

**November
2021**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- *Dennis Artley, Treasurer*
- *Bill Dempsey*
- *Blair Diamond, Vice Chair*
- *Boris Gerber*
- *Vicky Lindsay*
- *Jim McNeil, Chair*
- *Beth Petty*
- *Tammy Veasy*
- *Nancy Wedge*

November Dates to Remember

3

Discussion Group—
Near Death Experiences

7

Daylight Saving Time
Ends

7

In-person & Online
Worship
with Communion

8

Board of Directors
Meeting

14

In-Person & Online
Worship

21

In-Person & Online
Worship

25

Thanksgiving Day
(Office Closed)

28

In-Person & Online
Worship

A Word From Our Minister

Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case

The year 1984 seems like yesterday instead of 37 years ago when I became the residential pastor here at First Congregational UCC and we started our journey together. In 1981 it was my privilege to be one of the Michigan Conference's delegates to our General Synod meeting. During that meeting we voted for the full church union of the UCC and the ECU (Evangelical Church of the Union) in Germany, both West Germany and at that time East Germany (DDR). The Berlin wall was still up and the Michigan Conference was selected to represent the UCC in helping the union between the UCC and ECU become a reality. In 1985 two of us, Marilyn Gillet and I, were selected to represent the Michigan Conference and the UCC at Kirchen Tag (Church Day) in Greifswald and spent 10 days touring East Germany visiting churches and cementing what would become an ongoing friendship between the UCC and the ECU.



As many of you know this was only the beginning of a new ministry here at First Congregational in Alpena as we became a sister church to Paul's Church in Gelsenkirchen in West Germany. Rev. Brokhoff-Ferda and I began a regular exchange of delegations and for the cost of half the air fare teenage youth from our church would spend three weeks in Germany divided into a week in Gelsenkirchen, Berlin and Brussels at a church camp. We learned about each other's countries, job shadowed and took in the sights. The next year we would host a youth delegation from Gelsenkirchen for three weeks including time in Chicago. Then we would rest a year and then begin the cycle all over again.

There were other exchanges between our two churches over the years the last one being in 2016 with our Minister Rev. Dr. Paul Lance along with a delegation from Gelsenkirchen including Rev. Henning Disselhoff and Rev. Andrea Ness.

The reason I share this with you is to remember that our ministry here in Alpena extends around the world and has impacted young and old in Germany over these many years. This had a significant impact on many of our youth and the adults who worked with this project. Diana Standen reminded me of this and I thought it would be helpful for all of us to continue to dream big dreams that extend beyond the boundaries of northern Michigan.

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 Happy
Thanksgiving 

Stewardship Drive Update

Bill Dempsey

The Stewardship Committee met twice and developed plans for the 2022 Stewardship Campaign to begin October 3, 2021, and to include church service announcements as well as the mailing of packets to all church members. The packets included an introduction letter, pledge cards and return envelopes. Stewardship Moments were shared by committee members during Sunday services in October. The campaign was set to end October 31.

This report is being written mid-October. Preliminary results look quite nice! As of this early date, we have approximately 50% of the pledges returned and have met 50% of our financial goal of \$105,000.

The Committee wishes to thank all of you for your generous contributions.

Best, Bill and Debbie Dempsey, Bill and Dottie Haase, Terry Bell



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Notes From Our Needle Crafters and Dedicated Volunteers

Diana Standen

BABY CARE KITS—Thursday, October 14 Mike LaMarre and I delivered 16 boxes containing 51 Baby Care Kits to Immanuel Lutheran Church. On Saturday the 16th, Priscilla Homola and I watched as hundreds of quilts and kits from 25 area churches as far away as Traverse City were loaded on a U-Haul truck bound for Saginaw. From there the items were to be transferred to a larger truck, additional quilts and kits loaded and headed to Lutheran World Relief Headquarters in Maryland. Final distribution will then be made to over 500,000 recipients at missions in the United States and 24 other countries. Many Baby Care Kits arrive in Africa where mother and baby projects are set up to help mothers learn to take care of their infants. Many thanks to Margo Evans who knitted sweaters, hats, booties and 39 baby blankets during the pandemic, to Priscilla Homola for countless hours of knitting and many dollars worth of yarn, to Lynn Stewart who helped assemble kits, to Mike LaMarre for delivering kits, and all who donated cloth diapers through mission funds. Take a peek at the elevator room bulletin board with photos that Shari Davis took at a previous event here as well as LWR posters showing all the recipient countries.

NEEDLE CRAFT DAY—Our Fellowship Hall is reserved every Friday, 11:00am until 1:00pm, for folks to join Priscilla and me with needle craft projects. If you want to learn to knit, crochet or sew, we can assist you. We have received a generous donation of yarn available for projects. We also have fabric for sewing projects. You are welcome to work on something for yourself or for the church. Hope to see you soon! Please call me at 989-356-2356.

Mitten Tree—2021 Edition

Diana Standen



Calling all men, women and children! We need items for this year's Mitten Tree. Imagine being out in the dead of winter with no hat or gloves, or walking around on a cold bare floor with no slippers or socks, or just wishing for a warm sweater to ward off the chilly draft. We will be collecting hats, gloves, mittens, socks, slippers, scarves, and sweaters to be distributed to those in need. Items may be homemade, store bought or even gently worn. Donated items will be sent to Trinity Episcopal Church to be distributed to guests at their Sunday Suppers, to Salvation Army for children in need and, if supply allows, to area elementary schools as well. A basket will be set out near the display case in the church's main hall November 14 through Christmastime. Please drop your donations in the basket and say a little prayer for the recipients.

A Word From the Minister (Continued from page 1)



There will be remembrances of the relationship between our church and these ministries in Germany in the sanctuary and fellowship hall the next few Sundays. Let us give thanks and keep in our prayers our German sisters and brothers, many of whom stay in contact to this day.



Ushers Invited

Boris Gerber

As we continue to assess what our new normal will entail, and we return to many familiar church traditions, our ushers group will begin to meet again and begin performing weekly services. We are inviting all church members including new and returning ushers to join us in our ministry. Please contact the church office if you will be continuing as an usher or are interested in joining the ushers group. The ushers' schedules are flexible to meet individual needs and abilities.

Feed A Family Needs

Bill Haase

The Salvation Army Food Pantry is currently in need of the following items:

Tuna/Hamburger Helper
Jelly or jam

Jello and/or pudding cups
Boxed/bagged rice & noodles

Shampoo and conditioner
Men's body wash and deodorant

Board Meeting Summary - October 11

Judy Suszek, Office Administrator

Boris Gerber stated the schedule for the Sunday Counters has been changed to a semi-monthly timetable on a trial basis.

Dennis Artley presented the September 30 financial statements noting the Reserve Operating Fund is healthy, and the finances are stable and looking good. Dennis also presented the budget worksheet including the proposed 2022 fiscal year budget.

Committee Reports:

- Investment—Minutes from the September Investment Committee meeting were submitted.
- Property—Weinkauf Plumbing & Heating staff fired up the boiler system in preparation for the colder months ahead. The two new, high efficiency boilers are working fine, but the third and oldest boiler would not start. The committee will contact Weinkauf to discuss options for the third boiler.
- Stewardship—Bill Dempsey noted the annual stewardship drive has begun. The pledge packets were mailed and pledges are coming in. Weekly "stewardship moments" will be presented during Sunday services. The drive is scheduled to wrap up by October 31, but members will be encouraged to submit pledges at any time following the wrap up.

Reverend Case led discussions regarding several topics in his written report including the new Meeting Owl, soon to be installed new church members, the online fellowship opportunity, and ongoing Covid safety protocol measures including those for communion, offertory, ushers, choir, etc. as we attempt to find a "new normal".

*First Congregational United Church of Christ
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Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am — 1:00 pm Monday — Thursday

**Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
In person and Online**

Temporary Pastor: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case
Organist/Choir Director: Kat Tomaszewski
Treasurer: Denise Fusina
Office Administrator: Judy Suszek
Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Still Speaking

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November Birthdays

Dan Kibbe	11/01	Gary Jarmuzewski	11/12
Diana Kelly	11/03	Diana Standen	11/14
Deborah Butler	11/05	Sherry Allen	11/15
Chris McCoy	11/06	Kay Beland	11/16
Marilyn Kettler	11/08	Leigh Copeland	11/20
Andy Lindahl	11/08	Wyatt Hanna	11/26
Bill Haase	11/10	Dan Storey	11/30
Margaret Nielsen	11/11		

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!



*May our lives
be full of both
THANKS and GIVING.*

