



THE CHURCH WINDOW

May 2022



FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

Dear Ones,

In this past month, we have finished our Lenten journey together, celebrating with Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, dining with him as he shared with us the Last Supper, wept with him as he was crucified, and then rejoiced with him as he was resurrected. In the week since then, our church has celebrated a wedding and graduates from our exploring faith class and, this coming week, we will celebrate a Baptism and hold Communion. In this past week, we also held a funeral for our beloved Jim Johnson and I heard from several people in the congregation that they also lost beloved ones in just this past week. Throughout all of these life-changing events and celebrations of sacraments, a song has been playing in my head, "In the Bulb, there is a Flower." Perhaps I'm hearing it because it is spring and I am seeing so many of our bulbs bloom. But the choir also chose to sing it for the young men who completed our exploring faith class, so perhaps that is why it has been on my mind. I suspect, though, that it is its message that really has put this song in my head. It is often called, "the song of hope," because it suggests that there are new beginnings just waiting to happen in every new seed—a wonderful song for Baptism, for a wedding, and for graduates of a faith class. But it also reminds us, as does the Lenten journey and our Easter celebrations, that in death there is resurrection, in what seems like an end, a new beginning. It is a song of hope, indeed, especially as we miss those who have died. So I share the words of it here that we may all meditate upon the hope of new beginnings.

Blessings, Pastor Laura

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

By Natalie Sleeth

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

2.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

3.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity,
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Youth Calendar

On the first Sunday of every month, the youth of our church have started to meet. The first meeting in March was to discuss our goals for the program and in April we did a service project-stuffing hygiene kits for a local shelter and stuffed Easter eggs for the upcoming children's Easter egg hunt. Next month (May 1st) we have talked about doing a spring cleanup activity around the church grounds and then we will be going for a quick walk to A&W for a yummy lunch.

The following are "in the works" for our calendar. Let Demphna Krikorian (248-396-2266, demphna@childandfamily.org) know if you have any further thoughts and suggestions for the church youth group. Thank you!

1. Paint birdhouses and bag up birdseed to sell to church members for themselves or for us to give to the church homebound. (mini fundraiser)
2. A trip to the Jim Crow Museum at Ferris State.
3. Miniature Golf!
4. A trip to the holocaust museum in Farmington Hills
5. School supplies collection and stuffing backpacks
6. Letter writing and cookie baking to be delivered to the homebound members of our church
7. Tie blankets for shelters
8. Youth Holiday party, white elephant exchange, and holiday gift collection
9. Canned food drive for Souper Sunday

GL Food Bank

The church is resuming our monthly food donations to the Grand Ledge Food Bank (GLFB). The donated food items are placed on the altar on the first Sunday of each month as we observe communion. Additionally, the GLFB is in need of clean "ensure" like bottles. Thank you so much for your generosity in supporting the GLFB.

Sunday School

Sunday school has resumed! It's a lot of fun. But more importantly it is an opportunity for our young ones to learn about Christianity and how we are called to help others. This month we will learn about character development like being honest and sharing with others. We also have fun crafts with a chance to paint, glue, color and make original creations for your refrigerators! The first Sunday of the month, children stay in the church. But all the other weeks, we have Sunday school immediately after Fresh Perspectives.

CHURCH INSTAGRAM

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

Exploring Faith

Since January this year, our church has offered an exploring faith class, which Jackson Lipsey and his friend Jacob Proctor took and successfully completed. Karen Holcomb-Merrill and Demphna Krikorian were Pastor Laura's co-teachers, and Charlene Avery and Ron Erskine were the young mens' mentors. It was a wonderful experience! We had great discussions about faith, God and the church, and were able to visit some other faith communities. As a culmination of this learning, Jackson and Jacob each wrote and presented faith statements to the church on April 24th. We have included them here so that you can read them. They demonstrate how very thoughtful, serious, and deep thinkers they both are. I know that all of us were honored to work with them and are very proud of them!

Jackson Lipsey Statement of Faith April 24, 2022

I learned a lot during my time in the faith class, and I've begun to understand what God and Christianity mean to me. God is to me, a moral compass, or a map in a sense; guiding me on my journey through life and exploring spirituality. I see God's goodness through the actions of good people in and out of church. God speaks to me by giving me a sense of what is morally right and wrong. Jesus is like a teacher to me, leading by example, loving and caring for all. For me, to be a Christian is to follow in his footsteps and spread his love and kindness to others. This church has done a great job in teaching me his lessons, and providing a loving community for me to explore my beliefs. I appreciate this community's support as I continue to learn about other's beliefs while solidifying my own.

Jacob Proctor Statement of Faith April 24, 2022

Who or what is God to you? Is God a person, force, spirit? Is he near or far away from you? To me, God is a person, but also a force, and a spirit. I believe God is always there. He is the creator, the guide, the answerer. God helps us in times we need, like these times were in right now.

Have you prayed to God to guide you through this pandemic? I have for sure. Outside of prayers though, do you see God? Does he comfort you when you are fearful? Does he appear when you worship and praise? Do you feel His presence when making decisions? How do you actually see God showing up in the world? Where have you encountered him? I have encountered God and I have seen his miracles. He shows up and guides me with schoolwork. He blesses me with a good night's sleep. He helps me with baseball and helps me make a good play. He always makes sure I have family and friends whenever I need them. God helps all of us. He blesses me. He blesses you. He blesses all of us. He has blessed the people not here today. God has blessed everyone. He loves us like children because we are all God's children. God helps people in desperate times of need and He answers prayers, God is everywhere.

We have all chosen to believe in God and that is why we are all here today. That is why we are placed at the table in God's dining room. But not everybody believes in God. Why? That is their choice. Nobody is forced to be a Christian. But what does it mean to be a Christian? A Christian is somebody who has put faith into God. Somebody that is willing to believe in Him, love Him, and worship Him. There's not just one way, and one way only to be a Christian. As part of our Exploring Faith class, I was able to visit a Greek Orthodox church in Lansing. It was a great experience. Everybody was so welcoming. The way that they taught and worshiped was a lot different than I have experienced. But, everybody in that room was a Christian, just differently. I am a Christian. I believe in God, I took this faith class to explore more about my faith, and I have a bible next to my bed every night. But I haven't gone to an actual church service in a long time. I haven't worshiped God as a group in a while. But that doesn't mean I'm not a Christian. I love God. I believe He is there when most needed and guides. I believe He is the creator.

This exploring faith class has really opened my eyes to a whole lot more than before. I know some things now that I didn't even know existed. But one thing that specifically shaped my experience was realizing how strong my Faith in God is. I have been a Christian for years but this class helped me grow my relationship with God. I'm proud to have taken this class with such amazing people. All these people of God. Thank you to my teachers Karen, Demphna, and Pastor Laura. Thank you to our mentors Charlene and Ron. I would also like to thank Tamara and Jackson for asking me to be a part of this great experience. Thank you.

CONGREGATORS

Beloved Congregators,

It seems unreal that we will gather for lunch on Tuesday, May 3, 1 pm at Sophia's without our beloved Jim Johnson. We will so be missing his quiet, sweet presence. He loved these monthly get togethers and made them a priority each time. Some of you may have talked to him for the last time at our April gathering. We will certainly spend our time sharing memories of Jim, one of the founders of Congregators many years ago. As always, please be sure to get in touch with one of us to let us know you can make it or if you need a ride.

All are welcome!

Charlene (517.281.5019) and Sandy (517.420.2121)

WOMEN GATHERING OVER DEVOTIONS (WGOD)

Women Gathering Over Devotions (WGOD) had a very social lunch in the Fellowship Hall on April 18, 2022. We discussed many things but did not complete the discussion of our book. Therefore, at our next meeting on May 16, 2022, the discussion of "In Sickness and In Health" by Pastor Barbara Edema. We will meet at noon in the Fellowship Hall and bring our own lunch

We also chose our next book which is "The Infinite Jeff" by Will Holcomb. Fay Schroeder is ordering them through Amazon. You can let her know if you want to purchase the book or order it yourself through Amazon.

SISTERS OF RUTH (SOR)

On April 11, 2022, members of Sisters of Ruth met for lunch at the new coffee shop/restaurant Toads. Many of us had sandwiches and some also had soup. Lunch was very good and we recommend everyone try this new business in Grand Ledge.

Our next meeting is May 9, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall to assemble the personal care kits with the donations of shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, washcloths, and all other donations for the S.I.R.E.N. Shelter. Many people leave an abusive relationship with nothing but what they are wearing at the time. These kits will help the S.I.R.E.N. Shelter provide them with personal care products.

Income and Expense Report

	<u>Actual</u> March 2022	<u>Actual</u> Year-to-Date	<u>Budget</u> Year-to-Date	<u>Annual</u> Budget
INCOME	\$12,850.75	\$ 37,613.54	\$ 29,996.50	\$131,876.00
EXPENSES	<u>13,915.50</u>	<u>38,996.20</u>	<u>37,706.50</u>	<u>152,326.00</u>
BALANCE	(\$ 1,064.75)	(\$ 1,382.66)	(\$ 4,737.50)	(\$ 20,450.00)

As the year is progressing, we are showing a larger deficit. There are also a couple of large expense facilities repairs that need to be done, the sign and the fans in the sanctuary. As the Executive Board works on getting these repairs at the most reasonable rates, we are reminded that your continued support is very important for the sustainability of our church.



SUMMER CAMP DATES 2022!

We are so excited to welcome all of our campers and volunteers back this summer!! The National UCC is encouraging churches and youth to attend their outdoor ministries programs this summer since they had to cancel National Youth Event. We have a full summer camp schedule for all ages this summer! We will be looking at the theme of Talahi....A Way of Life as we explore what it means to be a part of the Talahi community. If you or someone you know over 18 would like to volunteer as summer staff, deans or counselors please let me know!

Here is our 2022 Summer Camp Schedule:

May 27-30: Young Adults Camp
May 27-30: Family Camp
June 28-July 1: CIT Camp (grades 9-11)
July 3-8: Transgender and Gender Diverse Teen Camp (ages 13-17)
July 10-13: Mini Camp (grades K-2nd)
July 10-15: Junior Camp (Grades 3-5)
July 17-22: Jr. High Camp (Grades 6-8)
July 24-29: Sr. High Camp (Grades 9-11)

Please visit our website at www.camptalahi.org to register for any of our camps. We also have some great discounts and scholarships available this year. As always there is a discount for multiple people from one family that attends camps this summer.

We have had a generous gift given to us this year to give out \$100 to each new camper to Camp Talahi. If you have a brand new camper that has never been to camp before, please email camptalah@gmail.com or text 406-855-4317 to get the coupon code before you register. This same donor has given scholarship to any returning camper that brings along a brand new camper to camp this summer. So if you are a returning camper and bring a brand new camper that has never been to Talahi before you will also get \$100 scholarship off your registration fee. Email or text to get this code as well. The gift will be \$50 for every brand new Mini Camper or returning Mini Camper bringing a brand new camper! This scholarship is limited to a total of \$5,000 so register today!!

If you need additional scholarship, find our scholarship application on the website as well.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this upcoming summer!

Blessings,
Kim Harris
Camp Talahi Operations Manager and Program Director
406-855-4317

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES
First Congregational United Church of Christ – Grand Ledge
Executive Board Meeting Minutes February 22, 2022

Call to Order

Moderator Leah Horn called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

The meeting was held over Zoom due to Covid-19 distancing recommendations. Two members attended by phone.

Board Members present: Charlene Avery, Gary Cypher, Kim Dible-Glasser, Lynn Hart, Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Leah Horn, Thea Oatman, Mary Lou Prevost and Fay Schroeder.

Excused Member: Pastor Laura Miller-Purrenhage Also present: Linda Gooley

Spiritual Reflection

In the absence of Pastor Laura, Leah began with prayer.

Open Forum

No one was present for this item.

Consent Agenda

Due to illness, there was no Pastor's Report. The remaining items were accepted.

Action and Discussion Items

Stewardship Campaign

Totals remain the same as reported at the Annual Meeting.

Update to Covid-19 Prevention Program

There was a lengthy discussion to consider updating our policy of mask requirements. It was determined that it is extremely difficult to keep up with writing new policies due to the rapidly changing guidelines from the CDC and the State of Michigan. Motion made by Fay Schroeder and seconded by Charlene Avery to adapt the recommended guidelines from the CDC as changes occur. Motion carried.

Return to Congregational singing during worship

After discussing the possibility of the return to congregational singing during worship, it was decided that there would be no action taken at this time. We may revisit this in March.

Wedding Questions

In response to the wedding questions posed in an e-mail by Pastor Laura, it was the opinion of the Board that wearing masks or not during the ceremony should be the decision left up to the Pastor. Also, with input from the Tech Team, who are not videographers, since the cameras are stationary mounted, it may not be possible to provide acceptable coverage of the proceedings to meet the participants approval. Therefore, it is recommended that the church not provide video recordings.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

Personnel Question

Linda Gooley asked for clarification of the job responsibilities for the position of Christian Educator, currently being filled by Demphna Krikorian, in order to prepare a job description. Linda referred to a rough job description, a copy of which she had provided to the Board prior to tonight's meeting. Based on information discussed, Linda will prepare the job description to be entered into the Personnel files.

New Business

The Board of Congregational Life asked to return to the use of bread and cups to serve for Communion service. The Board agreed. Congregational Life also asked if an 8:30 a.m.

Easter sunrise breakfast should be offered this year. The consensus of the Board, because of Covid issues, was tending not to offer food at this time, but is willing to revisit it next month.

In Pastor Laura's absence, Jim Robinson was asked by someone for a gas card. On behalf of our church, Jim purchased a card for this person and will turn in his bill for reimbursement. Leah will follow up with Pastor Laura to see if there is a procedure in place for gifting the gas cards.

Leah just learned that Darlene Banks may actually have fallen in the church parking lot several weeks ago. Leah will talk to Darlene to obtain more information and update the Board when she learns more.

Next meeting will be March 22, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., manner TBD. Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Mary Lou Prevost Church Clerk



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., Denny E. and Shirley 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.*

Eaton County Department of Resource Recovery

RECYCLING FEVER

JUNE 18, 2022 9 PM - 2 PM

*****Registration Required*****

Location is released upon completion of registration

Register online: <http://www.eatoncounty.org/913/>

ELECTRONICS: Computer Accessories, CPUs, Printers, Fax Machines, Scanners, TVs, Cell Phones, Laptops, CD Players, Camcorders, Copiers, Small Kitchen Appliances, Remote Control Items, Fans, Hair Dryers & Curling Irons, or Anything with a Cord.

****NO FREON CONTAINING ITEMS, LARGE APPLIANCES, OR EXERCISE EQUIPMENT****

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE: Acids & bases, Aerosols (No empty cans), Asbestos, Asphalt & Roofing Tar, Automotive Fluids, Cleaners & Polishes, Varnishes, Fluorescent Light Bulbs, Fire Extinguishers, Flammables, Flea Collars & Sprays, Glues & Caulks, Household Cleaners, Mercury & Mercury containing Items, Oil based Paint, Paint Thinners, Pool Chemicals, Solvents, Pesticides, Herbicides, Sharps (Must be in a Puncture-Resistant Container), and Wood Preservatives.

****NO LATEX BASED PAINTS, MEDICATIONS, OR BATTERIES****

PARTICIPANT RULES:

1. Events are for private (non-commercial) residents of Eaton County.
2. **Registration is required and your participation is important.** If cancellation is unavoidable, please provide 48 hours notice. Limit of TWO registrations per household. Registration opens on March 15, 2022 at 12 pm and closes June 15, 2022 at 12 pm.
3. **Electronics: NO refrigerators/freezers, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, large appliances, or exercise equipment will be accepted. \$10 suggested donation per TV or monitor.**
4. **Household Hazardous Waste: NO latex based paints, medications, or batteries will be accepted.** Please visit our website for disposal options. **Anything over 10 1-Gallon Cans of Paint will be charged \$1 per can.**
5. **YOU MUST REMAIN IN YOUR VEHICLE** for the duration of the event. Workers will retrieve your recyclables for you.



For questions, cancelation notifications, or [volunteer information](#): visit <http://www.eatoncounty.org/913/>, email Recycle@eatoncounty.org, or call (517) 543-3686.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



The Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ is pleased to announce the election of Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, as the next settled Conference Minister of our Conference.

Lillian Daniel is a nationally recognized preacher, teacher, and writer who cares deeply about clergy and congregations. After serving four unique congregations in the UCC, she now feels called by the Holy Spirit to leadership as the next Conference Minister of Michigan.

A graduate of Yale Divinity School, she began her ministry as an Associate Pastor at a large church in Cheshire, Connecticut. From there she became a Solo Pastor at a small urban church in New Haven, Connecticut where the choir outnumbered the congregation, but over eight years, they grew to become a vibrant, interracial community that also became Open and Affirming. This would be the first of three churches to go through the Open and Affirming Process under her pastoral leadership; which also includes extensive experience organizing for justice in politically diverse settings, serving on boards of Interfaith Worker Justice and the Community Renewal Society. After ten years as a Senior Pastor at a large church in the western suburbs of Chicago, Lillian moved to the beautiful drift less region of Dubuque, Iowa where she has been Senior Pastor at an historic urban church since 2016.

Rev. Daniel will begin her ministry as our Conference Minister on July 1, 2022. Please join us in welcoming Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel to Michigan and keeping her in prayer during this time of transition.

Judith Booker
Board President
Michigan Conference United Church of Christ

May 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	2 6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	3 Congregators Meeting 1pm at Sophias	4 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	5 7- 8:30 pm Choir Practice	6	7 10am AA Women
8 9:00 Christian Ed Meeting 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	9 6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	10	11 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	12 7- 8:30 pm Choir Practice	13	14 10am AA Women
15 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Wor- ship Service	16 6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	17	18 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	19 7-8:30 pm Choir Practice	20	21 10am AA Women
22 10:30am In-Person and Facebk Worship Service	23 6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	24 6:30pm Execu- tive Board Meeting	25 6pm AA 7:30pm Al-Anon 8pm AA	26 7-8:30 pm Choir Practice	27	28 10am AA Women
29 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	30 6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	31				

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

DATE	May 1	May 8	May 15	May 22	May 29
THEME	Making the Invisible Visible	Mother's Day	Mental Health Sunday	Holy Hilarity Sunday	
TEXT	Psalm 150 John 20: 19-31	Psalm 23 Acts 9:36-43	Psalm 30:1-5 Revelation 21:1-6		
HEAD USHER	Chris Cypher	Kathy Burt	Freida Schneeberger	Leah Horn	Kim Dible
GREETER	Gary Cypher	Gay Burt	Sandy Sipes	Lynn Hart	Connie Dible
LITURGIST	Anita Calcagno	MaryLou Prevost	Marcia Kent	Jim Hart	Rich Brown
SOUNDBOARD	Julie Wilkinson	Julie Wilkinson	Julie Wilkinson	Charlynn Walker	Karen walker
VIRTUAL COORDINATOR	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee
HYMN SINGER	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir



MAY BIRTHDAYS

Josh Gooley	3rd
Sandy Sipes	4th
Bobbie Tanasse	5th
Olivia Westfall	5th
Ted Westfall	5th
Kyler Posey	10th
Paul Oatman	12th
Mike Pier	24th
Lisa Reed	26th
Pam Westfall	27th



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 Fax: 517- 627- 4539
 Office E-mail: office@grandledgeucc.org
 Pastor's E-mail: pastor@grandledgeucc.org
 Emergency Contact 517-374-0145
grandledgeucc.org



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	<p style="text-align: center;">STAFF</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage Larry Patterson Office Administrator Brandon Frost, Choir Director Darlene Banks, Bell Choir Director Chuck Byam, Organist & Accompanist Rev. Demphna Krikorian, Christian Educator Ben Sackett, Custodian Nicole Finney, Nursery Care Provider Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS & BOARD CHAIRS</p> <p>Leah Horn, Moderator Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Vice Moderator Mary Lou Prevost, Clerk Fay Schroeder, Treasurer Lynn Hart, Financial Secretary Charlene Avery, Member-at-Large Thea Oatman, Member-at-Large Gary Cypher, Member-at-Large Kelly Stuible-Clark, Christian Education Kim Dible, Congregational Life</p>
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