

May
2021

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- *Dennis Artley, treasurer*
- *Bill Dempsey*
- *Blair Diamond*
- *Boris Gerber*
- *Tammy Veasy*
- *Nancy Wedge*
- *Vicky Lindsay*
- *Jim Mc Neil, chair*
- *Beth Petty*

Dates to Remember

May 2
In person & Virtual
Worship

May 9
In person & Virtual
Worship

May 10
Board Meeting at 5:30pm
Covid guidelines follow

May 16
In person & Virtual
Worship

May 23
In Person & Virtual
Worship

May 30
In person & Virtual
Worship

May 31
Memorial Day-Church
Closed



A Word From Our Minister:

Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case

A Message from the Transitional Minister

Our Church's History in a Time of Transition

As you enter the sanctuary the windows to your left, the north side windows were designed to emphasize the basic teachings of the Congregational Churches – “Faith, Freedom, Fellowship and Equality of all souls before God.” As in last months newsletter, I will be quoting directly from Rev. Robert Barksdale’s description of the windows. For those of you who may not know, Robert Barksdale was the pastor here for 25 years and when the church building was constructed. The church chapel was named after him. (I have adapted some of the language to bring it up to a more contemporary and inclusive style.)

1. **Flaming Torch:** This portrays the faith of a Christian. A Christian does not keep the light of faith hidden. He (she) is ready and willing at all times to proclaim it. Jesus has told us, "Let your light so shine before men that they might see your good works:.. This symbol represents the witnessing Christian. Faith without works is dead.

2. **Open Bible with cross:** Our faith comes from the Bible, and our faith has always stood for an understanding of truth that comes from a knowledge of the Bible. The Bible tells us of the life and teachings of Jesus; His death upon the cross because of His love for us -love that was willing to give itself in order that we might have a more abundant life.

3. **Freedom:** Freedom has always been a basic teaching of our Church. We have always believed in the freedom of the Christian person. We believe in freedom in religion, the right of every individual to worship according to the dictates of their conscience, and the right to express their faith through writing and speaking, without hindrance from anyone. Freedom does not mean the license to do as we please. It means the right to work out our destiny in cooperation with others. This concept of freedom is symbolized by the scroll, representing the Mayflower Compact which is at the very foundation of the American way of life and expresses a great social and religious philosophy.

4. **Pulpit:** The free pulpit of the Protestant Churches was largely responsible for the development of democracy in America. It created this climate of thought which created the Declaration of Independence. In 1710 John Wise of Ipswich used the free pulpit to christen the word “democracy”. “It is he said “Christ’s government in Church and state ... Power is originally in the people By natural right all men (people) are born free”. It is our faith that a free pulpit stands for freedom in every realm of life.

Next month we will look at the last windows on the north side of the sanctuary. Take time as you enter on Sunday morning and think about the meaning of these windows and how you understand them in today’s society.

Rev. Bob Case
Transitional Minister

Is Our Church Treasurer Really Elvis?



Church Records Say Yes!

Janet to reveal all – full story in next month’s newsletter!

Got your attention? Great! The Mission Committee will resort to anything to get your attention to help promote our special offerings, this one being:

Church World Service Blanket Appeal - Mother’s Day, May 9

On Sundays May 2 and May 9, you have the opportunity to give the gift of a blanket to someone in need. Church World Service blankets provide comfort as well as protection from harsh weather for refugees, the homeless, and victims of national disasters throughout the world. The simple gesture of giving a blanket to someone in need is an act of compassion with enormous significance. Each person wrapped in a blanket is enveloped in a sense of warmth, safety and love. It’s a priceless feeling – just like a mother’s touch!

Mother’s Day Blanket Gift Cards are available to acknowledge your gifts. In addition, for each \$10 blanket purchased, you may fill out an “honor heart” with the name of an important woman in your life (mother, grandmother, wife, daughter, granddaughter, sister...). The hearts are pinned on our blanket in the sanctuary. By Mother’s Day, you can help us completely cover the blanket with love!

If you are not comfortable attending “live” church, and wish to purchase blankets, just send your check (made out to First Congregational Church, with note “for blankets”) to the church office, with a note listing the names of the important women (or men!) in your life that you wish to honor, and “honor hearts” will be prepared and pinned to our sanctuary blanket.



Thank you! to Diana Standen for refreshing the display case outside the office. Looks great!

Art Exhibit includes painting by Sharon Rickard

Be sure you visit the art exhibit at Besser Museum called Divergence from April 21 to August 22. Our member Sharon Rickard has a painting in the exhibit. The exhibit includes art works from North-east Michigan Artist Guild. The Besser Museum is open from Monday to Saturday from 10-4 p.m. Sunday from noon -4 p.m.

Mission: Boris stated that One great Hour of Sharing did very well and that First Congregational UCC Alpena is one the top per-capita giving churches nationally!!!

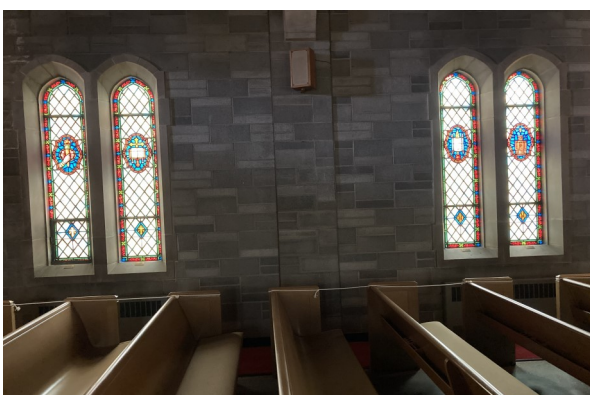
Keeping in Touch

Several churches in our area started a program to get in touch with members and friends of their church when the Covid lock down began. After hearing about their programs, we began a program for our church. We felt the need to contact our members and friends since we were not seeing each other at church services or other church meetings.

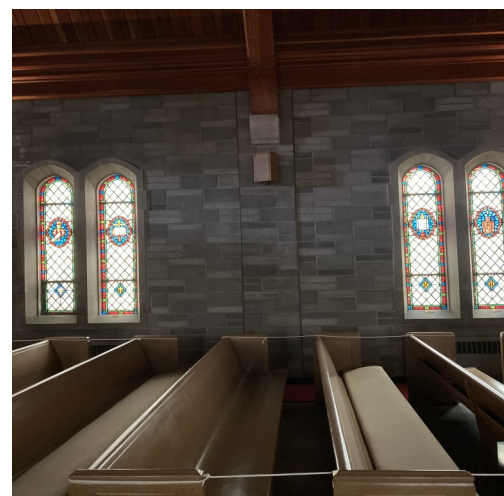
Keeping in Touch (KIT) is a program within the church composed of 13 callers who are contacting between 4-8 people or couples each month or more often if needed. These callers are just checking up on people, relaying news of the church and picking up on any needs or requests.

Thanks so much to our callers. Please let us know if you would like to help.

Dottie & Bill Haase



Our Windows!



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

Phone: 989-356-1795 Fax 989-356-8825
Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com
Office Hours: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Monday – Thursday

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

Transitional Minister: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case
Choir Director/Organist:: Kat Tomaszewski
Treasurer: Denise Fusina
Secretary: Kristi Blackaby
Custodian: Mike LaMarre

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Birthdays and **Anniversaries in May**

Birthdays:

5/4 Sharon Rickard
5/5 John Briggs
5/5 Ann Gerow
5/21 Debra Dempsey
5/22 Steve Bailey
5/22 Beverly Bodem
5/22 John Caplis
5/27 Justin Grubaugh
5/29 Ray Moore
5/29 Peggy DiNegro
5/29 James Standen
5/30 Rev. Bob Case



Anniversaries:

Rev. Eugene & Karen Bacon 48 years

