November, 2026

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





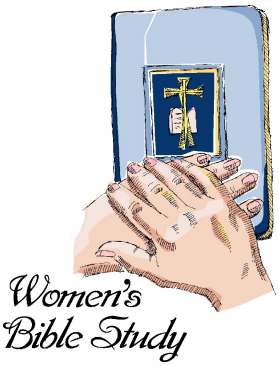
All Saints Sunday

Sunday, November 1 we remembered and gave thanks for those who have gone before us in faith - family, friends and fellow believers who have touches our lives and pointed us to Christ. We remembered Carol Black, Duane VanDuzen and Yvonne Lee.

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 the new city manager, and the chef is Jack Butterick. All men (and even women if they so desire) are more than welcome to attend.



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible study with Beth continues to meet each Wednesday at 4:00 p.m. If you haven't come before it's never too late - YOU are welcome to join us.

Hope Initiative



A simple approach to impacting our community with the Gospel. Sign up by the church office. November 15- December 13. Questions? Talk to Pastor Luke.



1st Sunday of Advent - November 29:

Advent begins a season of waiting, hope and preparation as we turn our hearts toward the coming of Christ. As candles are lit and familiar promises are read, may we make room for God's peace and watch with renewed expectation for the light of Jesus.

Fall Back:



Be sure to change your clocks Saturday evening so you don't arrive at church too early Sunday morning.

Church Pews:



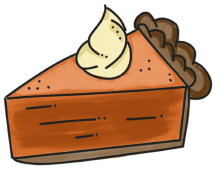
Upstairs we have about 5 white pews that we would like to get rid of. Would you be interested in taking a pew. Let the church office know. Cost: donation only.



Pancake Brunch:

Join us after church on Sunday, November 15 (note the date change) for a delicious Pancake Brunch - all you can eat - All are welcome and encouraged to come!

Pumpkin Pie Sunday:



Who doesn't love a piece of pie? Come enjoy a pie of pumpkin pie on Sunday, November 22.

Veteran's Day Recognition:



Each year on Veterans Day, we pause to give thanks for the men and women who have served our country with courage, sacrifice and devotion. Their willingness to defend freedom reminds us that service often comes with great cost.

As Christians, we are called to honor those who serve and to pray for veterans, active-duty military members and their families. We also remember that true peace comes from God, who is our refuge and strength. On Sunday, November 15 we will recognize the Veteran's of our church family.

May this day lead us to gratitude, prayer and renewed commitment to serve others with humility, courage and love.

Christmas Craft Sale and Plum Pudding Shoppe

Only a month away!! Saturday, December 5! Our ladies have been busy making crafts all year long and 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

38th Annual

Christmas Craft Fair

Saturday, December 5, 2026
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



Poinsettias

Poinsettia Order



Poinsettias

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 15, 2026 - NO LATE ORDERS**

Our Church Family:

Sympathy - We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of **Yvonne Lee**. Yvonne was a very active member of our church - chairing several committees and continually volunteering.



Yvonne Alberta (Lantz) Lee, 93, passed away peacefully in Columbia, Maryland October 26, 2026. She was born in Leslie, Michigan, April 11, 1933, the daughter of Roy Chester and Katherine Banks Lantz.

Yvonne was born and grew up on a farm in Leslie, MI, with her brother George and sister Naomi. She attended country schools prior to attending Leslie High School where she met the love of her life, Max Lee. She married Max in 1953, and they followed his coaching career to Kalamazoo, Manchester (where her sons were born) and Brooklyn, before making the big move to Fremont in 1961. Soon thereafter, she interviewed with Gerber Products Co. and was immediately hired to lead the steno pool. In 1963, she became secretary to Dan Gerber. During her 32-year career at Gerber she reported to eight different CEOs, and in 1985 became Corporate Secretary, at the time a position normally filled by male attorneys. She retired in 1993. The family moved to Hesperia in 1972 where they lived until 2004, when Max and Yvonne returned to Fremont. Her final move was to Maryland in 2024 to live close to her son Craig.

Her strong Christian faith shaped much of her life. In her childhood, she attended a United Brethren Church in Leslie. The family joined the Fremont Congregational Church in 1962, where she sang in the choir for over 40 years. After retirement, she became an avid quilter and crafter, leading the church's "Thursday Crafters" for 21 years, during which time they raised $250,000 from the Christmas shopping fair.

Living with a coaching husband and athletic sons, she spent much of her spare time sitting in high school bleachers supporting them. She was also very involved in the community. She served as a Trustee of the Fremont Area Community Foundation board for 14 years, the local Hospice of Michigan board for 14 years, the Board of Chaplaincy Services for Newaygo County for 12 years, and a member of the Gerber Contributions committee for 16 years.

The most important things in her life were God and her wonderful family. She was very thankful for having a wonderful 65-year marriage, good health until the last few years, and incredible sons, daughters-in-law, five grandchildren and their spouses, and seven beautiful, healthy great grandchildren.

Yvonne is survived by her sons, Craig (Janet) Lee of Glenelg, Maryland; Dana (Leslie) Lee of Gallatin, Tennessee; her grandchildren, Erin (Trevor) Randall; Krista (Tom) Barron; Ryan (Ann) Lee; Stephen (Carmen) Lee; Kevin (Madison) Lee; seven great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Yvonne was preceded in death by her husband, Max Lee; her son, Steven Whitney Lee in 1956; her brother George Lantz; and her parents, Roy Chester and Katherine Banks Lantz.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Association in Yvonne's memory.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, November 7, 2026 at 12:00pm, gathering at the First Congregational Church of Fremont, 714 Hillcrest Ave, Fremont, MI 49412. Visitation will be held the night before, on Friday, November 6, 2026, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at Crandell Funeral Home's, Fremont Chapel, 7193 W 48th St, Fremont, MI 49412. A luncheon will be provided following services at the church's fellowship hall. Interment will be in Maple Grove Cemetery immediately following the luncheon.

November Birthdays

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





A Mission Field of Prayer

Missionary Cynthia Sundman shares the story of a woman in her 80s who is battling cancer and confined to bed. Though she can no longer leave home, she keeps a list of missionaries around the world and prays for them each day. Cynthia says, "This woman travels the globe every day serving the Lord. Her mission is to pray for all the missionaries on her list."

Her story reminds us that faithful service does not always require travel or public recognition. Sometimes ministry happens quietly, from a bedside, through prayers lifted to God.

November Dates to Note:



November 1 - All Saint's Sunday, worship & communion 10:00 a.m.

November 1 - Deacons meeting 11:30 a.m.

November 2 - Women's Fellowship Board 10:00 a.m.

November 4 - Men's Fellowship Luncheon 12:00 noon

November 4 - Women's Bible Study with Beth 4:00 p.m.

November 7 - Visitation for Yvonne Lee 11:00 a.m.

November 7 - Funeral service for Yvonne Lee 12:00 noon

November 8 - Worship - special music Jean Howarth 10:00

November 9 - Technology meeting 6:30 p.m.

November 10 - Fellowship Hall reserved

November 11 - Women's Bible Study with Beth 4:00 p.m.

November 15 - Worship - Communion & Walk up Choir 10:00 a.m.

- Veteran's Recognition
- Ministry Moment Harmony Hybrid, Denise Halgren
- Special music - Harmony Hybrid
- Poinsettia Orders due

November 15 - Pancake Brunch 11:15 a.m.

November 16-23 - Rooms of Refuge

November 16 - Executive Council 6:30 p.m.

November 18 - Trustees 1:30 p.m.

November 18 - Women's Bible Study with Beth 4:00 p.m.

November 22 - Worship - Special music Rev Rap -Pumpkin Pie Sunday 10:00 a.m.

November 25 - Women's Bible Study with Beth 4:00 p.m.

November 26 - Thanksgiving Day

November 29 - 1st Sunday of Advent - Worship 10:00 a.m.

- Honoring David Vandenbelt for sharing his musical gift with us
- Blanket Drive (& towels) for Community Closet

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

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

Harmony Hybrid Tuesday/Thursday 8:30 a.m.

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2026
DRAFT

Present: Stacey Church – Moderator, Carrie DeMull – Clerk/Deacons, Luke Schmalz – Pastor, Bill Black – Trustees, Dean Morehouse - Men's Fellowship, Crystal Schmalz – Board of Christian Education, Jean Morehouse – Women's Fellowship

Absent: Judy Nadeau-Salacina – Growth Initiative

I. Meeting called to order at 6:45 pm.
Stacey Church opened with prayer and called the meeting to order.

II. Bill Black made a motion to accept the minutes as written changing the word goat to goal. Dean Morehouse seconded. Passed

II. Public comments
1. Growth Initiative – Dean Morehouse
• We are part of the great commission. We are called to be disciples of Jesus.
• Have you ever counted to see how many friends there are in church on Sunday? You are not alone. It is OK to count. We had a goal of 60 visitors in 90 days. Do you believe we are almost to 100.
• You can feel the energy in the church.
• We are an independent Christian Congregational Church. More people are looking for an independent church to come to. We have that here with our members being the body and government of the church.
2. Security Review Update: See Old Business Below

IV. Board Reports

Board of Deacons – Carrie DeMull
• The website is getting updated on a regular basis. Let Carrie know if there needs to be any updates to the website and she can do that for us.
• Harvest Parade went well. There were many positive comments from the community.
• The CROP WALK soup luncheon is currently happening during our meeting.
• Carrie will teach Sunday school on October 11. Crystal will be out of town.
• Sunday, October 18, the Annual Meeting will be after worship downstairs.
• Saturday, October 31, from 5:30 – 8:00, the church will have trunk or treat in the parking lot.
• Sunday, November 1, will be All Saint's Sunday.
• Sunday, November 15, we will be celebrating our veterans.
• Sunday, November 22, will be Christ the King Day.
• The first Sunday of Advent will be November 29.
• November 16-23 Rooms of Refuge will be here again downstairs.
• Pastor Luke will be on vacation from November 23 – 28.
• Pastor Luke will be on vacation from December 25 – January 2. Pastor Luke has asked Rap to be our pulpit guest. Deacon's will follow up with Rap.
Kathy made a motion to approve Pastor Luke's vacation dates. Luke P. Seconded. Passed.
• Outreach Growth Projects: Hope Initiative, The Chosen viewing, and small groups. 100 visitors before the end of the year. We are well on our way.

Board of Christian Education – Crystal Schmalz

- 11 children total in Sunday School this year.
- 3 on a regular basis.
- Trunk or Treat on October 31, at 5:30. 6 cars will be handing out candy.

Board of Trustees – Bill Black

- Financially we are doing very well. Income is at 81% with expenses at 78%. Expenses are still a little high because of insurance costs. We are at 75% of the fiscal year.
- Pastor Luke is starting to use his continuing education budget.
- Moving some money from the Edward Jones account to the checking account.
- Steeple lights and sign lights are still being worked looked at and worked on.
- Mellema has finished the landscaping at the south end of the parking lot.
- The boiler has had some annual maintenance done, so we are all set for the winter months.
- The sprinkling system has been winterized.
- The ceiling fans in the sanctuary have been turned off. One of the fans has a bad bearing and it needs to be fixed.
- Trustees have given the CROP walk a donation for $500.00

Women's Fellowship – Jean Morehouse

- Susan handed out the year end statement. She does a 5-year comparison from year to year. She does an excellent job.
- Harvest parade went well and there was a lot of cookies left to be used for coffee hour and the CROP soup luncheon. The luncheon raised $568.00 with the food cost being under $100.
- A travelogue with Rachel will happen in mid November or sometime this spring. Come take a trip with us to Iceland.
- A new fall banner has been purchased and put outside in front of the church.
- The next meeting is November 2.

Men's Fellowship – Bill Black

- Dean was the speaker for October. 25 people were in attendance.
- The next meeting will be November 4. The new city manager will be speaking to us. Jack Butterick will be the chef.

V. Pastor's Report – Pastor Luke

- Jim Rynberg has decorated the altar in honor of Sally DeShetler's birthday. He will also be decorating it for fall/advent season.
- 23 people were present at the annual meeting.
- Lorene is back from vacation but will be out of the office on October 26.
- We will again be doing a blanket drive for Community Closet this Advent season through January.
- Sign up for the Hope Initiative will be November 8 during the pancake breakfast.
- Running low on guest bags.
- Rooms of Refuge 2027 dates: February 22- March 1, June 14 – 21, August 23 – 31, and September 20 – 27.

VI. Acceptance of reports – Carrie DeMull motioned to accept the above reports. Bill Black seconded. Passed

VII. Old Business

- Security Update:
    1. What are we doing for security? Can we get an app on our phones and use the camera system that we have?
    2. Trustees will set up a schedule to have someone do a walk through of the church after Sunday coffee hour to make sure the lights are off, windows shut, and rooms and

doors are secure and locked. Trustees will talk about this at their next meeting.

- Pancake Brunch is November 8 after worship downstairs in fellowship hall. There will be a fall theme with no town hall meeting. Just food and fellowship.
- The choir loft clean up is tabled.
- We need to get the nursery upstairs on the second floor and the cry room cleaned out.
- The white church pews need to be thrown away.

VIII. New Business

- Pumpkin Pie Sunday will be November 15.
- Celebration of Dave Vandenbelt will be on November 29 after worship to thank him for his ongoing service to the church. Let's celebrate him with some cake!

IX. For the Good of the Order - None

Meeting adjourned with a closing prayer by Pastor Luke at 8:50 pm.

Next Meeting is Monday, November 16, at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Carrie DeMull



Relationships - Pastor Luke

I like talking about big ideas, big events, big problems, big stuff. It's fun to think about philosophy, worldview, theology, and all sorts of pie-in-the-sky things. I like to discuss this stuff because it matters. What we believe, how we handle problems, and all that stuff matters. But I have grown suspicious of my enjoyment. I have noticed that when discussing big stuff, I don't really need to do anything about it. You can argue all day on the internet and then be done and not have to change your life. We can talk about what should be done all day. But because it is big, it is beyond me and my little life, so I can't change things, so I don't have to do anything other than think about it. It's fun to argue about what theological position is correct. It is difficult to pick up your cross and follow Jesus. One of the most difficult things to do is to take an idea and put it into action. It is what I love about being a pastor while being in school. I am forced to ask over and over again, does this fit at my Church? It is easy to complain about the effect of technology on people and their ability to connect. It is hard to sit with someone as they struggle with grief, illness, or the other struggles of life. Dealing with one another is complicated, messy, and uncertain. Ideas are clean and easy. As we look to reach our community, to grow our church, and to fulfill God's calling in our lives, we can fall into the same trap. Thinking that we need to do this or that thing. To find some silver bullet or program. But in the end, what matters is relationships. It is about connecting with people and sharing the love of Christ. That does not mean a program is wrong or unhelpful. That there isn't change that needs to happen or anything else. In fact, often big things need to be addressed, but in the end, the personal relationship makes all the difference.