hope UCC will celebrate the 24th anniversary of the Harvest of Hope Fund with a Winter Farmers' Market and Brunch on January 16, 2010. In the first 10 months of 2009 the Harvest of Hope Fund gave gifts totaling \$67,662 to Wisconsin farm families in distress.

Madison Orchard Ridge has a Winter Retreat for Families with Children being held January 15-17 at Pilgrim Center. There will be crafts, music and lots of family activities including a karaoke dance party Saturday night!

Congratulations Belleville! The 2009 Belleville Area CROP Walk was a big success! The 39 walkers and four canines raised \$3,131.00.

New Glarus Swiss UCC held a Youth and Family Raking Leaves event! Parents and youth gathered on a Sunday afternoon and raked the leaves on the church grounds as well as for individuals around the village. Swiss UCC also has a "Buy a Bag Campaign" going on. They have a group going down to El Salvador and they will carry with them toys, clothing, shoes and other personal and household items to help those who have lost much in the recent floods. Folks can contribute to a fund to help offset anticipated airport baggage fees.

Christmas can be a lonely time for some folks. How nice that the Choir and Church Life Ministry Group at **Platteville Congregational UCC** put on a Christmas Feast where everyone is welcome December 12 at 6:00 pm. It includes a holiday meal, decorations and holiday music.

Recently retired SW Clergy person, Ree Hale, spend two weeks this fall volunteering at Koinonia Farms in Georgia, the birthplace of Habitat for Humanity. While she was there she volunteered in their kitchen making lots of the pecan goodies they sell to support their ministries. (This sounds like so much fun, I have put this on the top of my "What to do in Retirement List"! I wonder if they need a pecan cracker!) If you can't make it to **Madison First Congregational** where Ree will be selling some of these products after the services in December, you can check out Koinonia Farms bakery catalog online and buy treats to support a good cause.

It is that time of year when we think about giving. As I read through all the newsletters of the SW Association, I am always amazed at the gifts of our members and the creative ways they are involved in giving back. **Monticello Reformation** raised almost \$2,000 for the Food Resource Bank by growing a crop of corn this summer and donating the money made from the harvest to the FRB.

Reeseville First UCC has started their second annual Sunday School Mitten Tree Project that will run until December 13. They will collect hats, scarves, mittens, socks, earmuffs and slippers that will be distributed to needy children in time for Christmas. They are also putting together Christmas Basket for shut-ins that will be delivered December 18.



Last December I shared with you the words below that I had read in the **Monticello Zwingli** newsletter. I had a copy of them all year on my desk. As I have encountered a cough that I am having trouble kicking and a few new little pains, I have come to realize that our bodies do really eventually wear out! I decided that I better keep these words on my desk for another year as a good reminder!

"I have yet to use all the capabilities of my laptop computer and my cell phone. I am content to say, someday, when I have more time, I'll sit down and figure them all out. Only realistically, they will probably wear out long before I figure out all their functions!"

Let's not let this happen with our lives. Although we do not have the same abilities, each of us has been given many wonderful gifts and talents. Let's not miss the opportunity to develop and share them for the glory of the One who has bestowed them upon us . . . we are not as easily replaced as a laptop or a cell phone.

Happy Holidays, Go and Serve.

Nancy