

**August
2024**

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

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From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Dick Hotchkin

In the past, Sunday was set aside. Work was minimal. An aura of reverence pervaded the day. People did not pray all day long, but God hovered over Sunday, giving human beings rest from the tedium of the week.

Our complex modern society has robbed us of the blessing of Sunday. Not altogether, however. There is respite from routine. There are visits to friends and family. There is recreation. Leisure and play, healing as they are, may in themselves become destructive. We may have to return from an exhausting weekend to find rest in routine again. And what is worse, the preoccupation with recreation may distract us from any thought of God.

One historian has said that the old Germany was destroyed by Hitler when he initiated his Sunday programs for youth, taking them away from the churches. Disobedience to the commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," changed the character of that nation. If God's day can be wiped out, God can be forgotten.

It will take individual and personal disciplines for us to recover Sunday. It may be quite futile to roll back to the day when stores were closed, whole communities finding their way to churches, traffic on the highways at a minimum. The best we can do is to resist the tempo by self-discipline. Most important, certainly for people who profess faith in God, is to find our way to church.

A Pastor writes, "In one of my churches was a man who had not missed a Sunday service in 32 years. Why this self-imposed discipline? Certainly not because church services were always so edifying. And not because he feared that God would punish him for any lapse. The reason was quite clear: he had resolved that he ought to set aside at least an hour a week to thank God in company with others who gathered to thank God."

When someone says, "I feel better when I've been to church," don't dismiss her as a romantic or a fanatic. She may very well be on to something profoundly great!

Dates to Remember

August 4
Worship Service
Communion
Sunday Singers

August 11
Worship Service

August 12
Board Meeting
5:30 pm

August 18
Worship Service

August 25
Worship Service



Trust
IN THE LORD

email Scams

Pastor Dick

Please be aware that there have been emails being sent by “Rev. Hotchkin” or “Dick Hotchkin”. These **ARE NOT** from him. If you will look at the email itself, it is not from this church/office. His office email is alpuccpastor@gmail.com. In the event you do receive an email from him with another email address, please verify this with him before opening it.



Treasurer's Report

Denise Fusina

<u>PLEDGE REPORT</u>	<u>June 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
◇ General Fund Pledge	\$ 9,250	\$ 55,500
◇ Received	8,687	67,261
<u>INCOME AND EXPENSES</u>	<u>June 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
◇ General Fund Income	\$ 8,974	\$ 96,439
◇ General Fund Expense	21,284	126,340

Laity Schedule for August

Greeters:

August 4 Deborah Butler
 August 11 Joe & Pat Garant
 August 18 Mary Minnick
 August 25 Bobbi Zubi

Lay Readers:

August 4 Lori Mayer
 August 11 Bill Dempsey
 August 18 Boris Gerber
 August 25 Lori Mayer

Ushers:

August 4 Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski
 August 11 Nancy and Ashley Wedge
 August 18 Max & Vicky Lindsay
 August 25 Pat Labadie and Penny Anderson

Altar Guild:

Sandy Jarmuzewski

Communion:

August 4 Sandy Jarmuzewski

Counters:

August 11 Boris Gerber
 August 25 Tammy Veasy

Fellowship Hostess:

Sharon Rickard



Recollections and memories through the years...

Vernie Nethercut

Vernie is a 62-year member of First Congregational UCC Alpena. She and her husband Gordon joined the church in 1962 when they moved to Alpena from the Detroit area. Through the years, Vernie has been very involved in the church by holding a variety of positions on boards and committees, and singing in the choir. She and Gordon raised their children, Cynthia, John, and Bill, in Alpena; and they were very involved in the church as a family as well.

Some favorites memories of Vernie's church involvement were family events and Pilgrim Fellowship retreats she participated in when she served as a PF sponsor. She has fond memories of Rev. Jack Fitzgerald. The Nethercut family was grateful that he was able to travel to perform their son John's wedding in Pennsylvania, and daughter Cynthia's wedding in New Jersey. Vernie also has dear memories of Rev. Dr. Bob Case during his leadership at our church, and for the memorial service he performed for her husband Gordon in 2021.

Vernie commented that, since 1962, the church has impacted her life through meaningful pastoral guidance, Bible discussions, and while working on church boards and committees. She appreciates the pastoral support and counsel she received through the years, especially coaching the church Moderators, the implementation of Ministry Teams and as she served as coordinator, and as the interdenominational college group sponsor.



From *ALPENA GLEANINGS and Stones From Her Granite Gardens Part IV* by Robert. E. Haltiner page 6

EARLIEST CEMETERIES

The earliest known burying ground in this area was on the banks of the Thunder Bay River where the present post office is located. This was an Indian burial ground.

Sometime after the Carter Family arrived in what was to become Alpena in 1856, a burial site for those who died was established way out in an area called the Plains—then a long way from the few residences. It was in the now 11th Street area where the recent Thunder Bay Manufacturing Company was located.

At a meeting at the First Congregational Church on March 3, 1862, a motion was made and supported and carried that the Society instruct the trustees of the church to take measures to procure title to the burial grounds, or cemetery grounds, "the same that has been used for that purpose near the village." The site served as the village cemetery until 1873.

...The remains from those interred in the burial grounds near what is now 11th street were disinterred and re-buried in the newly named Evergreen Cemetery.

Recollections and memories throughout the years....

From *ALPENA GLEANINGS and Stones From Her Granite Garden Part V* by Robert E. Haltiner (pgs. 20 & 21)

Mr. and Mrs. (David) Plough were leading members of the Congregational Church...he being one of the church officers and Mrs. Plough one of the charter members...After much searching, we find that Mrs. Plough's death occurred on December 10, 1888. The following two brief announcements of her death and burial were in the *Alpena Argus* — 1888 *"Mrs. David Plough, formerly of this city, died at Sand Beach Monday. The remains will be brought to this city for burial. Funeral from Congregational Church tomorrow at 2 o'clock."*

And...*"The funeral of Mrs. David Plough took place last Thursday, the service being held at the Congregational Church. Mrs. Plough was one of the pioneers of this county. She was one of the charter members (or founders) of the Congregational Church. The floral arrangements were superb."*



Jim Park

Jim Park was born in Alpena and baptized at First Congregational Church in 1937. He officially joined the church at age 13 and has been a lifetime member for 74 years. He along with Joan Chrzan and Dixie Julian hold the longest memberships. Jim continued his membership while in College and also while working with Price Waterhouse, first in Venezuela (1982-1986), Washington DC, and Tampa. Jim joined the Besser Company in 1980 and continues membership while in Alpena and also while wintering in Florida.



Jim states that "one of my favorite memories was singing carols as the choir walked from the old church to the new church that was built with concrete masonry with the financing of Jesse and Anna Besser in 1955."

Jim has enjoyed all the Ministers over the years and remember when Phil Park sent the Besser airplane to facilitate the interview with Rev. Barksdale, and subsequently enjoyed hearing his southern drawl while preaching his sermons. Jim enjoyed playing softball on the famous Whippets team with Rev. Robert Case who was the pitcher and long ball hitter. He also thinks fondly of Rev. Paul Lance who came back to his hometown to serve as our minister.

We appreciate Jim for his long years of membership and thank him for his continued support of our church.

Dates to Remember

Birthdays

Carmen Grubaugh 8/4

Ashley Wedge 8/6

Dave Zeller 8/12

Dixie Julian 8/14

Priscilla Homola 8/19

Heather Bodem 8/23

Anniversaries

Nathan & Kristin Barden 8/2

Ron & Lynn Borke 8/14

Dave & Lori Zeller 8/14

Bill & Dottie Haase 8/19

Jon & Megan Petty 8/20

Brian & Miranda Plume 8/21

Bob & Diana Kelly 8/27

Dan Kibbe & Lois Gibbs 8/30



Board Highlights

- ⇒ Vanco: A new online giving option will be introduced soon.
- ⇒ The elevator needs many required upgrades that will be costly. The Property Committee is looking at several options regarding this.
- ⇒ Membership Declaration cards have been mailed to those who have not completed these.
- ⇒ The Board, Budget/Finance Committee, Investment Committee, and Stewardship Committees will be pursuing ways to improve, stabilize, and sustain our financial health.

Our 50 Year+ Member Celebration Sunday was a SUCCESS

Deborah Butler

Close to 60 members were in attendance, and a majority of our honored guests were able to attend the June 23rd celebration honoring our 50 year+ members. The reception following worship was well-attended and enjoyed immensely.

Many people worked together to make this truly a day of celebration. A Special Thank You to: Bev Olsen, Bobbi Zubi, and Dotti Haase for the numerous phone calls made; Ann Gerow and Lois Gibbs for putting together the articles on many of the 50 year+ members included in the Summer Newsletters; Nancy Wedge, who organized the celebration, which was hosted by Lynn Borke and Cindy Straley, who also took many pictures; and Bill and Dottie Haase who set up, made coffee, and cleaned up afterward. Nancy Ross ensured invitations were mailed and coordinated the RSVP's, and Rev. Hotchkin honored these longtime members during our worship service. Most importantly, THANK YOU to our 50 year+ members who have been the foundation, cornerstone, and leaders of this congregation for so many years.

THANK YOU...

First Congregational United Church of Christ
201 South Second Avenue
Alpena, Michigan 49707

Phone: 989-356-1795

Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>

Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com

Office Hours: 9:00 AM– 1:00 PM Monday – Thursday

Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM
In Person and Online

Transition Minister:

Reverend Dr. Richard E. Hotchkin

Pastor Emeritus: Reverend Dr. H. Robert Case

Organist/Choir Director: Kat Tomaszewski

Treasurer: Denise Fusina

Office Administrator: Nancy Ross

Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

*That is why it is necessary
for us to pay more than the
usual attention to the things
we have heard,
so that we never drift away.
Hebrews 2:1*

