

January
2020

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 McNeil**, Chair
- **Beth Petty**

January 2020

Dates to Remember

1

Happy New Year!

Office Closed

8

“White Fragility”

Book Discussion 7 pm
led by Dottie Haase

10

Ladies’ Luncheon

@ the 19th Hole

13

Board Meeting

15

“No Frills” Book Club

18

“White Fragility”

Saturday Workshop
with Rosie Gibson

25

Jona Hauff Benefit
Concert

29

**Annual
Congregational
Meeting**
(Elections, budget,
and reports)

A Word From Our Minister: “White Fragility”

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

In a community that is 97% white, it may seem odd to want to talk about “racism”. And yet, that’s what our church is going to do on the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend here in Alpena.

Our Saturday, Jan. 18, workshop will be led by Rosie Gibson,

a retired nurse & trainer
from Cincinnati, who is

preparing for

ordination in the

United Church of Christ.

She is a member of the

Lewiston Congregational UCC.



The Saturday workshop

participants will experience themes from the book “White Fragility” on **Jan. 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** in our Fellowship Hall... open to the public. **Lunch will be provided. Please register in advance.** \$20 will cover the book and the meal. (If you purchase the book on your own, you may register for only \$10.) Register by calling the church (356-1795) or sending an email to “officeuccalp@gmail.com”.

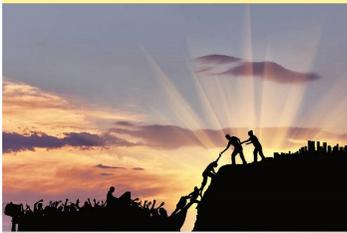
Multicultural educator **Robin DiAngelo** uses the term “**White Fragility**” to refer to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged about their racial presumptions.

Emotions such as anger and fear, guilt and shame, surface when an open and honest discussion of racial stereotypes and experiences takes place. These behaviors, in turn, function to re-instate “white equilibrium” and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialog. **People get “stuck” in their prejudices** and don’t even realize it.

It is rare for “white” people to talk with other white people about what it means to be “white”. Please attend, and tell your neighbors about this discussion. Thank you.

I’ll see you in church! **Rev. Paul Lance**

They Showed Us
Unusual Kindness
(cf. ACTS 2:42)



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2020

The Alpena LARC (Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic) Committee has hosted the annual “**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**” *community worship service* in January for a dozen years.

These churches have graciously included First Congregational UCC in their LARC meetings in Alpena for nearly 20 years... and this year we have been invited to be the location for the **Wed, Jan. 22, 2020, 7:00 pm** evening service.

We thank them for the privilege, and we invite you to put it on your personal calendar as well. We hope to have a “combined choir” sing an anthem or two. Let Kat know if you are available to sing on that Wednesday.

The participating churches include St. Paul Lutheran (Pastor John Shipman will be the preacher), Grace Lutheran Church, First Presbyterian Church, First United Methodist Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, and our own congregation.

Since these are Churches with whom we regularly share Lenten Soup Suppers, we decided to have soup prior to the worship service on that Wednesday, too.

So... plan to attend the “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity” worship service in our sanctuary on Wed. evening, Jan. 22, but come early (at 6:00) for soup in Fellowship Hall. This service is open to the public.

There will be a free-will offering dedicated to the Salvation Army’s “Call Us For Help” program, in particular to help people with home heating in the winter.

Thursday Theology Class — “Christianity: The First Thousand Years”

We meet upstairs in Fellowship Hall at 1:00 p.m. This is an A&E History DVD series on the big TV.

Jan. 2 — The Apostles and first leaders (St. Peter, St. James)

Controversies and Saul of Tarsus (St. Paul)

Seeds of Faith & Struggle for Survival

Jan. 9 — Emperor Constantine’s Rule, The Gnostics

The New Testament, Monastic Life

Jan. 16 — Augustine of Hippo, The Fall of Rome, and St. Patrick & the Irish Church

Jan. 23 — Byzantine Empire, Theodora, the Birth of Islam, and “Iconoclasts”

Jan. 30 — King Charlemagne, Church & State, King Louis, The Vikings, & Otto the Great

We watch a segment and then discuss it. We finish at 2:00 pm each Thursday. Invite a friend, too.

**Live Music in Fellowship Hall
Benefit Concert
for Jona Hauff**

(see article to the right)

Sat., Jan. 25th, 2020, at 2:00pm

**Cost — Make a charitable cash
donation at the door to help
make a young man's dream
come true.**



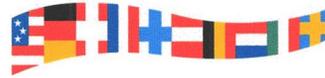
**Join us for yoga
with Stacy Lukitsch
in the Lower Level
All-Purpose Room.**

Tuesday 10 am *Restorative Yoga*

**Thursday 5:00 pm *Yoga for
Every-Body***

***Kids' Creative Movement*
will reconvene after the New Year.
Call Stacy for more information.
989-916-5053**

blue lake
INTERNATIONAL



Help make a young man's dream become possible.

My name is Jona Hauff, I have been invited to participate in Blue Lake Fine Arts International Music Exchange program for 2020.

I am 15 years old and I am doing what I can to raise as much money as possible on my own. I have been performing music in downtown Alpena, working at a church playing piano for their Sunday service, selling candy bars and I will be performing at benefit concerts.

The total cost of the program tuition, accommodations, travel and other expenses will come to nearly \$10,000. With still being a student in school, my time is limited to raise this much money by myself. This is a very large goal to accomplish. Whatever contribution or donation you can make would be greatly appreciated.

For more information or if you are able to help make this dream come true please contact my father, Timothy Hauff 989-464-9828. You can call me, Jona, at 989-916-3208. One could send a check directly to Blue Lake in care of Jona Hauff's International Music Exchange Tuition. This is a 501(c)(3) non-profit program.

Or visit my Go-Fund-Me page on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/donate/537582983714055/>

Thank you, *Jona Hauff*

**Sunday Fellowship Hostesses
are needed for several months
in 2020. See sign-up sheet at
Care Podium in the hallway.
Thank you. — Bill Haase**

December Board Meeting Highlights

Bri Fastnaught, Secretary

Janet Artley kicked off the “congregational comments and correspondence” by asking if there would be an order placed for poinsettias for the Christmas Eve service this year. Rev. Lance answered by saying there would not be. The three large plants donated by Bill & Debbie Dempsey will suffice.

Janet also shared that she will no longer be taking Sunday morning attendance as of January 1st, to which Boris Gerber replied the ushers could probably absorb the job. Thank you, Janet.

Mid Michigan Health sent a “thank you” card for Rev. Lance’s remarks at the Love Light Tree ceremony. The national office of UCC sent a Thanksgiving card. Immanuel Lutheran Church sent a note of thanks to the congregation and the quilters for the donation of **49 baby kits** and assistance with loading the truck. Dottie mentioned that members of the congregation were wondering why the choir was singing less often. The same two answers were given as when this came up last month.

The **finances** for 2019 are in good order—which is a relief, especially when compared to being \$27,000 in the “red” at this time last year. The Stewardship campaign raised a total of **65 pledges** for next year: **\$130,882 for the general fund** and **\$14,458 for the mission fund**. This included 18 increased pledges, 12 decreased pledges, 26 that stayed the same, eight new pledges, and two who did not return a pledge. The proposed **2020 budget worksheet** was updated to include actual expenses through November, and the actual pledged amounts were used (rounded to \$130,000).

The Board decided that, after the need arose to treat the first floor Lounge for bed bugs a **second** time, that the Lounge is now “closed to outside groups” and is only to be used for events held by members of the congregation. The “outside groups” are welcome to meet downstairs in the All - Purpose Room, which has been rearranged to feature metal folding chairs in an effort to negate any further issues with upholstery or carpet. Diatomaceous earth has also been spread in the Lounge.

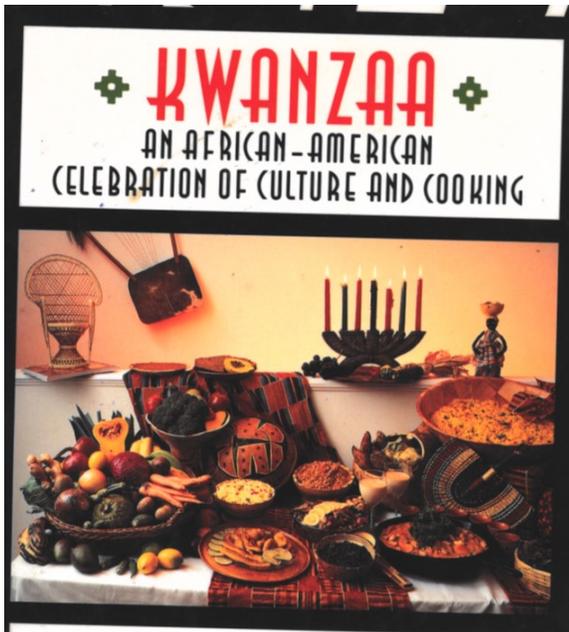
Boris and Edith Gerber met with the Church’s “Church Mutual” insurance agent in November, and had two items for the Board to decide. First, if the deductible is raised from \$1,000 up to \$2,500, the Church would save \$920 a year on the policy premium. Second, there’s a terrorism risk “add on” that costs an extra \$144 unless signed-off that the Church does not want it. The Board decided to increase the Church’s deductible and to not purchase the additional terrorism risk coverage.

All of the committees were wrapping up for the year. The Fellowship Committee was preparing for Christmas Eve. The Mission Committee was looking ahead to the Veterans of the Cross Christmas Fund collection. The Investment Committee is considering moving funds from Boston Advisors to a different company, as well as creating a way to receive stocks and other residual assets from bequests. Edith Gerber shared on behalf of the Property Committee that the roof over the elevator is still leaking, so we’re leaving buckets in there for now. The small pane of stained glass that has a crack in it (in the Sanctuary) was looked at by My Glass Wings. The crack is not structural and could be painted over to make it less noticeable. The lime leeching in the masonry beside the Lockwood Street door is possibly caused by a leaking sewer line. Weinkauff’s Plumbing will follow up to remove an upstairs toilet in order to find out where the leak is starting from. The Personnel Committee Chair reviewed the Finance Committee’s proposed 2020 budget and agreed with the proposed 2% salary increases for Rev. Lance and our custodian, Mike LaMarre. This will come before the Congregation for a vote on Sunday, Jan. 29, at the Annual Meeting. Rev. Lance shared that Jeffrey Mindock will be moving, bringing Wacky Wednesday to an end & leaving Sunday School unstaffed.

A Note from Church Secretary

Bri Fastnaught

With all the updates to technology around the Church office (new computer software, new printer, etc...) I want to make sure nothing slips through the cracks! If you had an item on the 2020 calendar, please email or call the office so I can make sure I have all the details correct. Thank you!



The “Kwanzaa lunch” which had been planned for Sunday, Dec. 29, has been postponed until Sunday, Jan. 19th, during the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend.

This sit-down meal following the morning worship service will be provided by Rev. Ginny Titus. Explanations of elements in the meal and on the table will become an interactive experience which honors African Americans.

Monday Mid-day Movies return with four African/American Features

Join us in Fellowship Hall at NOON on Mondays for these films...

Jan 6 — “*Roots*” (Episode 1), 1977, 95 minutes — “I saw white men” said 15-year old Kunta Kinte, something unknown to his village life in Gambia, West Africa in 1767. Ed Asner plays a pious slave-ship captain who ferries 170 blacks in chains on an agonizing odyssey to the New World. Based on Alex Haley’s Pulitzer Prize book.

Jan 13 — “*Amistad*”, 1988, 155 minutes — Steven Spielberg’s film about a group of enslaved Africans who take over their captor’s ship “La Amistad” (Spanish for “Friendship”), are charged with murder, and await trial in Connecticut.

Jan. 20 — “*Amazing Grace*”, 2006, 120 minutes. **Jan. 27** — “*Lincoln*”, 2013, 150 min.

Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration 2020 Programming in Alpena

Tom Orth

La’Ron Williams, an Award winning African-American Storyteller and Workshop Trainer, will be presenting programs in Alpena schools the week of January 13 through 17.

On Thursday, January 16, he will present a community program entitled **"Racism is NOT That Guy in the Pointy Hood"** at ACC Room CTR 106 (opposite Granum Theater) from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

*The program, driven by a strong personal vision of a supportive and inclusive community in which everyone can freely participate, will be a blend of **storytelling, interactive exercises, lecture, and dialogue** to help us identify the major illusions that prevent us from effectively — and even joyously — working to achieve harmony across racial lines.*

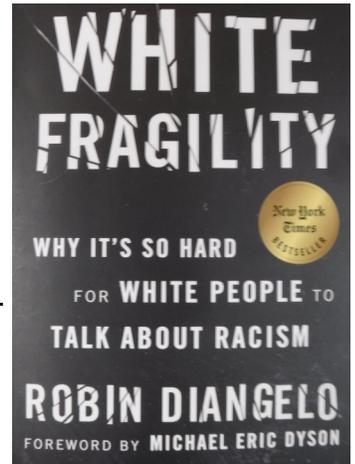
The community is invited. For more information contact (989) 354-6031.



Don't Forget!

Dottie Haase will lead a "White Fragility" **book discussion** Wednesday, January 8 at 7 pm

"White Fragility" Workshop with Rosie Gibson will be on Sat., Jan 18 from 9 am to 3 pm. Cost is \$20 to attend (\$10 if you already have the book). Please call the Church office at 356-1795 to reserve your spot!



Our Congregational

ANNUAL MEETING



Call to Meeting...

Plan to stay after the worship service on Sunday, Jan. 29, for the Annual Congregational Meeting at 11:00 a.m. in our sanctuary. We elect officers, set the budget, and do other business for the well-being of the congregation. The Annual Reports will be published two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.



Ladies' Luncheon

The 2019 Ladies' Christmas Luncheon in our Fellowship Hall was a success (see photo at left). Thank you to all who attended and had a good time. Thank you especially to our church organist/choir director **Kat Tomaszewski**, who played Christmas carols on the piano all through the meal.

The first Ladies' Luncheon of 2020 will be held on Friday, Jan. 10, at 11:30 am at the 19th Hole Restaurant, hosted by Sharon Rickard. The sign up sheet will be on the Care Letter podium. Hope you can make it!



Thank you to Dr. Avery Aten and the other members of our Bell Choir for their lovely performance during the worship service on Sunday, Dec. 15. The photo at right shows them preparing to perform.



Birthdays and *Anniversaries* in January

1/10 Herbert Knowlton,
Max Lindsay
1/12 Lillian Banas,
Vicky Lindsay,
Kathy Thomas

1/13 James Park
1/17 Bev Olsen
1/23 Vernie Nethercut
1/26 Joan & Sonny Chrzan
1/31 Jennie Morey



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

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

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Fellowship Time: 11:00 am

Minister: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case

Choir Director & Organist: Kat Tomaszewski

Kids Club Leader: Jeffrey Mindock

Treasurer: Denise Fusina

Secretary: Bri Fastnaught

Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

CALL TO MEETING...

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Jan. 26, 11 a.m.
in the Sanctuary
(after the worship service).
Please plan to attend and
help decide matters for the
well-being of our Church!

ANNUAL MEETING



WHITE FRAGILITY

**WHY IT'S SO HARD FOR WHITE PEOPLE
TO TALK ABOUT RACISM**

ROBIN DIANGELO

NARRATED BY AMY LANDON

Where: First Congregational U.C.C.

201 S. Second Ave., downtown Alpena

Book Discussion: Wednesday, Jan. 8, 7 pm

led by Dottie Haase

Workshop: Saturday, January 18, 9am – 3pm

The cost of the workshop is \$20, including the book and the meal (or \$10 if you already have the book). Call 356-1795 to register.