

The Carillon October, 2024

First Congregational Church
Your Independent Worship Center
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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 23, 2024

DRAFT

Present: Lou Deleguardia-Moderator, Pat Krehn – Vice Moderator, John Cooper – Trustees, Ted Caris – Men’s Fellowship, Jean Morehouse – Women’s Fellowship, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Stacy Church-Deacons

Absent: Jack Stewart-Technology, Jack Buttrick-Board of Charitable Giving.

I. Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm. Pastor Luke gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the August 26, 2024 meeting minutes: Jean moved to approve, Pastor Luke seconded, passed.

III. Public comments – Stacy would like her name taken off the absent roll call for August minutes. She wasn’t supposed to attend.

IV. Board Reports

Board of Charitable Giving

The remainder of the \$1500 was given out to the following organizations: Compassion Home/Fremont, HERE Hygiene/Inspire/Fremont, NC Prevention of Child Abuse/White Cloud, Community Closet/Fremont, Love, Inc./Rooms of Refuge/Fremont, Empowerment/Fremont, Hope 101 Ministry, Insight Pregnancy/Fremont, Vera’s House/Newaygo, Wellspring/Fremont as well as additional contributions to the Crop Walk.

Board of Deacon’s-Stacy Church

The Deacon’s reminded themselves to update the website on a continual basis. Suggestions from a round table discussion: Making the minutes that appear in the Carillon a draft instead of a formal copy.

Board of Christian Education-No Report

Women's Fellowship-Jean Morehouse

OLD BUSINESS: Pat has asked the men's coffee group to possibly install the handrail for Gary. They will investigate to see if it is something they can do. The Guatemala fundraiser was tabled. The CROP dinner will be October 4th from 5 – 7 pm. The dinner will be Spaghetti and meatballs, French bread, dessert (Susan and Pat) and lemonade. Meeting at church on October 3 at 2 pm to cook and set up. Jean will shop for food and supplies. The travelogue went very well. Thank you, Rachel and Pat. Jane has torn a muscle, in her shoulder and won't be able to paint the welcome table until it is healed.

NEW BUSINESS: Jean will shop for a large crock pot for the kitchen. Rooms of Refuge dinner by the Woman's Fellowship will be September 19 at 6:00 pm. Meet at 5:30 to set up. Gail will purchase a large sub sandwich. The Harvest Ingathering will take place between October 13 until November 10. There will be a table set up in front of Lorene's office to hold donations to True North during this time. Jack will deliver donations after November 10 to True North. Next meeting is on October 7 at 10:00 am.

E. Men's Fellowship-Ted Caris

Bill Black and I will be taking over for Dean Morehouse and Jack Butterick on the Men's Fellowship Board. Coffee hour during summer is usually lower number between 4 and 5. The first fall luncheon was in September. 18 people were in attendance. The speaker was Dr. Shaffer. He spoke about diet. Tracy Slager, of Love Inc., will be speaking at the October meeting. Speakers are lined up through May, and cooks are lined up through February. The Men's Fellowship will be doing the hay art for the fall festival. The theme: I'll Vote for Jesus. He walks on water.

F. Board of Trustees – John Cooper

The exhaust fan motor in the kitchen has been repaired.

G. Technology Board – Jack Stewart

The church website is working flawlessly. I have been working on our transition to Voice-over-IP for our in-house telephone system. I have made quite a bit of progress and am almost ready to test the complete system. Everything has gone well and as anticipated. The final system testing is only being delayed by my personal schedule. I may not be able to begin until early October.

H. Music Committee-Stacy Church

Met on September 22nd after worship. We have secured Rachel to play the piano on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month. Lorene will be on the organ on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. Dave will continue playing the organ on the 5th Sunday. The Vandenberg music family will be gifted a bass and a set of drums for their music school. The family will come and provide special music for the congregation. Leslie Anderson will perform the 1st Sunday

in December. Mat's niece will be coming in November. There was talk of a more formalized choir for the Christmas season.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

The service at Veteran's Memorial Park happened over Labor Day weekend. Two churches would like to partner with us in the Rooms of Refuge program. Grace Community and Fremont United Methodist Church. Pastor Luke continues to reach out to them to offer support and encouragement. Autumn Sunday had 45 people in attendance. Articles have been going into the Times Indicator. The Harvest Festival Parade is this Thursday at 5:30. The All church meeting is Sunday, September 29. I will be attending a training at Inspire Church dealing with trauma. Lou and I will be attending Gideon's Banquet on October 8. Hope Initiative will again be starting up in November. I am working on a sound booth schedule. Mat Emerick has showed interest in learning about the sound board. Sue will run the projector. Our church will now have Narcan on top of the AED. The Chosen will be shown this fall. I am exploring new ideas for Family Night. Whether it be dinner, Bible study, or Sunday School after worship, etc. The tree dedication will be happening within the next 2 weeks. Average attendance for August was 36.

VI. Acceptance of reports – John Cooper moved, and Ted Caris seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business-None

VIII. New Business-

Nomination Committee-Pat Krehn- All volunteer spaces are filled. John made a motion to accept the nominees for the 2025 church year. Luke 2nd

Bylaw Changes: Remove the Minister of Music, Section A, part D, Remove the Creative Ministries Facilitator, Section A, part D. Remove the ability to have a Youth Representative, Section A, part E. Jean moved, Pat seconded to approve-passed.

All church meeting on September 29, 2024. Theme: How to be a Healthy Church. Issues we have average age, struggle with evangelism, getting volunteers, leaders are tired. Strengths of church: outreach, excellent worship, generous church, history of church. What are the changes we need to make to get healthier. Do we have the drive and will to turn things around? Structure of the church, name of the church, programs of the church. Are we healthy enough spiritually to help the church thrive? What are the goals of the individual church members? Change our culture to be active and inviting? Reach out and get advice? Having classes and talking to other churches. The goals need to be around the 150th year. 150 members through the doors? In two years have an average attendance of 50 people? 10 years 100 people? 15 kids in Sunday School? Average age of church members at 40? We should have meetings every 2 months instead of 5.

Leadership changes: Tabled

IX. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Next Meeting is October 28, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. in the Library.

Respectfully submitted,
Carrie DeMull

Spaghetti Dinner:

REMINDER ... PLEASE FRIDAY, OCT 4 IN FELLOWSHIP HALL, AT 5:00 - 7:00PM, FOR THE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP SPAGHETTI DINNER. DONATIONS WILL BE APPRECIATED FOR CROP WALK; 25% STAYS IN NEWAYGO COUNTY. PLEASE INVITE YOUR NEIGHBORS AND MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CWS/CROP. THANK YOU! jb



Harvest InGathering:

Women’s Fellowship will be sponsoring their Annual Harvest InGathering. A table has been set up by the church office. Please bring your pantry items and personal items to the table during our InGathering - October 13 - November 10.

If you would prefer to donate monatarily - we will gladly take your check made out to TruNorth. This will allow TruNorth to purchase items they can get at a discount or purchase items they are in need of.



Annual Meeting:

The Annual Meeting is set for Sunday, October 20 following worship. Reports will be available on Sunday, October 13. *A few reports are still needed!! Please get them Lorene no later than Monday, Oct 14.*

The agenda currently has two items to vote on - approval of the 2025 budget and a change to our bylaws. It you are note able to attend the meeting and would like to vote absentee ballots are available in the church office.



Men’s Fellowship:

Wednesday, October 2 at 12:00 noon we will have our Men’s Luncheon. All men are invited - friends are welcome as well!!



Book Circle:

Tuesday, October 1 at 1:00 p.m. at the Fremont Public Library. If you enjoy books we’d love to have you join us!



Our Church Family:

Health Concerns ~

We continue to remember those who are shut in and those we have moved to new locations, especially Ann Werner, Yvonne Lee and Sally DeShetler.

We think of those who have not been feeling well or who have recently had surgeries or covid.

Sympathy ~

We express our sympathy to the daughters, Susan (Steve) and Mary Beth in the passing of their father and our faithful church member and friend, Richard (Dick) Ramm. Services are incomplete at this time.



Dick Ramm, age 91, of Fremont was raised into the arms of Jesus on Thursday, September 19, 2024 at Newaygo County Compassion Home. Dick was born on December 5, 1932 in Detroit to John and Carol Ramm and later married Judith Coblentz on August 27, 1955. Dick graduated from Western Michigan University in 1955 and then earned a master's degree from Central Michigan University. After graduation Dick taught for seven years in Willow Run. His work life then took him and his family to Racine, WI for a year and Glenview, IL for a year. He and his family then returned to Michigan, coming to Fremont in 1965.

Dick taught physical education in every building in the Fremont system at one time or another, starting at the old high school and ending up at Pine and Cedar Schools. He also coached the swim and cross-country teams. Dick retired from teaching after twenty-eight years in Fremont.

Their church (Fremont Congregational) was always a very important place in Dick's family's activities. Dick served as Sunday School Superintendent, Bethel Participant, House Person and Director of the 60+ Program.

Dick has been a volunteer at the Dogwood Center of Fine Arts along with volunteering at True North and the Newaygo County Commission on Aging for every lunch at the Fremont meal site and then delivering meals for about eight years.

Dick is survived by his daughters, Susan (Steve) Brizzolara of Grand Rapids and Mary Beth Ramm of Plainwell; and several nieces and nephews. His wife, Judy, preceded him in death in June of 2017.

A memorial service is being planned for a later date at the Fremont Congregational Church. Those details will be announced when they are finalized. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Newaygo County Commission on Aging, P.O. Box 885, White Cloud, MI 49349 (please note "Meals on Wheels" memo line in the

check to ensure the funds are used for a cause Dick cared so passionately about. Contributions may also be made to First Congregational Church of Fremont, 714 Hillcrest Avenue, Fremont, MI 49412; or the Newaygo County Compassion Home, 20 S. Stewart Avenue, Fremont, MI 49412.

Feed the Hungry - Pastor Luke



God's care for the needy comes to mind this time of year. The harvest is coming in, Thanksgiving is near, and the weather is cooling down. All this reminds me of how blessed I am and how others struggle. The harvest reminded me that rather than working to find enough food, I have more than I need. The cool weather I love brings dread to others because they don't know how they will stay warm. And I have so much to be thankful for while others struggle which reminds me of the commands in the Bible to care for the needy, the poor, the widow, and the orphan.

The Bible teaches the responsibility of those blessed with resources and power to care for those without. Deuteronomy 24:19 instructs the Israelites to leave the extra of their harvest for those without. This theme plays out in Psalm 82 where God judges rulers harshly for failure to care for the needy and weak. And passage after passage could be named because God places importance on caring for the underprivileged. We are called to care for others who are less able to do so. The value of a person comes from God's love for them, not what they have. A person who is well off is not more important in God's Kingdom, as is true in the world. Rather those who have resources don't need divine help and more care is given to those who need it.

God has blessed us so we may bless others. The church is God's tool to bring the Kingdom of heaven into the world. Establishing the Kingdom of Heaven results in care and justice brought to those who are not powerful enough to get it for themselves. The church is called to help make the world a better place. A place that reflects God's Kingdom. When John the Baptist wanted to know if Jesus was the Messiah Jesus replied in Luke 7 "Report to John the things which you saw and heard— blind ones are seeing again, lame ones are walking, lepers are being cleansed. And deaf ones are hearing, dead ones are being raised, poor ones are having good news announced to them. And blessed is whoever does not take offense in Me". God's work through Jesus was to preach the Gospel of salvation by faith, healing the sick, and caring for the poor. This is the work of the church. And that is why we put so much effort into programs like Rooms of Refugee, Cropwalk, and the Harvest in Gathering for the True North food pantry. This Fall I hope you reflect on God's blessings in your life and how you can take the extra of the harvest to give to others.

October Birthdays



9	Lorene Witte	21	Gordon Oosterhouse
14	Miles Cowles, Sr	22	Pat DeKleva
16	Leah McKivitz	29	Sally DeShetler