

First Congregational Church of St. Clair



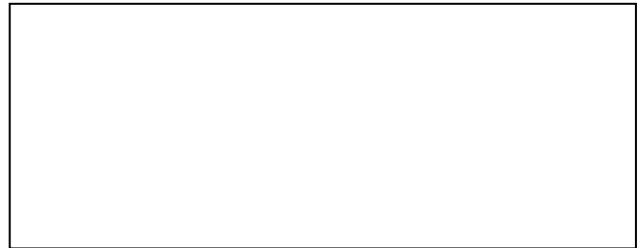
"A Just World for All"

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

810-329-4142

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

2020



JUNE

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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Some thoughts from Pastor Alana

June 1, 2020



Today I'm thinking about "ministry touches".

We think of the church as being a building where we go on Sundays to worship God in community. But church is so much more than this. In speaking of successful churches, church growth leaders like to speak in terms of church touches. Sometimes, when a church is applying for a grant, there may even be a question about the number of touches a church makes each week. This is done to assess the vitality of a congregation.

When Julie sits in the office (in the good ol' days... yes), and four people drop by, each visit she gets from someone is a touch. It's great to know that she has her regulars, and it's also great to know that during the stay home stay safe time she's been reaching out to those "usuals" by phone. They're the folks you might find sitting in one of the green chairs, chatting amiably with Julie. I see Julie's acceptance of this as a called ministry as such a blessing. Each person she speaks with is a church ministry touch.

When I open my Facebook page in the morning and see I have a post from someone wanting to know they might be able to have their wedding in the church (because they LOVED the information they saw on the web site about the church) THIS too is a ministry touch.

If someone drops in because that person is having a problem paying a bill, Julie will send them to me and we have a conversation. This is a ministry touch.

When fifteen church members or friends go to Harbor to work, those are ministry touches!

When eight church members and friends show up to spread mulch in the gardens, caring for the church gardens, these are more church touches.

When we do a Community Meal and Karen Galvin drops off the food she's bought for a meal, Elsa and Bonnie go in to organize the kitchen, cooks arrive on a third Tuesday and prepare a meal, thirty diners come in to eat our meal, Mary Ann has four conversations in the hall outside the Oak Room where people are eating; each of these is a touch.

When Barb Skovran has the quarterly Sjogrens Support Group on a Saturday, that's 12-15 more touches. Of course, lately Barb has mainly been fielding phone calls from around the state of Michigan. Those are still touches I'm happy to claim.

I can go on and on.

Counting our touches each week is a pretty taxing thing to do, and frankly, the counting many seem to value most, mainly centers on who is sitting in the pews on a Sunday. (By the way, I'm often floored by the low estimates I hear for our Sunday worship that, in fact, from January 1st until we began the quarantine, averaged 61 people per Sunday.) You can see that even this number misses the mark in assessing the touches made each week by First Church UCC St Clair. BEING THE CHURCH is much more than going to church.

Of course, worship on Sunday is VERY important! We're taught to keep the sabbath holy and to love the Lord God with our heart, soul, mind and strength. But it is also VERY important to understand that the church does so much and comes into contact with all sorts of people with all kinds of needs each and every single day, even as we worship remotely in our homes!

First Church UCC St Clair is really and truly good at BEING THE CHURCH. I'll say that again and again because it is so true. Well done, you good and faithful servants!

With You on the Journey,

Pastor Alana

Matthew 25: 33b-40

'Come, you that are blessed by God, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, ^[g] you did it to me.

IN NEED OF PRAYER

The family of Irwin Engelgau, Matthew Pennewell,
Collette Carlsen, Rennie Fandruck,
Brian Paret, Jr., Katie Paret, Cal Rock.

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.



Remember, Newsletter article submission deadline is
June 20th.

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

WELCOME

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Randy Kling – 3rd

Cindy Frey – 7th

Kaitlin Kling – 8th

Virginia Hirt – 12th

Denise Gregg – 13th

Aiden Sheedy – 14th

Ryan O'Connor – 17th

William Putney – 20th

Dale Frey – 23th

Alana Montroy – 24th

Christina Baker – 25th

Wil Malcolm – 29th



David & Jill Scheel – 14th

Donald & Nancy Rice – 15th

Paul & Laurel Lydy – 17th

Kyle & Rachel O'Connor – 25th

James & Catherine Light – 26th

Joe & JoAn Kindsvater – 27th



June 21, 2020

*For our soul sits in God in true rest,
and our soul stands in God in sure strength,
and our soul is naturally rooted in God
in endless love.
~Julian of Norwich~*

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
Custodians:
Dale & Cindy Frey



The Little Food Pantry needs non-perishable donations.



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.

June 28, 2020 is Open and Affirming Sunday

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 our Christian education program comes to a close for this academic year, the Christian education committee is busy exploring additional virtual programming for families during the summer. Families will continue to receive updates via Facebook and mail weekly. Although we are unable to gather in person, we still have a fantastic opportunity to learn and grow with each other virtually. Please continue to check the churches Facebook page for updates regarding Christian education summer curriculum.



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.

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.

JUNE DUTIES

TECHNOLOGY: David Kelley,

Don Rice, Brian Paret

MUSIC: Denise Gregg, Anna Moore

READERS: Fantastic Volunteers!

*To sit with a dog on a hillside on a
glorious afternoon
is to be back in Eden,
where doing nothing was not boring -
it was peace.*

~Milan Kundera~

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 HAVE BEEN CANCELED AT THIS TIME UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIVE STREAM THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE AND THE LINKS PROVIDED IN THE WEEKLY E-NEWS. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT PASTOR ALANA DIRECTLY FOR ANY PASTORAL CARE NEEDS. 440-935-2395