

A Joyful Noise!

May 2026

Hi,

Whether we have been one on one talking, in a meeting, or in a group, there has been A Lot of conversation lately about cultural animosity and communal hate. Many of us are fed up, disheartened, and overall carrying grief for the fact that there is so much anger surrounding us.

We are finding that conversations are limited. Limited to who we talk to and what we say. It is exhaustive. Can we be our true selves without being yelled at or hurting someone's feelings? We live in a hard time. Politically. Socially. Economically.

I was taught: Just be nice. Easier said than done most days, however the words are true. Just Be Nice.

The following article came into my inbox this morning and I think it is worth sharing. It offers a way to Just Be Nice. This comes from the United Church of Christ News, a weekly newsletter. I think it offers a wonderful alternative to the anger and aggression that surrounds us.

U.S. of Kindness 250 acts of kindness initiative kicks off this week

by **Renee DeLuca** | published on Apr 21, 2026

The United Church of Christ has partnered with the **Values in Action** foundation to encourage everyone in the U.S. to join the **United States of Kindness** (USK) movement, and commit to completing 250 acts of kindness, celebrating the 250th birthday of the United States. While the movement has been underway already, it officially launches on Friday, April 24, when there are 250 days left in 2026—meaning one would only need to do one small act of kindness once a day to complete this mission.

Values in Action co-founder Stuart Muszynski believes this is a much-needed movement in our country. “Kindness is a core value that we all need, because kindness connects communities, kindness connects people. Kindness is the glue that holds society together,”

he said at a recent event at the Ohio Statehouse. “Kindness dissipates anger and resentment. We have a lot of that in our country today.”

Values in Action and Kindland co-founder Stuart Muszynski speaks at the Ohio Statehouse as part of the kick-off to the U.S. of Kindness.

At the Ohio Statehouse, leaders from across the state gathered to recognize the bipartisan adoption of Ohio’s first Kindness Resolution and to kick off Ohio’s role in the United States of Kindness.

The success of the United States of Kindness relies on a nationwide, collective effort. Kindland is calling on all organizations to use their voices to underscore the value of kindness and model healthy social connection.

Author Malcolm Gladwell wrote that every societal transformation reaches a “tipping point,” a moment when change becomes inevitable. In a time of anger, division, and violence highlighted in the media, publicizing kindness across organizations and industries throughout the United States can tip the scales and ignite a cultural shift. This is an invitation to be part of a national movement that lifts up compassion, connection, and unity during this historic year.

Many UCC churches and congregation members have already made a pledge to join. Anyone can do this, and there is no cost involved. Registration may be completed [HERE](#).

Everyone is encouraged to share the acts of kindness that are being committed, and to follow along on social media. The UCC has a [Kindland webpage HERE](#).

Anyone can share stories of kindness happening. Tag @USofKindness and use #USK250 on social media and follow USK social media accounts: Facebook: [@USofKindness](#), Instagram: [@USofKindness](#), LinkedIn: [US of Kindness](#).

I’m in. Are you?
See you along The Way,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Patty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The article with pictures can be found here:

https://www.ucc.org/u-s-of-kindness-250-acts-of-kindness-initiative-kicks-off-this-week/?inf_contact_key=296c5a23e4220f8c6d820352abacdc9513a6a8ae6bc41f90c1120da2b4ee430c

Happy to forward it electronically, just let me know.

Barbara, Anna, Rodney, Robin; family & friends of
 Al and Anne Young; family & friends of Kay (E.C.)
 Fischer; family & friends of Larry Wulke.

Prayers For...

Those who have lost loved ones.

Flowers

*If you need the assistance of the church for
 Altar Flowers, please call the office*

231-882-4922.

For our **B.I.G.** donations this month,
 we are collecting
Laundry Products.

BIG



Web Links

Michigan Conference News: michucc.org

Church Facebook Page:
facebook.com/BenzoniaCongregational

United Northern Association Facebook Page:
facebook.com/UnitedNorthernAssociationUCC

Church YouTube Page:
<https://www.youtube.com/@FirstCongregationalBenzoniaUCC>

Church Instagram Page: [@benzoniaucc](https://www.instagram.com/benzoniaucc)



Happy Birthday



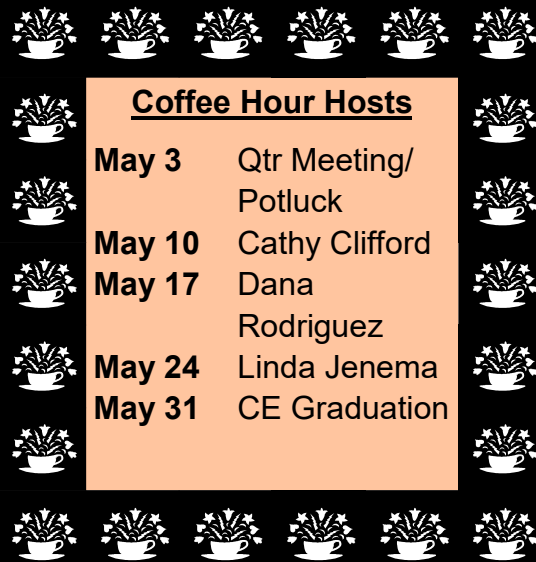
- 1 Dick Henry
- 6 Trevor Danford
- 7 Wade Peacock
- 7 Brianna Brian
- 8 Catherine Clifford
- 9 Taylor Johnson
- 12 Katrina Smith
- 15 Joanne Appelhof
- 25 Steve Stephens
- 25 Bill Bos
- 26 Sabra Danford
- 26 Rob Wolowiec
- 27 Kristine Johnson
- 27 Doug Workman
- 30 Lawrence Czap



- 5 John and Barbara Riegler
- 7 Donald and Jean Voight
- 13 Michael and Nancy Call
- 17 Scott and Kathy Neveu
- 23 Wayne and Marilee Strom

Coffee Hour Hosts

- May 3 Qtr Meeting/
Potluck
- May 10 Cathy Clifford
- May 17 Dana
Rodriguez
- May 24 Linda Jenema
- May 31 CE Graduation



Quarterly Meeting & Potluck

Sunday, May 3, 2026
Following Worship



The funeral for Jill Tooley is Saturday, May 9th at 11:00 am.

We are looking for people to help serve and clean up after. We also need cookies. Please contact Chris Stone if you can help in any way.

chrisstone47@gmail.com

or

231-651-0476



The annual Attic Treasure sale is Saturday, June 27th. We will start accepting donations the week of May 25th. Please place them in the Gethsemane room, the second door on the left as you come in the South entrance. Remember, no clothing or electronics. We will also be looking for help setting up a day before the sale and we will need help during the sale or to help pack up and clean up when it is over. If you can help in any way, please contact Chris Stone or Jane Gary.

ATTENTION MEN of the Congregation!!

Women's Fellowship could really use some of your help the day we set up the Attic Treasure sale and when we take it down and clean up when it is over. If you can help, please contact Chris Stone or Jane Gary.

May is Laundry Products Month for B.I.G.



Laundry Detergent

- Liquid
- Powder
- Pods



Fabric Softener

- Liquid
- Sheets

Fresheners – Beads

- Stain Remover
- White Vinegar



Let's Talk About It

What does the Bible say about justice, authority, public lament, and prophetic witness?

Join the conversation !!
 May 6 and 20
 June 3 and 17
 6:00 P.m.

Bring your favorite Bible story
 Bring your questions
 A light meal will be provided.

Concert!

Please Join the Deacons in the Lobby
Benzie Central High School

Benzie Choir
 Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 PM

Support
 Church
 Youth





Photo courtesy of <https://www.michfa.org/new-page>

We all know Luke. Well, we should. Luke is with Michigan Faith in Action and has engaged us in many conversations.

As part of MFIA for Benzie County, we are talking about both housing and mental health. Both of these subjects are hard lived here in Benzie. Both have very limited resources. What actions are needed? What actions can we take?

Luke will be worshipping with us on May 17th.

During coffee time, Luke would like to hear your story concerning either/or housing and mental health.

Collectively we can make a difference in our community. Come and share your story.

Concert!

Please Join the Deacons in the Lobby
Benzie Central High School

Benzie Band
Thursday, May 14 at 7:00 PM

Support
Church
Youth



Join us Sunday, May 31st
as we celebrate Youth Sunday.

A joyful morning honoring all of our young people,
from our youngest ones to those preparing to
graduate.

Come be part of a service filled with energy, hope,
and the voices of our youth as they lead us in
worship.

All are welcome as we give thanks for who they are
and who they are becoming.



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

NURTURE
THE SOUL

FUTURE OF FAITH: Small Town - Full Building

Monday, May 18th | 3:30 PM Eastern



Rev. Patty Higgins
Pastor, First Congregational Church of
Benzonia, UCC



Mary Rodriguez
Co-Chair, Treasurer & Choir, Division
World Services Committee, First
Congregational Church of Benzonia, UCC



Sara Moorhead
Moderator & Chair of the Music
Committee, First Congregational
Church of Benzonia, UCC

First Congregational Church of Benzonia United Church of Christ strives to create a united community in Christ's Love. Instead of focusing on the lack of children in the church on Sunday mornings, we shifted our focus to getting community groups and other organizations into the building throughout the week. We share our hospitality and love by opening our doors (and parking lot) to various groups in our community. From hosting 12-step programs, to tutoring, to Single MOMMS, and the Father Fred Back to School Shoe Event (just to name a few!), we are living into our community.

If you would like to join the webinar on May 18, go to www.ucc.org/event/future-of-faith-small-town-full-building/ to register.

May 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 12pm WAA (Barn) 7pm AA (Barn)	2 8:30am Men's Breakfast
3 BIG Sunday 10:30am Communion Worship	4 12pm Bridge 5pm SMART Recovery 7pm AA (Barn) 7pm Boy Scouts	5 5:30pm Single MOMM 7pm WAA (Barn)	6 6pm Soup & Conversation 7pm AA (Barn)	7 10:30am Women's Radiant Qigong (Barn) 5pm AA (Barn) 7pm NA (Barn)	8 12pm WAA (Barn) 7pm AA (Barn)	9 11am Jill Tooley Celebration of Life 2pm Single MOMM
10 9:30am Deacons 10:30am Worship	11 9am Trustees 11am Commodities Distribution 12pm Bridge 5pm SMART Recovery 7pm AA (Barn) 7pm Boy Scouts	12 5:30pm Single MOMM 7pm WAA (Barn)	13 7pm AA (Barn)	14 10:30am Women's Radiant Qigong (Barn) 5pm AA (Barn) 7pm NA (Barn)	15 12pm WAA (Barn) 7pm AA (Barn)	16
17 9:30am Christian Ed 10:30am Worship	18 12pm Bridge 5pm SMART Recovery 7pm AA (Barn) 7pm Boy Scouts	19 5pm Council 7pm WAA (Barn)	20 8am Benzie Cty Community Chest 6pm Soup & Conversation 7pm AA (Barn)	21 10:30am Women's Radiant Qigong (Barn) 5pm AA (Barn) 7pm NA (Barn)	22 12pm WAA 7pm AA (Barn)	23
24 10:30am Worship	25 Office Closed 12pm Bridge	26 7pm WAA (Barn)	27 7pm AA (Barn)	28 10:30am Women's Radiant Qigong (Barn) 5pm AA (Barn) 7pm NA (Barn)	29 12pm WAA 7pm AA (Barn)	30
31 10:30am Worship						

ACROSS

- 1 One of the sons of Shobal
Gen. 36:23
- 5 "And I will give him the morning ___." Rev. 2:28
- 9 Father of Anub and Zobebah
1 Chron. 4:8
- 12 "The children also of Benjamin from ___" Neh. 11:31
- 13 Son of Abinadab
2 Sam. 6:3
- 14 "Bethel on the west, and ___ on the east."
Gen. 12:8
- 15 "That ye may with one mind and one mouth ___ God,"
Rom. 15:6
- 17 "Remember not the sins of my ___,"
Psalm 25:7
- 19 "Jesus saith unto them, Come and ___." John 21:12
- 20 Wicked king; son of Ahijah
1 Kgs. 15:33-34
- 21 "A measure of ___ for a penny,"
Rev. 6:6
- 23 "When the Lord shall have washed away the ___ of the daughters of Zion," Isa. 4:4
- 24 "___, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,"
Isa. 55:1
- 25 Unwavering course
- 27 "Then let him count the years of the ___ thereof,"
Lev. 25:27

- 30 Individual Retirement Account (abbr.)
- 32 "Nevertheless the men ___ hard to bring it to the land;" Jonah 1:13
- 34 Father of Joshua
- 35 15th or 16th book of New Testament (abbr.)
- 37 Another of the sons of Shobal
- 39 Knock out (abbr.)
- 40 "He leadeth me in the ___ of righteousness"
- 42 Bad habits
- 44 Bohemian dances
- 46 "And the people shall be as the burnings of ___:"
Isa. 33:12
- 47 "But this man hath done nothing ___."
Luke 23:41
- 48 "The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of ___,"
Zech. 9:1
- 51 National Rifle Association (abbr.)
- 52 To be full
- 54 "John to the seven churches which are in ___:"
Rev. 1:4
- 55 Poetic for it is
- 56 15th book of the Bible
- 57 "Christ is the ___ of the church:"
Eph. 5:23

DOWN

- 1 Laid by a hen
- 2 "And I will punish ___ in Babylon,"
Jer. 51:44
- 3 Home
- 4 Cowboy rope

- 5 "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be ___."
Prov. 29:25
- 6 "___ kingdom come." Matt. 6:10
- 7 "Joshua sent men from Jericho to ___,"
Josh. 7:2
- 8 "A ___ priesthood,"
1 Pet. 2:9
- 9 "The children of Israel served ___-rishathaim eight years." Judg. 3:8
- 10 A pledge
- 11 Was over the Nethinims
Neh. 11:21
- 16 Bury
- 18 Cereal grain
- 20 "And Hazar-susim, and at Beth-___,"
1 Chron. 4:31

- 21 "And Samuel told him every ___,"
1 Sam. 3:18
- 22 Son of Lotan
Gen. 36:22
- 23 "Maketh us wiser than the ___ of heaven?" Job 35:11
- 26 ___ Ark
- 28 Gospel that tells of the Nativity
- 29 Grandson of Adam
- 31 "Greet ___ my beloved in the Lord." Rom. 16:8
- 33 Slew the giant
- 36 "And he was strong as the ___,"
Amos 2:9
- 38 "Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and ___,"
Num. 32:3

- 41 "How sweet are thy words unto my ___!"
Psalm 119:103
- 43 "___ from anger, and forsake wrath:"
Psalm 37:8
- 44 "That ___ after the dust of the earth"
Amos 2:7
- 45 Father of Ahab
1 Kgs. 16:29
- 46 "Eloi, Eloi, ___, sabachthani?"
- 48 "Wisdom hath builded ___ house,"
Prov. 9:1
- 49 Spy agency (abbr.)
- 50 Owned
- 53 26th book of the Bible (abbr.)

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A Joyful Noise!

First Congregational Church Of Benzonia UCC
Benzonia, MICHIGAN



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