

**January
2017**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- **Dennis Artley** *Secretary/Treasurer*
- **Ann Diamond** *Chair*
- **Kathy Dempsey**
- **Ann Gerow**
- **Dottie Haase**
- **Vicky Lindsay**
- **Mike Mack**
- **Jim McNeil**, *vice-chair*
- **Beth Petty**

January 2017

Dates to Remember

- 1**
Happy New Year!
- 2**
Office Closed
- 4**
"Taking down the
Greens"
- 8**
New Member Inquiry
Class
- 13**
Ladies Luncheon
- 16**
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day Celebration
@ ACC
- 18**
"No Frills" Book Club
- 22**
New Members Join
- 23**
Friendship Room
@ St. Bernard's
- 29**
Annual Meeting

A Word From Our Minister: "Looking Back & Forward"

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

January already! Can you believe it? The winter solstice is past, which means there will be a gradual warming of the frozen arms which have embraced us these last few weeks. I fully understand why so many of our faithful families find themselves driven South to Florida or West to Arizona rather than face the deep darkness and chill. While it is by no means springtime, the additional minutes of sunlight each day means we're moving in the right direction.

The Christmas season, however, is not past. Oh, yes, displays in the stores have ousted Santa Claus in favor of Valentine's Day, but they always seem to have a two month jump on us ordinary folks. In the Church, Advent ended on Christmas Eve and the "Twelve Days of Christmas" began on Dec. 25. The season of Christmas runs until January 6 (Epiphany), when tradition commemorates the arrival of the wisemen. It's during these 12 days that all those lavish gifts were given in the popular song.

In Paris, ever since 1198, New Year's Day was celebrated as "the festival of fools" when every kind of absurdity was tolerated. I guess they wanted to shake off the old year and get all riled up for the new! In medieval England, farmers would bake a flat cake and place it on one horn of the herd's leading cow. Then their families would tease and tickle the cow until she tossed the cake to the ground. If it fell in front of her, it bode well for the coming year. When it fell behind, the reverse could be expected.

Here in America, we go out dining, dancing, and/or drinking on New Year's Eve. Maybe it's our tame version of the Parisians' Festival of Fools; maybe it's some slight residue of the farmers' tickling the cow and tossing the cake. In any case, it's a time people look back on the year gone by and look forward to what may be on the horizon.

Right now, our church leaders are putting together their Annual Reports from 2016 in preparation for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017. They put into writing the names of volunteers and the activities they accomplished in the year past, with perhaps a note or two about what may change in the coming year.

In reality, very little has changed in most of our church activities and events. "Repetition of familiar routine" is a hallmark of our 154 year-old congregation. Attendance is steady, the mood is positive, people are increasingly generous, and we hear laughter in our fellowship. Those are good things. We anticipate few radical surprises in 2017. Steady, sustainable maturation, like the gradually coming of spring, is our strength. We're moving in the right direction.

“Mitten Tree “

Jennie Morey and Diana Standen

Thank you to all who donated to the Mitten Tree Project. We collected 67 hats, 50 pairs mittens/gloves, 21 scarves, 14 slippers/socks and 5 sweaters. One hundred dollars from mission funds was used to purchase adult gloves. Items were given to the Episcopal Church for Sunday Supper folks; a box was shipped to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and baby hats will be sent with our World Relief baby kits. Because of your generosity, many will be a lot warmer this winter.

Thank You.



Ladies Luncheon

Kay Beland and Jan Snell

The Ladies Christmas Luncheon was held in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, December 10th. Many thanks to Nancy Wedge, who made all the arrangements for the caterer, to Ann Gerow for the beautiful decorations, to Kat Tomaszewski for the great music, and last but not least, the “servers” complete with their red and white striped aprons: Joe Beland, Jim Stewart, Patrick Labadie and Rev. Paul Lance.

Our January lunch will be on Friday, January 13, at **the Ramada of Alpena** at 11:30 a.m.

Ladies Luncheon

UCC Sunday Fellowship Hostesses

Bill Haase

Many Thanks and Compliments to our Hostesses for Sunday Fellowship. The great treats, homemade pastries and assorted fruits that you have been providing are most appreciated by our church members and guests. Your attention to details and hosting service makes a warm fitting to ending our Sunday Service. Hostess volunteers are always welcome. Contact the church office or Bill Haase (340-2123) if you would like to help with Sunday Fellowship. See sign-up sheet at the Care Podium for details where help is needed.

Winter Dinner Mixers--

Sign up for dinner with church friends and guest during the months of January, February and March. This is a great event with lively conversation, lots of laughter, and delicious food. The dinner host will set the time and date for the dinner. Participants are assigned to bring a dish, *i.e.*, salad, vegetable, or a dessert. The host will provide the main entrée. Sign-up sheets are located at the care letter podium. If you would like to host a gathering, please indicate on the sign-up sheet. Dinner grouping size - maximum (8) persons, (can be less). Sign-up by the 15th of the month and meals will be planned for last two weeks of the month. For more information contact **Bill Haase (340-2123) for January, Jim McNeil (269-268-5032) for February, and Bill Dempsey (595-2723) for March.**



January Birthdays to Celebrate

Jan.10: Herb Knowlton Jan 24: Margaret Naylor
 Jan 10: Max Lindsay Jan 28: Pat Kreft
 Jan 12: Vicky Lindsay Jan 31: Jennie Morey
 Jan 12: Kathy Thomas
 Jan 12 Lillian Banas
 Jan 13: Jim Park
 Jan 17: Bev Olsen
 Jan 20: Martha Vance
 Jan 21: Brittany Nunez
 Jan 23: Vernie Nethercut



If we missed your birthdate,

please let Gerrie know in the Church office. Thank you.

January Anniversaries

January 4

William & Kathleen Dempsey **25 Years**

January 23

Mary & James Davison **70 Years**

January 26

Sonny & Joan Chrzan **54 Years**



Board of Directors December 2016 Meeting Highlights

Gerrie La Cross, Secretary

- ◆ Thank-you to Rev. Lance and the church leadership for all the hard work to prepare for the Christmas season and the beautiful funeral service for Steve Tretinik.
- ◆ Received a new billing from Omega Electric, with the corrected amount due for a service call.
- ◆ Treasurer reports: We are ahead in donations to Mission Pledges. The loose offering is well over the budget and the General Fund should meet the pledge for this year. It has been a good year.
- ◆ New web site is ready to go live.
- ◆ Board approved the proposed 2017 Budget from the Finance Committee.
- ◆ Stewardship had a good fund raising drive this year
- ◆ Mission Committee is wrapping up the year. They will meet Dec 14th to spend the final monies for 2016.
- ◆ New boiler has been installed. Omega will be in to replace lights in the Fellowship Hall and look at the lights in the Sanctuary. A chair person is needed for the Property Committee.
- ◆ Max Lindsay is making calls for the Nominating Committee.
- ◆ Annual Meeting date set for January 29th following the morning service.
- ◆ A nursery attendant has been hired, Shelby Sexton, is a high school junior. She has completed the Safe Sitter Course offered by the hospital. She will begin in January.
- ◆ Reviewed names of inactive members. Board approved letters to be sent
- ◆ A "go-pro" camera has been purchased to allow us to video-tape and post the weekly sermons on the new web page. We will also get a camera to videotape interviews with church members.
- ◆ Friday, February 3, 2017, Rev. Toby Jones and his combo will be here to perform a concert.
- ◆ Rev. Lance is trying to contact Joel Gary to schedule another organ concert, perhaps in May.
- ◆ Rev. Lance will be on vacation Feb. 8-17th. New member class, Jan 8; new members join on Jan 22. Underground Church will resume February 19th.

Full Board Minutes by request by email to office@uccalpena.org

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration

Dottie Haase

Monday, January 16, 2017, at Alpena Community College

3:00—4:30 PM Film & Discussion, led by Matt Dunckel

Alpena Community College, Besser Tech Center 122

The film is “BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE.” This PBS film asks profound questions about the state of black America—and our nation as a whole. This event is free and open to the public.

5:00—6:15 PM Chili Supper - Adults \$8.00, Students \$4.00

Alpena Community College, Lumberjack Shack

Proceeds benefit “Wash Your Coat”, a project for our community that provides free laundromat service to those in need. Tickets available at the door. Sponsored by First Congregational UCC, Grace Lutheran, St. Paul Lutheran, & Trinity Episcopal Churches.

6:30 PM Essay Winners Speak Out

Alpena Community College, Granum Theatre

Winners of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest for junior high and high school students will have an opportunity to read their works—“**Consider the conflicts in your own community: in schools, neighborhoods, churches, and other organizations. How might you create a Beloved Community?**” This event is free and open to the public.

7:30 PM Discussion on Creating a Beloved Community/

Understanding White Privilege

Alpena Community College, Newport Center 106

How are issues like education, health care, poverty, housing, and economic status related to white privilege? This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, please call 989-340-1171

Activities planned by the Alpena MLK, Jr. Day Committee,
with the support of Alpena Community College &
the Outreach Committee of St. Paul Lutheran Church



MISSING: A few months ago a member of the church purchased dish cloths (from Nancy Wedge) for kitchen use. They are now missing. If you took them home to wash, great, but please return them. Thank you.

Altar Flowers: The 2017 schedule for altar flowers is posted on the bulletin board outside of the Secretary's office. Sign up now for those special days in your life to honor or remember loved ones.

Monday Mid-day Movies

In preparation for the discussion of "white privilege" at Alpena Community College on Jan. 16, the films (noon, Fellowship Hall) will deal with race relations in America.

Jan. 9 (1967) "***Guess Who's Coming to Dinner***" Katharine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy, Sidney Poitier. When a white daughter brings her black fiancé to meet her parents, sparks fly; and his parents are equally dismayed. A classic study of prejudices.

Jan. 16 — two short documentaries:

(1986) Peter Jennings narrates "Martin Luther King, I Have a Dream" (Aug. 28, 1963) with vintage news-footage of the setting.

(2011) "Black-Power Mix-tape" (1967-69) Swedish television journalists documented Stokely Carmichael's alternative to Dr. King' non-violence. Unseen in the USA.

Jan. 23 (1996) "***Ghosts of Mississippi***" The trial to convict Medgar Evers's killer.

Thank you from SERRV

Another Big Thank You Is due to the valiant crew who showed up in this busy season to hold another successful sale for SERRV in October, and again on December 4th!

A full report will be in the annual meeting booklet next month, but we wanted to report that both sales were successful, and our income exceeded expenses by about \$800. We will be making a donation back to SERRV to help craft producers get set up in business and deal with emergencies such as damage from earthquakes in Nepal.

Early next year we hope to recruit a new leadership team for our SERRV sales. We need to hand over some responsibilities due to changes in our circumstances, and it is more than time for some fresh eyes on how to proceed in the future. If you are interested in helping maintain this 42-year tradition at our church, let us know!

Marcia Aten and Belinda Aguirre.

(Monday Midday Movies continued...)

Jan. 30 (1991) "***The Long Walk Home***" Whoopie Goldberg, Sissy Spacek, Dwight Schultz. 1955 Montgomery bus boycott pits two women's resolve against the White Citizens' Council.

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Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@frontier.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Monday – Thursday

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Fellowship Time: 11:00 am

Minister: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case

Choir Director & Organist: Kat Tomaszewski

Treasurer: Denise Fusina

Secretary: Gerrie La Cross

Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

A New Year's Resolution:

"Let's do church!"

Sunday 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship
("Underground Church"
will resume February 19th)

Monday 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
Noon Mid-day Movies

You are welcome here!



ANNUAL MEETING



**Sunday, January 29th
after the 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service.**

- Budget**
 - Election of Officers**
- All are welcome.***