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First Congregational United Church of Christ
Charlotte, MI uccCharlotte.org

OCTOBER 2022

Volume 95

Issue 10

It's a Homecoming! Be a Part of It!

Barbecue, traditional picnic dishes, desserts, music, lawn games, rock painting, laughter, water, picnic seating. Bring your own beverage and a lawn chair.



On Friday, October 7, at 5:30 pm, the Charlotte First Congregational United Church of Christ will celebrate a homecoming event. We encourage neighbors, friends we haven't seen in a while, new people who are curious to join us for an evening of light-hearted fun. All ages welcome. We will be meeting on The Congregational Commons at 126 S Bostwick. We will provide hot dogs, bratwurst, vegan "hot dogs," buns (and gluten free buns) and toppings. Members are asked to bring a dish to pass (there is a sign up sheet in the Bess Fulton Room so you can see what others are bringing). All others are encouraged to simply bring themselves, their favorite beverage, and a lawn chair.



There will be rocks to paint, games to play, and a brief group project to complete. All are ice breakers to the real heart of the reason for a homecoming—talking, listening, getting to know one another [again].

please join us

Volunteer Spotlight—Matt Slot

Caryn Hansen with Matt Slot

When Matt and Amy Slot moved to Charlotte in 2003, Luke was 4 and Kaleigh was 2. Adam was born the following year. They joined our church shortly thereafter. This year marks the 19th anniversary for the Slot family.

Matt is the Chair of both the Communications Team and the Commons Team. He works with the Worship Team to livestream the Worship Service each week as well as splits duties with Terry Davis as part of the Tech Team.



What draws you to volunteer?

For all of the things this church has done for me, I find that spending some of my time and talents to give back is the least I can do. There are many (many!) things that I'm not good at, but for those things that I can do or that stir my passions, I find that the time I invest pays me back many times over. Sometimes it's just about being the right person in the right place, or even just the only one around to do it.

I also do it because I want to see this church thrive — to welcome new families, bring healing to those who need it, and inspire our community to be the best it can be. It's not always about making big changes or solving big problems, but doing something about the small ones right in front of me, one day at a time.

What are some key roles where you might like to see volunteers?

While it seems we are always looking for people to take on leadership positions, there's so much more to service than that. What we really need are people who have a modest talent or interest that they'd be willing to share once in a while. Do you like to take pictures or write articles? Garden? Catch up over coffee?

- The Worship Team wants friendly faces on a Sunday to greet members and guests
- The Missions Team has opportunities to serve for a few hours here and there.
- CARE Community could use drivers to bring people to appointments and back

If we haven't asked you for your help, it's not that we don't need it, we just haven't found the right words yet. The key thing is to show up to a meeting and listen. There's so much that goes on in this church that doesn't make it into the Council Minutes or the Chanticleer. Even if you vacation away for half the year, or have a busy social life and can't make monthly meetings, there are many small ways you can support the church.

Food insecurity linked to high health care costs in Michigan

Nushrat Rahman, Detroit Free Press; March 3, 2022

Health care expenses associated with food insecurity amounted to \$1.8 billion a year in Michigan. It's a cost that comes into sharp focus in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, Michiganders struggled to put food on the table because of the pandemic's economic upheaval, highlighting the close relationship among poverty, food insecurity, and health. That's according to a report released Thursday by the Food Security Council, created by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in 2020 to look into the scope and reasons behind food insecurity in the state. The advisory group submitted its findings and recommendations to the governor last month.

Last year, the group reported that food insecurity, or not having access to enough affordable and nutritious food, was an ongoing issue that was only heightened by the pandemic. In 2019, about 1.3 million Michiganders faced food insecurity — more than 300,000 of whom were children — compared with roughly 1.9 million people in 2020, including 552,000 kids.

The new report notes that "despite the adaptability and resilience of many organizations and agencies in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity remains a persistent problem throughout Michigan and the United States."

Food insecurity was linked with racial disparities in Michigan. Urban areas with majority Black residents and several counties in northern Michigan with Tribal reservations showed elevated rates of food insecurity, the group reported last year, citing research from 2018.

"We have to look at the exorbitant cost that is associated with food insecurity," said Phil Knight, executive director for the Food Bank Council of Michigan and co-chair of the Food Security Council.

Among the findings in the latest report:

Households struggling to put food on the table adopt "coping strategies" such as purchasing foods lower in nutritional value. Combined with delays in seeking medical care and the high costs of medications, these individuals are more likely to struggle with managing chronic illness and other health issues.



Hunger drives up health care costs. Food insecurity is associated with health conditions, like

diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. Health care expenses related to food insecurity cost about \$1.8 billion in Michigan per year, according to 2019 research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the report cites.

Federal and state food assistance programs, such as SNAP, WIC and school meal programs, were a crucial safety net for families in the pandemic. Food banks helped families pay other bills including rent, utilities, and health care.

So-called "food-as-medicine" programs can help address food insecurity. Henry's Groceries, a pilot program out of the Henry Ford Health System providing biweekly home delivered groceries to patients for one year, saw emergency department use reduced by about 42% and hospitalizations reduced by about 56%.

"This is really looking at what are the right investments that we should be focused on for the long term," said Lewis Roubal, chief deputy director for opportunity at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and co-chair of the Food Security Council.

The advisory group offers a number of recommendations to ramp up food security for Michiganders including grants for local growers and businesses, improving transportation services such as home delivery and improving the way health care organizations track patients' food insecurity issues.

"The pandemic is going to resolve, and we are going to then be looking at how do we fix this structurally or how do we make the smartest choices that we can to really help Michigan residents avoid food insecurity and bring solutions to scale," Roubal said.

Last year, Food Rescue US Detroit – a nonprofit that transfers extra food that would otherwise be thrown away from local businesses to families facing food insecurity — saw a decrease in need because of stimulus checks and increased benefits, site director Darraugh Collins said.



But within the last month, Collins has been hearing more requests from the agencies her organization works with for more donations and that the "need seems to be increasing" as added benefits slipped away. To her, that's a bit concerning.

During the peak of the pandemic, Gleaners Community Food Bank distributed roughly 7 million pounds of food and now that's down to about 4 million pounds, President and CEO Gerry Brisson said. But that may not reflect the need. He expects the number of people showing up to tick up in the next few months when school ends in the summer.

"There's a lot of people who haven't recovered from the impact of the pandemic yet. And we expect to see some increased need in the community for some time," Brisson said. "A person's health is both an individual and community responsibility."

"Food security is incredibly important because we all know that if we don't have access to fresh fruits and vegetables, then we are likely eating food that isn't great for us and that's what contributes to diabetes and hypertension and other chronic illnesses that are very expensive to manage and treat," Collins said.

October Giving Tree

The October Giving Tree is Brown Bags, which will be distributed during the service on October 2. We invite you to fill them through the month and return them by October 30 for distribution locally.

The Giving Tree is located in two places: The Annex hallway and the Bess Fulton Room, or you can leave the filled bags on the steps in the front of the sanctuary.



October Film Event

"A Place at the Table"

Sunday, Oct. 2nd at 11:30
First UCC Sanctuary

Five million Americans—1 in 4 children—don't know where their next meal is coming from. "A Place at the Table", starring Jeff Bridges and Tom Colicchio, tells the powerful stories of three such Americans who maintain their dignity even as they struggle just to eat. In a riveting journey that will change forever how you think about the hungry, this award-winning film shows how the issue could be solved forever, once the American public decides—as they have in the past—that ending hunger is in the best interests of us all

Amanda Thompson, from Helping Hands Food Pantry, will talk with us after the movie about food insecurity in the country and in our own community. **Please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to Helping Hands.**



8 Facts to Know about Food Waste and Hunger

World Food Program USA; Published Oct 1, 2021; Last Updated March 22, 2022

Global hunger isn't about a lack of food. Right now, the world produces enough food to nourish every man, woman, and child on the planet.

But nearly one-third of all food produced each year is squandered or spoiled before it can be consumed.

For many Americans, this food waste happens in the kitchen — when we prepare food that is left uneaten or spoils in our fridges and cabinets.

For millions of people in low-income countries, this food waste happens at harvest time. Poor storage leads to pest infestations or mold that ruin crops before they can be eaten.

Along with chronic poverty, conflict and natural disasters, food waste is one of the root causes of hunger worldwide.

Here's how food waste and global hunger are connected:

1. \$1 Trillion Dollars' Worth of Food Is Wasted Each Year

Approximately \$1 trillion dollars' worth of food is lost or wasted every year. This happens in the form of food loss – food that is damaged as it moves through the supply chain – and food waste – edible food that is thrown away by retailers or consumers.

According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), reversing this trend would preserve enough food to feed 2 billion people. That's more than twice the number of undernourished people across the globe.



2. Food Waste Is One of the Largest Producers of Carbon

Food waste and food loss have a significant impact on global warming. When wasted food goes to the landfill, it rots and emits greenhouse gases that damage our environment. Each year, 3 billion tons of greenhouse gases are emitted because of food waste.

To put this into perspective, if wasted food were a country it would be the third largest producer of carbon dioxide in the world after the U.S. and China. Taking small steps to reduce food waste, like eating leftovers and only buying the food that you need, helps



fight global hunger and climate change.

3. 30-40% of Food in the U.S. Is Wasted

According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, roughly 30 to 40 percent of the food in the United States is wasted. That amounts to more than 20 pounds of food per person wasted each month.

This happens:

- at the production and supply chain level, where food is damaged or spoiled
- at the retail level, where food can be thrown out due to physical blemishes or overbuying
- at the consumer level, when people buy more than they need and then throw out unused food

4. Rich Countries Waste as Much Food as Sub-Saharan Africa Produces

According to the U.N. Environment Programme, industrialized countries in North America, Europe and Asia collectively waste 222 million tons of food each year. In contrast, countries in sub-Saharan Africa produce 230 million tons of food each year. That means sub-Saharan Africa's food output is practically equal to the amount of food wasted by the world's richest countries.



5. Our Food Systems are Exhausting Soil and Water

The amount of water used to produce food that ends up wasted could fill Lake Geneva *three times*. And of the world's arable land, 28 percent produces food that ends up in a trash bin rather than a hungry stomach.



6. Cutting Global Food Waste Is a Top U.N. Goal

In 2015, the U.N. created the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a blueprint for peace and prosperity for the world. In it are 17 goals to reach by the year 2030.

Sustainable Development Goal #12 is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, and that includes cutting food waste in half by 2030.

7. The United Nations World Food Program (WFP) Helps Reduce Food Loss

Post-harvest food losses often occur because of poor storage equipment.

The U.N. World Food Programme's Zero Post-Harvest Losses project sells low-cost, locally pro-

duced grain silos to farmers and provides them with training on post-harvest crop management in five key areas: harvesting, drying, threshing, solarization and storage. Through these air-tight storage containers, we help farmers cut their post-harvest food losses from 40 percent to under 2 percent.

8. World Food Program Finds New Ways to Distribute Food

Another cause of food loss in developing countries is damage and decay during transportation. Inadequate infrastructure can cause delays in delivery, especially in remote areas that are hard to access.

The U.N. World Food Program is tackling these issues by boosting access to local markets. This includes sourcing its school meals with locally grown crops, so food is fresh and there's no need to import it from far away. We are also working with communities to build better roads and storage facilities and, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, providing cargo bikes to mostly female farmers to increase their access to markets. This creates more efficient food distribution, thereby decreasing the risk of food loss during transportation.



Today, 811 million people don't know where their next meal is coming from while tons of perfectly edible food rots in landfills and poor storage containers. Reducing food waste and losses is key to ending global hunger, fighting climate change, and fostering healthy food systems – and every person can be part of the solution.

How Can We Help?

Watch for the monthly Giving Tree projects. Collect non-perishable food items when they are on sale and bring them in then.

Grow future givers. If you have children or grandchildren, help them help you to look for specials, to collect non-perishable food items,

Contribute financially or through volunteer hours to local organizations that help provide for those in need. Helping Hands of Eaton County, Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center, Siren Center are three organizations we support.

Watch for opportunities to make your dollars count extra with programs like “Simply Give” through Meijer, with corporate matching, or through your employer.

If you are an employer, consider offering matching dollars opportunities to your employees.

Protect Voting Rights: *Vote Yes on Prop 2*

(from promotethevote2022.com)

Proposal 2 is a constitutional amendment to put key voting rights directly in the Michigan Constitution. It will enhance the fairness and integrity of our elections and protect the ability of every eligible Michigan voter to be heard.

Promote the Vote 2022 would:

- Recognize the fundamental right to vote without harassing conduct;
- Require military or overseas ballots to be counted if postmarked by Election Day;
- Provide voters the right to verify identity with photo ID or signed statement;
- Provide the voter right to a single application to vote absentee in all elections;
- Require state-funded absentee-ballot drop boxes, and postage for absentee applications and ballots;
- Provide that only election officials may conduct post-election audits;
- Require nine days of early in-person voting;
- Allow donations to fund elections, which must be disclosed;
- Require canvass boards to certify election results based only on the official records of votes cast.

No matter what we look like, where we come from, or what candidate we support, we all want safe, secure, and fair elections.



From the Desk of

Pastor Jody Betten

This Little Light of Mine: Keep Shining

As an interim minister, my tasks are to help you reflect on your history, help you see your identity, assess systems and structures, renew links to outside organizations (in particular, the UCC at all levels), and finally to focus you on purpose and mission.



So much of that is done. You have a strong history of involvement in the community, of self care and mission, and of strong inspirational worship. Your identity as a progressive Christian faith community that longs to be God's love in action (purpose and mission) is clear in your strategic plan. I'm at work assessing many of the systems and structures to see what needs updating and what might be missing and to help you become a learning organization. You are connected to the Covenant Association, the Michigan Conference, and the United Church of Christ for resources.

Perhaps what you needed most was to know that you are okay. After a short term pastorate that caused some division and angst, in the midst of a pandemic, not to mention the racial reckonings we are facing and the economic uncertainties, there is reason to wonder. Let me reassure you, you are okay. More than okay. You glow in the world as a beacon of love and joy. You are known as a place where what used to happen still happens (think Harvest Feast and Bazaar) and what can happen is happening (think Festival of Trees and Open and Affirming).

Of course, there is always work to be done to become more Christlike in our behavior toward one another and toward the world. When we experience God's patience and forgiveness, we are compelled to be a merciful and forgiving presence toward all those who offend us. As we experience God's grace and mercy, we are reminded to keep our hearts softened and opened so we may extend grace and mercy. This requires the ability to be introspective, to see where God is at work within you, and to change and grow based on that awareness.

You clearly want to share God's love! As opportunities to serve come up, may you continue to rise to the occasion, to grow in patience and forgiveness, in mercy and grace, to change and grow to become more and more God's love in action!

Education Conversation

October 23, after worship

What do Dale Dodd's Sunday Class, Curt Scott's Tuesday Bible Study, the Social and Environmental Justice movies, and Adam Droscha's Sunday morning Prayer Meditation and Contemplation Time have in common? They are all opportunities to learn what it means to follow Jesus. Spending time in silence practicing listening, engaging with others around the issues of the day, considering the historical context of our sacred text, wondering together about social justice issues and how to address them; these are where we learn and grow.

And, there is no group under which this effort, spoken of this way in your Mission Statement "to educate followers of Jesus," is organized. Now, sometimes organization can stifle. I think what you have going on is organic; it springs from the gifts and desires of your congregation. But what if there is something missing? How do you understand what it means to be progressive and how to anchor your educational opportunities in that understanding?

These will be the considerations of a gathering of interested folks on Sunday October 23 after worship in the Annex. **Please join us with your ideas and questions at 11:30 for an hour.**

November Book Study and Sermon Series

Love Your Enemies, by Arthur C. Brooks

In this era of vitriol and animosity, as God's people we ought to project something else. And, we are people! We get as wrapped up in our beliefs and feelings and thoughts about what's going on as anyone else. How do we engage with one another in a spirit of love and encouragement, not vitriol and animosity? Does someone always have to win the argument? Or, is there a way to gently agree to disagree and still belong to the same group?

In **Love Your Enemies**, Brooks helps us think about what it means to really behave as though we love our enemies. In the month of November, we will be reading this book together and sharing in a series of discussions as well as reflecting in the worship service on this topic and our response.

My prayer is that First Church is a place where all can share their ideas and concerns and joys safely and without judgement. That sharing together may result in an expansion of our understanding of God's love and truth in our world.

Please purchase the book and be prepared for a November 6 reflection to kick off our engagement with this very important topic.

Our Whole Lives (OWL)



We rely on our public schools to teach our children reading, writing, arithmetic and history among other things needed for them to become gainfully employed, to be productive members of society and to be responsible citizens. However, we don't expect our public school system to teach our children more than a basic understanding of human sexuality. Let's be real, that's probably not the best place for it to be taught anyway. Truth be told it's not the easiest subject for parents to teach their children and they care the most for them of anyone!

So what if the church became the place. In the United Church of Christ for many years now, human sexuality is being responsibly taught in the local church throughout our country, and in many secular settings as well, using a nationally recognized curriculum called Our Whole Lives (OWL).

From the website: (www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/health-and-wholeness-advocacy-ministries/our-whole-lives/) "Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives. For these reasons and more, the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalists proudly offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula for use in both secular settings and faith communities."



Interactive workshops and activities engage participants, while step-by-step instructions for program planners and facilitators help ensure success. Seven curricula speak to participants' needs, by age group: grades K-1, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, young adults, adults, and older adults.

Our Whole Lives helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their relationships, sexual health and behavior. With a wholistic approach, (https://www.uua.org/files/documents/owl/circles_sexuality.pdf) Our Whole Lives provides accurate, developmentally appropriate information about a range of topics, including relationships, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, sexual health, and cultural influences on sexuality."

What if First Congregational United Church of Christ became the place where sexual ethics were taught, where children could learn to be responsible sexual beings who cared first for themselves and then for their neighbor in a way that honored the beautiful creatures of God that they are?

If you are interested in considering this possibility, please explore the website above. You are invited to talk with Matt Slot or Pastor Jody. We will set a time convenient for all interested to talk about the possibilities.



What is Godly Play?

Sarah Cook, Godly Play Teacher

As most of you know, we are using Godly Play as our Sunday School curriculum.

The Godly Play guide says, "Together, all the lessons are designed to form a spiral curriculum that enables children to move into adolescence with an inner working knowledge of the classical Christian language system."

Godly Play was created by Jerome Berryman with a Montessori approach to learning. The Montessori approach has a goal of nurturing each child's natural desire for knowledge, understanding, and respect through play.

It's important to remember that a child's playtime is their work time. Children need to be able to make choices and learn in a safe environment, with adults close by to guide them and help process what they are learning.

At the beginning of each session the teacher/leader greets the children, invites them to sit in a circle on the carpet, and uses the Godly Play materials to tell a sacred story, a parable or to present a liturgical action to them. The materials are made from wood, stone, cloth or felt, and they are meant to be used by the children in play. After the story, the leader and students pause to wonder and think aloud about the presentation they just heard.

When the story and wondering time is finished, it is work time. The leader and assistant invite the students to choose materials to use during their work time. During this time the children can choose to play with the Godly Play materials that we have already introduced, read a book, or use art supplies.

We are excited to have our new Godly Play teacher, Sarah Cook, a gifted musician. Sarah is a Traverse City native, a junior at Olivet College, a music major, and is partaking in the Teaching Pathway to eventually get her certification in music education. She incorporates music into her lesson plans.

Our own Olivia Konietzko continues as the assistant teacher who will walk with the children to the 2nd floor classroom during Worship and return them at the close of the service.

Harvest Feast 2022—October 16

Mary Normand

When the leaves start to change, we know Harvest Feast is around the corner! It will be right after church on October 16. (Indoor dining and carry out only.)

Serving times:

- Parishioners will be served starting at 11:30. Please come down on the south end of the church by the elevator.
- The General Public will be served from Noon to 2 pm.

Cost: For both dine in and carry out, children 5 and under eat free (but must be present). All others are \$15.

Menu: Turkey, bread dressing (gluten free vegetarian dressing is also available), mashed potatoes, homemade gravy, squash, corn, coleslaw, cranberry relish, pickled beets, rolls with butter, drinks (coffee, tea, water, and milk), and dessert (choice of chocolate, vanilla, peanut butter, or pumpkin sheet cake OR a rice Krispie treat).

Funds raised from both Harvest Feast and the Church Bazaar will go primarily to local charitable organizations to be determined at the annual meeting Sunday, January 8.

The No-Walk CROP Walk!

Ramona Kime

Our church is again participating in the local Crop Walk, although without any of the walking! The annual CROP Hunger Walk is a continued effort to fight against disease, disaster, displacement, and other challenges that leave people hungry.

There are two ways to donate:

- Go online to <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2022>, click on “make a donation”, and in the “in support of” line, put the team name “First Congregational UCC, Charlotte, MI”.
- Give money or checks to Amy Frost or Ramona Kime at coffee hour on October 9, 16, or 23. Please make checks out to CWS/CROP.

The deadline for donations is October 23.

CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk fundraising events held in cities and towns across the United States, created to support the global mission of Church World Service, a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement, and disaster. After a CROP Hunger Walk ends, 25% of the funds raised is returned to the host community to support local hunger fighting efforts.



Annual Coat Fundraising Drive Starts October 1

Carol Yerkes

Colder weather is a sign! It's "Coat Drive" time! Children need warm coats to go to school. In addition to monetary donations, gently used or new coats are welcome.

Donations may be given at church with the designation "Coat Drive" or may be given to Bill or Carol Yerkes. The new coats purchased will be divided between Siren House and Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center.

Donations may be given from October 1 to December 20. Qualifying children will receive the coats at no charge.

Festival of Trees—Boots Too!

Amy Frost

The Festival will be in person Friday, November 25 from 5 to 8 pm and Saturday, November 26 from 10 am to 5 pm. Online bidding will be open through Sunday, November 27 at noon.

Please consider donating a tree, wreath, quilt, or wall hanging. All proceeds benefit Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center's Winter Boots for Kids.

Set up times will be:

- Sunday, November 20 from noon to 4 pm
- Monday, November 21 from 5 pm to 7 pm
- Tuesday, November 22 from 5 pm to 7 pm
- Wednesday, November 23 from 10 pm to 5 pm



All set up must be completed by Wednesday to allow for lighting and auction preparations.

We will need set up help during the above times and clean up help on November 27.

To donate or volunteer or for questions, please contact Amy Frost at frosta@pennfield.net.

See you there and bring a friend or two!

The Congregational Church Bazaar 2022

Amy Krizek

For those new to the area, the Congregational Bazaar comprises 4 parts: Crafts from the Congregation, the Country Kitchen, the Jewelry Shop, and the Friday Luncheon.

Friday, November 11, 9 am to 4 pm

Friday Luncheon 11 am to 1:30 pm

Saturday, November 12, 9 am to 4 pm

As is our tradition, preparation for our church bazaar signals the start of our holiday season. Steering the 2022 event is the Bazaar and Women's Fellowship Committee, and more specifically, our co-chairs, Mary Normand and Amy Krizek.

Although a few things have changed in 2022, what hasn't changed is the need for help. The below list is intended to help individuals decide how they and their families can play a deeper role in these unifying festivities. Sign up sheets are in the Bess Fulton Room. You can also contact individuals directly using the contact information below. Or you can indicate your willingness to volunteer on the back of the Welcome Cards on Sunday.

Craft Lounge (Annex Large Meeting Room)

Co-Chairs: Judy Johnson 543-7768, Dottie Moore 543-4809

Bazaar sells crafts created by individuals who donate their special handmade/homemade items. Beginning Sunday, November 4 bring anything you craft and are willing to donate for our sale. Pricing these items by YOU is very important and appreciated. Items not sold will be returned to you.

Help greet guests and assist with customers on both Friday and Saturday. Also, if you don't have a craft, you might consider joining a group of crafters. Craft making is currently in progress starting at 9:30 am on Thursdays in October in the Annex Large Meeting Room.



Jewelry Shop (Library)

Chair: Lola Wilson (517-543-0049)

Costume Jewelry of all kinds is "repurposed" in this very popular Jewelry Shop. Please try to get your "gems" to Lola by October 30 for pricing.

Publicity

Co-Chairs: Dyna Lehman (517-543-1292), Barb Anderson (517-541-0592)

Distribution of publicity information and menus to local businesses and organizations.

Country Kitchen (Annex Small Meeting Room)

Chair: Rachel Harvitt 543-3387

Country Kitchen sells YOUR home grown and home-baked products. Especially good are breads, pies, jams, garden produce & herbs. Bake ahead and freeze!! Drop off labeled donations in the Lounge starting Sunday, October 31.

Cookies

Chair: Judi Cates (517-667-6659)

In our country kitchen we will have prepacked, home baked cookies.

November 5 to November 10, if you BAKE, bring your most praise worthy cookie donation (usually a 3 dozen recipe).

November 10, Thursday, help is needed to package the cookies.

**Luncheon** (Dine in and Carry-Out only)

Co-Chairs: Amy Krizek (517-652-1579), Mary Normand (517-543-9487)

November 7, 1:00 pm, Monday, Prep, workers needed to chop cooked beef and chicken.

November 10, Thursday, starting at 8am. Kitchen prep, workers needed to peel apples, etc.

Pie Baking

Co-Chairs: Pam Rinckey (517-543-2901), Mary Kohmuench (973-897-9471)

November 10, 1:00 pm, Thursday, workers and donations for pie fruit ingredients needed. Pies are sold at the Luncheon by the slice and whole pies in the Country Kitchen as well.

**Luncheon General Help**

Co-Chairs: Bill Oatman (517-543-5178),

Susan Barnett (517-543-6429)

Help make our Bazaar a friendly experience!

November 11, Friday, Needed: runners/greeters.

Sign up to help cut pies, serve food, serve coffee and clear tables.

Servers/Cashiers

Chair: Linda Foster (Treasurer) November 11, Friday, 10:30 am.

Dishwashing Brigade

Chair: Allen Krizek (517-652-1579)

Thursday, November 10, 9:00 am – noon, Prep crew

Friday, November 11, 10:00 am -3:00 pm, Dishes - SAVE THE EARTH and volunteer to help with REAL dishes: dishwashers and pot scrubbers greatly appreciated.

Around the Church—We Each Do Our Part

Caryn Hansen

Jeanne Hudson-Bowring had an idea and daughter Katie Metz went a step further. A fresh coat of paint in the children's play room and a mural to help all of the children feel a part of the group.

"We're growing our future youth group, one child—or hand, at a time," someone said.

When you are in coffee hour and wonder where all the children are, take a peak in the nursery. Next step: a few new toys.



An Open Letter to the Charlotte County Journal Reader

From Pastor Jody

I am so grateful for the gift of free speech that we enjoy in this country! It means that advertisements like the one submitted by New Hope Community Church in the September 3, 2022 edition of the County Journal (page 8); highlighting Pastor Randy Royston's answer to the question "Why are churches divided on so many current issues such as gay marriage, abortion and transgender rights?" can be printed, even though his answer isn't completely accurate.

Christian churches throughout the ages have been divided on many "current issues;" probably the most memorable is the issue of slavery. Many read the literal translation of the Bible as sanctioning slavery and until the Civil War that position was advocated by many Christian churches.

Churches of many traditions (denominations) have also disagreed about when the fetus acquires a soul, whether contraception is right or wrong, how many genders there are (in the Hebrew text there are 8 different genders) and what a Biblical marriage is (polygamy was outlawed by the Mormons in 1890).

Our study of the ancient word, considering the historical context, and current relevant interpretations are important continuing methods for understanding the Bible for our age. Between the Christian traditions, within denominations, and among us, as people who seek to be God's love in the world; our conversations about our experience and new understandings, guide us to



become increasingly truthful and authentic about following the ways of Jesus with integrity.

In the United Church of Christ, we believe that God is still speaking to us from not only the Bible, but through modern day prophets. We are each able to be connected to God through the Spirit; and we honor how each person's experience informs the community.

In fact, I believe that having a conversation between pastors of local churches would help those in our faith communities to respect one another better. **What do you say, Pastor Randy? Want to sit down in a public forum and share our ideas so others can hear our best thinking?** I believe our community would be blessed!

— PAID ADVERTISEMENTS —

ASK PASTOR RANDY

Why are churches divided on so many current issues such as gay marriage, abortion and transgender rights?

Actually, Christian churches for most of recorded history were very united regarding acceptable and not acceptable relationships between men and women. God created two genders: male and female. Sexual relationship is to be only between a man and a woman within the commitment of marriage. God holds every life precious from the moment of conception. It is only in this last generation that some churches have set aside the foundational teachings of the Bible attempting to please this culture that has pursued their own lust disregarding the basic tenets of faith practiced for 2000 years. Second Timothy 3:15-17 talks about the importance of staying true to the Scriptures.



New Hope Community Church
436 W. H. Road, Charlotte • 311-543-8800
www.newhopechurch.net • Pastor Randy Royston
Pastor Randy Royston
CharlotteNewHopeChurch.net

Here and There...



Mission Moment

Mary Normand

CROP walk is this month. Dates that we will be collecting money will be Oct 2, 9, and 23. All monies have to be turned in by the end of the month.

In August our Giving Tree was white bags. In addition, at the Concert on the Commons on August 27, we had a trailer to stuff. From those 2 events we collected 36 bags of food, 44 white bags, and 10 cases of Lysol. (Thank you to Ace Hardware for donating the Lysol.) **The October Giving Tree is brown bags to fill with non-perishable food.**

The Mission Board is conducting a survey monkey. Please fill this out online or request a paper copy. We are trying to find out what the interests are from the congregation.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/FCCUCC_Mission-Outreach_Survey



The Winter Coat Project starts this month. Bill and Carol Yerkes are once again heading this up. You can give money directly to them or put it in the church offering envelope and mark winter coat project on the “other” line.

If you have gently used coat/s those are accepted too. If you see a good buy on a coat and wish to purchase and donate that, it's ok. We want to keep people warm this winter.

Festival of Trees is coming fast. It is November 25 and 26. Set up days will be November 20, 21, 22, and 23. There will be **NO** set up on Friday, November 25. This is such a fun event. Some of you know I LOVE this event. I usually have multiple entries. Currently I have 2 for next year already. Please consider entering a tree this year. All the trees are auctioned off and the proceeds go to EFCC to buy winter boots for their clients. If you don't have a tree, just come and look at the entries. The creativity is amazing.

Meeting Time Change: The Missions Team will meet the third Sunday in October as opposed to the second since the Harvest Feast will be taking place on October 16.

Lift up the poor and be kind to those who need your compassion. Always be grateful and willing to use the gifts you have received.

Stay tuned!

Pillar of Peace Update

Caryn Hansen

Mark your calendars! The new Pillar of Peace is complete and wintering in a secure location.

The Installation Ceremony for this new symbol of peace is being planned for Earth Day 2023, Saturday, April 22. We will be inviting a diverse group of local organizations to join us as we plant this artistic pillar, created with input from our congregation in the furtherance of peace both in our local community and our world.

The ceremony will include the decommissioning of our current old and faithful Peace Pole. In the spirit of Earth Month, our intention is to recycle our tired pole. If you have ideas how we might assign it a new purpose, the planning team would like to hear from you. Please make a note on the back of the Welcome Card.



Now that we have the peace pillar in house, the following items will need to be completed in preparation for the ground installation of the Peace Pillar:

- ◆ Choose the right placement for the pillar
- ◆ Fit the pillar with plexiglass
- ◆ Attach solar light
- ◆ Create plaque
- ◆ Create cement platform for plaque
- ◆ Attach plaque to platform
- ◆ Build cement casement to anchor pillar into the ground

If you have knowledge or are able to provide assistance on any of these items, the planners would like to hear from you. Please make a note on the back of the welcome card insert in your bulletin.

May this pole stand in the gap as a reminder that peace has many languages.

Our Open and Affirming Statement

New Wording

In August, our church reviewed the wording of our Open and Affirming Statement. Suggestions were submitted and the wording was tweaked. The Social and Environmental Justice was tasked with the overseeing the project. Below is the new wording which can be found on our website, uccCharlotte.org, and on the “About” tab of our Facebook page, facebook.com/ucc48813

We at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Charlotte, commit to loving all people equally, just as Jesus did, to see beyond our differences, extending the hand of peace to all.

We actively resist socially exclusive behaviors, relying on the healing and unconditional nature of God’s love and grace as our guide.

We strive to grow in God’s wisdom, generosity, and compassion, allowing everyone to experience the wholeness of being their authentic selves. Progressive in our belief that God is still speaking, we renounce any discrimination or injustice, and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming church.

We invite anyone, regardless of race, ancestry, age, ability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, marital status, family structure, faith background, culture, physical or mental facility, to full participation in the common life of the church.

No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step forward. If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story.

Ivan Dominic Illich (1926-2002) Austrian Roman Catholic priest,
theologian, philosopher, social critic.

Love expands.

Our Holiday Traditions

Invite Family and Friends

October 16—Harvest Feast, Noon—2 pm

November 11, 12—Church Bazaar, 9 am-4 pm; 9 am-2 pm

November 11—Country Kitchen Luncheon, 11 am-1:30 pm

November 20, 21—Hanging of the Greens, after worship, Monday as needed

November 25, 26—Festival of Trees, 5 pm-8 pm, 10 am-5 pm

December 24—Family Christmas Service, 4 pm

December 24—Candlelight Service, 8 pm



Self-Sustaining Justice

by Kenneth Samuel | ucc.org/daily-devotional

“He was amazed to see that no one intervened to help the oppressed. So he himself stepped in to save them with his strong arm, and his justice sustained him.”

– Isaiah 59:16 (NLT)

Human history is littered with just causes and noble campaigns that have fallen by the way-side. Popular support eventually peters out ... financial backers gradually lose interest ... the winds of trend shift with the passing of time ... new generations signal new sets of priorities. Any movement for justice that is solely dependent upon popular support is not likely to be sustained beyond a flashing moment in time.

What differentiates a moment of justice from a movement of justice is the self-sustainability of the justice movement.

Reconstruction in America was superseded by Jim Crow laws, but there are those who are still ready and willing to fight for racial equality in America. Peace efforts appears to have taken a back seat to the current escalation of military armaments, but the warriors for peace have not yet abandoned the battlefields of national debate. Affordable health care for the masses has been roundly disparaged and dismantled by the majority in the U.S. Congress, but those who are dedicated to the promotion of universal health care are by no means dissuaded.

According to Isaiah, when God’s agent of justice could find no one to support the justice cause, that agent took up the cause himself, and he was sustained in his work by his own passion for righteousness.

During the heat of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, someone asked a black woman walking to work, “Aren’t you tired?” She responded, “My feet are tired, but my soul is rested.”

Prayer

Lord, let the righteous passions you place within us generate the power we need to persevere in all seasons. Amen.

Leaders and Staff of the Church

Council President 3rd Thursday, 6:30 pm	Amy Frost	Frosta@pennfield.net
Vice President	Curt Scott	CurtisJScott@hotmail.com
Church Clerk	Barbara Anderson	BarbaraF5543@icloud.com
Financial Secretary	Don Johnson	DonJohnson106@mac.com
Treasurer (Finance Team)	Kathie Cook	crkfcCook@hotmail.com
Endowment Team	Mike Fulton	mjfulton@sbcglobal.net
Congregation At-Large Representative	Mary Kohmuench	MTheoharis@gmail.com
Buildings and Grounds	David Frost	Black_ice@att.net
Business Team Leader	Bill Oatman	Oatman701@att.net
Education Team Leader 1st Sunday, 11:30 am	Judy Johnson	Johnsoj@ameritech.net
Mission Team Leader 3rd Sunday, 11:30 am	Mary Normand	DavidNormand@att.net
Worship Team 4th Sunday, 11:30 am	Dennis Cates	DWCates55@yahoo.com

Staff

Minister	Pastor Jody Betten	Pastor@uccCharlotte.org
Director of Music	Ramona Kime	Ramona.Kime@gmail.com
Student Intern	Adam Droscha	Adam.Droscha@gmail.com
Communications	Caryn Hansen	Office@ucccharlotte.org
Bookkeeper	Sher Brown	Office@ucccharlotte.org
Child Educator	Sarah Cook	Office@ucccharlotte.org
Custodian	Rex Todd	Office@ucccharlotte.org

The Chanticleer is the monthly newsletter, distributed to members and friends of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Charlotte. We welcome most comments and articles.

Editor: Editor@ucccharlotte.org

Chanticleer monthly deadline is the 18th to inform us of intended articles.

When We Come Together . . .

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

Faith Groups

Adult Bible Study	Sundays, 8:15 am, Annex/LMR	Dale Dodds vdd6@att.net, Sundays, 8:15 am
Contemplation, Meditation, Prayer	Sundays, 7:30 am, 8 am, 8:30 am	Adam Droscha Adam.Droscha@gmail.com
Godly Play (Children)	Sundays, 10:10 am, Church/Floor 2	Sarah Cook
Prayer Group	1st and 3rd Thurs, 10:30 am	Sandra Field yourstrulycollection@hotmail.com
Prayer Shawls	1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9 am, Lounge	Amy Krizek Mom_Krizek@hotmail.com,
Pub Theology:	2nd & 4th Thursday, 7 pm, Riedy's	Adam Droscha
Tuesday Night Study	Tuesdays, 6:30 pm, Annex	Curt Scott curtisjscott@hotmail.com

Music

Senior Choir Wednesdays, 7pm, Lounge, September—May

Committees and Groups

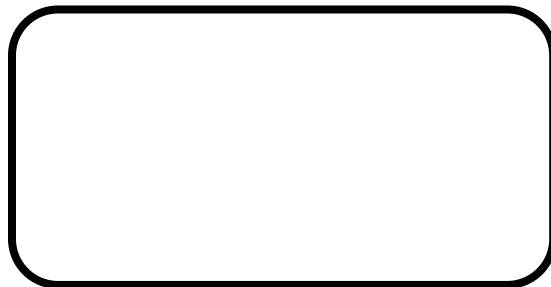
Art Committee	Mondays, 1 pm, once a month	Sandra Field yourstrulycollection@hotmail.com
Blanche Moyer	2nd Monday, 6:30 pm	Judi Cates JudithCates68@gmail.com
Care Committee	1st Wednesday, 10 am	Pam Rinckey rinckey1@hotmail.com
Commons Comm.	Times Vary	Matt Slot MattSlot@gmail.com
Communications	3rd Monday, 6:30 pm, Annex/smr	Matt Slot
Personnel Committee	As needed	Terry Davis tdavis@msu.edu
Social and Environmental Justice Committee	2nd Sunday, 11:30 am	Ramona Kime Ramona.Kime@gmail.com
Women's Group	As needed	Mary Normand, Rachael Harvitt, DavidNormand@att.net



THE CHANTICLEER

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office@uccCharlotte.org www.ucccharlotte.org

Office Hours
Tues - Wed & Fri 9am - 2pm
517 543 1310
Worship Service 10 am
Sunday In Person,
Facebook & YouTube



Some of the special days celebrated in October:

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month,
Bat Appreciation Month, Adopt A Shelter Dog
Month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month,
National Apple Month, Learn to Bowl Month

October 4 - Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
October 5 —Yom Kippur (Jewish)
October 10 —Thanksgiving Day in Canada
October 10 —Indigenous Peoples Day
October 16 —World Food Day
October 21 —National Pumpkin Cheesecake Day
October 30 — Visit a Cemetery Day
October 31 — National Knock-Knock Jokes Day

