

**January 2013**  
***The Tie That Binds***  
**First Congregational United Church of Christ**  
**Cadillac, Michigan**

**PASTOR REYNOLDS' RAP**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-14, NRSV)

Dear Friends,

We have endured an especially dark Advent season this past December, but finally the light has come into our world. The Christ child has been born among us once again! As we celebrate his birth and move toward Epiphany's bright stars, may the gradual lengthening of the days remind us that **darkness never has the last word**. No, that is reserved for love.

Even as we continue to encounter the specter of evil in our world, may we strive to let Christ's light shine brightly in and among us. May we serve the Prince of Peace by being instruments of his peace. May our actions be governed by equal parts justice and loving kindness. May our words be true and spoken always in love. May the silence of the winter night sky soak into our beings like a prayer, infusing our souls with a calm which surpasses human understanding. May we remember that one of the most frequently spoken phrases in the bible is "do not fear," and may we choose to transcend our culture by releasing our anxieties directly to God.

When we do these things mindfully and faithfully, we allow ourselves to be shaped by them and by the Light. And then we stand a chance of letting peace--true peace--begin with us. May it be so.

Blessings for this New Year to you and your families,  
Pastor Carol

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JANUARY 2013**

January 6	Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12	Where is the Child?
January 13	Isaiah 43:1-7	Affirmed by Love
January 20	John 2:1-11	Extravagant Sign

January 27 I Corinthians 12:12-31a, Luke 4:14-21 Good News, Good Ways  
February 3 I Corinthians 13:1-13 Prophet on the Edge

## WORSHIP & WELCOME

### Celebration Service

#### January 20

Recently installed Michigan Conference Minister the **Rev. Dr. Campbell Lovett** joins us to celebrate our Open and Affirming vote. He will preach the Sunday sermon, as well as a "Message for All Ages."

### Ritual of Farewell for Pastor Carol

#### February 3

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### Congratulations!

- to **Sue Wachowski** on the recent sale of her house, which has been a very long time coming.
- to our newest members—**Miguel Monge, Steve Jackson** and **Al Snyder**, who joined the church on **December 2**. Please see their bios below.

### Many thanks

- to **Penny Phelps** and **Casey Cline** for leading the final two ONA study sessions.
- to **Anne Hamming** for raising funds for the church through the sale of her book and to **Penny Phelps** for coordinating book signing events and a tea.
- to **Karen Anderson** who spent a month musically directing the Sunday school kids for a wonderful performance of "Go Tell It on a Mountain" with the choir on December 23.
- to **Larry & Connie Zolynsky** for hosting the post-Christmas caroling party. Great fun was had by all!
- to the many liturgists and musicians who participated in the Christmas Eve service.
- to our out-going Moderator, **Sue Wachowski**, for her many years of service.

### Prayer List\*

Please hold these friends and family in prayer: **Dorothy Campbell, Brian Belleville, Aaron Eckert, Margaret Leemon, Jenny Freese, Ruth & Bill Pitts, Sherry Johnson, Skip & Carol Baynes, Adam Keinath, Cullin Stewart, Sol, Bob & Pat Porter, John & Ruth Wimmeler, Suzi Askins, Russ Hevel**

\*Please contact **Pastor Carol** to have a name added to or removed from the Prayer List.

## MEMBERSHIP

### New Members

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest members, who joined the church

on December 2.

### **Steven Jackson**

Steve was raised in many, mostly small, towns all over Michigan and Ohio, as his Methodist minister father was relocated frequently. After high school, he played drums all over the Midwest for 12 years. He then worked in the medical field in Grand Rapids for 7 years before going back to college and being classically trained in culinary arts. Steve worked as a cook and chef in Florida, Arizona, and California; then in 2000 returned to Michigan to be near his parents. Six years ago he lost his beloved partner of 18 years to cancer, and has recently met a most beautiful man and moved to Ewart to begin a new life with him. Steve is in awe of the open, accepting and nurturing spirit of the people of this UCC church, and looks forward to many years of participation, community, and spiritual growth with everyone.

### **Miguel Monge**

Miguel was raised Catholic in his Guatemalan homeland. In 1992 he came to the US to find work. He has a son and 2 daughters who still live in Guatemala. Miguel has worked as a bus and a truck driver. He enjoys football and soccer, as well as meeting new people. He would like to get more involved in the church, but needs guidance in order to do so. Miguel likes and is joining First Congregational Church UCC Cadillac because, in his experience, we treat one another well and are nonjudgmental.

### **Al Snyder**

Al was raised in Royal Oak and soon after marriage moved to Benzonia, where he raised a daughter and was a public school teacher. He also owned and managed businesses for others. Al attended First Congregational Church UCC of Benzonia and was active in the local community. After retirement, he and his wife wintered in Tucson. They later moved to the Ewart area, where they had a home in the country. Al continued to live there after she passed away, and now shares his home with his partner, Steven Jackson. He is very happy to be a new member of First Congregational Church UCC of Cadillac.

## **OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA)**

### **\*\*January 13: ONA Covenant Affirmation Vote at 2013 Annual Meeting\*\***

Following is the Open and Affirming covenant recently drafted by the ONA Task Force. Although church by-laws and Robert's Rules of Order do not provide for absentee ballots for those unable to vote in person at the meeting, we do welcome the submission of statements to be read aloud at the meeting. They may be submitted to **Pastor Carol, Karma Chapo**, or a **Board of Trustees member**.

### **ONA Mission Statement**

We, the congregational family at First Congregational United Church of Christ of Cadillac, Michigan, whole-heartedly believe that all people are created in God's

image. We welcome individuals of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions into the life and leadership, the ministry and fellowship, and the joys, cares, and responsibilities of our congregation.

We recognize that God's family is diverse and wonderful and includes lesbians, gays, bi-sexuals, transgender individuals, and those who are questioning their sexual identity. We celebrate God's gift of loving relationships for us all.

We strive to respectfully address people's needs and to provide a safe harbor and a nurturing environment to the LGBT community who has suffered discrimination and threats to basic human rights, both from within and without the religious community. We vow to sustain and safeguard people who are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning; we encourage empowerment by helping persons of all sexual identities to realize and respect their own dignity and potential. We speak out in support of each other, regardless of sexual identity.

Therefore, we align ourselves with positions taken by the General Synod 1985 of the United Church of Christ, the Michigan Conference, and other congregations of the UCC and declare First Congregational United Church of Christ of Cadillac, Michigan is an Open and Affirming congregation.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Summary of 12/13 Board Meeting

#### Susan Wachowski

**Penny** has again replenished the jam supply (for our "Jam Ministry" for first-time visitors). Word has it that this gesture of welcome is "spreading" to other churches in the area.

At the January 13 Annual Meeting we must fill **4 Board positions (1 Moderator and 3 Trustees)**, as well as vote on **2 United Northern Association Delegates** and **2 Conference Delegates**. Other ministries needing a caretaker include **Deacon** (changing seasonal pulpit paraments).

With **Bob LeVand's** commitment to provide Birthday/Anniversary cakes and decorations concluding at the first of the year, it is time for us to vote on whether to continue these celebrations and, if so, to sign up for each month's duties [i.e., order, pay for (\$25) and pick up cake, and decorate on the First Sunday of the month.] We certainly have enjoyed this special event and hearty "Thank You" to Bob!

**ONA** - Do we leave the ONA taskforce in place until next year or transition into a committee? The final vote will be taken at the annual meeting, and a draft of our ONA statement has been written. Once finalized and approved, it will be submitted to the UCC LGBT Coalition for approval of our inclusion on their national listing of officially ONA churches. The final statement will be posted on our church website. Our ONA status will be publicized on several local LGBT websites, including Gaycadillac.com.

Next **Pancake Brunch** is scheduled for **February 16** (Valentine's Special)

Maybe heart-shaped pancakes could be mastered? There are people in the congregation interested in participating in a Team B, but they will need to be recruited and trained by members of Team A.

Retired ordained United Methodist Deacon **Nancy Smith** would like to teach a class in **January** (Bible orbook study, or spiritual formation). Tom inquired about A Passover Plot or In the Garden of East. The Board requested Nancy make an announcement in worship and propose a specific study.

**Pastor Carol** will host her mother and family over the holidays and will be on vacation from Christmas Day through January 2. (Note: we look forward to meeting and welcoming them to our family.)

## MISSIONS

### **Mission Target for January: Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)**

Who we are as members of the United Church of Christ is all bound up in Our Church's Wider Mission. As we review our values and goals, the concept of social justice keeps coming up - an awareness of deep economic disparity and tribal conflict and gender issues and lack of education and opportunity - and we are committed to doing what we can to right those wrongs. As individuals - even as a small congregation - what we are able to do is minute, like the widow's mite, but when our efforts and voices are combined with all those in the UCC, mountains can be moved!

Our gifts to OCWM help support the national church and the Michigan Conference, which connects all the local UCC churches in Michigan. The national church and the conference help local churches find clergy, celebrate ordinations and installations, offer conflict resolution, and support new churches. The national church collects funds for victims of hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural and man-made disasters - without siphoning off a large chunk of donations for "administrative expenses". Presently, of all the OCWM funds collected in Michigan, 29% is sent on to the national church and 72% is kept here in Michigan to pay salaries and maintenance on the conference center in Lansing and to support all the programs (such as sending Rev. Cheryl Burke to help us make the transition from Pastor Carol to an Interim and on to future leadership of our church) and needs of the 156 local churches in Michigan. The budget is small and carefully monitored - there is no fat to trim. Please support who we are with a gift to OCWM.

### **From the American Red Cross**

Dear Friends—

Thank you so much for your generous donation of cookies for our recent blood drive. They were enjoyed and appreciated by our donors.

Sincerely,  
Lois Cinco

### **From Feeding America/Gleaners Food Pantry**

Thank you for the donation you made to the Feeding America Food Bank. We--the Gleaners Food Pantry for Seniors of Missaukee County--received the benefit of the donation. We want all to know how much each of us who benefited appreciate it.

Sue Lehr, Director

Faye Watkins, Assistant

### **Love In the Name of Christ**

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your recent donation of \$329 to Love INC. This donation has been so appreciated.

Jim and Linda were facing some tough times due to downsizing by Jim's employer. They did

not want to move and uproot their children again, so Jim was willing to take any job and

ultimately found work at a fast food restaurant. The Love worker was able to direct them for

socks and underwear for all the family, plus a Thanksgiving basket of food, signed them up

for Gifts for Kids for Christmas, and directed Linda on how to apply for a free phone, which

will eliminate one of their expenses.

Your financial help enables us to continue to **help churches help people**, and, for that, we are truly grateful.

Blessings,

Diane Wood, Executive Director

### **From OASIS & Family Resource Center**

Dear Friends of OASIS:

On behalf of the clients, Board of Directors, employees, and volunteers of Cadillac Area OASIS/Family Resource Center, I'd like to thank you for your \$323 donation to our agency and your \$103 donation to the OASIS account at the Food Bank. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Last year our agency provided 4496 bed nights, responded to 2382 crisis calls, counseled 727 survivors, and helped 426 children. Some were homeless; many seeking a safe harbor from a domestic violence or sexual assault situation in their homes. All this was done with the help of 135 volunteers.

In addition to the many residents of our shelter, we also provide services to hundreds of non-residential adults and children every year. We operate on a tight budget, relying heavily on community donations such as yours to meet the needs of the people we serve.

On-going local support has enabled us to respond to the needs of those in our community. The families who seek our assistance are the true recipients of your donation. Thank you for your commitment to our agency and our community. Working together, we can continue to make a difference!

Sincerely,

Sally Repeck, Executive Director

**From Seventh-day Adventist Community Services Center**

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Community Services Center, I would like to express my deep appreciation for your generous contribution of \$103 to help families of our community. Our service center has been able to help numerous individuals in need because of your gift. God bless you for your willingness to help in our community.

Sincerely, Mr. Ewald Lassel, Food Ministry Coordinator

**UNITED NORTHERN ASSOCIATION**

**Sister Church**

Our UNA sister church for January is **Ironton Congregational UCC**. Please pray for the congregation during the coming month. Cards may be sent to **2582 Washington Road, Charlevoix 49720**.

**MICHIGAN CONFERENCE**

**From Conference Minister the Rev. Dr. Campbell Lovett—The 2 x 2 Campaign**

Jesus sent out his disciples two by two into every town and place to which he was about to go. The United Church of Christ has a deep commitment to serving in every town and place in which we are located. The Michigan 2 x 2 campaign will honor our community mission partnerships and celebrate the work we do together - as one Conference.

Building Partnerships: Each local church is invited to develop a community mission partnership - it may be with a food pantry, a shelter, a school; it might be with Habitat for Humanity, or ChristNet shelter program in Detroit, UCOM or Micah in Grand Rapids, or it might be your own food pantry, transitional housing program, or clothing ministry. Your partnership could be with a group with which you are already working, or it could be with a new group with which you have wanted to work. Your partnership could be an advocacy opportunity addressing issues of poverty, bullying or violence, or it could be the Mission 4/1 Earth program of the national setting of the UCC which invites us to green up, power down, and shout out for the environment. Some have asked if their church can have more than one community partner - the answer is, "Yes!"

Tracking Efforts: Once you have identified your community partner and designed a special project with them, then for the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, keep track of the number of partnership hours your members put in: the numbers of hours shared, people cared for, meals served, dollars spent, or lives changed. We'll track the hours and efforts on the Conference website, and conduct a state-wide media campaign to let our neighbors know what the UCC is doing two-by-two.

2 x 2 will demonstrate that we are one Conference, and it will begin to build

the solidarity that is necessary for revitalization in all of our churches.

Next Steps: Once you have agreed upon your community partnership, please let the Conference know using our new 2 x 2 email address: 2x2@michucc.org. We are hopeful that participating churches will email by the end of January.

### **Workshop: Inclusive Radical Welcome**

The Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team is pleased to offer this workshop from 9 am to 5 pm on Tuesday, **February 5** & Tuesday, **March 5** at the Conference office in East Lansing.

An interactive program will be presented by **Rev. Melanie Morrison**, **Allies for Change** founder and her colleagues **Dionardo Pizana**, and **Monique Savage** will provide the leadership. Participants are expected to attend both sessions and do weekly assignments in between. Contact Lisa Soulliere at the Conference office to register (lisa@michucc.org or 517.332.3511).

The \$25 registration fee covers lunch for both sessions. Scholarships are available. Contact Acting Associate Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Deborah Kohler (deborah@michucc.org).

Allies for Change provides anti-oppression education, training, and resources for individuals committed to social change. Believing that justice work is deeply spiritual work, programs invite participants to sharpen their tools for structural change while enlarging their capacities for compassion, hope, and joy.

### **Congratulations to 3 Conference Churches that applied for and received grants from the UCC Mission One Campaign and the Annual Neighbors in Need Offering!**

UCOM in Grand Rapids received \$2,000; HELP Ministry of Ludington received \$1,000; The Rochester Area Neighborhood House at First Congregational Church Rochester received \$1,000. Your support of Neighbors in Need really does support your neighbors in need! For more information about applying for a grant: <http://www.ucc.org/nin/resources/Grant-Application-Guidelines-2-9-11.pdf>

### **Prelude to Lent: "Big Sing" & Retreat with John Bell February 10-12, 2013**

#### **First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo & Transformations Spirituality Center**

Join John Bell of Iona, Scotland, for an intimate retreat discussing 'Ten Things They Never Told Me about Jesus'. We will look at the Gospels and aspects of Jesus' ministry including his understanding of women, family life, power, money and food. There will also be an opening up of his humor and we will address how the Gospels require our imagination to unlock them. During our time together in this retreat we will ponder, learn, sing and pray. Our retreat will begin on Sunday evening and conclude with a "Fat Tuesday" lunch; just in time to return home and prepare for Ash Wednesday. For more information please visit: [www.TransformationsCenter.org](http://www.TransformationsCenter.org)

## **Lay Leadership Development Opportunity**

Lay Leadership Development, a new program presented by the STEM board, will begin this spring. The program consists of 3 free-standing components which can be taken separately, although participants will gain the most benefit from engaging in the sequence.

The first segment is a one day event on Prayer and Social Action presented by Rev. Denise Griebler. Based on the belief that faith-based social action is grounded in solid spiritual discipline this workshop will help members connect those elements in ways that bring greater strength to both.

An Immersion Trip to Detroit is scheduled for summer of 2013. Working with a leadership team from the Detroit Metro Association, the group will spend the day at work sites around the city. A facilitator will guide the dialog in the evening to enable participants to reflect on their experience. The goals for the day include accomplishing work tasks, relationship building, increasing awareness about the dynamics of race and poverty, and the ability to serve as mission leaders in their congregations.

The final component, Mission as Mutual Ministry, will be offered in the fall. Based on the concept that we can all learn from each other, this workshop will continue to dismantle myths of racial and cultural superiority. Participants will engage in exercises designed to heighten their awareness of how to recognize their own internalized cultural indoctrination and strengthen their leadership skills in facilitating this process with those in their local congregations and communities.

As you consider mission programs and projects for your local congregation, this leadership development opportunity is one designed to meet you where you are. Contact STEM director Anne McCauslin for more details.

## **PHOTO/ADDRESS DIRECTORY**

For a copy of the 2012 directory, please see **Donna Debney**. A **suggested donation of \$5.00** covers production costs for a binder of photographs and addresses for church members and friends. Whether or not you are able to make this donation, you are invited to take a copy home with you.

## **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 to her. On days off (Mon, Tues), please direct emergency calls only to her cell phone (**884-9884**). Thanks!

## **NURTURE AND CARE TEAM**

**Diane Jobson** can coordinate rides to church or doctor's appointments and meal delivery for those recuperating from surgery, illness, injury, grief or a family emergency.

