

**September
2019**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- *Dennis Artley, treasurer*
- *Blair Diamond*
- *Kathy Dempsey*
- *Boris Gerber*
- *Ann Gerow, vice chair*
- *Dottie Haase*
- *Vicky Lindsay*
- *Jim McNeil, chair*
- *Beth Petty*

September 2019 Dates to Remember

- 2**
Labor Day
(Office Closed)
- 2 & 30**
Friendship Room
- 4**
Choir rehearsals resume
- 9**
Board of Directors
- 11**
Wacky Wednesday Kids
Fun Club Resumes
- 13**
Ladies Luncheon
- 18**
"No Frills" Book Club
- 21**
UCC Fall Association
Meeting here
- 29**
Farewell to
Gerrie La Cross
- Every Monday
10:00 am Bible Study
6:00 pm Cubs &
Boy Scouts
- Every Thursday
10:30 am Mythology
Class & 1:00 pm "From
Jesus to Constantine"

A Word from Our Minister: "Schedules Change and New Things Get Started in September"

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance

By the time you read this article, Patty and I will be somewhere in Canada driving along the north side of Lake Superior. We will then come back into the USA at Duluth, Minnesota, for a couple days. Then it will be across northern Wisconsin and into the Upper Peninsula to visit Houghton/Hancock, Marquette, and other parts we have never seen. The Rev. Bob Case will be our guest minister in my absence.

Initially that is why we stopped "Thank God It's Sunday" evening services. When I'm away, it's hard to pull together. However, even when I get back in September, it will not be back. It turns out that to provide appetizers and beverages every week took both extra time and money that was unsustainable.

My hope was that fellowship conversation around tables, over nice "happy hour" style food and beverages, would catch on. However, the attendance of 24, dropped each week down to only 9 of us by the fifth week. So, I've called it off, in order to use the time and energy in new ways. It's great to try new things!

You will see articles in this Newsletter that highlight some of those new ventures. For example, I will start the "Serenity" Bible Study fresh on Sept. 11 (1:15 pm in the Lounge) with "Step One" of the 12-Step process of recovery. I encourage you to spend those 45 minutes in deep conversation about real life issues.

Rev. Ginny Titus will start a Thursday morning class on "Mythology", featuring DVD conversations between Bill Moyers and Joseph Campbell. (article on page 6). I will start a class about the evolution of the Church "From Jesus to Constantine" on Thursday afternoons (see page 4). Wacky Wednesdays will resume on **Sept. 11** for our children, and that evening Rev. Bob Case (and a half-dozen other ministers) will kick-off the "30 Days of Peace" with an interfaith service in our sanctuary at 7 pm.

There will be a fun theater outing on Sunday, Oct. 6, and a reader's theater dinner on Nov. 17. Lots of ways to spend our time, energy, and money! Please take part in some of them.

Celebrating the Birthdays of September

Nancy Wedge	09-06	Lois Gibbs Kibbe	09-20
Tom Grubaugh	09-06	Laura Caplis	09-21
Bill Clegg	09-07	Ginny Titus	09-24
Penny Anderson	09-08	Cheryl Mack	09-27
Blair Diamond	09-14	Claire Caplis	09-28
Connor Caplis	09-15	Nicole Petty	09-28



Celebrating the Anniversaries of September



Thomas and Bonnie Watkins	September 12	66 years
Dennis and Beverly Bodem	September 21	56 years

Feed A Family

Bill Haase

We received the following list of needed items from the **Salvation Army Food Pantry** :

Tuna Helper, Canned Potatoes, Pork & Beans, Hamburger Helper, Spaghetti Noodles, Cereal, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruit, and Juices (Apple, Orange, or Grape)

Please bring your donations to the church by the end of the month.

THANKS FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT

Ladies Luncheon

The weather is getting cooler, the kids are going back to school, the leaves will be turning colors... wait a minute, whatever happened to summer?

Anyway, the Ladies Luncheons will begin again on Friday, September 13th at 11:30 at Hunan's Chinese Restaurant. Hosted this month by Lillian Banas. There is a sign-up sheet on the Care Letter Podium.

Hope to see you there.

Our Church Hosts the UNA Fall Meeting on Saturday, Sept. 21, 8:30 am—3:00 pm

Come join us at the United Church of Christ "United Northern Association" Fall Meeting.

We will begin with coffee and sweets at 8:30 a.m., worship in our sanctuary at 9:00 am, have a bit of business, and then launch into our program — break for a delicious lunch provided by John Murphy and his helpers — and continue until 3:00 p.m.

Our program will be led by Barbara Brown Zikmund , an American historian of religion. For people who have come into the UCC from other denominations, BBZ will help us see how the UCC may be quite different: unique aspects of our theology & practice, anecdotes from our long legacy in America (since 1620), as well as current changes in UCC polity, and the challenge to "Be the Church" in today's world.

There are registration forms on the podium . Cost is \$20.00 per person.



Board of Directors August 2019 Meeting Highlights

Gerrie La Cross, Secretary

Meeting opened with prayer led by Rev. Paul Lance. The minutes from the July meeting were approved with the correction of one typo.

We received word from the Michigan UCC Conference of some upcoming changes in staffing. Rev. Cheryl Burke will be stepping down as the Associate Conference Minister to United Northern Association and will be replaced by Rev. Jody Betten of Traverse City.

Also Rev. Dr. Campbell Lovett will be retiring as our Conference Minister at the end of December.

Our church finances are in good shape at this time. Rev. Lance requested additional funds for marketing and publicity to complete this year. A motion was made approved to use additional capital reserve funds up to \$2,500.

The Mission Committee continues to do good work in the community. Helping people from the drug court to meet the requirements of their service plans has been a focus this year.

The Property Committee hired the Sunrise Mission Lawn Care to complete work around the church grounds begun by Bill Dempsey, pulling weeds around the perimeter of the church building. The carpet in Fellowship Hall will need to be cleaned again soon. Someone will look for the additional carpet squares to replace any that are too stained to clean.

Personnel Committee has received five applications for the Secretary position. They will conduct interviews the week of August 19th.

VBS feedback received 23 responses by the end of the survey session. They received many positive responses. Dottie felt this was the best year of the past three years with the VBS leaders.

Rev. Lance reported on several things happening in the coming months. He will be on a two week vacation from Aug 24—Sept 4. Rev. Case will be the guest preacher on Aug 25 & Sept 1.

Two classes starting in September: Theology Class (DVD lectures), "From Jesus to Constantine", led by Rev. Lance, and "The Power of Myth" led by Rev. Ginny Titus.

Fall UNA Meeting will be here on Saturday, Sept 21. Rev. Lance will attend a UCC Clergy Retreat, Sept 23-24 in DeWitt, MI. On October 6, the FUNdraiser "The Marvellous Wonderettes" will be at TBT. 100 tickets are available for the best seats in the house, at a \$2 discount. Sign up in the church hallway. You can choose your seats and decide to join us for a meal in Fellowship Hall prior to the musical. Please sell some tickets to your friends, and plan to attend the musical show with us.

Rev. Lance will be in Kalamazoo at the UCC Michigan Conference Annual Meeting from Thursday October 10 to Sunday, October 13. We will have Keith & Ginny Titus as our guest ministers on Sunday, October 13.

Gerrie will begin to train the new Church Secretary on Monday, September 16th. Gerrie's last day is Wednesday, September 25. There will be a reception in her honor on Sunday, September 29 during Fellowship Time. Please plan to attend and congratulate her for work well done. Thank you, Gerrie!

THURSDAY THEOLOGY CLASSES : “From Jesus to Constantine”

1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall, using the DVD lectures of **Bart Ehrman**

This is a “**Great Course**” which will examine how a movement that began in a remote part of the Roman Empire as a small, lower-class group of followers of a Jewish preacher who had been executed as an enemy of the state, grew into such an enormously influential institution. No charge.

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Sept 5 -- “From Jesus to Constantine” -- #1: The Birth of Christianity

Sept 12 -- #2: The Religious World of Early Christianity

Sept 19 -- #3: The Historical Jesus

Sept 26 -- #4: Oral and Written Traditions about Jesus

October 3 -- #5: The Apostle Paul

NO CLASS on Oct. 10 – Rev Lance drives to Kalamazoo for UCC

Oct 17 -- #6: The Beginnings of Jewish/Christian Relations

Oct 24 -- #7: The Anti-Jewish Use of the Old Testament

Oct 31 -- #8: The Rise of Christian Anti-Judaism

Nov 7 -- #9: The Early Christian Mission

Nov 14 -- #10: The Christianization of the Roman Empire

SKIP NEXT TWO WEEKS – THANKSGIVING VACATION

Dec 5 -- #19: The New Testament Canon (selecting the books)

Dec 12 -- #22: The Beginnings of “Normative” Theology

Dec 19 -- #24: Christianity and the Conquest of Empire (last class)

Silly Week at First Congregational

The week of August 19—22 the church lower level was filled with music and laughter as 23 children came to play for Silly Week with Jeffrey Mindock (helped by his wife Paige, Beth Petty, and Rev. Lance). We listening to the excitement of the children as they left for the day ready to return the following day. Even asking if they can come to **Wacky Wednesday Fun Club starting September 11**. Of course they can be back for Wacky Wednesdays from 4:30—5:30 pm weekly. Tell your friends!



October FUNdraiser

There is a sign-up sheet on the podium to join us at Thunder Bay Theatre on Sunday, October 6. There is a free lunch being provided here at the church. The play we are going to see is "The Marvelous Wonderettes" A trip down memory lane. Featuring your favorite '50's" and "60's" pop hits. The Wonderettes are graduating high school and experiencing growing up and becoming adults. Family fun for all ages.



Why discuss “Myths” in a Christian Church

Rev. Paul Lance

For many people, “mythology” connotes imaginary folk-hero stories from ancient cultures. From the Greek Titans like Cronos -- and their Olympian off-spring like Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, Demeter, Hercules and the rest -- to Isis, Osiris, and Horus of Egypt, Native American stories, Persian and Hindu deities, there has been no age or civilization that has not probed the mystery and meaning of life through the narrative and graphic means of “myth”.

Despite the wide diversity of myth-making cultures, the forms and functions, variations and evolution of mythology have recurring themes. In this six-part series, Journalist Bill Moyers engages in lively conversation with Joseph Campbell, professor of literature at Sarah Lawrence College and frequent Esalen Institute lecturer, about “heroic tales” from many cultures.

When “The Power of Myth” first aired on PBS in 1988, it created a national sensation. These two brilliant men discuss how “myths” hold the key to understanding human experience. At the deepest level, they reveal the path to self-fulfillment, social integration, and possibly, transcendence.

Classes will be held on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in the upstairs Fellowship Hall at First Congregational UCC using the DVD and big-screen TV.

Sept. 12: *The Hero’s Adventure.*

Sept. 19: *The Message of the Myth.*

Sept. 26: *The First Storytellers.*

October 3: *Sacrifice and Bliss.*

Oct. 10: *Love and the Goddess.*

Oct. 17: *Masks of Eternity.*

Rev. Ginny Titus has led this class three or four times and assures us it will be insightful... firing both one’s imagination and one’s intellect. Following some discussion of each week’s session, classes will end by noon. There is no charge for this series. The public is invited. For more information, contact First Congregational at 356-1795 or uccalpena.org.

Memorial Garden and Columbarium

Dennis & Janet Artley

If you have not already noticed, the gardens of the Memorial Garden have been recently replanted and new mulch added. It is an enjoyable place to visit and be at peace.

There comes a time in everyone's life when we need to make decisions for our burial. If you have not made your plans, have you considered a final resting place to be in our Memorial Garden or Columbarium? Please take a moment to read the following article for consideration. Dennis or Janet Artley as well as the church office would be glad to furnish information to help you make any decisions.

MAKING CHOICES



Throughout the history of the Christian Church the remains of the deceased were often buried in vaults within the church or in burial grounds surrounding the church. Such burials provided Christians a final resting place within the embrace of the church which had been their spiritual home during life on earth.

Our Church has created and dedicated a sacred area on our grounds where cremated remains (cremains) may be placed, thus allowing this historic practice to be brought back into the life of Christians today.

Cremation does not violate any Biblical precepts which emphasize the eternal life of the spirit rather than the physical body. What is required is reverent treatment of the physical remains after death. Burial in the Memorial Garden or Columbarium does not limit the type of Memorial Service or Committal Service a family desires.

MEMORIAL GARDEN

This peaceful garden in the side yard of our Church provides an area where cremains may be placed directly into the earth. A memorial plaque records all the names

COLUMBARIUM WALL

This wall encloses a portion of the Memorial Garden. It has sealed niches for the placement of cremains and each niche has the capacity to hold the cremains of two individuals. Names are affixed to each panel.

Planning and providing for your end of life arrangements can be a great source of comfort to both you and your family. The expense is minimal and the comfort is great.

The Memorial Garden /Columbarium policy and reservation forms are available in the Church office. You can receive this information by mail or in person. The Church office will arrange for someone to meet with you if you have questions and would like to discuss this option for end of life arrangements.

Please call: (989)-356-1795

