



The Carillon August, 2025

First Congregational Church

Your Independent Worship Center

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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JULY 28, 2025

DRAFT

Present: Pat Krehn – Moderator, Stacey Church – Vice Moderator, Jean Morehouse – Women's Fellowship, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Jack Butterick – Board of Charitable Giving, Jeff Stewart – Technology Board, Lou Delegardia - Trustees

Absent: Bill Black – Trustees, Dave White – Trustees, Jack Stewart – Technology Board

I. Meeting called to order at 6:31 pm. Pat gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the June 23, 2025 meeting minutes with an amended date for the historical service of August 3rd, 2025: Stacey motioned to approve. Jack seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – None

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick

July 20 – August 17 we will be collecting basic personal care products for HERE (Helping Every Real Expression) located in Newaygo County serving 6 school districts. Many of the children do not have access to personal care items. Girls without personal care items often stay home from school. Funding is provided by 8 churches, including FCC, and two area businesses. During this period of July 20 to August 17, please donate toothbrushes, travel size toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, body lotion, bath soap, and underwear and feminine hygiene products. If you prefer to make a check donation, please write your check to First Congregational Church and put HERE in the memo line. Your participation in the project will be greatly appreciated by all the children receiving your donations.

Starting September 28 through October 26, we will be collecting food donations for the charity Hand 2 Hand. Hand 2 Hand is an organization that provides weekend meals to children in the 6 different school districts in Newaygo County. We will be collecting mixed fruit cups, applesauce, snacks that are individually wrapped, ramen noodles, Mac and cheese, and spaghetti O's. Look for more information to come this September.

B. Board of Deacon's – Pastor Luke

Reflection on new communion structure. Will there be wafers, how will we distribute, coming forward, and overall structure with walk up and pew distribution. No decisions were made about the communion structure.

All church meeting will happen in September to let congregation have a say about how they feel about the communion structure that is being proposed. A note will go in the bulletin reminding the congregation of the meeting the 4 Sundays in August.

C. Board of Christian Education – No Report

D. Board of Trustees – Lou Delegardia

The budget is at 50%. Giving income is at 58%. We received a check from the Fremont Area Community Foundation in the amount of \$34,000. This check wasn't received until July, and will affect the budget going forward. The utility expenses continue to be high. Trustees will request an audit from DTE and Consumer's Energy to see why our energy bills are so high. Bill Black will be joining the financial committee. The maintenance of the elevator was discussed. Possible sources for the maintenance of the elevator are the Parsonage Fund or the FACH Fund. Also looking into FACH funds to balance the budget. The kitchen fan needs repair and will be looked at. Lou will call Nieboer Electric to set up the repair since they installed the fan. The property has been appraised at \$85,000 for single family housing. Because of the lot size, it will probably be sold as multiple home housing at a much higher price. Not sure yet what we are going to ask. There is an extra piano downstairs by the chapel that our new pianist is interested in. We will donate it to her in exchange for piano playing during our worship services.

E. Women's Fellowship-Jean Morehouse

No meeting was held in July. Working on the September travelogue. There will be a spaghetti dinner honoring all the volunteers/donors for the crop walk. Congregation is invited. September 4th at 12:00 pm will be the annual Summer Luncheon at Carrie DeMull's house. Bring a dish to pass. Main dish and drinks provided. Look for a sign up sheet by Lorene's office.

F. Technology Board – Jeff

Jeff fixed the quality of the services presented on the video. Took the camera apart and temporarily fixed. It needs to be sent back to the company for a permanent fix or

get fixed somewhere local. The cameras recording outside activity around the church need to be licensed. Lorene is looking into some numbers for the licensing. Will be looking into a few different options. The internet in Pastor Luke's office is not working properly. NCATS will be called. The CONGO main site has poor reception in Pastor's office. The monitor that was in the sanctuary wasn't working. Got checked on and it somehow became unplugged.

G. Men's Fellowship – No report

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

The park service at The Shack was well attended. Civic Leader 150th anniversary celebration dinner went well. Advertisements are running in the Times Indicator for our 150th Anniversary celebration. Judy N and Pastor Luke are working on display tables downstairs showing 150 years of the church in pictures. Part 2 of the church's history will be published in the Times Indicator by the time you read this. The Historical Service will be August 3. At that time, we will be opening the church's time capsule. The anniversary celebration and the community block party will be August 10th. The big banner will be hanging across Main Street August 3rd through the 17th. Rooms of Refuge will be here from August 18 – 25. Grace Community Church will again be partnering with us. Vacation for Pastor Luke will be August 18 – 22. The last summer service in the park will be Labor Day weekend and Pastor Luke will be preaching.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Pastor Luke moved, and Jean seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business

Deb Emerick's Summer Celebration will be August 12, at 7:00 pm, at the Dogwood Center.

Discussion started about what we should keep the same or change to be effective in our mission through First Congregational Church. Should there be changes in committee/board structure? Changes in any bylaws need to be approved before the annual meeting. Should we consider simplifying church? (Simple Church) We have all these activities and nothing is done with excellence. Find two or three key priorities to do at the church and do them well. We need to include all people in activities and invite them to participate. If we were to take a more simplified church model, what would that look like? Having more church meetings with the congregation? Every other month? Start now? Start brainstorming about what we want to do next. What is our vision? We will start doing this discussion about the future and the direction of the church with congregational meetings every other month with the whole congregation starting in September.

For August meeting: Set up what we want to discuss at the congregational meeting on September 7.

Pastor Luke closed with prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM

Next Meeting is Monday, August 25, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. in the library.

Respectfully submitted
Carrie DeMull



Jesus is Here! - Pastor Luke

Last month, I spoke of the three streams of Christianity and the strengths of each one, and how we should strive to have the strength of each stream. Reflecting on this, I was struck by one of the defining parts of the two streams we could grow in. Both are defined by the expectation of God's presence in the church. Both expect and look for God to break into the world and to be experienced physically and clearly. This can be a radically different way of faith for some believers. Many experience their faith as a mental thing. I worry that this type of faith is missing something. The other two streams go into worship and life, believing and knowing that Jesus will be present with them. This radical exception of the in-breaking of Jesus can introduce greater depth and connection to our Lord.

For the traditional, historic, sacramental stream, this expectation is seen in the central importance of the sacraments in their worship. Martin Luther described a true church as one that preaches the Word and serves the Sacraments, and that a true worship service is Word and Table. This stream takes Jesus seriously when he says "This is my Body" and "This is my Blood" in Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, and Luke 22:14-23. Jesus is truly and fully present when they receive communion. It isn't just a symbol or an aid for memory, but Christ himself. At the moment of Communion, Jesus has broken into that place and is present with them. Not only is Jesus present, but he is there pouring out his blessing on them.

The Spirit-filled, emotional stream expects and experiences Jesus present with them in worship and life. For this stream of Christianity, Jesus is present with them through the Holy Spirit. They expect and look for the Holy Spirit to work in and through them in a tangible way. One passage they look to is John 16:5-15 when Jesus tells them, "I will send Him," referring to the Holy Spirit. In this passage, the Holy Spirit is called the Helper. And the Helper is with us as we go into the world carrying out the mission of the Church. What does that look like? Like the Book of Acts, where the Holy Spirit intervenes in real ways. This stream believes and looks for God to break into their world and sees him at work.

This is an area in which First Congregational church can grow and learn from these streams. We need to start to hope for, look for, and eventually expect God to break into our world. We must believe that Jesus will be present and active in our lives and worship in a real and tangible way. That we can experience Jesus. It will take some work to change how we think. But the payoff is worth it, leading to a greater connection with our Lord and Savior. How do we change? Through prayer.



This year **West Michigan Youth for Christ** has been chosen to receive the Love Offering.

If you write a check please put on the memo line: Fremont/Newaygo - Gifts can also be sent to:

WMYFC
PO Box 2678
Grand Rapids MI 49501

Neighborhood Block Party -

Come celebrate our 150th Anniversary with food, cake and fun for all following worship on Sunday, August 10. Invite your friends!!!



Birthday Card Shower -

Sally DeShetler will be turning 103 in late October and we would like to “shower” her with birthday greetings. A box is located on the table by the church office. Drop off a note to Sally and we will see that they are delivered to her. Her daughter reports - Mom is doing quite well and although she is still having difficulty walking, her mind is as clear as a bell and she is enjoying life and looking forward to her 103rd birthday!



Communion -

On the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the Executive Council has decided to increase the frequency of communion. Starting in September, we will have communion twice a month (the first and third Sundays). In the future, we will explore increasing the frequency from there (i.e. during Advent and Lent or just weekly in general).

As we celebrate our 150th Anniversary, we are also asking what are the new things God is asking us to do. This is one area where we embrace our “deep roots” as communion has been a central aspect of Christian worship throughout history.

We are excited to see what God will do as we start this new chapter.



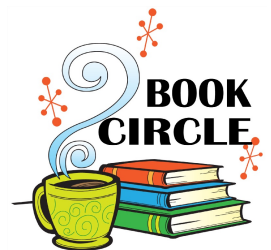
Community Worship Service -

Our last community service of 2025 will be held in the park once again beginning at 10:00 a.m. Pastor Luke will be giving the message. Golf carts will be available to assist. Please bring your own lawn chair. In case of rain the service will be held at First Christian Reformed Church. Come celebrate your holiday weekend by worshiping with fellow believers in unity!



Book Circle:

Book Circle will meet on Tuesday, August 5 at the Fremont Public Library.



Rooms of Refuge:

Evening meals and one lunch (Sunday) are needed. Sign up on the sheet by the church office or call the office to see what dates are needed. They will be here Aug 18-25



Our Church Family

Health Concerns ~

We continue to remember *Carol Black* who is under Hospice Care, *Dave Vandenberg* as he continues to recover from Lyme's disease and *Betty Dougan* as she recently had a heart valve replacement

We give thanks to God for a successful pacemaker implant for *Gary Hooker* and for the medical team to react quickly as to what was needed.

We remember those who are apart from us - *Sally DeShetler, Yvonne Lee, Heidi Redding, Ann Werner and Karen Zick*



No Noisy offering in August - the current schedule is:

H.E.R.E. - July 20 - Aug 17

Hand 2 Hand - Sept 28 - Oct 26

Noisy Offering - last Sunday in Nov & Dec

Dates to Note:

Sunday, August 3 - Historical Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, August 3 - Deacons Meeting 11:30 a.m.

Monday, August 4 - Women's Fellowship Board Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 5 - Book Circle 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 6 - Women's Bible Study -6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 10 - 150th Anniversary Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, August 10 - Neighborhood Block Party following worship

Monday, August 11 - Technology Board - 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, August 12 - Deb Emerick Summer Music Celebration -7:00 p.m. Dogwood

Wednesday, August 13 - Women's Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 17 - Worship w/ Communion 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, August 17 - 22 - Pastor Luke on Vacation

Monday, August 18-25 - Rooms of Refuge

Tuesday, August 19 - Trustees Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, August 20 - Women's Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 24 - Worship - Char Spaulding will share Youth for Christ 10:00 a.m.

Monday, August 25 - Executive Council 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 27 - Women's Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 31 - NO worship here - Community Worship 10:00 p.m.



Monday/Wednesday/Friday - Men's Coffee 9:30 a.m.

Thursday - Christmas Crafters 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Looking Ahead:

- September 7 - Special Music - Stacey, Martha, Jack
September 7 - All Church Meeting following worship
September 9 - Small Group at the home of Pat Krehn
September 1 - Church office closed - Labor Day
September 4 - Women's Fellowship Luncheon at Carrie DeMull's home
(sign up by calling the church office or on the sheet outside the church office)
September 8 - Women's Fellowship Board Meeting 10:00 a.m. (note the date change due to Labor Day)
September 23 - Small Group at the home of Pat Krehn
September 26 - CROP Walk Fundraiser Spaghetti Supper Fellowship Hall



August Birthdays

- 4 Jack Butterick
7 Pat Krehn
8 Jeff Stewart
14 Jack Stewart
16 Crystal Schmalz
29 Elise Pfeiffer
31 Heidi Redding



August Anniversaries

- 2 Luke & Karla Pfeiffer
4 Pastor Luke & Crystal Schmalz
11 Jeff & Susan Stewart
21 Dean & Jean Morehouse
22 Jack & Fran Stewart
24 Tony & Carrie DeMull
31 Mike & Jane Stroschin



The First Congregational Church Fremont MI

Loving Our Community



August 9, 1875 - 2025

The 150th Anniversary Committee has for you
a coffee mug, a church decal (for your water bottle, computer, car, etc)
and an anniversary booklet.

Stop by the table in the narthex to pick up your gift.