



# THE CHURCH WINDOW

*June 2021*



## OPEN AND AFFIRMING LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

As a UCC church, our open and affirming designation is an integral part of who we are and what we think of others in our congregation. When I joined FCUCC in 2009 I knew it was a church I could be comfortable in knowing that this amazing group of Christians had welcomed my child and my daughter-in-law as a same sex couple. I didn't know anything about the process of becoming an open and affirming congregation and the prayerful, self challenging commitment it required.

Our ONA group participated in PRIDE festivals, demonstrated at events supporting the LGBTQ community and fought against those who would try to limit their rights or promote hate based attacks on them. We stood together when the Westboro Baptist Church demonstrated at the funerals of servicemen and claimed that it was God's punishment for gays.

In 2015, marriage equality finally became the law in all 50 states and many couples were finally able to have that important legal recognition of their union. Unfortunately, I think many people thought that since marriage equality was here, there was no more work to be done. I WISH!

We have welcomed members of the LGBTQ+ community to our church family and we can be proud of that. However, in the last two years, ONA discontinued their meetings due to lack of participation.

The last administration set back the fight for Transgender rights. Transgender men and women were not allowed to join the military and were to be discharged if they already were part of our national defense force. Transgender students were blocked from using bathrooms which matched their gender identity. Hate crimes against transgender persons increased. There are still 27 states with no explicit STATEWIDE laws at all protecting people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodations. Michigan is one of them. The most recent anti-transgender legislation targets transgender children and their parents, trying to block those children from participation in school sports and even from medical treatment that their doctors have recommended and that their parents have sought out.

The ONA Coalition of the UCC has started a new initiative for social justice "Three great loves: Neighbors, Children Creation". This is our time to re-engage in the fight for the LGBTQ+ community because they are US-our family members, our friends, the children of this generation. Pastor Laura has proposed that we reassemble the ONA team and I would like to find members of this congregation who will stand together and fight for LGBTQ rights. I believe this is who we are and I believe there are many of us of this congregation who are ready to learn about the rights and the fights concerning these issues. If you want to join ONA and make it a viable tool for change through education and advocacy, please contact me so we can have our first meeting soon.

Thank you for being who we are.

Anita Calcagno - 201-446-6645 call or text - accalcagno@icloud.com



## MEMBER AND FRIENDS SPOTLIGHT

For the last few years, we have been blessed with many guests and new friends to our church. This number has increased, as we have taken our services on to Facebook live. But since we can't meet in person, it's terribly hard to get to know people. So we are starting a new column in the monthly newsletter which will help introduce new friends to long-time friends and members.

This month's column spotlights two long-time members, Gary and Kathy Burt.

### *What brought you to FCUCC Grand Ledge?*

Kathy grew up in Grand Ledge and has always attended the Congregational Church. She and Gary met while students at Olivet College. They were married in the church in August 1970.

### *What has encouraged you to stay with us or what do you like about this congregation?*

Kathy and Gary love singing in the choir. They enjoy the people of the congregation, and doing projects around the building with them.

### *Can you tell us a little about yourself – where you're from, your religious background, what do you enjoy doing?*

Gary worked for Auto-Owners Insurance Company for 35 years. Kathy was an elementary teacher for 31 years. They like to bike, cross-country ski, golf, travel, and spend time with their family and time at their cottage.

### *What are some things you'd really like the church to know about you?*

Kathy and Gary were instrumental in the creating and installation of the stained glass in the Sanctuary. Gary is the longest-standing church treasurer. He served 17 years. They both have served on several boards and committees. They renewed their wedding vows in the church for their 25th anniversary. They love this church!



## WOMEN GATHERING OVER DEVOTIONS (W GOD)

Women Gathering Over Devotions (W GOD) met in the Fitzgerald Garden on Monday, May 10, 2021 for the first time in over a year. Six members brought their own dinner and enjoyed catching up with each other.

Usually W GOD does not meet in June but since this is an unusual year, we are planning on meeting on June 7, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fitzgerald Garden at the church. Each person will bring their own dinner, drink, and lawn chair. We will not be discussing a book but if you want to bring a short devotional, please do so. If you are thinking about joining us, this is a wonderful opportunity to see what we are all about.

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Emily Miller-Purrenhage – 7th

June Robertson – 11th

Karen Walker – 15th

Riley Spayde – 19th

Erica (Stoll) Oliver – 23rd

Tamara Lipsey – 27th

Eleanor Clark – 29th

Gla' Spayde – 30th



Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage  
- Ordination – 30th (2019)

# CHURCH YARD CLEAN-UP – THANK YOU!

So many people came to help at two morning cleanups recently! We pulled weeds, raked leaves, pruned shrubs, raked debris from under the spruce trees that were trimmed last month, cut dead branches from the crab trees...and ended by spreading mulch in several areas. Thanks to Kim Dible for the mulch! Many loads of branches were hauled out to Jim Hart's place. Things are looking pretty good around the church! A huge thank you goes to Lynn and Jim Hart, Fay and Tim Schroeder, Cheryl Mattson, Lon Wilkinson, Gary and Kathy Burt, Patty Moore and June Robertson, Bruce and Karen Ramthun!! We worked hard! But we had a lot of fun as we worked...helped a tad by chocolate chip cookies and brownies almost fresh from the oven. Perhaps that will entice new people to join us for our fall cleanup. A little bonus was that several of us got to meet Angela, our 'new' office administrator who joined us for our cookie break. ...Charlene



## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Just as individual prayer time is very important to each of us, so is **prayer as a faith community**. We invite you to call the **church office at 627-2336** to notify the pastor of any prayer concerns you would like to share.

**Health concerns:** Pray for family and friends with health concerns and those who have the Coronavirus.

**Those who are struggling be it:** financially, mentally, spiritually, individually, or collectively.

**Those in a time of transition or turmoil.**

**Those who serve:** soldiers, teachers, police officers, firefighters, counselors, public servants, our congregational leaders, politicians, and many more.



**Prayer request:** Please pray for those affected by the Coronavirus as well as all those on our prayer list: Pam and Jim P., Ben B., Corey, Kaleb, Beth P., Doris B., Lili B., Kathy H., Cindy G., Carole S., Barbara N., Geri L., Robert E., Larry and Carol S., Jim H., Anna C., Sandy S., Marty S, Maryann, Patricia R., Sarah B., Stacy S., Jenna P., Philip C., Ron, Katy R, Sue C., and Caieya C.

*In being consistent with the HIPAA Law and people's privacy, we only list individuals with their explicit permission and no last names. During worship, please do not use personal identifiable information for others when asking for prayers.*

## COVID-19 INFORMATION

The following link will help guide you to vaccine locations in Michigan:

[\*Michigan Vaccine Information and Locations\*](#)

Please follow this link for accurate and up to date information:

[\*Michigan Coronavirus Information\*](#)



The following link is for individuals experiencing mental and emotional health challenges during this time:

[\*Michigan Dept of Health and Human Services\*](#)

## Sunday Schedule for June 2021

Date	June 6 2nd Sun after Pentecost Green	June 13 3rd Sun after Pentecost Green	June 20 4th Sun after Pentecost Green	June 27 5th Sun after Pentecost Green
Text	1 Sam 8:4-20 (11:14-15) Mark 3:20-35	1 Sam 15:34-16:13 Mark 4:26-34	1 Sam 14:(1a,4-11, 19-23), 32-49 Mark 4:35-41	2 Sam 1:1, 17-27 Mark 5:21-43

## Sunday Schedule for July 2021

Date	July 4 6th Sun after Pentecost Green	July 11 7th Sun after Pentecost Green	July 18 8th Sun after Pentecost Green	July 25 9th Sun after Pentecost Green
Text	2 Sam 5:1-5, 9-10 Mark 6:1-13	2 Sam 6:1-5, 12b-19 Mark 6:14-29	2 Sam 7:1-14a Mark 6:30-34, 53-56	2 Sam 11:1-15 John 6:1-21

# EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

April 27, 2021

## Call to Order

Moderator Leah Horn called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

This meeting was conducted electronically due to the Covid-19 virus distancing recommendations. Most members logged on to the Zoom website and some were connected by telephone.

Board Members present: Leah Horn, Lynn Hart, Pastor Laura, Chris Cypher, Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Charlene Avery, Lisa Reed, Fay Schroeder, Kim Dible Glasser, Chris Clark, Thea Oatman and Bil Turner. Also present was Mae Clark.

## Spiritual Reflection

Pastor Laura offered a prayer that focused on church leaders. In this time of change, joy and worry, will the people return?

## Open Forum

Mae Clark was present to ask 1) why we aren't worshipping in person and 2) why the Zoom link to Executive Board meetings is no longer available to all members?

Leah answered regarding the Zoom link, that is apparently just an oversight and she will ask Angie to make sure it is restored to the Thursday Pause. Regarding in person worship, that is on tonight's agenda and we will be discussing it later.

## Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was accepted.

## Action and Discussion Items

### Pastor's Report

Pastor Laura reported that much of early April was taken up with preparations for Easter and the other extra services. She has attended many Board and Team meetings this month. There has also been planning for a new feature in the newsletter, Member and Friend Spotlight, highlighting information about those who call FCUCCGL their worship home. In addition she has attended many online group meetings on behalf of our congregation.

### Pandemic Preparedness Plan

It was noted that the Barry/Eaton Co. Health Department has recommended that indoor gatherings be limited to a maximum of 25 people. The Michigan UCC has recommended that no indoor worship services be held until all members and friends can safely assemble. With those guidelines in mind the Worship Team has prepared the following options:

Option 1 - That we hold all outdoor services beginning in May and extending to roughly Rally Sunday. The services would be held on the east side of the sanctuary, and would also be live streamed. Other details are as discussed in the April 26<sup>th</sup> email from Pastor Laura.

Option 2 - That we hold two services each Sunday, over the same months. One in person service held outside and is not live streamed, and a second service that is staged in the sanctuary and is live streamed. The second service would not allow in person attendance. Option 2 would also be used if there are problems with live streaming from outside.

We could also hold some alternating mixture of these two Options, or we could continue with the existing live streamed services, but staged in the sanctuary.

To begin live streaming from the church we will need to upgrade our wifi capabilities in the church at a cost of about \$50/month. Moved by Karen, seconded by Chris Clark to upgrade the wifi. Motion passed.



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES continued

In order to continue live streaming our services with the existing team, it would be appropriate that we agree to pay Brandon and Chuck throughout the summer (their contract usually goes from Sept-June) with one Sunday a month off (as normal). For that Sunday, we would reach out to musicians in the church to see if they would like to play. It would also be appropriate that we offer gift to Chad, Troy and Kelly (if she steps in each time the guys are off). This is essentially a continuation of what we have been doing. Moved by Lynn, seconded by Fay to adopt this proposal. Motion passed.

Moved by Charlene, seconded by Chris Cypher to adopt Option 1 (a single outdoor service) with a first trial on May 9, services to begin on May 23 and end about Rally Sunday. Services to be staged in and live streamed from the sanctuary in the event of inclement weather. Motion passed.

If we are to live stream from the church we will need to invest in a video camera and peripheral items that would total approximately \$600. Moved by Fay, seconded by Bil to purchase the required items. Motion passed. Potential sources for funding this purchase will be pursued.

Lynn moved and Chris Clark seconded to allow the four member worship team plus Judy and Pastor Laura to conduct services from the sanctuary for future live stream services. Motion passed.

Confirmation of e-mail votes. Moved by Karen seconded by Kim to confirm the e-mail votes on the yard work item and the Tyler funeral. Motion passed.

The yard work item includes: Jim Hart and Tim Schroeder volunteer to pull the weeds around the sign, Tim McClung will spray the weeds three times at \$75 per application, Tim McClung will volunteer to help trim the row of spruces along the west property line, and purchasing mulch at a cost of \$200 for various areas around the grounds.

The Tyler funeral item is: the Tyler family is permitted to use the church grounds to conduct a funeral. The church is not to be open in case of inclement weather.

Summer Music. The Personnel Committee will coordinate summer music.

### New Phone System

The new phone system is installed.

### Grounds Committee

Moved by Charlene, seconded by Karen to buy two \$25 gift certificates for Tim McClung and his helper for their work on the spruce trees. Motion passed.

### New Business

Chris Cypher asked if there will be special summer music this year. Pastor Laura answered that yes, there will be, and the details are being discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted, Bil Turner, Church Clerk

## CHURCH CLERK'S UPDATE

Chuck Byam became a member of the church on Easter Sunday, almost 63 years to the day when his grandparents, Harry and Alice Byam joined our church.

There have been no marriages or baptisms in 2021 to date.



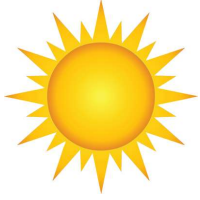
# INCOME & EXPENSE BALANCE SHEET

	Actual April 2021	Actual Year-to-Date	Budget Year-to-Date	Annual Budget
INCOME	\$ 8,870.17	\$ 53,765.06	\$ 41,081.33	\$135,714.00
EXPENSES	<u>11,442.08</u>	<u>42,187.58</u>	<u>48,227.00</u>	<u>144,681.00</u>
BALANCE	(\$ 2,571.91)	\$ 13,912.95	(\$ 2,989.00)	(\$ 8,967.00)

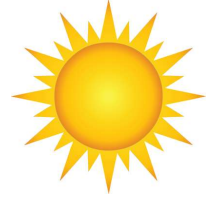


With the warm weather getting very close and having services outside, there is hope that future donations will increase to cover the monthly expenses. There is a positive balance for the total year-to-date but that will decrease as the year progresses. Your continued support will help this church continue our mission to this congregation and community.





# JUNE 2021



Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

		1	2 6pm AA 8pm AA	3	4	5 10am AA Women
6 2nd Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Facebk Worship Service 1-2pm In-person fellowship	7	8	9 6pm AA 8pm AA	10	11	12 10am AA Women
13 3rd Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Facebk Worship Service 1-2pm In-person fellowship	14	15	16 6pm AA 8pm AA	17	18	19 10am AA Women
20 Father's Day 4th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Facebk Worship Service 1-2pm In-person fellowship	21	22 6:30pm Exec Board Zoom Mtg	23 6pm AA 8pm AA	24	25 64th Anniversary of the United Church of Christ	26 10am AA Women
27 5th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Facebk Worship Service 1-2pm In-person fellowship	28	29	30 6pm AA 8pm AA			



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**First Congregational UCC Mission Statement**

*Following Jesus, our mission is to serve God by building an inclusive community where uplifting worship and relevant messages deepen spirituality and inspire acts of justice, service, and compassion.*

ONA LETTER	1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STAFF</b></p> <p>Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage          Angela Spialek, Office Administrator          Brandon Frost, Choir Director          Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director          Judy Nielsen, Organist          Chuck Byam, Choir Accompanist          Sue Sackett, Custodian          Nicole Finney, Nursery Care Provider          Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS &amp; BOARD CHAIRS</b></p> <p>Leah Horn, Moderator          Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Vice Moderator          Bil Turner, Clerk          Fay Schroeder, Treasurer          Lynn Hart, Financial Secretary          Charlene Avery, Member-at-Large          Kim Dible, Member-at-Large          Lisa Reed, Member-at-Large          Thea Oatman, Christian Education          Chris Cypher &amp; Kim Dible, Congregational Life          Chris Clark, Christian Outreach</p>
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