



# THE CHURCH WINDOW

*August 2022*



## FROM THE PASTOR'S KEYBOARD

Dear Ones,

I wonder what the word “Homecoming” means to you? Some of us think of our high schools. For some of us, high school brings back great memories and we are excited about Homecoming. For others, it was a painful time that we are glad to be done with and so we skip Homecoming. Others, who live in a town with a large university, may also not have fond memories of Homecoming because it means busy streets, crowded restaurants, and noise-filled nights. For others, Homecoming means parades, wonderful and lively marching band music, tailgating with friends, and an exciting football game. For my husband and I, homecoming has a special meaning. Every five years, we take a special trip back to our college campus (which is where we met and also where our two oldest children graduated from). Although our college holds Homecoming every year, they have special events for every fifth year since a class has graduated. We meet up with friends we graduated with, take a campus tour, meet the current faculty and administration, and get the obligatory class picture. We talk about how many things have changed and what has, somehow, stayed the same (I swear the dorm furniture hasn’t budged in 30 years!). We reminisce about our days in school—about that one prof that everyone loved or hated, about how bad the food was, about the concerts or performances or sports that we were in together, about that one time when so and so did the craziest thing. And we share stories about how we are now—what we are doing, how our families are. Our class was small enough that many of us knew each other, and every time, it’s like coming home again.

A church is different from a high school or a college but, for many of us, it holds that one similarity to my college experiences—it feels like a home, like a family. In the life of our church, we have celebrated that feeling of family and our history together through some large events, like our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of worshipping in this building or the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our existence. But it seems appropriate that, after three years of a pandemic that has separated us, we should start our program year with our own Homecoming celebration. We invite you all to worship with us on the second Sunday in September. Help us to welcome new members and friends, while also celebrating and remembering our past. Help us to consecrate the stuffed animals and warm blankets that adorn our sanctuary and offer us comfort. Take a tour of the church building and grounds after the service to see what new things are happening (I'm looking at you Youth room!) and to see some of our history displayed in the parlor. Join us outside for a time of fellowship and take the time to ask some of our “oldsters” about how the church used to be. Then take some time to ask some of our “youngsters” what they love about this church now and what they're looking forward to. And in the midst of all of this, let us remember who it is who brings us together in community and in covenant, our beloved God and Creator. Let us worship the one who redeemed and blessed us with his grace, our dear friend Jesus Christ. And let us listen for the voice of the one who calls us into service as disciples of Christ, our blessed guide and comforter, the Holy Spirit. Let us all come home.

## Rally Sunday

Rally Sunday will be September 11. This year's theme will be "Homecoming" and we want to invite all of our friends and members back to celebrate! This is also a wonderful time to bring friends that would like to learn more about our church, as we kick off our church year, welcome our talented music ensembles back, and bring the stuffies and blankets back to the pews. There will be a special moment for youth to participate, as well as fellowship after and a special arts and crafts project for young people. We hope to see you there!

## Share Your Story

We would love to hear the story of your faith journey: what inspires you, what gives you strength and hope. What brought you to First Congregational and what keeps you coming back? Please consider sharing your story with us in a short ten minute message during our worship service. Pastor Laura will be happy to give suggestions and help if needed. Please call the office or contact Kim Dible to reserve one of the following dates:

November 27

## 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.

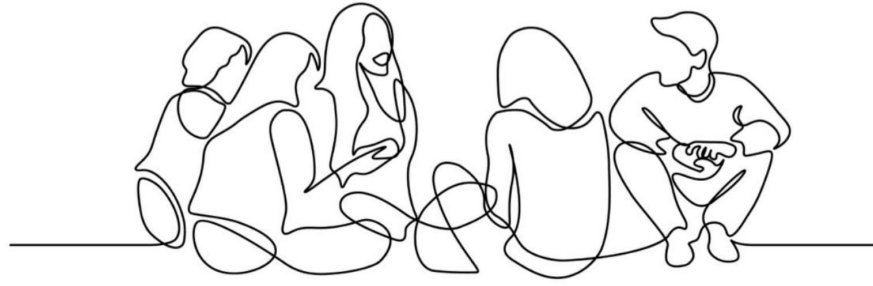
**Prayer request:** Please pray for those affected by the Coronavirus as well as all those on our prayer list: Darlene B., Corey, Kaleb, Beth P., Doris B., Lili B., Kathy H., Cindy G., Carole S., Barbara N., Geri L., Robert E., Larry and Carol S., Marty S, Maryann, Patricia R., Sarah B., Jenna P., Ron,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

## 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/>



**FCUCC Teen Fellowship (new name for Youth Group) 2022/23 Calendar:**

On the first Sunday of every month, the youth of our church have started to meet.

Please note the change in September.

Grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> are invited to attend.

NOTE: No Youth Group on Sunday, Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> due to the Labor Day Weekend.

1. **September 11<sup>th</sup>: Rally Sunday.** We will be involved in the worship service & help make pennants for our school for the bulletin board after church at the church fellowship party for Rally Sunday.
2. **October:** Scary Movie with popcorn and hotdogs.
3. **November:** Tie blankets for shelters
4. **December:** Card signing and cookie baking to be delivered to the homebound members of our church and white elephant exchange.
5. **January:** Help organize toys at Child and Family Charities. Pizza lunch.
6. **February:** Tie blankets for shelters and Canned Food Drive
7. **March:** Planning meeting for 2023-2024

→Demphna Krikorian can be reached at 248-396-2266, [demphna@childandfamily.org](mailto:demphna@childandfamily.org). You can also share your thoughts about the program with her as well. We are always looking to improve!

ANYONE 18 and older can help as a counselor. You will need a Background check provided by the church and a short training, that's all! P.S. this experience looks great on a resume!

***Thank you!***

### CONGREGATORS

After taking off the summer months, we look forward to meeting for lunch and conversations to catch up on so many things. Plan to meet at 1pm at Sophia's restaurant on Tuesday, September 6 as we go back to our first Tuesday of the month schedule. New friends are always welcome to join the 'regulars!' Let one of us know if you can attend!

**Charlene (517.281.5019) or Sandy (517.420.2121)**

### WOMEN GATHERING OVER DEVOTIONS

The first Women Gathering Over Devotions will be September 19, 2022 at noon in the Fellowship Hall. We have decided to read the book, "The Infinite Jeff" by Will Holcomb. For our September meeting, we will read and discuss the first 10 chapters. The book can be purchased either through Amazon or at Barnes and Noble.

Again, this program year, we will continue to bring our own brown bag lunch and drink. We will enjoy lunch together and then discuss the book.

If you are thinking of joining us, just come and see what we are all about. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me: Fay Schroeder, at either (517) 627-2727 or [fschroeder4200@yahoo.com](mailto:fschroeder4200@yahoo.com).

### SISTERS OF RUTH

Sisters of Ruth will begin our program year by meeting on September 12, 2022 at 12:30 p.m. at the Cancun Restaurant. We will discuss our community projects for the year. If you have any questions, contact Fay Schroeder.

## Income and Expense Report

	<u>Actual</u> July 22	<u>Actual</u> Year-to-Date	<u>Budget</u> Year-to-Date	<u>Annual</u> Budget
INCOME	\$23,586.24	\$ 96,303.30	\$ 76,927.67	\$131,876.00
EXPENSES	<u>9,099.87</u>	<u>83,120.99</u>	<u>87,981.83</u>	<u>152,326.00</u>
BALANCE	\$ 14,486.37	\$ 13,182.31	(\$ 11,054.17)	(\$ 20,450.00)

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES**  
**First Congregational United Church of Christ – Grand Ledge**  
**Executive Board Meeting Minutes      July 26, 2022**

**Call to Order:**

Moderator Leah Horn called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

The meeting was held in the Fellowship Hall with 8 members in attendance.

Board Members present were: Charlene Avery, Gary Cypher, Ron Erskine, Lynn Hart, Leah Horn, Thea Oatman, Mary Lou Prevost, and Fay Schroeder.

Excused Members: Kim Dible-Glasser, Karen Holcomb-Merrill, Pastor Laura Miller-Purrenhage, and Kelly Stuible-Clark.

**Spiritual Reflection:**

Leah began with a spiritual reflection from the UCC Daily Devotional.

**Open Forum:** No one was present for this item.

**Consent Agenda:**

All items were accepted as submitted.

Lynn posed a question referring to the Pastor's report, item 1. C. Kudos, which thanked, in part, "Demphna Krikorian for her willingness to re-instate Sunday school this summer. Normally, she is supposed to have that time off". Lynn's question was, "who authorized her to work through the summer; because I thought our budget was just through the school year?" After discussion, it was determined that approval did not come from the Executive Board, which would present a break in our protocol for this type of action. Leah will contact Kelly Stuible-Clark to find out more information.

**Action and Discussion Items:**

Bi-Vocational Pastor Book Read and Review of Call Agreement Update:

A small group consisting of Mary Lou, Lynn, Kim, and Leah have been working with Pastor Laura to look at the tasks involved in the ministries of our church as they pertain to her Call Agreement and the scope of her work. Also, as they pertain to responsibilities and ministries that leaders and various committee members and lay persons in our church should realistically expect to take over with the calling of a part-time minister. Our hope is to prioritize those ministries we wish Pastor Laura to accomplish within the 20-25 hours per week outlined in her Call Agreement. Also, to prioritize and make decisions about how to accomplish those tasks and ministries that are deemed not to be Pastor Laura's responsibilities. The plan is to present the findings of this process to the Board as soon as possible. These discussions will be an on-going process for her and us as well.



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

### Review of Procedures for Protestors/Disruptions During Worship:

Karen has received the recording of the Webinar, but in her absence, this item has been tabled.

### Possible Bystander Training:

Because Kelly was unable to attend the meeting tonight, this item as been tabled.

### Kids Hope Coordinator and Mentoring Program:

It is possible that we could be partnering with Emanuel Lutheran Church who was involved with this program prior to COVID. They lost a number of their participants since that time and are interested in working with our church in this endeavor. This would not have any affect on the requirement that both of our churches would be expected to pay the normal fees, which is \$1,000 for the first year and \$500 per year thereafter. It is accepted knowledge that this in a tremendous commitment which would last at least two years throughout the school year. It is planned that the program would be introduced during the service on the Sunday after Rally Sunday, with an informational opportunity presented to interested individuals following the service. A mentor does not have to be a member of our church or even going to our church. We talked about perhaps sharing one coordinator between the two churches sort or piggy-backing onto Emanuel Church if we find that no one is interested in the Coordinator position and we find that we do have people who would like to mentor. Fay and Leah will try to contact Lynn Danes from Emanuel, who is possibly still the coordinator of the program, to find out more information.

### Bids for Grounds Work:

Kim has received one bid for the tree removal and is hoping to receive additional bids. This item has been tabled.

### Employee Masking Requirements/Updating COVID Policy and Procedures:

At this time, there will be no change in the masking protocol for the congregation or the staff. Leah will prepare a statement to be included in the Thursday Pause and to be read in the service during announcement time concerning the signage on the doors and for the safety of everyone, if you are experiencing any symptoms to wear a mask.

### Wedding Policy Documents:

Fay and Lynn presented revised wedding procedures, fee guidelines and documents to be considered. After discussion and a few minor typing and grammatical corrections, a motion was made by Lynn, seconded by Fay to accept the wedding documents. Motion carried. Appreciation was expressed for accomplishing this daunting task.

### Political Announcements on Sunday Morning:

It was discussed that not all announcements at the beginning of the service are viewed as “good for the church” and have been met with objection from some members of the congregation. Leah will prepare a draft for the Board to tweak, which would rephrase the wording asking for any announcements at the beginning of the service to be limited to topics of upcoming church events and church-related business only.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

### Possible Change in Timeline/Process for Approving Meeting Minutes:

We discussed the fact that the Executive Board Minutes are almost three months old by the time they are published in the monthly Newsletter. This is witnessed by the fact that the April minutes were not included in the Newsletter until the July issue. The delay occurs because the Board meetings are usually held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, and the compilation of the Newsletter occurs the day after the Board meeting. To catch up, the May and June minutes will be published in the August Newsletter. Because of the timing, we will normally be one month behind in publishing the minutes. For the future, we may consider changing the Executive Board's meeting time to the third Tuesday to accommodate the lag in publication of the minutes. However, we can revisit this after each of the Boards' membership changes in January, to learn which week of the month they plan to meet and how the meeting dates impact this timing.

### **Miscellaneous Updates:**

#### Gas Cards:

Leah requested \$360 in gas cards from Meijer, and they approved \$250 in Gift cards, which could be used for gas or anything else. However, when the request was made, it indicated that the cards would be used for the Hayes Middle School project; so we are back to designating funds for the purchase of gas cards to be given out by our church. A motion was made by Fay and seconded by Charlene, since we are half way through the year, that we purchase 6 gas cards for \$25 a piece and add a line item to the budget to this effect. Motion passed.



#### Ceiling Fan Installation:

The fans have been ordered and will be scheduled for installation when they arrive. Bil Turner will coordinate the installation. Leah will give both Lynn and Fay a copy of the bid for the records.

#### Outreach Board Concerns:

Rich Brown, who serves on the Outreach Board, has agreed to do the administrative duties with setting up meetings, making announcements, and placing things on the calendar. However, one of the other members, currently Ron Erskine, will attend the Executive Board meetings. Also, Charlynn Walker said she would be willing to attend the Board meetings. For consistency purposes, Ron will work out with Charlynn who the representative will be to serve on the Executive Board.

#### Update on the Internet Issues:

David Gruner checked, and MetroNet is not available here. Larry contacted Comcast and learned that we are in a contract with them until April, 2023. To break this contract, we would be responsible for paying a breaking fee plus a \$35 a month fee to the end of the contract date. Since we have no alternative at this time, it is a moot point to look for other internet providers. There is a question as to the old computer that was donated, which may be causing some of our issues. The team is looking at different inexpensive options for the pur-



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

chase of a new laptop. Kelly pointed out that MSU has some in surplus which could be another option.

### Email Vote on an Employee Salary Advance/Loan:

The majority of the Board members felt that this was not a good idea and, therefore, did not approve this salary advance. Leah reached out to this employee and learned that they had other avenues they could explore. As a follow-up, Leah learned that everything had worked out.

### Background Check for Bell Choir Director:

Linda Gooley, Personnel Committee, reported that Carol Orsborn, volunteer for Bell Choir Director, has successfully completed a background check and is ready to assume this position.

### **New Business:**

Leah stated that our Nursery care person, Nicole, has not been here lately and after trying several avenues to contact Nicole without any response, Leah contacted Anita who will go by her apartment to see if she could find out any information.

Fay had a concern that she heard about a new law being considered that would require employers to provide part-time employees working 30 hours a week or more, one hour of sick pay. It was suggested that she contact the church's payroll company to see if they have more information.

The next Board meeting will be Tuesday, August 23, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Mary Lou Prevost, Church Clerk

# September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6pm Chancel Choir Practice	2	3  10am AA Wom- en
4  10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	5  Office Closed: LABOR DAY  6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	6  Congregators meetings, 1pm at So- phias	7  6pm AA 7:30pm AI-Anon 8pm AA	8  6pm Chancel Choir Practice	9	10  10am AA Wom- en
11  9:00 Christian Ed Meeting 10:30am In-Person and Facebook Wor- ship Service 11:45 AM Youth Event K-12	12  6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice  Sisters of Ruth, 12:30pm	13	14  6pm AA 7:30pm AI-Anon 8pm AA	15  6pm Chancel Choir Practice	16	17  10am AA Wom- en
18  10:30am In-Person and Facebk Worship Service	19  6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice  WGOD , 12pm Fellowship Hall	20	21  6pm AA 7:30pm AI-Anon 8pm AA	22  6pm Chancel Choir Practice	23	24  10am AA Wom- en
25  10:30am In-Person and Facebook Worship Service	26  6:30PM Grand Ringers Prac- tice	27  6:30pm Execu- tive Board Meet- ing	28  6pm AA 7:30pm AI-Anon 8pm AA	29  6pm Chancel Choir Practice	30	

## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

DATE	September 4	September 11	September 18	September 25	
THEME	The Shrewd Manager	Rally Sunday: Homecoming	Blessing Children		
TEXT	Proverbs 2:1-15 Luke 16:1-13	Joshua 1:1-9 Matthew 7:24-27	Psalm 127:3 Matthew 19:13-15		
HEAD USHER	Fay Schroeder	Kim Dible	Leah Horn	Cheryl Mattson	
GREETER	TBD	Connie Dible	Sandy Sipes	Karen Walker	
LITURGIST	TBD	Mary Lou Prevost	Rich Brown	Ron Erskine	
SOUNDBOARD	Charlynn Walker	Charlynn Walker	Charlynn Walker	Charlynn Walker	
VIRTUAL COORDINATOR	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	David Wee	
HYMN SINGER	Choir	Choir	Choir	Choir	



### September BIRTHDAYS

Linda Gooley	3rd
Alex Reed	4th
Chuck Byam	6th
Kay Kulp	9th
Julie Wilkinson	12th
Thea Oatman Oatman	13th
Ellen Robinson	18th
Charlene Avery	20th
Sue Ann Cole	25th
Connie Dible	29th
Pat Reed	29th



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<b>First Congregational UCC Mission Statement</b>		
<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>		
<b>PASTOR'S KEYBOARD</b>	1-2	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STAFF</b></p> <p>Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage            Larry Patterson Office Administrator            Brandon Frost, Choir Director            Carol Orsborn, Bell Choir Director            Chuck Byam, Organist &amp; Accompanist            Rev. Demphna Krikorian, Christian Educator            Ben Sackett, Custodian            Rev. John Baumgartner, Pastor Emeritus</p>
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		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS &amp; BOARD CHAIRS</b></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>