



The Congregator: Finally Fall Edition

Hudsonville Congregational United Church of Christ - October 2021

From the Pastor's Desk: Sabbatical 2021

There are many things I look forward to sharing with you about my sabbatical, but the first is to say thank you! Though this is part of my contract that every five years of service I take a sabbatical for renewal, I simply had no idea the impact this time away would have on me. I have a new energy and desire to continue our good works here and for us to take deeper looks at the impact of racism in our community and beyond. I have begun to share some parts of my travels with you in the two sermons I preached in September and there will be so much more to share later.

We completed two of our scheduled three trips traversing 14 states. Yet, as you may have heard, as we were preparing to embark on our final trip, I took a trip of my own at home resulting in a gash in my leg, 12 stitches, and a wound that is still healing more than a month later. Instead of traveling, I focused instead on reading and watching documentaries, all still very worthwhile.

God's timing is mysterious. While She was working on me with my sabbatical, God was also working on Jeff and preparing his heart for something new. As you may have heard on Sunday and as you will read in this newsletter, Jeff has tendered his resignation as our Associate Pastor. I have appreciated working with Jeff over the past 5 years. I look forward to hearing about what God has in store for him in the future. Jeff will serve with us until the end of the year. I encourage you to reach out to Jeff and his family thanking them for their service with us and wishing them well in the future.

As we enter this season of autumn and the air takes on that chill we know so well, let us continue to pray for our community, for our schools and teachers, for the health and well-being of our neighbors. Let us pray for an end to COVID. Let us pray that our message of love and affirmation will continue to inspire and intrigue new folks who will join our church and make our congregation even stronger. And let us continue to be bold in our faith as we follow Christ in our discipleship. Peace be with you all, friends.

- Pastor Dan

A Word from Pastor Jeff:

Friends,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve you over the past five years. It has been a privilege to be to a small part of the work of the Holy Spirit as we have lived into our Open and Affirming identity. I love seeing all of the new and familiar faces each Sunday morning and interacting with the voices online as we continue to share God's love with our neighbors. I enjoy developing and leading our education classes, together discovering and rediscovering God's word.

However, I have felt for some time that God is calling me elsewhere. After several months of prayer and discernment, I believe that it is time for me to step down as your Associate Pastor to follow God's call. This is not a decision that I make lightly, but it is a necessary step to follow the voice of the Holy Spirit into the next season of my ministry.

My plan is to fulfill my duties as your Associate Pastor through Christmas Eve. Over the next few weeks I will work with Pastor Dan and the Council to transition my responsibilities. I thank you for your willingness to take on a seminary intern and to create a space for me to live into my call. HUC is the first church that affirmed my God-given gifts, and I will always treasure the relationships that Cindy, Evan and I have developed over the past five years. It has been an incredible experience to be part of a church that is Open and Affirming, welcoming the full inclusion of the LGBTQ and other marginalized communities. My prayer is that you will continue to listen for and follow the voice of God, and that you will be a rainbow of hope, sharing the love of Christ with all in the greater Hudsonville community.

--Pastor Jeff



WE'RE ON A MISSION!

Feeding America: Thank you to everyone who came out to help with Feeding America. We were able to serve 49 families for a total of 126 individuals.

Nestlings: We are still collecting diapers and wipes. All donations can be dropped off to the church in the diaper box.

Help Needed: We are still looking for someone to be our ServSafe person for the kitchen. In order to be able provide meals or food to the community (funerals, dinners, fundraisers, etc) we need someone to be certified. Please reach out to Sue Dykstra or Janet Overbeek if you want more information.

HAND2HAND: OurHand2Hand crew has made the first delivery of the new school year to South Elementary. Currently we have 29 students enrolled in our program. Our numbers are down so far this school year, but we have had 6 students graduate into middle school, 7 move away, and a couple families that no longer need our help (yeah!). Some home-schooled students have also re-entered our program and we expect to see our numbers increasing as the weeks go by. We appreciate the food that has been donated which has our pantry looking good. We will continue to ask for the following items as we use them so much and so quickly: small cans of tuna and chicken, soup, cake mixes, frosting, fruit cups, tuna and chicken helper type boxed meals, and pudding. Any and all shelf-safe but not too heavy donations are welcomed, so if you see a great sale, we can use it! Thanks for your prayers and support. If you are looking to become more involved with this program, please contact Sandy Lyon.--*Your Mission Board and H2H volunteers*



A Report from Your Treasurer: As we reach the end of September we are still looking for additional gifts to meet some extra bills that have come in during the summer. Thank you for your continued support.

A quick financial update:

1. Your gifts this year are above what we received last year. Thank you for your continued and increased generosity.
2. We have paid all of the original bills for the roof replacement however, we have some additional costs related to unexpected conditions and leaks during construction. While the roofer is paying the bulk of the costs associated with the leaks we are sharing a portion of that cost. These additional costs will be around \$5000.
3. We recently had to replace a water heater that cost \$2500.
4. We were able to pay the principle payment at the end of September, but we were left with outstanding bills of around \$2500 for the month.

While your increased giving has gotten us through the year so far, we will need additional gifts by the end of September to pay our bills in full. Please consider making an extra gift in the next two weeks if you are able.

--*David Bendert, Treasurer*

OCTOBER CALENDAR

- October 3 - Worship 10am, Bible and Coffee 11am, Basketball 4-5:30 and 6:30-8pm
- October 5 - Basketball 5:30-8pm
- October 9 - Family party rental 3-5pm
- October 10 - Worship 10am, Council 11am, Bible and Coffee 11am, Basketball 4-5:30 and 6:30-8pm
- October 12 - Basketball 5:30-8pm
- October 17 - Worship 10am, Bible and Coffee 11am, Basketball 4-5:30 and 6:30-8pm
- October 19 - Basketball 5:30-8pm
- October 24 - Worship 10am, Bible and Coffee 11am, Basketball 4-5:30 and 6:30-8pm
- October 26 - Basketball 5:30-8pm
- October 29 - Trunk or Treat 6-7:30 BYO Trunk!!!!
- October 31 - Worship 10am, Bible and Coffee 11am, No Basketball

Sunday Morning Bible Study: *“In the beginning was the Word...”* Join us after church in the parlor for a study on the Gospel of John. We will read together the gospel while studying the meaning of the various signs and metaphors that describe and point us towards who Jesus is. Grow in your faith as we discuss this important book. Please contact Pastor Jeff with any questions.



This Is No Trick - Trunk or Treat is Back!!! Friday, Oct. 29, 6-7:30. Please contact Katrina Furman or Ruth Lee if you’d like to decorate a trunk and join the fun in this great neighborhood outreach!

Bring a New Friend to Coffee Hour! If you see an unfamiliar face on any given Sunday morning, say hi and invite them to stay for treats after church. It’s a great way to Be the Church!



Happy Birthday!	Happy Birthday!	Happy Anniversary!
10/2 Mya Rivera	10/17 Kayla Winkle	10/3 Dick & Joyce Van Dyk
10/4 Lori Newenhouse	10/17 Austin Winkle	10/14 Matt & Jodi Carlson
10/7 Vic Coveny	10/20 Alex Stilwill	10/18 Mark & Joni Baragar
10/8 Robert Wolf	10/23 Christina Breen	10/19 Tracy & Kim Kwekel
10/10 Pat Haynes	10/28 David Bendert	10/25 Kevin & Cory Boggs
10/10 Jan Thorsen	10/28 Paul Slotegraaf	10/28 Kevin & Kristi Bayko
10/12 Eileen Slagter	10/29 Kiersen Korienek	10/29 Dale & Kathy VanderMarkt
10/13 Christian Hennells	10/29 Kim Perrin	
10/14 Jayme Terrell	10/30 Joan Edson	
10/15 Joyce Hessler	10/31 Mike Dykstra	
10/15 Donovan Wass		

New folk especially—please let me know if I miss your day or have the wrong date! I’ll do better next year!



Please Pray

Active Prayers: Pat Haynes, Judd Newenhouse, Kendra Simon, and all affected by the coronavirus.

Continual Prayers: Betty Baareman, George Drayton, Joan Edson, Paul Kunde, Delores Wheelock

October Prayer Emphasis: Of our 27 UCC churches and agencies in our Grand West Association, this month we will pray for Joy Like A River UCC in Wyoming. This mostly Spanish-speaking church continues to reach out to new groups of folks sharing our inclusive message of love and affirmation. Let us remember their mission and ministry in our prayers for October.

The family of Larry Byle would like to thank all who offered prayers, cards, and condolences in this time of loss. We appreciate all your expressions of love and support.

Please let the church office know either if you would not like to be listed here or if you would like to be listed here and are not. Please keep all of these folks in your prayers.



Boy, have we got some great opportunities for you!

**You could Be a Sunday School Teacher - see Katrina Furman or Ruth Lee for details.
You could Be a Tech Crew Person on Sunday mornings - see Aron Duby for the scoop.
You could Be an Offering Counter after church - see David Bendert for the lowdown.
You could Be the SafeServ Kitchen Person - see Sue Dykstra or Janet Overbeek.**

Be all that you can Be! You'll Be our Favorite!

- *You can view all previous services online at facebook.com/hudsonvilleucc/live.*
- *You can also find services and Sunday School lessons at <https://www.hudsonvilleucc.org>*

CHURCH CONTACT

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