

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

June 2022

## Young Adult Ministry (18-55 and their families)

Our next event will be our third annual Burger Burn at the church on Sunday, June 12 at 12:00. Plan for a great meal and wonderful gathering.



## AFTER WORSHIP

Join together once again for **Coffee and Conversation** in Fellowship Hall, immediately following worship on Sundays.

### *Dear Congregation,*

The trustees wish to inform you that we have chosen Coldwell-Banker to be our selling agent. This decision was made after careful consideration of each agency that provided us with details explaining why we should choose them. In each of our criteria for choosing an agent, Coldwell-Banker rose to the top. We were unanimous in our decision to have them handle the selling of our parsonage.

We have appreciated your prayers and support during this process. We ask this to continue because we take representing the congregation as our utmost priority and we will surely have a few anxious moments when choosing an offer.

Please know that we will do our best at informing you as quickly as possible once an offer has been accepted.

Best Regards, Your trustees

## Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus our Christ,

Thank you for all of the liturgical exploration and labor we did together in the month of May. I'm grateful for those who acolyte, sing, play instruments, run tech, lay lead, turn the lights on and off, tend the children, send email announcements, care for the grounds, count the money, greet each other with warmth, feed the hungry, set up zoom meetings, pray for our members and extended families, update screens, tithe, study scripture on Wednesday nights, and on and on. Living the Gospel is a communal endeavor and no act of consecration is too small. It takes all of us. I see you doing it. Thank you.

We are entering the liturgical season of Pentecost together. Wear your red! Blaze those bonfires! Celebrate the birth of the church and the arrival of the Holy Spirit with boldness!

The worship theme of the month is Divine Diversity: The Many Images of God. We will look at diverse languages, foods, ecology and forms of love as expressions of the divine life. I welcome those who have the desire and capacity to deepen their study of scripture to attend Bible Study on Wednesday nights at 7pm. Those who seek to engage in contemplative practice of communal care are invited to join our weekly prayer group on Wednesday nights at 6:15pm. Both gatherings are on zoom. Just ask me via email if you'd like the link to attend. My email address is below

As I've witnessed bewildering and painful dynamics happen in our society and its major institutions around gun violence and the harm/death of children and people of color, foreign policy and war devastation, reproductive rights and the sanctity of life, and the place of vaccines and masks inside of this pandemic, I can't help but notice two themes. Some of us are struggling to hear (truly truly hear) each other across differences, and there seems to be an insistence on choosing between the mutually exclusive options of individual liberty and collective responsibility.

We are an inextricably bound species on (divine) purpose; the individual is made possible by the social and the social is composed of individuals. Further, I think what brilliant neo-orthodox Christian theological Paul Tillich once wrote is true: "The first duty of love is to listen." How can we live faithfully into the paradox of our social and individual existence and honor the first duty of love to listen, as Christians? What does this look like for you in practice/discipleship?

In times when culture wars get louder and louder I try to recenter in scripture because my first allegiance is always to Christ. Here are the two passages I read every single morning. I share them in hopes that some of you might also find them helpful and grounding.

Philippians 2:

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others."*

And this passage from 1 Cor 12:

*"...the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,<sup>23</sup> and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect;<sup>24</sup> whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member,<sup>25</sup> that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another.<sup>26</sup> If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."*

Keep the faith, Beloved.  
Pastor EJ

## JUNE

We are beginning our month-long focus on Divine Diversity: The Many Images of God. All through the month of June will be reading sacred text, searching ancient symbols and mining Church history for the myriad ways God shows God's self. This weekend we celebrate Pentecost--the birth of The Church through the arrival of the Holy Spirit via tongues of flame and violent wind. It's a pretty action packed story, full of natural elements, different languages, prophecy and the fulfillment of God's promise to give the disciples what they need to continue works of salvation on Earth.

As we pivot from May (Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month) toward June (LGBTQ+ Pride Month) I thought I'd share two of my latest favorite resources from the internet with you. One is a website full of solidarity resources and stories connected to APIA communities and the other is a website created by LGBTQ+ theologians and biblical scholars. Check them out!

2022 APIA Heritage Month Solidarity Resources

[https://solidarityis.org/our-work/tools-resources/apiahm22playlist/?mc\\_cid=2c4fb28e8b&mc\\_eid=246cb3b7de](https://solidarityis.org/our-work/tools-resources/apiahm22playlist/?mc_cid=2c4fb28e8b&mc_eid=246cb3b7de)  
Enfleshed  
<https://enfleshed.com/>

This month I will be in the office from 10:30AM-3:30PM on Mondays: June 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th. If you need to connect with me about pastoral needs outside of those days, you can call me at 269-832-9447 or email me at [emilyjoye@gmail.com](mailto:emilyjoye@gmail.com)

In Christ,  
Pastor EJ

### Did you know?

Aldi's is so generous to our food pantry. They provide fresh fruits and vegetables and many other healthy items. Their generosity allows us to provide important nutrition to our clients.

*When shopping, please frequent Aldi's.*



## Vacation Bible School 2022

We are looking for volunteers to help with Vacation Bible School this year. We are working with the Peace Lutheran Church and First United Methodist Church to have a VBS on July 18-22 at Peace Lutheran Church.

Dinner will start at 5 p.m. and VBS will begin at 6 p.m. every evening.

Talk to Sarah Peterson or Pastor Mike about volunteering. You can get more information and sign up as participants or volunteers, at [lumpartners.com](http://lumpartners.com).

## From the Michigan Conference of UCC

Here is information if you wish to help the community of Gaylord, Michigan, from the recent tornado that went through their town.

Volunteer Center--Otsego County United Way. To register please visit: [www.otsegounitedway.org/volunteers](http://www.otsegounitedway.org/volunteers)

The Otsego Community Foundation has set up a Tornado Response Fund. For online giving: <https://give.otsegofoundation.org/campaign/tornado-response/c409192>

To give by check, mail to:  
Otsego Community Foundation  
Memo: Tornado Response Fund  
P.O. Box 344  
Gaylord, MI 49734

## Lori Tupper's Celebration of Life Party

Lori Tupper (wife of Pastor Mike) was diagnosed in December with Metastatic Breast Cancer. She has decided to throw herself a Celebration of Life Party. Everyone is invited. It will be on August 13 from 1:00 to 8:00 at the home of Mike and Lori Tupper (45554 West Street, Lawrence). There will be food and fun in addition to entertainment by David Veenstra and Diane and Lisa Van Deurzen-Otey. Let us know you are coming at the following website: <https://sites.google.com/view/lifecelebrationofloritupper/>



## Second Sunday Soup Supper

Join us for a lite supper, soup provided. Come ready to be part of a conversation that asks you to 'say more about that'. We will listen deeply, laugh together, solve the world's problems (jk), as we share a meal and talk about more than the weather.

This is a first of what we hope will be ongoing; no pressure to attend every time.

This event will happen on July 10th at 5:30 p.m. at the home of Dani Veenstra (1220 Monroe Blvd.).

For details on what to bring contact Dani at 616-232-7307, or [daniveenstra54@gmail.com](mailto:daniveenstra54@gmail.com)



06/04 Diane Ritchie  
06/05 Riana Rowles  
06/09 Griffin Larson  
06/12 Bryce Campbell  
Mike Tupper  
06/16 Art Ayers  
06/17 Nathan Morey  
06/21 Robert Gleason  
06/23 Eleanore Peterson  
06/24 Ann Raue  
06/27 Jason Danczyk  
06/30 Matthew Larson  
Barb Musgrove

6/06 Phil & Lynda Clemons  
6/10 Robert & Lynn Gabel—50th  
6/13 Jeff & Barbara Reber  
6/17 Matt & Jaquelyn Bennett—5th  
6/18 Jeffrey & Lynn Dick—45th  
6/19 David & Nancy Daugherty