



CTC CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER May, 2021

From Pastor Brant...

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. – Acts 2:43-47

When a child is born, any child, anywhere, it our collective hope that the infant would not just survive, but thrive. The ability of a child to thrive can be defined in many statistical ways. The child can gain weight and height, eat and sleep well, move eyes and limbs, and interact with mother and father within the context of a safe and secure environment. This thriving can also be measured in other more important ways that are qualitative rather than quantitative. The child smiles and laughs; energetically explores and enlarges his or her world; experiments with new things and generates new ideas.

God wants the church to thrive as well. Out of God's unfathomable love and generosity, God offers to the church all that is needed to thrive. Through the work of the Spirit, the church is sustained and nurtured. We are offered the forgiveness that empowers us to forgive others. We are offered the grace that empowers us to see beyond our failures and limitations and sets us free to put the needs of others first and create ministries that meet their needs. We are given individual gifts which, when united in effort and mission, empower us to join with God in God's efforts to bring healing and wholeness to all.

This passage from Acts gives us a vision of what makes for a church that thrives. Luke, who wrote Acts, wants us to understand that the central focus of the church is to create space into which the Holy Spirit's transforming power will reveal the love of God and the redeeming work of Christ. This space is created through the study of Scripture, which reveals how God has been at work from the beginning that we might anticipate how and where God is at work in the present. This space is created through the celebration of God's work in the past and in the present. This space is created when people gather and share their personal encounters with the living God. In so doing, they experience the compassion that allows them to move on from past mistakes, and then the shared hope which invites people to try something new and different this time around.

These actions of the Spirit generate within this community an emboldened sense of mission. This mission sees obstacles as opportunities to experience the power of God to make life abundant and full, creates a deep sense of hope and joy, and thus touches such an insatiable hunger within people that they are drawn to in in droves.

As the fear of the pandemic eases, and it becomes safer for us to gather, we will again take up our work of seeking consensus around the vision God has for us as a church. We will create the space into which we will invite the Spirit to do the work of moving us forward by creating a sense of unity around our mission.

Take Care,

Brant

YOUR SESSION/COUNCIL AT WORK

April 20, 2021

Mary Ann Parker, Your Clerk of Session

Following a period of reflection, thanksgiving, and prayer, reports were received.

Treasurer's report: Reports from January, February, & March accepted.

Net proceeds less accumulated expenses for the sale of the manse was \$96,322.95. This has been placed in the minister compensation fund as designated to help pay for future housing of the pastor.

Clerk's report: Church membership remains at 120.

Letter of appreciation written to Lake Huron Presbytery for \$2500.00 technology grant.

Communion served on 4-1-2021 and 4-4-2021.

Background information: While we were in the process of selling the manse property on Deerfield, it was found that there had been a masonry lien put on the church property by DCR Enterprises dated 2-6-2004 when the church school addition was built. This was researched and the following is the result of the research and will be entered into the session minutes. All paperwork and copies of all e-mails have been filed in the church office for any future reference.

Information for the record regarding masonry lien on church dated 2-6-2004 with DCR Enterprises d/b/a A & D Masonry, David Randall (President), Midland.

After multiple phone calls and e-mails and working with Tracy Carr, financial secretary at Lake Huron Presbytery, it is determined that the lien is no longer relevant. DCR Enterprises had one year after filing the lien to file a lawsuit. They did not and the Statue of Limitations has long passed. DCR Enterprises was dissolved in 2010. Chris Radke, attorney, an employee from the register of deeds office, and Ann Wegener from Superior Title Company all agree that the lien has expired and is no longer relevant, even though it still appears on the church property deed.

Pastor's report: Lenten devotionals & Bible study completed.
Serving on the Presbytery Committee of Ministry.
Provided Good Friday service with First & Second Presbyterian.
Discussed possibility of leadership training day for Deacons and Elders.
Will schedule installation of officers in May.
Requested vacation from April 26-May 2 approved by Session. Rev. Timm High will preach on May 2nd.
Visioning team to be created to assist in planning and implementing a process to discern our vision for the future.

Building & Grounds: Day to clean out and dispose of accumulated, unused items to be planned. Church members will be invited to assist.

Christian Outreach: Mission of the month – Baby shower collection of items and clothing for children from newborn to 5 years of age for April. Mission for May – Habitat for Humanity.

Finance & Stewardship: So far this year members/friends have kept contributions coming in and we have not fallen below 74% of our goal. Per capita paid was at 97%.

The session expresses its gratitude to the congregation for its continued faithful stewardship to the mission of the church.

Through the first quarter of the church almost reached its giving goals.

In January we collected \$8686.17, 74% of our goal of \$11,700.

In February we collected \$8547.55, over 100% (!!!) of our goal of \$8,000.

In March, when we able to return to in-person worship, we collected \$9109.85, 86% of our goal of \$10,600.

Our Monthly Goal for April: \$10,300

The session also expresses its appreciation to those who participated in our voluntary Per Capita collection over these last few months, in which we are challenged to share with our parent denominations \$30 per member as a way to support the national and international ministries of the PC (USA) and the United Church of Christ.

\$2230 was collected, which means that we almost met our goal of \$2300 (97%), and that over 60% of our membership participated in this effort.

Personnel: Pastor's accountability team met with him on 4-13-21 to review his realizations and goals for the future.

Pastor's Goals, 2nd Quarter, 2021: Last month the pastor met with his accountability team to focus on the goals he committed to last year, just before the beginning of the pandemic. Many of these goals were put on hold because of the inability of the church to have face to face meetings and because of the need to focus more immediately on the church's worship needs. The Personnel Committee is using the book, *"When Better Isn't Enough; Evaluation Tools for the 21st Century Church"*, which focuses on what the author, Jill Hudson, considers to be the "12 Characteristics of an effective 21st Century Pastor." The pastor and his accountability team decided to focus on five of what they saw as being most vital to this congregation. They include:

1. The ability to communicate a vision.
2. The ability to interpret and lead change.
3. The ability to promote and lead spiritual formation for church members.
4. The ability to provide leadership for high-quality, relevant worship experiences.
5. The ability to identify, develop, and support lay leaders.

During this next quarter the pastor is committing to work on a visioning process with the congregation, helping it to engage with what its members consider to be the core values and bedrock beliefs of the congregation. Through the interaction of its members, spiritual formation will be strengthened, and a new vision for the church, with the help of God's Spirit, will arise.

The pastor will also be working to help strengthen the governance and the programming of the church through the organization and training of the church's officers.

A copy of the full report, which gives the list of the 12 qualities, and more in depth information concerning the five characteristics that are the focus of the pastor's work, can be found in both the church office and on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

Many thanks to the Accountability Team members for their work to strengthen the congregation by providing guidance, encouragement, and clarification to the pastor. These members are: Debbie Davis, Mary Ann Parker, Roger Scovill, and Darren Woodke. Please bring your concerns and ideas to these people that they might be supported in their work.

Congregational Care: Team has lost their momentum, but some calls are made intermittently. We would like to meet with the Deacons to establish roles and further care for the congregation/members.

Old Business: Motion sustained that because of the continued COVID surge that we will not allow outside groups to meet at the church except the Scout Troop until we meet for our August meeting at which time, we will revisit this issue again.

TREASURER'S REPORT
Mari McKenzie, Treasurer

	March				
	Beginning Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers	Ending Balance
General	8,200.60	9,109.85	11,052.18	1,095.00	7,353.27
Memorial	8,745.00	400.00			9,145.00
Memorial - Lyons Troop 304	65.00	75.00			140.00
Manse	-				-
Special gift	15,300.02				15,300.02
Special projects	4,695.36				4,695.36
Mission					
Per capita	270.60	90.00			360.60
Two-coins-a-meal	-				-
Food baskets	1,362.52	850.00	1,000.00		1,212.52
Heifer proj (Church School)	(0.00)				(0.00)
UCC/PCU/Blankets	205.00	430.00	205.00		430.00
Good Samaritan	2,497.28				2,497.28
Muriel Lakey Scholarship	6,896.97				6,896.97
Womens Association	-				-
Local	325.00				325.00
Bricks	1,335.85				1,335.85
	49,899.20	10,954.85	12,257.18	1,095.00	49,691.87
Minister Compensation	96,322.95			(535.00)	95,787.95
Endowment	252,478.49	44.17		(560.00)	251,962.66
	398,700.64	10,999.02	12,257.18	-	397,442.48

In-Person Worship Continues: Though the infection rates in Michigan, and locally in Saginaw County are relatively high when compared with many other in the nation, the session believes that due to the high rate of vaccination among our members, that we will continue offering in-person worship on Sundays. Please continue to follow these protocols to insure that safety our members and community.

1. The sanctuary will be filled on a first come, first served basis, as household groups. Once filled, people will be directed to the fellowship hall where the service can be watched on the screen.
2. Please come in and exit through the center doors. The doors on the East side of the building will be locked.
3. Masks are required. They are an essential element in keeping one another safe, especially in indoor spaces with limited air movement.
4. Participants will be screened prior to admittance. Questions will be asked concerning his or her present state of health and possible exposure to the virus through others in the last 14 days.
5. We are asking people about their vaccination status. You do not have to answer this question in order to participate in worship.
6. Temperatures will be taken using an infrared thermometer and those with high temperatures will not be permitted to attend.
7. You will be asked to use the hand sanitizer on both your way in and your way out.

8. Participation will be recorded that we might, if needed, provide contact tracing.
9. Sit in designated seating in your household groups. There is flexible seating and you are asked to use the noodles found in the pews to maintain a safe distance.
10. The pastor will not be wearing a mask while speaking. He will be behind a Plexiglas shield to protect worshippers.
11. There will be no Children's Time during the service or Sunday School after the Children's Time.
12. Those who would prefer to sit in the fellowship hall are welcomed to do so, and chairs will be provided that are socially distant. Family groups are welcomed to move them so that they can sit together.
13. There is a basket at the back of the church for your offering.
14. You are to remain seated until after the completion of the Postlude. Please honor this so as not to create an issue with the livestreaming of our service.
15. Upon dismissal please do not stop to socialize, but move directly and quietly outside.
16. There will be no social time following the service inside the buildings. You are welcomed to socialize for as long as you would like outside if you wear masks and keep appropriate physical distancing from one another. Bring a lawn chair.
17. The service starts at 10:30. Please come early to give yourself time to go through the screening and seating processes.

Online Worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30 on YouTube CTC Saginaw: We will continue to place on our CTC Saginaw YouTube page our livestream of our Sunday morning services. If you have feedback about any of our digital outreach content, we'd love to hear your gently phrased guidance.

We will continue to put on our FB pages our order of worship for the day, and will make available a link to our YouTube channel for the service. We are hopeful that it will enhance your worship experience by offering the words to the hymns and other parts of the service so that you may participate more fully.

We ask that you continue to be in prayer for the volunteers who provide assistance for our services, as well as for new volunteers to step up for these positions. If you have an interest in serving in the ministry of the gospel as a camera person, a computer assistant, or a worship planner working with media, please contact the pastor so that you can review the job description and the responsibilities of these positions.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper May 2nd: During our worship on May 2, 2021, we will be celebrating the Lord's Supper. You are invited once again to gather before you the elements of the bread and the cup so that you might fully participate in this sacred celebration.

National Day of Prayer, Thursday, May 6th, Saginaw City Hall: The pastor will be participating in the National Day of Prayer Event sponsored by the Ezekiel Group on Thursday, May 6th, on the outdoor steps of the Saginaw City Hall. If you feel safe, please gather, as closely or as far away as you would like.

Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd: On Sunday, May 23rd, we will celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church. As a celebration of the Spirit's presence with us, to guide us, challenge us, comfort us, and encourage us, please wear red.

Offering Envelopes are available to be picked up: Lori Halase has made the boxes of offering envelopes available during the week for pickup. To pick yours up, **please first call the church office to make an appointment** to ensure both that someone will be here to unlock the door for you, and to pick up your offering envelope if you want to drop it off, and also to help us keep the number of people coming into the church building manageable. The boxes will be on the table on the left side as you come in the East door, each one in its own plastic bag. Please wear a mask as you enter, and exit as quickly as you can.

thankyou

Ruth Marsh wishes to thank everyone for the cards showered upon her and the Valentine's treats she received. She wanted to tell you that she misses everyone and sends the Lord's blessings to all.

Nancy Easlick wishes to give a great big thank you to all who ordered Easter flowers. We had 42 plants displayed in the

Church on Easter Sunday and they were beautiful and smelled wonderful. She especially wishes to thank Dan Groom for setting up the plants and Randy Groom for keeping our church so clean.

Christian Outreach: Please remember our local ministries during this time, as they work to provide additional resources to our community in this time of pandemic and need your support. The Missions of the Month for May will be the Habitat for Humanity and Pentecost Sunday which is May 23, 2021. Thank you.



Greeting Cards: Shirlee Scovill has greeting cards on display and for sale inside the east door to the church on the table. There is a variety of cards available, but she wanted me to let you all know that if you need something special give her a call or email her to let her know what you want. Her phone numbers are: 989 892-1903 (Home) 989 327-2219 (Cell) and her email is scovillshirlee@yahoo.com.

Facebook Prayer Group: We have created a FB Prayer Group on our newly created FB Page. It is a private group where only those who are invited can see the messages posted for those in need of prayer. If you are on Facebook and would like to be invited, please call Kathy in the office so she can invite you to join.

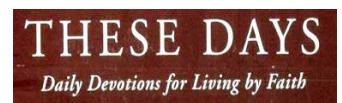


Telephone Directory: The new directories are ready to be picked up. If you aren't able to get to the church to get one, call Kathy in the office 989 793-0125 and she will mail it to you. If you do not get an answer, leave a message. Thanks.

Corrections: CHANGES FOR YOUR NEW DIRECTORY:

For Gwen Henderson, please add her apartment number which is: Apartment 18. This needs to be on any mail going to her. **New telephone numbers: MariAnne Vega-989 401-8913 and Fern Evon Little-989 270-1444.**

These Days: We have received the second quarter of 2021 *These Days* magazine and they will be in the box outside the east entrance door if you would like to pick one up.



We have new information on our member, Betty Burr. She is now rehabbing at Samaritas Senior Living (which is the old Luther Manor) on State Street in Saginaw. I am not certain what the visitation rules are at this time, but for those that would like to send her a card or call and talk with her, her address and phone number are:

Ms. Betty Burr, Samaritas Senior Living
200 State Street, Room 200
Saginaw, MI 48602
Phone: 989 799-1902 (ask for Betty)

Please Take Note

Change in Office Hours for Tuesday, April 27, 2021: Just for this one day - the office will not open until 1:00 p.m. and will remain open until at least 4:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars accordingly. Thank you.

PROTOCOLS FOR COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY CHURCH UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

In an abundance of caution and until it is safe to relax these procedures, the following protocols will be required before entering the building:

1. Appointments are required. Please call the office (989) 793-0125 to set up a convenient time Monday-Thursday in the mornings.
2. Enter the building only through the east door near the office
3. **YOU MUST WEAR A MASK WHILE INSIDE THE BUILDING.** Free masks are available if you need one.
4. Fill out the Registration Sheet on the table immediately inside the door to the left, recording your answers to the Screening Questionnaire and your temperature as shown on example below. To take your temperature, place the thermometer near your forehead and squeeze the button. Your temperature will show up on the screen (please note that if it is cold outside, you may need to place the thermometer close to a location which was covered by your coat in order to get an accurate reading (forearm, neck, etc). **If you are not feeling well, or your temperature is above 100.4° F please do not come into the church.**
5. Please use the hand sanitizer on your way in and on your way out.

DAILY RECORD OF THOSE COMING INTO CTC

Date	Attendee/Name	Received Covid Vaccination(s)		Screening Questions (which one if answered "yes")	Temperature (Below 100.4 F/38C)	Admitted	
		1 st	2 nd			(Yes)	(No)

6. Please do not venture into the church.
 - a. If dropping something off, leave it on the table.
 - b. If picking something up, please arrange this in advance so it will be readily available for you.

We want to make sure that we are all as safe as possible under these extreme conditions and urge everyone to please be careful, always wear your mask and wash your hands often. Use hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes regularly. If you do not have a mask or need more, please let Kathy know and you will be provided as many as you need.



BIRTHDAYS MAY

- 1 Gwen Henderson
- 4 Joshua Gonzales
- 5 Sue Smith
- 6 Betty Burr
- 6 Marcia Lacker
- 8 Dorothy Hughes
- 12 Barbara Groom
- 18 Doris Ruth
- 21 Seth Diggs
- 24 Katlyn Scovill
- 26 Charles Ohmer
- 26 Lore Woodke
- 28 Sue Paterson

BIRTHDAYS JUNE

- 2 Michael Wayne Groom
- 3 Eric Smith
- 8 Christian (Volker) Saxton
- 11 Robert Bortner
- 11 Dana Hansen Cooper
- 19 Kitty Blehm
- 20 Marilyn Leffler
- 20 Dan Saperstein
- 21 Jasmyn Volker
- 30 Darren Woodke
- 30 John Furlo

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Elaine O'Keefe
- 5 Dawn Curtis
- 11 Graham Parker
- 12 Robert Lemmer
- 13 Jean Bortner
- 18 Sidney Diggs IV
- 23 Bobby Diggs
- 24 Zayden Evans (Alexa Mahan)
- 24 Dick Mallette
- 27 Susan Anderson
- 29 Holly Furlo
- 30 Lynne Groom
- 31 Rachael Plater

ANNIVERSARIES MAY

- 4 Tom & Chong Ladner
- 7 Floyd & Lois Krzak
- 15 Christine & Paul Greenwood
- 16 Kathryn & Kevin Barnum
- 18 Randy & Lynne Groom
- 28 Christian & Bradley Saxton

ANNIVERSARIES JUNE

- 21 Edward & Lori Halase
- 28 Dan & Liz Saperstein
- 29 Ronald & Jean Anne Miller

ANNIVERSARIES JULY

- 28 Charles & Irene Ohmer

We have a couple of **LANDMARK BIRTHDAYS** to celebrate if you are able and want to send out a card or give a call to these special ladies. We just missed Fern Evon Little's 95th birthday which was on April 5th and coming up quickly is Betty Burr's 95th birthday on May 6th. Please shower some love on these lovely ladies.