

**August
2025**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena



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From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Dick Hotchkin

Late one evening, a wise Cherokee leader told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. The grandfather said, "My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all. One is evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith." The boy thought about it for a minute, and then he asked, "Which wolf wins?" The grandfather replied, "The one you feed."

The best spiritual teachers remind us that spiritual maturation takes time, space, and practice. Jesus says that if people are "worried and distracted about many things," [Luke 10:41] then they cannot have the type of faith that he desires. There is so much striving going on these days. So many individuals feel pressure to build platforms, climb ladders, covet attention, make more money, be enough. But to what end?

Not granting ourselves the time and space for spiritual deepening is feeding the wrong wolf. Numb to their soul's longing, many people throw themselves into the race for success which they run through the practices of competition, envy, regret, greed, arrogance, lies, and ego. Rarely do they intend this; it is simply what our culture rewards. The insidious illusion of this race convinces people that they do not have enough, create enough, perform enough, invest enough, consume enough. No matter their accomplishments, they are not enough. Their fear drives them in the pursuit of more.

Psychotherapist Sylvia Boorstein says that when she gets in this state of relentless striving or struggle, she says to herself, "Sweetheart, you are in pain. Relax. Take a breath. Let's pay attention to what is happening. Then we'll figure out what to do." I love her advice. If you find yourself feeding the part of you that isn't kind, compassionate, and peaceful, stop. Relax. Take a breath. And then start again, feeding the best of yourself. Remember, what we feed grows.

Membership Declaration Cards

Membership Declaration Cards are required annually. We will soon review submitted cards to identify any that are missing for 2025. If you haven't submitted yours yet, please do so—it's a great help to have everyone's information up to date. Thank you!

"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 are 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



August Birthdays

Ashley Wedge - 6th
Dave Zeller ~ 12th
Priscilla Homola ~ 19th
Heather Bodem ~ 23rd



August Anniversaries

Ron & Lynn Borke ~ 14th
Dave & Lori Zeller ~ 14th
Bill & Dottie Haase ~ 19th
Jon & Megan Petty ~ 20th
Bob & Diana Kelly ~ 27th
Dan Kibbe & Lois Gibbs ~ 30th

Hello 
AUGUST

Days to Remember

Sunday	3rd	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	4th	Worship Committee Mtg.	5:30 p.m.
Friday	8th	Ladies Luncheon (Connie's Cafe, Ossineke)	12:00 noon
Sunday	10th	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Monday	11th	Board Meeting	5:30 p.m.
Sunday	17th	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Sunday	24th	Worship Service Membership Celebration	10:00 a.m.
Sunday	31st	Worship Service	10:00 a.m.

Summer Faith Challenge (August Edition!)

Each week, try one small way to grow closer to God and share His love:

Week 1 – Pray for someone.

Pick one person—friend, neighbor, or church member—and say a short prayer for them.

Week 2 – Read outside.

Take your Bible or a devotional outside. Enjoy time with God in the fresh air.

Week 3 – Be kind in secret.

Do something nice for someone without telling them. Let it be your quiet gift.

Week 4 – Share a song.

Send a favorite worship song to a friend or family member to lift their spirit.

Ladies Luncheon

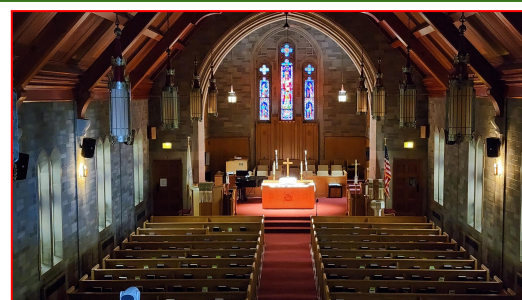
August 8, 2025

Connie's Cafe (Ossineke)

12:00 Noon

**Contact Bobbi Zubi
for more information.**

Telephone: (989) 657-9996






 FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
MEMBERSHIP CELEBRATION
SUNDAY

Bring Your Family, Friends, and Neighbors as
 We Honor the Past and Embrace the Future.

AUGUST | 24 | 10 AM
Reception Following
 201 SOUTH SECOND AVENUE
 ALPENA, MI

Membership Celebration Sunday Sunday, August 24, 2025

Join us for a special worship service as we celebrate the commitment and faithfulness of our church members—both long-standing and new! This is a time to honor milestone anniversaries of membership and reflect on the spiritual journey we've shared together.

 **Reception to Follow in the Fellowship Hall**
 All are welcome! Please plan to stay for a celebration lunch, conversation, and connection following the service.

50 YEARS
MEMBERSHIP

Dennis Artley
 Janet Artley
 Kay Beland
 Alison Bloom-Storey
 Jeannine Boyce
 Joan Chrzan
 Ann Diamond
 Blair Diamond
 Jean Gilliland
 Herbert Knowlton

Chris McCoy
 Mary Minnick
 Vernie Nethercut
 Jim Park
 Janet Southwell
 Jere Standen
 Bonnie Watkins
 Nancy Wedge
 Rebecca Wells
 David Zeller

Feed-A-Family

Bill Haase

The food pantry is currently in need of the following items:

- **Tuna, Hamburger & Chicken Helpers**
- **Bagged or Boxed Potatoes**
(Mashed, Au Gratin, Scalloped, Cheesy)
- **4 pack pudding, Jello or fruit cuts.**
- **Rice or Noodle Sides**
(Bag or Pouch)
- **Peanut Butter & Jelly**



Why do these items appear month after month?

We've been assured by our local pantry representative that these staples are **always in demand**. Your continued generosity helps ensure families in our community have dependable meals on their tables.

5 bags were donated during the month of July! Feel free to use the bags on the table in the middle hallway for your shopping needs.



August Laity Schedule

	Greeters	Ushers	Lay Readers	Fellowship	Altar Guild	Communion	Counter(s)
3rd	Joan & Sonny Chrzan	Ashley Wedge Nancy Wedge	Marilyn Kettler	Ron & Lynn Borke Diana Kelly Bev Olsen	Sandy Jarmuzewski (All Month)	Ashley Wedge	
10th	Deborah Desimone	Penny Anderson Jim Straley	Bill Dempsey	OPEN			Ashley Wedge
17th	Penny Anderson	Max Lindsay Vicky Lindsay	Bill Dempsey	OPEN			
24th	Ann & Jeff Gerow	Gary Jarmuzewski Sandy Jarmuzewski	Lynn Borke	Membership Celebration			
31st	OPEN	Ashley Wedge Nancy Wedge	Lori Mayer	OPEN			Dennis & Janet Artley

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



Thank You to all who have signed up to host Fellowship during the summer months. Openings for August are still available. Can't commit to the whole month? No problem — just sign up on the roster in the middle hallway for the weeks you're available!

*If you are able to help on any **OPEN** date, please let the Office know!*

Heifer International Project

Mission Committee

Heifer International's mission is to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth. Working in 19 countries, including the United States, families are helped and communities become self-reliant by providing a range of livestock, seeds and training. It all began in 1944 with founder, Dan West, a farmer whose deep faith called him to relief work during the Spanish Civil War. He saw firsthand that giving people food was a short-term solution, while gifting livestock to families provides long-term nourishment. Additionally, Heifer donors provide resources and training to help farmers improve the quality of their goods and establish connections to markets.

As a result of the faithful generosity of congregations like ours, struggling families achieve self-reliance. We will hold our Heifer International kick-off collection on:

August 10, 2025

(Donations will be accepted through the month of August.)



Board Notes from June

- ❖ The Narrative Budget Committee has been formed and has begun work on creating the five pillars of the church. Thank you to Cindy Straley, Marilyn Kettler and Lynn Borke for agreeing to serve on this ad hoc committee.
- ❖ The Bylaw Change Committee has been formed and will meet for the first time on August 12th to begin discussing a proposed amendment ensuring church assets remain local in the event of dissolution of the church. Thank you to Nancy Wedge, Dan Kibbe, Blair Diamond, Jean Gilliland, Sandy Jarmuzewski and Dennis Artley for agreeing to serve on this ad hoc committee.
- ❖ The Board heard suggestions and recommendations from Ron Borke regarding the leaky elevator roof.
- ❖ The Board voted to maintain and upgrade the existing elevator pending the results of a variance requested in June.

Treasurer's Report

Denise Fusina

Report as of June 30, 2025

<u>Giving:</u>	<u>Pledge</u>	<u>vs</u>	<u>Received</u>
June	\$10,417		\$ 6,600
YTD	\$62,500		78,729

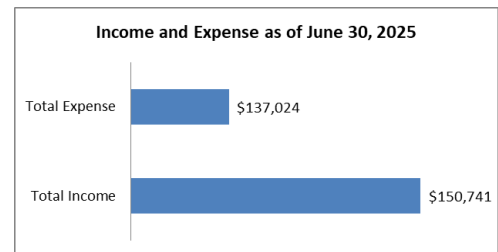
Thank you for continuing to fulfill your pledges!

Six months into 2025 we are in a positive place.

The contributions we have received continue to exceed Pledges.

Your pledges allow our church to fulfill our mission in many ways:

- **We Worship Together**
 - We worship God and praise Jesus, doing so while letting God's love and joy flow through all that we do.
- **We Reach Out**
 - We are a generous congregation and give by sharing our time, talents, and treasures with various missions near and dear to our hearts, both locally and globally.
- **We Care for One Another**
 - We are a family and as such, we care for one another in many ways, both structured and informal.
- **We Nurture Our Faith**
 - We invest in programs that help us continue to grow in faith and discipleship.
- **We Maintain Our Historical Church**
 - Our facilities are a large part of our ministry, allowing us to offer a home to community groups, worship together weekly, gather for fellowship and to grow spiritually, and to seek shelter from life's storms. Attractive grounds and a well maintained building invite people to come in and explore all that we have to offer here at First Congregational United Church of Christ.



VANCO
FAITH