

First Congregational Church of St. Clair



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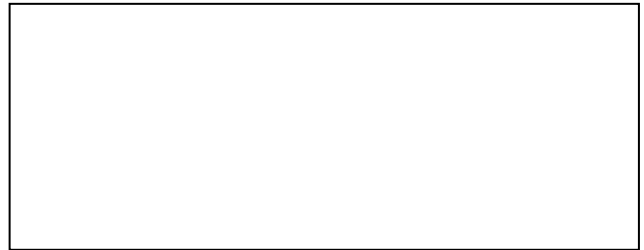
"A Just World for All"

[www.firstcongsc.org](http://www.firstcongsc.org) | 300 Adams Street, St. Clair, MI 48079

810-329-4142

\*ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED\*

# 2020



# APRIL

# 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  
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St. Clair, MI 48079  
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Website: [www.firstconggsc.org](http://www.firstconggsc.org)

Facebook: FirstCongregational.UCC.St.Clair

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13



Greetings and Happy Eastertide!

May 1, 2020

There is a Chinese curse that is simply this: *May you live in interesting times*. That is pretty profound, because interesting times are often times of instability. They are often stressful times. If you're living in interesting times, as we have been for over a month now, the learning curve is steep. Lots of questions arise and the answers are not crystal clear.

I hope by now we've all settled into a new normal. We've gone through Lent and Holy Week, we've celebrated Easter in the best way possible, and now we're heading toward Pentecost, the Sunday we celebrate the birth of the church. Life goes on.

More than any other thing right now, we may be learning that the church is not the building. The church is the people. We like to say this. Right now, we are experiencing this.

As I write, we still don't know when we'll be back together in the sanctuary. But, I have found that much good has come out of our invention of this new way of worshipping. It has been a matter of problem solving, considering and accepting the newest normal. Those who have been working at providing worship have become a pretty tight knit crew. I have loved this

about the experience. We have been forced to think in new ways and have become more inventive. It has been exciting!

There is a lot of creative thinking going on around us, it seems, as people devise ways of staying busy and helpful at the same time. I think of Ken Madeleine who does a thirty-minute set of music everyday outside of his house. Neighbors stop to listen. His wife, Debi livestreams him on Facebook. He even takes requests and if he doesn't know a song, he'll learn it by the next day.

Many people have stepped up and are making masks for regular people like you and me. Masks are good because they help us keep our germs to ourselves and they protect us, along with physical distancing from a virus that seems very good at sickening people. Kathy Cilluffo is making beautiful masks; Christine deNardo-Gorzan is too. And there are many other busy mask makers.

As the days ahead become a little less interesting, may we learn from this required slow-down. May we learn that slowing down is good for us sometimes. May we retain the lesson of living with less. May we appreciate more the flowers and the blue sky and the birds as we continue to celebrate new life through Jesus Christ. And may we appreciate daily God's gift of life.

With You on the Journey,

*Pastor Alana*

## IN NEED OF PRAYER

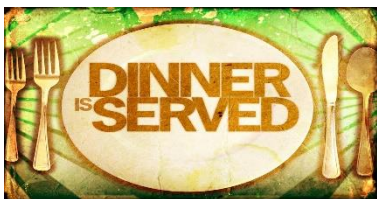
The family of Mary Beth Bolla, Matthew Pennewell, Collette Carlsen, Rennie Fandrick, Brian Paret, Jr., Katie Paret, Cal Rock, Pearl Ewart. Also, remember Edwin Summers, Cameron Coverly, Dakota Hazel, Nathan Distelrath, all who are serving in the military, first responders, medical personnel, and our elected officials. Be kind to one another.



Remember, Newsletter article submission deadline is May 20<sup>th</sup>.

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

WELCOME



This month’s Community Meal is  
May 19, 4:30pm-6:00pm.  
(Tentative)

## BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Joshua Kennedy – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Cory O'Connor – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Violet Hirst – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Erin Galvin – 7<sup>th</sup>

Harrietta Ryan – 11<sup>th</sup>

Brian Paret – 11<sup>th</sup>

Barbara Jeffries – 13<sup>th</sup>

Chelsea Montroy – 15<sup>th</sup>

Melvina (Sis) Johnson – 17<sup>th</sup>

Todd Hughes – 19<sup>th</sup>

Richard Johnson – 25<sup>th</sup>

Rebekah Rathman-Wingrove – 25<sup>th</sup>

Doug Bishop – 30<sup>th</sup>

Brook Ireland – 30<sup>th</sup>



Tom & Elsa Pennewell – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Doug & Doreen Vernier – 17<sup>th</sup>

Douglas & Diane Johnson – 23<sup>rd</sup>

*“The flower that follows the sun  
does so even in cloudy days.”*

*~Robert Leighton*

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  
Custodians:  
Dale & Cindy Frey



The Little Food Pantry needs non-perishable donations. Please help support this worthy mission.



### **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

Called to *Serve*

**YOUR LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE...**

Please feel free to contact any member of the  
Committee with any questions, comments or concerns.  
Serving alongside the Pastor are...

Pat O'Connor - Moderator  
Nancy Rice - Vice Moderator  
Don Rice - Treasurer  
Dave Scheel - Church Clerk  
Don O'Connor - Member  
Randy Kling - Member  
Brian Paret - Member  
Jody Skonieczny - Member  
Marge Guinther - Member





## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

As we continue to navigate through uncharted territory's together, Christian education will be putting all activities on hold as of now. Much like other churches and organizations across the United States, and globe, we are doing as much as possible virtually. Doug has and will continue to post activities, resources and links on Facebook for families and students to continue their journey virtually. If you have not already liked the church Facebook page, you and your family are encouraged to do so.



**PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS...**Nancy Rice, Carroll Simmons, and Barb Arevalo serve on the Pastor Parish Relations Team to support Pastor Alana in her ministry. The group meets quarterly. While you are encouraged to speak directly to Pastor Alana about concerns you have with her, sometimes it's easier to speak with a member of the PPR Team. Those Team members are available to hear your concerns and will share them with her.

**MAY DUTIES**

We are now accepting  
donations for an  
updated Audio/Visual  
Equip. Ctr.



The A/V Team has begun researching various means of projecting and sharing our Worship Service during our gatherings and outside the walls of the church, and would be happy to hear your suggestions and/or ideas. If you would be able to donate to this project, please mark your check or envelope "A/V Equipment". Any questions, please speak with Don Rice or Brian Paret.

Online Giving  
is simple and easy!

The option for ONLINE GIVING has been established through a program called Tithe.ly. A link has been posted on our Facebook page, on our web site, and through our weekly E-News. Please remember our stewardship of the church during this unusual period.

**“ALL EVENTS UNTIL AT LEAST APRIL 19  
HAVE BEEN CANCELED AT THIS TIME,  
INCLUDING HOLY WEEK AND EASTER  
WORSHIP SERVICES IN THE SANCTUARY.  
WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE STREAM  
THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.”**