



## The Carillon October, 2025

First Congregational Church  
Your Independent Worship Center  
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### THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 22, 2025  
**DRAFT**

Present: Pat Krehn – Moderator, Stacey Church – Vice Moderator, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Jack Butterick – Board of Charitable Giving, Bill Black – Trustees, Dean Morehouse – Men’s Fellowship, Dave White – Deacons

Absent: Jack Stewart – Technology Board

Non-Board Member Attendee: Crystal Schmalz

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

II. Approval of the August 25, 2025, meeting minutes: Carrie motioned to approve. Jack B. seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – None

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick

- September 28 – October 19 Hand to Hand collections will continue.
- Noisy offering will continue in November and December.

B. Board of Deacon’s – Dave White

- New member class will be starting.
- New communion structure going well.
- The deacons will go through the memberships before the annual meeting to see who has withdrawn their membership, passed away, or moved away. They will update the roles.

C. Board of Christian Education – Crystal Schmalz

- Sunday School is having another round of 13 weeks of attendance. A pizza party is in the works for everyone who attends Sunday School.
- Children had fun at the 150th anniversary celebration.

- Crystal is doing Bible lessons with the children along with Bible verses, and Carrie is doing Children in Worship wooden figure lessons with the children.

#### D. Board of Trustees – Bill Black

- Pledges are coming in nicely.
- Trustees are having a meeting on September 23, 2025 regarding the lot sale.
- Total income is at 85% of the budget with total expenses at 64% of the budget.
- The mailbox by the road was broken. Will replace the 2 x 4 in the grass.
- Still working on the brass plaque for the fellowship hall.
- Talked about the church doing advertising. Will talk more at the next meeting.

#### E. Women's Fellowship-Dean Morehouse for Jean Morehouse

- A funeral luncheon for Ann Werner was held at church on September 27.
- September 26 was the Crop Walk Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser.
- Travelogue will be sometime this fall on a Sunday afternoon.
- Cookies and water will be handed out at the parade drop off this year instead of the church having a float. There will also be bike riders from church in the parade.

#### F. Technology Board –

- Camera #2 is not recording properly. Working to get it fixed.
- Working on programming the thermostats so they will be ready when we need heat.

#### G. Men's Fellowship – Dean Morehouse

- The hay art is complete at the front of the church. Bill was the designer and engineer. Mike was the construction person. Dean was the painter and gofer.
- Holly Moon was the speaker for last month's meeting. She talked about the Newaygo Promise. Students in Newaygo County can get up to \$2500 a semester/\$5000 for the year to attend Ferris State University and Muskegon Community College. Ted Caris supplied the lunch.
- John Cooper is providing next month's lunch with special guest Barb Geeno (?) talking about companion dogs.

#### V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

- All church meeting went well with a lot of communication.
- Attended a Love, Inc. Focus Group event this month.
- Bernie is finishing up the plaque with an unveiling downstairs after worship soon.
- 150th anniversary follow-up celebration potluck will be happening soon.
- Dick Ramm was buried in the Memorial Garden.
- New member class will be starting shortly after church with 4 classes being held for 45 minutes a piece.
- October 2 will be handing out cookies/water for all the Harvest Festival Parade participants.
- The Chosen, Season 5, will start this fall. 8 – 1 hour programs starting in October with discussion after each program.
- November 2 will be All Saint's Sunday

- November 30 Advent starts.
- Another round of Rooms of Refuge will start October 22-29.

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

#### VII. Old Business

- Discussion of Town Hall meeting. Positive meeting with good questions. Discussion of having Town Hall meetings quarterly.
- Most of the people are open to combining the boards and committees.
- Talk about forming an ADHOC committee on Evangelism. This group will organize 4 quarterly evangelism events.

#### VIII. New Business-

##### Presentation on Endorser

• Crystal talked to the EC about becoming an Endorser for First Congregational Church. What does that entail? Two years ago, in 2023, she switched her chaplain membership from the United Pentecostal Church to First Congregational Church. It is now time to renew her chaplain license, and First Congregational Church is not an endorsing church. Crystal made a motion to the EC board that the executive leadership committee accept the application for the APC (Association of Professional Chaplains) with any edits that the executive leaders would see fit. 2nd by Stacey. Passed. This means that Crystal will be an endorser for the church and anyone in the community that would like to become a Chaplain can take classes with Crystal to get their Chaplain License. There is a fee to do this, and Crystal also thinks that this would be a good fit for First Congregation Church in the future to help other community members become chaplains in the community. Crystal also needs this endorsement so she can keep her Chaplain license through First Congregational Church.

• Formation of a ByLaws Committee. The EC can form the Bylaws Committee. There are enough people that are interested in the committee. A proposal will be put forth at the annual meeting to form a committee to update the bylaws so the congregation can vote on it. The committee meetings will last for a month. To change the bylaws, we need an official business meeting. What do we want the bylaws to look Like? The committee will present the new bylaws to the EC and then the congregation will vote on it.

• A motion was made by Pastor Luke stating: In an effort to streamline our leadership structure, improve communication, and the ability to act quickly, it is so moved that the congregation approve the creation of a committee to combine the boards and committees. The committee will meet to determine what is the best way to accomplish this goal through consultation with the members, boards, and committees. The committee will then redraw the bylaws to reflect the new leadership structure and present the recommendations and changes to the EC by the end of December 2025. A business meeting will be called to vote on the changes no later than Sunday, January 25th. This committee will also be responsible for nominating members to fill the new positions on the boards and committees if needed.

Stacey seconded. Passed.

- Pat and Stacey will get together to talk about the agenda for the annual meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Next Meeting is Monday, October 27, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. in the library.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie DeMull

### **Crop Walk -**



Thanks to the Ladies of Women's Fellowship for hosting Spaghetti Supper, you eager eaters and financial contributors along the way, we gave \$1,150 to fight hunger in Newaygo County and on a broader scale. Well done good and faithful servants ... Thank you! Charitable Giving/jb

### **Hand to Hand -**



Hand To Hand (H2H) is an association of eight churches in Fremont living Matthew 25:35 (For I was hungry and you fed me ..) that are providing food for nearly 200 children in Fremont schools who have no reliable food source on weekends. Your contributions through October 19 of the kids' favorite single-serving sizes of applesauce cups, spaghetti, granola bars w/protein, mac & cheese will be appreciated. Thank you! Charitable Giving/jb

### **Annual Meeting-**



The Annual Meeting is set for Sunday, October 19 following worship. Reports are printed and ready for you to pick up a copy. Please bring your copy along to the meeting.

Thank you for board and committees for your timely matter in getting your report turned in. It was greatly appreciated!!

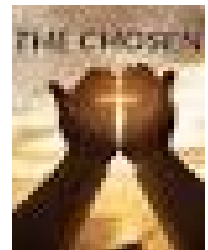
### **Rooms of Refuge -**



October 27 - November 3 we will be hosting the Rooms of Refuge program. There is a sign up sheet by the office if you are willing to provide a meal for them.

### **The Chosen Season 5 -**

We will be showing Season 5 of The Chosen in Fellowship Hall beginning Sunday, October 19 thru November 16 at 5:00 p.m. Popcorn will be provided - bring your own beverage and a snack to share if desired.



### **Women's Bible Study -**

The time has changed to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday's instead of 6:00 p.m. - Come in the Light ~ Go Home in the Light! All ladies are welcome!! Beth Hooker is our leader.



## Our Church Family -

### Health Concerns:

**Stacey Church** had knee replacement - healing and recovery is going well. We continue to remember those who are shut in and those who have moved to new locations, especially Yvonne Lee and Sally DeShetler.



### Sympathy:

We express our sympathy to the family and friends of our long time member, Ann Werner.



Ann Elizabeth Werner, 84, of Fremont, passed away peacefully on September 6, 2025. She was born on January 20, 1941, in Adena, Ohio, the daughter of Rev. Stuart and Violet (Adams) Werner. During her childhood, Ann's family relocated to Allegan, Michigan, where she graduated with the Allegan High School Class of 1958. She went on to attend Western Michigan University, earning a bachelor's degree in Latin, followed by a master's degree in Latin. Ann later continued her studies at the University of Michigan, where she received a master's degree in English.

Ann began her 30-year teaching career at Fremont High School in 1962. She taught Latin for several years before transitioning to English, retiring in 1992. Following her retirement, she remained in Fremont, where she dedicated much of her time to volunteering at the Fremont Public Library. A faithful member of the First Congregational Church of Fremont, Ann was active in the Women's Fellowship, served on numerous church boards and committees, and led a monthly worship service at a local retirement community. She also served as Moderator of the congregation and was a devoted participant in the church's book club.

Reading was Ann's lifelong passion. She built an extensive and eclectic personal library, filled with both treasured works of literature and educational texts. In addition to her love of books, Ann was an avid University of Michigan football fan. She rarely missed a game and took great joy in following all the latest college football statistics.

Ann is survived by her brother Stuart (Mary) Werner II of Kalamazoo; her sister Barbara (Larry) Ross of Novi; her nephew Scott Werner; her nieces, Beth (David) Cook, Kristen (Bill Landesman) Ross, and Ann Venable; her grandnephew Luke Venable; and her grandniece Mollie Landesman.

Funeral services were held in the sanctuary on Saturday, September 27. The family suggested memorials be given to the First Congregational Church.

Ann's ashes are in a book shaped urn in the Columbarium at the First Presbyterian of Northville, right next to her parents.





(Photo courtesy of the Times Indicator)

## Harvest Parade - 2025

This year instead of a Church float we offered our church restrooms as well as homemade cookies and bottled water for the Parade lineup that using our parking lot.

Thank YOU for helping to support our community.

We had some First Congregational Church Bikers in the parade - Barb Veldman, Gary Hooker and Mat Emerick participated;

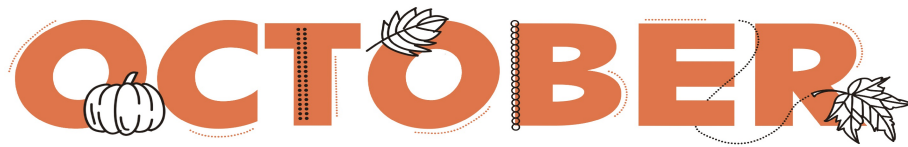


(Photo courtesy of Carrie DeMull)



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October Dates:



Wednesday, October 1 - Men's Fellowship Lunch - 12:00 noon  
Wednesday, October 1 - Afternoon Small Group - 1:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 1 - Women's Bible Study - 4:00 p.m. (Note time change)  
Thursday, October 1 - Harvest Parade Activity  
Sunday, October 5 - Deacon's Meeting - 9:00 a.m. (Note time)  
Sunday, October 5 - Worship with Communion - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday, October 5 - New Members Class - 11:30 a.m.  
Sunday, October 5 - CROP Walk - 12:45 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 7 - Women's Fellowship Board - 10:00 a.m. (Note time & date)  
Wednesday, October 8 - Women's Bible Study - 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday, October 12 - Worship - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday, October 12 - New Members Class - 11:30 a.m.  
Monday, October 13 - Tech Board Meeting - 6:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 14 - Library in use - 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 15 - Afternoon Small Group - 1:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 15 - Women's Bible Study - 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday, October 19 - Worship with Communion - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday, October 19 - Annual Meeting following worship  
Sunday, October 19 - The Chosen - 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 21 - Trustees - 10:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, October 22 - Women's Bible Study - 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday, October 26 - Worship - 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday, October 26 - The Chosen - 5:00 p.m.  
Monday, October 27 - November 3 - Room of Refuge in Fellowship Hall  
Monday, October 27 - Executive Council - 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 29 - Women's Bible Study - 4:00 p.m.

Monday/Wednesday/Friday - Men's Coffee 9:30 a.m. - ?  
Thursday - Christmas Crafters 10:00 a.m.

### *October Birthdays*

9 Lorene Witte  
14 Miles Cowles  
16 Leah McKivitz  
22 Pat Dekleva  
29 Sally DeShetler



## **Deeply Rooted**

Last Sunday, I finished a four-part sermon series on the Nicene Creed. This series has been equally rewarding and difficult. I had to grow in my theological understanding and my preaching skills. It increased my appreciation of traditional Christian faith. As Americans, we often struggle to have a sense of history and tradition. As a people, we are wired to look forward, not backwards. We tear down and rebuild with barely a second thought. This can be a great strength as a society, but as people of faith, this is a weakness. We miss how the spirit has been working in the Church in the past. How those who have gone before reflected on the unchanging God. It stunts our growth. We often find ourselves having to rebuild our faith from the ground up. We lose the vocabulary and language developed through thousands of years of theological work. And find ourselves only with the language of our current moment. This is not to discount the good of American Christianity. It has done a lot of good. But we have much to gain from reading and engaging with the best of the past. They come from such different societies that we are challenged to think about and know God in a greater and new way.

Deep roots keep us anchored in the storm of contemporary times. Looking back, we find that the Church has gone through similar times. We find resources that can help us through. It reminds us that God has been working in and through his church for a long time, and the answer we are looking for may have been given in the past. The history and traditions of the Church are resources to equip us to carry out God's mission. That is why we don't turn away from what has gone before, because they are gifts from God. We sing the old hymn and follow old ways. Not because they are old but because they draw us to God, because God has been using them to draw people to himself through all time and places. Often, the way forward starts by looking back, seeing where we have been to see where we should go. It is in the fruitful mix of the old and current that we find the path forward. We depend on the Holy Spirit to guide us forward. As we continue to reach our community and look to the future, we ask how we can grow deep roots. What can we take from the past that will anchor us deeply in God, like the Nicene Creed? This is the question we face as we look to the future.

