

February
2020

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena

Board of Directors:

- **Dennis Artley**, treasurer
- **Bill Dempsey**
- **Blair Diamond**
- **Boris Gerber**
- **Ann Gerow**, vice-chair
- **Nancy Wedge**
- **Vicky Lindsay**
- **Jim Mc Neil**, chair
- **Beth Petty**

Dates to Remember

Feb. 2

Scout Sunday

Feb. 7

Toby Jones @ TBT
Coffee House

Feb. 9

Keith & Ginny Titus
perform Spoon River
Anthology

Feb. 10

Board Meeting

Feb. 12

"No Frills" Book Club

Feb. 14

Happy Valentine's
Day!

Feb. 23

Performance by our
Salt & Light Singers

Feb. 26

Ash Wednesday
6 pm Soup Supper @
St. Paul Lutheran
Church
7 pm Lenten Worship
with Rev. Lance
preaching
@ St. Paul Lutheran

A Word From Our Minister: Happenings!

Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

One would think that mid-winter February would be a **slow time** in Northern Michigan... Slippery sidewalks and snowbanked parking lots, long dark nights and some chilly grey days, tend to make folks want to stay indoors, cuddled under a blanket, watching TV or reading.

But here at Alpena's first church, we have added two Sunday afternoon **performance programs** (Feb. 9 & 23), set up four more Monday Mid-day Movies along the theme of understanding "racism" (article on page 5), and continued our Thursday afternoon Church History classes and Thursday evening choir practices. I guess we just don't know how to go slow, even in the depths of winter.

Please read the article on page 2 of this Newsletter which explains what **Keith and Ginny Titus** will be doing at 2 pm on Feb. 9, and then get the word out to your friends. You know what a power-packed performance that will be! Thank you, Ginny & Keith Titus.

The "Salt & Light" Singers will perform eight lively songs on our stage at 6:00 pm on Sunday, Feb. 23. These talented kids include **Gavin Barden** and nine girls who are homeschooled, who asked me to pull together a group who might go on tour to Turning Brook and Medilodge and some other churches in Alpena after their "debut" performance on our Fellowship Hall stage. Please come!

I also draw your attention to the Friday, Feb. 7, Coffee House at Thunder Bay Theatre which will feature **Toby Jones**, the former minister of the First Congregational UCC in Gaylord, who has also put on two concerts here at our church. Toby plays the guitar and sings a variety of kinds of popular music. It will cost \$15 to attend.

Finally, near the end of the month, the seven-week season of **Lent** begins with an **Ash Wednesday** service at St. Paul Lutheran Church for which I have been invited to be the preacher. You will see the complete schedule of Lenten soup suppers and Community Worship Services on page 4 of this Newsletter. My sermon topic will be "*Jesus' Passion for the Word*" and we'll read about Jesus' "temptations in the wilderness". Come at 6 pm for soup, or at 7 pm for the worship service at St. Paul Lutheran Church. **Thank you.**

January 2020 Board Meeting Highlights

Bri Fastnaught, Secretary

Mary Davison sent a note to thank the choir for caroling at Turning Brook around Christmas time, and **Dennis Bodem** also sent a monetary appreciation gift to the choir for their caroling. **Patrick Labadie**, our church historian, was present and expressed interest in spending his last term as historian making headway on the photo backlog and organizing a team or training a successor.

The financial reports look good and were accepted by the Board. We finished 2019 “in the black” **\$5,501 ahead of budget**. The proposed 2020 budget was also ready to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting on Sunday, Jan. 26.

Dennis Artley announced that he would be willing to stay on as Board Treasurer for one more term in order to train an understudy in the role, so long as the congregation approved waiving the term limit.

The Property Committee found the source of the leak that was causing the lime leaching near the Lockwood Street entrance. The upstairs toilet flush was replaced along with the wax seal and flange in order to stop the leak. The Committee is currently focusing on finding and resolving the issue with the faulty heat tape on the roof that causes a breaker to blow.

The Mission Committee met in December to designate local mission recipients for 2020 and give out year-end checks. Committee Chair **Boris Gerber** also serves as our church’s “charter representative” to Troop 78 & Cub Pack 3078. They are looking ahead to Feb. 2 “Scout Sunday” and the “Souper Bowl of Caring”, in which the Scouts will do a skit to promote awareness of hunger in the community and raise funds for Trinity Episcopal Church’s “Sunday Suppers”.

The “ad hoc” Fellowship Committee plans to meet before February in order to further plan some of the events on the horizon, including the Lenten soup supper in Fellowship Hall (6:00 pm on Wed., March 4) and the Easter Sunrise service (6:45 am on Sun., April 12, at the Small Boat Harbor).

Rev. Lance spoke of several upcoming events, including the “**White Fragility**” workshop by Rosie Gibson, who will also be our guest preacher on January 19th; **Scout Sunday** on February 2nd; and an upcoming **Maundy Thursday** evening service (6:00 pm, April 9) here in Fellowship Hall.

Live performance on Sunday, February 9, at 2:00 pm in our Fellowship Hall...

“**Spoon River Anthology**” (1915), by Edgar Lee Masters, is a collection of short free-form poems that collectively narrates the epitaphs of the residents of a fictional small town of “Spoon River” -- named after the real Spoon River that ran near Masters' home town. The aim of the poems is to demystify the **rural, small town American life**. The collection includes two hundred and twelve separate characters, all providing two-hundred forty-four accounts of their lives and losses. The poems were originally published in the magazine *Reedy's Mirror*. **Keith & Ginny Titus** have edited the book into a dramatic readers' theater script which includes songs. (*Event is free!*)

Birthdays and **Anniversaries** in February

2/3 Avery Aten

2/3 Greg Granum

2/5 Tom & Judy Cook (61 years)

2/8 Mary Minnick

2/11 Jere & Diana Standen (53 years)

2/12 Richard Bloom

2/13 Rebecca Wells

2/16 Jay Kettler

2/17 Bonnie Watkins

2/18 Jim Straley

2/20 Deidra Westenbarger

2/21 Alison Bloom-Storey

2/21 Norman Cavender

2/23 June Perry

2/24 Belinda Aguirre

2/25 Janet Artley

2/25 Roger Snell

2/28 Joseph Beland



Altar Flowers Needed!

New year, new sign-up sheet outside the church office for altar flowers! Please sign up to spruce up the Sanctuary with a bouquet or two throughout the year. Sign up on the sheet or by calling the office at (989) 356-1795. You can also sign up by sending us an email at

officeuccalp@gmail.com.

Thank you.



Ladies' Luncheon

This month's Ladies' Luncheon will be held on Valentine's Day - Friday, February 14th at 11:30 a.m. This month's host, **June Perry**, has picked **Hunan's** as the location. Please see the sign-up sheet in the hallway outside the Sanctuary, and come out to enjoy a time of fellowship with your fellow ladies!



CPR training provided to our Scouts by Katie Torok of the Green Township Fire Dept.



Lenten Series Schedule 2020

Theme: Jesus' Passion for ...

| Date | Host | Preacher | Theme |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| Ash Wednesday February 26 | St Paul Lutheran | Rev. Paul Lance | The Word |
| March 4 | First Congregational UCC | Rev. Father Joe Muszkiewicz | Love |
| March 11 | First Presbyterian | Rev. Bill McClure | Wholeness |
| March 18 | First United Methodist | Rev. Bill Rayment | Hope |
| March 25 | Grace Lutheran | Rev. Seok Nam Lim | Life |
| April 1 | All Saints Catholic Parish | Rev. Tom Orth | Justice |
| Maundy Thursday April 9 | Trinity Episcopal | Rev. John Shipman | Service |
| Good Friday "Tre Ore" April 10 | First United Methodist Church (noon - 3 pm) | (all six ministers, and a combined choir!) | |

From the Secretary's Inbox...

SAMARITAS Affordable Living Alpena, a Senior housing, HUD supported property, is searching to fill vacancies on our Board of Directors. We are seeking individuals who would enjoy sharing their knowledge and love of community to lend advice and support our property management team. Our board meets quarterly within the year. If you are interested in supporting the needs of our community in this way, please call **Jenny Edmonds**, Property Manager at (989) 356-6725.



All four of the Monday Midday Movies in February will look at racism through the lens of the South African experience. A fifth film in this series will be shown in March.

*"Now for all the people of Africa, the beloved country, **'Nkosi Sikelel'i Africa'**, God save Africa." This was said by Msimangu, the Zulu preacher in Alan Paton's novel **"Cry the Beloved Country"**, which was made into a movie starring James Earl Jones in 2013. We will show the film on **Monday, Feb. 3, at noon** in the Conference Room. Alan Paton's book was banned by the apartheid government of South Africa in 1948... *"But he would not see that salvation. It lay afar off, because white men were afraid of it. And what was there evil in their desire, in their hunger? That men should walk upright in the land where they were born, and be free to use the fruits of the earth, what was there evil in it? Yet men were afraid, with a fear that was deep, deep in the heart, a fear so deep that they hid their kindness, or brought it out with fierce-ness and anger, because they were so few. And such fear could not be cast out, but by love. It was Msimangu who had said "I have one great fear in my heart, that one day when they turn to loving they will find that we are turned to hating."**

Feb. 10 – **"Cry Freedom"** (1988 -- 2 hours 37 minutes). Richard Attenborough's sweeping story of black activist Stephen Biko (played by Denzel Washington) and a liberal white newspaper reporter (played by Kevin Kline), who risks his own life to bring Biko's message about the horrors of apartheid to the world. A riveting true story.

Feb. 17 – **"The Color of Friendship"** (2005 – 90 minutes). In 1977, the family of African-American congressman Ron Dellums hosted an exchange student from Africa, presuming she would be *black*. The family of the South African teenager presumed a congressman's family would be *white*. Inspired by actual events, the two teenagers – one white, one black – had to confront personal prejudices and institutional racism.

Feb. 24 – **"Invictus"** (2009 – 2 hours 13 minutes). Nelson Mandela (played by Morgan Freeman) was imprisoned 27 years for his heroic fight against apartheid. When he was elected President of South Africa, he rejected revenge, forgave his oppressors, and sought to promote national unity by getting the rugby team captain (Matt Damon) and his underdog squad to do the impossible and win the World Cup. Clint Eastwood directed this uplifting film about a team sport inspiring greatness.

First Congregational United Church of Christ
201 South Second Avenue
Alpena, MI 49707

Phone: 989-356-1795 Fax 989-356-8825
Web Site: <http://uccalpena.org>
Email: officeuccalp@gmail.com
Office Hours: 9:00 am — 1:00 pm Monday — Thursday

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Minister: Rev. Dr. Paul A. Lance III

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. H. Robert Case

Choir Director/Organist: Kat Tomaszewski

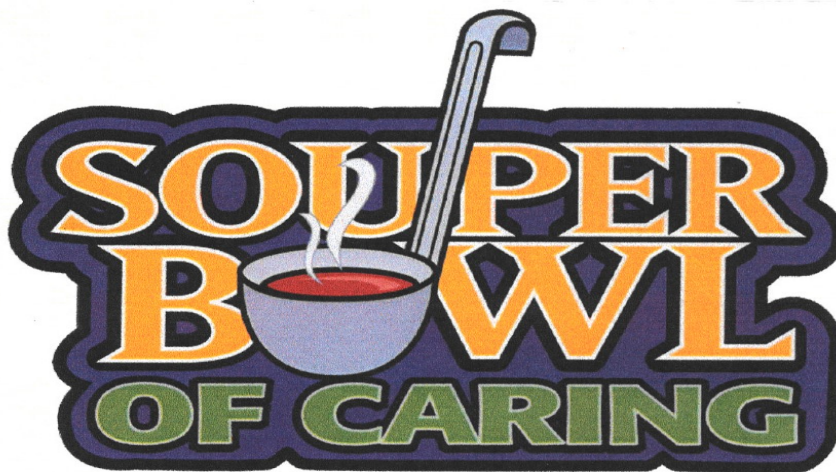
Treasurer: Denise Fusina

Secretary: Bri Fastnaught

Custodian: Mike LaMarre

Still Speaking

Newsletter of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Alpena



Calling All Souper Heroes

Your Mission: Join Forces and Battle Hunger

On Super Bowl Sunday, February 2 a special collection will be taken. Sponsored by our scouts, the "Souper Bowl of Caring" collection will help fund the Trinity Episcopal Sunday Suppers (the Friendship Room at St. Bernard's provides meals Monday-thru-Saturday, the Episcopal church offers a free meal every Sunday evening to anyone who comes).

Cub scouts from our Pack 3078 will be holding "soup pots" in the narthex after the service on February 2. Every dollar dropped in a soup pot helps people in need feel the power of God's love! Please give generously!

Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those who don't even have a bowl of soup to eat.