

Loving Our Community Since 1875
First Congregational Church of Fremont



The Carillon **June, 2025**

First Congregational Church
Your Independent Worship Center
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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES** **MAY 26, 2025** **DRAFT**

Present: Pat Krehn – Moderator, Stacy Church – Vice Moderator, Jean Morehouse – Women’s Fellowship, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Jack Stewart - Technology Board, Dave White - Deacon’s, Jack Buttrick – Board of Charitable Giving
Absent: Bill Black - Trustees

I. Meeting called to order at 6:32 pm. Pastor Luke gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the April 28, 2025 meeting minutes: Jack B motioned to approve. Dave W. seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – Dean Morehouse - Two years ago, Lou Deleguardia invited Stacey and Ian Kennedy to speak to our congregation on a Sunday morning. They were wondering about the possibility of using First Congregational Church to hold their weekly meetings if Youth for Christ came to the Newaygo area. First Congregational Church has the perfect space to hold meeting, a Fellowship Hall, kitchen, Chapel for Bible study, crafters, and a wood shop. In the past two years, Youth for Christ has been interviewing and vetting candidates for the leadership position in Newaygo County. Char Spaulding has accepted the position, and she will begin her mission in October of 2025. Pastor Luke made a motion to partner with Youth for Christ and have them use our church to help them grow their organization. Dave seconded. EC voted yes and agreed this will be a great way to help Youth for Christ grow their organization. First Congregational Church will take an active role in participation through weekly meetings with volunteers from their organization.

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick
Noisy offerings in May/June collected \$305 for the Prevention of Child Abuse of

Newaygo County. Singer Jean Hogarth returned her \$75 compensation for her presentation in April to FCC to be included with our Noisy Offerings to PCA. Members of Charitable Giving will present our donation for the April-June quarter to PCA's executive director, Tara Nelson in July. Samaritan Way opened up a drop in center in Newaygo on May 1 to lend a hand to those trying to escape drug/alcohol addictions. Similar facilities are operational in Muskegon, Greenville, and Manistee. Barb V, Mary B, and Jack B presented a \$300 check to manager Nicolas on May 19. For more information on this please visit:

https://samaritanrco.org/staff_member/nickplumhoff

Charitable Giving will meet June 18 to consider new programs for the last half of '25. E.g. a pause of Noisy Offering may be replaced with a collection of products requested by two groups:

- 1) July/Aug – Helping Every Real Expression of need living our Matthew 25:35. A wide variety of products like toothpaste, toothbrushes, basic hygiene products are needed by indigent children returning to school in the fall.
- 2) Sept/Oct – Hand 2 Hand: An association of 8 churches in Fremont providing food on weekends for nearly 200 children. FCC donated \$500 in 2022, and we will likely want to collect food products for in support of their/our commitment to Matthew 25:35: for I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me in. We have expended \$2,100 this year with \$900 remaining.

B. Board of Deacon's – Dave White

The 150th anniversary celebration committee is working hard. Music Committee is working hard getting Sunday guests to sing on Sunday morning.

C. Board of Christian Education – Pastor Luke

Sunday School is going well. Having the Jelly Room on the 1st floor is a well-liked idea.

D. Board of Trustees – Jean/Pat for Bill Black

Update of the sale of the land: just received the survey back. Will take the survey to the city hall to get a parcel number assigned to it. 3.77 acres will be sold. The trustees voted to pay for the cost of an assessor to come in and give us an estimate on the value of the property. Lou gave the name of an assessor in Fremont, Joe Hunt. Jean has contacted him and he hasn't gotten back to her yet. Conversation about window cleaning the upper windows of the church. An organization called FISH will be contacted to get an estimate. We have some cash at the Fremont Foundation, \$37,000, that we would like to request be given to us from the foundation so that we may put it in our Edward Jones account and make a better rate of return on our investment. A letter will be sent to the foundation requesting this. Talked about parking lot refurbishing at a cost of \$89,000. This is why it hasn't been done yet and has been tabled.

E. Women's Fellowship-Jean Morehouse

The men of the church are putting posts in for the banners we will be having in the front of the church. Banners 3 foot by 6 foot will be bought by Woman's Fellowship for different needs. The Altar Committee hasn't been able to get anyone to donate

flowers for the Altar. Jim Rynberg has made 3 beautiful bouquets that will be displayed on the Altar at various times of the year. Thank you Jim! Spring Fling went well with 18 ladies in attendance. We bought Crystal a rose bush to thank her for speaking. The handrail for the right side of the Altar area is still a work in progress. A spaghetti dinner for the Crop Walk is scheduled for September 26. Lorene is going to send out a notice to the different churches involved to get a count for the dinner so Women's Fellowship can plan accordingly and supply dinner to all the other churches participating. An aviation camp will be happening this summer for a week. 80 children plus counselors will need food and snacks. The Women's Fellowship voted to write them a generous check for snacks. Siri Pinnick's funeral was held at church on May 24. The family provided cake. The family donated the leftover cake and supplies to be used by the church. Looking into the cost of changing the Altar curtain. Permission from EC is needed to look into it. Maybe the curtain can be taken down and the area behind it painted. Talked about putting can lights in the narthex and entry way on the main level outside of the offices. Will be working on getting costs for lighting.

F. Technology Board – Jack Stewart

Jeff has been working hard on getting the computers updated. The IMAC is updated and he is working on the laptop. Website is running good. Pictures need to be updated by the Deacons. Dave will bring that message back to the Deacons. Jeff has been looking for volunteers for the tech booth. Still no luck. VOIP is working flawlessly.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

Mother's Day went well. Memorial Day service was well attended. Planning for the July service will start shortly. The offerings collected from the part service went to Community Closet. The Shack in White Cloud has offered to provide a space for the upcoming services. The next service in the park is July 4th weekend. Met with Glen and Robin and they want to join the church. June 8 is Pentecost Sunday. Father's Day is June 15. June 16 through the 30 is Rooms of Refuge. There will be 15 people. July 19th will be a 150th Anniversary dinner for all civic leaders. I am working on the 1st draft of the history of the church from 2000 to 2025. A second small group will meet at 1:30 or 6:30 depending on what works better for people. Beth Hooker has offered to host a Bible Study starting June 18 at 6:00 at her house.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Dave moved, and Stacy. seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business-Update of small group meeting at Pat's house. Pastor Luke supplies the discussion materials. We talk for about a ½ hour then talk about other things. A flyer is being made up about what our church does. We will be walking through the condos and handing out the flyers. Having an open house to invite people to church to see what we are all about.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Next Meeting is Tuesday, June 23, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in the library.

Respectfully submitted

Carrie DeMull

Book Circle:

Our next Book Circle gathering will be our annual Salad Luncheon on Tuesday, June 3 at 12:00 noon at the home of Bev Williams. Please bring a salad to pass. Bev will provide beverage and dessert.



Women's Bible Study

We will begin on Wednesday, June 18th, at 6 pm. We will be meeting in the church library. Come casual, bring your Bible and bring along anything you want to drink. I will provide pens, pencils, hi-liters, sticky notes, etc. Can't wait to see get started. Beth

Rooms of Refuge:

Fellowship Hall will be in use June 16-30 for overnight guests. There is a great need this month for guests - with a waiting list as well. No volunteers will be needed this month.



Dates to Note:

Sunday, June 1 - 10:00 worship & communion
Sunday, June 1 - 11:30 Deacon's meeting
Monday, June 2 - 10:30 Women's Fellowship Board Meeting
Tuesday, June 3 - 12:00 noon Book Circle Salad Luncheon at the home of Bev Williams
Sunday, June 8 - 10:00 worship - Pentecost Sunday
Monday, June 9 - 6:30 Tech Board
Tuesday, June 10 - 7:00 Library in use
Sunday, June 15 - 10:00 worship - Father's Day
Tuesday, June 17 - 10:00 Trustees
Monday, June 16 - Monday, June 23 - Lorene on vacation
Monday, June 15 - Monday, June 30 - Rooms of Refuge
Sunday, June 22 - 10:00 worship
Monday, June 23 - 6:30 Executive Council
Sunday, June 29 - 10:00 worship - Noisy Offering Sunday

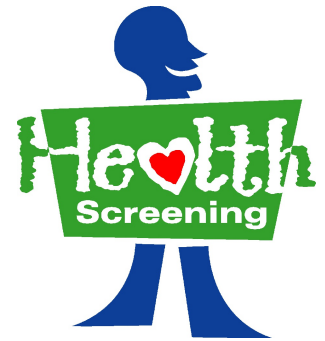
Looking Ahead:

Sunday, July 6 - 10:00 Community worship in the Park - No worship here
Friday, July 11 - Life Line Screening - Fellowship Hall



Life Line Screening:

Have you taken control of your health today? Life Line Screening will be here at First Congregational Church on Friday, July 11, 2025 offering safe, painless, non-invasive preventive health screenings that are typically not a part of a routine physical. To be more proactive about your health for yourself, your family and your community, please register for these health screening today. There is no time like the present to take action!



Three ways to register:

- Call toll-free: 1-888-814-0466 promo code HSCA001
- Online: <https://www.llsa.social/hzca>
- Text: the word circle to 216-279-1607

Our Church Family:

Health Concerns ~

Carol Black is under the aid of Hospice Care.

Betty Dougan is having some health concerns.

Thank you ~

Thank you for the support, cards and the beautiful plant as we mourn the loss of my brother, Mark Unekis. He is greatly missed, but we are finding peace in knowing his mind is at rest.

Rachel & Greg Poches

An Ode to Dads

God took the strength of a mountain, the majesty of a tree, the warmth of a summer sun, the calm of a quiet sea.

The generous soul of nature, the comforting arm of night, the wisdom of the ages, the power of the eagle's flight.

The joy of a morning in spring, the faith of a mustard seed, the patience of eternity, the depth of a family need.

Then God combined these qualities, when there was nothing more to add, He knew his masterpiece was complete, and so, he called it ... Dad.





What forgiveness is — and is not

Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship. Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start and a new beginning. It is the lifting of a burden or the canceling of a debt.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Grief Support

Mat Emerick will host a bi-weekly grief support gathering in his home on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month, beginning June 10. The gatherings will be held in cooperation with First Congregational Church of Fremont.



In July of 2023 Mat lost his beloved wife Deborah to brain cancer. His grief journey has been long and difficult. One of the most important things for him on the journey has been to talk with others who have also experienced a loss of a loved one. He wants to provide that opportunity for anyone in our community who desire someone to talk with about their own loss.

You might recognize that Mat has been offering a variety of creative programs and concerts at his house, “Patchwork Pear Place,” in honor of Deb and the creative and artistic legacy she left behind. However these gatherings are not any form of a “program.” They are just an informal time for folk to come together to share in their grief journeys. The gatherings will also not be a time of counseling or therapy but can help anyone desiring either of those to find that service. The gatherings will also have an open door policy and require no registration or commitment.

“If you want to talk, the door is open. Come in and join us.”

The gathering time will be 6:00-7:30pm.

The location is 308 N. Division Ave in Fremont.

For more information, call Mat at 231-519-4933

The Pastors Page - Pentecost:

The second Sunday of June this year is Pentecost Sunday. Growing up this was a big celebration for my church. They often staged elaborate dramas and services. And while in the traditional liturgical year, it is a major celebration. In many churches, it is overlooked. I find this unfortunate. Pentecost is rich with theological ideas, and symbols, and is key to understanding the role of the Church. It is the time we celebrate and seek to understand the work of the Holy Spirit. Theologian and Pastor Francis Chan named the Holy Spirit the forgotten God. And I think he is right and it is tragic. The Holy Spirit is key to the work of the Church. Without the work of the Holy Spirit, we can not do the mission given to us. Without the Holy Spirit, we will fail.



We see the importance of the Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament. Acts 1 and 2, in particular, can help us understand the role of the Holy Spirit and how we can ensure the Holy Spirit is not forgotten at First Congregational church. In Acts 1:8 we learn of the centrality of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given as a gift to all believers. This is novel, the Holy Spirit has always been at work in the life of the Children of God, but only certain people have been filled with the Holy Spirit. But now all are given the Holy Spirit. Why? Because all are called to the mission "to be witnesses." Jesus has given the Church a job to do. We are given the Holy Spirit to carry out that mission. Without the Holy Spirit, we can't carry out the mission and if we are not carrying out the mission of God then we are not a true Church.

How do we ensure that the Holy Spirit is not forgotten? How do we become a spirit-filled church directed by the Spirit? Acts 1 and 2 can help us here. In Acts 2 we are told, "They were all together in one place." First, we must expect the Spirit to arrive and be present, as they did in Acts 2. We must be willing to "not leave" until the Holy Spirit shows up and transforms us into the people of God. This will look like coming to church ready and willing for the Spirit to move. We pray that the Spirit will arrive and that we are looking for that move. Often we miss God's work because we do not expect His work and therefore leave the place we are to stay. Second Jesus tells the disciples "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised." We must be open to the move of the Spirit. The Disciples obeyed Jesus and stayed. But they didn't just wait but they gathered, prayed, and sought the Spirit. They ensured their hearts were open to God to work in and through them. And God did work. That day alone 3,000 joined the Church. We want to continue to be part of the story so we need to be filled with the Spirit. Let us pray for a spirit of expectation and openness to the Holy Spirit and seek the Holy Spirit.

