

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

December 2022

***The Fabulous Smoked Turkey Dinner* will be
Sunday, December 11th at 11:45 a.m.**

This is a wonderful dinner for the whole family provided by the men of the church. This fellowship event is a perfect time to invite a friend to come and meet others.



Fresh Christmas trees are available. Contact Bob Linderman, 214-2550, if you would like to cut your own. These are short needle trees.



We are planning some time before the Christmas Eve Service for individuals to share their musical talents. If you would like to sing or play a holiday song before the service on Christmas Eve, please let us know.

Thank you, Diane & Lisa VanDeurzen-Otey

dianeandlisa@owlsnestmusic.com

520-834-5366

Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Rick Olsen
Alicia Garrison
Joyce Thompson



MEMORIALS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH

In memory of Paul Rood

Dave & Susan Murphey
Chuck & Nancy Garber
Jerry Gruber
Claudia Amar
Marian Mitchell

Mary Pietenpol
David & Nancy Daugherty
Cathy Siler
Ladonna Golden
Scott & Ann Raue

In memory of Miriam Dick

Women's Fellowship of FCC

In memory of Ted Williams

David Hart

In memory of Burton & Stella Kelley

John Kelley

OFFICE NOTES

2023 **Offering envelopes** will be available in the Narthex mid December. If you would like a packet please mark it on your pledge card or, call the church office.

Year end gifts to the church need to be received by December 31st, NOON. Donations have to be deposited in the bank on the 31st to be included on your 2022 statement.

Statements will be mailed out in January. Thank you for your support of the ministry of FCC.



FROM PASTOR DANI

Advent, derived from the Latin *adventus* meaning *coming*, is the season when we as church fill the sanctuary with candles and greenery, trees and lights. All done in anticipation of the arrival of the light of the world found in a special baby.

But isn't every baby special? Each birth longed for; we, as parents, grandparents, great grandparents wait for the news of the birth. And then we wonder, who will this child grow up to be? Will she/he be the one? The one to find the cure for cancer, the one to end world hunger, the one to bring peace on earth?

Just such a miraculous person is exactly what the world was waiting for 2000 years ago, Isaiah spoke of such a child, and so did the other prophets. Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Looking back, it seems to us that the prophets were future-telling; true predictions of the birth. But more likely the story of Jesus birth was later told in a way that matched what Israel had been hoping and praying for all along; a savior.

They needed someone to get Rome off their backs, someone to help them put food on the table, someone to heal their souls wounded by captivity and exile. And Jesus did fulfill those hopes when he shared the loaves and the fishes, when he gave living water to a Samaritan woman and when he promised to give the disciples the Holy Spirit to sustain them in the work of making more disciples. They waited for a very long time to see their redeemer, and most people did not recognize him when he showed up as a baby. They were expecting a warrior, or a king, not a baby who needed to grow and mature into manhood before he could begin the work God wanted him to do.

We too at times want a warrior to save us from life's difficult days. We move through the Advent season, the four weeks before Christmas, in anticipation, looking for the coming of

the light that will color our world with hope, peace, joy and finally love. It happened once before. Will it happen again, and when?

As we light the Advent wreath each week, as the sanctuary grows brighter with each candle we light; may we each experience our own sense of wonder and gratitude that God came to us through a sweet baby who grew up to be a radical, willing to give his life so that others might know peace. And may we look into the eyes of one another and see the advent, the coming of God's hope, peace, joy and love. For God is still with us, still in us. Come oh Come, Immanuel.

Blessings,
Pastor Dani

RESULTS...are almost in!

We have received a summary of our meeting in November from Devon of the Lombard Peace Center. The eight recorders are now transcribing their notes so, in January, all the information from the meeting will be ready to distribute to the congregation.

Giving Opportunities During Advent and Christmas

Christmas Fund - Veterans of the Cross - this special offering is collected by the Mission Board and is given to the United Church of Christ. One of the special aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds do not support programs, make grants to institutions, or fund advocacy programs, but rather, they provide direct financial assistance to individual retired UCC clergy and lay employees. This offering is collected through December 18th.



First, we are in need of "elves" for our Trains & Trees Event beginning December 2 at Woodhams Ford showroom. (I promise you that you don't have to wear an elf hat if you don't want to!) This would entail greeting people as they come through the door, manning the We Care desk and just walking around to make sure things are the way they should be. Easy work and fun! We have many trees being decorated by community members and schools again this year so plan on enjoying wonderful Christmas and festive decorations! Please contact Doug Dunn or Erika Morrison at #269.637.4342 for more information and availability. Thank you for your consideration!

Second, if you would like to support We Care and our ministries/programs we are in need of Walmart Charitable Gift Cards in amounts of \$10, \$25 and \$50. They cannot be used for alcohol, tobacco, lottery tickets or firearms. So they are perfect for us - for the holidays, gas for cars, gifts, meals, etc. Interested donors can go to the following registry to see exactly what is needed.

<https://www.walmart.com/registry/ER/aa09ebef-f326-49b5-bc79-1284a53fcb0e>

Thank you for your continued support of and generosity to our community. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to let us know. May you have a blessed Thanksgiving!/

Dana Tipken
Operations Manager & Utilities Specialist
We Care



Anniversaries

- 12/09 Diane & Lisa Van Deurzen-Otey
- 12/27 Robert & Theresa Gleason
- 12/30 Don & Elaine Kitchin

Birthdays

- 12/01 Tony Cochran
- 12/03 Scott Raue
- 12/08 Margaret Guimond
- 12/09 James O'Niel
- 12/09 Joseph O'Niel
- 12/15 Nancy Daugherty
- 12/17 Sue Gillett
- 12/17 Faith Spies
- 12/27 Jason Turner
- 12/28 Adam Peterson
- 12/30 Bob Straits



Christmas Flower Fund



This year for Christmas we are offering you the opportunity to order a poinsettia that will be used for adorning our Sanctuary during this Advent season. After the Christmas Eve service you are encouraged to take your poinsettia home with you or share it with someone. Please let us know on the form if you will be doing that.

You may order a flower for a donation of \$15 /each, or more, which can be in memory or in honor of someone. A list of donators will be published in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

To make a donation, fill out this form and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office by **December 18th**.
Thank you.

I wish to give \$ _____ in memory/honor of
(circle one)

I wish to give \$ _____ in memory/honor of
(circle one)

I wish to give \$ _____ in memory/honor of
(circle one)

Signature

Note: Whatever name(s) that appear for the signature is what will be printed.

I will be taking my poinsettia home with me.