



The Carillon November, 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 OCTOBER 27, 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: Gary Hooker, Judy Nadeau

I. Meeting called to order at 6:29 pm. Pat gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the September 22, 2025, meeting minutes: Jack B. motioned to approve. Dean M. seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – None

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick

- Crop Walk on October 5, 2025, raised \$1,150.
- Hand 2 Hand collections raised 60 pounds of kid-favorite food for children in Newaygo County.
- Noisy offering will resume for November 30 and December 28.

B. Board of Deacons – Dave White

- New member class is going well.
- New communion structure going well.
- The Deacons will provide money for advertising.

C. Board of Christian Education –

- Crystal has ordered another set of videos to show the children. It will be an animated version of The Chosen.

D. Board of Trustees – Bill Black

- 75% of the year is complete and our pledges are at 104%.
- 95% total income and expenses are 73%
- Lot sale is complete.
- 150th Anniversary plaque will be mounted outside the church on November 9. There will be an anniversary celebration wrap up luncheon on November 9th with the plaque dedication, time capsule closure, and church 150th historical presentation after worship.
- The Trustees are willing to help with advertising expenses if the need arises.
- The Trustees are working on a parking lot solution.
- The Trustees will now be responsible for giving out new key cards.

E. Women's Fellowship-Jean Morehouse

- Travelogue has been moved to the spring, late March or early April.
- Discussion about Crop Walk Spaghetti Supper: Raised a fair amount of money with very few taking part in the meal. Different day next year? Different time? Things to think about.
- Ordered 2 more banners for the Christmas Craft Sale which will be put up by the road for all of November and Keep Christ in Christmas which will be put up out by the road through December.

F. Technology Board – No Report

G. Men's Fellowship – Dean Morehouse

- 17 people attended October luncheon/meeting. John and Gail provided food. Barb Geeno was the speaker.
- Next Luncheon, November 5, at 12:00 pm. The speaker will be Bill Fries, Jr., and our chef will be Dean Morehouse.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

- Harvest Parade table during the Harvest Parade had a good response and great outreach. It was highly successful.
- Afternoon small group has started.
- Two community connections this month. Fremont Christian School Chapel and met with True North.
- True North is starting a program called ENGAGE. True North met with pastors from area churches to see what programs they are offering to help the community. This will in turn help True North ENGAGE more with the community for those people in need.
- Chosen has started.
- ROR was this last week. It is the last one for the year.

- Finishing new members class on November 2nd after worship.
- Love, Inc. is having a leadership breakfast that I will be attending.
- Vacation is schedule for 3 days over the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Advent starts November 30.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Bill Black motioned, and Dean M. seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business

- Formation of the bylaws committee. EC is tasked with this.
- After discussion, the committee members are Pastor Luke, Jim Rynberg, Judy Nadeau, Carrie DeMull, Jean Morehouse, and Pat Krehn.
- Next town hall meeting will be January 2026. Time to be decided at a later date.

VIII. New Business

1. In 2020, the Deacons set out to do a study of church growth. Covid hit and they couldn't move forward. A discussion started about our church growth. Judy N. And Dean M. would like to step up and help with a plan for church growth. They would like to develop and implement a plan. A motion was made by Judy Nadeau/Dean Morehouse. They moved the EC agree there is a need to grow our church and they would like the opportunity to develop a plan to do so. This will include researching other churches plans for successful growth and avenues used to promote favorable outcomes. The results will be present to the EC as soon as possible. Jack B. seconded. 9 all in favor . Approved.
 - Advertising discussion along with growing the church. Deacons have money in their budget for advertising. Advertising will be charged to the Deacons.
 - EC can use Dean Morehouse's expertise in this area with his ties to the community.
 - Wintertime is a perfect time to advertise the Crafters and the Workshop and what they are doing for the church and the community.

2. Gary Hooker came and talked to the EC about the security and safety of the Church.

- Gary said that there should be 4 people per service to walk around the building and secure the building after the services have started.
 - He would like to form a Security and Safety Committee. It would be a ministry for the congregation. A discussion was started and a few areas of concern were brought forward. When Rooms of Refuge is here, the door is left open. Is this safe for the church and the guests staying with us? Also, 15 minutes after the service starts, the doors are locked.

- Bill Black brought up the concern with a lot of people having keys to the church. Lorene will look at the members/friends that have keys and talk with the trustees. We need to balance safety with also being welcoming. Could there be a few action steps taken such as a doorbell to let people in, 4 committee members making rounds to make sure the doors are locked (15 minuted window as mentioned above). Members need to make sure their key is on them in case they are late.
- More discussion followed, and the EC decided to talk about this further and have Gary come back next months to talk some more.

3. Rooms of Refuge dates for 2026. February 26-March 2, May 25-June 1, August 17-24, and November 16-23. Luke made a motion to have ROR use the church in 2026. Dean M. seconded. Passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Next Meeting is Monday, November 24, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. in the library.

Respectfully submitted Carrie DeMull

Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden was dedicated in 2004 and today twenty-seven Members/Friends of First Congregational are resting there. We have reservations from eight Members to be interred in the Garden but room for only two nameplates on the western plaque. Should we buy a small rock/plaque for the remaining six on our list or are there more of us who would like to be laid to rest in our Garden?



I invite Members/Friends of our FCC family to consider their future on Earth and if Memorial Garden is in your future, please let me know by January 1st so that everyone involved can plan accordingly.

Mary Butterick, Chairperson

Women's Fellowship Invitation:

Women's Fellowship would like to invite you to join us. Our meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 10am in the church library.



Activities that we are involved in include:

1. Crafters - held on Thursdays at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. This is a great activity to get to know people. You don't have to be artistic. There are always people to help you work on the crafts. Every year we have a Christmas Craft Fair where we sell our treasures that we make!! For more information please see Gail Cooper.

2. We hold church dinners and luncheons in Fellowship Hall to make money for CROP, Guatemala, etc., special occasions such as our Spring Fling and sometimes just to get together as a congregation.

3. Funeral (Celebration of Life) luncheons

4. Travelogues

5. Holiday activities

We would love to have you join us!

For more information see Jean Morehouse, Carrie DeMull, Susan Stewart, Gail Cooper or Pat Krehn.

November Birthdays

8	Gary Hooker
16	Barb Veldman
19	Luke Pfeiffer Rosemary Tittle
21	Loretta VanDuzen
25	Dougan Church Kyle Parks
29	David White



Christmas Craft Sale and Plum Pudding Shoppe

Saturday, December 6 - Less than one month away! Our ladies have been busy making crafts all year long. Pass the word and let your friends know our sale will be from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Note the new time!!

Plum Pudding needs your help! You have been generous in the past with your baked goods and specialty items. Please consider helping us again.

In accordance with the State of Michigan Food Requirements this is the required list of food items that can be made for Plum Pudding:

Breads - not frozen

Similar baked goods

Vinegar & flavored vinegar

Cakes - not refrigerated

Muffins

Cooked fruit pies

Jams & Jellies (in glass jars that can be stored at room temperature)

Cookies

Dry herbs and dry herb mixes

Dry baking mixes

Dry dip mixes

Dry soup mixes

Dehydrated vegetables or fruits

Popcorn

Chocolate covered pretzels, marshmallows, graham crackers, rice krispie treats

Coated or uncoated nuts

Dried pasta made with eggs

Roasted coffee beans or ground roasted coffee



All food items have to be labeled with a list of ingredients with your FIRST name, The First Congregational Church 231-924-4710 on the label.



Thank you for your cooperation,
Mary Butterick, Plum Pudding Coordinator

All Saints Sunday

Sunday, November 2 we remembered those who have passed from our congregation in 2025 as well as our loved ones who have passed before us. We remembered Siria Pinnick, Karen Zick, Ann Werner, Jon Clapp, and Carol Black.



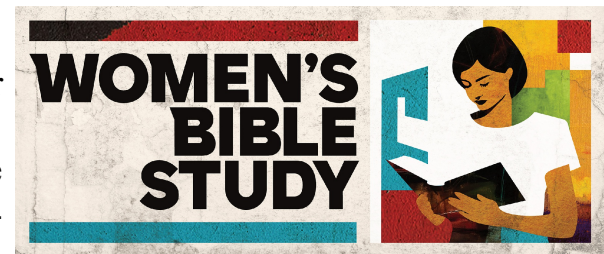
Men's Fellowship Lunch:

Men's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday November 5 at 12:00 noon for their monthly luncheon. The guest speaker will be Bill Fries, Jr and the chef is Dean Morehouse. All men (and even women if they so desire) are more than welcome to attend.



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible study has moved their starting time up 4:00 p.m. with Beth Hooker leading. This allows you to come and go in the light. If you haven't come before it's never too late - YOU are welcome to join us.



November 9 - 150th Historical Presentation

Sunday, November 9 will be the completion of our 150 Anniversary celebrations. We have some closing events planned (that will be stored in the time capsule) including:

- taking a picture of the congregation
- a hymnal for you to sign and write a message if you choose
- unveiling of the new plaque
- lunch provided with a presentation of the past shared during this time



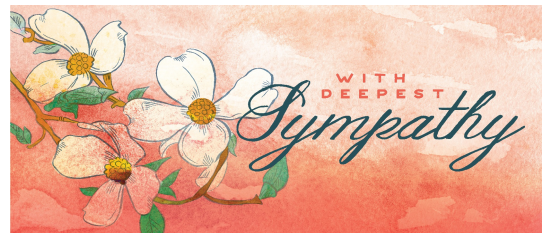
Noisy Offerings

Noisy Offerings will be on November 30 and December 28. Our contributions will be earmarked for the newly formed Newaygo County Church Alliance. Recipients of help will be our neighbors who have fallen through the cracks, are struggling to meet routine expenses but not eligible for financial assistance from traditional sources. Love your neighbor as yourself. Charitable Giving/jb



Our Church Family:

Sympathy -



We extend our sympathy to **Bill Black** and family in the passing of his wife, Carol.



Carol Hunt (Welch) Black, age 85, of Fremont, Michigan, passed away peacefully on October 19, 2025, surrounded by her loved ones.

Born in Montague, Michigan, Carol was the daughter of Rufus “Bart” and Marjorie (Jager) Hunt. She spent her early years helping in her family’s hardware store and later attended Ferris State University, earning her nursing degree. Carol went on to serve the Fremont community for over 30 years as a compassionate nurse at Pine Medical Group.

A member of Fremont Congregational Church since the early 1960s, Carol lived a life of family, faith, and generosity. She gave her time and talents to many causes. A gifted crafter and flower arranger, Carol was always working on a project, whether at home, with the grandkids or on the go.

She loved to travel and was proud to have visited all 50 states and many countries. Carol and her husband Bill spent their winters in Gulf Shores, Alabama, and summers at Burt Lake. She especially cherished sunsets over Lake Michigan.

Carol is survived by her loving husband of 31 years, William Black; her children Bruce Welch and Elizabeth (Todd) Spindler; and stepchildren Bill (Anne) Black, Chad (Sally) Black, Greg (Kara) Black, and Christopher (Rebecca) Black. She was a devoted Nana to Thomas Spindler, Marli Welch, Kelly Spindler, Eric Welch, Mia Spindler, Landon Black, Carter Black, Charlie Black, Sarah Black, Olivia Black, and Connor, Liam, Rowen Morrison, Jordan Black, Brandon Black, and Demi Winfrey. She is also survived by her nieces and nephews Jim & Janis Kemper and Anne & Sean Toohey, along with many dear friends, including the cherished "Birthday Girls."

She was preceded in death by her parents and her sister, Bonnie Kemper. A Celebration of Life will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 22, 2025, at Fremont Congregational Church, with visitation beginning at 1:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, Carol requested donations be made to True North of Newaygo County or Fremont Congregational Church.

Carol will be remembered for her warmth, generosity, and deep love for her family, friends, and community.

Thank you

Mom (Sally DeShetler) wants to thank everyone for the wonderful 103rd birthday cards that she received. She enjoyed reading all the messages from her friends. It was a terrific celebration at her residence that included a disc jockey leading a game of Name That Tune, lots of trivia puzzles and of course, cake. Blessings to all of you!
Gail - Sally's daughter



Poinsettia Order



Red 6 ½" pot - 4-7 blooms **\$12.00** _____ (Quantity)

_____ Total Amount Enclosed

Poinsettia(s) to be used during Advent.

_____ Following worship service, I/we will pick up our _____ poinsettia(s).
_____ Following worship service, the Altar Committee may
take care of my/our poinsettia(s) in an appropriate way.

Given by: _____

In Memory of _____

Or

In Honor of _____

This completed form, along with your payment for each poinsettia ordered may be placed in the offering plate, or turned into the church office no later than **November 16, 2025 - NO LATE ORDERS**



The Pastor's carillon article is from Crystal this month

What Can God Do With The Heart, Mind, and Hands of Many During this Season of Uncertainty? -Crystal Schmalz

This article is a mixture of personal reflection, sharing, and ends with a personal call to action. I am going to share these reflections in three sub-topics: personal, community, and church. I want to share what is on my heart, in my mind, and what I might be able to do with my hands. I pray it blesses you. I offer it with humility, a few tears, and a small bit of courage.

Personal

I am personally grateful for the many blessings of God, and for how God has always helped provide for needs within my family. I am reminded of many times in childhood when my family had times of needs, and God provided through the church and community for these needs. Whether it was receiving food stamps, riding the city buses, receiving food from a food bank, getting a winter coat or new pair of boots, or my parents working tirelessly to provide for our family, I am reminded of the goodness of God, the Church, and the Community. Our family life would have been far more challenging without the help of many. I'll never forget the time a woman in the church shared her daughters used dresses with me, and how I felt like a princess in the dresses. I will not forget the man who drove the church bus, and picked us up on Sundays because we did not always have a car. I will not forget the ministry leader who gave my mom a turkey, not knowing we had very little for the Thanksgiving Holiday. I will be forever grateful for these generous God-led hearts. You may not know how far and wide your generosity reaches, and only the stories of eternity will share the full picture of your importance, impact, and ministry. You do make a difference, and I hope you never question or forget that.

Community

Some of you may know I serve as a leader within Trinity Health. In this role, I was fortunate to sit at a meeting of leaders who are asking how they can help mobilize charitable food efforts in Muskegon, Oceana, and Ottawa counties. The need has always existed, but with the government shut down the needs have grown exponentially. There are many within Newaygo County and beyond who may need extra help during this season of uncertainty. There is danger of grocery stores closing, people going hungry, lights being shut off, and many experiencing homelessness. While the needs may feel overwhelming and great, we can do something. There are a few ways we can help as a church and community. The United Way is establishing funds to help further the cause of food distribution for at risk families. They can stretch a dollar in a way that often we cannot, and one of the best ways to help is to donate to United Way and or Feeding America. A second way we can help, is to let people know they can call 211 and receive information about assistance. 211 is a program which helps connect people to critical resources. A third way we can help is to donate to local already established food



Love

the Lord your God
with all your HEART
and with all your SOUL
and with all your MIND
and with all your STRENGTH.

Mark 12:30, ESV

pantries in our area. These pantries often have established hours of distribution, and you can let people know they can go online to the Feeding America website and look up a food map, which gives an updated list of local food pantries in the area with times, locations, and services provided. Another way we can help is to become a volunteer at a local food pantry and donate our time. True North and Love Inc. have established programs and may need an extra hand in the weeks and months to come. There may also be other churches in the area which could use a few lending hands in their food pantry efforts. I am grateful we have an Ecumenical vision here in our church, and we can work together with other Christian leaders.

Church

First Congregational Church of Fremont is one of the most generous and community-giving churches I have ever encountered. I want you to know the work, ministry, and care you give each day is making a difference. From your work on the Board of Charitable Giving, to the Wood Shop projects, to the Women's Fellowship initiatives, to visiting people in their homes or bringing a meal to someone, to your commitment to helping Rooms of Refuge you are sharing the love of Christ. You are demonstrating the incarnational ministry of God, and following the Biblical call to care for the poor.

As I think about the poor, I am reminded of how the poor are defined within scripture. The poor are the brokenhearted. The poor are the ones who grieve and mourn. The poor are the children and marginalized. The poor are those who are overlooked or unwelcome in society. The poor are those who are struggling. Jesus said the poor will always be with us, and this lets me know I have both a responsibility and a calling to be committed to walking with the poor if I want to be a minister of the Gospel. I do not take this calling lightly, and especially in this season of uncertainty I want to be led by the Holy Spirit to help those I see in need. I want to be able to share a meal with a struggling family (two are in Pastor's office if you know of someone in need-including a turkey), buy a bag of diapers to give to a struggling parent, hold the hand of someone who is dying, say a prayer with someone who needs God's miraculous touch, sit with children in Sunday School and teach them about the love of God not only through words, but with my actions, and care for ministry leaders who are caring for others. Sometimes the best sermons are those with which only a few words are spoken, but many actions are shared. My personal call to action is to ask God for the strength to increase my ability to demonstrate the love of Christ to my neighbors. Neighbors being defined as anyone who I come in contact with, whether they share my beliefs or not. I also want to ask you to think about what your personal call to action might be. The Holy Spirit empowers us to give, and inspires our hearts and hands to love. May God's Holy Spirit both hold you for the care and work you already give, and may the Holy Spirit also stir your heart for any ways you might be able to extend or stretch your ministry, which is vitally important. If you have a need, please let Pastor and I know. We want to be able to care for you and are not always aware of all the needs. We will join you in prayer. We will walk with you in suffering. We will try our best to care for you and share the love of Jesus with your heart, mind, soul, and strength.

With Love and Care, Crystal



37th Annual



Christmas Craft Fair

Saturday, December 6, 2025

9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Presented by

**First Congregational Women's Fellowship
714 Hillcrest Drive ~ Fremont Michigan**



Christmas Shoppe

(many new quality craft and wood gifts and decorations to purchase)

Plum Pudding Shoppe

(holiday foods to purchase)

Children's Shopping Room

(children can shop for that special gift for their mom, dad, grandpa, grandma, teacher, friend, etc.)

Price range \$1.00 - \$5.00 - this includes the gift being wrapped and ready to give)



10% of gross profit is contributed to various Newaygo County non-profit organizations.

For event information, call the church at 231-924-4710 or Gail Cooper at 231-924-2126

www.fremontfcc.org

