



Pilgrim Post

February Volume 24 issue 2

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We, the people of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Muskegon, care for the welfare of our community and welcome everyone, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. We welcome into our community people of every age, race, nationality, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, faith background, marital standing, family structure, gender identity and expression, and sexual orientation. We also invite you to share in the life, leadership, worship, fellowship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, and joys of our congregation as we seek to grow together in faith and love.

SOUP-ER BOWL
SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 11
In Fellowship Hall
Following Church

Please sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office if you will be able to join us. (We want to make sure we have enough soup for everyone). If you would like to help us with bringing soup just let us know on the sign up sheet what kind you will bring. A dessert sign up sheet at Welcome Center for bringing dessert. Price of admission: a canned food for our pantry. Wear your favorite team's color if you wish!
Sponsored by Congregational Life Department

LETTER FROM REV. TIM

Dear friends,

This year we have an interesting confluence of themes on February 14. On the one hand, it is Ash Wednesday, the traditional beginning of the Lenten season of self-examination and repentance. And that, as I often say, is more than just contrition and penitence. It requires a revolution in our thinking. I believe that is what Christ is getting at when he begins his ministry in Mark's gospel by proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God (*the reign of God – God's way of doing things; i.e. thy will be done*) has come near; repent, (*that is re-think, reevaluate your fundamental assumptions about how the world works*) and believe (*not intellectual assent to certain doctrine, but trust that enables us to have peace of mind, that gives us courage to act*) in the good news." Something that deserves far more than a season of forty days.

On the other hand, it is also Valentine's Day, the annual commemoration of romance and mush, that enriches the sellers of cards and flowers and chocolate. Given that coincidence, it seems good to me to think a little bit about St. Valentine who has given his name to the day. On the one hand, that is a little confusing, because depending on your source there are several St. Valentines, and many tales of his marvelous deeds. But the Valentine that comes to my mind right now was a Christian priest, who persistently defying orders from the emperor Claudius Gothicus, performed weddings for couples, thus allowing the husbands involved to escape conscription into the pagan army. For that crime against the state, he was executed outside the Flaminian Gate on February 14, 269 A.D.

What is particularly interesting to the language nerd in me is the root of that name in Latin – *valens*, meaning strong, vigorous, healthy. Related also to the words valiant and valor. And the Roman greeting, *vale*, "Be well!" Or the one that was drummed into me in eighth grade Latin class, *Si vales, valeo* – "If you are well, I am well."

Grace and peace to you. Si vales, valeo.

Rev. Tim

Our Church Family

Prayers are appreciated for continued healing for members and friends of our church:

*Those who suffer in silence. Those who are homebound. Those who are ill.
Those who are recovering from surgery. Those who are lonely.
Those who have moved. Those who have lost a loved one.*

Blessings to:

Marie Brandow. She was baptized on January 21, 2024 with her parents Adam and Katie at her side and her godparents – John and Alicia Schaub standing with them; her extended families in the pews.

Sympathy and Prayers to:

Family and friends of lifetime FCC member Marilyn Andersen who passed away on Thursday, January 9, 2024 at age 89. She met her future husband, Roger, in the church nursery school. They delayed dating until college, married on August 17, 1957 and enjoyed 61 years of marriage before Roger's passing in 2018. Together they shared a love of sailing, living together on and around the water throughout their lives. A gifted wordsmith and lifelong booster of Muskegon, Marilyn was a freelance writer on the arts and culture of the community. In the 1980's she was writer and editor of The Muskegon Chronicle's quarterly magazine, Currents.

Family and friends of Charles Steffen, who passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, January 20, 2024. He was a member of FCC. No details at this time.

Trina and Eddie Jankowski on Trina's mother's passing. Mary Wall was 79 years old.

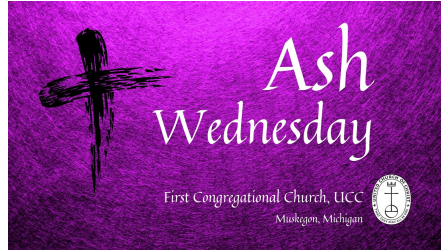
Family and friends of Brenda Gasahl who passed away January 26, 2024. Brenda was a FCC member and a faithful member of Motet Choir. No details as of this printing.



February Birthdays

01	Karl Ochs; Bonnie Lipan; Marti Balgooyen	17	Robert McEwen
03	Jan Delaney	18	Judy Hysten
06	Jane Clingman-Scott; Brenda Gasahl; Elizabeth Buikema	19	John Schaub; Pat Mercer
08	Donna Lachniet	20	Sandy Kieft; Julia Krause
09	Kay Wallace; Ron Sweet; Cindy Barnum-Steggerda	21	Hal Rummery; Judy Wilcox; Mitchell White; Jim Hysten; Marla Major
12	Stephanie Baker	23	Vivian Witmer
13	Darlene Anacker	24	Ray Wilkinson; Solee Clark
14	Trina Jankowski	25	Shawn Lawton; Tiernan Twining
15	Marty Ferriby	26	Sue Rummery; Tom Goodman
16	Chrissy Obzut; Craig Simons; Mariel Senecal	28	Logan Kartes

What's Happening



***Please join us for Ash Wednesday
Wednesday, February 14th
6:30 pm in sanctuary***

Cookies for Sunday Fellowship

Those whose last names begin with the letters O through S please bring cookies or treats during the month of February. Home made cookies are also appreciated as are Gluten free and/or sugar free cookies or bars.

Thursday Emails

Join in on up to date FCC events and information. Also a direct link to our on-line worship service. Just email michaelm@fccmuskegon.org and ask to be put on our Thursday email.



FCC Women's Single Group



We will meet at Judy DeWall's home for a Soup and Salad Luncheon with "Chef Shirley" on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 1:00 pm. Cost is \$5.00. Please sign up at the Welcome Center or call Judy D. at 734-478-3716.

No Name Group



Please join us at Whitlow's on Airline Rd Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Dave and Nita Wikman are hosts. If you can make it please sign up at the Welcome Center or contact the Wikmans or the church office.

GSA

GSA meets every Monday night here at FCC from 7 to 8 pm.

Tuesday Pantry

Tuesday is Food Pantry here at FCC We receive names with appointments from Love In The Name of Christ. If you know of anyone in need of food please have them call Love at 231-773-3448 before Tuesday. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Shirley Lawton or call the church office. If you would like to help in some other way, we are collecting canned goods on Communion Sundays. Just put them in the baskets in the Narthex. Many thanks!

Mobile Food Pantry

Saturday, February 3rd in FCC Parking Lot at 10:00 am

Saturday Breakfast

The last Saturday of each month we hold a Saturday Breakfast which is open to the community. The Breakfast is from 9-10:30 am and is free to all. Please contact Donna Lachniet if you are willing to volunteer.

Paint Class

Our next paint class will be **February 21, at 1:00 pm**. We will be using that all-time favorite kitchen cleaning tool, the *metal pot scrubber* to create a very unique acrylic pour design.

Material List

Canvas any size. Pre primed

Dark back ground color. Black, grey or blue
4-5 bright colors including a metallic.

Metal pot scrubber iron or steel preferred

Palette knife

Pouring medium cups, paper towels, stir sticks, squirt bottles.

Sign up at the Welcome Center Desk!



***Congregational Life Department is sponsoring a
St. Patrick's Day Talent Show and Trivia Event***

Sunday, March 17, 2024 in Fellowship Hall following worship service.

Singing, dancing, playing an instrument, or other talent is welcome.

***If you have a talent to share, please sign up at the Welcome Center and
include what talent you would like to do.***

Minutes of Governing Board Meeting

January 22, 2024

1. Meeting called to order by President Jankowski at 6:31 p.m.
2. Rev. Tim opened with prayer.
3. Agenda approved with addition of "Member Recruitment" under Unfinished Business.
4. Consent Agenda was approved minus Finance, Building and Grounds, and Member Care.

A. **Finance Committee:** In response to the H & S Review of FCC's financial accounting systems, Rev. Tim published a one page summary of the findings in the *Pilgrim Post* of January, 2024. Governing Board now directs the church Treasurer (Deb Collett) to review each completed bank reconciliation, holding the preparer accountable for timely reconciliations and all outstanding bank activity. "Preliminary Monthly Financial Report for December 2023" was distributed with explanation from Deb Collett. (See Treasurer's Report.)

B. **Building and Grounds** minutes from December 18 were distributed and accepted with no further discussion.

C. Two motions were passed as recommended by **Member Care:**

MOTION PASSED to accept transfer of membership for Daniel Barnum Steggerda to FCC.

MOTION PASSED to move Tom Woirol to inactive status in the membership rolls.

President's Report: Eddie expressed appreciation for Rev. Kristen Orion's filling in during Rev. Tim's vacation as well as noting upcoming major musical events and other activities on the church calendar.

Minister's Report: Tim also expressed appreciation for Rev. Orion's involvement during his absence.

At Tim's request a **MOTION PASSED** regarding Tim's submitting a letter of support requesting that Muskegon County Cooperating Churches become the fiduciary for the Sacred Suds program, formerly part of the dissolving Community enCompass program.

New Business:

A. Jefferson Towers : **MOTION PASSED to approve appointment of three new members to Jefferson Towers Board: Roy Winegar, Dollie Hippchen, Virginia Taylor.**

B. Consent agenda format for conducting meetings will continue to be used with the clerk responsible for developing a more instructional monthly agenda to aid board members in following it.

Next meeting: February 19, 2024, 6:30 p.m., FCC Library.

Minutes submitted by Donna Lachniet, Clerk

PRELIMINARY MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT for December 2023

	Current Month Actual	Current YTD Actual	2023-2024 YTD Budget	2023-2024 YTD Difference	2023-2024 Annual Budget
Pledged Offerings	\$46,883	\$170,662	\$ 177,768	\$ - 7,106	\$ 320,000
Non-pledged Offerings	\$2,668	\$12,158	18,332	\$ - 6,174	31,145
Misc. Income	10,350	19,100	18,910	190	52,867
Operating Income Endow.	0	40,607	45,055	-4,448	95,056
Total Op. Income	\$ 59,902	\$242,527	\$ 260,064	\$ - 17,538	\$ 499,067
Total Op. Expenses	\$ 50,890	\$245,374	\$ 253,126	\$ - 7,756	\$ 499,067
NET TOTAL:	\$ 9,011	\$ - 2,847	\$ 6,938	\$ - 9,786	0

Income exceeded expenses for the month of December by \$9,011. A gift of \$10,000 from the Shaw & Betty Walker Foundation was received in December and specified to be used in general operations. Miscellaneous Income continues to be higher than budgeted expectations year-to-date.

Year-to-date, we have drawn less from Endowment funds for use in operations than budgeted expectations. Actual income and expenses both remain below budget expectations.

(As of 1/04/2024, Deb Collett, Treasurer - ejm)

Looking Ahead:

[Please join us for a Community Concert at FCC:](#)



REQUIEM
For the Living
BY DAN FORREST

SATURDAY
MARCH 2
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

7:00 PM

SHORELINE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA
FCC MOTET CHOIR
MUSKEGON CHAMBER CHOIR
MUSKEGON COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHOIR



Jazz Sunday Worship Service, March 3rd



February 2024 Lectionary

THU Feb 01	I Kings 2:1-4, 10-12; I Chronicles 29:10-12; Mark 6:7-13
FRI Feb 02	Sirach 47:4-11 (<i>Apocrypha</i>); Psalm 18:30, 46, 49-50; Mark 6:14-29
SAT Feb 03	I Kings 3:4-13; Psalm 119:9-14; Mark 6:30-34
SUN Feb 04	FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; I Corinthians 9:16-12 Mark 1:29-39
MON Feb 05	I Kings 8:1-7, 9-13; Psalm 132:6-10; Mark 6:53-56;
TUE Feb 06	I Kings 8:22-23, 27-30; Psalm 84:1-4, 9-10; Mark 7:1-13
WED Feb 07	I Kings 10:1-10; Psalm 37:5-6, 30-31, 39-40; Mark 7:14-23
THU Feb 08	I Kings 11:4-13; Psalm 106:3-4, 35-37, 40; Mark 7:24-30
FRI Feb 09	I Kings 11:29-32; 12:19; Psalm 81:9-14; Mark 7:31-37
SAT Feb 10	I Kings 12:26-32; 13:33-34; Psalm 106:4, 6-7, 19-22
SUN Feb 11	TRANSFIGURATION II Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; II Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9 James 1:1-11; Psalm 119:67-68, 71-72, 75-77; Mark 8:11-13
MON Feb 12	James 1:12-18; Psalm 95:12-15, 18-19; Mark 8:14-21
TUE Feb 13	
WED Feb 14	ASH WEDNESDAY Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; II Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
THU Feb 15	Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1:1-4, 6; Luke 9:22-25
FRI Feb 16	Isaiah 58:1-9a; Psalm 51:3-6b, 18-19; Matthew 9:14-15
SAT Feb 17	Isaiah 58:9b-14; Psalm 86:1-6; Luke 5:27-32
SUN Feb 18	FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; I Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15 Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18; Psalm 19:8-10, 15; Matthew 25:31-46
MON Feb 19	Isaiah 55:10-11; Psalm 34:3-6, 15-18; Matthew 6:7-15
TUE Feb 20	Jonah 3:1-10; Psalm 51:1-2, 10-11, 16-1; Luke 11:29-32
WED Feb 21	Esther C:12, 14-16, 23-25 (<i>Apocrypha</i>); Psalm 138:1-3, 7-8; Matthew 7:7-12
THU Feb 22	
FRI Feb 23	Ezra 18:21-28; Psalm 130:1-8; Matthew 5:20-26
SAT Feb 24	Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Matthew 5:43-48
SUN Feb 25	SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38
MON Feb 26	Deuteronomy 9:4b-10; Psalm 79:8-9, 11, 13; Luke 6:36-38
TUE Feb 27	Isaiah 1:10, 16-20; Psalm 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23; Matthew 23:1-12
WED Feb 28	Jeremiah 18:18-20; Psalm 31:4-5, 13-15; Matthew 20:17-28
THU Feb 29	Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1:1-4, 6; Luke 16:19-31