

First Congregational Church of St. Clair



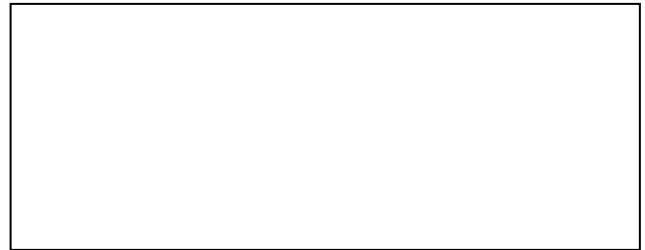
"A Just World for All"

www.firstcongsc.org | 300 Adams Street, St. Clair, MI 48079

810-329-4142

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

2019



FEBRUARY



THE CHANNEL

We are proud to be a Progressive Congregation

Worship & Sunday School: Sundays – 10 a.m.

Pastor: Reverend Alana Kelley

Communion: First Sunday of Every Month

First Congregational Church of St. Clair
United Church of Christ
300 Adams Street
St. Clair, MI 48079
(810) 329-4142
Fax: (810) 329-4420

E-Mail: firstcongstclair@sbcglobal.net

Website: www.firstconggsc.org

Facebook: FirstCongregational.UCC.St.Clair

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration. Encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11



Some thoughts from Pastor Alana;

Our Christian calendar was designed in such a wise way; a way intended to give us comfort and to keep us engaged over the course of a year. We have the focal points, our most important Christian holidays, Christmas and Easter. Advent, the weeks before Christmas remind us that it is time to get ready, in earnest. It requires us to get busy readying our church, family and selves for the beloved celebration of Jesus' birth. Christmas comes as winter weather descends upon us. It provides important diversions that have become our traditions. And by the time it all ends in January we are ready for some down-time.

Before long we become aware that Lent is fast approaching. It is the time of preparation for Easter, our other, most important Christian holiday. Easter, like Christmas, requires much preparation as we provide special worship services. And over the years we grow to love the traditions of church and family relating to the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Christmas helps to get us through the long, cold winter while Lent and Easter remind us that Spring will be bursting forth in no time at all.

The time around Christmas and Easter is called Ordinary Time. Our Ordinary Times are the longest stretches of time on the Christian calendar. And one thing Ordinary Time is NOT is ordinary because it is very important to the health of our faith and ourselves. This is time that allows us to refuel. This is our time to rest up for the upcoming season. Ordinary Time is a time dotted with other holidays, like St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Pentecost, and All-Saints Day. These days come along as icing on the cake that is our Christian year.

We have just entered Ordinary Time before Lent and Easter. This year our pre-Lent ordinary time is longer than it often is since Ash Wednesday is not until March 6th. This is an excellent time to remind ourselves to read Scripture, to pray often, to re-engage at church and to refocus on God who is over, under, in and around us always.

What a blessing it is for us to remind ourselves that Christ is always with us. Christ is with us indeed. May you find ways to refocus during this Ordinary Time on what will give you strength for the journey as we continue our walk together.

With You on the Journey,

Pastor Alana



Mary Beth Bolla, Carol LaVigne,
Karen (Deuane & Mary Ann's neighbor),
Shirley (Brian Paret's mom),
Rick (Caroline Schultz' brother),
Nancy Martin, Pearl Ewart, Vicki Kling,
Betty Pesta (Debbie Pesta's mom),
and Margaret Loranger.

Let us also remember
Dakota Hazel, Nathan Distelrath,
All who are serving in the military,
and our elected leaders.



Remember, Newsletter article submission deadline is
February 20th.

“No matter who you are or
where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here!”

WELCOME



Larry Keeler – 1st
Pearl Ewart – 1st
Kathleen Cilluffo – 2nd
Brooklyn Sheedy – 3rd
Bonita Hazel – 6th
Richard Malcolm III – 10th
Tom Pennewell – 12th
Kay VandenVoorde – 14th
Patricia O'Connor – 17th
Sabrina Doyle – 18th
Nana Black – 25th



Donald & Patricia O'Connor - 4th
Ken & Caroline Schultz - 25th
Hunter & Julie Wendt - 27th

Be the Church gathering is set for the fourth
Tuesday of every month. We will meet on
Tuesday, February 26, 2019, at 7pm.



THE LITTLE FOOD PANTRY NEEDS
NON-PERISHABLE DONATIONS. PLEASE
HELP SUPPORT THIS WORTHY MISSION.



STAFF LISTING...

Pastor:
Reverend Alana
Kelley
Organist:
Denise Gregg
Vocals:
Anna Moore
Bookkeeper:
Amanda Schwehofer
Office Administrator:
Julie Wendt
Christian Ed Coordinator:
Doug Bishop
Nursery Staff:
Olivia Carlsen/Lori Lewis
Custodians: Dale & Cindy Frey

MALLARD'S LANDING SERVICE takes place the third Thursday of every month. Please join us as we provide a much-appreciated communion worship service for some of the residents. You will enjoy getting to know 'the regulars' and seeing the members of this church who live at Mallard's, too! This month's service is on Thursday, February 21st, at 9:15am.





This month's Community Meal is on
February 19th, 4:30pm-6:00pm.



SUSTAINING CREATION
48 STEPS TO LIVING
SUSTAINABLY—
ACTIONS WE CAN ALL TAKE

I took a break last month with our list of ways to live sustainably, as outlined by Dr. Terry Gallagher. But we're ready to go now in 2019 and we are now officially in the "Getting in Deeper" column, which means that these suggestions may be a little harder for us to accomplish, but we can start and keep trying! As far as "Lifestyle" goes, Dr. Gallagher has 4 suggestions in the "Getting in Deeper" category:

17. Skip the Christmas presents (uh-oh, too late) and use the money instead to help a poorer family save some energy this year through improving their home's insulation or lighting.
18. Shop local farm markets. Food is healthier when it doesn't travel thousands of miles.
19. Add a second or even a third "meatless" day to weekly schedule or give up red meat entirely as it has triple the cost of early resources.
20. Use your social media platforms and contacts to spread the critical message of sustainability.

Next month, we'll look at two suggestions for transportation! Thanks for considering these ideas to keep God's planet healthier and sustainable.

Source:www.sustainingcreation.org

To a greener earth,

Mary Ann Martin



Please mark your calendar for our
Congregational Annual Meeting on February
3rd, 2019, immediately following worship.



YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL...

Please feel free to contact any member of your Church Council with any questions, comments or concerns.

Lisa Hughes - Moderator
Robert Rood - Vice Moderator
Ken Schultz - Treasurer
Caroline Schultz - Church Clerk
Pat O'Connor - Trustee & Finance
Kathy Rood - Worship & Music
Mary Ann Martin - Mission & Ministry
Penny Malcolm - Christian Education
- Member at Large
Alana Kelley - Pastor



KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SHINGLES

If you've had chickenpox, you're at risk for developing shingles. In fact, one in three people in the United States will develop shingles at some point in their life.

CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS

The varicella zoster virus causes both shingles and chickenpox.

- Chickenpox is more common in children, although it may occur in adults.
- Shingles is caused by the same virus but occurs almost exclusively in adults. Shingles has a different rash and develops in a different manner.

After you recover from chickenpox, the virus stays in your body. Years later, it can become active again and cause shingles. Shingles appears as a painful rash on one side of your face or elsewhere on your body. It involves an underlying nerve, which is why it can be so painful. Initially, you feel pain without the rash, but within a day or so, the rash will develop. It may be a stripe that wraps around the left or right side of your body or covers one side of your face. Once the rash appears, it blisters. The blisters scab over within about seven to ten days. It can take two to four weeks for the rash to go away. Other signs of shingles include fever, headache, chills or upset stomach.

Some people have a higher risk of getting shingles. Your risk increases as you age or if you have a weakened immune system due to a medical condition or medicine that suppresses it.

Antiviral medicines reduce the amount of time your symptoms last and decrease your risk of developing persistent pain. These medications work best when you start them as soon as the rash appears. If one of your eyes is affected, you need to see an eye specialist, or ophthalmologist, because of the risk of blindness.

Pain medicine can help reduce the discomfort. You can also try soothing measures, such as wet compresses, calamine lotion and baths with colloidal oatmeal, to help control the itching. If you think you have shingles, contact your primary care physician right away.

There are two shingles vaccines – Shingrix, the new vaccine, and Zostavax. Studies have shown that Shingrix is more effective. Shingrix is approved for adults ages 50 and older with a healthy immune system. It's given in two doses two to six months apart. Ask your primary care physician if this is right for you. Check with your insurance carrier to see if the cost is covered.

It is NOT too late to get the influenza vaccine. There are reports that this year's vaccine is very effective with the type of flu going around. This flu is very debilitating, especially for the young and the older populations. Protect yourself—get vaccinated today!!

Source: MyBlueMedicare-Summer,2018

Here's to a healthy winter,

Mary Ann Martin, RN, BAS, FCN



OPEN & AFFIRMING INCLUSIVE CHURCH COVENANT

The members of the First Congregational Church of St. Clair, United Church of Christ, declare that we are a fully inclusive, open and

affirming congregation. We affirm the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and believe that all people are children of God. As such, we welcome to the community of faith all people of diverse race, physical and mental abilities, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, and socio-economic status. We covenant to provide to all a safe, loving, nurturing and compassionate community.

**FRIDAY MORNINGS AT
NEIMAN'S CAFÉ..**

Every Friday, 10:30 a.m-12:00 p.m.

You are welcome to stop by for a chat with Pastor Alana, enjoy some good coffee, or just appreciate a relaxing end to your week!



STATE OF THE STATE

(CONFERENCE OF THE MI UCC)

I just completed my very first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ. I have to admit, I was a little nervous,

or hesitant—not knowing what to expect. I’m happy to report it was a very pleasant experience during which I learned a lot. I would like to share with you my experiences, as it does directly relate to you and to our church. Because of the impending bad weather, we met by video/audio conference and I didn’t need to drive to Lansing, so that was a good beginning!

Here are my takeaways from the meeting:

- We have a very dynamic and active Board of Directors for our state Conference.
- At the Michigan Annual Meeting in 2015, a Vision Action Statement was set up for 2020. We spent much time discussing what has been accomplished and what is next. We attempted to prioritize actions for this year.
- They are trying to ensure that invested monies are in sociably responsible funds so that we are practicing what we preach.
- The OCWM Was down 3.2% in 2018 compared to 2017.
- There is training available from Lansing for our Pastoral Relations Committee which sounds very interesting and wise.
- The group is in the process of identifying a new moderator, as the past one fulfilled his term.
- On 2/27/19, there is a training for the New UCC Manual of Ministry, which has some changes.
- There are scholarship grants available regarding social justice work that have not been requested yet.
- The State Conference puts out a weekly newsletter which is very informative and tells us all about the programs available and news from Cleveland.
- There is a church revitalization event coming up—Vitality Day 2019, Saturday, March 9, in Ann Arbor.
- There is a Women’s Conference in June!

Stay tuned for more information. Feel free to sign up for weekly newsletters at michucc.org and be in the know for the State of our State Conference! Feel free to discuss your thoughts and concerns with me. I am a representative for our church, therefore, for your church!!

Respectfully, Mary Ann Martin

The Alzheimer's Support Group will meet the fourth Thursday of the month at First Congregational Church. All are welcome. The meeting in January will be Thursday, February 28th, at 1pm. For further information, please call the church (329-4142) or Mary Ann Martin (326-0798).



Volunteers make up FCC's various committees. If you would like to participate in the stewardship of the church, or have any questions or concerns about what the committees do, please reach out to the committee chairs:

Administration: David Scheel
Altar: Adelle Schwan & Liana Cherni
Altar Flowers: Marge Guinther
Care Team: Karen Galvin
Christian Education: Penny Malcolm
Inside Maintenance: Don O'Connor
Memorials: Caroline Schultz
Mission & Ministry: Mary Ann Martin

Open & Affirming: Pat O'Connor
Outside Maintenance: Randy Kling
Parish Nurse: Mary Ann Martin
Parsonage: Don Rice
Pastoral Relations: Bob Rood, Nancy Rice, Carroll Simmons
Treasurer: Ken Schultz
Ushers: Tim Galvin
Worship & Music: Kathy Rood

Worship

PHRASES LIKE worship service and service of worship are tautologies. To worship God means to serve God. Basically, there are two ways to do it. One way is to do things for God that God needs to have done—run errands for God, carry messages for God, fight on God's side, feed God's lambs, and so on. The other way is to do things for God that you need to do—sing songs for God, create beautiful things for God, give things up for God, tell God what's on your mind and in your heart, in general rejoice in God and make a fool of yourself for God the way lovers have always made fools of themselves for the one they love.

A Quaker meeting, a pontifical High Mass, the family service at Zion Episcopal, a Holy Roller happening—unless there is an element of joy and foolishness in the proceedings, the time would be better spent doing something useful.

-Originally published in *Wishful Thinking* and later in *Beyond Words*
“Wise Words from Frederick Buechner”

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

What fun we have in Christian Education, and how much we enjoy learning about God! If you don't believe it, take a look at our Year-in-Review bulletin board in the long hallway.



I am hoping to expand this experience to the teens that have been coming on Sundays. If you know of any 7th-12th graders that need to add some Christian fun to their lives, I'd love to get to know them! Your Christian Ed Team is very excited for 2019!

Doug Bishop
Christian Education Director



Mary Beth Bolla would love to see you all or receive mailings from you! Please continue to keep her in your prayers.

Mary Beth Bolla
Blue Water Hospice
2795 Edison Drive #4
Marysville, MI 48040



“Dancing at Lughnasa” premieres at The Citadel Stage in Port Huron for 3 weekends in March. This is an Irish story, set in 1936, about 5 unmarried sisters. One of them has a small son. Although they are poor, they celebrate their life through music and dance. Kelly Kennedy is one of

the five sisters. Show dates are March 1-3, March 8-10, and March 15-17.

Show times are Fridays and Saturdays- 7:00pm. Sunday performances are at 3:00pm.

February 2019 at First Congregational

1	Friday	Neiman's Café 10:30am-12:00pm
2	Saturday	Weight Watchers 8am Ground Hog Day!
3	Sunday	WORSHIP 10:00am / Communion / Annual Meeting / Souper Bowl Sunday
6	Wednesday	Amanda Here 9am-12pm Bible Study in the Lounge – 6-7pm Reports Due for Trustee Meeting next week
7	Thursday	Garden Club Choir Practice 11:30am-12:30pm
8	Friday	Neiman's Café 10:30am-12:00pm
9	Saturday	Weight Watchers 8am
10	Sunday	WORSHIP 10:00am / Choir Sings! / Everybody's Birthday Pot Luck
12	Tuesday	Trustees Meeting 4pm
13	Wednesday	Amanda Here 9am-12pm Reports Due for Council Meeting next week
14	Thursday	Valentine's Day!
15	Friday	Neiman's Café 10:30am-12:00pm East China Schools Off for Winter Break
16	Saturday	Weight Watchers 8am
17	Sunday	WORSHIP 10:00am / Blood Pressure Sunday
18	Monday	President's Day!
19	Tuesday	Community Meal 4:30-6pm Council Meeting 6:30pm
20	Wednesday	Amanda Here 9am-12pm Ladies Lunch – Tea at the Parsonage 12pm Bible Study in the Lounge 6-7pm
21	Thursday	Mallard's Landing Service 9:15am
22	Friday	Neiman's Café 10:30am-12:00pm
23	Saturday	Weight Watchers 8am
24	Sunday	WORSHIP 10:00am
26	Tuesday	Harbor Impact Day 9am-12pm
27	Wednesday	Amanda Here 9am-12pm Last Bible Study in the Lounge 6-7pm
28	Thursday	Music Planning Meeting 9:30am Choir Practice 11:30am-12:30pm Alzheimer's Support Group – 1pm

We are very happy to welcome our newest
members of First Congregational Church of St. Clair,
United Church of Christ:

Andy & Jody Skonieczny
and their children Avery & Jack

Mark & Kenzie Achatz
and their children Corbin & Quinn

Carlos & Barb Arevalo

*“No matter who you are,
or where you are on life’s journey,
you are welcome here.”*