

**April
2025**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena



Board of Directors

Deborah Desimone

Nancy Wedge

Co-Chairpersons

~~

Joe Garant

Vice-Chairperson

~~

Sandy Jarmuzewski

Treasurer

~~

Beverly Bodem

Bill Dempsey

Ann Diamond

Jim McNeil

Beth Petty

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall
for a light breakfast following the
Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday.
We look forward to seeing you there.

Bill & Dottie Haase
Cindy & Jim Straley

From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Dick Hotchkin

Jesus arose from the dead! This is not an allegory, or a myth, or a parable. It happened! Jesus arising from the dead is a solid event in history, unlike any other event, but an event! Jesus died ... he rose again.

Nor did Jesus suffer and die to teach a lesson – like how to be brave, or how to be loyal to our convictions. Jesus suffered and died and rose again to overcome the enemy, Satan, and to pay for the sins of the world. Jesus suffered and died and rose again to redeem the world, to recover humanity, to restore that which had been lost, to free the spiritually imprisoned, to save the world.

It is not strange that people rub their eyes and say, “How can this be so?” Whoever heard a claim like this before?

The wonder is that we can believe it at all. This itself is a miracle of God. Most of us have heard of the event since we were children. The wonder of it may have been lost in the repetition. But, it is the world's greatest wonder! Stepping on the moon is a trifle compared with it. After all, to say that God would become a human being and die for us – is this not a truth more fantastic than anything the world has ever heard?

The cross and the empty tomb are the measure of God's love. Unless we can accept this radical love of God, both Jesus' death and resurrection become impossible to believe. Such love can never seem reasonable, but is glorious beyond imagination.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

(John 3:16)

Membership Declaration Cards

Membership Declaration Cards were distributed at the recent Annual Meeting held on January 26th.

“To maintain membership in good and regular standing, a member will annually sign a card that reads:

‘I declare that I am a member of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena, Michigan.’

A former member may re-establish good and regular standing by signing such a card at any time.”

Membership cards will be available on the table at the back of the sanctuary, by calling the church and requesting one, or by stopping in the office during regular business hours.

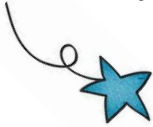
Days to Celebrate



Joan Chrzan ~ 1st
Lori Mayer ~ 11th
Janet Southwell ~ 12th

Dottie Haase ~ 19th
Dennis Artley ~ 20th
Patricia McNeil ~ 24th
Jere Standen ~ 24th

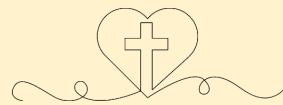
Donna March ~ 28th
Bob Kelly ~ 28th
Patty Lance ~ 29th



April Birthdays

April Anniversaries

Max & Vicky Lindsay ~ 8th
Curt & Sharyl Davis ~ 12th
Alison & Dan Storey ~ 17th



April Laity Schedule

	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Readers	Fellowship	Altar Guild	Communion	Counter(s)
6th	Mary Minnick Dan Kibbe	Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski	Marilyn Kettler	Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski	Sandy Jarmuzewski	Sandy Jarmuzewski	
13th Palm Sunday	Bev Bodem Craig Waak	Ashley Wedge Nancy Wedge	Lori Mayer	and Bill & Dottie Haase	(All Month)		Ashley Wedge
20th Easter	Pat Garant Joe Garant	Penny Anderson Jim Straley	Bill Dempsey	(All Month)			
27th	Lynn Borke Ron Borke	Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski	Lynn Borke				Tammy Veasy

Note: If you see openings where you can help, please feel free to step in.

Worship Opportunities for Lent

Worship Committee

April 13	Palm Sunday	Worship	First Congregational UCC	10:00 a.m.
April 18	Good Friday	Worship	Trinity Episcopal	12:00 noon
<i>The theme this year is "The Seven Last Words of Christ." Hymns, special music and a combined choir anthem from the six participating churches will be interspersed between the homilies.</i>				
April 20	Easter Sunday	Sunrise Service	Boat Harbor	6:30 a.m.
		Continental Breakfast	Fellowship Hall	following Sunrise Service
		Worship	Sanctuary	10:00 a.m.





HELLO April Days to Remember

Friday	4th	Great World Religions Class	10:30 a.m.
Sunday	6th	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	7th	Worship Committee Meeting	5:30 p.m.
Tuesday	8th	Search Committee Meeting	4:30 p.m.
Friday	11th	Great World Religions Class	10:30 a.m.
Sunday	13th	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	14th	Search Committee Meeting	4:30 p.m.
		Board Meeting	5:30 p.m.
Friday	18th	Good Friday Service (Trinity Episcopal Church)	12:00 Noon - 3:00 p.m.
Sunday	20th	Easter Sunrise Service	6:30 a.m.
		Continental Breakfast	following Sunrise Service
		Easter Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	21st	Search Committee Meeting	4:30 p.m.
Friday	4th	Great World Religions Class	10:30 a.m.
Sunday	27th	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	28th	Search Committee Meeting	4:30 p.m.

Board Notes from March

- ❖ The Board learned about a new Narrative Budget format that may be beneficial to the church.
- ❖ With regard to the search for a new parsonage, the Board approved the negotiation of the details for a new lease option that became available for a local home rental for April occupancy.
- ❖ The Search Committee continues its work by reviewing and updating the church profile as they prepare for first meetings with the UCC Conference Search Representative.
- ❖ Plans for the March 23rd piano dedication concert are underway. Advertisements will be run in the Alpena News and several other sources, including social media.
- ❖ The Board discussed the Easter Sunrise Service and continental breakfast plans. In addition, agreed to run an updated color ad in the Alpena News (Easter Tab).
- ❖ The Board decided to retire the old Elevator Room copier which is in disrepair. Parts for the copier are no longer readily available.

Treasurer's Report

Denise Fusina

Giving:	Pledge vs Received	
FEB	\$10,417	\$11,286
YTD	\$20,834	\$52,901

Thank you for your generosity!

**A good number of members
have paid their annual pledge in full.**

What good work is done with your gifts? We open our facility for use by others. Prior to Covid, we had a number of community groups using our facility. We are finally moving past the Covid shut down and resolving security concerns to, again, open our doors to our neighbors. Recently, we have provided space for music lessons; play rehearsals; Holiday open house; enrichment classes; Feed A Family collections; warm hats, mittens, and sock collections; and a community concert to dedicate our new piano.

These activities are part of our ministry of welcome, hospitality, and community involvement. This is the church life and ministry that is enabled through your support of our facility – utilities, upkeep, insurance, etc. Your giving is directly related to “paying the bills” (not glamorous) which translates to the enriching life of your church.

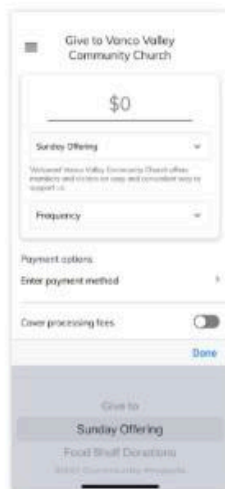
HOW TO GIVE USING VANCO MOBILE

Support our ministries from anywhere. Go to the App Store or Google Play to download the Vanco Mobile app for free.



1. Search for Our Church

Enter our church's name or use the invite code and click **Search**. Then, select our church.



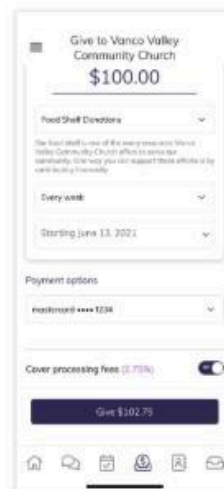
2. Select Your Fund and Amount

Select your fund and donation frequency, then select your payment method.



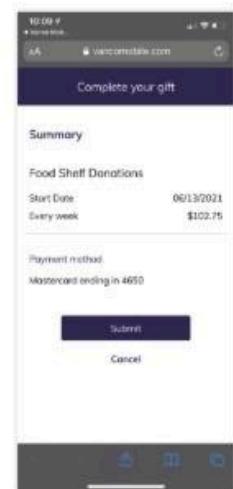
3. Enter Payment Method

Select a payment method and enter your credit card, debit card or bank account information. You can save this payment method for future donations.



4. Choose to Cover Processing Fees

You can choose to cover the donation processing fees by adding a small amount on top of your gift. Click the button to opt in.



5. Complete Your Donation

Review and complete your gift by clicking **Submit**.

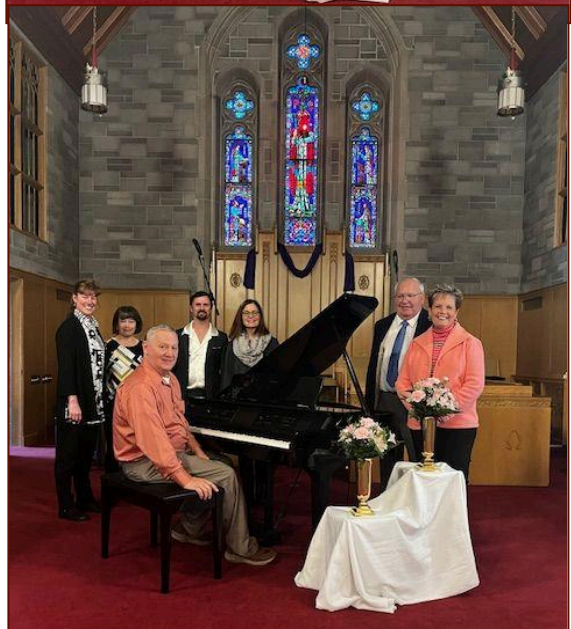


VANCO
FAITH

First Congregational United Church of Christ Hosts Joyous Celebration of Musical Gifts



On Sunday, March 23rd, First Congregational United Church of Christ hosted a **Joyous Celebration of Musical Gifts**, a special event to celebrate and dedicate the church's new digital grand piano generously donated by Ann Diamond and Blair Diamond in honor of their mother, Barbara Diamond, on what would have been her 99th birthday.



The event featured a lineup of talented musicians, each sharing their favorite piano piece, creating a diverse and uplifting musical experience. Performers included **Jean Martin-Baker, Suelyn Bartz, Sandy Jarmuzewski, Ted Rockwell, Nick Stone, Kat Tomaszewski, and Julie Wood**. Attendees were treated to a variety of musical styles, including classical, show tunes, religious pieces, and a hymn sing-along.

The dedication of the digital grand piano marks a significant addition to the church's music program, enhancing worship services and community events for years to come. The congregation expresses deep gratitude to the Diamond family for their generous contribution and to all the musicians who participated in making the celebration so memorable.



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

Sunday Worship ~ 10:00 AM
In Person and Online

Transition Minister: Reverend Dr. Richard E. Hotchkin
Pastor Emeritus: Reverend Dr. H. Robert Case
Organist/Choir Director: Kat Tomaszewski
Treasurer: Denise Fusina
Office Administrator: Leslie Reynolds
Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Phone: (989) 356-1795
Website: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com
Office Hours: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Monday - Thursday

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena



He is Risen!

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**
201 S. SECOND AVENUE, ALPENA, MI

Please join us for

Easter Services

Palm Sunday Service
April 13, 2025 10:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service
April 20, 2025 6:30 a.m.
Alpena Boat Harbor
Followed by a continental breakfast at the
First Congregational Fellowship Hall

Easter Worship Service
10:00 a.m.

AS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION, WE WELCOME
PEOPLE AS THEY ARE, SHARE JESUS AS HE IS, AND SERVE OUR
COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD IN LOVE.