

A JOYFUL NOISE!

October 2011

In my September letter, I began sharing with you my Synod journey this summer. I shared with you a bit about how the United Church of Christ governs itself as well as the regional groupings of local UCC churches nearby and statewide. I also shared a brief history of our denomination and the four denominations that merged in 1957 to become the UCC. For October, I'd like to share a bit about how I became a delegate and a bit about what I experienced.

Delegates for General Synod, the national gathering of the UCC, are elected at Michigan Conference meetings every two years. Synod meets every two years. A delegate serves a four year term and attends two consecutive meetings of the General Synod. The national gathering moves around the nation rather than meeting in the same place every year. You may recall that two years ago Synod met in Grand Rapids. This year, we met in Tampa, Florida and in 2013 we will meet in Long Beach, California. Delegates are similar to U.S. Representatives in that there is not one delegate from every church, but a sampling of delegates by region based on population and with great efforts made to include equal numbers of clergy men and women, lay men and women, and age groups. When the Traverse City church left the UCC two years ago taking their 800 members with them, the Michigan Conference lost one delegate, essentially, we lost one voice and vote from our State. One other important note, the Conference reimburses most of my expenses. My Synod experience cost the church only pulpit supply while I was away.

I have mentioned before my reluctance to fly. I'm not sure where this came from as I have had the great fortune to travel extensively from as far as Hawaii to India, all requiring many hours in flight. But I decided early on in my preparations for Synod that I would take the extra time to travel to Tampa by train. This turned out to be a wonderful experience. I met many intriguing people and discovered other delegates from other states along the way. I travelled from Grand Rapids to Chicago, Chicago to Washington D.C., and D.C. to Tampa.

The Michigan delegation met twice before we left to prepare ourselves and to better get to know each other. The 3,000+ delegates were scattered about the hotels in Tampa yet it didn't take long to meet people I had met at Seminary, or were colleagues in ministry from Pennsylvania, or others I knew who were now serving in Conference ministry or churches around the nation. It really was like homecoming and it was remarkable!

There are multiple responsibilities of a delegate. We attend sessions of the House where all delegates sit together divided by Conferences and set apart from all visitors. In these sessions we listen to speakers, gather for worship, and vote on Resolutions. All delegates are also sorted out randomly to one resolution each to prayerfully discern, discuss, and approve any language changes and then submit to the Synod for voting or table for further review. Approved resolutions are then submitted to the General Synod for vote. What kinds of resolutions were submitted? Did they all pass? Tune in next month for the next installment.

Pastor Dan

Mission 1 Challenge

On Sunday, September 4, Pastor Dan issued a series of challenges to our congregation. The national office of the United Church of Christ is encouraging all churches to participate in the Mission 1 campaign to promote mission in a special way by November 11, 2011 or 11/11/11.

Pastor Dan challenged the church to: 1) collect 111 items of food for BACN. This goal has been met and exceeded. Our new goal is 1,111 items of food. 2) Donate 111 collective hours of volunteer service anywhere in our communities. Please let the church office or Pastor Dan know what has been done and how many hours. This goal has been met and exceeded. Our new goal is 1,111 hours donated. 3) Collect \$1,111 to Benzie Home Health Care. So far we have raised \$333.33. To donate, please make checks payable to: First Congregational UCC Benzonia with 11/11/11 in the memo section. All challenges are to be completed by 11/11/11.

The Board of Trustees Report

The board of trustees met on Tuesday September 20th to conduct the financial matters of the church. Pledging in 2011 has exceeded our expectations, leaving the church with a smaller budget deficit than previously thought. The majority of the meeting was spent discussing the proposed 2012 budget of \$188,776.00. This is a decrease of 8% from the adopted 2011 budget. The 2012 stewardship campaign will be beginning in October. Please keep an eye on your mailbox for more information!

Updates were given on the new landscaping in front of the stained glass window and the recent kitchen remodel. Both look great! A thorough walk-thru of the church will take place shortly to address any maintenance or repair concerns. If you have any questions or ideas please let a board member know.

News from the Deacons

There are lots of exciting things going on in our church! The women of Circle 1 have been busy painting and moving and cleaning. If you see one of the women, take a moment and thank them for a job well done. There are still some projects to finish up and if you have some free time, stop by and help.

The next Bible Study will begin on October 11th. It will meet every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. for seven weeks. Please join us for study and discussion.

We send a big thank you to the Memorial Committee for our new offering plates. Our old ones were in bad shape and they allotted the money to replace them, thanks!

Our next fellowship offering is a dinner for the Maples and Long Term Care residents. The dinner will be at 5:00 p.m. on October 19th. After dinner Christy's group will entertain our guests and then Anne Nordbeck will lead a hymn sing. If you would like to help, please let us know. It is a wonderful evening out for everyone.

Christian Education News

Rally Sunday was on Sunday September 18th. Our Sunday School kids welcomed the new school year with a game day, ice cream sundaes, balloons and lots of fun.

Things that we would like to do this year include - a project for the 11-11-11 campaign, learning about the Bible and Church basics such as the Lord's Prayer, the commandments, communion, etc. And of course the holiday season will quickly be upon us. Our special activities will include a Youth Bell Choir, the Christmas decorating and craft day, and of course the Christmas Pageant. The kids really like to be helpful around the church. So, if you can think of anything the kids can help with - let us know.

Women's Fellowship News

Nine members of Circle I met at the church on Wednesday, September 21, and painted the kitchen and the center island in the kitchen and cleaned some of the Sunday school rooms and the choir room and washed windows.

Thanks to Mark Thompson for doing some new electrical wiring so we could move both refrigerators into the kitchen. If you get a chance, take a look at the results. It is a work in progress.

Women's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, October 5, at 1:00 at the church. There will be a delicious dessert. Circle I is in charge. The program will be an exhibition of photographs unearthed during the cleaning. All women of the church are invited. Do come.

The Executive Board will meet at noon on October 5, prior to the general meeting.

Circle IV will meet at the church at 10:30 on Wednesday, October 19, and go out to lunch afterward.

Sarah Circle will meet at noon on Wednesday, October 19, at the church. Bring a sandwich. Flo Wellman is in charge of the program.

Circle I members mark your calendar for the next meeting on October 19 at 1:00. Watch the bulletin and weekly church update for the meeting place and activity. It will probably be another church project.

Annual Special Olympics Fajita Dinner Fundraiser

The time has arrived for our third annual Fajita Dinner for Special Olympics to support our athletes here in Benzie County. The dinner will be held here in our church on Friday, October 14th, from 5:00 to 7:00.

Our sports program continues to grow. We have added poly hockey and bocce. After discontinuing bowling for two years, the sport will be reinstated due to popular demand. Currently we are carrying ten sports, which include winter sports, basketball, volleyball, softball, swimming, poly-hockey, soccer, bocce, cycling and bowling.

By supporting these programs, this church has given me the opportunity to work and coach these fine people. Carrying ten sports can be challenging, but also very rewarding. Luckily I've been very fortunate to have some good volunteers.

In the past the congregation has donated vegetables, such as onions, tomatoes, and green peppers. Your support again this year will be greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for all you do for Special Olympics and People with Disabilities. God bless everyone.

Respectfully,

Sonny Rodriguez



Welcome New Member

On Sunday, September 11, we welcomed Jeri Thornell into our church. Jeri is originally from Grand Rapids, where her husband, Leonard, worked for General Motors. They moved up here and owned the 4K's Motel on US 31 for about eighteen years. Then they had a shrimp boat in Florida for about five winters. Leonard died last November.

They lost their son in Vietnam. Jeri has three daughters, one teaching at Western in Kalamazoo, one working in Traverse City, and one a veterinarian in Alaska. She has three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Welcome to our church, Jeri.

What's New in the Library

Hope Will Find You...When her daughter was diagnosed with a potentially fatal degenerative disease. Levy focused on finding a way to heal her daughter. As she moved through this period, she eventually realized that she needed to restart her own life and learn to live well despite the circumstances. An honest account of the struggle of one family to do this.

Missing Max...Finding Hope After My Marine Son's Death...Corporal Max W. Donahue, a Marine K-9 dog handler in Afghanistan was killed by an IED while on a combat mission. This small book, written by his mother, Julie Burget Schrock, will pull at your heart strings as she tells of the death of Max, the military service, the devastating grief and how she has, & still is, coming to terms with the loss. The book was given in honor of the Burget family.

Neighbor: Christian Encounters with "Illegal" Immigration ...The author, a Presbyterian minister who offers an unequivocal pastoral welcome to all immigrants, is not a dispassionate political analysis of the U.S immigration system. His aim is to open the Christian reader's mind to the plight of the immigrant and his heart to the immigrant himself.

The Unofficial Handbook of the United Church of Christ...This pocket church survival guide offers a lighthearted look at the UCC for members who want to learn more about their denomination. It offers practical tips on surviving in an un-airconditioned sanctuary, what to bring to a potluck, etc. as well as brief overviews of our history, polity and the ways we go about being a church.

The Mayflower Story...this slim book, more a pamphlet than a book, tells the history of the small group of people from Nottinghamshire who immigrated first to Holland and then to America. This group would eventually be called our Pilgrim Fore-Fathers.

Being a Widow...This powerful book provides solace, guidance, and direction for women lost in the loneliness and stress of being a widow. Throughout, the author emphasizes the need for each woman to rebuild her life in her own way. Direct, articulate writing, full of compassion and understanding.

The Mercy...the third book in *The Rose Trilogy* by Beverly Lewis.. Continues the story of Rose and her sister, Hen. Rose loves a 'rebel' who has left the Amish order; sister Hen has moved back to her amish parents with her daughter with her daughter and estranged husband. Read to find out how these two young women, and their men, work out their differences.

UCC Sister Church of the Month

As part of our continuing efforts to work together as a community of faith, in worship we pray for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited in October to pray for the ongoing mission and ministries of **First Congregational United Church of Christ in Harrison**.

Bible Study

On Tuesday, October 11, we will begin our next Bible study. We will be focusing on the book of Psalms. Have you ever wondered about these poems written in joy, anguish, love, and sorrow that were once central parts of worship in the ancient temple? Join us on Tuesday mornings at 10:00. Please contact Pastor Dan or the church office so we may order a book with a cost of \$17. Scholarships are available. You may also order a book to read on your own if you are unable to join us for the study. This will be a seven week course.

New Chairs

We have decided on a new chair model to replace the chairs in fellowship hall and the folding chairs. It is a burgundy-colored, stackable chair. One is on display in the hall. They cost \$75 each. If you would like to help with the purchase of these chairs, you may send a check for to the church. Designate on the check that it is for a chair.

Flowers

There is a sign-up sheet outside the church office for altar flowers for 2011. If you are interested in supplying flowers, please sign up for a certain date (or if you are unable to be in worship call the church office to make arrangements). You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$25 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist. If you would like the bulletin to reflect your donation, please let the church office know who the flowers honor or memorialize as well as identifying yourself as the donor.

Hand Chime Choir

The hand chime choir will begin rehearsals in November. We would like to play monthly during December through April. You do not need to read music to be part of this group, just interested in ringing. New ringers are welcome. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Penelope Olson at 231-282-0488 or olsonpr75@gmail.com.

Memorial Garden

On the north side of our church property is a beautiful memorial garden for members and friends of the church who would like their cremated ashes interred on our sacred grounds. For \$250 you may reserve a one-square-foot plot. The price covers future opening and closing as well as a memorial plaque to be placed on the stone located along the walkway. Please speak with Pastor Dan for more information. Donations for perpetual care are also welcomed.

GoodSearch.com

Remember that if you use the Internet, you can earn money for the church using www.goodsearch.com. One penny per search, or more for internet shopping, is donated directly from the website to our church. Designate us by entering our church name as the charity of your choice.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1	John Marshall
5	Phyllis Crowell
8	Rob Rafferty
8	Harriet Stone
11	Andrew Case
15	John Abbett
19	R.J. Rafferty
21	Doug Rodrigues
23	Michelle Lee Herban
25	Barbara Riegler

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

5	Dan Furman and Gillian Soholt
6	Rob and Maria Wolowiec
11	Lisa and Glen Sauer
14	Pete and Sally Moss

Thank You

We just cannot say THANK YOU enough to all our members who have contributed to the improvements that have been made around the church lately. Guess it started with a general spring cleaning. The kitchen is easier to work with just the few changes that have been made - new shelving, cupboards that are being painted and moved around. Both refrigerators are now in the kitchen. The landscaping artists have been hard at work - the front has been redone with new plantings and decorative stone. Plans are to continue improving the landscaping all around the church. The carpets in the Fellowship Hall and all the side rooms have been cleaned. Everything looks just great. THANK YOU EVERYONE!!

Thanks to Linda Harnisch, Phoebe Vance, and Jean and Wally Edwards for all their work folding, labeling, and stamping the September issue of The Joyful Noise.

Church Family Update

In September, Jim Uren passed from this life to the next. Please remember Dot and the Uren family in your prayers. You are also invited to pray for some of our members who are home-bound, in assisted-living, or facing health concerns: Doug Joy, Marylou Patee, June Trost, Norm Stewart, John Robson, Marjorie Call, Buck and Dorothy Hall, Ruth Masters, Liz Ehman, Betty Peters, Barb Nason, Bernice Rankin, Mona McElderry, Trudy Collins, Jo Danford, and Betty Henry.

Reminder: If you, a loved one, or a church member you know is in the hospital, please let the church office know so that Pastor Dan may visit. Due to privacy laws, hospitals no longer contact the churches to let them know church members are hospitalized. The church wants to know so that we can support you during this time of need.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR OCTOBER VOLUNTEERS -

	<u>COFFEE HOUR</u>	<u>NURSERY</u>	<u>GREETERS</u>
Oct. 2	Deacons	Carolina Jones	Jean Voight and Anna Butts
Oct. 9	Chris and Ardith Jones	Chris Gehring	Chris and Ardith Jones
Oct. 16	Church Lunch	Chris Jones	Ruth Catton and Rosemary Miller
Oct. 23	Joan Appelhoff and Barb Riegler	Esther Rodriguez	Doii Burget and Flo Wellman
Oct. 30	Bev Brouwer and Barb Brian	Barb Brian	Barb and James Brian
	<u>HEAD USHER</u>	Dennis Richards	

OCTOBER 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
						1 UNA Meeting
2 9:00 Adult Study 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	3 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	4 10:00 Christian World Service 10:00 Yoga-Barn 6:30 Christian Ed 6:30 - Kiwanis	5 12 Noon - AA 1:00 Women's Fellowship 2:00 MS Support Barn	6 10 Centrl Wellness Exercise - Barn 10:00 Archive Team 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	7 12 N - LOWV Library	8
9 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	10 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 11:00 Commodities Distribution 5:00 Trustees 7:00 AA - Barn	11 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga -Barn 7:00 Council 7:00 WAA - Barn	12 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 7:30 Deacons	13 10 Centrl Wellness Exercise - Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	14 12 N - LOWV Library	15 1:00 Uren Funeral
16 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Lunch with Speaker	17 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	18 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga - Barn 5:00 Trustees 6:30 Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	19 Circle Meetings 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 5:00 The Maples Dinner	20 10 Centrl Wellness Exercise - Barn 10:00 Archive Team 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	21 12 N - LOWV Library	22
23 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	24 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	25 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga - Barn 7 WAA - Barn	26 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn	27 10 Centrl Wellness Exercise - Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	28 12 N - LOWV Library	29
30 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	31 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn					

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Chris StoneTreasurer
Mary Rodriguez..Financial Secretary
James Sheets.....Church Moderator
Christy Case Choir Director
Rosemary MillerAssistant Choir Director
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