

March 2013

The Tie That Binds

First Congregational United Church of Christ

Cadillac, Michigan

~A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR~

I have been asked what does an intentional Interim pastor do? That is a good question. As an interim pastor, I do the usual things a settled pastor does. I prepare the worship service and the sermon for Sunday. I make hospital calls and calls on members and friends who are dealing with issues of health or aging. I support the Trustees and the committees and programs of the church. I will relate to the Cadillac Area Ministerial Association as I am able and be a public face of First Congregational Church in the community. I will coordinate with the secretary on the weekly email and the monthly newsletter.

Because I am in Cadillac only three days a week I need your help in identifying who is hospitalized or will be hospitalized and could use a pastoral call. I missed seeing Tim Vollmar by several days because I was not aware he was in the hospital. So if you, a family member or someone in the church is hospitalized or could use a pastoral visit, please give me a call at 614-748-4998. Please do not assume I already know of the situation. I would rather have multiple calls than miss a person who could use a pastoral visit.

In addition to all of the regular pastoral responsibilities, there are a number of specific tasks that an intentional interim does with the congregation. One of those tasks is known as “discerning the congregation’s purpose and identity.” In some church’s this is a very necessary undertaking. But here at First Congregational Church, I think you have been doing this task over the past year or so in the process that resulted in the vote at the January Annual Meeting declaring the church to be Open and Affirming. My role as the interim pastor will be helping you “live into” being an ONA congregation.

How will being ONA impact the mission and ministry of the church? The place of the church in the greater community?

Another of the interim tasks is “coming to terms with the congregation’s history.” I will work with the members to recall the history of the church, including the relationships with former ministers. The hope is that this work will help us build on the strengths of the past and also deal with the shortcomings and challenges that have caused tension and pain, so healing can happen. A third important task of this interim time is “reaffirming and strengthening denominational links”.

This is very important as the church moves into the search process to find a person to call as your settled pastor. Again you as a church have already been about strengthening the links with the United Church of Christ as you worked through the Open and Affirming process. And the Trustees at their February meeting accepted the challenge of Michigan Conference Minister Campbell Lovett that each congregation establish or strengthen a partnership with a local community ministry. Campbell has called this the 2 X 2 program. The Trustees decided to strengthen the relationship with the free clinic, committing to 4 pancake brunches in 2013. The first one will be on Saturday, March 16. And also exploring with the clinic what other ways the partnership between the clinic and First Congregational can be strengthened.

There is important work and ministry to do during this time of transition between called pastors. I look forward to engaging with you as we together respond to God's call to the church.
Shalom, Forrest

NURTURE AND CARE TEAM

Please contact our Nurture and Care Team Coordinator Diane Jobson at 775-7367 or 920-8764 if you need a ride to church or a doctor's appointment, or if you are recuperating from surgery, an illness, an injury, a death or other family emergency and would like the congregation to bring some home-cooked meals to your home.

MISSIONS

Mission Target for March: One Great Hour of Sharing Donna Debney

Despite our superficial differences, isn't it great to know that One Great Hour of Sharing is a cooperative effort by 9 denominations to pool resources and tackle problems world wide? For example, when disasters happen in this country or worldwide, funds are immediately available to rush help to the affected area. UCC folk are always generous in giving to specific disasters, but the funds are needed right now and cannot always wait for an appeal to be made.

In 2011, the United Church of Christ received over \$2,756,804 for the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The largest portion of that, 64% went to support developments in health, education, and agriculture. Another 25% was spent in relief of national and international disasters as well as refugees. With so many worthy causes soliciting our aid, it's reassuring to think of our small contributions being combined with those from many other churches all over the country – and the globe – and then effectively distributed where the need is the greatest. Please help support the good work of this worthwhile special donation.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Summary of February 20 Meeting Donna Debney, Clerk

The Board discussed and acted on the following items of interest:

- Elected Penny Phelps as Chair and Carol Nilsson as Vice-Chair.
- Our Interim Pastor, the Rev. Forrest Hoppe, shared a paper on UCC Polity.
- The Board will be meeting on February 27th from 3 – 5 pm, facilitated by Pastor Forrest, on ways to sharpen our leadership skills.
- The Mission Targets for each month of 2013 were established.
- A suggestion to use the loose offering from one Sunday a month to go the the mission for that month.
- Does anyone in the congregation have an idea for a Sunday Fun Day? If so, speak to a Board Member.
- Pastor Forrest requested our help in identifying those members and friends that he needs to visit ASAP.
- An Easter Sunrise Breakfast is planned for 9 am on Easter Morning before our service.
- Tentative plans were made for a Potluck on Sunday, April 28, 2013.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm. Next meeting – Wednesday, March 20, 2013 at 7 pm.

TREASURER'S REPORT Penny Phelps

Summarized below are the first figures of the new calendar year. At our Annual Meeting on Jan. 13th,

we approved a budget totaling \$88,847 – well in excess of our projected income of \$64,340.

We're counting on all our members and friends to do what they can to meet the challenge.

Summary Financial Report as of 1/31/13

2013 Budget \$88,847

Average Monthly Expenses (\$88,847/12) 7,404

January Income (applicable to the budget) 4,353

January Expenses 7,066

Deficit 2,713

OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA)

Let's rise to the challenge! Penny Phelps

We have received many accolades since adopting our ONA Mission Statement at our Annual Meeting

in January. Now it's time to get together and make plans for the future. Everyone who is interested in

being on the new ONA Committee is urged to attend an organizational meeting at 5 p.m. on

Thursday, March 14th. That includes members of the former task force and any other folks who want to join in.

UNITED NORTHERN ASSOCIATION

Sister Church

Our UNA sister church for March is First Congregational – UCC, Manistee. Please pray for the congregation during the coming month. Cards may be sent to 412 Fourth St Manistee, MI 49660

PASTORAL CARE

Due to HIPAA privacy rules, hospitals do not notify pastors when parishioners are hospitalized.

When

in doubt, please assume the pastor is unaware of a hospitalization and pass the word along.

When the pastor is not in the office, please direct emergency calls to him at 614-748-4998.

Thanks!

BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

Are you finished with all of the books at your house? – Then bring them to our book table and buy

some new ones. -- All monies received go to the kitchen fund. Thank you.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Heartland Hospice is looking for caring and dedicated people with an interest in serving terminally ill

patients and their families in your community. Volunteers provide the extra love and care to patients

at this challenging time in their life. We invite you to consider becoming a hospice volunteer.

Spend

as much or as little time visiting as your schedule will allow. Take a chance, be a friend, share a smile...make a difference. Enrich your life and theirs!

Contact Diana Murray, Volunteer Coordinator at 1-866-248-0253 for more information. Thank you.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Mark your calendars!

Be sure to make plans to join us for the next Pancake Brunch, Saturday, March 16th from 10 until noon. Once again, our intrepid team of pancake flippers, French toast makers, and sausage turners will be filling Fellowship Hall with appealing aromas and good cheer – they might even whip

up a batch of green pancakes to honor St. Patrick's Day! Bring your friends and family and help support the Stehouwer Free Clinic.

Easter Sunrise Breakfast

Remember the fabulous Easter morning breakfast we all enjoyed last year? Well, it's happening again

this year. Easter is March 31st this year, and a breakfast buffet will be served at 9 a.m.

Bacon, breakfast casseroles, fruit, muffins and cinnamon rolls will all be on the menu.

To make things more exciting, there will be an Easter-egg hunt and an Easter bonnet contest, with

prizes for the most colorful, the most traditional and the largest hats. Start planning now...

Cadillac Area Lenten Breakfasts

Sponsored by the Cadillac Area Ministerial Association

7:00 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. each Wednesday

You are cordially invited to breakfast each Wednesday during Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday,

February 13. The time together will include breakfast, singing and a meditation beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending promptly at 7:50 a.m. so you may be to work on time or on to other business of the

day. A freewill offering is received for the meal. The entire community is invited to attend. Invite a

friend to come – it could be life changing! Below is the listing of the breakfasts:

March 2013 Breakfast Schedule

March 6 ~ 1st Presbyterian Church

Parish Assistant Judy Coffey – Speaker

March 13 ~ United Methodist Church

Pastor John Martek - Speaker

March 20 ~ First Congregational Church

Pastor Ken Pastotnik - Speaker

March 27 ~ Cadillac Revival Center

Pastor Scott Torkko – Speaker