

October 2011
The Tie That Binds
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Cadillac, Michigan

PASTOR REYNOLDS' RAP

will return in November.

God's Grace and Peace to each one of you over the coming month,
Pastor Carol

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Please note that I am away on vacation and attending a UCC workshop through October 1. If you have a pastoral care need in my absence, please contact First Presbyterian pastor **Rev. Paul Tomlinson** at **231-775-7111**. If you happen to get the church's answering machine, you will have access to Rev. Tomlinson's cell phone number on the outgoing message.

Below is my regular work schedule, excluding meetings and visitation

Monday, Tuesday Sabbath/Days Off*

Wednesday Sermon and Worship Study and Preparation

Thursday Office Hours 1:00-5:00 pm (Please call or e-mail ahead for an appointment.)

Saturday Sermon Writing and Final Worship Preparation

Sunday Worship and Coffee Hour

*With the exception of pastoral care emergencies, calls and e-mails received on my days off will be returned on Wednesday or Thursday. Please direct emergency calls to my cell phone. If it is not an emergency, please leave a message in my church voicemail box: 231-775-7632 #1. Thank you.

NURTURE AND CARE TEAM

This is a reminder that, in addition to the care provided by our pastor, we now have a Nurture and Care Team available to minister to members and friends of the congregation. In conjunction with her volunteer work at Love INC, **Diane** coordinates care as needs come to her attention--either through direct contacts or via referrals from **Pastor Carol**. **Pat** is Diane's back-up coordinator and co-caregiver. Diane and Pat are able to do visitation, coordinate rides and/or meals, and send cards on behalf of the church. In addition, Pat can use her RN skills to do very general medical assessments. If you are in need of one of the services this ministry provides, please call Diane.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR OCTOBER 2011

October 2	Matthew 21:33-46	World Communion Sunday/TCPC Wrap-Up
October 9	Philippians 4:1-9	God Matters
October 16	Matthew 22:15-22	Willing Relationships
October 23	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	God's Story, Our Stories
October 30	Micah 3:5-12	God With Us

WORSHIP

World Communion Sunday/TCPC Wrap-Up

Please join us as we celebrate our unity and communion with Christians all over the globe. Our communion table will be graced with a diversity of international loaves, which will follow us down to coffee hour after the service. Please see **Karma** if you'd like to bake and contribute a loaf. **Pastor Carol** will also deliver a homily wrapping up our study of the 8 defining points of the Center for Progressive Christianity in preparation for our vote on affiliation at the Semi-Annual Meeting.

The Blessing of All Creatures Great & Small

We will celebrate our second annual pet blessing in honor of the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi on **Sunday, October 30 at 3 pm**. St. Francis of Assisi lived in the 12th century and is the patron saint of animals. The Feast of St. Francis is October 4. To commemorate this day, many churches in the U.S. and around the world hold special animal blessing ceremonies on or around this date.

You are invited to bring your creatures, great or small (or a picture, if you prefer) to be blessed. Since we have had to hold the blessing so late in October this year, we are also inviting people and pets to dress up for Halloween, if you like, and enjoy some treats. Please spread the word to your neighbors and friends and their animal companions!

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Congratulations!

Congratulations to our newest members—**Marcie, Richard, Todd, and Christine**—who joined the church on September 18.

Thank You!

Many, many thanks to

- **Donna** for her donation of a TV and VCR/DVD player for the forthcoming support group for gay, lesbian, and questioning students, which will be meeting at the church.
- **Larry and Connie** for hosting a fun, relaxing Bread & Fish Supper at their home, which included something for everyone: delicious fish and venison stews, paddleboat and powerboat rides, vineyard tours, football on the TV inside, and animated conversation out on the porch.
- **Jack, Bill, and Richard** for their tireless, ongoing work on the church bell tower.
- **Penny Phelps, Gary, Tom and Diane, Jerry, Jack, Richard, Bill, and Sara** for cleaning, disassembling, and transferring the Symphony Board's materials to the Crow's Nest in preparation for their former storage room's conversion into a Sunday school classroom and support group meeting room.

Items requiring a congregational vote:

1. Proposal by Pastor Carol that FCC formally affiliate with the Center for Progressive Christianity.
2. Proposal by the Open & Affirming Study Group (aka the Pre-Task Task Force) for a Congregational Exploration of the ONA Process:

At the April 10, 2011 congregational meeting, we covenanted to study the tenets of the Center for Progressive Christianity, as well as the United Church of Christ's (UCC) Identity Markers over a period of time. Our objective was to explore these theological concepts in order to determine how well they fit with our congregation's diverse beliefs and with our overall mission as a church.

A small group of church members (**Karma, Pastor Carol, Penny Phelps, Linda, Troy, Bob, Jenny, Karen, Sara, and Margie**) decided to specifically explore the UCC's Open and Affirming (ONA) Identity Marker and the process required to become an official ONA church. We wondered: How does a church earn the Identity Marker, Open and Affirming? What is involved in the process? How long does it take? What effect does it have on a church to call itself Open and Affirming? How does it differ from being "Gracious and Accepting?" Are there resources available for us to study?

Our questions led us to spend the last several months seeking answers. We have received and reviewed information from the United Church of Christ. We have visited with pastors and congregants from churches that have been through the process. We've watched DVDs. We were educated and inspired by what we saw, heard, and read.

In response to these experiences, the members of our group would like to invite the congregation to embark upon a journey with us. We would like to request that the congregation consider forming a task force to guide us through a formal, congregational exploration of our identity as it relates to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender persons and issues. This team would seek to provide an open, caring, and intentional setting for the First Congregational Church of Cadillac to explore justice issues specific to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and what we believe our church's response to those issues should be. This process will involve thoughtful examination of our beliefs and may likely reveal some differences among us. It is expected that we can support each other in ways that provide zones of both safety and freedom in which these differences may be expressed openly and thoughtfully.

Our intention in proposing that we study these issues is to eventually determine whether we wish to proclaim ourselves an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. This would not be a rushed process; it takes "as long as it takes," meaning that we as a congregation set the pace. We are genuinely interested in hearing everyone's responses to the study materials as they are presented over the next year or so.

UNITED NORTHERN ASSOCIATION

Our UNA **sister church** for October is **Portage Lake United Church**. Please lift up the congregation and its pastor, **Rev. Cynthia Method**, in prayer during the coming month.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we gathered for worship on Sunday (8/14), we lifted your congregation and its mission up in prayer. May you be blessed in all that you do!

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Alpena

Photo Directory

Reminder: A new photo directory will be issued in October. Please see **Robin** if you would like to add or update your photo, and let us know if you have candid shots to share. A sign-up sheet for directories will be issued soon. The cost will be **\$6.00 per copy**.

EDUCATION

Book/Film Study?

Sunday School

At this time, FCC's Sunday school program remains "under construction," as we continue to explore curricula, timing, and class configuration. Two things we are sure of at this time are that classes will be meeting upstairs in the former storage room of the Cadillac Symphony and that we are in dire need of teachers. We will be discussing this dilemma at the Semi-Annual Meeting, but would also ask that each of you prayerfully consider whether you might be called to lead a Sunday School class once a month and to speak to **Laura, Linda, or Pastor Carol** if you are experiencing a nudge in that direction.

FUNDRAISING

Meijer Community Awards

You can help raise funds for our church when you shop at Meijer, and you don't have to have a Meijer Credit Card to do it. Simply sign up online at Meijer.com/rewards, and you will receive a Meijer 1 Card in about 2 weeks. (If you don't have a computer, you can also request an application at the store.) Then when you pay with cash or a debit card and show your Meijer 1 Card, the church gets back .5% of the value of your purchases! If you have a Meijer Credit Card, it is also possible to link it to the Community Awards program, in which case, the church would receive a full 1% back.

MISSIONS

Our Mission Target for October: Neighbors in Need (UCC)

Penny Phelps

Neighbors in Need is one of the special UCC offerings spread throughout the year. NIN supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion everywhere in the United States. A large portion of the money collected funds a wide array of advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

One-third of the offering helps support our Native American neighbors in the UCC through the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Today there are twenty UCC congregations on reservations, plus one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations.

Justice and Witness Ministries really speak to who we are as a denomination, and our contributions to Neighbors in Need can bring about meaningful change.

Small efforts add up

Did you know that for several years we have been collecting "pop-tops"? One of our members, Terry Oss, suffers from Huntington's disease, and the group which supports folks with this genetic ailment raises money by collecting pop-tops. As small as they are, if you pile up enough pop-tops, the aluminum they're made from has value! Just snap them off your pop cans, or beer cans, or V-8 cans,

stick them in a baggy, and when the baggy is full, bring them to church (leave them on the table in the narthex).

Then there are those "box tops" and "labels for education" that are on so many products. Have you noticed them on boxes of Zip-lock bags, or Land-O-Lakes butter? Or Campbell's soups? Prego sauces? Cut those out, too, and stick them in an envelope. With school budgets so tight these days, if the whole congregation pitches in, we can help out schools in our community with very little effort.

New Hope Shelter

Dear First Congregational Church,

Thank you so much for your gift of \$42.50 to our ministry. Because of generous supporters like you, we are able to serve the homeless in our area.

Thank you so much and God bless you!

New Hope Shelter

OASIS/Family Resource Center

Dear Friends of OASIS:

... I'd like to thank you for your generous donation of \$435...

Last year, our agency provided over 5125 bed nights and over 15,271 meals to women and children. Some of them were homeless; many were seeking safe harbor from domestic violence or sexual assault situations in their own homes.

...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.

Ongoing 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

Thank you for your food donation in July 2011. The ladies and children especially enjoyed the ice cream. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Joyce

Stehouwer Free Clinic

Dear Congregation of the First Congregational Church,

Thank you!! We promise to help "the least of these" with the funds you have offered. (\$898.75)

Thank you.

Cindy Evans

Director

VISION

Whole Earth

On October 9 at 6:30 pm, **Transition Cadillac** will host the first film in their film series in Fellowship Hall. "In Transition, From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience" is the first detailed film about the Transition movement filmed by those who are making it happen on the ground. The Transition movement is about communities around the world responding to peak oil and climate change with creativity, imagination and humor, and setting about rebuilding their local economies and communities. It is positive, solutions focused, viral and fun. "In Transition" has been shown in

communities around the world to enthusiastic audiences. Please be sure to stay for discussion after the film! This is where we bond as a community, visioning our own future of opportunity.

FUN!

October Sunday Fun Day!

This month Richard and Marcia have graciously offered to host a Color Tour Wagon Ride through the Manistee National Forest!

When: Sunday, October 9th – Depart at 2:30, Return at 4:30

Bring: Warm clothes, snacks and beverage for the ride

There is room for 10-12 people.

If you have ideas for future Fun-Days, please speak to **Sandy**

Here is a photo of FCC's synchronized swimmers and sunbathers at the August Fun-Day:



COMMUNITY

Movies for the Mind

The next screening is scheduled for **October 30**. Details will be circulated when they become available.

OCTOBER 2011

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 *Jazz. 8:30 am
2 World Communion Sunday, 10:30 am Semi-Annual Meeting	3 *Jazz. 4:30 pm 5:45 pm	4 *Jazz. 8:30 am	5 *Jazz. 5:45 pm Choir 7:00 pm	6 *Jazz. 8:30am 5:00pm	7 *Jazz. 8:30am	8 *Jazz. 8:30am
9 Worship 10:30 am	10 *Jazz. 4:30 pm 5:45 pm	11 *Jazz. 8:30 am	12 *Jazz. 5:45 pm Choir 7:00 pm	13 *Jazz. 8:30 am 5:45 pm *Miracles 10:00 am BOT 5:45 pm	14 *Jazz. 8:30am	15 *Jazz. 8:30 am
16 Worship 10:30 am	17 *Jazz. 4:30 pm 5:45 pm	18 *Jazz. 8:30 am *Audubon 7 pm	19 *Jazz. 5:45 pm Taize Worship First Presb Church 7:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm	20 *Jazz. 8:30 am 5:45 pm Items for Newsletter Due!	21 *Jazz. 8:30am	22 *Jazz. 8:30 am
23 Worship 10:30 am	24 *Jazz. 4:30 pm 5:45 pm	25 *Jazz. 8:30 am	26 *Jazz. 5:45 pm	27 *Miracles 10:00 am	28	29 Worship Planning 9:00 am
30 Worship 10:30 am Animal Blessing 3pm Movies for the Mind 6pm	31					*Non-Church activities that occur in the church.