

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

May 2023

NEW MINISTER TO BEGIN IN MAY! WELCOME PASTOR FREY

Pastor David Frey recently made it official while surrounded by the pulpit search committee and the moderator. Pastor David's first service with his new church family will be May 21st. Exciting times!



Left to right:

Seated: Marcia Claggett, Pastor David, Dave Murphey, Louise Wepfer
Standing: Adam Peterson, Sarah Peterson, Doug Gruber, Diane Ritchie

Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Rick Olsen
Joyce Thompson
Art Ayers
Donna Capps



Saying Goodbye!

Celebrating Pastor Dani's time with us will take place on Sunday, May 7th, immediately following worship. This will be up in Fellowship Hall.

Although this is not her last Sunday preaching, the church wanted to make sure that we could thank her before leaving us. Her last Sunday to preach is May 14th, Mother's Day.



WORSHIP this MONTH

May 7—Sacrament of Holy Communion

May 14—Mother's Day

Women of the church will be given a gift after worship.

May 21—Graduation Sunday

We'll be celebrating our 2023 graduates. There are eight!

This will be our new pastor's first Sunday with us.

May 28—Pentecost

Traditionally, wear something red that day.

**Family Fellowship Night -
Are you smarter than a 5th grader?**

Join us Sunday, May 7th at 5 p.m. for a potluck dinner, followed by the game "Who's Smarter than a 5th Grader?", led by Elaine Fluck.



May 18th

As the saying goes 'many hands make light work' is so true when it comes to holding a Food Truck distribution. If you can help, please let Scott Raue know.

Workers would arrive about 10:30 to help set up. All distributing begins at 11 a.m.

Until our paths intertwine once more

Our time together is coming to an end. What a joy amid the initial turmoil it has been. I cannot thank you all enough for helping me be the minister FCC needed at this time and space. Mistakes have been made on my part, for those errors I beg your forgiveness, your grace will follow me in the coming days.

It is about nine months that we have been blessed to worship together, Ten times the diaconate has set the table for us to share Communion (my favorite part of worship), We celebrated Advent, missed Christmas Eve and day services due to Michigan's wrath in the form of ice and snow. Each week my heart swells with joy as we worship; walking with the children who serve as acolytes, planning the music and liturgy and then celebrating together our desire to follow where Jesus leads us in co-creating a new heaven and earth, a new kin-dom. You have allowed me to be fully myself as I preach; your questions, comments and wonderings shared with me have taught me many times, giving me a new view of the stories in our sacred text.

Keep wondering, keep asking questions, keep poking at your faith along with your new minister. He is coming into a great congregation that serves the Lord well. Listen to one another; hearts break, and are mended when we are willing to sit with one another in places both dark and filled with light.

My David and I will not be attending church for at least a year, you need to allow Rev. David Frey to settle in as your minister. Give him your assistance as you have given it to me, freely

and lovingly. You know stuff he will need help with. You are a wonderful church- Body of Christ.

When you see me around town, smile and wave. I will be holding you all in my prayers. Again, thank you, our time together has reminded me why I answered God's call to enter ministry.

Blessings,
Pastor Dani



High honor presented to John and Sue Gillett

At a recent gathering for We Care volunteers, John and Sue Gillett were awarded Volunteer of the Year 2022, presented by Erika Morrison, Director of We Care. The Gillett's served the community for over 16 years.

Unfortunately, the Gillett's were unable to attend the event and were given the award later.

THANK YOU JOHN AND SUE!

Members needed for Nominating Committee

We need to have three people for this committee. Your main responsibility would begin August/September. Your duty is to find someone that would like to fill a vacancy on a board beginning in upcoming January.

We have descriptions of each board for you to share with your perspective volunteer.

Your main responsibility would end November 1st. *Contact Dave Murphey if interested.*

dave.murphey@gmail.com

Rummage Sale Wrap Up

Even with construction blocking all church entrances at times, rummage sale profits will be close to \$ 2000!

We appreciate the quality of goods brought in, that people followed the guidelines, the volunteers who helped before, during and after, and for supporting the Domestic Violence Coalition.

The We Care migrant and personal programs also received items from the sale.

Our volunteers were all "in house" church family, including our ever helpful scout Jordan Fleming.

IOU's can be paid to Kris Ayers or Sue Murphey ASAP. Checks should be made out to Women's Fellowship.

We still have available a Dyson vacuum, 38" flat screen TV with remote,

space heater, and a nice/sturdy 3 pc. set of wicker furniture available. Please see Kris if interested.

For a bunch of old folks, we still get the job done! Way to go!



Memorial Garden

A few years ago there were some in the congregation that had asked if they could have their ashes buried on the church grounds. No such area existed. So, a committee was formed to explore this and the result is an area located along the west side of the building, designated for the specific use as a memorial garden.

When it initially started the thought was how to best share those names whose ashes have been buried. A local artist, Kayla Ridley, was asked to create a design with ideas that had been presented. The final project is a large green tree, with some background scenery of Lake Michigan included. (picture above) It is beautiful! It is located in the foyer off of the office wing.

The cost to have your ashes placed in the memorial garden is \$ 250. This

includes the cost of the name plate for the memorial plaque and the upkeep of the Memorial Garden.

This arrangement can be set up anytime by contacting Victoria in the church office.

Sock collection

New Testament Church in South Haven challenged us, and other churches in the community to help collect 10,000 pairs of socks in the month of March. These socks would then be distributed between the homeless, the incarcerated, and the Domestic Violence Coalition.

The picture below shows CJ 'The Bread Man' with a member of the Van Buren County Sheriff's Department.



We received a card from Pastor CJ thanking us for our participation and support. It is posted on the south bulletin board in the Narthex.

Looking at May

Lay Assistant

7– Don Kitchin
14– Theresa Gleason
21– Doug Gruber
28– Don Kitchin

Usher Captains

Don & Elaine Kitchin
(Don is busy this month!)

Anniversaries

1– Greg & Marian O’Niel
7– Ted & Margaret Guimond
21– Tony & Pat Martorano
25– Craig & Chris Arms



Birthdays

4– Karen Ruesink
13– Shirley Sollman
15– Peggy McClendon
16– Aaron Strebeck
Erin Bos
17– Beth Keithly
18– Lisa VanDeurzen-Otey
19– David Campbell
20– Camborley Gleason
23– Diane VanDeurzen-Otey
24– Mike Nelson
29– Greg O’Niel
Debbie Walter