



# THE CHURCH WINDOW

*July 2021*



## FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

Dear Ones,

We are going on an adventure!

That phrase is one of my favorites from literature. It is said by Bilbo Baggins, the Hobbit, as he is running out the door to follow Gandalf the wizard and several dwarves to reclaim the dwarves' inheritance. As a child, I always thought of adventures as fun and exciting, and many times they are. But one of the things I learned from Tolkien's *The Hobbit* is that adventures are also often difficult, and sometimes frightening or sad. We always leave something behind when we go on adventures, and when we return, neither ourselves nor the place we left are quite the same. In fact, that's often the point of adventures—change and growth.

And we are, indeed, going on an adventure, as we enter into blended worship where we will (eventually) hold in-person worship services that we simultaneously live-stream. Both types of worship are so very important to us, since they allow us to be together in our sacred spaces of church, home, yard, hospital, cabin, hotel, shelter, or wherever we are when it comes time to worship. The live-stream is particularly valuable, since it allows us to connect with our beloved ones who cannot join us in person, and it allows them the opportunity to worship. So we're excited to be able to move into these blended services!

However, we do leave something behind--both the wonderful live streaming services of the last year, and the ways that we used to hold in-person worship. Worshipping in person during a pandemic will require some changes in how we conduct those services—in how we take the Offering, serve Communion, in how we social distance and sing. There might be some changes to our space to accommodate cameras. And we might grieve that a little, wishing things could just be the way they used to be. This new adventure will also take some extra help, which is why we are forming and training a tech team (please let Leah know if you would be interested in serving on that!). We will also be reaching out to you all to see if you might help with being a liturgist, usher, greeter, etc. And the new technology we're implementing and learning will take funding, as well time to get used to, and maybe some patience.

Still, I see it all as an adventure—a time to discover new ways that God can work with and through us, and a time when we might discover new skills or talents. We are such a resourceful, open, and engaged congregation! I'm excited to see where this path leads us and trusting that God is right there with us, enjoying the adventure, too!

Blessings, Pastor Laura

## MEMBER AND FRIENDS SPOTLIGHT

This month's column spotlights **Deb Dennis** and **Tom Dillman**.



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

We were looking for a church whose views were in line with our own. We discovered Edgewood, attended for a few months and liked it very much. I realized one day that this church, which we'd driven past innumerable times, was UCC as well. It was closer to Delta Twp. (where we live) than Edgewood, and it was winter, so we decided to check it out. And here we are, a year and a half later.

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

We were encouraged to stay by the friendly people we met here, and also by the fact that this is an ONA congregation. This congregation seems very caring and very giving. Although we only met in person for a couple months after our initial visit, we have still come to know a few members throughout the pandemic.

### ***Can you tell us a little about yourself?***

Tom and I were married eight years ago in our favorite city – San Francisco. Tom has two grown sons and beautiful twin granddaughters who will be five in July. My children have all had fur, and currently that role is being filled by Charley, whom we rescued two years ago and has been a blessing for both me and Tom.

Tom was raised in an Episcopal church and I was raised as a Methodist. Neither of us have been active in any organized religion as adults until recently.

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

We both retired from Farm Bureau Insurance in early 2016 after a combined total of 80+ years of working. Tom had been a systems analyst and software developer, I had worked in communications and website content management.

We enjoyed traveling and had plans to do much more in our retirement. In early 2018 our plans took a turn when Tom was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia, an atypical form of Alzheimer's Disease. Through participation in a clinical trial with Mayo Clinic we learned that he has a second form of atypical Alzheimer's called Posterior Cortical Atrophy. In combination these two diseases primarily impact vision, perception and language before the typical memory problems associated with Alzheimer's begin. It was Tom's desire to continue to aid in Alzheimer's research by participating in clinical trials, as we had done with Mayo Clinic for two years. However, the pandemic made that impossible, while also worsening his disease.

As POA, I'm also in charge of all my mom's finances, etc. We had to move her and my stepdad to a memory care facility in February.

We are SO grateful to all of the people – especially Chad, Brandon, Chuck and Troy – who blazed the way for us to have online worship. It has worked out great for us and likely will be our primary choice in the future, as being around large groups of people is difficult for Tom.

### ***What are some things you'd really like to know about our congregation?***

There are many very long-term or lifetime members in this church, which is impressive. I'm curious if there are many 'newbies' like us. I expect to learn more about that through these monthly articles.

## CONGREGATORS

Summer is here! Crab trees and redbuds, tulips and daffodils are a fading memory...until next spring. Hanging baskets and pots of geraniums are everywhere...how beautiful! Vegetable gardens have been planted and are waiting for rain! As plans are evolving to have outdoor worship services, so are plans evolving for Congregators to get together again after all these many months...stay tuned! In the meantime, we stay connected with loving and caring phone calls back and forth. Our love continues flowing to you!

Jim (517.627.7968), Sandy (517.420.2121) or Charlene (517.281.5019)

# WOMEN GATHERING OVER DEVOTIONS (W GOD)

Women Gathering Over Devotions (W GOD) met in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, June 9, 2021. Ten members brought their own dinner and enjoyed catching up with each other. Connie Dible brought each of us a dogwood blossom and read the legend of the dogwood tree, which was the tree used for Christ's cross. Karen Ramthun read a devotion and Kay Kulp read a prayer. All of these readings were very inspirational.

It was decided that we will begin anew the book *Girlfriends, Exploring Women's Relationships in the Bible* by Barbara J. Essex when we begin our new program year in September. Watch for more information in future newsletters.

## 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., Caieya C., Ashley R., Eric, Heather and their families, Lee W., and Dan B.

*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 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

## Sunday Schedule for August 2021

Date	August 1 10th Sun after Pentecost Green	August 8 11th Sun after Pentecost Green	August 15 12th Sun after Pentecost Green	August 22 13th Sun after Pentecost Green	August 29 14th Sun after Pentecost Green
Text	2 Sam 11:26-12:13a John 6:24-35	2 Sam 18:5-9, 15 John 6:35, 41-51	1 Kings 2:10-12 John 6:51-58	1 Kings 8:1,6,10-11 John 6:56-69	Sol 2:8-13 James 1:17-27

# EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

May 25, 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, Chuck Byam.

## **Spiritual Reflection**

Pastor Laura offered thoughts reminding us that while we may often focus on the recent troubling news items, we can also remember that portion of Matthew 6 that reminds us that we should not worry, that God will care for us, no matter what, and that we should strive first to serve God.

## **Open Forum**

Chuck Byam was present as a member of the worship team. He wanted the Board to know that some members of the team, including him, have trouble performing with masks on. The problems take a variety of forms. He acknowledged the concern for Pastor Laura. He asks permission for the team members to remove masks at certain times. The Board will take this up later in the meeting.

## **Consent Agenda**

Leah mentioned that the April Exec. Board minutes indicate that the Personnel Committee will coordinate summer music. The minutes should say that Judy will be arranging for special summer music and coordinating with Linda Gooley. With that correction, the Consent Agenda was accepted.

## **Action and Discussion Items**

### **Pastor's Report**

Pastor Laura reported that Pastoral Care was up for the previous month. She also spent time helping arrange for Boyd Tyler's funeral and prepare the Mental Health worship service. Grand Ledge United has decals available that say "All are welcome here". Trinity Episcopal Church and our church are thinking of having a joint book study in October on the book "So you want to talk about Race". She has attended several of our church's team meetings and the monthly "Mental Health in Churches" webinar. A most pressing issue is the need to form a team of perhaps 4-5 people to tackle the technical issues surrounding our Sunday indoor/outdoor and live-streamed worship services.

### **Worship Service Plan**

It was noted that in addition to the Worship Team there are other groups (Bells, WGod, and Congregational Life) that would like to use portions of the church. A far ranging discussion took place, first focused on Sunday Worship. The problems and benefits of worshipping together were discussed. The many technical issues were discussed in some detail. Moved by Lynn, seconded by Lisa, to remain with online worship services, form a technical team and get a report from them, and then look again at outdoor services. Motion passed.

The discussion then moved to the other groups that would like to use the Fellowship Hall. Moved by Bil, seconded by Karen to allow the Fellowship Hall to be used, using the same guidelines established for building use by Alcoholics Anonymous, with an increase of up to 12 people allowed. Motion passed.

Regarding a mask policy for the Worship Team, it was moved by Fay, seconded by Karen, to allow the current Worship Team to remove their mask while they are performing, playing or speaking. Motion passed.



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES continued

Regarding a technical team, Pastor Laura will create a list of items that the team needs to address and Bil will make contacts with potential team members.

### New Business

#### Survey of the congregation regarding Sunday Worship.

It's not currently clear how many people would attend an outdoor service if one were offered. Also, it's unknown how to meet the needs of those who aren't able to electronically attend Sunday Services, or how large that group is. Thea will create a survey around those issues.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

The next Executive Board Meeting will be Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 6:30 PM. (Very likely a Zoom meeting)

Respectfully submitted,

Bil Turner, Church Clerk



## INCOME & EXPENSE BALANCE SHEET

	Actual <u>April 2021</u>	Actual <u>Year-to-Date</u>	Budget <u>Year-to-Date</u>	Annual <u>Budget</u>
INCOME	\$ 10,305.00	\$ 66,405.53	\$ 56,547.50	\$135,714.00
EXPENSES	<u>8,715.12</u>	<u>50,902.70</u>	<u>60,283.75</u>	<u>144,681.00</u>
BALANCE	\$ 1,589.88	\$ 15,502.83	(\$ 3,736.25)	(\$ 8,967.00)



With the warm weather getting very close and working toward outside services, we are in the process of purchasing equipment to live-stream our service. We have also updated the internet service. The hope is that very soon, we will be having live services. Your continued support will help this church continue our mission to this congregation and community.

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

Chris Cypher – 2nd

Tom Bernardi – 5th

Tina Lamer – 5th

Karen Ramthun – 7th

Anita Calcagno – 10th

Elva Maguire – 10th

Katie Miller-Purrenhage – 12th



Patty Curtis – 20th

Janet Harmon – 20th

Becky Ramos – 23rd

Reshay Tanasse – 24th

Molly Coombes – 24th

Joe Gilson – 26th

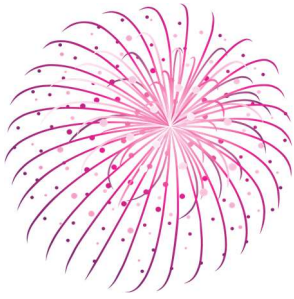
Bob Sackett – 27th

Jane Cosper – 30th

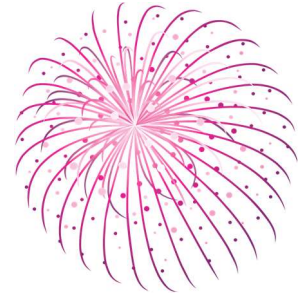
If you would like your birthday included in the newsletter, please contact the office administrator at 627-2336 or [office@grandledgeucc.org](mailto:office@grandledgeucc.org)

## CHURCH INSTAGRAM

Our church now has an Instagram account! If you do, too, then please follow us!



# JULY 2021



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3 10am AA Women
4 6th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Facebk Worship Service 1-2pm In-person fellowship	5	6	7 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	8	9	10 10am AA Women
11 7th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Worship Service - location tbd	12	13	14 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	15	16	17 10am AA Women
18 8th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Worship Service - location tbd	19	20	21 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	22	23	24 10am AA Women
25 9th Sun after Pentecost 10:30am Worship Service - location tbd	26	27 6:30pm Exec Board Zoom Mtg	28 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	29	30	31 10am AA Women



210 W. Saginaw Hwy.  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Office Phone: 517- 627- 2336

Fax: 517- 627- 4539

Office E-mail: [office@grandledgeucc.org](mailto:office@grandledgeucc.org)

Pastor's E-mail: [pastor@grandledgeucc.org](mailto:pastor@grandledgeucc.org)

Emergency Contact 517-374-0145

[grandledgeucc.org](http://grandledgeucc.org)



### 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.*

PASTOR'S KEYBOARD	1	<b>STAFF</b> 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	<b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS &amp; BOARD CHAIRS</b> 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 & Kim Dible, Congregational Life Chris Clark, Christian Outreach
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT	2		
CONGREGATORS	2		
WGOD	2		
THOUGHTS & PRAYERS	3		
COVID-19 INFO	3		
SUNDAY SCHEDULE	3		
EXECUTIVE MINUTES	4 & 5		
INCOME & EXPENSES	5		
BIRTHDAYS	5		
INSTAGRAM	5		
CALENDAR	6		