

April
2017

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- **Dennis Artley** *Secretary/Treasurer*
- **Kathy Dempsey**
- **Blair Diamond**
- **Ann Gerow**, *vice chair*
- **Dottie Haase**
- **Vicky Lindsay**
- **Mike Mack**
- **Jim McNeil**, *Chair*
- **Beth Petty**

April 2017

Dates to Remember

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Peace Pole

Stations of the Cross

3

Bishop Satterlee

@ St Paul Lutheran

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Board of Directors

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No Frills Book Club

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Maundy Thursday

@ Trinity Episcopal

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Ladies Luncheon
and Good Friday

@ First Presbyterian

15

Three Billy Goats Gruff

16

Easter Sunday

17

(Office Closed)
Friendship Room

19

Wacky Wednesday
Kids Fun Club begins

23

Volunteer Appreciation
Sunday, with a
Pizza Party and
Three Billy Goats Gruff

A Word From Our Minister: "The Shack"

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

In 2006, William Paul Young gave his six children a copy of his brand new book, "**The Shack**", printed at his own expense at an Office Depot as a Christmas gift dedicated to them. (I don't know how old they were. This is not a children's book. There are long theological conversations within the plot.)

Mr. Young was holding down three jobs at the time, just making ends meet for his large family. He never imagined becoming a published author. But three of his friends who liked the message of the book encouraged him to send it to a publisher. After 26 publishers either ignored or turned down the manuscript, "Paul" and his friends decided to self-publish, each person contributing one-third of the cost of the print run.

In May 2007, exactly ten years ago, they had 11,000 copies sitting in a garage, with only a web-site and no promotional marketing plan. It could have gone nowhere.

What happened next was wildly unexpected! People, who ordered one copy on line, returned to the web-site to order multiple copies more... sometimes whole cases of the book. Between May 2007 and June 2008, the fledgling publishers shipped over one million copies of the paperback! That June, the novel debuted on the *New York Times* bestseller list at #1, and it remained on the "best seller" list for the next 49 weeks. Remarkable!

William Paul Young began getting emails from readers all over the world. The messages were "*wrenching and wonderful, beautiful and painful, telling me how this little book had intersected their world at just the right time. They would tell me moving and stunning stories of the transformational impact of the questions and conversation contained in **The Shack***" (from his Author's Note preface in the 2016 edition, page vii).

The Shack has been translated into 50 languages, and has sold more than 19 million copies – similar to what the "Harry Potter" books or the "Left Behind" series of novels have done. **The Shack** is now a major movie, starring Sam Worthington as Mack, Octavia Spencer as God ("Papa"), Avraham Aviv Alush as Jesus, Sumire as the Holy Spirit, & Alice Braga as Sophia ("Wisdom"). Country Western Music icon Tim McGraw plays Willie, Mack's helpful next door neighbor. (The film was showing here in Alpena at the AMC State Theater, but it may have moved on by now.)

When the movie comes out on DVD, I will purchase it for our Church members to view together... followed by a series of discussions about the content. When a book (or film) makes a huge impact on the religious thinking of a significant part of our culture, it deserves to be reflected upon.

The issues the film addresses – resentment and desire for revenge...

(article continues on next page)

(The "Word from Our Minister" continues from front page)

... or attempting forgiveness?; issues of anger, sadness, and feeling guilty; Do we blame God when tragedy strikes?; How can we get "unstuck" from the weight of our past?; Where is God in a world so full of unspeakable suffering? – are also part of the **Lent and Holy Week experiences of Jesus**. I'll be preaching about such topics on Wednesday, **April 5**, at the First Presbyterian Church (7 pm), and seven ministers will do so on Good Friday, **April 14**, from noon until 3:00 pm (also at the Presbyterian Church). Maybe I'll see you there.

In the meanwhile, as Spring returns to these Northlands, I hope to see you at the several events listed on the back cover of this April Newsletter... especially the "Sunrise Service" at the Small Boat Harbor on Easter Sunday morning (6:30 a.m.)! 'Til then, be well, and may God bless you. — **Rev. Paul Lance**

Feed a Family Coordinator

Bill Haase, Coordinator

We have been doing great in providing food for the Salvation Army. So far in 2017 (only 3 short months) we have provided 21 bags of groceries. Keep up the good work. This month lets, focus on the following:

- Hamburger Helper
- Tuna
- Tuna Helper
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Fruit
- Jelly
- Soups
- Crackers
- Peanut Butter
- Elbow Macaroni
- Spaghetti Sauce/ Noodles

And at the **end of the month** some fresh fruits and vegetables are always appreciated.

April Anniversaries

4/ 8	Max & Vicky Lindsay	39 years
4/12	Curtis & Shari Davis	48 years
4/17	Alison Bloom-Storey & Dan Storey	18 years
4/28	Patrick Labadie & June Perry	44 years

Ladies Luncheon — Jan Snell and Dolly Zeller

The Ladies Luncheon was held on Friday, March 10th at the Hunan Chinese Restaurant. A good time was had by all. Please consider joining us this month on **Friday, April 14th at the 19th Hole**. There is a sign up sheet on the podium.

We gather at 11:30 for food and fellowship. Come, bring a friend and be a part of our activities. Good Friday Services are from Noon to 3:00 p.m., so you can still attend the latter part of the service at First Presbyterian Church if you wish. **Jan and Dolly**

Wacky Wednesday Kids' Fun Club



Wednesdays, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

@ **First Congregational United Church of Christ**

201 S. Second Ave., Alpena, MI 49707 Church Phone - (989) 356-1795

resumes on April 19 with Jeffery Mindock

Come Join Us – Bring a Friend

April Birthdays

1 Joan Chrzan	20 Dennis Artley
5 Alyssa Griffore	20 Howard Marsh
11 Miranda Plume	21 Lydia Hanna
12 Janet Southwell	24 Jere Standen
12 Brian Hanna	24 Debra Grubaugh
14 Bill Lewis	24 Patty McNeil
15 Katie Mack	27 Emily Skiba
16 Gregory Gramum	27 Bob Kelly
19 Dottie Haase	28 Donna Marsh
19 Kristin Barden	29 Patty Lance
19 Ben Wedge	

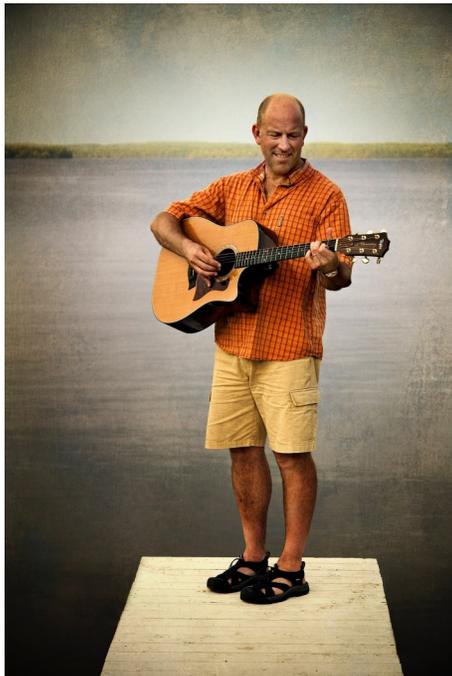


Board of Directors March 13, 2017, Meeting Highlights

Gerrie La Cross, Secretary

- We have received many letters of thanks from this year's Comstock recipients. Many positive comments about our impact on the Community.
- Gifts of money from Ann Saretsky's family for the funeral committee to help with future luncheons.
- Reality Check weekends will no longer be held at First Congregational after March 19th.
- Finances are in great shape. Everything is moving in a positive direction.
- New boiler has passed state inspection and Weinkauff Plumbing has made all the adjustments for efficiency. We received a \$285.00 rebate from DTE for installing a more efficient boiler.
- Mission committee is working on One Great Hour of Sharing to be held on April 2 and Blanket Sunday to be held on May 14. We have granted Temple Beth El \$1000 toward the repairs of the Synagogue. Rev. Lance and their board president Kathleen Lutes will be meeting to begin building a relationship between our two congregations.
- We have decided to discontinue the Adopt-a-Highway program. With a lack of participants, it was time to let it go. (We were active since 2/07/1992)
- Rev. Lance reported on upcoming events for March, April, and May. Lots of things happening with Easter approaching.
- Maundy Thursday services will be at Trinity Episcopal Church with Rev. Bob Case preaching.
- Good Friday services will be at First Presbyterian Church with seven ministers preaching.
- Wacky Wednesday will resume on April 19, under the leadership of Jeffery Mindock. (TBT)
- Volunteer appreciation on Sunday, April 23 followed by a pizza lunch.
- Two opportunities to see Billy Goats Gruff in Fellowship Hall, on Saturday, April 15 and again on Sunday April 23. A production by Thunder Bay Theatre (TBT).
- Toby Jones will have a concert in our sanctuary on Friday, May 19, (7:30—9:00) and host a seminar on Saturday morning, May 20.

“An Evening of Story & Song” – Friday, May 19, at 7:30 pm in our sanctuary



Toby Jones, the minister of the UCC church in Gaylord, shown here with his guitar near his home in Harbor Springs, together with his talented keyboardist **Rokko** and bass-guitarist/drummer **Joanna**, will present a concert in our church sanctuary, open to the public at no cost on Friday, May 19, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. They will tell stories related to the songs they perform such as by the Beatles, James Taylor, Jackson Browne, Bob Dylan, Don Henley, Dan Fogelberg, and Crosby, Stills, Nash, & Young. **Plan to attend and please invite your friends and neighbors.**

Building Bridges - through World Sabbath and Community Celebration

Marcia Aten

As part of the joining of our Building Bridges to Understanding Group with the Religion Studies group at St. Paul Lutheran, I traveled to Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills with 8 others to attend the World Sabbath celebration. A description from the Interfaith Leadership Council follows:

“Shalom, Salaam, Shanti, Peace. Under the soaring roof of Temple Beth El, Jews, Christians of all denominations, Muslims, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Sikhs, Baha’is, Jains, Buddhists, and Hare Krishnas shared blessings and prayers, music and dance.

From the opening procession of the committee, the community’s faith leaders, and the Children of Peace, to the resounding round of shofar blasts, we came together to celebrate all that is different about our religions and our cultures and to rejoice in the love for one another that is the same across these traditions.”

It was a memorable occasion, full of color and music, laughter and tears. We were recognized for our traveling so far to participate, and hope to send an even larger group next year - consider joining us! In the meantime,

SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 3, 2017

Come and experience a nondenominational nonpartisan celebration of healing and listening through the arts which aims to unite us heart-to-heart hear in Alpena. Enjoy the afternoon with family and friends celebrating respect, compassion and understanding in our community and beyond with music, poetry, speakers, crafts and activities for the children, and much more! This event is being put together by a committee which includes people from beyond our group membership, and we are very encouraged by the support in the community. Plan to join us - we hope to make it a lot of fun.

Mini SERRV Sale!

Missing all that good SERRV chocolate? Still wanting some soup for those cool evenings, or a good cup of coffee? Remaining SERRV food items will be on sale during fellowship time following the 10 am worship service on April 2 — which is our “One Great Hour of Sharing” Sunday, too.

Three Billy Goats Gruff in our church: Saturday April 15 and Sunday, April 23



Bring your family, friends, and neighbors to a Thunder Bay Theatre production of “Three Billy Goats Gruff” in Fellowship Hall at **First Congregational UCC**. Two opportunities for your family, at no cost. First on **Saturday April 15, at 11:00 a.m.** (followed by a kid friendly lunch), and then again on **Sunday, April 23** at 1:00 p.m. Come to the Sunday morning worship service, and stay for a Pizza lunch to honor our volunteers. The show will begin at 1:00 p.m. for those who enjoy live theater with children.

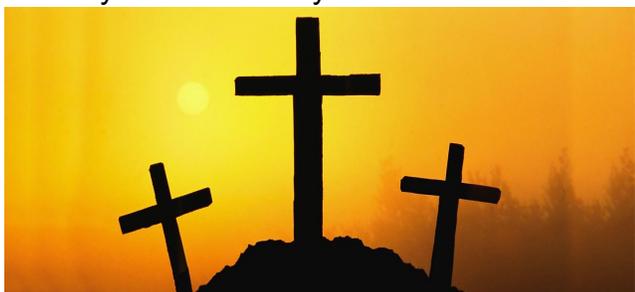
Happy Easter

May God bless you at Easter,
and keep you all year through.

May God give you all the faith it takes
to make your dreams come true.

May God’s love and wisdom always help
to guide you on your way.

May God’s light shine down upon you now
to bless your Easter Day.



**Alpena Al-Anon &
AA Saturday Night at
the Movies!**

**WHEN LOVE IS NOT
ENOUGH**

April 8, 2017

7:00—9:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

**Fellowship, popcorn, refreshments, coffee,
and snacks**

Come to this **OPEN meeting** (all are welcome) and watch this award winning movie based on the true story of the enduring but troubled love between Lois Wilson, co-founder of Al-Anon, and her alcoholic husband Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

First Congregational United Church of Christ
201 South Second Avenue
Alpena, MI 49707

Phone: 989-356-1795 Fax 989-356-8825
Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@frontier.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Monday – Thursday

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Underground Church 5:00 p.m.

Minister: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case
Organist & Choir Director: Kat Tomaszewski
Treasurer: Denise Fusina
Secretary: Gerrie La Cross
Custodian: Mike LaMarre

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Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Lenten Services and other Fun things in April

April 2, 2:00 pm: Peace Pole Stations of the Cross beginning at Community of Christ on Clinton St.

We will be at First Congregational at 3:20 p.m.

April 3, 7:00 pm: Bishop Craig Satterlee @ St. Paul Lutheran (*Chrism Mass*)

April 5, 6:00 Soup Supper, 7:00 Service. Rev Lance preaching @ First Presbyterian Church

April 8, 7:00pm: Al-Anon and AA Saturday Night at the Movies, All are welcome.

April 13, 7:00 pm: Maundy Thursday, Rev. Bob Case preaching @ Trinity Episcopal Church

April 14, 11:30 am: Ladies Luncheon at the 19th Hole restaurant

April 14, Noon – 3:00: Good Friday Services @ First Presbyterian Church (with seven preachers)

April 15, 11:00 am: Three Billy Goats Gruff in Fellowship Hall at First Congregational UCC

April 16, Easter services: 6:30 am @ Small Boat Harbor, 10:00 am Sanctuary Service

April 19, 4:00 pm: Wacky Wednesday Kids Fun Club begins with Jeffery Mindock

April 23, 11:00 am: Volunteer appreciation followed by Pizza lunch and Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Thank You

The Lenten Soup Supper on Wednesday was a success. With 16 pots of excellent soup, we fed 120 people. A big thanks to the cooks, roll providers, dish washers, and those who helped set-up, serve and clean-up! Patty Lance