



724 E. South River Street  
Appleton, Wisconsin 54915  
Church Office (920) 733-7393

Fax number (920) 733-7022  
Website: [www.firstcongoappleton.org](http://www.firstcongoappleton.org)

Stephen P. Savides, Senior Pastor

Jane B. Anderson, Co-Pastor

Maynard E. Beemer, Pastor Emeritus

Gene Sinner, Church Administrator

Deb Burich, Director for Volunteer Ministries

John M. Albrecht, Director for Music Ministries

Jon D. Riehle, Organist

Kara J. Woodford, Director for Children's Ministries

Lyssa Fish, Director for Youth Ministries

## SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2008

**8:45 and 10:30 a.m.**

Sermon..... Pastor Jane B. Anderson

Music: 8:45 a.m. .... The Sanctuary Choir  
and Instrumental soloist

Music: 10:30 a.m. .... The LU Music Scholars  
and Instrumental soloist

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008

#### **ANNUAL MEETING**

**8:45 a.m. only**

Sermon..... Pastor Steve Savides

Music: ..... The Children's Choir (grades 2-6);  
The Sanctuary Choir; The LU Music Scholars;  
Instrumental soloist

The 8:45 a.m. worship service is broadcast over  
radio station WECB 104.3 FM.

city where our partners receive mail, bank, shop and receive/send email. The Pastoral Institute where Kip teaches pastors each June is located in Eldoret.

In conversations with Kip Elolia I have become like a sponge – soaking up all that he shares and wanting to know more. After a conversation with Kip 2 days ago, I wished he were here and that I could spend a day listening to all that he shares regarding Kenya, the intricate pieces of culture and history as well as the stories of courage that continue to touch my heart.

I know that many members of our congregation share what I have just described. Our partnership with the people of the African Inland Churches of the Kerio Valley has woven lives together and formed rich friendships. It is a partnership that breaks down barriers and opens one another's lives in ways that at times amaze us, it is a partnership rooted in faith and growing in Christ's love. What an amazing blessing!

As we continue to pray for the people of Kenya, may we also listen to our partners as they share needs and priorities of resources. There will most likely be new needs as our partners reach out to help those displaced, people who have lost homes and all they have, people who need food and medicines, water and shelter. May we also offer our financial blessings to help our partners as they help their country move forward in love, hope, courage and faith.

*Deb Burich*

## THOUGHTS TURN TO OUR PARTNERS AND FRIENDS IN KENYA

During this past week I have been checking BBC and other sources of news in Kenya often. My thoughts linger on our friends and partners there. I wonder about others we met while there in September. How are the sisters/nuns at the AMECEA? Is Ben Murk's family okay? What about Enok and his family? And Kip's sisters? And the man who lent us his land rover for the week, and ....? These are all people in Eldoret, a city torn by violence and fear. Eldoret is also the

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



### “Conversation at the Center”

They call it the “*numinous*,” this sense of being in the presence of holy mystery, the presence of God. It started for me when I was four years old, the only child left at home after the older ones had been sent off to school, and therefore my mother’s constant companion. In the day of one-car families, she and I would walk together the two or three blocks to the grocery store and, on the way back home, stop at the little Episcopal church across the street from our house. Mom would lay down the grocery bags, sit in a pew, fold her hands, take a deep sigh, and be silent for a while, sometimes a long while. I would sit and marvel at the light as it filtered through the stained glass windows and blanketed the sanctuary with color. It was the only time in my childhood when staying quiet wasn’t a chore. These *numinous* experiences, this sense of holy mystery has stayed with me through the years and forms the basis of my understanding as to what it means to worship.

Around the same time I can remember sitting in the worship service of the church my father served, Union Congregational of Waupun, and having a far more difficult time staying quiet and still. But I was blessed by an older woman who often sat right behind me and my brothers and sisters. After the service was endured, we would turn around expectantly and she would offer each of us a candy orange slice as a reward. And that too was worship for me, that act of hospitality, of loving human contact. In the years since my youth, I’ve attended and led countless worship services, studied different Biblical models of worship, engaged in many worship renewal projects and conversations, but I’ve always come back to these two formative experiences. They led me to believe that at the center of worship is both an experience of the holy mystery of God and an experience of loving human contact.

We’re going to have a wonderful opportunity to talk together about worship on Sunday, January 27. After our 8:45 worship service we’ll hold our Annual Meeting, and then, in the hour or so before lunch is served, we’ll be gathering in small groups to talk about worship. Please plan on taking part.

This is an important discussion to have, particularly with this congregation having several new worship leaders: myself, Director for Music Ministries John Albrecht, and Organist Jon Riehle. This will be an important opportunity for us to listen and be guided by your understanding of worship. It’s also an important discussion for all of us as we try to live out this congregation’s expressed worship goal: “*To become a community in which central, pervasive worship draws us more strongly and more completely into relationship with each other and with God.*”

At the center of our lives together as church is worship, this experience of holy presence and loving community. Please join us on January 27 in this conversation at the center as we share our experiences, hopes, and dreams about worship and the future of our church.

Your friend and fellow minister,  
Rev. Steve Savides

### **\*\* COMING UP \*\***

#### **Youth Sunday, February 17**

If you’re a youth and interested in being a part of the service, contact Lyssa fish here at the church!

### **CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING**

The church’s Annual Meeting will be held after the first service on Sunday, January 27, 2008. There will only be one service that Sunday at 8:45 a.m., followed by the meeting, then a family-style meal for fellowship. Please plan to join us that Sunday for this important annual event and some good food.

### **JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH**

If you have particular joys or concerns that you would

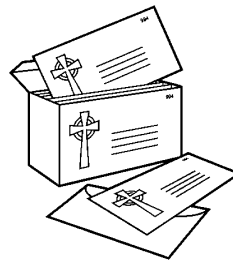
## MUSIC NOTES

*John Albrecht, Director for Music Ministries*

We're "off and running" into the new season, with rehearsals already having resumed on January 2. **Additional singers would be most welcome in our Sanctuary Choir**, as we provide worship music each Sunday and prepare a major work (with orchestra), to be presented on Sunday, April 27. Please call me at the church (733-7393, ext. 230) with any questions, or to let me know you will be joining us for our 7:00 p.m. rehearsals on Wednesday evenings.

**Our Children's Choir (grades 2-6)**, is busy preparing anthems and its Spring Musical, to be offered in worship already on Sunday, March 9. (*Note the early March presentation date, to avoid conflicts with spring sports schedules and all the activities at the end of the school year*). Rehearsals continue on Wednesday afternoons from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. in the choir room. **We were glad to welcome two new singers in December and January, and would welcome more children who would enjoy sharing their faith through singing, acting, and choral movement.** Please call me (ASAP) with any questions, or to let me know your child will be joining us.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2008



Please stop at the table in the narthex at your earliest convenience and pick up your new envelopes. Please do not use old envelopes. The number on the envelopes identifying your account may have changed.

## THE BRUNCH BUNCH

The Brunch Bunch will meet February 10, 2008 at noon at Riverview Country Club. This is an opportunity for empty nesters, retired members, new members and others to get acquainted or reacquainted and enjoy informal fellowship.

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE  
OF THE OPEN DOOR IS 9:00 A.M. ON  
MONDAY, JANUARY 21, 2008.**

## SOUPS, SWEETS AND SHARING FOR ALL WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

**Thursday, February 7, 5:45 p.m.**

All Women of the Church are invited to attend a special time of fellowship. A selection of soups and beverages will be served. Volunteers are needed to bring bread, raw vegetables, cheese & crackers and dessert. Please sign-up at the table in the narthex or call the church office. A \$4.00 charge will cover the cost of soup and beverages.

## GREETINGS FROM KENYA

The church received a Christmas card from Rev. Samuel Chepkonga with the following message:

*“The church of the AIC Kerio Valley District Council of Churches is sending their love to their brethren of First Congregational United Church of Christ during the Christmas season. We wish God’s love and Christmas light to each one of you. We are really grateful that the Lord has sustained each one of us in the year 2007. We trust that he will continue to enable us to grow in His Grace as we enter the year 2008. May God bless you all!”*

*Rev. Samuel Chepkonga, on behalf of the AIC Kerio Valley*

## HABITAT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY IN THE GULF COAST:

Our Habitat affiliate has partnered in the past with the Slidell, LA Habitat affiliate to assist them in their Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

We are planning to send a group of up to 25 people to help them build the week of Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> with travel on the weekends prior to and after. The maximum group size will be 25 volunteers and we will accept volunteers on a first-come, first-serve basis until we have 25 people set to go. All building experience levels are welcome! What will be necessary are a servant’s heart and a desire & willingness to help.

The estimated cost will be approximately \$500+ (which includes meals, transportation and lodging). The mode of transportation (bus vs. private autos) will affect the final cost. This cost **does** include a \$150 housing fee for the time in Slidell. Sleeping accommodations will be in local churches.

If you are interested in finding out more about this wonderful & unique opportunity, please email me. We will need to know your full name, phone # and email address and we will need to know of your interest in joining this group no later than Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Jodi Isom, Volunteer Coordinator

Direct Phone: (920) 968-6355

Website: [www.foxcitieshabitat.org](http://www.foxcitieshabitat.org)

---