



# Pilgrim Post

May Volume 25 issue 5

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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.*

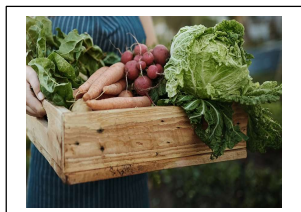
## A Quartet of Food Programs at First Congregational Church Muskegon April, 2025

FCC has had a very strong commitment to social justice since its founding in the 1800's and currently has four programs that aim to help the food-insecure folks who live in Muskegon:

1. Our monthly **Saturday Breakfast** happens on the last Saturday of the month and feeds an average of 137 individuals with the help of 30 volunteers.
2. Our seasonal **Saturday Breakfast Garden** engages about 35 gardeners from May-October in the planning, planting, growing and harvesting of produce from the large community garden across the street from FCC.
3. The weekly **Tuesday Emergency Food Pantry** annually serves 542 households with 1,272 individuals by referral from LOVE INC or walk-in guests.
4. Monthly **Feeding America Mobile Food Pantries** happen on the first Saturday of every month and serve an average of 226 households with 534 individuals who only need to get in line for the 10 a.m. boxed donation to be delivered to them.

All four food programs are totally run by volunteers and FCC has **partnerships** with 13 organizations that from 2003 to the present have provided financial or food donation and/or volunteer support to supplement First Congregational Church's resources.

**Partnership support** changes from year to year in quite unpredictable ways but has over the years included: AgeWell Services, Women's Division Chamber of Commerce, Nelson Neighborhood Improvement Association, Feeding America West Michigan, LOVE INC, Aldi's, Panera, Old Orchard, Morat's Bakery, Hodgepodge Bakehouse, Community Foundation for Muskegon County, First Presbyterian Church, Harbor Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Church World Service (CROP Hunger Walk), and the federal government's Emergency Food and Shelter Program through United Way of the Lakeshore.



# **LETTER FROM REV. TIM**

Dear friends,

Last month I wrote a bit about our membership covenant, and warned you that I was going to continue to go through it section by section. I know some people immediately react, "Oh no! By-laws!" But ours in this church are particularly well-done, in my opinion, and worth the read.

We covenant together with God... That was last month. This month we begin the points that follow, we covenant to do what? And the first of those points is, "To walk in God's ways, known and to be made known to us." The first thing I want to mention is that each of these points are about doing, not just believing, or proclaiming a certain kind of faith or creed. We are, by our covenant with God, called to action. I am proud to have served a congregation that has taken that seriously in so many ways.

The part of it that I want to focus upon this month, though, is that phrase "God's ways, known and to be made known to us." That is what the "God is still speaking" catch phrase we often see in the UCC is all about, and it has deep roots in our history. John Robinson, the pastor of those Pilgrims we have paintings of in our narthex, preached a farewell sermon as they were about to depart in which he proclaimed his confidence that God had "yet more light and truth to break forth our of his Holy Word," and to lament those who were stuck in the past by their devotion to leaders who, while they might have been great men of God, "yet saw not all things."

This is our struggle, is it not? To be steadfast in our walk in God's ways, some of which have been known to us for generations, and others of which are yet to be made known! Times change, the Gospel principles of love, kindness and inclusion remain, but how we put them into practice may need to change as well. May God bless us with the wisdom to walk that path.

Grace to you all and peace,

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.*

Prayers of Sympathy are for the family and friends of Doris Mixer. Doris went peacefully at the age of 100 On April 5, 2025. She was a lifelong, active member of FCC till she moved to Traverse City closer to her daughter Marsha. She is survived by her son John, daughters Anne and Marsha Mixer and spouses, 8 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren and 2 great, great grandchildren. A Celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

Prayers and sympathy for family and friends of Helen Lind, FCC member. Helen passed away at the age of 95 ½ on April 5, 2025. She was always up for an adventure and will be missed by her daughters, Penny and Laurel and their families. A Celebration of Life was held on April 14, 2025 at Lee Chapel Sytsema.

Thank you to all for the cards and prayers. We are keeping all the cards. Prayers are still very much needed. With love and gratitude, Pat Pimley



## ***May Birthdays***

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 02 Lee Treptow  | 16 Fox Garabedian                 |
| 03 Conner Young; Charlotte Chessman;<br>Pam Garabedian; Jonathan Krause | 17 Aidan Perreault, Melissa Start |
| 05 Jeff Leinicke  | 19 Diane Goodman                  |
| 06 Susan Mulvey; Robin Murphy   | 20 Jamal Abdelkader, Dale Brinks  |
| 07 Asa Orion  | 22 Stacy Chambers                 |
| 10 Sue VanderHaar; Collin Doctor  | 24 Bill Eyke, Rob Ginman          |
| 11 Alissa Mack  | 25 Sharon Miller                  |
| 12 Eric Portenga  | 26 Brian Krause, Richard Inbody   |
| 13 Christen Twining   | 28 Alyssa Simmons                 |
| 14 Nick Singerling  | 29 Mary Williams                  |
| 15 Mary Bown  | 30 Casey Cress, Don McEwen        |

## ***Cookies for Sunday Fellowship***

Those whose last names begin with the letters E through J please bring cookies or treats during the month of April. Homemade cookies are also appreciated as are Gluten free and/or sugar free cookies or bars.

## ***Thursday Emails***

Keep current with FCC events and information. Also, a direct link to our on-line worship service. Just email [michaelm@fccmuskegon.org](mailto:michaelm@fccmuskegon.org) and ask to be put on our Thursday email.

## ***Look at all that's Happening***

### **Women's Single Group**

We will meet at Olive Garden, Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. Please sign up at the Welcome Center or call Judy Dewall up at the Welcome Center or call Judy D. at 734-478-3716.

### **Mobile Food Pantry- Saturday, May 3, 10:00 am**

First Congregational Church friends and neighbors **will be hosting mobile food trucks from Feeding America** on the **first Saturday morning of the month.** (with a couple of exceptions). With the partnership of several local churches and organizations. Donna Lachniet ([DGL2846@aol.com](mailto:DGL2846@aol.com)) will be coordinating the volunteers and needs to have updated contact information for everyone. Please contact Donna to indicate your interest in helping.

### **Saturday Breakfast**

The last Saturday of each month (May 31) 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 or just show up at 8:30 am if you are willing to volunteer.

### **Last Saturday of the Month Saturday Chapel Service**

Cowboy conducts a worship service in the Chapel on Saturdays at 10:45am (following Saturday Breakfast on May 31). This is open to all.



### **Mission of the Month for May**

The Missions & Service Department has chosen Kids Food Basket as the Mission of the Month for May, and they could use some volunteer help! Only 1 1/2 hours of your time would be very much appreciated. Please see Merijo Dulyea to sign up or get more information. Thank you in advance for helping these children. Merijo Dulyea

### **3 C's Exercise Class - Cardio Drumming**

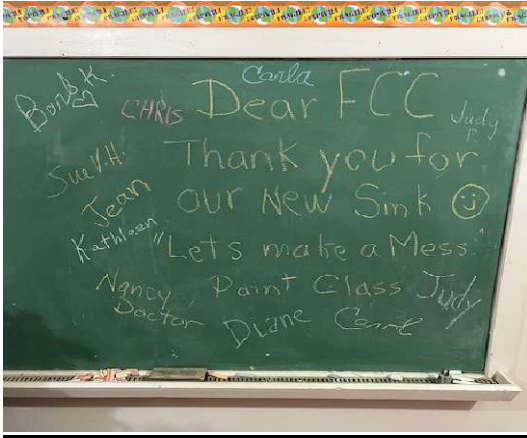
3 C's Exercise Class – Choreography + Cardio Drumming Class meets on Thursdays from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. \$3.00 per session.

### **Update from the Westshore GSA (Genders, Sexualities Alliance) Youth Group**

The Westshore GSA Youth Group has been continuing to meet every Monday night with increasing numbers of youth participating (13-21 students each week). Meeting programs have ranged from movie nights, karaoke, and various art projects. We are currently outgrowing our space in the basement and we have some fabulous volunteers preparing a classroom on the second floor for us. The youth have picked out colors and made floor plans and are excited for the new space. FCC, Muskegon Pride and the Muskegon Community Foundation (Love is Love fund) have been instrumental in helping us equip and feed our hungry teens. Next month, some of our students will be attending an LGBTQ+ pride summit called BAMB at GVSU. Muskegon Pride members and Pioneer Resources have graciously provided transportation for this event. The Westshore GSA and FCC's Open and Affirming Task Force are making plans for pride month in June. The Muskegon Pride Festival will take place on Saturday, June 7 in Hackley Park. The festival will be kicked off in the morning with a parade, followed by booths and entertainment. The church and the Westshore GSA have reserved booths for the event and are in **need of volunteers, both to staff the church's booth and to march in the parade.** This is a very fulfilling opportunity to get out and show our support as well as have a great time! We will place a sign up sheet at the welcome desk for you to volunteer!

Thanks for all that you do, Paul and Jessica Krause

## **Thank You!**



## **Congratulations To:**

Thomas "Cowboy" Hardy on receiving an Award for Excellence for Outstanding Work in Sociological Practice from Muskegon Community College on Thursday, April 17. This award recognizes academic excellence, character, and contribution to the discipline. Well done, Cowboy!



## **Community Garden**

Spring brings the Community Garden. We are looking for volunteers to help us out. Leave your contact name with the office (231) 726.3254 or just join us at 10 am on Saturdays at the garden. We have a short class then have some gardening time. Or Tuesdays from 1-3pm if that works better with your schedule.

Tim K. is planning to return to holding monthly (2nd Saturday) **bike clinics** at the garden and we will hold our first one on May 10. Please help invite the neighborhood to bring their bikes in for a spring tune-up.



## **Acrylic Paint Class**

Let's Make a Mess Paint Class May 14<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Just bring a 12x12 square canvas; a light color paint for the background; 3 or 4 colors for your flowers; 1 cup of flour; Cups to mix paint. Please sign up at the Welcome Center.

## **UPDATES AND SAVE THE DATES**

Save The Date: August 31, 2025. If any members have stories or memories they would like to share, please email them to Bonnie at:

[bonniepringle@gmail.com](mailto:bonniepringle@gmail.com)

Christian Education had 20 kids participate in the egg hunt on Easter Sunday!

Congregational Life will be having a Clippers Ball Game outing on Friday, July 25th

**GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**Monday, April 21 ,2025, 6:30 pm**

Call to order 6:34 pm by Deb Collett  
 Opening prayer by Rev Tim VanderHaar

Motion to approve Governing Board Agenda by consensus.  
 Approved by Consensus.

Motion to approve previous month’s Governing Board Minutes  
 Approved by consensus.

Department motions:

Motion to move \$5,000 from Endowment to Operating Fund. Tom Linacre moved,  
 Shirley Albers seconded. Motion carried as presented.

Motion to add 5 new members: Ron McDermed, Roy and Sharon Beetham,  
 Bob Chessman, and Scott Beemer. Charlotte Chessman moved, Patty Kelly seconded.  
 Motion carried as presented.

Motion made to accept the Treasurer’s Report and place it on file.  
 Moved by Bonnie Lipan, Seconded by Tom Hardy.  
 Motion approved as presented.

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Next meeting May 19, 2025 at 6:30 pm in Library

**PRELIMINARY MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT for March 2025**

	Current Month Actual	Current YTD Actual	2023-2024 YTD Budget	2023-2024 YTD Difference	2023-2024 Annual Budget
Pledged Offerings	\$32,882	\$227,595	\$263,494	\$ - 35,899	\$ 337,000
Non-pledged Offerings	\$2,976	\$15,485	24,840	\$ - 9,354	31,145
Misc. Income	10,550	92,568	57,500	35,069	59,450
Operating Income Endow.	5,000	50,370	50,370	\$ 0	85,570
Total Op. Income	\$ 51,408	\$386,018	\$396,203	\$ - 10,185	\$ 513,164
Total Op. Expenses	\$ 45,164	\$370,530	\$ 380,611	\$ - 10,081	\$ 513,164
<b>NET TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 6,244</b>	<b>\$ 15,488</b>	<b>\$ 15,592</b>	<b>\$ - 104</b>	<b>0</b>

Income exceeded expenses for the month of March by \$6,244. Year-to-date, income exceeds expenses by \$15,488. As expected, we drew funds towards operations from Endowments for cash flow purposes.

## Lectionary May, 2025

<b>THU May 01</b>	Acts 5:27-33; Psalm 34:1, 8, 17-20; John 3:31-36
<b>FRI May 02</b>	Acts 5:34-42; Psalm 27:1-4, 13-14; John 6:1-15
<b>SAT May 03</b>	Acts 6:1-7; Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19; John 6:16-21
<b>SUN May 04</b>	<b>THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER</b> Acts 9:1-20; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19
<b>MON, May 05</b>	Acts 6:8-15; Psalm 119:23-24, 26-27, 29-30; John 6:22-29
<b>TUE, May 06</b>	Acts 7:51-8:1a; Psalm 31:2-3, 5-7, 16, 20; John 6:30-35
<b>WED, May 07</b>	Acts 8:1-8; Psalm 66:1-7; John 6:35-40
<b>THU, May 08</b>	Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 66:8-9, 16-17, 20; John 6:44-51
<b>FRI, May 09</b>	Acts 9:1-20; Psalm 117; John 6:52-59
<b>SAT, May 10</b>	Acts 9:31-42; Psalm 116:12-17; John 6:60-69
<b>SUN, May 11</b>	<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b> Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30
<b>MON, May 12</b>	Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 42:1-2; 43:3-4; John 10:11-18
<b>TUE, May 13</b>	Acts 11:19-26; Psalm 87:1-7; John 10:22-30
<b>WED, May 14</b>	Acts 12:24-13:5; Psalm 67:1-7; John 12:44-50
<b>THU, May 15</b>	Acts 13:13-25; Psalm 89:1-2, 20-21, 24, 26; John 13:16-20
<b>FRI May 16</b>	Acts 13:26-33; Psalm 2:6-11; John 14:1-6
<b>SAT May 17</b>	Acts 13:44-52; Psalm 98:1-4; John 14:7-14
<b>SUN May 18</b>	<b>FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b> Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35
<b>MON May 19</b>	Acts 14:5-18; Psalm 115:1-4, 15-16; John 14:21-26
<b>TUE May 20</b>	Acts 14:19-28; Psalm 145:10-13a, 21; John 14:27-31a
<b>WED May 21</b>	Acts 15:1-6; Psalm 122:1-5; John 15:1-8
<b>THU May 22</b>	Acts 15:7-21; Psalm 96:1-3, 10; John 15:9-11
<b>FRI May 23</b>	Acts 15:22-31; Psalm 57:7-11; John 15:12-17
<b>SAT May 24</b>	Acts 16:1-10; Psalm 100:1-3, 5; John 15:18-21
<b>SUN May 25</b>	<b>SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER</b> Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67 Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5; John 14:23-29
<b>MON May 26</b>	Acts 16:11-15; Psalm 149:1-6, 9; John 15:26-16:4
<b>TUE May 27</b>	Acts 16:22-34; Psalm 138:1-3, 7-8; John 16:5-11
<b>WED May 28</b>	Acts 17:15, 22-18:1; Psalm 148:1-2, 11-14; John 16:12-15
<b>THU May 29</b>	Acts 18:1-8; Psalm 98:1-4; John 16:16-20; <i>Or</i> ASCENSION DAY Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 46 <i>or</i> 93; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53
<b>FRI May 30</b>	Acts 18:9-18; Psalm 47:1-6; John 16:20-23
<b>SAT May 31</b>	Acts 18:23-28; Psalm 47:1-2, 7-9; John 16:23-28