



THE CHURCH WINDOW

April 2023



FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

Dear Ones,

When you receive this newsletter, it will be Holy Week. That can be the hardest week in Lent—a time when we confront sin and evil in our world, and sometimes in ourselves. We watch the disciples fail Jesus, betray him, and turn away. We watch his faith community ask for his crucifixion. We watch powerful leaders kill a man out of jealousy, fear, and ultimately, a desire for power. And we watch a tyrannical government torture and murder a good man. It's also a time when we see Jesus at his most human and divine—and both of those can be hard to contemplate. He's at, what I believe, is his most human when he has to face upcoming torture and death, and so begs God to change things—to keep that suffering from him. He's at, what I believe, is his most divine when he contemplates the upcoming betrayal of his friends and not only forgives them, but initiates a sacrament—a new covenant which promises unending love and grace not just for them, but for all of us. And then we walk with the disciples as they spend two days in grief and fear, believing that everything their kind, sweet gentle leader had stood for was for nothing—that evil will always win. That's a hard week.

But we walk into that week every year, contemplating those same things every year, because it is important to name these griefs. They happen over and over again throughout our history—the torture and murder of good people, the sinful actions of people in power and of entire systems, the mistakes and sins of ourselves and others. So we name them. We grieve them. We lay them before God and we ask, why?!

And then that one week ends, not with a whimper, but with a light, with a shout of joy, with

From the Pastor's Keyboard (CONT.)

a rolled away stone. And we notice that we experience all of these losses, all of these griefs, all of these frustrations, and all of our questions with something that Jesus' disciples did not have—we experience these things with a hindsight that gives us foresight. We look at the Holy Week the disciples faced with hindsight, knowing that it led to a miracle of love, hope, and joy. And that gives us foresight as we face our own Holy Week, our own Garden of Gethsemanes, and our own Good Fridays. It is a foresight that God has promised to, and will make, all things new. God will redeem our griefs, our frustrations, our losses, our questions. God will transform them into unexpected light and joy. So go into this Holy Week with foresight, and let that foresight allow you to be willing and ready to face the difficulties of the week. Trust with a deep and inner knowing that evil, sin, death and despair have already and will again be conquered. The Resurrection is coming! Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Laura

CONGREGATORS

Tuesday, April 4, 2023—Sophia’s 1:00pm

Perhaps by the time we have our April get together, it will be more like spring as at this writing there is still snow on the ground! Our Congregators group always looks forward to getting together for lunch and conversation each month. We welcome anyone new who wants to join us as we are always eager to make new church friends. Get in touch with either of us to let us know you can make it or if you need a ride!

Charlene (517.281.5019) and Sandy (517.420.2121)

WOMEN GATHERING OVER DEVOTIONS

Women Gathering Over Devotions (WGOD) met on March 20, 2023 for lunch in the Fellowship Hall. The first eight chapter of the book “Many Lives, Many Masters” by Brian L. Weiss, M.D. was discussed.

For our next meeting will meet on **April 17,2023**, in the Fellowship Hall at noon. Bring your own lunch. After lunch we will discuss chapter 9 through the end of the book of “Many Lives, Many Masters.” This book can be purchased either through Amazon or on an ebook.

SISTERS OF RUTH

Many times when an abused person or family leaves a home, they do not have anything but the clothes they wore. As in previous years, during the month of April, Sisters of Ruth is asking for your donations of travel size of personal care items; such as, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, combs, razors, shower gel or bar soap. We are also asking for hand towels and washcloths. Sisters of Ruth will put together personal care packets at our May meeting for the S.I.R.E.N. Shelter of Eaton County.

There will be a box in the narthex to place your donated items. For those of you who wish to donate during the hours our office is not open, there will be a box between the doors at the west side of the church (by the mailbox).

Our next meeting is a luncheon at the House of Hsu on April 10, 2023 at 12:30.

Income and Expense Report

	Actual	Actual	Budget	Annual
	February, 2023	Year-to-Date	Year-to-Date	Budget
INCOME	\$ 14,519.50	\$ 27,681.42	\$ 21,672.67	\$130,036.00
EXPENSES	<u>12,909.89</u>	<u>25,596.66</u>	<u>26,872.17</u>	<u>162,783.00</u>
BALANCE	\$ 1,609.61	\$ 2,084.76	(\$ 5,199.50)	(\$ 32,747.00)

Your support for our church is absolutely wonderful. We have started the year on the positive side. However, in the month of March, we paid some quarterly payments that were due. Your continued support is what sustains our church and allows us to continuing serving this congregation and community.

🎵 🎵 **“TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME”**

Let's get a fun group from our church for the **Saturday, August 19**, Lansing Lugnuts game at Jackson Field vs the Great Lakes Loons from Midland! Pastor Laura and her husband John plan to go. They will be special guests at a pregame dinner along with other area pastors!

Group rate tickets are \$11 each; two years old and younger are free. We need a minimum of ten people to get the group rate; otherwise, tickets are \$15 on the day of the game and \$13 if bought in advance for a group under 10.

The first pitch will be at 7:05pm so it's recommended we arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of time in order to get there for pastor recognition and first pitch!

No food or beverages are allowed to be brought in.

Parking is available at several nearby lots for \$2/hour...some of us may plan to carpool from the church.

Plan to stay for beautiful LAFCU fireworks after the game!

So...check your summer calendar and let me know if you can go or have questions. Feel free to ask friends! **I will need your ticket money no later than Sunday, May 21. See me in church or call me at 517.281.5019 ...Charlene Avery**

Eaton County's Department of Resource Recovery is pleased to announce the 2023 Household Hazardous Waste event schedule.

For your convience, we have listed each of our events below with links to both the **EVENT FLYER** (which includes information on accepted materials and other individual event details) and the individual **EVENT REGISTRATION** (*required for participation* in any of our recycling events).

Simply review the event flyer for the event you are interested in by clicking the **EVENT FLYER LINK** below the corresponding event. Once you have reviewed the event flyer, please register by clicking the **EVENT REGISTRATION LINK** which is also located below the corresponding event. It is that easy!

SPRING CLEAN UP: May 13, 2023, 9 am – 2 pm in Delta Township, MI

[EVENT FLYER LINK](#)

[EVENT REGISTRATION LINK](#)

RECYCLING FEVER: June 10, 2023, 9 am – 2 pm in Charlotte, MI

[EVENT FLYER LINK](#)

[EVENT REGISTRATION LINK](#)

RECYCLE-PALOOZA: August 12, 2023, 9 am - 1 pm in Charlotte, MI

[EVENT FLYER LINK](#)

[EVENT REGISTRATION LINK](#)

You can also visit: <https://www.eatoncounty.org/913/Recycling-Events-Programs> to find flyers and registration information.

Ways to Keep In Touch with the Church!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/uccgrandledge>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcmU3DDWy-JbJ04TgjLtgWg>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/grandledgeucc/>
<https://grandledgeucc.org/>

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
First Congregational United Church of Christ – Grand Ledge
Executive Board Meeting Minutes February 28, 2023

Call To Order - Moderator is Leah Horn. Board Members Present: Leah Horn, Pastor Laura Miller-Purrenhage, Holcomb-Merrill, Thea Oatman, Charlene Avery, Ron Erskine, Gary Cypher, Lynn Hart, Fay Schroeder

Mary Lou Provost has resigned as Secretary. Bil Turner will stand in for MLP for the remainder of MLP's term as soon as he has returned from out of town.

Open Forum - No one present

Consent Agenda

- A. Feb 24th minutes were not available for consent
- B. A correction to the Pastor's Report was made regarding number of hours worked.

Action and Discussion

- A. Kitchen Repairs – G. Burt is working on an estimate of what repairs and costs are needed for the kitchen.
- B. Potential Fee Waiver for the Building Use Permit submitted for April 21st Civil War Presentation
 - There was discussion regarding the nature of the presentation and the tendency toward misinformation or disacknowledgement of political reasons for the Civil War and how such a presentation reflects on the church
 - Building Use fee waiver was denied.
- C. Bystander Training - tabled
- D. CPR training event
 - Grand Ledge Fire Department can accommodate up to 30 training participants.
 - Training takes 3-4 hours and is \$50/person for CPR
 - First aid training can be included in this for the same cost but will add an additional hour to the training
 - A recommendation was made that the church pay for staff to take the training, but a decision on this will not be made until the Emergency Plan is finalized and adopted. (One staff member is currently certified.)
 - There has been a recommendation that we look into purchasing a defibrillator
 - A blurb will go in the Thursday Pause to gauge Interest in CPR and First Aid Training
- E. Potential Lugnuts Outing on Friday, July 21st or Saturday, August 19th
 - Details include pass for 2 to Pastor Buffet and first pitch, \$11/person over the age of 2.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

- We will check interest in a Lugnuts Outing in the Thursday Pause
- F. An email vote January 27-28th approved an adjusted salary from \$10k to \$12k for Accompanist/Organist Position
- G. Emergency Closing Protocol as posted in Dropbox was tested and proved efficient on Ash Wednesday.
- H. Sandy Sipes changed from Board of Education to Board of Outreach
- I. Emergency Procedure – L. Horn, M. Prevost and P. Laura will continue working to edit and simplify the Emergency Procedure Plan.
- J. Pastor Church Rolls and Ministries discussion is tabled until the team has had a chance to meet

New Business

- A. Funeral Procedures/Fees
 - What is/should be the policy for paying staff for member funerals?
 - Video Technician, Custodian, and Office Administrator charge the hours worked on their timecards.
 - Honorariums are asked for and determined by Pastor, Choir Director, Accompanist, Soloists
 - Meal cost is reimbursed by the family
 - Funerals can be made available via zoom, but not live streamed.
 - Board Decision - an Honorarium of \$50 should be asked for Sound Board Technicians as is done for weddings
 - All positions may choose to waive their honorarium.
- B. \$25 gift card gratuity suggested for generosity of professional soloists
 - Kelly Stuible-Clark and Sandula-Gruner have each sung almost every Sunday for the months of December and January.
 - Note that staff will be more coordinated scheduling soloists in the future
 - Fay S will pick up two \$25 gift cards from Starbucks
- C. Recommendation that we pay the budgeted OWM money now to alleviate budgeting issues for local and national conferences and because of the resources we have been utilizing from the Conference
 - Board Decision - pay the full \$840 (5% increase from last year) right away

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

- D. Staff Sick/Vacation Coverage Concern
- Custodian has no back-up
 - Children's Bible School has no back-up
 - Someone will check with Christian Education Board for back-up
 - A blurb will be put in the Thursday Pause asking for volunteers to back up these positions
- E. Thursday Night Fellowship Hall Use
- There is concern that some building use forms including the Thursday night group's form are missing and we are unaware of who is responsible for the building at those times.
 - The board would like to renew Building Use forms annually from here on out. (This is being added to the Office Administrator duties.)
- F. Sanctuary Bell Room Door Trip Hazard Has Been Handled - A cumbersome box covering an outlet with trip hazard has been replaced by a taller and more subtle bell table.
- G. Personal Team Issues there was discussion related to the duties of the Personnel Team and finding folks who can serve on this team.
- A job description for Personal Team positions is needed and L. Horn will draft a description.
- H. Door Lock Policy
- Parking lot doors are being locked sooner than 10 minutes after service begins.
 - There is an outward facing courtesy sign letting people know the door policy but no inward facing courtesy sign for people who might leave after the parking lot doors are locked.
 - There will be a Door Lock Policy reminder in the Thursday Pause.
- I. Pastoral Duties – There was discussion regarding the hours worked during the months of December – February given the death of a long-time member, the blizzard forcing the cancellation of live worship on Christmas Eve, and the recent tragedy at MSU and what we can do as a church to fully support our pastor while continuing to respect the responsibility that comes with having a bi-vocational pastor. The Board agreed to compensate the Pastor for hours worked during this time period.



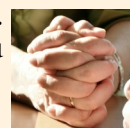
Meeting adjourned
Respectfully submitted,
Thea Oatman, Vice Moderator

Volunteer Schedule

Date	Greeter	Head Usher	Liturgist	Fresh Perspectives	Homily	Soundboard
5/7	Chuck Byam	Chris Cypher	Rich Brown	Pastor Laura	Pastor Laura	Julie Wilkinson
5/14	Lynn Hart	Tina Lamer	Greg Elbin	Demphna Krikorian	Pastor Laura	Julie Wilkinson
5/21	Connie Dible	Kim Dible	Sue Sackett	Demphna Krikorian	Pastor Laura	Charlynn Walker
5/28	Bil Turner	Lisa Reed	Vicki Korroch	Elain Donnoe	Linda Gooley	Charlynn Walker
6/4	Sandy Sipes	Susan Elbin	Leah Horn	Pastor Laura	Pastor Laura	
6/11	Gary Burt	Kathy Burt	Lisa Reed	Demphna Krikorian	Pastor Laura	
6/18	Charlene Avery	Tina Lamer	Ron Erskine	Demphna Krikorian	Pastor Laura	
6/25	Fay Schroeder	Cheryl Mattson	Marcia Kent	Lisa Reed	Lisa Reed	

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: Darlene 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., Marty S, Maryann, Patricia R., Sarah B., Jenna P., Ron, Katy R, Sue C., Caieya C., Ashley R., Eric, Heather and their families, Lee W., Dan B., Phillip C., Ann E., and Denny E. *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.*

HAPPY EASTER



April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1			1 10am AA Women
2 Palm Sunday 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	3 6:30PM Grand Ringers Practice	4 Congregators meetings, 1pm at Sophias	5 Community Meal 5:30pm Grand Ledge Methodist Church 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	6 6pm Chancel Choir Practice 8pm AA	7 Good Friday	8 10am AA Women
9 Easter Sunday 8:30am Easter Sunrise Service 9:00 Christian Ed Meeting 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	10 6:30PM Grand Ringers Practice Sisters of Ruth, 12:30pm	11	12 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA Rest in the rush 5-7pm	13 6pm Chancel Choir Practice 8pm AA	14	15 10am AA Women
16 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship	17 6:30PM Grand Ringers Practice WGOD - 12:00pm	18	19 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon	20 6pm Chancel Choir Practice 8pm AA	21 Civil War Presentation 7-9pm	22 10am AA Women
23 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship	24 6:30PM Grand Ringers Practice	25 6:30pm Executive Board Meeting	26 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	27 6pm Chancel Choir Practice 8pm AA	28	29 Memorial Service for Gwen Knight 10am AA Women
30 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship						

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

DATE	April 2	April 9	April 16	April 23	April 30
THEME	Palm Sunday: What happens when we die?	Easter: Resurrection and the Kin-dom of God	Holy Humor Sunday	Opened Eyes (The Road to Emmaus)	
TEXT	Isaiah 25:6-7 1 Corinthians 15: 51-55	Isaiah 65:17-25 Matthew 28:1-10		Luke 24: 13-35	
HEAD USHER	Tina Lamer	Chuck Byam	Tina Lamer	Lisa Reed	Cheryl Mattson
GREETER	Bil Turner	Sandy Sipes	Charlene Avery	Pat Reed	Gla Spayde
LITURGIST	Leah Horn	Lisa Reed	Ron Erskine	Mary Lou Prevost	Marcia Kent
SOUNDBOARD	Julie Wilkinson	Charlynn Walker	Julie Wilkinson	Charlynn Walker	Charlynn Walker
VIRTUAL COORDINATOR	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee
HYMN SINGER	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir



April BIRTHDAYS

Jackson Lipsey	2nd	Tina Erskine	21st
Ben Sackett	5th	Tony Ramos	26th
Sue Lawens	5th	Bil Turner	28th
Bonnie Thompson	6th	Brian Ramthun	28th
Pastor Nicolette Siragusa	7th		
Chuck Thompson	8th		
Rich Brown	9th		
Daniell Gooley	13th		
Brian Curran	15th		



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First Congregational UCC Mission Statement		
<i>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.</i>		
PASTOR'S KEYBOARD	1-2	<p style="text-align: center;">STAFF</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage Larry Patterson Office Administrator Brandon Frost, Choir Director Carol Orsborn, Bell Choir Director Dr. James Sullivan, Organist & Accompanist Rev. Demphna Krikorian, Christian Educator Ben Sackett, Custodian Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS & BOARD CHAIRS</p> <p>Leah Horn, Moderator Thea Oatman, Vice Moderator Bil Turner, Clerk Fay Schroeder, Treasurer Lynn Hart, Financial Secretary Charlene Avery, Member-at-Large Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Member-at-Large Gary Cypher, Member-at-Large Kelly Stuble-Clark, Christian Education Kim Dible, Congregational Life</p>
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