

Still Speaking

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Charlotte, Michigan

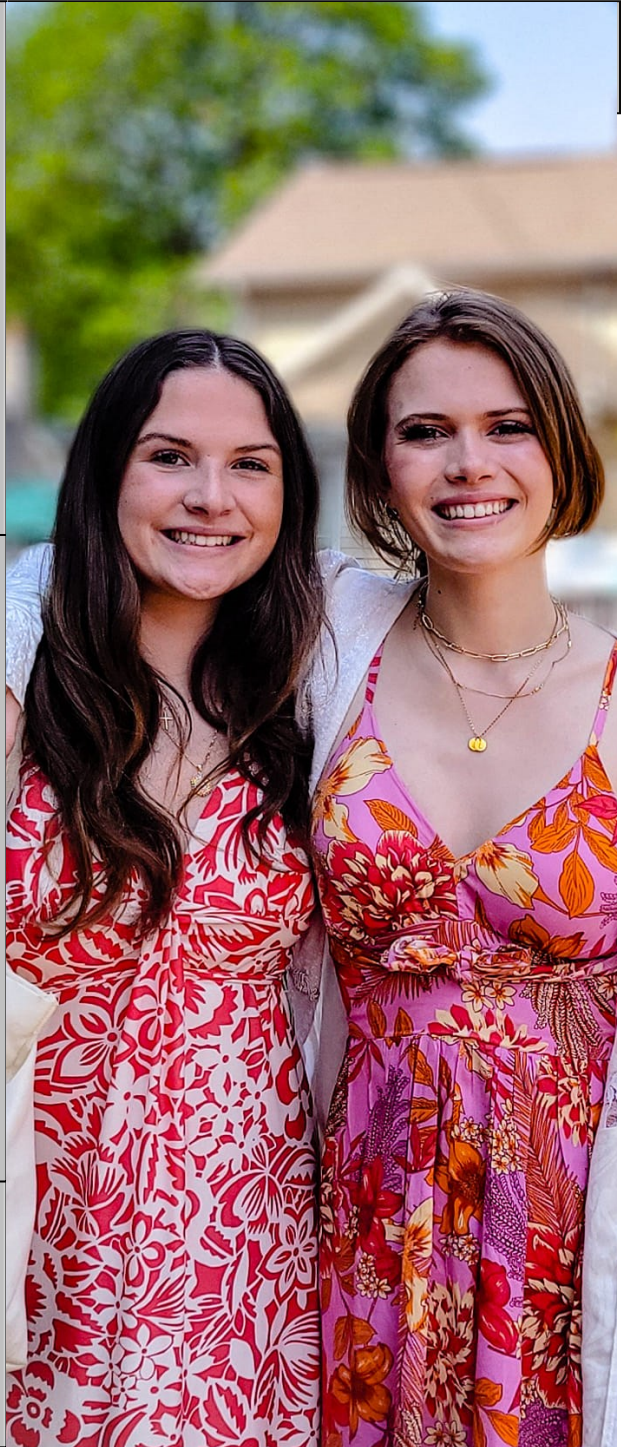
July 2023
Volume 1
Issue 7

Never place a
period where God
has placed a comma

It's Mid Summer!

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Find us on:
facebook

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Still Speaking is the monthly newsletter distributed to members and friends of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Charlotte. We welcome inside and outside comments, creative writing, illustrative photos/art, and articles. We appreciate feedback; please send comments to the Editor @ Editor@uccCharlotte.org

Editor: Editor@ucccharlotte.org

Still Speaking article deadline is the 25th of each month. Queries are due by the 18th.



Thank you

with Christine Terpening, I'll Be Your Rock, Deb Cogswell, and Meijer

On June 24, 2023, First Congregational United Church of Christ of Charlotte hosted a BBQ for LGBTQIA+ youth and their allies. Social and Environmental Justice Team member Deb Cogswell was the Champion – pulling together food, security, games, invitations. Like the Valentine's Day event, we did not widely publicize this ahead of time out of concerns for safety and privacy. For the most part, everyone who participated followed the lead from Deb and from I'll Be Your Rock, the local organization created to support rural youth.

After the event, we circled in with Christine Terpening, founder of I'll Be Your Rock, rural LGBTQ+ youth support, who wrote a few words and shared some thoughts.

Christine expresses heartfelt gratitude to the First Congregational United Church of Christ of Charlotte for hosting a stellar Youth Pride BBQ. "Many kids have reached out to tell me how much fun they had."



One youth wrote, "I gotta say that the BBQ is one of the best times I had in months. Thank you guys so much for having me! You fill my heart with so much joy and memories." That testimony proves that the efforts of I'll Be Your Rock, for which the members of our church are considered Rocks, are working.

"It is not only our mission as Rocks to end suicide and self harm among LGBTQ+ youth, but also to ensure happy childhoods they so richly deserve," Christine continued, "I'll Be Your Rock would like to especially thank **Deb Cogswell** who puts her whole heart and efforts into this mission. Also a hardy thank you to the many that fed the kids and ensured they felt the love that day. You ALL Rock."

For her part, Deb Cogswell would also like to extend a Thank You to local retailer **Meijer** for their generous gift certificate that allowed her to purchase food and other supplies for the event. We all know that it takes a village to raise a child, to provide for families, to meet community needs, and we are thankful that this Michigan grown retailer is a vital part of our village.





Letting Our Light Shine – Social Media in a Nutshell

From the desk of Caryn Hansen, Communications Editor

The Church's Social Media campaign is basically 4 parts:

- **To let our internal Light shine outside our church walls**
- To build our "audience"
- To share the events that happen in our church with the community
- To share messages we support

My Mission as a Communications Editor is to let the light shine. My goal is to find a way, through pictures, posts, and memes, to let the messages communicated within the church be reflected (projected?) outside the church. The hope is that people who need to hear the message of love, of action, of inclusion, are able to hear it. They may not be only local, though the largest number are. Last week, a person from Mississippi who is in a dark spot health wise, sent an email asking for a prayer shawl. We are so thankful that we were able to assist. That's part of our mission - showing God's love through intentional action.

Building our audience is a practical step. From a budget point of view, the bigger our social media audience grows, the lower our advertising costs on Facebook will be. More followers create opportunity for our events and posts to be shared organically ("Organically" equals "naturally," little or no money). Right now, we have just over 700 followers on our page and more than 600 people who "like" our page. These lists overlap, but they are different. People who like our page may not follow it and people follow our page without putting a like on it.

Sharing our events occurs in one of 5 - 9 planned ways.

- 1) Weekly Tuesday email and Weekly Saturday MailChimp (use the Welcome Card to sign up)
- 2) Church Calendar - uccCharlotte.org, or also found on the bulletin board next to the elevator or next to the Church Office
- 3) Monthly Still Speaking newsletter and weekly program insert
- 4) Facebook Event, Facebook Post (these are different and spread online differently) (Instagram too)
- 5) An outside source, like the County Journal and outside event calendars

Another way to let our Light shine comes when we show support for groups, organizations, individuals, businesses, and messages we support. We do this by sharing their posts and their events or by tagging them in a post that we create (like a thank you or an acknowledgement).

How can individuals within the church help? **1)** If you are on Facebook or Instagram, find us and like or follow us. **2)** Next, regularly look at and put a "like" on our posts. **3)** Make a goal to share one post a week a week with your audience.



Movie Corner

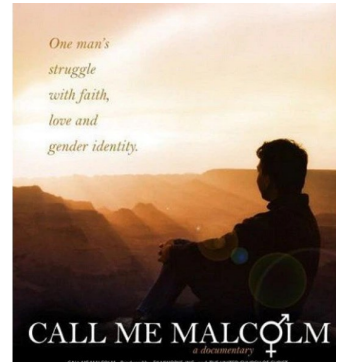
Ramona Kime, Social and Environmental Justice Chair

The SEJ movie series is taking a break this summer, but if you still want to watch some good films, here are a couple wonderful options that you can watch from the comfort of your own home!

Call Me Malcolm (2005) (produced by the UCC)

Malcolm is a young, soon-to-be-ordained UCC pastor, and this film is about his struggle with faith, love, and gender identity.

“Call Me Malcolm is an amazing story of the human spirit and God’s spirit, and the liberating struggle to realize and express with confidence the marvelous gift of one’s truest sense of self. As Malcolm shares his own story and through the stories of others we meet, Call Me Malcolm offers us a glimpse into the real lives of real people who are transgender...., daunting in a culture which has done more to heap shame on persons who identify as transgender. The good news of Malcolm’s story is the way in which shame and fear are overcome by grace, compassion, and knowledge.” (from the UCC website)



You can access the full film:

- The UCC website (go to ucc.org, then search for “Call Me Malcolm”)
- YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sh4Pv10Ifyc&t=5s>)
- The DVD is also available on the small table in the Annex Large Meeting Room

A Secret Love (2020) (on Netflix)

If you weren’t able to join us for the June movie, you still have a chance to watch it on Netflix. This film is a heartwarming, deep, and beautiful love story—and very highly rated (critics gave it 100% on Rotten Tomatoes!). Falling in love in 1947, two women—Pat Hensel and pro baseball player Terry Donahue—begin a 65-year journey of love and overcoming prejudice. And amid shifting times, Terry keeps her lesbian relationship a secret from her family for over six decades.





Pastor's Corner – Let There Be Joy!

Reverend Jody Betten

Have you ever gotten lost and found something spectacular on the way? Dan and I like to go where the locals go when we travel. That can mean misunderstanding directions, like the time in Ireland when we went one way and should have gone the other. We missed the thing we were looking for (don't remember what it was) but discovered a quaint little mom and pop restaurant serving local food (one item on the menu) and a lovely struggle to understand one another in the conversation over dinner. It is a time we remember fondly.

Last Sunday we talked about the joys of summer, what makes it a unique time to experience rest and renewal. I have two more suggestions.

One is to go off the beaten path. Risk getting lost and discover what is available there. Vary from your familiar route. This may occur as our getting lost in a car in another country did. Or it may occur figuratively, as you are confronted by a new thought or opinion and linger there to consider it, versus dismissing it because it doesn't (yet) fit in into your narrative.

What if some shared with you this summer that they love classical music, it's the only kind of music that they listen to. And, you have never liked classical music, but for the sake of venturing out of your norm, you decide to try it. You pull up a couple YouTube classical musical selections and determine to listen to them once a day for a week, just because.

What if someone shared with you that they only eat vegan. Could you determine to try a vegan recipe once a week, just because?

What if you stepped out of your comfort zone during this time when all else is relaxed and familiar and renewing, just because. We can practice making changes, and become less afraid of change.

Here's the second idea. Napping. Hear me out.

Tricia Hersey founded The Nap Ministry back in 2016. The four tenets of The Nap Ministry are:

- Rest is a form of resistance because it pushes back and disrupts white supremacy and capitalism.
- Our bodies are a site of liberation. Wherever our bodies are, we can find rest.
- Naps provide a portal to imagine, invent and heal.
- Our dream space has been stolen, and we want it back. We will reclaim it via rest.

It's not just about getting more rest, it's about reprioritizing our activity around what makes us

valuable as human beings. Is it our productivity that makes us valuable? Or, is it that we are? Yes, simply that we exist, is what makes us valuable, worthy, loveable, and important.

Napping, or what is also being called “quitting quietly,” is an act of resistance. It is behaving so as to put our well-being as humans first; rather than the capitalist ideal that what makes us important is being productive, working hard so we make money so we can buy things so we can consume.

It was done in the days of slavery when the whole field of slaves would work slower so that they could stay alive and undermine the value of their bodies as machines in service of the slaveholders. It was done during covid when people stayed home and got the same amount of work done in a shorter time and spent the rest of the time they were being paid to stay well, mentally and physically and emotionally.

These are two more ideas for making a summer of rest and renewal meaningful. You probably have other ways that you find the summer to be a particularly indulgent time of freshness and indulgent activity. Picking blueberries. Tree bathing. Opening all the windows. Wearing sandals. Walking the golf course. Reading a book all day. Finding friends for ice cream. Enjoy!



Let's Take a Trip - Hidden Lake Gardens

Bill Oatmen, Organizer

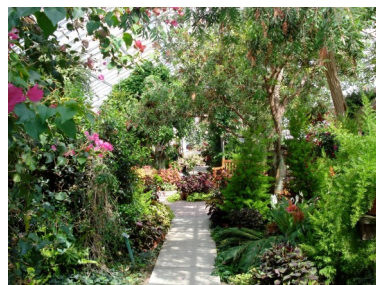
Tuesday, July 11, 10 am – Meet in the Church parking lot

Come join us as we explore the Hidden Lake Gardens 755 acres of botanical gardens, arboretum, a canopy walk, and a 6 mile scenic drive. Features also include a bonsai collection and a conservatory. We expect that photographers will especially find this event enjoyable.

Located a 75 minute drive from Charlotte in Tipton, Michigan, admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$5 for students.

Interested individuals should contact Bill Oatman directly for further details, oatman701@att.net or 517-983-3748.

Picture by Deanna Rendel of the group who attended the Curwood Castle trip in June.





Mission Moment

Mary Normand, Chair

Concert on the Square

Please remember the July 20 Concert on the Square that the Mission Board is helping to sponsor. We will have our famous homemade ice cream sandwiches again. We are in need of helpers to help stuff the cookies on July 19 at 10am and to help the night of the concert to help move the freezer over to the courthouse square, help hand the sandwiches out, move the freezer back to the church, and help with clean up. Let Mary Normand know if you can help (517-231-6647).



Giving Tree

July we will be helping ECFC with their Back To School event. They are in need of shoes, socks, and new children's underwear. Please help as you are able.

Stuff the Trailer

August will be Stuff the Trailer with nonperishable food and/or personal care items. These are then given to Helping Hands, ECFC, and SIREN/Eaton. The trailer won't be on the premises until the night of the Concert on the Commons August 26 but items can be placed in the annex prior to that.



Stay Tuned



87th Year for the Bazaar! November 10 - 12, 2023

Amy Krizek, Co-Chair

Many things have changed in 87 years of Bazaar at Congregational Church. At the June 6 meeting of the Women's Fellowship the consequences of COVID pandemic three years ago and our local community adaptations were discussed and evaluated for considering the continuation of Bazaar.

We are excited to announce we will continue Bazaar this fall! The dates are set: Friday, November 10; Saturday, November 11; and the wrap up – final sales, will be following worship on Sunday, November 12.

We have made plans for change. *We are sad to announce that October's Harvest Feast will be on hold for a year.* The November Bazaar meal, Beef and Noodles and hot Chicken Salad will remain the same BUT the serving times will be an evening meal. Dine in or Carry Out from 5pm to 7pm, Friday November 10.

Pies! Pie baking is still in the plan as are pickled beets, cookies, baked goods, crafts, vintage jewelry. As a nod to our Harvest Feast favorites, cranberry sauce and cooked squash will be frozen and sold at Country Kitchen. New for 2023 will be strawberry and mixed berry freezer jams, and we will keep thinking about ways to meet your epicurean anticipation.

Craft Lounge, Country Kitchen, Cookie sale, Jewelry room will all be continued in the Annex, Friday 9am – 4:30pm and Saturday 9am – 12pm.

Craft ideas were reviewed and crafting sessions will begin Thursday mornings at 9am-12 pm starting July 6 in the large meeting room of the annex.

Needed:

- Vintage Jewelry donations and a jewelry co-chair/understudy
- Hospitality Lounge co-chairs
- Craft ideas and crafters Thursday mornings starting July 6
- EVERYONE's help as we work on kitchen projects, craft projects and new ideas

New!

A "Conversation Lounge" is planned, where coffee and sweets could be purchased and consumed during the Bazaar craft sale. Held in the main church building lounge, it is intended to substitute for the socializing previously provided by the luncheon for the daytime crowd.

Watch for dates to be publicized and join in the fun!

Please plan to join us at the next Bazaar planning meeting set Wednesday, August 23, 1pm.

Summer

First Congregational United Church of Christ presents

ON THE COMMONS

Congregational Commons • 126 S Bostwick, Downtown Charlotte

We are super excited to have this talented group returning for the second year to the Stage at the Congregational Commons.

Charlotte Community Jazz Ensemble will start our musical evening at 5 pm with a range of complex harmonies, tempo swings, and syncopated rhythms. With our spirits lifted and emotions high, **Fabulous Oldies But Goodies** will bring us home with their performance at 6:30 pm.



Saturday
July 8

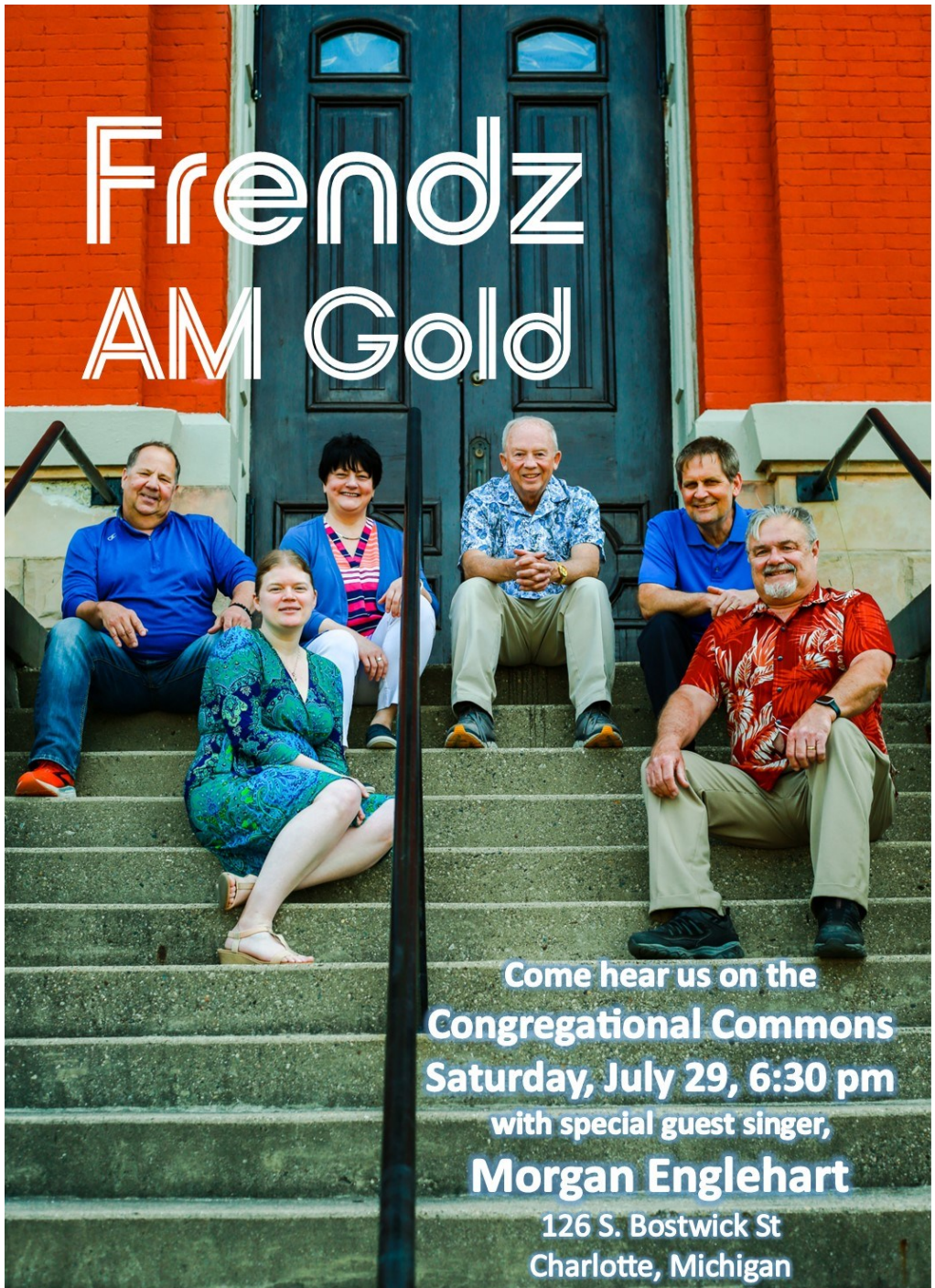
Charlotte Community Jazz Ensemble • 5pm
Fabulous Oldies But Goodies • 6:30pm

Hot Dogs, Nachos with Cheese



The Fabulous Oldies But Goodies Band is an authentic blast to the past when rock and roll was young: harmonizing vocals, in front of "Jerry Lee" style piano, classic sax riffs, and driving rhythms. The band has performed with Chuck Berry, The Platters, Bill Haley's Comets, the Marcells, members of Motown, Rare Earth, the Reflections, the Royaltones, Johnny and the Hurricanes, the Del Shannon Band, and Danny and the Juniors. Rock and Roll is here to stay!

Frendz AM Gold



Come hear us on the
Congregational Commons
Saturday, July 29, 6:30 pm
with special guest singer,
Morgan Englehart

126 S. Bostwick St
Charlotte, Michigan

Recycle-Palooza

August 12, 2023 9 AM – 1 PM

Registration Required

Location released upon completion of registration

Register online: <http://www.eatoncounty.org/913>

ELECTRONICS

Computer Accessories, CPU's, Printers, Fax Machines, Scanners, TVs, Cell Phones, Fans, Laptops, CD Players, Camcorders, Copiers, Small Kitchen Appliances, Hair Dryers, Curling Irons, Remote Control Items, Almost anything with a cord

****NO FREON CONTAINING ITEMS, LARGE APPLIANCES OR EXERCISE EQUIPMENT****

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Acids & Bases, Aerosols (no empty cans), Asbestos, Asphalt/Roofing Tar, Automotive Fluids, Cleaners, Polishes, Varnishes, Fluorescent Light Bulbs, Fire Extinguishers, Flammables, Glues, Caulks, Flea Collars & Sprays, Household Cleaners, Mercury & Mercury-Containing Items, Oil Based Paint, Paint Thinners, Wood Preservatives, Pool Chemicals, Solvents, Pesticides, Herbicides, Sharps (must be in a Puncture-Resistant Container)

****NO LATEX-BASED PAINTS, MEDICATIONS OR BATTERIES****

TIRES

Passenger tires only, with or without rims. Oversized tires (larger than 24") will not be accepted

Limit 10 tires per vehicle

Funding for Scrap Tire Collection made possible through a State of Michigan EGLE Scrap Tire Cleanup Grant

PARTICIPANT RULES

1. Events are for private (non-commercial) residents of Eaton County.
2. Registration is required. Please provide 48-hour notice of cancellations. Limit of **Two** registrations per household.
3. Electronics: **NO** refrigerators, freezers, dehumidifiers, air conditioners, large appliances or exercise equipment will be accepted. **\$10 suggested donation per TV or monitor**.
4. Household Hazardous Waste: **NO** latex-based paints, medications or batteries will be accepted - please visit our website for disposal options.
5. Tires: Limit of 10 tires per vehicle. We are unable to accept oversized tires.
6. For your safety and ours, you must remain in your vehicle for the duration of the event. Workers will retrieve your recyclables for you.



For questions, cancelation or volunteer information:
visit <http://www.eatoncounty.org/913/>,
email Recycle@eatoncounty.org
or call (517) 543-3686.





Book Discussion

Tired of Apologizing for a Church I Don't Belong To
Author, Reverend Doctor Lillian Daniel

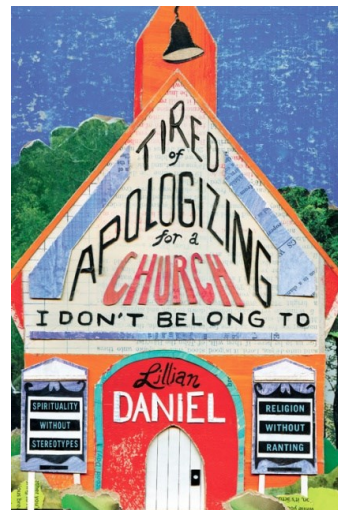
Get Ready! Rev.
Dr. Lillian Daniel
will be speaking at
our church on
August 6!

July 8, 10 am, Annex Large Meeting Room, Chapters 1 – 8

July 29, 10 am, Annex Large Meeting Room, Chapters 9 – 15

Michigan Conference Minister, the Reverend Dr. Lillian Daniels will be speaking at our church in August. To prepare, we will discuss Daniel's book. Books available in the church office for \$7.

"When Lillian Daniel apologized to a total stranger for every bad thing that had ever been said or done in the name of Christianity, he was surprised that she was responsible for all that. "The Inquisition? Don't even raise it, I'm way ahead of you. I was mad about it before you even heard of it, that's how open-minded I am. Salem witch trials? I know! So embarrassing. Can I hang out with you anyway? You're too kind." "Religion is responsible for all the wars in history," they would say, and I'd respond, "You're so right. Don't forget imperialism, capitalism, and racism. Religion invented those problems too. You can tell that because religious people can be found at all their meetings."



"In this book, Daniel argues that it's time for Christians to stop apologizing and realize that how we talk about Christian community matters. With disarming candor laced with just the right amount of humor, Daniel urges open-minded Christians to explore ways to talk about their faith journeys that are reasonable, rigorous, and real. After the publication of the much talked about *When Spiritual But Not Religious Is Not Enough: Seeing God In Surprising Places, Even the Church*, Lillian Daniel heard from many SBNRs as well as practicing Christians. It was the Christians who scolded her for her forthright, unapologetic stand as one who believes that religious community matters. The Christians ranted that Christians, by definition, tend to be judgmental, condemning hypocrites, which is why people hate them. By saying religion matters, she was judging those who disagree, they said, proving the stereotype of Christians. Better to acknowledge all that's wrong with Christianity and its history, then apologize. In this book, Daniel shows why it matters how we talk about Christian community while urging open-minded Christians to learn better ways to talk about their faith."

– Hachette Book Group



A Little Extra

Ann Kansfield, co-pastor, Greenpoint Reformed Church



John told them, “If you have two coats, give one away to someone who doesn’t have any.” – Luke 3:11 (CEV)

This scripture sure seems to be about material goods—a call to live simply and generously by giving away excess “stuff” to people in need. It reminds me of the UCC Book of Worship communion prayer that describes “the vision of the day when sharing by all means scarcity for none.”

Sometimes as we pray these words before the eucharist, I think of Luke 3:11 and say, “I should go through my closet and give away my extra coats.”

Over time, I’ve experienced this prayer as a call to mutual ministry with others—something much deeper than giving away extra things. Depending on the day or the thing that’s being shared, I may have extra or I could be in need. Some days we have extra love, compassion, space for prayer and deep faith. Other days, we might need a little extra love or compassion, prayer or faith.

Recently my children and I went out for dinner. It was a long day, and they were on my last nerve. Just as I was losing patience with them, our server arrived to take our order. The kids continued to act up, and she remained calm. She turned to take my dinner order and said, “What can I get you?” I said, “I need your patience.” She smiled long enough for me to catch my breath. She had extra serenity and without thinking about it shared that with me.

Prayer

God, help me to be generous both with giving and with receiving the things that I and others might need today. Amen.

When We Come Together . . .

Sunday Worship, 10 am In Person and on Facebook, @ucc48813 and website: ucccharlotte.org

Learning Opportunities	Meeting Times	Contact Person
Words and Tangents	Sun, 8 am, Annex/Library	Jan Shall, JanShall00@gmail.com
Godly Play	[Summer Hiatus]	Sarah Cook, scook@olivetcollege.edu
Prayer Group	1 & 3 Thur, 10:30 am Small Prayer Room	Sandra Field yourstrulycollection@hotmail.com
Pub Theology	[Summer Hiatus]	
Tuesday Night Study	Tues, 6:30 pm, Annex LMR	Curt Scott, CurtisJScott@hotmail.com
Music		
Choir Practice	[Summer Hiatus]	Ramona Kime, RamonaKime@gmail.com
Committees & Groups		
Art Committee	2nd & 4th Tuesday, 11 am	Sandra Field, yourstrulycollection@hotmail.com
Blanche Moyer	2nd Monday, 6:30 pm	Judi Cates, JudithCates68@gmail.com
Commons Committee	Times Vary	Matt Slot, MattSlot@gmail.com
Communications	3rd Mon, Annex SMR	Curt Scott, CurtisJScott@hotmail.com
Prayer Shawl	1st & 3rd Sat, 9:30 am, Lounge	Amy Krizek, Mom_Krizek@hotmail.com
Social & Environmental		
Justice Committee	2nd Sun, 11:30 am, Annex LRM	Ramona Kime, RamonaKime@gmail.com
Women's Fellowship	As Needed	Mary Normand, DavidNormand@att.net



Still Speaking

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 106 South Bostwick - Charlotte, MI 48813
 office@uccCharlotte.org www.ucccharlotte.org

Office Hours
 Tues - Wed & Fri 9am - 2pm
 517 543 1310
 Worship Service 10 am

Find us on
Facebook



Full calendar can be found at
uccCharlotte.org

July 2023

Please send changes or corrections to
 office@uccCharlotte.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						9 am Prayer 1 Shawl Group, Lounge
2	3	4	10:00 am 5 Care Community, Library	9:30 am LMR 6 Crafting/Bazaar 10:30 Prayer Grp, Prayer Rm	7	July 8: 10 am Book Discuss, LMR, p. 13 5 pm Concert, Commons p. 10 6:30 pm, Concert Commons, p. 10
11:30 am 9 Social and Environmental Justice, LMR	Blanche 10 Moyer, BFR 6:30 pm Children's Story Hour, Commons	11:00 am Art 11 Team Meeting, Art Room 6:30 pm Bible Study, LMR	12	9:30 am 13 Crafting/ Bazaar, SMR	14	July 15: 9 am Prayer Shawl, L.
11:30 am 16 Missions Team Meeting, LMR	6:30 pm 17 Children's Story Hour, Comm or Annex LMR	10 am Cookie 18 Baking, Kitchen 6:30 pm Bible Study, LMR	10:00 am 19 Ice Cream Cookie Assem- bly, Bess Ful- ton Room	July 20: 9:30 am Crafting/Bazaar LMR 10:30 Prayer Group, Prayer Rm. 6:30 pm Church Council, LMR 6:30 Courthouse Concert		22
11:30 am 23 Worship Team Meeting, Place TBD	6:30 pm 24 Children's Story Hour, Comm or Annex LMR	11:00 am Art 25 Team Meeting, Art Room 6:30 pm Bible Study, LMR	26	July 27: 9:30 am LMR Crafting/Bazaar		July 29: 10 am Book Discuss, Annex LMR, p. 13 6:30 pm Concert, Frendz AM Gold with Morgan Englehart
	6:30 pm 31 Children's Story Hour, Comm or Annex LMR					