

Still Speaking

First Congregational

United Church of Christ
Charlotte, Michigan

October 2024
Volume 2
Issue 10

Never place a
period where God
has placed a comma



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Leaders and Staff of the Church

Council* President	Matt Slot	MattSlot@gmail.com
Vice President	Mary Kohmuench	MTheoharis@gmail.com
Buildings and Grounds	Bren Wood	Brnwdmi@gmail.com
Business Team	Bill Oatman	Oatman701@att.net
Care Community	Pam Rinckey	rinckey1@hotmail.com
Church Clerk	Barbara Anderson	BarbaraF5543@icloud.com
Congregation At-Large Representative	Amy Frost	FrostAmy58@gmail.com
Endowment Team	Mike Fulton	mjfulton@sbcglobal.net
Education Team	Diane Hudson	DianeKHudson@sbcglobal.net
Financial Secretary	Don Johnson	DonJohnson106@mac.com
Mission Team	Mary Normand	DavidNormand@att.net
Treasurer (Finance Team)	Kathie Cook	crkfcCook@hotmail.com
Worship Team	Jeannine Scott	Scottj21@msu.edu
*Church Council	3rd Thursday, 6:30 pm	Annex Large Meeting Room

Staff

Minister	Pastor Adam Droscha	Pastor@uccCharlotte.org
Director of Music	Ramona Kime	Ramona.Kime@gmail.com
Communications	Caryn Hansen	Editor@ucccharlotte.org
Bookkeeper	Sher Brown	Office@ucccharlotte.org
Child Educator	Alexis Konietzko	
Custodian	Rex Todd	Office@ucccharlotte.org

***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.*

***About the cover:** "Bubbles," featuring 4-year-old Rylan Englehart with siblings in the background was taken by Caryn Hansen at the 2024 Homecoming Picnic on Friday, September 27. The evening was lovely and the event well attended.*



Exciting News for our Church Grounds!

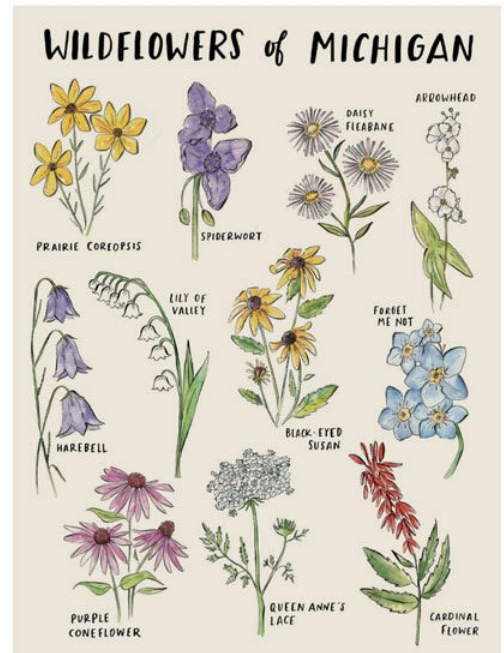
Ramona Kime and Maria Davis

Keep your eyes open for the appearance of a Michigan native-plant pollinator garden on the south side of the Annex! Our church received a \$1,000 grant from the Charlotte Generosity Fund to jumpstart the installation of the garden. The Pollinator Garden committee includes Jamie Curtis, Ramona Kime, Maria Davis, and Maria's student from Olivet, Mara Grey, who is very interested in native plants and is also using her work with us as her Service Learning project, a requirement for graduation from the University.

Unfortunately, many of the wildflower seeds that we've tossed in that space were of invasive species, including the beautiful but non-native orange Cosmos wildflowers that, like the invasive non-native plants they are, have taken over the area. One of the first steps will be to remove all plants that aren't native to Michigan. Then Jamie will dig up the ground and add in soil amendments. We are planning to create a flagstone path (with fake stones made of cement) through the area, and Allen Krizek will be building a wooden structure around the AC units to help them blend into the background.

There will be opportunities for our church family and friends to get involved. Those of us on the committee have our own plants growing in our home gardens to contribute to the project, but we will put out a call to the congregation to see if anyone has flowering perennial plants native to Michigan that they would like to contribute. There will also be opportunities for digging, planting and maintaining the garden, as well as making the concrete flagstones. Contact any committee member if you would like to help and we will get you connected!

Ultimately, we want this garden to have educational value, as well as being beautiful and providing nourishment for pollinators. We plan to create signs for the various plants, and Mara will be doing a presentation for us on the value of pollinator gardens.



Over the course of the next month or so, and then again in the spring, you will start to see activity in that area. It will be exciting to watch as the process unfolds and as the garden project takes root (pun intended!!)



Movie Night!

Food, Fun, and Young Frankenstein!

Sunday, October 20, 6 PM
Church Sanctuary

Did you know that before the Eaton Theatre opened January 7, 1931, Charlotte's original movie theater was the Congregational Church Sanctuary? The screen extended the height of the chancel and the projector streamed movies from the balcony.

With that historical tidbit in mind, have we got a fun treat for you and all of your friends!

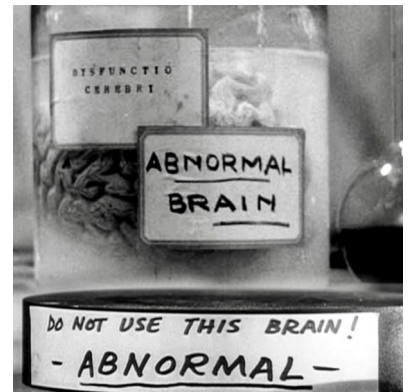
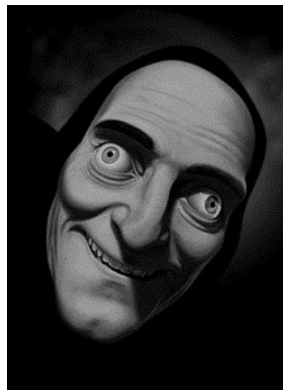
All are invited to take a mental health break from the world's craziness and join us for a viewing of this classic 1974 American comedy horror film (rated PG) directed by Mel Brooks and starring Gene Wilder, Madeline Kahn, and Marty Feldman.

Sing along ("Oh, sweet mystery of life, at last I've found you!") or speak along ("Hump? What hump??") with all the great lines for entertaining audience participation!

And, most definitely, feel free to dress for your favorite parts! We're not saying our sanctuary is haunted, or that we even believe in ghosts, but for this one single day, in the spirit of the season, we can have a lot of fun pretending.

Yummy ghoulish treats will also be provided.

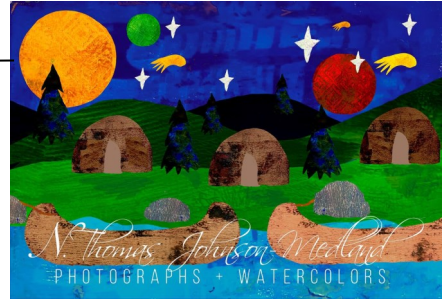
**Don't miss
this fun event!**





Let's Take a Trip

Bill Oatman, Organizer



Nokomis Cultural Center, Okemos

Tuesday, October 15, 9:00 am

There are 12 federally recognized tribes in the State of Michigan: Bay Mills Chippewa Indian Community, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Hannahville Potawatomi Indian Community, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indiana, Little River Band of Ottawa Indiana, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians of Michigan (Gun Lake Tribe), Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi, Pokegon Band of Potawatomi Indians, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

The Nokomis Cultural Heritage Center, founded in 1988, is dedicated to the preservation of History, Arts, Culture and Language of the Anishinaabe people - Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi nations. The Center fulfills this mission through programs, exhibitions and special events.

The Anishinaabe (alternatively spelled Anishinabe, Anicinape, Nishnaabe, Neshnabé, Anishinaabeg, Anishinabek, Aanishnaabe) are a group of culturally related Indigenous peoples in the Great Lakes region of Canada and the United States. They include the Ojibwe (including Saukteaux and Oji-Cree), Odawa, Potawatomi, Mississaugas, Nipissing, and Algonquin peoples. The Anishinaabe speak Anishinaabemowin, or Anishinaabe languages that belong to the Algonquian language family. (Hele, Karl. "Anishinaabe," The Canadian Encyclopedia.)

At the time of first contact with Europeans they lived in the Northeast Woodlands and the Subarctic, and some have since spread to the Great Plains.

The word Anishinaabe means "people from whence lowered". Another definition is "the good humans", meaning those who are on the right road or path given to them by the Creator Gitche Manitou, or Great Spirit. Basil Johnston, an Ojibwe historian, linguist, and writer, wrote that the term's literal translation is "beings made out of nothing" or "spontaneous beings". The Anishinaabe believe that their people were created by divine breath. (Johnston, Basil (1990). Ojibway Heritage. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press. p. 15. ISBN 0803275722.)

Let Us Know So we can better prepare for this group outing, please either: sign up on the back of the Sunday Welcome Card, or send an email to Office@uccCharlotte.org, or reach out to Bill Oatman directly. The plan is to meet at the church at 9:00 to carpool, head out to tour the center, see a presentation, and follow up with lunch together at Buddies Pub & Grill.



Thoughts on Stewardship

Matt Slot, Church Council President, Pastor's Corner

We are a church that cares about using our resources well, being present in our wider community, serving our neighbors, continued learning and growth, and being a light for those around us. Through financial gifts, donations, and pledges, as well as time, talents, and energy we have done beautiful things. Our accomplishments represent what Christ's church was intended to be: a community of love, grace, acceptance, inclusion, diversity, and hope.



We have also seen healthy and consistent attendance in our regular church services and gatherings. For a community church of our size, that's a big deal. Community churches across the country are seeing dwindling attendance, and we too have encountered headwinds in recent years, yet remained strong. It's not only evidence of our resilience and firm foundation, but that our values are true. We are committed to our mission, and our message is getting out.

We know this is true because of what visitors and people who are not members of our church say about us. "You guys have a great message!" "I don't go to church anymore, but I believe in what you guys are doing!" "I actually feel included here; I can be myself." We have heard these words and more in-person and online. Hearing them from our members is one thing; hearing it from strangers is validating.

Our accomplishments and validations also show the commitment and generosity of our givers, tithers, pledgers, and contributors. While financial giving is only one way that supports the work of our church, it goes to many projects, services, and needs. We have surely been blessed, and we thank God for the provision and gifts we have enjoyed. Financial gifts, like yours, reveal how blessed we are, and ensure that can continue the work of faith, hope, and love in our community.

This October is stewardship month for First Congregational Church. As we plan for next year, please thoughtfully consider what you can do to support the great work of our church. If you have not received a pledge card, you can contact the office to request one. We will collect them during the worship service on Sunday, November 3 or at the office any time.

I hope we can plan on your support.



Crafts from the Congregation

2024

Friday, November 8th

9:00 am - 4:30 pm

Saturday, November 9th

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Holiday Bazaar

Crafts, Baked Goods, Vintage Jewelry,
Pies, Cookies, Pickled Beets & more!

Conversation Café Friday, 9:30 am –1 pm

Family Dinner 4:00 pm—6:30 pm



Facebook.com/ucc48813 &

Instagram.com/uccCharlotte

Web: <https://ucccharlotte.org/all-church-bazaar/>



Crafts from the Congregation 2024

88th year!

Friday, November 8th - 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Saturday, November 9th - 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Sponsored by the Bazaar & Women's Fellowship Steering Committee

Co-Chairs: Mary Normand & Amy Krizek

Family DINNER: Friday, 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm

There are LOTS of opportunities to get involved! Here is a list of the different parts of the Bazaar that all come together for a fun-fellowship-filled two days.

CRAFT Lounge

Co Chairs: Judy Johnson 543-7768, Jan Shall 269-832-5114

Bazaar sells crafts created by individuals who donate their special handmade/homemade items. Beginning Sunday, Nov. 3 after Church, bring any item you are willing to donate for our sale to the Annex. Pricing these items by YOU is very important and appreciated.

Craft Sessions

Co-Chairs: Dyna Lehman 983-8825, Judi Cates 667-6659

We hope you are working on homemade items at home. Group craft workshops happen on many Thursday mornings 9:00 am. Watch your bulletin and emails for details. Ideas are welcome! join us for these crafting sessions.

Jewelry Shop

Co-Chairs: Lola Wilson 543-0049 & Sharon Oatman 517 402-3297

Vintage jewelry of all kinds is "repurposed" on this very popular Jewelry Shop. Please try to get your "gems" dropped off in specially marked boxes at church or annex by Oct. 27th

Country Kitchen

Chair: Chris Reist 517-719-8889

Country Kitchen sells home grown and home-baked products. Especially good are breads, pies, jams, garden produce & herbs. Bake ahead and freeze!! Members and friends drop off labeled donations in the Annex starting Sunday Nov. 3rd

COOKIES, COOKIES, Cookies! homemade holiday style cookies are needed! Dropped off in the Annex after 3:00 pm on Tuesday. Rachel Harvitt will be calling to remind you!

Hospitality

Co-Chairs: Judi Cates 667-6659 & Pam Rinckey 543-2901

Cashiers/Baggers: Friday, November 8th , 9 am - 4:30 pm, Saturday 9 am - 2 pm

NEW!! Conversation Cafe Friday 9:30 am-1 pm

Chair: Jenny Bohms

Enjoy FREE beverages and relaxed conversation with other Bazaar customers and friends in the Church Lounge. Cinnamon Rolls, Large Buttermilk Cookies or Turkey Croissants as a cash purchase or your Country Kitchen goodies can be enjoyed in this venue.

Bazaar Family DINNER **NEW!!** Friday 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

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

Our Bazaar Family dinner held in the Bess Fulton Room, Dine in or Carry out. Dinner includes choice of Entrée (Hot Chicken Salad, Vegetable Quiche or specialty Beef & Noodles), beverage and two sides. Add a slice of one of our signature homemade pies!

Meat Prep: Wednesday, Nov 6, 1:00 pm. Workers needed to chop cooked beef & chicken.

Veggie Prep: Thursday, November 7, starting at 9 am. Workers needed to peel apples.

Servers/Cashiers: Friday, November 8, 3:30 pm. (Treasurer: Pam Rinckey)

Pie Baking

Co-Chairs Mary Kohmuench 973-897-9471 & Pam Rinckey 543-2901

Thursday, November 7th, 10 am Workers and donations for pie fruit ingredients needed.

Pies are sold at the Dinner by the slice and large and small size pie during Bazaar.

Dining Room

Chair: Bill Oatman 543-5178

Set up Thursday, November 7th. Help is needed to keep our guests served during the Dinner. If you can pour coffee, greet friends, serve meals, contact Bill.

Pie Cutting: Friday, November 8th, 3 pm.

Dishwashing Brigade

Co Chairs: Bren Wood 973-879 1028 & Anna Mitchel 652-9957

Thursday Nov. 7th 10 am – 2 pm - prep & pie crew; Friday, November 8th, 4-8 pm. Earth-friendly china plates are being used and we need dishwashers and pot scrubbers.

Publicity

Co-Chairs: Dyna Lehman 543-1292 & Amy Krizek 517 652 1579

Help with distribution of publicity information and menus to local businesses and organizations.

Questions: Call Amy Krizek 652-1579 or Mary Normand 231-6647

Let's all join in to make this a successful event!!



Menu

Conversation Café Friday 9:30 am—1 pm

Enjoy conversation with friends in the church lounge. Beverages: Coffee, Tea, Christmas Punch and water is on us. Treats to purchase (cash only)

- Cinnamon Rolls – Fresh baked with cream cheese frosting \$2
- Large Buttermilk Cookie – A traditional Bazaar favorite \$2
- Turkey Croissant – Generous amount of turkey on a large croissant with chips (gluten free and vegetarian options available) \$10

Family Dinner Friday 4:00 pm—6:30 pm

Dine in or Carry out in our Bess Fulton dining room, traditional Bazaar favorites (credit cards accepted)

- Beef and Noodle Plate, includes beverage and choice of two sides \$15
- Hot Chicken Salad, includes beverage and choice of two sides \$15
- Broccoli Cheese Quiche, includes beverage and choice of two sides \$15

Sides

Cole slaw with homemade sweet and sour dressing, cinnamon spiced apple, pickled beets, homemade bran muffin, or roll. Extra sides available \$1/side

Pies

End your meal with one of our fresh baked Pies

Pecan \$4; Fruit Pies \$3: Apple, Cherry, Blueberry, Rhubarb, Strawberry-Rhubarb, Pumpkin





Mission Moment

Mary Normand, Mission Team Chair

Giving Tree In August we collected 54 bags of nonperishable food items and personal care items. Mission Board will match this with 5 bags of food and 5 bags of personal care. Thank you to everyone who was able to contribute to this event.

The Giving Tree for October and through the end of the year is winter coats. Bill and Carol Yerkes will head this up again. Donations of money or new or gently used coats can go to them or be brought to the church. Any financial donations should be marked as winter coat donations.

Neighbors in Need is in the month of October. There will be envelopes available, by the church programs, if you wish to donate to this.

Loads of Love Our next one is October 19 at Quality Dairy Laundromat. We also give away books for free. If you have any adult books that you don't want anymore, please drop them off in the middle meeting room of the annex.

A big Thank you to Bren Wood's insurance company who granted us \$200 toward our Loads of Love program.

Gift Cards The Mission Board donated ten \$15 Subway gift cards to the office for those folks who come in and are in need of a meal. If anyone would like to donate a gift card to Subway or any fast food place, it would be appreciated. Just give them to Sher.

Festival of Trees is coming up fast. Please consider participating in this event with a themed tree.

Global Ministries Mission Board financially supports 2 children throughout the year for their schooling. One of ours is graduating out of the program. We have voted to adopt another child through this program.

Mission Board voted to donate \$100 to Camp Francis, in memory of Brenda Bly, for the handicap sidewalk to the fire pit.

We had 2 new members join our group. Thank you to Mary Roessler, and Mary Kohmuench. Thank you also to those who signed up, at Rally Sunday, to help us with some of our projects when needed.

In A World Where You Can Be Anything, BE KIND.

STAY TUNED

October Giving Tree

Winter coats for all ages:

Give coats or money to Bill or Carol Yerkes,
or put checks in the offering plate.

Please indicate “Coats” on any checks or cash envelope.



Neighbors in Need— UCC offering for mental health justice:

Put cash or checks in the offering plate or give to Sher.

Please indicate “Neighbors in Need” on the check or
cash envelope.



The Festival of Trees - a Tradition Raising Funds for Winter Boots

November 29, 5 pm to 8 pm

November 30, 10 am to 5 pm

Set up dates start Sunday, November 24 and extend to Wednesday, November 27

Can you believe it? It's almost Christmas!

Okay, not really, but it is time to begin to go through our boxes and begin making our lists

Thirteen years: that's how long the Festival of Trees has been wrapping itself around our hearts. This Charlotte holiday tradition, organized by local resident, Christmas enthusiast, and child educator, Amy Frost, is designed to raise funds to purchase winter boots for children.

The funds raised go to Eaton Clothing and Furniture Center to purchase and distribute boots for families whose budgets are stretched beyond capacity during the winter months especially.

Fully decorated and gift laden trees, holiday wall hangings, wreaths, quilts, and other items are donated by individuals, as well as local businesses and organizations to be auctioned off silently – in person and online. Details can be found at www.uccCharlotte.org/festival-of-trees. Information can also be found on the church Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ucc48813.

The online auction begins on Thanksgiving (the exact start time is always a fun surprise!) and goes through noon on Sunday, December 1. Usually, there is a last-minute bidding war on one or two especially popular items, so the auction might close a few minutes later. All of this is part of the fun.

On Friday, November 29 and Saturday, November 30, the trees can be viewed in all their beauty in the historical Sanctuary and Lounge at First Congregational United Church of Christ at 106 South Bostwick Street, Charlotte – the southwest corner of Lawrence and Bostwick.

Admittance is free, as is the holiday craft for children. Friday hours are 5 pm to 8 pm; Saturday hours are 10 am to 5 pm. The Saturday hours are purposefully scheduled to coincide with the start of Charlotte's Lighted Holiday parade, which begins at 6 pm.

Those groups, organizations, businesses, and individuals wishing to donate items to the auction, should contact Amy at FestivalofTrees@uccCharlotte.org.



Not HIM!

Kaji Douša, Senior Pastor of The Park Avenue Christian Church, NYC

Jesus said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.” - Mark 2:17 (NRSV)

Questions to think about:

1. Who has been a “tax collector” in your life? How do you feel imagining that person as a reflection of God?
2. How do you need forgiveness for your sins and God’s embrace of grace?
3. Why would you ever talk to them?

There are lots of those folks. The writer of Mark calls them “tax collectors.” I have other names for them. You do, too.

Just imagine the very worst person you can think of. The person who—if you say them on the street and felt a certain kind of courage that day—you’d spit at their feet, like they do in period films.

Maybe this person is someone who has done something awful to you, personally. But a better image would probably be someone who is doing something horrible to everyone around you. This is the revilement appropriately analogous to the tax collector. The guy who was part of a mechanism of financing of the state, who took a cut and squeezed everyone in his jurisdiction for every penny he could get.

You walk up to the place you know you’ll find him, at the booth where he publicly carries out his lechery. Imagine how you feel as you anticipate seeing him.

Then imagine that you see Jesus. What would you expect from him?

If we accept Christ’s divinity, we need to allow him to embrace our enemies.

God is not just ours.

And this is good news. Mark calls them “tax collectors and sinners.” We miss the point if we forget that the sinners include: us.

Prayer

God, if we are going to get past the sins of the world, we will all need your embrace. Sigh. Amen.

When We Come Together . . .

Sunday Worship, 10 am In Person and on Facebook, @[ucc48813](https://www.facebook.com/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	Sunday, 10:10 am	Alexis Konietzko
Prayer Group	1st & 3rd Thur, 10:30 am Small Prayer Room	Sandra Field yourstrulycollection@hotmail.com
Pub Theology	2nd & 4th Thurs. 7 pm	Adam Droscha adam.droscha@uccCharlotte.org
Adult Bible Study	Tues, 6:30 pm, Wed. 11:30 am Annex Large Meeting Room	Curt Scott, CurtisJScott@hotmail.com
Coffee Hour with a Pastor	Evelyn Bay, Tuesday, 10 am	Pastor Droscha, pastor@uccCharlotte.org
Music		
Choir Practice	Wednesdays, 7 pm	Ramona Kime, Ramona.Kime@gmail.com
Bell Choir	Wednesdays, 4 pm	Jenny Bohms, rjbohms@yahoo.com
Committees & Groups		
Art Ministry Committee	2nd & 4th Tuesday, 11 am 2nd & 4th Monday, 7 pm, Zoom	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 Monday, 6:30 pm, SMR	Amy Frost, frostamy58@gmail.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 LMR	Ramona Kime, Ramona.Kime@gmail.com
Women's Fellowship	As Needed	Mary Normand, DavidNormand@att.net
Men's Group	1st & 3rd Sat, 10 am, Annex SMR	Larry Taylor, TaylorLT1752@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



Fall Cooking Classes are in full swing!

Cost is \$25 to cover expenses. Each baker gets to keep their edible wares. There are 3 ways to sign up: Back of the Welcome Card on Sunday, on the list in the Bess Fulton Room, send an email to Office@uccCharlotte.org

Friday, October 4, 6:30 pm, **Baklava**, Bess Fulton Room

Friday, October 25, 6:30 pm, **Colossal Cookie Winning Recipes**, Bess Fulton Room

Friday, November 22, **Holiday Cupcake Decorating**, Bess Fulton Room

Calendar!

The calendar in October is so full that it is difficult to read on the allotted page. We are working on alternative methods to share the information in the calendar.

For now, to see a full calendar of events, please:

- Check out our online calendar at www.uccCharlotte.org/calendar,
- See the insert in the weekly program
- Subscribe to our weekly emails by sending an email to editor@uccCharlotte.org
- Check out our calendar of events on the bulletin boards around the church
- Talk with Caryn Hansen or email her at editor@uccCharlotte.org for a paper copy