

November
2019

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- Dennis Artley, treasurer
- Blair Diamond
- Bill Dempsey
- Boris Gerber
- Ann Gerow, vice chair
- Dottie Haase
- Vicky Lindsay
- Jim Mc Neil, chair
- Beth Petty

November 2019

Dates to Remember

3

Daylight Saving Time ends (set clocks back)
10:00 am worship with
Wild Rose Band

8

Ladies Luncheon

10

**Fall Harvest Fellowship
Lunch after worship**
and
"Imagination Movers" at
the Aplex (Kids!)

11

Board of Directors

13

"No Frills" Book Club

17

10:00 am worship with
Bifocal Brass
and
5:00 pm Codfish Dinner
with Readers' Theater

25

Friendship Room

28

Thanksgiving Day
(Office Closed)

A Word from our Minister: "The Pilgrim's Thanksgiving"

— Rev. Dr. Paul Lance

As Congregationalists, we take special pride in recalling the story of the Pilgrim settlers who came to America on the Mayflower in 1620.

In their day, these men and women were called "Separatists" because they chose to "separate themselves" from the institutional Church of Roman Catholics and Anglican Protestants in England. They were a "non-creedal" sect of Christians, unwilling to let others dictate to the local congregations what they should believe & how they should be organized.

They were unwelcome in England, where Anglican orthodoxy insisted that priests were necessary to maintain proper order, so the band of mostly rural rebels went first to Holland. While they found a measure of comradeship and welcome among the Calvinists, the Pilgrims from England sought a place where they could be free to worship as they chose.

They heard of the "New World" America, which was just then being settled by colonists from England. The Jamestown settlement (made famous by Disney's retelling of the story of the Indian princess Pocahontas) had just received their first shipload of African slaves in Virginia. The Pilgrims wanted nothing to do with that! They had their eye on the Massachusetts Bay Colony, where they might start a brand-new (New) England.

On Sunday, Nov. 10, I'll tell the story of the Pilgrim's first effort to come to America from Rotterdam on the sailing ship "Speedwell"... but it proved unseaworthy, so they traded it in on the "Mayflower" in Plymouth, England. The transatlantic trip was often horrible and the destination was wild & windswept.

On that Sunday, we'll hold a "Fall Harvest Potluck" after worship, with all the turkey fixin's of a real Thanksgiving! (Plan to stay for it.)

The next week (Sunday, Nov. 17) the worship service will be enhanced by the **Bifocal Brass** — trumpets, horn, trombone, and tuba! It will be a festive time for traditional Thanksgiving songs during worship.

Then I invite you to **come back** to Fellowship Hall that Sunday at 5:00 pm for a full New England-style "codfish" dinner! It will be an evening of good food and an original "Readers' Theater" drama on our stage.

I will play the part of an old Pilgrim who was there during those first few years of hardship, having dialog with **Marilyn Kettler**, who will play "Anne Hutchinson" — a bright and faithful woman who got into hot water with the Puritan leaders of Boston. **Jay Kettler** will be Gov. Winthrop & **Gene Bacon** will be Rev. John Cotton, Anne's Pastor. Based on historical proceedings, we will experience the conflict between free-thinking Christian spirituality and the desire for institutional religion to keep things "decent and in order". Invite your friends & neighbors to join us that night.

Updates on “Neighbors in Need” UCC Offering and TBT “Marvelous Wonderettes” Fund Raising

Last month we collected **\$639** during our Neighbors in Need Collection. We also made **\$227** profit with our “Marvelous Wonderettes” fundraiser—not to mention that the Thunder Bay Theatre show was lively and fun for all of us. Thank you all for your donations.



Thank you to Dr. Tom Cook for bringing his apple cider press to the church for fun and fellowship!



Barb Kett Sends Greetings to First Congregational UCC of Alpena

Recently Janet Artley, Delilah Tretinik, and Ann Diamond had an opportunity to visit **Barb Kett** at her residence in **Walled Lake**.

As they arrived, Barb had a wonderful expression on her face and she knew each of them. She was in good spirits and so pleased they had come to see her. Random comments and recollections about hair styles & colors, food & wine, and church followed. Remembering many by name, she told how she loves Alpena, misses everyone, and sends her best to all.

Barb is living in a private facility owned and managed by a husband and wife team. There are two beautiful homes with a common backyard between them and each dwelling is home to six individuals. Residents are provided home-cooked meals and while we were there they were served at a lovely dining room table with owner Daniela joining them for lunch. Daniela encouraged our stay even though it was lunch time, offering Barb ample time for a nice visit and then provided her personal lunch accommodations. It is of great comfort to know Barb is well cared for and loved by the owners and staff.

Her parting words (after the hugs and kisses) were stated in typical Barb fashion with a big smile, **"Peace Out"**. Please keep Barb in your thoughts and prayers. If you would like to drop her a note or card, it can be sent to her attention at either Daniela's Serenity Care, 1278 Leon Rd, Walled Lake, MI, 48390 or to Kristen Allmacher, 3430 Circle Drive, Commerce Township, MI, 48382.



Ladies' Luncheon

Last month, the ladies of our church met at The 19th Hole on Friday, October 18 with their hosts, Bev Olsen and Mary Bloom. A good time was had by all.

This month's Ladies' Luncheon will be held on Friday, November 8, again at The 19th Hole. Thank you to Rev. Ginny Titus for hosting this month! Be sure to look for the sign-up sheet on the Care Letter podium in the hallway.

Follow our new Facebook page: First Congregational UCC of Alpena.



Our thanks also go to **Shari Davis**, who has hosted and posted our previous Facebook site for many years.

Board of Directors Meeting Highlights from October 2019

Bri Fastnaught, Secretary

The meeting on Monday, Oct. 14, was opened at 5:35 p.m. with prayer. The September minutes were approved with one minor change.

Two pieces of congregational correspondence were shared with the Board: Gerrie La Cross sent a card thanking the Board for the \$500 gift after six years of working together, and Mary Lou Shuler sent a change of address card (1700 Bronson Way, Kalamazoo, MI, 49009) along with a letter describing her new home, the First Congregational UCC Church there, and asking that she receive a pledge card from us as a continuing member here.

The Church finances are in good order. Rev. Lance pointed out that we began the year with assets of **\$184,722.64** and our current assets are **\$183,817.90**... nearly the same after nine whole months. Dennis Artley added that our invested assets are growing. Bill Dempsey made a motion to accept the financial report as presented.

Dennis Artley also went over the **tentative 2020 budget**. This preliminary budget will balance if the Stewardship Campaign brings in projected General Fund contributions of **\$125,800**. The budget will be reviewed again in Nov. & Dec. before being presented to the congregation for its consideration at our **Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2020**.

Leavesly Construction has been contacted in regards to the roof over the elevator. Repairs are necessary in order to keep melting snow from leaking down into the elevator itself and into the shaft. There has also been contact with Omega Electric concerning the heat tapes on the main roof. Edith Gerber will be reaching out to My Glass Wings to see about the cracked pane of stained glass. Boilore Cleaning cleaned the Fellowship Hall carpet and it is now spotless; there is no need to replace the carpet.

A new Fellowship Committee has been formed with John Murphy, James McNeil, and Thomas Grub-augh as chair. The Worship Committee has scheduled Christmas Caroling for Sunday afternoon, Dec. 15, at the homes of church members who live in town and would enjoy a visit from carolers. In years past the visits were only to homebound members, but this year there are very few homebound members. Kat Tomaszewski has arranged for guest musicians or bands to cover her vacation Sundays.

Max Lindsay is the new chair of the Personnel Committee. Bri Fastnaught is settling into her role as our new Church Secretary. The Committee will meet in the Fall to discuss salaries of our Minister & staff.

Boris Gerber is the new chair of the Mission Committee. The last Special Mission Offering for the year will be "The Christmas Fund for Veterans of the Cross" on Sunday, Dec. 15. At the Michigan UCC Conference Annual Meeting, our Alpena church was recognized as one of the top ten givers per capita.

The Mission Committee will meet in December to allocate remaining Mission Project Funds and to begin planning for next year.



(article continues on next page)

OCTOBER 2019 BOARD MEETING (continued from page 4)

The Comstock Fund Committee has **\$52,000** available to give away this year; however, grant requests amounting to about **\$126,000 have come in**. Comstock Fund grants received by our Mission Committee have been used for “local missions” and for emergency “human needs” throughout the year.

The Stewardship campaign this year begins on November 3. The goal is \$125,800. Letters will go out at the end of October and announcements made on three consecutive Sundays (Nov. 3, 10, & 17).

Boris Gerber reported on behalf of the Investment Committee that Boston Advisors group was bought by a different, larger company. He received information at the Michigan UCC annual conference about alternative advisors groups that UCC is using. The Board recommended the information be given to Dan Kibbe (Chair of the Investment Committee) for further review.

Rev. Lance, Edith Gerber, and Gene Bacon all attended the Michigan Conference UCC Annual Meeting last month. Rev. Lance reported that back in 2000, Michigan had 174 UCC churches. There are currently 131. Further, in 2000, Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) donations were at \$1 million and last year OCWM contributions totaled \$458,000. UCC is projecting 2020 OCWM funds to be \$407,000. OCWM funds used to be split 50% to the national UCC and 50% to the state UCC. That split is now 30%/70%. In order to maintain a balanced budget, National UCC has had to rely on profits from property sales and investments. Rev. Lance also reported that his presentations were very well received.

From October 22 through the 24, Rev. Lance attended the Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic (LARC) retreat. They will discuss how to reach three groups: The “Nones” (those with no religious preference), the “Dones” (those who have had toxic religious experiences and therefore have walked away from both organized religion and God), and the “Spiritual but Not Religious”.

Rev. Lance told the Board that our 8-year-old church computers have Windows 7, which Microsoft will no longer support after December. We must either get new software for our old system, or get new computers with new software. The Board agreed to get the new computers; Curt Gerow will do this.

Celebrating the Birthdays and **Anniversaries** in November

Nov. 1: Dan Kibbe
Tom Watkins

Nov. 3: Diana Kelly

Nov. 5: Deb Butler

Nov. 6: Chris McCoy

Nov 8: Marilyn Kettler
Andy Lindahl

Nov. 10: Bill Haase

Nov. 11: Margaret Neilsen

Nov. 14: Diana Standen

Nov. 15: Sherry Allen

Nov. 16: Kay Beland

Nov. 20: Leigh Copeland

**Nov. 22: Rev. Keith & Ginny
Titus, 38 years**

Nov 26: Wyatt Hanna

Madisyn Speaks

Nov 30: Dan Storey



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Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am — 1:00 pm Monday — Thursday

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

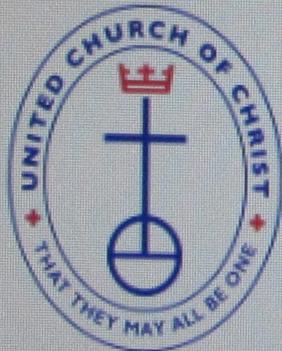
Minister: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case
Choir Director and Organist: Kat Tomaszewski
Kids Club Director: Jeffrey Mindock
Secretary: Bri Fastnaught
Treasurer: Denise Fusina
Custodian: Mike LaMarre

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"Thanksgiving from the Spirit"

FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL



Sunday, Nov. 17, 5:00 pm

A Reader's Theater drama
about the Pilgrims' first
Thanksgiving and Anne
Hutchinson's confrontation
with the Puritans of Boston.

Everyone is welcome. Dinner will be provided.
No charge. Call 356-1795 to make reservations.

"Thanksgiving from the Spirit"