

**September  
2024**

# Still Speaking

*Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena*

## Board of Directors

Deborah Butler,  
Chairperson  
Sandy Jarmuzewski,  
Vice-Chairperson  
Nancy Wedge,  
Treasurer  
Beverly Bodem  
Bill Dempsey  
Ann Diamond  
Joe Garant  
Jim McNeil  
Beth Petty

## **From the Pastor's Desk**

**Pastor Dick Hotchkin**

Imagine the range of emotions parents might feel when sending their daughter off to college for the first time. They have loved her as best they could. They have trained her and nurtured her, disciplined her and encouraged her. They have tried to give her self-confidence and an appreciation of her unique gifts and abilities. They have tried to shape her character and mold her values. They have tried to inspire in her a vision of what life can be, and of what she can offer to the world. And now they are sending off their daughter, releasing her so that she can find her own way of being and loving in the world. As parents, they are aware of the challenges, the temptations, even the dangers, that will confront their daughter in this new setting. And so they pray for God's protection, and for wisdom as she makes choices, and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as she begins her new phase on life's journey.

In a similar way, Jesus prayed for his disciples. Jesus knew that they would face hatred and rejection in the world, because their values were not the world's values, and their ways were not the world's ways. Jesus recognized the presence and power of evil in the world, and so he prayed for the protection of the disciples ... as he does today for our protection.

You and I have been chosen by God and consecrated to be God's witnesses in the world. Jesus sends us into the world to testify to God's saving love and grace. Our comfort is this: we belong to God. Our safety is in God's protection. Our success is in God's strength working through our weakness. Jesus sends us out with the love of a parent, promising to be with us always, encouraging us in our task and warning us of the dangers we will face. It is in this assurance that we find a sure comfort, in life and in death.

As each of us carries out our particular mission in the world, let's remember that we are surrounded and upheld by this great love, a love greater even than the love of a parent for a child. Let's trust in that love. Let's abide in that love. Let's be that love.

**September 1**  
Worship Service  
Communion

**September 2**  
Labor Day

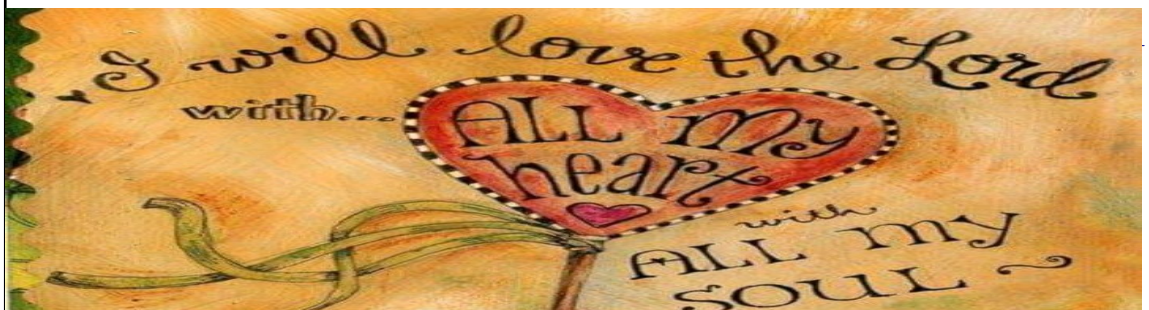
**September 8**  
Worship Service  
Informational  
Meeting

**September 9**  
Board Meeting  
5:30 PM

**September 15**  
Worship Service  
Special  
Congregational  
Meeting

**September 22**  
Worship Service

**September 29**  
Worship Service



## Board Highlights

*Nancy Wedge, Board Secretary/Treasurer*

- \* Gary Jarmuzewski and Janet Artley presented a proposal for the Columbarium/Memorial Garden.
- \* Jean Gilliland has been assigned to the Comstock Committee. Joe Garant and Max Lindsay will join the Stewardship Committee.

## Treasurer's Report

*Denise Fusina, Treasurer*

<u>PLEDGE REPORT</u>	<u>July 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
◇ General Fund Pledge	\$ 9,250	\$46,250
◇ Received	5,991	58,573
<u>NCOME AND EXPENSE REPORT</u>	<u>July 2024</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
◇ General Fund Income	\$ 6,156	\$ 87,465
◇ General Fund Expense	20,435	105,057

## Online Giving - A New Opportunity

*Denise Fusina, Treasurer*

We want to start by expressing gratitude for your unwavering support and generosity towards our church. Your contributions have been essential to our ability to continue carrying out our mission and serving the needs of our community.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new e-giving platform, Vanco. This platform provides a secure and user-friendly way to give to our church online, and we are confident that it will make giving more convenient for many members of our congregation as well as friends from outside our membership.

You can now give by going to our web page (<https://www.uccalpena.org/>). Once there, you will find a "Donate" button located near the top of the page. When you click on the "Donate" button, it will take you to our secure Vanco online page where you can choose to support the General Fund, Mission Fund, or other special giving opportunities like the Heifer program. When you click on the giving tile, for instance General Fund, it takes you to a form to complete. (You will need to create an account the first time you give). Your online donation can be by credit card or ACH bank debit. Choosing a one time gift or a repeating gift (like payments on your pledge) and covering the credit card service fee (2.9%) or ACH fee (1%) are options offered for each gift.

The following QR code will also take you to our secure Vanco online giving page.

More information will be included with upcoming bulletins.



Whether you choose to give online or in person, your support is vital to the continued success of our church community. We are so grateful for your generosity and commitment to our shared mission. Thank you again for all that you do.

If you have any questions, please email me at: [apnucbookkeeper@gmail.com](mailto:apnucbookkeeper@gmail.com).

## Special Congregational Meeting Announcement

Jay Kettler, Moderator

As moderator of our church, it is my duty to inform you that there will be a **Special Meeting of the Congregation in the sanctuary on Sunday, September 15, 2024** immediately following our worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to consider changes in the Comstock Fund Guidelines.

Every 5 years the Comstock Committee is required to review the Comstock Guidelines and recommend any changes. The Committee has done this and brought their recommendations to our Board, which has acted on them. The recommendations now must go before our congregation for actions.

**There will be an informational meeting on Sunday, September 8 during fellowship time to discuss the recommendations coming before the Membership.**

## Feed A Family

Bill Haase

The area food pantry is in need of: Ravioli, Spaghetios, Beefaroni, crackers (saltine, oysters, graham), any kind of hamburger, chicken, tuna helper. Thank you.

## Homebound/Shut-in Ministry

Pastor Dick

If you are interested in having someone visit or bring you communion, please let either Pastor Dick or Gary Jarmuzewski know. With many older and homebound members, some may feel somewhat neglected and lost in the activities of our church. We would love to have you stay connected and feel a part of our church community.

## Celebrations

### Birthdays

Thomas Grubaugh 9/6

Nancy Wedge 9/6

Bill Clegg 9/7

Penny Anderson 9/8

Matthew Bailey 9/10

Blair Diamond 9/14

Connor Caplis 9/15

Lois Gibbs 9/20

Laura Caplis 9/21

Cheryl Mack 9/27

Nicole Petty 9/28

Claire Caplis 9/28

### Anniversaries

Dennis & Beverly Bodem 9/21



## Recollections and memories through the years...

On June 23<sup>th</sup> we celebrated the 23 First Congregational United Church of Christ Alpena's 50+ Year Members. Many have been members 60 or more years. Their dedication and participation in our church is a rich legacy as they have set an example of faith and involvement over the years. This month we are featuring several members with their stories and memories.

### Janet Southwell

Janet has been a member of our church since 1965. She began attending and joined the church when she married her husband, Gordon, who was already a member. It was important to Janet that her family attend and worship together. Her children were confirmed and her grandchildren were baptized at First Congregational UCC Alpena. Janet remembers with joy hearing her son, Matt, as he sang Amazing Grace with his high school classmates at the church service celebrating their graduation.

### Bonnie Watkins

Bonnie has been a member of our church for 62 years, officially joining in 1962. She has many fond memories of her years as a member especially as she and Margaret Smith served as Sunday School teachers. Bonnie's favorite memory is of her daughter, Rebecca Wells, getting married in our church with Rev. Jack Fitzgerald as the officiant.

### Dave Zeller

Dave has many great memories of our church, has been a member since 1966, and has been involved in many groups and committees through the years. He especially remembers being part of Pilgrim Fellowship, serving as the group's president, and the PF leadership Rev. and Mrs. Barksdale contributed. In his youth, Dave was a member of the Boy Scout troop sponsored by our church and went on to become an Eagle Scout. He comically remembers when he and now Rev. Paul Lance were wise men/kings in the Christmas Pageant and as they sang the carol We Three Kings.

### Rebecca Wells

Becky has been a member of our church for 53 years, since 1971 when Rev. Barksdale was the minister. She has many years of involvement and service to the church. Some of Rebecca's fondest memories were those of the church high school youth group, especially the group's trip to Kentucky, and she remembers Bob and Diana Kelley as leaders. Rebecca was also married at First Congregational UCC Alpena by Rev. Jack Fitzgerald.

### Kay Beland

Kay was born and raised in Durand, Wisconsin. There she attended the local Congregational Church since infancy. She met and married Joe Beland who was from Alpena, and eventually they made their way back to his hometown. They joined the Alpena UCC in 1963.

One of Kay's favorite memories was of her son Scott when he was 8 or 9 years old. Scott was a member of the Boy Scout Troop that met here. Once when Kay came to pick him up from one of his meetings, he didn't come out with the rest of the boys. She found him sitting alone in the sanctuary, and asked him what he was doing. He said, "I like it in this room because God is here."

A poignant event for Kay was the baptism of her son Steve. Kay's parents came from Wisconsin, and her father had very high praise for the church. Unfortunately, Kay's father died in a car accident one week later. She remembers Rev. Barksdale words of comfort and special solace for her grief during this time.

We thank Kay for being a member of our church for 61 years. She has been very active in our church and involved in the prayer chain, Women's Circle, numerous funeral committees, and the Friday Ladies Luncheon. We are always glad to see her smiling face on Sunday mornings.

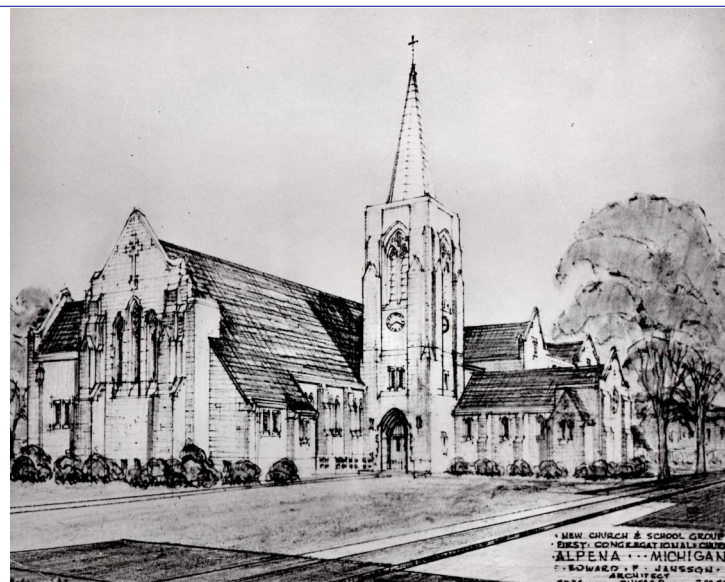
## Recollections and memories through the years...continued.

### The Founding of an Ecumenical Church, 1862–1868

During the winter of 1862 the Christian people of Alpena met on the subject of the organization of a church and decided that: *“Whereas the Christian people of Alpena, Michigan – having come from various denominations – feel it a privilege and duty to unite ourselves in a church relation, that we therefore adopt a constitution, Confession of faith and covenant, as a basis for a church organization. The name of the church to be “First Congregational Church of Alpena” with the dual organization of church and society.”* Two month after that, at a Sunday service on March 2, 1862, the church was officially organized.



Jesse and Anna Mulvena Besser



Architectural Drawing of present building.



Pilgrim Fellowship...back in the day. Recognize any of these fine folks?

## Memorial Garden and Columbarium

*Janet & Dennis Artley*

There comes a time in everyone's life when we need to make decisions for our burial. If you have not made your plans, have you considered a final resting place to be in our Memorial Garden or Columbarium? Please take a moment to read the following article for consideration. Dennis or Janet Artley as well as the church office would be glad to furnish information to help you make any decisions.

### MAKING CHOICES

Throughout the history of the Christian Church, the remains of the deceased were often buried in vaults within the church or in burial grounds surrounding the church. Such burials provided Christians a final resting place within the embrace of the church which had been their spiritual home during life on earth.

Our Church has created and dedicated a sacred area on our grounds where cremated remains (cremains) may be placed, thus allowing this historic practice to be brought back into the life of Christians today.

Cremation does not violate any Biblical precepts which emphasize the eternal life of the spirit rather than the physical body. What is required is reverent treatment of the physical remains after death.

Burial in the Memorial Garden or Columbarium does not limit the type of Memorial Service or Committal Service a family desires.

### MEMORIAL GARDEN

This peaceful garden in the side yard of our Church provides an area where cremains may be placed directly into the earth. A memorial plaque records all the names.

### COLUMBARIUM WALL

This wall encloses a portion of the Memorial Garden. It has sealed niches for the placement of cremains, and each niche has the capacity to hold the cremains of two individuals. Names are affixed to each panel.

Planning and providing for your end-of-life arrangements can be a great source of comfort to both you and your family. The expense is minimal and the comfort is great.

The Memorial Garden/Columbarium policy and reservation forms are available in the Church Office. You can receive this information by mail or in person. The Church Office will arrange for someone to meet with you if you have questions and would like to discuss this option for end-of-life arrangements.



Please call: (989) 356-1795

**SAVE THESE IMPORTANT DATES**

- Information Meeting - September 8
- Special Congregational Meeting - September 15
- Thanksgiving Potluck - November 10
- Holiday Luncheon - December 8

## Future Newsletters

*Nancy Ross, Office Administrator*

Beginning September 1, 2024, you may contact the office for a paper (snail mail) copy of the Newsletter; otherwise all Newsletters will be sent electronically (email). The Newsletter will also continue to be posted on the church Website. You may want to update your email at this time by calling the office or emailing us at officeuccalp@gmail.com. Thank you for your understanding in this important step in Stewardship and fiscal responsibility.

## Greeters

*Janet Artley*

Fall is approaching and it is time to prepare for a busy and wonderful time in the life of our church.

The Worship Committee has considered this and recommend that we have two greeters for each Sunday church service. The first one would be as they always have been-in the hallway covering both the main entrance and the Lockwood entrance. The additional greeter would be at the lower elevator entrance to not only greet but assist if necessary. Could you help?

Any questions, please call Janet Artley, 989-354-8490 or the church office, 989-356-1795.

## Laity Schedule for September

*Nancy Ross, Office Administrator*

### Greeters:

September 1: Bill & Debbie Dempsey

September 8: Ann Gerow

September 15: Curt & Shari Davis

September 22: Sonny & Joan Chrzan

September 29: Ron Borke

### Lay Readers:

September 1: Boris Gerber

September 8: Jim McNeil

September 15: Bill Dempsey

September 22: Lori Mayer

September 29: Bill Dempsey

### Ushers:

September 1: Boris Gerber and Penny Anderson

September 8: Gary & Sandy Jarmuzewski

September 15: Boris Gerber and Pat Labadie

September 22: Max & Vicky Lindsay

September 29: Nancy and Ashley Wedge

### Altar Guild:

Lori Mayer

### Communion:

September 1: Ashley Wedge

### Counters:

September 8: Nancy Wedge

September 29: Ashley Wedge

### Fellowship Hosts:

Nancy Wedge, Ashley Wedge, Sonny & Joan Chrzan



*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](mailto: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*

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Whatever you do work at it with  
all your heart. As working for the  
Lord, Not for Men.

-Colossians 3:23



**Happy Labor Day!**

@AshleyKiczek