

Congregational Courier

THOUGHTS FROM BOB LIVINGSTON SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Friends:

Six months now into the pandemic and things are beginning to feel a bit more predictable. We Americans, as well as the whole world community, are learning how to keep ourselves and others more protected (in fact, I have enjoyed seeing the number of creative facemasks people are wearing!). We are following the safe social distancing recommendations of our State. We are abiding by group-size directives. We are hopeful for an effective vaccination in the (presumably) nearer future. We are even enjoying watching football on television again and are anticipating the big opening game of Michigan vs. Minnesota on October 24!



As I reflect more and more on these past months, I am grateful for the women and men who have gone over and above the “call of duty” to guide and help us through this difficult and uncertain time. In fact, there are so many people to recognize and thank that I cannot even begin to list them all! Indeed, you, and we, all know who these “heroes” are. My sincere thanks to each and every one of them (and you).

Yes, gratefulness is an important and powerful attitude and action for living and enjoying a rich and full life. Research points out the positive results of gratitude. Among the list is: greater life satisfaction, greater health, better relationships, reduction in aggression, better sleep, and higher self-esteem. Honestly, gratitude is a wonderful medicine for a happier life!

In that vein, I want you, our beloved FCC congregation, to know how much I appreciate the many ways you have reached out to others and offered your support and encouragement during these past months. In fact, just this past week, I received a call from one of our members

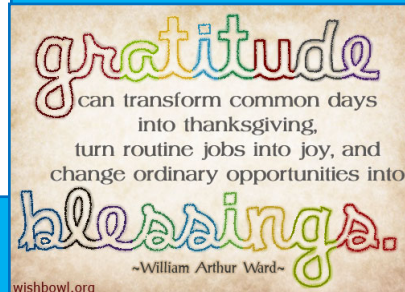
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Whatever Your Story, You're Welcome Here



simply to check up on me! As one of your ministers, I often hear about meals being offered, cards being sent, outdoor “check-ins” that have occurred, thoughtful donations that have been received...and scores of other caring things you have done. You are special!

So my charge to you these next two months is to live with gratitude, in spite of the challenges, hardships, and disappointments. After all, November is the month of Thanksgiving!

Indeed, I am already celebrating!

Affectionately,



Bob Livingston
Senior Minister



PS. The Opening the Church Task Force, a sub-committee of Council, met again last week. They have recommended NOT opening the building for programming and worship during the month of October, and likely the month of November as well. This decision is based on the recommendations of our State regarding indoor group size, as well as the ongoing completion of the construction, which is estimated to be finished about the end of October. Thus our weekly services will continue online at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings throughout the months of October and November, with curbside communion offered weekly on the William Street side of the church building from 9 – 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We will keep you updated on building openings via the Friday email and Website postings...and even by mail when necessary. We are all making your safety and health our highest priority. Indeed, I can't wait until the day when we are all joyfully back together in our beautiful building! Please stay tuned.



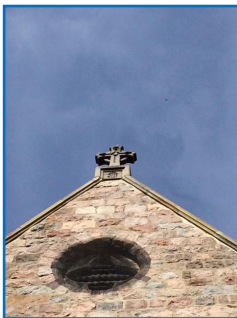
DARCY CRAIN MINISTER



Sunday Assembly or Church?

In the mountain of research, sociological writing and speculation about the trend of churches, belief, and spirituality in the United States, it is of no surprise that the trend of the past 50 years has been a decline in membership, church attendance, and allegiance to a particular faith tradition. People are “spiritual but not religious,” “belonging but not believing,” “agnostic but not atheist,” and a collection of other broad statements that describe the decrease in religiosity. Much of my dissertation work is in this capacity, and this month I read about a relatively recent franchise called Sunday Assembly. Its motto is: “live better, help often, wonder more.” Sunday Assembly is not a Christian organization. It does use spaces of closed down Christian churches to gather. It does include aspects of ritual and believes in the power of community to volunteer and effect change for the better. It does encourage its participants to wonder about the universe and our role and purpose within it. It does happen to assemble itself on Sunday mornings. It’s like belonging to a church without the belief of what the church is about. It’s not a bad thing, the purpose of this work is not to diss Sunday Assembly. I have nothing against that organization. I am intrigued however, by the current spiritual and anti-religious landscape in which we live that would foster the success of such an organization. We have become an apologetic faith, and not without reason. We qualify what kind of Christian we are. We are a Christian but we don’t hate gay people. I go to church but I’m not going to judge you if you don’t. I believe in God, but you do what makes you comfortable.

I think that what makes us Christian is not how the media paints Christianity in America. That mural of faith requires more apologetics and explanations. What makes us Christian is how we answer the why of assembling on Sunday mornings. It is why we worship and why we pray. It is why we love our neighbor and care about the least and the last. The why comes down to Jesus and the message Jesus had for us. If we internalize that message, if we truly believe that the kind of life Jesus led, taught others to lead, and died and rose for, is the best possible way to live then we proclaim unashamedly, that we are Christian. We assemble on Sunday mornings not because there is nothing else to do but because we worship a God who has blessed us in innumerable ways and is worthy of our praise. We worship because the stories in our Bible are not meant to be used for political policy or for fear-mongering but for binding us together in faith with a God



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who loves us in an unrelenting way. This is our why.

I love our faith. I believe with every fiber in my being the story of Jesus and God's love. It has changed me, it has changed our world, and it will continue to do so through us. So let us have the courage to be spiritual and religious. Let us belong and believe.

Let us identify as a follower of Jesus and may our words and actions be the only qualifier we need. We will assemble on Sunday, yes, for worship, in our God whom we believe, whom we love, and whom we serve.



RACHEL DUDLEY
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

The Importance of Socialization

I saw a post on Instagram weeks ago that mentioned how socialization has become awkward! I hadn't really thought about this, but since seeing that post I've realized how vital socialization is to all of us. Here are three examples that cemented in my mind just how much people are in need of socialization right now:

1. I spoke to a friend who mentioned her husband had followed a pest control guy around their house the previous day because he was needing someone outside of his family to talk to. The whole service call they talked about their common interests.
2. I called a more shy and reserved mom who is the sweetest person I've ever met. During our phone call she talked a mile a minute, the fastest I've ever heard her talk!
3. I attended an outdoor, safely spaced, gathering with a few friends and, within minutes, there were multiple conversations going on across each other, and each kept getting louder and louder as people excitedly talked. I've never heard this group of friends be so loud!

None of these three examples are outrageous or crazy, but they stood out to me because they are all interactions that would have been different before we were encouraged to limit our social interactions because of the pandemic.

I appreciate how seriously our community has taken the need to keep each other safe through distancing, but I encourage everyone to figure out ways to safely fill their need for socialization. Keeping our bodies healthy is important, but keeping our minds and souls healthy through socialization and community is also important.

My prayer is that when we can physically be close again our community will not just be healthy physically, but also spiritually, mentally, and emotionally!



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CHRISTMAS PAGEANT— NOW IN PRODUCTION!



This year's pageant is going to be like never before! For the first time ever we are recording the Christmas pageant ahead of time in small sections so that families can participate without sharing 'germs'. The final Christmas pageant will be broadcast near Christmas for all to enjoy from their homes, or wherever they find themselves near the holiday.

To make this possible, we need assistance from our FCC community! You do not need to have kids currently in the church school program to participate. We need everyone's help to make this the best Christmas pageant ever!

Are you willing to help in any of the following ways?

- Christmas Pageant Set-Up: The areas that recording will be taking place need to be set up to look like it is Christmas time! Are you up for decorating Christmas trees or the installation of the life size nativity stable in a classroom?
- Christmas Pageant Actors: Families are invited to sign up for a time slot to be recorded reading an assigned section of the Christmas story, and then dressing up in costume and acting it out. The recordings will be pieced together to form the virtual Christmas pageant. Recording will occur at the church with a limited crew (Rachel & Mitchell, wearing masks). Only one family will be allowed to record per evening.
- Musicians and Singers: Interested in singing one of the Christmas carols for the service or playing one of them on your musical instrument? New faces of all ages are encouraged to volunteer!
- Advent Calendar Recordings: Looking for volunteers to introduce themselves on camera, say a future given date ("Today is December 3rd"), pull the corresponding tag out of the advent calendar, and read what is on the tag. One person per date would be ideal.

Sign up to secure your recording time through the link in the Friday email and on the church website. All others are encouraged to email Rachel at rachel@fccannarbor.org to express interest. You will receive a call or email back to arrange recording times, locations, discuss songs, etc.

Thank you in advance for making this year's Christmas pageant one we will never forget!



HISTORIAN'S CORNER

BETTY BISHOP

I did a little research on church historical markers while on a vacation trip this August. We are planning to have a historical marker from the State of Michigan for the First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor as part of the 175th Anniversary celebrations. I was interested to see similar historical markers on Congregational churches in Charlevoix and Frankfort, both on the Lake Michigan coast.

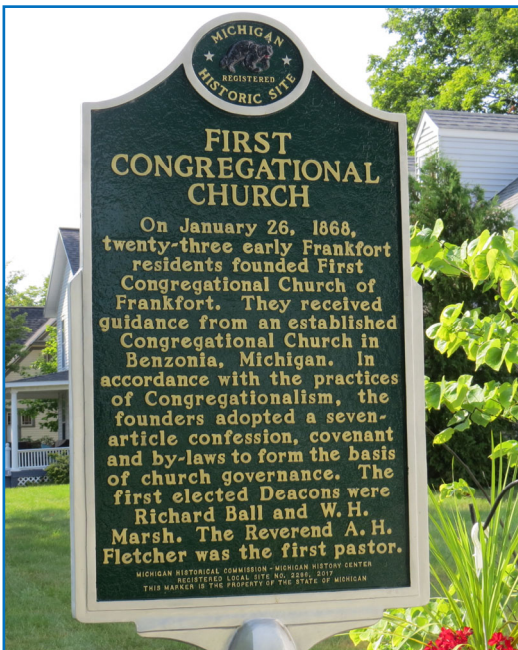
The First Congregational church of Charlevoix was



formed in 1882 and their current church was built in 1885. Church women held fundraisers to help finance the building. Stained glass windows were installed in 1884 and a bell made of Michigan copper and Banca tin was added in 1886. The church later added a wing and a fellowship hall.



Slightly further south the First Congregational Church of Frankfort was founded in 1868 with



guidance from an already established church in nearby Benzonia. Land for the church was donated by the Frankfort Land Company whose manager, Eugene B. Frost, was a charter member of the church. A loan from the Congregational Church Building Society financed the \$5,000 building cost. An addition in 1960 provided offices and space for Sunday school classrooms.



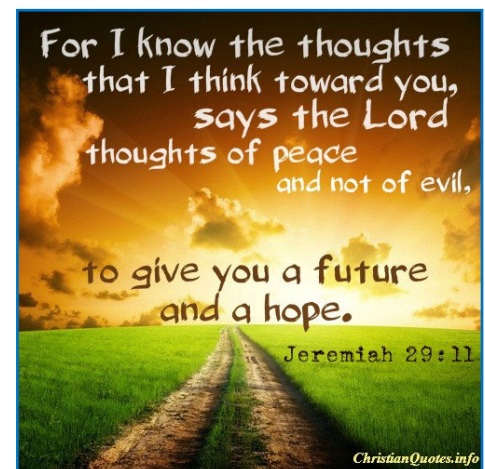
THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION
GEORGE WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 3, 1789



Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and-Whereas both Houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me "to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness:"

Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favor, able interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations, and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions; to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us), and to bless them with good governments, peace, and concord; to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us; and, generally, to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.



GREAT LAKES SCRIP PROGRAM

NANCY SAUVE, FCC BOOKKEEPER

The Virtual Scrip Table is OPEN!

While we are not yet back in our Sanctuary, the Scrip program raising money for future mission/work trips continues. Many thanks to those who have ordered online. The difference between the retail value you purchase and the amount we pay for the card is deposited directly into our account at the church. For example: \$400 in Amazon cards purchased directly from Scrip yielded \$9 for mission /work trips. IT adds up quickly when



many participate in the program.

To order, or for more information on how to purchase online or with the new and improved app for your phone, please contact Nancy Sauve at nancy@fccannarbor.org.

FCC CORE IDENTITY

Mission

We are a beacon of God's love, hope, and Christian freedom.

Vision

We are a joyous spiritual home, welcoming and valuing all people, engaging God's Word, and enriching lives.

Core Values

Compassion – We are a deeply caring faith community, demonstrating God's universal love and mutual respect.

Joy and Positivity – We are a faith community that faces life with open-mindedness, positivity, and a generous spirit.

Integrity – We are a faith community that builds trust through a commitment to authenticity and guided by the humility of Christ.

Courage – We are a faith community committed to persevere and grow in the midst of challenges and opportunities.

Inclusive – Whatever your story, we accept you as you are and believe God's doors are open to all.

INSPIRATION

SUSAN AGER, FORMER DETROIT FREE PRESS JOURNALIST

Circa 1998. Copied by Robbie Sawitski from an old and yellowed newspaper clipping that traveled with me as a source of inspiration to the bottom of the Grand Canyon and back.

The Old Testament's Job, tested by God, cried out in bitterness, "My soul is weary of my life." Yet most of us can say that, even when our lives are in decent order. Every piece of your life, blown to bits by trouble.

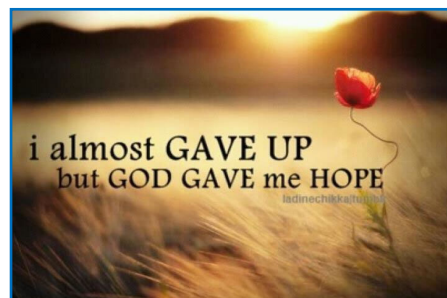
Switching metaphors, what's good about big trouble is that it blows through your life like a whirlwind and forces you down on your knees to put things straight again.

Kneeling is healthy, especially for the proud. When you kneel you can't run. You can do nothing but examine every piece of your life blown to bits by trouble.

Then you must choose very deliberately, what to save and what to toss. What to try to glue back together, and what to bury and forget.

Trouble that doesn't kill you makes you neater. Finally, you can get off your knees and walk again, more nimbly, because so much of what you carried around before is gone.

The good news about trouble: It reduces you, and introduces you, to your essence.



<https://susanager.net/>

While she's best known for her 25 years at the Detroit Free Press, which included 16 years as a columnist, Susan earlier worked for the Associated Press in Lansing, Mich. and San Francisco, and at the San Jose Mercury News. In 2018 she was inducted into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame.

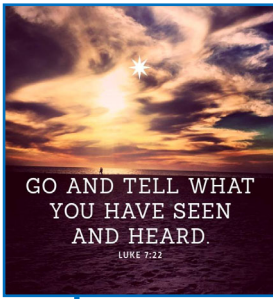
Susan's hometown is Detroit but she now lives in a village of about 500 people in northern Michigan, where she continues to write, edit, teach, speak and take on other projects. Among them is the gathering and writing of "Life Stories" for men and women who don't want the tales of their lives to go untold.



Thank you!

COMMUNION TABLE FLOWERS AND LAY READERS

The need for communion table flowers and lay readers has been put on hold until the group guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic is relaxed and we are able once again to resume public worship services. Though we have no idea when we will actually return to the sanctuary, *hope springs eternal*. You will be the first to know when we are, once again, in need of lay readers and flowers. Please look to the Friday Emails and the church website for updates. Your willingness to participate in the worship service in these ways is greatly appreciated.



CHURCH COUNCIL

CHRIS VERMEULEN, CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY

Elected Positions

Church Council Chair	Lynda Norton
Church Council Vice-Chair	Bruce Pringle
Secretary	Chris Vermeulen
Treasurer	Mike Dabbs
Clerk	Peg Jacobs
Historian	Betty Bishop

Remaining Positions, Filled According to Role

Board of Deacons Co-Chairs	Jane DeLancey, Michael Makin
Board of Trustees Chair	Mark Schirmer
Board of Christian Education Chair	Val Towery
Director of Children's Ministry	Rachel Dudley
Missions & Outreach Comm. Co-Chairs	Pam Dabbs, Greg Eggleston
Music Committee Chair	Paul Fossum
Nominating Committee Co-Chairs	Rick Muhs, Kristy Stoneburner
Activities & Fellowship Comm. Chair	Robbie Sawitski
Contemporary Issues Committee Chair	Sara Holmes
Ministers	Bob Livingston, Darcy Crain

Current Activities

Task Force for Opening the Church:

- The group formed to look into planning how and when the Church will be opened after the Stay-At-Home order has ended has been reviewing the health guidelines from the State. At this time the building will remain closed through the end of October. Another review will be done in mid-October regarding the month of November.

175th Anniversary in March 2022:

- Forming a group to start planning several events that will culminate in a celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Church in March of 2022. The group will be led by Betty Bishop.

Review of By-laws:

- The updated By-laws are available on the website for review by the Congregation. Currently, the plan is to present the revised By-laws for approval at a special meeting once the building is reopened. The By-laws Committee, appointed by the Church Council, met several times and had discussions with ministers, officers, and the Church Council. Most of the changes are clarifications, so the By-laws are aligned with the

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CHURCH COUNCIL

CHRIS VERMEULEN, CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY

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operation of the Church. Following is a summary of the changes recommended:

- ◇ Clarification of membership status (see Section 3.1)
- ◇ Combining employment matters into one section (see Section 5.1.c)
- ◇ Clarification of responsibilities of Church Council (see Section 5.2.a)
- ◇ Clarification of the annual audit (see Section 6.4.b)
- ◇ Clarification of the budget process (see Section 6.4.c)

If you have questions, please contact Chris Vermeulen, Church Council Secretary.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Church Council with questions, comments, or concerns. We appreciate your feedback on the activities of the Church.

Next Scheduled Meetings:

October 19

November 16

FCC CORE VALUE STORY on COURAGE

MARK SCHIRMER

As Chair of the Trustees, I'm fortunate to routinely hear detailed reports on all the great work routinely put forth to support The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor. The commitment demonstrated by the many boards and committees is so much appreciated.

This month, we wanted to celebrate our church staff for all they are doing to support our church during these very complicated and uncertain times. All the Trustees recognize their hard work, as every day seems to bring new challenges.

At the Church Council meeting last month, I was thinking about all the extra effort our church staff — particularly the leadership from our ministers Bob and Darcy, and Rachel, our Director of Children's Ministry — puts in week-after-week, and could not help but recognize that their commitment to FCC is the personification of our Core Value of Courage.

Courage: *We are a faith community committed to persevere and grow in the midst of challenges and opportunities.*

On behalf of all of the Trustees, I want to send a special thanks to all the church staff — a courageous group indeed!

If you have a story that you would like to share that reflects an aspect of our FCC Core Identity, please submit it to office@fccannarbor.org. This is who we are...let's share our stories together!





TREASURER'S REPORT

MIKE DABBS

The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor 2020 – 2021 SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT August 31, 2020

	ACTUAL 6/30/20	APPROVED BUDGET 7/1/20 – 6/30/21	NOTES
REVENUE			
Pledges	\$ 19,830	\$500,000	1
Gifts – Operations	11,218	53,000	
Other Income	2,985	26,887	
Special Funds Transfer	<u>-0-</u>	<u>15,325</u>	2
Total Revenue	\$ 34,033	\$595,212	
EXPENSES			
Ministry	\$ 32,481	\$232,079	
Administrative/Office	28,110	325,668	
Christian Education	4,701	53,980	
Music	4,688	69,726	
Missions & Outreach	2,500	34,000	
Maintenance & Utilities	<u>4,556</u>	<u>106,060</u>	
Total Expenses	\$ 77,036	\$821,513	
NET REVENUE	(\$ 43,003)	(\$226,301)	
TRUST FUND DISTRIBUTION	-0-	+ \$184,550	3
	<u>-0-</u>	<u>+ 41,751</u>	4
BALANCE	(\$ 43,003)	\$ -0-	

Notes

- 1 Actual 2020-2021 Pledges expected to exceed Approved Budget by approximately \$20,000.
- 2 Pastoral Fund distribution of \$12,500 for staff education, M&O, and pastoral assistance. Memorial Fund distribution of \$3,325 will be made for 175th Anniversary Historian project.
- 3 2019-2020 Budget projected distribution from trust and endowment funds is 6%.
- 4 Additional distribution from trust and endowment funds, if necessary due to pandemic impact on church finances.

TREASURER'S REPORT

MIKE DABBS

Capital Campaign Note 2020-2021 Mortgage Principal payments will be \$32,406. Capital will Campaign contribute \$30,000 for Principal payments. The Principal payment is not reflected in the Annual Budget.

TREASURER'S NOTES

- The Financial Statement Summary reflects FCC's finances after the first two months of the year. It is difficult to forecast our future finances with just two months and it's even harder with these being summer months when we typically have less activity. However, I am concerned that we have received very little of our pledge income, though as I stated, this is not an uncommon situation due to the summer months and members being out-of-town.
- There is no further update in regards to the forgiveness of the federal government's PPP loan
- All expenses are at or less than budget, which we expected due to the pandemic's effect on church services and programs. However, until we get a better idea of how the U.S. economy recovers and when the church is able to return to in-person services; we have asked the staff, boards and committees to limit all discretionary spending.
- UHY has begun their Annual Financial Review of this past Fiscal Year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020). We anticipate UHY'S Report to the Trustees by November and as soon as this report is received and accepted by the Trustees, we will make it available to any interested member.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

BRIAN CONNELLY, CHAIR

We are not asking for money! That's right, this is not another money request from your Stewardship Committee, but just a simple thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Thanks to you, we not only reached our goal of \$500,000, but exceeded it! And that is the first time we have done that in many years. The timing of the campaign could not have been worse as it happened in the toughest of times -- right smack-dab as the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Yet you responded beyond what we could imagine.

So, we say

Thank You

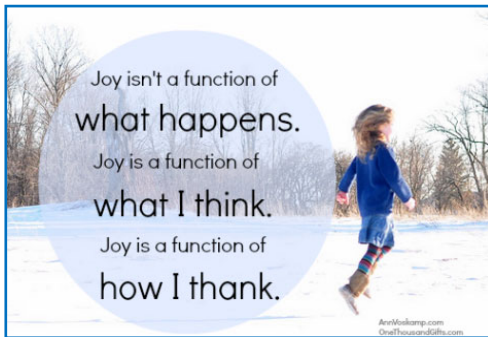
Thank You

Thank You

God willing, we will not be back to ask for pledges until next Spring.

ACTIVITIES AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

ROBBIE SAWITSKI, CHAIR



We will all be so joyful when our construction is finished, and we can gather and bask in all the glory that is FCC. We are planning to jump into the 'put the church back together' project as soon as the all clear is given. What a great moment that will be! Every 7-14 days, I have the opportunity to step inside our beautiful building. What strikes me the most is, even though it's empty, I can see and feel our congregation everywhere. There is

a lot of spirit that lives in our old building, even when we are not there. Okay, I know how anxious everyone is for something to look forward to, so I will give you the heads up that we will be having a **Make Me an Offer Rummage Sale** after the clean up has begun. The purpose will be to offer what is no longer needed at FCC to the congregation. After everyone has had a chance to say "yea" or 'nay', the leftovers will be donated or discarded. Knowing how generously our church always responds, please note that we do not need any donations for this rummage sale. Stay tuned for more details.

A Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving to All!

MUSIC COMMITTEE

PAUL FOSSUM, CHAIR

Mission Statement

We enthusiastically support the creation and enhancement of music within the worship service.

Vision Statement

We embrace music as an integral part of our spiritual experience.

Your FCC Music Committee recently gathered (virtually) for its first meeting of the 2020-21 church year. With music having been an abiding and integral part of The First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor's worship and its ministry tradition, the committee, with joy and seriousness, undertook its work of ensuring that each service and season will continue to be enhanced through the inclusion of thoughtfully selected and carefully prepared musical offerings.

Benediction



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DESIGN COMMITTEE

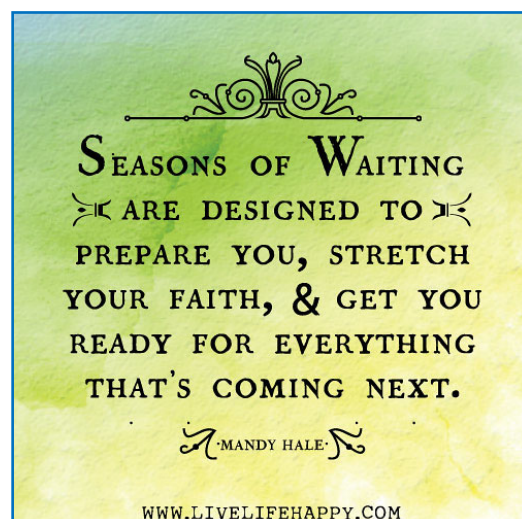
DAN JACOBS, CHAIR

The 2020 Capital Campaign Project is beginning to wrap up of many of the stages of the planned work. Infrastructure has been completed for the renovated areas and finishes are being applied. The project in general has stayed on track from the time the Governor allowed interior construction to start, but we are a little behind due to availability of sub-contractor staffing. We expect to be ready for the punch list to be performed mid-October.

I wanted to let you know of some of those infrastructure things which will not be noticeable to most, but have certainly added long term value to the building. Three of the electric panels in the Annex have been replaced with new panels, and a separate new panel has been added for the Mayflower Room Kitchenette. This has allowed us to properly wire up the appliances for both kitchens. Wiring has been replaced where it was found to be deteriorated. Most lighting and power supply wiring has been replaced to areas renovated. Floor drains now exist in all bathrooms. A grease trap was added to make our Pilgrim Hall Kitchen commercial qualified. Environmental items such as asbestos piping and tile base have been removed. Leaking walls were repaired. A better exhaust system has been added to all bathrooms. These are the things that most people will not notice, as they are hidden away, but they all have made FCC safer and better.

We are now focusing on the final touches. There is more to do, but it is mostly small projects. Bob is beginning to develop plans for restoring supplies and equipment to their final locations. Many of us will help in different ways such as mounting shelving, doing outside projects, and preparing for when everyone can return and see how great the space looks.

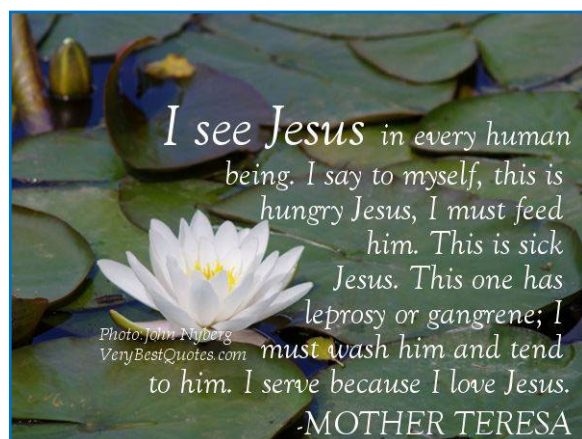
The Trustees and Design Team thank you for your donations and help to make this project a success.



MISSIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

PAM DABBS, CO-CHAIR

The M&O Committee would like to thank all our members who donated matching funds to the Hurricane Relief effort. It seems like hurricanes are reaching land in rapid fire, and whatever we send to help will be appreciated...yes, a lot of rain drops fill a bucket! It is heartwarming to see the empathy you show to others in need. Please watch the Friday emails to see the final count on your donations.



We wanted you to know that we are thinking about the Christmas Wish Tree for this year. There are so many unknowns as this article is being written such as: when will our church open, will we be able to have gift tags to take, do we need to do something online? Rest assured, we are focused on helping to make Christmas special for a lot of children who look forward to their gifts. We will keep you posted as to how we are going to do this through Friday emails. It will be fun to be a bit creative, and to keep the spirit of the season close to our hearts!



In addition, we just want to remind everyone that the CROP Walk is coming in October. This is a perfect way to do something special with your family, and you don't even have to leave your neighborhood to walk if you don't want to! Please see page 17 for details.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2020



Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 1, 2020, at 2:00 A.M.

On Saturday night, please set your clocks back one hour (i.e. gaining one hour) to "fall back."



2020 CROP HUNGER WALK

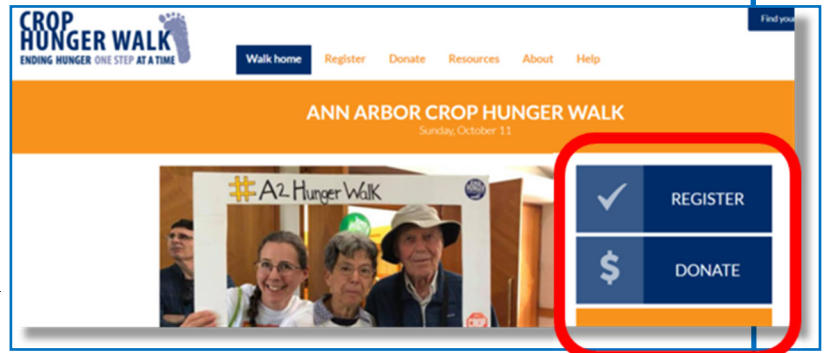
GREG EGGLESTON, CO-CHAIR

Taking regular walks during the pandemic? This year's **Crop Hunger Walk** will give you an opportunity to walk with purpose on October 11, 2020 to support this great organization and all the work they do to help end hunger both locally and globally.

Although there is a date and time for the event, your walk can take place at your convenience! At past events, participants walked together approximately ½ to 2 miles, but this year you choose your route and distance. Consider a yard sign or some other means to spread the word to your neighbors.

It's easy to participate and completely virtual. If you like, you can just donate and not register to walk. To register or donate go to <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/annarbormi>

Technical issues? Send your contribution to our member and event co-coordinator, Sara Eggleston, and she will get you registered and record your donation. Their address is 3153 North Wagner Rd. Ann Arbor 48103. If you need someone to walk you through the on-line registration and donation page, please call Sara at (734) 224-2425.



Whether you walk, pledge, donate, or all three, please make sure you indicate that you are part of the **First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor TEAM**. If you pledge and someone wants to support your walk, just share with them the above link and make sure they say they are donating to the FCC team. If you would like to share an image of you or your family on the walk, please send them, as jpeg attachments, to Robbie at the church office at office@fccannarbor.org.

HISTORY/ENDORSEMENT: The FCC Missions and Outreach committee is once again excited to support this worthy event. Last year FCC raised \$1,480.00! Let's exceed that amount this year knowing that food insecurities during the pandemic are on the rise. Please join member and event co-coordinator, Mary Mostaghim, in spirit as she walks for the 20th plus year in a row! What an important way to teach our young members how to give and participate in a worthy cause. Want to know some fascinating history of the walk that started over 50 years ago?

<https://resources.crophungerwalk.org/resource/50th-history/>



SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all gatherings at the church have been cancelled. Many meetings are being held electronically. Your group leader will contact you, or please watch your Friday emails for more information regarding all church meetings and gatherings.

TUESDAY NIGHT STUDY ~ TNS

In October and November, we are hoping to offer an occasional TNS gathering on Tuesday evenings, from 7 to 8:30 p.m., via Zoom. If gathering in this way is suitable to the group, Bob will email everyone with the date, the time, and Zoom link and Meeting Number/Password. Whether you have participated in the past, or are newly interested, please contact Bob at bob@fccannarbor.org for more information, or to affirm your interest in a virtual meeting.

TEXT BREAKFAST

Please join us Wednesday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. with Rev. Bob Livingston on Zoom! Our lively discussions include sharing our understandings, insights, and questions about the scripture for the upcoming Sunday sermon. Please watch the Friday Email for the scripture passage that will be discussed. Please email Bob at bob@fccannarbor.org if you would like to join us. All are welcome!

MIND AND SPIRIT BOOK GROUP

Mind and Spirit will be meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays via ZOOM in October and November. We will be reading *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* by Gregory Boyle, a Jesuit priest working with gang members in LA. We invite any interested women in the church to join us. Members attend when they are available and find it a meaningful way to connect with other women in the church who are interested in discussing issues regarding faith, spirituality and social issues. If you are interested in knowing more about the group, please contact Gail Haynes at 734-332-3434 or gehaynes@aol.com.

20/40 SMALL GROUP

We are group of young adults in our 20s through 40s, some with kids, some without, who love gathering and studying together. During this 2020 distancing time, many of us are feeling “zoomed out.” We are gathering every other Wednesday, potentially at two different locations concurrently, in order to keep our numbers reasonable for outdoor gatherings. Our plans change based on weather, infection rates, and children. When possible we hire childcare providers so that parents can focus and have some kid-free adult time. Our next gathering is September 30, outdoors in Darcy’s backyard. We will have a childcare provider onsite to help wrangle kids and keep them safe. We will be reading the Psalms (1 per week) as our Bible study during our Fall gathering times. If you have any questions or would like to be added to the distribution list, please email Darcy at darcy@fccannarbor.org.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

AN OUTREACH MINISTRY OF FCC
MARY ANN MARQUARDT

Circle of Friends is a visitation and assistance ministry that links home centered members, including those in long term care facilities, and *Circle Friends* (active members of First Congregational Church) in a one-to-one relationship. Circle of Friends provides a caring connection to the church through regular visits, spiritual support, and other kinds of assistance as appropriate for both parties.



We have not had any meetings due to Covid-19. Our group reaches out to seniors who are in assisted living facilities, living with family, or at home, and are unable to get to church. Our members have been able to stay in touch. Some of our seniors have had to stay in their rooms at senior facilities and are very lonely. We send our friends cards and talk by phone.



This year our member Gail Haynes started a group for church members who have lost a spouse. We introduced ourselves at a luncheon and several of the women have kept in touch with one another.

If you are interested in our group, please contact me by phone at 313-303-1989 or by email at maryannmarquardt73@gmail.com. Thank you!

CURBSIDE COMMUNION



Luke 22:19-20

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

Every Sunday morning before our worship service, we are offering weekly "Curbside Communion" from 9 - 9:30 a.m. on the William Street side of the church (simply drive up or walk up to the church entrance on William Street to receive the individually packaged elements). We look forward to celebrating with you.





The First
Congregational
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fccannarbor.org

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REACHING OUT TO YOU AND STAYING IN TOUCH

- **9:00 - 9:30 A.M. CURBSIDE COMMUNION**
- **10:00 - 11:00 A.M. LIVESTREAM SERVICE** From our home to yours. During Michigan's "Stay at Home Orders" we are broadcasting live on YouTube and Facebook. Our single service is a blended one, utilizing our wonderful traditional and contemporary musicians. We think you will like the variety! Please watch your Friday email and our Website for updates on how you can connect on Sunday morning. After the service has ended it will be linked to the homepage of our website so you can access it throughout the week. Our Communications Specialist, Crystal, will be monitoring the live-stream and will be able to help with most technical difficulties.



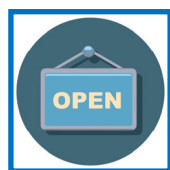
- Please check out the Black Lives Matter section on our website.



We see a very clear need for our voice to be loud in condemning racism and uplifting the truth that all Black Lives Matter. At FCC, we are committed to advocacy and continued

education through our faith, through open and frank conversations, through social responsibility, and through listening and learning. Please join us on this journey as we seek to lift up, reach out to, and care for our Black brothers and sisters during this very difficult time.

- For your spiritual nurture, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, we are posting videos, and on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, we are posting devotionals. These videos and devotionals are being prepared by various staff and other guests. Please check these out daily, as a way to "Look Up During Uncertain Times", by going to the link <https://www.fccannarbor.org/news-blog/>.



- Although the church building is closed, the church office is *VIRTUALLY OPEN*. Robbie is available Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. She has full access to the office files and calendar. The office phone number, 734-662-1679, rings through to her cell phone during these hours. After hours, messages come to her email, so you are always in touch with us.

Please call anytime!

Engaging God's word and enriching lives.