

January
2019

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

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- **Dottie Haase**
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- **Jim McNeil**, chair
- **Beth Petty**

January 2019

Dates to Remember

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Happy New Year!
Office Closed

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"Taking Down the
Greens"

11

Ladies Luncheon

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"Thank God It's
Tuesday" begins

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"No Frills" Book Club

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"Salt & Light" Singers
begin to rehearse

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Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day Celebration
@ ACC

22

Friendship Room
@ St. Bernard's

27

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

A Word From Our Minister: "A New Year of Activities"

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

Things were different for me and for the Church during the last three months of last year. Because I was on "sabbatical" until Dec. 16, I did not need to plan sermons or studies or extra services of any kind. **The Rev. Gene Bacon** did all that in my place, and I would like to say that he did a fine job! Thank you, Gene, for your ministry; and thank you, church members, for giving me three months to sort through stuff in my life. Three rooms in the Lower Level now have bookshelves and file cabinets full of stuff I had accumulated over 35 years of ordained ministry. I can actually put my hands on them now!

As we launch a new year of program initiatives, I am excited at what's in store. Now, I do not expect any of you to try to do "all" of the following new ventures, but I would like you to spread the word among your friends. Some of these studies and activities may strike them as valuable, and (please let them know) **they are invited!**

Inside this Newsletter, you will see an article about our new Tuesday "in home" Bible Study that will meet *at the McNeil home* at 5:00 pm. You will also see an article about my new Wednesday 1:15 pm "**Serenity**" **Bible Study** based on the traditional "12-Steps" of recovery from addiction. I find the *12 steps process* very helpful, even if a person is not wrestling with a specific dependency. Tell your friends.

You will also see a list of the "**Monday Mid-day Movies**" that I'll be showing at noon in Fellowship Hall. These are movies that make you think!

There are three more new activities that do not have articles in this Newsletter, so I'll tell you about them right now:

First, the annual "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" service will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church this year, on **Wednesday, January 23**, starting with a **soup supper at 6:00 pm** followed by a multi-church worship service at 7:00 pm.

Second, on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 20. at 3:00 pm, 14-year old Jona Hauff will be at the piano on our stage as he and I start a brand-new kids and youth **song & dance** performance group called "**Salt & Light**" Singers. We will practice for an hour each week, learning fun songs to perform (here & on tour). Kids have to be **old** enough to read, and **bold enough** to perform loudly, with **energy!** Tell the children and teenagers you know who might like song & dance. Call the church and give us their name, and age, and phone number. Thanks!

Third, I am resuming my **Thursday Theology Class at 1:00 pm** on January 3 up in Fellowship Hall. We will pick up the lectures on "Jesus and His Jewish Influences" with (Jan. 3) Jesus' Jewish Lineage, (Jan 10) Herod the Great, (Jan 17) Was Jesus a Pharisee?, (Jan. 24) Pontius Pilate, and (Jan 31) Herod Agrippa. We watch a DVD... which I frequently interrupt for discussion.

Please pick one of these groups and give it a try. **Happy New Year!**

“Mitten Tree “

Diana Standen and Jennie Morey

Thank you to all who donated to the Mitten Tree.

We collected:

23 hats,

23 pairs mitten/gloves,

11 scarves, and

16 pairs slippers/socks.

Items were given to the Salvation Army Christmas Assistance Project and the Sunday Supper

Because of your thoughtfulness many more children will have a brighter Christmas and feel a lot warmer this winter.



Ladies Luncheon

The Ladies Christmas Luncheon was held in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, December 8th. Thanks to Jan Snell and Lynne Stewart for hosting the celebration. Thank you to Kat Tomaszewski for providing us with music.

Our next gathering will be Friday, January 11, at 11:30 a.m. at the **19th Hole**, hosted by Patty Lance. All women are welcome and encouraged to attend for fellowship and lunch. Sign up sheet is on the podium. Hope to see you there!



First Congregational UCC has donated 98 bags of groceries to the Salvation Army food pantry during 2018.

Thanks for all you do to help feed the poor and needy of our community.

UCC Sunday Fellowship Hosts & Hostesses

Bill Haase, Coordinator

Many Thanks and Compliments to our Hosts and Hostesses for Sunday Fellowship. The great treats, homemade pastries, and assorted fruits that you have been providing, are most appreciated by our church members and guests. Your attention to details and hosting service makes a warm fitting to ending our Sunday Service. New hosting volunteers are always welcome. Contact the church office or Bill Haase (340-2123) if you would like to help with Sunday “after worship” Fellowship Time.

January Birthdays to Celebrate

Jan.10: Herb Knowlton
 Jan 10: Max Lindsay
 Jan 12: Vicky Lindsay
 Jan 12: Lillian Banas
 Jan 13: Jim Park
 Jan 17: Bev Olsen
 Jan 23: Vernie Nethercut
 Jan 31: Jennie Morey



Rev. Bob Case leads an A.L.L. class on Tuesdays at A.C.C.

“Rethinking Christianity in the 21st Century” will be held at the Madeline Briggs University Center at ACC on Tuesdays at 1:30 pm on Jan. 8, 15, and 22. Based on the Marcus Borg DVD “Embracing an Adult Faith”, Bob will help participants explore what it means to be Christian in today’s society. Bob will explore topics such as God, Jesus, salvation, practice, and community. (There is a fee to join the Association of Lifelong Learners at Alpena Comm. College)

Board of Directors December 2018 Meeting Highlights

Gerrie La Cross, Secretary

- ◆ The Congregation is beginning to receive Christmas Cards for the season. Thank you to all.
- ◆ Financial reports for the month show we are in good shape for the end of the year. Thank you!
- ◆ We reviewed the 2019 budget including proposed staff raises. Board approved it to be sent to the congregation for vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 27 after worship.
- ◆ **Martin Luther King Jr. Committee** is requesting funds for this year’s drama-in-the-schools event on Jan 21. A request will be made of the congregation and the Mission Committee to help.
- ◆ Janet Artley requested moving funds from the “Memorial Garden Walkway” Fund to “Capital Reserve” Fund. It was approved by the Board, but Comstock Fund Committee approval may also be needed.
- ◆ Property Committee reported that Leavesley Construction has looked at the front doors (which do not completely close) and reported that we need new pivots for the doors. Edith Gerber will contact Alpena Glass to see if they can get the parts. The elevator roof is leaking again. TRC roofing has been contacted and will see what they can do.
- ◆ Worship Committee reports that **John & Joyce Murphy and Ginny Titus** will host the Christmas Eve Reception. Thank you to these three new members for volunteering to serve in this way.
- ◆ Mission Committee will meet to discuss end-of-the-year expenditures and make plans for 2019.
- ◆ Stewardship Committee reports that they collected 59 pledges this year. General Fund: \$123,000 and Mission Fund: \$12,600. **This is \$22,000 below the target of \$145,000.**
- ◆ Rev. Bacon has been visiting with Heather Bodem at Medilodge following her brain surgery. She is progressing, but still has blurry vision, some loss of hearing, and significant vertigo/dizziness.
- ◆ Board requested care letters be sent to our shut-in’s for Christmas. (They were mailed Dec. 23.)

Thank You to Kat Tomaszewski...

Our choir worked hard during the holiday season and we thank them for their music. Kat also hosted a lively “caroling” session on Sat., Dec. 15, which was appreciated.

Anniversaries:

Jan. 4: Bill and Kathy Dempsey, 28 years
 Jan. 26: Sonny & Joan Chrzan, 56 years

Congratulations!

Monday, January 21, 2019 @ Alpena Community College

2:30—3:45 p.m. Discussion led by Matt Dunckel in Room CTR 106

Discussion about “Race as a Cultural Construct” led by Matt Dunckel, Faculty Instructor for Geography & History at ACC. This event is free and open to the public.

5:00—6:15 p.m. Chili Supper in the Lumberjack Shack (Adults \$8, Students \$4)

Proceeds benefit “Wash Your Coat,” a project for our community that provides free laundromat service to those in need. Tickets available at the door. The Chili Supper is sponsored by First Congregational (United Church of Christ), Grace Lutheran, St Paul Lutheran, and Trinity Episcopal Church.

6:50 p.m. Discussion on Diversity in Alpena

Alpena Community College, Granum Theatre

Rev. Tom Orth, Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, and Rev. Bill McClure, Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, will lead a discussion with members of the community from different ethnic backgrounds.

Our “thank you” in advance to Jeffrey Mindock and his team from Thunder Bay Theatre who will be presenting a dramatic presentation about MLK, Jr. to the 3rd—5th grade students in all six of the Alpena elementary schools, as well as at All Saints Catholic School, and Immanuel Lutheran School during the 2 weeks following our Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

For more information, please call (989) 354-6031

Activities planned by Alpena MLK, Jr. Day Committee with the support of Alpena Community College, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Grace Lutheran Church, Outreach Committee of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Thrivent, Trinity Episcopal Church, and the United Way of Northeast MI.



Something New, starting on January 2...

Wednesdays at 1:15 pm in the Lounge: “Serenity” Bible Study

Our church is the host location for six weekly groups for Alcoholics Anonymous or Al-Anon. Our Minister, Rev. Lance, also serves on the panel for the District 88 “Drug Court.” Some participants in those groups have expressed interest in a spiritual study which would address the themes from the familiar “**Twelve Step**” **Recovery** pattern of AA. Beginning on January 2, Rev. Lance will lead a Bible Study at 1:15 pm on Wednesdays, immediately after one of those AA groups conclude. *It is open to anyone, not just people with drug or alcohol dependencies.*

Thank you from SERRV

Another big **Thank You** is due to the valiant crew who showed up in this busy season to hold another successful sale for SERRV back at the end of October, and again on December 8th! **Thank you!**

A full report will be in the annual meeting booklet next month, but we wanted to report that both sales were successful, and we will be making a donation back to SERRV to help craft producers get set up in business and deal with emergencies such as the earthquakes and hurricanes which have afflicted many of their countries this year.

— Marcia Aten

“Thank God It’s Tuesday” in-home Bible Study

Some of you may recall the lively Bible Study that was hosted in the home of **Glen and Barb Kett**, followed by wine and cheese and great conversation in their kitchen. We miss them and we miss those weekly get-togethers. My Mom, **Dodi Lance**, was a participant in those weekly discussions. We miss her, too.

I’m happy to announce that our “Thank God It’s Tuesday” (TGIT) Bible Study will resume in the New Year at the home of **Jim & Patty McNeil (139 Bear Point Road)**. It will start on Tuesday, January 15, at 5:00 pm. We will read and discuss the Gospel According to MARK. Bibles will be provided. After an hour of study, we will break for refreshments and general conversation. I am grateful to Jim & Patty for opening their home for this informal and wonderful chance to get to know each other better.

In addition to Jim & Patty, and me and **my wife Patty**, I believe that **Paul & Jody Mocerri** will be in the group (even though he is now the Pastor of Alpena’s First Baptist Church). We hope those of you who used to meet at the Ketts will join this new group as well as anyone who wants a fun and informative afternoon of Gospel and friendship.

For more information, you may call me — Rev. Paul Lance (church: 356-1795)

“Monday Mid-day Movies” resume at 12-noon.

With an eye toward Martin Luther King’s Day on January 21, this month’s movies will deal with **race relations in America**.

- Jan. 7 — *“Briars in the Cotton Patch”* (2012, 57 minutes) The Story of Koinonia Farms, Americus, Georgia, which became the home of “Habitat For Humanity” as well. This documentary, narrated by Andrew Young, examines the remarkable events of a small Christian community in the South where whites and blacks chose to live and work together as equals despite the brutal & frightening consequences.
- Jan. 14 — *“Race to Freedom: the Underground Railroad”* (2013, 95 minutes)
- Jan. 21 — *“Selma”* (2014, 128 minutes) Dr. King leads a march in the face of violence.
- Jan. 28 — *“Decoration Day”* (2002, 98 minutes) James Garner, a retired judge, is asked to look into why a black man is refusing to accept the Medal of Honor.

First Congregational United Church of Christ
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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: Gerrie La Cross

Custodian: Mike LaMarre

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A New Year's Resolution:

"Let's do church!"

Sunday 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship

3:00 p.m. "Salt & Light" Singers

Monday 10:00 a.m. Bible Study

12:00 Noon Mid-day Movies

Wednesday 4:30 p.m. Wacky Wed.

Kids' Fun Club
with Jeffrey

Mindock

6:00 p.m. Choir

**You are
welcome
here!**



ANNUAL MEETING



**Sunday, Jan. 27th, after the
10:00 a.m. Worship Service.**

- ◆ **Approve the 2019 Budget**
- ◆ **Election of Officers**

***Look for the "Annual Reports"
booklet for all the details of the
past year and plans for this one.***