



The Carillon September, 2025

First Congregational Church
Your Independent Worship Center
714 Hillcrest Drive - Fremont MI 49412
231-924-4710
congo@fremontfcc.org ~ www.fremontfcc.org



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 25, 2025

DRAFT

Present: Pat Krehn – Moderator, Stacey Church – Vice Moderator, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Jack Butterick – Board of Charitable Giving, Jeff Stewart – Technology Board, Bill Black - Trustees

Absent: Dave White – Trustees, Jean Morehouse, Women's Fellowship
Non-Board Member Attendee: Dean Morehouse

I. Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm. Pat gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the July 28, 2025, meeting minutes: Stacey motioned to approve. Carrie seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – None

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick

- September 28 – October 26: Collecting food for the organization Hand to Hand.
- November and December: Noisy Offering resumes with the recipient named later in November.

B. Board of Deacon's – Pastor Luke

- Finalize communion structure: Congregation will come forward, take a wafer, dip it in the cup, and partake. A Deacon will still come to the pews to distribute the bread and the cup.
- Music Committee: Tammy Krol has been brought in as a substitute pianist.
- The Deb Emerick Summer Concert raised \$3,200. Youth for Christ was the beneficiary.

C. Board of Christian Education – No Report

D. Board of Trustees – Bill Black

- Expenses are at 59% of the budget, and income is at 80% of the budget because of prepaid pledges.
- We have \$39,981 in our investment accounts plus we will have the sale of the land monies yet to come.
- We would like to ask the congregation for a 10% increase in their 2026 pledges, because we want to be in a better position financially with decreasing membership.
- Still looking into why DTE and Consumer's Energy expenses are so high, while also trying to keep expenses down.

E. Women's Fellowship-Carrie DeMull for Jean Morehouse

- Harvest Parade – No float, but we will participate by opening the church to use bathrooms, and supply coffee, water, and cookies to the parade participants. If anyone would like to volunteer to help pass out cookies or decorate for this event, let Pastor Luke know.
- Talked about ideas for church dinners/brunches to provide the church with some extra income by offering it out to the community. Swiss steak and mashed potatoes, an Irish themed corned beef and cabbage dinner, etc.
- Having done research on our bell outside the front of the church for our 150th Anniversary celebration, the Women's Fellowship would like to take on the task of cleaning it and bringing it back to its original glory. Pat is checking into a cleaning supplies and the Women's Fellowship will clean it.
- The large yard signs have been updated with the new time for the Craft Fair: 9:00 – 1:00 on the first Saturday in December. Yard signs are being printed, and Susan is looking to see if the "square" app might be a good fit for the church since everyone hardly carries cash anymore.

F. Technology Board – Jeff

- The audio problem has been taken care of.
- Difficulties with 3 cameras outside of the church has been fixed.

G. Men's Fellowship – Bill Black

- Coffee hour and the men's workshop has been going well.
- The workshop is working on a brass plaque to commemorate the 150th anniversary celebration. The plaque will be mounted downstairs on the brick wall.
- The men will be doing hay art for the harvest festival.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

- The 150th Anniversary activities went really well. Rooms of Refuge spent a week downstairs August 17 – 24. Dinners were provided by Grace Community and many families of FCC. The last one for the year will be in October.
- Karen Zick's funeral was at FCC on August 26. The Women's Fellowship will be providing a luncheon.

- Labor Day weekend will be the last ecumenical service in the park with Pastor Luke preaching.
- This fall there will be a 150th Anniversary plaque dedication and a new time capsule will be assembled to open in the future.
- There will be a night this fall to wrap up our anniversary celebration where we will get together and have a potluck and share stories, articles, and artifacts about the history of the church. Stay tuned!
- Sunday, September 7, will be the start of the different communion structure (walkup), and the all church meeting after worship. Come join us downstairs for brunch and the meeting right after church. The next walk up communion will be September 21st
- Pastor Luke will start a continuing education series on the Nicene Creed sometime this fall.
- The Crop Walk Spaghetti Dinner will be Friday, September 26, from 5:00 until 6:30.
- A new member class will be starting soon. If you would like to become a member, please let Pastor Luke know.
- 2nd small group meeting will start with Pastor Luke leading them. If you can't make Pat's meeting on Tuesday at 10:00, Pastor Luke's will be on a Tuesday or Wednesday from 2:00 until 2:45.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Carrie motioned, and Pastor Luke seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business

VIII. New Business

- Dean talked about Youth for Christ. Once a month they will have a general meeting and come to our church to use our facilities. The church is going to have a donation basket in the narthex on a table just like we did for Gary for Guatemala. This will be our way of helping YFC and the children that are coming into our church. This will be our way to support YFC financially throughout the year
- Discussion about the Ecumenical services in the park. How many people are actually participating from the church. Discussion started about the loss of offering money when there is no service at church. Bill B. Made a motion that we should drop out of the community services in the park for the 2026 summer. Stacey seconded. 5 yes and 1 no. Passed
- Agenda for all church meeting: Luke will lead the meeting. 2 things will be discussed: 1. Financial position of the church. 2. Simplifying the leadership structure of the church and streamlining the bylaws.

Pastor Luke closed with prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

Next Meeting is Monday, September 22, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. in the library.

Respectfully submitted
Carrie DeMull

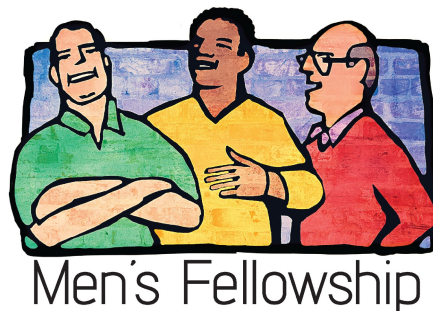
Charitable Giving - Hand to Hand Ministry:



Fremont Hand To Hand (H2H) - is an association of eight churches living Matthew 25:35 (For I was hungry and you fed me ...) by providing food to 175+ children in Fremont schools who have no reliable food source on weekends. Your contributions through October 19 of the kids' favorites single-serving size of applesauce cups, spaghetti, granola bars w/protein, mac & cheese will be appreciated. Charitable Giving/jb

Men's Fellowship:

Gentlemen, The Summer has flown by! Our Fall start up meeting is Wednesday, September 3 at 12:00 noon. Ted Caris will be our chef and Holly Moon will be our speaker. Holly will be speaking about The Newaygo County Area Promise Zone - Affordable College Starts Here!



Your wives or friends may be interested in this topic, and they are welcome to attend. If you will be bringing a guest, please notify us by responding by e-mail to billblack815@comcast.net. This helps our Chef plan on the amount of food required. A simple (yes) means you are coming, and a little note lets us know if you are bringing a guest.

We are looking forward to seeing you all again!!

CROP WALK:



CROP Walk, Oct 5 - the 40th Walk/Fundraiser in Fremont will commence with a Women's Fellowship Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, September 26, 5:00pm-6:30pm for a donation to CROP. Invite your friends, neighbors. The Walk will be Sunday, October 5 at 12:45pm in Veteran's Memorial Park. Cash/check contributions will be appreciated; please write checks to CWS/CROP and put them in the offering plate. Details re. Crop Walk are displayed next to the elevator on the lower level. Thank you for your in-person a/o monetary participation. Charitable Giving/jb

Women's Fellowship Spaghetti Dinner

Women's Fellowship will be hosting a Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, September 26. Please RSVP by September 22 to help us plan. This is donation only and all donations will be given to the CROP Walk. Take out is available.





Women's Fellowship Lunch:

Ladies it is not too late to sign up - Call the church office and we'll put you on the list to attend. Thursday, September 4, 12:00 noon at the home of Carrie DeMull on Martin Lake. We'd love to have you join us!! All ladies are welcome!!

Our Church Family:

Health Concerns:

Alicia Westfall, daughter of Jim Rynberg, received news from the University of Michigan Hospital of a very serious medical condition and would like your prayers for healing during the coming weeks.

This is a very difficult time for our family. We appreciate your prayers. Jim R

I received a letter from **Ann Werner's** Sister, Barb (perhaps you did too) - the letter says that Ann's health has begun a decline and she is not able to care for herself. She can still eat and read but not care for herself in other health needs. Last week she entered the care of Hospice. Her cognitive abilities are also declining, which is painful to witness. She has lost interest in reading. She has several insurmountable health issues. Please keep Ann in your prayers.

Carol Black who is home bound and under the care of Hospice.

Those who are away from us: Sally DeShetler, Yvonne Lee & Ann Werner.

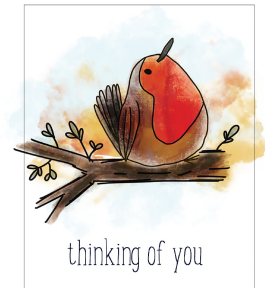
Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of longtime church member and friend **Karen Zick**.



Karen Gail Zick, a cherished resident of Fremont, Michigan, passed away peacefully on Saturday, August 16th, 2025, at the age of 79. Born on Thursday, May 2nd, 1946, in Benton Harbor, Michigan, Karen lived a life full of love, dedication, and service to her community.

Karen was a devoted and inspiring educator, having earned a Bachelor's degree from Western Michigan University and a Master's in Parks and Recreation from Central Michigan University. She devoted many years to teaching high school home economics before retiring from the Fremont Public Schools in 1989. Her passion for education and empowering young minds left a lasting legacy in the hearts of her students.



Beyond her career, Karen was deeply committed to numerous community and personal pursuits. She was a Girl Scout Counselor and took pride in starting a Red Hat Chapter. An artist at heart, she loved painting, crafts, and cooking, imparting her creativity and zest for life to all who knew her. Her adventurous spirit was nurtured from a young age, having lived in Mexico during her childhood.

Karen is lovingly remembered by her special friends and caregivers, Deb Houghteling, of Fremont, MI, and Lucky Anderson. As well as many beloved nieces: Kris (Brad) Wright, Kim (Justin) Hopkins, Andrea (Rhett) Kunhen, and Erica (Tom) Wieczorek. She is survived by her brother, Russell Norman (Autumn) Zick, who also share in celebrating her rich and impactful life.

Karen was predeceased by her parents, Russell Norman Zick and Marion Inez Zick Hughes, and her sister, Randall Leslie Yeske (Rollie).

Services were held on Tuesday, August 26th, 2025, at the First Congregational Church in Fremont, MI, officiated by Pastor Luke Schmalz.

Karen Gail Zick will be dearly missed by her family, friends, and all those whose lives she touched. Her legacy of kindness, creativity, and dedication will continue to inspire and uplift the hearts of those who were fortunate to know her.

Dates to Note in September:



September 1 - Church Office Closed in observance of Labor Day
September 3 - Men's Fellowship Luncheon 12:00 noon
September 4 - Women's Fellowship Luncheon at the home of Carrie DeMull
September 7 - Worship & communion 10:00 a.m.
September 7 - All Church Meeting following worship
September 8 - Tech Board 6:30 p.m.
September 9 - Small Group at the home of Pat Krehn 10:00 a.m.
September 14 - Worship 10:00 a.m.
September 14 - Deacon's Meeting following worship (note the date change)
September 15 - Women's Fellowship Board Meeting 10:00 a.m. (note the date change)
September 16 - Trustees Meeting 10:00 a.m.
September 21 - Worship & communion 10:00 a.m.
September 22 - Executive Council 6:30 p.m.
September 23 - Small Group at the home of Pat Krehn 10:00 a.m.
September 26 - CROP Walk Spaghetti Dinner 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
September 29 - Worship 10:00 a.m.

Thursdays 10:00 - 2:00 - Crafters

M/W/F - 9:30 a.m. Men's Fellowship Coffee

M/W/F - 10:00 a.m. Woodshop Open (when two or three are gathered)

Why are we increasing how often we are taking communion?

Pastor Luke Schmalz

Starting in September, we will begin taking communion twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Sunday. This change stems from the discussions around our 150th anniversary and the future of our church. Building off our value of unity in diversity and our motto “Deeply Rooted-Future Focused,” we began discussing incorporating the best of the various Christian traditions. One way to do this is by increasing how often we take communion. The Lord’s Supper has always been a central point of Christian worship. Unsurprisingly, as when we receive the Lord's Supper, we gain all that Christ has to give.



In communion, we receive Christ and all his blessings. Communion is an avenue of grace received through the physical items of bread and wine. The Lord's Supper is a gift from God that is not dependent on us. All we do is receive God’s grace in a way that we can feel, taste, and smell, no matter where we are physically, mentally, or spiritually. John Wesley puts it this way: “If we consider the institution of it as a mercy to ourselves, no man who does not receive it as often as he can has any pretence to Christian prudence.” Because of all we receive from the Lord's Supper, why wouldn’t we want to take communion as often as possible? So we are exploring increasing how often we take the Lord’s Supper, starting with twice a month, and are considering weekly communion. We want your input on this or any other change as we explore ways to renew our church.

One of the issues that came up during the discussion on Communion was our method of taking communion. There was a concern with how long it took to prepare and the number of deacons needed to serve The Lord's Supper. We decided to try another way to take communion. The method we are going to try is called intinction. It is a method of receiving Communion by dipping the piece of bread (cracker, wafer, etc.) in the wine (grape juice in our case), and eating it.

After blessing the elements, the minister and one deacon will come to the front of the sanctuary with the bread and chalice. The members will come down the central aisle. Receive the bread (The Body of Christ Broken for you) from the deacon, come to the minister and dip the bread (The blood of Christ shed for you), eat the elements, and then return to their pew along the outer aisle. For those unable to come forward due to health or other reasons (running sound, playing piano, Sunday School, etc), another deacon will take the elements to them. This should allow us to give communion as often as we would like without putting too much strain on our deacons. As always, please talk to me if you have any concerns, questions, or feedback.

September Birthdays

- 19 Betty Dougan
- 20 Brad Church
John Cooper
- 23 Nancy Lindner
- 27 Judy Nadeau
Jane Stroschin
- 29 Troyer Church
- 30 Norah Schmalz



September Anniversaries

- 10 Bill & Carol Black
- 23 Pete & Nancy Lindner



REMINDERS:

Worship in the park Sunday, August 31 - 10:00 a.m. Pastor Luke is preaching - No worship here at church

All Church Meeting following worship - Sunday September 7